Jenő Szűcs

The Historical Construction of National Consciousness

SELECTED WRITINGS

Edited by

Gábor Klaniczay · Balázs Trencsényi · Gábor Gyáni

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Contents

Introduction:
Reading and Rereading Jenő Szűcs

Gábor Gyáni, Gábor Klaniczay, *and* Balázs Trencsényi

The oeuvre of the Hungarian historian Jenő Szűcs (1928–1988) had a considerable international resonance in the 1970s and 1980s. His study on the *Three Historical Regions of Europe*, originally written for a samizdat volume commemorating the Hungarian democratic political thinker, István Bibó (1911–1979), but soon afterwards republished by an official publisher, had a remarkable impact (due to the abbreviated English version from 1983 and especially the French translation, with a foreword by Fernand Braudel, published in 1985). The wide circulation of this work instantly put the Hungarian historian into the forefront of the transnational debate on Central Europe, alongside such intellectual luminaries of the period as Milan Kundera and Czesław Miłosz. While this essay enjoys a lasting international fame (in the 1990s it appeared in German, Polish, Italian, Serbian, Croatian, Romanian, Slovak, and Russian), this also had an unintended consequence of shadowing the equally important oeuvre of Szűcs as a medievalist and as a scholar of premodern collective identities.

While not negating the historical importance and sophistication of his essay on the three regions, the present volume seeks to extend the perspective on his work, documenting his seminal contributions to many contemporary debates in historical anthropology, nationalism studies, and conceptual history. In turn, by reframing the intellectual context of his oeuvre, it also intends to offer a more nuanced picture of the intellectual roots and historiographical place of his interpretation of historical regions. Besides, rereading his most important studies, written between the early 1960s and the late 1980s, helps our reflection on the historical culture of Hungary during the socialist regime and, in a broader sense, the ambiguities of intellectual life in post-1945 East Central Europe.

Intellectual Socialization and Early Works

Coming from a Calvinist middle-class family living in Debrecen, Szűcs received his diploma in history and archival studies in 1953 and was also a member, between 1948 and 1950, of the Eötvös College, an institution originally established at the turn of the century as a local version of the École Normale Supérieure, one of the most important pockets of high-level academic socialization in Hungary, which survived both the interwar authoritarian and the communist regimes.[1] His background entailed an ambiguous relationship with the communist regime: while the Calvinist middle class was hardly the social basis of the new order, culturally there was some contiguity between the anti-Habsburg "independentist" historical narrative cultivated by the Hungarian Calvinist intelligentsia, and the historical politics of the Stalinist leadership, especially the minister of culture, József Révai (1898–1951), who sought to legitimize the regime by creating a symbolic and ideological continuity between the romantic liberal nationalist tradition of the 1848 Revolution and the communist movement.[2] Szűcs's Debrecen context is also important from the perspective of his later work as his native city had a strong and rather specific local identity, rooted in the early modern Protestant urban culture based on stock-farming in the Hungarian Great Plain.[3]

Szűcs was employed from 1952 by the Hungarian National Archives, focusing on late medieval urban history. His first major work was a monograph on fifteenth-century urban and artisanal culture in Hungary.[4] The choice of research topic deviated from the general line in the sense that the new Marxist social history in the early 1950s mostly focused on agrarian history (engaging with En-

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1   Our article draws on several Hungarian-language studies on various aspects of Szűcs's oeuvre and intellectual contexts: Gábor Gyáni, "Szűcs Jenő, a magányos történetíró" [Jenő Szűcs, the lonely historian], *Forrás* 6 (2008): 3–16; Gábor Klaniczay, "Félbemaradt vizsgálódás a 'nép' és a 'nemzet' őstörténetéről" ["People" and "nation": An unfinished inquiry into the genesis of two concepts], *Holmi* 6 (1994): 631–35; English version, Gábor Klaniczay, "'People' and 'nation': An unfinished inquiry into the genesis of two concepts," *Budapest Review of Books* 4 (1994): 25–29; Gábor Klaniczay, "Utolsó Árpádok és utolsó kéziratok (Szűcs Jenő: *Az utolsó Árpádok*)" [The last Árpádians and the last manuscripts], *BUKSZ – Budapesti Könyvszemle* 6 (1994): 321–26; see also Balázs Trencsényi, "Writing the Nation and Reframing Early Modern Intellectual History in Hungary," *Studies in East European Thought* 62 (2010): 135–54.

2   On Hungarian "national Stalinism," see Martin Mevius, *Agents of Moscow: The Hungarian Communist Party and the Origins of Socialist Patriotism, 1941–1953* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

3   What is more, the memory of the revolutionary struggle of 1848/49 was particularly strong there since the city served as the seat of government in 1849.

4   See Jenő Szűcs, *Városok és kézművesség a XV. századi Magyarországon* [Towns and artisans in fifteenth-century Hungary] (Budapest: Művelt Nép, 1955).

gels's theory of "second serfdom"). Szűcs's study was also marked by an unusual richness of archival material and the absence of dogmatic Marxist historiographical tropes. From all this, it is not surprising that he found his way to the reform communist intellectual networks emerging after the death of Stalin and the temporary fall from grace of the Hungarian Stalinist leader, Mátyás Rákosi. Szűcs actively participated in the "historical debate" of the Petőfi Circle in June 1956, one of the most emblematic events signaling the craving for intellectual freedom and the boiling emotions, which became part of the chain reaction that eventually culminated in the revolutionary outbreak on October 23, 1956. At the debate, Szűcs criticized the poverty of standards of source criticism characterizing the historiographical production of the Stalinist era, arguing that it was a serious problem that there was no proper methodological training at the universities. What is more, he openly targeted the dogmatic style of many of his colleagues, whose "partisan approach" culminated in "distortion, voluntarism, and the non-scientific handling of sources."[5] His activism, however, did not lead to an open clash with the regime during the revolutionary days, and in contrast to some of his colleagues who took an active part in the October events (representing very different intellectual trajectories: some of them tainted with a Stalinist past, like Péter Hanák or György Litván; others having a national reform communist profile, like Zoltán I. Tóth; or coming from a conservative background, like Domokos Kosáry) he remained rather invisible and was thus spared from the reprisals following the violent suppression of the revolution and the installation of the Kádár regime.

Nation and History

After the revolution, Szűcs gradually shifted his interest to the question of national identity, a topic that was already crucial to the debates of the Petőfi Circle.[6] This theme was particularly important from the perspective of the self-legitimization of the Kádárist regime, coming to power with the help of Soviet

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5   András Hegedűs B. and János Rainer M., eds., *A Petőfi Kör vitái hiteles jegyzőkönyvek alapján alapján,* vol. 3, *Történészvita* [The debates of the Petőfi Circle based on certified protocols, vol. 3, The debate of the historians] (Budapest: Múzsák – 1956-os Intézet, 1990), 117–18. Online version: http://www.rev.hu/ords/f?p=600:2:::::P2_PAGE_URI:kiadvanyok/petofikor03

6   His last major study on urban history in the period is Jenő Szűcs, "Das Städtewesen in Ungarn im 15–17. Jahrhundert," in *La Renaissance et la Réformation en Pologne et en Hongrie = Renaissance und Reformation in Polen und in Ungarn, 1450–1650*, Studia Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 53, edited by György Székely and Erik Fügedi (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1963), 97–164.

tanks. In 1960, Szűcs moved to the Historical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the very hotspot of this debate. A key figure of the controversy was the director of the Historical Institute and former minister of justice, Erik Molnár (1894–1966). Trained as a lawyer and having spent time in Paris and Rome during his studies, Molnár was an illegal communist before 1945 with a strong interest in Marxist historical theory. Atypical for this stream, he tried to apply this analytical framework to the prehistory and the early history of the Hungarians. After 1945, he became part of the communist establishment, serving as minister of social affairs in the first transitional government and, later, also as minister of foreign affairs and minister of justice. However, being rather distant from the top Stalinist leadership, he was commissioned to conduct the investigation of the abuses of power after the death of Stalin during the reformist course of Imre Nagy in 1953. After 1956, he withdrew from active politics but remained active in the management of science. In this domain, he also had his own axe to grind as in the late 1940s and early 1950s he repeatedly clashed with (and was humiliated by) the key figures of the "national Stalinist" cultural and historical course (the abovementioned Révai, as well as the prominent historian-apparatchik Erzsébet Andics, who both subscribed to the idea of the progressive nature of premodern anti-Habsburg independentist movements, seeking to recycle the romantic nationalist tropes in order to legitimize the communist regime). In contrast, Molnár was influenced by the historical perspective of the most important Hungarian Marxist theoretician of the early twentieth century, the syndicalist Ervin Szabó, who tried to use a rigorous class-based analysis and argued that, in the conflict of the Habsburg centralizing power and the independentist Hungarian landed gentry, it was the former who represented social and economic progress, irrespective of the suppression of premodern national self-government. The corollary of this argument was that the national ideology of the liberal nationalists in 1848 was based on a false consciousness, covering up their class interest in perpetuating the dominance of the landowners over the peasantry.

While the identity politics of the Stalinist period was schizophrenic in the sense that the uncritical subservience of the Hungarian leadership to the Moscow directives went together with a strong historical emphasis on struggles for national independence (this ambiguity might have had an unintended consequence of training the young generation in a romantic cult of struggles for national liberty, which, during the stormy days of October 1956, could turn into a powerful emotive basis for the desperate fight against the Soviet "invaders"),

Kádárism obviously had to recalibrate its ideological positions, crafting different, but no less paradoxical collective identity narratives. The Kádárist leadership rejected the "national Stalinist" ideological combination and—due also to the specific conditions of its emergence as a negation of the 1956 "counter-revolution" and the personal attitude of Kádár himself, coming from a working class background in a multiethnic urban area (Fiume/Rijeka; coincidentally, the same city where Molnár was born)—in contrast to many of his peers in other satellite countries, refrained from opting for nationalism (and anti-Semitism) as a legitimizing tool in the post-Stalinist ideological vacuum.

After 1956, Molnár continued his struggle against the residual elements of "national Stalinism" (and any kind of post-romantic nationalism), publishing a series of articles which provoked a long and emotional clash, known as the "Erik Molnár debate."[7] The main target of his diatribes was Aladár Mód (1908–1973), another former illegal communist who was among his pre-1956 critics, now heading the department of Scientific Socialism at the ELTE University of Budapest. Given the institutional location of the protagonists, the ideological and power struggle also had broader implications, pitting the Institute of History and the History Department of the university against each other. In a broader sense, this heated polemic can also be placed into a transnational framework around the Soviet theoretical debate on socialist patriotism with repercussions in most satellite countries.[8] It was in this context that Szűcs set to work on the question of national identity, in the institution led by Molnár, who provided unusually generous working conditions (and access to Western theoretical literature) to his younger colleagues. Szűcs's scrupulously academic studies from the period also document an existential challenge as, in some ways, his intellectual and family background would have predestined him to take up the "national"

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7   See Miklós Lackó, "Molnár Erik és a 60-as évek történész-vitája" [Erik Molnár and the debate of historians in the 1960s], *Századok* 142 (2008): 1483–1536. On Hungarian historiography under state socialism, see also Zoltán Dénes Iván, *A magyar történetírás kánonjai* [The canons of Hungarian historiography] (Budapest: Ráció Kiadó, 2015); as well as Ignác Romsics, *Clio bűvöletében: Magyar történetírás a 19–20. században* [Under the spell of Clio: Hungarian historiography in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries] (Budapest: Osiris, 2011) and Gábor Gyáni, *A Nation Divided by History and Memory: Hungary in the Twentieth Century and Beyond* (London: Routledge, 2021).

8   For a programmatic statement by a chief ideologist of the period, see Mikhail Davidovich Kammari, "Stroitel'stvo kommunizma i dal'neysheye sblizheniye natsiy v SSSR" [The building of communism and the further rapprochement of nations in the USSR], *Voprosy filosofii* 9 (1961): 31–32. On the broader regional context see Michal Kopeček, "Historical Studies of Nation-Building and the Concept of Socialist Patriotism in East Central Europe 1956–1970," in *Historische Nationsforschung im geteilten Europa 1945–1989*, ed. Pavel Kolář and Miloš Řezník (Cologne: SH-Verlag, 2012), 121–36.

position, but his institutional context, and also arguably his scholarly findings, were bringing him closer to Molnár's position, albeit without the vulgar Marxist social determinism of his boss and based on a much more thorough knowledge of historical sources.

Szűcs entered the debate already in 1962,[9] but it is the later essay, "The medieval historical roots of national ideology" (1968), that made Szűcs well-known also to the broader intellectual public.[10] Already in the early 1960s, he argued against the anachronistic projection of modern forms of national identity on the premodern context, stressing that the peasant soldiers defending Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade) against the Ottomans in 1456 could not have been motivated by patriotism, as this concept was not even present in the consciousness of the peasantry of the period.[11] His earlier studies on this topic started from the working hypothesis that if there was any common consciousness and emotional bond transgressing the divisions of the estate society, this was not some sort of atemporal ethnic consciousness but a Christian universalism. This is what he identified in the case of the defenders of Nándorfehérvár and the revolting peasants led by György Dózsa in 1514. In his famous study about the latter, he stressed how the peasant army, originally mobilized to fight the Turkish "pagans," used Christian symbolism to legitimize its social claims against the nobility. Szűcs described this phenomenon in terms of a "popular Crusader frame of mind," but he also pointed out the role of observant Franciscans in shaping and popularizing this ideological construct.[12] Working on these topics, Szűcs became in-

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9   See the thematic block *Nemzet, haza, honvédelem a parasztság és a nem nemesi katonáskodó réteg gondolkodásában (XV–XVIII. század)* [Nation, fatherland, and defense of the fatherland in the worldview of the peasantry and the non-noble soldiers (15–18th centuries)] *Történelmi Szemle* 6, no. 1 (1963): 1–101.

10   Jenő Szűcs, "A nemzeti ideológia középkori historikuma" [The medieval historicity of national ideology], *Valóság* 11, no. 6 (1968): 37–49; Jenő Szűcs, "A nemzeti ideológia középkori historikuma (II. rész: A patriotizmus historikuma)" [The medieval historicity of national ideology; Second part: the historicity of patriotism], *Valóság* 11, no. 7 (1968): 49–66; subsequently also published as a book, Jenő Szűcs, *A nemzet historikuma és a történetszemlélet nemzeti látószöge (hozzászólás egy vitához)* [The historicity of the nation and the nationalistic viewing angle of history: Comments on a debate] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970).

11   Jenő Szűcs, "Nándorfehérvár és a parasztság" [Belgrade and the peasantry], *Történelmi Szemle* 6, no. 1 (1963): 11–14.

12   Jenő Szűcs, "Dózsa parasztháborújának ideológiája" [The ideology of the Dózsa Peasant War], *Valóság* 11 (1972): 12–39. Reprinted in Jenő Szűcs, *Nemzet és történelem: Tanulmányok* [Nation and History: Studies] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1974; 2nd edition: 1984), 601–68, English translation in the present volume. See also Jenő Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia és az 1514. évi parasztháború (Egy kódex tanulsága)" [Franciscan Observance and the Peasant War of 1514: The lessons of a codex], *Levéltári Közlemények* 43 (1972): 213–63; Jenő Szűcs, "Ferences ellenzéki áramlat a magyar parasztháború és a reformáció hátterében" [A Franciscan oppositional current in the background of the Hungarian Peasant War and the Reformation], *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 78 (1974): 409–35.

creasingly interested in inserting them into a more comprehensive temporal and structural framework. On the one hand, he also started to study Hungarian history before Christianization, asking the question if there existed at the moment of the Hungarians' entrance to the Carpathian Basin, around 900 AD (or even before), any integrative form of collective ethnic consciousness. On the other hand, he returned to the problem of the continuities and ruptures between premodern and modern forms of collective consciousness, investigating the reconfiguration of national ideology in the nineteenth century.

Focusing on the question of the historicity of national consciousness, in a short while he prepared a series of important studies in academic journals and edited volumes, many of which were subsequently published together in a volume, under the title *Nation and History* (1974).[13] While one obviously needs to put these texts into the context of the "Erik Molnár debate," Szűcs's position was far from being one-dimensional. His studies documented the existence of premodern forms of collective identity, but he made it clear that there was a profound structural difference between premodern and modern forms of national sentiment and was also adamantly against the instrumentalization of these premodern cultural codes for the purposes of reviving political nationalism (both in the forms of national communism and anti-communist ethno-populism).

It seemed that his personal career path (becoming head of the medieval department at the Institute of History) and the wide resonance of his 1974 volume heralded the triumph of a more critical historical consciousness about Hungarian national identity. However, there were also signs that his position was not so universally accepted, as indicated by the storm around his 1972 text arguing that the theory of Hunnic-Hungarian continuity was not based on some ancient collective memory transmitted by folklore, but was constructed by the chronicler Simon of Kéza in the thirteenth century.[14] What is more, the early 1970s saw a broader turn toward nationalism in the public sphere, triggered both by the growing concern for the situation of Hungarians living in the neighboring states and exposed to increasingly intolerant policies of homogenization, and by the search for new (and old) ideological reference points after the global

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13   Szűcs, *Nemzet és történelem*. German version: Jenő Szűcs, *Nation und Geschichte: Studien* (Budapest: Corvina, 1981).

14   Jenő Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet, politikai teória és történelemszemlélet Kézai Simon Gesta Hungarorumában" [Social theory, political theory and the historical approach of Simon of Kéza's *Gesta Hungarorum*], *Századok* 107 (1973): 569–643, 823–78, translation in the present volume. For a passionate pamphlet against Szűcs's position, see László Sebestyén, *Kézai Simon védelmében* [In defense of Simon of Kéza] (Budapest: MÉM Statisztikai és Gazdaságelemző Központ, 1975).

setback of reform communism symbolically linked to the crushing of the Prague Spring (in Hungary, the rupture was less dramatic, but the radical economic reform course was also halted here in 1971). In this context, Szűcs's meticulous historical analyses about premodern and modern patterns of collective identity had obvious contemporary stakes.

Gentilism and Medieval National Consciousness

The theoretical solution he worked out to deal with medieval forms of collective identity drew on the results of the contemporary German medievalist school, especially the Gentilism theory of Reinhard Wenskus. His key work in this respect was the study *"Gentilizmus": A barbár etnikai tudat kérdése* ("Gentilism": The question of barbarian ethnic consciousness). Importantly, apart from publishing a "sketch" of it, Szűcs did not finalize this work and it was published in its entirety only posthumously in 1992,[15] presumably for the reason he gives in his introduction: it was intended as the opening chapter of a comprehensive work on the development of ethnic and national consciousness up to the end of the Middle Ages. However, the project had to take a back seat to the enterprise that was to engage Szűcs's energy for years: "The Middle Ages" volume of the Institute of History's ten-volume *History of Hungary* project, for which he undertook to write a section on the last kings of the Árpádian Dynasty, which then became his other big posthumous volume.

Szűcs summed up the historical problem he set out to answer as follows: in the West, i.e., in the regions that were to define the face of nascent Europe, barbarian *gentes* (Franks, Goths, and Lombards) who made their appearance in the early Middle Ages later disintegrated as ethnic groups, and the modern nations—the French, the Spanish, and the Italian—emerged from more broadly-based late medieval formations. In contrast, in Northern and Eastern Europe—the regions populated by the new "barbarians," who joined the medieval West between the ninth and the eleventh centuries—the newly arrived Czech, Moravian, Polish, Magyar, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish ethnic groups were the

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15   Its shorter version was published in 1974, in Szűcs, *Nemzet és történelem*, 327–57. Translation in the present volume. The debate at the Academy of Sciences organized on the manuscript was published in *Történelmi Szemle*, Jenő Szűcs, "'Gentilizmus.' A barbár etnikai tudat kérdése (Tézisek és vita)" ["Gentilism": The question of barbarian ethnic consciousness (Theses and debate)], *Történelmi Szemle* 14, no. 1–2 (1971): 188–211. The full text was published as Jenő Szűcs, *A magyar nemzeti tudat kialakulása (Két tanulmány a kérdés őstörténetéből)* [The formation of the Hungarian ethnic consciousness: Two studies on its prehistory], ed. István Zimonyi (Szeged: JATE, 1992; 2nd enlarged edition: Budapest: Osiris, 1997).

units that would start to develop into modern nations. Is this indicative of two regionally distinctive types of modern national consciousness? If so, how far does the asynchronism of ethnogenic development account for the differences between the two types? What exactly does this "asynchronism" consist of? What parallels were there between the integration of the "new barbarians" into Christian Europe between the ninth and the eleventh centuries and the barbarian *gentes*' integration into the Roman Empire in the fifth and the sixth centuries? In what respects did the two processes differ? Szűcs's attempt to clarify his original question brought him, as we will see, to the fundamental methodological problem of the comparative study of historical regions and of asynchronous historical processes. He would return to these questions a decade later in his study of the three historical regions in Europe.

After having outlined the broader perspectives in the second chapter of "*Gentilizmus*," Szűcs details how the Western "gentilic" political, social, and cultural formations were cemented by common institutions and customs (*origo*, *lingua*, *instituta*, and *mores*). He then shows that the new medieval states were built on the shattered ruins of these original formations: to give *gens* a new territorial connotation, the Visigoth, Frankish, and Lombard rulers allied with their foreign entourages against their own aristocracies to destroy the old "gentilic" practices and forms of organization and joined with the Church in obliterating the epics and myths that had transmitted the old barbarian consciousness from generation to generation.

Jenő Szűcs's "*Gentilizmus*" represented a milestone in Hungarian historiography. It was the first attempt to interpret Hungarian ethnogenesis in terms of a Western/Germanic model of "gentilic" ethnic consciousness elaborated by German historians.[16] But before he could credibly posit the two processes as analogous, and then go on to use the model to illustrate also the differences between the two types of "gentilic" consciousness, Szűcs had to deal with what had for decades been a serious obstacle to an open-minded reconsideration of the subject: József Deér's theory of the origins of Hungarian national consciousness. Writing in the 1930s, Deér denounced the earlier conjectures of some primeval

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16 Theodor Mayer, "Die Ausbildung der Grundlagen des modernen deutschen Staates im hohen Mittelalter," *Historische Zeitschrift* 159 (1939): 457–87; Theodor Mayer, "Staatsauffassung in der Karolingerzeit," in *Das Königtum: Seine geistigen und rechtlichen Grundlagen*, Vorträge und Forschungen III, ed. Theodor Mayer (Lindau and Konstanz: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1956), 174–84; Helmut Beumann, "Zur Entwicklung transpersonaler Staatsvorstellungen," in *Das Königtum*, ed. Theodor Mayer, 185–224; Reinhard Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung: Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen Gentes* (Cologne and Graz: Böhlau, 1961).

Magyar national consciousness and concluded that the *Führertum* of the Árpáds was the real "ethnogenic factor" in the case of the Hungarians.[17]

In a surprising manner, Szűcs was arguing against Deér that certain elements of Hungarian ethnic consciousness did indeed go back to pre-Conquest times. Why this apparent change in Szűcs's position? The fact is that Szűcs had to draw a historical picture of Magyar "gentilic" consciousness—something that those who automatically stretched the notion of "Hungarian national consciousness" into the twilight zone of ancient history consistently failed to do—in order to be able to trace the intricacies of the complex historical transformations of the former, and answer his own question of why national consciousness developed differently here, as compared to the West. Picking his way through the minefields of ethnology, epic criticism, archaeology, and historical linguistics, Szűcs presents impressive arguments which effectively undermine the "four pillars" on which the "dome" of Deér's theoretical construct rests. He shows that there is documentary evidence that the Magyars' sense of their common origin was based on epics reaching before the time of Árpád; that they had words for the various frameworks of group cohesion: *nemzet* for what the Latin world called *genus*, and *fajzat* for *populus*, and for their particular form of social organization, the term "*Hétmagyar*" ("Seven Magyars"); and he argues convincingly that the Turkic inscriptions found at Orchon and interpreted by Deér as providing conclusive evidence of the chieftain's ethnogenic role attest an ideology, rather than a state of affairs.

Jenő Szűcs's virtues as a historian are most evident when, after meticulously drawing a series of theoretical distinctions, he suddenly places the theory back in its historical context. He returns to where he left off, speaking about the stifling of "gentilic" forms of consciousness in the medieval West, and shows that for all the "asynchronism," things happened much the same way in the Hungarian case as well: once there were two interpretations of "nation," and the archaic variant was doomed. But it went down fighting: it is this conflict that Szűcs sees at the root of the eleventh-century pagan revolts, not just the protest against Christianity, let alone the "class conflict" postulated by Marxist historians.

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17   József Deér, *Pogány magyarság—keresztény magyarság* [Pagan Magyars—Christian Magyars] (Budapest: Egyetemi Nyomda, 1938); later he also published a reworked German version: József Deér, *Heidnisches und Christliches in der altungarischen Monarchie* (Darmstadt: WBG, 1969). The concept of *Führertum* as a constitutive element of ethnic consciousness was also present in the interpretative framework of the pre-1945 precursors of the Gentilism theory, referred to in the previous note. From this perspective, Szűcs's arguments against Deér's conception can also be read as a subtle internal polemic with the *Gentilism* paradigm.

In one instance after the other, he demonstrated that national consciousness—like every other expression of collective identity—was a construct that was forever being reinterpreted and transformed, the same as any other tradition. Terms such as "invented tradition" and "imagined community," which have acquired currency through the work done by Eric Hobsbawm, Ernest Gellner, and Benedict Anderson in the early 1980s, are quite in keeping with Szűcs's findings in the previous decade.[18]

While we can praise Szűcs for being ahead of his time, it is important to recognize the degree to which his ideas were also the product of his times. Beyond the ceaseless mutation of the forms of national consciousness and its metaphors throughout history, what fascinated Szűcs were models of overall development. The introduction to his "*Gentilizmus*" seems to imply that we must go as far as the "asynchronous" development of East and West in the early Middle Ages if we are to make sense of the evident continuity between modern nation-states in Eastern Europe and early medieval "gentilic" social formations, and if we are to understand the particular vitality of the region's nationalism.

Another aspect of "*Gentilizmus*" that testifies to the time of its writing is its disciplinary approach. Szűcs was interested in the ethnic consciousness of the early Middle Ages not as a part of cultural history, but as a primitive mode of political thought: that is how the barbarian conception of justice comes to be compared with Cicero, Ulpian, and St. Augustine. As for ethnic consciousness being the seed of national consciousness, Szűcs tended to answer this in the negative: he tried to show that the correlation was less significant than modern nationalists generally suppose. The early Middle Ages, he argued, gave rise to various forms of collective identity, many of them no less enduring than ethnic consciousness. It is this insight that is reflected in the subtle change that took place in the second half of the 1970s, when Szűcs's interest shifted from the issue of "national consciousness" to the question of the medieval precedents of "civil society." This was a key issue addressed in the study on regions he wrote for the *Bibó Emlékkönyv* (Bibó Memorial Volume).

These complexities might provide a partial explanation to the rather limited nature of the international reception of Szűcs's studies on medieval national consciousness, in contrast to the general enthusiasm about his later essay on Eu-

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18 Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press, 1983); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

ropean regions. Another reason might well be the considerable time lag between the genesis of these texts in the late 1960s and the publication of the German version, *Nation und Geschichte*, in 1981. In the meantime, the German *Nationes* research network, which had a decisive role in thematizing the problem of premodern national consciousness, already moved beyond the paradigm of *Gentilism*, which came under increasing criticism (not unrelated to the unfolding *Historikerstreit*) of being rooted in a pre-1945 historical tradition tainted with anachronistic and politically dubious conceptions of *Volk* and *Führertum*. At the same time, Szűcs's broad structural claims, which in Hungary could be read as a covert way to overwrite the Marxist interpretative language, still sounded rather deterministic for many members of the medievalist community of the *Bundesrepublik*, not to speak about the fact that his considerations in other (earlier) parts of the book about socialist patriotism appeared to his West German reviewers dangerously similar to the discourse of their peers from the GDR. As a result, his book was compared unfavorably to the (otherwise not so dissimilar) work of the Czech post-1968 émigré historian František Graus (1921–1989).[19] Significantly, the Czech scholar started out with a more dogmatic Marxist position in the 1950s, but gradually became a key exponent of a methodologically sophisticated social constructivist challenge to the traditional understanding of medieval societies and identities, as—after his emigration—his work became swiftly integrated into the trendsetting *Nationes* series.[20]

Crisis and Renewal: The Last Árpádians

In 1968, a decision was made to prepare a ten-volume synthetic work on Hungarian history, coordinated by the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Jenő Szűcs was commissioned by the editorial board to write the part on the six decades after the Mongolian invasion in 1241: the history of Hungary until the extinction of the dynasty of the Árpádians. The preparation of this volume consumed all his energy during the subsequent decade. By 1980 (or by 1981 according to other sources), he completed his contribution, which

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19 "Hier bleibt S. entschieden hinter den Erwartungen zurück, denn er schildert zwar am Beispiel des ungarischen Nationsbildungsprozesses einige Hauptzüge der mittelalterlichen Abläufe und Ablaufsbedingungen (S. 77 ff.), aber das alles wirkt nicht sehr fundiert, geht zu rasch aufs Allgemeine und wird jeden Leser enttäuschen, der mehr erfahren möchte als methodisches Raisonnement unterhalb der von Reinhard Wenskus und František Graus gesetzten Maßstäbe." Joachim Ehlers, "Nation und Geschichte: Anmerkungen zu einem Versuch," *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 11, no. 2 (1984): 205–18, here 210.

20 František Graus, *Die Nationenbildung der Westslawen im Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1980).

satisfied the requirements but turned out to be much longer than expected. For this reason, he kept on working on the text, and concluded it in 1984. However, the planned second volume of this "ten-volume" History of Hungary never appeared, and Szűcs's part was published posthumously, as an individual monograph, edited by his friend and colleague Pál Engel.[21]

The intention to write the history of the last Árpádians could have seemed particularly exciting for Szűcs because precisely these decades brought a crucial turnaround in the abovementioned model of historical evolution. This was the historical period when Hungary turned towards the West, more markedly than before, and shaped the social and political institutions of the "second feudal age" (Marc Bloch).[22] It was during this period, following one of the biggest historical catastrophes of Hungarian history, in the verve of the postwar reconstruction, that those features were wrought which rendered Hungary one of the significant powers of late medieval Europe. To provide only a sketchy enumeration of the elements that belong here: the differentiated, Western-type social structure (a high and lower nobility acquiring gradually the status of estates, a unified serfdom with rights of free movement, burgher towns protected by privileges); the activities in agriculture, mining, handicraft, and commerce revived with Western technologies and regulating mechanisms, imported partly by the mediation of newly arrived settlers (*hospites*); the state organization developing an up-to-date administration and bureaucracy, fortified by efficient tools of internal and external defense; and a Christian church catching up with the modern ecclesiastical structures, religious orders, and intellectual currents that have unfolded since the twelfth century.

Many colleagues probably expected that precisely these questions would be in the center of the monograph: the examination of the economic and social structures in an international context and the theoretically grounded confrontation of Hungarian political institutions and ideologies with the Western ones. It came as a surprise, then, that the tone-setting first part of the book focuses instead on the psychological characterization of the rulers—Béla IV and Stephen V—posing the question: how are we to assess their capacity as political leaders? Departing from the starting point of structural history and regional models of evolution, Szűcs is proposing here something different. He continues

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21 Jenő Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok* [The Last Árpádians], ed. and annotated by Pál Engel (Budapest: História, 1993).

22 Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L. A. Manyon (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

to address the "questions of national fate," but instead of constituting an abstract model of intellectual history (coded with hidden political messages), he condenses his answers, with a Plutarchian method, into the moral lessons derived from suggestive ruler-portraits.

These political questions were inserted into a framework of social history, investigating the economic, social, and political features of the feudal order and its transformations over the period under examination. From this perspective, the Mongolian raid is the challenge which incites Hungary to make a step forward, following the "growth rules" of feudalism, and satisfying the needs of a more articulated society; this is how the country gets increasingly closer to Western evolution. In Szűcs's words: "It was in the decades following the Mongolian raids that the new constitutive elements of the social structure—the nobility and the bourgeoisie—took up definitive contours and could not be left, henceforth, out of consideration in the political sphere."[23] He came to this relevant observation in the framework of a holistic view of history, not reduced to the spheres of politics and the state, nor to a Marxist-minded economic determinism. As he underlines, "Merely on the basis of economics the social–legal pattern cannot be deciphered; 'rights' do not follow mechanically from the availability of economic conditions."[24]

According to Szűcs, for triggering a transformation and a "growth" within the "feudal system," external factors are needed, which are not contained within the economic or social structures. That is why he emphasizes the role of agency, above all that of the kings, but also that of the lords who had a larger than average potential of decision and action. This did not mean for him a return to pure political history. He would rather phrase it as an assessment of the importance of rational political agency in the process of the structural transformation of feudal society.

At this point, however, Szűcs had to face the delicate question: what kind of sources allow the historian to understand the intentions and the interior motivations of his historical actors? This is especially troublesome for medievalists, working with very thin documentation. Szűcs cannot resist attributing an articulated political reform strategy to Béla IV, supposing that the king clearly understood the necessity of economic and social reforms for preparing his kingdom for a successful resistance against a possible renewed Mongolian attack.

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23 Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok*, 143.
24 Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok*, 212.

But he also understands the dilemma that the historian's perception of the "logic of the situation" might be more articulate than that of the actors of the age, who might have been "tools" rather than "steering leaders" of the unstoppable growth processes.[25]

Structure and Agency: An Outline of the Historical Regions of Europe

The historiographical ethos of Szűcs was marked by a tension between his aspiration to exhaustive documentation and digestion of all historical details and a desire to formulate more general and encompassing interpretative models. When he set out to work on a new topic, he did not want to make compromises in any direction: he tried to integrate all sources from economic and social history to cultural history while also seeking to enter into a dialogue with representatives of other disciplines, drawing on economic, legal, and sociological categories and theories. The genre of "outline" was a typical form of compromise in his oeuvre, being torn between his intellectual ambitions and the available objective possibilities of realizing the conceived design. It seemed appropriate to name the unfinished fragment published in the "*Gentilizmus*" volume exactly as "An outline of Hungarian prehistory," and the essay written for the Bibó Memorial Volume is also entitled an outline. Besides the professional and moral obligation to pay tribute to the highly respected political thinker, the real stimulus for Szűcs was that this "sketch" allowed him to delineate a vast model of historical evolution, in explicit polemics with the contemporary public discourse, and present a series of historical proofs for his arguments.

From the mid-1970s the Hungarian public sphere was increasingly dominated by such polemics, many of them on historical topics. This was due both to the relative tolerance of the regime, keeping a rather broad grey zone open between discourses and phenomena which were explicitly forbidden (touching directly on the legitimacy of the regime, such as the memory of the 1956 revolution), and explicitly promoted. This relative tolerance was reinforced by the geopolitical game of the Kádárist leadership, trying to normalize its relationship to the West (culminating in such symbolic acts as receiving back the Hungarian crown from the US authorities in 1978) as well as by the global dynamic of détente determined by the "Helsinki process." On the other hand, the global fall of belief in "socialism with a human face" after 1968 catalyzed a colorful plural-

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25   Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok*, 118.

ity of critical voices, gradually coagulating into more coherent groups (including various forms of counter-cultural movements from hippies to folk-revivalists), with some of them also moving toward more explicit political positions. By the late 1970s, they came to form two loosely-knit and sometimes competing, sometimes cooperating, streams: that of the "democratic opposition," using the language of human rights, and the ethno-populists, focusing mainly on national identity and the situation of Hungarians beyond the borders.

