



Márta Fata. *Das Ungarnbild der deutschen Historiographie.* Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2004. 334 S. EUR 48.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-3-515-08428-4.



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M. Fata: Das Ungarnbild der deutschen Historiographie

Published in the series of the *Institut für Donauschwäbische Geschichte und Landeskunde*, this collection of essays presents aspects of the image of Hungary in German historiography. The institute was founded by the Interior Ministry of Baden-Württemberg in conjunction with the Eberhard-Karls-Universität in Tübingen, Germany, in order to promote the study of the history, the location and linguistic dialects of German settlements in South-Eastern Europe, as well as the fate of Germans exiled from their regions. The papers were originally read at a conference of the Institute.

The editor, Márta Fata, fellow of the Institute that published the volume, arranged the eighteen papers of this interesting and richly documented book into three groups. Following her own introductory paper on some basic issues regarding the images of Hungary in German historiography, the essays that follow portray *Historical Images*, *Pictures of Legal History*, and, finally, the *Ways of Mediation*.

The first question the editor examines is Hungary's position in the eyes of contemporary German histori-

ans (pp. 11-22). She surveys recent German approaches to Hungary's position in Europe and discusses various views of Eastern Europe (Osteuropa), East-Central Europe (Ostmitteleuropa), as well as South-Eastern Europe (Südosteuropa). Due to its unique position in the continent of Europe, Hungary has been presented by German research since the *Wende* as a part of several different areas in *the lands between*, as the British historian Alan Palmer would put it. Important remarks by Márta Fata remind the readers of the multifaceted history of German scholarly interest in Hungary and her history.

János M. Bak, professor of medieval history at the Central European University in Budapest, dedicated his brief but useful survey of the German historiography of medieval Hungarian rulers to the memory of Jürg K. Hoensch (1935-2001) (pp. 25-30). One of the most productive figures of modern German historiography in the realm of Hungarian history, Hoensch devoted important books to Emperor Sigismund (1996) as well as to King Matthias Corvinus (1998). A professor of East European History at the University of the Saarland, Saarbrücken, Hoensch descended on his father's side from a family

that first settled in Hungary in a German-speaking community. He became a leading German expert in the field of medieval Hungarian history and also contributed a useful survey to modern Hungarian history (1984, English translation 1988). Bak's article is indeed a tribute to the memory of Professor Hoensch who died prematurely at the age of 65.

István Futaky, emeritus professor of the Georg-August-Universität in Göttingen, provided a well-researched case study of Hungarian history as taught and studied in 18th century Göttingen (pp. 31-48). His paper surveys the early Hungarian students of the University of Göttingen, examines the growth Hungarian material in the university library, and portrays the various German scholars who taught Hungarian history, such as Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi and church historian Ludwig Timotheus Spittler. Interesting are Futaky's examples of Hungarian contributions that were sent to the GGA, *Die Göttingischen Gelehrten Anzeigen*, one of the finest review journals that attracted international attention. Some of the Hungarian publications, such as the papers of Daniël Cornides and István Wessprömi, may have been sent to Göttingen in the hope of paving the way for their membership at the Göttingen Academy.

Márta Fata also contributed her own paper on Hungarian history as presented by German historiography in the first decades of the 19th century (pp. 49-83). Her focus is the Enlightenment, her authors are the non-historian historians Ernst Moritz Arndt, Friedrich Schlegel, and Karl von Rotteck, all of whom also dealt with Hungary in their own work. They were all interested in the new world introduced by the French Revolution, the rise of the nation and of a new, bourgeois society. An early German nationalist, Arndt was particularly interested in the national ideology, Schlegel sought for a solution to the problems of a modern identity in tradition, von Rotteck searched for constitutional guarantees of individual liberty in relation to the state. Through these works, Hungary emerged as the fringe area of German Europe.

Joachim von Puttkamer of the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität in Jena sets his study of the nationality question in Hungary against the broader background of contemporary research on nationalism (pp. 84-98). Professor von Puttkamer has three issues to deal with: Hungarian policies regarding the nationalities in the 19th century, the drive for Magyarization, and the internal structure of Hungary's national idea. For the author, the Hungary in question is the Hungary of the Austro-

Hungarian Monarchy, i.e. the state of Hungary as it existed between 1867 and 1918. This culture-studies approach is an effort to reinterpret the traditional views of the state of Hungary as it tried to integrate and (sometimes drastically) assimilate the various ethnic groups on her territory. The Magyar language played a major role in these efforts. Based mainly upon the rich, recent Hungarian research by Ágnes Deák, József Galántai, András Ger, Ferenc Glatz, Gábor Gyáni, Péter Hanák, Vilmos Heiszler, Viktor Karády, László Katus, Csaba Gy. Kiss, György Kovács, János Mazsu, László Péter, Ilona Szarmány-Parsons, László Szarka, Zoltán Szász, the author concludes that "Hungary is a good example that such a national integration process could be successful in the midst of extreme ethnic diversity and without any measurable element of linguistic relationships" (p. 98).

