

BOOK REVIEWS

The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Edited by Gábor Kármán and Lovro Kunčević. (The Ottoman Empire and Its Heritage.) Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2013. 450 pp.

The volume under review was published as a result of the conference by the same title that was held in May 2009 in Dubrovnik (Croatia). The conference brought together scholars united by the goal of reassessing the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and its tributaries in the course of the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. The major success of the volume is that the authors managed to challenge an approach deeply enrooted in many national historiographies, in which the alleged statuses of the Early Modern states seem to reflect more the questions of national dignity that are articulated today by their successors than they do any reliable assessment of the available sources. The authors whose essays have been included in this volume have situated their research within the context of modern Ottoman studies in order to focus not on the struggles of the tributaries for self-governance associated with autonomy and, furthermore, with the independence of the respective states, but rather on peculiarities of their functioning within the Ottoman Empire.

In the introduction, the editors point out that the need to consider the legal status, military cooperation and diplomatic performance of the tributaries specifically from the Ottoman perspective gains its particular importance in part because of the fact that recently scholars of Ottoman history have been revising both the nature of the Ottoman Empire and its strategies of state-building. Specifically, recent scholarship stresses the composite nature of the Empire and suggests that it may prove important to analyze the performance of the central authorities as trend-setters, while the trends themselves shifted considerably in the process of adjusting to local conditions of the particular provinces or tribute-paying entities. At the same time, the editors of the volume emphasize the importance of not comparing each tributary state to some “ideal tributary,” which existed only in the bureaucratic reality of legal prescriptions, and exploring instead the actual statuses and performances on a case by case basis. They also suggest introducing a more substantial comparative perspective in order to move beyond judgment-based categories and considering the functioning of

the integral parts of the Empire. Thus, the essays are intended to offer a more nuanced comparative understanding of the tributary states to the Ottoman Empire and add an imperial perspective by using appropriate Ottoman sources.

The volume consists of four separate sections the first three of which address the legal status of the tributaries, diplomatic communication between the tributaries and the Empire, and military cooperation between the tributaries and the Empire. This is followed by a concluding section offering insights into how an understanding of these issues may enrich current discussions of broader topics within Ottoman studies.

The section devoted to the legal status of the Ottoman tributaries contains four articles dealing with (1) the cases of Crimean Khanate, (2) the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, (3) the principality of Transylvania and (4) the Cossack Ukraine. In the first of these articles, Viorel Panaite analyzes the cases of Moldavia and Wallachia. Developing a conceptual and terminological framework for his study, Panaite encourages scholars to abandon widely used inappropriate terminology borrowed from European practice, such as the “vassal–suzerain” relationship or “autonomy,” which have no parallels in the Ottoman legal practice. Instead, he suggests consulting wide range of Ottoman sources for both the appropriate conceptual apparatus and a better understanding of the nature of the relationships of the principalities to the Empire. Regarding the notion of the Empire as an entity permeated by the idea of universal sovereignty and composed of the lands both under direct Ottoman administration and the tributaries, Panaite affirms that the rule of the sultan Suleiman the Magnificent was a dividing line in the history of the legal status of both Moldavia and Wallachia. He demonstrates that at this particular time the subordinate status of the principalities can be clearly identified in the Ottoman sources. Specifically, as of the mid-sixteenth century, the territories of the principalities are depicted as located within the borders of the House of Islam; the voivodes of both Moldavia and Wallachia were regarded as governors of the provinces within “Well-protected Domains,” and the terminology used in reference to the inhabitants of the principalities did not differ from the terms employed for the other non-Muslim subjects of the sultan. In the end, Panaite addresses the issue of the “old privileges,” which Moldavian and Romanian national historiographies cite as evidence of the alleged “semi-independent” status of Moldavia and Wallachia. According to Panaite, the “old privileges,” which were actively used in the political discourse of the last quarter of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth in order to further

international recognition of the newly emerging Kingdom of Romania, were the result of the codification of customary practices of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in later periods.

In her article, Natalia Królikowska uses the case of the Crimean Khanate to explore the question of what it meant literally to be a tributary and whether the Crimean Khanate met the criteria to qualify as one. In her analysis, Królikowska considers the attributes of exclusive royal authority suggested by Hanafi jurists, such as the practice of mentioning the sultan's name in the Friday prayer, collecting poll-taxes, and distributing booty. Using Crimean chronicles as her major source, she demonstrates that the practices regarding these three indicative issues were rather ambiguous. The sources contain contradictory information regarding mention of the khan's and sultan's name in the *hutbe*; they provide no evidence that Crimea ever paid any sort of poll tax or sent a specified share of booty to the sultan. This ambiguity is further emphasized in the other important practices that could have been signs of the presence or lack of supreme authority over a subject. On one hand, the sultan was able to control accession to the Crimean throne, though the extent of this influence varied in different periods, ranging from merely approval to the actual authority to appoint the Crimean khans. On the other hand, Crimean khans enjoyed a number of privileges normally reserved for supreme sovereigns, such as maintaining their own diplomatic relations, minting coins, and keeping control over the network of post stations. This article is interesting in part because, alongside the author's careful analysis of the sources, it also provides discussion of important secondary questions that require further research. For example, did the Ottoman Empire perceive Muscovy as a tributary state because the latter paid "pominki" to the Crimean khan, and until when was "pominki" regarded as a tribute? Or when and under what circumstances was Ottoman suzerainty over the Crimean khanate established and what symbols and rituals (if any) played roles in this process?

Teréz Oborni suggests another set of criteria on the basis of which to address the same question about the meaning of being a tributary in the case of Transylvania. The first is the title used to address the ruler of Transylvania (voivode or prince), the second involves the terms employed to refer to the territory of Transylvania (province or country), and the third and last is the practice of accession of the Transylvanian ruler (appointed by the Ottomans or freely elected by the estates). To provide necessary context, Oborni examines the double-faced policy of Transylvania in the course of the sixteenth century and its simultaneous acknowledgment of the sovereignty of both the Ottomans and

the Habsburgs. The author draws particular attention to the issue of titles, which were used as political instruments and specifically employed by Transylvanian rulers to demonstrate their loyalty to both emperors. Oborni concludes that specific features of Transylvanian tributary status were the consequences of the double dependency of Transylvania, which managed to simultaneously find its place within two different legal systems: as a tributary of the Ottoman Empire on the one hand and as a province of the Kingdom of Hungary on the other.

Similarly, in his article on the legal status of Ragusa, Lovro Kunčević encourages historians to consider the integration of the Republic of Ragusa into two different international communities, that of *Res Publica Christiana* and that of the Ottoman Empire. In this respect, he urges his reader to disregard two simplistic views on the status of Ragusa as either a dependent state subordinated to the sultan or an independent entity that merely paid tributes for in exchange for trading privileges. He points out the very peculiar kind of Ragusan submission stipulated by its role as an intermediary in the relationship between sovereign Christian rulers and the Ottoman Empire. The author devotes considerable attention to the political vocabulary of Ragusa in his attempt to determine precisely when some of the terms conveyed actual meaning and when they were used as parts of polite formulae. Kunčević points out that the diplomatic strategies of the Ragusan envoys in Istanbul included avoiding open discussions of the status of the Republic and using a diplomatic vocabulary with a double meaning. Taking into account the fact that Ragusa belonged to both the European and the Ottoman international communities, the author concludes that the issue of the status of Ragusa cannot be productively discussed in the framework of a single legal tradition.

The section ends with an essay by Victor Ostapchuk, who attempts to arrive at a comprehensive explanation of *de jure* and *de facto* status of the Ukrainian Cossacks with regard to the Ottoman Empire. Regarding the payment of tribute as the major defining feature of a tributary, Ostapchuk claims that, as in the case of the Ukrainian Cossacks tribute was never imposed and there is little evidence that it was ever seriously discussed, technically Cossacks were not Ottoman tributaries. Providing wide political context, Ostapchuk addresses the reasons why Porte did not get fully involved in Ukraine and shows how this lack of involvement influenced the destiny of the emerging Cossack state.

The section devoted to the diplomacy of the tributary states in the Ottoman system consists of three articles. Geographically, it includes Transylvania, Moldavia, Wallachia, and Dubrovnik. It opens with an article by Gábor Kármán

on the diplomatic representation of tributary states (with specific focus on the principality of Transylvania) in Istanbul and the markers of sovereignty or subordination that were employed in the processes of diplomatic interaction. Specifically, Kármán explores the structure of diplomatic missions; the ranks of the diplomats who were sent as representatives and the respective titles used in Transylvanian and Ottoman practices; and diplomatic performance both in and out of the ceremonial space. The broad comparative perspective definitely adds value to his inquiry. Taking into account the limited control of the sultan over Ottoman borderlands, Kármán suggests including non-state actors in the study. In the end, he outlines common features of the diplomatic practices of the representatives of the tributaries and those of independent powers, as well as the distinctions that allow us to understand their different status in the diplomatic hierarchy of the Ottoman Empire. At the same time, Kármán points out the differences between the treatment of tributaries and the imperial peripheries, stressing the complicated nature of the Ottoman diplomatic system, which does not allow one to use the simplistic terms “independent” or “fully subordinated” when referring to the status of any of the tributary states, including Transylvania.