In this context, the issues of national identity got entangled with questions of symbolic geopolitical self-positioning and the problem of civil society. To be sure, the debate on Hungary's symbolic geographical localization and on historical regions in general had a considerable prehistory going back to the late nineteenth century.[26] However, rather than an unproblematic continuity, there were important diachronic ruptures of this discourse. For instance, after WWII, the binary East/West division of Cold War Europe effectively overwrote the Central European discourse, triggering also a complex historiographical production focusing on economic (especially early modern agrarian) history and using the language of backwardness. The 1960s saw the reemergence of alternative conceptualizations challenging this binary perspective in Hungary as well as in most countries of the Soviet camp, leading to the rediscovery of the Central European cultural and political traditions and the reevaluation of the Habsburg Monarchy which provided a common framework to many of these nations for centuries. While in the Czech case this discourse was originally launched in the cultural and philosophical spheres (with reference to the heritage of Kafka and the local socialist intellectual traditions providing an ideological alternative to Soviet-type communism), in Hungary (as well as in Poland) these discussions engaged especially the historical profession, including such luminaries of the time as György Ránki, Iván T. Berend, and Péter Hanák.[27]

The most resounding Hungarian contribution to this debate was made by Szűcs, which was due both to the intellectual and conceptual sophistication of his essay and to the specific conditions of its genesis. It was published in a collective publication, which was meant originally as a *Festschrift* to István Bibó, a promi-

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26   On the transnational history of the Central Europeanist discourse, see Balázs Trencsényi, "Central Europe," in *European Regions and Boundaries: A Conceptual History*, ed. Diana Mishkova and Balázs Trencsényi (New York: Berghahn, 2017), 166–87.

27   See the anthology: Iván T. Berend and Éva Ring, eds., *Helyünk Európában: Nézetek és koncepciók a 20. századi Magyarországon* [Our place in Europe: Views and conceptions in twentieth-century Hungary] 2 vols. (Budapest: Magvető, 1986).

nent dissident thinker and former political prisoner (condemned to life imprisonment for his role in the 1956 Revolution), by an illustrious and colorful group of intellectuals, many of them linked in one way or another to opposition circles. However, after the death of Bibó in 1979, it became a memorial volume. Szűcs was among the organizers of the project and the original intention of the editors was to publish it officially with the state publishing company Gondolat, which had a strong cultural-historical portfolio. Nevertheless, due to the pressure from higher party echelons, the publisher eventually refused the manuscript, which was then distributed as samizdat in 1981.[28] One of the most precious pieces in the memorial volume was the historical essay by Szűcs. Its special intellectual merits and the political and cultural conditions of late Kádárism can explain how this bulky type-written samizdat text could still quickly be published in the review of the Historical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and then as an autonomous volume by a state-owned publishing house, and soon afterwards even in English translation by a Hungarian academic review.[29]

The text explicitly engaged with Bibó's philosophy of history, focusing on a tension between a general normative vision of European social development toward the "humanization of power"[30] and the situatedness of historical actors and decisions responding or failing to respond to particular challenges. For Szűcs, historical regions also provided such broader frameworks fitting into the general patterns of civilizational progress but also far from predetermining the historical path of a given community. Drawing on his previous research on the time lag between the formation of Western European and East Central European monarchies in the Middle Ages and the fundamental difference between the West and the "post-Byzantine" Russian and Ottoman-dominated Eastern Europe, he depicted the relationship of the Occident and East Central Europe in terms of a creative tension, sometimes marked by close approximation (like in the high Middle Ages and in the nineteenth century) and sometimes by the growing of the gap (like after 1945). Rather than a discourse of resentment (like

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28 The first legal edition is Pál Réz, ed., *Bibó-emlékkönyv* [Bibó memorial volume] (Budapest: Századvég Kiadó, Bern: Európai Protestáns Magyar Szabadegyetem, 1991).

29 Jenő Szűcs, "Vázlat Európa három történeti régiójáról" [The Three Historical Regions of Europe: An Outline], *Történelmi Szemle* 3 (1981): 313–59; in book form: Jenő Szűcs, *Vázlat Európa három történeti régiójáról* [The Three Historical Regions of Europe: An Outline] (Budapest: Magvető, 1983); In English: "The Three Historical Regions of Europe: An Outline," *Acta Historica* 29 (1983): 131–84. A thoroughly edited English text is included in this volume.

30 For Bibó's historical-philosophical essays, see István Bibó, *The Art of Peacemaking: Political Essays by István Bibó*, trans. Péter Pásztor, ed. Iván Zoltán Dénes (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

Kundera's emotional text on "*l'Europe kidnappée*"), Szűcs used a structural argument to reassert a fundamental historical linkage between East Central and Western Europe. Along these lines, he also established a connection between the premodern social evolution and the organizing principle of modern civil society. What was somewhat missing from this engaging historical tableau was the Balkans, which later on earned Szűcs the criticism of authors, such as Maria Todorova, who challenged the Central Europeanist paradigm for its blind spot (and alleged exclusionary intention) on the southeastern part of the continent, which could not be reduced to a boundless concept of "Eastern Europe" either.[31]

The Late Eighties: Between Hope and Despair

As we could see, in the early 1980s Szűcs shifted his attention from the question of national consciousness to the problem of historical and structural preconditions of democracy and civil society. By the second half of the eighties, the situation changed once again. Being involved in the reform movement, he became increasingly sensitive to the revival of nationalism and turned back to the problems of myths of origins, national identity, nation-statehood, and national minorities. This problem area was the subject of one of his last intriguing essays written not long before his death, published in the prestigious cultural monthly, *Valóság*, albeit with some censorial interventions.[32] One of its main theses was that historicizing national consciousness goes back to the premodern era, and its elements survived or rather were revived by nineteenth-century nationalism. This "premodern structure of awareness" was based on the postulate of mythologizing both ethnogenesis and the origins of the state. The former drew on the belief in fictitious "prototypical peoples" constructed by scholars in the Middle Ages "from remaining scraps of historical, geographical, and ethnographical information of late antiquity."[33] As for the latter, "Medieval man was preoccupied less with the origin of a 'state' per se than with the genesis of a given kingdom (*regnum*) as a 'national territory.'"[34] These two myths of genesis, becoming anachronistic by the eighteenth century, would surface again as a conceptual

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31   "Within this majestic framework, the Balkans were not even deemed relevant to be analyzed"; see Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 143.

32   Jenő Szűcs, "Történeti 'eredet'-kérdések és nemzeti tudat" [Questions of "origin" and national consciousness], *Valóság* 3 (1985): 31–49. Republished in Szűcs, *A magyar nemzeti tudat kialakulása* (1997), 334–69. The latter contains the text in its complete form. See chapter 8 in this volume.

33   Ibid., 334 (299 in this volume).

34   Ibid. (299–300 in this volume).

raw material of nationalism at locations where the state and the nation were so distanced from each other "that the state could only be declared 'national' at the cost of the greatest theoretical or practical difficulties (or not even at that cost)."[35] The historicized notion of the nation came to fulfill the ideological role which connected—over many centuries and structures—in the form of a "great arch" the origin of the state and the people to the legitimation demands of the present-day nation-state. Consequently, analogy, but not sameness makes the pre-eighteenth-century ideological notion of the nation comparable to the notion of the modern nation-state created by nationalism. The key difference between the two is due to the polysemic nature of the premodern concept of nation:

> In medieval Hungary ... a "Hungarian" (*Hungarus*) ... was anyone who was a subject of the kingdom of Hungary (*regnum Hungariae*). At the same time, the stance conceptually gave clear recognition to the separate identity of all who were differentiated as a group by virtue of their "nation," which is to say by origin (*natione*) as well as by language and customs (*lingua et moribus*). . . . What counted as truly valuable, however, was for somebody to be considered as belonging to a third kind of "nation"—that is, fitting into the framework of a *natio Hungarica*, organized not simply by virtue of being a territorial subject, or even by linguo-cultural affinity, but in a feudal-corporative sense.[36]

These alternative concepts of the nation automatically provided everybody with some kind of a group identity while still preserving the distinctiveness of these identity constructions. As Szűcs remarks: "Everybody was, as it were, born into his own particular double or triple 'national' status, while the identities that were dealt out got on well together." The notion of the nation revived (or rather redefined) by modern nationalism culminated, however, in the fusion of these three elements: "everyone had to belong to a *specific* nation, and consequently the archaic compromise of divided and overlapping 'national' identities ceased to exist."[37]

Nineteenth-century Hungarian nation state-building, however, was confronted with an almost unresolvable practical problem of how to historicize the

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35   Ibid., 334 (301 in this volume).
36   Ibid., 337 (302 in this volume).
37   Ibid. (303 in this volume).

ethnogenesis, facing the obvious ethno-cultural plurality of the country. A further challenge was to eliminate the discontinuity caused by the Ottoman occupation of the country in the early modern period, fragmenting the linear narrative of Hungarian history. Still, the nineteenth-century nation-builders had to find some solution to these dilemmas, since the "national consciousness is . . . a sense of identity of which a sense of *historical continuity* is an important component. Without this there can be no national consciousness, or else it is present but disturbed."[38] The main task stipulated by modern nationalism was thus to seek identity even in "non-identities," and look for continuity in disruptions, with the explicit aim of linking the present to the past through a specific historical discourse. Any failure to create such a discursive integration of the nation could threaten the final success of the nation-state building project. From this perspective, modern Hungarian national consciousness with its multi-level fragmentation and the divergence of the mental frameworks of statehood and ethnos was hardly a success story and—in many ways resonating with István Bibó's critical analyses from the 1940s—Szűcs tended to depict the reemergence of a neo-romantic ethno-cultural nationalism in the 1970s as a pathological symptom of the incomplete process of nation-building.

His critical tone became even sharper in his speech, held less than three weeks before his tragic suicide, in front of the audience of the "New March Front," a rather heterogeneous group of reform-minded intellectuals trying to mediate between the regime and the mushrooming opposition movements. Szűcs's reserved discourse was strikingly out of tune with the growing euphoria about the space for democratization opening up in the late 1980s. It is hard to say if his existential anxieties and depression triggered a more pessimistic historical reading, or the other way round, his dark intuitions about the direction of historical development contributed to his personal collapse.

Be it as it may, his last major public appearance was marred by his gloomy warnings to his audience with regard to the potential failure of the democratization process. While he praised Gorbachev for openly labeling the Soviet regime as tyrannical and seeking to introduce "socialist legality," he did not believe that the communist leaderships in the Soviet Union or in Hungary were really committed to power sharing and the introduction of multi-party democracy. In this respect he was highly skeptical of the Russian political dynamic and envisioned (quite prophetically) a pendulum movement where the democratization cham-

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38   Ibid., 346 (311 in this volume).

pioned by Gorbachev would be followed by the return to an autocratic regime, perhaps in a radical nationalist or imperialist garb. But his main concern was not even the possible failure of *perestroika*, but rather the weakness of the democratic and civic potential of his own society. While there was a strong intention on the side of the non-communist social actors to grab (or at least share) power, there was much less willingness to create a framework where the power-holder (be it communist or anti-communist) would be effectively controlled.[39] Szűcs's general conclusion was that, although the historical path of Hungary had strong links to Western Europe, he did not see any predetermined and unilinear road towards a functional democracy.

Conclusion

What made Szűcs a distinctive voice in Hungarian historiography, also highly interesting from a broader transnational perspective? Despite the fact that Szűcs was working on an extensive empirical base, he could evade the trap of source fetishism because of his openness already in the 1960s towards the teachings of the emerging (West) German *Begriffsgeschichte*.[40] He was also ready to combine this with the contemporary results of historical sociology and cultural anthropology. All this proved a novelty both in Hungary and even globally, and this also explains why his domestic and international reception by mainstream historiography encountered many difficulties.

The fact that—apart from his contribution to the debate on Central Europe—Szűcs's oeuvre concerning the conceptual history of the nation and the state is passed over in silence in the scholarly community may be explained by several reasons. The direction of Szűcs's analyses converged with the constructivist theory of nationalism which appeared in Western Europe at the beginning of the 1980s. While anticipating many of our current assumptions stressing both the relativity and obsolescent characteristics of the national historical paradigm, Szűcs might have gone too far from the perspective of his audience.

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39   Speech at the November 5, 1988 debate of the New March Front: see Iván Vitányi, ed., *Új Márciusi Front 1988* [The New March Front, 1988] (Budapest: Múzsák, 1989), 208–13. Republished in Jenő Szűcs, "Ha referátumot tartottam volna," *BUKSZ* 31, nos. 3–4 (Fall–Winter 2019): 214–16.

40   The first volume of the seven-volume synthetic undertaking of German *Begriffsgeschichte* is *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, edited by Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck. It appeared only in 1972, but Szűcs used already in the late sixties several of the entries published separately in scholarly journals.

In an oversophisticated phrasing (and this was not wholly accidental),[41] he argued that narrating the past as an exclusively national history was conceptually ungrounded and merely an ideological (mythological) undertaking. By assuming such a standpoint, he seemed to challenge not only the nationalist historical master narrative, but also the very sense of superiority characteristic of the identity of professional (academic) historical scholarship in its relationship to any other possible form of historical consciousness and discourse.

The 1990s brought a pluralization of historical discourses and thus the studies of Szűcs became important reference points in the Hungarian discussion on the continuities and ruptures of national consciousness triggered by the reception of the works by Gellner, Hobsbawm, and Anderson. In turn, the post-2010 new historical politics of the Hungarian "System of National Cooperation" has been systematically trying to demolish most of the tenets of his analysis stressing the discontinuity between premodern and modern frames of identification. The ideologists of the regime and the new institutions set up by the government draw on ethno-nationalist scholarly and para-scholarly subcultures, trying to restore the theory of Hun-Magyar continuity into its erstwhile dominant position, instrumentalize medieval symbolism (most importantly that of the Holy Crown) in modern politics, actualize and decontextualize historical sources about premodern collective identity, and merge pagan and Christian references.[42] What is more, they instrumentalize the Central Europeanist discourse in the form of the Visegrad cooperation not against Eastern Europe, but against Western Europe and the alleged multiculturalist deviation of the European Union (thus, seeking to forge a tactical alliance with the autocratic regimes of Russia and Turkey). In this sense, one can argue that Szűcs's work is more vital than ever and might offer many relevant points both for scholars of Hungarian history and that of the broader region, as well as inspiration for the younger generations of students seeking to find reliable points of orientation on these highly contested issues.

Given the multifarious and extensive oeuvre of Jenő Szűcs, our volume could not aim at a comprehensive publication. We sought instead to offer a substantial

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41 The conceptual complexity and ponderousness of his language might well have been a conscious or unconscious means of self-concealment. By rendering the understanding of his texts more difficult, he supposedly tried to take the edge off the subversive effects of his views.

42 On the "politics of history" in Hungary after 2010, see Balázs Trencsényi, "'Politics of History' and Authoritarian Regime-Building in Hungary," in *National History and New Nationalism in the Twenty-First Century: A Global Comparison*, ed. Niels F. May and Thomas Maissen (New York and London: Routledge, 2021), 171–89.

selection of his most characteristic works, some of them previously not available in English, while providing more complete and sometimes textually corrected English versions for those which were already partially available. At the end of the volume, we also included a comprehensive bibliography of Szűcs's printed works, relying on the previous publication of the journal *Történelmi Szemle*. We would like to thank the Pasts, Inc. Center for Historical Studies at the Central European University for providing funding for the translations and the editorial work. The long process of translating the texts, checking the translations against various versions of the Hungarian original, as well as assembling and sometimes correcting the original notes, demanded a lot of attention. Apart from the translator, Tim Wilkinson (1947–2020), we are also grateful to Christiana Mauro, Andrew Mike Cragg, and John Puckett for double checking the English versions, to Nóra Vörös and József Litkei from CEU Press for taking good care of the book manuscript, to Flora Ghazaryan for preparing the index, and to Sára Lakatos for formatting the footnotes.

Last but not least, we would like to dedicate our book to the memory of János M. Bak (1929–2020), a sorely missed colleague and friend, who also worked a lot to make the writings of Szűcs available for the international scholarly audience.

"Nationality" and "National Consciousness" in the Middle Ages: Towards the Development of a Common Conceptual Language*

A thorough treatment of the issues in the title is not the task of an essay with special limitations but one of a monograph; the purpose of this text is thus not to present the historical dynamics and serious conceptual implications of the issues being considered. At most, we can offer viewpoints and propositions, if you will, that might help to create a theoretical frame of reference, which, though it still cannot be found in the literature, is crucial. Methodologically, theoretical and historical analysis mutually condition each other. That we begin here with a purely conceptual analysis and the historical research follows in a separate part is because reconstruction of the medieval phenomenological world does not *in itself* offer a sufficiently robust basis to situate such phenomena within our current classification framework.

A Conceptual Model

The historical precursors of the modern nation-state involve conditions which reach far back into the Middle Ages. They have been of major interest since the modern nations emerged and methods of historical scholarship were established around the turn of the nineteenth century. They appeared in the same period and were also genetically related, along with the evolution of a distinctive new framework for considering "national history" that could be read in various

ways.[1] However, there are few questions on which historical scholarship is so utterly divided as this: in what sense is it justified to use the label or term "national" (e.g., in "national consciousness" or similar notions)? How broadly or narrowly should it be applied? The absence of a generally accepted conceptual framework today is no less apparent than it was a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ago, even though the oldest historical layer of this problem—the issue of "national consciousness" during the Middle Ages—has been the object of ongoing historical investigations since the turn of the century.

There is hardly space for even a rough survey of the literature,[2] thus, we are forced to make do with references to the types of responses which may serve as illustrations.

One type of response dates the emergence and continuous existence of "nations" to the moment when the names of nations as we know them today first appeared with an ethnonymic function in the sources. It qualifies without hesitation as an indication of "national consciousness" any manifestation of the differentiation from the outsider—or, to use a modern sociological expression—the appearance of "*Wir-Bewußtsein*" in the source material. If the "awakening of national sentiments" (as Ranke and Thierry conceived it) shattered the universal Carolingian unity over the course of the ninth and tenth centuries, a number of essays and monographs have sought to fill this historical and theoretical framework with as much source material as possible since the turn of the twentieth century. One branch of scholars who took this historiographical path, ranging from Franz Guntram Schultheiß's attempt at an outline at the end of the nineteenth century to the sizable recent publications of Karl Gottfried Hugelmann, cannot disclaim its ideological bias, seeking to offer a historical apology to nationalism. Curiously, many historians with opposing ideological viewpoints came to quite similar conclusions. Even Johan Huizinga was of the opinion that in the so-called "longer prologue" of the *Lex Salica* (probably dating to the middle of the eighth century)

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1   For a critical synopsis of the development of the concept of national history, see Eduard Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie* (Munich and Berlin, 1936), *passim* esp. 415–21, 429–30, 535–49, and 557–75.

2   Two bibliographies on the subject are available which offer points of departure, though they are quite deficient with respect to their research on medieval antecedents: Koppel S. Pinson, *A Bibliographical Introduction to Nationalism* (New York, 1935); Karl W. Deutsch, *An Interdisciplinary Bibliography of Nationalism, 1935–1953* (Cambridge, 1956).

*   Johan Huizinga, "Patriotism and Nationalism in European History," in *Men and Ideas: History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance*, translated by James S. Holmes and Hans van Marle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 103. 103. Original edition: "Wachstum und Formen des nationalen Bewusstseins in Europa bis zum Ende des XIX. Jahrhunderts," in *Im Bann der Geschichte* (Basel, 1943).

"there suddenly sounded the clarion call of a new national awareness."* With regard to the qualities of patriotism and nationalism he thought that "the only change in the two emotions in the course of time has actually been that they have become somewhat more clearly delineated. For the rest, they have remained what they always were: primitive instincts in human society."* As far as usage of the terms is concerned, Erich Zöllner's characteristic point of departure was that the incontrovertible disparity between the conception of "people" in the Middle Ages and the modern age "does not in itself entitle us to construe national consciousness of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as paradigmatic," nor to interpret comparable earlier phenomena as "antecedents." Also widespread was the approach adopted by George Gordon Coulton, who said: "I try to use the term nationalism consistently within my own rough limits, but without attempt at scientific definition."[3]

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*   Johan Huizinga, "Patriotism and Nationalism," 99.

3   For the views of Leopold von Ranke and Augustin Thierry, see, respectively, Leopold von Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, vol. 1 (*Sämtliche Werke* I) (Leipzig, 1867), 9; and Augustin Thierry, *Lettres sur l'histoire de France* (Paris, 1820), 10. Statements dating from the tenth century ("die europäischen Nationen standen einander in bewußter Abgeschlossenheit gegenüber") are prevalent in the historical literature. See Albert Hauck, *Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands*, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1985), 388. Franz Guntram Schultheiß, *Das deutsche Nationalbewußtsein in der Geschichte*, *Sammlung wissenschaftlicher Vorträge*, 129 (Hamburg, 1891); Franz Guntram Schultheiß, *Geschichte des deutschen Nationalgefühls, Eine historisch-psychologische Darstellung* (Munich, 1893). With this interrupted undertaking the author intended to educate his nation: "unserer heranwachsenden Jugend . . . ein nationales Erbauungsbuch werden könnte" (Preface, viii). What is begun here in conceptualization and methodology will appear over the next half century in a whole interconnected series of works. Most recent is Karl Gottfried Hugelmann's 500-page monograph, *Stämme, Nation und Nationalstaat im deutschen Mittelalter* (Würzburg, 1955). The work's size, the literature referenced, the sources drawn upon, and the formal pedantry of its approach makes it the pinnacle of a half-century of historiographic development (for details, see the work's bibliographical appendix). But its overly dense and illogical exposition and its glaringly ahistorical interpretations also give it a caricature-like quality. His conclusions include not only the claim that already in the mid-ninth century "das deutsche Volk sich als eine gegliederte Einheit formte und abgrenzte und ein deutsches Nationalbewußtsein einstand" (Hugelmann, *Stämme, Nation und Nationalstaat*, 294) but also the assertion that simultaneously "das deutsche Volk einen Nationalstaat gestaltete, in dem es sich als große geschichtliche Einheit fühlte und das Recht der Persönlichkeit, der Selbstbestimmung in Anspruch nahm. . . . Ja man wird dann in gesteigertem Sinn von einem Nationalstaat sprechen können, von einem Staate, dessen Nationalcharakter auch—mindestens indirekt [!]—juristische Formulierung gefunden hat . . ." (Hugelmann, *Stämme, Nation und Nationalstaat*, 430). This work is a textbook example that shows how through the retrospective distortive lens of nationalism an impressive body of data can turn historical realities upside-down, for one of the elements of a historical reality—"German misery"—entails that behind the fantasy of a medieval *Imperium* there was not only the possibility for a "nation-state" to vanish but that of any kind of *state*. His vision of a *"Nationalstaat"* and *"Nationalbewußtsein,"* which, since the ninth century existed "kontinuerlich auf dem deutschen Volksboden' [!] (Hugelmann, *Stämme, Nation und Nationalstaat*, 377) represents nothing more than the distorted consolation of a nationalistic conception of history. In fairness, however, it should be noted that already in the 1920s there appeared within German historiography a more critical school of thought (see below), and Hugelmann's work received sharp criticism, particularly from the German side;

According to the common conceptual foundations of these responses, for-mulated in different ways, the essence of the nation is a historical identity qual-itatively similar to that of medieval times. Another type of answer abandons even the claim of historical continuity because in line with its historico-philo-sophical point of departure, "nation" is a supra-historical classification and his-torical evolution consists of alternations between "national" and "supra-na-tional" periods. Thus, there existed Jewish, Hellenic, and Roman nationalism (along with more cosmopolitan variants of these cultures) until the "*Wiederein-tritt des nationalen Prinzips in die Weltgeschichte*," as it is put characteristically by this type of literature from the end of the nineteenth century until today, re-ferring to the triumph of the Germanic ethnic group-consciousness over the battered Roman Empire and the cosmopolitism of late antiquity.[4]

In contrast, a third type of response particularly emphasizes the essential dif-ference between the European structures and periods which emerged after the end of the eighteenth century and the rather distant (pseudo-national) ana-logues of the nation or between the modern nation-state and earlier (pre-na-tional) phenomena, even if in a sense they could be regarded as historical ante-cedents of modern national integration. The requirement of critical discernment in historical and conceptual analyses has appeared already in the nineteenth century: in the works of Fustel de Coulanges and Friedrich Julius Neumann, for example. It can be traced in the Western perspective—and above all in the American literature, which has recently begun to dominate the study of nation-alism—but also in recent Soviet historiographical findings, though naturally they differ in important ways, and indeed conflict with respect to their method-

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see for instance the review of Otto Brunner, "Karl Gottfried Hugelmann: *Nationalstaat und Nationalitäten-recht im deutschen Mittelalter*. I. Bd.: Stämme, Nation und Nationalstaat im deutschen Mittelalter," *Histo-rische Zeitschrift* 186, no. 1 (1958): 103–11. and Heinrich Sproemberg, "La naissance d'un État Allemand au Moyen-Âge," *Moyen-Âge* 64 (1958): 213–48; see also Werner Conze, *Die deutsche Nation: Ergebnis der Ge-schichte* (Göttingen, 1965), esp. 9–36. References quoted in the text are from Erich Zöllner, *Die politische Stellung der Völker im Frankenreich (Veröffentl. des IÖG 13)* (Vienna, 1950), 31; George Gordon Coulton, "Nationalism in the Middle Ages," *Cambridge Historical Journal* 5 (1935): 15–40, here 15.

4   For the perspective of Paul Barth and others, cf. *Verhandlungen der deutschen Soziologentage*, vol 2, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie, Schriften Ser. I. (Tübingen, 1913). This conception, in its most extreme form, however, largely remained a historico-philosophical precept; for an overview of such views, see Waldemar Mitscherlich, "Volk und Nation," in *Handwörterbuch der Soziologie* (Stuttgart, 1959), 647. A dissertation that was modest in itself had much more influence over the conceptual approach: Alfred Dove, *Der Wiedereintritt des nationalen Prinzips in die Weltgeschichte (Ausgewählte Schriften . . .)* (Leipzig, 1898), 1–19. Its title became a dictum and even served as a basis for analyses which—as Heinrich Finke and Halvdan Koht, for instance (see Note 6 below)—do not link the genesis of nationalism in Europe to the fall of Rome. This view also recurs in more recent works, e.g., Salo Wittmayer Baron, *Modern Nationalism and Religion* (New York and London, 1947), 13.

ological underpinnings and many a detail. It is nevertheless possible to consider these responses as comparable inasmuch as they see the nation-state as a new kind of historical entity and try to articulate this with their terminology. Regardless of the etymology and historical connotations of the term *nation* (*natsiya*), according to our current classification framework it embraces a totality of notions, assumptions, and conceptual features which have only existed as such since the end of the eighteenth century. In recent literature there have been relatively consistent efforts to subsume earlier forms of integration under the heading of "nationality" (*narodnost'*). As Carlton Hayes, the doyen of American research, has written, nationality, as a "cultural group that speaks a common language (or closely related dialects) and who possess a community of historical traditions (religious, territorial, political, military, economic, artistic and intellectual)" is a very old construct which has served under many historical conditions. Historical expressions of patriotism are equally old, "but the fusion of patriotism and nationality and the predominance of national patriotism over all other human loyalties . . . which is nationalism . . . is modern, very modern." The outlook of the Soviet research, as summarized by Lev V. Cherepnin, is that in contradistinction to the nation that emerged as a result of the formation of bourgeois relations, the *narodnost'* is bound to pre-capitalist formations of ethnic community; it is located social-typologically somewhere between tribe and nation. From a historical point of view, it was the nation's ethnic basis that possessed the typical national criteria in a rudimentary way (language, territory, economic life, and mentality manifested in common culture).[5]

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5 Fustel de Coulanges (1830–1889) expressly opposed the above position epitomized by Ranke and Thierry: "this assertion . . . means that we are looking for the kind of sentiments in the ninth century which only appeared in humans centuries later." Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges, *Histoire des institutions politiques de l'ancienne France* (Paris, 1892), 617. "Man kann das Entstehen von Nationen in gewissem Sinne ein Werk der Neuzeit nennen"; Friedrich Julius Neumann, *Volk und Nation* (Leipzig, 1888), 95. The first serious attempt to analyze the historical semantic content of *natio* is at 115–43. For the most important comprehensive American works which today dominate bourgeois historiography, taking, to a greater or lesser extent, medieval antecedents into consideration, see: Carlton J. H. Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism* (New York, 1926); Carlton J. H. Hayes, *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism* (New York, 1931); Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A study in its origins and background* (New York, 1944); Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication* (New York and London, 1953); Louis Leo Snyder, *The Meaning of Nationalism* (New Brunswick, 1954); Boyd C. Shafer, *Nationalism: Myth and Reality* (New York, 1955); Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (New York, 1961). In the area of systematic analysis and categorization of historical antecedents, one noteworthy attempt is Friedrich Hertz, "Wesen und Werden der Nation," *Jahrbuch für Soziologie*, supplementary vol. 1 (1927): 1–88 and later Friedrich Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics: A Study of the Psychology and Sociology of National Sentiment and Character* (London, 1944). Somewhat less successful than the abovementioned historical and theoretical syntheses, see the recent German study by Eugen Lemberg, *Geschichte des Nationalismus in Europa* (Stuttgart, 1950) and Eugen Lemberg, *Nationalismus*, 2

Of course, these three types of responses are rarely differentiated from each other in such an extreme and clear-cut way. It is more a matter of period-specific trends, for adherents of the first point of view also generally acknowledge that the modern nation was something "other" than the *natio* of the Middle Ages; the second point of view does not refute that there are differences between the modern European phenomena and, say, antiquity; and the third point of view also pays some degree of attention to historical antecedents. This does nothing to alter the deficiency in a uniform conceptual language. This deficiency remains troublesome even if in the historiography of the problem, under the heading of the "development of forms of national consciousness"—already present in the title of Karl Lamprecht's attempt to produce a typology—or the medieval history of "nationalism," or similar designations, remarkable achievements took place not only in terms of data collection from many centuries but in some cases also regarding systematization or periodization of social and intellectual history, and with respect to classification of "forms of manifestation."[6]

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vols. (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1964). The reference quoted in the text is from Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism*, 28. For a French interpretation of the semantic distinction between *nationalité* and *nation*, see Ferdinand Lot, "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" in *Recueil des travaux historiques de F. Lot*, vol. 1 (Geneva and Paris, 1968), 253–70. It is worth mentioning that in the literature one can find many other propositions regarding the terminological distinction between modern and historical phenomena, but they have elicited little response. One such example is Ernesto Sestan, *Stato e nazione nell'alto medioevo: Ricerche sulle origini nazionali in Francia, Italia, Germania* (Naples, 1952), 43, who proposed the introduction of the term "*nazione premoderna*" as the historical-ethno-cultural antecedent of the term "*nazione*" after the French Revolution. A synthesis of the position of Soviet historiography is offered by a collected volume: Nikolai M. Druzhinin and Lev V. Cherepnin, eds., *Voprosy formirovaniya russkoy narodnosti i natsii* [Questions of the formation of the Russian nationality and nation] (Leningrad, 1958). For the historical and theoretical approaches to the question, an extremely important debate was published in the 1966–67 volumes of *Voprosy istorii* in response to an initial text by Petr Mikhailovich Rogachev and Matvei Abramovich Sverdlin, "O ponyatii 'natsiya,'" [On the concept of nation], *Voprosy istorii*, no. 1 (1966): 33–48.

6   Karl Gotthard Lamprecht's introduction to his history of Germany (1st edition 1906) may be regarded as the first modern attempt at systematization, using a certain socio-historical perspective: see Karl Gotthard Lamprecht, "Entwicklung der Formen des Nationalbewußtseins," in *Deutsche Geschichte* (6th ed. Berlin, 1920), 1–55. His categories are "Stammesbewußtsein," "Gemeinschaftsgefühl auf Grund der Reichsentwicklung (kein eigentlich politisches Nationsgefühl)," "soziales Nationsgefühl ritterlichen Charakters," or "bürgerlichen Charakters" (als "integrierende Bestandteile des konventionellen Seelenlebens der Zeit"), etc., which according to his understanding of the concept does not agree with "Nationalbewußtsein des subjektiven Zeitalters" [i.e., the nineteenth century]. In contrast, the historical disquisition of Otto Bauer, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (Vienna, 1907) constitutes a step backwards. Detailed research flourished in the 1910s, as illustrated by the publication around this time of a series of works which were generally rich with data and advocated a more or less critical stance. Examples include Heinrich Finke, *Weltimperialismus und nationale Regungen im späteren Mittelalter* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1916); Paul Joachimsen, *Vom deutschen Volk zum deutschen Staat* (Natur und Geisteswelt Series, No. 511) (Leipzig and Berlin, 1916); Henri Hauser, *Le Principe des nationalités: Ses origines historiques* (Paris 1916); Oskar Halecki, *Das Nationalitätenproblem in alten Polen* (Cracow, 1916), etc. For the most

Clearly the array of responses stems not simply from terminological differences but are caused by divergences in the theory and philosophy of history, as well as methodology. Where is the essence of a "nation" to be found? Is it typically a matter of specific social, political, cultural, or intellectual relationships? Or is it rooted rather in ancient, traditional historical content? It is widely recognized that this theoretical quandary has been with us since the appearance of the modern nation itself. These two types of responses or conflicting mental conceptions existed already in the late eighteenth century: on the one hand in the idea of the French Revolution, rising out of Voltairean enlightened rationalism, and, on the other hand, in the German Romantic stream of the Enlightenment, in Herder's and Fichte's response. According to the former school of thought, the nation was a completely innovative political association of the people who possessed a sovereignty derived from the *volonté générale*, whereas according to the latter it was an ancient historical organism rooted in the *Volksgeist*. However much the content of the beliefs and arguments behind the theory of nation may have changed, developed, transformed, and become differentiated over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it is this oppositional dimension which has determined both the theoretical and historical facets of the question up to the present day. It would lead us astray to enter the details of the reciprocated influence of historiographic literature and the modern theory of nation. So, without further ado we can state that the myths which

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part these works concentrated on the historical antecedents of a single nation, but this upsurge in focused research highlighted the need for comparative investigation as well. This is reflected in the fact that one of the topics in the program of the Sixth International Congress on History at Oslo in 1918 was *La nationalité et l'histoire*. Summaries and reports of the debate were published in the *Bulletin of the International Committee of Historical Sciences*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1929). Among the later works, those that stand out are the ones which considered the subject area as a problem of universal history. These include Richard von Wallach, *Das abendländische Gemeinschaftsbewußtsein im Mittelalter* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1928); Robert Michels, *Der Patriotismus: Prolegomena zu seiner soziologischen Analyse* (Munich, 1929); Coulton, "Nationalism in the Middle Ages," 1935; Eugen Lemberg, *Wege und Wandlungen des Nationalbewußtseins* (Münster, 1934); Huizinga, "Wachstum und Formen des nationalen Bewußtseins in Europa bis zum Ende des XIX. Jahrhunderts"; Halvdan Koht, "The Dawn of Nationalism in Europe," *American History Review* 52 (1947): 267–80. Paul Kirn, *Aus der Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls* (Leipzig, 1943) is a fundamental and, due to the copious data it contains, indispensable work, but one that is entirely misguided in its positions and in its "*völkisch*" interpretations. In any event, several elaborations of specialized topics not listed here (but cited later) show that since the 1930s this whole subject has become a major interest for medieval researchers and accounts for part of the upswing in research interest in nationalism (see Note 5). This applies doubly to the work published in the quarter century following the end of World War II. Its most important contribution—at least with respect to mainstream research—was to disregard biased data collection and, most particularly, apologetic essays and to imbed the subject area more deeply within the context of the history of political ideas. A brief synopsis of the results, which lays no claims to completeness, is offered by Jean Touchard, *Histoire des idées politiques*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1959), 219–27.

typically color national ideologies and their development according to period and region—be they of a "metaphysical," "physical," or cultural-historical nature—have blemished the way the question is posed within the field of history.[7] But the two dominant trends—the so-called objectivist and subjectivist approaches—dividing the theoretical literature on the topic since the mid-nineteenth century, have not facilitated the historical perspective either.

