COMPARATIVE HISTORY WRITING IN HUNGARY UNTIL 1945/48

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I hereby declare that this dissertation contains no materials accepted for any other degrees in any other institutions and no materials previously written and/or published by another person unless otherwise noted.

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Abstract

This dissertation presents a historiographical study of the rise of comparative history writing in Hungary in the interwar era, through the Second World War, and its immediate aftermath until 1948, when there was a consolidation of a Stalinist version of historical materialism that brought an end to large-scale regional comparative studies for almost two decades. Hungary's loss of the First World War was the original impetus for the competition to rewrite a history that also rewrites borders between states, often producing a less plausible version of history, but also for a broadened interest in the shared history and culture of the region, and a better basis for historical research. The dissertation puts forward a thesis of a transformation of historical studies on the neighboring countries that follows a path (1) from being propagandistic nature in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, (2) to eventually a more political history oriented research of the nationalities (minorities) of Hungary before 1918 in order to explain the demise of Hungary, (3) to histories of the neighboring countries themselves, and (4) finally to full-scale comparative histories of Hungary and the neighboring nations, i.e., regional comparative history. These final two stages, which of course did not eliminate entirely the first two, depended on the rise of a group of historians who could learn the languages and research the history of nations neighboring Hungary. This in itself was a difficult task since historians in Hungary previously looked to Germany, France, and the West as foundations of historical comparison rather than the smaller surrounding nations and regions, which also entailed learning the languages of nations that in the interwar era were considered hostile to Hungary. There was a fairly large cohort of young historians, linguists, philologists, and literary historians engaged in this task. Out of this larger group, however, the dissertation focuses on seven who best exemplify the skills needed to engage in regional comparative history, and who had a large enough oeuvre (including monographs) before 1945 in order for this dissertation also to have a basis for evaluation. They are **László Makkai, Lajos Tamás, Zoltán I. Tóth, László Gáldi, Domokos Kosáry, Lajos Gogolák,** and **László Hadrovics**. These seven are called the "comparatists" because they consciously engaged in the writing of comparative works and based their studies on what they perceived to be the more advanced methods of the historical sciences of the interwar era. This dissertation shows how comparative history writing in Hungary was syncretic in nature and could be combined with different dominant and minor historiographical schools of the interwar era, a factor which explains its successes and appeal. It explores how robust university departments in Hungary of Romanian and Slavic literatures and training in modern linguistics aided the project of historical comparison. It delves into the nexus of politics, nationalism, and history writing; how nationalism colors the research agenda of historians, and how competition among regional actors set conceptual frameworks. The thesis concludes that in spite of the challenges to impartial history writing in this era, a concerted effort to study the history of the neighboring nations and broader region was not wasted. And though comparative history writing came to an abrupt end, partly during which a majority of the comparatists were marginalized, in many ways it created the foundation for future studies on the region, which however were conceptually framed in Marxist theory. The dissertation thus aims to uncover a broader story of comparative history writing in Hungary that so far has only been told sporadically and is usually hidden under the better-known historiographical debates of the interwar era. Here the order is reversed, and comparative history writing is set up as its own subject which can then reflect back on the historiographical debates of the time.

If anyone had the courage to advise something to this nation, he should straight away say, like I do: "You, people of Hungary, especially, you, original Hungarians, you do not have enough common interest to sustain yourself for long, given your indecent constitution. If the heavens should fancy to separate you some day from the House of Austria and Bohemia—and this could easily happen in view of the agitation, for which your sanguineous temperament is so much predisposed—then you would be given some kind of guardians, like the ones given to children. So make sure that you stop dallying and agitating as soon as possible, that you place your existence on more solid foundations, and that you join your occidental neighbors through morals and language, these people who are as famous now as in the past (certainly more famous than you have ever been)—*otherwise it can easily happen that you will learn Russian*!" (Johann Molnár, "Political-ecclesiastical Hermaeon of the reforms of Emperor Joseph II," 1790)

In Gábor Almási and Lav Šubarić, *Languages and Identities in the Kingdom of Hungary: An Anthology of the Language Debates (1784–1810)* (forthcoming, 2017).

Introduction

Following the First World War, Hungarian elites had the perception that a small cabal of local East-Central and South-East European politicians, historians, and Western publicists succeeded in rewriting the map and history of Eastern Europe, and there is in fact some credence to the theory; however, there is also credence to the theory that the division of the region into small states was a question of when, and not if. Yet, never before had such basic structural aspects of the continent been shattered and reshaped on a grand scale. What the Entente had created was a social-national experiment that for survival depended on a never ceasing campaign of the East European victors to prove their political (and historical) legitimacy. The Hungarian response and lesson was not only the recognition that image matters but that they now had to be proactive in presenting an image of a great and unjustly maligned nation—in a word, propaganda. Yet even propaganda must rest on facts. Under the tutelage of image factories that were set up by the Hungarian political elite, a small army of fact checkers (i.e., historians and researchers in the early phase of their careers) were created, trained, and summoned from the ranks of the university system. In this analogy, on the one side we have the politician-publicists, on the other, the fact checkers. I use this analogy as a way to describe the nexus between those who had political-propagandistic aims but who lacked the expertise to provide the historical analysis needed to justify their claims, and hence required researchers to fulfill this task. However, these researchers eventually developed agendas of their own, and some academic independence, which makes the story of their careers much more complex than a simple analogy. The subject of this thesis is the interwar era biographical and historiographical story of seven historians who were young and quickly climbing the ranks of academia, and who best exemplify the process of transformation from "fact checkers" to regional and comparative history specialists. They are László Makkai, Lajos Tamás, Zoltán I. Tóth, László

Gáldi, Domokos Kosáry, Lajos Gogolák, and László Hadrovics. As a group, theirs is a story of how comparative history writing in Hungary came into existence under flawed conditions, but none the less existed and flourished. I call this group of seven the "comparatists," for the sake of easily speaking of them as a group, since they represent the peak of regional comparative history as practiced in Hungary from 1935 to 1945, and up to 1948. They were first and foremost historians of questions relating to Hungarian history, but in terms of a comparative framework they branched out to neighboring countries according to various linguistic and history field specializations.

The image of Hungary presented by the politician-publicists in their foreign-language journals in relation to Hungary's former minorities, like in the higher quality Hungarian Studies journals *Hungarian Quarterly* and *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, was one of paternalistic idyll, which, if put into a short phrase would sound approximately like this: "we transgressed, but everyone had their rightful place, and the problems could have been solved if only emotions [i.e., nationalism] had not replaced reason." However, the comparatists, after they surpassed that early stage in their career of fact checker, were not mere lackeys of the publicists. Their work did overlap for sure, and they submitted a slew of journalistic-type historical analyses aimed at a broader non-academic audience, and in foreign languages, too, in order to influence Western readers that Hungary is a great and unjustly maligned nation. Thus I would not characterize their work as a rebellion against propaganda per se, since even the publicists came around to the idea that the vulgar propaganda of the 1920s in the aftermath of Versailles was counterproductive. It was rather the realization that intellectual independence was a precondition for valuable scholarship, and in this regard they far surpassed this simple dichotomy of politician-publicist and fact checker. They became true academic specialists in the history of broader regional questions at a level of expertise that had never been achieved in Hungary before. There are likely two reasons for their academic

successes in the interwar era and up till 1945. First, the loss of the First World War and two-thirds of the geographical area of Hungary placed regional geopolitical issues and the history of the surrounding nations and countries on an entirely new footing. In short, a span of an entire generation (and teams of various experts in history) was needed to figure what had just happened, by which time the next war was beginning. The second reason for the rise of regional specialists was basically to fill a major lacuna in scholarship: "the researchers of Hungarian literary, linguistic, and cultural history until the 1930s primarily studied the culture of the Western large nations and tied the roots of our own national culture to them, and virtually left entirely out of their purview those small nations who lived together or beside Hungarians; whose world view, emotional life, functioning imagination, and distinct points of view, in this respect and exactly due to everyday contact, show much similarity." It was in the 1930s when a new philological school, "straddling the border of the positivist and *Geistesgeschichte* [historiographical] periods … 'made connections between the entire course of Hungarians' political and cultural development and those nations that surrounded them or lived in the same polity.'"[1] Some of the comparatists focused more on the cultural and literary fields, others were more at home in the traditional historical sciences.

By the 1940s, the comparatists started filling important administrative positions at the universities in Budapest and Kolozsvár/Cluj. In the midst of the war, the Teleki Institute was founded and became the home for a much larger group to research historical questions of the region, individuals who without this separate institutional home likely would not have found positions in the university. And it worked to everyone's favor: wide-ranging research into broad historical regions require large apparatuses. The Teleki Institute apportioned a greater division of labor into subregional specializations while also allowing for some overlapping of research

[1] István Szeli, "Búcsú Hadrovics Lászlótól," *Híd* (June 1997): 473–478.

interests, i.e., there was less of an incentive to stake out one's "turf." In the middle of the Second World War, these young historians were able to essentially advance their own publications and research and run their own journal at the Teleki Institute. Here they published the French-language *Revue d'histoire comparée* journal that presented the academic writings of the comparatists and other young historians, as well as their reviews of international literature coming from the region and the West (reviews which previously would have only been found in Hungarian-language journals like *Századok*). The *Revue d'histoire comparée* was the successor to the *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis*, the first foreign-language (mostly French and German) academic history journal published from 1935 until 1943, which also premiered some of the interwar era corpus of the comparatists.

My impression of the differences between views of the politician-publicists and the comparatists hinges on several aspects: The publicists could not foresee any future of Hungary besides the regaining of the full pre-WWI borders; they were from that world and they held on to the idea of it even at the cost of national suicide and personal death. The comparatists hoped in the possibility of dressing the borders around the edges to better suit ethnographic statistics, some of them with an eye to an alliance with Hitler's Germany as being too high a price for any revision whatsoever. Having come of age in the new post-Versailles era, the comparatists were well aware of the demographic realities of the entire region and historical Hungary. They were, as comparatists, just as much specialists of the rise of Hungarian nationalism as that of the surrounding nationalisms. After the war, they recognized the significance of the complete loss and surrender to Soviet Russia. They experienced profoundly the corruption of life under right-wing populist and fascistic ideologies. They wanted to start over and most adapted quite quickly to these new conditions. Yet, before the dogmatist Marxist model took over the historical faculties by 1948,

there was a period of uncertainty when one could not yet guess what from the old world could be kept or combined with a Marxism which itself still seemed fluid. This very short span between 1945 and 1948 has been labeled as a period of intellectual renewal, with a rare period of historical writing free of the previous nationalism and future dogmatism.[2] I disagree with the first part of this statement. In terms of research, whatever new that was published by the comparatists in this period rested on research conducted or written during or before the war, with usually just a slight adjustment of the narrative. This image of the 1945 to 1948 period is largely based on the case of Zoltán I. Tóth,[3] who out of this group of seven historians is an anomaly, in the sense that his career advanced in the immediate aftermath of the war with his historical writings on Romanian history. The other six historians basically had to wind down their regional studies by 1948, when the historical sciences were finally consolidated under the nationalist spin on historical materialism. In fact, the post-1945 period, in spite of some interesting comparative works, has to be viewed already from the standpoint of a decline of the comparative historical method in Hungary. Of course there were fields that the some of the comparatists excelled at which could be easily integrated into the new Stalinist paradigm, such as Slavic and Russian Studies, histories of the peasantry and feudalism, etc. Thus, what might have seemed like a time of hope of future working correspondence with the historians of the new socialist nations and a stronger interest in regional questions, in fact in the case of Hungary returned to questions that were covered already in the 1920s, the only difference being the supposed extraction of some nationalist bias from the equation. A fairly large late interwar and WWII comparative historical apparatus and a division of

[2] See the jointly authored Maciej Janowski, Constantin Iordachi, and Balázs Trencsényi, "Why Bother about Historical Regions? Debates over Central Europe in Hungary, Poland and Romania," *East Central Europe* 32, nos. 1–2 (2005): 5–58, at 9. A decline is perceived by already after 1945 by István Gál, *Bartóktól Radnótiig* (Budapest: Magvető, 1973), 29; amongst others see Janowski, Iordachi, and Trencsényi, "Why Bother about Historical Regions?," 9.

[3] Based on Dániel Csatári, "I. Tóth Zoltán," in Zoltán I. Tóth, *Magyarok és románok. Történeti tanulmányok* (Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1966), 38.

labor was replaced with historical topics confined to the borders of small Hungary or at most a return to the historical questions of large pre-WWI Hungary, i.e., the nationalities question, for roughly two decades.

In the 1960s there was a renewal of questions relating to the position of Hungary and the region in European economic systems, which see in the work of Zsigmond Pál Pach, "who focused on early-modern agrarian history and sought to document the moment of divergence between East and West," and also worldwide economic systems, after Wallerstein's concept of "world-economy" and center and periphery zones, in the works of Iván T. Berend and György Ránki.[4] These region-wide economic studies cannot be viewed in light of continuity with the pre-communist past, in part because economic theory in the interwar era was sorely neglected. In this sense Marxist economic theory was a benefit and not a hindrance. Such wider regional questions, such as how the social life of Hungary and Eastern Europe belongs to the West or the East is certainly analogous to the work of the comparatists, but this was not the same type of micro-level historical comparison, on a nation-to-nation basis further subdivided into microregions, that was taking place in Hungary before 1945. Even though broad regional studies in Hungary took a different route under communism, there was some overlapping with the work of the comparatists especially in the person of Emil Niederhauser, who published his first works just after the war, went through the ubiquitous history of peasants phase, but later took regional level nationalism studies in the 1970s to a level that surpassed that of the comparatists in the interwar era.[5]

[4] Janowski, Iordachi, and Trencsényi, "Why Bother about Historical Regions?," 10. László Makkai, "Ars Historica: On Braudel," *Review* (Fernand Braudel Center) 6, no. 4 (Spring 1983): 435–453, at 441.

[5] Niederhauser, *A jobbágyfelszabadítás Kelet-Európában* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1963); *Nemzetek születése Kelet-Európában* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1976); *A nemzeti megújulási mozgalmak Kelet-Európában* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977).

It was only in the Kádár era after 1956, specifically in the 1960s, that the careers of the comparatists recovered from sidelining or suppression, with the exceptions of Lajos Tamás, who was already on the forefront of the Stalinist reorganization of the sciences, and Zoltán I. Tóth, who did not have to take a forced hiatus from regional (Romanian) historical studies, but was killed by a stray bullet during the 1956 revolution. Kosáry of the group of seven was the last to let the past pass (he was imprisoned for a period after the 1956 revolution) and the first to return to the historicization of the interwar era project of comparative history, already in the 1980s. During this time, in the late communist era, Kosáry still (explicitly) defended the past work of the comparatists and the ability to pursue independent and valuable scholarship in the Hungary of Horthy, just as he also defended this same possibility under the Hungary of Kádár—contra the Hungarian nationalist novelist-in-exile Albert Wass, for example.[6] And after the end of communism, another one of the comparatists, Hadrovics, who like Kosáry lived to see the Iron Curtain fall, also wrote about how unfortunate it was for the historical sciences that their research before 1945 was labeled in its entirety as "bourgeois" and "nationalist" during the Stalinist period, and was slow to recover in reputation afterward. Neither do I imply here that the comparatists were entirely impartial and free of national bias, or of Marxist heavy-handedness in the following communist era; it simply means that certain regimes of historical interpretation do not necessarily exclude the possibility of valuable scholarship. The comparatists excelled at breaking through the layers of interpretation of the historians of the region whose works they analyzed. They were foremost historiographers. My task is to do the same for their corpus.

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[6] Domokos Kosáry, "Letter to the Editor," *Slavic Review* 29, no. 4 (Dec. 1970): 763–765.

Who were these historians, linguists, and philologists who I call the comparatists? What are the academic tendrils that connect them to our present day? What makes this thesis more than simply an exercise in antiquarian curiosity? The most obvious connection is Béla Köpeczi (1921–2010), who, in an article on the perspective of twenty years after the explosive reaction to the publication of *Erdély története* in 1986,[7] recounts his early university education at a well-known Hungarian college and his studies of the works of László Gáldi, László Makkai, and Lajos Tamás, who were roughly a decade his senior and also (mostly) alumni of the same Eötvös József College (not to be confused with the communist-era renaming of the Pázmány Péter Budapesti Egyetem to Eötvös Loránd Tudomány Egyetem). Köpeczi writes of his particular interest in their treatment of the question of Daco-Roman continuity and Romanian ethnogenesis: "These studies and the sources of Balkan linguistics convinced me that the Romanian people and language developed south of the Danube." Köpeczi, like Gáldi, Makkai, and Tamás, came to Hungary from Romania for his university studies, and because of his native Romanian skills (and likely French training in Romania too) quickly branched out to other Romance languages at the Eötvös College, continuing with French literary studies during a long stay at the Sorbonne from 1946–1949. He produced his first publications for the *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis* and *Revue d'histoire comparée*,[8] of which the comparatists were editors. Just as Köpeczi points to the work of the above three comparatists as his foundation, one can also say that both Gáldi and Makkai leaned on and were inspired by Tamás's research, which preceded their own by several years. These three comparatists

[7] Béla Köpeczi, "Erdély története harminc év távlatából," *Kisebbségkutatás* 14, no. 1 (2006), www.hhrf.org/kisebbsegkutatas/kk_2006_01/cikk.php?id=1332; Köpeczi, ed., *Erdély története*, vols. 1–3 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986).

[8] Köpeczi, *Zur Frage der rumänischen Lehnwörter im Ungarischen*, offprint of *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis* 8, nos. 3–4 (1942); Köpeczi, review of *Ursprung und Wirkung der französischen Kultureinflüsse in Südosteuropa* by Franz Thierfelder, *Revue d'histoire comparée* 3, nos. 1–4 (1945): 250–253.

are intrinsically tied to the research of Transylvanian history that was covered in the three-volume *Erdély története*.

There are perhaps three factors which kept the comparatists from becoming relegated only to the confines of institutional memory, and by "institutional memory" I intend nothing devaluing, but in fact the important and vital recognition of one's teachers, trainers, inspirers, and administrators. The first factor was that most of them continued their research and writing in fields that still had significance outside of the strict confines of Hungarian history or Hungarian linguistics and kept up international networks even when it was not a straightforward task. In short, they were well-known and recognized (even famous?) historians in their respective niches and beyond. The second factor was longevity, in that several of them reached an age where they could begin to contextualize their own oeuvres, and that of their coworkers, and form a type of physical continuity between the interwar era and the postcommunist era. Essentially, they commented on the fact that they accomplished important research before 1945 which was largely forgotten for several decades due to geopolitics. The third and unexpected factor as regards the memory of the comparatists was the publication of *Erdély története* in the mid-1980s which coalesced around the head editor Köpeczi and had ramifications for years to come. This work singlehandedly resurrected the memory of the old timers—the first generation of historians and linguists to apply twentieth-century methods of research to regions both close and far away from Transylvania—including those who had passed several years before, such as Tamás and Gáldi, and those whose short careers still had reverberations, such as I. Tóth. But the list of old timers does not end here with the comparatists. One should mention the Romanist András Alföldi (who emigrated after WWII), whose research on the late Roman Empire was the pivotal starting point for Hungarian researchers looking into Romanian ethnogenesis, and of course Mátyás Gyóni, who with his Greek

philological training examined the Byzantine sources on the Romanian-Bulgarian Empire. And last but not least, the Slavicist István Kniezsa, a seemingly surprising presence in a book on Transylvania, was in fact the bedrock of toponym analysis which is considered the strongest element of the early chapters of *Erdély története*. Makkai's name and work is directly tied to his editing of volumes one and two of *Erdély története*, and he wrote the third chapter of the first volume, "Transylvania in the Medieval Hungarian Kingdom (896–1526)."[9] Yet Makkai in his early career as a historian of Transylvania and Romania often relied on and synthesized comparative linguistic and philological studies, first of all that of Tamás, then later that of Kniezsa.

My foremost goal was to gather all the information possible on the scholarly activities of these seven historians and linguists in the period up to 1945/48. These seven figures all had different areas, regions, and eras of focus, but their careers abutted in several centers of scholarly activity, at Budapest University, Eötvös College, and Teleki Institute, as well as virtual locations such as journals. In this sense they can be studied as a single unit, which is what I intend to accomplish with this thesis. Looking at their biographies and oeuvres as a group allows one to make certain conclusions and broader generalizations about the opus of comparative and comparative-type research conducted in Hungary over a relatively short period of time, roughly 1935–1945/48. One can analyze its successes and failures, and also try to comprehend how a fully functioning yet fairly unrecognized branch of historical studies, because its practitioners were spread out among different institutions, functioned in Hungary for over a decade with the added uncertainty of lacking an academic and popular audience, problems which were even more amplified outside of Hungary's borders. When one considers that Hungary's most influential interwar era historian, Gyula Szekfű, is practically unpublished in French and English, the previous

[9] English version: László Makkai, András Mócsy, and Zoltán Szász, *From the Beginnings to 1606*, vol. 1 of *History of Transylvania*, ed. Béla Köpeczi (trans. Péter Szaffkó et al.) (Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 2001).

statement should come as no surprise. These Hungarian comparatists published foreign-language works intended for European audiences with only small echoes abroad, and certainly even if read were rarely commented on by historians of the states whose history they were researching. As Gáldi writes in 1941,

> it must be admitted that Hungarian and Romanian research into [the history of] Transylvania came about entirely autonomously, and they only recently have started to outline … the contours of German research on Transylvania. As regards the former two, we can establish that their results are often so incompatible, that if one leafs through the Hungarian volume on Transylvania [*Erdély*, ed. by Magyar Történelmi Társulat, Budapest, 1940] and then afterward a large Romanian synthetic publication dedicated to the topic of Transylvania, for example, the volume *La Transylvanie* [ed. by Académie Roumaine, Bucharest, 1938], we will find virtually no point of contact between the two syntheses. In fact, more often than not, our impression is as if they are not even talking about the same geographical region. Romanians basically drown out the Hungarian past of Transylvania; and Hungarian authors unfortunately too frequently do not judge Romanian development according to its own internal logic.[10]

Yet Gáldi's characterization of the flaws in the Hungarian treatment of the surrounding nations and regions is surely an understatement—as if the problem was simply one of not being theoretical enough. An entrenched Hungarian bias, in spite of published statements that eschew bias, was just one reason for the lack of dialogue. The case of Romania was even more complicated than other surrounding nations because of an unbridgeable gulf in the Romanian and Hungarian treatment of the pre- and early history of Romanians. Since my thesis is a historiographical study, I cannot judge who was correct in the many debates in the interwar era over medieval and modern history; neither do I have the linguistic ability to do so. It would be too easy perhaps to suggest that national bias does not matter as long as one is "right." However, numerous cases have shown that national bias frequently colors one's ability to neutrally assess historical sources and data. Whereas one

[10] Gáldi, *Erdély hivatása délkeleteurópa művelődésében* (Minerva könyvtár 58) (Budapest: Danubia, 1941), 6.

often supposes that two diametrically opposing national interpretations to a single question must mean that one of them has to be correct, in reality often both are flawed.

For example, some of the comparatists and their larger cohort in regard to Romanian history weighed into debates on the history the Second Bulgarian Empire (sources of which provide the first historical mention of the Romanian Vlachs), as well as the connection of Turkic groups (Cumans and Tatars) to the state formation of early medieval Wallachia and Moldavia and Bulgaria. The historian István Vásáry in his 2005 *Cumans and Tatars*[11] (the first monograph on the topic) cites a few of the comparatists (Gáldi and Makkai) and their larger cohort (László Rásonyi, 1899–1984; Mátyás Gyóni, 1913–1955), amongst other more contemporary historians, a majority of whom are international scholars. Vásáry writes that

> the ethnic composition of the Second Bulgarian Empire has been the favourite theme of nationalistic historiography, both Bulgarian and Romanian … On the one hand, most Bulgarian scholars have tried to minimize or sometimes eliminate the Vlakhs' role in the re-establishment of the Bulgarian state. On the other, most Romanian scholars extol the empire as being the first (sometimes the second!) Romanian state in history … Their main error is that they project the modern idea of nation back to the Middle Ages. They attribute major significance of nationality, although it was of secondary or tertiary significance in the outworking of events. (2005, 17–18)

Yet, while Vásáry mentions at several points the nationalist contortions of aspects of Romanian, Bulgarian, and Serbian historiography, he neither spares criticism of his Hungarian forebears:

> It is in connection with the *Blaci* of Transylvania that L. Rásonyi put forward a strange theory. He tried to prove that the *Blaci* of Transylvania had nothing to do with the Vlakhs, but were a Turkic people named *Bulaq*, and that the Vlakhs and Bulaqs were later confused in the sources. Unfortunately, this theory cannot be corroborated by any sound evidence, and every historical argument speaks against it. While I do not regard

[11] Vásáry, *Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185–1365* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

> it as my task to prove here that this idea cannot be sustained, I would simply remark that it was again nationalism that lay behind this theory: Hungarian nationalism has tried to minimise the Romanian presence in history, while Romanian nationalism has tried to expropriate the Hungarian and Bulgarian past. (2005, 29)

What we witness in Vásáry's book in regard to national bias is similar to what historians often did with studies produced in the communist era: skirt past the dogmatism and reach for the underlying substance and data, when these latter are backed up with solid research. A similar type of operation is necessary for much of the corpus of the comparatists, especially if one studies it for its scholarly value over its historiographical significance. Jenő Szűcs (1928–1988) was an important figure of the communist era critique of the interwar era nationalist coloring of historical writing. He, like Vásáry, saw that the main problem with nationalist bias in historians is that it increases the likelihood of "discovering" ethnonational identity among individuals and classes of the distant historical past.[12] No doubt, the work of the comparatists contains many flaws, but they also intended their work as a start, and jumping off point, still an ideal intention in the middle of hostilities during WWII; regardless, by 1948 it was clear that even the ideological reworking and dampening of their more nationalist writings would not save the project itself at the Hungarian institutional level. By 1948 most of them had to return to their earlier pre-comparative phase specializations, which thus closed this chapter of comparative history writing.

Looking at what I characterize as the best practitioners of comparative history in Hungary as a group highlights the conceptual variation and methodologies with which one could approach regional, nation-level, and microregional studies. From the perspective of the group, comparative history appears foremost as a syncretic undertaking, with representatives from every major Hungarian historiographical school; yet this is mimicked to some extent also by individual cases,

[12] Jenő Szűcs, *Nemzet és történelem* (Budapest: Gondolat Könyvkiadó, 1974).

where a single figure might combine the linguistic structuralism of the Prague Circle together with the anti-materialist historical paradigm of *Geistesgeschichte*. This syncretic element rather than weakening the project of comparative history in fact strengthened it since it broadened the number of individuals who could take part in it. The term comparative history was first used by Kosáry in the Hungarian context in the late 1930s and was in publications from 1942. Comparative literatures and linguistics had an earlier start, and were combined with historical studies on the region as an explicit program already in the early 1930s. Yet what was meant by comparative history often was closer to what today we would call transfer history or histoire croisée, and at its conceptually broadest level simply "East European Studies," to use Cold War era terminology. Of course, in the interwar era, the point of reference was still mostly the studies of Marc Bloch and Henri Pirenne. Calling the historians, philologists, and linguists of this study "the comparatists" is my distinction that categorizes them according the fact that they were the most specialized in the field of microregional, country, and regional studies. They did not use this term in regard to themselves, but spoke rather of the practice of "comparative history" or "comparative method." Under the heading East European Studies, Steven Béla Várdy in his 1976 *Modern Hungarian Historiography*[13] traces the formation of chairs in East European History at several Hungarian universities, which were filled by more established historians who wrote about medieval relations between Hungary and Poland, amongst other topics. My thesis aims to show that there is a much larger story here that can show the division of broader "East European Studies" into what was called comparative history in the interwar era and transfer history and histoire croisée today. This in turn can also reflect back on the historiographical debates of the era from a new perspective, fine-tuning to some extent the image of a *Geistesgeschichte*-dominated interwar era

[13] Steven Béla Várdy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1976), 147–160.

historiography. This is why I enter into the debates that Hungarian practitioners of social history and *Volksgeschichte* had with those of *Geistesgeschichte*, and why I also further trace the history of the Romanian Philology department in Budapest and chairs in literature of several Slavic languages that had their origins in the nineteenth century, since philology and linguistics provided the basic toolkit for comparative historical studies in polyglot region. One has to look closely to find the story of comparative history among the historiographical literature on the interwar period, especially because the two above-mentioned much more influential historical schools were overcrowding the field in their debate on the meaning of Hungarian history, a subject which in itself often had the effect of clouding rather than elucidating broader regional questions and narrower nation-to-nation level comparisons. Yet, when in their institutionally backed milieus, these young historians were debating the meaning of historical regions as well as the shared history of the lands between Germany and Russia. In this thesis I follow the historiographical clues to trace the trajectory of comparative history writing in Hungary throughout the period which turned out unfortunately to be its peak for decades to come.

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Chapter One discusses the structural hurdles to overcoming Hungarocentric interpretations of history, as in what fields of science needed to be strengthened in order engage in scholarship that was recognizable to international experts. This chapter also summarizes how the Hungarian historical sciences remembered the lives and work of each of the comparatists and how their biographies relate to the early part of their careers that are the focus of this thesis.

Chapter Two explores the question of the nexus of politics and scholarship in the lives of the comparatists and how they perceived their intellectual independence in the interwar era. Archival sources are used to get a stronger sense of their education and history training, and then

their centers for teaching and publication, to uncover more contextual details than what the analyzed biographies in Chapter One present.

Chapter Three is a study of how the comparatists' different Hungarian historiographical orientations influenced the way they approached comparative history studies. The second highlighted element in this chapter is how German studies of the East-Central and South-East European region influenced the way that the comparatists framed their historical questions on the region. Hungarians were advancing their own theses contra not only the historians of the successor states, but simultaneously those of Germany.

Chapter Four presents an analysis of the programmatic texts on comparison written before 1945 and how the comparatists' oeuvres fall into different categories of comparative and comparative-type methods. Furthermore, their opinions on what level of social, cultural, or intellectual life comparison should focus on are used to better classify their differences. This chapter lays out more clearly the syncretic nature of comparative research as practiced in Hungary until 1948.

As a final practical note to the reader, in this thesis I use a form of citation which is a hybrid of the classic footnote system as well as the author:date in-text citation. The first instance of every citation can be found in the footnote in full form for easy reader access, not requiring that the reader turn to a reference list at the end of the thesis for the full title, etc. However, because to make every citation into a footnote with numerous abbreviations and ibidems would likely double the space taken up by the footnotes, I decided to develop this hybrid form where citation repetitions are simply placed in parentheses at the end of the sentence following an author:date:page format. My goal is both ease of access and saving of space.

Chapter One

Biographies of the Comparatists up to 1948

In this chapter I am going to introduce the biographies of a group of Hungarian historians, philologists, and linguists (collectively whom I call the "comparatists") whose research focus was on the countries surrounding Hungary and the broader East-Central and South-East European regions between the two World Wars and until 1948. I will relate the biographies to several broader contextual issues, here primarily Hungarian interwar institutions in their relation to the development of comparative studies. Among these one can list universities, colleges, foreign scholarship/study abroad programs, historical institutes, and publishing ventures. I will complement this picture with data gleaned from archives, information which sheds more light on how the institutional picture related personally to each of the comparatists who are the focus of this thesis. Aspects more directly connected to Hungarian and international scholarly networks inside the university system, Hungarian interwar era university education in history and linguistics, and the comparatists' teaching careers will be analyzed in the following chapter on institutions. With this chapter, the intention is to lay the groundwork for the analysis of the scholarly output of the comparatists before 1948.

But first, it will be necessary to problematize the issue of how Hungarocentrism related to the comparatists who focused on broader regional historical studies, such as East European Studies, South-East European Studies. The main question to consider is if interwar era Hungarian East European studies were doomed to parochialism. And, if historical works of lasting scholarly value were produced in this era, how does one account for them in light of the belligerent regional atmosphere, a time when historians were tasked with proving, in the words of Elemér Mályusz (1920), a leading interwar era Hungarian historian and founder of the *népiségtörténet*/ethnohistory

school, that "historical truth is on our side, and its future must be built up in this consciousness."[1] Of course, this attitude was not restricted to Hungary. It was a result of competing nationalisms, competing for the location and right to a nation-state. How then does one overcome this type of impasse between historians of different nations where everyone writes for their own audience and ignores the work of other historians, which may in fact be relevant to their own field? The brilliantly obvious answer is that what we all have in common, besides a certain geographic location between empires, is precisely this nationalism. This is the insight which Domokos Kosáry received when studying in Paris in 1936–37, influenced by the *Annales* school of Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch. Upon returning to Hungary in 1941 from his studies abroad, Kosáry pulled together a group of like-minded historians, philologists, and linguists, and by 1943 commenced a French-language journal, *Revue d'histoire comparée*, which, "Instead of interpreting history from a traditional, nationalist point of view, it tried to analyse the development of nationalism from a historical point of view, outlining the nations' social and political conditions, their rivalries and the parallel and, in many instances, the similar character of their conflicts" (Kosáry 1988, 124). This type of endeavor of course has the potential of creating dialogue between historians, but the most crucial insight is that without comparison, errors are introduced into the work of a historian: "Both [Henri Pirenne and Marc Bloch] pointed out that European development, with its variants, cannot be properly understood from a merely 'ethnocentric' point of view, limited to the political framework of such and such a national state" (1988, 128–129).[2] Of course, Hungarian historians

[1] Elemér Mályusz, Review of Béla Iványi's *Pro Hungaria Superiore. Felsőmagyarországért*, *Századok* 53–54 (1919–1920): 174.

[2] This sentence can be better understood in the context of Marc Bloch's lifelong interaction with German historical scholarship, and his critique of ever more extreme forms of nationalism in scholarship. See Peter Schöttler, "Mark Bloch as a Critic of Historiographical Nationalism in the Interwar Years," in *Writing National Histories: Western Europe since 1800*, ed. Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passmore (London: Routledge, 1999), 125–136; Marc Bloch, "Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européenes," *Revue de synthèse historique* 46 (1928): 15–50. The connection of Hungarian historiography to the German is too large of a question to enter into here, suffice it to

in their own nationalist way were critiquing the nationalist histories of the surrounding countries by this time for more than 25 years, but this was not the critique that was needed for comparative history, rather self-critique, which, I argue was best observed in a generation of young comparatists who were trained under the reality of a small Hungary vs. the older generation who could only conceive of a Hungary as the large nation that it used to be. The *Revue d'histoire comparée* was the highlight of a period which made stumbling, but more and more successful, efforts toward comparative and regional studies.[3] The 1943 program of this journal might seem like a politically motivated attempt by historians to jump from the sinking Nazi ship, but the desire to reorient scholarship on the part of some historians, particularly Gyula Szekfű, towards France and Great Britain began in the 1930s and was stated outright even during the height of the "success" of Hungarian revisionism, in 1941 with the return of sections from Slovakia and Romania, when most people still believed that Germany would win the war (Kosáry 1988, 126). The further best evidence that the journal went beyond mere propagandistic purposes was that the research was not geared towards the general reading public, as with the myriad Hungarian English- and French-language publications on ethnic relations in historical Hungary, but to a scholarly audience which it hoped to form through such an endeavor.

The biographies of the seven comparatists of this study will be tied in with the institutional context for a simple reason: one of the basic requirements of the practice of comparative history is to become historians of the other nations in their own right; you need specialists, or as much as institutional funding and direction allows for. In Hungary, there were some practical problems

say that a critique of the "ethnocentric" German historiography and its Hungarian practitioners began in the 1930s and started to take on an explicit political meaning. See Chapter Three.

[3] Domokos Kosáry, "The Idea of a Comparative History of East Central Europe: The Story of a Venture," in *Historians as Nation-Builders: Central and South-East Europe*, ed. Dennis Deletant and Harry Hanak (London: Macmillan Press, 1988), 124–138.

with this endeavor, which are made obvious by the example of Slovakia: just because borders changed after WWI does not mean that a Hungarian goes from being a historian of the Slovakian question in the nineteenth century to becoming a historian of Slovakia, though these two can overlap at points. The Hungarian-American historian, Steven Béla Várdy, author of the invaluable *Modern Hungarian Historiography* (1976), writes that the limitation of post-Trianon revisionist aims ensured that most historians would remain focused on issues that related to historic Hungary, and less on issues tied to other countries or the region as a unit of comparison (158).[4] Ferenc Glatz, a researcher of interwar era historiography since the late 1970s, seconds this opinion: "The research of nationalities gained greater ground, that is, one aspect of it—Hungariandom and nationality. This 'one aspect' has to be emphasized because this research did not focus on the history of the [former] Hungarian nationalities—Romanians, Slovaks, and Serbs—but on the nationalities question. Hungarian historical literature after 1920 … was not capable of research, *an sich*, into the history of the nationalities" (1980, 22, 24). However, my thesis argues that the comparatists buck this overall trend, which Glatz correctly points to. They were in fact the first group of historians in Hungary to research regional questions that went beyond direct ties to

[4] This was coupled with a broad rethinking of historical and political questions and a neoconservative backlash against liberalism, left-wing politics, and revolution following the governments of Mihály Károlyi and Béla Kun. This was best voiced in the historian Gyula Szekfű's *Három nemzedék* (Three generations, 1920), a work which blamed the misfortunes of Trianon on dualist era liberalism and nationalism, that is, a surface-level liberalism. This liberalism also had a counterpart in positivist historiography, according to Szekfű; he was, however, also critical of the dualist era's national romantic history as a production of the "gentry nationalist" way of thinking (Kosáry 1988, 127). But this negative view, in fact, does not do justice to the entire picture of pre-WWI historiography, which also could incorporate highly developed, modern methods. Ferenc Glatz makes in interesting point about how the critique of pre-WWI historiography did not necessarily lead to an improvement: "This strengthening [after 1920 of national problematics] was not just noticeable in the mentioned program of historical sciences … but in a type of deformity of the whole of historical literature: now sidelined … are aspects which at the beginning of the century were practiced at a European level … such as philology, economic and social history … [After 1920] when in Western Europe sociology in combination with modern social history is already trying its wings, in Hungary the topics of historical literature are national themes, which are primarily determined by political history" (1980, 21–22). See Gyula Szekfű, *Három nemzedék. Egy hanyatló kor története* (Budapest: Élet, 1920); Ferenc Glatz, *Történetíró és politika. Szekfű, Steier, Thim és Miskolczy nemzetről és államról* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980).

Hungary. They were part of a minority of historians who focused on other countries or the region as a unit of comparison, whom Várdy covers only briefly. My goal is to provide the full story behind the rise of their careers.

On the whole, though, the interwar era is seen as a time of intensification of historical studies due to the increased state funding of scholarly activity for partly political purposes, but with the consequences of increased professionalization of historical studies in many fields (see T. Kiss 1998). On the governmental side, the budget of the Ministry of Religion and Education, led by Kuno Klebelsberg from 1922–1931, increased from a level of average 3–6% of GDP in 1900 in large Hungary, to 9–10% in 1925 in small Hungary (Kosáry 1996, 35; Ujváry 2010, 18).[5] There were many new education projects including the reorganization and modernization of educational facilities, with a bulk of the funding going to the building of rural schools for the decrease of illiteracy, and the moving of university faculty from Pozsony (Bratislava) and Kolozsvár (Cluj) to new university towns in Hungary. Yet, more relevant for our purposes, there were scholarships for students at Hungarian institutes in Berlin, Vienna, and Rome, at the Paris Sorbonne, and less commonly London or the USA—1,500 students received foreign scholarships between 1924 and 1934—and there was state funding for monographs, journals, and archival source publications (Kosáry 1996, 353). Let us take a brief look at some aspects of the institutional life of regional historical studies and specializations, and the auxiliary sciences, such as Romanian and Slavic linguistics and philology, which aided in the endeavor of comparative history in the interwar

[5] Ferenc Glatz, *Tudomány, kultúra, politika. Gróf Klebelsberg Kunó válogatott beszédei és írásai (1917–1932)* (Budapest: Európa Könyvkiadó, 1990); Tamás T. Kiss, *Állami művelődéspolitika az 1920-s években. Gróf Klebelsberg Kunó kultúrát szervező munkasága* (Budapest: Mikszáth Kiadó, 1998); Gábor Ujváry, *Klebelsberg Kuno és a bécsi Magyar Történeti Intézet megalapítása* (Győr: Győri Levéltára, 1996); Domokos Kosáry, "Magyarország kultúrpolitikája az első világháború után," in *Hat év a tudománypolitika szolgálatában* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1996), 350–358; Andor Ladányi, *Klebelsberg felsőoktatási politikája* (Budapest: Argumentum Kiadó, 2000).

period.

Departments of East European Studies were founded in Budapest in 1929, headed by Imre Lukinich, in Debrecen in 1939 with Adorján Divéky (a Polish history specialist), and also in Kolozsvár (Cluj) in 1940 with Vencel Biró (Várdy 1976, 148–151; Niederhauser 2000, 228).[6] Várdy assessed the achievements of two of the heads (all three born between 1880 and 1885) as the following: "When we examine the topics of Lukinich's dozens of publications, we find that he was first of all a specialist of Transylvanian-Hungarian history, and only secondarily was he an East Europeanist in the conventional sense of that term. In fact, outside of Polish-Hungarian-Transylvanian connections, there was nothing beyond Hungary's history … that caught his attention. In this sense he was … hardly different from one of the other East Europeanists, V[encel] Biró." Regardless of whether the potentialities of the departments were hindered by a certain mindset (Emil Niederhauser claims that Lukinich, though teaching Russian history, had no sympathy for the subject), or if department chairs were awarded based on seniority rather than the best occupant for the job (Lukinich did not speak any Slavic languages), the comparatists were not entirely dependent on the conditions in these departments, as will be shown below (Kniezsa 1958, 82; Niederhauser 2000, 227). Lukinich, to be fair, was an instrumental mentor to several of the comparatists and was the main figure behind the first foreign-language historical journal, *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis* (1935–1944), which featured many of their publications. However, if the departments in East European Studies were not necessarily the cradle of broader regional comparative history in Hungary, where should one look? The ability to employ the comparative method in a polyglot region depends almost entirely on language skills and an understanding of

[6] Steven Béla Várdy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1976); Emil Niederhauser, "Utószó," in *A magyarság és a szlávok*, ed. Gyula Szekfű (Budapest: Lucidus Kiadó, 2000 [1942]), 225–236.

local historiographies across the region. And, in fact, the comparatists included a large segment who transitioned to historical studies from their training in literary studies, philology, and linguistics.

The Romanian Philology Department in Budapest was founded in 1862 as the lesser outcome of the unfulfilled Romanian university that was demanded by the Romanians of Transylvania and Hungary. It was, however, only after WWI that the tenure of the new department head, Carlo Tagliavini (1928–1935), ushered in a new phase in the life of the department, "emerg[ing] from their obscurantism" (Várdy 1976, 157). Two students of Tagliavini, Lajos Tamás and László Gáldi (both subjects of this study), took over the department afterward and remained there until the 1970s. It was under their tenure in the late 1930s and 1940s that corresponded with what Levente Nagy and Florin Cioban (both currently affiliated with the department) call "the golden age of the department": "They were widely appreciated not only in Hungary but also throughout Europe. Without them there would be no Romance studies in Hungary today" (2012, 306).

A total of three chairs in Slavic languages were created in Hungary before 1945: for Slavistics in general in 1849, for Croatian in 1894, and Ruthenian/Ukrainian in 1919 (Kniezsa 1958, 69–72).[7] Although Slavic and Romanian Studies often implies a linguistic, philological, or literary science, in a small country like Hungary many of the Slavic and Romanian Studies specialists were often historians as well. Slavic studies in Hungary tended to focus on questions of relevance to Hungarian history, particularly the etymology of Hungarian words, but after WWI, it was recognized that the field needed to be broadened. István Kniezsa (1898–1965), one of the foremost Slavicists of the interwar period, and head of the department from 1941, wrote in 1958:

[7] István Kniezsa, "A magyar szlavistika problémái és feladatai," *MTA Nyelv- és Irodalomtörténeti Osztályának Közleményei* 12, nos. 1–4 (1958): 69–90.

> The lesson of Trianon, at least on the part of the youth, showed that Hungarians cannot live insulated from the sea of Slavic peoples. The [ethnic] Hungarian youth from Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia particularly felt the need to get to know the literature of the neighboring peoples, and acted as interpreters on the part of Hungarians [in Hungary], but the Hungarian youth had this sort of will as well … In the interwar period a generation developed which took it as its task to study the literary issues of the neighboring Slavic peoples. (1958, 80–81)

Nonetheless, Kniezsa was quite clear about the hurdles to major philological research in the interwar era institutions, including historical or ethnographical research, which requires knowledge of at least four Slavic languages, besides Western languages. In fact, he lists at least five different points regarding the major problems surrounding Slavistics in Hungary up to 1945.[8] In conclusion, Kniezsa writes that Hungarian Slavistics had no alternative than to be Hungarocentric, meaning that it could only focus on Slavic issues that had relevance for the Hungarian history and language, since it did not have the resources to explore issues of relevance to Slavistics as a whole (1958, 79–80).

Thus Kniezsa claims that in the interwar era when great work was accomplished by individuals, then it was to their credit and not the institution's credit. Overall, Kniezsa's assessment of the Slavistics department before and after 1945 should be accepted as true, while keeping in mind that in 1958 full progress in the sciences in comparison to the "bourgeois" era before was still a sensitive subject.[9] And indeed, Slavistics in Hungary was further professionalized in the sense that funding was increased due to the prestige of the subject, many students had the

[8] Kniezsa's list: 1) Language training problems could not be solved due to professors also having to be lectors. 2) Virtually no practicums were held by the leading interwar era professor János Melich. 3) There was a lack of good library resources for materials outside of Hungary-related Slavic questions. 4) There were only four Privatdozents for the Budapest Dept. of Slavic Languages in 100 years. 5) There was no ability to create positions for younger generations of scholars.

[9] Perhaps 1948/50 is a more realistic dividing line than 1945 in this case, considering that universities directly after the war declined to the level of *Fachschulen*, in Kniezsa's words (1958, 83).

opportunity to study in the Soviet Union, and a full and separate Russian Studies Department was created, with the result that researchers could engage in topics that had no relation with Hungary (85–86). László Hadrovics, a subject of this study, also agreed with this assessment, but with the caveat that South Slav/Balkan studies were severely hindered during the first two decades of communism due to the rift with Tito, essentially forcing those inquisitive of the region to find another field (1970, 171). And he is more judicious with his assessment of the pre-1945 picture, stating that even if many aspects of Slavic studies in Hungary were in their infancy, and specialists had to split their time between philology and linguistics, there was already a major shift in the way that those of his generation approached the topics of Hungary's neighbors (170).[10] One might also add that the picture of the Romanian philology department was different in the sense that it supported the study of all Romance languages, much more prestigious in the interwar era than Slavic languages, and the expertise of the department was needed in the most critical of Hungarian disputes with neighboring countries, over Transylvania. Thus to leave aside the institutional picture of the interwar era would inevitably produce a study in a vacuum, and one should not start with the premise that everything by comparison was underdeveloped then either. The following chapter will explore in greater detail the institutional background to the interwar generation of young scholars who were on the vanguard of East European studies, philology, modern linguistics, and comparative history. Chapters Two and Three will also show how mentor-mentee and personal relationships influenced the drive to comparative history, and perhaps more than any institutional factor.

[10] This 1958 assessment of Kniezsa's ("A magyar szlavistika problémái és feladatai," *MTA Nyelv- és Irodalomtörténeti Osztályának Közleményei* 12, nos. 1–4: 69–90) is juxtaposed here with an article of László Hadrovics's from 1970 ("Délszláv filológiánk a felszabadulás óta," *Filológiai Közlöny* 16, nos. 3–4: 270–274). In the case of Hadrovics, we should also add history to the list of items that he divided his time over, which in his case had to be drastically curtailed after 1948.

Who then were the scholars that accomplished this "great work" that Kniezsa speaks of and what were their fields and specializations outside of the Hungarian sphere? My thesis presents the following list:

László Makkai (Romanian history; Balkan-Hungarian relations; East European social history; ecclesiastical history)

Lajos Gogolák (Czech, Slovak, and Polish history, literature, and languages; the history of Slavic nationalisms; and South-East European history)

Zoltán I. Tóth (National and peasant movements in Romania and Transylvania; 1848 revolutions in Romania and Hungary)

László Hadrovics (South-East European medieval and modern history, Slavic philology and linguistics; Indo-European languages and literature; Russian lexicography; Latin studies)

László Gáldi (Romanian literature, linguistics, and history; Slavic philology; Romance studies; Russian lexicography; Albanian studies)

Lajos Tamás (Comparative Romanian and Hungarian linguistics; early South-East European history; Romanian medieval and ancient history; Albanian studies)

Domokos Kosáry (1848 revolutions, modern era Central European political and diplomatic history; perceptions of Hungary abroad; comparative methodology; eighteenth-century social history).

What we see in this list is a rather varied group of specialists, each with several main interests, and roughly half coming to comparative questions via their studies in history, and the other half starting out in comparative literature and linguistics and moving into comparative history. This latter aspect should come as no surprise, or as Levente Nagy, a Romanian studies specialist, writes, "If the

tensions among the peoples of the Carpathian Basin began out of reasons of language politics, then so it was the linguists and the literature specialists who were the first to emphasize similarities instead of differences" (2011, 9).[11]

This list is not meant as a hagiography. I will approach all of the comparatists critically, many of their ideas and prejudices seem outdated to us today, and the requirements of comparative history have also changed since they were set out by Marc Bloch in 1928. In fact, I use the term "comparative" across a wide spectrum of methods, including what we today might call transfer history and histoire croisée. But their evolution as comparatists is relevant to the task of scholars today who perceive the need to accomplish regional and comparative history, and to break out of the paradigm of national history. In this task sometimes they were successful, at times they fell into very Hungarocentric traps, and before 1945 they often defended Hungarian revisionism.

Generations and Categories

Who were these comparatists, and how have they been categorized? All the comparatists of this study were born in the last days of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and so roughly belong to the same cohort, making them approximately 30–35 years of age at the end of WWII. Miklós Lackó (1984) divides up the interwar era historians into three different cohorts, in a play on the title of Gyula Szekfű's seminal *Három nemzedék* (Three generations, 1920).[12] The youngest generation, the comparatists, is the "third" and final interwar generation, differentiated from the

[11] Levente Nagy, "Őslakók, vándorok, túlélők. A kárpát-medenci nyelvek és népek (rövid) története," *Délkelet Európa – South-East Europe* 2, no. 6 (Summer 2011): 1–10.

[12] Miklós Lackó, "Szekfű Gyula és kortársai," in *A két világháború közötti Magyarországról. Vélemények, viták*, ed. Miklós Lackó (Budapest: Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1984), 375–402.

leading interwar historians who were trained before WWI but rose to the top afterwards, that is, the "second" generation such as Gyula Szekfű (1883–1955), Sándor Domanovszky (1877–1955), and Bálint Hóman (1885–1951), as well as the "first" generation who were already distinguished historians before WWI and retired in the interwar era. This second generation of leading interwar era historians were the mentors of the third and final interwar generation, the cohort of the comparatists.

Essentially, the invitation to look at the comparatists generationally was stated by Kosáry in 1988 in the context of a two-decade old impetus to better understand the role of the leading interwar era historians (Szekfű, Domanovszky, Hóman, István Hajnal, Elemér Mályusz, Imre Lukinich), which inevitably qualified their "negative" image and thus those associated with them. Steven Várdy (1976) and Ferenc Glatz (1980) in their historiographical works focus mostly on the central older generations of scholars of the interwar era, and only hint at the achievements of this young generation of comparatists, and Várdy claims that their story belongs to later Marxist historiography (Várdy 1976, 159). Yet, an understanding of interwar era historiography is not complete without this group of comparatists. As a group their research topics provide a new prism with which to approach interwar era historiographical debates. And it is even more difficult to assess their later careers and influences as well as regional and East European studies as a whole after 1945 unless we place them into the context of the time when they were trained in historical methods, became acquainted with international and regional scholarship, and their promising careers were not only developing but achieving fruition. It will become clear that they far surpassed their mentors in expertise in questions of regional and non-Hungarian significance, and this indeed was the intention behind their training. They were the first to really come to the core of the issue that the old Hungarian nationalities question could not be explained in a vacuum, or solely through

political history. They were needed to truly elucidate the underlying causes of regional nationalism. They were experts of the nationalities question, but just as important, they were the experts of the surrounding nations and regions, even branching on the periphery of interwar Hungary, such as Poland, Greece, Albania, and Bulgaria. Based purely on an assessment of the interwar and WWII political atmosphere, one might assume that an attempt at comparative history would be destined to failure. But this endeavor makes sense when one considers how it was almost entirely the young generation of historians, philologists, and linguists who were the vanguard of the *Revue d'histoire comparée* and host of publications on the history of surrounding countries, regional studies, comparative works, and shared/entangled history.

But before I go any further, it is important to state clearly my criterion for choosing "only" seven figures to include in my categorization of "comparatists." This study focuses on the subsection of the interwar era cohort of comparatists and broader regionalists who had a sizeable oeuvre, including monographs, both before and after 1945, which allows for a historiographical analysis of works produced among different expectations. But if one were to slightly vary the variables by looking at historians who studied questions outside the significance of Hungary's interwar era borders that required knowledge of neighboring countries' languages, or became comparatists right at the end of WWII or in the late 1940s, then this group would expand quite rapidly: István Sinkovics, Jenő Berlász, István Szabó, Erik Fügedi, Imre Wellmann, József Deér, Zsigmond Jakó, Gábor G. Kemény, István Juhász, István Borsody, Emil Niederhauser, and Lajos Elekes. And if one were to include comparative literature with its historical vantage, again this group would expand with István Gál, Sámuel Domokos, and László Sziklay. There was in fact a significant overlapping of research subjects among all of these individuals and the "comparatists" as evident from an analysis of their published works and correspondence in archival documents,

but this study would be unmanageable with such a large group. Some of the above scholars, however, will be mentioned again in relation to the main group of comparatists in the chapters on historiography, Chapters Three and Four. Yet, at its core, my thesis focuses on the naissance of comparative historical studies, and as such I have decided that it is these "seven" comparatists who are necessary to present a sufficiently broad picture.

Biographies and Differences in the Commemorative Literature

In this next section, I want to provide the briefest feasible biographical sketch of each of the comparatists and their different fields, citing archival documents where suitable, while emphasizing discontinuities in their scholarly research before and after 1945/48. I will do this by reviewing commemorative and biographical pieces published in the Hungarian journals—articles, festschrift, and obituaries usually written by their former associates, the latter commonly referred to in Hungarian as "necrologies." The commemorative literature shows interesting variation simply depending on whether the individual died during the period of communism or afterward. In the pre-1990 literature, the life of each comparatist is usually divided into "bourgeois" vs. "progressive" phases, and there tends to be fewer details on their life and oeuvres prior to 1945/48. Reasons behind these lacunae in biographical details up to 1945 might be as simple as the obituary writers wanting to recognize the professional at the height of his career and intellectual power, which incidentally should have coincided with his intellectual maturity in the communist era. However, the fact that almost all of these comparatists had a schizophrenic career path after 1945, essentially being at least two types of historian, philologist, or linguist in one lifetime (and not allowed to cover politically sensitive subjects of comparative history any longer), perhaps made it

easier to simply gloss over the causes of this dichotomy with silence. In this literature before 1990, one reads details of critique and self-critique, such as the historians' fumbling path to true Marxist theory or an outright critique of their interwar era ideological "excesses." On the other end of this spectrum, those who died after the period of communism lived to see a period that coincided with a deep reappraisal of both the interwar and communist eras in the Hungarian historical sciences, and their biographies show signs of being free from the pressures of a progressive self-critical narrative. After this transition one can find a greater emphasis on their early careers before 1945, along with some of the repressions that they experienced after 1945. And in the most recently published discussions on these comparatists, we can sometimes read about their communist era "excesses," too. It will be interesting to compare these two ends of the spectrum with the historian who died young in the 1950s, Zoltán I. Tóth, but remained throughout the decades one of the most lionized figures of this group. A final variation here is how the Hungarian historical sciences have remembered the life of Lajos Gogolák, a historian who emigrated in the 1950s and finished his career in academia abroad.