Vesna Miović examines the complicated status of Ragusa, which enjoyed triple protection by the Porte, Spain, and the popes and until 1526 paid tribute to both the sultan and the king of Hungary. Under these circumstances, the activities of Ragusan diplomats were aimed at maintaining the existing balance in the Ottoman capital. They therefore tended to make extensive use of rhetorical figures that emphasized the difficulties Ragusa endured in order both to pay tribute and to offer the Porte the best of its services. Obviously, the purpose of these rhetorical figures was to raise the “price” of Ragusan loyalty in the diplomatic interchange with the Ottomans. Miović’s most significant contribution with this article is the reconstruction of Ragusan diplomat’s unofficial connections, which are usually extremely difficult to follow. Miović presents an elaborated diplomatic network, which extended far beyond the official consulates and involved confidants from the Ragusan community, who offered trading or medical services to the Ottoman officials. She also outlines the importance of the family connections of the Ragusan resident consuls with the important Levantine families that provided access to a far-reaching espionage network. No doubt an understanding of the channels of information flows and the instruments with which it was distributed can help further a better grasp of the general logic of official diplomatic activity.

In his article, Radu Păun attempts to comprehend the logics of the regular anti-Ottoman uprisings that took place in Moldavia and Wallachia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He analyzes the dynamics of the uprisings from a number of perspectives, taking into account the personal careers of the rebels, the relationship between the two principalities and the Porte at certain periods of time and general European attitudes (including military plans and ideas about the destiny of the Ottoman Empire based on predictions that were made at the time). With regards to the careers of the rebellious voivodes, Păun takes into account their networks, which extended far beyond local Moldavian and Wallachian elites to both Habsburg and Ottoman dominions. At the same time, Păun assesses the instruments that were used by the Ottoman Empire in order to integrate the principalities into its “Well-protected Dominions,” such as assertion and maintenance of the right to appoint and “rotate” voivodes and the practice of taking their close relatives as hostages. Indeed according to Păun, the practice of rotation was at the core of the voivodes’ growing sense of insecurity, and it was this that pushed them to rebel against Ottoman power. He emphasizes that the principle of “the more you do, the more you must be able to do” principle was applied, so were a voivode to demonstrate a greater degree of loyalty, this might well result in more pressure from the Ottoman side. In the end, Păun urges historians to keep in mind that when contemporaries assessed Ottoman power, their views were based not on any sort of reliable data, but rather on rumors of various origins and propagandistic statements and predictions that clearly asserted the temporary character of Ottoman power. In Moldavia and Wallachia, the hope for a triumph of the Christians over the Ottomans was reinforced by the wish of the elites to preserve their status in the face of the harsh politics of rotation.

The next section of the volume is devoted to military cooperation between the Ottoman Empire and its tributaries. Ovidiu Cristea explores how Moldavian and Wallachian voivodes participated in the Ottoman military campaigns. He poses a number of previously unexplored questions concerning, for instance, the kinds of wars in which Moldavia and Wallachia were expected to participate, the duration of this participation, the forms of their military contribution, and the political vocabulary used to describe the assistance that was given by the principalities. Cristea uses the available sources to arrive at estimates of the actual military potential of Moldavia and Wallachia and to address their strategies of avoiding participation in the Ottoman military campaigns. He points out that insecurity and threats posed by neighboring powers were presented as the major

reason for the unwillingness of the voivodes to leave their principalities, whether to join Ottoman military campaigns or to deliver tributes in person. By providing evidence concerning how Moldavian and Wallachian voivodes managed to avoid participating in Ottoman military campaigns and the significant differences between the actual situation and the conditions stipulated in *ahidnâmes*, Cristea indirectly raises one more important issue, namely the role and function of *ahidnâme* (paragraphs of which were often overlooked in practice) in regulating the relationships between the Porte and its tributaries.

Mária Ivanics presents the very different case of the Crimean khanate, which did not pay tributes but did participate in the important campaigns of the sultan in Central and Eastern Europe. Stressing the importance of the roles played by the large and mobile Crimean army in these Ottoman campaigns, she examines the procedures through which the khan was engaged in a campaign and the peculiarities of Crimean–Ottoman collaboration.

In his article, János Szabó stresses the mutual nature of cooperation between the Ottoman Empire and its tributaries by analyzing the case of Transylvania. Specifically, he explores the military assistance that was provided by Transylvania to the Zápolya dynasty and the voivodeships of Moldavia and Wallachia in an attempt to defend this part of the Well-protected Domains from the devastating attacks launched by the Cossacks. The author identifies the Long Turkish War as the watershed in this practice of employing Transylvanian forces to assist other Ottoman tributaries, because it led to the growing influence of the Transylvanian prince in both of the voivodeships and threw into question the supreme Ottoman control of all three of the principalities. Analyzing the military conflicts in which Transylvania was directly or indirectly in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, Szabó examines how Transylvania's geographical position and military strength influenced the regional political landscape, including Moldavia, Wallachia, the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, and Hungary.

Finally, Domagoj Madunić suggests a new perspective from which to interpret Ragusa's strategies by adding a military component to the traditional view of Ragusa as the republic that was able literally to buy peace and resolve conflicts by purely diplomatic means. Madunić assesses Ragusa's military strength (including sea and land forces) and its defensive system (including fortifications and supporting infrastructure, such as arsenals and armories) at the turn of the seventeenth century. He contends that the Ragusan armed forces were significantly inferior to the armies of its mighty neighbors, and he arrives at the conclusion that the relative military weakness of Ragusa was one of the

key factors that kept it distant from the conflicts. In the end, he states that the major value of Ragusa in military terms lay in its facilities, such as arsenals and armories, as well as the system of fortifications, which surpassed those found in Venice.

The final section of the volume, which consists of the contributions by Sándor Papp and Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, demonstrates how analyses of the relationship between the tributaries and the Porte can contribute to broader discussions in the field of the Ottoman studies. Acknowledging that the Ottoman Empire was a far less centralized state than one might think on the basis of the descriptions in modern scholarship, Papp sees the essence of the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and its tributaries in their offers of compulsory services, including paying tribute or ceding the right to appoint (and depose) rulers in exchange for the sultan's protection. He adopts a comparative perspective on the status of both the Christian and Muslim vassals by contrasting the documents that formalized relationship of the Porte with both the categories and the views of Islamic legal doctrines on the limits of their autonomies. In the end, he argues that differences in the treatment of Christian and Muslim entities blurred with time, and by the sixteenth century the Empire employed very similar chancery practices, formal instruments and political vocabulary for both groups of subordinates. Finally, examining the political vocabulary, legal criteria and set of obligations practically performed by various tributaries, Dariusz Kołodziejczyk emphasizes that it is not worth attempting to squeeze available source material into the framework of universal judgments. Instead, he contends that it would be more productive to acknowledge the shifting, situational character of the relationships between the Ottoman Empire and the tributary states.

I would conclude with a summary of the many merits of this volume as an outstanding contribution to the field of Ottoman studies, as well as a few observations concerning its shortcomings. The most important strength of the volume is its clear conceptual framework. The editors and authors of the volume aim to challenge traditional attempts (recurrent in many national historiographies) to organize Early Modern source material according to modern logics of analysis and within modern conceptual frameworks, i.e. the notion that submission and independence should be regarded as complete antonyms and that practice was supposed to function strictly in the framework of the existing legal basis. Instead, the contributors to this volume seek to demonstrate both sides of the coin. On the one hand, the reader can once again raise questions

concerning the criteria on which to base the contention that any given state should be regarded as a “tributary,” as well as the sources on the basis of which these criteria could be established. On the other hand, one notes that the actual practices used by the Ottomans when dealing with their tributaries cannot be easily shrunk to fit into the framework suggested by the prescriptions of Islamic law. At the same time, a number of contributors put considerable effort into the job of reconstruction in order to get away from the “ideal picture” and show how political and diplomatic relationships functioned at the level of personalities and informal networks.

However, while they point out that the nature of the relationships between the Ottoman Empire and the state entities which are characterized as its tributaries was not stable and shifted over the course of time, the contributors pay little to no attention to the respective developments in the functioning of the Ottoman Empire itself. As explicitly stated in the introduction, it is vital, if one wishes to provide a meaningful context in which to understand the practices and strategies of the Ottoman tributaries, to consider developments in the state-building strategies of the Ottoman Empire. In other words, the question “what did it mean to be tributary?” is inseparable from the question “what did it mean to be imperial?” So one cannot but agree that paying more attention both to the developments initiated by the central government and those which happened as a matter of fact within integral parts of the Empire would add considerable depth to the analysis of both legal status and the practices of interaction between the tributaries and the Empire. The next issue is related to the declared aim of the volume to contribute to an assessment of the performance of the tributary states from the Ottoman perspective and with the use of the relevant Ottoman sources. In the end, in a number of cases this task remains to be done. Finally, I would make a remark concerning the conclusion suggested by the contributors, according to which the complex, semi-dependent (as well as semi-independent), vague status of the tributaries raises the question as to whether one can talk of the missions dispatched to (or residing in) Istanbul as “diplomatic” and their activity as “diplomacy.” The approach of assigning representatives of tributary states diplomatic functions can be justified when one takes into account the fact that modern scholarship avoids the term “diplomacy,” with its strong reference to modern practices when dealing with the Early Modern period, and instead prefers the phrase “diplomatic communication,” which seems more flexible. Nevertheless, a clarification of the concept of “diplomacy” in the Early Modern context would make the methodology of the volume more precise.