Attila Pálk (Institute of History, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest) discusses the impact of Leopold von Ranke on Hungarian historians and historical thought (pp. 99-109). He follows the process of how von Ranke's writings became known in Hungary and analyzes the work of some of the most significant Hungarian historians and historiographers for their varied interpretations of the German historian. Von Ranke's influence came relatively late to Hungary, where his pre-World War II disciples and critics, commentators and admirers included the von Ranke disciple Henrik Marczali, as well as the influential historian and political thinker Gyula Székf who both saw in von Ranke the forerunner of modern historiography. After the War, von Ranke became heavily criticized by Marxist historiography, as represented by Lajos Elekes and József Szigeti, who saw von Ranke as an influential representative of the imperialist ideology of the Bismarck era. A more balanced image was first offered by Ágnes R. Várkonyi in her significant book on positivism in 1973. As shown by Attila Pálk, the image of von Ranke as it emerged in Hungary throughout a century has always been a relevant point of orientation for Hungarian historiography.

Robert J. W. Evans, Regius Professor of History at the University of Oxford, offers a much needed summary of Hungary's position in British historiography (pp. 110-125). He surveys nearly all British histories relating to Hungary in the last two hundred years, from William Coxe of the early 19th century through Carlile Aylmer Macartney and A. J. P. Taylor, mentioning even some of their students. In Evans's interpretation, the most formidable figure of British historiography with regard to Hungary was C. A. Macartney, whom he describes in

great detail and with considerable understanding. Evans notes that Macartney's work evolved from the viciously anti-Hungarian aura prevailing in Great Britain immediately after World War I.

László Orosz, a Ph.D. student of the University of Miskolc, presented the correspondence of Fritz Valjavec (1909-1960) and Professor Elemér Mátyusz (1898-1989) in terms of the relations between German research in South-East-European history and Hungarian scholarship (pp. 126-167). Valjavec was a typical son of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy who later studied (1930-34), and finally settled, in Munich. He became the editor in 1936 of the newly established *Östdeutsche Forschungen*, later to become *Öst-Forschungen*, and established a wide web of correspondents all across South-East Europe (in Hungary alone, he had 117 contact persons). In his long and very detailed article, Orosz carefully reconstructed the correspondence from the 71 letters he found in Budapest and Munich, and concluded that the South-East became a productive field of study for German historians during the Third Reich. The historical studies in the new Germany with its new institutions and their largesse towards particular areas of inquiry, encouraged Mátyusz to think in similar terms in Hungary where historical studies were to underpin research needed for a revisionist foreign policy.

However, the general attitude towards Valjavec's most important work, his *Habilitationsschrift* from 1940, *Der deutsche Kultureinfluss im nahen Osten. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Ungarns* was a cool reception by Hungarian critics such as Csaba Csapodi and János Kása, who saw in it a repulsive scholarly foundation of German expansionism in the South-East and expressed this in reviews in the *Századok* and *Egyetemes Philologiai Közlekedés*. Yet, Valjavec succeeded in publishing a five-volume extended version of his book, between 1953 and 1970, under the title *Geschichte der deutschen Kulturbeziehungen zu Osteuropa* (München, *Osteuropäische Arbeiten*).

Krisztina Kaltenecker, a Ph.D. student of the Institute of German Studies at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, presents the Hungarian perspective on the documentation of Germans chased from the Eastern countries after World War II (pp. 168-191). The commission of German historians under Theodor Schieder, established in 1951 by Hans Lukaschek, the Bundesminister für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, published these *Östdeutsche pa-*

pers in 1956 in Düsseldorf. Volume 2 of this monumental work discussed the fate of Germans in Hungary between 1918 and 1950 (*Das Schicksal der Deutschen in Ungarn*). Kaltenecker interprets the expulsion of Germans after the War as a conflict between solidarity at the human level, and legalized arbitrariness at the official one. Hungary lost most of its loyal, hardworking, and ancient citizens: some half a million Germans were to be expelled due to Soviet orders. A careful analysis of this documentation attempts to shed some light on the *mitgebrachten Demokratisierungsdefizite* (the *deficits of democracy* the German-Hungarians carried along into Germany).