It is well known that the first approach, by identifying a certain number of objective criteria, seeks to establish a formula: a clear and conclusive definition which expresses the nature of "the nation" which is generally accepted. This, however, is all but impossible. Even if one ignores the fact that most attempts at a definition have elements which are not, in fact, "objective criteria" but subjec-

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7   The characteristic myths of modern theories of the nation were summarized by Shafer, *Nationalism: Myth and Reality*, 16–56. Among the "metaphysical myths" is the idea formulated by Herder (1744–1803) and Fichte (1762–1814) that the nation is a manifestation of divinity and the ultimate purpose of Creation. The first phrase from the notes that the young Jakob Burckhardt made during Leopold Ranke's lectures at the University of Berlin was: "Meine Herren, Völker sind Gedanken Gottes!" Werner Kaegi, *Chronica mundi: Grundformen der Geschichtsschreibung seit dem Mittelalter* (Einsiedeln, 1954), 74. An even more profound influence on theories of nationalism than religious mysticism was exerted by "natural law" and historical mysticism. This emerges already with the "Romantics" of the Enlightenment (i.e., Jean-Jacques Rousseau) and subsequently became expanded in the romantic notion that the nation is a product of *loi naturelle* or *Naturtrieb*, a natural community or *società naturale* (Mancini). Contributing to this was the romanticist argument that the nation was an ancient historical organism, a community of the *Volksgeist*. This was not purely a Herderian legacy, and not peculiar to the Central and East European concept of linguistic and cultural nation. Both the *Volkswille*, in the Swiss Johann Caspar Bluntschli's theory (1808–81), and the "*spirit of the nation*," in the works of the British political theorist Edmund Burke (1729–97), are derived from a shared state framework, government, and institutions, and stand in a closer or looser connection with "physical" myths according to which the nation is a product of natural constraints, landscape, native land, climate and even race, common origin, etc. Yet, a good example of how such a historical mysticism can take shape even when physical myths have been rejected is the theory of Ernest Renan (1823–92). It is true that in his famous disquisition (Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (Paris 1892)) he clearly states that man is neither a slave to his race, nor his language, religion, etc. ("*l'homme n'est esclave ni de sa race, ni de sa langue, ni de sa religion...*"). But with Renan the formerly revolutionary *volonté générale* is refined into an "intellectual principle" which now appears, together with memories of shared ancestors, sacrifices, and glories, as a natural constituent of a historical mysticism (Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*, 27). The material of national myths displays differences which partly correspond to the common intellectual trends of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and partly correspond to the specific traditions of individual national ideologies. But in all cases the national myth assumes an outlook which disregards historical categories whether they contain historicized myths (ancient ideas about the state, about institutions, about constitutionality) or are ethno-psychological theories (the character of an ancient people, community of fate), combinations of ancient history elevated to the sphere of an ideology (ethnic autochthony and the like), or a national ideology that has crystallized around something else. Correspondingly, the nation is something a priori, or at least a very ancient entity which was, is, and will be, based solely on its laws and characteristics which are valid for itself, whose existence, ageless and unbounded to time as it is, determine—and must determine—every part of the entity. Raising modern nationalism into the metaphysical sphere indicates, incidentally, that in many respects it has assumed the features of religious devotion. For more on this subject, see Carlton J. H. Hayes, *Nationalism: A Religion* (New York, 1960).

tive myths, such as "race," the "spirit of the people," and the like, contingent or incidental features such as religion, or intangible characteristics and scientifically unverifiable presumptions, such as "community of destiny," "national psyche," "national character,"[8] this kind of a conceptual construction of the nation is necessarily imperfect and inadequate. Listing certain genuine factors, such as territory, language, culture, and economy, and defining the essence of nation as the sum total of these factors does not make it more accurate. For one thing, there are no common factors which would be equally valid for the indi-

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8   A typical example of nineteenth-century attempts at a definition is the formulation of Pasquale Mancini, *Della nazionalità come fondamento del diritto delle genti* (Turin, 1851), according to which the nation is "una società naturale di uomini, da unità di territorio, di origini, di costume, di lingua conformati a comunanza di vita, e di coscienza sociale." It should be noted that a community of fate does not usually include racial overtones but like the original medieval theme of customs and practices it is ultimately a modern remnant of the medieval notion of *origo*, though, as such, it is an element rarely absent in these definitions. In Kant's opinion a nation was "eine Menge, die sich durch gemeinsame Abstammung als zu einem bürgerlichen Ganzen vereinigt bekannt," and even Meinecke proposed the feature of "gemeinsame Blutmischung." Alongside territory, language, culture, and historical traditions ("customs") the most frequent consituents are religion, the community of fate, and character. For Otto Bauer (Bauer, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie*, 118): "Die Nation ist die Gesamtheit der durch Schicksalsgemeinschaft zu einer Charaktergemeinschaft verknüpften Menschen." Among the more successful definitions is that of Friedrich Julius Neumann, which was the fruit of substantial critical debate but nevertheless is typically representative of the [nineteenth-century] view: "Die Nation ist eine größere Bevölkerung, die infolge hoher eigenartigen Kulturleistungen … oder in politischer Beziehung ein eigenartiges gemeinsames Wesen gewonnen hat, das sich von Generation überträgt und vorzugsweise in gemeinsamen Kultursprache, Charakterzügen, Anschauungen und gemeinsammen Sitten und Gebräuche sowie in lebhaft entwickeltem Gefühle der Zusammenhörigkeit zu äussern pflegt" (Bauer, *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie*, 74). For a critique of the above approach, see (among the works cited above in Note 5) all the works of Carlton J. H. Hayes, Friedrich Hertz, and Boyd C. Shafer. Useful overviews of the various trends (with bibliography) include Edwin R. A. Seligman, ed., *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 11 (New York, 1933), 231–49; *Handwörterbuch der Sozialwissenschaften*, vol. 7. Göttingen, 1961, 540–46; and *Staatslexikon: Recht, Wirtschaft, Gesellschaft*, vol. 5 (Freiburg, 1960), 885–902. Moreover, if one disregards racial theory and other extremist nationalist theories of the twentieth century, the nineteenth century had already largely filtered out origin, race, *Volksgeist*, and notions of this sort from the objective criteria characterizing the nation: "Nationality is an attribute of human culture and civilization, and the factors of biology are not applicable to it" (Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism*, 12). Religion only plays a role under specific historical conditions as a feature which colors a national ideology incidentally (e.g., the Roman Catholicism of the Irish or Poles). National character, or psyche, is the most problematic element of nation theories. One cannot negate the existence of a certain collective psyche, mentality, or attitudes in reference to modern national communities; but these are hard to establish scientifically and far from constant in nature (Voltaire famously listed among the characteristics of the English their fickleness, revolutionary zeal, and irreconcilability, whereas in his opinion the French were by nature traditional and conservative; a century or so later the only thing that needed to be done to these caricatures was to swap ethnicities). In any event, they are far from homogeneous in a societal sense. Far from being objective criteria, or factors of national integration, they are products of the modern evolution of the nation, theories of national evolution, and ideological propaganda (self-characterization). From the extensive literature on the issue, see Friedrich Hertz, "Die allgemeinen Theorien von Nationalcharakter," *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft* 54 (1925): 167ff; Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics*, 290ff; Ernest Barker, *National Character and the Factors in its Formation* (London, 1948).

vidual forms or historical and regional types of national integration.[9] A definition consisting of freely variable elements is not likely to stand up to logical scrutiny. For another, it is imperfect because the factors which appear as typical criteria are not criteria specific to *national* groupings but, to a significant extent, also to much more primitive communities. Thus, neither individually nor in arbitrary combination do such factors articulate the conceptual and historical specificity of national integration. But definitions of this type are also inadequate because they lack the precision necessary to indicate the degree of this conjunction of factors and criteria that would entail a *sine qua non* of a national grouping. Consequently, in and of themselves they are unsuitable for providing clear, unambiguous conceptual points of departure for the problem of nation with respect to history. A *certain degree* of territorial, linguistic, and cultural integration and even economic and state integration can be observed already in centuries past, whereas the depth of vertical integration (as well as the community characterizing the whole social configuration of the population) that can be expressed with these factors is frequently less a *precondition* than a *consequence* of modern national integration. Just like the nation-state itself, national

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9   The combination of factors differs from each other and form in various mixtures the criteria of a given nation according to the logic of national integration in the modern era, which is either a function of the development of the state or, on the contrary, proceeds along linguistic, and cultural interdependencies in opposition to the existing state framework. What holds true for the historical region of Western Europe or, on the other hand, of the evolution of Russia, where monarchies (or, in the former case, the early development of the bourgeoisie) had prepared the way for economic and political and territorial unity, and where state nationalities had formed early in the modern era, does not hold true for a large part of Eastern and Central Europe, and vice versa. In the former case, for example, the motif of language is either not emphasized (in 1793 one quarter of the French nation neither spoke nor understood French), it does not represent any sort of national criterion (see Belgium and Switzerland, for example), or languages are not specifically national languages (as with English, Spanish, and Portuguese). On the other hand, there are places where language represents the primary criterion, and economic and politico-territorial unity remains only a desire of the people for an extended period (and historically not a cause but a consequence of nation-formation). Naturally, this does not mean that an emphasis on economic factors in an analysis of the evolution of the modern nation is also mythical (see Shafer, *Nationalism: Myth and Reality*, 42–44), because a certain level of development of capitalist conditions is an essential condition for a modern national movement (for example, in East Central Europe), even if economic unity per se—the national markets of a large part of the nineteenth (and, indeed, here and there even in the twentieth) century—is not necessarily a criterion of national existence. In any event, in the case of the two basic structural models of *Staatsnation* and *Kulturnation* one must reckon with varying combinations of factors, or different combinations of criteria and orders of values; see Friedrich Meinecke, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat: Studien zur Genesis des deutschen Nationalstaates* (Munich, 1922), 3ff, considering that this duality overall expresses ideal types, behind which lie a multiplicity of specific manifestations. Indeed, the region of East Central Europe is distinct as a third type, where the linguistic-cultural factor, mixed with a historicized "state-nation" concept, manifested in the nineteenth century. See the relatively recent article by Theodor Schieder, "Typologie und Erscheinungsformen des Nationalstaats in Europa," *Historische Zeitschrift* 202 (1966): 58–81.

languages, which bridge dialects, or a "national culture," which breaks down the isolated dualism of folk culture and high culture, and an emerging (already emerged) national market or "national economy," as opposed to broader and narrower regional economic features, are in many cases more likely an outcome than a cause (or, for that matter, a "factor") of the progression to nationhood and of the modern national movement. These can be understood as "historical factors" of national development only on the basis of a *post hoc*, *ergo propter hoc* logic. A nation is not merely a horizontal configuration of groups, limited to two dimensions, as it were, but also a social structure and historical formation that must be determined by its vertical integration, which for that very reason is circumscribed as well by a further dimension: time (the course of history); it is the specific historical result of these two types of integration.

An approach that is exhausted by a set of purely horizontal criteria is a precarious point of departure for historiography because such a formulation can never be "perfectly" suitable or equally valid for different types of processes. In addition, it contains no reliable conceptual foothold within this dimension. The historian is therefore forced to rely on critical acumen or subjective value judgments in order to interpret this "aggregate" of given factors. He must also define which other factors are playing a determining role; consequently, which age and which structure demarcates the nation's *terminus post quem* (the nineteenth century, seventeenth century or, for that matter, the ninth century?). These definitions on strict interpretation would lead to the exclusion of a number of European nations existing in the nineteenth and even the twentieth century from the ranks of nation. On the other hand, by broadening the definition in a somewhat arbitrary way it would lead to the conclusion that the "essence" of certain nations had already emerged in much earlier times. If this route—one that is often seen in the literature on the subject—is taken ad absurdum, its conceptual precariousness becomes practically boundless; after all, sources like the dictum of Notker Balbulus (883): *apud nos, qui theuthonica sive teutisca lingua loquimur,** where the recognition of a language community at the Abbey of St. Gall is accompanied by a "we (*nos*) consciousness," can be cumulated at will since very early times. This, together with the beginnings of the notion of "Germanness" may be interpreted as the early development of the German nation, as the *genus*

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*   Notker the Stammerer: "We who read the Teutonic or Germanic language," in *Gesta Karoli Magni* 1, 10, 24–25.

Teutonicorum has been referenced since 909.[10] If the ahistorical blurring of the boundaries of the concept of nation is widespread and found not only in bourgeois historiography (especially within its nationalist-apologetic stream) but is discernable to some extent also in Marxist historiography, this means that the mechanistic measuring of "criteria" often substituted analysis. The criteria contributing to the definition were employed axiomatically, rendering further analysis unnecessary, being expressed in one of Stalin's distinctive phrases. In its own place and read contextually this understanding served its objective, though it was no more than a typical nineteenth-century definition corrected with economic emphasis (and returning back to the nineteenth century with its emphasis on "national psyche"), which, however, can hardly replace the Marxist theoretical analysis of the concept of nation.[11]

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10   Hugelmann, *Stämme, Nation und Nationalstaat*, 269–73.

11   Iossif V. Stalin's famous 1913 definition, "a nation [*natsiya*] is . . . a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up, and manifested in a common culture," was subject to criticism in debates in *Voprosy istorii* (1966, no. 1) for several reasons. It was criticized partly with respect to individual elements and partly based on its approach, though what was evidenced in the end was only the need for minor corrections. Some especially noteworthy methodological standpoints were offered through the contributions of M.S. Dzhunusov in *Voprosy istorii*, no. 4 (1966): 16–30; and V.N. Kozlov in *Voprosy istorii*, no. 1 (1967): 88–99. The necessity for critical Marxist reevaluations of the entire subject area has frequently been voiced over the past decade, with especially constructive contributions from Erik Molnár, "A nemzeti kérdés" [The national question], *Magyar Tudomány* 67 (1960): 571–87; Miroslav Hroch, "Az európai újkori nemzet kialakulásának kérdéséhez" [On the emergence of modern nations in Europe], *Századok* 96 (1962): 627–44 (translation of a paper originally published in *Československý časopis historický*, 1961). As an illustration of the kind of antedatings to which a "mechanistic and formalistic interpretation" of the four criteria can lead, one might mention, for instance, the reasoning of S.S. Dmitriev, in whose view "a bourgeois-type nation" emerged in Russia basically over the course of the seventeenth century: "Obrazovanie russkoi natsii" [The formation of the Russian nation], *Voprosy istorii*, no. 7 (1955): 59. It is even more frequent within Marxist historiography that the category of national (national independence, national consciousness, etc.) has essentially lost its relation to the modern concept of nation and, without the need for stronger precision, can be projected as technical vocabulary (a matter of perspective indeed) onto any earlier era. A model of a nationalist view of history could be reproduced with seemingly Marxist arguments according to which the oppressed classes were the vehicles and repositories of true patriotism and national independence within every historical era in the same way that, for instance, a latent national principle finds expression in early class wars or peasant movements. For a critique of this internationally common model, see, besides what is cited above, Erik Molnár, "Ideológiai kérdések a feudalizmusban" [Ideological questions in the feudal era]," *Történelmi Szemle* 4 (1961): 261–68, and Erik Molnár, "A hazafias nemzeti idéológiáról" [On national patriotic ideology], *MTA II. OK* 13 (1963): 303–13; more recently Jenő Szűcs, *A nemzet historikuma és a történetszemlélet nemzeti látószöge* [The historicity of the nation and the nationalistic viewing angle of history] (Budapest, 1970). The internal content of the concept of *conscience nationale* or *Nationalbewußtsein* is usually very slippery, as is its applicability under the conditions of the Middle Ages. See e.g., Eugen Stănescu, "Mittelalterliche Voraussetzungen des rumänischen Nationalbewußtseins," *Studii* (1964): 967–1000; František Graus, "Die Entstehung der mittelalterlichen Staaten in Mitteleuropa," *Historica* 10 (1965): 60–63; František Graus, *CISH 22nd International Congress*, vol. 4 (Vienna, 1965), 108–9.

We do not advance towards a more robust conceptual foundation with a "subjectivist" approach either. Partly in response to the mechanistic and static attempts at a definition, it can be regarded since the latter half of the nineteenth century as the dominant trend in the bourgeois academic literature. Already according to Pasquale Mancini's (1851) formulation objective features represent no more than "dead material" only "brought to life" by the *coscienza della nazionalità*, while Ernest Renan (1882) completely rejected the objectivist approach. For him, the nation was a "spiritual principle" intrinsic to a community of shared memories and feelings, self-awareness, and will. The basic principle of methodology is not always quite as absurd as Franz Oppenheimer's exaggerated formulation (*"Wir müssen nicht aus der Nation das Nationalbewußtsein, sondern umgekehrt aus dem Nationalbewußtsein die Nation ableiten"*); indeed, the research of recent decades has striven to see the approaches of history, sociology, economics, and psychology applied with versatility when investigating the factors that created the modern nation. Today it is generally thought that such factors cannot be molded into a comprehensive formula but are contingent in their entirety, as contrasted to the factor of self-awareness, that is nationalism itself. This explanation implies that the focus of modern bourgeois research deals not so much with national evolution as it does the phenomenon of nationalism (in the English use of the word, widely accepted as non-judgmental and merely descriptive).[12] This type of research contains important details about the "criterion" of "national consciousness," which was lacking in the previous "objectivist" definitions (although without it one can hardly speak about a nation). However, a vicious circle is apparent in such an approach inasmuch as it posits a condition to be fundamental which is itself conditioned by other factors and developments. Apart from this, this notion is no less volatile as a point of depar-

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12   Mancini, *Della nazionalità come fondamento del diritto delle genti*; Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*, 27: "Une nation est une âme, un principe spirituel.... Deux choses ... constituent cette âme, ce principe spirituel.... L'une est la possession en commun d'un riche legs de souvenirs, l'autre est le consentement actuel, le désir de vivre ensemble, la volonté de continuer à faire valoir l'héritage qu'on a reçu indivis..." Franz Oppenheimer, *System der Soziologie*, vol. 1 (Jena, 1923), 644. One typical formulation is that of Georg Jellinek: "Ist es demnach unmöglich, ein einziges sicheres objektives Kriterium der Nation anzugeben, so kann ein solches auch nicht durch eine feststehende Kombination mehrerer Elemente gefunden werden. Daraus ergibt sich, daß die Nation nichts Objektives im Sinne des äußerlich Existierenden ist.... Nation ist vielmehr etwas wesentlich Subjektives, d.h. das Merkmal eines bestimmten Bewußtseinsinhaltes..." Georg Jellinek, *Allgemeines Staatslehre* (1929), 119. For a survey of subjectivism, see the above-listed references (see Note 8). A summary of the dual modes of modern research—psychological (or functional) and institutional (or formalistic)—with critical comments is provided by David M. Potter, "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa," *American Historical Review* 67 (1962): 924–50.

ture for historical investigation than the previous ones, since *some degree* of awareness of national belonging can be substantiated even in relatively early periods, already in the ninth or tenth century, for instance. These are features of an objective integration, so that even here the historian's point of view determines whether the existence of this consciousness is cited as evidence of national consciousness to explain an immanent "national principle."

To again draw attention to an example where this is carried to the point of absurdity (and one often employed in this context in the literature): the fact that the *gentes ultra Rhenum*—the high-ranking members of the Bavarian, Alemanni, (Eastern) Frank, Thuringian, and Saxon tribes—elected Arnulf as their common ruler in 887 can be read as the expression of the *will* to become a nation. One can also interpret as a sign of the awakening of "national" consciousness such sources as Richer of Reims' description of an encounter between King Henry I and Charles the Simple (921) to conclude a treaty, where the young Eastern and Western Frank knights mix company and begin to mock one another's language, which was turning into insults and tussles—*ut eorum mos est*, the chronicler adds.[13]

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The purpose of this rough outline was simply to highlight problems rather than to expound on them in any thorough fashion. Still less is the aim, in what is to follow, to "solve" this complex matter or cut through the Gordian knot with a new definition which is superior to all previous ones. Incidentally, it is likely that such a definition does not exist in principle. We will almost certainly have to forego tidy, clear-cut, one-phrase formulas. We are not in any event concerned with the subject matter on the whole but with the confrontation that arises between historical and modern content that fall under the classification of "nation" and specifically with its conceptual analysis. It is of course unlikely from the outset that a conceptual analysis, however finely formulated, will in itself succeed, as semantics, methodology, historical approaches, and even philosophy of history, are woven together here in a complex manner.

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13 Such references evidencing "völkische Bewußtsein," "nationale Regungen" in the work by Paul Kirn are on p. 43, 74 and 110; "Eben dies scheint uns im gegensatz zu Lamprechts Betrachtungsweise unbestreitbar zu sein; daß mann ein geistiges Anderssein des mittelalterlichen Menschen, verglichen mit dem neuzeitlichen, aus einem Verhalten zu Volk und Vaterland nicht wird erweisen können" (Kirn, *Aus der Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 79).

As we indicated previously, the semantic difficulty lies in the modern classi-fication framework, as the term "nation" comprises a sum of notions, conjec-tures, and conceptual features which have only existed in concert since the eigh-teenth or nineteenth century, though it is not an easy task to define the exact boundaries of a conceptual field; in other words, due to an inherent "*tyranny of words*,"[14] it is difficult to apply modern notions to phenomena of earlier centu-ries without risking, consciously or unconsciously, a carry-over effect. Neverthe-less, the word itself, *natio* in the original Latin, has had derivatives in most Eu-ropean languages since the twelfth–fourteenth centuries (*nation*, *nazione*, etc.), or precise archaic equivalents (for example, with the Hungarian *nemzet* or the Czech and Slovak *národ*). These denoted those forms of integration—albeit not in principle, nor consistently, and by no means solely these ones—that might be considered the historical antecedents of the modern nation.[15] This case, there-

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14 This fitting expression was used in a similar context (along with a diagnosis of "corruption of words") by Snyder (Snyder, *The Meaning of Nationalism*, 3–13). "An oft-committed error of students is to tear generic words like nation and nationalism from their historical contexts, to read their contemporary substance back into the past, and thus to see in the past the generalities and universals evident actually and only in contemporary life." Shafer, *Nationalism: Myth and Reality*, 5. No matter how many times the topic has been raised in international forums on recent history, the divergence in the use of the concept has virtually always been apparent, and again and again warnings have been sounded in connection with the dangers of an overly general or too broad use of the word. At the International Congress in Rome there were several papers which spoke about nations in connection with the tenth and eleventh centuries; *Atti del X. Congresso Internazionale di scienze storiche*, Rome, September 4–11, 1955 (Rome, 1957), 330ff and 415ff, but on the other hand they also included several comments, especially from Walther Holtzmann, cautioning about use of the term: "wenn es sich um Stämme oder allenfalls Völker mit einem noch gar nicht, oder erst sehr schwach ausgeprägten und quellenmäßig gar nicht faßbaren Selbstbewußtsein handelt." *Atti del X. Congresso Internazionale di scienze storiche*, 337. See also Rudolf Buchner: "Man sollte überhaupt Ausdrücke *Nationalbewußtsein*, *sentiment national* und dergleichen für jene Zeit [d.h. für das frühere Mittelalter] vermeiden, weil sie unwillkurlich Assoziationen hervorrufen, die völlig unhistorisch" *Settimane di Spoleto*, vol. 5/2 (Spoleto 1958), 689. See also *CISH XII Congrès International des Sciences Historiques*, V. Actes, (Vienna, 1965), 625ff, e.g., Gotthold Rhode: "Auf diesem Gebiet der Bewußtseinsbildung, auf dem frühere Forschergenerationen allzu leicht die Begriffe und Vorstellungen der eigenen Zeit ins hohe Mittelalter übertragen haben, bedarf es wohl ganz besonders neuer eingehender Untersuchungen," 632.

15 On the details of this question, see the latter part of the present study. There is no adequate comprehensive work on the history of the concept. Guido Zernatto, "Nation: The history of a word," *Review of Politics* 6 (1944): 351–66, is no more than a perfunctory outline but it does offer passages that show the transformations in the eighteenth century in relief. Surveys that are useful in relation to the Middle Ages, among the works already cited, include esp. Neumann, *Volk und Nation*, 111–19; Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics*, 3–14; Hugelmann, *Stämme, Nation und Nationalstaat*, 286–91 and *passim*. Fundamental for a specific period are the richly informative historical enquiries by Kurt Heissenbüttel (1920), Karl Bierbach (1938), and Eugen Ewig (1958), as well as Franz Walter Müller's (1947) exemplary philological elaboration of the history of Old and Middle French "*nation*" (see the second part below). Basic sources for the vulgar linguistic derivatives of "natio" are Frédéric Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IXᵉ au XVᵉ siècle*, vol. 5 (Paris 1888), 4622; Walther von Wartburg, *Französisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, vol. 7 (Basel, 1955), 41–43; Tobler-Lommatzsch, *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch*, vol. 6 (Wiesbaden, 1965), 471;

fore, is of the variety that Otto Brunner wrote about so aptly.[16] Contributing to the tense contradiction existing between the demand for a "source-based conceptual language" and the dangers which stem from the "tyranny of words" is the practical necessity that entails the articulation of distinct contrasts when referring to past centuries; for want of a better expression—against one's better judgment, that is—we cannot avoid making use of the adjective "national." It would bring us closer to resolving, or being able to bridge, these difficulties if we could manage to clearly, conceptually grasp the distinctive dichotomy—the historical connection and phenomenological antithesis—of the contradictory relationship between the modern nation and its historical antecedents, and if we were to succeed—in the form of intellectual compromise—in expressing it terminologically. A historical analysis, of course, would be a necessary condition for this, but in the absence of conceptual elements a historical analysis may easily fall off course; this is the most serious methodological difficulty, amounting at times to a "magic circle," and ultimately expressing itself in the fundamental divergence of historiographical answers. In the end, the greatest theoretical difficulty is that all historical and conceptual analysis will be in vain if a common denominator is absent in the philosophical interpretation of the category of "national history." If this is the case, there is no hope of generating a common conceptual language. There is, however, another way of looking at things according to which the appearance of the modern nation is the intrinsic principle and "final aim" of the historical process. No type of analysis can help this position, which might create the "infrastructure," so to speak, for various (possibly contradictory) historiographic trends, because each fragment of data becomes automatically imbued with "meaning" in such a context. It is different if we conceive of history as a sovereign process, *one possible* facet and retrospective *organizing*

Niccolò Tommaseo and Bernardo Bellini, *Dizionario della lingua italiana*, vol. 3/1, 451; *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 7 (Oxford, 1933), 30–31; Otto Basler, *Deutsches Fremdwörterbuch*, vol. 2 (Berlin, 1942), 177–84; Friedrich Kluge, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (Berlin, 1957), 812. *Nascion* (*nassion, nacion*) in Old French has been referenced since the twelfth century, but its use in the wider sense of "people"—in parallel with other references—and likewise the English *nacion* or *nacioun* occurs only in the late thirteenth century; the German *Nation* appears at the end of the fourteenth century. The Hungarian *nemzet* can be substantiated since the early fourteenth century; see *A magyar nyelv történeti-etimológiai szótára* [A Historical and Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language], vol. 2, ed. Loránd Benkő et al. (Budapest, 1970), 1012.

16 "Hier tritt uns eine eigentümliche methodische Schwierigkeit entgegen. Die historische Forderung nach einer quellenmässigen Begriffssprache stößt auf die Tatsache, daß die Kategorien, unter deren die Zeiten sich selbst verstanden haben, daß aber auch die Begriffe der modernen Wissenschaften an einer Wirklichkeit entwickelt wurden, die erst seit dem 18. Jahrhundert entstanden sind." Otto Brunner, *Adeliges Landleben und europäischer Geist* (Salzburg, 1949), 62.

principle of which is the "national history." It would be impossible to harmonize these two perspectives.

By excluding this possibility from the very outset, we shall attempt in what follows to outline as succinctly as possible potential semantical and methodological solutions for these conceptual and terminological difficulties. We may start from the indisputable fact that modern nations did not arise in a vacuum but have their own historical preconditions and antecedents: (albeit non-linear) centuries of development and integrational patterns (albeit different from the modern ones) which have begun to take form since the Middle Ages. Incidentally, the source-based term for the latter was often "nation," albeit not by default and not consistently, as indicated previously. That is to say, the continuity of the linguistic expression in itself reflects the continuity of the phenomenon to a degree. Modern nations, however, are not simply the *extension* of preconditions and antecedents—a pinnacle of development or elevation to a higher level, so to say—but simultaneously surpass these, emerging as entirely novel historical configurations. In our age, it is axiomatic that "humanity is made up of nations"; namely that there are three and a half billion people who are "naturally," but at the same time also in a sociopolitical sense, divided into groups of humans whose identity can be expressed primarily in the category of their nationality. This is one of those precepts that was (along with its implications) not recognized before the eighteenth century. Prior to the eighteenth century, the *genus humanum* was divided primarily into religions, states, social estates, and local groups. For these, the category of nationality was irrelevant, or else the connection was tenuous, transposed, or secondary.[17] The reason why nationality

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17 Cf. Potter, "The Historian's Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa," 924–25. Naturally, earlier periods were acquainted with some sort of notion of "people" (*gens*, *natio*), which changed from one age to the next, and they took note of the *diversitas gentium*; nor was the idea that humanity was made up of unities— peoples—divided up according to various languages and customs unknown. This was not just an empirical fact, as already in the ethnography of antiquity the characteristics (criteria) of a people crystallized around the conceptual features of *lingua* and *mores* (Gerold Walser, *Rom, das Reich und die fremden Völker in der Geschichtsschreibung der früheren Kaiserzeit* (Basel, 1951), 72–85). Yet in a sense it was also a theoretical point of view insofar as, ever since the high cultures of the Ancient Orient, language and ethnogenesis formed an organic unity in notions related to the origin of man. One version of these theories was the linking of the confusion of languages at Babel in the Old Testament with the theory of seventy-two ancient languages and peoples in antiquity. (On theories about the emergence and development of languages and ethnogenesis with extensive references, see Arno Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel: Geschichte der Meinungen über Ursprung und Vielfalt der Sprachen und Völker*, 4 vols. (Stuttgart, 1957–1963). In the latter half of the Middle Ages the larger nationalities that had emerged—*gentes et nationes*—began to be placed into this theoretical framework. "Aber erst in der Neuzeit wird das Nationale in einem vielschichtigen historischen Vorgang die bestimmende Ordnungsvorstellung, die Nation zu einer vorherrschenden, alle anderen Bedeutung übertreffenden Gruppenform. Im diesen Sinn kann man von einem Zeitalter des Nationalismus

played such a dominant role in nineteenth-century Europe was not because century-long forms and processes of integration were "realized naturally," but because an entirely novel process found an applicable framework within historical concepts that were centuries old. Only thus was the third estate, the bourgeoisie (or the societal stratum fulfilling this function), able to achieve social, political, economic, and intellectual emancipation. Fighting against the feudal social structure, the feudal-absolutist political sphere, and the unfavorable regional and power balance in the economic sphere—and in spite of the binding ideological forces which reflected all of this—it declared all individuals, "the people," a sovereign human community, a united "society" independent of all higher authority and free from internal feudal division. This unfolded within the framework of integration which possessed features, in its social layers and traditional associations, that were historically given and had been described in terms of a nation already for centuries. This historically novel form—the "national society"—became the framework and theoretical source retrospectively for the past and prospectively for the present and future political, economic, and cultural relations (whether actual or aspired).

It is unquestionably significant that with regard to the components of this metamorphosis the historical form of integration was already given, but no less significant is the fact that the features of this metamorphosis differed from the outset. They depended, for example, on whether the "state-nationality" that since the Middle Ages had been referred to as *natio* or *nation* (as was generally the case in Western Europe) had been forged primarily by a territorial and institutional evolution of the monarchies, or the historical unifying forces crystallized around primarily linguistic and cultural elements, working in opposition to the existing state frameworks (as was generally the case in Central and Eastern Europe), or the linguistic factor was combined with a legal and historical argument derived from a former medieval state framework triggering the nation-formation (as in the regions of Central and Eastern Europe belonging to the conglomerate Habsburg and Ottoman Empires). As it happens, these vectors or crystallization points were not new; indeed, they had already become crystal-

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sprechen . . ." Reinhard Wittram, *Das Nationale als europäisches Problem* (Göttingen, 1954), 9 and *passim*. Although expressions of the sort summarized by Isidore of Seville: "Huius populus [Christiani] congregatio ex gentibus: ipsa est ecclesia" (*De fide Cath.*, 2, 1, 4), which sound uncannily like the tenet "humanity is made up of nations," can be picked *ad libitum* from many early medieval sources, resemblances are absolutely superficial, because the modern concept of nation contains a plethora of implications which in reality were creations of the era of nationalism. On this notion, with further literature, see Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*.

lized centuries prior to the formation of the modern nation. Let it suffice here to quote from a disquisition of the Council of Constance in 1417: "A *natio* may be conceived of as a community of people (gens) distinct from others, with a *common ancestry*, or according to the *diversity of languages*, which is the principle hallmark of a *natio*, its very essence according to divine right and the province of the human law alike, or it may be conceived . . . in a *territorial sense*, as befitting . . ."[18] It can also be understood as the pinnacle of many centuries of evolution, as the archetype of the modern *Staatsnation-Kulturnation* duality. Just prior to the emergence of modern national movements, the conceptual features of nation (what we would today refer to as "historical nationality") were furnished by Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie* (1778), associating it with community of *political territory* and *government*, while the lexicographer Johann Christoph Adelung's dictionary of High German (1798) associated it with community of *origin* and *language*. To illustrate the third variety, we could refer to the appearance of a Hungarian conception in the first half of the nineteenth century which, apart from *language*, designated *historical* elements relating to a once independent state framework, and the legal claims that were derived from it, as the constitutive features of nationality (*nemzetiség* or *Nationalität*).[19]

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18 "Sive sumatur natio ut gens secundum cognationem et collectionem ab alia distincta, sive secundum diversitatem linguarum, que maximam et verissimam probant nationem et ipsius essentiam iure divino pariter et humano . . . sive etiam sumatur natio pro provincia equali Gallicane, sicut sumi deberet." Heinrich Finke, "Die Nation in den spätmittelalterlichen allgemeinen Konzilien," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 57 (1937): 338. Of course, the polemic text of the English conciliar *natio* presented on March 31, 1417, was extremely far from being a self-serving conceptual definition or an exposition of the principles of a modern nation. The background of this event was that there was an attempt to reconcile the clashing interests of the English and French monarchies (the Battle of Agincourt in 1415!) in the sphere of ecclesiastical policy and broader politics. See Finke, "Die Nation in den spätmittelalterlichen allgemeinen Konzilien," 333–38, as well as Louise R. Loomis, "Nationality at the Council of Constance," *American Historical Review* 44 (1939): 508–27. All the same, behind the specific reference to the scope of representation at the Council, the tone of the arguments and the way they are formulated indicate that the broader meaning of *natio* was already lurking behind this: "state-nation" and linguistic nationality were notions that were maturing in the late Middle Ages. The submission argues that the Scots, for instance, were part of the *natio Britannica* since Scotland was territorially part of Britain and their language was similar to English; if, on the other hand, the principle had been that multilingualism enhanced the splendor of a nation, then as the English *natio* at the Council spoke five different languages, it could form five "nations." The closing argument, the *ultima ratio*, is typically medieval: let the Council's quadripartite segmentation remain, but let its present names be done away with "because the naming of *nationes* according to kingdoms is injurious to other kingdoms." Neither, however, should they be named after languages, because there are so many of them; the arrangement should be worked out in accordance with the four quarters of the compass.