These critical remarks notwithstanding, the volume provides its readers with a unique opportunity to compare and contrast cases concerning a wide range of Ottoman tributaries and learn more about their distinctive features such as legal status, diplomatic performances, and military cooperation with the Ottoman Empire. One can observe how the Ottoman Empire developed a relationship with each of the tributaries on a situational basis and taking into account the background of the dynasty (as in the case of the Crimean Khanate), the practice of double submission (as in the case of Transylvania and Cossack Ukraine), the role of mediator in relations with the sovereign Christian rulers (as in the case of Ragusa), and the imposition of different sets of obligations under the pressure of circumstances (as in the case of Moldavia and Wallachia). Finally, the contributions clearly illustrate that there was no single international community, united by common principles. Rather, several international systems existed, each of which functioned according to its own peculiar rules. Many of the tributary states seem simultaneously to have belonged to more than one of these international systems, making it quite senseless to pose questions concerning which system of values might have been more “objective” and might help better define the “real” status of any of the tributary states.

Tetiana Grygorieva

What Is Microhistory? Theory and Practice. By István M. Szijártó and Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon. London–New York: Routledge, 2013. 181 pp.

Microhistory has been one of the most productive and innovative trends in contemporary historiography. The heyday of microhistory was the late 1970s and the 1980s, when its classic and most cited works were published, some of which not only produced important disputes in the field of historiography, but also reached a broader audience and became true bestsellers. And the influence of the microhistorical approach persists. Some of the most significant recent debates in the field of historiography have been connected to microhistory, including present-day disputes over postmodernism and other famous “turns”—the linguistic, narrative, anthropological, cultural, and so on.

The significance and notoriety of the trend are demonstrated by the newly published book, *What Is Microhistory?*, in which the historians István M. Szijártó and Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon try to sum up microhistory’s chief characteristics, place it in the field of contemporary historiography, and, more broadly, link it to recent works of scholarship in the humanities. It is not an easy task. In spite of the apparent similarities among microhistorical approaches, there are at least as many differences between and among the “classic” works: not only among the Italian, Anglo-Saxon, German, and French schools, but even, say, between the viewpoints and methodologies of the two most famous Italian microhistorians, Carlo Ginzburg and Giovanni Levi.

Thus, *What Is Microhistory?* has a twofold aim. On the one hand, it summarizes the most significant developments in microhistorical thought, specifying the common features of diverse works and tendencies. On the other hand, it points out the basic differences among them, and illuminates the difficulties and uncertainties inherent in these kinds of generalizations. The book also takes full advantage of the possibilities of dual authorship; because both writers are practicing (micro)historians, and because their special national and cultural backgrounds (one is Hungarian and the other Icelandic) yield exceptional perspectives, together they cover almost the entire spectrum of microhistory. Accordingly, their viewpoints afford a wider perspective than do books written by authors belonging to one or another of the leading schools of microhistory; their approaches do not seem to be bound to any given theory or methodology. The authors’ fundamental aim is to emphasize the multiple potential viewpoints from which microhistory can be appraised. Their twofold approach comprises

both the specific ways that each author sees the means and ends of microhistory, as well as the ambiguous and controversial nature of this historical (sub)discipline. *What is Microhistory?* thus offers at least two answers to its titular question, and allows the reader to formulate his or her own responses.

The first part of the book, written by István M. Szijártó, is comprehensive in character. The author summarizes the history of microhistory, describes its central tendencies, and gives a short introduction to the field's most famous works. He catalogs not just the Western (Italian, German, French, and Anglo-Saxon) books and essays, but also studies by Russian and Hungarian historians. Szijártó attempts to answer the question in the title by considering three fundamental characteristics of microhistorical works. First, he defines microhistory as "the intensive historical investigation of a relatively well defined smaller object, or a single event" (p.4). According to Szijártó, this small-scale analysis does not imply that microhistorical works are simply case studies, or that their main aim is merely the exhaustive examination of a given local phenomenon. The second fundamental characteristic of microhistory is its use of synecdoche, its examinations of the "ocean in the drop" as historians study seemingly unimportant phenomena try to answer "great historical questions." The third peculiarity of microhistory is connected to the former, and throws light upon the ideological and political stakes of this trend. According to Szijártó, this historiographical approach focuses definitively on social agency. "For microhistorians, people who lived in the past are not puppets on the hands of great underlying forces of history, but they are regarded as active individuals, conscious actors" (p.5). In other words, microhistory's second feature does not imply any kind of determinism, or that the events occurring at the micro level are merely miniature copies of "great historical processes."

In addition to the main authors and studies of microhistory, Szijártó also surveys some other trends and tendencies that could be connected with it. Thus, besides the "classical" works, he studies some movements that do not appear to be strictly microhistorical (German *Alltagsgeschichte*, Anglo-Saxon incident analysis, etc.), but do connect to one or two of the above-mentioned basic characteristics of the discipline. For instance, the concept of incident analysis introduced by Robert Darnton involves a kind of historical examination concentrated at the micro and individual level, which comports with Szijártó's first and third criteria. However, it does not satisfy the second condition because it does not formulate great, macro-level conclusions about the structure of the given society, focusing only on individuals' lived experiences and their frames of interpretation. Szijártó thus defines microhistory in both strict and broad senses.

One of the main purposes of his survey is to connect microhistory to this second feature, the problem of “great historical questions.” According to Szijártó, microhistory cannot be regarded as mere reaction to structuralist history, nor (as some postmodern thinkers have suggested) as self-contained studies that offer only local knowledge and deny the possibility of a total history. For example, as the Dutch philosopher of history Frank Ankersmit has declared, the microhistorical works of Ladurie, Ginzburg, and Zemon Davis are clear examples of a postmodern, fragmented, anti-essentialist historiography in which “the goal is no longer integration, synthesis, and totality, but it is those historical scraps which are the center of attention.”¹ However, this interpretation of microhistory usually meets with the disapproval of practicing microhistorians who definitively avow themselves to be anti-postmodernists.² Szijártó agrees with these sorts of postmodernist views, but only to a certain degree, since, according to him, the connection between global or total history and microhistory is more complicated. One of Szijártó’s most interesting analogies refers to fractal theory and the fractal-like character of microhistorical investigation. The geometrical forms of fractals, in which the same structures appear on different levels and at different scales, are metaphors for microhistorical works. Microhistorical practice does not begin with the event itself at the micro level, but with the macro-level structure, or as Szijártó puts it, the general picture the historian has formed for him- or herself, after decades of study, about a given period. According to Szijártó, historians, in the course of lengthy research, “meet scores of individual cases, and in one of these, the only one that they write up as microhistory, they recognize the features of a whole age or the complete problems they are studying” (p.64). This general picture is not the “reality” itself, but a mental representation of it, while the given event functions as a synecdoche of this larger mental image.

In another striking analogy, Szijártó cites a famous work of literary history, Erich Auerbach’s *Mimesis* (1946), which describes the chief methods for representing reality in Western literature from antiquity to the modern period. Auerbach chose seemingly random portions of great works (e.g. *The Bible*, Homer’s *Odyssey*, Stendhal’s *The Red and the Black*, and Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*) and tried to demonstrate their authors’ strategies of literary representation through close readings of these tiny parts. Aside from the fact that

1 Frank Ankersmit, *History and Thopology. The Rise and Fall of Metaphor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 176.

2 See for example Carlo Ginzburg, “Microhistory: Two or Three Things that I Know about It,” *Critical Inquiry* 20 (1993): 10–35.

Auerbach's method resulted partly from his material situation (the author stayed in Turkey during WW2, and thus could not access all the relevant literature), the analogy convincingly illustrates the possible relationships between the micro level of parts and fragments and the macro structures of literature and society.

However, if we accept Sziĵártó's view of the microhistorical event as a synecdoche of the representation of historical reality that exists in a historian's mind, we can connect his viewpoint to certain elements of the postmodernist approach. The mental representation of historical reality, as Hayden White stated in his classic work *Metahistory*, is created by a poetic act in that the historian prefigures the historical field by using one of the principal tropes of poetic language.³ Thus the work of the microhistorian, the specific event he or she finds and the analysis of it, could be considered a figurative representation of this prefigured historical reality. One could also interpret the Auerbach example as a reference to the poetic character of scientific research, given his statement in *Mimesis* that his working method was partly inspired by the modernist writers of the 20th century. The most important novelists of European modernism (Proust, Joyce, Virginia Woolf) did not attempt to represent the "total" reality of their age, but picked out tiny, seemingly insignificant scenes: a single ordinary day in the life of a Dubliner in Joyce's *Ulysses*, or two separate days in the lives of an English family on a Scottish island in Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. According to Auerbach, these parts represent entire realities that are only partially perceptible, and thus his method of analysis follows the representational methods of modernism.⁴ Likewise, Sziĵártó brings microhistory nearer to the poetic and fictional viewpoints of postmodernism, because, willingly or not, he strongly emphasizes the linguistic and poetic aspects of the microhistorian's work. Moreover, one might connect this synecdochic understanding of microhistory to certain theorists' claims to have found historical antecedents to modernist writing.⁵ And thus Sziĵártó's interpretation of microhistory is modernist inasmuch as he stresses the synecdochic (part/whole) character of historical analysis, whereas his emphasis on the poetic work of the microhistorian comes closer to postmodernism.

3 Hayden White, *Metahistory. The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 30–31.

4 Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 547–48.

