

BOOK REVIEWS

Vrijeme sazrijevanja, vrijeme razaranja: Hrvatske zemlje u kasnome srednjem vijeku [Time of development, time of destruction: Croatian lands in the late Middle Ages]. Edited by Marija Karbić. Biblioteka Povijest Hrvata 3. Matica hrvatska: Zagreb, 2019. pp. 637.

Vrijeme sazrijevanja, vrijeme razaranja is the third volume in the series Biblioteka povijest hrvata, published by Matica hrvatska in 2019. This series eventually will consist of seven volumes in Croatian covering the history of Croatia and the Croatian lands from late antiquity until the late twentieth century. The first volume was published in 2015 and the third, which covers the period of the late Middle Ages, in 2019. The third volume of the series has twenty-three authors (five more than the first one), who are the most prominent scholars in their fields, which include history, legal history, economic history, church history, and historiography, and the authors belong to the younger or middle generation of Croatian historians. The volume begins with a preface written by editor Marija Karbić, who highlights that the book covers a turbulent period of the Croatian history characterized by integration and disintegration. This period included the rise of Venetian authority in the coastal territories, continuous conquests by the Ottoman Empire, and turbulent periods when some of the Croatian lands were part of the Kingdom of Hungary. According to Karbić, the volume aims to follow the path of the first book in the series in its structure and topics. She also highlights that the volume follows the path of two previous Croatian history projects, “Hrvatska i Europa” and “Povijest Hrvata.”

This volume, like the first volume of the series, thematically can be divided into three parts. The first part is a general overview which offers different perspectives on and approaches to the history of Croatia and the Croatian lands. It also deals with fields that are usually less frequently discussed, and it offers new approaches alongside the traditionally popular topics. The first two studies, which were written by Borislav Grgin, give an overview of the political history of Croatia in the late Middle Ages (pp.3–23 and 25–38). They are followed by Ante Birin’s chapter on the history of the Croatian nobility (pp.39–54). Damir Karbić then discusses the characteristics of the late medieval Croatian peasantry (pp.55–61). The last chapter, which is about the general social history of the Croatian lands, was written by Gordan Ravančić, who offers a look at urban communities and society (pp.63–77). Following these discussions of social topics,

Sabine Florence Fabijanec examines the economic aspects of Croatia, including farming, forestry, viticulture, fishing, trade, commerce, and finance (pp.79–98). Her chapter is followed by two chapters on the continuous Ottoman conquests, both of which were written by Ivan Jurković. The first chapter discusses the migration caused by the Ottoman conquests in the Balkans (pp.99–113) and military history and defense campaigns against the Ottomans (pp.115–33). Zrinka Novak and Zoran Ladić deal with church history and religious life in late medieval Croatia, including the history of the different orders, ecclesiastical organization, and social questions (pp.135–161). Nella Lonza then examines various legal developments (pp.163–77), and Sandra Ivović and Meri Kunčić deal with the intellectual and cultural history of the period in question. Zoran Ladić and Goran Budeč discuss some aspects of the history of the families and private life as the final part of the first thematic unit (pp.213–33).

The second main part of the volume reflects the historical and cultural regionality of Croatia. It deals with territories of Medieval Croatia, including lands that are part of present-day Croatia but were separated in the Middle Ages and territories that are culturally, socially, and historically closely connected to Croatia. The first two chapters, by Marija Karbić and Stanko Andrić, deal with northwestern and northeastern Croatia separately (pp.235–54, 255–304). Both chapters are structured in a similar way. They show the history of the regions in different periods of the Hungarian Kingdom and deal with urban, social, and church history. The following chapter, by Marija Mogorović Crljenko, deals with Istria and the Kvarner Gulf (pp.305–26), followed by a chapter on Gorski kotar, Lika, and Krbava by Ivan Jurković (pp.327–39). The late medieval history of Dalmatia is divided into three parts. Irena Benyovsky Latin offers an account of the history of northern and central Dalmatia (pp.341–59), and Zrinka Pešorda Vardić writes on the golden age of Dubrovnik (pp.361–90). The third part, by Ivan Majnarić, is about Kotor (pp.391–400). The final chapter of the second part, by Ivan Botica, deals with the territory of Bosnia and Hercegovina (pp.401–42).

The third and final section of the volume (which is also the longest section) provides geopolitical context, as it deals with the countries and empires that had close relationships with either the Croats or the territories of present-day Croatia or held any parts of it. Marija Karbić discusses Hungary (pp.445–62), followed by Kornelija Jurin Starčević's examination of the relationship between Croatia and the Ottoman Empire (pp.463–80). Jadranka Neralić deals with the relationships between Croatia and the Papacy between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries (pp.481–502). Lovorka Čoralčić analyses Venice's role and advances in Croatia

(pp.503–20). Borislav Grgin examines Croatia's ties to southern Italy and Spain (pp.521–29). Robert Kurelić deals with Croatia's relationship to the Holy Roman Empire (pp.531–44) and Austria (pp.545–59). Damir Karbić analyses the history of the Czech territories and Poland (pp.561–69), and, finally, Vjeran Kursar deals with the Balkans (pp.571–97). After the final unit, the volume includes an index of people's names (pp.599–616) and an index of geographical names (pp.617–36).

The volume is a continuation and the outcome of a huge project started in 2015. The authors of the volume are among the greatest experts in their fields, and they have composed one of the finest syntheses of Croatian history. Their work and the sedulous work of the editor offer new perspectives on Croatian history, with chapters written about topics that to a large extent have eluded discussion, though they fit well into present trends in international historiography. The division of the book also offers new perspectives. It helps further an understanding of Croatia's regional diversity and the varying histories of the regions of the country, and it also puts the history of Croatia and the Croatian lands into an international and regional context. The volume includes impressive studies, and it will appeal not only to the community of historians, but also to the wider reading public. Furthermore, it constitutes an important addition to the materials available for educational purposes. This volume, like the first book in the series, is a modern historical synthesis, and as such, it provides an excellent example on which new projects on other Central European countries can draw.

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Dalmatia and the Exercise of Royal Authority in the Árpád-Era Kingdom of Hungary. By Judit Gál. Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities, 2020. 228 pp.