László Hadrovics (b. Alsólendva, June 27, 1910 / d. Solymár, May 12–13, 1997) both began and finished his career as a philologist and Slavicist, with particular emphasis on Croatian studies.[13] For some time in-between, another main calling of his was South-East European history. Called by his students and colleagues "one of the last representatives of the classic-type professor" (Nyomárkay 1997, 1118), this meant that he was educated in an era when scholars covered a far vaster swath of subjects than seems humanly possible today with our hyper-specialization. The origin of Hadrovics's linguistics career really begins with eight years of Latin classes in secondary school. His high school Latin teacher urged him to apply to the prestigious Eötvös College in Budapest, where he was accepted based only on the excellence of his Latin examinations (L. Kiss 1999a, 398). After enrolling at the College in 1929, Hadrovics originally signed up for a Hungarian and Latin specialization, and German as the third. One day he picked up a German-Croatian grammar from the shelves of the College library, recalling visiting relatives in Croatia a few times as a child and learning a few phrases from kids. He learned the language so quickly that the next

[13] Commemorative and biographical literature: István Nyomárkay, "Hadrovics László," *Magyar Tudomány* 42, no. 9 (Sept. 1997): 1118–1120, here 1118; Loránd Benkő, Stanislav Marjanović, Béla G. Németh, and István Nyomárkay, "Búcsú Hadrovics Lászlótól," *Magyar Nyelv* 93, no. 3 (Sept. 1997): 257–265; Lajos Kiss, "Hadrovics László (1910–1997) és az Eötvös Collegium," *Magyar Nyelv* 95, no. 4 (Dec. 1999b): 397–403; István Nyomárkay, "Hadrovics László emléktáblájának leleplezése," *Magyar Nyelv* 98, no. 1 (2002): 103–106; Jenő Kiss, "Hadrovics Lászlóra emlékezve," *Magyar Nyelv* 107, no. 1 (2011): 120–123; Lajos Kiss, "Hadrovics László közelről," in *Hadrovics László*, ed. Kálmán Bolla (Budapest: ELTE Fonetikai Tanszéke, 1997), 21–27 (volume includes the transcript of a video interview from 1977 and his opera omnia); Lajos Kiss, *Hadrovics László* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1999a); Peter I. Barta, "Literary Studies in *Studia Slavica* under the Editorship of László Hadrovics (1966–85)," *The Slavic and East European Journal* 33, no. 2 (Summer 1989): 293–299; András Zoltán, "Hadrovics László, az etimilógus," *Magyar Nyelv* 107, no. 3 (2011): 340–344; István Szeli, "Bucsu Hadrovics Lászlótól," *Hid* 6, no. 9 (1997) 473–478; István Nyomárkay, "László Hadrovics, 27. Juni 1910–12. Mai 1997," *Studia Slavica* 42, nos. 1–2 (1997): 219–222; László Hadrovics, "Utószó," in *Vallás, egyház, nemzettudat* (Budapest: ELTE Szláv Filológiai Tanszéke, 1991), 98–99; Ágnes Osztovits, "Kötelességtudás és szerencse," interview with László Hadrovics, *Magyar Nemzet* 56, no. 113 (1993): 10.

time he visited his relatives they were surprised to hear him speaking Croatian, and by the end of the vacation he hardly had an accent (398, 401). He dropped German as his third subject, and signed up for classes with János Melich at the Slavistics Department and with József Bajza at the Croatian Literature Department. In his spare time he studied Russian (L. Kiss 1999a, 402).

He wrote his dissertation on *Muraköz helynevei* (The toponyms of the Mura River region, 1934).[14] In it we see the influence of one of the most popular topics of Slavic philological research in Hungary, led by the two interwar era heads of the Slavistics department (Melich and Kniezsa), on the toponyms of the Carpathian Basin (here uncovering the languages through which toponyms were transmitted into Hungarian and in some cases excluding other languages from a mediary position, such as Romanian). A second major recurring topic was the etymology of Slavic loanwords in Hungarian (J. Kiss, 2011, 121). Hadrovics used his expertise in Croatian to turn this latter subject on its head, investigating Hungarian loanwords in Croatian in his works "A horvátban lévő magyar elemek szóföldrajzi és időrendi problémái" (The geographical and chronological issues of Hungarian elements in Croatian, 1942) and *Ungarische Elemente im Serbokroatischen* (1985).[15]

Hadrovics returned to the Eötvös College to teach for many years, but finally received a university teaching position first in 1942. Starting in that year, Hadrovics taught Slavic linguistics classes three times a week in Szeged for several semesters. The Szeged university intended a full Slavic linguistics department from 1944 with Hadrovics as its head, which made sense in light of Szeged being closest university town to the reacquired Vojvodina; but by then the war was in its final stages and the full department never came to fruition. In a letter about his new professorship

[14] László Hadrovics, *Muraköz helynevei* (Budapest: Hornyanszky, 1934).
[15] Hadrovics, "A horvátban levő magyar elemek szóföldrajzi és időrendi problémái," in *Emlékkönyv Melich János hetvenedik születésenapjára* (Budapest: Magyar Nyelvtudományi Társaság, 1942a), 104–116; *Ungarische Elemente im Serbokroatischen* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1985).

he writes to his old professor János Melich: "Dear Professor … When I assumed this entrusted post, I felt like I reached a turning point in my career. If over these dire years I turned to you many times with my complaints, I will not waste the opportunity to inform you of this joyous news, to whom I have to thank for so much good [in my life]."[16] In 1942, Hadrovics also began his research for the Teleki Pál Tudományos Intézet (Teleki Pál Scientific Institute, hereafter just Teleki Institute), and within it the section called the Történettudományi Intézet (Historical Sciences Institute), an institution which gathered together some of the most talented young scholars of the era. To get a sense of the immense workload and division of labor for the comparatists, a letter from Hadrovics to István Hajnal both reveals a few details on the subject and describes the environment at the Teleki Institute:

> Honorable Professor,
> I gratefully thank you for the offprint [version of your work], 'Kis nemzetek történetírása' ["On the small nations' history writing community," originally published in two parts in *Századok*, nos. 1–3 and 5–6, 1942)]. As regards our own [possible] collaboration, I have been keeping up to date and reviewing the historical literature on Serbia and Croatia now for years, sadly almost all by myself. At the same time, I have to be a linguist and a literary historian, which together mean the tackling of enormous work. Since I have been at the Teleki Institute, I have been able to pursue historical work more intensively, because I no longer have to bother with administrative duties. In the future, I will happily undertake a South Slav-oriented collaboration. (MTAKK Ms 5835/194 Hadrovics to Hajnal/ Budapest n.d. [1942])

The dichotomies in Hadrovics's career can be seen more in the topics that he could investigate before and after 1948. István Nyomárkay writes, "[a] more significant part of L. H.'s life fell in an era when, as in his words, dealing with South Slav topics was a life threating thing, 'the hopelessness in these bleak times when the already not so large number of curious youth rather

[16] OSZKK/ Levelestár/ Hadrovics to Melich/ Budapest Sept. 1, 1942.

sought fulfillment in other arenas, including myself as well, rather working a decade in lexicology'" (1997, 1120). In essence, history was completely dropped with his career as a philologist-historian coming to rest squarely on the side of philology, which came at the cost of studies dealing with, for example, comparative studies in medieval history and on the rise of national consciousness among South Slavs. His most important work in this latter field is *Le people serbe et son Église sous la domination turque* (1947, shorter version 1943).[17] This work claims that the late medieval Serbian Orthodox identity under the Ottomans was vastly different in its nature when compared to Catholic nations. He claimed that the Orthodox identity was similar in ways to later national consciousness because it was partially based on ethnicity and fanned out to the lowest levels of society, whereas European Catholicism emphasized the international aspect of faith, thus the Catholic Church could not yet attach itself to ethnic/language differences.

After WWII, he continued to make a career for himself at a time when funding for Slavic Studies in Hungary increased dramatically starting from the late 1940s, when it can be stated without equivocation that the Soviet sphere was beneficial to its position as science. On the other hand, this was certainly not the case with Balkan Studies for the first two decades, since the split between Tito and Stalin was mirrored in the sciences as well (see Kniezsa 1958, 69–124; Hadrovics 1970, 271). Whereas before 1945, Slavistics in Hungary centered mostly on questions that had a significance to Magyar either linguistically or historically, afterward Magyar could be entirely dropped from the equation. András Zoltán calls Hadrovics's etymological oeuvre Hungarocentric, in the sense that in whatever he researched, he always had an eye out for Hungarian elements in Slavic languages, and Slavic elements in Hungarian (2011, 341, 344). Though these may have been personal preferences, he certainly had the ability (2011, 341) and did in fact cover subjects

[17] Hadrovics, "L'église nationale serbe aux XVI[e] et XVII[e] siècles," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 1, nos. 1–2 (1943): 117–166; *Le peuple serbe et son église sous la domination turque* (Paris: Presses Univ. de France, 1947a).

outside of the sphere of bi-directional connections with Hungary. For example, Hadrovics's own recognition on the international Slavistics scene coincides with his editorship of the journal *Studia Slavica* from 1966–1985, "years which mark a major thaw in ideological rigidity in Hungary" (Barta 1989, 294). His most publicized accomplishment was the deciphering of the oldest extant Croatian fragment, the fourteenth-century poem *Cantilena pro Sabatho*, discovered by András Vízkelety in a Latin manuscript at the Széchenyi National Library (1984).[18] Hadrovics was the head of the ELTE Slavic Philology Department from 1965 until his retirement in 1974, and from 1951 to 1965 moved up the rank from docent to full professor. Details, however, of his repressions under the early years of communism have been revealed by this recent literature. Hadrovics was denied access to Western contacts and shut out from foreign travel personally for three decades (his first trip abroad in the communist era was in 1977), he was denied full membership into the Academy of Sciences until 1970, and, as mentioned before, comparative history research was sidelined completely (Nyomárkay 1997, 1120, L. Kiss 1997, 26).

His most important comparative works include, "Magyar–szláv irodalmi érintkezések" (Hungarian-Slavic literary contacts, 1942) and *Magyar és déli szláv szellemi kapcsolatok* (Hungarian and Slavic intellectual connections, 1944).[19] His approach to comparative questions were novel in their time, moving beyond the once prevalent subjects of Croatian constitutionalism and Serbian irredentism, and engaging in topics of social and cultural history. Hadrovics's name today is synonymous with the Russian-Hungarian dictionary published continuously since 1951, which he compiled with László Gáldi.

[18] László Hadrovics and András Vízkelety, "Ein altkroatisches Passionslied aus dem 14. Jahrhundert," *Studia Slavica* 30 (1984): 3–37.

[19] Hadrovics, "Magyar-szláv irodalmi érintkezések," in *A magyarság és a szlávok*, ed. Gyula Szekfű (Budapest: Franklin, 1942d), 189–204; *Magyar és déli szláv szellemi kapcsolatok*. Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1944).

László Gáldi [Göbl] (b. Miskolc, May 23, 1910 / d. Budapest, Feb. 4, 1974), though a linguist of Romance languages, co-authored the above Russian-Hungarian dictionary with László Hadrovics in 1951.[20] How did the specialist of Romance languages and Romanian poetry in the interwar era, someone who already mastered so many languages, arrive at this Russian lexical achievement a few years later? When reviewing the commemorative literature on Gáldi, all contributors present an image of one of the most erudite and talented members of the interwar intellectual elite. His list of publications is simply astounding: 50 monographs and 200 shorter articles (Bakos 1975, 204). Of all the effort spent to develop young Hungarian talents in the interwar era, Gáldi represents the maximum of investment. At the intellectual elite-forming Eötvös College from 1928–1932, he studied Romanian and French linguistics under Carlo Tagliavini, a comparative linguist in Romance, Balkan, and Albanian studies, and under Aurélian Sauvageot, a Finno-Ugric specialist. At the college he was introduced to his lifelong intellectual orientation by Zoltán Gombocz, who "recognized the importance of Saussure … and the Prague linguistic circle" (Bakos 1975, 204). He went to the Sorbonne from 1932–35 and studied under Paul Hazard and the Romance studies specialists Oscar Bloch and Mario Roques (also an Albanologist). He also

[20] Commemorative and biographical literature: János Barta, "Gáldi László," *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 78, no. 2 (1974): 279; Ferenc Bakos, "László Gáldi (1910–1974) [in French]," *Acta Linguistica Academiae Scientarium Hungaricae* 25, nos. 1–2 (1975): 203–209; Mihály Péter, "Gáldi László (1910–1974) [in Russian]," *Studia Slavica* 20, nos. 1–4 (1974): 397–398; András Martinkó, "Gáldi László (1910–1974)," *Nagyvilág* 19, no. 4 (1974): 635–636; László Sziklay, "Gáldi László," *Helikon* 20, no. 1 (1974): 127–128; Zoltán Szabó, "Gáldi László életműve," *Utunk*, no. 11 (Nov. 1974); Lajos Kiss, "Gáldi László emléktáblájánál," *Magyar Nyelv* 96, no. 4 (2000): 509–510; Katalin J. Soltész, "Gáldi László," *Magyar Nyelv* 70 (1974): 375–377; György Beke, "Gáldi László," in *Tolmács nélkül. Interjú 56 íróval a magyar–roman irodalmi kapcsolatokról* (Bucharest: Kriterion Könyvkiadó, 1972), 214–220; Katalin Kese, "Gáldi László," in *Kultúra és filológia a Román Tanszék történetének tükrében* (Budapest: ELTE Levéltára, 1999), 161–168; György Szépe, "Douze stances sur maître Gáldi," *Revue d'Études Françaises*, no. 6 (2001): 169–178; Levente Nagy and Florin Cioban, "The third classic: László Gáldi," in "Brief History of the Romanian Philology Department of the 'Eötvös Loránd' University in Budapest," *Philologica Jassyensia* 8, no. 2 (2012): 299–311, here 304–306; Ferenc Bakos, "Gáldi, László," in *Lexicon Grammaticorum: Who's Who in the History of World Linguistics*, ed. Harro Stammerjohann (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1996), 320–321; Ferenc Bakos, "Bibliographie de l'oeuvre linguistique de László Gáldi," *Analecta Linguistica* 9 (1979): 227–245.

studied Russian under the Slavicist Boris Unbegaun (Bakos 1975, 204; Nagy and Cioban 2012, 305). Then he spent a year each in Italy in 1938 and in Greece in 1939 (2012, 306). He studied Romance and Slavic languages, Albanian, and Greek in order to gain a better understanding of Romanian, while also becoming a Balkan specialist at the same time. The work which ensured his "European reputation" was his *Les mots d'origine néo-grecque en roumain à l'époque des phanariotes* (1939)[21] (Bakos 1975, 205). Besides publications on early French and Italian studies, another lexical achievement was his Spanish-Hungarian dictionary.

At the age of 28 he was Privatdozent of Romance languages in Budapest, 30 when he became the acting head in Budapest of the Romanian Department (filling in for Lajos Tamás), and 32 as a professor of Romanian Studies at the Kolozsvár University of short-lived Northern Transylvania (Barta 1974, 279; Kese 1999, 161). He was never to obtain such a prestigious position again, though his career eventually rebounded in the 1950s after being dismissed from his teaching positions in the late 1940s. As expected, he was not allowed to return to topics of Romanian history, and from the 1950s stuck with mostly Romanian linguistic and etymological studies, "versification and lexicography." Over the next few decades, Gáldi taught several generations of students, essentially anyone who studied Romance languages or came through the Romanian Philology Department (Nagy and Cioban 2012, 305).

The primary reason behind Gáldi's repression clearly had to do with nationalistic elements in his interwar era oeuvre. In an obituary on Gáldi, László Sziklay, a colleague of his in comparative literature from the same period, mentions other elements of critique: "We argued with him, we called him out on the influence of *szellemtörténet* [*Geistesgeschichte*], and his perhaps slightly overexaggerated structuralist orientation in language, but at the same time we learned

[21] László Gáldi, *Les mots d'origine néo-grecque en roumain à l'époque des phanariotes* (Budapest: Kir. M. Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetemi Görög Filológiai Intézet).

enormously from him" (Sziklay 1974, 127). *Szellemtörténet* was an idealist philosophy of historical interpretation popular in the interwar era due to the influence of Gyula Szekfű, which came under heavy criticism during communism. Although the historiographical discussion of *szellemtörténet* will come in chapter three, we should note for now that there was both a literary and historical side to *szellemtörténet* in Hungary. In the latter case, it is an idealist interpretation of historical events and persons used to exclude materialistic factors from historical explanation. In the former, it can be an essentializing discourse which discovers the spirit of a nation in its language. Both aspects were very relevant to the work of the comparatists, especially up to 1945, when short, encapsulated lessons from history could be perceived to enhance Hungary's position against antagonistic neighbors. For example, we can see different motivations in the way Hungarian linguists assessed foreign loan words in Romanian, i.e., Slavic, Albanian, or Hungarian elements. Gáldi produced numerous publications in the field of loan words, generally with an eye to the significance of Romanian terminology of Hungarian origin (e.g., concerning feudalism) and what it might say about Hungarian influence on Romanian societal development. But assessing these elements positively (as a development of language and social structure) or negatively (as a bastardization of language and sign of inferiority) depended on the individual historian or publicist in question (Nagy and Cioban 2012, 305). There is an interesting exchange in the correspondence between Gáldi and József Balogh, the editor of *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie* (*NRH*) and *Hungarian Quarterly* (*HQ*), in which Gáldi criticizes elements of Zsombor Szász's (a former Hungarian MP and publicist on Romanian questions) 1941 article "Rumanian History," published in *HQ*. Gáldi writes that he was taken aback by smaller factual errors and orthographic mistakes, but was most surprised to read Szász's comment that "their [the Romanians'] language was the language of the Balkans, corrupted by Albanian and more particularly by pronounced Slav elements" (1941, 199).

Then Gáldi rhetorically asks, "Well, how is the development of language still 'corruption'?"[22] Gáldi's and other comparatists' contributions to these two foreign-language journals, however, certainly diminished their reputation in the long run since what was scholarly in it was often crowded out by the propagandistic. Besides Gáldi's flirtation with the "dangerous side" of *szellemtörténet*, he wrote an article in praise of Mussolini's use of language (1940)[23]—Italy being Hungary's first diplomatic success after WWI (the first Entente nation to side with Hungary diplomatically) meant that many students went on scholarship to study there—at the same time being a critic of Nazi Germany, facts which have been commented upon by Nagy and Cioban (2012, 304, 306)

A much better step in the positive direction were Gáldi's scholarly comparative works, such as *Az erdélyi román nyelvújítás* (The Romanian language movement in Transylvania, 1943), and even a work intended for a broader public, *Magyar-román szellemi kapcsolatok* (Hungarian-Romanian intellectual connections, 1942b), both written during WWII.[24] These and similar works, however, show some of the ambivalent aspects all too common in the comparatists' works in this era: simultaneously polemicizing with Romanian authors on continuity theories and the place of Transylvania in Romanian history, while also praising the mutual benefits of Romanians and Hungarians interacting in such close proximity together for so many centuries; yet even here social, cultural, and linguistic influence was usually unidirectional, from Hungarians to Romanians.

A good introduction to Gáldi's structuralist orientation is in his comparative magnum opus,

[22] OSZKK/1/1116/10706/ Gáldi to Balogh/ Budapest, Sept. 5, 1941.
[23] Gáldi, "Mussolini és a modern olasz stílus," *Egyetemes Filológiai Közlöny* 64 (1940): 181–197.
[24] Gáldi, *Magyar-román szellemi kapcsolatok* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1942b); *Az erdélyi román nyelvújítás* (Budapest: A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Kiadása, 1943).

A Dunatáj nyelvi alkata – A Dunatáj irodalmi fejlődése (The constitution of the Danubian language – The development of Danubian literature, 1947a),[25] on the thesis of a Danubian language union which exists in spite of heterogeneity among language families in the region, similar to the Balkan *Sprachbund* as first laid out by Jernej Kopitar and later by Kristian Sandfeld as well as members of the Prague linguistic circle.[26] Gáldi in this work divides the Central European region from the South-East European region on the basis of several factors, including two sets of phonemes, *ö* and *ü* adopted by the western Slavic and Hungarian languages from Western languages like German and French, and *ă* shared by Romanian, Bulgarian, and Albanian. Further differences are seen in the way that the Central European languages had a tendency to adopt foreign words as mirror translations vs. South-East European languages that had the tendency to adopt the foreign word itself (L. Nagy 2011, 9; Szépe 2011, 170).

Lajos Tamás [Treml] (b. Temesvár, Mar. 23, 1904 / d. Budapest, Sept. 19, 1984), the linguist, presents so many similarities to Gáldi's biography, and being ten years older, he is in a sense the trailblazer for modern Romanian studies in Hungary.[27] He grew up in several cities in

[25] Gáldi, *A Dunatáj nyelvi alkata – A Dunatáj irodalmi fejlődése* (Budapest: Gergely R., 1947a).

[26] A summary of the *Sprachbund* also in Gáldi, "A balkáni filológia mai állása és magyar feladatai," *Apollo* 4, nos. 3–4 (1937): 161–174.

[27] Commemorative and biographical literature: Katalin J. Soltész, "Tamás Lajos emlékezete (1904–1984)," *Hungarológiai értesítő* 6, nos. 1–2 (1984): 287–289; József Herman, "Tamás Lajos," *Magyar Tudomány*, no. 5 (1985); János Balázs, "Tamás Lajos emlékezete," *Magyar Nyelv* 81, no. 3 (1985): 373–377; Sámuel Domokos, "Tamás Lajos halálára," *Filológiai Közlemények* 30, nos. 2–3 (1984): 324–327; Ferenc Bakos, "Tamás Lajos," *Nyelvtudományi Közlemények* 87, no. 1 (1985): 249–253; Gy. Sz. [György Szabad], "Tamás Lajos 70 éves," *Nyelvtudományi Közlemények* 77, no. 1 (1975): 229–230; Fruzsina Veress, "Tamás Lajos műveinek bibliográfiája," *Nyelvtudományi Közlemények* 77, no. 1 (1975): 230–239, see interview lit. on p. 239; Éva Tóth, "Tamás Lajos hetvenöt eves," *Magyar Nemzet* (Mar. 23, 1979); József Herman, "Tamás Lajos 80 éves," *Magyar Nyelv* 81, no. 1 (1985): 118–119; Katalin Kese, *Tamás Lajos a romanista* (Budapest: ELTE Sokszorosítóüzemében, 1989); Katalin Kese, "Tamás Lajos, a tudós és tanár," in *Kultúra és filológia a Román Tanszék történetének tükrében* (Budapest: ELTE Levéltára, 1999), 210–245; Levente Nagy and Florin Cioban, "Brief History of the Romanian Philology Department of the 'Eötvös Loránd' University in Budapest," *Philologica Jassyensia* 8, no. 2 (2012): 299–311, here 302–304; Katalin Kese, "Tamás Lajos román filológiai munkássága," lecture, MTA Nyelvtudományi Intézet, Budapest, April 14, 2004; György Szépe, "Emlékezés Tamás Lajosra," lecture, MTA Nyelvtudományi Intézet, Budapest, April 14, 2004. Critical literature: István Schütz, *Fehér foltok a Balkánon. Bevezetés az albanológiába és a balkanisztikába* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó,

the same Banat region (and like Gáldi attended high school in Arad) and was also partly of German heritage, both still growing up in a Hungarian-language environment and Hungarianizing their family names. He was a specialist in almost all of the same languages as Gáldi, though he never became a professional Slavicist. While Gáldi's historical works focused more on the modern and early modern period of Romanian history, Tamás's specialty was pre-medieval Romanian history and linguistics and Balkan history. He also attended the Eötvös Collegium from 1922–1924, and after two years in Vienna and Berlin, from 1924–1926, he received a scholarship to the Sorbonne for one year, 1927/28, and there pursued a diploma in Albanian linguistics. Tamás always considered himself an autodidact, essentially creating the institutional tracks that others afterward could follow upon (Kese 1989, 12). He completed his doctoral degree in 1929 in German literature, but after this point, turned his full attention to questions of Romanian linguistics and ancient history (Bakos 1985; Kese 1989, 5–6, 12). He became a specialist in theories of Daco-Roman continuity and Romanian linguistic continuity, arguably the first Hungarian to be able to approach this question with all the necessary linguistic and philological apparatuses (Nagy and Cioban 2012, 302); his most famous work of this subject is "Romains, Romans et Roumains dans l'histoire de la Dacie Trajane" (1935).[28]

Though the polemical nature of his works from this period have been remarked upon, this was not uncommon considering the sensitivity of subjects that he covered (Nagy and Cioban 2012, 302). The Hungarian Albanologist István Schütz considers the above work one of the most innovative of its time, being the first to develop the concept of "mobile continuity" in regard to

2006 [2002]); Levente Nagy, "Balcanistica hungarica rediviva," *Zeitschrift für Balkanologie* 39, no. 2 (2003): 191–200.

[28] Lajos Tamás, orig. Hung.: *Rómaiak, románok és oláhok Dácia Trajánában* (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1935); "Romains, Romans, et Roumains dans l'histoire de la Dacie Trajane" *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis* 1 (1935): 1–96, and 2 (1936): 46–83 and 245–374.

Balkan neo-Latin speakers (Schütz 2006, 141; also Kese 1989, 33). An outsider to the Romanian-Hungarian polemics, Gottfried Schamm, writes the following about Hungarian scholarly output during the interwar era and WWII:

> I am fully aware of the fact that the works published in Hungary during that period [before 1945] tried to underpin Hitler's peremptory decisions in a scientific manner, in consequence of which the Romanians put under Hungarian control far outnumbered the Hungarians liberated from the Romanians. In spite of this sombre political background, I have to admit that, all in all, this collective activity – which was surprisingly rich as compared to the relative shortness of the period – meant the pinnacle of the [continuity] debate, because of the weight of the arguments and a methodology that was not invalidated by political commitment. I have not seen any findings in later immigration theories that would supersede the statements published at that time. (*Korai román történelem* [Early Romanian history, 1997], quoted in L. Nagy 2003, 192)

All that I would revise in the above quote is that many works of the comparatists predate the Vienna Awards by several years. The argument of unfriendly competition aiding scholarship is for sure a difficult argument to allow, but there have certainly been similar instances in a world divided by spheres of interest, Soviet and Russian history being the most obvious case. One should also keep in mind that Tamás had many professional contacts with Romanian linguists already in the 1930s due to his lexical research, frequently traveling to Bucharest, Rome, and Sofia for research, even publishing in Romanian journals (Kese 1989, 13, 25).

Some of his other important works in the period include "Die ungarischen Lehnwörter im Rumänischen" (1928–29), and the comparative "A magyar eredetű rumén kölcsönszavak művelődéstörténeti értékelése" (Cultural-historical assessment of Romanian loanwords of Hungarian origin, 1943), and "Ugocsai magyar-rumén kapcsolatok" (Hungarian-Romanian relations in Ugocsa County, 1944)—works[29] which also delve into larger historical questions of

[29] Lajos Tamás, "Die ungarischen Lehnwörter im Rumänischen," *Ungarische Jahrbücher* 8 (1928) 25–51, 9 (1929): 274–317; "A magyar eredetű rumén kölcsönszavak művelődéstörténeti értékelése," in *Az Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet*

the influence of the Hungarian language and Hungarian Latinity on Romanian urban and administrative development and trade in the medieval and Reformation periods (Gáldi, *Századok*, 1943, 522; Kese 1989, 25–33).

In 1933, at the age of 29, he was a Privatdozent in Romance studies and Romanian philology in Budapest. From 1936 until his retirement 1972, Tamás was head of the Romanian Philology Department, though Gáldi was acting head from 1940–1944 when Tamás was the director of the Transylvanian Scientific Institute in Kolozsvár (Bakos 1985, 249–250). The answer to how one figure could remain the head of this department through its most tumultuous period after 1945 is the point where similarities with Gáldi start to disappear, and it is a question that has only been asked in more recent studies. Essentially, Tamás's job description after 1948 was the Stalinist reorganization of humanities in Hungary,[30] which included repressing individuals like Gáldi, who, like him, were previously researching sensitive questions in the region (Schütz 2006, 141). Though all of the historians-philologists-linguists that are the subject of this dissertation were quickly utilized for their expertise in the early days of communist internationalism to generate friendship through scholarship, they still had to face various consequences for their previous "bourgeois nationalist" monographs and articles (the flowering or bouncing back of careers varying greatly across the spectrum). Tamás, though, was spared from this process of self-critique by ensuring that others were not. Then a young student, István Schütz, and later co-author with Tamás of the Albanian-Romanian dictionary, recalls the irony of being at first urged to pursue

évkönyve – 1942 (Kolozsvár: Minerva, 1943), 349–389; "Ugocsai magyar-rumén kapcsolatok," in *Az Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet évkönyve – 1943*, vol. 1 (Kolozsvár: Minerva, 1944), 3–48.

[30] See, for example, Lajos Tamás, "A 'fordulat éve' a nyelvtudományban," *Magyar Nyelvőr* 74, no. 5 (1950): 327–334; and "A szókincs kérdése a sztálini elmélet megvilágításában," *Nyelvtudományi Közlemények* 53 (1952): 3–13.

Albanian studies (in the early communist "internationalist" period),[31] then his dissertation being personally failed by Tamás in the 1948/49 school year because "research into Albanian language history offended the continuity nostalgia of the nationalistic Romanian Communist party" (L. Nagy 2003, 191). And just as issues of Romanian ethnogenesis were off the table for the next 40 years, especially due to Tamás's administrative guidance, he too had to find another subject to cover, centering strictly on linguistic contacts between the Romanian and Hungarian languages and textbooks on comparative linguistics and structural theory (Nagy and Cioban 2012, 303; Schütz 2006, 141).

Besides his work in the Romanian Philology department, instructing several generations of Romance Studies students, his other administrative roles included dean of the Humanities Department of Budapest University from 1949–1951, and rector of the university from 1953–1955. He became head of the French Department in 1964. From 1963–1973 he held various positions in the Language and Literature section of the Academy of Sciences. Today he is still recognized for building up the Romanian department to modern international standards and is often remembered by his former students as a most captivating lecturer (Kese 1999, 252).

[31] Nagy and Cioban call this early communist period in historiography, the hope of joint cooperative endeavors with neighboring nations' scholars, one of "socialist forced politeness," but the result should in no way detract from the (naive?) expectations of Hungarian comparatists of a new and continued "internationalist" spirit (2012, 305).

The Historians and Regionalists

Zoltán I. Tóth (b. Versec, Aug. 11, 1911 / d. Budapest, Oct. 25, 1956), though born in a town that became part of Yugoslavia (Vojvodina), moved with his parents to Temesvár in 1919, making him the third comparatist with formative childhood years in the Banat region, and a specialist in Romanian history.[32] After his first university degree in history-geography in 1933 in Cluj, his intellectual capacities ruminated for several years as a high school teacher in Szatmárnémeti (Satu Mare) from 1935 to 1941, minus 1937–1939 while attending the Sorbonne on a scholarship for 19 months. Here he wrote a dissertation under the guidance of the famous French historian-geographer Jacques Ancel, entitled "Az erdélyi románok és a francia közvélemény a XIX. században" (The Transylvanian Romanians and French public opinion in the 19th century), but it remained unpublished with his doctoral degree postponed until 1944 (Csatári 1966, 27, 29, 35). Then the early 1940s witnessed his quick rise through several Historical Institutes—Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet (Transylvanian Scientific Institute) in Kolozsvár in 1941 and the Teleki Institute in Budapest in 1942. His first permanent position as Privatdozent was at

[32] Commemorative and biographical literature: László Makkai, "I. Tóth Zoltán 1911–1956," *Magyar Tudomány* 2, nos. 1–4 (1957): 121–123; József Perényi, "I. Tóth Zoltán," *Annales Univ. Sc. Bp.-iensis, Sectio historica* 1 (1957): 5–15; Endre Kovács, "I. Tóth Zoltán," *Századok* (1957): 481–484; Dániel Csatári, "I. Tóth Zoltán," biographical introduction, in I. Tóth, *Magyarok és románok. Történelmi tanulmányok* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1966), 7–57; Dániel Csatári, "A lehetségestől a véglegesig. I. Tóth Zoltán emlékezete," *Tiszatáj* (1981); Ambrus Miskolczy, "Mitoszok nélkül: I. Tóth Zoltán könyve," in I. Tóth's *Az erdélyi román nacionalizmus első százada, 1697–1792* (Csíkszereda: Pro Print, 1998), 5–12; Gyula Dávid, "I. Tóth Zoltán és a két világháború közötti nemzedék," *Korunk* (Oct. 2001); Gyula Dávid, "Preface," in I. Tóth's *Primul secol al naţionalismului românesc ardelean*, trans. Maria Someşan (Bucharest: Pythagora, 2001); Stelian Mândruţ, "Anii de studii universitare ai istoricului I. Tóth Zoltán (1929–1934)," *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie "George Barit" din Cluj-Napoca, Series Historica* 43 (2004): 593–610; Stelian Mândruţ, "Ismeretlen adatok I. Tóth Zoltán kolozsvári könyvtárosi pályájának alakulásáról (1940–1941)," *Erdélyi Múzeum* 69, nos. 1–2 (2007): 110–114; György Szabad, "In memoriam I. Tóth Zoltán," *Magyar Szemle*, new ed., 16, nos. 1–2 (2007): 39–42; Vilmos Erős, "I. Tóth Zoltán (1911–1956)," *Korunk* 22, no. 5 (May 2011a): 85–89. On Panaitescu, see Ambrus Miskolczy, Review of Petre P. Panaitescu's *Interpretari românesti* [1947], *Buksz* 8, no. 2 (Summer 1996).

the Budapest University in 1948, and leader of a section on the history of the Soviet Union and the People's Republics at the Történettudományi Intézet (Historical Sciences Institute) in 1949. After this last incarnation of the Teleki Institute was finally shut down, a few years later in 1953 a full department at the university was created under the same name, the Department of the History of the People's Democratic Republics, headed by I. Tóth too (Miskolczy 1998, 5–12). This department can be seen as the successor of the East European Studies Department formerly headed by Lukinich. At the height of his career, I. Tóth was the dean of the Historical Sciences Department at the university, the position that he held when he was shot outside of the parliament in the early days of the 1956 revolution while leading a delegation of students to discuss their demands. This latter fact did nothing to deter his praises in several commemorative articles of the following year. László Makkai, a subject of this study, and his long-time associate from the Kolozsvár days, wrote in commemoration in 1957:

> Hungarian scientific life and university education has suffered a grave loss with the early tragic death of Zoltán I. Tóth. His history writing activities were cut down in their prime, when after his intense two-decade collection of sources and writing of monographs, his oeuvre would have unfolded into a phase of synthesis; when with his methodological insights and mature historical approach he would have not only solved the so many unresolved problems of the history of the nationalities, but also could have founded a school out of his nurtured young researchers and university students. (1957, 121)

I. Tóth was to become one of the most unequivocally lionized historians of the twentieth century; his statue from 2007 sits outside the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His entire reputation could almost be built upon a single work, *Az erdélyi román nacionalizmus első százada, 1697–1792* (The first century of Transylvanian Romanian nationalism, 1946).[33] International

[33] I. Tóth, *Az erdélyi román nacionalizmus első százada, 1697–1792* (Csíkszereda: Pro Print, 1998 [1946]). Rom. trans.: *Primul secol al naţionalismului românesc ardelean* (Bucharest: Pythagora, 2001).

scholars on Romanian nationalism and nation-building have frequently cited this work, considered the best monograph on the period in question and recently translated into Romanian as *Primul secol al naţionalismului românesc ardelean* (trans. Maria Someşan, 2001). This work uses a sophisticated typology to trace the rise of national thought and the different stages of national consciousness among the Transylvanian Romanian population, from what I. Tóth calls "folk consciousness" (not in the sense of *völkisch,* but just a simple intuition that one is different in language, religion, and custom from the neighbor over there) to a full-blown national movement. Vilmos Erős, historian of Hungarian historiography, notes I. Tóth's emphasis on Romanian intellectuals and priests spreading the word of Romanians' noble origins and Daco-Roman continuity to the general population, along with a political program to boot, calling it akin to the notion of "the invention of tradition" (here I am citing Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* in regard to nation-building; Eric Hobsbawm introduced the notion itself) (2011a, 82, and endnote 13). I. Tóth also makes clear comparisons showing how developments regarding national consciousness were different for Romanians in Transylvania vs. Wallachia and Moldova; more detailed analysis of the latter is offered in an earlier work, "A román nemzettudat kialakulása a moldvai és havasalföldi krónikairodalomban" (The evolution of Romanian national consciousness in the chronicles of Moldova and Wallachia, 1942), which details chroniclers' knowledge of Roman connections long before it had any political significance.[34]

The origin of I. Tóth's much praised candidness and open-mindedness on Romanian questions has to be traced to his college years in Cluj. Here he studied Romanian history from Romanian professors, attending Petre Panaitescu's lectures and a seminar of the medievalist Joan Lapedatu (Csatári 1966, 19). One reoccurring goal of his career was to assess historical moments

[34] I. Tóth, "A román nemzettudat kialakulása a moldvai és havasalföldi krónikairodalomban," in *A Magyar Történettudományi Intézet évkönyve 1942*, ed. József Deér (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1942a), 277–326.

on which to ground permanent Romanian-Hungarian friendship. Perhaps more so than any other comparatist, he rejected Hungarian revisionism, as an excerpt from his diary in 1932 shows: "'because a potential revision would take away the possibilities of crystallization, development, and enrichment, and with it Hungarians' reasons for existence … Revision today … is the spiritual destruction of Transylvanian Hungarians'" (I. Tóth, diary entry Dec. 18, 1932, quoted in Csatári 1966, 18). As a 20-year-old university student he belonged to a group called *Erdélyi Fiatalok* (Transylvanian Youth, a journal under the same name) from its founding in 1930, who were Hungarian youth searching for the correct modus vivendi in Romanian society.[35] The existentialist nature of the above quote really underlies the issue of differences between generations of the Hungarian minority, particularly those growing up in the reality of a Romanian Transylvania. Erdélyi Fiatalok was a radical democratic group wanting to break with the old Hungarian order, directly blaming the intransigence of pre-WWI Hungarian nationalism, with the simple Hungarian and simple Romanian the victim, which was also evidenced in their rift with the political party of the interwar Hungarian minority, Országos Magyar Párt. They sought an alliance between the interests of the peasant classes and the intellectual class, one of mentorship, and to this end researched village life with aim of aiding its social development. They also made connections and eventually joint research with Dimitrie Gusti's modern sociological school in Bucharest, head of an interdisciplinary project producing monographic research into Romanian and Transylvanian villages, which Christopher Hitchens calls a rare moment of Hungarian-Romanian cooperation; I. Tóth took part in these collaborations (Csatári 1966, 14–21; Hitchens 2007, 90–92).

[35] On Erdélyi Fiatalok, see Keith Hitchins, "Erdélyi Fiatalok: The Hungarian Village and Hungarian Identity in Transylvania in the 1930's," *Hungarian Studies* 21, nos. 1–2 (2007): 85–99; Péter Cseke, "Nemzedéki értékhorizontok drámája. Az Erdélyi Fiatalok és a Hitel konfrontációi 1935 és 1940 között," *ME.DOK* 7, no. 3 (2012): 9–26.

Dániel Csatári, a student of I. Tóth's and author of the most in-depth biography (1966, 9–75), writes of a splinter group of *Erdélyi Fiatalok* that came out in support of greater communist ties in 1932, of which I. Tóth was *not* a part. Csatári, though regretful of this fact, points to I. Tóth's personal investigations into Marxist theory and (potential) sympathies as a groundwork for his later conversion to Marxism. The oft-remarked generalization as regards Transylvanian Hungarians is that they were much more open to leftist ideas, insulated from the Horthyist neoconservative backlash in Hungary, with practically the entire young generation in favor of major social reforms whether due in the end to left-wing or right-wing sympathies, or a mixture of both. Details, however, paint a much more complex picture. The main circle behind *Erdélyi Fiatalok* and another journal, *Hitel* (the latter in which I. Tóth and László Makkai took part), had a type of reactive relationship with what they perceived to be the possibilities for minority life in relation to the changing politics in Romania. As Romanian politics became more radical, as cooperation with the ever more *völkisch*-oriented German-Saxon minority became unlikely, often the response on the part of the journal editors and leading figures also was more radicalism. As a result, these circles often split into subgroups based on political differences (Cseke 2012, 87, 90, 91).

I. Tóth's post-1945 oeuvre shows an ever greater influence of Marxist theory, and support for the idea that relations between Romanians and Hungarians of the same class would have been harmonious, if not corrupted by the ruling classes' nationalist rhetoric. Makkai called this period the opening up of his own horizons, when "he showed through economic and sociological analysis the hidden beginnings of national oppression in feudal oppression" (1957, 123). I. Tóth's biography of Nicolae Bălcescu and works focusing on unsuccessful attempts at rapprochement in the waning days of the 1848/49 Hungarian and Romanian revolutions, are presented as moments

in Hungarian-Romanian relations that could have become an alternate trajectory.[36] Most recently, though, Vilmos Erős has emphasized the need for some contextualization of the frequently used motto "without myths" in regard to the content of I. Tóth's works and life (for use of the phrase see Ambrus Miskolczy's introduction to the 1998 reprint of *Az erdélyi román nacionalizmus első százada* [5–12]). Erős characterizes the period before 1945 as still falling prey to the ruling national discourse of undermining Romanian historians' objectivity, for example, in I. Tóth's anti-Iorga work, *Iorga Miklós és a székelyek román származásának tana* (Nicolae Iorga and his thesis on the Romanian origin of the Székelys, 1941); at a basic level, however, this was a thesis unacceptable for Hungarian historians.[37] Regarding his post-1945 emphasis on social-political relations in Romanian and Hungarian history, Erős states that his oeuvre here was weakened by too much focus on class and class struggle, unintentionally clouding out his sociological insights with political history. He adds, though, that I. Tóth's emphasis on sources and data makes these later works still invaluable, and his analysis of the history of nationality in light of the history of ideas places him among the "greats" of twentieth-century Hungarian historians, such as Gyula Szekfű, Jenő Szűcs, and Lajos Für (2011a, 83, also footnotes 23, 25).

[36] I. Tóth, "A magyar–román szövetség kérdése 1848-ban," *Századok* 82 (1948): 252–282; *Bălcescu Miklós élete (1819–1852)* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1958).
[37] I. Tóth, "A román történettudomány és a székelyföldi románság kérdése," *Erdélyi Múzeum* 4 (1942b): 530–558.

Lajos Gogolák (b. Pozsony, Mar. 18, 1910 / d. Vienna, Sept. 22, 1987) provides an interesting variety to our picture so far of historians and linguists.[38] His university degree was in law, but as a young university student he was taken under the wing of Gyula Szekfű, and became a journalist and literary critic and a regular contributor to Szekfű's journal *Magyar Szemle* from 1929; his first article was published there at the age of 19. He was on the editorial board of several journals, including the Catholic journals *Regnum*, *Katolikus Szemle*, *Jelenkor*, and *Korunk Szava*, and from 1938 to 1944 he was an editor of *Magyar Nemzet*, a daily newspaper known for its anti-fascist bent. These publishing organs were, no doubt, still conservative by any standard in the 1930s, but also liberal when compared with the extremes to come. In the encyclopedic entries on interwar era authors and historians, the phrase "specialist in Slavic issues" attached to his name was accompanied with very little extra information. In fact, "the forgotten historian" Gogolák was a historian of high reputation, capable of singlehandedly covering all the historical, literary, and journalistic aspects of Czechoslovakian life for a Hungarian audience (Ujváry 2010, 26); and here not just minority issues in Slovakia, but questions of Prague politics and Czech historiography.[39] In the interwar period he published several highly cited works on the history of Czechoslovakia,

[38] Commemorative and biographical literature: Gábor Antal, "Gogolák Lajos," *Kritika*, no. 3 (1988); Béla Nóvé, "Adalékok egy szellemi repatriáláshoz. Gogolák Lajos-ról," *Kritika* (1988); Béla Nóvé, "In memoriam Gogolák Lajos," *Irodalmi Újság*, no. 2. (1988); Béla Nóvé, "Egy 'paleofrivol' emlékirat elé. Gogolák Lajos tanúságtételei," *Holmi* 13, no. 3 (Mar. 2001): 286–292; Lajos Gogolák, "Romemlékek (I)," ed. Béla Nóvé, *Holmi* 13, no. 3 (Mar. 2001a); Lajos Gogolák, "Romemlékek (II)," ed. Béla Nóvé, *Holmi* 13, no. 4 (Apr. 2001b); Lajos Gogolák, "Gogolák Lajos Szekfű, Gyula és Gerevich Tibor kávéházi asztalairól," ed. István Bardoly and Csilla Markója, *ENIGMA* 16, no. 59 (2009): 150–159; Gyula Borbándi, *Nyugati magyar irodalmi lexikon és bibliográfia* (The Hague: Mikes International, 2006). Critical literature: Julianna P. Szűcs, "Kurátor és Kora – Az Enigma című folyóirat két számáról," *Artmagazin*, no. 3 (2011): 22–25; Tamás Ungvári, "Szegény ripők," *Mozgó Világ* 39 (2011); István Jelenits, "Jegyzetek a Korunk Szaváról," *Irodalomismeret*, no. 1 (2011): 35–44; Gábor Ujváry, *A harmincharmadik nemzedék. Politika, kultúra és történettudomány a "neobarokk társadalomban"* (Budapest: Ráció, 2010); István Tóth, *Szlovák népismeret. Tankönyv* (Szeged: Pax Christi Hungary, 1995).

[39] Others in this field from oldest to youngest: Lajos Steier (1885–1938), one of the first historians of the Slovak question, Pál Szvatkó (1901–1959), Endre Moravek (1902–1971), and István Borsody (1911–2000), with much overlapping work.

Hungarian and South Slav connections, and pan-Slavism: *Csehszlovákia* (1935b); *Magyarok és délszlávok* (with Mihály Ferdinándy, 1940); and *Pánszlávizmus* (1940).[40] Regarding the latter work, István Tóth, a historian of Czech-Slovak-Hungarian relations, writes that Gogolák was the first Hungarian historian to point out that pan-Slavism as a movement advocating Slavic unity must in fact be understood as an expression of different national movements' hope for self-government and a nation-state (1995, 11). The biggest complaint, though, that one could make about these above works is that they were intended for popular education at a level below Gogolák's scholarly capabilities, like many of his works in this period, but then again this was an aspect of which he himself complained.[41]

At the turn of 1936/37 it seems that Gogolák had a sort of mental breakdown where he stopped writing articles after an episode with the editors of *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie* (*NRH*) and *Hungarian Quarterly* (*HQ*), two semi-scholarly journals of Hungarian Studies intended to portray a positive image of Hungary to a broader Western audience and written in a tone of "what the Hungarians did for the West, and how abandoning us was a mistake." He was tasked with writing an article about the Ruthenian/Ukrainian minority in Czechoslovakia in the English-language journal, an article that was rejected by the editors due to the critique of outside reviewers on the basis of the article's "contents" and "tendencies." Gogolák responded to the vague rejection in an angry letter wanting to know exactly who the reviewers were, saying that they obviously could not

[40] Gogolák, *Csehszlovákia* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1935b); *Pánszlávizmus* (Budapest: Cserépfalvi, 1940); Lajos Gogolák and Mihály Ferdinándy, *Magyarok és délszlávok* (Budapest: Officina, 1940).

[41] See his outline for a planned but never published book, "Magyarok és Csehek" (Hungarians and Czechs), on the "historical potency of the idea of nationalism," where he "wants to remedy the public unfamiliarity, [visible] even to a degree in scientific circles, with the nationalities question which rules the entire Central European region" (OSZKK 7/676/ Magyar Szemle Társaság. Gogolák Tervezet a c. munkáról/ [Sept.? 1936]). He also states that he wishes this could be a work in the vein of "intellectual history" (*szellemtörténet/Geistesgeschichte*), but will stick more to facts in the positivist style, yet not without some "data on intellectual developments which influenced the bearing of Czechs in relation to us"; though "the goal here throughout the work will be to show that for our own best interests we must know our neighbors and enemies."

have been people outside of political circles: "I do not know who in Hungary could have dealt with my original research on the basis of these original sources (except perhaps Lajos Steier, who knows the language), and I do not know who could have been the 'expert' here that you could have scrupulously entrusted with the task."[42]

In a later apology for this overreaction, he explained that he was under stress due to the circumstances of his scholarship in Rome, that is, his ambivalent reception by the director of the Collegium Hungaricum who saw Gogolák's presence in Rome as competition with his own people, people who "have for a long while [to come] taken away my desire to work in publication," he writes. Over the next several months, upon returning to Budapest, he stopped writing the assigned articles and even stopped reviewing other authors' potential articles, writing "But in my current situation and nervous state … I cannot calmly finish my initiated tasks … unless I reach a better mental state."[43] Further efforts of another editor of *NRH*/*HQ*, György Ottlik, to find him work in the press office of the foreign ministry did not pan out either because Gogolák did not send them the promised sample article. Gogolák in fact had been pressing for months for his friend István Borsody to take over his role as specialist of Czech politics and Hungarian minority issues at *NRH*/*HQ* (which Borsody did) because he wanted to focus on larger historical issues such as the nineteenth-century Hungarian Reform Era and Hungary's historical relations with England and

[42] OSZKK 1/1197/11556/ Gogolák to Balogh/ Rome, Oct. 7, 1936. Tibor Frank (1978, 62–63), of the American Studies Department in Budapest, has also picked up on some generational differences among authors in these two journals, writing that *HQ* did not give much space to young writers partly due to reasons of censorship, where writers complained about the twisting of their words, while the editors needed to show a unified front to the world; see Frank, "A Hungarian Quarterly irodalompolitikája," *Filológiai Közlöny* 24, no. 1 (1978): 55–65. Oddly enough, of the young scholars and critics who seemed to know the ways of the world so well, at times they could seem so green in the world of politics. There are more than several occurrences of this cohort butting heads with reviewers, editors, and especially censors in a manner similar to this episode from Gogolák's life.

[43] OSZKK 1/1197/11557/ Gogolák to Balogh/ Rome, Nov. 24, 1936; OSZKK 1/1197/11563/ Gogolák to Balogh/ Budapest Feb. 10, 1937

France.[44] This could be evidence for his commencement on his book project later published as *Mocsáry Lajos és a nemzetiségi kérdés* (Lajos Mocsáry and the nationalities question, 1943), on the Hungarian politician who throughout the nineteenth century was pushing for a lasting and workable solution to the Hungarian nationalities question in light of the expected failure of the 1867 Compromise in this regard.[45] A few months after this letter, Gogolák was back to his old self, writing away, and a year later he was an editor of *Magyar Nemzet*. He finally attained several positions in academia, too; at the Budapest University's Institute of Minorities (Kisebbségi Intézet) he was an assistant professor, and a lecturer at the Historical Sciences Institute of the Teleki Institute. In spite of his numerous anti-fascist articles, published in almost all of the journals and newspaper with which he was affiliated, Gogolák did join the Arrow Cross Party in 1944, making him an outlier to the group, which is all the odder considering the great influence of Szekfű in his life. His biographer, Béla Nóvé, claims that this was a trumped-up charge; and a few years later, when he was coopted to spy for the Hungarian secret police, he was blackmailed, specifically because of a morphine addiction (2001). After WWII, however, he lost his teaching positions and focused entirely on journalism again, at a few startup "bourgeois" journals, and from 1949 he published primarily on cultural life, literature, and theater in the journal *Kis Újság* (Borbándi 2006, 95).

Another reason that Gogolák disappeared off the Hungarian scholarly map after WWII was because he immigrated to Vienna in 1957. He survived Stalinism, but it seems that he finally gave up on life in Hungary after his personal library and flat blew up in street skirmishes in Budapest (Nóvé 2001). In Vienna, after writing for several exile publications, he ended up at the university's

[44] OSZKK 1/1197/11557; OSZKK 1/1197/ 11559/ Balogh to Gogolák/ Budapest, Nov. 30, 1936; OSZKK 1/1197/ 11566/ Balogh to Gogolák/ Budapest, Apr. 6, 1937.
[45] Gogolák, *Mocsáry Lajos és a nemzetiségi kérdés* (Budapest: Franklin, 1943b).

East and South-East European Institute, teaching classes on Slovak history and literature, Hungarian-Viennese local history, and Central European history (Borbándi 1996, 95). Over those decades he would occasionally enter into Hungarian journals, but usually in a negative way. He published a critically acclaimed (but not in Hungary) three-volume history of Slovak national consciousness, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des slowakischen Volkes* (1963–1972),[46] covering a vast four centuries from the aristocratic *Hungarus* consciousness in 1526 to the latent Czech stirrings in the 1790s and finally a full-blown national movement up to 1919; in it he identified a unique Slovak-Hungarian consciousness already in the eighteenth century which was different from the *Hungarus* type, a kernel for the time later on when the two lines would separate for good. In this critical Hungarian press he was transformed from a Hungarian nationalist to an ardent Slovak nationalist because he supported Slovakia's independence from both Czechs and Hungarians (the reviews of Gogolák's *Beiträge*: Sziklay 1964; Tarnai 1965). This time, when it seemed that he had finally atoned for his Hungarian nationalism, he was accused of joining up with the old interwar era gang of Viennese *völkisch Südostforschungen* historians (in Hungary of course historians toed the line on the Czechoslovakian status quo). László Sziklay, a specialist in comparative literature and Slovak literature already in the interwar period, took it personally when Gogolák complained about Hungarian lacunae on Slavic literature even to the present day (1960s), also criticizing interwar era historiography on Slovak questions for its etatist bent; Sziklay essentially retorted by saying: well, you were there yourself, you were one of the believers in the idea of Saint Stephen's state, how come you did nothing about it then (1964, 253). Gogolák until his retirement in 1985 was a popular university professor in Vienna and wrote exclusively in German, which aided his substantial contribution to German-language scholarship on questions of the Habsburg Monarchy

[46] Gogolák, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des slowakischen Volkes*, vols. 1–3 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1963–1972).

(Nóvé 2001). When his life and career finally did reenter debate in Hungary, this was around 2001, after Gogolák's friend Béla Nóvé published sections of his memoir, it incensed many interwar era specialists (Gogolák 2001a, 2001b). Written from the perspective of a nineteen-year-old Gogolák, and full of personal details, the excerpts reveal an extremely cheeky, extremely talented, and arrogant young kid, full of bon mots, both basking in and making fun of the intellectual circles surrounding István Bethlen (the prime minister), Gyula Szekfű (his hero), and baron Móric Kornfeld (a major funder behind their combined neo-conservative publishing ventures).

Ágnes Széchenyi in a recent biography of Móric Kornfeld, industrialist and benefactor to several important conservative organs in the interwar period, writes that "Gogolák depicted Móric Kornfeld with contempt as a struggling specimen of a social class that had lost its base, had outlived its legitimacy and had developed increasingly unfortunate manifestations … Gogolák, a notorious gossip, on the other hand, painted everything in the darkest possible colors. Yet he did report certain correct details that I have used in the present volume, having discarded the distortions and sarcasms" (2007, x–xi). Julianna P. Szűcs has the harshest words of all for Gogolák (in defense of Tibor Gerevich, art history professor, avant-garde critic, and an advocate of Italian fascism): "he witnessed an era, the era's main actors, and one art stratum—when as a servant of the Arrow Cross Party, when against the saving of Jews, when as an informer of the Hungarian secret police, but most of all and entirely surely as a luckless loser" (2011). István Jelenits, a Catholic brother and writer, comes to a qualified defense of Gogolák (and Béla Horváth) in spite of their anti-Semitic critique directed at the poet Miklós Radnóti in 1938: "The memory of Hungarian literary history will be richer if we recall the published critiques, literary reviews, and memorials in *Korunk Szava* [Words of our age]. Béla Horváth and Lajos Gogolák deserve more than if we just recall

them because of the wounds that they hit on Radnóti's heart. Clearly they transgressed, but rather in a thoughtless manner and not out of true bad intentions" (2011, 44).

László Makkai (b. Kolozsvár, July 10, 1914 / d. Budapest, Dec. 1, 1989) began and finished his career as a historian of Transylvania.[47] Today he is best known for authoring and co-editing a section of the famous *Erdély története* (*History of Transylvania*, 1986),[48] where the story of the book itself is now a page in the political history of late communist Hungarian-Romanian relations (Miskolczy and Szász 2011; Mevius 2013). In between these two lifetime bookends, Makkai exemplifies more than any of the comparatists the historian of many careers, commemorated at the end of his life by historians of theology, technology, and economy. He was the son of the famous writer-theologian Sándor Makkai and spent his childhood in Cluj surrounded by the most famous Transylvanian Hungarian literary personalities, who met weekly in his home (Ács 1998, 1). He attended the university in Cluj, with a degree in History and Hungarian Studies in 1935, completing his dissertation on Urban History with doctoral examinations on East European History in Budapest under István Hajnal in 1936–1937. He collaborated with I. Tóth in the 1930s on projects such as the journal *Hitel*, and both were affiliated in the 1940s with the short-lived Transylvanian Scientific Institute (Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet), a venue for teaching,

[47] Commemorative and biographical literature: Zsigmond Pál Pach, "Makkai László 1914–1989," *Magyar Tudomány* 35, no. 5 (1990): 611–613; Katalin Péter, "Makkai László (1914–1989)," *Történelmi Szemle* 31, nos. 3–4 (1989a): 311–312; "Makkai László (1914, Kolozsvár – 1989, Budapest)," *Élet és Tudomány* 44, no. 51 (1989): 1625; Katalin Péter, "Makkai László (10. Juli 1914 – 25. August 1989)," *Ungarn-Jahrbuch* 18 (1990): 339–340; Katalin Péter, "Makkai László," *Népszabadság* (14 Dec. 1989b); János Csohány, "Makkai László, az egyházépítő," *Reformátusok Lapja*, no. 51 (1989); Zsigmond Pál Pach, "Makkai László ravatalánál," *Confessio*, no. 2 (1990): 104; József Barcza, "Makkai László emlékezete," *Képes Kálvin Kalendárium* (1991): 165–167; Katalin Péter, "Makkai László," *A Ráday Gyűjtemény Évkönyve* (1994); Walter Endrei, "Makkai László (1914–1989)," *Technikatörténeti Szemle* 21 (1994–95); Zoltán Ács, "'Az embert akarom megérteni' Makkai László történésszel beszélget Ács Zoltán," *Forrás* 20 (1988): 1–7; József Barcza, ed., *Tovább … Emlékkönyv Makkai László 75. születésnapjára* (Debrecen: Debreceni Református Kollégium Sokszorosító Iroda, 1989); Tibor Bartha[?], "Makkai László 70 éves," *Confessio* 8, no. 3 (1984): 14–16; "Makkai László műveinek bibliográfiája," *Történelmi Szemle* (1985): 540–552. Gyula Dávid, "A Hitel késői kisugárzása és a hitelesek szerepe a túlélés évtizedeiben," *ME.DOK* 7, no. 3 (2012): 27–40.