5 See for example Hayden White, "The Burden of History," *History and Theory* 5, no. 2 (1966): 111–34; Lionel Gossman, "History and Literature. Reproduction or Signification" in *The Writing of History. Literary Form and Historical Understanding*, ed. H. Canary and H. Kozick (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 3–39.

The second part of the book, written by Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, uses another method and evinces a seemingly different approach to microhistory. This author bases his argumentation on three case studies. The first deals with the everyday lives of rural people in nineteenth-century Iceland, especially with popular attitudes toward death. The second is concerned with one of the most cited microhistorical works, *The Return of Martin Guerre* by Natalie Zemon Davis. Magnússon's third case study might seem peculiar at first glance, given that it is both a meta- and a micro-historical essay about the personal life of the author, specifically his love life and the texts he has produced from written documents and private memories of a particular love affair. Thus, the second part of the book does not attempt to cover the whole of the microhistorical corpus, but instead concentrates on a few local levels. These special case studies illustrate Magnússon's conception of the aims and possibilities of microhistory. As he argues it, the microhistorical approach works totally differently than larger-level investigations do, in that it uses different methods and different sources, and usually reaches different conclusions than do macro-level analyses. Magnússon's examination of Icelandic peasants' attitudes toward death includes a discussion of macro-level investigations based primarily on statistics. While from a macroanalytical viewpoint the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were a period of constant and steady progress in Icelandic rural life, at the individual level, according to the personal sources of the rural people themselves, a quite different, more pessimistic, even hopeless picture comes to light. Moreover, according to the author, the microhistorical approach does not necessarily have the above-mentioned synecdochic character; events at the micro level do not have to correspond to structural features of the macro level. Microhistory's change of scale (to quote the famous phrase of the French historian Bernard Lepetit) involves a change in one's view of history, too. Because the microhistorian concentrates on personal experiences at the individual level, he or she can answer only the questions that emerge at this micro scale, and thus his or her narrative will inevitably differ from the grand narratives of grand historical approaches.

The use of the phrase "grand narratives" is not accidental; Magnússon refers directly to postmodern interpretations of this concept. According to him, the microhistorical approach has a singular character in that it investigates events in their direct context, and this "singularization of history" means that microhistorical works cannot link themselves to great historical questions or "metanarratives." This explains Magnússon's specific, case-study-oriented approach, in that he does not want to give a "total picture" of microhistory or

describe a (meta)narrative for the discipline; he instead tries to demonstrate the operation of the metahistorical approach in certain micro-analyses.

The essay about the author's love life could be construed both as an example of a microhistorical study on the personal level and as a metahistorical examination of the relationship between a historian's sources and the narrative texts he or she produces from them. This is not merely an individual history, but also a brief analysis of the special case in which the subject of the narrative is the personal story of the historian himself. Magnússon gives an account of "what really happened," but also shows the differences in his approaches to the various sources, such as his personal diary, the letters of the woman he loved, and the emails this lady exchanged with her close friends about the love affair. The conclusion of his account is not a "postmodern" lamentation of the irreconcilable gap between sources and reality, but a demonstration of an approach he calls the analysis of "the textual environment" of an event. According to Magnússon, when a historian studies the textual traces of the past, he or she has to regard these texts not as mirror images of reality itself, but as complex entities whose formal and rhetorical attributes, circumstances of creation, cultural positions, and interactions are as important as any concrete statement they may make. His account reflects the difference between historian's narrative and the source materials in a specific case when the story is about him. However, it does not suggest that the event itself is inaccessible or that only multi-perspectival stories, like those of Akira Kurosawa's famous *Rashomon*, still exist. According to the author, the central opportunity of the microhistorical approach is to give up the intent to answer great questions and formulate metanarratives and instead to concentrate strictly on the micro level, on events themselves and the persons who produced and/or endured them.

In sum, the two authors' answers to the question *What Is Microhistory?* are as different as their writing strategies. While Szijártó uses a broader approach in trying to place this (sub)discipline in the greater field of historical science, Magnússon concentrates on particular works and events, emphasizing the unique character of microhistorical investigations. For this reason, the book is more than a simple introduction to microhistory. Although it is perfectly suitable as a guidebook to the subject, it is also a challenging and thought-provoking essay that leaves it to the reader to formulate his or her own personal opinions about the essence and aims of microhistory.

Tamás Kisantal

Imagináció és imitáció Zrínyi eposzában [Imagination and Imitation in Zrínyi's Epic]. By Farkas Gábor Kiss. Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2012. 298 pp.

At the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, at the dawn of modern Hungarian literary criticism and literary history, the interpretation of the poetry of Miklós Zrínyi (1620–64), which until then seemed to have been left in a Sleeping-beauty slumber, suddenly became a topic of pressing interest. One of the key issues of the discourse that emerged was the question of originality versus imitation in his compositions. This debate would not have created waves that can be felt to the present day had the issue of originality versus imitation been merely a question of literary theory. The topic at hand was not simply the methods of writing used by a single poet (Zrínyi), but rather the question of the national character of all of Hungarian culture and its relationship to the literary cultures of Western Europe.

According to poet, literary historian and theorist Ferenc Kölcsey (1790–1838), one can only speak of genuine originality in the case of the ancient Greeks (for instance Homer), since every other literary culture borrowed from its fires to light their torches.¹ Thus imitation, Kölcsey felt, was hardly something of which to be ashamed, since every literature imitated. Some fifty years later, however, Hungarian poet János Arany (1817–82), having compared Zrínyi's epic *Szigeti veszedelem* (1651; translated into English by László Körössy as *The Siege of Sziget*, 2011) with Torquato Tasso's (1544–95) *Gerusalemme liberata* (1575), came to the conclusion that Zrínyi's epic was a “meeker moon” that snatched its pale fire from the sun (meaning Tasso's epic). One can sense in Arany's remarks the inferiority complex that authors from all of the literary traditions of Central Europe felt when confronted with the cultures of Western Europe.

In his book, Farkas Gábor Kiss persuasively argues that the nineteenth-century and twentieth-century debates concerning Zrínyi's originality were indeed nineteenth-century and twentieth-century debates, and had little to do with the questions raised by authors of the seventeenth century. As he notes, originality “was not an essential product or value-creating element of the independent use

1 Ferenc Kölcsey, “Nemzeti hagyományok” [National Traditions], in idem, *Irodalmi kritikák és esztétikai írások* [Literary Critics and Essays on Aesthetics], ed. László Gyapay (Budapest: Universitas Kiadó, 2003), 517.

of the imagination or novel innovation in the seventeenth century” (p.12). The term “originality” was not even used in the Classical poetics or Classical rhetoric. The word “originality” was first used (by late Christian authors) to denote original sin. The first instance of the use of the French word *originalité* in writing is from 1699, and it was used to mean strange and bizarre and had more of a negative connotation than a positive one. Since the creation of something from nothing was the prerogative of God and God alone, every practitioner of the arts worked with borrowed material. Authors could choose one of two methods: either they could imitate works that had been written by authors of Antiquity or they could find an object worthy of imitation in nature, i.e. in the world around them. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, emphasis had shifted away from imitation of the ancients (imitation of something that had already been composed) to imitation of nature, of the real world. In this context, originality meant that authors turned from the virtual (ancient texts) towards the real world. This process of composition can be described with broad brushstrokes in the following manner: using one’s mind, one discovered perfect beauty (truth) and then sought the manifestation of this perfect beauty in nature and either painted it or narrated it in words. This perfect beauty and depictions of it, of course, could be found not only in nature, but also in the works of the authors of Antiquity.

The texts of the eras before the emergence of originality as the most important artistic criteria meet par excellence the criteria of auto-poetic literature. Literature is a world unto itself. Authors read one another’s writings and rewrite them. No one is interested in knowing what a real encounter on the battlefield would be like, or a real siege or war hero. The poet wishes to know only how to depict them in words. It is an intertextual paradise. It is therefore hardly surprising that postmodern literary theorists also like to deal with the question of imitation. Kiss provides a refreshingly concise and clear summary of these theories, of which the ideas of Thomas M. Green seem the most interesting and useful to me. According to Green, the success of imitation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was due to the emergence of historical consciousness, as well as the outbreak and spread of the fear that it might well prove impossible to conjure the precise meaning and significance of the texts of Antiquity.

The first two chapters of the book contain an essay on the Renaissance and Baroque theories of imitation, an essay that has long been much needed in Hungarian scholarship on literary theory and history. The essay is in some

ways an echo of an essay written by Imre Bán over a quarter of a century ago.² The next two chapters, *Az imitáció elmélete és gyakorlata a Székesfehérvári veszedelemben* (The Theory and Practice of Imitation in *The Siege of Székesfehérvár*) and *Imitáció és petrarkizmus Balassi költészetében* (Imitation and Petrarchism in the Poetry of Balassi), offer concrete examples of the practice of imitation. Arany revealed Zrínyi's source, Kiss examines how he used it. He merits praise for having included, in general, interpretations alongside a list of the examples of imitation in Zrínyi's work (for instance his interpretations of the Cumilla-Dido or the Juranics and Radivoj-Nisus and Euryalus parallels: pp.42–43, pp.77–81). While reading the brilliantly done presentation of the examples of parallels, I was struck by the question, how could the search for similarities and differences be broadened? Is the endless semiosis (à la Kristeva and Derrida) not perhaps a trap (Umberto Eco)? There is a risk that the interpreter will be swept up by the comparative approach to interpretation and will compare everything in one work with everything in the other, in spite of the fact that it is not immediately obvious that something that resembles some other thing (or is even its apparent opposite) has anything in particular to do with that other thing. Is it not possible that we see connections where there are none? Of course the “recognition” of a similarity always depends on the aptitude and erudition of the interpreter, but where does interpretation end and over-interpretation begin? When does text awaiting interpretation become pretext for confabulation?