Coloman the Learned, king of Hungary (1095–1116), was crowned king of Croatia and Dalmatia in 1102. Within three years, he occupied the most important cities of northern and central Dalmatia, thus unifying Hungary and Croatia into a union that lasted till 1918. The monograph under review, this valuable contribution to common Hungarian-Croatian history, analyses the southernmost part of the Kingdom of Hungary, or more precisely, Dalmatian cities and their place within the kingdom in the first two hundred years through the lens of the exercise of royal authority. Although several aspects of this relationship have been dealt with by Hungarian and Croatian historians, Judit Gál's monograph has two major strengths. First, it is a modern original work based on hundreds and hundreds of hours of diligent archival work accompanied with intelligent comparative analyses of both national historiographies. Second and no less important, it is a highly analytical, yet comprehensible piece of scholarly work written in English, or in other words, it is accessible to a comparatively wide audience.

The book begins with a concise but very useful discussion of the socio-historical and geopolitical background. On the one hand, there was a relatively young and quite active Kingdom of Hungary which managed to extend its influence on the Adriatic although, on the other side, the doge of Venice had adopted the title duke of Croatia and Dalmatia in the late eleventh century, at the time when the Byzantine Empire was occupied with other affairs in the east. Dalmatian cities, those precious ancient (apart from Šibenik) urban shells in that frustratingly narrow coastal strip beneath the mountainous region in the north, have always had special status and a degree of autonomy which they mostly maintained within the Kingdom of Hungary.

The study is pursued here in two major chapters, constructed and intertwined around the role of royal authority. The first one is dedicated to the church, which played an essential role even in the secular life of Dalmatian cities. When addressing ecclesiastic affairs, Gál focuses on the three most important aspects: the changes in the structure of the Dalmatian church and the role played by Hungarian rulers in its modification; the personalities of the prelates of Dalmatia and changes in their roles; and the role played by royal and ducal donations to the church in the exercise of royal authority. The kings of Hungary did not

have permanent local representatives in Dalmatian cities, so the archbishops of Split were Hungarian kings' right hands, administrators with an extended reach. Dalmatian bishops and archbishops served as symbolic representatives of royal authority who promoted royal policies in their cities. Split archbishops, who inherited the metropolitan status of ancient Salona and were primases of Dalmatia, connected their city with the royal court and helped manage local affairs and promote the kings' foreign-policy interests.

In the second chapter, Gál examines aspects concerning the exercise of Hungarian royal authority related to secular administration and urban communities. First, she analyses the privileges granted by the kings of Hungary to the cities of Dalmatia. She then examines the roles of the representatives of Hungarian royal authority: the dukes of Slavonia and the bans of Slavonia. She concludes with a discussion of shows of royal power and authority, mostly displayed through royal and ducal visits to Dalmatia. Her analyses of rulers' show of power reveal that these visits were in fact complex performances with practical and symbolic functions. King Coloman made his visits to Dalmatia, during which he was accompanied by his splendid retinue consisting of Hungary's highest-ranking secular and ecclesiastic dignitaries (as well as their Dalmatian counterparts), according to a regular schedule: every three years. Other kings traveled less frequently, never managing to follow this pattern, while the dukes of Slavonia mostly travelled to Dalmatia shortly after acquiring their titles. The bans became increasingly powerful after the Mongol invasion of 1241–42, but the overall Hungarian royal authority deteriorated after King Bela IV died (1270), and the local oligarchy, especially the Šubić clan, gained more influence in Dalmatia.

There are four very useful appendices at the end of the book. The first is on "Iohannes Lucius' Collection of Historical Manuscripts," which Judit Gál probably knows better than anyone else at this point, at least among the younger generation of historians from both sides of the Pannonian border. The second is the list of "Dalmatian Toponyms in Various Languages." The third is the list of "Hungarian Kings' and Dukes' Donations to Dalmatian Churches" (1102–1285). The fourth and final appendix is a list of "Hungarian Kings' and Dukes' Grants of Privileges to the Cities of Dalmatia." The book ends with four other additions: two indices (of personal and geographical names) and two sets of historical maps. The first set presents the city maps of Zadar, Biograd na Moru, Šibenik, Nin, Split, and Trogir in the period of Árpád kings. The second

shows Dalmatia in 1105, 1180, 1205, and 1298, and it also includes a map of the Catholic Church in Croatia (as of 1298).

Gál spent a substantial amount of time in the Archive of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb and the Archbishopric Archive in Split, and she has made admirable use of the sources she found in both. She came to Zagreb as a MA student, and she brought with her an infectious enthusiasm, good knowledge of Latin, and an ever-improving ability to use Croatian scholarly literature. Dr. Damir Karbić, the director of the Historical Department of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, quickly realized what a promising scholar she was, and showing his usual hospitality, he made sure that she had the proper guidance through Croatian institutions. But all other credit goes to her for her dedicated, disciplined, old-fashioned hard work in the archives. This book is not the only fruit of the many years she spent pursuing research. She has also written numerous scholarly papers, digitized material, and made fresh discoveries in the undeservedly forgotten yet very valuable collection of sources. Historians of Central Europe in the Middle Ages cannot help but be impressed by her achievements, and it is worth noting that Gál, who only completed her PhD in 2019, is still at the beginning of her academic career.

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Katonabárok és hivatalnok grófok: Új arisztokraták a 18. századi Magyarországon [Soldier barons and office-holder counts: New aristocrats in eighteenth-century Hungary]. By Tamás Szemethy. Budapest: MNL–BTK TTI, 2020. 479 pp.