[48] Béla Köpeczi, ed., *Erdély története*, vols. 1–3 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986).

research, and publication, as well as the Teleki Institute in Budapest (Makkai from 1944). In connection with the above institutes, Makkai's prolific publication in the first half of the 1940s centered on issues of Transylvanian history, from monographs to the popular interwar topic of the history of settlements in Transylvania (through the latter often engaging in the heated questions of ethnogenesis and immigration in Transylvania), as well as works on Romanian history and historiography (*A románok története, különös tekintettel az erdélyi románokra* [History of the Romanians], edited and co-authored with Gáldi in 1942; "Román történetírás a két világháború között," 1943/ published in French as "L'historiographie roumaine dans les dernières dizaines d'années," 1943).[49]

After 1946 Makkai's publications slowed for a short while, coinciding with a period of suppression, during which he joined the communist party and spent three years abroad at the universities of Geneva, Leiden, and Basel, studying, of all subjects, theology. Katalin Péter writes, "He proved in the most difficult times his loyalty to the Calvinist Church by studying theology after 1946. He gave up pastoral work in 1951," after the nationalization of the Sárospatak Theological Seminary where he taught Church History from 1950 to 1951 (Péter 1990, 339). Even more incredible is that his theological doctorate also coincided with his historical interests changing direction towards social and economic history and Marxist theory (peasant uprisings and feudal relations), which Zsigmond Pál Pach labels his fourth major trajectory; the third being theology (in light of his theologian father a subject to which he was born), and the second, the history of technology (through the influence of István Hajnal) (1990, 611–613). Miskolczy and Szász write that he never became a Marxist "which is not a sin either" (2011, 86); or perhaps more

[49] László Gáldi and László Makkai, ed., *A románok története, különös tekintettel az erdélyi románokra* (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1942); Makkai, "Román történetírás a két világháború között," pts. 1–2, *Hitel* nos. 9–10 (1943b): 569–584, 636–648; French trans.: "L'historiographie roumaine dans les dernières dizaines d'années," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 1, nos. 3–4 (1943a): 469–504.

accurately, as in Makkai's own words, "I became acquainted with the sort of Marxism that was not dogmatic [in Basel], and which was so interesting that I attended two semesters of classes [on it]" (Ács 1988, 5).

In one of the most personal chapters in a work celebrating Makkai's 75th birthday, Pál Kiss says of Makkai at the Sárospatak Seminary, that "God sent him to me in the most literal sense of the word … Makkai taught us to fear neither the Russians, the communists, nor the atheists, but instead directed us toward a brave and coequal dialogue, at a time when one could not at all speak about such things." He was sent to teach us, "whether desired or not, the Marxist historical ideology, at time when it was still a novelty for us, or more accurately, [to teach us] what is useful and instructive in it … [saying]: 'Theology—the word of God—is not idealism but the most realistic realism'" (P. Kiss in Barcza, ed. 1989, 217–225, here 218, 220).

From 1946–1951 he held a position of professor of East European social history in Budapest (though there is no evidence of him teaching), from 1949 he was continuously affiliated with Historical Sciences Institute of the Academy of Sciences, and then was appointed professor of church history at Debrecen University in 1971, a position he held until his death. Several works in the 1950s on seventeenth-century Hungarian Puritanism, economic relations, and peasant uprisings helped to reestablish his reputation as a trusted supporter of Marxist sciences. He founded a journal on world history, *Világtörténet*, in 1964, in response to the connections that he made with the international scholarly circle surrounding his friend Fernand Braudel. He had the rare opportunity to travel to the West for research and conference participation on these projects.

His comparative magnum opus, *Magyar-román közös múlt* (Hungarian-Romanian shared past),[50] was written at the end WWII, when it still looked like both Hungary and Romania would

[50] Makkai, *Magyar-román közös múlt* (Budapest: Teleki Pál Tudományos Intézet, 1948).

be on the losing side, though it was published only in 1948 and republished in 1989 (Miskolczy and Szász 2011, 87; Péter 1990, 340). Makkai secured a reputation as one of the leading historians contradicting the Transylvanian ethnogenesis of Romanians, but this work, *Magyar-román közös múlt*, was not written with that goal in mind. Miskolczy and Szász write that it was imbued with the spirit of the "lessons of the tragic confrontations between the two nations," though the book literally disappeared from library shelves since it was labeled harmful to relations with communist Romania by the Rákosi government and was never even released in Romania. This work, they continue, "could have fulfilled on the part of the two nations' intelligentsia a qualitative consciousness forming function, from the standpoint of a healthy national consciousness and realistic historical-political awareness," but instead it convinced the Romanian government to label Makkai a war criminal (Miskolczy and Szász 2011, 87). Several of his and other historians' works were placed on a black list in Romania after the war. Regarding the accusations of being a war criminal, József Révai and Erik Molnár, historians overseeing the "reorganization" of historical sciences in the late 1940s, personally convinced Rákosi not to deport Makkai to Romania. The fate awaiting him there would likely have been analogous to Gheorghe I. Brătianu, who died in prison in 1953, but earlier co-authored a manuscript with Makkai on the role of Transylvania in both Hungarian and Romanian history. Their crimes were being a part of "a type of spontaneous consensus [that] began to emerge in opposition to the communist forced consensus, as regards exactly assessments of the [historical] development of Transylvania" (quote in Miskolczy and Szász 2011, 87; Schütz 2006, 141). Mirroring these events forty years later, relations reached a new nadir with the publication of *Erdély története* in 1986, when owning a copy of this work was illegal in Romania, and the Soviet embassies were tasked with creating peace between the two countries (Mevius 2013, 599, 603). A new era of balance began in 1994, symbolically, one could

say, with the publication 50 years later of Brătianu and Makkai's bilingual *Tündérkert: az erdélyi fejedelmi kor magyar és román szemmel : két tanulmány / Grădina Zînelor: epoca principatului transilvan în viziunea maghiară şi română : două studii* (Fairy garden: The era of the Transylvanian Principality from Hungarian and Romanian perspectives: Two studies).[51]

Domokos Kosáry[52] (b. Selmecbánya, July 31, 1913 / d. Budapest, Nov. 15, 2007) is among a few of the comparatists of this study who had the chance to write the postscript to their life and lifework, being the last of his generation. The Hungarian-British historian László Péter called Kosáry in his old age the "Nestor of Hungarian historians and the former president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, [who] has over the years earned the reputation of being the arch-revisionist of nineteenth-century Hungarian history" (2002, 296). Kosáry throughout his career

[51] Gheorghe I. Brătianu and László Makkai, *Tündérkert: az erdélyi fejedelmi kor magyar és román szemmel : két tanulmány / Grădina Zînelor: epoca principatului transilvan în viziunea maghiară şi română : două studii* (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd Román Filológiai Tanszék, 1994).

[52] Commemorative and biographical literature: Ferenc Mucsi, "Kosáry Domokos kilencvenéves," *Századok*, no. 3 (2003): 511–518; Mária Ormos, "'90' Kosáry Domokos," *Magyar Tudomány*, no. 8 (2003): 1045–1047; István Orosz, "In Memorian Kosáry Domokos," *Agrártörténeti Szemle*, nos. 1–4 (2007): 197–200; Csaba Katona, "Kosáry Domokos (1913-2007)," *Levéltári Szemle*, no. 4 (2007): 91–92; Róbert Hermann, "Kosáry Domokos (1913-2007)," *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények*, no. 4 (2007): 1383–1387; Ignác Romsics, "Kosáry Domokos (1913-2007)," *Rubicon*, no. 9 (2007): 78–80; Ferenc Glatz, "Kosáry Domokos temetésére," *História*, nos. 9–10 (2007): 3–4; Gábor Klaniczay, "Kosáry Domokos emléke," *Holmi*, no. 12 (2007): 1651–1655; László Lator, "Kosáry Domokos, 1913-2007," *Holmi*, no. 12 (2007): 1650; Péter Kende, "A Kosáry hagyta űr," *Holmi*, no. 12 (2007): 1656–1660; Szilveszter E. Vizi, "Elhunyt Kosáry Domokos (1913-2007)," *Magyar Tudomány*, no. 12 (2007): 1514–1517; Mária Ormos, "Kosáry Domokos (1913-2007)," *Történelmi Szemle*, no. 1 (2008): 127–132; Ferenc Glatz, "Kosáry Domokos (1913-2007)," *Századok*, no. 2 (2008): 525–530; Lajos Gecsényi, "Kosáry Domokos (1913-2007)," *Levéltári Közlemények* 78, no. 2 (2007) 309–311; Magda Ferch and Mária Ormos, eds., *Hommage à Kosáry Domokos* (Budapest: Széchenyi Irodalmi és Művészeti Akadémia, 2009); Ignác Romsics, "Kosáry és a Teleki Intézet a II. világháború alatt és után," presentation at the conference "Emlékülés Kosáry Domokos születésének 100. évében," Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, May 14, 2013; "Kosáry Domokos műveinek bibliográfiája," *Történelmi Szemle*, nos. 3–4 (1983): 510–519; "Kosáry Domokos műveinek bibliográfiája," in *Hommage à Kosáry Domokos*, ed. Ferch and Ormos, 277–324; Gyula Kodolányi, "A Magyar Szemle és a fiatal nemzedék," interview with Domokos Kosáry, *Magyar Szemle*, new ser., 6, nos. 11–12 (1997); Péter Módos, "Kilenc évtized, harminchárom nemzedék, Beszélgetések Kosáry Domokossal," *Európai Utas* 51 (2003): 2–6; Kosáry, "A Teleki Intézet emléke," *Magyar Könyvszemle* 166, no. 3 (2000): 251–252; Kosáry, "Gombocz Zoltán emlékezete," *Magyar Nyelv* 98, no. 2 (2002): 240–242. Also László Péter, "Old Hats and Closet Revisionists: Reflections on Domokos Kosáry's Latest Work on the 1848 Hungarian Revolution," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 80, no. 2 (Apr. 2002): 296–319; Hung. ed.: "Vaskalaposok és óvatos revizionisták. Gondolatok Kosáry Domokosnak az 1848-as magyar forradalomról írt legújabb könyvéről," *Aetas* 18, nos. 2–3 (2002): 212–230.

remained the same historian, and it was only the world around him that changed and for better or worse reacted to what he represented—"the intellectual legacy of the bourgeois middle class" (Glatz 2008, 525). Kosáry remained in essence a student of Gyula Szekfű all of his life, both rehabilitators of the much maligned eighteenth century in Hungarian history, in their view a period of Habsburg peace and rebuilding (Kosáry 1980). Szekfű confronted the "gentry nationalist" view of the (Habsburg) eighteenth century as a period of decline, and criticized the goals of the Independentist '48 Party as ultimately weakening Austria-Hungary after 1867, and leading to Trianon; Kosáry was confronted by the vulgar communist-nationalists in the late 1940s, who portrayed the arrival of communism as the progressive outcome of independence struggles in Hungarian history, essentially another anti-Habsburg discourse (Glatz 2008, 526, 527).

Kosáry's family moved to Budapest, like many of the administrative and intellectual classes, in 1919 after his grandfather, Géza Réz, lost his position as the last Hungarian rector of the Mining and Forestry Academy in Selmecbánya (Banská Štiavnica), ceded to Czechoslovakia. His father was a music instructor and his mother, Lola Réz, a famous writer. At the Budapest University he enrolled in a History and Latin degree and took the seminars of the most notable Hungarian historians of the time; but it was Szekfű who took him under his wing and directed him towards the subject of the 1848 Revolution. Kosáry's first monograph (1936), based on his dissertation of the same subject, was the rehabilitation of the 1848 revolutionary war general Artúr Görgey, who was almost unanimously labeled a traitor in Hungarian historiography up to that point for surrendering to Russian forces in 1849.

He read the reviews of this work while on a scholarship at the Sorbonne in France in 1936–1937. And he was in London when a full biography of Görgey (1939) intended for a broader public

was published.[53] In Paris he became familiar with the Annales school and the works of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre, which convinced him of the potential and utility of comparative history in East-Central Europe. As it happens, there are quite a few letters surviving from Kosáry's correspondence during this period that he was abroad. These letters will be covered in greater detail in the following chapter and its sections on scholarships abroad and the Teleki Institute. Kosáry went on further tours abroad from 1938–1941, including Great Britain, taking a seminar under R. W. Seton-Watson (considered an enemy of Hungarian historical and political interests) at University College London, and in the Unites States. His time in the US in 1941 goes beyond what has been dubbed "cultural diplomacy." He was in fact tasked by Pál Teleki, prime minister and informal leader of the Hungarian anti-Nazi coalition, to discern how the Anglo-Saxon and Western nations would view Hungary's territorial revisions in the wake of the First and Second Vienna Awards.[54] Kosáry's judgment on the question was quite negative, the same as it was already in the spring of 1939, evidenced in a letter to Domanovszky: "In the last few weeks the thought presses more greatly on me that if a general collision comes, and if Great Britain wins … and if we count again as the German's valet, our fate will be unimaginable."[55]

An aspect from his archival correspondence that I have not seen covered in the scholarship on *Revue d'histoire comparée* is Kosáry's discussion with C. A. Macartney, when on a visit to Oxford in 1939, on plans for a joint British-Hungarian comparative history society, to be called

[53] Kosáry, *A Görgey-kérdés és története* (Budapest: Királyi Egyetemi Nyomda, 1936); OSZKK Ms 5563/229/ Kosáry to Bisztray/ London, Mar. 12, 1939.

[54] See Balázs Ablonczy, *Pál Teleki (1874-1941): The Life of a Controversial Hungarian Politician* (Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs, 2006).

[55] MTAKK Ms 4525/717/Kosáry to Domanovszky/ London, n.d. [1939]. Kosáry also writes that Bálint Hóman advised him in March 1944, in the wake of the German coup, to destroy all documents related to his "confidential mission" in the US and the Teleki Institute's plans to reach out to Allied nations; see Kosáry, "Emlékeim Hóman Bálintról, 1939-46," interview by Ferenc Glatz, *História*, no. 1 (2003)—an interview which provides an interesting context to the life and deeds of the Education Minister who supported the Jewish laws and Nazi collusion, and later died in a Hungarian work/prison camp after the war in 1951.

the Society for Carpathian Europe.[56] This is a full two years before his return to Hungary, when he started a debating club and society (Kárpát-Kör) for comparative research, in cooperation with the Magyar Történelmi Társulat (Hungarian Historical Society), the organization responsible for the publishing of *Századok*. This society became the kernel of a group of young historians tied to the Historical Sciences Institute of the Teleki Institute, created in the autumn of 1941, and named after Pál Teleki, who committed suicide in April of the same year in protest of the Hungarian government agreeing to let German troops cross their territory to invade Yugoslavia. Kosáry became vice director of one of the three subsections, the Historical Sciences Institute (Kosáry 1988, 129–130). Under this latter institution, Kosáry founded the journal *Revue d'histoire comparée* (1943–1948), which was the new name given to *Études Hongroises*, published sporadically since 1923, and with the full support of its editor Sándor Eckhardt, who still had distribution connections with occupied France's Presses Universitaire. The idea of a comparative history journal was in fact viewed unfavorably by Szekfű, editor of *Magyar Szemle*, and the editors of *Hungarian Quarterly* and *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, who felt that their own subjects, authors, and audience overlapped (Ablonczy 2009, 31). Some of the articles of *Revue d'histoire comparée* do address the old Hungarian nationalities question, but with the intention of highlighting structural differences and similarities in the historical development of the nationalities in historical Hungary. A large majority, though, address questions of regional history, comparative history, and national historiographies, covering the entire map of East-Central and South-East Europe, with a few exceptions. Questions about the political significance and goals of this journal and the Teleki Institute will be covered in Chapter Two.

[56] MTAKK Ms 4525/716/Kosáry to Domanovszky/ London, May 31, 1939. Cf. Balázs Ablonczy, "A Revue d'Histoire Comparée, 1943–1948," in *Hommage à Kosáry Domokos*, ed. Magda Ferch and Mária Ormos (Budapest: Széchenyi Irodalmi és Művészeti Akadémia, 2009), 30–39.

Since most of the commemorative literature about Kosáry's works analyzes his contribution to Hungarian history writing, let me mention a few works in this period which mostly touched upon issues of nationality in the revolutions of 1848, such as "Les project de Kossuth de 1851 concernant le problème des nationalités" (1943) and "Nationalisme et internationalisme dans l'histoire des peuples danubiens" (1947), and works on nationalism and comparative theory, such as "Sur quelques problèmes d'histoire comparée" (1943).[57] On the whole, he wrote few articles of this nature, but many reviews, and in the period from 1943–1948 was mostly engaged in administrative, teaching, and editing responsibilities. Kosáry, though barely classifying as a comparative historian, because he used only asymmetrical regional comparison in some of his histories of Hungary, is in fact the ideologue of comparative history in this era in Hungary. Thus his role is essential to this thesis.

From 1937–1950, Kosáry was also an instructor at the Eötvös College, his alma mater from 1931 to 1935. After the war, when Szekfű became the first Hungarian ambassador to the Soviet Union, Kosáry filled in as professor of modern history at the Budapest University from 1946–1949. The political cover from his association with Szekfű could only hold out for so long, and in 1949 he was fired from his professorship. He was demoted from university professor to librarian at an agricultural college in Gödöllő, but here produced one of his most popular works, *Bevezetés a magyar történelem forrásaiba és irodalmába* (Introduction to the sources and literature of Hungarian history, 1951–1958), three volumes mapping the entire corpus of historical document collections in Hungarian archives.[58] In 1956, he served as president of the Historians'

[57] Kosáry, "Sur quelques problèmes d'histoire comparée," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 1, nos. 1–2 (1943c): 3–32; "Les project de Kossuth de 1851 concernant le problème des nationalités," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 1, nos. 3–4 (1943b): 515–540; "Nationalisme et internationalisme dans l'histoire des peuples danubiens," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 5, no. 2 (1947): 3–21.

[58] Kosáry, *Bevezetés a magyar történelem forrásaiba és irodalmába*, vols. 1–3 (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1951–1958).

Revolutionary Committee. He was imprisoned in 1957 and released on amnesty in 1960. From 1960–1967 he worked at the Pest County Archives, and in 1968 at the Történettudományi Intézet (Historical Sciences Institute), the successor of the Teleki Institute. In the 1970s he was part of a small group of historians, including Makkai, who introduced the Annales school to the wider public (Klaniczay 2007, 1653). He became a full member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1985, and from 1991–1996 was its president. From the late 1980s and afterward, Kosáry had a chance to revisit many of the figures and episodes of interwar era scholarly production. His studies on these subjects remain an invaluable firsthand account of the functioning of important institutions, and in some cases, due to archival documents being destroyed, only recollections survive.

Conclusion

After reviewing the commemorative and biographical literature on the comparatists, we can point to certain commonalities in their life stories. They were the first generation in the interwar period trained to fight Hungary's battles on the field of knowledge (paraphrasing the often noted words of the 1920s education minister Kuno Klebelsberg), and thus their biographical trajectories met up at certain fascinating junctures. In some cases they studied at the university together, were admitted at the same time into the elite-forming Eötvös József Collegium, or went on scholarships to one of the several Hungarian Academies abroad. And even if they studied at different universities, or came to Budapest after their first university degree in the neighboring countries, the most important place where their trajectories collided was the Teleki Institute and the Transylvanian Scientific Institute. Their professional lives crisscrossed around mentor

historians, especially around Szekfű, but the comparatists reflect a greater myriad of historiographical influences than one would expect (aspects which will covered in Chapter Three). Thus it is no accident that most of these comparatists shared a similar world view and ended up in the waning days of the war hiding out from the Nazis and the Arrow Cross, and in some instances contributed many of the articles written by a coalition centered around anti-fascist sentiments (among this group, Gogolák wrote a lion's share of these critical articles for *Magyar Nemzet* in the late 1930s and early 1940s). But besides a story of scholarly achievements, it is important not to shy away from some of the less scholarly points of their careers up to 1945, too. For the Hungarian audience, on the one hand, there were numerous high-level scholarly publications; on the other hand, there were works which were never too far from pointing out the current political lesson to be read from history, even in the higher quality periodicals such as the Szekfű-edited *Magyar Szemle*. If for foreign language publications we have a *Revue d'histoire comparée,* its converse was the well-written and yet often semi-propagandistic *Hungarian Quarterly* and *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*. And almost all of the comparatists were involved in these ventures, and as fate would have it, the archives for the Teleki Institute were destroyed in a fire in 1956, unrelated to the later events in October of that year, while the *HQ*/*NRH* files are one of the best preserved fonds from the interwar era (these aspects will be revisited in greater detail in Chapter Two). And even though almost all of the comparatists were coopted into some of the propagandistic ventures of the time—works critical of the neighboring countries' politics, minority relations, and history writing—the one consistent aspect of this propaganda, at least, was its anti-Nazi orientation.

The well-known historian of sociology György Litván, in a work commemorating the 80th birthday of Kosáry, writes about the generational peers at the Teleki Institute in the period 1947–1948 (when the political scientist István Bibó was at its helm), saying that they "exemplified the

democratically minded [and] cultured pro-reform generation, who already at a quite young age, in the midst of the crisis of the World War, recognized and accepted the need for change and modernization, and in 1945 seized at the chance to bring it about" (1993, 276).[59] The catastrophe of Nazi collusion and destruction of the country left an indelible mark on the lives of the comparatists, which greatly influenced the way in which they attempted to rebuild the nation. In the many twists and turns between 1944 and 1950 to come, their reactions were personal and individual, but one aspect was certain: a new start where life not only could not go back to the way it was before the war, but in fact was not even desirable. Kosáry spent the last days of the Budapest siege hiding out from the Hungarian Arrow Cross in the Festetics Palace in Budapest with Szekfű and his Jewish wife, Sári Betyár (I. Romsics, lecture, 2013). In the fall of 1944, at the time of the joint Soviet-Romanian (re)occupation of Northern Transylvania, Makkai and Tamás left their posts at the short-lived Northern Transylvanian Kolozsvár University and the Transylvanian Scientific Institute and came back to Budapest. I. Tóth in late 1944 moved part of the book collection of the Teleki Institute for safekeeping from Budapest to Balatonfüred, a total of 80,000 volumes on the Hungarian nationalities question on which he was compiling a bibliography. He also went to Szombathely in March 1945, requesting that institute members not be conscripted into the last-ditch battles by the western border of Hungary (Csatári 1966, 35, 37). There is an apocryphal story of Gogolák receiving gunshot wounds when he and his mother hid 17 girls and women in their apartment building in the last days of the war, including his future wife of Jewish origin, who were wanted by Arrow Cross death squads. While he distracted the gang, he was shot in the shoulder, chest, and lungs, and his mother was beaten, and in the meantime, the fugitives escaped out the servant's stairwell. He was supposedly saved from execution by his high school

[59] György Litván, "Újrakezdés, szakítás és folytonosság," in *Európa vonzásában. Emlékkönyv Kosáry Domokos 80. születésnapjára*, ed. Ferenc Glatz (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1993), 269–276.

classmate and foreign minister of the Arrow Cross, baron Gábor Kemény. The only problem with this story is that there is no evidence for it, in fact there is a document showing that Gogolák in the last two days of the siege of Budapest joined the Arrow Cross Party (making the story unlikely, but not impossible). At this point, one can only guess at the motivations of Gogolák, all the more perplexing considering that he was a leading journalistic voice of the anti-Nazi coalition in the previous six years (including during the war), and even more perplexing considering that the Soviets were literally two days from achieving victory in Budapest (Nóvé 2001; 2009, 109–110).[60]

Without the war, all these scholars would have moved from the top of their field to the highest positions of leadership in academia and even political life. And even though almost all of them in later times, from the 1950s or 1960s on, or sooner, (re)gained honored and prestigious roles as professors and members of the Academy of Sciences, their collective story is mostly one of careers derailed, not just in terms of trajectory, but becoming in most cases radically different specialists after 1945. Let me end this chapter with a continuation of the thoughts of György Litván:

> Communist intolerance in a tragic manner hindered this generation—which had the learning, local knowledge, and ambition for the task—from achieving the so necessary break and reckoning with the past, in terms of a historical continuity and organic development. In 1945 and immediately afterward, there never occurred an exhaustive and analytical coming to terms with the past. The radical left did not want it, and the rest, on the other hand, did not dare implement such a difficult and painful action. In its place they chose a much easier and superficial solution: a simple repudiation or "erasing" of the interwar period, without separating from it that which would have been tenable and continuable. (Litván 1993, 276)

[60] Only further interviews with people who personally knew Gogolák might shed a light on the context of the known facts. Béla Nóvé, who personally knew Gogolák, and discovered these details only later and after much surprise, has no answer to these questions: Nóvé, "Enigma-változatok – Töprengések Gogolák Lajos önarcképe, privát és publikus portréi felett," *ENIGMA* 16, no. 59 (2009): 108–140.

Chapter Two

Institutions, Education, and Careers

Since I have adopted an additional biographical approach to historiographical questions of the first generation of comparatists working in Hungary from 1930–1960, I want to ensure that the short biographies of the previous chapter are not presented in a vacuum. I can best fill this vacuum with an overview of the institutions within which the comparatists operated. Steven Béla Várdy's *Modern Hungarian Historiography* (1976) provides some of the most useful analysis when it enters into the institutional context of interwar era academia, though his work covers much more ground and several more centuries. In a similar way, but with greater personal detail, I want to focus in on the institutions that most influenced the educational and scholarly existence of the comparatists. Thus, in addition to providing an overview of the history of the institutions in question, I will present them from the vantage of the comparatists in their younger days, for which there is a sufficient amount of archival documentation. In essence, this chapter can showcase the archival documents themselves, which reveal considerable information on the comparatists, which when combined with secondary sources help to place them in the institutional context of the interwar era, WWII, and the communist transition. Whereas Chapter One focused on how the Hungarian historical sciences remember(ed) the comparatists, here I am uncovering new data, or data bypassed by previous scholars; it is a chapter that will read like a group biography centered around the framework of institutional life. This chapter is intended to provide a contextual basis for the historiographical studies of the following chapters, Three and Four, which will focus almost entirely on textual questions of who influenced whom, who read what, what currents and categories were adopted from whom, and so on.

In the following sections, after segue into their secondary school education, I will trace aspects of the comparatists' university education, who in the interwar period were tied to only a few institutions, both as students and as professors: the Pázmány Péter University of Budapest, the "King Ferdinand I" Romanian University of Cluj, and the "Ferenc József" Hungarian University of Kolozsvár in short-lived Northern Transylvania (1940–1944). Additionally, four of them had a several decade long connection with the Eötvös College in Budapest up to 1950, again as students and as teachers. Their further academic experience was gained abroad in universities and Hungarian institutions in Paris, Rome, London, Berlin, Geneva, Leiden, Vienna, and Basel. Finally, the comparatists were all part of a group of researchers and administrators at the Teleki Institute, which was founded in 1941. I delve into the history of these institutions and the comparatists' teaching experiences in the following sections of this chapter.

Bilingualism and Secondary Schooling Inside or Outside of Hungary

The question of bilingualism in childhood, in the sense of growing up in one of the neighboring states of Hungary, presents an important introduction to the lives of the comparative historians, philologists, and linguists of this study and a straightforward basis for biographical comparison. While it is easy to assume that East-Central European Studies in Hungary depended, or even still depend, on the stream of bilingual students from areas of historical Hungary and outside of Hungary proper, in fact, the picture is much more varied. As will be seen in later sections, such as on the Eötvös Collegium and the Budapest University, there was also a significant development of homegrown multilingual talent in the interwar era. For sure, from among this smaller group of comparatists, those who attended secondary school outside of the borders of

interwar era Hungary are in slight majority (four : three), with Gáldi, Makkai, I. Tóth, and Tamás moving to Hungary after their high school or even university education in neighboring states. Those who attended secondary school in Hungary and became regional specialists include Hadrovics, Kosáry, and Gogolák;[1] though records show that Hadrovics picked up a rudimentary conversational level of Croatian when visiting relatives during his childhood before he pursued Slavic languages at the Eötvös College and Budapest University.[2]

Although it may seem unusual to trace the biographies of the comparatists back to their secondary schooling, it is an aspect frequently covered in the (auto)biographical and commemorative literature. Completing a doctorate in one's mid-twenties, as was the case with most of the comparatists, requires a significant investment in learning already at the younger high-school age. The comparatists received a grounding in foreign (and often dead) languages at this level, and in the instance of excellent teachers, they often recalled with nostalgia their vigorous and strict training. There are documents from the archives of the Eötvös College and the Budapest University[3] which trace the comparatists' curricula vitae back to outstanding results in secondary schools (specifically pertaining to their application as students and their later applications and letters of recommendation for positions as professors at the university). Thus I will briefly do the same.

[1] This ratio remains roughly the same when broadened to the larger cohort of young scholars who covered regions that once were a part of historic Hungary as well as those comparatists who entered the stage later. István Sinkovics, Jenő Berlász, István Szabó, Erik Fügedi, Imre Wellmann, and József Deér were all educated from an early age in interwar era Hungary; Zsigmond Jakó, Gábor G. Kemény, István Juhász, Emil Niederhauser, István Borsody, and Lajos Elekes all came to Hungary from either Romania and Czechoslovakia. And if one were to include comparative literature with its historical vantage, again this group would expand with István Gál, raised in Hungary, and Sámuel Domokos and László Sziklay, from Romania and Czechoslovakia, respectively.

[2] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/7. doboz-8. dosszié/Hadrovics László, f. éve 1929/2/"Minősítvényi jó ajánlással"/Budapest, [summer] 1929: "Érettségi: jeles / Anyanyelve, nyelvismerete[:] magyar.–horvát. / Im Deutschen mittelmäßig (Gruppe II.)."

[3] The latter was called Királyi Magyar Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetem in the interwar era, not to be confused with the current Pázmány Péter Catholic University with Budapest and Piliscsaba campuses.

Hadrovics's recognized excellence in Latin at a young age, mentioned in the previous chapter, resulted from the eight years of classes that he attended, first at the Kőszeg Benedictine *gymnasium* for the "four lower years," where he was taught by Tadé Hein. Then he went on to the school of the Premonstratensian Order in Keszthely by Lake Balaton from 1925–1929 for upper/main (*fő*) gymnasium, equivalent to "high school," and there was taught Latin by Emil Láng, himself an alumnus of the Eötvös College (L. Kiss 1999a, 397). In the next subsection I will delve deeper into the role of the Eötvös College in interwar Hungary. Suffice it to mention, though, that already at the high school level, there was a network of teachers inside and outside of Hungary who promoted their most promising students towards Budapest's best institution.

Kosáry attended the Trefort gymnasium in Budapest, graduating in 1931. Founded in 1870, the Trefort prep school was called a "model gymnasium" due to its permanent ties with the Budapest University, where university graduates taught as part of a teacher-training program.[4] The reputation of this elite school, to this day, is associated with famous graduates such as Edward Teller and Michael Polányi. Strength in the hard sciences at this school is evidenced in Kosáry's recollection that history was not yet on his horizon before he attended university, but that he originally intended to study physics (Bartal and Balázs 2004, 7). The personal papers of Kosáry contain a copy of his *baccalauréat*, which lists him in attendance from 1923/24–1930/31.[5] All of his examinations were "passed with distinction" (*jeles*) from a list of core subjects, such as, Hungarian language and literature, Latin language and literature, history, mathematics, physics,

[4] This practice of doctoral graduates teaching briefly at a high school, in preparation for university level teaching, was quite common, though for the majority of cases it ended up being a lifetime career. Kosáry taught high school for one year in 1937/38, at the Lutheran Tasnádi Nagy András gymnasium in Budapest, after finishing his doctorate, and before his new position as a professor at the Eötvös College starting in 1938/39. I. Tóth, as mentioned in the previous chapter, was a high school teacher in Satu Mare from 1935–37 and 1939–41. Tamás taught briefly at the Hatvan Realschule until January 29, 1930, before being transferred to the Széchenyi Library (ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1025/1932-33/4/Lajos Tamás's "Curriculum vitae," Budapest, Dec. 23, 1932).

[5] Országos Széchenyi Könyvtár, Budapest, Kosáry Domokos-kiállítás, Dec. 9, 2013–Mar. 8, 2014.

religion and ethics, Greek language and literature, German language and literature, and philosophy, among others.[6]

With the exception of Makkai, I. Tóth, and Gogolák, I was able to come across archival documentation of either the high school diploma itself or commentary regarding it; for these three exceptions, I will have to rely on (auto)biographical information instead. From the available records it is clear that the above-mentioned classes of Kosáry were pretty much standard for Hadrovics, Tamás, Gáldi, and by extension to the remainder of the group, but with minor variations. Unlike Kosáry's diploma, Hadrovics's and Tamás's diplomas have the rubric of classical Greek crossed out,[7] while there is no evidence of Gáldi taking Greek in secondary school, even though he studied it in the late 1930s and published a work on modern Greek elements in the Romanian language (1939). Latin, on the other hand, was a given for each of them. Another variation regards the learning of French in secondary school. In Arad and Timișoara, Romania, where Tamás, I. Tóth, and Gáldi attended secondary school, French was offered over German; though Tamás, graduating earlier in 1922, studied German, and continued on this track at the Eötvös College, combined with French. Makkai also knew German and French, learned either in secondary school at the Calvinist College in Cluj, Romania, or in the home environment. Makkai recalled in an interview that the principal of the college, Lajos Gönczi, said that he would be twice as strict on him as the other students because his famous father was also a superintendent of the

[6] This type of secondary school instruction is practically a thing of the past, with its classical and Prussian models. Taking a cue from the different meanings of the word "baccalaureate" in the Anglo (university) vs. the French (high school) context, subjects of this caliber are now more akin to Bachelor's level Classical Studies, Philosophy, or Theology training, though Latin is still taught in some (usually more elite) prep schools in Europe and North America.
[7] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/21. doboz-20. dosszié/Treml Lajos, f. éve 1922/2/"Hiteles fordítás Treml [Tamás] Lajosnak a Gimnáziumi érettségi bizonyitvány"/Noter public D. Silviu Păscuţiu/Arad, after Aug. 2, 1922; Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/7. doboz-8. dosszié/Hadrovics László, f. éve 1929/15/"Tanulmányi Értesítő Kőszegi Ferenc József kath. főgimnázium"/ 1921/22–1928/29 tanév.

college (Ács 1988, 1, 3). I. Tóth studied at the Piarist gymnasium in Timișoara, Romania, passing his examinations in the Romanian language on July 6, 1929 (Csatári 1966, 11).

Tamás studied at the gymnasium of the Conventual Franciscans (*Minorita*), and in addition to Latin studied German and Romanian. He applied to the Eötvös College in 1922 due to the recommendation of his teacher Nándor Berde, also an alumnus of the Eötvös College (Kese 1989, 5). In his letter of application, addressed to the Hungarian Minister of Education, at the time Kuno Klebelsberg, he writes, "As a student of poor background, but with high achievement, I concluded my studies at the Arad Roman Catholic Hungarian upper gymnasium. After my diploma examinations [in Romanian], I want to enter into the field of teaching, selecting the subjects of mathematics and physics."[8] Tamás was the only comparatist of working-class background, the rest had fathers almost entirely from the bureaucratic, state-administrative, or educational fields, while both of Kosáry's parents could be classified as intelligentsia. Moreover, Tamás, like Kosáry, intended to study the hard sciences, and actually started in physics and mathematics at the Eötvös College before transitioning to literature and linguistics.

Gáldi's secondary schooling started in Dej, Romania, and then he went to the same Roman Catholic high school run by Conventual Franciscans in Arad as Tamás, which was renamed the Moise Nicoară Liceum after 1919. Gáldi was fluent in French when he arrived to Hungary for university studies in 1928. That same year he applied to the Eötvös College, writing in a letter also addressed to the Minister of Education, "Several years ago I decided already that for my life's mission I will choose the field of teaching, with the subjects of the Hungarian, French, and Romanian languages." While attending high school in Romania, he studied under what he called, in a 1974 interview, "high-caliber" Romanian teachers, Alexandru Constantinescu and Alexandru

[8] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/21. doboz-20. dosszié/Treml Lajos, f. éve 1922/1/Lajos Tamás to Minister of Education/Temesvár, July 2, 1922.

T. Stamatiad, the latter a student of the poet and literary critic Alexandru Macedonski. He passed his state high school examinations in the Romanian language in Timișoara in 1928, and then repeated a Hungarian baccalaureate examination in Budapest at the Verbőczi István real-gymnasium (Kese 1989, 161; Beke 1974, 215).[9] Rarely covered in Hungarian research on minority education politics, if ever, are personal recollections of high-quality Romanian literature and language instruction. Gáldi might be an exception here, considering that he was translating the poetry of Eminescu and his teacher Stamatiad into Hungarian at the age of 14 (Beke 1974, 215). Yet Makkai also speaks of his influential professors of Romanian history, whom he befriended at the Cluj University (Ács 1988, 1, 3). Focus is usually placed, and rightfully so, on the across the board drawbacks, hurdles, and prejudiced position of minority education in a nationalizing state.[10] Gáldi, in fact, many years before, in 1929, also seems to have concurred with this general situation. In his second application to the Eötvös College, Gáldi explains why he was attending university in Budapest instead of Cluj: "My father—a former Hungarian state gymnasium teacher—is

[9] Also ELTE Levéltára 8/b/732/1937-38/10–11/László Gáldi's "Curriculum vitae," Budapest, Dec. 18, 1937.

[10] There is a large corpus of research into the general and specific disadvantages of Hungarian students in Romania in the interwar period, for example in regard to difficulties Hungarians had with university entrance examinations in the Romanian language (often perceived as more strict than for their Romanian counterparts), the financial difficulties of parochial schools after the land reforms which also affected church properties, the progressive increase in the number of classes that had to be taught in the Romanian language, and Hungarians' proportion in the universities falling to roughly their actual nationwide proportion (that is, a large decrease). The classic comparative work in this field is the posthumous publication of Sándor Biró, *Kisebbségben és többségben. Románok és magyarok 1867-1940* (Csíkszereda: Pro-Print, 2002 [1989]), 351–421, also published in English as *The Nationalities Problem in Transylvania, 1867–1940: A Social History of the Romanian Minority under Hungarian Rule, 1867–1918, and of the Hungarian Minority under Romanian Rule, 1918–1940* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1992). After a full comparison of minority issues, including economic, educational, religious, and legal, before and after 1920, the thesis is that in the balance it was better to be a Romanian in Austria-Hungary than a Hungarian in Romania. However one's opinion falls on this question, Biró's book is an unequal comparison because Transylvania was in a state-building phase in the interwar era, the economic preponderance of each ethnic minority in the different eras was radically different, and nationalism was an entirely different animal after the First World War—aspects not really taken into account when the manuscript was originally written in 1945–46 for the purpose of Hungary's peace negotiations (see Nándor Bárdi, "Nemzetiségpolitikai látószögek és társadalomtörténeti folyamatok (Előszó az erdélyi kiadáshoz)," in Biró [1992, 5–6]).

currently working as a teacher at a gymnasium in Arad run by Catholics. The institution had its public license taken away by the Romanian state in 1922, and as a result, attendance has dropped from the original 1,200 to 85 students in 1928/29 … and in the following year will probably close down. In this scenario, my father will be compelled to find a position in Hungary, and anyway he can only teach in Romania for one more year because his required Romanian-language certification for further operation was not accepted."[11] When he was admitted to the college, starting in 1929/30, the discussion surrounding his application reads—"[Personal] Remarks: It is the opinion of Sándor Eckhardt [literary historian and professor] that he is quite proficient in French"—an opinion which was significant enough for him to receive a full scholarship to the college for the Hungarian-French-Romanian track.[12]

Finally, Gogolák, the outlier, because he studied law at the university and at first wanted to become a politician, received his upper secondary (high school) education at the Piarist gymnasium in Buda, a school which he calls the seat of youth with ties and sympathies to the interwar era governing class in Hungary, a place where he "never felt any community even as a pupil of the pious orders" [már kegyesrendi növendékként sem éreztem közösséget] (Gogolák 2001a and 2001b).[13]

[11] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/6. doboz-7. dosszié/Göbl [Gáldi] László, f. éve 1929/10/Gáldi to Minister of Education/Budapest, June 12, 1929. There is evidence, based on a 1933 letter from his father to the school administration, that his father remained in Arad, see ibid. 10/Gáldi Alajos to Directorship/Arad, May 30, 1933.

[12] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/6. doboz-7. dosszié/Göbl [Gáldi] László, f. éve 1929/12/"második felvételi magy. franc. román/Budapest [summer 1929].

[13] The remaining records of this gymnasium are kept at the Budapest City Archives/Főváros Levéltára, Budapesti II. kerületi Királyi Egyetemi Katolikus Gimnázium iratai (VIIIl/24), 1. téka. M. They were almost entirely lost during the siege of Budapest, 1944–45. Apparently, the birth records of attendees only remained from the 1922/23 school year, and diplomas from 1911 (see A magyarországi piarista iskolai anyakönyvek konspektusa / Conspectus matricularum Scholarum Piarum in Hungaria, http://archivum.piarista.hu/index.htm?http&&&archivum.piarista.hu/rendtortenet/adattarak/matricula.htm, accessed May 24, 2014).

The choice of secondary school institution for the comparatists usually aligned with religious affiliation but for two exceptions: I. Tóth attended a Catholic high school in Timișoara, but attended university in Cluj with a scholarship from the Calvinist Church to study theology; and Kosáry, a Lutheran, attended a non-denominational prep school in Budapest. Makkai, I. Tóth, and Kosáry are the Protestants of the group, the rest belonging to the Roman Catholic faith. Since university and secondary school registries of the time contained denominational data, it is an easily quantifiable factor for prosopographical studies. The connection between denominations and historiographical schools in interwar era Hungary is a subject that has been explored before (Erős summarizes the idea in 2000, 10). Regarding their future university education, at least, religion seems to have played a minor role outside of their personal life, but with two exceptions perhaps: Makkai passed theological examinations in Sárospatak alongside his graduate studies, and, less significantly, Gogolák contributed many articles to several Catholic presses in the 1930s and 1940s. Still, if one places too much emphasis on the question of religion, it becomes difficult to take into account how Szekfű (a Catholic) influenced equally Gogolák (a Catholic), Kosáry (a Lutheran), and Gáldi (a Catholic), the former two actually being on friendly terms with Szekfű. His influence upon these three comparatists is much better understood either in terms of a specific historiographical interpretation of Hungarian history (in Kosáry's case), in terms of the then popular *szellemtörténet* method/style (in Gáldi's case), or in terms of political outlook (as in Gogolák's case). Moreover, the comparatists, as regionalists, in many cases had the option of remaining insulated from some of the broader historiographical divisions of the time, even sticking to a more positivistic methodology (like Tamás and I. Tóth, that is, until their Marxist turn after 1945).

The Eötvös College

The 1995 centenary celebrations of the founding of the Baron Eötvös József Collegium, a watershed moment in the history of its remembrance, were attended by the honored guests László Hadrovics and Domokos Kosáry, two alumni from the late 1920s and early 1930s. Lajos Tamás and László Gáldi, recruited from outside of Hungary's interwar era borders, were also alumni of this college, which funded university studies through room and board in the capital. The college itself was closed up in 1950 as its intellectual elite generating reputation could not be overcome even after massive restructuring starting in 1945, independent critical spirits not being in need at that exact time, as many would comment. Gáldi, Hadrovics, and Kosáry were all instructors and important administrators at this important 1950 juncture (all three, and Tamás briefly, too, were instructors from the late the 1930s). In the 1980s, Kosáry continued the process of rehabilitation of the college that began in the 1970s, and in general he pointed to the more liberally-minded institutions of the interwar and WWII era (such as the Teleki Institute and Eötvös College), though not open-minded enough to include communists, and even if not per se progressive, at least institutions that did not hinder liberally-minded individuals (Glatz 1970, 805). Of course, by this time many others joined the bandwagon of critique of the Stalinist reorganization of the sciences in Hungary, but Kosáry in his work *A történelem veszedelmei* (The perils of history, 1987) was especially harsh in pronouncing the loss of previous decades of advancement, not to mention decades of potential, which amounted to a type of autochthonization through shutting oneself out of international debates. Kosáry, though critical of the "reactionary," out-of-date nature of interwar politics, personally recalled the feeling of traveling abroad and not having to be ashamed about his

education, [14] and in fact, in his field of history, proud of his training in the most up-to-date methods of the time in Hungary, while having the opportunity to study at other institutions, like the Sorbonne in France.

For all alumni, the relationship with the Eötvös College was meant to be for life, and this was case for the comparatists too, who in spite of the college's closing in 1950, never ceased to speak of its former good reputation. The comparatists, once on their career paths, and away from the college, continued a correspondence with the director Miklós Szabó (director, 1935–1945), letters existing in the college archives to this day. They are filled with many personal details of friendship, postcards from scholarships in European capitals, requests for specific scholarly contacts abroad, and a constant stream of invitations to their lectures and talks in Budapest, a sign of Miklós Szabó's continued fostering. The importance of this institution on the intellectual life of Hungary from 1895–1950 cannot be overestimated, and the same holds true regarding the individuals of this study. Regarding the historiography on the college, János Korompay writes, "from its very beginnings many articles, memoirs, autobiographical novels, and recently two studies have been published about it … the era is not characterizable without knowledge of the college" (2006, 227). Besides Garai's 2014 monograph, there are several important publications, such as the *Lustrum* volume of 2011, that combine many short articles on numerous aspects of the college's history. Since an exhaustive account of this institution is outside the scope of this study, I will stick to important recollections of the above four comparatists combined with relevant secondary sources, aspects which primarily highlight their training.[15]

[14] Here he is referring to the university system in Budapest: "A budapesti egyetemet Londonból kezdtem igazán értékelni" (MTAKK Ms 4525/713 Letter of Kosáry to Sándor Domanovszky/ London Jan. 30, 1939).

[15] Literature: László Kósa, ed., *Szabadon szolgál a szellem. Tanulmányok és dokumentumok a száz esztendeje alapított Eötvös József Collegium történetéből. 1895-1995* (Budapest: Eötvös Collegium, 1995); Imre Garai, *A Báró Eötvös József Collegium története 1895–1950 között* (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Collegium, 2014); József Zsigmond Nagy and István Szíjártó, eds., *Tanulmányok az Eötvös Kollégium történetéből* (Budapest, 1989); Domokos Kosáry, "Az Eötvös

The Eötvös College was a type of parallel institution which functioned alongside the university system since it did not provide degrees, but there were mandatory core curriculums from which all attendees had to choose. "The Eötvös students had to go to the university only for exams, and they spent the larger proportion of their time in the institution's well-equipped and constantly growing library" (Sepsi 2005, 32). In Hungarian these core curriculums were called *szak*, the same word as "degree," but here meaning first a choice of a broad topic of either humanities or sciences, then with subsections in linguistics, history, physics, mathematics, etc., and a further choice from a minimum of two languages. This amounted to roughly 14 hours of classes for those on a three-curriculum track, in addition to university studies. Like its inspiration and model, the Parisian École Normale Supérieure, the mission of the college was to train open- and critically-minded scholar-teachers, teachers of secondary schools, but morphed into something much more significant. A list of the alumni of this college reveals some of the most influential Hungarian scholars, writers, and scientists, and certainly linguists, philologists, and historians. After the First World War, the college continued to function as an institution for the entire old Hungarian realm, and drew ethnic Hungarian students from beyond Hungary's interwar era borders. Approximately 25 percent of the students were made up of this group, which is roughly equal to the ratio of ethnic

Collegium történetéből. Az első évtizedek: 1895–1927," in *Tanulmányok*, ed. Nagy and Szíjártó (Budapest, 1989a), 1–16; Domokos Kosáry, "Az Eötvös Collegium történetéből," *Eötvös-Füzetek*, new ser., 10 (1989b); István Szíjártó and Gábor Tóth, eds., *Az Eötvös József Kollégium történetének bibliográfiája és levéltári anyaga* (Budapest: Eötvös József Kollégium, 1987); Enikő Sepsi, "A Collegium története, Visszatekintés az elmúlt 100 évre," *Világosság*, nos. 2–3 (2005): 31–38; Enikő Sepsi and Károly Tóth, eds., *Tudós Tanárok az Eötvös Collegiumban* (Budapest: Ráció Kiadó, 2009); János H. Korompay, "Az École Normale Supérieure és az Eötvös József Collegium," in "Kultúra, nemzet, identitás," ed. József Jankovics and Judit Nyerges, 322–327, Lectures from VI. Nemzetközi Hungarológiai Kongresszuson (Debrecen, August 23–26, 2006); Imre Szabics, "Az Eötvös József Collegium és az École Normale Supérieure," in *Lustrum Sollemnia aedificii a. D. MCMXI inaugurati* (Budapest: Typotex Kiadó – Eötvös Collegium, 2011), 419–427; Géza Laczkó, "Az Eötvös-Collegium, középiskolai tanárjelöltek állami internátusa," *Nyugat* 14, nos. 15–16 (1920): 817–818; Béla Lekli, "Szemelvények a régi Eötvös Kollégium utolsó éveinek történetéhez (1945–1950)," *Levéltári Szemle* 45, no. 3 (1995): 37–56; Veronika Markó, "Hogyan lett az Eötvös József Collegium könyvtárából az Irodalomtudományi Intézet Eötvös Könyvtára?," in *Lustrum*, 220–235; Pál Pritz, "Magyarságkép és külföldi propaganda a húszas évek első felében," *Századok* (1994): 1078–1116.

Hungarians outside of Hungary's interwar era borders. Of the 22 individuals which accounted for this 25 percent, a majority were born Hungarian citizens prior to 1920, a fact which coincides with the date of birth of Tamás and Gáldi (Kovács and Szabó-Pál 1995, 59–60). In addition, there were numerous foreign exchange students housed in the college at any one time, large enough for 100 students total, from all over Europe, North America, and even Asia, creating an international atmosphere (Pritz 1994, 1098). Foreign professors were often recruited to teach subjects such as comparative literature and linguistics of Romance, Germanic, Finno-Ugric, and Turkic language families, and Western languages were often taught by native speakers, an aspect which was codified in an increased budget from 1911 (Ress 2011, 571).

Of all the languages offered at the college, the pronounced emphasis on French as the language with which to engage in Western scholarship has often been commented upon. This was an aspect which came to the forefront in times of political turmoil, too, such as in a 1920 article in *Nyugat* (in response to critiques of elitism against the college and threats of restructuring during the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic of the previous year), where Géza Laczkó, an alumnus, writes that "the college … was the home of French and Francophile culture. Among the great German deluge it was a small Romance, nay, Gallic island. And this is to Géza Bartoniek's credit, the director from the very beginning until today. With him and via him we gazed at Paris and France" (1920, 817). Ferenc Glatz, in his article on the historian-training program of the college, writes that this French influence was also visible in the "bourgeois" bent of the historiography seminars (contra the dominant gentry-nationalist school of historiography) and philology and source criticism seminars led by Sándor Mika[16] from 1895 until 1912. The first group of historians and students of Mika to come out of the college around the turn of the century were Gyula Szekfű,

[16] "Mika Sándor (1859-1912)," *Századok*, no. 5 (1912): 398–400; Sándor Domanovszky, "Mika Sándor," *Történeti Szemle*, no. 3 (1912): 477–479.

Sándor Domanovszky, Ferenc Eckhart, Sándor Eckhardt, and Tibor Gerevich, most of whom were the later mentors to the comparatists, including those who did not attend the college. Glatz also points out that at the college German historiography was not avoided either, with emphasis on Ranke, Mommsen, and Niebuhr, in addition to the French Michelet, Taine, and Renan (Glatz 1970, 800–802). The main point here, though, is the unique dual German and French footing of this first group of graduates. In neighboring Austria, for example, Szekfű claimed in 1908 that it was obvious among the students of the Viennese Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung that they were only trained in the German historical tradition (803). In the Hungarian context, and specifically regarding Szekfű, this dual footing created the odd scenario where one could reject one tradition in favor of the other based on the current political climate too. Szekfű (who will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three) provided a breakthrough critique of the Hungarian gentry nationalist discourse with a book on Ferenc Rákoczi II (1913), which he dedicated to his late teacher Mika; its thesis of an anti-hero Rákoczi was so scandalizing that there were parliamentary debates and censures of its author.

Yet, after the war, Szekfű succeeded in influencing almost the entire interwar cadre of Hungarian historians away from this "French" positivist direction and in favor of "German" *Geistesgeschichte* (*szellemtörténet*). Added to this critique of positivism was a critique of liberalism, thus tying together "dead-end," "liberal" Austro-Hungarian politics with the history writing of that same era. It seems that when Szekfű was most successful in this course, i.e., when *szellemtörténet* reached its peak in Hungary, he developed a new aversion to all things German, coinciding with Hungary's alignment with the German political sphere of interest in the early to mid-1930s. He was also disturbed by the newest Hungarian historical school of *Volksgeschichte* (*nepiségtörténet*) that emerged in the 1930s and shared traits with its German version in seeking

out ethnicity as a cause or motor of history. Lajos Gogolák too identifies the year 1933—"when Hitler is sending books by the hundreds of thousands to the bonfire"—as the date that is a turning point in Szekfű's life, who "now permanently breaks with the roots of German-origin erudition, and begins to turn in the direction of French Catholicism, and speaks all the more about land reform, and in [István] Bethlen's *Magyar Szemle* gives more space to those articles which urge land reform."[17] Thus we see that the dual footing in both the German and French historical traditions opened up the possibility for a conceptual nimbleness, though in the case of Szekfű there was clearly a preference for the conservative type.

After Mika, historiography and source criticism seminars at the college in the interwar era were held by Imre Madzsar and Pál Lukcsics, which, Glatz writes, resulted in an overall decline from the previous high level of instruction (804). Yet the significance of history training in this era should not be tied strictly to the reputation of the individuals then teaching, or as Krisztina Tóth writes: "the Eötvös József College did not become legendary in the eyes of contemporaries because here they would have taught different [subjects] from other higher education institutions, nor because here only highly talented students were accepted … but because here they taught using different methods: with teacher and student in close knit human and professional contact … small group teaching, [and] expectations tailored to the individual" (in Kósa, ed., 1995, 115, 111). Moreover, one should consider that the Eötvös College was always a complementary institution to university studies, and there was a great incentive to attend university lectures, too, since many of the most popular professors, like Szekfű, only taught at the university. In addition to those former alumni and professors mentioned in the above paragraph, among the next generation to

[17] Gábor Noszkai, "Szellemi életre kelni...," *Holmi*, no. 6 (2012): 721–733, here 724, quoting "Gogolák Lajos Szekfű Gyula és Gerevich Tibor kávéházi asztalairól," ed. István Bardoly and Csilla Markója, *ENIGMA* 16, no. 59 (2009): 150–159.

come out of the College were István Hajnal and Elemér Mályusz, each responsible for an interwar era "school" of history. And for those comparatists interested in linguistics, literature, and philology, one should mention János Melich and István Kniezsa for Slavic philology, Sándor Bonkáló on Russian literature, and József Bajza for Croatian literature; Carlo Tagliavini for Romanian and Romance linguistics; Aurélian Sauvageot for French Studies; and Zoltán Gombocz for Indo-European and Finno-Ugric comparative linguistics.

In 1938, when Kosáry took over the history seminars at the college, replacing the retiring Lukcsics, it was another moment when the French influence in the college took on political significance. One of the unofficial requirements of this position was a person "not of the traditional German, but of French, or rather Anglo-Saxon, erudition" (Glatz 1970, 804). Protectiveness of the French orientation in the late 1930s had to do with the college being practically both a hatchery and nest for teachers sympathetic to the anti-fascist opposition, as a list of the political orientation of the faculty would undoubtedly show (Glatz 1970, 805). Kosáry sums up the orientation in broader strokes as follows:

> While the larger portion of Hungarian public opinion, from a slightly rural frog's perspective, viewed the Wilhelmine Second Reich as the main model, the college was one of those high-opening windows which looked out directly west above the head of German power … while the German orientation, as a result of the close proximity and given power relations, hid in itself the danger of dependence on exclusivity and provincialism, then Paris was not just another country's capital, but an exploration into the slightly larger world, representing the possibilities for independent and free choice. (Imre Szabics, "Az Eötvös József Collegium és az École Normale Supérieure," in *Lustrum*, 2011, quoting Kosáry 1989a, 14)

From the standpoint of language instruction, and going back several decades, the dual footing of the college should be viewed as all the more remarkable considering how dominant the German language was in the state structure of Austria-Hungary; after 1883 it was a mandatory

subject in secondary schools in Hungary, too. Yet, with 25 percent of the students in the early years of the college choosing German as their main track, German studies at the college could not possibly have been neglected either. The height of German studies at the college is tied to the name of Hugo Kleinmayr, 1912–1925, teacher to several important literary studies experts, including Gyula Farkas who was later the director of the Collegium Hungaricum in Berlin from 1935, and remained in academia in West Germany after WWII. Before WWI, German was generally treated as the first language to be mastered, and then it was often paired with French as a single track, a German-French curriculum. In the 1920s, however, the level and quality of teaching had to be adjusted to take into account the loss of regions with native German speakers, with more emphasis now on the language itself, and less on seminars on the different eras of 400 years of German literature (Ress 2011, 571, 573–575).