The similarities presented by Kiss are not forced, and he marshals other persuasive arguments in order to demonstrate that Zrínyi must indeed have read the passages in the works traces of which are found in *The Siege of Székesfehérvár* (or other compositions by Zrínyi). One obvious approach to the question, of course, was simply to examine the poet's library. In many cases, Kiss even found editions of the books from which Zrínyi borrowed with the relevant passages underlined. This is an example of superb carpentry that must have demanded considerable patience (on the part of both Zrínyi and Kiss), but the result is both striking and, more importantly, useful for future generations of scholars and readers. One of the great merits of this chapter is that Kiss demonstrates that in the case of Zrínyi one finds a whole repository of the techniques of imitation that were used at the time and taught in the schools.

2 Imre Bán, “Az imitatio mint a reneszánsz arisztotelizmus esztétikai kategóriája” [Imitation as an Aesthetic Category of Renaissance Aristotelianism], *Filológiai Közlemények* 21 (1975): 374–86.

One of the additional strengths of the book is that it examines how imitation and imagination functioned at the time not only in literature, but also in a pertinent example from the fine arts. In the chapter entitled “Imagery and imagination on the title page of the *Syrena* volume” (referring to a volume published by Zrínyi in 1651 entitled *Adriai tengernek syrenaia*, which could be translated as “Siren of the Adriatic Sea”), Kiss provides a thorough comparison of the title page of Vitorio Siri’s (1608–85) *Il Mercurio* and the engraving print used as the title page for Zrínyi’s work. He concludes that the two images bear very different meanings. In the case of Siri’s composition, the image is expressive of the poet’s *ars poetica*: in vain do the Sirens try to entice Mercury with material wealth (they offer him a horn of plenty), the messenger god continues to steer the boat with a confident hand. Put simply, the poet will write the truth and only the truth. In contrast, “Zrínyi may have found the Truth appealing, and the emphasis on historical accuracy in the image, for he himself asked the Virgin Mary to ‘let me write things as they were,’ but in its subject matter the arrangement of the entire image is as foreign to the epic as a newspaper is to a work of literature” (p.124). And indeed the image on the title page of his book embodies the *ars poetica* of the poet, not the journalist. Even imitation is a literary gesture: the model was the introduction to the second book of Giambattista Marino’s (1569–1625) *Galeria*, which deals with statues. The Sirens, who represent ambition, vanity (*superbia*), and bliss (*delizia*) try to entice the poet, depicted sitting in a boat (he is also a Siren). Kiss notes that this image is not simply an allegory for the poet, but also draws on the theological tradition according to which vanity is one of the worst sins, because it stems from scorn for God.

The whole question of the title page, however, becomes even more interesting if one also takes into consideration the *Syrena*, *Adrianszékoga mora Syrena*, which essentially is a translation of the Hungarian book into Croatian by Zrínyi’s brother, Péter. Kiss refers to it, but he offers no detailed discussion on the subject. It might have been worthwhile to have taken into consideration the observations that have been made by Croatian scholars. In an article that has been published in Croatian and Hungarian, Zrinka Blažević and Suzana Coha analyze the title pages of the two *Syrena* (the Hungarian and the Croatian).³ Hungarian scholars should take note of their observations in part simply because the two

3 Zrinka Blažević and Suzana Coha, “Zrínyi Péter – a hősteremtés irodalmi modelljei és stratégiái” [Péter Zrínyi—The Literary Models and Strategies for Creating Heroes], in *A Zrínyiek a magyar és a borvát történetében* [The Zrínyis in Hungarian and Croatian Historiography], ed. Sándor Bene and Gábor Hausner (Budapest: Zrínyi Kiadó, 2007), 137–65.

literary historians, whose work is otherwise excellent, at times seem to confuse the two title pages, and they attribute a message to the Hungarian version (and therefore to *The Siege of Sziget*) that is actually only relevant in the case of the Croatian version. “The very title page [of the Hungarian work] (by conjuring the iconological motif of the familiar half-human, half-animal Siren [...]) suggests that ambivalence may be the formal, content-related, and ideological structural principle that provides the key to the entire work. Iconographically, this fundamental idea is embodied on the title page by the allegorical figure of the armed hero who is steering the ship and who responds with utter indifference to the enticing gestures of the two Sirens, one of whom is trying to tempt him with beauty, while the other offers a crown. At the same time, paradoxically the figure of the hero, who is portrayed as unmoved by material wealth, contradicts the popular Baroque metaphor of the ‘state-boat,’ which is also evoked by the title page. This metaphor is unquestionably reference to the political ambitions of the helmsman, i.e. the ambitions of the Croatian viceroy, who had only recently assumed office, to become palatine, and at the same time represents the most important virtues of rule, constancy and modesty.”⁴ I would begin with a few factual errors. On the title page of the Hungarian *Syrena*, one of the Sirens is offering the figure of a man in the boat not a crown, but a perfectly ordinary shell. Kiss provides excellent commentary on the shell as one of the indispensable accoutrements of depictions of Venus: “Venus is clearly the symbol of luxury, wantonness, or, to use a term more expressive of the Hungarian language at the time, lasciviousness” (p.125). It is not at all clear that the boat on the title page of the Hungarian book is a metaphor for the state, or that it refers to the political ambitions of the helmsman (Zrínyi). In 1651, when the book was published in Vienna, the question of the position of palatine was entirely irrelevant. In the spring of 1649, Pál Pálffy had been elected palatine without any ado whatsoever. We have no reason to think that, while composing the book (1645–48), Zrínyi, who as of 1647 served as viceroy of Croatia, had any desire to achieve the rank of palatine. On September 25, 1645, János Draskovics had been elected to the position of palatine without any complications. On November 26, 1653, Pál Pálffy died, and this was followed by the national assembly in 1655, in the course of which a palatine was elected. This assembly, which took place in the midst of stormy commotion, has often been the subject of historical inquiries, and Zrínyi’s ambitions at the time to

4 Zrinka and Coha, *Zrínyi Péter*, 138.

achieve the position of palatine have been documented, even if some of the details are not entirely clear. But it would be temerity to claim that in 1651 he was using the title page of *Syrena* to communicate his later political aspirations to the Hungarian nobility.

In my view, the explanation for Blažević and Coha's mistakes and misinterpretations lies in the fact that they were searching, in the Hungarian *Syrena*, for ideas that are discernible in the Croatian version of the work. Clearly we will not have a complete overview of the subject at hand until literary historians have done a thorough comparative study of the two compositions, but it is quite clear on the basis of a comparison of the title pages that the observations made by Blažević and Coha are accurate in the case of the Croatian version. In this image, the Sirens do indeed offer a crown (as well as keys, an olive tree, and palm branches, all of which are symbols of power) to the figure sitting in the boat (Péter Zrínyi), who, unlike his brother Miklós, does not turn away, but rather looks with visible interest on the temptresses. His boat is a war galleon that is sailing for a bastion bearing a Croatian flag. In the upper left corner of the image one recognizes the boat from the title page of Miklós Zrínyi's *Syrena*, which is journeying towards a Hungarian bastion. The relationship between the two title pages and the political symbolism of the Croatian *Syrena*, which is undoubtedly layered, are subjects that still await clarification. What do the two crowns represent? The kingdom? But which kingdom, the Hungarian one or the Croatian? Why are the Sirens offering both crowns to Péter? Why is the Croatian title page more embellished with warlike imagery (a war galleon and the phrase *Vincere aut mori*, for instance, which means conquer or die)? Why does Péter Zrínyi not turn away from the Sirens who offer him the crowns? Furthermore, in the selection of the image for the title page of *Adrianszékoga mora Syrena*, both Péter's and Miklós' conceptions found expression. Sándor Iván Kovács has persuasively shown that the title page for the Croatian work was done by the same engraver, the Venetian Jacopo Puccini, who made the image on which György Subarics based his depiction when making the image for the title page of the Hungarian *Syrena*.⁵

In the case of *Adrianszékoga mora Syrena*, we are clearly dealing with political doublespeak: while the ideology of the book may seem to be pro-Habsburg, it nonetheless contains an anti-Habsburg discourse as well. In contrast, there is no such ambiguity in the Hungarian *Syrena*. This is hardly surprising, since *The*

5 Sándor Iván Kovács, *A lírikus Zrínyi* [The Lyricist Zrínyi] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1985), 100.

Siege of Sziget is a composition that firmly resists ambivalent readings. Attempts have been made in the secondary literature to interpret the Hungarian *Syrena*, allegedly a “labyrinthine-volume” (Elréd Borián), as a political allegory, but Kiss’ conclusion is more persuasive in my view: “the language of Zrínyi’s epic is fundamentally one-layered. It does not permit ambivalent readings, and for this reason one cannot find parts in it that could be considered allegorical. A continuous allegory that involved the entire plot would clash with the tendency of the epic, which seems intentionally to simplify. [...] The only allegorical element of the *Syrena* volume in my assessment is the image on the title page” (pp.178–79). Thus Kiss Farkas disagrees completely with the interpretation of the two Croatian literary scholars, and a Hungarian–Croatian *Syrena* colloquium would no doubt give rise to engaging debates and yield provocative insights.