Tamás Szemethy's book, analyzing the emerging Hungarian "new aristocracy" of the eighteenth century from the viewpoint of social history, is based on a PhD thesis defended in 2020 at Eötvös Loránd University under the supervision of István Szijártó. Szemethy is one of the most promising members of a circle of young social historians who are gathered around Szijártó's "school" at the Department of Social and Economic History of Eötvös Loránd University. Szemethy's doctoral thesis was finalized and turned into a book within the framework of the research group "The political culture of the Hungarian estates' system (1526–1848)" (NKFI K 116 166), coordinated by the National Archives of Hungary and the "Integrating Families" Research Group of the Institute of History of the Research Centre for the Humanities (LP2017-3/2017), supported by the "Momentum" ("Lendület") Programme of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

The main goal of the book is simple: to validate or refute the topos of the "dilution of the Hungarian aristocracy" in the eighteenth century, which Szemethy considers a persistent commonplace in Hungarian historiography. The volume raises some crucial questions concerning the so-called "new aristocrats," i.e., those who earned the title of a Hungarian baron or a count as plain nobles, characterizing it as a social group to establish his chosen research methodology. His main inquiry concerns the framing of the group, the careers of its members, and other factors preceding the elevation of their ranks, as well as possible explanations as to why the ruler decided to bestow on them a new rank. Finally, Szemethy also considers the typical career moves of the group.

Methodologically, the author commits himself prosopography, one of the auxiliary disciplines of social history, arguing that it can provide a qualified set of data which enables one to arrive at findings concerning the main tendencies of the group in question and general changes in the eighteenth-century social elite. Szemethy tries to define what he means by this in the first chapter, which could be treated as a practice-oriented contribution to this field of historical auxiliary sciences. According to this, not only has prosopography been separated from the traditional genre of archontology, but its advantages and disadvantages have also been considered. Referring to the work of English historian Lawrence Stone, Szemethy mindfully reflects on the limits and difficulties of doing prosopographic

research, highlighting the problems of gathering sources that are of adequate quality and quantity, as well as the scarcity of narrative sources (first of all, ego-documents). He also cautions against conflating the typical characteristics of the whole group with those of its few prominent members, e.g., those individuals who held high offices and stirred interest among contemporaries. Based on these considerations, Szemethy constructs a group of “new aristocrats” as the subject of his analysis, zooming in on 91 people from 76 families between 1711 and 1799. He excludes from this group naturalized foreign aristocrats (*indigenae*) and those who earned the title due to their relatives and not their own career moves. In practice, apart from the chapters on atypical careers, his research is based fundamentally on the classical and more recent genealogical literature on the one hand and on the Royal Books (*Libri Regii*) on the other, though Szemethy also uses urbarial conscriptions, files from the Austrian State Archives in Vienna (nobility files, etc.), and other archival sources, if to a lesser extent. His style is succinct, clear, and factual, and his chapters are rhetorically well-structured, but the richness of the information provided sometimes makes it rather difficult to read them.

The book is divided into four main chapters and includes an almost 200-page long appendix, which contains all the relevant biographical and career data concerning the members of the group, as well a much shorter list of the high-ranking soldiers who earned the Military Order of Maria Theresa. This well-built database constitutes the backbone of the analyses. The structure of the whole book and the individual chapters is clear and logical, almost didactic. The short methodological introduction is followed by the longer prosopographic analyses of “typical” careers. The subsequent chapter then presents three “atypical” cases, and finally, a conclusion summarizes the achievements of the project.

Within the group of “new aristocrats,” two bigger subgroups, namely the office holders and the soldiers, have been set apart, and the title-donations of lower (baron) and higher (count) value are examined separately. By reason of the changing tendencies, the baronial donations implied different inner periodization and further subgroups: regarding the officials, the two subperiods are 1711–1770 (18 persons) and 1770–1799 (16 persons). In the case of officers, the timeframes are 1711–1758 (10 persons) and 1758–1799 (16 persons). In the first case, the dividing line is grounded in the emergence of a professionalizing office holder, marked by the baronial donation of Károly Reviczky, which approximates the conclusions of a study by Szijártó and Tünde Cserpes on the “high office holders” of the eighteenth century, cited frequently by Szemethy. The second

case is much simpler, because the foundation of the Military Order of Maria Theresa definitely marks the beginning of a new period.

Concerning each group and subgroup, the careers, social backgrounds (ancestry, social status), and financial situations of its members are compared. Their financial situations are reconstructed on the basis of the amount of land they owned according to the urbarial conscriptions, an indicator which offers a rough approximation of the wealth of a certain family. However, the urbarial conscriptions indicate only possessions that were burdened by urbarial services. The measure of the current social status and the degree to which the “new aristocrats” could be said to have been integrated into the traditional aristocracy is assessed based on the *connubium*, i.e., the marital strategies of people recently elevated in position and their children from the perspective of the social and legal statuses of their spouses.

The subgroup of soldiers who earned baronial titles before 1758 is similar to the officials of the same period. In other words, most of them were elevated from wealthy noble families. After 1758, in contrast, several soldiers of humble backgrounds rose to the new aristocracy as well. However, the estimated wealth of the so-called “soldier barons,” based on the urbarial conscriptions, of the period was much less on average than the wealth of the officials. While the meritocratic elements of selection became significant among the soldiers in the last third of the century and this criterion (merit) also began to be more frequently applied within the central bureaucracy of the period, it remained only a subsidiary reason for bestowing a baronial title on officials. Regarding officials who earned a baronial title, Szemethy also points out that the father’s career was a factor only in a few cases of title donation, while the legal status of wives and mothers could also contribute to a certain extent to the rise of the nobility into the layer of aristocracy.

A subchapter focuses on those who earned the title of Hungarian count, making up the top elite of the emerging new aristocracy. As Szemethy points out, the Habsburg Monarchy had neither a unified aristocracy nor a unified nobility. Thus, the Austrian provincial, imperial, Transylvanian, Bohemian, and Hungarian title donations were all available at request at the same time, though at different prices and representing varying contents and values. The Hungarian titles were of the greatest value because of the political rights they potentially provided, i.e., the participation of aristocrats in the meetings of the upper house of the Hungarian diet in person or by proxy. The title of Hungarian count was not only more expensive than the title of baron, but as Szemethy presumed and

has verified, it required a more successful military or civilian career, in addition to wealth and ancestry. From the group of 91 people, 28 became counts, and a third of them earned their title in two steps. As the author points out, most of them belonged to wealthy noble families with mid-size and large-size estates, and a significant number of them acquired their lands by themselves. While the number of official and soldier barons was balanced in the period, in the case of counts, only those who had a successful official career could advance, and only five soldiers were given this rank, who also needed to earn a significant land donation. Because of these reasons, until the end of the period under study, the subgroup of counts formed a more exclusive and prestigious circle than the barons within the new aristocracy and the group of magnates in general.