19 Hertz, "Wesen und Werden," 23. One of the definitions from *Pesti Hírlap* [Pest Herald] in Reform Age Hungary (1842): "Nationality is a historical fact, of which language is not the only factor, for in order that a people should have a nation it is also necessary to be connected by a common constitution, common sentiments, common interests, a common need for progress and development, and common memories of

Additional benchmarks that some theories of the nation have grouped around these conceptual features since the nineteenth century may be authentic enough or may themselves be the products of national myths, but in truth they are only adjunct notions, not merely because they are unsuitable for defining "the nation," as they are *precluded* from possessing a general validity, but also because they are *not specifically suited to* the modern nation but in some respects for the preceding historical forms of integration as well. The essence of the modern nation as an objective reality (as a historically specific form of integration) is only partially expressed, as it were, in horizontal cross section by the abovementioned criteria (which in themselves are in any case extremely variable). At least part of its essence lies in the internal cohesion of a given society, that is to say, its *vertical* integration, as measured by political, cultural, economic, psychological, or ideological features of the configuration bounded by the "horizontal" criteria. In this respect it is not enough to restrict ourselves to pointing out the "common features." While the modern nation and the principle of equality of citizens before the law are inseparable, as are modern conceptions of "society," "economy," "culture," and "state" (that is, conceptions emerging in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), it also bears the inherent contradictions of all the above. The modern nation is a complex formula of a historically constituted community of interests and its inherent social conflicts of interests. Thus, for precisely this reason, the Marxist theoretical definition cannot be confined to an interpretation of a particular definition and its reiterations. It would be preferable to work out a typology of national development which does not employ the usual structural models (such as *Staatsnation-Kulturnation*) and addresses the inherent social standards and historical dynamics of integration, with particular regard to the evolutionary or revolutionary nature of the bourgeois national transformation, its economic preconditions, its leading class, and so on. The essence of such a point of departure was declared by Lenin already in 1894, who said that "the creation of these national ties was nothing else than the creation of bourgeois ties."[20]

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a collectively experienced great age"; see Domokos Kosáry, "A *Pesti Hírlap* nacionalizmusa 1841–1844" [The nationalism of *Pest Herald*, 1841–44], *Századok* 76 (1943): 384. About the contradictory nature of this concept of nation, see the recent analysis by László Péter, "A magyar nacionalizmus" [Hungarian nationalism], in *Eszmék nyomában* [On the trace of ideas], ed. Sándor Németh, (Munich, 1965), 199ff.

20   See Vladimir I. Lenin, "What the 'Friends of the People' Are," Pt 1, in *Collected Works*, 4th English edition, vol. 1 (Moscow, 1972), 155. Incidentally, Lenin did not strive (any more than Marx or Engels) for a conclusive definition, but always presented it as a product of the emergence of bourgeois relations. See Vladimir I. Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question" (1913) in *Collected Works*, vol. 20, 17–51; Vladimir I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self–Determination" (1914), in *Collected Works*, vol. 20, 393–454.

If the modern nation is something greater than what may be defined acceptably through any given model using static criteria, it is a result of the complexity of "bourgeois ties" and the fundamentally new model of the "national society" that is sustained by them. The turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries represents the start of something new, not only insofar as earlier unifying processes speeded up on the basis of the modern bourgeois transformation, creating superior and closer forms. It is also in this period that the objective reality (group), which came to be termed nation—defined and supported theoretically in various ways, often by poorly considered arguments, criteria, and factors—assumed the status of an ideological entity abstracted from its concrete components. Since the end of the eighteenth century (and only since then), "nation" became a vehicle or pinnacle of standard values, defined for members of a given group. Consequently, it became a fundamental organizing principle of the economic, social, political, and cultural sphere (whether this was real or merely hoped for). And as such it became a significant (the dominant or, at least, a dominant) object of group loyalty. This is what the conceptual model of a "national society" boils down to. The modern nation is, in reality, a functional association of the elements listed above (objective and subjective) and exists in connection with the creation of bourgeois ties.

These are the elements and tenets which are suitable for facilitating a clear and unambiguous understanding of what, beyond all of the diverse criteria, is common to the modern concept of "nation," abruptly parting company with historical content. If we restrict ourselves to the three most important ones, they would consist of the tenet (or requirement) that every person belongs (or *should* belong) to a *particular* nation, and vice versa: that the individuals who form the nation are, in principle, equal members. (Prior to the eighteenth century, according to various conceptions of *natio*, an individual could simultaneously be a member of more than one nation, in the linguistic, regional, or feudal sense, while the concept of formal equality before the law was unheard of.)

The second tenet represents an entirely new notion of national sovereignty in which the political structure and political authority—the state itself—is a derivative of the concept of the nation; the state is legitimate only when it embodies national sovereignty. If sovereignty does not already exist, then it *must* be created. (Prior to the eighteenth century, the categories of *regnum* and *natio* were either completely independent or, if they were in some way interdependent, in contrast to the modern age, their relationship was inverted: the *natio* was a function of the *regnum* inasmuch as the view held at the time—broadly speaking—

regarded the subjects of one political territory as members of the same nation. The abstraction which is a condition of the modern concept of national sovereignty would have been incomprehensible, indeed senseless, within the pre-eighteenth century conceptual structure.)

Lastly, the nation according to this model is the object of political loyalty par excellence; indeed, it occupies a dominant position among all these relations. In the event of a conflict of loyalties (for example, if the state does not express the national concept), in theory civil allegiance may be legitimately violated in the spirit of national loyalty. (Prior to the eighteenth century, affiliation to nationality, per se, was generally not a political obligation and as one aspect of group loyalty it was typically subordinated to multiple forms of political *fidelitas* which bound the individual.)

The grouping of the points of view outlined above is by itself, of course, no more than a kind of notional model; it does not encompass all details and does not make claims with respect to historical explanation or assessment. In any case, this was not even its objective. Nor was it an objective to further nuance this outline. A historical phenomenon is often best understood through its contrasts. In my opinion, with the aid of this model such contrasts can be brought to light more clearly than with customary models.[21] What then, is the question at hand?

In various historical periods and within various social structures larger groups of humans living in largely delineable shared spaces play a role which, irrespective of their internal social structure and current political or organizational frameworks, form a unit as a result of their shared historical past and on the basis of linguistic and cultural interdependencies in the broadest sense. Their association with or differentiation ("secondary in-group" or "we-group" nature) from other groups is explicitly considered according to these relationships. If these most widely recognized features of nationality[22] are projected onto a historical context, with each perceived separately and interpreted appropriately according to their mutual relationship, it becomes obvious that "nation-

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21 The constituent elements of the model, whether taken individually or taken together, are not especially original as they have arisen frequently and were articulated, with greater or lesser emphasis, in the modern literature on the question. At the same time, one cannot emphasize strongly enough that these considerations generally remained alien to the entire viewpoint and practice of—and even the usage of concepts in—historiography. The purpose here was more to blur historical and conceptual boundaries than it was to seek contrasts.

22 Having an autonomous political territory or organization (statehood), or economic unity is not a criterion, nor necessarily a requirement, of a nationality; its criterion and main constitutive element is a historico-cultural tradition that is passed on in a common language, and its awareness of relatedness based on this.

ality" is a quite general and very old historical phenomenon. For instance, it cannot be limited to European history or limited to recent centuries. Indeed, many ethnic groups entering history—the Ancient Greeks, for example—could be perceived in this sense as nationalities, though not every "people" is concurrently also a nationality.[23] The unity of the Greek "nation" (*ethnos*) was defined by Herodotus as "a community of blood and language, temples and ritual; our common way of life . . ."[*] However, the awareness and reality of such "national" affinity did not stand inherently in relation to the primary groups and frameworks of the social and political structure, or with the loyalties which sustained them. "Society" was constituted by the fellowship or community (*koinonia*) of free citizens, which within the framework of city-states was bound to the idea, constitution, and organization of the *polis* (the *politeia*) with a sort of charged "political ethos." European history marked its beginnings in Hellas with society, as a sovereign political community, and the very concept of politics distinguished itself sharply from the category of *ethnos* at both the level of reality and abstraction. Other historical periods and structures also adhered, in their own fashion, to this separation.[24] It was left to the modern age to form a "natural" fusion out of these three categories.

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23 It would be problematic to perceive, for example, tribal groupings as being "primitive nationalities" even though in linguistic and cultural respects they generally form a coherent unit, and indeed in this sense may be more homogeneous than more highly socially differentiated societies. On the other hand, it is not possible to speak of an Egyptian or Babylonian "nationality" even though these are both instances of larger human groups and/or peoples with some degree of cultural coherence who lived on shared territory. In order that one may speak of nationality, it is, in any event a condition that the community in question should not be a primitive blood-kinship or local formation (*face-to-face group*), but a clan in the sociological sense of a "secondary in-group" that keeps track of its relatedness through its own inherent characteristics. A group of this kind is automatically the product of a more prolonged (artificial) historical integration and, to a significant degree, political factors as well (even when it does not necessarily form an autonomous political framework). But on the other hand, the main subjective condition of its relatedness is generally the group's organic inception, a belief in a community of origin (although the group itself does not precisely form a genuine "community of blood"). The fictive community of origin is only a characteristic expression of historical interdependence, and the linguistic community is not something a priori but, as a tool of communication and vehicle of historico-cultural tradition, is itself a historical construct, being no more than an aggregate of loosely linked dialects. A community of culture should, of course, be understood in the broadest sense encompassing a great variety of things—from functions of material culture (mode of production, lifestyle, etc.) to a community of traditions, customs, moral and behavioral norms, to religious concepts and high culture (visual arts, literature, etc.), to the institutional frameworks for all these; it depends on the given structure which of these elements stand in the forefront of which grouping. In this respect a static definition is not possible as different features may stand out under different social conditions and in different periods; indeed, even the characteristics of the selfsame nationality may change while the identity of the group remains the same.

* Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Aubrey de Sélincourt (Harmondsworth, 1954), Book 8, 575.

24 It is not our objective here to go into the fine details of the ramifications of these issues. The relationships themselves show a multiplicity of historical formulations, but they agree that nationality, for all the social,

With respect to the topic under discussion, the difference between the Middle Ages and the modern age appears in much clearer relief if the functional associations of the three categories are taken as a basis than if we say that the incipient nationalities in the Middle Ages developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to fully fledged nations. In fact, the *nationes et gentes* (insofar as these designations genuinely do relate to the antecedents of modern nations) were important historical realities in the latter half of the Middle Ages and the early modern period. They were usually acknowledged in a conceptually adequate manner as a community of "language, customs, and manners," *lingua et mores (consuetudines)*, with the latter conceptual mark also used in reference to what today would be classified under the heading of law, culture, or historical and cultural traditions, etc.[25] Accordingly, people in the Middle Ages related to these frameworks with certain group emotions, though naturally both the objective reality of the nationality and the quality of the emotions changed over time, bearing no resemblance to the modern age. The decisive structural difference, however, is not here but in the fact that, while it is true that a person in the Middle Ages kept in mind his "national" affiliation, this did not represent "society" for him, at least not society as "*Gesellschaft*" (as understood by Ferdinand Tönnies), and only very rarely as *Gemeinschaft*; and it was not the focus of political loyalty.

In general, during the greater part of the Middle Ages, it was impossible for a clear notion of "society" as a category of human community, intrinsic, sovereign, and independent of higher authority, to emerge as it was caught between St. Augustine's universal *societas fidelium*, regarded as the only perfect *Gesellschaft*, and the narrow, local forms of *Gemeinschaft*. What existed between the

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political, and cultural factors which played a decisive role in its inception, did not exist in any natural relationship or connection with either the primary groups of social affiliation (classes, estates, casts, local communities) nor the basic formulations of political organization (city-states, empires), nor with the primary frameworks of religious-cultural devotion (local or imperial political cults, world religions). Cf. Hayes, *Essays on Nationalism*, 9–22. On the frameworks of antiquity, see Tadeusz Walek-Czernecki, "Le rôle de la nationalité dans l'histoire de l'antiquité," *Bulletin of the International Committee of Historical Sciences* 2 (1929–30): 303–20. On categories of Greek political thought, see Charles Howard McIlwain, *The Growth of Political Thought in the West from the Greeks to the Middle Ages* (New York, 1932), 3–80 (esp. 8–10 and 63–68); see also Louis Krattinger, *Der Begriff des Vaterlandes im republikanischen Rom* (Immensee, 1944), *passim* (esp. 27, 40, 59 and 69).

25 For the medieval content and survival of ancient *topoi*, see Note 17 and Ernst Mayer, "Das antike Idealbild von den Naturvölkern und die Nachrichten des Caesar und Tacitus," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum* 62 (1925): 226–32, see Part 2 of this study further on. On the broad conceptual/semantic ambiguity of *mos/mores* cf. *Novum glossarium mediae latinitatis* (*Fasc. Miles-Mozytia*), ed. Franz Blatt (Copenhagen, Hafniae, 1963), 832–66.

two during the early feudal and vassalage periods was partly the bonds of bare subordination (*populus subditus*) and partly the registry of a complex network of diversified personal fealty obligations (*fidelitas*). All these stood in diametric opposition to any sort of cohesive social organization. As a believer (*fidelis Christianus*), an individual was indeed considered a "citizen," in the Augustinian sense, of "society" understood broadly (*populus Christianus*), but only in his capacity as a believer and in the spiritual sense. Even the mundane organization of this virtual *res publica*, the Church, did not recognize the notion of *civis*. Every believer was classed here too as a subordinate (*fidelis subditus*). In the earthly sphere, however, the ancient concept and organization of sovereign human association, the *populus*, was not even recognized in a theoretical way. For the first 700–800 years of the Middle Ages, the "politically organized people," or *populus*, meant subjection to an authority legitimized by God (*populus a deo imperatori* [*regi*, *duci*, *comiti*, etc.] *subiectus*) and mediated by the Church. Its cohesion was not guaranteed by constitutive and inherent social, legal, political, or cultural factors (as was the case with the *populus Romanus* of antiquity) but solely by this relationship of subjection. But the vectors of feudal allegiance that cut willy-nilly through the social model rendered this relationship illusory. Within this structure the category of "political loyalty" was identified with the concept of fidelity (*fides-fidelitas*), mixed with elements of the barbarian retinue relationship and the Christian faith. This concept was ethicized through this vassalage and assumed an ideological character, and the political relationship of the individual became crystallized around the quality of *fidelis subditus*. The fidelity of allegiance towards the person of the king, or the *regnum*, was essentially nothing more than the transposition of this model to the civil law relationships that served as a surrogate for the concept of state.[26]

Accordingly, the major changes in European history commenced with the advent of a second feudal age (Marc Bloch), particularly in the wake of the es-

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26   The most recent comprehensive analysis of this subject area (the historical emergence of the concept of the *fidelis subditus*, *populus subditus*) is found in Walter Ullmann, *The Individual and Society in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore, 1966), esp. 7–23. Cf. Ewart Lewis, *Medieval Political Ideas*, vol. 1 (New York, 1954), 194–206. For a critical analysis of the concept of barbarian German fealty (*trewe*) and the Carolingian-era beginnings of the medieval ideology of fealty, see František Graus, "Über die sogenannte germanische Treue," *Historica* 1 (1959): 71–121. On the concept of fealty and its relationships to attitudes towards the early state, see Ferdinand Lot, "Le serment de fidelité à l'époque franque," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 12 (1933): 569–82; Charles E. Odegaard, "The Carolingian Oaths of Fidelity," *Speculum* 16 (1941): 284–96; and Herbert Helbig, "Fideles Dei et regis. Zur Bedeutungsentwicklung von Glaube und Treue im hohen Mittelalter," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 33 (1951): 275–306.

tablishment of towns and the appearance of corporate (estate) organisms in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. At this time when ancient theories of political and social organization were revived—principally though the rediscovery of Roman law and Aristotle's *Politics*—categories suitable to express theoretically the changes materialized. In addition to *fidelis subditus*, the concept of *civis*, and the category of the sovereign political society, *civilis societas* emerged—with characteristic medieval content, of course. The outward forms of a free and legitimate human community and of a sovereign society (*populus liber*, *societas publica*), derived from the principle of *ius gentium* and existing independently of higher authority (*absque autoritate principis*, *sine licentia superioris*), were naturally part and parcel of the existing or emerging forms of estate-corporate organizations (*universitates*, *communitates*). The medieval "social theorists," from the glossators through to the scholastics and from Dante to the early modern period, by and large knew five basic types of human coexistence. The "societies" of the lower four, the village, town, province, and kingdom (*universitas vici*, *civitatis*, *provinciae*, *regni*), fitted naturally under the highest social organism and supreme *societas publica*: the *universitas populi Christiani* embodied by the Church. The nature of this "society" was shaped by the return to the models of antiquity; through them it would surface from the shadow of earlier centuries when its constitutive features were discovered as the inherent forms of "law and public utility," *unitatis iuris et communis utilitatis* (Aquinas, *De Regimine Principum* II, 2, 42, 4.). However, unlike the modern view of society, this one never encompassed the entire community of people (*multitudo hominum*) living within a given border, but denoted a feudally structured organism.

Among these, the broadest secular political society, the *universitas (communitas) regni*, was identified specifically with the estate pole of the state and as both the sphere of the person and as *persona ficta*. In the Thomist formula, the concept of "society" as personal sphere characteristically merges with the quasi-abstract concept of the "state": *societas civilis sive res publica sive populus*. If we were to outline the developments which were initiated during the final third of the Middle Ages in very broad strokes in relation to these categories, then we might speak about a tendency of the state moving increasingly to the forefront in the institutional reality of the monarchy and in the minds of people. It confronted earlier local and narrowly regional (feudal or corporate) structures as well as universal Christian ties and structures. But this tendency altered the existing forms of "political loyalty" and "social" cohesion in terms of the fundamental dualism of the late medieval "state" (*status regis—status regni*). On the

one hand, it not only reinforced the subject's loyalty but it also gradually tied it to more abstract symbols and concepts (*corona regni*, *communis utilitas*, *patria*, etc.); on the other hand, however, it simultaneously deepened and consolidated the intrinsic feudal-cohesive development of "society," *civilis societas*, as a *communitas regni*, thereby, the concept of society and people's awareness of it became firmly cemented.[27]

These conceptual schemes reflect, in a highly abstract form, of course, something of the diversity of the medieval world. This is precisely what makes them so suitable for demonstrating something crucial in a concise manner, namely, that there is no place in this system of classification for *natio*. This is not because "nationality" did not exist for the medieval person as an objective reality or as the object of group sentiments (as has previously been emphasized and will be shown again in detail later on), but because the social and political sphere was thrust into the background objectively and conceptually, and became almost completely irrelevant as compared to the *primary* (broader, i.e., Christian-universal, or monarchic-territorial, and more narrow, i.e., feudal-provincial, local, and estate-corporate) models. And even if these spheres had more or less coincided, the group sentiments associated with nationhood were of a character that was *different* from the dominant forms of social-political loyalty. Whether an individual's social and political status was determined by his/her status as *fidelis subditus* to a higher authority (Church or empire, king, or liege lord) or could claim membership (*membrum universitatis*) in a corporate entity (a feudal *societas publica*), the dimensions of these loyalties were usually not associated with the framework of nationality. The loyalties themselves were stronger, more ethicized, and more ideological than the language and customs (*lingua et mores*)

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27   On the make-up of the "second feudal age," see Marc Bloch, *La société féodale: La formation des liens de dépendance* (Paris, 1939), 95–115. On the "discovery" of *civis* and the reorganization of political categories after the thirteenth century, see Otto von Gierke, *Die Staats- und Korporationslehre des Altertums und des Mittelalters und ihre Aufnahme in Deutschland,* vol. 3 of *Das deutsche Genossenschaftsrecht* (Berlin, 1881), 188ff. E.g., Baldus: "populi [liberi] … sunt de iure gentium et possunt fieri absque autoritate principis" in contrast to the category of *populus subditus*. Bartolus: "civitates quae de iure vel de facto hodie non recognoscunt superiorem; et sic est populus liber." Gierke, *Die Staats- und Korporationslehre des Altertums und des Mittelalters*, 438. The threefold division of societies which existed politically (in this sense *universitas populus*, *societas populus*, etc. are synonymous): universitas minima (under which belong the *vicus*, *villa*, *castrum*, *oppidum*), *minus larga* (*civitas*) and *larga* (*provincia, regnum*) (Gierke, *Die Staats- und Korporationslehre des Altertums und des Mittelalters*, 345 and 545). On the societal outlook of St. Thomas Aquinas and the scholastics in general, see Ignatius Theodore Eschmann, "Studies on the Notion of Society in St. Thomas Aquinas," *Medieval Studies* 8 (1946): 1–42; Franz-Martin Schmölz, "Societas civilis sive Respublica sive Populus," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für öffentliches Recht* 14 (1964): 28–50. The details of trends in the late Middle Ages will be addressed later.

that were generally recognized as the cohesive force of *natio*. It is a natural organizational element of medieval thought that a person who is faithful (*fidelis*), possesses service obligations (*servitium*), and in some cases achieves merit by the "shedding of his own blood" or, if it comes to that, by sacrificing his life *pro domino*, *pro rege* or *regno*, *pro corona* or even *patria*, but in all such cases the idea of a *pro natione* or *gente* duty was completely alien, and any attempt to find it in sources would be fruitless.[28]

Just as alien from the medieval classification system was the notion that a person's *natio* would stand for "society." As we have seen, ever since the notion—in the sense of Tönnies' *Gesellschaft*—was acknowledged in the Middle Ages, it found a place within the category of *civilis*, a legacy of antiquity. This was, in fact, a category of neo-Stoic origin which had served to summarize "civic relations," as it were, in antiquity, while in scholasticism and according to medieval theories of society and jurisprudence it came to designate the "social and political sphere" par excellence ("*Politica, id est civilis scientia*," Aquinas, *Com. Pol.* 5). Within this system, the conceptual counterpart to *civilis* was *naturalis*; and *civilis societas* was the conceptual counterpart to the *status naturalis*. In line with medieval thinking, *natio* belonged to the latter sphere of activity. The notion itself preserved its original etymological and semantic connections to the word *nascor* (*natus*, *natura*, etc.), or "birth," suggesting a "natural" state, until early modern times. Thus, it did not primarily express a social or political (*civilis*) relationship but a natural endowment, so to speak. All who by reason of birth or natural origin belonged to an ethnic framework, or *gens*, were members of one and the same *natio*. It was not so much the changes in the content and framework of *natio* as it was the *gens* which generated fluctuation of the notion of "nationality" to such a large degree over the course of the Middle Ages, according to the narrower provincial, regional, and "tribal" or broader linguistic or constitutional frameworks and "peoples" (*gentes*). With regard to

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28 On the ethical value of the concept of fealty, see Graus, "Über die sogenannte germanische Treue," 91ff. In the ethics of chivalry loyalty to one's liege was stronger than any other bond, including the parent-child relationship; the elevation of the bond of allegiance to the religious and ethical sphere is well illustrated by the words of the Duke of Gascony to a vassal at the Council of Limoges in 1031: "Debueras pro seniore tuo morte, suscipere … et martyr dei pro tali fide fieres." Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1957), 482. On the matter of the *membrum universitatis*: Gierke, *Die Staats- und Korporationslehre des Altertums und des Mittelalters* 433–34. On the problem of loyalty to *corona*, *regnum*, etc. see *Corona regni: Studien über die Kröne als Symbol des Staates in späteren Mittelalter*, ed. Manfred Hellmann, (Weimar, 1961), *passim*. The way in which more abstract ideas, formulated in the languages of jurisprudence and "political theology," ended up as the focus of loyalty was analyzed in a masterly style by Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*.

the dominant understanding of this notion, the definition offered by Isidore of Seville in the eighth century retained its validity until the early modern period: "*natio a nascendo (est appellata)*," that is, "*multitudo ab uno principio orta*," or, in other words, "*nationes, quae propriis cognationibus terminatae, gentes appellantur*" (*Etymologiae*, IX, 2 and IX, 6.). The greatest change to take place since the early Middle Ages was the "territorialization" of the way things were perceived. If at the end of the Middle Ages *natio* meant little more than an aggregate of *naturales*, the latter concept was a synonym for *indigenae*. In contrast, the basis for the conceptual definition of "political society" rooted in *civilis* relationships was a Ciceronian formulation which was resuscitated after the twelfth century: "*Populus autem non omnis hominum coetus quoquo modo congregatus, sed coetus multitudinis iuris consensu et utilitatis communione sociatus* [But the people is not every association of men, however congregated, but the association of the entire number, bound together by the compact of justice and the communication of utility]." (Cicero, *De re publica* I. 25, 39). The degree of contrast between the two concepts is obvious. To this one only needs to add the rather well-known aspect that language and lifestyle, cultural and historical tradition, behavioral and moral norms, dress, food and drink, everyday customs and all things encompassed by the *topos* of *lingua et mores*, together with the notion of the common *origo* (*genus*), were generally understood to be the community of a *natio* within the medieval conceptual framework. In contrast to the classification and value system radically transformed in the eighteenth century, the medieval nation was not considered a "cultural value" but a "natural," indeed, innate—*naturalis*—attribute.[29]

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29   Another definition of society in St. Thomas Aquinas: "*Societas nihil aliud esse [videtur], quam adunatio hominum ad unum aliquid communiter agendum*"—a society means a union of men, assembled together for one and the same purpose—in *Contra impugnantes*, Bk. 3; Thomas Eschmann, "Studies on the Notion of Society in St. Thomas Aquinas," 26. On the antithesis of *civilis* and *naturalis*, see: Schmölz, "Societas civilis sive Respublica sive Populus," 37). On the origins of this concept of society in Antiquity, see McIlwain, *The Growth of Political Thought in the West from the Greeks to the Middle Ages*, 107ff. In fact, this is the model of the Augustinian concept of *populus Christianus*, which is also not a "natural" but "*coetus multitudinis rationalis rerum, quas diligit, concordi communione sociatus*"—an assemblage of reasonable beings bound together by a common agreement as to the objects of their love. "De Civitate Dei Bk. XIX, Ch. 24," in *Corpus Scriptorum Eccl. Lat.*, vol. 40, no. 2 (Prague, Vienna, and Leipzig, 1900), 419. On the concept of *natio* in Antiquity (e.g., Sextus Pompeius Festus, *De verborum significatu*, see "Natio est genus hominum, qui non aliunde venerunt, sed ibi nati sunt") Gustav Meyer, ed., *Thesaurus linguae Latinae*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Leipzig), 1, 925–34. 1, 842–48. For Isidore's definitions, see Migne, *Patr. Lat.*, vol. 82 (Paris, 1878), 328 and 349. On the history of the concept in the Middle Ages, see below. On the discovery of the cultural value of the mother tongue, see Karl-Otto Apel, "Die Idee der Sprache in der Tradition des Humanismus von Dante bis Vico," *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 8 (1963): esp. 104–29.

The extent to which the concepts of "society" and "nationality" consisted of different, quite unrelated qualities according to the cognitive framework of the Middle Ages is illuminated in the most succinct way by *De regimine principum* (book 1, Ch. 10), a disquisition by Aquinas, who is one of the most consequent theoreticians of this framework. According to this text, the guiding principle for every large human grouping is *amicitia*. A simple translation meaning friendship, friendly circle, or the like is inadequate as it signifies something much closer to what we would today refer to as social cohesion or alliance, with every *amicitia* being consolidated on the basis of some community (*communio*). In Aquinas's view *amicitia* united human groups as a result of either the similarity of natural origins or "customs" (*vel per naturae originem, vel per morum similitudinem*) or through community by association (*per cuiuscunque societatis communionem*).[30] The latter is clearly a difficult term to "translate" into modern terms because according to this framework "society" is precluded from being a *naturalis* endowment but is from the outset regarded as a *civilis* association or *societas*. This is what Aquinas, following Cicero, considered "not a human community which has come to be associated in just any manner" but "*coetus multitudinis iuris consensu et utilitas communione sociatus*" (*De regimine principum*, Bk. 1, Ch. 2, 105), that is, one that agreement and similar interests produces based on solid legal principles, going beyond the general factor of *amicitia*. What is more, there is a fourth condition—*virtus*—which consists of *prudentia politica* "directed towards the common good of the city or kingdom" ("*Quae ordinatur ad bonum commune civitatis vel regni*"; *De regimine principum*, Bk. 2, Ch. 2, 47, 11). This is a clear conceptual model of medieval society, of *societas civilis sive populus*—the feudal estate cohesion of the Middle Ages. This, incidentally, differs clearly and pointedly from *another* kind of human community which is also united by cohesion or *amicitia*—an emotional one, one might say. It is not the *civilis* form of association and therefore not *societas* (*Gesellschaft*), but a community of "natural" origin and tradition; that is, a form of community that according to medieval definitions also encompasses the additional element of language, to which the category of *natio* ("nationality") belongs.

Nuancing this picture further is the task of historical analysis. The structure outlined above changed, of course, absorbing new elements and becoming more

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30 On these connections, see Schmölz, "Societas civilis sive Respublica sive Populus," 42–44. The broader subject area, embedded in a sketch of the transformation of categories in the modern age, has been treated by Werner Conze, "Nation und Gesellschaft: Zwei Grundbegriffe der revolutionären Epoche," *Historische Zeitschrift* 198 (1964): esp. 4–11.

fluid, but it did not break up altogether until the eighteenth century. Over the course of France's development, rightly considered classical, the medieval heritage of provincial nationalities, *nationalités provinciales* (or as they are referred to according to the language used in the sources: *nations de Burgund*, *Champagne*, *Normandie*, etc.) was gradually forged into the French *nationalité d'État* by the monarchy itself. Even in the eighteenth century this *nation française* was no more than the "aggregate of subjects of the monarchy" (for instance, *les Bourguignons, les Champenois, les Picards, les Normands, les Bretons sont autant des peuples qui forment la nation française*), or to use the terminology of absolutism, simply *mes peuples*.[31] *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*? The French Revolution posed the question in a new manner, with the answer offered in a famous pamphlet entitled "What Is the Third Estate?", written by Abbé Sieyès in January of 1789 on the eve of the Revolution: *Un corps d'associés vivant sous une loi commune et représenté par la même legislature.* The year 1789 can be regarded as the birth of the modern nation inasmuch as the Revolution declared a principle out loud for the first time which had been maturing within the Enlightenment's world of ideas and in the writings of Voltaire and Rousseau. According to this principle the *nation* was a form of *corps politique*, a historical configuration based partly on a community of language, partly on common institutions, historical traditions, customs, and manners. A novel political association of citizens, united by a historical framework and represented by the "national assembly" (in itself a conceptually new institution born at this historic moment), who possess sovereignty and serve as the theoretical source of the nation-state. Thus, the historical formula, "nationality," which already existed in a society's horizontal relations, now acquired a vertical principle, turning it into the modern nation.[32] These cir-

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31 The form *peuple des nations françaises* also occurs. In parallel, the concept also had a feudal-corporate character (with antecedents which, as will be seen, stretched back to the thirteenth century). It was still possible, even in the early eighteenth century, for one representative of the feudal opposition to argue that the French *nation* was to be identified with the nobility who descended from the Frankish conquerors, whereas the *peuple*, descendants of the subservient Gallic masses, had never belonged to the nation. An anonymous leaflet of 1758, however, was already branding as unjust that writers and artists, merchants and financiers were subsumed under the concept of the *peuple* when, in reality, they ought to belong to a more elevated stratum of *nation*. The absolutist perspective, in contrast, rejected any corporate concept; as Louis XIV said: "La nation ne fait pas un corps en France, elle réside tout entière dans la personne du roi." See Zernatto, "Nation: The History of a Word"; Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics*, 314–25; Robert R. Palmer, "The National Idea in France Before the Revolution," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 1 (1940): 95ff.

32 It is symbolic, in a way, that an assembly of the third estate of June 1789 opened with a terminological dispute. Mirabeau proposed that they call themselves *representants du peuple français*, but the majority objected to an ambiguous, indeed unsavory word like *peuple* being co–opted for higher purposes, which is how, in the end, the term *assemblée nationale* came to be accepted (Zernatto, "Nation: The history of a

cumstances legitimized an entirely new form of argumentation, so that already within the first year of the Revolution soldiers refused to obey certain orders given by their superiors; "nous sommes les soldats de la Nation," they declared.[33] Only the notion of a "national society" was able to position the nation at the heart of political loyalty.

The proportion of fiction and reality in the notion of a "national society" is a different matter, but it is a question relating to the Janus face of the modern nation, concerning the side which doesn't turn towards the past but gazes into the future, and therefore points beyond the question's original scope.[34] It is also a different matter that the theoretical "model" of the nation which the Revolution gave birth to was distorted within a short time. In practice, the young French nationalism became aggressively expansionist. Thus, the French Revolution became a fountainhead for European nationalism in a double sense: conceiving it and triggering a reaction. For this reason, and due to the differences in historical antecedents and social structures that arose, there is more than one type of process leading to the birth of a modern nation. The concept of nation has engendered a great many variants, from revolutionary rationalism to conservative mysticism. Therefore, to speak of a uniform "concept of nation" is impossible in precisely the same way that attempts at a definition which become exhausted by enumerating static criteria will necessarily be unattainable. It is impossible to generate conceptual features which express something that is undeniably common in the concept of "nation per se."