Levente Nagy

Translated by Thomas Cooper

A reform útján. Katolikus megújulás Nyugat-Magyarországon [On the Path of Reform: Catholic Revival in Western Hungary]. By István Fazekas. Győr: Győri Egyházmegyei Levéltár, 2014. 339 pp.

Where lay the end of *Konfessionalisierung*? This geographical and thematic question always comes up in new publications on Early Modern Church history. The historiography of the theory of *Konfessionalisierung* has sparked substantial debate over the course of the past two decades.¹ One of the main objections was the overly narrow focus on the secular and ecclesiastical authorities, i.e. the perspective of upper echelons. It is this hardly surprising that István Fazekas treats the theory of *Konfessionalisierung* carefully and prefers to use other terminology: the terms *reform* and *Catholic revival* figure in the title of the book, and he uses these concepts alongside *Counter Reformation* throughout the essays. This approach derives from his primary research interest: the changing stance of the local level of ecclesiastical society, the parish priests. He concentrates on the local communities and their priests, i.e. the very people who constituted the social group that merited more emphasis according to critics of the notion of *Konfessionalisierung*.

The geographical center of the book is the Diocese of Győr, which is situated in the western strip of what was the Kingdom of Hungary. Partly occupied by the Ottomans in the 1540s, the region was in a distinctive position, close to the Habsburg capital, Vienna. The important border defense line had run through the diocese, transforming the former bishopric seat, Győr, into a key fortress.² Some parts of the diocese had been in the hands of the Habsburgs since the fifteenth century, which made the hereditary province of Lower-Austria a secular authority in the region, while the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the bishops was left untouched.

1 For a basic summary of the theory see Wolfgang Reinhard, “Was ist katholische Konfessionalisierung?” in *Die katholische Konfessionalisierung. Wissenschaftliches Symposium der Gesellschaft zur Herausgabe des Corpus Catholicorum und des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte 1993*, ed. Wolfgang Reinhard and Heinz Schilling (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1995), 419–52. The most important viewpoints of the critical reception of the theory were collected recently in: Ute Lotz-Heumann, “Confessionalization,” in *Reformation and Early Modern Europe. A Guide to Research*, ed. David M. Whitford (Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2008), 136–57.

2 Pálffy Géza, *A császárváros védelmében. A győri főkapitányság története 1526–1598* [In Defense of the Imperial Capital. History of the Captain-Generalcy of Győr] (Győr: Győr-Moson-Sopron Megyei Levéltár, 1998).

Fazekas demonstrates the processes of revival in the various levels of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, from bishops to parish priests, to explore the roles of each in the reorganization of the diocese. He furthermore puts emphasis on the contributions of the religious orders and secular actors, mainly the landlords, to the missions and conversions among local communities. Since the Catholic reform movement needed a strong cultural background, he also examines literacy levels among the various groups of ecclesiastical actors, bishops, parish priests, religious orders and the different forms of baroque piety among the aristocracy and in local communities. Through his research, he offers a kind of overview of these actors, including their cultural background and decision-making processes.

Fazekas examines sources on the ecclesiastical society and its influence in the region. He tries to determine the extent to which individual groups of actors participated in the Catholic revival in the Diocese of Győr. Who played the leading role in western Hungary in the reform of the Catholic Church? Fazekas provides a complex analysis of a major metamorphosis of ecclesiastical society. As noted, he approaches the theory of Konfessionalisierung carefully, but he sheds light on its applicability in Hungary.

The revival had two parallel, linked sub-processes: internal reform and consolidation and an external movement in the form of Counter Reformation. The most important actors of the internal processes were the parish priests, as they were in direct contact with the local communities. Most of the essays deal with the situation of this lower level of ecclesiastical society. Fazekas' research is based on the canonical visitations between 1641–1741. First he draws the general outlines. Most of the parish priests originated from the diocese, so their language skills corresponded to the linguistic makeup of the population: speakers of Croatian, Hungarian and German. In the seventeenth century, due to the great shortage of priests, most of them finished their education after two years of theology. Personal career aspirations motivated priests to get positions in more prosperous parishes, such as the Archdeaconries of Locsmánd and Sopron. The parishes of Sopron, Csepreg and Sárvár were good springboards to the middle class of the ecclesiastical society.

Among the parish priests, the clerics from the Holy Roman Empire formed a separate group, which Fazekas has examined thoroughly. The parish priests fled from the Holy Roman Empire because of the Thirty Years War, and they served as an important reinforcement for the diocese, which needed to fulfill the

spiritual needs of the local German-speaking communities.³ But conflicts arose in linguistically mixed areas. The case of Martin Iwanschitz, the parish priest of Mannersdorf, sheds light on one such conflict. The conflict involved several factors, including language use, the unconventional expectations of the German landlord, and the Croatian parish priest's habit and financial circumstances.

Fazekas examined two other aspects of the parish priests. His observations concerning their erudition are based on book inventories. Most of the books served as resources for sermons and other, everyday activities of a parish priest, while the polemic literature was almost completely absent. Unfortunately, Fazekas did not compare the situation with that of other dioceses, such as the dioceses of Pécs or Várad (Oradea, Romania).⁴ He claims that on average in 1651 a parish priest in the Diocese of Győr had four or five books, compared with an average of ten volumes in France. The cultural background is reflected in the case study on the inheritance of Francesco Orsolini. Although he was in a privileged situation as the court priest of Palatine Pál Esterházy, his library was similar to that of the parish priests.

Fazekas also examines the circumstances of the dwellings of the parish priests. In the western part of the diocese they used the buildings of the former Protestant preachers as their residences. The quality of their lodgings improved with time. In the eighteenth century, tiered houses were built, but the upkeep of the buildings was a source of conflicts, mostly between the priests and the local communities. In general, the building plot was provided by the local landlord and the construction and upkeep of the parish house were the responsibility of the community. But in confessionally mixed communities or in parishes with more filial churches the distribution of the tasks became a subject of debate.

In contrast with the parish priests, with a few rare exceptions the bishops of Győr were unable to fulfill the expectations placed on them in the wake

3 In the early eighteenth century, the German settlers also needed German parish priests in the Diocese of Pécs to solve the problem presented by the need to hold holy mass and confession in the native tongue of the parishoners: Zoltán Gőzsy and Szabolcs Varga, "Kontinuitás és reorganizáció a pécsi egyházmegye plébániahálózatában a 18. század első évtizedeiben" [Continuity and Reorganization in the Parish Network of the Diocese of Pécs in the Early Eighteenth Century], *Századok* 143, no. 5 (2009): 1153.

4 Zoltán Gőzsy and Szabolcs Varga, "Papi műveltség a Pécsi Egyházmegyében a 18. század első felében" [Clerical Erudition in the Diocese of Pécs in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century], *Jelenkor* 54, no. 5 (2011): 509–14; András Emödi, *A nagyváradai egyházmegye alsópapságának könyvkultúrája a korai újkor végén. 18. századi plébániai könyvjegyzékek, személyi gyűjtemények fennmaradt kötetei* [The Book Culture of the Parish Priests in the Diocese of Nagyvárad at the End of the Early Modern Age. Eighteenth-Century Parish Book Inventories and Surviving Volumes from Personal Collections] (Szeged: Szegedi Tudományegyetem, 2013).

of the Council of Trent in large part because of their official duties, often as royal chancellors. Bishop György I. Draskovich called a diocesan synod to Szombathely in 1579 to put the decisions of the great council into practice in his diocese. Fazekas identifies the tenure in the position of the younger Bishop György II. Draskovich as a turning point because Draskovich was able to reside in his diocese without having to serve governmental functions. Draskovich was able to implement effective measures to promote the revival. Fazekas also examines the life of the Bishop György Széchényi, who later served as Archbishop of Esztergom. Because of his long life and his special aptitude for economics, Széchényi was able to establish a series of ecclesiastical institutions (Jesuit colleges, seminaries, academy, etc.), and this made him a significant figure of the Catholic revival in Hungary.

Fazekas admits already in the introduction that he has not included the middle class of ecclesiastical society, the members of the Chapter of Győr, in his study, although he mentions the generally ambivalent attitudes of the chapters to the reforms of Trent.⁵ One case study on the career of Máté Szenttamásy, Provost of Csorna and nominee for the position of Bishop of Transylvania, does something to fill this gap. Fazekas contends that Szenttamásy also promoted the revival, but only on a limited scale by providing financial support for literature and a foundation for Transylvanian seminarists in Nagyszombat (Trnava, Slovakia). Although Fazekas doesn't examine the role of the chapter in any depth, new research on members of this ecclesiastic group suggests that they had limited opportunity to participate in the Catholic reforms.⁶

Due to the absence of the bishops and the weakness of the middle class of ecclesiastical society, the secular landlords gained important roles in the other sub-process of Catholic revival, the Counter Reformation. In the early seventeenth century, almost without exception the most important aristocratic families were Lutheran. After their re-Catholicization, however, they became the protagonists of the revival through the “landlords’ Counter Reformation,” as Fazekas calls it. This model is based on the theory of Katalin Péter, who examined the activity of the Jesuits in Sárospatak under the protection of the

5 For example, the Chapter of Győr raised objections to the settlement of Jesuits in Győr, see Zsófia Kádár, “Jesuitische Kolleggründungen im westungarischen Raum in der ersten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts. Die Beispiele von Győr/Raab und Sopron/Ödenburg,” in *Frühneuezeitforschung in der Habsburgermonarchie. Adel und Wiener Hof – Konfessionalisierung – Siebenbürgen*, ed. István Fazekas, Martin Scheutz, Csaba Szabó, and Thomas Winkelbauer (Vienna: Institut für Ungarische Geschichtsforschung in Wien, 2013), 155–70.