Of the comparatists, Tamás from 1922 studied mathematics and physics for the first two years, then was urged by the director of the college, Géza Bartoniek[18] (director, 1895–1928), to study philology and sign up for the German-French track. Tamás even completed his dissertation for a German degree, but earlier chose to minor in other linguistic studies, primarily Romanian, but also taking Italian studies classes from Tagliavini at the Romanian Philology Department of the university (Kese 1989, 6, 12).[19] Hadrovics from 1929 originally signed up for Hungarian and Latin degrees at the university, and German was the third major, taking the same subjects at the college (L. Kiss 1999a, 398). Zoltán Gombocz (1877–1935), director of the college (1928–1935) after Bartoniek, one day saw Hadrovics studying a German-Russian grammar book, and urged him in his third year to switch his major to Slavic Studies (401–402).[20]

[18] See Tibor Gerevich, "Az Eötvös Collegium története – Bartoniek Géza (1854-1930)," in *Lustrum*, 96–102.
[19] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1025/1932-33/3/Lajos Tamás's "Curriculum vitae," Budapest, Dec. 23, 1932.
[20] There is a story of Gombocz presenting Hadrovics a silver pengő upon being able to understand the Russian lyrics to the opera *Boris Godunov* (Borzsák 2002, 237).

Gombocz,[21] an internationally recognized linguist and a professor at the college and the Budapest University, became a defining figure for the comparatists, particularly the linguists of the group, in fact for the entire linguistics field in Hungary. Gombocz's college and university classes focused on topics such as Hungarian etymology, introduction to linguistics, a comparison of Finno-Ugric and Indo-European language families, and the Turkic, Slavic, German, Latin, and Italian elements of Hungarian (G. Tóth 1977, 423). He also introduced Saussure and the functionalist theories of the Prague linguistic circle to the Hungarian community of linguists (Balázs 1977, 414, 418–420). He was instrumental in leading the university towards modern linguistics, with full faculties for the teaching of Indo-European comparative linguistics, Finno-Ugric studies, and Middle-Eastern and Asian languages, results evidenced by his students' push for Hungarian studies, philology, and linguistics to enter into entirely new directions. The Turkologist and Eötvös alumnus Gyula Németh (1890–1976) wrote of his one-time teacher: "Gombocz and the Eötvös College belong together closely; these are not two [separate] topics" (Németh, *A múlt magyar tudósai*, 1972, 254–257, in G. Tóth 1977, 421). Gombocz, member of the very first class of students of the college in 1895, has been called on numerous occasions the nation's single most important scholar (Harmatta 2002, 238). Kosáry, who was not on the linguistics track at the college, but learned French from him and interacted with him regularly on a personal basis, in an interview called him one of the most influential of his teachers (Bartal and Balázs 2004, 12; Harmatta 2002, 241). Gombocz was also instrumental in bringing to the college

[21] See especially the special Gombocz issues of *Magyar Nyelv* 73, no. 4 (1977); and *Magyar Nyelv* 98, no. 2 (2002): Gábor Tóth, "Gombocz Zoltán és az Eötvös Collegium," *Magyar Nyelv* 73, no. 4 (1977): 421–425; János Balázs, "Gombocz Zoltán és a korabeli általános nyelvészet," ibid., 414–421. Also, Domokos Kosáry, "Gombocz Zoltán emlékezete," *Magyar Nyelv* 98, no. 2 (2002): 240–241; János Harmatta, "Gombocz Zoltán mellszobra előtt," ibid., 238–240; István Borzsák, "Gombocz Zoltán mellszobrának felavatása," ibid., 236–238; Jenő Kiss, "Gombocz Zoltán életéről és munkásságáról," in *Lustrum Sollemnia aedificii a. D. MCMXI inaugurati* (Budapest: Typotex Kiadó – Eötvös Collegium, 2011).

Aurélian Sauvageot,[22] a Finno-Ugric specialist and French studies teacher to a generation of students from 1923 to 1932. Sauvageot was a student of Antoine Meillet in Paris, sent to study Hungarian and write his dissertation under the guidance of Gombocz. During this time Sauvageot also prepared a French-Hungarian dictionary which was published in 1932 (Szathmári 1989, 506). Gáldi studied under both Sauvageot and Tagliavini (head of the Romanian Philology Department at this time) (L. Kiss 2000, 510). Hadrovics attended Gombocz's lectures at the university and seminars at the college, and for his doctoral oral examination minor was tested by Gombocz on Hungarian linguistics (L. Kiss 1999a, 402). Gáldi, as a disciple of Gombocz, remained a representative of the functionalist orientation throughout his lifetime, and published several works (1953; 1962) on the analysis of prosody in this vein (Bakos 1975, 204).

Teaching at the Eötvös College

Gáldi taught Romance languages sporadically at the Eötvös College from 1937 to 1950—being that he had responsibilities at the Budapest University and in the early years took study trips to Italy[23] and Greece—and then taught Russian in the post-WWII years as well (L. Kiss 2000, 510; Markó 2011, 230). In a letter from Rome in 1938, he discussed his teaching plans at the college for the next school year: Italian, French, and Romanian, becoming officially the Italian teacher,

[22] István Szathmári, "Aurélien Sauvageot-ra emlékezünk," *Magyar Nyelv* 85, no. 4 (1989): 505–507; József Erdődi, "Aurélien Sauvageot üdvözlése 75. születésnapján, 1972. április 13-án.," *Magyar Nyelv* 68, no. 3 (1972): 370–372; Mária Cz. Farkas, "Sauvageot professzor könyvtára," *Magyar Nyelv* 93, no. 4 (1997): 493–495.

[23] A letter requesting the quick administrative processing from the Budapest University of his Italian "premio" scholarship for the 1937/38 school year: ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1414/1937-38/1. It seems that the director of the Eötvös College, Miklós Szabó, organized or obtained the scholarship for Gáldi: Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/6. doboz-7. dosszié/Göbl [Gáldi] László, f. éve 1929/26/Gáldi to Miklós Szabó/Rome, April 10, 1938. Besides the expression of thanks, here he discusses preparing a much needed "proper" Italian grammar for Hungarian students

and French only until someone else could fill in Sándor Eckhardt's vacant position (records in fact show him teaching French language and literature sporadically until the college's final school year in 1949/50, see Lekli 1995, 49, 58). For first-year Italian linguistics students, he planned one hour weekly of introduction to Italian linguistics, old literary texts, and a historical stylistic analysis; in the second-year grammar lectures and then textual analysis; third and fourth year, linguistic history, linguistic geography, and more texts.[24] As a teacher at the college, Gáldi also introduced his students to ideas from *szellemtörténet*, his other main interwar era orientation. One can receive a brief insight into the nature of his classes in a postcard from January 28, 1940, sent by Gáldi to Béla Zolnai, an expert in comparative literature, particularly French and Hungarian literature from the eighteenth to twentieth century, and an alumnus of the Eötvös College. Gáldi congratulates him on the publication of his chapter "Magyar stílus" (Hungarian style), on the character of the Hungarian language, in the Szekfű edited work, *Mi a magyar?* (What is Hungarian?, 1939b). This work, emphasizing a non-ethnic identity of Hungarians, has since become the focus of considerable historiographical analysis as the sine qua non of interwar era characterological studies.[25] Gáldi, in his letter, writes that he has frequently discussed this chapter in his classes at the college, and "when I present a lecture on the history of neo-Latin versification in the following semester, I will recall this [and your other] works."[26]

[24] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/6. doboz-7. dosszié/Göbl [Gáldi] László, f. éve 1929/26/Gáldi to Miklós Szabó/Rome, April 30, 1938.

[25] Ambrus Miskolczy, "'Mi a magyar?' Nemzetkarakterológia és nemzeti mitológia válaszútján," *Századok* (1998): 1262–1304; Miskolczy, "Eltűnt akadémikusok nyomában. Zolnai Béla és A magyar stílus," *Magyar Tudomány*, no. 8 (1999); Miskolczy, "Filológia, szellemtörténet, történelem (Zolnai Béla [1890–1969] emlékezete)," *Holmi*, no. 8 (Aug. 2004), 927–935; Miskolczy, *Nemzet és szellem (Babits Mihály, Eckhardt Sándor, Szekfű Gyula és Zolnai Béla világáról)* (Budapest: Napvilág Kiadó, 2001). See chapter three for discussion of Balázs Trencsényi, *A nép lelke. Nemzetkarakterológiai viták Kelet-Európában* (Budapest: Argumentum Kiadó – Bibó István Szellemi Műhely, 2010); and the abridged English version, *The Politics of "National Character": A Study in Interwar East European Thought* (London: Routledge, 2012).

[26] MTAKK Ms 4123/386/Gáldi to Zolnai/Budapest, Jan. 28, 1940.

In 1934 Tamás taught a few French classes in exchange for being able to live in the dormitory (Kese 1989, 6, 12). From 1937 until 1950, Hadrovics taught a range of subjects at the Eötvös Collegium: Hungarian linguistics and Serbian and Russian languages and literature (L. Kiss 1999a, 403). Russian was only picked up at the college after the war; in the 1946/47 school year, records of the Ministry of Education show that both Gáldi and Hadrovics taught Russian language and literature, and only Gáldi in 1949/50 (Lekli 1995, 49, 58). Correspondence with the director of the college, Miklós Szabó, indicates some of the years that he taught Hungarian linguistics, 1939/40, 1941–43, etc.

Kosáry became a full teacher at the college in 1938, with some training in the previous year at the Tasnádi Nagy András gymnasium in Budapest. His position as leader of the history seminars was filled in by others when he went abroad to London and New York for several month periods. After 1945, he still kept his teaching position while becoming the director of the Hungarian Historical Sciences Institute, that is, until the college's closing in 1950.[27] Further activities surrounding the college by these four alumni included collecting books for the library of the college, and recruiting students to work on publishing projects. Kosáry wrote from New York in 1941 to Szabó that the Carnegie Endowment and the American Historical Society "promised an entire row series and historical works on the part of the college library"; it is not clear if these books made it from storage at the Smithsonian Institution to Hungary in those difficult times.[28] Similarly, in the late 1930s, after the French government's gift of 2,500 francs' worth of books to add to the collection of the college's library, Gáldi was in charge of choosing the books of linguistic

[27] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 41. doboz-71. dosszié/2 Kosáry Domokos/3/"Tasnádi Nagy András Gimn. h. tanár kinevezése"/ Budapest, Sept. 29, 1937; ibid., 11/"helyesbítése ügye angliai tanulmányútja idején"/Budapest, Sept. 16, 1938; ibid., 23/letter by unknown to director/Budapest, Aug. 22, 1945.

[28] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/10. doboz-11. dosszié/Kosáry Domokos, f. éve 1931/39/Kosáry to Miklós Szabó/New York, Aug. 10, 1941.

subject matter.[29] And as a final detail, in 1942, Kosáry, when at the Teleki Institute, recruited students for paid work to help compile the lists of a "nationalities bibliography" (which likely referred to both or either of the special issues of *Revue d'histoire comparée*, entitled "Bibliographie de l'europe carpathique, publications historiques de l'année 1942," and "Bibliographie de l'europe carpathique, publications historiques de l'année 1943").[30] These are just a few signs of the comparatists' long-term consideration of the fate of the college and its students.

The Politics of Foreign Research and Scholarly Networks

In the review of the bibliographical literature in the first section of this chapter, one subject repeatedly commented upon is the young comparatists' studies abroad, their having a chance to take part in the interwar era foreign scholarly networks. Part of the reason for this emphasis, no doubt, rests on the fact that these scholarships came to an abrupt end in 1948–49 (under the Minister of Education, Gyula Ortutay). As it happens, one aspect of my own research (relatively) rich in archival sources is the correspondence of the comparatists when abroad with their professors, publishers, and associates back home. One could (perhaps anecdotally) say that there would be no archival trail of these comparatists in the interwar period if not for three occurrences: travel, pecuniary issues, and apologies for not completing an article within deadline.[31] Before I delve into details of this correspondence, in the following section on their study tours, I want to go

[29] Veronika Markó, "Eötvös József Collegium könyvtára – Irodalomtudományi Intézet Eötvös Könyvtár," *Magyar Könyvszemle* 129, no. 2 (2010): 226–241, here 233.

[30] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/10. doboz-11. dosszié/Kosáry Domokos, f. éve 1931/40/Kosáry (Teleki P. Tud. Int.) to Miklós Szabó/Budapest, Mar. 12, 1942.

[31] Regarding the second issue, I have come across very brazen requests for more money from publishers and institutions.

over several aspects of the foreign scholarship system covered by contemporary scholarship as well as the historiographical background. The present-day Hungarian historians most responsible for uncovering and producing monographs on interwar Hungarian educational policies, and within this field ample literature on policies of funding scholarly activities abroad and the well-known colleges housing Hungarian students (the Collegium Hungaricum of Vienna, Berlin, and Rome), are Gábor Ujváry, Andor Ladányi, Tamás T. Kiss as well as the invaluable concise overview of Hungarian historiography by Béla Várdy, works to which I will often refer.[32] The aspect that overrides all studies of not only networks of foreign scholarship but the entire Hungarian cultural and educational apparatus of the interwar era is the figure of Kuno Klebelsberg, the Minister of Religion and Education from 1922–1931. By many, he is considered symptomatic of all the bad traits of an era which eventually led to Hungary's destruction in WWII (just like his successor to the post of education minister, the more politically radical and Germany-friendly Bálint Hóman,

[32] Gábor Ujváry, *Tudományszervezés – történetkutatás – forráskritika. Klebelsberg Kuno és a Bécsi Magyar Történeti Intézet* (Győr: Győr-Moson-Sopron Megye Győri Levéltára, 1996); Ujváry, "Klebelsberg Kuno és Hóman Bálint kultúrpolitikája," in *A magyar jobboldali hagyomány*, ed. Ignác Romsics (Budapest: Osiris, 2009), 377–413; Ujváry, "A tudós Magyarország Bécsben. Magyar tudományos intézetek a császárvárosban, 1920–1945," *Limes*, no. 1(1998): 49–69; Ujváry, "A bécsi Collegium Hungaricum," *Magyar Iparművészet*, no. 2 (1998): 72–75; Ujváry, "A Római Magyar Intézet története 1912–1945 között," in *Száz év a magyar–olasz kapcsolatok szolgálatában. Magyar tudományos, kulturális és egyházi intézetek Rómában 1895–1995*, 19–43 (Budapest, 1998); Ujváry, "A Gárdapalotától a Collegium Hungaricumig. Magyar történelem Bécsben," *Európai utas* 39, no. 2(2000): 65–74; Ujváry, "A 'tudós Magyarország' Bécsben," in *Császár és király. 1526–1918.* (Vienna and Budapest: Collegium Hungaricum, 2001), 105–110; Ujváry, *A harmincharmadik nemzedék. Politika, kultúra és történettudomány a "neobarokk társadalomban"* (Budapest: Rátió, 2010). Tamás T. Kiss, *Klebelsberg Kuno* (Budapest: Új Mandátum Kiadó, 1999); T. Kiss, *Állami művelődéspolitika az 1920-as években* (Budapest: Mikszáth Kiadó, 1998); T. Kiss, "Klebelsberg, az 'aktív, pozitív és produktív ember,'" in *A legnagyobb álmú magyar kultuszminiszter. Klebelsberg Kuno kora és munkássága*, ed. Péter Miklós (Szeged: Belvedere, 2008); T. Kiss, "Klebelsberg Kuno emberi és szakmapolitikusi pályájáról," *Szín*, no. 2 (2009): 55–77. Andor Ladányi, *Klebelsberg felsőoktatási politikája* (Budapest: Argumentum, 2000); Ladányi, *A magyar felsőoktatás a 20. században* (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1999); Ladányi, *A gazdasági válságtól a háborúig. A magyar felsőoktatás az 1930-as években* (Budapest: Argumentum, 2002). Ferenc Glatz, "Klebelsberg tudománypolitikai programja és a magyar tudomány," *Századok* (1969): 1176–1200. Gábor Gyáni, "Történetírásunk bécsi korszaka," *HOLMI* 9, no. 10 (1997):1486–1492.
Domokos Kosáry, "Magyarország kultúrpolitikája az első világháború után – Klebelsberg Kunó jelentősége," *Európai Utas* 6, no. 4 (1995): 28–31, also published in *Hat év a tudománypolitika szolgálatában* (Budapest, 1996).

see Kosáry 2003, 3), but also responsible for the rebuilding and modernizing practically from scratch the country's education system after the utter chaos of the post-WWI period. And it seems that judgments of his life and work have undergone all the same evolutions as those of the other complex conservative figures of the interwar era, the so-called "conservative reformers," who imagined some social reforms, but minus the resignation of the traditional elites and plus the retaining of traditional values, such as István Bethlen or Pál Teleki. Ladányi has written a five-page historiographical synopsis of publications on Klebelsberg: starting from the hagiographic in 1942, to the antidemocratic "reactionary" politician engaging in class warfare in 1945, to the "counterrevolutionary" neo-national ideologue not deserving of rehabilitation in the 1960s, to a focus on some of the positive developments under his ministry, such as "the realization of cultural decentralization, the development of regional universities, and the organization of the foreign scholarship system" in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and finally to studies in light of the broader societal context of the era, starting in the late 1980s (2000, 168–172). After 1990 there was again a renewed analysis and explosion of interest in the interwar era's cultural politics, best shown in the works of the above-mentioned historians, coinciding with questions of new cultural policies in light of Hungary's realignment with the West (a time when Kosáry himself was head of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) (2000, 172). At the exact same time, there was also a distinct nudge in the direction of political rehabilitation of Klebelsberg, in light of what some called his "saving of the Hungarian middle class" (see Gábor Gyáni's critique of this: 2002, 13–21). In his 1994 study, Ujváry felt that he had to broach the potential criticism of resurrecting positive examples from the "thank God—finally bygone interwar era" (10). And, indeed, part of the criticism came from Gábor Gyáni, asking how one can write an in-depth analysis of Klebelsberg's cultural politics which is only descriptive and not critical. Hopefully, it is safe to say that certain

negative judgments on him will stick, such as his distasteful social Darwinism, in the sense that all nations are in competition with each other primarily in the cultural arena; his belief in the cultural superiority of Hungarians and their role as the ruling nation of the Carpathian Basin; his treatment of cultural and education policies as the de facto Hungarian military wing which would achieve a victory that could surmount the disarmament treaties of WWI; and his anti-Semitism (Ujváry 2010, 18).[33] Though these opinions were hardly unique in the time period in question, and neither was his neo-national ideology, "which—contrary to traditional Magyar nationalism that had rested on the politics of power—was to be based on the alleged cultural and intellectual pre-eminence of his nation in the Carpathian Basin," the fact remains that he was in a position to implement his views in the educational system from 1922–1931, such as his much more troubling continued support for Hungary's and Europe's first *numerus clausus* law, passed in 1920 (Várdy 1976, 50; Ladányi 2002, 169).

Now let's summarize some of Klebelsberg's achievements: Ujváry (1993) speaks of Hungary's greatest success in the overcoming an almost insurmountable political, economic, and cultural isolation post-WWI via Klebelsberg's creation of a large international scholarly network.[34]

[33] On this latter aspect, just a sample of the very soundbite-worthy oeuvre of Klebelsberg: "A társadalom önmaga, saját rendjét védi, ha a történetírást pártolja" (in T. Kiss 1998, 42); and "Szeretném a köztudatba belevinni, hogy a trianoni béke következtében lefegyverezett Magyarországban a kultusztárca voltaképpen honvédelmi tárca is ... olyan értelemben, hogy most elsősorban a szellem, a művelődés fegyvereivel kell védeni hazánkat" ("1925. feb 20. A Kultusztárca programja," in Glatz 1990, 332).

[34] The list is so long that it belongs in a footnote: from before his tenure as Minister, as president of the Magyar Történelmi Társulat (Hungarian Historical Society), he pushed for the Magyar Történeti Intézet (Hungarian Historical Research Institute) in Vienna in 1920, and the re-creation of institutes in Rome and Berlin; Collegium Hungaricum in Vienna and Berlin in 1924, Rome, 1927; less active institutes, called Magyar Tanulmányi Központ (Hungarian Educational Center), in Stockholm in 1920, Helsinki, 1926, and Paris, 1927. There were agreements for scholarships to places without Hungarian institutes such as USA from 1924, France and Great Britain from 1925, and Geneva in 1926 (Várdy 1976, 53; Ujváry 1993, 16–17). And after Klebelsberg's tenure, "his successor B[álint] Hóman continued to establish additional Hungarian institutes (Rome-1934, Ankara-1929, and Sofia-1935), university chairs (Vienna-1935, Rome-1935, Bologna-1935, Paris-1938, Nizza-1939), as well as lectureships (Leipzig-1935, Rome-1935, London-1937, Lille-1937, Geneva-1937, Torino-1937, Milan-1937, Naples-1937, Pisa-1938, Pavia-1938, New York-

His idea for the creation of Hungarian research institutes, "government-sponsored study and residence centers," in major and minor European cities came from his own studies in Berlin in 1895, where he became familiar with the German government-funded "scientific factory" and the examples of French foreign institutes (Várdy 1976, 53; Ujváry 1994, 11). His efforts in this field included the complete reorganization and modernization of the university system in Hungary in the wake of the chaotic years following Hungary's loss of the war, the brief Hungarian Soviet Republic, and Horthy's consolidation; also moving former Hungarian universities and colleges from outside the borders of Trianon-era Hungary, i.e., the faculty, to cities like Szeged, Pécs, Sopron, etc. (2010, 14) Almost all of the comparatists of this study benefited for sure from his "elitist" perspective on education, even those with talent but without means (which meant essentially two tracks of education, one for the masses, and one for the future leaders of society), as briefly remarked upon in the section on the Eötvös College. Kosáry's own analysis of the controversy surrounding Klebelsberg is the following:

> The politics of culture and even more so of science does not, of course, immediately bring results, but rather one or two generations later. And here it does not necessarily realize the intentions of the era, under the conditions in which it was created … In a certain sense I myself am the product and offspring of these 1920s–30s cultural [policies] and institutions … And this generation, upon returning home [from scholarships abroad] and being able to achieve some independence in their own fields, had no desire to protect the outdated societal-political structures, but, just the opposite, to transform them in a democratic direction in light of the experiences they gained out in the wide world. Klebelsberg's generous cultural politics thus did not pass on the traditions of the given local conditions to the following generation, but instead opened paths toward stepping beyond … towards modernization. (1996, 357)

Columbia-1939, Padua-1940, Trieste-Fiume-1940, etc.). But in doing so, Hóman was simply executing Klebelsberg's grand scheme for the universal dissemination of Hungarian culture and learning" (Várdy 1976, 54).

For sure, Kosáry here is painting with broad strokes and not sufficiently problematizing either his or his cohort's modus vivendi with neoconservatism. Though I have uncovered fissures between the comparatists and their mentors and publishers, and briefly highlighted the populist-type discontent of several of this group, there is no question that many of Kosáry's and the comparatists' writings propped up the foreign policy objectives of the regime. Nonetheless, Kosáry is correct in carving out a conceptual space for academics to not be defined by actions of the powerful, but to have the possibility of independent and rigorous scholarly thought. And this is true in politics too, not only among the disagreements with the day-to-day political missteps of the political elite, and during WWII, when we see the comparatists among the anti-Nazi coalition, but a general dissatisfaction with the economic and political stagnation of the era that was out of step with French, British, and American modernization processes.

Briefly summarizing the origins and functioning of the foreign scholarships, Ujváry writes that the first period of "conscientious and planned" foreign cultural contacts on the part of the Hungarian government dates really to the beginning of the interwar period. Though state funding for foreign scholarships goes back to 1868 (right after the 1867 Compromise with Austria and a creation of a responsible government in Hungary), this is characterized as a somewhat haphazard endeavor (with the state funding roughly 15–20 students yearly only after the turn of the century, who went abroad primarily to Germany, France, Italy, or the other half of Austria-Hungary; later influential scientists and intellectuals among this group make a small but important list). Since only 1–3 percent of foreign scholarship recipients in the entire dualist period received state money, the other vast majority had to turn to foundations, religious institutions, Catholic orders, or directly to foreign universities. In 1927, the role of National Scholarship Council was codified in law, but by this point it had been up and functioning according to Klebelsberg's specifications. Its mission

was to send the most deserving students and scholars, under the age of 35, abroad for usually half-year periods, in line with a rigorous process of selection headed by many notable scholars and politicians of the time (1993, 14–18).

The budget levels of spending in 1926/27 on education for the small nation of interwar Hungary reached 81.23 percent of the total of the 1913 budget of pre-WWI Hungary (Ujváry 2010, 18). This amount covered all the nationwide education expenses, including a large program of rural illiteracy eradication. Although these high percentage levels were retained throughout most of the interwar period, the actual amount of money decreased after the beginning of the depression, and became much worse until eventually all university positions were frozen and plans to open more Collegium Hungaricum locations were postponed indefinitely (Ladányi 2002). Whether dependent on the depression era budget declines or for independent reasons, Bálint Hóman, Klebelsberg's successor, viewed the Collegiums as a money drain, the expense of keeping such institutions running too costly. In their place he advocated "free scholarships" where the student was given money directly to attend the foreign university best suited to one's needs. Though he continued to fund the Collegiums, he pushed for more cultural- and foreign-exchange agreements with European universities, bringing more foreign students to Hungary (the Eötvös College among them), and by the end of the 1930s focusing on agreements with universities in neutral or Germany-friendly nations (as is clear in the data in footnote 34) (Ujváry 1993, 19). This second type of program was more common for the comparatists, though several did spend some time at the Collegiums, including Hadrovics and Gogolák.

Comparatists on Study Tours and Their "Cultural Diplomacy"

There was an entirely standard, yet from our perspective today a most interesting, document from Gogolák's correspondence with Imre Lukinich, an influential professor in East European Studies and president of the university students' union, Magyar Egyetemi és Főiskolai Hallgatók Országos Szövetsége (MEFHOSZ). According to the document, a delegation of MEFHOSZ students who received a scholarship of 500 pengő to attend the 1930 lawyers' congress in Brussels had to sign the following oath: "we accept on our honor that we will serve the unity of the Hungarian student body in all things, we will not mention in front of the world a single word about the discord of student politics back home, and in other matters we will also set forth such an action, which according to our best conviction eliminates inner divisions."[35] What this document reveals is the obvious concern of the board of the scholarship programs about the image that young Hungarians represented abroad; and the comparatists, as historians examining some of the roots of Hungary's twentieth-century catastrophe, shared *some* of these concerns, evident in their "cultural diplomacy," a term meant to emphasize their personal day-to-day involvement in questions of regional political significance. Though I often detect a much more nuanced position in this arena, it is still definitely an aspect which comes through in their correspondence with their mentors and associates, some aspects of which will be evident in this section. This is partly a result of the dual audience of their interwar era output: specialty works for scholars and academics, and broader subjects for the educated masses, both at home and abroad. This dual audience functioned more as a type of compartmentalization, and not necessarily as opposing and contradictory goals, like in an instance of "say one thing for ourselves, and another for the masses." This

[35] OSZKK Fond 116/711/Gogolák to Imre Lukinich/Budapest, Aug. 1, 1930.

compartmentalization means that one does not have denounce as false the following honest and forthright statement of Hadrovics: "In the 1930s a small group of young historians and philologists under the intellectual direction of Sándor Eckhardt, then professor of French literature, endeavored to interpret and historically uncover the political and cultural questions related to Hungarians and neighboring peoples living [in the same region] together, free of all nationalist one-sidedness" (1991, 99). On the other hand, it still allows one to qualify aspects of their published output and point to the times when current issues pushed their way into historical analysis.

Gogolák, as somewhat of an outlier of the group, a full-time journalist in addition to teaching at the Budapest University starting in 1937, still had numerous opportunities to travel abroad, usually for short occasions involving a specific journalistic or research task: like in Prague (1935 and 1936) and Cracow (1932) for articles on the local cultural-political life for *Magyar Szemle*.[36] He was also in Rome from September to December 1936, partly on assignment to write about the "new Italian nationalism."[37] Gogolák gives another interesting perspective to the Collegium Hungaricum in Rome, in fact the only case of utter unhappiness with the institution that I have come across:

> The Collegium is a horrible institution! It is dirty and untidy, and prey to the free riotry of the Italian staff. The director: professor Kasztner (Koltay!) received me affably, but as far as I can see has no intention of being any assistance to me. He asked what I work with, and replied that my topic: the recent Italian, rather European history … belongs to the subject sphere of Huszka, the press attaché! [Kasztner] barely wants to place the Collegium library at my disposal; and said, that since the [Hungarian] state does not pay for its own library, he can only receive me there between 3 and 4; one can only read at that time![38]

[36] See his articles resulting from these trips: "Krakói benyomások," *Magyar Szemle*, no. 8 (Aug. 1932): 379–382; "Egy prágai út," *Magyar Szemle*, no. 8 (Aug. 1935a): 354–365.
[37] One of the resulting articles: "Az új olasz nacionalizmus," *Magyar Szemle*, no. 3 (Mar. 1937): 201–211.
[38] OSZKK Fond 1/1197/11551/Gogolák to József Balogh/Rome, Sept. 21, 1936.

In contrast to Gogolák's opinion of the collegium in Rome, Gáldi, on a scholarship in 1937/38, writes in a letter that "The director Kasztner is very gracious, and is available for assistance in everything, and was kind to so fairly organize all my matters. My stipend is transferred directly, divided across four months, and all I have to pay for is the minimal amount for the college housing."[39]

Gogolák, based on archival correspondence, appears to have often butted heads with his superiors and editors, such as József Balogh, even Sándor Pethő before he started working for him at *Magyar Nemzet*. Gogolák's dislike of the Hungarian collegium in Rome should be placed in the context of him tiring of journalistic writing surrounding Czechoslovakian issues, wanting to move on to more monograph-length historical studies, which he did in fact through a dissertation in Budapest under Szekfű's guidance, but never fully quit journalism until after 1956.[40] At this time he had been hoping to receive a more lengthy scholarship in Geneva, which could help in his own research into "Central European historical, political, and minority questions." To this end he asked that József Balogh, editor of *Hungarian Quarterly*, put him in contact with the Hungarian-American historian Ferenc Deák, in order to apply for a scholarship to the International Research Center's Foreign Policy Association in Geneva; however, there is no evidence that he received this scholarship.[41] His curriculum vitae from June 7, 1960, however, reveals at least one success in this arena, having spent a full year in 1937 at the Instituto Corrado Ricci in Rome in order to study cultural and art history.[42]

[39] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/6. doboz-7. dosszié/Göbl [Gáldi] László, f. éve 1929/26/Gáldi to Miklós Szabó/Rome, April 10, 1938.

[40] OSZKK Fond 1/1197/11557/Gogolák to Balogh/Rome, Nov. 24, 1936; OSZKK Fond 7/676/23/Gogolák to Szekfű/Budapest, Dec. 20, 1937. See the section on Gogolák in Chapter One, particularly footnotes 41 and 42, for more detail.

[41] OSZKK Fond 1/1197/11548/Gogolák to Balogh/Budapest, Aug. 24, 1936.

[42] Specifically in the German version: A Dunamelléki Református Egyházkerület Ráday Levéltára, Budapest, C208 Gogolák Lajos (1910–1987) iratai 1956–1987/10/XVIII/1.

Gáldi, according to his CV submitted for his candidacy for Privatdozent at the Budapest University, attended the Third International Conference on Romance Languages in Rome in April 1932, where he gave a lecture in the Italian language on the topic of French Creole. After completion of his dissertation defense in May 1932, he was in Paris for three academic terms, 1932–35, where he was also a secretary at the Centre d'Études Hongroises (Tanulmányi Központ, founded in 1927) and the Hungarian-language lector at the École des Langues Nationales Vivantes and the Société pour la Propagation des Langues Etrangères for two academic terms (1933–35). In Paris, he studied Romance linguistics, Romanian language and literature, and Albanian and Bulgarian at the École des Hautes Études and the École des Langues Nationales Vivantes under the professors Mario Roques, Oscar Bloch, Alfred Jeanroy, and Léon Beaulieux.[43] A further source states that he studied under Paul Hazard and Boris Unbegaun, though this is not in his CV (Nagy and Cioban 2012, 304–305).

Although there is no surviving correspondence from the period in Paris, Gáldi's later excursion to Rome is well documented—for the 1937/38 school year. It might be worthwhile to reiterate some of his observations, particularly the functioning of the Romanian Academy in Rome. Gáldi's visit to the Romanian Academy corresponds with his manuscript editing and translation into French of Domanovszky's 1938 work, *La Méthode historique de M. Nicolas Iorga: a propos d'un compte rendu*, a personal and vitriolic attack against Nicolae Iorga, which the historian Ambrus Miskolczy writes was misplaced since it dealt mostly with Iorga's works which were already twenty years old by that time (1999, 248). The correspondence with Domanovszky covers his editorial (*lektori*) remarks and other observations from Rome (archival finds which have been noted already by other researchers, see also Nagy and Cioban 2012). He writes:

[43] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/732/1937-38/10–11/László Gáldi's "Curriculum vitae," Budapest, Dec. 18, 1937.

> I was at the Romanian Academy as well, [and] I became acquainted with [Emil] Panaitescu, the director. They have a beautiful and very systematically updated library. They are extremely good-willed and want most of all to appear objective. It was surprising and reassuring what one of their scholarship recipients said regarding Iorga, that only his source publications will be of enduring value. The Romanian academy not only receives [the Hungarian journal] *Századok*, but, which amazed me, the Transylvanian Romanian historians here also read it. Otherwise they have a very proper collection of journals, which they place out in their reading room. I heard [also lectures at the Collegium Hungaricum] … by [Jenő Koltay-]Kasztner and [Károly] Kerényi … The Italians were really pleased by them.[44]

Nagy and Cioban, in their history of the Romanian Philology Department in Budapest, took notice of Gáldi's role as a "cultural diplomat," from whom I adopt the term, in the sense that Hungarian scholars abroad were urged to represent the political interests of Hungary. There is another report of Gáldi from Budapest, based on his correspondence with Tagliavini, of Hungarian vs. Romanian efforts to provide scholarly material to Italian professors who deal with relevant issues, and concludes that Romanians represent their interests abroad much better. Similar but opposite judgments were made by Romanians too, write Nagy and Cioban (2012, 305). In response to this letter, Nagy and Cioban write: "Again, the duplicity of Romanian-Hungarian cultural and intellectual disputes, even brutal fights, not without personal attacks, in the public and propaganda space of magazines and books, and an almost exemplary collaboration in daily life in personal discussions and the library rooms" (2012, 304). Indeed, Gáldi kept up contacts with Romanian scholars, as evidenced in his correspondence with Gyula Bisztray (a professor and minister in the Department of Education), sending Bisztray addresses of Romanian and Italian professors who might be interested in copies of his latest work, perhaps referring to Bisztray's *A magyar próza könyve* (The book of Hungarian prose, 1942). Then Gáldi adds: "PS. I am not sure what your standpoint is in regard to Romanian professors. However, I am in constant correspondence with

[44] MTAKK Ms 4524/159/Gáldi levele Domanovszkynak/Rome, Apr. 30, 1938. Emphasis in orig.

all of them [on the list], and as far as I know none have made statements of anti-Hungarian [*magyarfaló*] sentiment."[45] (The actual list of professors was an attachment unfortunately not included in the archive.)

Kosáry's foreign scholarships reveal an interesting role, both political and scholarly. Kosáry first scholarship was to Vienna in 1935 for four weeks when doing research for his book and dissertation on the Görgei question, i.e., on whether the general of the 1848 Revolution was a traitor, the still commonly accepted opinion in the interwar era.[46] There is no correspondence in public archives from his time at the Sorbonne in 1937. His travels in London (1938) and the US (1941) have received considerable attention, from Kosáry himself too in later life. Not only was he a cultural diplomat, but he was even assigned the task by Prime Minister Teleki to scope out Western opinion on potential border revisions and views of Hungary's relations with Germany (for details see Kosáry section in Chapter One).

Tamás, according to his CV submitted for his candidacy for Privatdozent at the Budapest University, lists all the professors, languages, and courses that he studied while abroad in Vienna (1924–25) (here working on his dissertation while boarding at the Collegium Hungaricum), Paris (1926–27), and Berlin: Romanian, Spanish, Provençal, French, Slavic, Hungarian, and Albanian. In Berlin, he recalls particularly the influence of the Romance-language specialist Ernst Gamillscheg. In Paris, he studied the language of the Istro-Romanians at the École des Hautes Études, gave a seminar on the Hungarian elements in the Romanian language, and received a diploma in Romanian and a language certificate in Albanian at the École des Langues Orientales. Sándor Eckhardt's letter of recommendation for his application as Privatdozent is more detailed:

[45] MTAKK Ms 5711/64/Gáldi levele Bisztraynak/Budapest, Mar. 29, 1942.
[46] Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/10. doboz-11. dosszié/Kosáry Domokos, f. éve 1931/49/Minősítési lap/Budapest, n.d. [1936].

"In the course of his studies abroad, in Paris, he became a Romanian linguist under Mario Roques, an Indo-European linguist under Meillet, and studied Romance languages under Jeanroy and Thomas. In Berlin, in Gamillscheg's institution, he chose a more definite direction with his studies of general Romance linguistics and Romanian linguistics; Vasmer, on the other hand, was his advisor in studies of Slavistics and Albanian linguistics … The historian of the Romanian language must be proficient in, besides general Romance linguistics, all the neo-Latin [languages], Albanian, Church Slavonic, Bulgarian, Greek, and if possible Ottoman Turkish and Cuman, *and above all Hungarian* [emphasis mine]. With the exception of Ottoman Turkish and Cuman, where it seems that he just studied the basic elements, Lajos Treml [Tamás] knows all these languages well; in fact, he speaks a majority of them, and equipped in such manner, he will excellently practice Romanian philology."[47] Upon returning home, he studied Slavic philology under János Melich, the Cuman language under Gyula Németh, and general Romance studies under Károly Tagliavini.[48]

For the sake of parity, let me also mention the three comparatists' studies abroad for whom there are only secondary sources. Hadrovics studied for a part of a semester in Berlin under Max Vasmer, author of the best and most complete Russian etymological dictionary; at the end of 1935 he became sick[49] and went home before lasting out the duration of the scholarship. The analysis of András Zoltán claims that the amount of time he spent in Germany was not long enough for him to abandon Hungarian questions in relation to Slavic Studies, but perhaps one should be appreciative of this aspect since his comparative studies begin after this point, as well as his post-

[47] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1025/1932-33/13–15/Sándor Eckhardt's "Letter of Recommendation" for Lajos Tamás, Budapest, Feb. 1, 1933.

[48] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1025/1932-33/3/Lajos Tamás's "Curriculum vitae," Budapest, Dec. 23, 1932.

[49] A point reiterated in a letter, where he requests to live at the college for the remainder of the school year, keep studying Slavistics, and recuperate from sort of lung ailment: Eötvös Collegium Levéltára 1/a/7. doboz-8. dosszié/Hadrovics László, f. éve 1929/8/Hadrovics to Miklós Szabó/Budapest, Sept. 12, 1936.

WWII Slavic-Hungarian lexicology (Zoltán 2011, 341). Makkai was from 1946–49 in Geneva, Leiden, and Basel (1948/49) (Kocsis in Barcza 1989, 3). In Basel he was a student of Karl Barth and obtained his theology doctorate. Regarding Basel, he states in an interview, "I became acquainted with the sort of Marxism that was not dogmatic, and which was so interesting that I took two semesters of classes [on it]" (Ács 1988, 5).

On the subject of poverty sometimes being tied to academic pursuits, Csatári writes that I. Tóth was "hungry in Paris" (Csatári 1966, 27). I. Tóth's graduate studies at the Sorbonne for 19 months (1937–1939) appear to have been funded partly out of his own pocket—and this is speculation, maybe partly by the Reformed Calvinist Church, since he taught for one of their high schools from 1934–1941; and thus he had to work nights on odd jobs at time when it was illegal for foreigners to work in France (Szabad 2007, 39; Perényi 1957, 5).[50] Here he studied under Jacques Ancel, and wrote his dissertation on "Az erdélyi románok és a francia közvélemény a XIX. században" (The Transylvanian Romanians and French public opinion in the nineteenth century), which was never published in the lead up to the Second Vienna Award. In fact, he submitted an entirely new dissertation in Budapest in 1944, which was essentially his book *Az erdélyi román nacionalizmus első százada, 1697–1792* that was published in 1946 (Csatári 1966, 27). Some further information available about his time in Paris comes from Perényi, who writes of Paris as I. Tóth's chance to escape from the heavy-handed influence of *szellemtörténet* in Hungary (Perényi 1957, 6). Perényi's comments in regard to Szekfű's lack of influence on I. Tóth were written not long after the death of Gyula Szekfű in 1955, who after 1945 in a volte face became ambassador of Hungary to the Soviet Union. This fact however did not mitigate the critique of Szekfű's interwar era influence on historical studies, which at this time were openly stated in a rather

[50] The memoirs of György Faludi also refer to this "catch 22" situation of receiving refugee status in France, yet not being able to legally support oneself.

unnuanced fashion, which was more a labeling as "counterrevolutionary" than a strict analysis. But in regard to the factual statement of I. Tóth's writing being free of the influence of Szekfű, József Deér seems to second this opinion in a letter of recommendation for I. Tóth from 1947, calling I. Tóth's style "historical realism … and not simply an anti-nationalist viewpoint."[51]

Teaching at the University

The comparatists as teachers in this period were mostly tied to two institutions: the Pázmány Péter University of Budapest and the short-lived Hungarian University of Kolozsvár in Northern Transylvania. My analysis here will extend from the late 1920s to the period of transition, 1945–49, and it will rely almost entirely on archival materials,[52] since I am mostly interested in the details that extend to the lives of the comparatists. Secondary sources on the history of the Budapest University focus on questions much too broad for our purposes. Moreover, regarding the historical sciences, one can still say that a detailed account of the workshop of history in the interwar era Budapest University has not been written yet,[53] and perhaps for very good reason, since it would likely be the story of roughly three to four influential historians, historians who are

[51] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1156/1946-47/9–12/József Deér's "Letter of Recommendation" for Zoltán I. Tóth/Budapest, June 1947.

[52] After consultation with several historians in Budapest and Cluj, I gave up on the idea of going on a goose chase for documents regarding the Transylvanian Scientific Institute and the Kolozsvár University from 1940–44, and Makkai, I. Tóth, and Tamás's activities in these institutions. Occasionally snippets or fragments do show up in the university archives among a section of unorganized, uncatalogued documents, or among other individuals' papers, such as the finds of Stelian Mândruț (2004; 2007) on I. Tóth. See his footnote on the destruction of the university library archives in the fall of 1944, pertaining to the dates 1940–44, just the period that would have been most interesting for the vantage of this thesis (2007, 112). Another reason we lack archival documents for the Kolozsvár University from the period of 1940–1944 is because fourteen trucks of materials were transferred after Sept. 2, 1944 from the university to the Festitics palace in Keszthely in the Transdanubian region, where a few months later they were destroyed by Soviet soldiers (Vincze 1999, 225).

[53] For an earlier period: Erzsébet Muszka, *A történelem és a történeti segédtudományok oktatása egyetemünkön, 1770-1848* (Budapest: ELTE, 1974).

much more fascinating when viewed individually, or in light of the mentor-mentee relationship. Someone looking for the broader institutional outlines, on the other hand, fortunately has to take recourse to Várdy's *Modern Hungarian Historiography* (1976). A further issue to consider about the secondary sources on Hungarian university life is that due to the politicization of the topic there was a tendency up till the recent past to focus on whoever was part of the official "in-crowd" depending on the politics of the era, or vice versa, the "out-crowd." Thus regarding the interwar era, one can read of the youth of communist tendencies being kicked out of the university, or after war, the fear that youth of bourgeois means might inherit their parents' disposition, thus being denied entrance.[54] My thesis, which, on the other hand, explores the question of continuity within individuals, will still take into account the general trends, but as a group they do not have a single strategy to remain employed after 1945/48. Nonetheless, the macro and the micro do meet in the life of the comparatists; for example, after the war, there was a strong spike in the number of professors hired, which was very beneficial for linguistic specialization, and it also meant that a single individual no longer had to teach such a wide spectrum of subjects.

[54] This emphasis, or theme, is best visible in the historical overviews of the university from the communist period. See, in English translation, for example, László Szögi, *A Short History of the Loránd Eötvös University of Budapest* (Budapest: ELTE, 1985), 41–54. On the bibliographies and sources of its history: Déri Miklósné, *Az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem történetének bibliográfiája* (Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1963); Szögi, ed., *Egyetemünk történetének levéltári és kéziratos forrásai 1635–1970* (Budapest: ELTE, 1982). General overviews: Szögi, ed., *Az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem története 1635–2002* (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Kiadó, 2003); Szögi, ed., *Hat évszázad magyar egyetemei és főiskolái* (Budapest: Művelődési és Közoktatási Minisztérium, 1994). Focus on the post-1945 period: István Sinkovics, ed., *Az Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem története 1945-1970* (Budapest, 1970). On the 1956 Revolution: Tibor Beck and Pál Germuska, *Forradalom a bölcsészkaron* (Budapest, 1997). On education policies of the interwar era, cited mostly in the above sections of this chapter: Andor Ladányi, *Felsőoktatási politika* (Budapest, 1986). Ladányi, *Klébelsberg felsőoktatási politikája* (Budapest, 2000). Ladányi, A *gazdasági válságtól a háborúig. A magyar felsőoktatás az 1930-as években* (Budapest, 2002). And contemporary contributions to university questions by the comparatists and others: Zoltán I. Tóth, "Nevelési kérdések az ELTE Történeti Karán," *Felsőoktatási Szemle* (1954): 341–345. László Makkai, "A történettanitás fejlődése a budapest Tudományegyetemen," *Felsőoktatási Szemle* (1955): 392–395. Gábor Tolnai, "Felsőoktatásunk a szocializmus épitésében," *Társadalmi Szemle* (1950): 513–515.

Starting in 1942, Hadrovics taught Slavic linguistics classes three times a week in Szeged for several semesters. The Szeged University intended a full Slavic linguistics department from 1944 with Hadrovics at its head, but by then the full department never came to fruition. In a letter about his new professorship, he writes to his old mentor and professor János Melich: "Dear Professor … When I assumed this entrusted post, I felt like I reached a turning point in my career. If over these dire years I turned to you many times with my complaints, I will not waste the opportunity to inform you of this joyous news, to whom I have to thank for so much good [in my life]."[55]

This excerpt of a letter opens important questions: How did the comparatists fare on the job market? What were the justifications for their hiring? What did they teach? What were the hurdles that they had to overcome? How insulated was the role of professor from the crucible of responsibility and power in politics?

Let us start with the last question, or at least aspects that might lead us to some answers in that direction. To begin, it is important to remember that all the hiring of professors at the Budapest University and at the Eötvös College, the latter technically a part of the university, were signed off on by the highest level of government administration, by the Minister of Religion and Education, after a tally of the secret ballot results at the department in question. Thus the whole academic procedure of formal application for a professorship, with its habilitation, test lectures, future lesson plans, and letters of recommendation, which were addressed to the Faculty of Humanities and Chair, were forwarded, also in the case of the comparatists, to Bálint Hóman (Oct. 1932–July 1942, except for the nine-month hiatus with Pál Teleki as minister, May 1938–Feb. 1939). Although the need for direct contact with the minister of education was a relatively rare occurrence for the

[55] OSZKK Levelestár/Hadrovics to János Melich/Budapest, Sept. 1, 1942.

comparatists, any extraordinary plans requiring additional funding, such as in the tumultuous period of WWII, when faculty moved to Kolozsvár, or plans for the Teleki Institute and its subdepartments, the Hungarian Historical Sciences Institute and Transylvanian Scientific Institute, or the former's journal, the *Revue d'histoire comparée* coming to fruition, meant much more bureaucratic interaction. Based on these professional, even friendly, interactions, Kosáry (2003) gave an account of his time with Bálint Hóman.[56] Hóman, as the nominal president of the Teleki Institute, instructed its director, József Deér,[57] to take on Kosáry as the director of the Historical Sciences wing of the institute in 1941, which Kosáry accepted only on the condition that none of his tasks compromise his anti-Nazi position—remarkable in light of the fact that Hóman's position was openly pro-Germany. Hóman also sided with Kosáry in the beginning of 1944 to oppose Tamás's and Makkai's idea of the creation of a German-language journal to be edited by the Transylvanian Scientific Institute, a wing of the Teleki Institute, in the waning days of the war. Kosáry also mentions that Hóman advised him in March 1944, in the wake of the German coup, to destroy all documents related to his "confidential mission" in the US and the Teleki Institute's plans to reach out to Allied nations (2003, 28). Here, we can see that Kosáry's space for maneuver, granted by Hóman in spite of political disagreements, amounts to a quality that he mentions and praises, but at the same time does hold back on criticism either. Unlike some of the "conservative reformers" and neoconservatives of the 1920s and 1930s, mentioned in the section on "The Politics of Foreign Research," the reputation of the more politically radical and Germany-friendly Hóman is more difficult to qualify, although his death in a work camp after sentencing for war crimes is deemed by Kosáry and Glatz to be inconsistent with what he should have been held accountable

[56] Kosáry, "Emlékeim Hóman Bálintról, 1939-46," interview by Ferenc Glatz, *História*, no. 1 (2003): 25–28.

[57] Deér could almost fit into the category of the comparatists because he focused on historical-constitutional questions of Hungary's relationship with Croatia, but he fits more into the classic mould of Latin medievalist. After WWII he lived and taught in Bern, Switzerland.

for, especially considering that the even more radical right-wing historian Elemér Mályusz was rehabilitated only four years after the war, though given no position of consequence afterwards (2003, 28).[58] What these views amount to, i.e., the implication of the comparison of Hóman and Mályusz on the part of Kosáry, is that he holds personal political opinions to be just as damning as one's role in the political life; which is why Kosáry never forgot Gogolák's compromising of himself in spite of decades passing.[59]

However, jumping back now to 1933, we can read of the justifications, some of them political, for the hiring of a Romanian-language specialist, Tamás, for the Department of Romanian and Romance Languages. In his letter of recommendation to this post of Privatdozent, Sándor Eckhardt, after listing all the prestigious linguists with whom Tamás studied abroad, also writes of his significance as a "homegrown" talent:

> All this [foreign study], however, has rested on foundations gained at our university, and the academic advancement of Lajos Treml [Tamás] is for this very reason valuable and precious from our perspective because his linguistic talents are not a foreign import, but started out in the Budapest linguistic school of a long past, original working methods, and Hungarian goals, and always leans upon it and is integrally engaged with it … Another section of Treml's studies deals with the difficult problem of the origin of Romanians and the development of Romanian historical self-consciousness. In several interesting critiques he successfully refutes the strained speculations of Daco-Roman linguists, the most illustrious among them: "A románság őshazája és a kontinuitás" [The Urheimat of Romaniandom and continuity] (*Jancsó-emlékkönyv* 1931).[60]

[58] On the other hand, István Bethlen, former prime minister, died in a Soviet prison in Moscow in 1946.

[59] This has to do with mysterious circumstances of Gogolák's behavior in the final days of the siege of Budapest in the winter of 1944/45, when his name showed up on a roster of employees of the Arrow Cross government, as well as the factors that led to him being an informant a few years later for the Hungarian communist State Protection Authority, or secret police (Államvédelmi Hatóság, ÁVH). These incidents in Gogolák's life almost passed unnoticed, until Kosáry let it be known that if Gogolák's life story is to be published, mention should be made of the whole story. Béla Nóvé recounts how his introduction to the publication of sections of Gogolák's memoirs led Kosáry, "in his first angry impression to almost publish a public rebuttal" (2009, 110). This also coincided with documents proving Gogolák's collaboration with the communist secret police (ÁVH).

[60] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1025/1932-33/13–15/Sándor Eckhardt's "Letter of Recommendation" for Lajos Tamás, Budapest, Feb. 1, 1933.

Eckhardt's letter goes into much greater detail about some of the Romanian philological gems that Tamás uncovered, and it would give the wrong impression to only mention the above justifications for his hiring. Eckhardt also perceived Tamás as a future Pál Hunfalvy, who with his linguistic skills would one day approach the problematics of the Hungarians' origin (Tamás in fact never did approach this subject). Nonetheless, competition with mainstream Romanian linguistics and historiography was a factor. His habilitation on the topic of "Romanian philology" included, besides questions on the oldest Slavic elements in Romanian or the oldest written evidence of Hungarian in Romanian literature from Carlo Tagliavini, for example, another question from Eckhardt: "With what type of arguments do Romanian scholars support the theory of their Urheimat?"[61]

Five years later, there are similar aspects in Gáldi's application to the position of Privatdozent and habilitation on the subject of "General Romance languages with special emphasis on Romanian[62] language and literature." It is Sándor Eckhardt, again, who in his letter of

[61] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1025/1932-33/11/Gyula Németh and Miklós Zsirai, "Jegyzőkönyv," Budapest, May 10, 1933. The significance of Tamás's test lecture on "Albanian-Romanian language contacts," a fascinating subject in itself, should be viewed also in light of historiographical disputes with Romanian scholars. The timing and place of these contacts makes all the difference: Was it because of the close geographic proximity of Albanians and Romanians in the Balkans, or because of a common shared linguistic substrate, perhaps Thracian or Dacian? See Lucian Boia, *Romania: Borderland of Europe* (London: Reaktion, 2001), 49.

[62] For the word "Romanian," two Hungarian terms are used side by side—"román/oláh/"—with the double brackets functioning as parenthesis. The reason I bring this up is because *oláh*, meaning "Vlach," is clearly pejorative, and often used throughout publications of the time and the humanities department of the university. Thus I attribute this double usage to the influence of Gáldi personally. In Gáldi's proposed lesson plans and courses, he sometimes reverses the order—"oláh/román/"—indicating that he is using them synonymously, or uses only *oláh*, and to make things more confusing, *román* can also mean "Romance" or "Romanesque" in Hungarian. In the above instances, though, it is clearly in reference to "Romanian." The reason I attribute its usage to Gáldi is twofold. First, in Tamás's habilitation documents from five years earlier, *oláh* was the only term used for "Romanian," and is still preferred by the other writers of Gáldi's habilitation documents. Second, in correspondence between Gáldi and Domanovszky of the same year, on the subject of editing and translating Domanovszky's monograph-length French-language attack of the Romanian historian Nicolae Iorga, Gáldi at first uses *román*, while Domanovszky (his senior) uses *oláh*, but then afterwards Gáldi transitions to *oláh*. There is likely some generational significance to this observation, but the most obvious point to consider is that Gáldi quite naturally referred to Romanians by their modern name, and did not feel the need to hold on to an outdated term and artificial affectation (see MTAKK Ms 4524/154 Gáldi levele

recommendation commends aspects in Gáldi's research which he perceives as useful in debates with Romanian linguists and historians:

> We know that the prejudiced Romanian linguists today are no longer satisfied with the fact that they declare Transylvania and the ancient Roman kingdom as the land of the Romanian language and landholders, [supposedly] living in unbroken continuity since Trajan, but even spread their absurd speculations most recently to Pannonia, even the entirety of Hungary, [and] the areas of the Slavic-language Balkans and Croatia. Gáldi, in his study ["Le romanism transdanubien," *Studi e Documenti italo-ungheresi*, Rome (1937)], reckons with this Romanian megalomania, because he demonstrates beyond a doubt that the Latinity of researchable Pannonian inscriptions is related to the Italian and Rhaeto-Romance, and there is not a single incident of an identical phenomenon with the so-called Eastern neo-Latinity.[63]

As regards further questions of Romanian significance, Eckhardt has much praise for Gáldi's manuscript, published soon afterward as *Les mots d'origine néo-grecque en roumain à l'époque des Phanariotes* (1939)—a philological analysis of Greek loanwords in the Romanian language—because it "offers an objective picture of the often-maligned Phanariote period's cultural contribution."[64] Regardless of the accuracy[65] of Eckhardt's analysis of the significance of Gáldi's work (praised internationally at the time), it reveals that he was especially pleased in a Hungarian author being able to contribute scholarly interpretations of Romanian historical questions.

Domanovszkynak/ Rome, August 24, 1937). Historiographical considerations over use of *oláh* in the interwar era have been commented upon by other researchers; see, for example, Zoltán Szász, "Utószó," in *A történeti Erdély*, ed. Miklós Asztalos, new online edn. (Budapest: Erdélyi Férfiak Egyesülete, 1936), i–x. Szász's postscript is actually a fascinating discussion of two generations of researchers on Hungarian-Romanian questions collaborating in a single volume.

[63] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/732/1937-38/19–22/Sandor Eckhardt's "Letter of Recommendation" for László Gáldi, Budapest, Jan. 31, 1938, at 19–20.