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word," 364–66). It was for similar reasons that in England Disraeli proposed that the traditional formula "people of England" be replaced by the designation "English nation," given that the former applied merely to a form of natural unity; by contrast "the civilised community is a nation." (It is not hard to see not only the distinction, medieval in origin, between *naturalis* and *civilis*, but equally the characteristic modern conceptual fusion of *civilis societas* and *natio*.) Gerhard A. Ritter, "Nation und Gesellschaft in England," *Historische Zeitschrift* 198 (1964): 25–28. The relevant passage in the 1791 French constitution (vol. 3, 1): "La souverainté est une, indivisible. Elle appartient à la Nation. Aucune section du peuple ni aucun individu ne peut s'en attribuer l'exercice." On this subject, see René Johannet, *Le principe des nationalités* (Paris, 1918), 85ff.; Otto Vossler, *Der Nationalgedanke von Rousseau bis Ranke* (Berlin, 1937); François-Alphonse Aulard, *Le patriotisme français de la renaissance à la révolution* (Paris, 1921); Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, 263–328.

33 Lot, "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" in *Recueil des travaux historiques de F. Lot*, 433.

34 This is the contradiction that was exposed already in the very "moment" of birth of the modern nation. The 1791 French constitution itself stipulated a relatively high property qualification as a condition for being able to exercise rights of citizenship: the radicals' concept of the nation (*La nation, c'est la France lettrée ou riche*) proved illusory. The birth of the modern nation and citizen coincided only ideologically, in practice the poor—the fourth estate—was left out from the reality of *corps politique*. Already Marat had put it into words ("the poor don't have a home") and a little later, the historian Augustin Thierry was bemoaning the fact that "We think we are one nation, yet we are two nations in one and the same land . . ." See Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics*, 324–25.

The only common element is that the model of "national society" is one that is general, though in reality it is articulated, of course, in distinctive outward forms. The historical and conceptual rupture originates in the relationship of the constituent elements of the model, between the modern nation and its historical antecedents ("nationality" and "nation"), even though the original linguistic form refers solely to historical associations and continuity. To summarize briefly, "nationality" is a very old historical formulation, and so is the notion of "society" as a sovereign political community, and the category of "political loyalty." But these three entities shared no intrinsic features within earlier eras and structures. What is new and has only existed since the end of the eighteenth century, is the historical fusion and functional relationship between these three categories; this is the "nation" as we understand it today.[35]

The models created have their own widely recognized advantages and disadvantages. The main criterion, however, is one precise feature—leaving all other possible aspects aside: by accentuating certain key features the model should serve its purpose as an abstraction. A model is not well-suited to express causal relations, reflect a diversity of processes, or to provide an explanation for the emergence of a given phenomenon. Nor was this our purpose here, as the objective is not to examine the historical context of national development but to highlight a conceptual distinction. This is not an end in itself, of course, but a methodological starting point for a historical investigation, for separating the historical layers of the subject. As the historiography shows, a major handicap in this process of separation is the fact that unity is lacking in the theoretical underpinnings of conceptual use, and this has repercussions for the end results as well. In the final analysis, the literature on the topic indicates that the "common denominators" will not be discovered by a theoretical approach alone without a historical analysis, nor will they be found using a historical approach alone without a theoretical analysis. Lastly, the goal of unifying historical and theoretical analyses observable over the last two or three decades is also inadequate without shared methodological bases and perspectives. The most important handicap to the present day is found in the latter circumstances, of course. The establishment of the modern nation not only affected the rearrangements and relationships between the categories discussed above, but retrospectively af-

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35 If one should want to further differentiate, the formula would need to be extended to the fusion and mutual relations of "nationality" and categories such as "economy," "state," "culture," etc., which have likewise been in existence since the eighteenth century.

fected the past, very concept of "history" as well. Yet, the same social and intellectual transformations which, after the eighteenth century, dragged history out of the shadows of God's Earthly Plan, and discovered the sovereign history of mankind as a replacement of *historiae humanae* moving towards the "goal" of Salvation,[36] at the same time also gave birth to modern nationalism and, thus, with virtually the same motion placed history into a cognitive framework that was new but equally subject to teleological interpretation. Within this framework the latent but immanent principle of history was the national factor and the goal of the historical process now became the emergence of the modern nation. It is impossible to say that this school of thought has been consigned to the past along with romanticism. Astonishingly recently, a surprising number of case studies, manuals, and syntheses have been produced in this spirit. Indeed, this is often the motive which directs source-based investigations of the early antecedents of the nation and national consciousness.[37] Needless to say, the other extreme position, which is prone to treat the phenomenon of nationalism itself as some sort of strange anomaly, does not aid our understanding of historical reality either.[38] Conceptual and terminological aspects are of no special interest for either position; the former school seeks to demonstrate an essential historical and conceptual identity in the category of nation, while the latter conflates primitive xenophobia with a unifying social factor. Naturally, it was not the intention of the outline presented above to chart a course between these two extremes, or even to say anything decisive at all on the historical context itself for the time being. It was merely to point out the intrinsic conceptual features that can be used to distinguish between the two important categories of "nationality" and "nation." Accordingly, we sought to identify internal conceptual markers for using these categories in a historical context, or at a minimum to reduce the scope of subjective interpretation so that we may carry less ballast when launching a historical investigation into the early antecedents of the nation.

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36   See the comments of Werner Conze, "Nation und Gesellschaft: Zwei Grundbegriffe der revolutionären Epoche," in this connection.

37   On the prolongation of the romantic model, and the proliferation of the artificial, distorting "national aspect" of history which appears even in historiography with Marxist pretensions, see Szűcs, *A nemzet historikuma és a történetszemlélet nemzeti látószöge.*

38   This attitude is present, above all, here and there in the works of modern American research into nationalism.

The Historical Model

Since Aristotle scholarship has been, among other things, the skilled ability to distinguish between things. The common notions of historiography acquire a certain scholarly value when, with their help, a part of a historical reality that belongs together according to certain important features can be separated from parts which are linked by less significant features. A term becomes devalued and loses its scholarly utility if it has been applied rampantly with too many shades of meaning. This is not to assert, of course, that the model proposed in the preceding section is the only option; undoubtedly distinctions may also be imagined using other approaches. What is important is the recognition that, on the basis of significant features, the historical antecedents of national integration (or phenomena that appear at a distance to be analogous) form a different part of historical reality than the phenomenon of the modern nation. And it would be practical to give expression to these circumstances in the terminology. This conceptual and terminological necessity is not at all generally accepted.[39] Nor is it irrelevant which markers are considered to be constitutive of the terminological distinction, because this has theoretical repercussions. Aside from this, the question arises as to whether, even at a terminological level, we solve the problem by making reference to anything before the eighteenth century as a "nationality." Generally speaking, our method will help to prevent faulty and ahistorical associations, and we shall obtain a term that may be applied safely in numerous contexts, but will we be able to manage in any given context? Can we dispense altogether with the word "nation" and the adjective "national" in reference to earlier centuries?

Here we face an unusual terminological and methodological dilemma for the historian, which is less of a concern to the philosopher or sociologist who deals with the subject. However conscientious the historian may be about the fundamental structural difference that is hidden within phenomena behind the history of the concept of "nation" per se, when naming certain processes or groups of phenomena or attempting to emphasize contrast, even with reference to relatively early centuries he cannot dispense with the adjective "national." At the same time, he is well aware that in European languages the very formation

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39 See Note 14 above. As an extreme case one can mention that even in the most recent debates among Soviet historians a view has emerged, citing some phrases lifted from Marx and Engels, that nation is the appropriate general term to designate the manifestations of the slave-holding or feudal formations, see the comment of S.T. Kaltakhchian, *Voprosy istorii*, no. 6 (1966): 24.

of the word *national* (*nemzeti* in Hungarian) is an eighteenth-century development. This is a characteristic linguistic shell of the deeper ideological and conceptual transformations for which the category of *nation* has been assigned as an "organizing principle" of the phenomena since the eighteenth century (and only since then).[40] Insofar as the category of "national history," which combines specific aspects of processes that took place in earlier centuries into a conceptual unit, is not meant to authenticate an a priori principle, but to serve as an organizing principle for research methodology, it represents a use of the term and a perspective that is scientifically justified. "National," as a technical term in the narrow sense of the word, i.e., a *terminus technicus*[41] or conceptual aid, is indispensable. Although our conceptual framework may have changed radically since the eighteenth century, the terminological transformation was often neither radical nor consistent enough, so that in relation to our subject it did not evolve a terminologically adequate solution for the curious ambiguity, outlined above, of historical connection and phenomenological antithesis, which characterizes the conceptual relationship between the historical *nation* and the modern "nation."

The "nation-state" as we understand it today, for instance, did not exist before the nineteenth century, but not because nationalities had not yet evolved, or because nationality and the state framework did not generally coincide, but because the inherent logical precondition of the concept is the modern idea of "nation" and the doctrine of national sovereignty that stems from it. That is, the state is the substrate of nation, and *natio* is not a conceptual function of *regnum* or any other political framework. A further precondition is the modern abstraction of the "state," which, in turn, postulates a series of institutions which only developed in the early modern era, along with other modern concepts. Nevertheless, in certain contexts it is hardly possible to avoid the designation "nation-state (monarchy)"—as a technical term—even already in reference to the late Middle Ages if we seek to express the complex reality which existed behind the expanding category of the *regnum*, in contrast to the dualistic universalism of

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40 See also Note 15. Compare the dictionaries cited above with their etymological data, esp. Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IXe au XVe siècle*, vol. 5, 463; Basler, *Deutsches Fremdwörterbuch*, vol. 2, 184; *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 7, 33, as well as Huizinga, "Wachstum und Formen des nationalen Bewußtseins in Europa bis zum Ende des XIX. Jahrhunderts," in *Im Bann der Geschichte*, 133; Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, 209 and 647. With respect to Hungary: Antal Nyiry, *A "nemzeti" melléknév keletkezése* [The origin of the adjective "national"] (Szeged, 1967).

41 On the indispensability of the "*technische Begriff*" in this connection, but also one the ways these contents can be harmonized, see Otto Brunner, *Historische Zeitschrift* 186 (1958): 109–10.

Imperium and *Sacerdotium*, on the one hand, and to the heterogeneous particularism of feudal *provinciae* on the other. The situation is similar with the designations of "national" language, culture, market, and so on, including the term "national consciousness," to be sure. The employment of such compounds is a constrained but, because of the inadequacy of our classification system, necessary conceptual compromise. Nevertheless, how far should such a compromise go? If one does not take a stance of principled agnosticism, one needs to be able to offer more details. Is anything that can in some way be brought into historical connection with a present-day nation to be regarded as "national"? Historians who possess a modicum of critical acumen have long shuddered at the equally old idea that the "nation-states" of Western Europe resulted from the disintegration of the Carolingian Empire in the ninth century, whereas it is common to name the process which unfolds in the thirteenth century as the birth of "national monarchies," on the grounds that by this time there is a closer and more direct connection to the modern meaning of the concept.[42] But where can a *terminus post quem* be designated reliably? It seems self-evident that one should strive to establish a conceptual foundation on the basis of which the phenomenon in question, in its modern and in its historical meaning, will reveal its identity, or at least indicate a close relationship on the basis of *significant conceptual features*. In other words, a necessary and forced compromise is justified if it is unequivocally deliberate that the technical compromise is for the sake of the "research," and the smaller the compromise the better it is.

It is not easy to strike the right balance, of course. Remaining with the example offered above, researchers of political history, law and institutions, or political theory will list the same criteria as to why it is that the French kingdom of the first Capetians in the tenth century cannot be considered a "national monarchy," while the kingdom of Philip "the Fair" (around 1300) can be regarded *in a sense* as such. When we are dealing with "national consciousness" things become even more difficult. What features should be regarded as definitive in measuring "sentiment," a conscious phenomenon? The ground is shaky everywhere one treads, but in any event it is certain that one will not be able to gain a

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42 For an overview, see e.g., Joseph R. Strayer, "The Historical Experience of Nation-Building in Europe," in *Nation-Building*, ed. W. Deutsch and William J. Foltz (New York, 1963), 23ff. Incidentally, of course, the term "state" is itself the same kind of technical expression under medieval conditions, as the age was unfamiliar with this abstraction, while the Latin *status* and its derivatives (*stato, estado, estat, state,* etc.) designated something quite different before the early modern age; see Arnold Oskar Meyer, "Zur Geschichte des Wortes Staat," *Die Welt als Geschichte* 10 (1950): 229–39.

reliable hold on the matter if one focuses solely on the history of "nationality." With this approach one could collect sources which, however colorful, ultimately say little more than that there was a "bit more" of a measure of reality and cognitive content behind a given ethnonym in, say, the fifteenth century than in the eleventh or thirteenth century, and "much more" in the eighteenth century. With this sort of approach one cannot hope for more robust conceptual points of reference, only an enrichment of detail in the narrative at best. The situation is different if the question of nationality and the conscious elements associated with it are viewed in connection with a shift in social and political relationships as subordinate to the whole ideological structure, that is, in a functional relationship with other categories. One wonders whether the model of the distinction outlined above might be of assistance in construing a relative conceptual distinction in the Middle Ages.

As we have seen, the essence of the modern nation subsists in the fact that nationality, kindled by the bourgeois transformation of the modern age and fulfilling its needs, became a fundamental structural element in the sociopolitical sphere. The categories of "society," "nationality," and "politics" became fused in a way that earlier epochs had not experienced. In this shape, modern European nations were also completely different from their medieval antecedents. But was the function of nationality in medieval Europe identical in every respect to the one it fulfilled, for instance, in the civilizations of Asia Minor and on the Mediterranean coast in antiquity, or in contemporaneous non-European societies such as the high cultures of Asia—China and India? Isn't it a specific feature of European history that "nationality" *in a certain sense*—albeit with a form and content different from that of the modern—enters into a kind of organic fusion par excellence with the spheres of "society" and "politics," becoming, *in a certain sense*, an "ideological" factor? Is it not possible that European developments in the Middle Ages do, after all, comprise, in advance, elements of modern nationality? Is there a model, a particular formulation of defined elements that modern evolution transcends so as to realize the model and replenish it with new content? If that were the case, then we could have a handle on the historical and conceptual *terminus post quem*, which in a terminological sense would also apply to the category of "national" (as a "technical concept"). For this, it would be a methodological requirement that an examination of medieval forms of "nationality" and "national consciousness" would be the subject not of pragmatic data collection or apologetic essays but of the history of political ideas. This history would have to consider also the synchronic context of European develop-

ment. And its purpose would not be to gather arguments to support the idea of the nation's "antiquity" but to contribute to an understanding of the inherent structures to be found in Europe's historical development.

Spatial limits will not permit me to raise more than one "representative" example, namely a brief outline of the French development, which, also in medieval history, is rightly regarded as a "classic" case. I wish to point out the scope of possible conceptual "coordinates," offering signposts rather than a thorough examination of the matter.

Permit me one remark by way of a preamble: the concept of "nationality" in the way that it is normally used today is itself a retrospective category of sorts. That is to say, in speaking about nationalities within a historic context we will assume that it refers to a configuration from which the modern nation historically emerged. History, however, deals with a very wide range of ethnic groups which one is fully justified in describing as "nationalities," many of them having vanished over the course of the centuries, in part, as a result of the process that generated other nationalities, being completely assimilated or only surviving as faint traces. "Nationality" is neither an a priori nor an organic configuration, but essentially a highly artificial historical entity which, over the course of its development, enabled political factors to play a decisive role. "Nationality" and "ethnic group" are not synonymous categories. Ethnic characteristics may factor as distinguishing marks of nationality, but nationality does not signify an ethnic group *ab ovo*.

It would be awkward to speak about a "French ethnic group," for instance. The French nationality or "historical raw material" was formed by a mesh of Celtic, Roman, and Germanic ethnic elements. Even the Roman society in Gallia (the Romanized descendants of Ligurians, Celts, Iberians, and so on), the groups that, according to early medieval sources, were collectively called Romani, could not be subsumed under an ethnic category, though the early medieval viewpoint regarded them as one and the same nationality (*natione Romani*). In Gallia, from the fifth to seventh centuries, next to certain groups, which were able to preserve their ethnic unity (for example, the Bretons), the conquering Germanic peoples were sharply demarcated from one another, with societies having *ex natione* distinct legal customs (*lex gentis*), divided according to an awareness of origins, social traditions, and customs (*origo*, *mos*, *consuetudo*) and using a different language (*lingua*). The groups that include the Salian and Ripuarian Franks, Burgundians, Alemanni, and Goths could be perceived as barbarian "nationalities" whose unity was recorded in documents, chronicles, the "common law," capitularies, and patristic literature. The inner cohesion of the groups was

assured by a meaningful and vigorous form of ethnosociological "we" (or in-group) consciousness (gentilism). This was demonstrated in detail in a recent major monograph by Reinhard Wenskus. Over the course of the sixth-eighth centuries, the "Romanized" barbarian kingships and early feudal relationships gradually loosened up, eventually upsetting these "gentilist" structures. The assimilation of Roman and barbarian societal elements occurring on various social levels led to the society's reorganization within new territorial frameworks. The inhabitants of these territorial formations, which proved durable, were perceived before long as belonging to the same "nationality" (note that reference to *natio Aquitana* as early as the seventh century). In parallel, the notion of *Francus* also became "territorialized" in two opposing directions. During the seventh to ninth centuries *Franci* referred at times to the bond between the freemen of the entire *regnum Francorum* within a state framework. During this period the popular etymology of *francus* (that is, *liber*/"free") arose, which has survived in the Romance languages up to the present day with the term *franc.* At other times it referred to the totality of subjects of a realm, the Carolingian *ducatus Franciae.* In the wake of integration efforts by the first Carolingians, there is no doubt that after the middle of the eighth century there emerged a historical possibility of a *nationalité franque* (F. Lot), or Frankish nationality. The literary apotheosis of this (and not of European nationalism) rings out from the so-called long prologue of the *Lex Salica*, around the time of Pepin the Short.[43] (763/764)

However, the possibility of a "Frankish nationality" was preempted (among others) by the dissolution of Carolingian unity. Historically, the potential for a *French* nationality emerged. The conditions for this included, for one, the lin-

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43 On the matter of the "gentilis" outlook on life in the early centuries of the Middle Ages (according to which the Romans were also a *gens* or *natio*, i.e., a populace viewed according to barbarian ethnic categories) see Heinz Löwe, "Von Theoderich dem Großen zu Karl dem Großen: Das Werden des Abendlandes im Geschichtsbild des frühen Mittelalters," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 9 (1951): 370ff; Helmut Beumann, "Zur Entwicklung transpersonaler Staatsvorstellungen," in *Das Königtum: Seine geistigen und rechtlichen Grundlagen,* Vorträge und Forschungen, vol. 3 (Lindau and Konstanz, 1956), 219–24; Fernand Vercauteren, "Le 'Romanus' des sources franques," *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 11 (1932): 77–78. For a synthesis on the problem of "gentilism," see Reinhard Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung: Das Werden der frühmittelaltelrichen gentes* (Graz, 1961), esp. 15–105. On the "transitional" nationalities of the seventh-ninth centuries, see Eugen Ewig, "Volkstum und Volksbewußtsein im Frankreich des 7. Jahrhunderts," in *Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo* 5/2 (Spoleto, 1958), 587–648. On the matter of a "*nationalité franque,*" see Ferdinand Lot, "Formation de la nation française," *Revue des deux mondes* (May 15, 1950): 261–63. On the dating and intellectual context of the so-called longer prologue of the Lex Salica ("Gens Francorum inclita, auctore Deo condita . . ."), see Eugen Ewig, "Zum christlichen Königsgedanken im Frühmittelalter," in *Das Königtum: Seine geistigen und rechtlichen Grundlagen*, Vorträge und Forschungen, vol. 3 (Lindau and Konstanz, 1956), 49–57.

guistic and cultural assimilation which appeared in some features already in the eighth century; and for another, the recurrent partitioning of the Carolingian Empire (843, 870, 887, etc.). But all of this was still only a remote precondition. In the ninth century the "French," as such, did not yet exist, and it would be equally inaccurate to associate the birth of the "French state" with the Treaty of Verdun (843).[44] Although the imperial annals—looking back, admittedly, from the perspective of the eleventh century—contain the famous phrase *Hec divisio facta est inter teutones Francos et latinos Francos* (887), and it is possible to trace the separation of a *lingua romana rustica* and a *lingua theotisca* to earlier sources (786, 823, 845, etc.), this only means that, roughly speaking between the Treaty of Verdun and the Treaty of Bonn (921), a political framework evolved under the crowns of the last of the Carolingian and the first Capetian emperors which over the course of centuries forged a populace that spoke a "barbarized" Latin tongue into a unified mass. Likewise, on the other side of the Rhine a political framework (the *regnum Teutonicorum*, first in 919) evolved as well. While this did not develop into a proper state, nevertheless the framework became a loose structure for processes which enabled the interdependence of the dialects of the *gentes ultra Rhenum*, the *theudisc* (ultimately from the Old Germanic **theudo*, "people," which later became the word *deutsch*) unity, to be consciously established.[45] That this was the process of the birth of peoples and nationalities was not evident to the peoples being born for quite some time. First it was outside observers who considered the French or the Germans as one "people." The first datable authentication of *genus Francorum* (in the sense of the word "French") and *Teutonicorum* is in an Italian document from 909. Two centuries were to elapse by the time French chroniclers used *gens*, *genus*, or *natio* as collective terms in the French context and German chroniclers used them in the German context (around 1100). Otherwise, for the "Germans," *gens*, *natio*, and the concept of *nos* (*lingua nostra*, *gens nostra*, *princeps noster*) embraced the likes of *Saxones*, *Baioarii*, and *Thüringi*. The "French" were regarded as *Franci* (the inhabit-

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44 Linguistic and ethnic principles played no role in the Treaty of Verdun; the principles of partition were: *affinitas*, *congruential*, and *aequa portio*. See Zöllner, *Die politische Stellung der Völker im Frankenreich (Veröffentl. des IÖG 13)*, 261; Eugen Ewig, "Karl der Grose und die Karolingische Teilung," in *Die Europäer und ihre Geschichte: Epochen und Gestalten im Urteil der Nationen* (Munich, 1961), 6–18.

45 The following items from the extensive literature on the subject are essential: Alfred Dove, *Studien zur Vorgeschichte des deutschen Vornamens (Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie, Phil.-Hist. Kl. 1916/8)*; Leo Weisgerber, *Deutsch als Volksname: Ursprung und Bedeutung* (Stuttgart, 1956); Walter Schlesinger, "Die Grundlegung der deutschen Einheit im frühen Mittelalter," in *Beiträge zur deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte des Mittelalters*, vol. 1 (Göttingen, 1963), 245–85.

ants of Francia or, roughly speaking, what was later to be known as Île-de-France), *Aquitani*, *Burgundiones*, etc.[46] There was an awareness of unity, of course, but mainly at the top, in the dynasties, within the consciousness of those who were cultivating the Carolingian tradition around the Louises, the Ottos living under the influence of the phantasm of *translatio Imperii*, and in the clergy who ministered to them in the abbeys of Saint-Denis, Fulda, Admont, etc.[47] It was also present in the consciousness of knights of the First Crusade who—as a result of the "contrast experience" (*Kontrasterlebnis*)—discovered in the midst of the babble of languages their "otherness" expressing their nationality. Conflicts were routine occurrences; Odo of Deuil wrote of the Second Crusade (1147) "the Germans were unbearable, intolerable (*importabilis*) to our people." The French knighthood, as Guibert of Nogent reported, were taken aback to hear the "incomprehensible barbarian language" of German and other knights, and it is around this time that the topoi of the *superbia Francorum*, *furor Teutonicorum*, and *perfidia Anglorum*, which were to become fixed for centuries, first gained currency. Here language did not represent an intrinsic, constitutive "value" but was used for differentiation and mockery. The motifs of "nationality" consisted of simple apparel—anything unfamiliar, outlandish clothing, styled hair and beards, "ungainly" weaponry. These were all crude features which on the primal level are marks of the "ethnocentrism" of savage tribes.[48] To perceive the beginnings of national consciousness in such expressions, as often happens, is rather like having someone interpreting the emergence of money as a means of payment as the beginning of "capitalism."

Incipient French nationality, for example, had no role in daily life as yet. The

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46 For a treatise on how the concept was employed, based on a wide range of sources, see Kurt Heissenbüttel, *Die Bedeutung der Bezeichnungen für "Volk" und "Nation" bei Geschichtsschreibern des 10. bis 13. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1920); cf. also Karl Bierbach, *Kurie und nationale Staaten im früheren Mittelalter (bis 1245)* (Dresden, 1938). Terminological matters and the problems of what "us" means in the eleventh century have recently been addressed in a careful analysis by Rudolf Buchner, "Die politische Vorstellungswelt Adams von Bremen," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 45 (1963): 15–59.

47 Karl Ferdinand Werner, "Das hochmittelalterliche Imperium im politischen Bewußtsein Frankreichs (10–12. Jh.)," *Historische Zeitschrift* 200 (1965): 14–18; Schlesinger, "Die Grundlegung der deutschen Einheit im frühen Mittelalter," 280–284; Buchner, "Die politische Vorstellungswelt Adams von Bremen," 55–56. On the role of the monasteries in general in this regard, see Coulton, "Nationalism in the Middle Ages," 24–28.

48 On the conflicts of the Crusades, see Coulton, "Nationalism in the Middle Ages," 18–19; Kirn, *Aus der Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 47ff; on knightly-"national" conflicts, see Fritz Kern, "Der mittelalterliche Deutsche in französischer Ansicht," *Historische Zeitschrift* 108 (1911): 237–54. On the origin of a topos, see Ernst Dümmler, "Über den furor Teutonicus," in *Sitzungsberichte der Königl. Preußischen Akademie* (Berlin, 1897), 112–26. For an argument that this is not a question of national sentiment but manifestation of a "quasi-national" tinge of chivalric consciousness, see Lamprecht, "Entwicklung der Formen des Nationalbewußtseins," in *Deutsche Geschichte*, 25ff and Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics*, 32–33.

regnum Francorum itself was no more than a claim of dominion coming from whichever sovereign wore the crown. The reality was *terra*, *patria*, *pays*, in essence the sovereign power of the *seigneurs souzerains* who numbered over 170 by the middle of the tenth century inside the territory of the French kingdom. The liege lords stood over their subjects not only in everyday matters of life—ranging from providing judicial services to taxation—but were also "ideologically" a focal point within the imagination of "their people." Little good is said about kings in the Old French epic poetry. As a rule, they were considered weak, capricious, and insignificant figures. The "great names" in the world of *chansons de geste* are the likes of Godefroy de Bouillon, Raimond de Toulouse, and Robert de Normandie, regarded as the "champions of Christianity," and entitled to the archaizing honorific of *pater patriae*. Anyone might have sneered at them, like the monk who summed up his impressions after travelling through the county (*comitatus*) of Tours as follows: "Right now I have as much power as the king of France, seeing that no one takes his orders any more seriously than they would mine." In the county of Anjou in the eleventh century the king was ridiculed with the title *pseudorex* or *regulus*, whose rule was purely nominal (*solo nomine*). Francia was the name of a province considered the dynasty's private dominion (subsequently Île-de-France), and up until the thirteenth century the collective name for the inhabitants of the province was *Franci*.[49] At that time they still formed only a minute minority among many "nationalities" of the French kingdom. According to the sources, apart from the *Franci*, a *natio* or *gens* consisted of Bretons, Normans, Gascons, Aquitanians, Toulousians, and so on. All these *nationes* were undeniably "nationalities" because, as a result of centuries of tradition-building, they spoke a language that was by and large the same (and that for the inhabitants of a neighboring *pays* was considered a "different language"); they were also connected by the same customs (*coutumes*) and cultural traditions generally, so that in the conceptual language of the times they formed a unit *lingua et moribus*. In the *Gesta Tancredi*, Radulf claims that the Provençales differ from the *Franci* in their "manners, temperament, customs, and lifestyle" (*Franci* here is to be understood somewhat more broadly as applying to

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49   For a perceptive survey of the tenth–twelfth centuries in this respect, see Ferdinand Lot, *Naissance de la France* (Paris, 1948), 828ff. See also Gustave Dupont-Ferrier, "Le sense des mots 'patria' et 'patrie' en France au Moyen Âge et jusqu'au début du XVIIᵉ siècle," *Revue historique* 188 (1940): 89–92. On the concepts *Francia* and *Franci* in the tenth–twelfth centuries, see Margret Lugge, *"Gallia" und "Francia" in Mittelalter*, Bonner Historische Forschungen, 15 (Bonn, 1960), 30ff.; Lot, "Formation de la nation française," 264 and 270. The quotations are from Kirn, *Aus der Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 65; Werner, "Das hochmittelalterliche Imperium," 7.

the inhabitants of any territory north of the Loire). A specific "characterology" emerged, according to which men of the north were belligerent, heroic, and bold, whereas southerners were indolent, vain, and gluttonous, as summed up in a proverb of the time that Radulf cites: *Franci ad bella—Provinciales ad victualia*. In his *Opus maius* Roger Bacon enumerates "startling differences" that are to be found between *Gallici* (inhabitants of the Île-de-France) and, for example, Picardians, Normans, and Burgundians "in their customs and language" (*in moribus et linguis*). Bacon resided in France for a considerable period in the mid-thirteenth century (in Paris, between 1257 and 1267). At that time, the French nationality was still barely perceptible among the multiplicity of *nationalités provinciales*.[50]

Throughout essentially the whole of the Middle Ages—indeed, as we pointed out earlier, right up to the early modern period—these provincial nationalities came first. In Old French *nacion* (*nascion*, *nassion*) appears in the broader sense of "people," but even in the late Middle Ages it was still the designation used first and foremost for the provincial framework. One of the most important French chroniclers, Jean Froissart (died c. 1410) made use of terms such as *nations de Calais/Gascon/France* or, for example, *toutes nations et par espéciel Angloys*, *Bretons*, *Navarroys et Gascons* at every turn; that is to say, he observed matters in the good old way perceiving the English—the foreigners—as a compact entity, while viewing his own "nationality" in a differentiated way. Even when the feudal estates assembled in 1484, the assembly was formed by representatives of the *nations de Languedoc*, *de Languedoïl*, *d'Aquitaine*, *de Paris*, *de Normandie*, and *de Picardie.* What about the French language? Even as late as 1323, Pope John XXII, native of Cahors, student in Paris and Orléans, had the French letters translated into Latin that the French king had sent to him; indeed, in 1463 King Louis XI himself only conferred with his own subjects at Brive-la-Gaillarde with the aid of an interpreter. Moreover, even at the time of the French Revolution (1793), one full quarter of *la nation française* did not speak or understand French.[51]

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50 On the matter of *nationalités provinciales*, see Marcel Handelsman, "Le rôle de la nationalité dans l'histoire du Moyen Âge," *Bulletin of the International Committee of Historical Sciences* 2 (Paris, 1929): 235–239 and 242; Lot, *Naissance de la France*, 830. On the north-south divide, see further on in the work by Laetitia Boehm, "Gedanken zum Frankreich-Bewußtsein im frühen 12. Jahrhundert," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 74 (1955): 685.

51 A basic treatment of the history of the concept is found in Franz Walter Müller, "Zur Geschichte des Wortes und Begriffes *nation* im französischen Schrifttum des Mittelalters bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts," *Romanischen Forschungen* 58/59 (1947): 247–321 (Froissart etc. 301–310). Linguistic data: Kirn, *Aus der*

In a parallel way, the start of something new is palpable in the 1200s. In this process there is a hidden factor, as yet hardly perceptible in the political and ideological sphere: urbanization. Urban development ripped confined regional structures apart and at the same time integrated them. A second factor increasingly became visible within the ideological sphere and as political reality: the monarchy. Consider that Philip Augustus acquired Normandy, Bretagne, and Poitou and conquered every English fief on French territory, thereby doubling the land held by the French crown. Then, with bloody military campaigns in the name of the cross, the conquest of the South was started (to be completed decades later, 1226–1271). This way the king could reach the coastline in both the west and the south. These transformations are only one facet of change, the horizontal one. With respect to the vertical, there was the appearance of royal officers (*bailli*) in duchies and counties along with the introduction of taxation, customs duties, and financial administration. The rapid "institutionalization" of the *regnum* suggests the pace of progress. On a conceptual level one component of the process was the extension of the designation of *Francia* first, in the latter half of the twelfth century, from north of the Loire to Flanders then, chiefly under Louis IX (1226–1270), south as far as Toulouse, while in place of the old *rex Francorum* the royal title after 1204 was *rex Franciae*. The concept of *tota Francia* was thereby given a meaning which was to achieve increasing verisimilitude not only in the next century but in the centuries leading up to the age of absolutism. The process itself was usually aptly referred to as "*la francisation de la France.*" From the point of view of the monarchy, it naturally meant that the feudal vassals and subjects of a large number of *seigneurs* were, little by little, shaped into a uniform *populus subditus—mes peuples* as Louis XIV was to call them. But this resulted in another type of outcome, the *nationalité d'État* prevailing over the "provincial nationalities." During the thirteenth century not much of this was visible as yet, but its seeds were noteworthy. The time when the subjects of the French king would understand each other's language was still a long way off, because the language of "Francia" would be born hard on the heels of the spread of the dialect of Île-de-France. For all that, it is remarkable that a document for the canonization of King Louis IX lists among his miraculous good deeds the alleged account that by the king's grave a pilgrim from Bur-

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Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls, 67; see Bernard Guenée, "L'histoire de l'État à la fin du Moyen-Âge vue par les historiens français depuis cent ans," *Revue historique* 232 (1964): 20; Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics*, 212.

gundy suddenly began speaking *recte Gallicana* instead of his mother tongue (*lingua materna*)—"as if he had been born in Saint-Denis," the registrar adds. What is important here is not the likelihood of the "miracle" but the story's depiction of a state of mind which over centuries was to create a uniform French language. It also suggests that there were "customs" which were shared over the entire territory of Francia. This also marked the beginnings of a metamorphosis of the concept of "nationalism" which is of decisive importance. The earlier point of view, as indicated previously, considered a group of people, a totality of *naturales* (antonyms: *advenae*, *peregrini*, *extranei*), who lived within a territorial framework *de natione sua*, *de sa naissance*, as belonging to one and the same nation. In the feudal era this framework was supplied by the *provincia*, *pays*, *patria*, the county or duchy; *naturales*, *indigenae*, and *compatriotae* were synonyms. Before the thirteenth century it would never have entered a person's mind that *natione* or *de nacion* (Old French) one belongs to the kingdom's territory. A tract which came into being around the turn of the fourteenth century marks the appearance of the idea of *gens qui sont nez hors du royaume*. At the same time, the designation *natione Gallicus* (now understood in a broader sense) begins to materialize in sources, and in around 1300 the idea of the *nation de France* takes shape in written form. Based on the elements of reality in the making, abstraction also produced the category of French "state-nationality."[52]

Sooner or later collective emotions became infused with the idea as well. Of course, consciousness of "nationality" permeated society top-down. Walter Ullmann, the distinguished British researcher of the history of political ideas,[53] proposed a model of "ascending" and "descending" conceptions to analyze medieval legal and political questions. If this is applied to the issue of nationality in the Middle Ages, one is generally referring to a "descending" process in societal terms. Despite their universalistic ties rooted in their feudal conditions and their worldview, the clergy and the knights became more quickly aware of their status as a "nationality" than other strata. Degrees of awareness of a socio-psychical "we-group" consciousness were necessarily socially differentiated. The "we," or secondary in-group, represented the gradually extending nationality—in contrast to

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52 A survey of the literature on the subject: Guenée, "L'histoire de l'État à la fin du Moyen-Âge vue par les historiens français depuis cent ans," 347ff. The cited works of Ferdinand Lot provide a good overview; see also Alexandra Dmitrievna Lublinskaya, "K voprosu o razvitii frantsuzskoy narodnosti (IX-XV vv.)," *Voprosy istorii* 9 (1953): 78–96. On the conceptual projections of this development: Bernard Guenée, "État et nation en France au Moyen-Âge," *Revue historique* 237 (1967): esp. 24–26.