6 Antal Molnár, *A bátai apátság és népei a török korban* [The Abbey of Bata and its People in the Ottoman Era], METEM Könyvek 56 (Budapest: METEM, 2014).

re-Catholicized Rákóczi family. She refers to the pre-1670 era as the “landlords’ proselytizing Counter Reformation.”⁷

Fazekas first examines the general outlines of the landlords’ Counter Reformation. The landlords fell back on the religious orders, mostly Jesuits and Franciscans. Although the first phase of Catholicization was more peaceful, later violent tactics were used, for example the summoning of soldiers and the deportation of the resisters. In another study Fazekas, makes the focus more narrow and examines the re-Catholicization of the villages in the manor of Kismarton (Eisenstadt) and Fraknó (Forchenstein). This region was acquired by the Esterházy family, who successfully promoted the “landlords’ Counter Reformation” in it. The results of their efforts, however, were questionable. Visitation records suggest that local communities became Catholic in appearance only, and they preserved many Lutheran traditions, This would suggest, as indeed Fazekas’ research indicates, that the phenomenon of *Kryptoprottestantismus* observed in Austria temporarily existed in a specific form in western Hungary as well, although recent studies have rejected the idea of any serious presence of *Kryptoprottestantismus* in Hungary.⁸

The Missio Segneriana therefore still had work to do among the seemingly Catholic communities in the early eighteenth century. The primary purpose of the mission was to strengthen the faith of the Catholic communities and only then to convert the Protestants. Although the mission was successful and had significant effects in Hungary,⁹ when folklore research began in Hungary in the nineteenth century scholars still found signs of Lutheran song traditions among Catholic believers. Fazekas points out the important role of the religious orders, mostly Jesuits. Bishop Miklós Dallos, who was a successful diplomat of the Habsburgs, founded the Jesuit college in Győr and set up a foundation for a diocesan seminary.¹⁰ Fazekas also examines the rich collection of the library

7 Katalin Péter, “A jezsuiták működésének első szakasza Sárospatakon” [The First Period of the Jesuits’ Activity in Sárospatak], in *Az értelmiség Magyarországon a 16–17. században – Die Intelligenz in Ungarn in dem 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. István Zombori (Szeged: Csongrád Megyei Múzeumok Igazgatósága, 1988), 103–17.

8 Rudolf Leeb, Martin Scheutz, and Dietmar Weigl, “Mühsam erkämpfte Legalität und widerstrebende Duldung. Der Protestantismus in der Habsburgermonarchie im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert,” in *Geheimprotestantismus und evangelische Kirche in der Habsburgermonarchie und im Erzstift Salzburg (17./18. Jahrhundert)*, ed. Rudolf Leeb, Martin Scheutz, and Dietmar Weigl, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung 51 (Vienna: R. Oldenbourg, 2009), 7–24, here 11, 14.

9 Orsolya Száraz, *Paolo Segneri (1624–1694) és magyarországi recepciója* [Paolo Segneri (1624–1694) and his Reception in Hungary] (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, 2012).

10 Kádár, “Jesuitische Kolleggründungen”.

of the Jesuit college of Győr. Although the library was broken up after 1773, Fazekas concludes on the basis of contemporaneous book lists that it contained 4,000–4,500 volumes of some 2,800 books. That also indicates the role of the Jesuit college as an important cultural center of the diocese.

These missions shed light on popular religious rituals and practices, but Fazekas also examines how the Hungarian aristocracy confirmed their re-Catholicization symbolically. The Baroque restoration of the shrine of the Blessed Virgin in Mariazell gave the Hungarian nobility an opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty to the Catholic Church and the Habsburg dynasty. A series of side-chapels were built by Hungarian aristocrats and prelates in the new church, which became an imperial shrine and symbol of the Baroque idea of *Pietas Austriaca*. But these chapels, with their altarpieces portraying the saints of the first Hungarian dynasty, the Árpád family (Saint Stephen, Saint Emeric, Saint Ladislaus and Saint Elizabeth), also emphasized Hungarian sovereignty within the Habsburg Empire. Support for pious Baroque literature served a double purpose: it was testimony to the booming Catholicism of the Hungarian aristocracy and it represented this aristocracy as the heir to the medieval, sovereign Kingdom of Hungary.¹¹ Fazekas examines the ex-Jesuit Márton Nagyfalusy's translation of the famous *Intelmek* (Admonitions) of Saint Stephen I to his son, Saint Emeric, from this perspective. Nagyfalusy transformed the story into a parable for the relationship between the re-Catholicized, wealthy Hungarian aristocrat Ádám Batthyány and his son.

With his complex analysis, Fazekas shows that although the bishops participated in the revival as founders of key institutes (Jesuit colleges, seminaries, etc.), the greatest burdens lay on the shoulders of the parish priests and missionaries. The Catholic aristocracy represented the most powerful source of support for the Catholic revival. Fazekas points out, with regards to this, two of the limits of the *Konfessionalisierung*-theory in Hungary. A state-supported Counter Reformation only began in the 1670s, and it was preceded by the landlords' Counter Reformation, which regained positions for the Catholic Church that had been lost during the Reformation. The Protestant preachers were persecuted, and their places were filled with Catholic parish priests. Although the local communities seemingly changed their religion, the priests found themselves in hostile surroundings. The Jesuit missions therefore had a

11 On the problems of the integration of the Hungarian aristocracy into the supranational nobility of the Habsburg Monarchy and the Habsburg Court of Vienna see: Géza Pálffy, *The Kingdom of Hungary and the Habsburg Monarchy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 71–88.

very important supportive role for local priests. This observations harmonize with the findings of Antal Molnár, who also examined the applicability of the theory of Konfessionalisierung in the southern region of the Diocese of Eger, which was under Ottoman occupation.¹² Of course, the landlords' Counter Reformation did not take place in the Ottoman-occupied territories, but the parish priests and Jesuit missions played the same successful role in this region as they did in western Hungary. But Fazekas' book is the first to deal with the Catholic revival of a region in Hungary that was under Habsburg rule. His research has yielded results similar to those of Marc R. Forster, who in his study of religious life in southwest Germany points out that in a case of weak secular or ecclesiastical authority, the Catholic revival took place because of the efforts and endeavors of parish priests.¹³

After several decades of Communism, scholarship on church history was revived in Hungary in the 1980s and then became even more vibrant after 1989. Fazekas is a member of the first generation in late-socialist Hungary to take an interest in Early Modern Church history. As this generation had no predecessors on whom to draw, they had to find their own way. Fazekas' early research on the history of the Catholic revival in the Diocese of Győr became an exemplary model for the next generation of historians. The title of the book (which contains his most important essays concerning church history), "On the Path of Reform," has a double meaning in his case. These essays show not just the process of Catholic revival in the Diocese of Győr, but also the revival of the study of Church history in Hungary.

Béla Vilmos Mihalik

12 Antal Molnár, *Mezőváros és katolicizmus. Katolikus egyház az egri püspökség hódoltsági területein a 17. században* [Market Town and Catholicism. The Catholic Church in the Ottoman-occupied Territories of the Bishopric of Eger in the Seventeenth Century], METEM Könyvek 49 (Budapest: METEM, 2005).

13 Marc R. Forster, *Catholic Revival in the Age of the Baroque. Religious Identity in Southwest Germany, 1550–1750* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Batthyány Ádám. Egy magyar főúr és udvara a XVII. század közepén [Ádám Batthyány. A Hungarian Aristocrat and his Court in the Middle of the Seventeenth Century]. By András Koltai. (A Győri Egyházmegyei Levéltár Kiadványai – Források, feldolgozások 14) Győr: Győri Egyházmegyei Levéltár, 2012. 636 pp.