[64] Ibid., 21.

[65] See R. Draguet, Review of Gáldi's *Les mots d'origine néo-grecque en roumain à l'époque des Phanariotes*, *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 20, no. 3 (1941): 634–636. Draguet points out in fact that Iorga was the first to reevaluate the Phanariote period from the standpoint of a cultural awakening/Europeanization via intermediary, and that Gáldi's position is half way between Iorga's "enlightened despotism" and the commonplace "Greek oppression" (635).

A letter of Gogolák to Szekfű in December 1937 reveals that he was an assistant lecturer at the Institute for Minority Law at the Budapest University (Kir. M. Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetem Kisebbségjogi Intézete), holding this position until 1940 according to his CV from 1960.[66] University records of 1941 show that he was filling in for the retired János Melich at the Slavic Philology Department, lecturing weekly two hours about the Slovak language, in the Slovak language, at an institution for students of Slovak mother tongue, the Slovak College. About this experience of teaching Slovak students, from 1940–43, he writes, "my activities there met with their sympathies."[67] In the Hungarian version of his CV circa 1960, he goes further in describing his sympathies for Slovaks, saying that his 600-page manuscript on the Slovak national question prepared in 1941–42 for the Teleki Institute was denied publication, their claim being that the sources were not objective—but Gogolák says that it rather did not fit in with political views of the time, just like his 300-page manuscript on the sociology of the nationalities question after 1945. A final document from 1946 is worth mentioning, a letter of unknown authorship to the Minister of Education Dezső Keresztury recommending Gogolák, "a long-time seminar lecturer," for the position of professor of the Journalism Sciences Institute (Sajtótudományi Intézet) of the humanities department, stating that there is "no one more suitable for the position … a one-time member of the circle surrounding Sándor Pethő [founder of the anti-fascist *Magyar Nemzet* paper]."[68] It is unlikely that he received this position, but he remained with *Magyar Nemzet* until "the summer 1949 … on the eve of its nationalization by the state" (CV 1960).

[66] OSZKK Fond 7/676/23/Gogolák to Szekfű/Budapest, Dec. 20, 1937: text on printed letterhead. There is also a German (1960) and Hungarian version (n.d.) of his CV, with different points and emphases: A Dunamelléki Református Egyházkerület Ráday Levéltára, Budapest, C208 Gogolák Lajos (1910–1987) iratai 1956–1987/10/XVIII/1.

[67] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1252/1940-41/2/"A szláv filológia tanszék és az orosz-tótszkos hallgatók előadásainak ellátása"/Budapest, Feb. 8 1941; ibid., 8/b/1151/1940-41/4–5/"Jegyzőkönyv"/Budapest, Jan. 17, 1941.

[68] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/686/1945-46/2/unknown to dean Dezső Keresztury/Budapest, Feb. 28, 1946.

In the early 1940s there was quite a bit of reshuffling at the university due to the creation of the Hungarian University of Kolozsvár and the Transylvanian Scientific Institute (the latter covered in the next section). Tamás's transfer to Kolozsvár to head the Transylvanian Scientific Institute (Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet) meant that Gáldi temporarily took over as head (1940–44) of the Romanian Philology Department in Budapest, based on Tamás's recommendation.[69] In the Slavic Philology Department, the transfer of István Kniezsa to Kolozsvár and the retirement of János Melich affected not only Gogolák's teaching possibilities, but also that of Hadrovics. He held an unpaid teaching assistantship on Serbo-Croatian language and literature, starting in 1938, but then, in 1941, moved up to the position of assistant lecturer, covering the same subjects. His first position as Privatdozent came only in Szeged in 1942, as mentioned in his letter expressing great joy to Melich, quoted at the top of this section. Then he achieved Privatdozent position in Budapest in early 1943. His reputation preceded his slow but steady advancement, until finally a 1946 university document, written by Zsolt Trocsányi and István Hajnal, states that Hadrovics is the only person capable of heading the planned South Slavic Philology and Cultural History Department, to be based on the model of the new Russian and Ukrainian Department.[70] There is no evidence that the department came to fruition, and definitely had no chance whatsoever after the Tito-Stalin split in 1948, or as Hadrovics writes, "when dealing with South Slav subjects became literally life threatening … and when I myself decided to rather focus on lexicology for more than a decade" (1991, 99).

[69] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/848/1940-41/1/Tamás to dean Tibor Gerevich/Budapest, Oct. 17, 1940.

[70] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1346/1937-38/1/János Melich to the dean Gyula Németh/Budapest, Apr. 7, 1938; ibid., 8/b/1151/1940-41/3–4/dean Tibor Gerevich to minister of education, Jenő Szinyei Merse/Budapest, Jan. 25, 1941; ibid., 8/b/1279/1942-43/1/dean to minister of education, Jenő Szinyei Merse/Budapest, Jan 12, 1943; ibid., 8/b/840/1945-49/1/"Jegyzőkönyv," Zsolt Trocsányi and István Hajnal on the "Yugoslav Dept"/Mar. 16, 1946.

The final example of a letter of recommendation for Privatdozent position in Budapest from the ELTE Archives is Makkai's from October 1946.[71] He already held the position of Privatdozent from 1942 at the Kolozsvár University until September 2, 1944 (Miskolczy and Szász 2011, 86), when the Hungarian government sent the order to "empty out" the university, due to the new Romanian-Soviet alliance of August 23.[72] Heeding this directive were professors of the university with potentially compromised positions—i.e., upper administration (Tamás), dealing in sensitive topics of Romanian history (Tamás and Makkai), or originally from Hungary proper—for fear of some sort of legal prosecution. This was far from an absurd possibility for an academic, as both Tamás and Makkai received extradition requests from the Romanian government after the war. Not heeding this directive was the university's rector, Dezső Miskolczy (Vincze 1999, 225–226), the ramifications of which the historian Zoltán Pálfy writes: "Had the university been evacuated and had its council departed, little chance would have been left for a separate university for Transylvania's ethnic Hungarians [after 1945]."[73]

This was the context for Makkai's return to Budapest in late 1944, where he was transferred to Hungarian Historical Sciences Institute (Magyar Történettudomány Intézet), joining a majority of the comparatists (excluding Tamás) at this sister institution of the Transylvanian Scientific Institute in Cluj, where he was previously professor, too.[74] His October 1946 habilitation however occurred in a new era for the university, best summarized by the August 1, 1945 memorandum

[71] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/274/1945-46/3–4/Péter Váczy's "Letter of Recommendation" for László Makkai, Budapest, [Oct. 13, 1946]; ibid., 1–2/Gyula Németh to Dezső Keresztury, Minister of Education, "Jegyzőkönyv," Budapest, Oct. 13, 1946.

[72] Gábor Vincze, "Fejezetek a kolozsvári magyar etyetem történetéből," in *Illuziók és csalodások. Fejezetek a romániai magyarság második világháború utáni történetéből*, ed. Gábor Vincze, 225–292 (Csíkszereda: Pro-Print, 1999), 225.

[73] Zoltán Pálfy, "Cluj Higher Learning in the Early Communist Period: Ethnic Division Reasserted in a Nationalized Market," *Yearbook of the Institute of History "George Barițiu" – Series Historica* 47 (2008): 283–307, at 284–285.

[74] See the section on the Teleki Institute in this chapter for more detail.

which was pasted into the class schedule for the 1945/46 school year. Due to the siege of Budapest throughout January and half of February, the classes for the second semester were not decided upon until April 12, 1945. When classes began again in the fall of 1945, the lecturers were informed via the pasted-in memorandum of the decision to keep the same class schedule as from the lost semester, but with the following caveat from rector Ferenc Eckhardt on elective courses: "I ask the board to ask of the lecturers that they choose the subject of their elective class lectures in such a way that they—in accordance with the fundamental European changes—primarily deal with Hungarians' and their neighbors' most important historical, linguistic, societal, political, cultural, public health, etc., questions. In such manner, the university can contribute to a significant extent to their students' gaining orientation in the life questions of the new Europe and Hungariandom."[75]

One year later, when Makkai applied for a Privatdozent position, it was for professor of "Eastern European Social History," a subject which easily falls under the rubric and spirit of the above quote. Péter Váczy's letter of recommendation speaks of Makkai as a "representative of a new generation of researchers who, with the inclusion of linguistic, geographic, and archaeological research, shed light on the relations of town and societal co-habitation, primarily in the Middle Ages … In such subject matters, it is only natural that he had held an opinion about the directions and results of Romanian historiography as well … He has two articles on this question [too]." Makkai's successful October 1946 habilitation, with 35 yeas and 4 nays from the humanities department,[76] resulted in the teaching of mostly seminars for Imre Lukinich and Sándor

[75] *A budapesti királyi magyar Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetem tanrendje az MCMXLIV—MCMXLV. tanév második felére* (Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1945).

[76] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/274/1945-46/3–4/Péter Váczy's "Letter of Recommendation" for László Makkai, Budapest, [Oct. 13, 1946]; ibid., 1–2/Gyula Németh to Dezső Keresztury, Minister of Education, "Jegyzőkönyv," Budapest, Oct. 13, 1946.

Domanovszky—according to the class schedules, from the first semester of the 1946/47 school year until fall of 1948/49. Makkai's inspiration at this time was the social historian István Hajnal (Ács 1988, 5), but the only evidence that Makkai fulfilled his job description in teaching social history, not even teaching Hajnal's seminar, is from the fall of 1948/49: the class "Feudalism and Estates in Southeast Europe."[77] There is no evidence of Makkai teaching in Budapest before or after 1948, after perusing the class schedules, and it is likely that he was in the process of being forced out of this position, or only held the position nominally. Oddly, in an overlapping time period, he had spent the previous two years from 1946–1948, both as a post-doc in Geneva, Leiden, and Basel and officially teaching the above seminars—he likely had a substitute. There are instances of professors officially holding lectureship positions in this period, but not actually teaching, such as the case of István Bibó, which might explain Makkai's situation too (Dénes 2013).

I. Tóth underwent the process of Privatdozent habilitation on the subject of "The Modern History of Hungarian-Romanian Relations in Transylvania" in October 1947. József Deér wrote one of the letters of recommendation, mentioned above, which was also a several-page long analysis of I. Tóth's work *Az erdélyi román nacionalizmus első százada, 1697–1792* (The first century of Transylvanian Romanian nationalism, 1946), which Deér says will count as his habilitation thesis: "In the past decades, much has been said about the nationalism of Southeastern European peoples in both scholarly and press literature. Except that so far they have analyzed the mature forms of those nationalisms, neglecting the vital question, from what did these become the nationalisms. Resulting from this—that they do not sufficiently know the antecedents—the observations usually lack the proper solid foundation. This lack can only be helped by a detailed

[77] *A Pázmány Péter Tudományegyetem Bölcsészettudományi Karának 1948/49. I. félévi tanrendje* (Budapest: Egyetemi Nyomda, 1948).

and thorough scientific exploration of the pre-life of nationalism. On the basis of enormous unknown sources and archival research, Zoltán Tóth's book has undertaken this task."[78] In the first part of his letter, Deér explains why I. Tóth is so fitting to teach the subject of Hungarians and Romanians living together, besides his resume of works touching upon the topic from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century: "The ethical element of Zoltán Tóth's historical conception, namely his belief in objectivity … is nowhere more important than in the fields that he covers, and where [historians] *intra muros et extra* have consistently trespassed against for two hundred years."

The Teleki Institute and Its Subsections

Just like at the Budapest University, all the comparatists at some point in their early careers (except Gáldi) were affiliated with the Teleki Pál Tudományos Intézet (Teleki Scientific Institute, hereafter "Teleki Institute"), which was an umbrella term for actually three sections: the Államtudományi Intézet (State Sciences Institute), the Magyar Történettudományi Intézet (Hungarian Historical Sciences Institute, TTI), and the Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet (Transylvanian Scientific Institute, ETI). In this section I will deal almost entirely with the latter two.[79] The origins of the institute, the brainchild of Pál Teleki, actually go back to 1926, with the State Sciences Institute. Its goal was to collect information and statistics on the successor states of

[78] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/1156/1946-47/1–15; ibid., 9–12/József Deér's "Letter of Recommendation" for Zoltán I. Tóth/Budapest, June 1947.

[79] One's understanding and description of the TTI depends mostly on the factor mentioned in Chapter One, the destruction of the the institute's archives in 1956, which means that the reconstruction of the importance of the institute for Hungarian historical sciences relies on data fragments, correspondence in archives, and published reminiscences. Two of the comparatists tied to the institute, Kosáry (2000) and Hadrovics (1994), have commented on varies aspects of the institutional life, in addition to the historians Ignác Romsics (2013) and Iván Zoltán Dénes (2000).

Hungary, "in preparation for revision" (Romsics 2013, 1458).[80] When the Hungarian (TTI) and Transylvanian (ETI) branches were founded in the wake of the Vienna Awards, it fulfilled the second role of a long-awaited "native historical institute" (Várdy 1976, 53–54). Thus its other purpose was as a post-graduate institution for talented scholars, who could not in all cases be employed within the university system (Romsics 2013, 1458). The government's investment in these institutions (headed by education minister Hóman) had a strong impact as a new source of research funding, which was expressed from the very beginning, as evident in a letter from Tamás to dean of the humanities department, Tibor Gerevich: "On the 14th of this month [Oct. 1940], the education minister, the honorable Bálint Hóman, informed me of his decision to entrust to me the directorship of the Transylvanian and Eastern Institute, now being organized, and that is why he will ask the honorable department … to grant me leave to Kolozsvár for two, perhaps three, years. Since his honor set up a *significant amount* [emphasis mine] to cover the expenses of publications organized by the institute, and intends the institute to fulfill a distinguished role in the Kolozsvár intellectual life, I felt it my duty to accept his assignment."[81]

What the Historical Sciences Institute in Budapest meant for Hadrovics (and others too),[82] struggling up to this point with teaching assistant or assistant lecturer positions, is worth reiterating: "I have to be a linguist and a literary historian, which together mean the tackling of enormous work. Since I have been at the Teleki Institute, I have been able to pursue historical work more intensively, because I no longer have to bother with administrative duties."[83] The

[80] Ignác Romsics, "Kosáry Domokos és a Teleki Intézet, 1941–1949," *Magyar Tudomány*, no. 12 (2013): 1458–1465.
[81] ELTE Levéltára 8/b/848/1940-41/1/Tamás to dean Tibor Gerevich/Budapest, Oct. 17, 1940.
[82] Of young former students of Szekfű, Hóman, and Domanovszky at the Budapest Historical Sciences division—István Barta, Kálmán Benda, Jenő Berlász, Csaba Csapodi, Kálmán Guoth, Mátyás Gyóni, György Györffy, Miklós Komjáthy, András Tóth, and Károly Vígh (Romsics 2013, 1459)—several almost fit into the categorization of this study. The start of Mátyás Gyóni's career was just a few years too late for a proper, full comparison with the other comparatists.
[83] MTAKK Ms 5835/194/Hadrovics to Hajnal/Budapest, n.d. [1942].

administrative duties of the TTI were in fact covered by the acting director Kosáry, who filled in for József Deér, who held the director's post over the full Teleki Institute, while Hóman was its president. For Kosáry, being the director of the TTI meant organizing the creation of documents needed by the Foreign Ministry—in 1943 already concerned about the sending of peace feelers towards the West—and editing the French-language historical journal, *Revue d'histoire comparée* (Romsics 2013, 1460).

The sister institution of the Budapest Hungarian Historical Sciences Institute, the Transylvanian Scientific Institute in Kolozsvár, actually came to full fruition much more rapidly in the wake of the Second Vienna Award in 1940. Its immediate purpose was the reorganization (read: Hungarianization) of sciences in the newly returned region, particularly to aid the Kolozsvár University in returning to Hungarian-language instruction, which it did only six weeks after the occupation of Kolozsvár on Sept. 11, 1940 (Hóman 1941, 4). Pál Teleki and Hóman did not want to return to the pre-WWI status quo, leaving the scholarly and cultural life entirely to the previous institutions of import, the university and Transylvanian Museum Association (Tamás 1941, 409–410).[84] Miklós Incze, an alumnus of the university from this period, writes that the ETI and the university were in close "symbiosis" with one another: "The ETI teachers were at the same time Privatdozents at the university, and they gave lectures at the university. Certain university professors were at the same time ETI directors, [and] they released many important works as ETI publications."[85] Similar to some of the fields covered by the Teleki Institute, the ETI was further divided into fields and specialties: geography, ethnography, history, archeology, sociology,

[84] Lajos Tamás, "Az Erdélyi Tudományos Intézet," in *Az erdélyi egyetemi gondolat és a M. Kir. Ferenc József Tudományegyetem története*, ed. Gyula Bistray, Attila T. Szabó, and Lajos Tamás, 409–416 (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1941); Bálint Hóman, "Előszó," in *Az erdélyi egyetemi gondolat*, 3–4.

[85] Miklós Incze, "Magyar történet- és társadalomtudományi műhelyek a kolozsvári magyar egyetemen (1940–1949)," *Erdélyi Múzeum* 59, nos. 3–4 (1997): 370–377, at 371.

linguistics, Hungarian-Romanian and Hungarian-Saxon relations (including Tamás), literary history, anthropology, and physiology (the latter two including eugenic research) (Tamás 1941, 412–416). Makkai from the beginning worked in the history subdepartment, Tamás also accomplished research for the Hungarian-Romanian relations subdepartment, and I. Tóth joined on Jan. 1, 1942, his task to prepare a bibliography of the nationalities question, which was not completed for another decade (Csatári 1966, 32). I. Tóth made his way to the TTI in Budapest shortly afterwards, where he writes of his experiences with Hóman: "Those who did not know the members of the institute, starting from the person of Hóman, imagined it to be a right-wing [institution]; those who, on the other hand, knew the members, could hardly believe the Hóman was the president. This strange situation could only stand over the long term, for many years, because Hóman, in a kind of protest, would avoid meeting with the members, barely visiting at all" (Tóth, "A Teleki Intézet és a nyilas uralom," in Csatári 1966, 32).

In the autumn of 1944, just before the joint Soviet-Romanian invasion of Northern Transylvania, when many of the institute members returned to Budapest, Makkai and Tamás too, the ETI was taken over by the Kolozsvár University and allowed to function until late 1949. Incze emphasizes that the high-quality Hungarian-language education at the university in a short nine-year period from 1940–49 truly reinvigorated the intellectual role of Hungarians in Transylvania, after a previous 22-year hiatus when most academics from Hungary proper fled the region, and had positive aftershocks for years to come, the implication being that Hungarian academia, and a Hungarian university or wing, had to been taken seriously by the communist Romanian government, of course under Soviet backing in the immediate aftermath of the war (Incze 1997, 370). Incze's analysis should be read as truly surprising considering the circumstances in which the Hungarians took over the university in Kolozsvár, and points to unpredictability in the life of

institutions, especially if viewed from strictly a black and white reading of fascism vs. communism.

After the siege of Budapest, the TTI was resummoned, and Kosáry became the full director and not just acting director. In the wake of the catastrophe, all the members were in agreement about their harsh critique of Hungary's wartime conduct, having seen firsthand the Arrow Cross horrors. The institute settled on remaking Western academic connections and reaching out to the neighboring states in an open and friendly democratic fashion. This was also when a Marxist historian wing of Hungarian communists joined the institute, who deemed the old guard of young historians responsible for Hungary's wartime actions too (Romsics 2013, 1461–1462). Kosáry felt absolved of this responsibility, because he had been warning members of the political elite that Hungary would lose the war, and to take a different course, even since 1939.[86] On numerous occasions afterward, the question of what the role of the institute should be came up, involving upper government ministers as well. István Bibó became the acting, then full, president in 1947, and introduced a new sociology wing. He also advocated for the TTI's renaming to the East European Scientific Institute, which took place, being unhappy with its informal name given after 1945, of the Danubian Valley Institute, because it left out Poland and sounded too Habsburg restorational (Dénes 2013).[87] Kosáry, already in 1945, commented in a letter that a more appropriate name would be Danubian Institute, since Eastern Europe implies more than what the institute can in reality handle in the immediate aftermath of the war.[88] These and other disagreements between Bibó and Kosáry became a moot point when the entire existence of the

[86] My research puts this assessment to already 1939, see Chapter One, footnote 34: MTAKK Ms 4525/717/Kosáry to Domanovszky/London, n.d. [autumn 1939]. Romsics cites his 1941 comments to Bárdossy and Bethlen: "they will break Germany like a walnut" (2013, 1460).

[87] Iván Zoltán Dénes, "Mediátor-szerepben," *2000*, no. 7 (2013).

[88] MTAKK Ms 5563/230/Kosáry to Bisztray/Budapest, July 23, 1945.

East European Scientific Institute was at stake. By 1949, all of the comparatists and Bibó (except for Tamás and I. Tóth who were already in upper administrative positions at the university) suffered reorganization, i.e., were kicked out with their positions taken over by the Marxist wing. Then the TTI was taken over by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and divided into three departments: Hungarian history, universal history, and the history of the Soviet Union and the people's republics. Hadrovics called his colleagues at the Teleki Institute, "this professionally very sophisticated community," for whom "[t]he guiding principle of this entirely youthful vanguard was rapprochement with neighboring peoples. It is a great loss that they broke apart this community by force" (1994, 117).

The End of the Institute and Its Afterlife

The following excerpt is from a two-page *Századok* article from 1949, "On the founding of the [new] Historical Sciences Institute," explaining why the old institution was done away with:

> The old East European Scientific Institute was established by the counter-revolutionary system for the purposes of anti-democratic, chauvinist, "scientific," and foreign policy objectives. This fact also stamped the functioning of the institution in the years after the liberation. The old institution in no way conformed to the requirements of a Hungarian people's democracy walking the path to socialism, in fact, it directly inhibited the development of the historical sciences, the general dissemination of the Marxist-Leninist methodology in historical research, and the organizing of planned scientific work.[89]

This excerpt comes from the back matter of the famous 1949 *Századok* volume, which opens with a photograph of Stalin and the article "Stalin and the historical sciences" by Grekov, a caesura in

[89] "A történettudományi intézet megalakulásáról," *Századok* 83, nos. 1–4 (1949): 372–373, at 372.

the journal which was aptly described at the time by acting editor Jenő Berlász.[90] The four coffin-nail pejoratives of the old East European/Historical Sciences Institute hide the complexity of the shuttering of the short-lived institute. The eight-year published output (1941–49) of the institution maintained an openness to Western democracy as well as opposition to mass right-wing *völkisch* populism and left- and right-wing totalitarianism.[91] And though one can find chauvinist articles written from an often-irrepressible Hungarian standpoint, that should not undermine its stated goal in historical research of a regional perspective to uncover the shared experience of modernization, with the hope of historiographical cooperation with neighboring states as the aim of its publication the *Revue d'histoire comparée*. One should also expect that the institute had "scientific" objectives, at least as scientific as the cutting edge historical research of the era, with a small role for economic and even materialist historical reasoning in the institute's publications before and especially after 1945, but the variety of both "bourgeois" and Marxism informed articles was the real core issue. And finally, the TTI really did have foreign policy objectives during WWII—to provide convincing arguments on the status of a fair Hungarian border in the case of the end of the war—which should not imply that all of its output, involving the organization of a large team of scholars working simultaneously on numerous subjects, was merely propagandistic. But to better understand what was perceived to be propagandistic about the Teleki/Historical Sciences Institute (TTI) *after* 1945 requires some more sources.

[90] An August 1948 letter to Sándor Domanovszky by the *Századok* acting editor, Jenő Berlász, sums up best this 1948 divide of the journal: "My deeply respected Professor, I am now preparing the *Századok* volume for publication. It is almost for certain that this will be the last one which I can put together. The events are rather galloping along. I have already lost my teaching position. The journal will not remain long in my hands, or more accurately, in our hands. With this issue an important era is coming to a close. The Professor opened this era. Many and myself would be very happy if in this—by all likelihood—closing volume, the Professor would speak once again. It would be my respectful request, that the Professor please submit for publication a completed study for *Századok* ... Your grateful student, dr. Jenő Berlász."

[91] Kosáry, "A Teleki Intézet emléke," *Magyar Könyvszemle* 166, no. 3 (2000): 251–252.

There is an interesting exchange in two articles from 1953 and 1954 that look back with several years' hindsight and really speak to the afterlife of the *Revue d'histoire comparée*.[92] The articles are the response by historians of the *Századok* editorial board, involving better known young Marxist historians as well as those with prior careers (István Hajnal, Lajos Elekes, previously tied to the comparatists' circle, and Kosáry), reacting to a debate about the future direction of Hungarian historical research with the self-critique and admission that the personality cult treatment of "progressive" figures in Hungarian history like Kossuth—in the vein of Stalin and Rákosi—was misguided. The debate thus comes on the heel of the second period (1949–53) of Marxist historiography in Hungary, labeled dogmatism, that ended with the denunciation of the Rákosi cult of leadership.[93] The editorial board debate was specifically about a research plan abstract by Elekes, "A magyartörténettudomány helyzete és feladatai"[94] (The situation and tasks of the Hungarian historical science, 1953), which criticized problems with the previous five-year plan, including a work overload with unclear directives, as well as a polemical divide between Marxist historians of the old guard and the young Marxists.[95] Responses included the question of how to better include in research projects the leftover historians from the bourgeois era, after several publishing debacles surrounding commemoration of the centennial of 1848, on the condition that they become properly trained (1954, 151). I give this short background just as a context to show how different the earlier period 1945–48 was in comparison, when the confines of what Marxist historical interpretation implied were not yet clear to most Teleki Institute

[92] *Századok* editors, "A Századok szerkesztőbizottságának vitaülése," *Századok* 87, no. 4 (1953): 648−671; *Századok* editors, "A Századok kibővített szerkesztőbizottságának vitaülése," *Századok* 88, no. 1 (1954): 148–187.
[93] Holger Fischer, "Történetírás a szocialista Magyarországon – periodizációs kísérlet külső szemszögből," in *Tudomány és ideológia között*, ed. Vilmos Erős and Ádám Takács (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Kiadó, 2012), 10–21.
[94] Lajos Elekes, "A magyar történettudomány helyzetének és feladatainak kérdéséhez a Kongresszus tanulságai nyomán," *Századok* 87, no. 4 (1953): 621−647.
[95] György Kövér, "A magyar történettudomány első ötéves terve és a gazdaságtörténet-írás," in *Tudomány és ideológia között*, ed. Vilmos Erős and Ádám Takács (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Kiadó, 2012), 22–42, at 33–34.

historians, who were still finding their own role. More importantly, this series of articles gives three diverse critiques of the Teleki Institute's publications.

It is important to note that at this later date of 1953, Kosáry now self-identifies as a Marxist historian. Yet, Kosáry in responding to certain insinuations in his former colleague Elekes's article inadvertently opened up several cans of worms: First, he pushed the need to broaden and deepen the study of general East European trends of development, referencing his erstwhile *Revue d'histoire comparée* as a positive example, writing, "I so stress the question of the parallels in the development of East European peoples because for a long time now I have seen it as one of our important tasks (Revue d'Histoire Comparée)" (1953, 651–652). Then, Kosáry writes that Elekes's single-stroke judgment of 1945–48 historiography is absurd when Elekes writes that "'the openly fascist and German-friendly elements have stepped down' [leaving the not open fascists?, Kosáry asks rhetorically]," to be replaced by the "'representatives of Western imperialist orientation'" (1953, 654). Seeing that it was clearly an attack on him too, Kosáry's response is that Elekes's Marxist self-critique involves admitting the small faults in order to avoid the large ones: Elekes does not admit to readers how his views have changed in his latest book on the Hunyadi era since the last time he wrote about the subject, neither mentioning, amongst many others problems, that he "applied the Kulturgefälle [concept of cultural slope], adopted from the Germans, in the farthest-reaching manner in the Romanian situation" (1953, 653). As we can read, Kosáry is not mincing words in using the forum which is on other topics entirely to defend his past work and that of his colleagues. What he does claim responsibility for, in the language of a self-critique, is representing antifascist and relatively progressive views before 1945, though not even having the possibility of being Marxist back then; for not being aware how deeply divided the world was after WWII; that their organization and training of new specialists after the war slowed the advance of

Marxism; and that their publications, which were a continuation of aspects from the old institution, did not a fulfill the demands of Marxist historical writing. "But to insinuate," he writes in response to Elekes, "that the leadership represented 'not open fascism' or some other type of imperialist aspiration … this is a falsification of facts which must be strongly and resolutely rejected" (1953, 654).

The response from Kosáry was met on several fronts. Opposing him amongst others were the historians Aladár Mód, Péter Hanák, and Zsigmond Pál Pach, those who a few years prior denounced Kosáry for anti-state activities, the latter two who would later rise to scholarly prominence internationally. Péter Hanák thought it only fair that "when we are sharply and deeply unearthing the deficiencies of our Marxist historical science" (i.e., applying self-critique to our work as Marxist historians), then "let us finally complete a critique of bourgeois history writing and its various directions" (1954, 165).

First, Hanák asks if the *Revue* was really apolitical after the Soviet liberation. Starting with some praise, he writes that the *Revue*'s openly declared program was correct "to advance the peace of the Danubian small nations with the tools of the historical sciences, to eliminate nationalism, and groom and deepen friendly relations." And, "The *Revue* stood against the compromised nationalism of the counterrevolutionary regime, it chose [Henri] Pirenne as its teacher, and declared the necessity of the 'objective viewpoint,' overcoming nationalism, and the comparative historical method" (1954, 164). To this purpose, however, Hanák writes that the *Revue* "heartily warmed up the idea of a Danubian confederation," but "behind the superficial democratic aims and perspectives, other goals were deeply concealed" (164). For example, a seemingly innocuous *Revue* article on nationalism and internationalism in the region,[96] one which points to positive

[96] Kosáry, "Nationalisme et internationalisme dans l'histoire des peuples danubiens," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 5, no. 2 (1947): 3–21.

moments in the region's history and the possibility of cooperation in "the development of a new internationalist spirit," in fact advocated a coalition under the aegis of Western powers. And Hungary's role in such a coalition, especially under the "*Revue* editorship's call for an international committee with the historians of the Danubian region taking part," was in fact the implied "extension of the idea of Hungarian cultural superiority." Then he concludes by writing, "We are supposed to believe that in the years after liberation the guard of Teleki Institute historians, merely inexperienced in regard to Marxism and made up of relatively progressive historians, did not represent any type of political aspiration" (165).

Finally, let me mention a few of Zsigmond Pál Pach's comments on this side debate. His main point is that it is incorrect for Kosáry to claim that he and the leaders of the institutions "'were not Marxists', as if it were a type of passive attitude." It was rather "a fairly open, active behavior against Marxism, a resolute and combatant anti-Marxism" (1954, 155). Moreover, both before and after the war, "the old Historical Sciences Institute always had a distinct political direction … the 'second line' of Hungarian ruling class politics [that] desired to serve an orientation towards Western powers" (155).

What we see in this long exchange are three possible levels of critique of the *Revue* and the Teleki Institute after 1945 and up to 1948: Elekes writes of hidden but implied reactionary, Horthyist views that survived the war, to be combined with sympathies for Western imperialism. This is the simple explanation of events that we see in the above 1949 excerpt from *Századok* on the reasons for the closing of the Teleki/Historical Sciences Institute. Hanák however recognizes the sincere and positive steps to eliminate nationalism that are then undermined by not rooting out Hungarian cultural superiority completely, which is also tied in to a new Western-controlled Danubian federation. Pach's focus is more on the supposed neutrality in regard to Marxism that

resulted in a stunting of Marxist historiography. Interestingly, however, he recognizes that the Institute during the war did not support the aims of Germany-allied Hungary, but rather an alternate vision of exiting the war on the side of the West with some of the elite intact, which then informed their outlook from 1941–48. Pach's critique and elements of Hanák's seem to validate the narrative that Kosáry has consistently put forward about the Teleki Institute. But more than anything else, this exchange shows that in 1953 the topic of the *Revue d'histoire comparée* was virtually taboo, and Kosáry erred in even bringing it up as positive example of regional scholarship that could be expanded to the current situation. Kosáry's failed attempt here should also make it clearer why in the early 1980s he would take the opportunity to publicize to a much larger audience what he considered the positive elements of "bourgeois" history writing, a time when other historians were also interested in reassessing the black-and-white picture of pre-1945 history and historiography.[97]

Conclusion

In summary, it is certain that those who hired the comparatists before 1945 considered them for their acumen as regards questions of international and regional political significance that could serve the interests of Hungary, interests which could not be aligned with the West despite trying. After 1945 and during the period of communist transition, when applying for new positions the "progressive," "democratic" elements of their pre-1945 CV were emphasized over the politically ambiguous or detrimental elements. Yet, short- and long-term career continuity for the comparatists after 1948 really only depended on two factors: one's fairly quick transition to a

[97] Vilmos Erős, "Historiográfiaírás Magyarországon 1945 után," in *Tudomány és ideológia között*, ed. Vilmos Erős and Ádám Takács (Budapest: ELTE Eötvös Kiadó, 2012), 151–166, at 154–155

Marxist paradigm, specifically a Stalinist historical materialism, as well as the extent to which one compromised oneself during WWII. Tamás and I. Tóth fared quite well during the transitionary and Stalinist periods, Gáldi's and Hadrovics's trajectories were slowed down slightly even though their Russian lexicographical work was essential, and Makkai, now a fervent Marxist, was eventually trusted with less prestigious positions. In terms of derailment, Gogolák had to return to his back-up career of journalism, though he alone resumed his favorite historical subjects in Vienna after 1957, while Kosáry was forced to discover the "joys" of library science, which regardless he took on with great responsibility. Kosáry was forced out of the university in 1949 and after 1952 spent several years in Gödöllő as a librarian at the agricultural college. His editorial work and connections with Western academia between 1945 and 1948 were condemned in 1949 as a conspiracy of bourgeois historians to create an alternate Danubian federation of small nations under the aegis of Western powers and a leading role for Hungary. Kosáry along with his associate Kálmán Benda were taken in for questioning about a conspiracy of working on behalf of émigrés and Western agencies, a charge that he successfully repudiated at least in terms of criminal acts (Romsics 2013, 1464). Kosáry's lack of compromise with Stalinist science took him down a different road from the other comparatists, but he was not alone in this type of semi-exile: archivist/librarian was also the career of *not* choice for many of the advanced scholars among his cohort and the broader historical faculty.[98]

[98] Just to mention a few from the broader circle of the comparatists: Jenő Berlász (a fellow historian and editor of *Századok*), Kálmán Benda (a fellow historian and Teleki Institute researcher), Dezső Keresztury (the minister of education 1945–47), and Elemér Mályusz. But the political circumstances in each case varied greatly, the three former, for instance, being truly unjustifiable. The position of outsider took serious time and effort to overcome, even if one was officially rehabilitated, as was the case even with Mályusz after 1949 (for Mályusz see Chapter Three) (Kosáry 2003, 28). Kálmán Benda, an associate of Kosáry's at the former Historical Sciences Institute of the Teleki Institute (1942–47, from 1947–49, assistant director), found work after 1950 at the archives of the Reformed Church in Budapest. Jenő Berlász is covered in Chapter Four.

In the end, however, everyone who remained in Hungary had to reach a modus vivendi with the academic and history writing practices of the era, which was eventually made easier due to the split among the national-communist and critical schools, and because the Kádár government chose not to choose sides in the debate—the famous motto "whoever is not against us is with us" also applied to historians, though career advancement favored those with party membership. This fascinating dynamic in Hungary among historians of various affiliation with Marxist theory, and the émigré Hungarian intellectuals' late realization of it, is what prompted Kosáry in 1970 to publicly defend in the pages of the *Slavic Review* his autonomy in the face of an attack from the nationalist, anticommunist novelist Albert Wass living in the US.[99] This autonomy was important for Kosáry because then he could also claim it for his pre-1945 as well as his 1945–48 endeavors.

[99] Kosáry, "Letter to the Editor," *Slavic Review* 29, no. 4 (Dec. 1970): 763–765. See also footnote 75 in Chapter Four.

Chapter Three

Comparison along a Sliding Scale

The parallels we see in the juxtaposition of the two opening excerpts below, that of a German historian's view of Hungarian urban history, and then that of a Hungarian historian's view of Romanian urban history, was an aspect already noted in the interwar era.* What we see in the two quotes are classic interwar era examples of the concept of *Kulturgefälle*, or a cultural slope, with culturally superior formations being transferred eastwards by Germans to Hungary in the first case, and by Hungarians to Romania in the second case:

Schünemann claims that medieval Hungarian urbanity in the wider sense can be viewed as an offshoot of the German urbanity, upon which other Western European influences had an effect, namely French and then Italian in the twelfth century. Indeed, in the fourteenth–fifteenth centuries there also existed in Hungary such cities which, at least as regards their population, had a strong Hungarian character—nevertheless [he holds that] the medieval Hungarian cities and their organization in their entirety can be viewed as German. And this is because Pannonia's ancient Roman cities and culture—as Schünemann determines—were swept away by the wandering of peoples, and neither the Conquest Era Hungarians nor the local Slavic peoples were city builders. Thus Hungarian cities and Hungarian urban culture exist thanks to the Germans.

Source: The Hungarian historian Ambrus Pleidell on the 1929 work of German historian Konrad Schünemann *Die Entstehung des Städtewesens in Südosteuropa*. Pleidell, "A magyar várostörténet első fejezete," pts. 1–3, *Századok* 68 (1934): 1–44, 158–200, 276–313, at 3.

With the effects of their twelfth-century migrations … the Hungarians of the [old Romanian Kingdom] achieved eternal merit in the cultural history of Romania, lasting so to speak to this very day, with their introduction of urban culture and a higher-order agriculture … It is not only on certain areas of intellectual life that we can observe Hungarian influence on Romanians, but one in fact could say that the entire Romanian culture and civilization developed under the tutelage of Hungarians, primarily of course via the Romanians of Transylvania. Gáldi outlines the crucial influence of the movements of Hungarian humanism, Reformation, and Counter-Reformation on Romanian intellectuality and strengthens with new data the already correctly maintained stance that Hungarians provided the cultural tools for Romanian national consciousness.

Source: László Makkai's review of chapters on Romanian history by Lajos Elekes and László Gáldi, in *Erdély népei* (1941), ed. Elemér Mályusz. Makkai, *Protestáns Szemle* 51, no. 3 (1942): 253–254.

* Kósa János, Review of *Der deutsche Kultureinfluss im nahen Südosten. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Ungarns* by Fritz Valjavec, *Egyetemes Filológiai Közlöny* 65 (1941): 214–229, at 216.

I will use these two quotes to map out the structure of this third chapter as well, with one half focusing on German publications highlighting the supposed culturally superior role of ethnic Germans in Hungarian history and the reflections, divisions, and fault lines opened up in Hungarian interwar era historiography through its meeting with German historiography. The other half of the chapter will aid the discussion of the comparatists' historical works on East-Central and South-East Europe by analyzing some of the parallels of German and Hungarian treatment of the region, since this is the milieu which can best contextualize the pre-1945 oeuvre of the comparatists. I am indebted to the studies of László Orosz[1] in helping me reach the conclusion that the best prism with which to enter into the Hungarian historiographical debates that the comparatists were a part of in the second half of interwar era and during WWII is through their interaction with contemporaneous German historiography on Eastern Europe and Hungary. Many of the problems that Hungarian historians dealt with were similar to those in Germany, though perhaps only in the sense of a distorted reflection. The reasons for this are not only the usually mentioned two major competing Hungarian historiographical schools' roots in the German *Geistesgeschichte* and *Volksgeschichte*, respectively, but even more so the analogous situation that Germans and Hungarians found themselves in after the First World War. There were significant Hungarian and German co-nationals/minorities remaining in states carved out of the former German Reich and Austria-Hungary, though in the German case they were usually more spread out (even in the Soviet Union) and in smaller pockets. There were German and Hungarian

[1] László Orosz, "Népiségkutatás a nemzeti érdekek ütközőpontjában. A két világháború közötti tudománypolitika Fritz Valjavec és Mályusz Elemér kapcsolatában," *Századok* 137, no. 1 (2003): 43–99, at 85; Orosz, "A két világháború közötti német 'délkelet-kutatás' és a magyar tudomány kapcsolatához. Fritz Valjavec és Mályusz Elemér levelezése," pts. 1–2, *Levéltári Közlemények* 75, nos. 1 and 2 (2004): 105–137, 118–154, resp. In German, see also Orosz, "Die Verbindungen der deutschen Südostforschung zur ungarischen Wissenschaft zwischen 1935 und 1944. Ein Problemaufriss anhand des Briefwechsels zwischen Fritz Valjavec und Elemér Mályusz," in *Der Ungarnbild der deutschen Historiographie*, ed. Márta Fata (Wiesbaden: Steiner Verlag, 2004), 126–167.

minorities living in close proximity to one another in Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia and sharing many of the same difficulties (historiographical too) of living under new ruling nations. But the easy similarities end here at the junction of the added complication of a German minority in Hungary. Once the German state took on the mantle of the protection of German-language speakers, who were once relegated to the sphere of state interests before WWI, it now meant that even though the relationship between German and Hungarian historians was mostly amicable, things could also become openly combative. These debates covered a vast swath of time from the first early medieval contact of Germans and Hungarians to the question of the strategy that states and their respective minorities should pursue in the present. And with the ramping up of tensions leading to another war, the unhappy yet useful alliance of Hungary with Germany, the installation of a puppet government in Hungary when it was already clear that the war was lost, and then the unconditional defeat by the Soviets, there were serious real world consequences for all the historians involved in this debate.

During this roughly fifteen-year period from 1930 to 1945, the strategies employed in Hungarian historians' engagement with Western scholarship changed towards greater emphasis on publications in French and English, as described in Chapter Two. The historian of French literature at the Eötvös College, Sándor Eckhardt, introduced in the previous chapter as a professor to László Gáldi and Lajos Tamás, wrote an article on European academics who speak Hungarian for *Magyar Szemle* in 1929.[2] The list of French, Dutch, Italian, Swedish, Finnish, Russian, German, Austrian, Czech, and Croatian scholars was not particularly long, with a few for each nationality respectively, but the hope was that these scholars would provide the kernel for future progress, aided with the funding efforts of the Hungarian government of both native and foreign scholars,

[2] Sándor Eckhardt, "A külföld és a magyar tudományos élet," *Magyar Szemle* 7, no. 9 (Sept. 1929): 85–90.

which would lead to mutual benefits for the linguistic, literary, historical, and archeological sciences. The government, Eckhardt writes, was now aware that propagandistic works had less influence abroad than hard science, adding that the severity of Hungary's losses following the Great War could only be explained by the ignorance of the victorious parties, as pure malice could not have produced such a destructive peace agreement: "This is why we exert ourselves presently with departmental chairs and institutes abroad, [and] issue foreign-language scientific journals abroad … to convey to the non-Hungarian reader, to indifferent Europe, the achievements of Hungarian scientific life" (1929, 85). The reasoning here was that the more people knew of Hungary and the Hungarians, the more accurate and amiable their impression would be.

Only a few years later, by 1932 for sure, this ubiquitous view was fast dissolving, caused it seems by none other than the publications of two of the young Germans praised in Eckhardt's article as young, promising historians of Hungarian topics, Konrad Schünemann[3] and Otto Albrecht Isbert,[4] of the Hungarian Institute in Berlin—historians from a country, no less, considered most sympathetic to the present and historical grievances of Hungarians. Schünemann's position, as summarized in the first of the opening quotes, that Hungary was incapable of creating a native urban culture, was proof that more knowledge of Hungary might not in fact be favorable to her interests. The perceived denigration by German historians of the cultural role of Hungarians in East-Central Europe was treated as an affront to the national sovereignty of

[3] Konrad Schünemann's (1900–1940) primary focus was Hungarian urban history and aspects of the colonization policies of Maria Theresa (he also wrote the introduction to the German translation of the famous *Magyar történet*, its first volume written by Bálint Hóman).

[4] Otto Albrecht Isbert (1901–1986) introduced to the German public the history and present condition of the German minorities throughout the Carpathian region and beyond, and his main focus regarding Hungary was on the German settlements of the eighteenth century. Probably the best anecdote uncovered in researching this chapter is that Isbert, after tiring of his interaction with Hungarian historiographers, became one of the first popularizers of Yoga in Germany, authoring many volumes on the subject after 1955.

the nation by many official circles. A 1932 article by Isbert published in *Magyar Szemle*,[5] on why Germany sees the German minority of Hungary as no longer an internal Hungarian matter, caused a full-blown diplomatic crisis by 1934, with Hungarian politicians calling for the removal of the Hungarian head of the Hungarian Institute in Berlin, Gyula Farkas, for fostering an atmosphere where this type of scholarship was entertained.[6] Every major historian in Hungary felt impelled to respond, and the best new talents were called upon in their research to rebut German historiographical claims, including some of the comparatists and their wider cohort. At the top of the list was (1) Gyula Szekfű, the historian who first inaugurated the idea, then rapidly distanced himself from it after the rise of Nazism, that Hungary's 1000-year history was intrinsically tied to the German cultural sphere (Orosz 2004, 110, fn. 14); (2) Bálint Hóman, co-author with Szekfű of the most famous synthesis of Hungarian history, the *Geistesgeschichte*- and *Staatsrecht*-inspired *Magyar történet*, who in the coming years as Minister of Education further cemented Hungary's cooperation with Nazi Germany; and (3) Elemér Mályusz, the importer of German-style *Volksgeschichte* aims and methodologies in Hungarian historical studies, who due to his embattled position had both a greater task and presumed stronger ability to prove his science's capability of rebutting *Völkisch* German claims (Orosz 2003, 76). The conundrum, commotion, even soul-searching caused by the contact of two historiographies, German and Hungarian, cannot be understated. It was something which in Hungary could never be treated merely as an academic dispute. And even though Hungarian historians presented a unified front in this one regard, this contact with German historiography deepened an already irreconcilable rift in the historical faculty over the meaning and essence of Hungarian history and the goals of history writing, with the three

[5] Otto Albrecht Isbert, "A magyarországi németség birodalmi német szempontból," *Magyar Szemle* 15 (1932): 231–240.

[6] Gábor Ujváry, *A harmincharmadik nemzedék, Politika, kultúra és történettudomány a 'neobarokk társadalomban'* (Budapest: Ráció, 2010), 249.

above historians forming a triangle of opposing corners. From this point on, a mainstay of Hungarian publications was the swift and constant repudiation of the main theses of a small cadre of German historians who with seemingly good intentions still treated Hungary as a lower part of the *Kulturgefälle*.

The People? Or the State?

At this stage in this thesis, it is no longer possible to avoid addressing the intractable disagreement between two leading members of the Hungarian historical faculty and their respective "schools," Gyula Szekfű (*Geistesgeschichte—szellemtörténet*) and Elemér Mályusz (*Volksgeschichte—népiségtörténet*). It is also of contextual relevance to the work of the comparatists, and it explains many peculiarities in the interaction with German historiography. The *szellemtörténet* school of Gyula Szekfű was far and away the single most influential paradigm in historical studies in the interwar era. So much so that other historians besides Mályusz, who were also running competitive schools with the resources to influence the research of their students and publish too, still found themselves in a position of using the language of *szellemtörténet* to appeal to a larger audience. This is exactly the predicament that Steven Várdy speaks of in regard to the positivist cultural historian Sándor Domanovszky (1877–1955)—Várdy calls his school *Kulturgeschichte*—which was evident in the introduction to his edited work on "Hungarian cultural history," *Magyar művelődéstörténet*[7]: "he struggled valiantly but not quite successfully to synthesize his own basically positivistic philosophical outlook with that of the fashionable

[7] Sándor Domanovszky, György Balanyi, Imre Szentpétery, Elemér Mályusz, and Elemér Varjú, eds., *Magyar művelődéstörténet*, 5 vols. (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1939–1942).

Geistesgeschichte orientation … [and] while trying to dethrone or at least lessen the influence of the Geistesgeschichte School, Domanovszky himself attacked the philosophical foundations of the positivist system he represented" (Várdy 1976, 168–169). Because Domanovszky, amongst other fields of history also pushed his students toward social history, he will be brought up again in Chapter Four. Szekfű's Hungarian version of *Geistesgeschichte* is *szellemtörténet*, and a mirror translation. Mályusz claims that his *népiségtörténet* moniker is just inadvertently similar to *Volksgeschichte* and in fact has independent roots (Mályusz 1994, 9).[8] A mirror translation of *népiségtörténet* back into German would be *Volkstumgeschichte*. However, as we will see below, the conceptual connection between the two terms was not lost on any historian in the interwar era. Várdy likely uses the German name for the schools because his book on *Modern Hungarian Historiography* (1976) is intended for an English-reading audience, and there are difficulties arising from translating some of these terms into English: *népiségtörténet* can be easily translated into English as ethnohistory, but this is already a condensation of what the essence of *Volksgeschichte* is; however, *Geistesgeschichte* is less lucky from the standpoint of translation into English. Thus, I will generally use the Hungarian terms because there is a process of conceptual translation to Hungarian conditions that made these historical schools in Hungary unique.

Three of the comparatists were strongly influenced by Szekfű—Kosáry and Gogolák directly, and Gáldi indirectly, as a strong proponent of *szellemtörténet*. To approach the historiography related to the comparatists, I will rely primarily on the scholarship of Iván Zoltán Dénes,[9] Balázs Trencsényi,[10] and Vilmos Erős. The latter, among Hungarian historiographers, has

[8] Mályusz, *Népiségtörténet* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1994).
[9] Iván Zoltán Dénes, ed., "Bevezetés," in *Szekfű Gyula* (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 2001).
[10] Balázs Trencsényi, *A nép lelke. Nemzetkarakterológiai viták Kelet-Európában* (Budapest: Argumentum Kiadó – Bibó István Szellemi Műhely, 2010). For an abridged English version see Trencsényi, *The Politics of "National Character": A Study in Interwar East European Thought* (London: Routledge, 2012).

perhaps gone into the greatest detail specifically on the interwar era contestations between the schools of Szekfű's *szellemtörténet* and Mályusz's *népiségtörténet*, and it is unfortunate that so few of Erős's works have been published in English.[11] Yet this is not surprising, considering that it is the same even for the person at the center of these debates, the 'greatest' Hungarian historian, Szekfű[12]—it was Gogolák who never stopped referring to Szekfű as the greatest Hungarian historian in his private correspondence into the 1980s, and in way remained in dialogue with him, his legacy, and his historical conceptions long after Szekfű's death in 1955.[13] At the same time, it is important not to oversell the extent of the dispute generally or in the scholarly pursuits of the comparatists. Several leading Hungarian historians had little reason to get involved, pursuing their own scholarly agendas, like István Hajnal, with whom the comparatists had considerable interaction too. Among the comparatists, László Hadrovics and Zoltán I. Tóth never mention the terms *szellemtörténet* or *népiségtörténet*, and those comparatists more oriented toward linguistic and literary studies could function independently of these historical schools, or in combination, like Gáldi.

[11] Vilmos Erős, *Szekfű és Mályusz vitája a középkori magyar nemzetiségi politikáról* (Debrecen: Történeti Tanulmányok, 1995a); "Historia regnum – historia populum. A Szekfű–Mályusz-vita kialakulása," *Századok* (1995b): 573–596; "Szekfű és Mályusz vitája a 'Magyar Történet'-ről," *Századok* (1997): 453–476; *A Szekfű–Mályusz-vita* (Debrecen: Csokonai, 2000); "Szekfű árnyak és viták," *Kommentár*, no. 2 (2008): 120–127; "Szekfű historiográfiai koncepciója," *Magyar Szemle* 19, nos. 1–2 (2013); "A magyar történetíras a két világháború közötti időszakban," *Erdélyi Múzeum*, nos. 1–2 (2009): 7–27; "Szekfű historiográfiai koncepciója," in *A negyedik nemzedék, és ami utána következik. Szekfű Gyula és a magyar történetírás a 20. század első felében*, ed. Gábor Ujváry (Budapest: Ráció, 2011), 101–111. In English, "In the Lure of Geistesgeschichte," *European Review of History* 22, no. 3 (2015a): 411–432; "Ethnohistory in Hungary (Elemér Mályusz and István Szabó)," *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 7, no. 1 (Jan.–Mar. 2015b): 18–36.

[12] On attempts to publish the famous *Magyar történet* in English in the interwar era, see Tibor Frank, "Luring the English-Speaking World: Hungarian History Diverted," *Slavonic and East European Review* 69, no. 1 (Jan. 1991): 60–80. In lieu of this work English readers received a Szekfű-inspired volume from the pen of Kosáry, *A History of Hungary* (Cleveland: Franklin Society, 1941). This work moreover claims to have regional comparative elements, which will be investigated in the following chapter.

[13] See Lajos Gogolák, "Romemlékek (I)," ed. Béla Nóvé, *Holmi* 13, no. 3 (Mar. 2001a); Gogolák, "Romemlékek (II)," ed. Béla Nóvé, *Holmi* 13, no. 4 (Apr. 2001b).

In its most simple configuration, Ferenc Vámos points to the difference between the two schools as "Historia regnum – historia populum," a history of the kingdom vs. a history of the people. Vilmos Erős uses this phrase in the title of his article (1995b), borrowing the distinction made by the art historian Vámos in 1939. The following is the longer original quotation from Vámos:

> In the field of Hungarian historiography, today the battle of two views is playing out. It is a fundamental symptom. With crushing strength it pervades every manifestation of Hungarian intellectual life as a whole. It is not a new thing—this degradation of the weight of the peasantry's substance. It goes back to Anonymus. … [Its name is]: *historia regnum*. It goes back to the Árpádian dynasty: beyond Anonymus, to the writer of the *Gesta*. This is a thousand-year edifice. The other group is incomparably younger. It feeds off the results of linguistics, archeology, and ethnology: *historia populum*. These three latter sciences today still operate independently of one another. The melding of their results will be the task of the future science. (Erős 1995b, 573, quoting Vámos 1939)

As we see in the above quote, the two schools[14] have tendency to be classified according to antinomies: the state and elites vs. the people and peasantry, statecraft and raison d'état vs. the unrepresented and thus essentially stateless. Another aspect we can pick up in this quote is the propensity for this debate to be framed in an almost existential manner. This snippet places emphasis on different auxiliary sciences, the implication being that Mályusz's "younger" *Volksgeschichte*/*népiségtörténet* school was more modern, and up-to-date with the rest of Europe, with the incorporation of linguistics, archeology, and ethnology (all of them important for an analysis of non-written culture). It also feeds off a strain of social history—"the non-statist-national sphere"—that went back to historical studies from the end of the nineteenth century,

[14] It is important to note "schools" is more a way of classifying them, than actual separate faculties at a history department. In the case of the comparatists, Szekfű's school I read as more of an ideological influence on a portion of young historians and what might today be called in the broadest sense "intellectual history."

which were used as a basis to approach Mályusz's highlighted field of the history of settlements and regions (Erős 1995b, 575). In Mályusz's 1936/37 lecture notes from his class on *népiségtörténet*,[15] he says that already at a young age he noticed because of his close reading of German historiography a high degree of sophistication in local and regional histories in Germany (*Ortsgeschichte*), which he wanted to emulate in Hungarian studies (1994, 7, 8, 10). For his 1922 dissertation on a single county in the former Upper Hungary, *Túroc megye kialakulása*, he imagined a science that could fuse many smaller studies on villages and towns into a history of regions, which could highlight medieval developments in economy and society, but also "uncover the unconscious life of the peasantry and their cultural activities, contra the reigning direction of research that uncovers the conscious political pursuits" (1994, 9). Mályusz's school would have ideally required a full team of historians to pare down certain problems according to their methodological skillset. In reality, however, a single historian usually had cover several fields by him/herself.[16]

Szekfű's own "modernization" of historical writing was "experimentation based on the conceptual renewals in German historical writing" (Dénes 2001, 17), particularly Ranke, Meinecke, Dilthey, and selectively Lamprecht, in other words incorporating ideas of medieval statecraft and raison d'état; anti-cosmopolitanism and anti-positivism; and interdisciplinary economic, cultural, art, and social history. The new element that Szekfű added to his 'synthesis of the state,' for example in his and Hóman's co-authored five-volume *Magyar történet* (1928–1934), was a cultural history depicting the epochs of Hungarian history according to "art history

[15] Mályusz did teach a class on *népiségtörténet* at the University of Budapest; his lecture notes were published two decades ago: Mályusz, *Népiségtörténet* (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete, 1994).

[16] Mályusz's students of the same generation (and younger) as the comparatists include Erik Fügedi, Ferenc Maksai, Zsigmond Jakó, Éva H. Balázs, and Emma Iczkovits, some of whom also published under the Kosáry-edited *Revue d'histoire comparée* (Erős 2009, 12).

categories (Renaissance, Baroque, Enlightenment, and Romanticism)" in sync with Europe-wide trends, as well as an "analysis and presentation of public administration, economics, society, art and culture, minorities, even geography" (Erős 2009, 10).