In contrast to the quantitative analysis in the second section, which is dry but rich in information, the third part focuses more on narrative methods and careers and elevation in rank of three persons considered “atypical.” These chapters originally were intended to complete and contrast the prosopographic analysis of the group of new aristocrats. However, each of them could be read as a micro-historical essay in itself. Zooming in on the three atypical careers, Szemethy shows further sides of his talent as a historian by examining other problematic questions and using new types of sources. In the case of István László Luzsénszky, Szemethy focuses on the role of the patron-client relationship between the ambitious nobleman and clergyman Luzsénszky and his influential patron, Imre Csáky. In doing so, he relies on their highly formalized “functional” correspondence, based on a method used by Heiko Droste. Szemethy points out that the elevation in rank was an outcome of the accumulation of Luzsénszky’s family inheritance as wealth and as socio-political symbolic capital. Reconstructing the case of György Farkas Chiolich, the author tries to track a charge of cradle-snatching against the bishop of Zengg-Modrus. He proves that Chiolich took steps to earn an aristocratic title in addition to his prelateship in order to accumulate more power and authority not only among the clergy, but also among laymen. Finally, the third case study focuses on Mihály Manduka, later known as Mihály Horváth, an ambitious Greek merchant of non-noble background who rose to become a figure of the Hungarian nobility and, a few years later, in the last decade of the eighteenth century, of the aristocracy as a baron. The chapter affirms the findings of renowned urban historian Vera Bácskai, according to which Horváth should be regarded as an “ennobled burgher” rather than as a “new aristocrat” who embraced the identity and ethic of the landowning nobility. Consequently, he could be considered one of the predecessors of nineteenth-century entrepreneurs.

In his concluding remarks, Szemethy, on the one hand, points out that the efforts of the Viennese court to make talented military officers more visible by bestowing titles on them led to a kind of “dilution” of the Hungarian elite. On the other hand, he calls attention to the fact that, of the officials, those who received a baronial title belonged to the wealthy and were able to reach the required standards. The new counts remained an exclusive group the members of which could assert themselves better in the environment of the traditional aristocracy. Szemethy summarizes his findings as follows: “[I]t would be more accurate to consider the social changes of the second half of the eighteenth century not simply as the dilution of the elite, but rather as its transformation and complementation with new elements.” All things considered, Szemethy has drawn a persuasive image of the eighteenth-century “new aristocracy” based on the method of prosopography, complemented in some cases with the inclusion of different kinds of primary sources, as well as some more innovative ways of analysis. Nevertheless, I cannot help but make a few critical remarks concerning some aspects of his undertaking which follow mainly from Szemethy’s presuppositions and the inflexibility of his method.

First, with regard to the treatment of primary sources, two significant shortcomings have to be mentioned. Szemethy did not research and use family archives systematically or extensively. Furthermore, his research on the practices of the chancellery and the changes it underwent over the course of the century is also flawed. Szemethy was frank about this, claiming that his “research in family archives yielded disappointing results,” and he mentions as an example the Luzsénszky family archive and the lack of narrative sources, first and foremost private family correspondence, diaries, and memoirs. Nonetheless, the conclusions he draws are hardly convincing, and they are even less so if all the related families are considered. Due to the lack of narrative sources, he is unable to demonstrate how “new aristocrats” considered and represented their own social status within the public sphere or what attitudes emerged in the narrower and broader social environment towards them. The contemporary set of the positive and negative *topoi* concerning new aristocrats should have been analyzed too, irrespective of their factual content. With regards to the former point, the case study of the Luzsénszky–Csáky relationship offers the possibility of narrative analysis, and with regards to the latter, the same is true of the “pilot study” on Gábor Draveczky in the first chapter. As for the practices of the chancellery, it would have been fruitful to consider the requests that did not result in title donations, particularly regarding the Military Order of Maria Theresa.

Second, while the starting date of the study, 1711, is unequivocally considered the beginning of a new era, marked by the year when Charles III ascended the throne, the ending year, 1799, is rather disputable. In Szemethy's, his choice enables him to examine the tendencies of the *fin-de-siècle* in the context of late eighteenth-century military and political history, while the context of Napoleonic Europe provides a fundamentally different framework. The French Revolution and the Revolutionary Wars profoundly changed the political and military situation for the traditional powers of Europe, including the Habsburg Empire and thus the Kingdom of Hungary. Nevertheless, the whole period between 1792 and 1815 (or so forth) should have been treated rather in its entirety to show tendencies in progress under the rule of Francis I, marked as "cabinet absolutism." This would have made it possible to assess the effects of the French Wars on the subgroup of the emerging "military aristocracy." For example, the case of Dániel Mecséry, who earned not only the Knight's but also the Commander's Cross of the Military Order of Maria Theresa and thus became a baron still struggled for land donation in vain and died relatively poor. Moreover, he left behind a German autobiography which constitutes a valuable narrative source, in contrast with those on whom Szemethy has focused in his research.

Finally, some remarks should be made with regards to the structure and appearance of the book. The method of presenting factual information, sometimes to a superfluous extent within the main text (apart from the three analyses of the "atypical" careers, where it seems necessary for the reader to be able to follow the text), is to some extent debatable, because the appendix contains detailed biographical data concerning each member of the group. Instead of this, the publisher could have published the tables in the appendix as an online searchable database (which would have been a more concise and economical option). Fortunately, this is also in progress, according to the latest information. Since the subject and name indices are missing from the volume, the use of the appendix and, in fact the whole volume is difficult. Nevertheless, the book can be downloaded for free, which remedies this problem to a certain extent. Notwithstanding these remarks, however, the richly illustrated and attractive book is well-edited and of very high quality.

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A Mighty Capital Under Threat: The Environmental History of London, 1800–2000. Edited by Bill Luckin and Peter Thorsheim. *History of the Urban Environment*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020. 282 pp.