53 Walter Ullmann, *Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages* (London, 1961), 20ff.

"them," the foreigners, similar neighboring groups (out-groups). Nonetheless, "group consciousness of nationality," so to speak, in itself was fairly undifferentiated, not with respect to its intensity but to its *intrinsic structure*. During the medieval period three of its defining elements need to be mentioned. First, in manifestations of this consciousness demarcation from foreigners occupied the primary role and not internal cohesion. Many a definition of the attributes of a people were found in the Middle Ages, but rarely do they address the issue of what *unites* a given people. The conceptual approach focuses on what sets apart the diversity of *gentes et nationes*. Consciousness of nationality itself is normally strong in frontier areas, along linguistic borders; but it is weak in the interior of a country, where routine frictions, strife, and clashes of interest do not directly nourish the psychological experience of contrasts; it is again stronger in the more mobile strata such as clerics visiting foreign universities, knights taking part in military campaigns, or travelling merchants, who experience contrast by virtue of their own movement. Needless to say, political conflicts, conquests, and expansionist aspirations play a major role. The initial stirrings of Franco-German discord, for instance, can be tied to clearly defined circumstances: disputes occurring between the *Imperium* and the French kingdom at the start of the twelfth century soon led Ekkehard von Aura to speak of a "natural hatred" between the two peoples (*invidia quae inter utrosque naturaliter quodammodo versatur*). But even in these cases the rationale is frequently not specifically national but one of "true Christianity" opposing "barbarianism" or "heathenry."[54] A second characteristic is the nature of the factors with which the age perceived and expressed the experience of relatedness and differentiation. An Italian observer writes at the time of Henry IV that the Germans were extraordinarily proud of

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54 The "definitions" from medieval sources almost always include the *diversitas gentium* with respect to difference, the factors which divide. A relatively early example is Regino of Prüm's formula from the early tenth century (*Praefatio operis de synodalibus causis compositi*), according to which "diversae nationes populorum inter se discrepant genere, moribus, lingua, legibus . . ." Fr. Kurze, ed., *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (hereafter MGH), *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum* (Hanover, 1890), 20. The political themes that appeared at the start of Franco-German antagonisms have been recently explored with clear and compelling information by Karl Ferdinand Werner, "Das hochmittelalterliche Imperium in politischen Bewußtsein Frankreichs (10–12. Jh.)," 34–43 (for earlier literature). There has been much detailed research regarding the early conflicts of the German-Slav linguistic border, such as Erich Maschke's *Das Erwachen des Nationalbewußtseins im deutsch-slawischen Grenzraum* (Leipzig, 1933); Clara Redlich, *Nationale Frage und Ostkolonisation im Mittelalter* (Berlin, 1941); etc. In contrast with the tendentiousness of the above works, Paul Görlich, by analysis of a closed group of sources, has more recently shown that before the fourteenth century, beyond the arguments of a social and religious nature connected with mundane conflicts, "von einer kontinuierlich sich entwickelnden Nationalbewußtseins in den Quellen keine Reden sein kann": Paul Görlich, *Zur Frage des Nationalbewußtseins in Ostdeutschen Quellen des 12. bis 14. Jahrhunderts* (Marburg and Lahn, 1964), esp. 223.

their physical size and plentiful hair and ridiculed the small stature of the Normans. On the other hand, as early as 1107 the people of Chalons had a good laugh when the emperor sent handpicked ambassadors who were tall and thin to the pope to convey the dominance of the *Imperium*. A few decades later Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis described the visit of a Bavarian duke with brutal irony, calling him "a man who was astounding in his entire outward appearance from stem to stern," as he had made himself the object of public ridicule by bragging and making his servants carry before him a massive sword.

By the thirteenth century common conceptions had already partly distilled into characteristic stereotypes. This can be traced in the curious genre of medieval poetry called *altercatio*, *conflictus*, *disputatio* (*Streitgedicht*), entailing popular "ethnic characterologies" called *gentium mores* and the like. It is thanks to Hans Walther that we are now familiar with a whole "catalog" of these tropes.[55] The *Disputatio inter Anglicum et Francum*, for example, registers the insults that were being branded against the English: their language is "so befouled that it dirties the intellect and it flows like poison from mouth to mouth." The belly was said to be the god of the English: they eat a lot of beef and drink "disgusting beer" (not "noble wine" like the French), and so on. The most common theme was that of language, though it would be a great error to read this as a sign of "linguistic awareness." It did not indicate a recognition of the value of one's own language but only a crude condemnation of "foreignness"—the ancient notion of *barbaros* (originally, common with the Sanskrit, meaning "stammerer, stutterer"); or to put it another way, "our lot" speak intelligibly, "their lot," however, are incapable of intelligible speech. In the opinion of William of Newburg (twelfth century) the language of the Germans was like the "barking of dogs and croaking of frogs," whereas the French "hiss like snakes." Dante was quite unique in discovering the value of the mother tongue in his *De Vulgari eloquentia* (1304)—this is something that would only emerge later on with the Renaissance and Humanism. Beyond this the following groups of concepts constituted the system of motifs: "bad manners" (not specified in any detail), clothing,

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55　The first case was interpreted as "Stolz auf die eigene völkische Art," or an "Erkenntnis des eigenen Volkstums," even a "Zeichen des Nationalbewußtseins," by Karl Gottfried Hugelmann, "Die deutsche Nation und der deutsche Nationalstaat im Mittelalter," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 51 (1931), 15. On the event at Chalons, see Kern, "Der mittelalterliche Deutsche," 247. For the system of stereotypes which were widespread in the Middle Ages, see Hans Walther, *Das Streitgedicht in der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters: Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters*, vol. 5/2 (Munich, 1920); Hans Walther, "Scherz und Ernst in der Völker- und Stämme-Charakteristik mittellateinischer Verse," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 41 (1959): 263–301.

hairstyle, physical size, food and drink, stereotyped virtues, and "moral" eccentricities such as heroism, honor, or diligence (or conversely cowardice, deviousness, or slothfulness).

Thus, these were nothing but predispositions that are also marks of an "ethnocentric" mentality in primitive structures and can be found just as often in the group consciousness of the barbarians who overthrew Rome as in the tribes of Asia and Africa. It is not a question of "consciousness of nationality" acting as a "psychological infrastructure" of rudimentary group discrimination (W. Mühlmann), which is determined by "a psychological law entailing the numeric overestimation of conspicuous traits."[56] Thirdly and lastly, in contrast with more recent centuries, by which time everyone would normally profess to belong to a *specific* nationality, the concept of *natio* in the Middle Ages was fluid and ambiguous. People could simultaneously belong to several *natio*s, according to various territorial, broader linguistic, or state and feudal conceptions. It was possible for a person to be *natione* Normande and (more largely) "French"; and indeed, as we will see further on, at one and the same time a member of the estate *nation*. The damning stereotypes that the "provincial nationalities" of a prospective nation hurled at each other were not any milder or different in character from those with which foreigners were classified. James of Vitry (d. 1240) drew up a catalog of the insulting adjectives that were fashionably applied at the University of Paris for various "peoples" of the time. These "peoples" were the English, Germans, and Lombards, but also the Normands, Poitevins, Burgundians, Bretons, Flemish, and so on—the constituent elements of the nascent French "nationality." The only changes in this area up until the early modern era were quantitative, not qualitative. Consciousness of nationality tended to come to the foreground and penetrated deeper into the social hierarchy in contrast to local ties, although even as late as the fifteenth century, for example, there is scarcely any trace of this in literary records which reflect the worldview of the "common people," the *pauvres et laboureurs*.[57] This type of consciousness per se had no influ-

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56   On the issue of ethnocentrism, see Daniel J. Levinson, "The Study of Ethnocentric Ideology," in *The Authoritarian Personality*, ed. Theodor W. Adorno et al. (New York, 1950), 102–50; Wilhelm Emil Mühlmann, *Chiliasmus und Nativismus: Studien zur Psychologie, Soziologie und historischen Kasuistik der Umsturzbewegungen* (Berlin, 1961); Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung: Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen Gentes*, 89–93. See also Lemberg, *Geschichte des Nationalismus in Europa*, vol. 2, 27–32. The source of the quoted data is Walther, *Das Streitgedicht*, 180ff.; Koht, "The Dawn of Nationalism in Europe," 278.

57   Dorothy Kirkland, "The Growth of National Sentiment in France before the Fifteenth Century," *History* 23 (1938): especially 16–18. On James of Vitry's catalog, see Kirn, *Aus der Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 29.

ence on people's primary loyalties to their social-communal group nor on their political loyalties.

At the same time, though, there was also consciousness which was still distinctly discernible. It was a consciousness that in many respects was of *another*, ideological sort. Its two poles were quietly taking shape already in the twelfth century. One pole was the increase of the power of the monarchy in the ideological sphere; the other was the formation of a social consciousness supporting this (with chivalric undertones). The symbolic year of birth of the first was 1124, when upon news of a threat of a German attack the knighthood of the French king's many provinces congregated at the Abbey of Saint-Denis in unusually large numbers for that period, and as a symbol of the venture Louis VI raised on high a war banner (the *oriflamme*), allegedly originating from Charlemagne, and with this symbol exhorted them *pro regni defensione*. Until then, the Carolingian heritage had been considered essentially a private affair of the dynasty, and Saint-Denis was one of the many abbeys which happened to be in the French king's advowson. Chiefly on the initiative of Suger, abbot of Saint-Denis, the twelfth century saw the flourishing of both a dynastic historiography and an increasingly vigorous "dynastic propaganda," indeed even mythology, a *mythe royale* as Marc Bloch has referred to it. This traced the dynasty's calling back to the mythical figure of Charlemagne, as around 1200 they managed to connect the House of Capet with the Carolingians by means of various genealogical maneuvers. This *reditus ad stirpem Caroli Magni* represented claims vis-à-vis the empire and over the pope and the provincial lords, constituting a "historical right," so to speak, to the heritage of Charlemagne. The emergence of the designation *rex Christianissimus* together with the dynasty's religious propaganda progressed hand in hand with the doctrinal work of the court's jurists supporting the unity of the kingdom and challenging feudal law. The reasoning of this royal myth, which evolved over the course of the century, is to be found in fully developed form in an address delivered to the pope around 1300. The mission of the French kings was buttressed by the "purity of the royal blood," the dynasty's antiquity, the virtues of the rulers, and the condition that they were ready "defenders of Christianity." Hans Kohn rightly pointed out that at least in its initial phase the "national kingdom" (in the technical sense of the term referred to previously) moved forward with its ideology by splintering and appropriating Christian universalism.[58]

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58   On the question of the "royal myth," see Gaston Zeller, "Les rois de France candidats à l'empire: Essai sur l'idéologie impériale en France," *Revue historique* 173 (1934), 247–311 and 497ff; Percy Ernst Schramm,

The social features of the process were displayed in the nascent self-aware-ness of the king's loyal knights of northern France, "the king's Frenchmen" as they were called at the time. The *virtus regis* extended to his whole people, in line with the ever-expanding notion of *Francia*. One of the first to express this self-awareness, already striking a tone of deep pathos, was Guibert of Nogent (c. 1053–1124), whose praise of *Franciae nomen regiae* was at the heart of his writings, and with whom the idea of "election," *Francorum beata gens*, first made an appearance: *cuius est Dominus Deus, populus quem elegit in hereditatem sibi*. Gilles of Corbeil (1140–1224), for his part, asserted that France rose above all countries "by the light of her nature" (*lumine morum*). Also belonging to this list is the medieval French *Chanson de Roland* (c. 1100) and the appearance of the notion of a "sweet" native land unknown since antiquity. This land, *tere France*—still for the time being the narrow *Francia*, with Paris and Saint-Denis at its heart—was not only "exceedingly sweet" (*molt douce païs*), not only "lovely" (*belle*), but also the "land of ancestors" (*tere majur*), the cradle of the Carolingians who also entered into the chivalric historical consciousness and which had to be defended "from disgrace." The fact that this *douce France* is not only an archaizing literary adaptation is well exemplified in the correspondence of a cleric, Pierre of Blois (c. 1135–c. 1203). "I want to live and die in the place where I was born and raised, *in dulci Francia*," he wrote; "we have it good here . . . ," before continuing that he was longing for home, "for the pleasant land with the mild climate and fine-tasting wines," where life was "sweet" (1170). In a different letter he writes to an Anglo-Norman acquaintance who had resettled in Syracuse: "my wish is that you return from that unfriendly, mountainous country to the sweet air of your native land . . . because that is where one is bound by security in life, the native land (*natalis patria*), the law of nature, the flavor of food and, above all, love for the king of England" (1175). We can see that some of the motifs were the same as those with which the era described differences between "peoples." The principal difference is that here they make an appearance as a function of *integration*, augmented with the new element of fealty to the king.[59]

Der König von Frankreich: Das Wesen der Monarchie vom 9. bis 16. Jh. (Darmstadt, 1960), 178ff.; Wilhelm Berges, *Die Fürstenspiegel des hohen und späten Mittelalters* (Leipzig, 1938), 73ff. See the survey of Guenée, "L'histoire de l'État," esp. 349. On the circumstances of the cited address: Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 252–55; Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, 95–96.

59   On the chivalric consciousness in Northern France, see Laetitia Boehm, "Gedanken zum Frankreich-Bewußtsein im frühen 12. Jahrhundert," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 74 (1955): 681–87; Jacques Chaurand, "La conception de l'histoire de Guibert de Nogent," *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 8 (1965): 385ff. Regarding the *Chanson de Roland*, see Lot, "Formation de la nation française," 270–72; Leonardo Olschki, *Der ideale*

Dynastic loyalty in itself is not "national consciousness," so notions such as "nationalism directed towards the king," for example, are meaningless.[60] The concentration of political loyalty to a monarchic *ideal* beyond the concrete person of the king, and political *group consciousness* founded on a single, immanent historical and social consciousness is already a different kind of construction. Many of the conditions for the emergence of the latter were ripening in the twelfth century. Suffice it to refer to just two of these. One is the consolidation of chivalry itself as a social configuration; the other is the rise of a distinctively new and Christian but still secularized *esprit laïque*. The essence of the catalog of the nobility's virtues, *virtutes cardinales*, consisted of turning wholly secular attributes into "legitimate" virtues through Christian reasoning; thereby the relations of worldly life became favorably sanctioned. From the twelfth–thirteenth centuries, among other things, this perspective facilitated an acceptance of a new system of values, the turn away from universalist structures, and the propagation of the *linguae vulgares* in chivalric romances. However, in a way it served to liberate the existing approach to history from the neutral collecting of data by monastic annalistic chronicles and the languishing and pessimistic philosophy of history existing in the shadows of the Apocalypse. It is significant that scholasticism voluntarily gave up the study of *historia*, which disturbed its narrow image of the world, surrendering it to the secular sphere. One very gifted representative of this new spirit (Otto von Freising) wrote: *Nos . . . non . . . tragediam, sed iocundam scribere proposuimus hystoriam*.[61]

The social, political, and ideological conditions that had only been ripening up until the 1100s bore fruit at both ends of the spectrum (the political and the social). This occurred in the period between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; from an amalgam of the two an ideological form of consciousness would arise—with its distinctive medieval peculiarities, of course—that may rightly be called a "national consciousness."

Now we have reached a point where we will have to make do with labels, as it were. On the ideological plane, with the newly elevated person of the king

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Mittelpunkt Frankreichs im Mittelalter in Wirklichkeit und Dichtung (Heidelberg, 1913), 17ff. On the correspondence of Pierre de Blois, see Koht, "The Dawn of Nationalism in Europe," 268–69.

60   Barnaby C. Keeney, "Military Service and the Development of Nationalism in England, 1272–1327," *Speculum* 22 (1947): 535; Germaine and Claude Willard, *Formation de la nation française (de Xᵉ siècle au début de XIXᵉ siècle)* (Paris, 1955), 40.

61   The fundamental work addressing these issues is Brunner, *Adeliges Landleben*, 62–90. See also Ullmann, *The Individual and Society*, 104–16; Léopold Genicot, "La noblesse dans la société médiévale," *Le Moyen-Âge* 71 (1965): 539–60 esp. 548ff.

and dynasty consolidation of the monarchy meant that an order of thinking developed which attempted to approach the concept of the "state" in a more abstract manner. It also meant to invest it with legal and moral values which would influence the state of consciousness and loyalty of the subjects more powerfully than had ever been the case previously. This "state propaganda" naturally did not deny itself the use of the religious mythology surrounding the dynasty, and, as it happens, it was around 1300 that the concept of *rex Christianissimus* reached its final apotheosis. The propaganda also made use of the theme of "antiquity" connected with the dynasty's origins. In the thirteenth century this distinction now extended back far before Charlemagne. By appropriating the legend of Troy, King Priam was now made an ancestor of the French kings. In the aforementioned address, the suitability of the French kings for their calling was said to be borne from the "purity of the royal blood *a Priamo primo rege.*" But apart from this the royalist ideologists and the court's jurists built the intellectual bedrock for the reality of the monarchy, partly by transforming feudal law by means of the introduction of the notion of *ligese* to bridge incidental feudal allegiances,[62] and partly by shaping the Christian "organic" doctrine of natural law into a theory of state (through the introduction of the notion of a *corpus politicum regni*),[63] but primarily by using elements of Roman law (*utilitas publica rei publicae*) and the first formulation of the notion of the *raison d'état* (*ratio publicae utilitatis*).[64] An emotionally charged and deliberate offshoot from all this over the course of the century was the burgeoning of "patriotic propaganda." In parallel with the establishment of the aforementioned *tota Francia* was the gradual extension of the notion of *patria*—theoretically, at least. Reading the texts of Roman law, legists and publicists discovered the ancient ethical value of *patria* and recognized its natural ideological potential. In antiquity, Rome was the *communis patria* of all (*Digesta seu Pandecta* 50, tit. 1, s33); any act in opposition to it was considered treachery, (*Dig.* 11, tit. 7, s35), whereas loyalty to it superseded all else (*Dig.* 11, tit. 7, s35; 49, tit. 15, s19) and was regarded as a virtue far greater than obedience

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62 Heinrich Mitteis, *Der Staat des hohen Mittelalters: Grundlinien einer vergleichender Verfassungsgeschichte des Lehnzeitalters* (Weimar, 1953), 172–74, 292, and 375–76.

63 Anton-Hermann Chroust, "The corporate idea and the body politic in the Middle Ages," *Review of Politics* 9 (1947): 423–52; Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, esp. 196–231 and 267ff.

64 Gaines Post, "Ratio publicae utilitatis, ratio status und 'Staatsräson' (1100–1300)," *Die Welt als Geschichte* 21 (1961): 8–28 and 71–99; Gaines Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought: Public Law and the State, 1100–1322* (Princeton, 1964).

to one's own parents (*magis patriae quam parenti*); it was believed that anyone who sacrificed his life while fighting for it would attain eternal glory (*Institutes of Justinian* Bk. 1, tit. 25, pr.; *Dig.* 9, tit. 2, s7, 4.).

These notions took deep roots in the writings of the latter half of the thirteenth century. "Since Rome was the collective home, the country's crown denotes the *communis patria . . .* ," one can read in a disquisition of Jacques de Révigny (c. 1270). What was one to do if the "common homeland" called? "In that event," Révigny continues, "you must subordinate your own narrower native place (*patriam propriam*) to the *communis patria*." Around 1300 a contemporary wrote the following about the royal jurists: "They have turned Paris into their Rome." We are offered a portrait of this incipient ideological framework with the disquisition of Jean de Blanot entitled *Tractatus super feudis et homagiis* (1255–56). He asked whom a vassal is under more of an obligation to serve: his liege or his native land (*domino vel patrie*)? The answer is normally his liege, and for two reasons: because he is bound by an oath and because he falls under his jurisdiction (*iureiurando et iurisdictione*). He is bound to the king through one law alone: on the basis of *jurisdictio*. But the following question is: what should happen if, on the one hand, a baron gives him an order to join his army against a neighboring province and the king calls on him to fight a war against the king of England "who wishes to subjugate the crown of France"? In that case, since the king called on him for "the good of the fatherland, that is to say, the public good of France" (*propter bona totius patrie sive propter bonum publicum regni Gallie*), he is obliged on the basis of *ius gentium* to follow the king's order *pugnando pro patria*, specifically, because the liege had summoned him merely for his own personal ends (*privata utilitas*) whereas the king was calling on his services in the "public interest" (*publica utilitas*).[65] As one can see, "patriotic propaganda" and the ideological framework are not merely poetic phrases but firmly embedded in the "public law" that was taking form on the basis of renascent Roman law. Though as yet still theoretical and only invoked in a crisis (*necessitas*), the public law that was emerging asserted that a vassal was still prin-

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65   The source literature and ideological history behind the beginnings of patriotic propaganda in Europe are elucidated by Kantorowicz in his "'*Pro patria mori*' in Medieval Political Thought," *American Historical Review* 56 (1951): 472–92; Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies*, 232–70; Gaines Post, "Two Notes on Nationalism in the Middle Ages: I. *Pugna pro patria*," *Traditio* 9 (1953): 281–320 and *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought*; see also Joseph Strayer, "Defense of the Realm and Royal Power in France," in *Studi in onore di Gino Luzzatto*, vol. 1 (Milan, 1949), 289–96. The cited segments of Jean de Blanchot's tract are to be found in Jean Acher, "Notes sur le droit savant au Moyen Âge," *Nouvelle revue historique de droit français et étranger* 30 (1906): 125–43. See also Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought*, 289.

cipally tied to his feudal allegiance under normal circumstances. In contrast, the *patria*, along with the notion of *publica utilitas*, was something different, something greater than royal authority: one of the elements of the emerging more abstract concept of the state and its emotional symbol.

The patriotic propaganda itself, together with the other specified ideological elements, belongs to one of the monarchic poles of the thirteenth-century transformation. The essence of the other, social pole was that the emerging *nation de France* became the object of the theoretical vision of history and society. The ambiguous coupling of Trojan descent with the Franks had already surfaced in the seventh century (in the form of the so-called Fredegar Chronicle). The idea was lurking in monastic consciousness (Fleury Abbey) in the eleventh century without the broader community being aware of it or associating it with the "French." It was at the Abbey of Saint-Denis that the theory was fully elaborated, in a great chronicle that had been kept over generations (*Les grandes chroniques de France*), in the segment compiled at the beginning of the thirteenth century (*Gesta Philippi Augusti*). According to the chroniclers it was not only the dynasty but the entire French *gens* that descended from the mythical King Priam. In the legendary ancient past under the leadership of Francion and Marcomir those fleeing Troy settled in Gallia. From them descended the Merovingians, Carolingians, and Capetians—and from their people, the French nation. In this context, in the 1270s in the collection of the *Grandes chroniques* the Old French word *nacion* came to be applied to all the French.[66] This historical combination clarified three issues with one stroke. Not only was the "antiquity" of the French vindicated; they were said to originate from what was considered the most illustrious of all the legendary tribes of antiquity. (This was the objective of historical theorists throughout Europe, who were motivated by similar interests, but not all of them attained access to such an illustrious past.) In addition, the "historical right" to the possession of Gallia was justified. And finally, it imbued with historic content the dominant vision of a community of birth and origin which had existed intrinsically in the concept of *nation*.

Over the course of the thirteenth century the idea took root that not only was the royal dynasty sacred and elect, so too was the entire *natio*. The germ of this idea existed already in the work of Guibert of Nogent, but the notion of a

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66   On the legend of Troy, see Maria Klippel, *Die Darstellung der fränkischen Trojanersage in Geschichtsschreibung vom Mittelalter bis zur Renaissance in Frankreich* (Marburg, 1936). Cf. Guenée, "L'histoire de l'État à la fin du Moyen-Âge vue par les historiens français depuis cent ans," 22 and 26; Müller, "Zur Geschichte des Wortes und Begriffes *nation* im französischen Schrifttum des Mittelalters bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts," 272.

nacio Gallicana, *nacio notorie Christianissima* (Guillaume de Plasian, 1303), the idea of the "divine election" of the French became tangible in political writings around 1300. The characteristically European position of having a national vocation came into being in this way, for the idea of election entailed the expectation of a function being fulfilled within a greater universal totality. A *natio*, after all, would only be elect (*a Domino electa*) within the entirety of the *populus Christianus*. In the same way that the dynasty dissolved and appropriated Christianity's universalism to a degree, the nascent "national" consciousness did the same in the interest of its own secularized goals.[67]

One important element of this budding consciousness was that the French were regarded as a "free" people. Reference was made earlier to the fact that the *francus* = "free" etymology had already developed as early as the seventh–eighth centuries. It was inherited by the French language: *France qui de franchise est dite*, as Rutebeuf put it. This etymology became the starting point for a specific "theory of society." This was partially reflected in a work (written around 1283) by the famous jurist Philippe de Beaumanoir, and partially in chivalric epics and romances of the era (for instance, *Renart le Contrefait*). By the thirteenth century the narrative had matured, embedding itself within the framework of an epic which related how Charlemagne had once summoned his freemen for a campaign against the Moors. Many of them, however, were cowards and failed to perform their military duty, and for this reason the ruler subjected them to servitude. Their descendants were the serfs, while those of the "brave" were freemen, *francs*, *franchises*, that is to say—with an etymological shiny finish—the "French." This narrative was well known throughout the whole of Paris around 1300 and according to one tale of chivalry one thousand serfs lived in Paris alone, direct descendants of the legendary "cowards of Apremont" (*couards d'Apremont*). According to a definition dating back to 1307, *Franci sequentibus temporibus* (that is, after the disintegration of ancient Gaul) *nominati propter iugum a se servitutis amotum*. This is the source of a narrative which gradually became a historical element in the social consciousness of the French nobility and was sustained right up until the eighteenth century. At the beginning of the century which ended with the Revolution, one of the leaders of the estates oppo-

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67   On the theoretical foundations of medieval French nationalism, see Hellmut Kämpf, *Pierre Dubois und die geistigen Grundlagen des französischen Nationalbewußtseins um 1300*, Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance, 54 (Leipzig and Berlin, 1935); on "national vocation," see Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics*, 290; Sestan, *Stato e nazione*, 33; Dietrich Kurze, "Nationale Regungen in der spätermittelalterlichen Prophetie," *Historische Zeitschrift* 202 (1966): 3, 110 and 23.

sition still maintained that the French *nation* was a descendant of Frankish conquerors whereas the *peuple* were the progeny of Gallic servants. This "social theory" was an indispensable element of the kind of "national" consciousness that was taking shape.[68]

This is illustrated in works of self-characterization that crystallized into a canonic form around 1300. In the major work of Pierre Dubois, the treatise *De recuperatione terrae sanctae* (1305–1307), traditional virtues which were the heritage of the twelfth-century chivalric ideal were presented dogmatically as features of the "free" *nation*: audacity, bravery, perseverance, and the "handsomeness" of outward appearance. But two new elements appeared alongside these: the Frenchmen of old, Dubois asserted, never acted *inordinate*; their deeds were guided by *iudicium rationis*, by the *recta ratio*. Logic, expedience, and rational order—*raison* and *ordre*—two constitutive elements of the modern French self-characterology were born here.[69]

But who and which circles constituted the people around whom these ideological elements were being assembled? Who made up this *nation* in the final analysis? Was it the entire French "nationality"? Hardly, since the very narrative responsible for engendering "national" consciousness excluded from its ranks the *serfs* who made up the overwhelming majority of the population. In this historical area as in others, the evolution of concepts is comparable to a seismograph in recording and indicating the course of events. In one of his poems (c. 1261) the renowned poet Rutebeuf used the term *sa nacion* (i.e., *la nation du roi*) with reference to the "French knighthood." His main consideration was that the king had not been listening to his "nation," the militant knights, who were also the guardians of the law, honor, moderation, and justice (*droit*, *loiauté*, *mesure*, *justice*)! The *nacion de France* makes another appearance not long afterwards (sometime before 1277) in a passage from the *Grandes Chroniques* of Saint-Denis and, in this context, it is plainly being used as a synonym for the *clergie et chevalerie*. The first time it figures in a source, this *nation* steps forward, almost symbolically, as a "society" positioning itself in opposition to the king and displays its own specific innate homogeneity as the possessor of a shared historical origin and social *origo*, defined virtues, carrying a certain "mission," also acting as the guardians of law,

68   Henri Lemaître, "Le refus de service d'Ost et l'origine du servage," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 75 (1914): 231–238; Marc Bloch, *Rois et serfs. Un chapitre d'histoire Capétienne* (Paris, 1920), 142–58; François Olivier-Martin, *Histoire du droit français: des origines à la Révolution* (Paris, 1951), 246–256; S.J.T. Miller, "The Position of the King in Bracton and Beaumanoir," *Speculum* 31 (1956): 268–80.

69   Kämpf, *Pierre Dubois*, 78ff.; Coulton "Nationalism in the Middle Ages," 34–36.

honor, and justice. On the other hand, its consciousness is sustained through its role as protector of the whole kingdom, the *defensor patriae* in the event of *necessitas*. In a historicized form this consciousness is reflected already around 1250 in the chronicle of Matthew of Paris. According to the text the French nobility considered themselves the limbs (*membra*) of the kingdom because the acquisition of the *regnum* was not the result of written laws, nor the haughtiness of the clergy, but the delight (*dulcedo*) of the battle.[70]

The historical dénouement of what we outlined above *in statu nascendi*, limiting it to its main features, occurred between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. There were many factors which gave it its ultimate form, but above all, two: the maturation of the feudal mentality and humanism. Of course, this was far from our modern conception of nation. The nascent patriotic ethos was not "national" patriotism but a distinctive medieval manifestation of "patriotism towards the state" that had also been historically discernible in earlier centuries; the nascent "national" ideology was social consciousness of an "estate nation-state" which expropriated the concept of nation as a *pars pro toto*, so to speak. This was a mentality which differed from consciousness of "nationality," albeit associated with it. Yet, it is precisely this loose connection which is a characteristic product of European history: conscious factors associated with nationality become fused with a vision of "social" cohesion par excellence, which accords with the Ciceronian model—the notion of a *societas civilis* ("the association . . . bound together by the compact of justice and the communication of utility")—applied to the Middle Ages, gaining a definite political function within the "political" sphere.

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The aim of this study was first and foremost to outline points of view that might be useful for "orchestrating" different analytical concepts. A skeleton of French historical development was introduced merely to serve as an illustration, with an undisguised intent to keep the matter within a general European framework and somewhat divorced from our specific Eastern European concerns. It would only be possible to go on to examine Eastern European features subsequent to this analysis. My own research has focused primarily, of course, on Hungarian

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70   These important connections were pointed out by Müller, "Zur Geschichte des Wortes und Begriffes *nation* im französischen Schrifttum des Mittelalters bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts," 262–70.

history between the tenth and fifteenth centuries, but I soon observed that there were many more synchronous correlations in this respect than one would normally expect. There Magyar, Bohemian, and Polish (and indeed, to carry on: the Danish, Swedish, Norwegian . . .) *gentes*, the "new barbarians" of European history following the fall of Rome, who in the ninth and tenth centuries started to play a European role, from an asynchronous framework that was still conspicuous at the turn of the first millennium, fairly quickly accommodated to the economic, social, and ideological framework that had been developed by the "old barbarians" over the previous five hundred years. This was possible exactly because a uniform European history already existed by then. Even if the progression of these peoples displayed many singularities, these were all variants of the same common historical evolution. This too has a bearing on our topic. The barbarian Magyars possessed their own ethnic consciousness ("gentilism") which can be reconstructed on the basis of linguistics, archaeology, ethnology, and contemporary sources in the period around 900. This is equally possible for Europe's "old barbarians" around 500.[71] Nonetheless, it was not this mental pattern which formed the basis for future types of consciousness because it largely decayed and died out, so that by around 1200 it survived only in "silly peasant tales" (according to Anonymus in his *Gesta Hungarorum*). The new formation, the *gens Hungarorum*, was not "Magyar" in the ethnic sense but for a long time, up until approximately the middle of the thirteenth century, it was a bond of allegiance, the *populus regi subditus*, which incorporated many peoples and "nationalities." Within this, of course, already around 1100 it is also possible to identify from sources the existence of a configuration known as the *gens Hungarorum*, as defined by *lingua* and *natio* (primarily understood in the sense of birth and descent). As can be attested already in the first half of the thirteenth century, this was a perspective which took into account numerous other *genera* (that is, "peoples," "nationalities"). Between around 1200 and 1300 in parallel with, but also genetically linked to, Western European development, there flourished an "estate nation-state" and "state patriotism," linked first to the knighthood and later to the nobility. Detailed research into the arc of Hungary's development from Anonymus to Simon of Kéza and the "premature" estate form of the 1290s has uncovered not only surprising analogies in the history of ideas but also connections that can be philologically documented. These threads point straight to Paris or Orléans on the one hand, and to Bologna on the other.

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71   For details, see "'Gentilism': The question of barbarian ethnic consciousness," chapter 3 in this volume.

Anonymus would have been unable to write his "chivalric romance," highly theoretical in nature, without knowledge of the political writings of his day, nor without being influenced by the twelfth-century chivalric *esprit laïque* referred to above. Simon of Kéza would have been unable to craft a social theory out of his story of the Huns without familiarity with Roman law and, for example, the French societal theory referred to above, as well as other ideological constituent elements of the *natio Hungarorum* which were arising around 1280. Until now, this has effectively been uncharted territory in the historical literature as far as the details are concerned.[72] Nor is it widely known that throughout the thirteenth–sixteenth century period three interrelated and yet highly distinct conceptions of the *natio* functioned and developed alongside one other. One of these was the "state nationality," based on, for instance, the bonds and institutions of vassalage; the second was the (partially "territorialized") "nationality of language," which was based on ethnic bonds, traditions, and linguistic unity; and thirdly, there was the notion of an estate *natio*. Their relationships and their development during the late Middle Ages is a complex issue which is particularly intriguing because in many respects it projects a shadow reaching up to the nineteenth century. This model is not, however, specifically Eastern European because there are common denominators *mutatis mutandis* with, for example, conditions in France, England, and Spain. What is specifically Eastern European is the character of the interrelationships that exists between the three conceptions or vectors listed above, their development in the early modern period, and the resolution brought about in the modern era by means of the forging of this "historical raw material" into the modern nation.