Going Backward to Go Forward

To some of the anti-szellemtörténet partisans, Szekfű's historiographical innovations seemed slight and outdated in comparison to Mályusz's. But when Szekfű was developing his voice, his counterweight was the nineteenth century, not népiségtörténet. So if we follow Vámos and treat Szekfű's historiographical school as *historia regnum,* then several important distinctions are necessary. Szekfű inadvertently threw a bombshell in his break from the style that he called the national romantic history of the Compromise Era, with its emphasis on politics, events, important personages, and patriotism; his 1913 monograph *A száműzött Rákóczi* caused a much larger scandal twenty years before than Isbert's above-mentioned article, where the former was debated in parliament for its "anti-national" overtones, leading to a libel case too. As unlikely as it sounds, Szekfű saw himself as a bourgeois historian: as regards both the process or rather hiccups of embourgeoisement in Hungary, and even more so in wanting to form the sensibilities of the bourgeois class in the interwar era, and also expand this class through gradual social reforms, such as land reform with peasants as beneficiaries (Erős 1995b, 580). But szellemtörténet still had an overlapping with the previous national romantic historiography versed in Rankean methods, which was based on a close reading of sources and narrative: "while few historians were as rigorous as Ranke in their sifting of the 'historical evidence,' narrative political history was the focus of most history writing" (Erős 2015b, 19). Szekfű in fact kept at least three aspects of this Rankean

heritage. The first was narrative, in order create a history readable and didactic for the educated public where possible. The second aspect, gleaned from Gogolák's article on the occasion of Szekfű's sixtieth birthday[17] and his "great" contribution to history writing, was the caution against inserting current events into an understanding of the past (a watchword uttered by most historians since the mid-nineteenth century). Dénes writes that Szekfű personally failed in this maxim (2001, 17), even though he successfully outed the previous Whig interpretation of the national liberals (Trencsényi 2010, 366). And we should also take into account Erős's thesis that the notion of decline and decadence fared prominently in Szekfű's historical philosophy (2015a, 412–413), which means by definition that one must trace the current crisis into the past; for Szekfű this went as far back as the Ottoman partition of the country and as close as the latest epoch of national-liberalism from right before WWI. The third aspect from Ranke, again gleaned from Gogolák's praises, is Szekfű's reading of the history of Hungary as one and the same as the history of the state; which today now seems like the exaggerated notion of all interwar era statist-oriented historians which was based on the idea of continuity, a grand arc of single purpose, from St. Stephan to István Széchenyi.

[17] Gogolák, "Nemzetpolitika," *Magyar Szemle* 44, nos. 1–6 (1943c): 245–249. See also Kosáry's "A történetíró," *Magyar Szemle* 44, nos. 1–6 (1943a): 231–239; and "Magyar történetírás a két világháború között," in *A történelem veszedelmei. Írások Európáról és Magyarországról* (Budapest: Magvető, 1987).

More Antinomies

Other antinomies in the literature on Szekfű and Mályusz that have been posited are the differences in the Hungarian religious social networks of the era: Catholic vs. Protestant; their historical heroes: Maria Theresa vs. Joseph II; and sources of funding: Count Kuno Klebelsberg (Minister of Education) vs. Count Pál Teleki (Prime Minister) (Dénes 2001, 10).[18] Szekfű in fact spurred the use of historical antinomies, for which he created rubrics according to aspects beneficial to the nation, or harmful. He called the former the "great Hungarian" strain, the latter the "small Hungarian," or pro-Habsburg Catholics vs. divisive and destructive Protestants. He traced a continuity in Hungarian history from the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century battle among Hungarians themselves, those who were pro-Habsburg *labanc* vs. the independence-seeking/even Ottoman fealty-swearing *kuruc*, to the divide between Széchenyi and the latifundia vs. Kossuth and the gentry from the 1830s to 1848, and then to the Compromise period with the 1867 vs. 1848 political parties. Moreover, he blamed the loss of WWI and the peace treaty on this latter Independentist Party's strife against all things Austrian in Austria-Hungary (as well as the overall leading national-liberal ideology of the era). His argument was that Hungary, as a conglomerate nation of many nationalities, could only hold on to the reins of power with the help of a stronger outside forces, i.e., Austria and Germany (discounting the unpopular Oszkár Jászi/Social Democratic pre-WWI course to do whatever necessary to make peace with the nationalities) (Dénes 2001, 19). Trencsényi calls this Szekfű's *Sonderweg* theory, where the

[18] Dénes here is citing the interpretation of Éva H. Balázs (1915–2006), a student of Mályusz in the 1930s. In spite of friendly relations with Kosáry throughout late communist era, there were some frictions over the shared topic of eighteenth-century Hungarian history (Gogolák to Kálmán Benda, Vienna, Dec. 20, 1971 and Feb. 11, 1972, Ráday Levéltár, Budapest, C208, Gogolák Lajosnak levelei Benda Kálmánnal.21dob.1963–1987.33db.).

invasion by the Ottomans set Hungary on a different path from regular European evolution (2010, 367), and also divided Hungarians against one another. Kosáry too used the same *Sonderweg* theory in his 1943 programmatic text on comparison (see next chapter); however, he sets up the Ottoman era as a preserver of nationalities in Hungary, a Europe within Europe, which only caused strife in the age of nationalism, and he shows less interest in the lessons to be gained by the history of Hungarians opposing one another. Unsurprisingly, there were many who were quite insulted on a political level, mostly in Szekfű's disparaging of the pre-WWI gentry political elite, but also on a historiographic level by his tracing of national-liberal hubris to roots in Protestantism and Transylvanian separatism. Mályusz incidentally was a Protestant, but then again so was Szekfű's student Kosáry. Thus religious denominations in interwar era Hungary are a less plausible explanation for some of the antinomies; rather, Szekfű is critiquing those who lionize the Protestant heritage as essential Hungarianness. But the influence of Szekfű's voice on the reasons for the decline and fall of the nation gelled with neoconservative consolidation after the war, and it was not until the rise of popular nationalist politics modeled on changes in Germany that this neoconservative position was questioned at the level of government. Makkai, who in 1942[19] identified himself with the aims of the népiségtörténet school, writes that szellemtörténet as a method is past its prime; it served its purpose in aiding Hungarians to find their way, their Staatsraison, after Trianon. Now it was time to place greater focus on the "unnamed millions," or "the unconscious life and cultural activities of the people" (the latter quote is borrowed from Mályusz).

[19] Makkai, "Népiségtörténet," *Hitel*, no. 1 (1942): 59–64.

Nature or Nurture

Already in the early 1920s, Gyula Szekfű wrote several articles on whether Hungarians were "a biological race or a historical entity"; it was an interesting question in itself and also the title of one of his articles[20] that outlines the views of Hungarian followers of Gobineau and Chamberlin. After the upheavals during and in the wake of the Great War, Szekfű found it politically topical to address race, identity, and feelings of superiority, especially the inversion needed for Hungarian Turanists in order to place brown-yellow features of nomadic Asiatic peoples above the traditional blond and blue-eyed Europeans. Turanism was a notion of "an ethnic substratum of 'true Hungarians' which connected them with the rest of the (half-)nomadic peoples of the steppes" (Trencsényi 2010, 361) and also involved the nurturing of those connections, past and present.[21] In refutation, Szekfű writes that any possibility for a substratum has in fact been "racially atomized," by a "mixture of Pannonian Slavs, Slovenes, Slovaks, Austro-Germans, Serbs, and every people dwelling around [them]," not to mention the mixture that was Magyar (Ural and Altaic) even before their arrival in the Carpathians. Likewise the peoples surrounding Hungarians share in some of the same blood, just like all Europeans are a racial admixture.

Based on this quite simple argument, Szekfű claims that Hungarians by definition are a historical formation, not a race, and thus their identity is tied up with the entirety of its history. For him, the only history that covered such an expanse was one which centered on the state itself and all of its changes, and the connections traceable in society to the state. It was a type of intellectual,

[20] Szekfű, "Fajbiológiai vagy történeti egység?," in *Nép, nemzet, állam*, ed. Vilmos Erős (Budapest: Osiris, 2002), 162–172. See also "A faji kérdés és a magyarság," ibid., 135–161.

[21] At a level of popular culture it can be a type of emotional connection to the original conquerors of the Carpathian Basin, as seen, for example, in the popularity of the diorama "The Arrival of the Hungarians" by Árpád Feszty at the 1896 celebrations of Hungary's millennium.

cultural, and political history (hence the term *Geistesgeschichte*) that traced the European evolution of Hungary across different epochs, and how once certain trends were accepted by the royal court, they slowly spread to the nobility, clergy, and educated strata of the realm. As such, the lower classes were almost completely left out of the picture. Szekfű did not see the peasantry as carriers of Hungarianness; in fact, they shared more in common with the peasants of other nationalities in the region than the Hungarian aristocracy (Trencsényi 2010, 368). Szekfű's historical narrative also contained normative elements, like the "great" vs. "small" Hungarian, in order to sift through both positive and negative events and personages from history, in order to release Hungarian identity from the curse of its storied history (Trencsényi 2010, 361). Tied to this normative aspect is the conspicuous absence of Jews from the above list of "races" of which Hungarians are an admixture. He considered them almost unassimilable, essentially creating their own interpretation of a "Hungarian" cosmopolitanism, with features too strong to shape into the cohesive Hungarian nation and creating a permanent divide between the city and the countryside. Moreover, regarding the rest of the nationalities of the Carpathian Basin, eventually he expected them to willingly rejoin the Hungarian idea of state (which he saw as the tolerant Hungary of St. Stephen which only temporarily lost its way under the sway of French concepts of nation-state), and that in the future in re-created great Hungary, the former nationalities would one day willingly assimilate too (Trencsényi 2010, 368).

Mályusz was quite dubious of this view for two reasons. The first was that loyalty to the state over one's ethnic identity meant that the neighboring countries could equally demand the assimilation of the new Hungarian minorities (Mályusz 1994, 24); and second, that assimilation was not necessary in order to recreate great Hungary. Mályusz's antithesis was: "The land, the population, and the culture I saw as so tightly interwoven under the protection of the state, that it

was the proof therefore of the results of the joint work of Hungarians and the other nationalities and at the same time the peaceful symbiosis of centuries" (1994, 9). Mályusz's image included peasants, the state, and other ethnicities; ethnicity was not something that one could change like a shoe. But neither him nor Szekfű made the "rural life the tenet of normativity … which would mean the idealization of backwardness" (Trencsényi 2010, 387). Based on the scholarship of István Szabó (also trained as a historian in the interwar era), whom Mályusz put forward as the best researcher that his school could produce, it was shown that different ethnicities could live in close proximity for generations and centuries without one assimilating the other; if however there was a smaller pocket inside of a larger ethnic region, then even ethnic Hungarians assimilated to Slavs and Romanians in periods throughout the Middle Ages and even later.[22]

However, this on-the-surface subtler approach to identity could still be severe for non-Hungarians. It certainly required a redrawing of the borders at a minimum to bring Hungarians back into it. It should have hardly mattered to the neighboring states if they lost just a part or their entire new country on the basis of a statist or ethnic principle. For Jews especially this was detrimental, since their willingness to assimilate to the nation-state was not necessarily interpreted as a sign of dropping an "essential" Jewishness. Both Mályusz and Szekfű perceived Jews as filling in the positions of the middle classes that should have been left for Magyars. Nor was Szekfű as tolerant as it seems with just a selective reading of his works. Although in reaction to popular open racism in Hungary and Germany in the later 1930s and 1940s he openly denounced racist ideologies, it was a phenomenon for which we must consider him partially responsible through his

[22] See Vilmos Erős, *Asszimiláció és retorika. Szabó István: A magyar asszimiláció című munkájának rekonstrukciója* (Debrecen: Csokonai, 2005), 76, where he traces how the editorship of *Revue d'histoire comparée* (Kosáry among them), in the French version of Szabó's original *A magyar asszimiláció*, changed every instance of Szabó's usage of *nép*/folk to *nemzet*/nation and historic "Hungary" to "Carpathian Basin." See also Mályusz and Domanovszky's joint preface to the book by István Szabó, *Ugócsa megye* (Budapest, 1937).

cultural anti-Semitism of the 1920s, most evident in his era-defining work *Három nemzedék*, which, though making valid points about Western forms without substance, is both an ad hominem and philosophical attack against Jews, particularly migrants from rural areas of the Austrian and Russian Empire who arrived most recently in the nineteenth century.[23] To the English reader, a translation of *Három nemzedék* (Three generations), if it existed, would perhaps reveal more than any other synthetic work on the interwar era. Szekfű's own stance from 1933 was one of intense anti-Nazi sentiment turning also into anti-German sentiment, equally directed against any similar strains in Hungary. In this vein, Szekfű wrote an article in 1934 that outlined the transition in Germany to an emphasis on ethnicity in historical studies. In his "Népiség, nemzet és állam" (1934),[24] he adds that since German ideas traversed Hungary in the past so easily, Hungary too will be "developing [its] own *Volkstum* [idea]." He makes a direct connection between the Germanies' loss to Napoleon and Germany's loss in WWI, when in the former case, after the loss of their state, the "shamed" intellectuals returned to the "insuppressible Germanness of the

[23] Probably the best introductions to the status and possibility of an anti-Semitic critique in present-day Hungarian historiography, here dealing specifically with Szekfű, are Ambrus Miskolczy, "Csoportkép történészekkel," *Aetas* 19, nos. 3–4 (2004a): 285–311; and the response of Vilmos Erős, "Látomás és indulat a szekfűlógiában," *Aetas* 19, nos. 3–4 (2004): 312–321. I do not use the term "cultural anti-Semitism" in any way to downplay collective responsibility, not to mention the validation it might have given to those with much more radical racialist views. The complexity of the question of the relation of neoconservativism to anti-Semitism is underscored by the fact that both Szekfű's and Gogolák's spouses were Jewish; the Jewish industrialist Baron Kornfeld was the main financier of the Szekfű and Bethlen influenced neoconservative (later liberal-conservative) organ, the *Magyar Szemle*, and by proxy Gogolák and all the comparatists who published in the *Hungarian Quarterly* and *Nouvelle Revue d'Hongrie*, the editorial offices of all three for a time under the same roof; however, the latter two journals eventually parted ways from *Magyar Szemle*, and they remained under the editorial direction of the Augustine-specialist József Balogh, "a man who paid for his superbly crafted house of cards with his own life" in the Holocaust. Quote from Miklós Hubay, interviewed by Loránt Kabdebó, *A háborúnak vége lett* (Budapest: Kozmosz Könyvek, 1983), see online at http://mek.niif.hu/07200/07206/07206.htm#2. On Balogh, see Tibor Frank, "A patrisztikától a politikáig: Balogh József (1893–1944)," in *A történelem szövedéke. Történelmi tanulmányok Székely György tiszteletére*, ed. Balázs Nagy (Budapest: Budapesti Történeti Múzeum és az ELTE BTK Középkori és Kora Újkori Egyetemes Történeti Tanszék, 2004), 391–404.

[24] In *Nép, nemzet, állam*, ed. Vilmos Erős (Budapest: Osiris, 2002), 197–207. See also "A népi elv két arca," *Magyar Szemle* 35, nos. 1–4 (1939a): 5–12.

unspoiled and unconscious lower classes." The shame of Versailles, he writes, also brought the most varied Weimar era political factions together in homage to the "eternally unchangeable peasant culture" in order to "regenerate the already internally decaying Germandom." Germans left outside of the new boundaries only had their Germanness and not the state to hold on to, with the obvious analogy of Hungarians outside the borders of Hungary. While in the past the praise of peasant culture centered on the collection of folktales and songs, the current German enterprise, he writes, centers on biology and blood as the carrier of the German genius, "the mystical peasant connection to Blut and Boden." Szekfű's hope is that if *Volkstum* must be imported, then maybe it can be used in Hungary's favor by bridging the gap between the upper and lower classes; though he claims this is unlikely, with the greater likelihood of Hungarians pushing whomever they perceive as non-Hungarian out of the nation forever.

Mályusz supported alliance with Nazi Germany, and in the war advocated expelling Jews from the country, specifically all those who "do not feel entirely Hungarian in their souls" (Trencsényi 2010, 405). This contrasted with his fight against any German views which questioned Hungary's cultural and political independence, and he considered his German-inspired methodologies as more capable of disproving German *Völkisch* stances on the German minority in Hungary than *szellemtörténet*; to meet science with science, and the "most up-to-date" methodologies of historical research and auxiliary sciences to appeal to the Western audience (Orosz 2004a, 112, fn. 18; 2003, 71). He considered Szekfű's "Hungarian high cultural canon of *szellemtörténet*" as "foreign to the Hungarian spirit" (Trencsényi 2010, 387) and incapable of "outlining Hungarian development, the autonomy and independence of Hungarian culture, and as a result degrading our culture to a secondary status," analogous to what German historians were doing in their own treatment of Hungarian history (Erős 1995b, 575).

The cultural and political opinions expressed in the pre-1945 oeuvres of both Kosáry and Gogolák often follow the ideological turns of Szekfű quite closely, with an almost verbatim repetition of his writings in some cases: Gogolák's 1936 "Történetünk német népi szemléletben" is a condensation of Szekfű's 1934 "Népiség, nemzet és állam"; or Kosáry's *A History of Hungary* (1941), which admittedly follows Hóman and Szekfű's *Magyar történet* (1928–1934), and is influenced by Szekfű down to the unfortunate interpretation of "Galician" vs. "assimilated Jews" in Hungary. Of all the comparatists, I consider Gogolák to be the closest follower of Szekfű as regards both historiography and political convictions, even more so than Szekfű's actual student Kosáry, or the eminent practitioner of Szekfű's school of *szellemtörténet*, Gáldi. Yet, Szekfű abandoned Gogolák after 1945, not taking him to Moscow as an assistant to his ambassadorship due to his actions in the last month of the war, mentioned in Chapter One (though Gogolák found work as a literary critic until 1956). However, in the late 1920s, it was under Szekfű's encouragement that Gogolák let his law degree wither away, showing interest no longer in the political and diplomatic circles that his uncle introduced him to, and began his study of the Slovak nationality question and became a Hungarian specialist on Czech history and the broader region, South-East Europe too, topics that remained with him his entire life. On the other hand, Szekfű protected Kosáry for as long as possible in the new communist, Stalinist state, and after a low point and jail time, Kosáry showed himself loyal to the historical conceptions of Szekfű by way of his emphasis on the Habsburg eighteenth century as the beginnings of a modernizing Hungarian society vs. the pre-Szekfű image as a century of decline.[25]

[25] Cf. Gogolák, "Történetünk német népi szemléletben," *Magyar Szemle* 28, nos. 9–12 (1936): 217–228; and Szekfű, "Népiség, nemzet és állam," *Magyar Szemle* 22, nos. 9–12 (1934); or Kosáry's *A History of Hungary* (1941) and Hóman and Szekfű's *Magyar történet* (1928–1934).

Cultural Transfer, Cultural Slope

Now, returning again to the two quotes at the top of the chapter, it seems that Hungarian academe was at first slow in recognizing the transition in German historiography on the cultural place of Hungary. A 1931 book review by Johanna Varga in the journal *Századok* was the first that I could find that laid out some of the new aspects. This review of Schünemann's *Die Entstehung des Städtewesens in Südosteuropa* (1929)—the book critiqued in the opening quote by Pleidell—came out a full two years after its publication, and, moreover, on the whole was reviewed mostly positively by Varga for reasons that will be mentioned below. But she notes that this book "denies the existence of independent Hungarian urban development in the Middle Ages, [and] stresses that the German influence beyond Hungary's borders into the Balkan Peninsula succeeded through Hungarian mediation."[26] The role assigned to Hungary at best was one of transmitting essentially a variant of German culture further to the Balkans; based on a reading of the comparatists, one would deem Romania at the top of this list, then Croatia excluding its coastal cities, and only sporadically in the Orthodox regions in the Middle Ages, though the large caveat being that the cultural transfer in their opinion would be Hungarian and not German.[27] It was likely the attentiveness of Elemér Mályusz that brought awareness to the subtleties on the matter because of his close reading of German historiography. He was the first to give across-the-board scathing

[26] Johanna Varga, Review of *Die Entstehung des Städtewesens in Südosteuropa* by Konrad Schünemann, *Századok* (1931): 428–433, at 431. The only reference to the author I could find is another article on the medieval history of Szeged, "A középkori Szeged," *Szegedi Szemle* 21, no. 4 (1931). There is a similar analysis of Valjavec in Kósa (1941, 216).

[27] One of the comparatists, László Hadrovics, denies any important Hungarian transfer to the southern Orthodox medieval principalities, an exception perhaps is the kingdom of Hungary being a model for the first Serbian king, Stefan Nemanja, to counteract the influence of the Byzantine Empire. Hadrovics, *Magyar és déli szláv szellemi kapcsolatok* (Budapest, 1944), 38–40.

reviews of German historical works, with two appearing in close succession in 1932 in both *Magyar Szemle* and the historical journal *Századok*[28]; and his decade-long joint editorship of the latter "main organ of Hungarian historical writing" made the journal a mainstay of investigations into German scholarship on the region.

An analysis of the interwar era journal reviews of the German literature centers on four main periods of settlement and contact between Germans in historical Hungary. The first are the German nobility, knights, and clergy in the Hungarian court and settlers to urban areas in Hungary after the year 1000, followed by Walloons, French, and Italians, even forming smaller village type settlements. Second, there was the larger contiguous settlement of Germans/Saxons in southern Transylvania in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Third, there were the smaller streams of Germans to urban areas in northern and central Hungary in the late medieval era. And the fourth period followed after the expulsion of the Turks from Hungary, with pockets of settlement, even termed colonization, in the Transdanubian region, southern Hungary, and the Banat, coinciding with a similar settlement of Serbians. This latter resettlement was seen by German historiography as beneficial to Hungary as regards civilization, with the innate thriftiness and diligence of the German peasants (Mályusz 1932b, 332); while some in Hungary viewed the settlement of German peasants almost as detrimentally as that of Serbians in southern Hungary and the Banat and Romanians to the farther reaches of the Hungarian Plain since the ethnic equilibrium in Hungary was permanently altered with these last settlers to Hungary (Romanians however are not classified as colonizers by any of the comparatists since they migrated within the Kingdom, their influx

[28] Elemér Mályusz, "Az új német nacionalizmus történetírása," *Magyar Szemle* 15, no. 69 (June 1932a): 241–253; Mályusz, Review of *Das südwestliche ungarische Mittelgebirge, Bauernsiedlung und Deutschtum* by Ottó Albrecht Isbert, *Századok* 66 (1932b): 329–333; and Isbert's response to Mályusz, "Egy-két helyesbítés. Mályusz Elemér a Századok 1932. évfolyamában (329–333. l.) kritikát írt a magyar középhegységről szóló könyvemről," *Századok* 67 (1933a): 112–115; and Mályusz's response to Isbert's response, "Megjegyzések," *Századok* 67 (1933b): 115–116.

across the border is dated to earlier periods). Some Hungarian historians also viewed the settlement initiated by the Habsburgs as an ethnically motivated policy in the supposedly pre-national eighteenth century, but for the purpose of filling empty lands with elements more politically loyal to Vienna than Pozsony. The only perceived benefit of the German settlement was their higher economic standing which fed the middle class in the nineteenth and even twentieth century. And until the 1920s at least, the Germans who still self-identified as such were perceived as loyal to the state and the greatest pool of potential assimilationists; by the 1930s less so. (By this time, however, Mályusz was also asking why the Dualist Era government did not place greater effort in raising from the Hungarian more well-to-do peasant stock a middle class to compete with Germans and Jews [Trencsényi 2010, 401].) As we can see here, these periods practically overlapped with the entirety of Hungarian history, which if one wants to define as an outcropping of German culture, leaves on its surface very little for Hungarians to claim as their own, except for the century post Conquest and prior to the adoption of Latin Christianity in the year 1000, and whatever was slow to die out of nomadic customs. This is another reason why the népiségtörténet school had an interest in tracing the historical trajectory of these Eastern nomadic traits through the life of the Magyar peasantry in fields like ethnography, musicology, and folklore—to find elements untouched by the centuries of western influence.

That Western cultural and civilizatory fashions and norms traveled over roughly a thousand-year period in an eastward direction from the far ends of the continent in itself should not have been a controversial statement, but a hundred plus years of debates on autochthonism in Hungary meant that the devil was now in the details. From the standpoint of the first Hungarian modernizers of the 1830s–40s, ‘Europe’ was perhaps perceived as a gulf that needed to be bridged. Their debate was less about how the adoption and infiltration of western practices took place

historically from the early Middle Ages to the end of the Enlightenment, and more about how to speed up the process by which Hungary could feel at home in the sphere of economically advanced and democratizing European nations. But even here the question arose of how to adopt new forms while holding on to ideas of the independence of a national culture, even how a nation or national culture is defined, especially during a time of intentional political transition from a nation of nobility to a liberal nation. As such, this nineteenth-century debate on innovation vs. tradition was a modern phenomenon and one must differentiate it from those earlier seventeenth- and eighteenth-century autochthonist discourses that centered on resistance to foreign influences and absolutism, like Sarmatianism in Poland[29] and Constitutionalism in Hungary. In his 1841 work *Kelet népe* (People of the east), István Széchenyi described the Hungarian nation as the synthesis of eastern and western traits, using this dichotomy as a caution against attempting too swift of a modernization. Jácint Rónay in his 1847 work *Jellemisme* (Characterology) advocated holding on to the eastern heritage and language as a moral bastion while accepting the need for the imitation of western models to aid in development and national regeneration (Trencsényi 2010, 317, 320). Less than a century later, however, the scales tipped entirely in the opposite direction: Hungary was now perceived unproblematically as a part of Europe (though more feudal and less democratic), but the losses after WWI and the new era of anti-liberalism meant that the 'Europe in Hungary' that they appreciated was the one which stretched only as far as the generation of the reformers, and everything post was considered artificial and non-Hungarian, even Jewish. (The "Turanist" version was even more extreme, defining Hungarians entirely as an eastern nation that had lost its way ever since its forced conversion to Catholicism under St. Stephen.) And thus Széchenyi was now seen as the prophet who warned against the adoption of forms without

[29] Jerzy Jedlicki, "Europe's Eastern Borderland: An Essay on the History of Flows of Civilization Innovations," *East Central Europe* 41, no. 1 (2014): 86–104.

substance, a view popularized by Szekfű's *Három nemzedék* (1922), "the veritable Bible of the period" that "depicts the nineteenth-century Hungarian liberals responsible for the disintegration effected by Trianon" (Erős 2015b, 20), and mirrored to some degree by the comparatists Kosáry and Gogolák.

Now returning to the devil in the details after this background, what miffed Hungarian historians and the political establishment was not necessarily the movement of civilization eastwards to Hungary, it was the claim that Germans were the primary if not sole transmitters of this civilization to Hungary, and not merely in a realm of the exchange of ideas but directly through Germans settling in Hungary. The further implication was that Hungarians were entirely passive to this process, with no ability to choose what elements of cultural and material life were useful to the conditions in the Danubian Basin.[30] It was Szekfű who in a way set up the possibility for this German interpretation, as Mályusz had also commented. Yet, Szekfű's *A magyar állam életrajza* (1918, p. 18)—placing Hungary into the sphere of the "Christian-German cultural community," but written at a time unaware of the potential for its later misconstrual—wholly emphasizes a Hungarian interpretation of state and rule, independent from Germany, but in contact with one another, i.e., his account allows for agency on the part of the Hungarian kings. Some German historians held that the German minority living in historical Hungary had an evolution entirely distinct from everyone else, particularly the contiguous blocks like the Germans/Saxons of southern Transylvania (Mályusz 1932a, 242–244, on E. Jekelius), Germans/Swabians in the Banat, and smaller less contiguous blocks in the southern part and Transdanubian region of modern Hungary (Mályusz 1932b, 329, on Isbert). All other ethnicities in some way or another were tied directly to the evolution of the state, except Germans, who if they kept their German-language

[30] Kósa János, Review of *Der deutsche Kultureinfluss im nahen Südosten. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Ungarns* by Fritz Valjavec, *Egyetemes Filológiai Közlöny* 65 (1941): 214–229, at 217.

identity into modern times should receive, the argument went, some form of political-regional autonomy as a natural right.[31] The Hungarian argument in defense presented an ideal picture of cultural transfers, as seen in the Hungarian historian Csaba Csapodi's 1942 critical review of *Der deutsche Kultureinfluss im nahen Südosten* (1940) by Fritz Valjavec,[32] the latter the most synthetic German work outlining precisely this thousand-year interaction. Csapodi writes, "European culture is not the creation of single nation, but the result of every single nation's infinitely numerous interactions and joint receptions. The influence of German culture on Hungary must not be viewed simply in a vacuum, but rather as one of the closest variations of a European culture."[33] In this quote we read that Hungary, like Germany, is just one of many cultures in Europe that are a part of the European system, and because of Hungary's location on the periphery, the German variation of this European culture had the most contact with Hungary. Whether or not Hungarians could make such an argument depended greatly on the field of urban history.

[31] Lajos Gogolák, "Történetünk német népi szemléletben," *Magyar Szemle* 28, nos. 9–12 (1936): 217–228, at 219 (on Helmut Klocke's "Föderalismus und Zentralismus in Ungarn," *Volk und Reich* 2 [1936]), which recommends Hungary returning to its federative "roots" (at 221).

[32] Fritz Valjavec (1909–1960) was born in Austria-Hungary and attended high school in Hungary before his university studies in Germany, and was perhaps the top German expert on questions of Hungarian and regional significance and editor-in-chief of one of two German-language scholarly journals on the region (his was *Südost-Forschungen* based out of Munich, the other was the more linguistics-oriented *Ungarische Jahrbücher* based out of the Hungarian Institute in Berlin).

[33] Csaba Csapodi, Review of *Der deutsche Kultureinfluss im nahen Südosten* by Fritz Valjavec, *Századok* (1942): 463–472, at 465.

City vs. Court

Hungary's truly first dedicated urban historian, Ambrus Pleidell, writes that it was essentially because of Schünemann that studies started to focus on the earliest evidence of urban culture in Hungary. He even goes one step further, writing that Schünemann essentially inaugurated Hungarian urban history, since there was no serious scholarly inquiry into the topic before his 1929 work (1934, 2). This is why Varga's 1931 review is mostly one of admiration, and then a questioning of why Hungarian historians are belated to a topic so relevant to their history as the analysis of the medieval layout of urban centers (430–431). The career of Pleidell[34] was meant to fill in that gap, and after it was cut short by his death others too tried their hand at urban history, including Elemér Mályusz and the comparatist Makkai.[35] Pleidell, noting the essence of great civilizations since antiquity, writes that culture and the city are inseparable from one another and that a nation without an urban culture essentially has no culture: How then could it be that it was a topic so neglected in Hungarian historical writing up to that time?

I think one answer is that it was not until after WWI that it occurred to anyone that the regional centers throughout historical Hungary would be in a position to have to justify their "Hungarianness." The "loss" of these cities, like Pozsony, Kassa, and Kolozsvár, was a meme that spread down through all of society, and at its simplest level it was an axiom that required no

[34] For a brief biography of Pleidell, who died at a young age, as well as a contextualization of his rise under Klebelsberg's educational policies, see István Szabó, "Pleidell Ambrus † 1900–1935," *Századok* 69 (1935): 504–505. The only real precursor to his own studies is identified by Pleidell as Bálint Hóman's *A magyar városok az Árpádok korában* (Budapest, 1908), which, however, does not deal with the actual origin of the Árpádian towns. Pleidell was a student of Sándor Domanovszky, who pushed his students to approach the fields of social, economic, and agricultural history.

[35] Elemér Mályusz, "A magyarság és a városi élet a középkorban," *Századok* (1944): 36–62; László Makkai, *Erdélyi városok* (Budapest: Officina, 1940).

explanation; or as Makkai writes in 1940, "because these cities were our cities." In the wake of the two Vienna Awards, the return of some of these urban centers was one of its most celebrated aspects, Gogolák writing a triumphant article on how the exodus of 30–35 thousand Slovaks from Kassa returned the city to its Hungarian character.[36] Yet barely hiding beneath this certitude was practically a full contradiction of the above sentences regarding their obvious Hungarianness. Already mentioned was the interwar era anti-liberal skewing of the image of the Hungarian city of the last one-hundred years as essentially foreign, i.e., Jewish, in spite of the rise of Hungarian as a lingua franca in cities during this period. From the longer historical perspective this was compounded by the fact that so many cities historically had a majority non-Magyar ethnic population, not least among them the capitals Pest-Buda and Pozsony. So if the Hungarian cities were only Hungarian on the surface during the *Ausgleich*, and if they were populated by mostly non-Hungarian elements during the Middle Ages, then what made a city Hungarian other than its location in Hungary? Mályusz warns against this pessimism and urges a rethinking of Hungarians in relation to cities, to reclaim the urban heritage (1944, 36–37). One focus was on the cities that were perceived to be unproblematically "Hungarian," like Debrecen since its inception, or Kolozsvár in the last five hundred years. Mályusz tried to show that Hungarians did found cities in the eastern half of the country too, like Szeged, but which were destroyed by the Ottomans.

Another focus was on cities that were founded by Hungarians but only later tipped to a majority German ethnicity later, to prove that the Árpádian Hungarians were in fact city builders. On this latter variation Pleidell writes that the picture of urban centers in the Transdanubian region were different from eastern Hungary and Transylvania, and that their condition in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, when Germans were in majority, will not provide an answer for earlier

[36] Gogolák, "Kassa a korfordulón," *Magyar Nemzet*, no. 251, Nov. 6, 1939b. See also Makkai, "Az erdélyi városok magyarsága," *Protestáns Szemle* (1940):

centuries especially as regards their ethnic composition and origin. He writes that Hungarians did in fact build cities upon the foundations of Roman settlements, which has not been disputed, but also that some of them had continuous inhabitants from before the conquest who were not Slavic (1934, 4). This latter point of Pleidell, trying to show that there was potentially a Roman Latin continuity in some Hungarian Transdanubian towns, turned out to be controversial in its time and was commented upon by several comparatists. First off, it was a strange argument: in order to prove that Hungarians were a natural urban race, it matters not whether they got their urban bug from Germans or from descendants of Pannonian Latins, it still would be coming from outside. It also has an obvious analogy to Dacian-Roman-Romanian continuity: this would be Hungary's own theory of Pannonian-Roman-Hungarian continuity. What is even more odd is that the comparatists did not discount Pleidell's theory outright, but rather stated that there was not enough evidence yet. Tamás in 1935 writes that Pleidell does not solve the issue of continuity, and that "he has been overly influenced by the teachings of [Alfons] Dopsch."[37] Tamás cites Dopsch's *Wirtschaftliche und soziale Grundlagen der europäischen Kulturentwicklung* (2 vols., Vienna, 1918–1920) as correctly pointing out that the connection between each respective Roman province and later medieval history has to be treated in a case by case basis (1935, 49); however, he disagrees with what he calls Dopsch's theory that Romanized elements existed into the Middle Ages, which he says most recent scholarship has revised (1935, 6). Kosáry in 1943 also weighed in on the debate and wrote that Pleidell's thesis can only show urban foundations (as in literally foundations of former Roman cities) and not necessarily continuity.[38] Miklós Komjáthy [Kring] (1909–1993), of the same generation as the comparatists and a fellow at the Teleki Institute, was a historian who

[37] Tamás, *Rómaiak, románok és oláhok Dácia Trajánában* (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1935), 50; French version: "Romains, Romans, et Roumains dans l'histoire de la Dacie Trajane," *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis* 1 (1935): 1–96, and 2 (1936): 46–83 and 245–374.

[38] Kosáry, "Sur quelques problèmes d'histoire comparée," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 1, nos. 1–2 (1943): 3–32, at 21.

wrote a social history of the medieval Cumans of Hungary amongst other topics and compared Schünemann's and Pleidell's theories in a review of an another work by the former historian. He concludes that Schünemann neither proves the German origins of Hungarian urbanity and that Pleidell himself was not entirely convinced of Roman continuity either (he does not cite his source for this latter bit of information concerning Pleidell). Komjáthy writes that "topographic continuity is not truly … unambiguously [the same as] continuity of urban life," and that either way it was too much of a simplification to trace Hungarian cities to either German or Roman origin (1940, 221).[39]

It was Pleidell nonetheless who aimed to fill the obvious lacunae of Hungarian urban history, which after his death was taken up by other historians. Another reason perhaps for the belatedness of Hungarian urban history had to do with cultural and intellectual history writing that focused on matrices other than urban centers, which incidentally sidestepped the question of the cultural importance of urban centers in Hungary in the Middle Ages. By placing emphasis instead on royal courts, local courts, and abbeys, one could reason that cities took on certain cultural fashions after they had traveled through these other locales first. Csapodi, for example, writes that "the carriers of Hungarian culture were not primarily the cities, but the church abbeys and the court-nobility culture. (The first written monuments were the creations not of city burghers but rather monks.)" (1942, 466). Downplaying the cultural importance of cities, however, was not in itself an ironclad way to avoid further questions of German cultural influence on the region, as will be seen in the following section.

[39] Miklós Komjáthy [Kring], Review of "Vorstufen des deutschen Städtewesens," by Konrad Schünemann, *Századok* (1940): 219–222. Komjáthy, like Tamás, also changed his family name after the rise of Nazism. He says of his eight great-grandparents, only two originated from Germany; yet this was label enough for him to change it to Komjáthy. See Tamás Kálnoki Kis, "Komjáthy Miklós (1909–1993)," *Levéltári Szemle* 43, no. 3 (1993): 102–105.

Transfer of High Culture

Based on the above mapping of the confluence of Germans in Hungary, basically any detail could land consideration, for example, on whether the Latin-language Hungarian liturgy shows a connection more to Latin liturgies of German-origin over French-origin, precisely to be able to put a German stamp on the spiritual life of Hungarians right at its inception (Kósa 1941, 218); this was an idea repeated once again in the account of the spread of "German" Protestant beliefs in Hungary. But to somehow put a national stamp on the teachings of Catholicism as the universal church was clearly a relatively new thesis with many elements to untangle: at its core it was a new claim of ownership along a chain of transfers from persons and locales. High cultural elements, something in the realm of ideas and spiritual practices, transferred through monks, are retrospectively given an ethnic title. At the level of warcraft, this could be the adoption of knightly traditions, and the claim here was that the German origin of many terms showed that European-style warfare was taught to Hungarians by the Teutonic knights who were at first invited (1211), and then shortly afterward expelled from Hungary (1225). János Kósa identified this redefinition in a review of Valjavec's same work, *Der deutsche Kultureinfluss im nahen Südosten* (1940). There is no longer a "general west-east directional cultural slope on the entire territory of Europe," he writes, where "Western Europe represents the cultural plateau; Valjavec does not pay attention to the high culture of Western Europe, that is the Franco-British culture" (Kósa 1941, 215). Instead, Western Europe is bypassed because, according to the Valjavec, Germany was the foci of all Western transfers which continued on to Hungary, undergoing change first in Germany, and becoming German.

Csapodi strongly criticized Valjavec in his grand undertaking of analyzing all the confluences of German culture in Hungary and the region and cherry picking what he saw as an

endless chain of influences from the early Middle Ages to the nineteenth century, and into the present day:

> The choice of subject itself is not historical enough. History attempts to showcase the totality of life; it works with complicated processes. Whoever places his focus on only one direction among them is completing useful clarifying work: compartmentalized research; but his results will always remain a supplement, data collection, which the synthesis-minded reworking will use. On its own, if it claims to be a work of synthesis, it will cause the reader unintended and false notions … European culture is not the creation of single nation, but the result of every single nation's infinitely numerous interactions and joint receptions. (1942, 464–465)

Csapodi's critique is that Valjavec's subject matter is both too broad and incorrectly formulated to be given a proper answer; how "German" the culture of East Europe is at its roots is essentially an ahistorical and unanswerable question. Conversely, one must ask if the Hungarian comparatists always applied the same standards to themselves as what Csapodi demands of German historians; whether they treated the cultural life of their neighbors as partaking in "infinitely numerous interactions and joint receptions." There are two answers to this question: some of their writing shows a greater subtlety in regard to the questions of transfers, while other times their terminology is a close match with German *Südostforschungen*.

In 1941, Gáldi wrote a short pamphlet for the book series of journal *Minerva* on Transylvania's "calling" (i.e., role) in the cultural life of South-East European region beyond its borders.[40] *Minerva* (1922–1944) was the first journalistic organ of the early 1920s which was formed specifically to advocate a separation from the positivism of the pre-WWI era and push an idealist agenda of research into the history of the Hungarian *Geist*.[41] As such the journal covered a broad spectrum of subjects, including history, the philosophy of history, and philosophy, but

[40] Gáldi, *Erdély hivatása délkeleteurópa művelődésében* (Minerva könyvtár, 58) (Budapest: Danubia, 1941).
[41] Mrs. Kálmán Huber [Huber Kálmánné], "A Minerva (1922–1943)," *Magyar Könyvszemle* 102 (1986): 192–200.

foremost literary history.[42] It was founded and edited throughout its twenty-year run by Tivadar Thienemann (1890–1985), who was a proponent of *Geistesgeschichte* parallelly and independent of Szekfű. Thienemann while in Berlin was perhaps among the last students to directly attend classes taught by Dilthey.[43] Thienemann's critique of Comte, a rather belated critique specific to intellectual life in Hungary, was included in the first issue.[44] In the pages of *Minerva,* Thienemann brought together a large contingent of writers and historians whose aims partially overlapped with that of Szekfű, but, as mentioned, with a greater emphasis on literary questions. Thienemann was instrumental in initiating a reassessment of Hungarian medieval literature and art (publishing writings of Tibor Gerevich), which up to that point were generally viewed in light of their derivative connection to the West; he also published in his journal an article on "Urban life in the Hungarian Middle Ages," amongst others (Korner 2008, 212) (Thienemann will be mentioned again in the following chapter in relation to István Hajnal.) In this sense, Gáldi, with his literary roots and attachment to szellemtörténet, was a good candidate to contribute to the book series of the journal about the connections of Transylvanian Hungarian cultural and literary life to neighboring regions from the early modern era up to Romanticism. Gáldi also weighed into the debate with Fritz Valjavec on the role of German cultural contacts, but rather than questioning the logical basis of such a framing of cultural transfers, as Csapodi is cited above, he engages in the same type of discourse in relation to Romania.

For example, Gáldi takes issue with Valjavec's assessment that the influence of French culture among Hungary's neighbors was always of a higher quality than in Hungary, and thus there was no role available for intellectual mediation. Gáldi to the contrary takes the position that even

[42] Veronika Horváth, "A Minerva társaság története," *Irodalomtörténeti közlemények* 90, no. 3 (1986): 305–312, at 309.
[43] Veronika Júlia Korner, "Irodalmi program és annak 'felülírása' – a Minerva folyóirat," *Helikon* (2008): 209–214.
[44] S. H. Szabó, "August Comet kritikája a Pécsi Minerva Társaság folyóiratában," *Acta Sci Soc* 36 (2012): 103–109.

though French literary works were introduced to Wallachia and Moldavia in the eighteenth century by Russians and Greeks, it was not until the early nineteenth century that a Transylvanian Romanian who moved to Wallachia introduced there the encyclopedists and first performed Racine and Molière (1941, 27–28). His assessment presents a kind of argument of "firsts." He found it important to emphasize that Hungarians also transferred modern French culture to the Balkans as a way to simultaneously dispute the opinion that Hungarians were only receptive to German cultural mediation. But it essentially follows the same logic as that of Valjavec, of a unidirectional flow of "culture." Many works of the comparatists are problematic from the standpoint of transfer which allows for agency. Yet agency does creep in odd ways, like for example Gáldi's assessment of the Transylvanian Romanian Church Union, where the religious establishment, he surmises, saw a political opening in their union with Catholicism rather than a type of religious conviction (1941, 23). This opinion however ascribes cold and calculating intentions, and belongs more to the type of political analyses that several comparatists more inclined to social history (Hadrovics, I. Tóth) explicitly aimed to bypass. (The following chapter delves into the comparative social history works of several comparatists.)

Makkai too, as we see in the opening quote of this chapter, was very unidirectional about Hungarian "civilizational" influence upon Moldavian and Wallachian urban history. He previously wrote a history of Transylvania that practically excluded Romanians (*Erdély,* 1944)—"The main actor in the history of Transylvania is not Transylvania, but Hungarians in Transylvania"—while at the same time criticizing a Romanian history of Transylvania for excluding Hungarians.[45] But in same year of 1944 he revises and adds nuance to his position of medieval Romanian statecraft, syncretically creating something unique out of their placement between Hungarian and Byzantine

[45] Makkai, *Erdély* (Budapest: Renaissance Könyvkiadövállalat, 1944), 6; Makkai, Review of *La Transylvanie*, *Századok*, nos. 4–6 (1940): 232.

geopolitical spheres of interest. We see a shift in the treatment of cultural connections in this work called *Magyar-román közös múlt* (The shared Hungarian-Romanian past, written at the end WWII, when it still looked like both Hungary and Romania would be on the losing side, though it was published only in 1948), where he denounces the idea of a cultural slope and writes of the rulers of Wallachia and Moldavia as autonomous actors in their struggle against Hungarian Catholicizing efforts.[46]

But Makkai's above work enters into a comparative framework which is more interesting than questions of agency or unidirectional influences along the line of transfer history. In this final postwar comparative work that arose out of the interwar era research efforts, he creates essentially a single nation, Hungarian-Romanian, that straddles both sides of the Carpathians and compares medieval and early modern social and political structures of Romanians in Hungary (Transylvania) and Hungarians in Romania (Wallachia and Moldavia). It is thus more akin to modern-day *histoire croisée* studies,[47] although only the terms "comparative method" or "comparative history" were common at the time of publication. In this book he writes that the first main source of difference between Hungarians and Romanians that had lasting consequences, whether in Transylvania or Wallachia and Moldavia, stems from their "two divergent social constitutions" centered on different economic models: Hungarians closer to plains and waterways, as per livestock raising; Romanians closer to higher mountains, as regards nomadic shepherding, but when in more confined settings, transhumance (1948, 22, 23). This difference only caused strife when

[46] Makkai, *Magyar-román közös múlt* (Budapest: Teleki Pál Tudományos Intézet, 1948), 42–44.

[47] See Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Beyond Comparison: *Histoire Croisée* and the Challenge of Reflexivity," *History and Theory* 45 (Feb. 2006): 30–50, at 38: "Histoire croisée breaks with a one-dimensional perspective that simplifies and homogenizes, in favor of a multidimensional approach that acknowledges plurality and the complex configurations that result from it. Accordingly, entities and objects of research are not merely considered in relation to one another but also through one another, in terms of relationships, interactions, and circulation. The active and dynamic principle of the intersection is fundamental in contrast to the static framework of a comparative approach that tends to immobilize objects."

Romanians in Transylvania moved to lower regions, which was once again solved when a majority of Romanians became workers of the land, or serfs, like Hungarians (60, 66). Another similarity, he writes, was that Hungarians in the Romanian principalities in the Middle Ages, like Romanians in Transylvania, had difficulty replenishing their co-ethnic elites and thus sank to the level of serfs (48). Hungarians in the Romanian urban centers eventually also assimilated and so did the Romanian *vajda* nobility of Hungary (50, 52–54, 67).

He continues with this comparative framework and covers stages such as Ottoman suzerainty in the region which tied the fates of Transylvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia much closer together again (98), less than two centuries after Romanian voivods succeeded in gaining further autonomy from Hungarian influence with the rebellion of Basarab (32); and then to the modern era all the way to the creation of modern Romania, focusing, for example, on how modern nationalism affected minorities on both sides of the Carpathians (260). Gáldi's only critique of Makkai's book was that it began with an account of Anonymus's *Gesta Hungarorum*, which has divided Romanian and Hungarian historians, not because he disagreed with Makkai, but because he saw it as an unnecessary red flag that would be better placated by being at the end of the book.[48]

[48] Gáldi, Review of *Magyar-román közös múlt* by László Makkai, *Magyar Nyelvőr* 72 (1948): 273–274.

Comparison for Understanding

János Balázs's 1947 "Keleteurópa és az összehasonlító történetirás" (Eastern Europe and comparative history writing)[49] brings an interesting new perspective and rejection of the idea of a cultural slope, similar to Makkai's publication of the following year. It is the introductory chapter to the volume *Magyarország és Keleteurópa*, to which Gáldi (on Albania), Hadrovics (on Croatia), and Makkai (on Romania) contributed short chapters summarizing much of their previous studies. This book highlights the historical, literary, and cultural connections between Hungary and each of the "East European" nations respectively (note that Balázs sheds terms East-Central and South-East European or Balkan in favor of East European). Balázs (1915–1989) was of the same generation as the comparatists and a student of the Eötvös College, where he studied Greek and Latin; his most significant publication up to 1947 was the bilingual *A Gazai iskola Thukydides-Tanulmányai / Gli studi Tucididei della scuola di Gaza* (1940).[50] Between 1945 and 1950, while working for the Hungarian Cultural Ministry, he spent two years Zurich and Geneva, in the latter university studying primarily Stylistics under one-time students of Saussure. His choice to head an introduction to a volume on comparative history might seem like an odd choice, except that the volume was made up of brief syntheses of mostly *literary* contacts from the history of the newly communist nations. The timing of his text, like the previous two, is also important. In this case it was written with the events of the war in the very recent past and also with an eye to Marxist theory. Since it was not yet clear what elements from historiography before 1945 would pass the

[49] János Balázs, "Keleteurópa és az összehasonlító történetírás," in *Magyarország és Keleteurópa. A magyarság kapcsolatai a szomszédnépekkel*, ed. István Gál (Budapest: Officina, 1947), 7–30.

[50] For a full bibliography of his works, see Kálmán Bolla, *Balázs János (1914–1989)* (Budapest: ELTE Fonetikai Tanszéke, 1994).

test of being "progressive," Balázs lists several historical schools and forms of critique that would aid comparative historical studies, their purpose being to develop a friendly rapport with countries that were just at war with one another.

First he makes a list of what we do *not* want in comparison: characterological studies, which though they were the beginnings of comparison among peoples, going back to antiquity, were developed by the romantics, nationalists, and chauvinists on a grand scale. He writes that the Szekfű-edited version of charaterological studies in *Mi a magyar?* (1939b) served the purpose in the early 1940s of a self-defense against German imperialism, but they must be rejected now since those studies lacked all propensities toward "societal stratification and sociological thinking" (1947, 7, 10). Another thing that we do not need in comparative studies, he writes, is imperialist ideology, which has prevented the Danubian nations from consciousness of one another. He brings up the example of recent German historical studies that examined German influence in Eastern European history. And likewise, looking for Hungarian influence in the region was semi-meaningless and pretentious. Balázs suggested instead the example of Bartók, who pointed to what was shared in the regions' folk music, "not how much our music affected which of our neighbors, but the shared interactions, joint effects, and related traits" (15–16). The volume itself was edited by the literary historian István Gál (1912–1982), who founded his own journal *Apollo* while still a student at the university in 1934, whose aim was to trace the literary history of all the East-Central and South-East European literatures and often contained comparative elements (Várdy 1976, 160).[51] Balázs in his introductory chapter sees the statistical analysis of language relationships based on shared vocabulary as the neutral key to reaching a friendly understanding among nations (1947, 26). Though the elements of language and loan words just a few years previously were used

[51] Maciej Janowski, Constantin Iordachi, and Balázs Trencsényi, "Why Bother about Historical Regions? Debates over Central Europe in Hungary, Poland and Romania," *East Central Europe* 32, nos. 1–2 (2005): 5–58, at 8.

to justify the idea of cultural slope, in fact, Balázs had a recent work of Gáldi in mind as a positive example, *A Dunatáj nyelvi alkata – A Dunatáj irodalmi fejlődése* (The constitution of the Danubian language – The development of Danubian literature, 1947a). Gáldi posits a Danubian language union (including Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Slovenian, and Serbo-Croatian) based on shared cultural traits embedded in language coming from German and French before the period of language modernization, similar to the Balkan *Sprachbund*. Though it divides Eastern Europe into at least two regions (East-Central and South-East Europe) with some in-between cases, like Polish and Romanian, an even broader regional unity is traced in the various literary cultures. The literary similarities exist despite the language modernization regimes that tended to accentuate the genetic traits over the cultural traits, though even here some corrections were necessary in cases where literary languages were too far separated from common parlances (1947a, 22–24).

Balázs's introduction to Gál's edited work still suffers because it describes the aims of comparison mostly according to what it should not be. A positive definition is missing, and it would further benefit by being placed on a theoretical level that makes it difficult to be used for nationalist purposes. It also does not explain how to bridge the gap between neutral language studies and the more sensitive issue of shared historical regions. However, he is right in the sense that it was politics more than theory which placed a question mark on the practice of comparative history writing in Hungary. In the postwar self-critique advocated in Balázs's introduction, as well as in works of this nature by the comparatists and others, we see that it was undertaken quite naturally and without prodding, with elements of this self-critique even during the war. The following chapter, will present other locally produced Hungarian programmatic texts of comparative history that are more theory based and perhaps provide a directive or approach to comparative history writing.

Conclusion

Thus to conclude we see that the debate between the two competing Hungarian historical schools of late interwar era Hungary, szellemtörténet and népiségtörténet, could also be framed in regard to their relation to German historiography on Hungary and the broader East-Central and South-East European region. Hungarian comparative studies on the region up to 1945, likewise, often but not always, responded to and mimicked the same German studies. A constant subtext of interwar era comparative history was the debate with German historiography on Hungary's cultural importance in the region as whole. Thus the comparatists were usually accomplishing four tasks when writing comparative-type histories: to correct what they perceived as errors in the treatment of Hungarian history by outsiders, to counteract what they perceived as an intentional understressing of the role of Hungarians in the history of neighboring countries, a general scholarly curiosity in the history of the region, and finally a way to better relations with neighboring nations through focus on commonalities—which was explicit in spite of the fact that the first two factors often made this final one more problematic and unlikely. And there is little evidence that they were successful in this aim, even after the first two issues (1943–44) of *Revue d'histoire compare*, which Gáldi claims, in a 1947 review, succeeded in eliminating concepts of *Kulturgefälle* and cultural superiority.[52] After 1945, it is also clear that narratives could be further transformed by the same authors based on research that was previously conducted under conditions of competition and war.

[52] Gáldi, Review of *Revue d'histoire comparée*, 1945–1947, *Századok* (1947c): 349–353, at 349.

Chapter Four

Comparative Paradigms

There are just two programmatic texts on the aim, purpose, and method of comparative history coming from Hungary up to 1945. I will provide an appraisal of these two texts and show how they relate to the comparative works of each of the seven historians/linguists. We will see how their research falls in line with theories of comparative history from the interwar era and the brief pre-dogmatic window in early communist Hungary up to 1948, which is the time period that János Balázs's short introduction was written for the István Gál edited volume, covered just previously in Chapter Three. The oeuvres of these seven comparatists overlap to cover almost the entire map of East-Central Europe and South-East Europe (though Poland,[1] Bulgaria,[2] and Albania[3] are considered more for how they connect to other places, and the Baltics[4] are almost entirely ignored). Amongst themselves there was a fairly clear division of academic specializations. Some were more recognized for their studies on the Middle Ages, others for the modern era, though there was not a single comparatist who did not cover both medieval and

[1] Poland is an interesting case because it was in the purview of an older generation of established historians, Adorján Divéky and Imre Lukinics, who were primarily interested in its connections to Habsburg Upper Hungary and independent Transylvania in the Ottoman era, Stephen Báthory (1533–1586), as prince of Transylvania and king of Poland, being one of several key subjects. Gogolák, however, has a brief section comparing Polish nationalism to East-Central European trends in "Társadalmi fejlődés és nemzeti eszmények Kelet-középeurópában," *Az Ország Útja* 6, no. 7 (July 1942): 193–205.

[2] Bulgaria was generally only important as regards its connections to theories of Romanian ethnogenesis. Gáldi was more interested in the Bulgarian language in relation to the idea of a Balkan Sprachbund.

[3] Albania was only important as regards its connections to theories of Romanian ethnogenesis. The brief period of communist internationalism produced this short chapter by Gáldi, "Magyarok és albánok," in *Magyarország és keleteurópa*, ed. István Gál (Budapest: Officina, 1947), 169–176.

[4] The single exception is Gogolák, "Dominium Maris Baltici," *Magyar Szemle* 37, no. 12 (Dec. 1939a): 242–248. This short article was written shortly after the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, lamenting the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland and the Baltic states. He delves briefly into how the Baltic Sea, joining together the histories of disparate peoples, can be compared to the Mediterranean.

modern history, and some even earlier, back to the waning of the Roman Empire, especially as regards questions of Romanian ethnogenesis, the origin of Eastern Neo-Latin languages, the Jiriček line, and the Byzantine sphere of influence. Some moved from an emphasis of language and literature into historical studies that featured linguistic elements, while others could be classified as traditional medievalists or historians of various emphases.