This collection of ten papers covers the major urban environmental changes in London over the past two centuries. The British capital was the first global city: the explosion of population growth and the concentration of the population in a smaller area during the nineteenth century presented previously unprecedented challenges. At these times, as was true in many countries in Europe, Central Europe, including the Hungarian capital, followed the technical and scientific innovations introduced in London in response to urbanization. From the 1850s onwards, London made several environmental improvements in order to enhance the living and health conditions of its citizens. Alongside news and publications, word was also spread by the flow of British professionals to Europe. Their role in the major infrastructure projects in Budapest (e.g., the Chain Bridge, the water and sewerage networks, etc.) also makes this volume of studies of particular interest to specialists in the history of Central Europe.

The book is introduced by a substantial editorial foreword, which provides insights into the historiography of urban environmental history followed by a brief overview of the last two centuries of London's environmental history and the major crises and problems the city faced.

Jim Clifford's study ("Greater London's Rapid Growth, 1800–2000") describes the city's growth over the last two centuries and the changes that have occurred, drawing primarily on a comparative analysis of maps. Defining (the boundaries of) the city is extremely difficult. The administrative boundaries do not cover the whole of the city's surroundings, and local government in this period operated quite independently of the (otherwise weak) central leadership. This and the following study, in its concluding remarks, draw attention to the increasingly serious and urgent need to address the continuous risk of flooding as a result of climate change and the city's expansion. The second paper, by Christopher Hamlin ("Imagining the Metropolitan Environment in the Modern Period"), examines the history of London as an environment, with a specific focus on the human aspect of how contemporary people understood the city as a physical and social medium.

Anne Hardy's study ("Death and the Environment in London, 1800–2000") examines the problems we have seen so far from demographic and

epidemiological perspectives. Rapid population growth in the nineteenth century presented environmental challenges to housing, and mortality rates were extremely high. The city authorities were unable to cope with these issues until the second half of the century. The problem was linked first to pollution and poverty and, from the middle of the century onwards, more specifically to the quality of air, water, and geographical locations and to periodic outbreaks of epidemics (e.g., cholera and typhoid). Environmental improvements were sought as a solution, and a slow decline in mortality did indeed begin. Contemporary and historical observations have described London as an environmental death trap, but this picture is much worse than the actual situation was. According to Hardy, this could be explained by poor central control, as the various historical studies have always been concerned with the administration of a given local borough, and thus the London-wide context is not really known.

Christopher Ferguson ("London and Early Environmentalism in Britain, 1770–1870") examines the relationship between early environmentalists and London. The individuals and associations that fell into this category sought to understand the various impacts of urban growth on the environment with the aim of protecting and improving human life and its values. In many respects, they were important predecessors to today's environmentalists. Although the medical approach of the 1870s focused more on the human body than on the living environment in terms of the development of disease, the spread of the idea of prevention and control led many European cities to focus on environmental hazards in terms of public health.

Finally, a later study in the book by Bill Luckin and Andrea Tanner ("A Once Rural Place?: Environment and Society in Hackney, 1860–1920") also belongs to this thematic unit. This paper is directly linked to Ferguson's study through its examination of the relationship between sanitation and environmental practices in Hackney, an inner London borough. The paper reviews the environmental hazards associated with health problems already identified in earlier studies. By the 1920s, the influence of the sanitary movement, which linked moral conditions to health, was beginning to fade. This case study also reflects and supports Hardy's demographic conclusions.

Peter Thorsheim's study ("Green Space in London: Social and Environmental Perspectives") looks into the evolution of green space in London and the uses of green spaces over the past two centuries. The notion of sustainability, in which environmental, social, and economic issues are inextricably intertwined, are traced in this study of the history of uses of green space.

Leslie Tomory's study ("Moving East: Industrial Pollution in London, 1800–1920") explores London's industrial pollution problems. The crises caused by industrial pollution in the nineteenth century were not as acute as the epidemics and pollution around dwellings, and they therefore have attracted less attention. Industry representatives also made it difficult for local authorities to regulate industries, and eventually they had to be regulated at government level. The city's air was gradually cleaner as factories moved eastwards, where they could operate under less regulated conditions, but it was not until the mid-twentieth century that real changes were made in relation to smog.

Two papers in this volume are dedicated specifically to a historical examination of the problem of water supply. Vanessa Taylor's study ("Water and Its Meanings in London, 1800–1914") examines the changing meanings and management of water in the long nineteenth-century London. The chapter provides a substantial chronological summary of the history of water supply in London. The paper then thematically reviews the city's debates about local supply, the relationship between changing conceptions of water and sanitation, and the changing forms and roles of domestic supply in everyday life. Increasing water supply in response to an elevated demand facilitated further population growth in expanding urban spaces. The possibilities and conditions of water availability for urban dwellers improved considerably, but major infrastructure decisions were made over their heads, and the ongoing debates about this in the nineteenth century were linked to London's governance mechanisms (e.g., the lack of central control and the strength of local government). There were conflicting priorities regarding urban rivers (the public was more concerned with water supply and sanitation, while the administration was basically interested in the function of rivers as a pollution removal system, although it monitored their deteriorating condition over time), but their "natural" state did not yet matter much. The idea of the river as an ecosystem had not yet been raised. The final chapter of the book also expands on the issue of water supply and the urban environmental history of London with a comparative study of New York by Bill Luckin and Joel A. Tarr ("Water for the Multitudes: London and New York, 1800–2016"). As Taylor does in his study, Luckin and Tarr examine the ways in which the growing population was supplied with water. Which proved more efficient, a privately controlled water supply or a publicly funded water supply? New York's system, established by the 1830s, solved the problem of supply through the use of sources far from the city. The water quality was better, but this meant regular conflicts with the locals, with whom a final agreement was

only reached in 1995. In London, the problems of municipal administration were seriously resolved in 1902, when water supply was transferred from private companies to the then Metropolitan Water Board, which significantly improved the situation.

The volume concludes with an extensive appendix of notes and an index to the studies. In the former, the authors have taken care to draw the reader's attention to a large body of additional literature on the various subtopics. The index is very rich, with names of persons, geographical names, and key terms. It is a particularly useful tool for the sub-topics that are covered by several studies from different perspectives (e.g., London's administration, different territorial definitions, environmental and epidemiological issues, etc.).