Translated by Tim Wilkinson

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72 I presented these connections in detail at the November 4–5, 1971 session of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Middle Ages Research Group. The study is published in an expanded format in the journal *Századok* as "Társadalomelmélet, politikai teória és történetszemlélet Kézai Simon Gesta Hungarorumában" [Social theory, political theory and the historical approach of Simon of Kéza's *Gesta Hungarorum*]. [See chapter 3 in this volume.]

"Gentilism": The Question of Barbarian Ethnic Consciousness[*]

The outline which follows is merely a thesis-style summary of an already completed monograph. It aims, in a highly abridged form, to simply raise some questions, draw up a frame for a methodology, and offer direction for further study. More detailed substantiation of the arguments presented here may be found in the monograph itself.

The subject at hand belongs to a distinct area of study within a considerably broader set of issues under discussion; it is an examination of the emergence of a form of "national consciousness" in the Middle Ages. Conceptual and methodological considerations, previous historiographic efforts, and current perceptions of history have provoked me to focus on this topic.

The opinions of historical scholars are divided as to whether it is legitimate to speak of a medieval "national consciousness" or to designate any phenomena in the Middle Ages as "national." This lack of consensus is due to theoretical and conceptual disagreement, and has resulted in a clear variance in terminology. Accordingly, the discipline lacks standard conceptual terms.

The theoretical and conceptual groundings and the historical premises behind the topic have been outlined in my essay "'Nationality' and 'National Con-

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[*] This text, first published in Hungarian in the review *Történelmi Szemle* 14 (1971): 188–211, is the outline of the main conclusions of the author's doctoral dissertation titled "'Gentilizmus': A barbár etnikai tudat kérdése" ["Gentilism": The question of barbarian ethnic consciousness] (Budapest, 1970). The dissertation manuscript was planned to be the first part of an eventually unfinished huge monograph on "National Consciousness and Patriotism in the Middle Ages: A Study in the History of Political Thought and Group Consciousness." The entire text of the dissertation appeared in print finally in 1997 with the title: Jenő Szűcs, *A magyar nemzeti tudat kialakulása* [The formation of the Hungarian ethnic consciousness: Two studies on its prehistory] (Budapest, 1997). Relying upon this, the editors of the present English translation have added a few basic references to the text in footnotes.

sciousness' in the Middle Ages: Towards the Development of a Common Conceptual Language." The lack of such a standard may stem from theoretical and methodological disparity, but there is no questioning the fact that terminological difficulties innate to the subject matter also exist. It is worth drawing attention to the fact that, according to modern conceptual norms, the term "nation" primarily corresponds to a set of notions and features which have only existed in European history since the turn of the nineteenth century. So, extending the use of this term to phenomena in a more distant past will surely be misrepresentative of the facts. The modern nation may have evolved from precedents existing many centuries before, but it is not merely an extension of historical circumstances—the aggregate sum or culmination, so to speak—of these events or conditions; over the course of time it has also evolved into a distinctively new kind of historical pattern. The novelty of the nineteenth century resided not only in the fact that earlier coalescent processes began to accelerate under the influence of the bourgeois evolution and produced higher level and more stable constructs. An equally important change was that the phenomenon referred to as the "nation" became the bearer of standardized values. Notionally, it was seen as a new synthesis; and as such, it represented a basic framework—one which was actual or merely longed for—an order within which social, political, and cultural spheres were organized. In consequence, it also became a primary, or at least dominant, object of group loyalty. Like the theory of national sovereignty, the idea of national culture, or the condition of national loyalty, the concept of a "national society" went hand in hand with the modern evolution of the bourgeois society. Among others, these were ingredients indispensable for the formation of a conceptual scheme that we now refer to as "national consciousness," which had not existed prior to the eighteenth century. All the same, modern nations do have their historical antecedents, while not identical to contemporary ones: throughout an uneven process of several centuries formative and integrative patterns had established themselves since medieval times. These frameworks, existent since the Middle Ages according to source documents, were often referred to as "nation," or, in the majority of European languages, more archaic equivalents to or derivations of the Latin *natio*; this is also the case with the Hungarian term *nemzet*. From relatively early on in history a sensibility also emerged that mirrored these seminal developments and was closely connected with them, though its features differed markedly from its modern equivalent and variations also appeared in earlier centuries. How indeed does one qualify or define such an array of phenomena? Modern transformations of our concep-

tual tools in this branch of study clearly evolved in a manner that was neither sufficiently coherent nor sufficiently radical. As a result, our terminology for the modern nation and its antecedents fails to adequately express the characteristic dichotomy between historical development ("national history") and phenomenological difference. All antecedent phenomena are united conceptually under the rubric of "nation." It is worth noting that efforts have been made in recent Soviet and American research to limit the use of the term "nation" (*natsiya*) to the modern age, and to refer to the historical models which were being formed from the Middle Ages onwards as "nationality" (*narodnost*). Still, such a distinction cannot always be demonstrated in every context. If, for example, one wants to treat, within the same generic conceptual framework, the trends and historical events behind the *regnum Francorum* around 1300 as opposed both to Christian universalism and feudal particularism, the category of "nationality" can be neglected, but the label of "national state" (or monarchy) cannot be helped, even if we mean to convey something different from what this notion has expressed since the nineteenth century. In a certain sense, therefore, we have been using "auxiliary" concepts to carry out our research. With regard to medieval circumstances, one might also contend that the use of the term "national" is an unavoidable conceptual compromise resulting from our poor classification lexis. We have to be aware that we use this classification term for stressing some connections or differences in phenomena far from the modern semantical content of the notion of "nationality," which could still be related to it for some of its conceptual features. Such a concession is defensible, provided that it is clear that, to some extent, we are dealing with auxiliary notions in this kind of research; the smaller the compromise, the more acceptable it is. This is likewise where we stand with the issue of "national consciousness." The scholarly value and the very meaning of this concept will be lost when it is completely abstracted from its historical context and stretched to accommodate phenomena of another era perceived as equal. Attentiveness to "nationality," conceptualized as a form of social psychological "We-consciousness," is quite an old phenomenon. In certain strata of society and in some rudimentary forms its presence in European history can be traced back as far as the ninth to the eleventh centuries. It did not play, however, any significant role in determining group loyalty within social, cultural, intellectual, or political spheres, i.e., precisely in what is understood to be an inherent feature of the concept of "national consciousness." In this respect it was around 1300 that one could perceive some distinct signs of a turning point in medieval European history insofar as "nation" became a well-

defined concept of social and political theory. In one fell swoop it becomes a social and political aspiration and the object of self-assertion and loyalty. Developing in the late Middle Ages, this awareness was not unrelated to a kind of "national" group consciousness that had existed in an earlier form, yet there is something generally more to it; it possesses a distinctive quality. It is a reflection of the change in political, historical, and social perceptions, which began sometime between 1200–1300. If we look at the matter more closely we see that deeper social, political, cultural, and intellectual transformations have caused a special fusion in mental makeup: the innovative theory of "political society" and the notion of political loyalty became enmeshed with the qualities of nationality, such as its historical origin, prestige, virtue, and indeed, the collective notions associated with its destiny, purpose, and "function." Now, it seems legitimate to subsume this set of phenomena in the aforementioned sense under the classification of "national consciousness," since, despite its typical medieval and estate-bound characteristics, the conceptual construct of this fusion is in many ways identical to what would materialize centuries later following the bourgeois transformation (which simultaneously rejected and realized on a higher plane the earlier mergence of the national and the social-political sphere).

The topic of medieval "national consciousness" is thus clearly a concern of the late Middle Ages and also belongs to the history of political ideas, in which synchronicity among historical events in Europe and interplay were key in addressing questions of social and intellectual history. Nevertheless, this complex possesses its own "historical antecedents" as well. The formation of "nationalities" constituted its historical raw material and served as a cognitive schema to help track historical developments. However, an "asynchronous" quality is also revealed when one considers differences between the older and younger regions within an evolving European history. In Europe's Mediterranean and Western half, which was more closely connected with antiquity in its beginnings, the pre-feudal and barbarian (Germanic) sociological and ethnographic patterns of the original inhabitants had largely been dissolved during the early medieval period (sixth to ninth centuries), much like Rome itself. After complex processes of disintegration involving intermixing populations and the simultaneous, and, to some extent, parallel process of territorial reduction, it was in the ninth and tenth centuries, the central Middle Ages, that the greater unifying political and cultural-linguistic symbol of "nationality" started to emerge. Before long, the era itself was referring to these with terms like *gens* and *natio*. The Western European national frameworks emerged following the breakup of ethnic barbarian

groups in the early Middle Ages, *gentes et nationes* (among them Visigoths and Ostrogoths, Salian and Ripuarian Franks, and Lombards), and the gradual integration of the territorial patterns of the central Middle Ages designated in like manner, the "*nationalités provinciales*" (among them Aquitanians, Burgundians, Champenois, Flemings, Swabians, Bavarians, Saxons). This process lasted many centuries and was only concluded during the modern age. French, Spanish, Italian, German, and English nationalities are sui generis the products of the feudalist system. In contrast, in the Northern and Eastern regions, which only joined the edifice of feudal Christian Europe after the tenth century, the medieval integrative frameworks called *gens* or *natio*, the nationalities (the Bohemians, Poles, Magyars, along with the Danes, Swedes and Norwegians) arose from more archaic, more "organic" patterns—from the ethnic frameworks of the earlier, pre-feudal barbarian structure. Even if their composition altered significantly over time, these changes were negligible compared with the total discontinuity that occurred in the older regions, whose development was more protracted and more deeply articulated. Insofar as the presence of a sort of sociological "We-consciousness" mirroring an archaic ethnic continuity may be ascertained before the turn of the first millennium among these peoples, the following question necessarily arises: What is the conceptual and historical connection between this cognitive content and the phenomena, which made their appearance as "national consciousness" during the Middle Ages?

Research in recent years on the Germanic peoples who overthrew Rome and appropriated its heritage has produced notable findings on group consciousness and the "early barbarian" worldview, expressly rejecting the adoption of the title "nation," which would have been anachronistic. First appearing in the early Middle Ages, this consciousness was based on cognitive constructs of long-standing ethnosociological frameworks—when larger population formations (referred to variously as "*Großstämme*," "*Völkerschaften*," or *gentes*) had integrated many tribal elements into their pre-feudal barbarian sociopolitical systems and world conceptions, at the very same time when ethnic features began to take shape among them. It is precisely due to these interconnections that one may rightly speak of a distinctive historical type of ethnosociological "We-consciousness" ("gentilism"), which played a special role as a political consciousness ("a self-contained, coherent system of social and political categories") in the history of the formation of Europe between the fifth and the eighth centuries. After considerable academic treatment of this subject matter (we might highlight inter alia the work of Erich Zöllner, Ernesto Sestan, Heinz

Löwe, Helmut Beumann, and Eugen Ewig),[1] a recent synthesis of the material has appeared in the form of a monograph by Reinhard Wenskus.[2] With respect to the historical typology of ethnic groups, it has also attracted scholarly attention in Soviet historical research.[3] As we have indicated, Western European history has drawn a sharp and clearly identifiable line between these "gentilic" frameworks and the "nationalities" of the Middle Ages; not so in the case of the "later" barbarians, whose developmental period was briefer, more rapid, and less articulated, and where some kind of continuity existed between archaic ethnic frameworks and feudal-era nationalities. Now, it has become increasingly apparent from Western historical literature that the social, political, and even the ethnogenic attributes of groups traditionally labeled as "Germanic" were actually features of a much broader range of "barbarian" social structures (also applicable to Slavic and even Turkic societies). With this consideration in mind, we must ask whether parallels may be drawn between those earlier Northern and Eastern ethnic frameworks and the "gentilic" structures of early medieval Western European history.

Such questions have hitherto not been raised in the field of history in connection with Northern and Eastern Europe. There has been some suggestion—in reference to Scandinavia and Bohemia—that archaic elements of early medieval "nationality"-bound group consciousness may be observed, but since flagging the issue has not resulted in any deeper analysis of the constitution of this phenomenon, addressing sociohistorical relationships or resolving conceptual problems, they have been broadly, tentatively, classed together as "antecedents." The historical and ethnographic literature have failed to tackle the construct of group consciousness as a separate area of study in connection with the ethnogenesis of the Hungarian people, though some important but limited results have been produced. The only individual who has sought to offer a compre-

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1   Erich Zöllner, *Die politische Stellung der Völker im Frankenreich*, Veröffentlichungen der IÖG 13 (Vienna, 1950); Ernesto Sestan, *Stato e nazio nell'alto medioevo: Ricerche sulle origini nazionali in Francia, Italia, Germania* (Napoli, 1952); Heinz Löwe, "Von Theoderich dem Grossen zu Karl dem Grossen: Das Werden des Abendlandes im Geschichtsbild des frühen Mittelalters," *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 9 (1951): 353–401; Helmut Beumann, "Zur Entwicklung transpersonaler Staatsvorstellungen," in *Das Königtum: Seine geistigen und rechtlichen Grundlagen*, ed. Theodore Mayer, Vorträge und Forschungen, vol. 3 (Lindau and Konstanz, 1956), 185–224 and Eugen Ewig, "Zum christlichen Königsgedanken im Frühmittelalter," in *Vorträge und Forschungen*, III, 7–73.

2   Reinhard Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung: Das Werden der frühmittelaltlerlichen gentes* (Graz, 1961).

3   See especially Lev Pavlovich Lashuk, "O formakh donatsional'nykh etnicheskikh svyazey," *Voprosy istorii*, 42, no.4 (1967): 72–82.

hensive, critical assessment based on the sources is József Deér.[4] Deér claimed that one should not expect the Magyar tribes, which arrived in Hungary during the ninth century, to possess an "intrinsic sense of community" or group consciousness, because this ethnically heterogeneous society was only formed into a "people" by Prince Árpád, and felt a sense of unity only through his dynasty. This narrative should have underpinned a distinct theory on Eastern nomadic peoples, which, along with "superstratified" autocratic and despotic sociopolitical structures, would have constituted the "Eastern nomadic" ("pagan") ingredient in Hungarian history up until the thirteenth century; in opposition to the "Western Christian" element visible in the "socialization" of subjects. It is to Deér's indisputable credit that he not only raised an essential question, but also attempted to furnish a documented answer. The tendentious nature of his assertions can both elicit criticism and drive further research on these issues. We will reexamine these issues now within the framework of general history, with a more complex research methodology and on a broader evidential base.

As a precondition of our research, we must accept that regardless of the difficulties that might arise with respect to the above, in the interim we should leave open the question of whether or not a connection or an opposition exists—in the historical and morphological sense—between a "gentilic" ethnic awareness and medieval "national" consciousness. Furthermore, given the lack of preliminary explorations and case studies we have to renounce examining the issue of "gentilism" in the entire younger region of Europe, that is, with regard to early Slavic and Scandinavian history. Under these circumstances our research proposal must remain a working hypothesis, much as our conclusions, in relation to Hungarian history prior to the first millennium, will necessarily only be of hypothetical value in many respects. Anyway, upon what methodological basis would it be appropriate to address this "archaeological" layer in the history of ideas?

If the question is approached purely from the perspective of Hungarian history, the antithesis that exists in a more or less obscured form within the Latin-language literature of eleventh to thirteenth century Hungary offers one point of departure. The texts in question (legends, chronicles or *gesta*, charters, and decretals) are derivative of universal Christian culture and the feudal mindset,

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4   József Deér, "Közösségérzés és nemzettudat a XI–XIII. századi Magyarországon" [National consciousness and the sense of community in Hungary from the eleventh to the thirteenth century], *A Gróf Klebelsberg Kunó MTI Évkönyve* 4 (1934): 93–111; Deér József, *Pogány magyarság—keresztény magyarság* [Pagan Magyars and Christian Magyars] (Budapest, 1938).

and hence they reflect their contemporary reality according to classifications and ideological assertions of the age; they also reveal a close relationship with contemporaneous Western European texts. On the other hand, occasionally there also appear elements, motifs, and notions that are obviously alien to coeval conceptual constructs. Though mostly incidental, derived on occasion from almost unrecognizably distorted fragments, they are incontestably the relics of a more archaic worldview and conceptual system. We could observe a similar phenomenon in relation to the concept of "people" and to the related broader notions. It is impossible to construe meaning from written sources alone or to isolate their constituents. In this realm, source criticism and philology might gain insight through evidence offered by linguistic history, archaeology, or historical ethnography, with the field of prehistory offering a possibility of coordinating research efforts. If, when reconstructing the intrinsic logic of historical fragments, we find that they definitely point to the existence of much older conceptual models and a "repertory of ideas" which, on the basis of sociohistorical connections and parallels in other areas of history, are components of a "gentilic" framework also observed elsewhere, then we will have reached the limits of what we may discover in this area. It follows as a matter of course that, given the nature of this research, questions cannot solely be viewed from the standpoint of Hungarian history. In other words, even as seen from a Hungarian perspective, both methodological and historical approaches to the question require that the research framework be extended, on the one hand, to the beginnings of European history (i.e., to the period of the acquisition of the Roman legacy by the Germanic *gentes*), and on the other, to the Eurasian Steppes (i.e., the historical background of the ethnogenesis of the Hungarian people). The manner in which we have posed the question requires a twofold historical basis: both Western and Eastern. It should envelop, more or less, the second part of the first millennium (the fifth to ninth centuries).

Two arguments offer good reasons for a critical survey of the early medieval development of Western Europe, the theoretical constructs concerning the formation of the Germanic people, and Western historical background conditions. Firstly, this is the historical context out of which earlier research has extracted the concept and typological model of "gentilism" itself (without, however, attempting to reach a level of generalization or trying to situate this notion in the world of early medieval conceptual schemes). On the basis of these research findings, it is above all the following questions that await a response: Is "gentilic" consciousness really identical with barbarian political thought? Was it re-

ally such a closed set of categories that could pervade and become, so to speak, a "foundational principle" of the early medieval conceptual world? Or, on the contrary, were the sixth to eighth centuries, with the general breakdown of ethnosociological structures, also the era in which "gentilism" got dissolved, and a new, specifically medieval schema emerged instead? All this has also a special importance from the point of view of Hungarian history. The texts of early Hungarian Latin literacy often date back to earlier Western European sources, as far back as the seventh to ninth centuries; thus, their interpretation is impossible without considering the transformation of these concepts and more broadly that of European mental schemas.

The extent to which a model extracted from Western history can be applied to the conditions of an Eastern history (i.e., to Magyar origins in the East European Steppe region) largely depends on one basic condition. Beside all the distinguishing, auxiliary, and specific features, one can identify some essential characteristics in their social structures, their political arrangements and their ethnogenesis, which could constitute "common denominators" between these distant pre-feudal barbarian ethnosociological structures, with no direct historical or ethnological links. Such recognition is facilitated when one divests oneself of certain prejudices or erroneous conclusions, which have presented a distorted picture of Hungarian prehistory based on absolutizing, indeed mythologizing, its "Eastern nomadic" characteristics. All this brings up an additional requirement: due attention must be paid to the scholarly literature's entire frame of reference used to treat the final stage of Hungarian prehistory (the fifth to ninth centuries) since this system determines the context of data and footholds that may be inferred in relation to our more immediate subject.

As regards the reconstruction of what "gentilism" could have been, the conditions and research strategies for making claims about early Hungarian history differ only in a quantitative respect rather than a qualitative one from the relations in Germanic territories. Although contemporaneous Hungarian printed sources and observations from high cultures in close proximity (in this instance, from Byzantium and the Islamic world) are very meager in comparison with sources documenting Rome and the barbarians, other kinds of sources are present in an equal quantity. Fragmentary traces of archaic thought mechanisms and conceptual frameworks or ethnographic material included in early feudal-Christian literacy, archaeological findings and ethnological parallels, and evidence within the Hungarian language itself all possess informational value inasmuch as these sources have separately undergone reliable critical examination

and cumulatively demonstrate an internal consistency; in this case, they can merge organically with a broader historical framework. This kind of historical reconstruction is not directed at factually based fragments of a former reality, but at fragments of the mental reflection of this reality, gradually assembled from scraps of material. Moreover, the object being recovered is not, primarily, the objective reality but rather a network of elements that once shaped an ideological framework: a model of a system of ideas, concepts, and notional motifs, within which a one-time social consciousness conceived the nature of "people." Clearly, this type of historical reconstruction may only remain hypothetical, although not more than any research on "prehistory," or more precisely from an epoch which predates written sources; we cannot expect more from such investigation than the affirmation of a previously existing conceptual model of the sort delineated above, without venturing further and proposing any, even hypothetical, suggestions to additional questions of detail. Working from the perspective of the history of ideas, and, to a considerable degree, within a framework of conceptual history, while methodologically complex (drawing on borrowings from the fields of philology, linguistics, ethnography, or archaeology), may, in the final analysis, offer a basis, or working hypothesis, which could further efforts to trace the development of communal forms of consciousness after the first millennium. The Magyars did not appear in Europe from out of a vacuum. This assertion also applies to categories of social consciousness. Partly through the disintegration and eradication, partly through the transformation of these categories, but in no way independent of them, grew the feudal-Christian ideological structure, with the "national" element of the Middle Ages unfolding from it centuries later as one of its distinctive branches.

The monograph referred to in the introduction, conceived according to the methodology and research approach outlined above, is divided into three parts. The first part summarizes the manner in which the question itself is posed and presents the historical framework behind the topic under study. The second part identifies the fundamental essence, and surveys the evolution and eventual breakdown of the Germanic "gentilism"; that is to say, it offers the Western setting. The final section analyzes the particularities of the Magyar "gentilic" ethnic consciousness as they arrived in their present territory, or in other words presents the Eastern historical background. With respect to my treatment of the Western background, the main conclusions are summarized briefly below.

The tension between a Roman Empire in its decline and the barbarian world gave expression, among other things, to a system of a political categories and a

community consciousness incongruent and previously alien to each other. This is tangibly reflected in sources from late antiquity and also in the conceptual understanding of the term "people" itself. According to the Romans the *populus Romanus* was not an "organic" natural or historical entity (that is, it would not be classified nowadays as either an ethnic group or a nationality), but rather a "political society," the constitutive elements of which were legal, social, political, and cultural criteria. The category itself, together with its conceptual (and fictional) contents, is an expression of antiquity's concept of a state and its relationship with society; it is a conceptual distillation of a typical "cosmopolitan" political attitude from the imperial era. The universalism of early Christianity, which set aside traditional, linguistic, and ethnic ties, and the very idea of the *populus Christanus*, was a spiritual variant of this worldview. The Roman conception of things entailed that "natural" affiliation did not signify political ties, nor any kind of wider ethnic framework; this is conveyed in the semantic content of the notions of *natio* and *gens*. If the Romans did nevertheless name group ties, tribes, or the larger ethnic formations of the barbarians using these same concepts (*nationes et gentes*), it was precisely for stressing the contrast that existed between themselves and these barbarians. According to this view, the unity of barbarian societies depended neither on social, legal, or governmental structures, nor on cultural values, i.e., the constituents of *res publica*, but it was defined as a community of descent (*origo*) and other traits deemed to be "natural," so to speak, and by the welding of language and tradition (*lingua et mores*). This already expressed the qualities associated with the "barbarous," although the notion of political and legal organization was also latent in the concept of *gens*, in opposition to the term *natio*, which imparted a purely "ethnographic" reality. This conceptual model is, by the way, not so far removed from the notion of barbarian self-awareness, which has, however, opposed emphases. The Gothic *thiuda* or Franconian *theod* (Old German **theudo*), for instance, express both the notion of "a multitude of identical descent (or blood-community)" and the idea of "a politically organized people." The characteristic union of "ethnic" and "political" spheres, unknown to the ancient world, typically reflects the barbarian ethnosociological framework.

The Germanic peoples or ethnic formations (*gentes*) which conquered Rome and succeeded it, were not, in reality, organic formations or blood communities. Originally they were the political institutions of tribes and segments of the population which had been assimilated over the course of their migrations (between the third and sixth centuries). However, the stability of the new realm

("*Heerkönigtum*," or military monarchy) led to the extensive incorporation of diverse ethnic traditions. It also resulted in a new belief in an "organic" foundation—a community of descent—of the people, just as this belief can be detected among the peoples who came to play a significant historical role in this epoch (Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Franks, Alemanni, Burgundians, Lombards, and so forth). Overlapping political and ethnic frameworks embraced the distinctive pre-feudal barbarian social structure, in which the element of the armed yeoman still carried significant weight, in spite of social segmentation and an unusually strong monarchical authority. At the same time an ethnic consciousness experienced by the bulk of society, based on the common descent of the people (*theudo*, *gens*) and the community of tradition, largely coincided with loyalty towards the political rule and the yeomen's social consciousness of belonging to a unity of title ("common law"). In this case we may justifiably speak of a "gentilic" framework and a "gentilic" consciousness. The dominant "ideological" elements within this treasured abstraction may not have reflected language or culture in their entirety; they were articulated according to wider linguistic and cultural relationships that were fashioned into an organic whole within the frame of a typical "ethnocentric" mode of looking at the world. These elements included homogeneous ancestral traditions (in which rudimentary elements of historical consciousness and an adopted barbarian myth of blood kinship replaced the abstract "society" and was elevated to the sphere of the sacred), common law (which also indicated an "ethnic" bond), general "customs" (established ethical norms) and a body of beliefs (regardless of whether or not the elements had originally been ethnically-specific): all this melted together into an organic totality within the frame of a typically "ethnocentric" worldview. One might count on finding a good deal of variation between different social strata within the same ethnic group relating to the nature, intensity, and function of their worldview. Nevertheless, these were undoubtedly variants of the same ideological system, which might be considered a "political" form of consciousness inasmuch as the notions stemming from ethnic consciousness determined, to a greater or lesser extent, the political and social consciousness and loyalties of group members.

What helped to preserve "gentilism" during the early Middle Ages was the fact that the separation of elements of Roman and barbarian society was also guaranteed, for a relatively extended period of time, by the new barbarian formations. These included the legal status of individuals, and cultural, religious, settlement, and "constitutional" rights. During the sixth to eighth centuries,

within Christian literacy, which still heavily possessed a "Roman" stamp, denominations related to the "gentilic" mindset also came to the fore, namely, political ethos, the approach to law and history, understanding of ethnicity, and, indeed, exercised some influence on the development of the Christian historical *Weltanschauung*. The Church did not merely side with barbarian rulers in its practical activities; patristics also incorporated the barbarian world on a theoretical level into its notion of the "Roman," which was invested with a spiritual meaning. Indeed, even the idea of the "election" of barbarian *gentes* emerged with Isidore of Seville, the Venerable Bede, and Paulus Diaconus. From the seventh and eighth centuries characteristic elements of "gentilic" notions of "people," virtue, and views of history were elevated, in a Christianized form, to the level of high literature (for instance, in the *Historia Gothorum*, the *Chronicle of Fredegar*, or the longer preamble to the *Lex Salica*). Whether these phenomena were manifestations of something new or, just the opposite, merely the dying remains of something old remains an open question.

In fact, in the very same world of late antiquity, the presumably antithetical phenomena of Roman "cosmopolitanism" and Germanic "gentilism" were present together; in a way they complemented each other, and medieval developments moved beyond them after a two-to-three century period of transition. While these early medieval transformations had involved the assimilation of several elements, they gradually broke up the "gentilic" structures themselves. The pace of this suppression was determined by barbarian kingships, which had become "Romanized" early on. They strove to demolish the dualistic Roman and barbarian social elements in a top-down fashion by various means, whereas early feudal relations undermined traditional social and ethnic bonds and frameworks from the bottom up. Over the course of the sixth and seventh centuries, this process asserted itself most swiftly in the Mediterranean region, where ethnic mixing, territorial fragmentation, and rapidly advancing social differentiation essentially broke the "gentilic" bonds along with their accompanying cultural baggage. In addition, "gentilic principles" could not prevail even in the political sphere par excellence, as is evidenced in the developments of the Franks. The *regnum Francorum* (since the reign of Clovis I) was not a "gentilic" construct; the line adopted by the state ignored ethnic classifications, while the notions of the "people" (*populus-leudes*) and of political loyalty (*fidelitas*) were solely aligned with the terms of alliance within a retinue, which was now elevated to a "constitutional" status. The *populus Francorum*, which shows up in the historical source material from the sixth to the eighth centuries, is basically

identical with the bonds of the ethnically heterogeneous subordinates of the royal retinue, broadly understood, and is far from being coextensive with the ethnic group (*gens*) which was *ex natione* Frankish according to descent. The longer prologue to the mid-eighth century *Lex Salica* cannot be considered to reveal a "gentilic" Frankish consciousness; its content is far more closely bound to the emerging Carolingian state-mysticism, which, by way of an epilogue, so to speak, had assimilated some of the fading and functionally distorted elements of the ancient Frankish ethnic consciousness.

As reflected in the history of ideas, three trends were contending with one another over the course of the sixth to eighth centuries: the remnants of an old "gentilism," the integrating aspirations of early barbarian kingdoms, and the disintegrating force of territorial fragmentation. It was the latter that emerged as the winner, interring the debris of "gentilic" frameworks and early feudal societal and state structures. By the seventh century the designation of *Francus*, which originally possessed the ethnic connotation of "Frank," became, generally speaking, a purely political, or "state," notion, while in another (social) dimension it became significantly reduced (*Franci* became a term sometimes used to refer to the elite of the whole empire, at other times it was a collective designation for the body of yeomen, the *exercitus Francorum*). At the same time, the third trend—"the territorialization of the concept of people" (E. Ewig)—asserted itself more strongly, narrowing the designation still further to the subjects of a smaller dominion (*ducatus Franciae*). Alongside this, the notions of *gens* and *nation* had become radically transformed: the emergence of a feudal territory was replacing the foundering "gentilic" and early feudal state frameworks and the ensemble of its subjects began to be regarded now as one and the same people or a "nationality" (e.g., *natio Aquitana*). This also applied to less developed areas (*gentes ultra Rhenum*), where, through the ninth and tenth centuries, the original individual tribal units (i.e., the Swabians, Bavarians, or Saxons) were essentially transformed into territorial configurations, the collectivity of subjects within a tribal duchy ("*Stammesherzogtum*"). Within this new framework a new tradition arose with dynamics that adjusted to itself the old *topoi* expressing the concept of "people." Thus, *genus* and *natio* became designations of provincial origin or "domicile," *lingua* started to mean regional dialect, *mores*, *consuetudines* or *leges* the territory's legal customs and customs more generally (*coutumes de pays*, *Landessitten*). Meanwhile, the contours of Europe's great "nations" were only starting to come into view, here and there, without as yet being conscious notions or affecting the allegiances of the population. There was a

long transitional period in Western Europe's history, roughly between the eighth and the thirteenth centuries, when one can no longer speak about a "gentilic" group consciousness, but neither did a "national" one as yet exist: citizens were divided up into hundreds of small provinces (*nationalités provinciales*), which frequently had no bearing on the relationships of social or political loyalty which linked one person to another.

In the ninth–tenth centuries, at the time of this more profound reorganization of structures and concepts, new "barbarian" peoples become factors in the Eastern part and the Northern perimeter of Europe. Their ethnosociological features and social and political institutions resembled Western European conditions of the fifth–sixth centuries much more closely than did the *Europa Occidens* of the age. In the case of the *gens Ungarorum*, a term which appears in written historical sources, the word *gens* now signifies something entirely different from what it did in contemporary "old Europe"; its attributes from the viewpoint of the *populus Christianus* and in historical sources such as annals and chronicles are similar, alluding to a similar organic unity of "barbarian" sociopolitical and ethnic nature as those of the early barbarians in late antiquity perceived according to the *populus Romanus* in that period. But did a consciousness of this unity really exist within the society itself?

The crystallizing nucleus of ethnic consciousness (as we have seen, this was the main instrument for capturing conceptually the organic nature of "society" under barbarian conditions) was the belief in a community of descent. Critical examination of historical sources and ethnological findings have now established that the legend of Hunor-Magyar, which survived in Hungarian chronicles, is indeed a genuine folk legend (vis-à-vis the majority of its motifs and structure). It is a typical variety of ethnogenetic legend of the people of the steppes which personify legends of kindred or historically connected peoples (in this particular case, probably the *Onogur* and the Magyar) with siblings-cum-ancestors. These are combined with other motifs and help to preserve dimming historical memories (for instance, *Belar, Dula princeps Alanorum*). The latter indicate that the final adaptation of the legend may have occurred between the sixth and ninth centuries as the myth of a community called the Magyars (*Megyeri*), presumably in reference to the name itself devolving on the ethnic formation. Both in structure and in its system of motifs, the legend radically contradicts the Christian-feudal notion of the *origo gentis* which was taking shape in the eleventh–thirteenth centuries; it could only have been recorded at all when, under the influence of a thirteenth-century European trend, naïve folk elements

got incorporated in theories of ethnogenesis. It is thus incorrect to claim (as does Deér) that the Magyar people had no consciousness of their origins that was independent of their ruling dynasty. Indeed, this legend and its relationship to the myth of the ruling clan's progenitors (the Turul legend) together suggest that the popular tradition of origin was not only independent of the latter but also conceived a good deal earlier than the assumption of power by the Árpád clan. The need to consider that an intrinsic collective consciousness existed well before an "organized people" appeared at the end of the ninth century is corroborated by a tradition kept alive until the thirteenth century by the Bashkir ethnic group, which remained in the Volga region. According to the tradition, when the antecedents of the future Magyar broke off (probably centuries before the ninth century) not only was the nascent ethnic group's principal objective touchstone, its language, present, so too was the principal subjective criterion of ethnic collectivity: group consciousness maintained through a line of common descent. From another point of view, the fact that the notion of a traditional connection to the ethnic group known as the Savirs (or Savartoi) in the Caucasus was still alive among the Magyar people even as late as around 950 confirms that a form of collective consciousness had already emerged by the time of their separation (before 750), which had survived the rupture of their geographical and political connections. All this suggests that we could expect that the tradition of descent must have been assimilated well before the ninth century. As to how that might have happened, the modern ethnogenesis of nomadic people of the steppes (e.g., the Kazakh Kirghiz, Kara–Kirghiz, and Uzbeks) may offer an analogy. Among the steppe peoples, who experience continual ethnic fluctuation, the coalescence and stability of political institutions facilitate integration of tradition. This is mainly demonstrated by the fact that the majority of the population accept identical origin myths. Looked at in respect of the thought process, this is none other than the transposition of a model of a symbolic (hypothetical) community of blood, manifested in making sense of the organic cohesion of tighter (face-to-face) groups, primarily clans, to a broader (secondary) group, the people. As the model itself—this way of perceiving the "people"—is far removed from feudal thought processes, its basis is to be sought in previous structures. The question is whether there are other signs, which would support the former existence of such an archetype in Hungarian antiquity.