As we find ways to classify the comparative oeuvres of this group of seven historians and linguists, it will help to map out the possible arenas of comparative topics starting at the core geographic unit of interwar era Hungary. Even though Hungary at this time was (and still is) quite a small nation, there were certain factors that allowed comparison to begin with this first unit, in spite of the fact that much of the research of the comparatists dealt with questions of larger pre-WWI Hungary and areas beyond. For one, interwar era Hungary was almost entirely shorn of minorities, which meant that as the first order of comparison, it could almost function as a clean slate with which to compare the historical topics of the area between interwar era Hungary and its historic boundaries, which is where a majority of the former nationalities resided. Small Hungary had other useful coincidences that aided comparison, such as the fact that its borders largely lined up with the greatest extent of Ottoman expansion in Hungary in the early modern era, meaning that it was the natural unit with which to compare Habsburg northwestern Hungary or independent Transylvania, or the latter two to each other. Additionally, small Hungary still had pockets of minorities whose history and development could be compared with their linguistic kinfolk in the second unit of comparison stretching to the pre-WWI borders: the Swabian German minority of small Hungary vs. the Saxons of Transylvania and the Swabians of the Banat; the small enclave of Romanians of the Hungarian Plain compared to the Banat and Transylvania; Slovaks of the Hungarian Plain compared to Slovakia (previously Upper Hungary); the Serbian enclaves along

the Danube River to Serbs in Vojvodina. Due to some of these historical factors more or less coinciding with the boundaries of small Hungary, the—temporary—changes during WWII with the Vienna Awards and the annexation of a part of Vojvodina and Carpathian Ukraine did little to change the perspective of the units of historical comparison, in spite of the uptick of the topicality of the historical analysis of regions and cities that were newly returned to Hungary. These two units of comparison (Hungary proper vs. historic Hungary) in fact were open to many historians of the interwar era but were usually framed in a non-comparative way, as simply a history of the minorities or the nationality question of historic Hungary. The first group of historians to attend to this task were covered in a historiographical work by Ferenc Glatz (1980).[5] Following their important work on the nationality question, many of the same generation as the comparatists, and the comparatists themselves, also studied further the nationality question.

Diana Mishkova, Bo Stråth, and Balázs Trencsényi, in their chapter "Regional History as a 'Challenge' to National Frameworks of Historiography," write of the interplay in interwar era Hungary between two seemingly contradictory ideas: (1) that "the real place of the Hungarian people … was among the Eastern European 'peasant nations,'" and (2) that there was "natural supremacy of the Hungarians over the 'peripheral' nations," where "integral nationalists opted for a geographical conceptualization (such as the 'Carpathian Basin'), which stressed the concentric nature of the broader region around 'Rump Hungary.'"[6] In fact, historians could take this latter aspect even one step further, in the sense of not even problematizing the differences of regions inside historic Hungary where many of the former nationalities lived, and merely treating the

[5] Glatz, *Történetíró és politika. Szekfű, Steier, Thim és Miskolczy nemzetről és államról* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980).

[6] Diana Mishkova, Bo Stråth, and Balázs Trencsényi, "Regional History as a 'Challenge' to National Frameworks of Historiography: The Case of Central, Southeast, and Northern Europe," in *Transnational Challenges to National History Writing*, ed. Matthias Middell and Lluis Roura (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013), 257–314, at 275.

subject as minorities in a centralized state. The simple picture of the overlapping of the geographical unit (the Carpathian Basin) with the historical unit (the crown of St. Stephen) was complicated by the nations and national movements that straddled the Carpathians, i.e., virtually all of them, including the apparent exception of the Slovaks (for whom the Carpathians were porous to Czech cultural trends at least since the seventeenth century). Thus on closer look, all of the nationalities of historic Hungary had to be treated as cultural amalgamations even before they became a part of independent countries, that were even larger amalgamations. Some of these nations straddled East-Central and South-East Europe, creating hybrid in-between cases, though Kosáry, for example, recognized that modern developments in these two regions were causing them to converge. The comparatists sometimes (but not always) liked to claim that the contradictions in these amalgamations were so stark, that they could not hold together in the long run (certainly the conglomerate states did not last).

Now, attempts were also made to characterize as Hungarian—culturally—any nationality living inside the Carpathians by virtue of having lived in historic Hungary. Works of the comparatists certainly could be of this type, aiming to show, for example, how the language modernization movement of Transylvanian Romanians leaned on Latin due to the late survival of Latin in Hungary, rather than French and Italian as seen in the case of the Old Romanian Kingdom;[7] or how the Serbs of Hungary achieved a diversified societal stratification earlier than in Serbia proper.[8] Once the comparatists came up with such a specific thesis, the issue was how far the ramifications could be carried. Outside of shared regions, do similar cases of Hungarian "influence" pass beyond the Carpathians? Yes, though the issues could be either oversimplified or complex depending on the book or article in question. Is Hungarian influence the keystone in those

[7] Gáldi, *Az erdélyi román nyelvújítás* (Budapest: A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Kiadása, 1943).
[8] Hadrovics, *Magyar és déli szláv szellemi kapcsolatok* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1944).

cultures? No, but the comparatists certainly could push the limit of this idea, as seen in the analysis of *Kulturgefälle* in Chapter Three. Is Kosáry's attempt to introduce "Carpathian Europe," a region that meets up on both sides of the encircling Carpathians (discussed below), just an expression of Hungary being the indispensable nation of both East-Central and South-East Europe? Mostly no. This becomes clear if one takes the idea of Hungarian "influence" to its logical limits.

Starting with South-East Europe, Makkai realizes that in spite of the terminology of feudalism being mediated by Hungarians in Wallachia and several similar cases, eventually the historical narrative has to include the peculiarities of Balkan development, languages, Orthodoxy, state formation, Ottoman conquest, Greek mediated Enlightenment, a Russian sphere of influence—a virtually endless list. In the end, these will push any Hungarian "influence" toward a vanishing point, almost as if one were writing about the history of Bulgaria, where the argument for Hungarian influence was never made. The same could be said of Hadrovics, who, though he pushes the Hungarian narrative onto Serbia and Croatia, eventually has to give place to the Illyrian idea, which cross-fertilized among the Dinaric nations of different faith, and the Serbs' own national idea in the early nineteenth century. What about East-Central Europe? Few historians in Hungary, if any, denied the Croatians their separate identity and fairly independent development in spite of 800 years' direct union with Hungary. And the Czech and Polish cases' lack of Hungarian "influences" are even more obvious, so much so that defining East-Central Europe in itself is fairly difficult (Poland is combined in comparative schemes by Gogolák only in short articles). Thus it is clear that neither small Hungary nor historic Hungary could form the conceptual core of the lands between the Baltic and the Black Sea or the nations between Germany and Russia, though it happens to be in the middle. The terms East-Central Europe and South-East Europe at first seem to fall apart in an endless chain of exceptions to the rule; eventually however there is

something structural that renews its significance, an aspect seen in Hajnal's comparative text below. I surmise that the comparatists continued to use East-Central Europe, South-East Europe/Balkans, or the broader Eastern Europe over Kosáry's hybrid Carpathian Europe for this very reason.

Since what has motivated this thesis is the exploration of Hungarian comparative historians who made steps beyond the borders of historic Hungary, this small group of seven have been singled out based on their production of comparative *monographs* between 1935 and 1945/48; others were excluded from this list of seven because their comparative oeuvres, though important, were too short. Steven Béla Várdy called the field of all the historians who focused on topics outside small interwar Hungary "East European Studies," which certainly made categorization easier because the larger output on the nationalities question of historic Hungary could be combined with works covering regions and nations beyond Hungary.[9] Domokos Kosáry called works of the smaller niche of historians and linguists focusing on regions beyond historic Hungary and including the successor states "comparative history." This chapter will focus primarily on those studies that fall under Kosáry's rubric, but among them I have generally accentuated the ones with focus beyond the borders of old Hungary. This chapter will also explore how far the work of the comparatists would fall into line with goals laid out by Marc Bloch in 1928. The works of the comparatists danced between large regional overviews, nation-to-nation studies, and micro focus on the smaller regions that make up a modern nation. The comparatists were intensely in tune to the variation that exists at the small regional level in East-Central and South-East Europe, which was the center of their comparative analysis because the map of Europe at this time was often changing and new nation-states were just a decade or two old, meaning that a comparison of the

[9] Steven Béla Várdy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1976), 147–160.

history of two nation-states within their current borders would likely produce nonsense. Just like Hungary was divided up into regions as described above, Croatian topics, for example, were compared in light of its four historical regions; or Romania in light of the Partium, Banat, Maramureș, Oltenia, Muntenia, Moldova, and so on; Serbian history was even more complicated, combining pockets in cities north and south of Budapest, larger blocks in Vojvodina and Banat, and then Serbia proper, not to mention Slavonia, Herzegovina, etc.

Perhaps we should view their oeuvres along a sliding scale, with some of them showing a more classic comparative methodology than others. For example, Lajos Tamás's significance to this topic is less his falling into the comparative spectrum and more his inauguration in Hungary of a far-reaching research topic that stretched from Poland to Constantinople and back two thousand years; however, in order to frame his historical questions, he does use comparative linguistics, of which Bloch speaks so highly as an example for historians. Tamás thus takes the next logical step and combines the two fields, though clearly he is not the first to do so as regards the history of South-East Europe (Mishkova, Stråth, and Trencsényi 2013, 280). Domokos Kosáry, on the other hand, is only a comparative historian in the sense that he includes broad regional strokes in his writings on the history of Hungary—histories of a single nation can also be framed comparatively, i.e., asymmetric comparison; yet his greater significance to this topic is his editorial work at the Teleki Institute up to 1948 and as an ideologue of comparative history, evident in his programmatic text for the journal *Revue d'histoire comparée*. Then we have the excellent example of Makkai, who could write more or less the same history, but in totally different keys, some comparative, some not. I consider Hadrovics a classic comparatist in his application of historical questions to the analysis of Serbian and Croatian literature and Croatian Latinity, but even here sometimes one must read between the lines because there is almost never an explicit advertisement

of the use of the comparative method in the work of this group of seven historians and linguists. Gáldi is also in the paradigm of comparative linguistics, and he uses language to theorize about gaps in history that are not covered by historical sources. I. Tóth uses comparison more as it is known in modern theory: his typology of the stages of pre-national and national consciousness could only have been formed based on a prior wide European comparison, yet it is his social history of the spread of knowledge of the Roman connection among Romanian society that is the basis of his study. Finally, Gogolák upends Blochian comparative methodology since his focus is not on medieval history but on the comparison of nationalisms (Kosáry a proponent of the latter as well), which actually fits better into modern comparative paradigms and nationalism studies.

As mentioned, there are just two programmatic texts on the aim, purpose, and method of comparative history coming from Hungary up to 1945. István Hajnal's "A kis nemzetek történetírásának munkaközösségéről" (On the small nations' history writing community, 1942)[10] and Domokos Kosáry's "Sur quelques problèmes d'histoire comparée" (1943c).[11] These two texts could hardly be more different from one another, yet oddly enough, neither of them reference Marc Bloch explicitly. Bloch is mentioned by name only several decades later in articles of the comparatists: Kosáry's retrospective article, "The Idea of a Comparative History of East Central Europe: The Story of a Venture" (1988) and in an interview with János Tóth, "'Kárpát-Európa'-kutatás a Teleki Intézetben" (1983),[12] in which he credits Bloch along with Henri Pirenne of the Annales school as well as Henri Sée as the main inspirations for his own short-lived historical journal *Revue d'histoire comparée* (1943–1948). Makkai's article "Ars Historica: On Braudel" (1983) includes a short comparison of the methodologies of the first Annales generation of Bloch

[10] István Hajnal, "A kis nemzetek történetírásának munkaközösségéről," *Századok* 76 (1942): 1–42, 133–165.
[11] Kosáry, "Sur quelques problèmes d'histoire comparée," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 1, nos. 1–2 (1943c): 3–32.
[12] János Tóth, "'Kárpát-Európa'-kutatás a Teleki Intézetben," interview with Domokos Kosáry, *Valóság*, no. 9 (1983): 32–41.

and Lucien Febvre and the second generation Fernand Braudel, but Makkai does this without mention of his own earlier comparative career. In this article Makkai also does not mention Hajnal, who was retrospectively categorized as a structuralist historian though he himself never self-identified as such, calling himself a social historian. Though Bloch today is rightfully considered one of the fathers of comparative history, in the early and mid-1940s in Hungary there were already several significantly different strains or schools with which one could have approached comparative historical studies. Each of them will require a closer look. These two programmatic texts will also be used to map out a categorization of the work of the seven comparatists.

Hajnal's Community of Small Nations

István Hajnal's influence on the comparatists at first look appears to be only tangential, but a reception history among the comparatists of his main historical theories and methods as evident in his programmatic text on comparison, "A kis nemzetek történetírásának munkaközösségéről" (1942), will reveal interesting connections surrounding the status and practice of social history in Hungary in the early 1940s. Studies on the social historian Hajnal (1892–1956) have undergone a renaissance period that started in the 1980s,[13] took off in the 1990s, and which still continues to this day and is being supplemented by English-language contributions. The interest in Hajnal is similar to the rediscovery of conceptually forward-looking figures who transcended the stifling norm of humanities overly influenced by politics, be it in the late Compromise era (Oszkár Jászi), the interwar era (Hajnal), or Stalinist era (István Bibó), and whose memories fell temporarily to

[13] Starting with László Lakatos, "Hajnal István történetszemléletének értelmezéséhez" (diss., Loránd Eötvös Univ. Budapest, 1983). See also Lakatos, *Élet és formák. Hajnal István történetszociológiája* (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 1996).

the wayside; hence the words renaissance and rediscovery. In the case of Hajnal, he is today recognized as underpinning his historical studies with a theoretical apparatus that was unparalleled in Hungary in the interwar era. There have been several recent English-language studies[14] that attempt to raise Hajnal out of Hungarian obscurity and into a role as a forerunner (along with his associate Theodor Thienemann) of media/communication studies, which took off in the Anglo world after WWII.[15] Hajnal called his field the history of *írásbeliség*, or the history of writing culture, which was neither a history of literacy, though there is some overlapping, and neither what has become known as the history of the book, though encompassing some elements here too (Kiséry 2011, 36). Though media studies are beyond the purview of this study, there are other equally important aspects of note which make Hajnal both anomalous in interwar era Hungarian historiography and a forerunner in certain fields there too. The first aspect is what István Lakatos,[16] Gábor Kovács,[17] László Kosárkó,[18] and others refer to as Hajnal being Annales-type historian at a time in Hungary when structural history was not yet in favor. As regards the comparatists and structuralism, it was only several decades later that Makkai, but now with a Marxist apparatus, followed closely the work of the second Annales generation, particularly Braudel. Gáldi's comparative structural *linguistics* studies date from 1938 but have their own different roots in

[14] András Kiséry, "Literacy, Culture, and History in the Work of Thienemann and Hajnal," in *Comparative Hungarian Cultural Studies*, ed. Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek and Louise Olga Vasvári (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2011); Péter Szirák, "Socialising Technology: The Archives of István Hajnal," *Studies in East European Thought* 60, nos. 1–2 (2008): 135–147, I am using an online version that is paginated 1–12, www.academia.edu/1920749/Socialising_technology_the_archives_of_Istv%C3%A1n_Hajnal?auto=download

[15] Szirák in footnote 12 of his (2008) article refers to the scholars of media studies who have "reflected" on Hajnal's "essential" work, "Le rôle social de l'écriture et l'évolution européenne," *Revue de l'Institut de Sociologie* (Brussels) 14, nos. 1–2 (1934): 23–53, 253–282. He lists Harold A. Innis, Marshal McLuhan (who in fact quotes extensively his "L'enseignement de l'ecriture aux universités mediévales," in *Gutenberg Galaxy* [1962] and not the previous title by Hajnal), Walter J. Ong, and Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, amongst others.

[16] Lakatos, "Az élet és a formák – Hajnal István történetszemléletéről," *3. part*, no. 6 (Spring 1991), http://bocs.hu/3part/lakatos-01-06.htm

[17] Kovács, "Hajnal István," *phronesis* (Summer 2008): 51–68.

[18] Kosárkó, "Hajnal István recepciója az 1930-as, 1940-es években," *Korall*, no. 2 (Winter 2011): 110–127.

Zoltán Gombocz's introduction of Fernand Saussure and the Prague Circle at the Budapest University/Eötvös Collegium (on Gombocz see Chapter Two). The second aspect is Hajnal's strong advocacy of historical sociology—sociology as an auxiliary science—at a time when, as Kiséry points out, sociology "had no institutional academic existence in Hungary, as there were no programs or departments of sociology at any university" (2011, 42). The reason for this lack of institutional grounding of sociology seems to have entirely political roots. Even though Jászi was mentioned only in passing above, sociology's disfavor in the interwar era can be traced back to it being the tainted positivist science of the leftist circles around the journal *Huszadik Század* and Jászi, who as Minister of National Minorities was directly blamed for Hungary's political blunders after the loss of WWI leading to the country's dismemberment.[19] Hajnal retained an outsider position in the interwar era in spite of the fact that he was a fully respected and fully integrated faculty member of the historical sciences at the Budapest University when he was appointed professor of World History in 1930, and an editor of the marquee *Századok* journal from 1931 to 1943. Yet, as I will discuss shortly, he was also on the cusp of attracting a larger following of students and admirers in the early 1940s, for "building a bridge between history and the social sciences,"[20] particularly among young historians of the same cohort as the comparatists who were already researching questions of economic and social history.

[19] Kosáry too repeats this claim as late as 1941 in his *A History of Hungary* for English-speaking audiences, which the exiled Jászi in Ohio reviewed negatively as regards the sections on twentieth-century history. Oscar Jaszi, review of *A History of Hungary* by Dominic G. Kosary, *The American Historical Review* 47, no. 4 (July 1942): 816–818. Furthering the chain, Hajnal's influence extends to Bibó, see Gábor Kovács, "Hajnal István és Bibó István történelemszemlélete," in *A szabadság kis körei. Tanulmányok Bibó István életművéről*, ed. Iván Zoltán Dénes (Budapest: Osiris, 1999), 200–215.

[20] Quote from ethnologist Béla Gunda, review of *A magyar gazdaság- és társadalomtörténetírás kialakulása* (1943) by Jenő Berlász, *Irodalmi Szemle* 58 (1947): 312–313. Berlász uses almost the exact same description of "bridge between history and science of sociology" (1943, 20).

Whereas the comparatists made their home in East-Central and South-East Europe and Kosáry's programmatic text is on the mapping of the East-Central European region specifically, Hajnal compares all the non-Mediterranean peripheral regions of Western Europe: East-Central Europe, the Baltics, and Scandinavia as regards their commonalities with Western Europe; and Russia and South-East Europe for contrast. Hajnal's thesis question inquires into the factor that transformed all of the newly formed and recently Christianized peripheral early medieval states into Western-esque societies considering that "crystallized forms of feudalism barely exist[ed]" there (1942, 8). As evident in its title, "On the small nations' history writing community," his text addresses some of the shared challenges of history writing in the small successor states of medieval European kingdoms, including Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czech, Hungary, Slovakia, and Croatia.[21] His text arose out of his participation in a Europe-wide project headed by the Paris-based Comité International des Sciences Historiques, which he then published as editor in the journal *Századok* in spite of the transition to a war footing for many of the involved scholars' nations. In terms of the geographic scope of his comparison, it can only be likened to Miloslav Hroch's *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge, 1985), with its comparative scope of incipient Norwegian, Czech, Finnish, Estonian, Lithuanian, Slovak, Flemish, and Danish(-minority) national movements, although in terms of subject and era it could hardly be more different. It has been only in the last few decades that such distant peripheries of Europe have been placed again into a comparative apparatus as

[21] In making comparisons, exceptions always abound: there are smaller language groups, in-between nations, like Holland, Belgium (spec. Flanders), and Portugal that he places in a hybrid category, along with "small language" Switzerland (Hajnal's ironic punctuation in orig.), because their development aligns more closely with their larger neighbors.

regards the process of Christianization and early Christian monarchies, as Gábor Klaniczay points out,[22] vis-à-vis East-Central Europe, Scandinavia, and Russia.

If we are looking for the specialization or field from which to account for Hajnal's programmatic text, it would be a unique combination of both macro-level historical studies on a European and world scale and micro-level research begun during his early career as a paleographer in Vienna. Hajnal taught world history at the Budapest University and authored a volume on modern world history, *Az újkor története* (1936),[23] which was part of the series on universal history, *Egyetemes történet* (1935–37), edited by Bálint Hóman, Gyula Szekfű, and Károly Kerényi. His segue into comparative history, though anomalous by Hungarian standards, was thus less of an intrepid undertaking. For him it began already several decades prior in the 1910s and 1920s while conducting research in Vienna. Here he "compared technologies of writing"—first between Hungary and Austria, then tracing their origin to the Paris university—during the thirteenth century, a period when "an almost exclusive orality of the early medieval period shifted into a new phase of literacy … the 'second literacy' after antiquity," as Péter Szirák writes in his study on Hajnal's contributions to the history of technology (2008). András Kiséry, in his study on Hajnal, writes that "he was planning to use the history of literacy as the organizing principle of an account of the rise of modernity" (2011, 40); in this programmatic text on comparison, Hajnal also connects literacy, but that of a small group of clerics, to medieval developments. What he focuses on is the sudden burst in the sheer number of writings of all sort in the peripheral nations in the thirteenth century which mimics slightly earlier developments in France. Prior to that point, in the first half of the Middle Ages, he claims that in Europe north of the Alps one could scarcely

[22] Gábor Klaniczay, "Közép-kelet-európából közép-nyugat-európába: 'átmenet' a középkorban," *Századok* (2009): 1291–1321, at 1299.
[23] István Hajnal, *Az újkor története*, vol. 3 of *Egyetemes történet*, ed. Hóman, Szekfű, and Kerényi (Budapest: 1936).

refer to even the existence of a literature, but rather an oral culture. A comparison of the early Middle Ages in Western Europe to Byzantium, which had a glorious (writing) culture, is so stark, he writes, that one has to seriously question what motivation[24] existed for leaders of peripheral nations to adopt the teachings of Western European missionaries (usually German) of the Roman Church over Orthodoxy (1942, 11–12).

Hajnal's view on the purpose of the comparative history of small nations does little to assuage national egos. He writes: "The task for the scholars of small nations is not to immerse themselves collectively in each other's history. We cannot learn very much from one another, given that whatever in our development is common, more or less originates from the West. Each of our tasks instead should be to research how and why variations exist in the local development of Western forms and results" (1942, 5). Thus he is not simply advocating a comparative history of small nations, but a comparison of transfers from the West (today it would be called a history of transfers, as one of the branches of comparative theory).[25] And by the West he means almost entirely Central France: "The location of the most profound development of feudalism is Central France; later too, and even for a large portion of the modern era, with its most tenacious success of customary law. Whichever direction one moves away from this Central French deep structure, the more 'rational' feudalism [becomes]" (1942, 19). Here he surprises the reader with a new sense of what "rationality" can mean when analyzing the interaction of various social strata. Rationality is the usefulness that individuals can gain in relations with other individuals. His interesting inversion is that he treats Byzantine development as the "rational" one, and wonders how the

[24] His assessment is that the rulers of peripheral Hungary and Poland saw that a centralized Church in the country would better serve their own power grab, but which afterward became less relevant than the "cultural methods" that were introduced alongside (1942, 8).

[25] Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka, "Comparative History: Methods, Aims, Problems," in *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective*, ed. Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor (London: Routledge, 2004), 23–39, at 31.

European peripheries could have become allied with the "primitive" West of the tenth/eleventh century over the obviously superior Byzantium, which was the continuation of Antiquity (1942, 11). Thus the "essential difference between Byzantine and Western evolution" is: "a strong difference of mentality; we could call the former rational, the latter irrational developmental structures." He adds that by "mentality" one must rule out "human spirit, philosophy, or psychology." Thus the farther east one travels from Central France, the more rational the societal organization: "Already in the German regions [there is] a relatively strong emphasis on the material connections of feudal relations, from which both sides hope for utility. Vocation, occupations thus do not have a muscular enough inner structure, that in itself could impose the recognition and adaption of the more raw forces of social life. Feudal services are restricted to one-sided, positive instances; administration evolves [to be] less socially skillful" (1942, 19). As regards the possible sources for Hajnal's ideas on rationality or irrationality as a characterization of a society, perhaps Szirák's analysis can provide some answers: "Hajnal, following Durkheim's notions argues for the significance of the objectified experiences collected by tradition, body of knowledge, and competences (and for the potentialities and restrictions of these for the recent generations). Historical development thus is not based on the workings of gigantic organisations, deeds and thoughts, neither does it originate from a (self-)conscious practicality, but rather on the minute contributions of masses, and the spontaneously articulating 'habituality.' There is no one exclusive cause but the existing causes are essentially products of previous periods" (Szirák 2008).

The reason that Hajnal's text classifies as being programmatic is because he lays down a general groundwork and theory which could have then been picked up by other interested scholars more embedded in their national paradigms. He offers a combination of broad strokes and detailed clues from different national contexts when looking for the answer to the question of what is

comparable when basic shared concepts fall apart at the national level between Western development and peripheral developments: "even such seemingly straightforward formations as nobility, peasantry, clergy, and citizenry [or something as obvious as guild] can hardly be defined conceptually such that one does not have to experiment with the deviation of the set of traits" (1942, 6). Like Max Weber,[26] Hajnal was deeply interested in the length to which concepts can be shared across cultures, with ancient China or India, for example, where "one can naturally speak of a peasantry," whereas in the US of today, that is of European background, there is no peasantry (1942, 35). Marc Bloch too showed how some of the pitfalls of comparison surround imprecision in terminology and the assumption that basic terms translate: he uses the example of the different meanings of English "villeinage" to French "servage," which nonetheless tend to be translated unproblematically (1967, 58–59).[27] Hajnal, on the other hand, seems to bypass Bloch's advice on using the comparative method "to make a parallel study of societies that are at once neighboring contemporary, exercising a constant mutual influence, exposed throughout their development to the action of the same broad causes just because they are close and contemporaneous, and owing their existence in part at least to a common origin" (1967, 47). Hajnal's broader geographic scope includes all the peripheries where there is a "constant" "influence" (transfer) coming from Western regions. Hajnal hones in on the thirteenth century as the most important moment for peripheral nations' inclusion into the development paradigms of the West (besides the initial acceptance of Roman Catholicism), but points to a French-origin Latin writing culture as the bond that ties Europe (excepting Italy, whose writing culture has a different relation with Antiquity), and which more than anything else was the engine and not the outcome of changes in the above societal

[26] His assessment of Weber in Hajnal, "Történelem és szociológia," *Századok* 73 (1939): 1–32, 137–166.
[27] Marc Bloch, "Toward a Comparative History of European Societies," in *Land and Work in Mediaeval Europe: Selected Papers by Marc Bloch*, trans. J. E. Anderson (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 44–81.

structures via a clerical class in the peripheries that studied either in Paris, or in German universities following the Parisian tradition.

Hajnal wished that history could imitate other historical subfields: "Prehistory and archeology became international sciences instead of all other historical fields because it was required that they work with concrete, technical source materials[28] … [Thus], according to our understanding, the reconstruction of the contextual and orderly functioning of societal structures is the only method to come to know evolution and the experiencing and moving human life [*megélő és mozgató emberi életet*]" (1942, 6, 7). He says that when comparison on the European level fails, it is because "systematic research wants to compare entirely summed up and drafted societal formulas. Nations and peoples, for example, [are] treated as individual types. Foreign 'influences' are altered into character traits; but this is not yet regularity [*törvényszerűség*], but only the characterization of historical processes" (1942, 6). Instead, what we need are "simple, more comparable facts," such as ones that "do not require subjective judgements." Of course it would be absurd for a historian to deny the importance of facts, but behind such a simple statement there is a very intentional subtext directed at his Hungarian audience that touched upon the then current practices of history and even reached into the decades before WWI. In the previous chapter it was discussed how the szellemtörténet school as presented by Szekfű was reaction to the positivism of the pre-WWI era. Hajnal was one of the few historians of the interwar era that did not run from the label of positivism (along with the cultural historian Sándor Domanovszky). He simultaneously critiqued its weaknesses, which he stated could be overcome with sociology, and also rejected szellemtörténet: "Past positivist historiography attempted to list concrete facts and forms, but did

[28] Bloch too had an analogy in mind for historians: comparative linguistics, as "one of the most impressive successes of the comparative method," which simultaneously traces both "the original characteristics" and "kinship among the languages" (1967, 67). Analogies provide a useful image, but "the history of social organisation is in this respect a much more difficult problem" (1967, 68).

not believe in uniform structural correspondences; in every development it saw an autonomous factor and force, which spasmodically has effects on the next. With this in mind, *szellemtörténet* looked for some kind of spirit or central energy, that creates and drives the structure." He claimed that only sociology can arrive at historical causes, whereas *szellemtörténet* in the hands of its best practitioners "conjures the social spirit of past societies" (1939, 4). He writes that it is better to err on "the opposite end of the spectrum: the examination and comparison of societal structures as *Geist*-less mechanisms." One can pick up on a similar critique in the introduction to his volume on modern world history (1936)—"for sure, one cannot explain this wonderful development [of modernity] based on European man's distinct and privileged spiritual-soulful uniqueness"[29]—where he is taking a jab at the overuse of "a European spirit" to explain the spread of European paradigms to the rest of the world, or even to European peripheries. This debate turns out to be highly relevant to comparative history because it goes to the heart of what should be compared and for what purpose. If differences among European societies are a result of each nation's genius, and not an underlying structure, then the purpose of comparison can turn away from causes, the search for causes also being one of Bloch's catch phrases.

[29] Hajnal, "Beveztés," in *Az újkor története*, vol. 3 of *Egyetemes történet*, ed. Hóman, Szekfű, and Kerényi (Budapest: 1936), http://mek.niif.hu/07100/07139/html/0001/0004/0001/0001-d8.html

Social History

Thus we see from the above section that Hajnal had a detailed framework to compare how the countless human-to-human interactions in different societies occur and what they mean—essentially a comparative social history. The ability to study social history in interwar era Hungary technically could have been claimed by any of the historical schools, yet for some more than others this would have required a little bit more stretching of the facts. In reality, social history was more closely aligned with the historical schools other than szellemtörténet.

However, one can easily conceive of a case where someone is making an intellectual history study but is also tying the reception of ideas to a certain social class. In the case of szellemtörténet, as long as one does not elevate these class factors above the ideas themselves, or make them causative of the ideas in the first place, then the inclusion of class will not cause a contradiction. One can see examples like this in Gáldi's use of the szellemtörténet paradigm, which he classifies foremost as what we would today simply label "contextualization." In Gáldi's review[30] of Tamas's 1935[31] monograph on the question of Romanian ethnogenesis, for example, he praises Tamás's mention of viewing the historical works on Daco-Roman continuity of the Romanian "Transylvanian School" of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century from their perspective and not today's. Tamás writes that Samuil Micu-Klein, Gheorghe Şincai, and Petru Maior, who presented the argument based on Anonymus's *Gesta Hungarorum* amongst other sources that Romanians were the first and suppressed nation of Transylvania, have to be

[30] László Gáldi, review of *Rómaiak, románok és oláhok Dácia Trajánában* by Lajos Tamás, *Egyetemes Filológiai Közlöny* 60 (1936): 88–94.

[31] Tamás, *Rómaiak, románok és oláhok Dácia Trajánában* (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1935); French version: "Romains, Romans, et Roumains dans l'histoire de la Dacie Trajane," *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis* 1 (1935): 1–96, and 2 (1936): 46–83 and 245–374.

understood as "offspring of their time," i.e., participants in the Europe-wide national consciousness raising efforts of the Enlightenment and Romantic eras (1935, 107). Gáldi calls this "a placing in a Geistesgeschichte background" (*szellemtörténeti háttérbe állítja*) (1936, 90). He goes on to write that Tamás however localizes too much the combining of non-contemporaneous intellectual trends (humanist historiography with Enlightenment and Romantic ideas) as only a backward phenomenon among Transylvanian Romanians, whereas in fact syncretism was a general East(-Central) European phenomenon, Gáldi writes (92). Thus we see that for Gáldi szellemtörténet meant foremost the contextualization of intellectual currents within the European paradigms, in the manner that Szekfű was the first to lay out in Hungarian historiography. Accounting for variations in the reception of intellectual currents based on differences in social structure from the Western norm is also featured in Kosáry's "Sur quelques problèmes d'histoire comparée" (1943c) as discussed below.

Much closer to social history than szellemtörténet is népiségtörténet. Makkai writes that népiségtörténet has a social history basis, or branch, which was also useful for comparing the make-up of the social classes of different nations.[32] Now, we have no reason to question Makkai's self-association with social history, but in its népiségtörténet form it consistently divided up questions of social history along ethnic lines. Thus Makkai's urban histories are histories that separate ethnic elements of a city and speak of either their Hungarian or Saxon historic character,[33] and the same goes for his rural analyses: based on a study of family names in early modern rural village registries,[34] we read of Romanians replacing Hungarians in vast geographic areas that were

[32] Makkai, "Népiségtörténet," *Hitel*, no. 1 (1942b): 59–64.
[33] Makkai, "Társadalom és nemzetiség a középkori Kolozsváron," pts. 1–2, *Kolozsvári Szemle*, nos. 2–3 (1943c): 87–111, 190–215; *Erdélyi városok* (Budapest: Officina, 1940).
[34] Makkai, "Északerdély nemzetiségi viszonyainak kialakulása," *Hitel*, no. 4 (1942a): 3–18; *Szolnok-Doboka megye magyarságának pusztulása a XVII. Század elején* (Kolozsvár: Minerva, 1942c).

once ethnically homogenous, but no longer due to Turkish wars and plagues. One could attempt to write such histories of the changes in ethnic makeup of villages and regions in a neutral manner (which is no doubt difficult), but Makkai's subtitles like "the destruction of Hungarian life" indicate to the reader how to feel about virtually anonymous processes that took place centuries ago. Yet, Makkai in the same article on népiségtörténet gives an important clue to how those historians who intersected with social sciences and social history were seen as closely related. We can get a sense of the perception of Hajnal's research: as regards questions of social history, Makkai writes, "similarly of great relevance is the oeuvre of Hajnal, who has introduced the possibilities and practical applications of sociological methods of the historical sciences." Makkai's comment on Hajnal in 1942 reveals none of his future proclivities for structural history, the history of feudalism, or the history of technology, which came to light only after an oeuvre on peasant uprisings and agrarian and feudal history in the 1950s that followed closely the dogmatist line as regards "class warfare" in the Middle Ages and early modern period. After this phase, Makkai's research thus comes closer to an Annales type structuralism in the 1970s; yet contra Hajnal, at this later time, he now advocates the removal of sociological considerations from structural history, which he says Fernand Braudel too is moving toward, in favor of purely economic data instead.[35] Now, back to his 1942 article, he also adds another name well associated

[35] Makkai, "Ars Historica: On Braudel," *Review* (Fernand Braudel Center) 6, no. 4 (Spring 1983): 435–453. Makkai writes, "as the realizer and perfecter of the Annales program, he [Braudel] cultivates the comparative method, quantification, and interdisciplinary scholarship. These methodological principles had been formulated, and partly realized already, by Marc Bloch. But Bloch's European medieval comparative analysis was extended by Braudel both in space and in time" (438–439). See also: "Febvre's greatest historiographical merit is that he was the pioneer of historical psychology, that he widened the more or less explored domain of mentalités … whose study was a major priority of the younger generations of the Annales school. Braudel no longer follows Febvre on this course, not because he belittles the historical role of thoughts and sentiments, but because the specialized disciplines which could provide reliable foundations for assessing the nature and importance of this role, i.e., sociology, psychology, and anthropology, have not been able to give more than mere explanations and classifications of subjective self-reports, questionnaires, tests, and interviews. Hence, their objective value is rather doubtful, and it is often replaced with philosophical speculations. There were times when historians expected much from sociology" (439–440).

with the social and cultural history, writing that "the broadening of the economic and social history branches of népiségtörténet is tied to the name of Domanovszky" and his students (1942b, 63, 62). So we should be on the lookout then for signs of cross-pollination among the students of the social historians Domanovszky and Hajnal, and Hajnal's friend Mályusz too. Hajnal's critique of the cultural history branch of Domanovszky's school was that it should be strengthened with sociological methods, a critique which could equally apply to Mályusz's népiségtörténet.[36] But all three of these schools could claim the mantle of social history, especially considering their distance from political history.

So in what way then was Hajnal an inveterate outsider? Did the comparatists have no use for him in spite of the fact that he was also a comparative historian? László Kosárkó's article on the reception of Hajnal in the 1930s and 1940s aims to dispel the myth that Hajnal had no followers or students, was not received with acclaim, and remained essentially unknown (2011, 110). He did in fact have students who pursued his paleography and *írásbeliség* studies[37] as well as admirers and friends inspired to use sociological methods to uncover the history of the peasantry (the most well-known among them the sociologist, *népi*/populist writer, and later politician Ferenc Erdei[38]) (2011, 114, 120). Yet even outside of the small group of students and followers, there was a recognition by other historians in addition to Makkai that Hajnal was offering another path, a

[36] Tamás Csíki, Károly Halmos, and Árpád Tóth, "A magyar társadalomtörténet-írás története a kezdetektől napjainkig," in *Bevezetés a társadalomtörténetbe*, ed. Zsombor Bódy and József Ö. Kovács (Budapest: Osiris, 2006), www.tankonyvtar.hu/hu/tartalom/tamop425/2011_0001_520_bevezetes_a_tarsadalomtortenetbe/ch03s06.html

[37] Loránd Szilágyi, "Összehasonlító írástörténet (Egy új vállalkozás programmjához.)," *Századok* 77 (1943): 228–244. Géza Istványi, *A magyarnyelvű írásbeliség kialakulása* (Budapest, 1934). Kálmán Guoth, *Az okleveles bizonyítás kifejlődése Magyarországon* (Budapest, 1936).

[38] Ferenc Erdei's well-known *népi*, leftist, and sociological works of the interwar era and WWII: *Parasztok* (Budapest, 1938); *Magyar város* (Budapest, 1939); *Magyar falu* (Budapest, 1940); *A magyar paraszttársadalom* (Budapest, 1941). Erdei believed that Hajnal's social history concepts were "so historically factual, that it was impossible for any political normativity to be derived from them," according to Kosárkó, who writes that Erdei in fact tried to maintain a synthesis of Hajnalian sociology and Marxist theory into the communist period (2011, 120 and fn. 7).

school, and in fact was introducing conceptually important innovations. I will trace here a few of these historians who overlap with the comparatists. These individuals offer a different perspective to the two standing theories on the reception of Hajnal: that he was rejected and forgotten in spite of his brilliance, or that he only had a minor following among the community of historians.

Jenő Berlász (1911–2015) perhaps offers the best contemporaneous description of Hajnal's standing in the historical sciences in the early 1940s, especially in regard to where his work met up with other social science orientations. Berlász was a student of Domanovszky, a cultural historian, who pushed his students to approach questions of social, economic, and agricultural history. As a "positivist" historian who was well established in the pre-WWI era, Domanovszky also remained an anomaly, in spite of being an eminent historian, and was an outspoken critic of the dominant szellemtörténet school as well. Béla Várdy writes that Domanovszky's Agricultural History School "represented the most viable socio-economic orientation in interwar Hungarian historiography" and because of his "great influence in the profession, he also represented a kind of check on the sprawling power of the *Geistesgeschichte* historians—even though he himself tended to fall progressively under their influence" (1976, 167, 168). Berlász in the interwar era and 1940s was known for his research into the social history of the early modern Estates.[39] In an article of his from 1943[40] summarizing trends in Hungarian historiography on economic and social history, he writes that the "influence of Hóman and Szekfű [on those topics] has been less noticeable," whereas Domanovszky "has conducted epochal work. His pursuits unfolded in two directions: history of commerce and Hungarian agriculture, or, serfdom" (1943a, 16). Berlász writes further that "around other chairs there did not develop a similar working group as the

[39] Berlász, *Az erdélyi úrbérrendezés problémái (1770–1780)* (Budapest: Egyetemi Nyomda, 1942), orig. in *Századok*, nos. 7–8, 9–10 (1941).
[40] Jenő Berlász, *A magyar gazdaság- és társadalomtörténetírás kialkulása* (Budapest, 1943), orig. in *Közgazdasági Szemle* 11–12 (1943a): 1076–1096.

Domanovszky school, but individual professors in their own work or indirectly through their students have taken a considerable part in advancing the economic and social history of our culture. First place among them is Hajnal … [whose] writing activities are just as revolutionary a phenomenon as the szellemtörténet movement in our historiography, though which represent a significantly different approach and method."

Social History and Comparison

Berlász, at the time of this article's publication, was an editor (1943–1948) of *Századok* and a researcher at the Teleki Institute with the majority of the comparatists. Outside of his usual topics, he entered onto the "turf" of the comparatists and wrote a fascinating chapter on the medieval and modern social structure of rural Transylvanian Romanians up to 1848 in the Gáldi and Deér edited volumes *Magyarok és Románok* (1943), which was then republished in French translation for *Revue d'histoire comparée* in 1946.[41] He used primarily Hungarian secondary sources and Latin primary sources, along with a few Romanian authors in German-language translations (being self-aware of his linguistic handicap), in order to give an overview of how the truism "Hungarian lord—Romanian peasant" arose and where and when it breaks down. He writes that his goal is to decouple questions of social history from political interpretation that has been common until recently in both Hungarian and Romanian historiography, which have "naturally resulted in an entire row of distorted images and unhistorical findings" (1943b, 573, fn. 1). He claims to take as the basis of his chapter several works by István Hajnal, including his

[41] Jenő Berlász, "A románság az erdélyi agrártársadalomban," in *Magyarok és Románok*, ed. László Gáldi and József Deér (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1943b), 572–598. French version: "Seigneur hongrois – paysan roumain en Transylvanie," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 4, nos. 3–4 (1946): 225–258.

programmatic work on comparative history (1942) and his article on sociology and historical research (1939): "Around Professor Hajnal there has emerged a new school which seeks on the basis of sociological considerations the elimination of subjective ideological and politically based evaluations in order to understand social formations and changes and the phenomena of human life-worlds" (1943b, 573, fn. 1). And his adoption of Hajnalian terminology is very apparent, Hungarian society becoming more "irrational" with its greater inclusion in European societal developments (1943b, 575). Like the historiographer Vilmos Erős,[42] I am inclined to classify Berlász as a student of Hajnal, except for the fact the Berlász himself never did so in any strict sense: Hajnal's "effect on the oeuvres of the younger generation still just appears to be sporadic," he writes, pointing rather to Géza Istványi and Lajos Elekes[43] as more obvious cases (1943a, 20). Berlász did take classes at the university taught by Hajnal (Erős 2009, 20), like many historians of his generation (Makkai's dissertation defense panel also included Hajnal in 1936/37), yet he considered himself foremost in the line of Domanovszky, which is where Makkai's article places Berlász as well (1942, 63). What we see here is the overlapping of interests as regards social history and his attempt to incorporate some of Hajnal's notions; I call it an experimental attempt because Berlász was aware that he could not exhaust secondary sources because of not knowing Romanian. The subject matter at hand, "the nature of human association" of Romanian rural society, he adds, lends itself to such an interpretation because "until the nineteenth century [it is] foremost a social factor; thus its history is social history par excellence" (1943, 573, fn. 1). Thus my thesis here is that we can broaden the influence of Hajnal to a slightly larger cohort of historians who were not

[42] Vilmos Erős, "A magyar történetíras a két világháború közötti időszakban," *EM*, nos. 1–2 (2009): 7–27, at 20.

[43] Elekes (1914–1982) was the closest borderline case of being a featured historian of this study. He was typecast early as a researcher of Transylvanian medieval history, particularly the era of the Hunyadis, but by 1940 was writing some of the most interesting articles on Romanian historiography and Transylvanian Romanian social history. Even though I set up the criterion that all of the comparatists of this study must have a substantial comparative oeuvre before 1945 as well as a monograph, his omission from this study is nonetheless regrettable.

his direct "students" but based instead on shared or overlapping topics. We see that the young historians who were students of Domanovszky and Mályusz and researching social history, economic history, feudal development, history of the peasantry, and agricultural history could more easily find common ground with the aims of Hajnal. And in the case of Berlász we have someone who was a researcher of the Teleki Institute and who tried his hand at a real Hajnalian interpretation of a field that was the main focus of the comparatists.

I recognize that this is a seemingly large digression to make such a small point about the reception of Hajnal. Yet it is important because otherwise there would be little evidence that Hajnal's programmatic text on comparison (1942), which is *not* cited in Kosáry's programmatic text on comparison (1943c), made much of a dent in the awareness of the comparatists. If true, this would be a major oversight on the part of the comparatists and potentially undermine the credibility of their project within the smaller Hungarian context. We would be having to ask the question why Hajnal's comparative history was rejected by the comparatists. Four of the comparatists (Gáldi, Gogolák, Kosáry, Makkai) each place themselves within either the szellemtörténet or the népiségtörténet school, and there is little self-identification of the comparatists with the Hajnal school, except for Makkai pointing to a conceptual overlapping with his own social history writings. It cannot be taken for granted that just because Hajnal uses the word comparison and Kosáry uses the word comparison that the former was influential on the latter. Yet what we see in the previous paragraphs is evidence of some cross-pollination of strains among the comparatists as a group that could aid in a comparative history project, Berlász's chapter appearing in the Deér and Gáldi edited volumes on Hungarian and Romanian history (1943), to which several of the comparatists (Gáldi, I. Tóth, Makkai), and a much larger team (including the Romanist András Alföldi, the Slavicist István Kniezsa, the historians Lajos Elekes and Kálmán Benda, the

ethnologist Béla Gunda), all made chapter-length contributions. Then there are other signs of personal connections.

There are clues to the reception of Hajnal in the following letter of correspondence from Hadrovics to Hajnal, another small yet significant point of contact.

> Honorable Professor,
>
> I gratefully thank you for [your] offprint, 'Kis nemzetek történetírása' ["On the small nations' history writing community"]. As regards our own collaboration, I have been keeping up to date and reviewing the historical literature on Serbia and Croatia now for years, sadly almost all by myself. At the same time, I have to be a linguist and a literary historian, which together mean the tackling of enormous work. Since I have been at the Teleki Institute, I have been able to pursue historical work more intensively, because I no longer have to bother with administrative duties. In the future, I will happily undertake a South Slav-oriented collaboration. (MTAKK Ms 5835/194 Hadrovics to Hajnal/ Budapest n.d. [1942])

Regrettably, there is no sign of that this future South Slav collaboration ever took place, but this letter shows Hajnal following the career of Hadrovics, and generally that his text on comparative history had a local audience—now Hadrovics in addition to Berlász. In order to surmise the reasons that Hajnal wanted to work on a joint project with Hadrovics, there are two possible arenas in Hadrovics's research that could have overlapped with Hajnal's. The first is Hadrovics's research into Croatian literature and Croatian Latinity, which combined comparative linguistics, literatures, and history.[44] The second is his social history of the Serbs of Hungary. Hadrovics in the late 1930s, early 1940s contributed to several anthologies short chapters on the cultural and literary history of Croats, Serbs, and other South Slav nations that comprised Yugoslavia. In these works, one would have trouble finding any opposition to the Yugoslavian experiment. He was of the opinion that Croatian separation from Hungary after WWI released a tension that had built up in the nineteenth

[44] The following is an overview of his previous research: Hadrovics, "Magyarok és horvátok," in *Magyarország és keleteurópa*, ed István Gál (Budapest: Officina, 1947b), 143–156.

century and actually aided in the ability to study history more objectively (1947, 156). In 1939 he writes that it will take time to create a unified South Slav state, even centuries to build a Yugoslav national identity out of such culturally diverse regions.[45] After Yugoslavia ceased to exist for several years, in 1944 he wrote, "between the two world wars, Serbian cultural labor was initiated with an enormous momentum; not only the field of sciences but also literature revealed a never before seen productivity."[46]

Before Hadrovics, the specialist of the "Serb question" of historical Hungary was József Thim (1864–1959). He wrote a three-volume history (1930–1940) of the Serbian rebellion during the Hungarian Revolution of 1848,[47] which was completed just two years before Hadrovics's entry into the topic: Hadrovics's work on the Serbs of Hungary attempts to contextualize their political aspirations in Hungary in light of factors of Serbian social history and Orthodoxy.[48] Between these two works and their authors there developed a bit of polemic, but good natured for sure.[49] Thim was part of the Kállay[50] and Thallóczy[51] Balkan history school of the nineteenth century which provided the historical-political grounding of Austria's occupation and later annexation of Bosnia.

[45] Hadrovics, "A délszláv nemzeti kultúrák kérdése," *Napkelet* 17, nos. 1–6 (1939): 388–494.

[46] Hadrovics, *Magyar és déli szláv szellemi kapcsolatok* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1944), 76.

[47] Thim, *A magyarországi 1848–49-i szerb fölkelés története*, 3 vols. (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1930–1940). On Thim, see Ferenc Glatz, *Történetíró és politika. Szekfű, Steier, Thim és Miskolczy nemzetről és államról* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1980).

[48] Hadrovics, "A magyarországi szerb kérdés balkáni gyökerei," *A Magyar Történettudományi Intézet Évkönyv* (1942b), 327–366

[49] Archival records contain their correspondence and joint bibliographic compiling projects into the 1940s and 1950s. MTAKK Ms 4825/430 Hadrovics László levele Thim Józsefnek/ Budapest 1949 VI 23/ 1 p.; see also I. Tóth's request of Thim that he join in on a bibliography project covering all Hungarian sources on Serbs and Croatians: Ms 4825/435 I. Tóth Zoltán levele Thim Józsefnek/ Budapest 1952 XII 20/ 1 p.

[50] Thim claims that he is finishing Kállay's unfinished work. Thim, *A szerbek története: a legrégibb kortól 1848-ig*, 3 vols. (Nagybecskerek: Pleitz, 1893), see preface (p. vii) on Béni Kállay's *A szerbek története 1780–1815* (Budapest: MTA, 1877).

[51] Thallóczy specialized in source publications "on Hungary's relationship with such South Slavic lands and provinces as Croatia, Serbia, Ragusa (Dubrovnik), the Banate of Jajcza, as well as several other protectorates of medieval Hungary" (Várdy 1976, 148–149).

In his 1941 review of Thim's work, Hadrovics points to the lack of a proper introduction to the problems of 1848, which have their origin much further back, to 1690. He writes that the "Serb question began in Hungary when there was not even a trace of national consciousness among the other nationalities. When patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević of Peć fled from the Turks with his people to Hungarian territory, not only did a large mass of foreign peoples immigrate with him, but a foreign idea of statehood also migrated."[52] Hadrovics's thesis was that the institution of the Orthodox church in Serbia under the Ottomans after 1557 functioned as a pseudo-state, "not merely an Orthodox institutional church unity, but a veritable theocratically governed vassal state." And upon its transfer to Hungary and the Military Frontier, the Serbian Orthodox Church became the kernel of its state-building (*államalkotó*) aims both in Hungary and in Serbia: "thus it is understandable that the Serbs from practically the day of their arrival strove to secure autonomy for themselves" (1941, 447). Hadrovics was very much aware that recent scholarship classified nationalism as a fully modern phenomenon, and that Serbian "modern" nationalism in Hungary began at the end of the eighteenth century, by which time a differentiated society of noblemen, bourgeois traders, educated teachers, lawyers, and writers had developed, a necessary precondition for nationalist ideas to take hold.[53] Summarizing Hadrovics in the language of nationalism studies, his theory is that Serbian state-building preceded nation-building, which placed Serbian national development in Hungary in a different category from all the other national programs.[54] Thim called

[52] Hadrovics, review of *A magyarországi 1848–49-i szerb fölkelés története*, 3 vols., by József Thim, *Századok* 75 (1941): 446–449, at 447.

[53] Hadrovics, "Utószó," in *Vallás, egyház, nemzettudat* (Budapest: ELTE Szláv Filológiai Tanszéke, 1991), 98–99. Hadrovics, "A déli szláv népek kultúrája," in *A magyarság és a szlávok*, ed. Gyula Szekfű (Budapest: Franklin, 1942c), 132–149, at 147–148; and "Magyar-szláv irodalmi érintkezések," in ibid. (1942d), 189–204.

[54] I cannot verify the validity of Hadrovics's theory, only provide a background to the debate. In Antal Molnár's paper on the attempts of Catholic missionaries in the Balkans to form a Uniate Church out of the Peć Patriarchate, he states rather unequivocally that at the turn of the seventeenth century, "these territories [from Skopje to Buda] according to the perception of the Orthodox priesthood became at the same time Serbian lands and a part of the future Serbian kingdom." Molnár, "A szerb ortodox egyház és az uniós kísérletek a 17. században," in *Rómából Hungáriába. A De*

his thesis nonsense, and in fact itself a politically derived idea of the Serbs. Hadrovics's social history of the Serb question in Hungary was developed further into a thesis on just the medieval Ottoman Serbian territories for *Revue d'histoire comparée*.[55] One of the few contemporaneous reviews of this latter book in the Western context shows it was not well received: "the significance of the Orthodox Church as a positive factor which contributed to a uniquely Serbian nationality or nationalism is open to serious doubt," but the reviewer simultaneously praised its treatment of questions of religious, economic, and social history over political history.[56] This interaction with Thim shows that Hadrovics had to defend his social history of the Serbs of Hungary as well as its placing in a comparative framework including Serbia proper.

Camillis János József munkácsi püspök halálának 300. évfordulóján rendezett konferencia tanulmányai, ed. Tamás Végsheő (Nyíregyháza, 2008), 43–54, at 46–47. Besides Hadrovics he cites Đoko Slijepčević, *Istorija Srpske pravoslavne crkve I. Od pokrštavanja Srba do kraja XVIII veka* (Munich, 1962); Srećko M. Džaja, *Konfessionalität und Nationalität Bosniens und der Herzegowina. Voremanzipatorische Phase 1463–1804* (Munich, 1984), 103–150.

[55] There were two versions because due to the war he had scarce access to Serbian sources, which resulted in a shorter version for the journal: Hadrovics, "L'église nationale serbe aux XVI^{e} et XVII^{e} siècles," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 1, nos. 1–2 (1943): 117–166. But that was eventually solved by his extended stay at the Matica srpska in annexed Vojvodina, which accounts for the longer offprint version Hadrovics, *Le peuple serbe et son église sous la domination turque* (Paris: Presses Univ. de France, 1947a).

[56] Donald F. Shea, review of *Le peuple serbe et son église sous la domination turque* by Ladislas Hadrovics, *The Catholic Historical Review* 34, no. 3 (Oct. 1948): 322–324.

Three Approaches to Romanian History

Social history also makes its way into modern Romanian history, but not for all of the comparatists. The division of research fields between Tamás, Gáldi, and I. Tóth exemplify three different ways to approach the questions of Romanian national consciousness.[57] There is broad agreement among them as to the outlines of Romanian history, but difference in focus and comparative paradigms. The main point of agreement for these three comparatists is that the Romanians' recognition of a linguistic and ethnic kinship with the ancient Romans of Dacia is an entirely modern phenomenon, reaching back to humanist contacts in the court of Moldavia in the sixteenth century, which then became a non-political source of pride in the writings of the Moldavian chroniclers in the seventeenth century, and that it was only in the eighteenth century that this recognition was combined with a political program in Transylvania, and only in the nineteenth century that this recognition spread among the broader masses in Transylvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia. Yet how these three individuals deal with this basic outline is quite different.

Tamás's *Rómaiak, románok és oláhok Dácia Trajánában* (1935), which was translated into French as "Romains, Romans, et Roumains dans l'histoire de la Dacie Trajane" (1936), was the first Hungarian summary of all the Hungarian, Romanian, and international research of the time on the question of Romanian ethnogenesis. Its fruition in the Hungarian context depended on the first scholar to be able learn all the languages necessary to get into the details of this complex debate. What dislodged the study of Romanian history from purely archeological and written

[57] I exclude Makkai in this discussion since his contribution to social history is mentioned previously, along with his best comparative work, *Magyar-román közös múlt*, in Chapter Three. Also he tended to be the synthesizer of the group, organizing primary and secondary sources focusing on Transylvania and Romania into a grand narrative.

sources was the nineteenth-century re-"discovery"[58] of Aromanians, one of three neo-Latin-speaking people living in South-East Europe, and the question of their relation to the fourth one, Romanian, north of the Danube.[59] Jernej Kopitar[60] in his 1829 description of grammatical similarities in Albanian, Bulgarian, and Romanian, in spite of all being from different language families, further complicated the question of the relation of the four eastern neo-Latin languages. And in the 1920s and 1930s, Kopitar's theory then advanced further to include Greek, that is by Sandfeld-Jensen,[61] and given a new classification, a Balkan-type language—which then was broadened to the term *Sprachbund* by Trubetzkoy of the Prague Circle. These were the factors that opened up a whole new arena in the debate on the ethnogenesis of Romanians. It was the linguists "in" to a topic that mostly interested historians up to that point, and who were then divided into Röslerian and anti-Röslerian schools. Robert Rösler, Tamás writes, was the first to use linguistic argumentation, in addition to historical, to question the validity of the theory of Daco-Roman continuity (1935, 109). "The problem of Dacian Romanity [*romanizmus*]," he writes, "the archeologist, historian, and linguist find equally exciting" (1935, 4).