Most of the studies are well structured, and cross-references between the chapters help the reader find links within a given topic. Hamlin's study, which seeks to examine the global city from several angles, stands out somewhat. It fits in the volume in terms of its topic and ambitions, but it is more of an essay that raises thought-provoking points. Rather than dwell on the classic topics of urban environmental history, these papers offer a glimpse into the history of various complex debates (urban green use, the construction and control of urban space, the many different meanings of pollution and water, etc.). There is also a strong emphasis on the current and future impact of acute problems.

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Vielfalt ordnen: Das föderale Europa der Habsburgermonarchie (Vormärz bis 1918). By Jana Osterkamp. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020. 531 pp.

In the historiography, the Habsburg Monarchy has long been characterized as the “prison of the peoples” (*Völkerkerker*), a state which, allegedly, would inevitably have fallen apart because of “nationality conflicts” while it was also (again, allegedly) shaped first and foremost by the issues of “nationality politics.” However, in the more recent scholarship, more emphasis has been put (not least because of the pioneering works of Pieter Judson) on the fact that the Habsburg Monarchy offered a legal framework for different identities and self-localizations, beyond the national cluster thinking, and represented a functioning legal system.

While the micro-historical studies explore the complexity of the local level, Jana Osterkamp has tried to put these local pieces of the puzzle together in a new narrative. Given her legal and historical knowledge, Osterkamp is able to interpret new findings of Habsburg research from a legal perspective.

With her innovative concept of the “cooperative empire,” Osterkamp succeeds in capturing both in historical and legal terms the *supranational and proto-federalist* character of the Habsburg Monarchy, especially the Austrian half of the empire. She introduces the concept of the “cooperative empire” as a description for legal and political opportunities beside and among the local structures (Jana Osterkamp, *Cooperative Empires* [2016]). The concept emphasizes integration, equality, and symmetries among the imperial “peripheries.” Therefore, the Habsburg Monarchy can be understood as an interdependence of several centers and peripheries, in which a complex multi-level system was established beyond (and even against) the imperial centers.

This approach allows Osterkamp to make the supranational character and the legal-administrative functions of the Habsburg Monarchy more visible. Statehood was not nationalized in Austria (Pieter M. Judson, *L’Autriche-Hongrie était-elle un empire?* [2008]), and the Habsburg Monarchy did not grant any single people a constitutionally anchored supremacy because there was no “nation” in the sense of a political nation (Peter Urbanitsch, *Pluralist Myth and National Realities* [2004]). A very important legitimization function was therefore assigned to the law (James Shedel, *The Problem of Being Austrian* [2001]). Despite the empire’s ethnic-linguistic, religious, and regional diversity, which would have made neither the hegemony of a nation nor a democratic nation-state possible, all citizens

enjoyed the same rights in the Austrian part of the Monarchy, regardless of their ethnic or religious affiliation or their professed native tongue.

In her new book, Osterkamp applies the results of federalism studies to the Habsburg Monarchy. She comes to the conclusion that proto-federalist elements can be recognized in the complex structure of Austria-Hungary, which, on the one hand, could not yet clearly come into play at the time (because of crown land interests, nationalisms, and the idea of an Austrian confederation), but which, on the other hand, anticipated a post-nation-state age of the “political.” Osterkamp perceives federalism as a pre- and post-modern idea (p.2 et sq.). In the age of emerging nationalisms and nation-states of the late nineteenth century, this federalist-supranational idea might seem outdated, but especially for the Habsburg Monarchy, the existing structures (such as the crown lands) gave new impulses and meanings while at the same time opening up discourses for new constitutional ideas.

With the concept of federalism, Osterkamp can overcome a state-focused perspective in both historical and legal debates: “Multi-level systems of rule do not have to be sovereign state in their entirety if one wants to examine them as federal systems” (p.10). In this sense, Osterkamp understands federalism as a *“vertical division of the state power by different decision-making levels within a long-term existing political order”* (p.215, emphasis in original).

The lack of a unified nation does not turn out to be backwardness or a reason for decay, but rather enabled new paths and ideas for an empire that had to legitimize itself beyond the “national”: “The state doctrine of the Habsburg Monarchy could not rely on the central idea of the nation. The place of the nation-state was taken by an enlightened ‘overall state idea’ [Gesamtstaatsidee] oriented towards the effectiveness and welfare of the population, on which Austrian political science had been working since the 18th century” (p.47). The social pluri-culturalism and the imperial-supranational structure corresponded to a formalistic-legalistic understanding of law, which—instead of relying on metajuristic-fictional and emotionally charged categories, such as “nation” or “state”—brought the dynamic processuality and the positivistic formality of the legal system to the fore (Urbanitsch [2004]). The lack of a unified “nation” and even the lack of such a state idea favored a model in which law and administration (as form and function) stood at the very center of state activities. This explains the strongly legalistic tradition of Austrian legal thought, which continued to have an effect after 1918 (and in fact until today) (Ewald Wiederin, *Denken vom Recht her* [2007]).

Osterkamp gives plurality and supranationality, long considered as deficits of the Habsburg Monarchy, a positive meaning. Although the Habsburg Monarchy could not build one nation (p.121), its constellation enabled a system in which ideologically motivated terms, like nation-state and sovereignty, were not in the foreground. The Habsburg Monarchy yielded a multi-level structure of the administration instead of centralized, one-dimensional governance (pp.87, 214 et sq.). Osterkamp differentiates between various forms of federal structures (administrative federalism, crown land federalism, union of dualism), which she compares with the federalist ideas of the time (trialism, non-territorial personal autonomy, a “United States of Austria,” etc.) (p.413).

Osterkamp’s analysis offers a new explanation for the state structure and cooperation within the Habsburg Monarchy, and it may also explain the discrepancy between the narrative of the “prison of the peoples” and the reality of a functioning (although muddled) administration. Pieter Judson ascribes a certain theatricality to Viennese politics: polarizing debates on the stage, but cooperation behind it, or, as Osterkamp writes: “People talked about each other in public, and in the back rooms with each other” (p.224).