András Koltai's *Ádám Batthyány*, which summarizes decades of research, belongs among the most important achievements in recent Hungarian historical literature about the courts of early modern Hungarian aristocrats. This work is, in many respects, a unique and complex undertaking. In exhaustive detail and with enjoyable style, Koltai narrates the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century history of the Batthyány family—proprietors of estates of decisive importance in the western part of the Kingdom of Hungary and volunteers for the lion's share of the wars against the Ottoman Turks—with a focus on the life of the family's defining personality, the first Count Ádám Batthyány (1610–59). In so doing, Koltai offers a finely lined portrait of a significant portion of the aristocratic society of the western part of the Kingdom of Hungary. In introducing the careers of Batthyány's various clients (*familiares*), for instance, he acquaints the reader with numerous individuals from an entire range of noble society, and in much greater depth than do previous accounts. In the course of the author's earlier research, he examined Hungarian aristocrats' marriages to foreigners and their systems of family relations, which work produced, among other things, a detailed exploration of Ádám Batthyány's circle of clients. One result of this work is a useful database for researchers concerned with the society of the period in the western regions of Hungary.¹ As a landowner and as a military leader—as captain-general of Transdanubia (*partium Transdanubianarum supremus capitaneus*) and as captain-general of the frontier outpost at Kanizsa (*supremus capitaneus confinium Canisae oppositorum*)—Ádám Batthyány not only played a range of significant roles in various military agencies in the middle third of the seventeenth century, his court also served as a model for numerous other Transdanubian aristocratic courts and influenced the lives of those who resided on his possessions in important ways. Thus, among the Hungarian magnates who were then converting to Catholicism under the influence of the Archbishop of Esztergom, Péter Pázmány, the nineteen-

1 *Batthyány Ádám főúri-földesúri familiája. 1629–1659. Prosopográfiai adattár* [Ádám Batthyány's Circle of Clients, 1629–1659. Prosopographical Archives]. Accessed March 09, 2015, <http://archivum.piarista.hu/batthyany> – Benda Borbála–Koltai András, 1999–2004.

year-old Batthyány was, in many respects, exceptional: in the course of his court career in Vienna, he became an imperial chamberlain who provided real service to the emperor, and departed from the established custom of Hungarian nobles of the period in choosing a foreign (not Hungarian) wife—Auróra Formentin (1609–53), Empress Eleonóra’s lady-in-waiting, whom he met at court and with whom he established a love-match.

The volume is divided into five large chapters, each of which is further split into subchapters. The first section (*“The good that remains of the ancestors”*: *Courts and Traditions*) describes the concepts of royal and noble courts and enumerates the characteristics of the early modern Hungarian court, encompassing both the relations between the Hungarian nobility and the Austrian Emperor, as well as the questions and possibilities that faced Hungarian magnates who took up service at their ruler’s residence in Vienna. After a section dealing with the denominational loyalties of the members of the Batthyány family, Koltai’s second chapter offers a detailed picture of Ádám Batthyány’s youth and the circumstances of his upbringing. Those in the young lord’s immediate environment—the members of the evolving court—appear in the roles of individuals who had an influence on young Batthyány, most important among them Count Palatine Miklós Esterházy (1625–45) and Péter Pázmány.

In the third chapter (*“All the castle, and all its contents”*: *The Court’s Built Environment*), Koltai uses the information in inventories, budgets, and instructional guides to develop a detailed image of the built environment and administrative practices of Batthyány’s court, including the history of its fortresses, castles, and residential buildings. The volume’s fourth chapter (*“These good, faithful servants”*: *Court Society*) is built around a reconstruction of the rules for maintaining courtly order. The lack of written regulations for the aristocratic court posed a challenge to the researcher, so much so that he had to attempt, on the basis of court censuses and other sources, to reconstruct the strict and traditional order of courtly life and society. At the beginning of the subchapter entitled *The familiaris* (pp.248–304), Koltai makes a noteworthy statement about the concepts of *familiaris* (client) and *szerviens* (servant), specifically about the appearance of *familiaritas* (patron–client relationship) in Hungary: in opposition to earlier literature in the discipline, this author stresses the continuity in the early modern period of the medieval system of Hungarian *familiaritas*—convincingly, for this reviewer (pp. 248–49).

On the basis of the exact numbers in the notes to his stipend rolls, we can track the population of Ádám Batthyány’s court, the composition and

responsibilities of the groups that made up his court, their expenditures and the measures of their consumption, and even the length of their service, all illustrated with particular examples. In the fifth chapter (“*Only with good ends do we meet*”: *Life and Death at Court*), we get glimpses into the life and functioning of the court through the significant, sad, or sometimes joyful occurrences in the dominant family’s day-to-day existence.

The volume’s closing subchapter, entitled *Image and Memory*, contextualizes Batthyány’s military and political legacies among those of the noble elites of his day, and in doing so, makes an important claim: that this “in many ways typical, western Hungarian Catholic nobleman’s” ideals and courtly image make him a worthy representative both of his family’s rank and of the baroque spirituality propagated by the Catholic church during the Counter-Reformation.

We come to the following two questions: One, from the perspective of social history, how does András Koltai’s monograph enrich our existing knowledge of the early modern Hungarian aristocratic court? And two, did the function of the Hungarian aristocratic court change as a result of the division of the country and the difficulties of daily life in the Christian–Ottoman borderlands? The chapter of the book that summarizes international research into court history describes the major trends in European scholarship: we get clear synopses of criticisms of the work of Norbert Elias and his followers, as well as accounts of the work of research groups engaged in the study of central European court history.

Perhaps problematically, beyond this review of the international literature in the discipline, the author relatively rarely connects the implications of his work to the conclusions of international specialists. It would have proved particularly useful to the reader if the author had, at several points in his work, compared Batthyány’s court and its set-up with the courts and arrangements of aristocrats living in other territories of the Habsburg monarchy. For example, Thomas Winkelbauer’s elaborate and in many ways similar account of the court administration of the nobleman, soldier, and Catholic convert Gundaker von Liechtenstein (1580–1658) would have offered opportunities for just this sort of comparison.

Koltai charts his own course through this book. He gracefully combines historical biography and family history while observing the conventions of microhistorical writing. Accordingly, we immediately recognize the structure of the court, its institutions, and the roles of the individuals who constituted it, but at the same time, we also see the everyday life of the court as it unfolds, as well as its constantly changing, dynamic operation.

This is one of the chief characteristics of Koltai's writing—because of it, in my opinion, his introduction to Batthyány's court and his biography of the aristocrat qualify simultaneously as classic and as modern historical work, in that they are built on truly extraordinarily thorough research into his sources. Koltai's work appears to be a good example with which to confirm the proposition² that Elias's concepts (for example “interdependence,” or the “network of mutual dependencies”), with some rethinking, might still provide a model for court research. Elias's rigid conception of “court structure” might thus be transcended in favor of interpretations that stress the temporality and dynamic operation of the court, and that consider members of the court within “a network of mutual dependencies.”

The author's statement of purpose in the volume's foreword reflects his hope that “on the basis of this analysis of Ádám Batthyány's court it might be possible to make inferences about the structures, lifestyles, and mentalities of other courts” (p.12). It is difficult to determine the degree to which Ádám Batthyány's court was “typical” of western or Transdanubian aristocrats' courts, partly as a consequence of the fact that all the written records of court administration kept by other families of Hungarian magnates in the period, even when taken together, do not equal the rich trove of source materials found in the Batthyány archive. The unique value of this collection is also demonstrated by its structure, in that its materials have been reorganized into independent sections according to the type of document (inventories and instructional guides, for instance), which provides an extraordinary range of possibilities for explorations of aristocratic court society and investigations into the functioning of the court itself. This abundance of supporting documentation is further enriched by the author's own outstanding abilities as an archivist, as well as his refined sensibility for analyzing and explaining these materials. The complicated nature of Koltai's work allows him to establish connections between his central theme and several trends and traditions, foreign and domestic, in historiography. Alongside numerous recent works about the Batthyánys, much of the latest research into the aristocratic elites of western Transdanubia has focused on the roles played by the Esterházy's, the Nádasdy's, the Zrínyis, and the Pálffy's, and these historical

2 Péter Erdősi, “Az erdélyi udvari társadalom modellje: kísérlet Norbert Elias fogalmainak alkalmazására” [The Structure of Transylvanian Courtly Society: An Essay on the Application of Norbert Elias' Concepts], in ... *éltünk mi sokáig 'két házban'...* Tanulmányok a 90 éves Kiss András tiszteletére [We Lived a Long Time in 'the House of Two'...: Studies in Honor of András Kiss's 90th Birthday], ed. Veronka Dáné, Teréz Oborni, and Gábor Sipos, *Speculum Historiae Debreceniense* 9 (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetemi Kiadó, 2012), 67–75.

analyses figure extensively in the present volume’s richly annotated scholarly apparatus and bibliography.

According to the author, the Hungarian aristocratic court diverged from its Western European model in the functions it served, in its operation, and in the institution of the *familiaritas* connected to the person of the *dominus*, the lord of the manor. That aristocratic courts functioned as “academies of Mars,” or schools of military life, can certainly be attributed to the threat of Turkish invasion, and the significance of the court’s manifold functions would only grow as the country was divided into three parts and the royal court moved beyond the border—one consequence of which was the adoption by aristocratic courts of certain functions of the royal court. It would have been inconceivable in the other territories of the Habsburg Monarchy—in the Austrian Hereditary Lands or the Lands of the Bohemian Crown (particularly after the Battle of White Mountain)—for an aristocratic contemporary of Ádám Batthyány’s to maintain a personal army of several thousand men. In Hungary, however, “amid the almost constant ‘clashes’ resulting from the Turkish conquest, the single most effective form of military defense came into being on the economic foundations of the great aristocratic estates, which provided private armies consisting of noble *familiares*, *hajdús* [mercenaries], and free peasants” (p.29).

Ádám Batthyány was one of the most significant Hungarian aristocrats of the period, and his court was truly the political, military, and economic center of the Transdanubian region. The author justifiably calls attention to the fact that his exploration of Batthyány’s military career, and likewise his description of the up-keep of a courtly retinue, call for separate monographs of their own (p.496). Likewise, this volume completely vindicates the claim its author makes at the beginning of his first chapter: “In the period between the battle of Mohács and the reoccupation of Buda, very few institutions played more important or more manifold roles in Hungary than did aristocratic courts like Miklós Zrínyi’s and Ádám Batthyány’s.”

Tibor Martí

Translated by Jason Vincz