Tamás's first chapter is an etymological study of the endonym *Román/Romanus* and exonym *Wallach/Vlach* as regards Romanians as well as the endonyms of the three South-East European neo-Latin language speakers. It is only in chapter four where he lays out a comparative structure to analyze all the various combinations of these four geographically separated neo-Latin languages' relationship with one another and as well as with the added complication of the Sprachbund, and if and how a vast vs. a small Urheimat for the neo-Latin languages can account

[58] "Discovery" here is used to indicate a piece of knowledge making its round among scientists. In fact, the first reference to the Aromanians' linguistic connection to Latin is Flavio Biondo (1388–1463) (see Tamás 1935, 102).
[59] Tamás cites Weigand as the linguist who in international literature dealt the most with the question of Romanian relation to Aromanian (1935, p. 16 fn. 8, p. 21, p. 68 fn. 48).
[60] Tamás cites Jernej Kopitar also in relation to his disagreement with the Petru Maior (1935, p. 40 fn. 41).
[61] On Kristian Sandfeld-Jensen (1935, 87, 138).

for all the possible variations of relationship. Essentially his comparative scheme is used as a process of elimination for various theories of linguistic relation. In Bloch's 1928 introduction to the comparative method, comparative linguistics presents a type of ideal case of the advantages of comparison, like in the way that for Hajnal archeology should be an example for historians. Yet Bloch writes that "the history of social organization is in this respect a much more difficult problem. The fact is that a language presents a much more unified and easily definable framework than any institution" (1967, 68). Bloch's mention of comparative linguistics is used as a metaphor of the layers of interpretation that a historian must consider, and less so of direct relevance to the work of historians. However, for the linguists of this group of comparatists (Tamás, Gáldi, and Hadrovics), it was directly related: language was a repository of historical facts that have no other written source. The linguists of this group of comparatists at some point in their career all studied the neighboring languages of the region as regards both Hungarian loan words and Latin origin words that reveal a Hungarian mediation.

Gáldi's main focus however is the development of modern literary Romanian (and the language modernizing processes) and lexicology[62] (especially the transformation of a Cyrillic script into a Roman alphabet). What is covered in just two pages in Tamás's work as regards the Transylvanian school having to be viewed in the context of their time, becomes for Gáldi a series of works placing the Transylvanian Romanian national movement into the larger Hungarian and East European context looking at the humanist,[63] enlightenment, and romantic stages of writing. What he points to are not just "misguided" historical works of Şincai and Maior that provided the kernel for the Daco-Roman theory, but the need for them to be understood in light of their

[62] Gáldi [Göbl], *A magyar szótárirodalom hatása az oláhra*, offprint *Nyelvtudományi közlemények* 48 (Budapest: Hornyánszky, 1932).
[63] Gáldi, *XVIII. századi humanizmusunk és a románság* (Budapest: Athaeneum, 1940).

publishing activities while residing in Buda and witnessing the same trends of cultural and national revival taking place in Hungary.[64] What for Tamás is a linguistic and etymological argument directed against those who accepted the theory of Daco-Roman continuity in his day, for Gáldi is philological tracing of the spread of such ideas in the eighteenth century, which coincided with other much more important attempts to (re)join Romanian cultural life with West.

However, what is missing from Gáldi's account of Romanian literary and national revival, because for him it is primarily a philological exercise, is an idea of the diffusion of knowledge of national character among the different social groups of Transylvanian Romanians; it has little social history basis. In a previous section, Berlász points to the history of rural Transylvanian Romanian society up to the nineteenth century as being a social history par excellence. I. Tóth's book[65] on the first century of Transylvanian Romanian nationalism follows the path of how this rural society came into knowledge of its Roman past, but first through a series of transformations among the still small number of Romanian elites, which he traces closely. In spite of the fact that I. Tóth speaks of the knowledge of the Roman past being a modern idea, he has a theory of the folk consciousness of Romanian peasants that reaches back hundreds of years before the enlightenment ideas of national renewal and was based on Orthodox identity that separated them from other people in Transylvania. He develops a typology to describe the development of "folk consciousness" into "national consciousness," which are ideal types and can also be part of the comparative history tool kit (Haupt and Kocka 2004, 29). He also outlines the many conceptual stages in between, for example how the term "natio valachica" that was used after the Church Union did not have both the legal or ethnic connotations of the term *natio* as used in reference to

[64] Gáldi, "Az erdélyi románság szellemi újjászületése," in *A románok története*, ed. Gáldi and Makkai (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1942a), 222–226.
[65] I. Tóth, *Az erdélyi román nacionalizmus első százada, 1697–1792* (Csíkszereda: Pro Print, 1998 [1946]).

the Székelys or Saxons; it did however have an ethnic meaning, as in *gens* (1998, 64, 66–67). The fact the national consciousness develops in Wallachia and Moldova differently from Transylvania, but eventually converges, makes it a perfect test case for his ideas on the transition from folk and national consciousness among the larger masses, since a comparison can be made among the same ethnic group, but in one case stateless and powerless (Transylvania), another a Russian protectorate (Moldavia), and finally a principality under Turkish domain (Wallachia).

Thus we see how division of labor was put into practice among the comparatists, possibly quite naturally considering what seems like an instinctive gravitation to different emphases, which was also very important for a resource challenged nation like Hungary that nonetheless desired to play in the big leagues.[66] By the time of the Teleki Institute was up and functioning well in late 1942, the division of labor among most of the comparatists and their wider cohort was organized from above by Kosáry with teams focusing on different national and geographical sections.

Kosáry on the Difficulties of Comparative History

Kosáry recalls in 1983 that after returning from his studies in France and England, he was motivated to pursue a large project of regional comparison. He pitched the project first to Domanovszky and because informal meetings were not allowed by law during WWII, it was recommended to start an official comparative history club under the aegis of the Historical Society (Magyar Történelmi Társulat), which also published *Századok*. Hajnal, as an editor of the journal,

[66] In his early academic career, Gogolák feared that József Deér would learn Czech, putting him out of business: "To my luck, Deér shortly gave up on the study of the Czechoslovakian question and the reading of Palacký's histories" (Gogolák, "Romemlékek II," ed. Nové Béla, Holmi [Apr. 2001]). He also claims that István Borsody's journalistic career had difficulty taking off for similar reasons, i.e., there was not enough room for two young specialists on Czechoslovakian questions. Yet the Teleki Institute solved some of these issues.

took on the role of official go-between (1983, 33). After the war, Hajnal also published in the journal *Revue d'histoire comparée* a review of Szekfű's 1945 *État et nation*, which was published the Parisian Les Presses universitaires de France, the publishing organ of the *Revue* as well.[67] Starting in 1940 the Carpathian Club put on a series of lectures and discussion, and Kosáry held an inaugural lecture on the comparative method, attended by the old and new guard. The club had forty members, including many his colleagues from the Eötvös College, who would then go on to research positions at the Teleki Institute from the fall of 1941. Those young historians of the Teleki Institute, who were interested in the comparative project, were divided between Budapest (in its Hungarian Historical Sciences Institute) and Kolozsvár/Cluj (at the Transylvanian Scientific Institute). Once Kosáry found himself with institutional backing and in an administrative position as acting director of the Historical Sciences Institute, "the moment had arrived to bring to fruition our ideas regarding the comparative history of the East-Central European peoples" (1983, 35). The separate regions (East-Central Europe, South-East Europe), nations, and subregions were assigned to teams of historians, and the journal *Revue d'histoire comparée*, as part of that project, took off in 1943.

Kosáry's "Sur quelques problèmes d'histoire comparée" (1943c) is the editorial of the opening issue that introduced the outlook of journal. Most of his editorial focuses on mapping historically the names, the location, and the specificities of the region. Yet it also shares several important aspects with Bloch's "Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européenes" (1928), which was published fifteen years prior, and even though it is not cited specifically, can be viewed as part of a dialogue due to certain similarities that will be outlined below.[68] After Bloch lays out

[67] Hajnal, "sur le livre de J. Szekfű [*État et nation*]," *Revue d'histoire comparée* (1946): 123–125.

[68] I will use the translation "Toward a Comparative History of European Societies," in *Land and Work in Mediaeval Europe: Selected papers by Marc Bloch*, trans. J. E. Anderson (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 44–81. Original: "Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européenes," *Revue de synthèse historique* 46 (1928): 15–50.

the utility of comparison for studying Western European feudal societies, he states, "I propose to compare the various European societies—especially in Eastern and Central Europe – societies that are contemporary, that live close to one another, and that go back if not to one common origin, at any rate to several" (1967, 48). Kosáry writes in 1988 that he took up the call of Bloch and Pirenne and founded the French-language journal *Revue d'histoire comparée* (1943–1948), though he was unsure if it could create a dialogue on comparative history in East-Central Europe during the height of hostilities in Europe. It was only in the 1980s, forty years after that brief window of comparative studies, that the process of historicization could begin (1988, 128–130). Kosáry in 1983 states that the time span of an entire generation had to pass in order to revisit the aims of the journal and shake off the accusations after 1948 of the comparatists' propagation of Klebelsberg-style cultural superiority, Hitlerism, and Western imperialism (1983, 40).[69] He further adds in this 1983 article that historical sciences in the "last two decades have taken big steps forward" in Hungary as they have moved away from the Marxist dogmatism that resurrected the "gentry national romanticism" of the pre-WWI era and which was not even truly Marxist.

Although the journal covered topics of both medieval and modern history of East-Central Europe and South-East Europe, Kosáry especially emphasizes modern era comparisons and points to comparative nationalisms as the most obvious launching point. There were aspects of development that were shared across the board with the following observation: "A l'ouest, c'est la bourgeoisie qui réalise le programme du nationalisme. Ici le programme du nationalisme comporte la création de la nouvelle bourgeoisie" (1943c, 4). That the bourgeoisie was so woefully missing in the era of revolutions attests to the fact that somewhere East-Central European development

[69] See, for example, the following critique of *Revue d'histoire comparée* by Erik Molnár as being pro-Habsburg, the implication that it follows after Szekfű's obsessions. This would be difficult argument to make considering that Kosáry brought together representatives of all interwar era historical schools: Molnár, "A magyar történetírás a felszabadulás óta, eredményei, hiányosságai és legsürgősebb feladatai," *Társdalmi Szemle* 7, no. 1 (Jan. 1952): 53–65, at 56.

diverged considerably from the West, even perhaps from its very beginnings. By the end of the Middle Ages, for sure, a vast social gulf existed between Western Europe and East-Central Europe, amongst the latter a "second serfdom" (technically not the term Kosáry uses, though he is referring to the same phenomena as Engels): "A l'ouest en même temps, le pouvoir central commença de refouler l'influence des seigneurs féodaux. A l'est, au contraire, cette influence ne diminua pas, et la dépendance des paysans s'accrut" (22). Kosáry puts forward an almost Sonderweg-type reading of East-Central European history, a retarded development due to certain distinct and traceable causes. It is part of the West, and yet not quite: "Aussi pouvons-nous dire que l'evolution de ces peuples représente une variante locale au sein du grand ensemble européen, qu'elle présente un certain caractère distinct qu'il nous faut examiner par la méthode comparative" (1943c, 7).

Where Is East-Central Europe?

Today, with the expansion of the European Union eastwards, and Germany's own Sonderweg less of an impediment to it being classified as Western, there is an impetus to shift the locales of West, Central, and East Europe all generally eastward to better fit paradigms of historical development as well as the actual geographic dimensions of the continent. Thus Germany would no longer be Central Europe but the eastern side of Western Europe, and East-Central Europe could be renamed West-Central Europe. Gábor Klaniczay in his article "Közép-kelet-európából közép-nyugat-európába: 'átmenet' a középkorban" (2009) is advocating such a shift which highlights how the region joined in a Western-type of development after the thirteenth century. Yet, it must be kept in mind that when Kosáry's text was written the term East-Central Europe was just coming into vogue, and was perceived as a more accurate and more neutral term than previous

ones, as will be outlined below. The publication of this text was also before the five-decade-long use of the blanket term Eastern Europe for everywhere beyond the Iron Curtain. Eastern Europe was useful heuristically in describing the backwardness of East-Central European development, but it also contained the connotation of a Slavic Europe, in spite of Hungarians, Romanians, Baltic language-speakers, Albanians, etc. Kosáry's listing of the many attempts to place geographical, geopolitical, and descriptive labels on the region is highly informative and worthy of a quick summary: Josef Partsch's Central Europe from Belgium to Montenegro, a region of "peaceful cooperation" under German leadership; Friedrich Naumann's *Mitteleuropa,* which written during WWI included a political and economic project with designs on the region; Korek and Stark's *Zwischeneuropa,* between Central European Germany and East European Russia, as an attempt to recover from the economic chaos arising from the creation of post-WWI smaller states. Then he lists some attempts according to principles of geography: Auguste Himly's *l'Europe Centrale* from the Alps to the Baltic Sea, regarding which Kosáry writes, "Il reconnaît d'ailleurs luimême que sous cette forme cette Europe Centrale est un terme vague, 'plutôt le produit d'une elimination successive' qu'une 'individualité fortement accentuée'" (1943c, 9–10). Similarly, Paul Vidal de la Blache's geography of Central Europe lacks a positive definition of where the region is, even though both he and Lucien Febvre put to rest a strict determinism (in preference for "possibilism") arising from geographic characteristics, unlike Henry Berr and Friedrich Ratzel (1943c, 10–12). Avoiding determinism is important since Kosáry opposes definitions of the region according to geopolitical volatility: Johan Rudolf Kjellén's "critical zone" between Finland and the Balkans; Emmanual de Martonne's politically unstable "world full of geographical and historical contrasts," comprised of Germans, Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, and Romanians; Konrad Kretschmer's critical zone between "German" Central Europe and the Russian steppes inhabited by peoples of "small

and medium size." Kosáry writes that just as efforts have been made to put an (ethnic) German stamp and claim on the region (through big power politics, partitions, immigration, and historical relations), similar attempts have been made to define the region deterministically after the so-called "traits" of the largest ethnic group, Slavs. This idea came of age in an era of national awakenings of various Slavic peoples (and was begun by the historians August Ludwig von Schlözer, Josef Dobrowsky, and Adam Kollár), he writes, when there was not yet any "Slavic" state other than Russia, which was happy to use its influence. After nationalism passed its linguistic and cultural phase and became a political project, "mais loin d'unifier, ce slavisme séparait"; it was now a subject for historians[70] (1943c, 14, 13).

Finally, arriving to the name East-Central Europe, Kosáry writes that recent German historiography has called the region *Ostraum* generally, but divided it "more precisely" into *Ostmitteleuropa* and *Südosteuropa*; C.W. Previté-Orton also uses East-Central Europe/Europa Centro-Orientale (1943c, 10–11). Kosáry, however, is not entirely satisfied with the more precise East-Central Europe since even though it is closer to a positive definition of the region, it still does not describe the region on its own terms. If we were to describe the 1980s/post-1989 reemergence of the idea of Central Europe as one which aimed at the re-inclusion and re-aligning of the region within the paradigms of Western development—a departure from the communist-era blanket designation of "Eastern Europe," or in the field of history, "East European or Slavic Studies"—Kosáry's goal during WWII was in fact one of separation. There are several reasons why Kosáry

[70] Kosáry does not mention Austro-Slav plans or ideas. In fact, a shared Habsburg history is surprisingly glossed over. There are perhaps two reasons for this: Szekfű's pro-Habsburg historical paradigm fell apart in the lead up to Austria's Anschluss; and a second reason might be what Maciej Janowski mentions as the obvious problem with equating post-Habsburg with (East-)Central Europe, that it only would include the southern Galician section of both interwar and modern-day Poland. See the jointly authored Maciej Janowski, Constantin Iordachi, and Balázs Trencsényi, "Why Bother about Historical Regions? Debates over Central Europe in Hungary, Poland and Romania," *East Central Europe* 32, nos. 1–2 (2005): 5–58, at 23.

would demand this regional separation other than the intention of historical accuracy. He did not wish a secession from the West, but rather a historical and political caesura from both German and Slavic stamps on the region; it was its own animal, comprised of Slavs, Hungarians, and Romanians. He wanted to declare independence from the German *Ostraum* in the hope of untying the region's fate from Germany. In spite of his political motivations of the time, he did not have revisionist stance as regards historical ties to German-language regions: "The area that extends around the Carpathians was not only the eastern marches of Europe, but also the eastern neighbor of the Holy Roman Empire, and as a natural consequence of this proximity it exercised on the lands of its eastern neighbors a very strong and diverse influence on political, intellectual, economic, and even ethnic viewpoints. This influence is still a phenomenon that must be examined with historical objectivity and without bias" (1943c, 28). Connected to the discussion in Chapter Three on the *Kulturgefälle,* or cultural slope, Kosáry too criticized the idea (held by Steinacker amongst others) that East-Central Europe was tied to European culture via German immigrants, particularly urban. He says that both sides exaggerate either the influence of Germanic culture or autochthonic factors, and that in fact the German regions did have a strong influence, but "it goes without saying that this influence was not always and everywhere of the same character and same proportion" (28, 29). Thus we find that in the place of East-Central Europe, Kosáry invented "Carpathian Europe," which overlapped with parts of South-East Europe too. His reasoning was that most of the nations of the region meet up at different sides of the Carpathian range or within it, which is the center of the broader region—a positive definition. Though this might seem to be Hungarocentric renaming of the region (and perhaps rightfully so), his claim at least is that he was looking for a term that described the region for where it is, rather than where it is not, i.e., neither Russia or Germany, nor just the eastern part of German Central Europe, etc. (1943c, 11–12).

Nevertheless, it was mostly likely a mistake to offer this term in the editorial introduction to a new journal whose aim was to uncover shared histories and developmental similarities in the region. In 1983, retrospectively, he recounts that with the name Carpathian Europe he wanted to "unmistakably indicate which part of Europe we are speaking of. 'Central' or 'eastern' always indicates referential notions … The concept 'Danubian' would have been difficult to spread to Poland." Carpathian Europe, however, "never really took off, which we in the end gave up on, and since then instead speak of East-Central Europe" (1983, 33).

Sonderweg

So how then is East-Central Europe a variant of European development, what are the symptoms and causes of this variation, and how far do they have to be traced back? He cites Tymieniecki pointing to a general archaic nature of social and political institutions in Eastern Europe due to lack of continuity with the Roman past, also noted by Fustel de Coulanges, Dopsch, and Pirenne; but it is not further elucidated as to what they specifically meant by "archaic" (1943c, 21–22). The first momentous step of East-Central European development was its joining the West in its conversion to Roman Catholicism. Yet here too, for a while the old and new institutions of kingship survived alongside one another in Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, and Kievan Rus', he writes, citing Péter Váczy.[71] Hajnal also points to how old ties of kinship remained in parallel with the early medieval state into the eleventh century. Archaism is visible in how Western forms and content are transformed under local conditions, but almost in real time: "Les phénomènes spirituels, les idées politiques et religieuses ou artistiques se manifestèrent ici relativement de

[71] Kosáry cites Váczy's *Die erste Epoche des ungarischen Königtums* (Pécs: Danubia, 1935).

bonne heure, presque en même temps qu'en Occident, mais cette évolution fut suivie plus lentement par la structure sociale et économique" (1943c, 23). Kosáry writes how the further one travels eastward, the less that Western influences affect the structure of society, or come to a full stop, especially before Russia, at least until the eighteenth century. He references J. Bidlo describing the Greco-Slavic world as having "a penchant for despotism, a hypertrophy of state administration, the [over]influence of the Church, and the lack of civic consciousness and dogmatic stubbornness," and a general feeling of being older, more conservative, and protectionist from outside influences (26). Kosáry calls "this theory full of generalizations" simplistic. The Orthodox world itself was divided into distinct regions that were not "historically homogenous" (27). His journal, moreover, frequented questions of South-East European history in relation to Hungary, especially as South-East Europe in the modern era rejoined with European intellectual movements (25). One can read in Kosáry's terminology some obvious aspects which separate him from Hajnal. Western influences he often describes as "spiritual" influences. This follows closely Szekfű's focus on the grand epochs and placing Hungary within their gambit, perhaps too hastily. Kosáry does however make an important correction to Szekfű by pointing out how very different epochs could run in tandem. Kosáry does seem keen to emphasize the idea of the region being vanguard of the Christian West in relation to Ottoman expansion, a subject he also takes up in his *A History of Hungary* (1941). But he also points out in his editorial that the fight against the Ottomans was aided by archaism of the region, which was a medieval universalism that remained well into the sixteenth century and beyond, that blended together with Renaissance humanism and the Reformation: "This unique archaic alloy of new ideas and medieval ideas provided the moral encouragement needed to fight against the common enemy" (24). Even though Kosáry writes of this synthesis in the sixteenth century, problematic aspects in his *A History of Hungary* (1941) are

adopted from Szekfű's *Magyar történet*, including viewing Matthias as a Renaissance king along the lines of Machiavelli's *Prince*, and then tying his endeavors to early European absolutist monarchic ideals.

Kosáry references what Westerners have described as the Oriental or "Macedonian" character of East-Central Europe, its patchwork of many ethnicities, a Europe within Europe (1943c, 17). Yet he points out that the West once contained this level of ethnic variety, and in fact the relative monoethnic homogeneity is the result of assimilation that took place in large part before the onset of modernity, with the remnants disappearing under absolutist monarchies: "Et pour commencer, la diversité ethnique ne fut pas toujours un caractère si particulier à cette région. Au moyen âge, en Occident, par exemple dans les îles britanniques, le mélange des peuples était à peu près aussi fort qu'au XI^{e} siècle dans le Bassin Carpathique." Kosáry cites the Turkish invasion of Hungary as the major separation from European state development, which also enhanced its ethnic diversity since up to the fifteenth century Hungary was 80 percent monoethnic. Under patterns of normal Western development, the remaining 20 percent would have shrunk over time. "Dans l'évolution historique de cette région, le mélange ethnique n'est donc pas une cause, mais un symptôme. Ce n'est point par suite de ce mélange que les conditions y sont devenues telles, mais par suite de ces conditions particulières que le mélange s'est maintenu et méme accru" (19–20). Thus he sees the lack of an early modern strong monarchist centralism as the preserver of nationalities, which then only became an issue in the age of nationalism. Gogolák seconds this view, writing that the absence of Hungarian absolutism in lieu of Habsburg absolutism set the stage for future crises of nationalisms.[72] A "King Matthias" of a later age was probably the image they had in mind.

[72] Gogolák, "Történetünk német népi szemléletben," *Magyar Szemle* 28, nos. 9–12 (1936): 217–228, at 224.

Gogolák, of the group, took on foremost the study of comparative nationalisms, also focusing on their political phases well into the late nineteenth century. His research began by looking at the various phases of nationalist thought in the Czech, Slovak, and Hungarian context and then branched out into East-Central and South-East European comparative framework. His earliest works on Czech history seemed to be a conceptual training ground, since Czech nationalism had a combination of state continuity and stateless factors.[73] His work with the widest comparative framework, "Social development and the national idea in East-Central Europe," is on the contradictions of the populus, the national idea, and social reality across East-Central Europe and part of South-East Europe; it is likely an abstract of his larger unpublished sociology of the national question. It follows the trajectory of the late eighteenth-, early nineteenth-century writers who led the fight for national emancipation and development in the region.[74] Their demands against the historical classes were what led to the creation of an intelligentsia, who first took control of the state levers of power for themselves and then disenfranchised the writer class. Afterward, structural economic factors of underdevelopment kept the lower classes, the people, from rising to the ranks of the bourgeoisie, after they had become literate in their own native languages and became nationalized, revealing the contradictions in the national idea. His 1940 work on Panslavism traces the cultural and linguistic growth and then the political factors that led to the decline of the concept and its inability to bring together divergent nationalisms, nineteenth-century partitioned Poland especially having little space for maneuver. At the time of publication he also wonders if the Soviet Union will successfully rekindle the idea of Slavic unity in the region.[75]

[73] Gogolák, *Csehszlovákia* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1935b).
[74] Gogolák, "Társadalmi fejlődés és nemzet eszmények Kelet-középeurópában," *Az Ország Útja* 6, no. 7 (July 1942): 193–205. See also Gogolák, "Középeurópa népei," *Magyar Szemle* 45, nos. 7–12 (1943a): 237–245.
[75] Gogolák, *Pánszlávizmus* (Budapest: Cserépfalvi, 1940).

Comparison and Nationalism

Nationalism, with its different cultural and political phases, as Kosáry writes, are now subjects for historians. What then is the solution when nationalism is in high relief when it comes to the historians themselves? Hajnal, Kosáry, and Bloch in their programmatic texts all dealt in their own way with the pitfalls of national sentiment coloring the objectivity of history writing. Yet there is no evidence that Hajnal viewed the comparative method in itself as a potential solution to the problem of objectivity, unlike Kosáry, and Bloch to some extent. Hajnal's strategy was to root out the very terms that cause so much trouble in the first place as can be inferred from his critique of "soul," "spirit," and "character traits" of nations and peoples, discourses unhelpful for uncovering mechanisms behind feudal societal developments in the peripheries of medieval Europe, or even modern Europe. Kosáry was not averse to these terms in themselves—for how else is one supposed to speak of intellectual movements in the modern era?—yet he too was distrustful of essentializing discourses working their way into comparative studies. Since Kosáry's text aimed to set out a comparative regional framework of the East-Central European region, first of all in order to understand a shared heritage, he wants to steer away from what he calls Henri Pirenne's "ethnocentric" ideas on the goal of comparison: "Pirenne, à l'ouverture du congrès historique de 1923, a recommandé l'emploi de la méthode comparée afin, précisément, de mieux comprendre les véritables traits de l'individualité, du génie, de l'âme de chaque nation" (1943c, 32). But is unclear if the comparative method as understood by Kosáry and Bloch offers an inherent critique of "ethnocentrism," beyond their own explicit denunciations. A duality is part of the building blocks of the comparative method because it can emphasize either similarities or differences over the other, based on the aims or outlook of the historian in question. And Bloch

certainly helps to dispel the notion that comparison's "only aim is to search for similarities … on the contrary, the comparative method, rightly conceived, should involve specially lively interest in the perception of differences, whether *original* or resulting from divergent development from the same starting point" (1967, 58). Now whether comparison's goal should be to uncover differences or similarities is mostly a facile distinction because comparison necessarily focuses on two or more incommensurables. As Jürgen Kocka writes in "Comparison and Beyond," independent cases "are brought together analytically by asking for similarities and differences between them … comparison breaks continuities, cuts entanglements, and interrupts the flow of narration."[76] However, in the interwar era in East-Central Europe (and in Central Europe too as we saw in the analysis of German *Ostforschung* in Chapter Three), similarities and differences could be and were turned into their own narration, especially as regards a civilizational or cultural scale. Similarities could be treated as evidence of a superior culture transferring knowledge to a lower culture; differences could be evidence of lack of reception of what is superior, or it could be turned around as the essential autochthonic wonder of a more primitive but more lively culture. Based on this quote from Bloch, it seems that if one is at odds with essentializing discourses, all that one can critique is whether it has really grasped on to something "original," or not. Kocka and Haupt in their contribution to the volume *History and Comparison*, point out that Bloch and Pirenne intended comparative history to aid in overcoming wounds of WWI (2004, 313).[77] However, Bloch in his 1928 article on comparison seems skeptical that the comparative method could be used intentionally for reconciliation, though it might accidentally help. He writes, "comparative history as I see it is a purely scientific discipline, orientated towards knowledge and

[76] Jürgen Kocka, "Comparison and Beyond," *History and Theory* 42, no. 1 (Feb. 2003): 39–44, at 41.

[77] See also Peter Schöttler, "Mark Bloch as a Critic of Historiographical Nationalism in the Interwar Years," in *Writing National Histories: Western Europe since 1800*, ed. Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passmore (London: Routledge, 1999), 125–136.

not practical results." The implication here is that if comparison is done correctly it is less easily forced into a national framework with nationalistic goals (1967, 75). If one follows this logic, it creates potentially odd scenarios where only the most professional historians are qualified to make statements about what is unique to a nation, and historians with good and friendly intentions also might "discover" false similarities between nations.

Classic Blochian Comparison

There is very little in Kosáry's programmatic text on comparison that lays out a groundwork or instruction manual for budding comparatists. Kosáry does not like Hajnal speak of the need for a sociologist's eye, even though the comparatists individually all had different orientations and some placed a greater emphasis on social history and its toolkits that could access the history of the "unnamed millions," to use Makkai's term. Kosáry's omission of an explicit reference to Bloch is perplexing considering that similarity of passages from Bloch's "Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européenes" with his own programmatic text. First of all Kosáry (1943c, 31), like Bloch (1967, 54), emphasizes the ability of the comparative method to point to causes over pseudo-causes, which is also tied to the above ability to rule out whether not something in one's history is truly unique. Let's compare two passages side by side.

> Kosáry: "Une erreur qu'elle commet souvent consiste, quand elle ne trouve pas dans l'Europe contemporaine le pendant de quelque institution ou de quelque coutume, à se hâter d'y voir une manifestation spéciale du génie national, alors qu'il est possible que cette institution ou coutume ait jadis été générale en Europe mais qu'ailleurs elle soit déjà disparue" (1943c, 32).

> Bloch: “Prenons maintenant la société voisine. Peut-être des faits analogues s’y sont-ils produits, et avec une force et une étendue Presque pareilles ; mais, soit par suite de l’état de notre documentation, soit en raison d’une constitution sociale et politique différente, leur action y est moins immédiatement perceptible” (1928, 20, cf. 1967, 48).

In order to provide the background to the above statement, Bloch relates the now famous story of his discovery of an enclosure movement “leading to the disappearance of communal obligations and the growth of individualism in agriculture” in Provence that shared some similarities with developments in England and France, the latter being recognized for the first time by historians at that time as well (1967, 50). Bloch adds that the only “advantage” he had to aid in a discovery of this transformation in Provence (which unlike in England “did not bring about any visible modification of the countryside,” i.e., hedges) was, “I happen to have read works on English enclosures or on similar rural revolutions in other European countries … In short, I have used that most effective of all magician’s wands – the comparative method” (1967, 51). Kosáry also inquires into the issue of once similarities are discovered, what their source is: “Quelle est la cause de la ressemblance : une action mutuelle, une influence venue du dehors, ou des conditions analogues donnant nécessairement un' résultat semblable? Jus qu'à quell point cette institution diverge-t-elle d'une institution de l'Europe Occidentale datant de la même époque ou éventuellement d'une époque plus ancienne? A ces questions il est difficile de répondre sans le secours de l'histoire comparée” (1943c, 31).

Bloch’s emphasis on uncovering causes through the comparative method does arise in the work of the comparatists, but in a more oblique fashion. William H. Sewell Jr., in his 1967 article on the “uses of comparative history,” calls Bloch’s method essentially hypothesis testing, even

though Bloch does not use those words explicitly.[78] For sure, using comparison as a type of hypothesis testing was foreign to the work of the comparatists generally. Theirs was a more descriptive version, and yet causes do come forward, but more in the manner that they compare smaller regions and microregions that make up modern states with one another to account for why a certain phenomenon exists in one place and not another.

Hadrovics presents an example of what to do when a similarity is discovered. He made a comparison of the literary and religious languages of the region around Zagreb and the region on the Dalmatian coast in relation to Hungarian. He found that there is evidence of Hungarian Latinity in the Zagreb region closer to Hungary, i.e., words of Latin origin in Croatian that reveal Hungarian mediation, but not in the cities along the coast. He concludes that the later conversion to Christianity of Croatians in the central region meant that their liturgy developed at roughly the same time as in Hungary. And when the Zagreb bishopric was created under the jurisdiction of Kalocsa bishopric in Hungary, Latin liturgies from Hungary were used in Zagreb. If the Zagreb region had had a longer history of Christianity like on the coast, then the entry of both Hungarian words and Hungarian mediated Latin words would not have taken root, or to a lesser degree. These words of Hungarian origin in Kajkavian now exist mostly in old texts, he writes, because they were replaced by terms from the literary language, the Shtokavian dialect of northern Herzegovina, which had only sparse Hungarian loan words. This is how he used variations across regions to rule out pseudo-explanations. An example of the latter would be to assume that shared terminology arose merely from the existence of Hungarian and Croatian joint statehood for eight hundred years, which is a thesis that Hadrovics at times was willing to state; but then in 1947 he better refines it

[78] William H. Sewell Jr., "Marc Bloch and the Logic of Comparative History," *History and Theory* 6, no. 2 (1967): 208–218, at 209.

to account for the lack of the same terminology on the Dalmatian coast.[79] Hadrovics explains this theory over several pages and does *not* lay out the important junctures explicitly; rather, we have to read into the text his comparative methodology which he practices seemingly instinctively.

Kosáry states (1943c, 32) that he too has tried has hand at including comparative elements in his English-language *A History of Hungary* (1941).[80] Sewell writes that "a history of a single nation can be comparative history if comparison is used in formulating problems and if explanations of developments in that nation are tested by the comparative method" (1967, 214), which Kocka defines as asymmetric comparison and is also skeptical about the "testing" process (2003, 40, 42). Kosáry's book does formulate the problems, but does not test them. The comparative aspects that Kosáry speaks of mostly cover the medieval history of the East-Central European region. The first chapters point to important junctures and differences with Bohemia and Poland, and do spend considerable time laying out the diplomatic relations (an early interest of Kosáry) of Hungary with the West and its neighbors. Comparison focuses on the timing of the adoption of Christianity and how the Cluny reforms affected relations with the Holy Roman Empire; on the role of the Teutonic knights; etc. This work benefits from not presenting Hungary in a vacuum, even explicitly showing how emphasis on the western European analogies can be

[79] This is my summary of a summary by Hadrovics of his own research of the previous decade: Hadrovics, "Magyarok és horvátok," in *Magyarország és keleteurópa*, ed. István Gál (Budapest: Officina, 1947b), 143–156.

[80] His book suffered from the timing of its publication in 1941 in the United States just months before Hungary's declaration of war against the USA, and also because its sections on twentieth-century history quickly became dated; by 1945 it already seemed like a time capsule of a Telekian elite project. As regards the history of this book, it has an interesting further life. Albert Wass, the Hungarian anti-communist, nationalist novelist living in Florida (wanted for war crimes in Romania), acquired the rights to the book in 1967 and commissioned the young Béla Várdy to rewrite the section from 1919 until the present day. Kosáry has no harsh words for Várdy, who seems to have accepted the task without being aware of the backstory, but he was incensed with Wass for having his name tied again to the book which, because of the sections on interwar era Hungarian history, was frankly the cause of embarrassment on the part of Kosáry. Even worse for Kosáry, he had to brush aside attacks from Wass that he was now a biased Marxist historian living in Hungary. See Domokos Kosáry, "Letter to the Editor," *Slavic Review* 29, no. 4 (Dec. 1970): 763–765.

misleading for East-Central Europe—like the oft compared Magna Carta to Hungary's Golden Bull.

The comparatists, even when they enter into a more Blochian version of comparison focusing on two units in close proximity and temporality, like let's say a comparison of Transylvanian, Moldavian, and Wallachian medieval history, do not actually use the word comparison to describe what they are doing. The Hungarian word *összehasonlító* is used very rarely. Gáldi in fact uses the less common *összehasonlító történettudomány módszer*, the "method of comparative historical sciences."[81] On the other hand, it seems almost too obvious to have to justify juxtaposing Hungarian and Romanian history, since they have lived in close proximity and intermixed for a thousand years, which is what Makkai did in a type of *histoire croisée* manner, as seen in Chapter Three. Thus, discovering and pointing to what in their oeuvres is comparative is mostly an exercise that has to be accomplished from the outside, and is less of an internal debate found in the comparatists' texts, even Kosáry's programmatic text on comparison.

[81] Gáldi, Review of *Revue d'histoire comparée*, 1945–1947, *Századok* (1947c): 349–353.

Conclusion

The main reason I assessed the reception of Hajnal is that there is now strong enough evidence to conclude that comparatists—as a group—gleaned from three or four of the major Hungarian historical schools of the interwar era (szellemtörténet, népiségtörténet, and the social history of Hajnal/Domanovszky), though individually they usually had a preference for only one of the historical schools. Moreover, for the linguists of the group, they could add to a historical school the syncretic possibilities of comparative literatures (Sándor Eckhardt, István Gál, Tivadar Thienemann) and structural linguistics (Gombocz) (see Chapter Two), as well as comparative Latinity in the East-Central European region (again, Hajnal). Comparison with its social history dimension now appears to be a fully mature syncretic discipline. My sense is that comparison and social history would have had the greatest future potential, but the history of intellectual transfers especially around ideas of modern nationalism were quite compelling too.

In a summary of these three programmatic texts on the comparative method and comparison in history until 1948, we see three wholly different approaches. Hajnal's research into transfers combines all the peripheries of Western Europe into one study on the basis that, as regards the topic of writing culture and its connection to medieval societal developments, there is enough in common to warrant a single perspective. Kosáry opens up the national framework to account for larger regional developments that are shared by countries located in East-Central Europe; this requires a discourse on how to delimit a region based not only geography but also modern (under)development. Balázs, as shown in Chapter Three, takes the single nation-to-nation approach advocated by Bloch for the purpose of finding a shared and common history between Hungary and each of the new communist states; but he approaches historical comparison with the

apparatus of comparative literary studies as practiced by the volume's editor István Gál (Várdy 1976, 160), where only language difference, and less so geographical units, is needed for the possibility of comparison. Since the standard Blochian units of comparison, nation-states, had too recent of a history at that time in East-Central and South-East Europe, they usually do not clarify. Bloch of course states that the units of comparison have to be adjusted for every research question one is pursuing, which is what the comparatists in fact did.

Final Conclusions

In this dissertation I have presented a historiographical study of the rise of comparative history writing in Hungary in the interwar era, the Second World War, and until 1948. The existence and practice of comparative history in Hungary in the interwar era was a subject that I arrived at only gradually. It began with a wider reading into the so-called nationalities question of the historic large Hungary and the minority question of Hungarians in successor states, topics that were in vogue, once again, in the 1990s and 2000s. I tried to track the numerous Hungarian historians in the interwar era who were examining these questions for the first time, taking an interest in their personal stories too, partly to see if I could find trends to explain how so many of them transitioned to communist era historiography, especially after what one could so clearly characterize as the confrontational historiography of the interwar and WWII eras.

While I was mapping the corpus of Hungarian interwar era scholarship on the nationalities minority questions, I came across a chapter, in English, a rarity in itself, written by Domokos Kosáry in 1988 on a so-called workshop of comparative history known as the Teleki Institute, an institution that of course I was already familiar with, but not in this way. His account, to paraphrase, that "we young historians were writing regional comparative history in the middle of the war to gain a better understanding of our own and our neighbors' history," to me seemed so simple and straightforward, and honestly—quite improbable and wrong.

Kosáry moreover gives little evidence to prove that comparative history was being written in Hungary at this time other than to say that he collected together a group of likeminded individuals at the Teleki Institute who were all engaged in questions of regional history, naming

several of them specifically. For sure, he headed a French-language journal called the *Revue d'histoire comparée,* but I suspected that Kosáry was just renaming the scholarship on the nationalities question as comparative history. This hunch was supported by the fact that I found the words "comparative history" in only three original Hungarian publications up to 1947 (one each by István Hajnal, Domokos Kosáry, and János Balázs); it existed in only three texts out of a vast interwar era corpus of books and articles written about Hungarians and their connection to Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Ukrainians, Romanians, Croatians, Serbs, Bulgarians, Albanians, and other ethnicities.

Since at this point there was so little evidence, the only way to test this hypothesis of the existence and practice of comparative history was essentially to make it my own hypothesis, and to use my understanding of how comparative history was practiced at the wider European level in the interwar era, which usually focused on medieval developments, and also to see how it equates to our present-day understanding of the comparative method, which is much more theoretically diverse and often focuses on comparative nationalisms and nation-building, political discourse, and ethnically shared regions of Europe. If one must ask—why spend time proving that comparative history was being practiced in interwar era Hungary and during WWII—my answer is simply that, if true, it would point to a larger, more complex conceptual toolkit at the disposal of historians; a more varied picture of a flawed but important era in the development of historical concepts in Hungary.

The dominant narrative of historiographers on both sides of the Atlantic during the Cold War implied that Hungarians in the interwar era were constitutionally unable to engage in comparative history, that their focus on existential questions in the wake of the loss of two-thirds of the territory of the country precluded any ability for judicious treatment of neighboring hostile

nations or the larger regional and geopolitical questions. Thus I had to look for clues that might show small cracks in this narrative.

The first aspect to consider is if there was even an educational apparatus in Hungary at this time that could have aided in the practice of comparative history, and there are certain factors pro and con. The nationalities question of old Hungary technically can be studied with just knowledge of Hungarian, Latin, and German. Comparative history, on the other hand, in its exhaustive form requires access to the locally produced historiography of the other half of comparison. As regards historical training, the chairs of East European history at several universities in Hungary during the interwar era and WWII have to be deemed too weak to provide the necessary theoretical training for comparative history. And yet, the level of World and European History instruction under István Hajnal in Budapest, someone also engaged in the field of comparative history, was certainly promising. But the most important element was the personal mentoring of certain professors at the Budapest University and the Eötvös College, encouraging their students to focus on the history of countries surrounding Hungary, as well as the dual linguistic and cultural footing of Hungarians growing up in bilingual environments of the successor states, personally synthesizing both cultures. Yet, weightier than historical training were the traditions of literary, linguistic, and philological instruction going back to university departments founded in the nineteenth century and which were strengthened at the turn of the century and the interwar era. If one is searching for the foundational possibility of comparative historical studies in Hungary, then comparative literatures and comparative linguistics is the place to look. It was the best toolkit and training for those who would later also try their hand at comparative history. Comparative history writing in Hungary had little chance without the linguists and the philologists.

There are other hurdles to comparative historical studies to consider: As I write fairly early on in my thesis, being a historian of the Slovak national question in historic Hungary, with research on the causes of the dissolution of Hungary, does not necessarily make one a comparative historian, although elements of nationalism studies would certainly strengthen one's work. Thus I point out figures who crossed this threshold. Lajos Gogolák engaged directly with the historiography of the Czechs and the Slovaks independently of their relation to Hungary, and also compared all the national movements of the region using terms of a nascent nationalism studies paradigm. And there was the philologist László Hadrovics, who engaged directly in research on the rise of nationalism among Serbs in Serbia, and compared this process to a social history of Serbs in Hungary. The linguist and literary historian László Gáldi wrote several works on the language modernization process among Romanians, and compared it to the literary revitalization that took place in Hungary, just to name several highlighted figures of my study.

Second, the paucity of contemporaneous examination of the comparative method in Hungary presents another hurdle. This is only partly solved by Kosáry's 1943 programmatic text on comparison, which follows closely the wording of Marc Bloch's 1928 text, considered one of the founding documents of the comparative method. The other part of the solution has to come from my outside reading of how Hungarian historians and linguists introduced comparative methods into their research without it being advertised as explicitly such, in some cases practiced even intuitively. At this level of analysis, I can only point to what is comparative in their work, and cannot arbitrate the accuracy of their research. Lajos Tamás's study of Romanian ethnogenesis from 1935, which I argue is the start of comparative history of the region in Hungary, uses comparative linguistics to assess one-by-one the possible relations of the modern Romanian language and the historical ramifications of linguistic arguments. Zoltán I. Tóth uses a typology

of ideal types to compare differences in the spread of knowledge of a Roman past among the different social categories of Romanians in Transylvania, Wallachia, and Moldova. László Makkai compares the evolution of social factors of the Romanians in Transylvania to that of Hungarians in Wallachia and Moldova in the Middle Ages in a manner that is closer to present-day *histoire croisée* studies.

The third basic factor important for comparative regional history is sympathy with the subject matter, to avoid where possible, in the language of Bloch, nationalist scholarship. My sense is that it seemed too wasteful of effort for those engaging in long-term study of neighboring nations to maintain a constant polemical stance, looking for the source of Hungary's present day disasters in interactions with other nations in the distant and recent past. As a potential solution to the problem of Hungarian irredentism clouding out the possibility of rigorous comparative analysis, I present a theory on how the nationalities question could have evolved into full-scale comparative studies by looking at personal episodes in the life of the comparatists. The early career of the comparatists often included aiding well-known historians and politicians in their polemical pieces attacking the successor states of Austria-Hungary. I uncover archival documents on how these tasks could be unrewarding for the comparatists since they felt that their expertise already surpassed their mentors' and that their own narratives could be sidelined by those who hired them to write books and articles (especially Gáldi and Gogolák). What we expect from comparative history in the best-case scenario, besides accuracy, is a more judicious treatment of sensitive questions because it should uncover the causes of historical development that override the symptoms that divide people from one another. Gáldi, we read, was absolutely enamored by the poetry of the Romanian language. Hadrovics had no personal dislike of Croatians or Serbs or their

Yugoslav experiment. The comparatists as a group had many beneficial traits, but only partially avoided the pitfalls of nationalism.

In Hungary there was a unique confluence of events that can explain the origin of comparative history writing. The loss of the First World War was the original impetus for the competition to rewrite a history that also rewrites borders between states, producing a less healthy version of history, but also for a broadened interest in the shared history and culture of the region, and a better basis for historical research. I put forward a thesis of a transformation of historical studies on the neighboring countries that follows a path (1) from being propagandistic nature in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, (2) to eventually a more political history-oriented research of the nationalities (minorities) of Hungary before 1918 in order to explain the demise of Hungary, (3) to histories of the neighboring countries themselves, and (4) finally to full-scale comparative histories of Hungary and the neighboring nations, i.e., regional comparative history. These final two stages, which of course did not eliminate entirely the first two, depended on the rise of a group of historians who could learn the languages and research the history of nations neighboring Hungary. This in itself was a difficult task since historians in Hungary previously looked to Germany, France, and the West as foundations of historical comparison rather than the small nations surrounding it, which also entailed learning the languages of nations that were considered hostile to Hungary. Out of a fairly large cohort of young historians, linguists, philologists, and literary historians engaged in questions of regional relevance, I have focused on seven who best exemplify the skills needed to engage in regional comparative history, and who had a large enough oeuvre (that includes monographs) before 1945 in order to have a broad enough basis for evaluation. I have called these seven the “comparatists” because they consciously

engaged in the writing of comparative works and based their studies on what they perceived to be the more advanced methods of the historical sciences of the interwar era.

In Chapter One, I look at the manner in which the comparatists have been remembered by the Hungarian historical sciences, and I also sift through aspects of their biographies that connect them to comparative history, adding elements from archival research. In Chapters One and Two, I explore how robust university departments in Hungary of Romanian and Slavic literatures and training in modern linguistics aided the project of historical comparison, reaching the conclusion that these subjects, more than historical training, are the foundation of comparative history writing in Hungary. Chapter Two delves into the nexus of politics, educational policy, and history writing in the lives of the comparatists as a group—it is a group biography—and I also find in archives clues about important mentors who might have aided in the project of regional comparative history. Chapter Three examines how the two dominant schools of history in Hungary (*szellemtörténet* and *népiségtörténet*) responded to competition among regional actors (particularly contra Germany), and the debates that this set off among Hungarians, which then had ramifications on the conceptual framework of what subjects were considered important for comparison. Chapters Three and Four survey how nationalism colored the research agenda and narrative of the comparatists in their works on the region, and how and when they attempted to navigate away from biases. Chapter Four shows how comparative history writing in Hungary was syncretic in nature and could be combined with the different dominant and less dominant (cultural, economic, and social) historiographical schools of the interwar era, and even structural linguistics and comparative literatures, a factor which explains its successes and appeal. I also trace a lengthy reception history of how this group of comparatists likely read István Hajnal's important study on the comparison

of all the peripheral regions of Europe, and I place into context Kosáry's programmatic text on the comparative method which incorporates the understandings of that time.

My thesis on the existence and practice of comparative history has been pieced together from disparate and non-overlapping sources that are a result of the hyper specialization of various scientific fields in Hungary, as is common anywhere in the world. It remained essentially invisible, but it was lurking in small snippets that needed to be synthesized. Since the comparatists all had various schizophrenic phases in their careers, their memories were divvied up by separate academic departments. The language and philology departments claimed heritage to that corresponding part of their careers, being less concerned with the importance of their historical contributions. The history departments divided the historians of the group according to historiographical school, whether they were disciples of Szekfű, etc. Also, their contributions to Hungarian history were separated from their writings on other nations in the region. This was compounded by the silence in most of the communist era around the presence of their previous interwar era topics, which was often self-imposed.

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Now the question must be asked if there was another school of history in interwar era Hungary and during WWII that so far has not been recognized—a comparative history school that as its main feature was syncretic in nature. Comparative research was up and running from the mid-1930s before there was even an explicit program of comparison in the early 1940s. And there were also the comparative literatures, linguistics, and Latin studies that were explicitly such in the 1930s, which were also tied to questions of history, even though the words "comparative history" are still not mentioned explicitly until the early 1940s (in archival letters of Kosáry slightly earlier). While previous studies have focused on the period between 1945–1948 as the flowering of broader

regional history, I see this period more in light of what Gál calls decline.[1] What we see after 1945 is the fruition of some projects that started already before. Thus, for example, I. Tóth's major work is placed in the context of this post-1945 "flowering" period because it was published in 1946; yet we know that it was actually written and defended in 1944 as his second dissertation, during the war. There was some change in the narratives of this group between 1945 and 1948; yet the attempt at reconciliation began already in the midst of the war (the interpretation being, at a minimum, that reconciliation was proposed for no other reason than fear of loss of war,[2] or, at a maximum, a genuinely felt intention that curbing nationalism was necessary in order to write properly factual histories). After 1945 there are some larger attempts like Makkai's to repurpose historical studies into new narratives, but his was the rarer case since he had real mea culpas to enact (as the only *népiségtörténet*-oriented historian of the group). Moreover, his actual research on Transylvania and Romania ended in 1944/45, with his return from Transylvania and the start of his studies abroad in the West: his publications after 1945 were just a repurposing of previous research but with new "peace and understanding" narratives. The goal of reconciliation of the communist nations, as seen in Balázs's introduction to Gál's edited volume, would be Gál's last major contribution to comparative linguistics and history in the interwar neo-humanist tradition.[3] And the chapters of the three comparatists who contributed to this very cursory volume, Gáldi's and Hadrovics's, were also just recaps of research and articles that were published before 1945; Makkai's chapter contribution is closer to the interpretation in his *Magyar-román közös múlt*

[1] István Gál, *Bartóktól Radnótiig* (Budapest: Magvető, 1973), 29; amongst others see Janowski, Iordachi, and Trencsényi, "Why Bother about Historical Regions? Debates over Central Europe in Hungary, Poland and Romania," *East Central Europe* 32, nos. 1–2 (2005): 5–58, at 9. See also Dániel Csatári, "I. Tóth Zoltán," in I. Tóth Zoltán, *Magyarok és románok. Történeti tanulmányok* (Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1966), 38.

[2] Emil Niederhauser, "Utószó," in *A magyarság és a szlávok*, ed. Gyula Szekfű (Budapest: Lucidus Kiadó, 2000 [1942]), 225–236. See also Gáldi, Review of *Revue d'histoire comparée*, 1945–1947, *Századok* (1947c): 349–353.

[3] János Bálázs, "Keleteurópa és az összehasonlító történetírás," in *Magyarország és Keleteurópa. A magyarság kapcsolatai a szomszédnépekkel*, ed. István Gál (Budapest: Officina, 1947), 7–30.

(1948), which was actually written during the war, though published later. Likewise, since the French-language publications of *Revue d'histoire comparée* are almost in all cases translations from previously published Hungarian versions, but with a slight delay, we can trace quite well the formation and publication of those ideas to the period before 1945 in many cases.

Kosáry's 1946 article on "Marx et Szemere" in *Revue d'histoire comparée* is an obvious attempt to widen the conceptual space in light of the geopolitical realignment of Hungary.[4] But this does not change my thesis that the period was one of just short-lived experimentation due to being unsure of what could be saved from the bourgeois era—yet little of real substance in terms of the work of the comparatists as a group. The large projects of bibliographies of the nationalities question, undertaken shortly afterward by Gábor G. Kemény,[5] were just that: bibliographies of the nationalities question, meaning that they focused on questions of pre-WWI Hungary, which, though important regarding the subject itself, nonetheless should be considered a major step back from the level of the comparatists. Makkai had no intention of dropping before 1948 the subject of either Anonymus or Romanian ethnogenesis being outside of Transylvania. The same goes for I. Tóth. It is Tamás who permanently silences the topics rather than forcing a rewriting of the theses. That is why the Transylvanian topic is just resting, waiting in a cryogenic sleep until Köpeczi reawakens it with the start of the *Erdély története* project in the late 1970s.[6] It is also Köpeczi who resurrects the memory of this generation's early career, which would not have been quite as compelling if left solely to Kosáry's historicization starting in the 1980s. The explosive political reaction to *Erdély története* placed a type of prestige on those Hungarian scholars whose pre-1945 oeuvres were referenced in the volumes' works cited sections.

[4] Kosáry, "Marx et Szemere," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 4, nos. 1–2 (1946): 103–116.
[5] Gábor Kemény G., ed., *Iratok a nemzetiségi kérdés történetéhez Magyarországon a dualizmus korában, 1867–1900*, 2 vols. (Budapest: Tankönyvkiadó, 1952–1956).
[6] Béla Köpeczi, ed., *Erdély története*, vols. 1–3 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986).

What we do see in the period between 1945–48 is the creation of some wiggle room and uncertainty in the careers of the comparatists. Formerly top figures of the historical profession were being (self-)exiled, jailed, or retired, and the up-and-coming next line of historians, the young generation at the top of their fields, the comparatists, were looking to fill these positions in this time of uncertainty. Before 1945, Kosáry was already at the Eötvös College; Gáldi was acting director of the Romance languages department; Hadrovics had some small success in Szeged and found his home at the Teleki Institute; Gogolák had started teaching classes in Budapest; Makkai and Tamás were in the top echelons of the university in Kolozsvár. And in fact, after 1945, they briefly filled the newly vacant positions, Kosáry covering for Szekfű at the university while he was in Moscow (with the exception of Gogolák who returned to journalism as his sole occupation until he made it out to Vienna in 1957). Although every one of them was coming to terms with the Marxist historical paradigm starting in 1945 (even Kosáry, who waited until the 1960s to make a better peace with it), it was still an open question as to how much conceptual mobility would be allowed on the borders or beside the Marxist paradigm. After 1948, all those experimentations hit a brick wall, and Makkai, who made the quickest mea culpa and transfer to Marxist historical theory, was politically still too compromised to not have it hurt his career. And when everyone else was demoted after 1948, Tamás and I. Tóth were promoted. Yet Erős claims that the scholarly quality of I. Tóth's works (after his magnum opus that was published in 1946) suffer from the emphasis on class warfare and that the period from 1945 to 1948 still contains some of the old nationalist bias.[7] That is part of the reason why this thesis has focused primarily on the first phase up to 1945. After 1945, these comparatists all went their own way and became different types of historians, linguists, and philologists than previously.

[7] Vilmos Erős, "I. Tóth Zoltán (1911–1956)," *Korunk* 22, no. 5 (May 2011a): 85–89, at 83.

So was there a bona fide Hungarian school of comparative history? Várdy placed everything under the heading East European Studies, which conceptually can hold much more than Kosáry's Comparative History. Yet he also relegated the story of the comparatists to their later careers under communism. My thesis shows that to relegate them to the communist era because that is when they achieved full maturity as historians would in fact minimize this separate, independent story of the "comparatists," covering an important fifteen-year period of work. It has been shown that they were using the comparative method according to the Blochian understanding of the time, even before the explicit program of comparative history under the aegis of the Teleki Institute; those focusing on the rise of nationalism in the modern era were also incorporating an early but fairly technical understanding of nationalism studies. Even so, the answer to the question of a comparative history school is likely negative since the number of individuals who could practice at the level of these comparatists was fairly small, though certainly with potential for growth. Yet my goal was to uncover a broader story of comparative history writing in Hungary that so far has only been told sporadically and is usually hidden under the better-known historiographical debates of the interwar era. Here I reversed the usual order and set up comparative history writing as its own subject which then reflects back on the historiographical debates of the time. However, for a brief period, especially during WWII, and with the further institutional backing of the Teleki Institute, comparative history was able to hold its own against the traditional departments of Romance and Slavic languages and East European History, i.e., retain specialists and publish. After WWII, the Teleki Institute was refashioned out of existence and eventually brought into the fold of the Hungarian Academy of Science, after the Soviet model. Gyula Szekfű as we know was not a fan of the comparative project of his pupil Kosáry, saying that it would go down in history as yet another Danubian fantasy in the manner of Oszkár Jászi. For

reasons unexpected this became true, but a foundation was built for the future rekindling of historical interest in both large regional questions and micro-level comparisons. Even though comparative studies in Hungary took a different route under communism starting in the 1960s, especially in the field of economic studies, there was some overlapping with the work of the comparatists especially in the person of Emil Niederhauser, who later continued regional level nationalism studies,[8] and who also features in this thesis as one of the historians who put the comparatists' pre-1945 oeuvre in context, when in the 1990s there was a sudden return to interwar era historiography. The surprise element in the story of the comparatists was *Erdély története*, which rekindled interest in much of the corpus of their studies on the region and which turned into the search for historiographical antecedents.

Yet, if one can just cut out this one sliver of Hungarian interwar era historiography for comparative history, it provides potentially a new rich prism with which to view the debates of that time. Though the general outlines of interwar Hungarian historiography remain the same due to the larger structural aspects of that period, my goal is to simply create a conceptual space for comparative history writing as a separate and yet strongly syncretic practice that was essentially on the cusp of forming a new Hungarian historical school. Though between 1945 and 1948 comparative history writing for most of the comparatists was coming to a halt, the experimentations of an even younger generation during this three-year period certainly attests to the vitality of the method that was pioneered by the comparatists in the previous decade.

[8] Niederhauser, *Nemzetek születése Kelet-Európában* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1976); Niederhauser, *A nemzeti megújulási mozgalmak Kelet-Európában* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977).

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