Osterkamp investigates not only the structures existing at the time or the federalist (federalizing) proposals, but also takes into account the reality of proto-federalist cooperation as well, for example among the crown lands vis-à-vis Vienna. Her book also analyses the different compromise models (in Moravia and Galicia), the crown land conferences, the petition practice of the local population (especially in Galicia), the financial equalization between the crown lands and between Vienna and Budapest. Separate chapters are devoted to the proto-federalist agricultural, social, educational, administrative, and health policies.

Jana Osterkamp’s monography thus represents the first attempt to describe the constitutional functioning and the administrative practices of the Habsburg Monarchy as part of her innovative concept (“cooperative empire”) and also with regard to today’s jurisprudential and theoretical debates on supranational, federalist entities (like the European Union). It is an admirable attempt impressive in its findings and insights.

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Milan Rastislav Štefánik: The Slovak National Hero and Co-Founder of Czechoslovakia. By Michal Kšíňan. London–New York: Routledge, 2021. pp. 300.

In recent decades, Milan Rastislav Štefánik (1880–1919) has become one of, if not the, most important Slovak historical figures in Slovakia. Born in Nitra County, he left Hungary in 1898 after completing grammar school, first to study in Prague and then to live in France as an astronomer. He then spent years traveling the world and became a prominent figure in the French scientific and political elite. In 1912, he acquired French citizenship. He joined the French army when the war broke out and used his contacts with members of the political elite to reach Prime Minister Aristide Briand, through Czech émigrés Tomas Garrigue Masaryk, whom he knew from Prague, and Edvard Beneš. Together with them, he quickly won support among the great powers for the post-war liquidation of the Monarchy and the creation of new state structures. Štefánik's political vision and his diplomatic and military organizational work thus played a major role in the creation of the new state of Czechoslovakia. Tragically, however, Štefánik never actually set foot on the soil of this new state. On his journey home, not far from Bratislava, his plane crashed on landing.

Several impressive papers on Štefánik's life and work have been published in recent years. One of Kšíňan's innovations in this already vibrant discourse is that he has created a deconstructionist biography: he deliberately does not follow a linear chronological sequence from birth to death (and does not bring his narrative to a close with Štefánik's death, but rather ends much later). This method allows Kšíňan to focus on what he considers the most important issues in Štefánik's life. Given the complexity of Štefánik's personality and the remarkable turns his life took, it would be almost impossible to organize these penetrating analyses into a straight narrative. Over the course of some 39 years (and especially during the last decade and a half of his life), Štefánik pursued a multifaceted career that was almost unprecedented not only in Hungary, but probably in Europe. This presents the historian with daunting challenges. Within the framework of a single narrative, one has to delve into the inner workings of the French astronomical society of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries while also considering the subtle shifts in domestic politics in Ecuador, France, Bohemia (or the Czech lands), Russia, England, the United States, Italy, and Romania, not to mention the systems of rules and customs in the French salons, the functioning of the Masonic lodges, and countless other contexts,

for without this detailed backdrop, Štefánik's life and achievements are hardly comprehensible.

After an introductory historical overview intended presumably for the non-Slovak reader, Kšiňan has divided his book into four major themes. It is worth noting that he does not cover Štefánik's entire life. Apart from a few digressions into some of the events of Štefánik's youth, he concentrates on the last 15 years of his life, the period between 1904 and 1919, when Štefánik gradually emerged as an increasingly prominent figure in intellectual and political life in France. As Kšiňan himself states in the preface, he is primarily interested in the Štefánik as the "Slovak national hero." More precisely, he seeks to consider the qualities, networks, relationships, and events in Štefánik's adult life, between the ages of 24 and 39, that made him such an important figure, so rapidly elevated by the new state to the status of a national icon.

The first chapter, which begins with a discussion of Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of social capital, examines how Štefánik created his network of French social contacts before the outbreak of World War I and how he transformed his social and cultural capital into economic capital. Kšiňan also considers how Štefánik used his interests and hobbies (astronomy, photography, a passion for collecting, an interest in the arts) to maintain his social capital. This analysis is important, as it furthers our grasp of how Štefánik was able to convince French decision-makers in the middle of the war to consider the views of two Czech emigrants (Masaryk and Beneš), how he was able to persuade them and Western public opinion to entertain a new vision of the future of Central Europe, and how he was able to balance the interests of Russia and France, powers which initially had different ideas about how to resolve the Czechoslovak question.

In the second chapter, Kšiňan uses Max Weber's concept of the charismatic leader as a point of departure to explore, through various case studies and micro-studies, how Štefánik influenced his those around him, or in other words, how he used the network of relationships presented in the first chapter. Kšiňan devotes particular attention, for example, to Štefánik's relationship with women, which was one of the most important elements of this network. From his Prague years onwards, Štefánik, who apparently was not a terribly fetching man, eagerly sought the company of the daughters of wealthy, powerful, aristocratic families with good connections, and he often accepted large donations from them. This subchapter also offers a good example of how Kšiňan, despite his basic premise, maintains a critical distance from the subject of his study. For

instance, he makes the following contention: “Štefánik’s flirtations and frequent partings were a consequence of his impulsiveness and fear of being trapped by common stereotypes of relationships. Often, however, he enjoyed the process of seducing and conquering women; he was more of a seducer than a Don Juan. The interest of ladies certainly catered to his egocentrism and narcissism since he always needed to be in the spotlight.” The analysis of Štefánik’s mission to Ecuador is also outstanding. It offers a detailed discussion of the geopolitical context of Štefánik’s secret mission and how his negotiations brought the South American country into the French sphere of interest.

In the third chapter, which follows the most classical format of a biographical narrative, Kšíňan presents Štefánik’s military and political activities during World War I. Unlike many earlier authors, however, Kšíňan does not take the founding of Czechoslovakia as a fundamental goal, i.e., as a goal established at the outset. Rather, he suggests that it was a political innovation which took clearer form during the war years.