In an article on German historians of Hungary's history in the 20th century, Gerhard Seewann of the *Öst-Institut* in Munich presents a typology of recent scholarship (pp. 192-213). His first type includes positivist historians who present facts but avoid discussing research controversies. Type two includes the majority of the German contributions which emphasize the state and how it defined history, generally by following Hungarian historical models. Seewann's third category is *emancipated and innovative historiography*, which attempts to argue against the traditionally anti-theoretical approach of the German East-Europeanists. Though the most significant result of this paper is undoubtedly the near exhaustive bibliography of German scholarship relating to 20th century Hungarian history between 1980 and 1999, with its 213 items compiled by Gerhard Seewann and Holger Fischer (pp. 203-213), Seewann's thought-provoking comments are useful additions.

Andreas Schmidt-Schweizer (Munich/Budapest) discusses the political *Wende* in Hungary in 1988/1989 and draws his own interesting conclusions. The comments of this clever contemporary are insightful, and the growing body of primary sources and secondary literature will undoubtedly make his field much more approachable for scholars.

The legal component of the book begins with a paper by Katalin Gánczi (Miskolc/Max-Planck-Institut für Rechtsgeschichte, Frankfurt-a.M.), who escorts us into the realm of legal history (pp. 227-239). She surveys the historical image of Hungary in German legal studies from Karl Friedrich Eichhorn through Jacob Grimm, Eduard Gans, Gusztáv Lindner up to Otto Hintze. The author also draws on Hungarian textbooks published in German, such as Ákos von Timon's *Ungarische Verfassungs- und Rechtsgeschichte* (Berlin 1904, 2nd ed 1909), which is re-

viewed copiously in contemporary Germany.

Professor Georg Brunner gives careful consideration to the work done by German legal studies in the field of Hungarian lawmaking between 1945 and 1990 (pp. 240-252). His interest in the differences between the law in the books and law in action, and his ability to show Hungarian law as part and parcel of politics make his contribution sensitive to the social and cultural realities of Hungary. This reliable paper may serve as a basis for a future survey in an entire book on this subject although, sadly, not by this scholar who died since the conference.

The legal section concludes with a paper by Johannes Berger, lawyer in Filderstadt (pp. 253-263). He analyses the perception of the defense of minorities through Hungarian law since 1990, as shown by German literature. The brief introduction to individual books, dissertations, and papers serves scholarly interests well. In Berger's opinion, the products of Hungarian lawmaking in this domain would be well incorporated in Germany.

The book's third section treats the subject of mediation. Professor Holger Fischer (University of Hamburg) investigates the problems of German surveys on Hungarian history (pp. 267-288). He treats form, function, and theses, and critiques each and every book from Peter Hanák, Hg. (1988) through Jorg K. Hoensch, Holger Fischer, Thomas von Bogyay, István Lázár, László Fábiny/László Kurucz (eds.) to István Nemeskürty, Miklós Molnár and Paul Lendvai (1999). This systematic, rigorous, and open criticism may help future authors of any nation working in this field to avoid some of the common errors of writing summaries of national history.

Maximilian Georg Kellner (Seehausen) treats the battle of Lechfeld (955) as a recurrent theme in German

scholarship (pp. 289-298). Kellner cites all the places of importance where this early Hungarian attack is mentioned or evaluated and presents a colorful picture about how and why the battle continues to create excitement at all levels of German historical scholarship.

The paper of Martin Zäckert investigates German school textbooks and how they treat Hungarian history (pp. 299-309). He first considers Hungarian history as presented in textbooks and concludes that Hungarian history is traditionally assigned a small role until the 19th century. In his more detailed analysis, Zäckert identifies the focal points of Hungarian history that are treated by German textbooks: the foundation of the state of Hungary, the revolution and war of independence of 1848-49, the interwar period, and the Communist era through 1989.

The concluding paper in the volume, by Zolt K. Lengyel (Ungarisches Institut, Munich), reports on the role of Hungarian studies in the Hungarian Institute in Munich (pp. 310-326). This is a sensible history of the Institute with details of interest and even of some importance to the cultural historian.

This book renders justice to the conference for which it serves as the proceedings. It provides rich detail and many views on a subject which would well deserve a monograph. It does not substitute for such a monograph, but is an honest effort to prepare for it. Hungarian history in other countries is a major topic for Hungarians, and we can hope that it is becoming more important in other countries. One also should hope that Hungarians will look into this book as if it were a mirror and consider what they did right and where they went wrong. Furthermore, it is imperative to reciprocate the initiative and to present the German image as it appears in Hungarian historiography.

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