The final major section analyses Štefánik’s identity and the political debates after his death, showing that although Štefánik was far from satisfied with the setup of the new republic, he was not fundamentally in favor of Slovak aspirations for autonomy. Rather, he would have strengthened the Slovak presence in a centralist state on the basis of parity rather than Czech dominance. The last two subchapters provide superb micro-examinations of two myths about Štefánik. The first concerns the circumstances of his death, about which conspiracy theories are still common (for instance, that his plane was shot down by Hungarians or that it was mistakenly shot down by Slovaks who, because of its Italian markings, mistook it for a Hungarian plane, or that Beneš had the plane shot down, or that Štefánik deliberately committed suicide). With exemplary thoroughness and critical distance, Kšíňan points out that the circumstances of the crash cannot be clarified because of the negligence of the investigating authorities, and he convincingly refutes various unfounded theories. The second myth concerns Štefánik’s alleged Freemasonry, which is also a popular theory, though one finds no support for it in any sources and there are far more arguments against it than there are for it.

Kšíňan’s monograph, which draws on a vast source base of unprecedented size and new methodological approaches, persuasively rewrites the historical narrative concerning Milan Rastislav Štefánik, calling attention to details which previously were only superficially understood, introducing new topics, and refuting stubborn legends. The book is clearly one of the best biographies of

the Štefánik. Kšiňan takes as his point of departure the notion that Štefánik is a national hero, but the book is really about much more than that. It furthers a far more nuanced understanding of who this man, known today as a Slovak national hero, really was.

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The Hungarian Agricultural Miracle? Sovietization and Americanization in a Communist Country. By Zsuzsanna Varga. Translated by Frank T. Zsigó. The Harvard Cold War Studies Book Series. Lanham, Boulder, New York and London: Lexington Books, 2021, 323 pp.

Zsuzsanna Varga's comprehensive account of the political economy of Hungarian agriculture during the Cold War exemplifies the international and transnational turn in research on agricultural and rural history. The book is ordered chronologically and consists of seven chapters. After the introduction, which outlines the research approach, chapter one offers an overview of the Stalinist system of socialist agriculture and exports to East Central Europe. Chapters two, three, and four cover the phases of the collectivization of Hungarian agriculture and the retrenchment to private farming from 1949 to 1961. Chapters five and six deal with the transfer of Western knowledge and technology, including "closed production systems" from the USA, after the conclusion of collectivization. Chapter seven evaluates the successes and limitations of the "Hungarian agricultural miracle" in the wider context. In the conclusion, Varga synthesizes the central insights of her study.

Using a rich body of macro-, meso- and micro-level sources (official documents, international press, oral interviews, etc.), Varga explains the shifting route of Hungarian agriculture between the onset of land collectivization in 1949 and its definite abandonment in 1989 within the framework of "transnational comparison" (i.e., the combination of comparative and entangled approaches). She highlights two transsystemic transfers of politico-economic institutions, technology, and knowledge to Hungary: first, the "Eastern transfer," which transplanted the Stalinist system of socialist agriculture, regarded as an "inner colony" for industrialization, into a pre-socialist mode of farming built on private property and market orientation; second, the "Western transfer," which transplanted a capitalist production system into a socialist agriculture based on the Soviet model. Varga argues that Americanization was one sort of solution to performance problems caused by Sovietization in the 1960s. By the 1970s, a "hybrid agriculture" had emerged in Hungary that applied the latest Western agricultural technology on state farms and producer cooperatives created on the basis of the Soviet model. The end of food shortages and the growth of agricultural surpluses were labeled as the "Hungarian agricultural miracle."

Varga clearly shows that the Hungarian agricultural transformation during the Cold War was not a well-paved path but, rather, a rocky road. Waves of state-

led collectivization according to the Soviet model were interrupted by phases of de-collectivization that reflected the destabilization of the socialist regime, mediation by its agrarian lobby, and peasant agitation. While the Soviet model was implemented, negotiated, and adapted top-down by the Hungarian state apparatus, the adoption of Western technology and knowledge emerged bottom-up through partnerships of state farms and producer cooperatives with private companies from beyond the Iron Curtain. The resulting division of labor involved large-scale state and collective farms specializing in capital-intensive arable production as well as small private household plots specializing in labor-intensive vegetable, fruit, and livestock production. The study shows institutional and technological transfer between countries with different political and economic systems can increase agricultural performance, provided that actors at sub-national levels gain agency to mediate between systemic imperatives and everyday priorities.

Although Varga does not refer to James Scott's notion of "high-modernism," her monograph contributes to the debate on state-led agrarian change in the twentieth century. The emergence of a both Sovietized and Americanized mode of farming in Hungary highlights the limits of top-down development schemes by authoritarian nation states and their technocratic planners as well as the potentials of bottom-up initiatives from the countryside. Rather than state-enforced "high modernism," the emergence of a Hungarian "hybrid agriculture" indicates a case of "low modernism" that shifts national economic performance through informal and formal institutionalization of sub-national grassroots activities. The creative adaptation of state-imposed collectivization by local actors – which was quite risky, as indicated by show trials against cooperative leaders – is framed in terms of a "successful alternative" to the Soviet model. From the prevailing socioeconomic perspective, this conclusion seems reasonable. However, doubts arise concerning the "successful" and "alternative" character of the "Hungarian agricultural miracle" when one shifts to a socio-natural view. The Western technoscientific package adopted by Hungarian state farms and producer cooperatives as well as the state-enforced Soviet model they struggled with rested on similar agro-industrial imperatives: the replacement of muscle power by machinery and agrochemicals based on fossil energy, the dissolution of the symbiotic relationship between arable and livestock farming, and the shift of both land and labor productivity according to the needs of industrial society. Seen from a socio-natural angle, the transnationally induced modernization of Hungarian agriculture during the Cold War might appear much "higher" (in Scott's terms) than from a purely socioeconomic view.

This critical comment should not cast a poor light on the rich evidence provided by the monograph, but rather indicates a direction for future research on the “Hungarian agricultural miracle.” The well-researched and well-narrated account of the Hungarian agricultural transformation will be of great value not only for scholars of rural and agricultural history, but also for anyone interested in the international and transnational history of Communist Europe during the Cold War.

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