The nature of the idea of the "people," along with the notion of descent, may be found in early literacy, albeit quite inconspicuously. This distinguishes it fundamentally from Christian and feudal notions. Around 1100 one can infer that

a *genus Hungarorum* is determined by notions of language and origins or descent (*lingua et natio*), independent from territorial factors, terms of subordination, or social and legal conditions. Regardless of which segment is considered, the archaic framework of this notion differs from the prevailing categories in which "people" (*populus*, *gens*) is perceived at the time. The equivalent of *genus* in ancient Hungarian is the word *fajzat* or *nemzet*. The latter (the root *nem* is most likely of Iranian origin) had probably already appeared in most ancient Hungarian as *nem-zet*, with an original meaning of "breeding" or "product of breeding." In ancient Hungarian it is only one of the terms that indicate affinity; the notion of a "kinship group" or clan was conveyed through terms like *genus*, *stirps*, or *progenies*, and native or offspring, spawn and scion, were *szülött*, *ivadék*, and *sarj*. During this era the word also acquired the broader connotation of "people" (*nation* or *gens*). This was used more specifically as an alternate to "*nemzetség*," or nationality, which had a distinctly different shade of meaning from that of the much vaguer *nép*. Such links, which can be found in the earliest surviving linguistic records of Hungarian, are only explicable by positing the existence of even more archaic conceptual formulations. In contrast with feudal conceptions, "*nemzetség*" and "*nép*" were understood to be intrinsically connected. At this time, a concept corresponding to *nemzetség* (nationality) was fashioned; this group designation engendered the notion of a broader ethnic bond of a "*nép*," or "people." Authoritative ethnogenetic studies have, of course, demonstrated that the historical process was more likely to have been the reverse: artificial (political) assimilation preceded the evolution of the naïve "organic" paradigm. But is there any evidence for this, and which period may decisively be considered to be the final one in Hungarian prehistory (the sixth to ninth centuries)?

The idea that the Hungarian people appeared out of an ethnic conglomeration by means of a late ninth-century Turkic-style "organization of the people" stems largely from a particular interpretation of events in Chapter 38 of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus's *De Administrando Imperio*, which projected its narrative to the final decades of the ninth century. This would, however, contradict the circumstances described in the earliest group of Muslim sources (c. 870) and it would also be in opposition to the insights obtained through evidence from the field of archaeology and historical linguistics. The archaeological legacy of the Magyars, who occupied the territory of modern-day Hungary, reveals the impact of relative homogeneity that traverses all societal divisions, be they horizontal (tribal, clan) or vertical (social), which testifies that their organic commu-

nity of common ethnic traditions had been existing for quite some time. Moreover, the fact that the Magyar people linguistically assimilated the indigenous population of the Carpathian Basin fairly rapidly (over the course of two or three centuries) can only be explained by accepting the presumption that the region was settled by an already stratified society, relatively homogeneous both in terms of language and general traditions. These contradictions have been resolved now that more recent research completed by Károly Czeglédy has found the key to Constantine's interpretation.[5] Inasmuch as the motifs in question (attack by the Kangars, breakaway of the Savirs) do not relate to more recent developments but older (sixth to eighth centuries?) historical memories, while the whole account is viewed after making allowance partly for the condensed nature of a legend of naïve historical memory (József Deér),[6] partly for tenth-century distortions with dynastic pretensions (György Györffy),[7] it is possible to discern in these motifs the heterogeneous relics of a longer period of time (the Khazar era of the Magyar people), and the need to postulate a one-off "organization of the people" may be cast aside. A deeper familiarity with the background and nature of the Magyar institute of dual kingship (itself of Turkic-Khazar origin)[8] will reinforce the probability that a uniform ethnic entity called the Magyeri—as it appears in written sources from c. 870 onwards (Al Džaihānī's *Book of Roads and Kingdoms*)—had already organized itself into a fairly distinct and well-defined formation both geographically and politically during the period of Khazar sovereignty (seventh and eighth centuries). Furthermore, secession from the Khazar Kaganate may well not have been a discrete incident (c. 830) but quite a prolonged process, only the final chapter of which is known with any reliability. The idea that the Hungarian people matured under a "Turkic" political framework does not refute, in fact it supports, the postulate of a relative separation and secession of their ruling organization during the Khazar era, which may have been the political condition for an integration of ethnic traditions over several centuries.

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5   Károly Czeglédy, "A kangarok (besenyők) a VI. századi szír forrásokban" [The Kangars (Petchenegs) in sixth-century Syriac sources], *MTA I. Osztály Közleményei 5* (1954): 243–76; Károly Czeglédy, "Kangarok és zavarok" [Kangars and confusions], *Magyar Nyelv* 52 (1956): 120–25.

6   József Deér, "A IX. századi magyar történet időrendjéhez" [Notes on the chronology of ninth-century Hungarian history], *Századok* 79–80 (1945–46): 6–14.

7   György Györffy, *Krónikáink és a magyar őstörténet* [Our chronicles and Hungarian prehistory] (Budapest, 1948), 62–67.

8   György Györffy, "Kurszán és Kurszán vára: A magyar fejedelemség kialakulása és Óbuda honfoglaláskori története" [Kursan and Kursan's castle: The formation of Hungarian rulership and the history of Óbuda in the period of the Conquest], *Budapest Régiségei* 16 (1956): 9–40.

There is no foundation to Deér's thesis that there existed a distinct "Eastern nomadic perception of people," which, under the magic spell of a nomad despot, forged an "amorphous human mass" into a unity of allegiance but that still remained devoid of the intrinsic quality of ethnic group consciousness.[9] This can be refuted with an analysis of precisely those early Turkic Orkhon inscriptions (from c. 720, 732, and 734) that were invoked to support the theory. In the conceptual system of these runes, the categories of *il*—"empire," or its semi-abstract variant ("the *khagan*'s authority")—and that of *bodun*—"people"—are clearly differentiated. The latter is also a noun and collective designation for various groups and phenomena, ranging in meaning from a vague "multitude, crowd, persons" to a more broadly understood notion of the "sum total of subjects within the Turkic dominion": that of mythical Turkic ancestors and that of present-day Turks (in this instance the meaning is ambiguous). Apart from this, it is also used for any ethnic group that is designated with a concrete term within and beyond the Turkic sphere of authority and for any conquered tribal group or individual tribe, and finally even for various cross sections of the "common people" in general, as opposed to the men of rank. There is no question here of some one-dimensional perception of people. Equally, a certain consistency can be discerned within this broad semantic sphere. The inscriptions also distinguish between a distinctive array of notions in a political sense. There are two kinds of people: one having its own *khagan* and ruling organization (*il*) and another which lacks them. The meaning of conquest according to the Turkic conceptual view is that it is synonymous with the murder of the *khagan* and the "seizure of the *il*." The more specific connotation of this common expression is readily demonstrable in the texts: extermination of the people's ruling class and retinue (*buyruq*) and its supplanting by a new Turkic governor and group of warriors. According to this view, the subjugated ethnic group itself (for example, a tribal alliance) was included among the "people" (*bodun*) within the power structure of the empire; more specifically, they kept their own established bonds, referred to occasionally with the term "beys and people" (*bäglär bodun*). The Turkic "organization of the people" always linked the people to the *khagan*'s authority through a thin ruling class, leaving—both de facto and subjectively—their "organic" (clan or tribal) structure intact. From another angle, which is to say, not from the authoritative viewpoint of the *khagan* but from that of the individual, this has also been confirmed by inscriptions found in the Yenisei re-

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9   Deér, "Közösségérzés és nemzettudat," 93–111.

gion, in which the term "my people" (*bodunim*) always occurs together with kin, fellow warriors, and the bey, or in other words, in a number of primary "We" groups (sociologically this might be, for instance, a tribe or tribal group). The meanings of these terms are clearly divorced from terms of loyalty towards a political structure or empire (*äl*, *il*) or ruler (*qan*). Whether a steppe people existing within a Turkic political structure (*bodun*) was necessarily an ethnic unit is another matter, as, to a significant degree, this was a function of the stability of the framework of the people in question. There is every reason to believe that the progenitors of the Magyar people came under Turkic-Khazar subjection in a similar manner as the "organization of people" is described in the Orkhon inscriptions. Originally the *kündü* and a Turkic-Khazar retinue were responsible for the "management" of the ethnic group connected with the Megyer-Megyeri tribe within the framework of the Khazar Khagan's empire (*il*); this subordination had no impact on the internal cohesiveness of the society, which possessed tribal and clannish bonds ("beys and people"). Neither the tribal names nor the Magyar tribal arrangements themselves indicate any connection with Khazar power. Likewise, precisely the names of those two dignitaries (the *gyula* and the *bő* or "clan chief") who were connected with internal legal and military organization and clanship organization cannot be derived from common Turkic, which reflected Khazar influence. When the Hungarian dual kingship seceded in the early ninth century it was not an "amorphous human mass" (Deér) that received a substantially new framework for its political organization, but a people that had been pursuing a relatively independent life for a prolonged period of time and became—in the expression of the Orkhon classification scheme—"a people possessing power and a ruler" (*elliɣ qaɣanliɣ bodun*).

All these aspects throw light on the formation of the Hungarian people with regard to the chronological, geographical, and political conditions of this decisive period (the sixth to ninth centuries), this mysterious black box of early Hungarian history, the details of which are little-known, though an aggregate of recent research offers (or would allow us to provide) new avenues of explanation for the development of an ethnic community of tradition. The political and power spheres are merely a frame and condition for ethnic processes, however, not direct agents. Where then is one to seek the social sphere par excellence which, in this very period, has ethnically assimilated a substantial number of associating foreign elements? The ethnogenesis of the nomadic people of Central Asia in modern times shows that the clan was the social unit which, when receiving newcomers, whether individual or group, into a community of tradi-

tions (inter alia the fictive blood community), also assimilated them in a broader sense into a fabric of bonds uniting the people. The organic connection between the notions of "*nemzetség*" ("clan") and "*nép*" ("people") in Hungarian antiquity likewise point in this direction. The Magyar clan of this era was not, of course, a primitive group defined by consanguinity but rather, like nomadic structures at much the same stage in history, was a multifaceted and, with regard to its beginnings, "inorganic" social unit, in which the image of a symbolic (hypothetical) blood relationship, embedded in the wider entity of a cultic community of tradition, had, in fact, the purpose of expressing the "corporate" nature of the group. In contrast with what has been speculated, it is most likely that the name of this clan during this period is one that has survived in the regions that have preserved the most archaic traditions and can be verified in ancient Hungarian: *nemzet*. It is more than likely that this term supplanted the earlier Ugrian-era names (cf. *had* and *szer*) due precisely to the fundamental reorganization of the clan structure. This organism in particular should be regarded as a principal instrument of ethnic integration, as with other nomadic peoples. Due to its considerable flexibility and versatility (for instance, in its exclusion of impoverished members or acceptance of wealthy newcomers) this kind of group can also become an important agent of assimilation: a newcomer symbolically becomes part of the blood community (cf. acceptance of confraternity, *atyafiúvá fogadás*, and blood brotherhood, *vérint való testvériség*) and the clan's community of tradition, the mediator of which is language. In proportion to the extent that the political bonds which tied the clans together were durable, and were tradition-generating elements in themselves, the clan became the mediator of a broader ethnic tradition. This is the probable explanation for the emergence of the notion of *nemzet*(*ség*) among the ancient Hungarian people: by extending the attributes of the narrower (primary) "We" group, the notion of a wider (secondary) "We" group was created and perceived as a bond of identical quality. That this was also accompanied by a degree of transference of group loyalty does not stand in need of special justification.

The name *hétmagyar* ("Seven Magyars") borne by the Magyar people prior to their arrival in the territory of modern Hungary and the designation of the ethnic framework as *nemzet*(*ség)* signal a two-pronged ethnic development: on the one hand, there was political integration, a procedure in which the tribes were linked together into a more robust ruling institution, and on the other, there was integration of ethnic traditions, the internal catalysts of which were the clans. The union of these two provisos is made manifest in the probable fact

that consciousness of the people's kinship was sanctioned by a broad acceptance of the traditions (including the recognition of common descent) of the politically dominant *Magyar* tribe. Thus, through political factors, a model of "social sensibility" rooted in a well-defined myth of consanguinity thereby penetrated "historical" (and equally non-historical) contexts. Conjectures may also be formed about further integral organic elements of this model, as with similar "gentilic" frameworks. As the traditions documented by Constantine Porphyrogenitus and by Anonymus two and a half centuries later both testify, a naïve historical consciousness (keeping track of the people's "historical existence") beyond the tradition of common descent crystallized around the wars and heroic deeds of ancestors (*fortia facta et bella*). Heroic cantos (*cantilenas*) and legends (*fabulae*) were not merely parts of the legacy of clan and tribal subgroups, but also conveyed to the entire people the awareness of their common historical destiny. The epic material was preserved at times merely in traces, at times in an already significantly modified form. It indicates, even in its fragmented condition, how this naïve historical consciousness was partly rooted in the symbolism of the steppe nomads, reflecting the way of life and mode of production of the entire clan establishment (e.g., the legend of the white horse), and partly in the pagan body of beliefs (e.g., the legend of Lél) and in the notion of the people's cohesion and related political ethos (e.g., the legend of Botond); in other words, it was derived from the relationships defining the ideological character of "gentilism." What may be regarded as the original version of the legend of the white horse shows quite tangibly the extent to which the symbols of a well-defined system of social values were elements of a sacred and political sphere, and suggests the degree to which, together, they constituted an ethnic bond. Of course, such interrelationships had already largely broken down by the time these myths got reformulated in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries; their significance had faded, the addition of foreign elements had increased, and with a socially diminished status they became part of the mentality of the common people, the *rustici*. And yet the form this consciousness took may still be deciphered in a more or less intact form by considering the mental constructs behind the so-called pagan uprisings in 1046 and 1060–61. These events may be considered the last overt, albeit distorted, historical manifestations of "gentilism." The rebels' goals and aspirations were shaped, in part, by a cognitive model that was still wholly derived from a pre-millennium-era schema. This was characterized by an archaic ethnosociological "We-consciousness" entrenched in a cohesion of traditions and accentuated by expressive outward trappings. It centered on "ideolog-

ical" elements of the pagan body of beliefs and the legal system of the barbarian legal framework. We may infer from written sources that these elements found a conceptual casing for this comprehensive whole in the broad and undifferentiated category of the *law* ("an ethically sanctioned, socially normative tradition"). The notion of the *old law* (like that of the refrain of a well-known Hungarian minstrel song), which played a central role in the "ideology" of the uprisings and took on the function of a political slogan, as it were, by the middle of the eleventh century, was the retrograde expression of a distorted and weathered store of ideas. However, originally—before the millennium—it served as an essential component of a "social sensibility" of a more coherent cognitive framework, according to which the symbolic community of descent referred to Magyar (*magyeri*) was a *nemzet*(*ség*), a *legal* community with one and the same law. That is to say, it was a uniform "society" (and from the individual's point of view the widest circle of the "We" category), which kept track of its own continuity through inherent notions of tradition and customs. In the wake of the post-millennial reorganization, this "gentilic" outlook on life and cognitive framework breaks down, first losing its former cohesion, then, having deteriorated, sinking in the social sense, until finally, after the thirteenth century, even its traces have been swallowed up.

The Christian-feudal cognitive world which arose in the eleventh century possessed a completely different ideological character and classification system. Yet, at one and the same time, out of the remnants of a "gentilic" ethnic consciousness—radically transformed with regard to its social and ideological function—a distinctively "national" medieval cognitive world is constructed on the basis of thirteenth-century social and intellectual transformations. As to how this could occur under these conditions—that is a subject for separate inquiry.[10]

Translated by Tim Wilkinson

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10 On this, see "Theoretical Elements in Master Simon of Kéza's *Gesta Hungarorum* (1282–1285)," in this volume.

Theoretical Elements in Master Simon of Kéza's Gesta Hungarorum (1282–1285)*

The Background: The Emergence of a European Structural Unity

One can only begin to speak properly of European history once the term Europe ceased to be merely a geographic concept and came to refer to something new: a structural unity. But at what point can one begin to speak of "European" structures? This is not an easy question to answer, as it is a matter of viewpoint where and in which combination of criteria one chooses to identify the essential, determining circumstance within the thousand-year process that began with the dissolution of the ancient world and led to modern Europe.

Certain primary conditions undoubtedly already lay concealed in that process which shifted the focus of history from the ancient center of civilization, the Mediterranean, further north toward the periphery of the late ancient world, toward the interior of a Europe which, though not unknown to ancient geography, was of rather uncertain definition. There is, therefore, some justification for the commonly held view which ties the "making of Europe" to the centuries of the early Middle Ages. It is significant that by the time of Charlemagne, around 800,

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Europe first appears as the expression of a totality of specific social and cultural ideas, a synonym for *Christianitas* (*societas fidelium Christianorum*)—in other words, as the conceptual framework of a specific "structure" we term Christian feudal society.[1] The Carolingian unity, conceived of as an *imperium Christi*, can be considered as the first experiment in the creation of a new synthesis, containing within its borders virtually the whole of the new historical area which had been coalescing since the fall of the western half of the *imperium Romanum* (the Islamic conquest having finally completed the dissolution of the ancient Mediterranean by detaching the southern half of the former *orbis Latinus* in the middle of the eighth century). This synthesis represented the result of three centuries of internal transformation, as the antagonism between the late antique Romano-Christian and the Germanic-barbarian worlds was finally overcome and a symbiosis gradually emerged. Indeed, much of the Europe-to-be is adumbrated in this process; the two elements, in part cancelling each other out, in part permeating one another, became the first medium of an emerging structure which was by then neither "Roman" nor "barbarian," but of a new quality: medieval.

However, this transitional phase (the sixth to eighth centuries) created merely the crystallizing nucleus of Europe. On the one side, this Europe lacked Hispania, then in Islamic hands; Britannia, too, was only loosely connected with it. On the other, its eastern limits terminated in the area stretching from the Elbe to the western edge of the former Pannonia where the *orbis Christianus* ended. The northern part of Europe and its eastern half were at this time and throughout the next two or three centuries still referred to by the same collective name applied in the fifth century to the world beyond the Rhine: "Barbaricum." Even in the tenth century, the Saxon Widukind spoke of the defeat of the Magyars at Augsburg (955) as a victory over the enemies of "Europe." At the same time, at the other end of the future Europe of the Middle Ages stood Byzantium, in retreat from the waves of "barbarians" and largely isolated from the emerging western Christendom, still guarding with defensive rigidity whatever it could of the Roman tradition.

In truth, it was only when the gap between the geographical and sociocultural senses of the term was bridged and the framework filled in with more or less identical content that Europe was, so to speak, "born." It took a new historical phase, the ninth to the eleventh centuries, for even the preconditions for this to emerge. However, there exist some analogies between this phase and the earlier

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1   Walter Ullmann, *A History of Political Thought: The Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1965), 70.

one. For just as in the fourth and fifth centuries the beginning was announced by "barbarian" invasions, so was it again the "barbarians" who threatened the Christian world. The Slavic and other mass migrations originating in the steppes had already filled the space between the West and Byzantium, but in the course of the eighth to the tenth centuries Viking raids from the North and the Magyar invasions from the East were threats which could still inspire apocalyptic dread in contemporaries. Consolidation finally came around the turn of the first millennium with the transformation of these peoples into new Christian nations. Europe now stretched from Scandinavia all the way down to Byzantium, embracing the areas peripheral to the former Carolingian Europe, with the nomadic remnants now confined to the eastern boundaries of geographical Europe. In this new synthesis Europe around 1100 embraces the totality of the expanded *orbis Christianus*, and thus in practice coincides with its geographical limits from now on. The preconditions were now in place for a unified "European history."[2]

To be sure, from the outset there was always something relative in this unity. Even the early nucleus of Europe was marked by regional differences. The larger units—the Mediterranean, Britannia, the areas west and east of the former Roman *limes*, and the Rhine—preserved many of the distinguishing characteristics of their historical genesis, to say nothing of Byzantium at the other pole. However, in the economic and social spheres the sharpest line of demarcation occurred between the new regions on the one hand and all of old Europe on the other—and this in spite of the paradoxical fact that the Schism of 1054 had already split the *neophitae gentes* into two camps. The Schism produced cultural and intellectual spheres of influence for *Europa Occidens* and Byzantium which did not coincide with the line of demarcation mentioned above but which nevertheless were later to have powerful repercussions in the social and economic spheres as well.[3]

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2   For details, see Helmut Gollwitzer, "Zur Wortgeschichte und Sinndeutung von 'Europa,'" *Saeculum* 2 (1951): 161–72; Geoffrey Barraclough, "Die Einheit Europas im Mittelalter," *Die Welt als Geschichte* 11 (1951): 97–122; Herve Aubin, "Der Aufbau des Abendlandes im Mittelalter," *Historische Zeitschrift* 187 (1957): 497–520; Oskar Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History* (Notre Dame, 1962). For the "old" and "new" barbarians, see Lucien Musset, *Les Invasions: Les vagues germaniques* (Paris, 1965), and Lucien Musset, *Les Invasions: Le second assaut contre l'Europe chrétienne (VIIe–XIe siècles)* (Paris, 1965).

3   The reason for making an exception, among disputed and disputable modern terms for regional demarcations, of the term "East Central Europe" is that that area shares certain common characteristics evident in the early modern age whose roots stretched back to earlier times. The kingdoms of Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary (with Croatia), and in some sense even the German territories east of the Elbe and Austria, display more or less "eastern" characteristics in the economic and social sense, but peculiarly "central" European ones in a cultural sense. [On this complex issue see the study "The Three Historical Regions of Europe," chapter 7 in this volume.]

At the turn of the first millennium European structures are still fundamentally "asynchronous." In northern or eastern Europe, the concept of High Middle Ages ("*Hochmittelalter*") makes no sense. These societies continued to live in their own "early Middle Ages" until the beginning of the thirteenth century, displaying many features more analogous to the Western European structures of the sixth to ninth centuries than to the feudal society of the contemporary West (to say nothing of the peculiar world of Byzantium). The Normans, Poles, and Magyars of the eleventh century, even as the subjects of Christian states, were still generally regarded and referred to as "barbarians"; in the middle of the twelfth century Bishop Otto of Freising spoke of the thoroughly barbarian characteristics he had encountered in Pannonia. In the course of the thirteenth century, however, one can observe a fundamental and surprisingly rapid transformation. A shift in attitude is discernible around 1200 when the new peoples receive their due place in the biblically derived genealogies of peoples and languages. By around 1300 no traveler from "old" Europe visiting the middle and lower stretches of the Danube or Vistula had any more the feeling that he was in an alien culture or in a "Europe" different from his native land, even if his eye might have been struck here and there by some things that seemed strange. When a Dominican at the Council of Lyons (1274) reviewed the former and present enemies of Christendom and assessed Europe's situation, he concluded that the "barbarians" (Poles, Magyars, etc.) had mostly disappeared and been assimilated into the larger family of Christendom—so much so, indeed, that he declares that "except for the Tatars, there are no barbarians." Indeed, the new papal legate to Hungary about the same time (1279) singled out the *more Christiano* lifestyle and culture of the Magyars as an example to be imitated by the Cumans, a new "barbarian" people now belatedly expected to be incorporated.[4] This anecdotal evidence by and large reflects the reality. In the new his-

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4 On the terminology, see Rudolf Buchner, "Die politische Vorstellungswelt Adams von Bremen," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 45 (1963): 15–59. Otto of Freising (MGH SS 20:368). The *Chanson de Roland* (of around 1100) counts among the thirteen "pagan" peoples the Bulgarians, the Magyars, and in general the "Slavs." For the lists of peoples, see Arno Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel: Geschichte der Meinungen über Ursprung und Vielfalt der Sprachen und Völker* (Stuttgart, 1957–63), 2: 580ff, 734ff. For Humbertus de Romanis' remarks at Lyons, see Giovanni Domenico Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (Venice and Florence, 1780; reprint Graz, 1960–1961), 24: 110 (cited below note 22). For the deeper sociocultural content of the phrase *more Christiano* in the so-called "Cuman law" of 1279 [now in János M. Bak, György Bónis, and James Ross Sweeney, eds., *The Laws of the Medieval Kingdom of Hungary/Decreta Regni Mediaevalis Hungariae*, vol. 1 (1100–1301), 2nd ed. (Idyll-wild, 1998), 71], see Miklós Kring (Komjáthy), "Kun és jász társadalomelemek a középkorban" [Cuman and Jazygian social elements in the Middle Ages], *Századok* 66 (1932): 42.

torical phase (from about the year 1000 to the middle of the thirteenth century) the geographical and political consolidations of Europe opened the way to something new in European history, a genuine structural unity, even if this unity manifested itself in regional heterogeneity and a characteristic Latin-Western vs. Orthodox-Eastern dualism.

Of course, the relevance of this dimension is not even admitted in the one-sidedly "western" or "eastern" historical viewpoints which still persist as a heritage of the nineteenth century. If, following Ranke, one narrows down the content of "Europe" to its "original" entities (his "Einheit der romanischen und germanischen Völker"), everything else, naturally, becomes some appendage, some *Randgebiet*, and so, effectively, some *quantité négligeable*. On the other hand, if one chooses to see historical development during the Middle Ages as the gradual evening out of the initial "phase-differences"—with whatever is left over being some "*qualité négligeable*"—this considerably oversimplifies the problem and leaves open the question whether or not there were infrastructural preconditions to the separate development of eastern and western Europe after the sixteenth century. As if this were not enough, a variety of inherited myths cloud the discussion. In practice it is unimportant whether these are modern versions of the Romantics' ethnic myths with their misleading dualism between "Romano–Germanic" and "Slavic" worlds, or whether they are newer civilization myths (the theory, for instance, that "feudalism" is peculiar to the West and did not develop elsewhere, or only imperfectly).

Without question there are analogies between the separate historical phases outlined above. Both the fifth and the tenth centuries led to a symbiosis between a higher unity and a heterogeneity of "barbarians," even if the half-millennium that separated these two processes inevitably made them very different from each other. But in neither case were the "barbarians" some primitive tribe or tribal conglomerate (which were swept away in the historical conflicts), but organized societies possessing a developed leadership and a system of rule based on military retinues. The Germanic *Gefolgschaft*, the Slavic *družina*, or the early Magyar stratum of *jobbágy* (corresponding to the Old Turkish *buyruq*, originally meaning "member of the retinue") are essentially equivalent. They are all the basis of a rudimentary "*Personenverbandstaat*" (Theodor Mayer). The subsequent development, peculiar to the proto-feudal structure, of free (*maiores*, *milites*, *vulgares*) and nonfree (*servi*) social elements relates the old and new barbarians much more closely than historians, still excessively en-

thralled by ethnic and civilization myths, generally like to admit.[5] (The use of "Germanic," "Slavic," and such terms as categories of social history is simply another myth.) The ultimate persistence of these original characteristics is debatable, however. Certain "original characteristics" in the economic, social, and political structures of eleventh and twelfth century Eastern Europe are comparable to proto-feudal conditions in the West. But it took five hundred years for the par excellence "European"—that is, Christian-feudal—structural characteristics to evolve, and only the "old" Europe worked to produce them, thus in turn providing finished models and schemes to hand over to the new barbarians around the turn of the millennium. So, in this sense the two historical situations are not analogous, and to a degree Europe's younger regions do indeed have secondary kinds of characteristics.

Indeed, the two phases are not comparable in other respects either. For in the final analysis the old barbarians vanquished Rome, even if the early Middle Ages absorbed the victors as ethnic and political units. The new barbarians, on the other hand, were "vanquished" by Christian Europe, at least in the sense that the situation convinced their rulers of the expediency of at least a degree of assimilation. The Europe of the millennium may have been less imposing than Rome had been even in her fall; but within it, forces of expansion and internal transformation were already straining to find expression. The political and institutional medium for this was once again a "renewed" and "Roman" *Imperium*, or at the other pole the true heir of Rome, Byzantium. The period which saw the beginnings of the fusion of the old Europe with the newer regions (about 1050–1100) was marked by the emergence of a complex of new phenomena. These included demographic expansion and improvements in agrarian technology, the beginning of economic and social mobility, and an intellectual revival. This combination of factors was to transform the face of Europe within the next two hundred years. The dynamism of this "second feudal age" (Marc Bloch) was peculiar to the Western part of Europe, in contrast to the more rigid eastern (Byzantine) sphere,[6] and its integrative force accelerated the new European symbiosis. However, this time, unlike in the early Middle Ages, there was little

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5   For details and further literature, see László Makkai, "Les caractères originaux de l'histoire économique et sociale de l'Europe orientale pendant le moyen âge," *Acta Historica Acad. Sc. Hungaricae* 16 (1970): 261–86; František Graus, "Deutsche und slawische Verfassungsgeschichte?" *Historische Zeitschrift* 31 (1959): 191–229; Jenő Szűcs, "König Stephan in der Sicht der modernen ungarischen Geschichtsforschung," *Südost-Forschungen* 31 (1972): 17–40.

6   Marc Bloch, *La société féodale: La formation des liens de dépendance* (Paris, 1939), 95–115.

reciprocity in the process, and the relationship between the "old" and "new" regions was mostly unidirectional.

The result was a peculiar dichotomy.[7] On the one hand, processes analogous to those which had taken place in Europe's older regions appeared again about 1200 in a more concentrated form and at accelerated speed, and in the course of the thirteenth century these dramatically transformed the region and set up the structural "common denominators" of feudal Europe. In a few short decades the royal domain and the earlier administrative system based on the royal castellanies disintegrates and is replaced in the economic sphere by the preponderance of large estates, either in secular or clerical hands, and in the political arena by the ascendancy of the upper clergy and the aristocracy vis-à-vis the king. Knighthood and certain forms of feudal relationships come into being, while the "free" middle social stratum disappears. New forces of integration forge from a variety of social elements the nucleus of a new stratum, the nobility, enjoying uniform prerogatives, their "golden liberty," while others lead to the progressive merging of people in a variety of conditions of bondage and to the gradual cessation of servitude, from which a unified class of dependant peasantry emerged with its own property and freedom of movement. Concomitantly, the region's agrarian base was transformed: there is large-scale internal colonization, the area of cultivated land expands, agrarian technology changes with the introduction of the heavy plough and the three-crop rotation system, while the old manorial system with a domestic economy worked by servants disappears. With more vital internal and external trade, the first privileged towns appear and the figure of the burgher emerges on the scene. All these features, now arising in the course of little more than a single century, had taken five hundred years (from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries) to develop in Europe's primary regions, the fruits of a protracted and more deeply structured historical development. For the rapidity of the historical processes in the newer regions was characterized by a certain "superficiality." In spite of the changed relationship between the king and the barons and between the big landowning *domini* and their *familiares*, vassalage, fief, and feudal law did not evolve in the sense they did in the West. The nature of personal dependency represented by *servitium* and *fidelitas* merged characteristics of the archaic retinue relation-

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7   Naturally, one cannot speak of homogeneous formulae here either. Regional factors, as well as the predominance now of the Western Latin, now of the Byzantine Orthodox poles in the process of this welding together, all produced several variations. What follows refers primarily to the East Central European region (see Note 3), and more narrowly to Hungary.

ship with certain superficial and inorganic quasi-feudal elements. Knighthood was generally an exclusive and circumscribed phenomenon. The knightly ethos, its ideals, and the way of life it involved touched the nobility only superficially; neither then nor later were *miles* and *nobilis* correlative concepts. The nobility itself is much more broadly based—more "peasant-like"—than in the West. The free and autonomous *civitates* were differentiated both in their size and in their subordinate importance from western towns; already at this time there is a burgeoning of that peculiar half-agrarian, half-industrial "market-town" form of urbanization, the *oppidum*. All these elements and characteristics follow the European model but differ from it in their inorganic superficiality, in their archaic peculiarities, in a certain gross lack of differentiation or in differences of magnitude.

Thus, by around 1250–1300, Europe's structural unity, the "synchronous" character of European history, is an evident fact discernible in many ways. This unity, however, manifests itself in multifarious and in many respects "asynchronous" structures, which, however, does not alter the indisputable fact of its existence. The new regions had their own belated and consequently compressed "High Middle Ages"—the term, indeed, becomes almost meaningless—after which they become in the late Middle Ages, in spite of all local variation, organic participants of a homogeneous process to which the name "European history" is commonly given.

A New Historical Frame of Reference: The Nation

It is not within the scope of this study to pursue this model further. Rather, we will select one of many possible approaches—specifically, the history of ideas—and focus on certain particulars. The thirteenth century was characterized among other things by the development of an increasing "synchronicity" in intellectual structures; everywhere intellectual currents could now express objective "common denominators" almost simultaneously and without the necessity of assuming direct transmission. At the same time, however, in this particular instance there still remains something peculiar in their appearance and in their function, some characteristic "asynchronousness." In what follows I shall try to delineate the nature of this through the analysis of a single literary work and to draw some lessons in that field of intellectual endeavor most closely related to social reality: the conception of history and social theory—in short, in the field of the transformation of political thought.

The work in question is the *Gesta Hungarorum* of Master Simon of Kéza, cleric at the court of Ladislas IV (the Cuman), written between 1282 and 1285.[8] This *opusculum* (the writer's own term for it) does not derive its significance from any inherent literary value—its style, in fact, is dry and rather monotonous—nor from claims to historical accuracy, but rather from the paradoxical fact that it is an ingenious historical fiction from start to finish. History for the author is a framework to be molded at will to serve theory. Within it he brings together a number of currents of thought common to all of Europe and adapts them to certain epistemological needs which were beginning to be felt in Hungary, and, indeed, does so in a way so "up-to-date" that for centuries historiography was unable to escape the spell of the picture he painted. Another paradox of the work is the fact that the "European" elements of its political thinking are located in a medium as originally "un-European" as the construct of the Hunnish origins and the prehistory of the Magyars. For it was Master Simon who identified a dualism in Hungary's past—Hunnish prehistory against Hungarian history—which was to persist from the late Middle Ages up to the beginnings of modern historiography.[9] And last but not least, it was Master Simon who as-

8   Emericus Szentpétery, ed., *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum tempore ducum regumque stirpis Arpadianae gestarum*, vol. 1 (Budapest, 1937), 141–94 (the two volumes of this collection of texts will henceforth be referred to as SRH). [For a recent annotated bilingual edition, see SIMON.] The relationship between Simon's work and the so-called fourteenth-century chronicle redaction, which exists in several textual variations (*"Chronici Hungarici compositio saeculi XIV,"* SRH 1:239–505) has been debated ever since the beginning of critical historical scholarship in Hungary; see *Repertorium fontium historiae medii aevi* (Roma, 1970), 3:301–2, 409–11. Some of the more recent studies include: Sándor Domanovszky, *Kézai Simon mester és krónikája* [Master Simon of Kéza and his chronicle] (Budapest, 1906); Imre Madzsar, "A hun krónika szerzője" [The author of the Hun chronicle], *Történeti Szemle* 11 (1922): 75–103; János Horváth, Jr., *Árpád-kori latinnyelvű irodalmunk stílusproblémái* [Stylistic problems in the Latin literature of the Árpád age] (Budapest, 1954), 350–91; János Horváth, Jr., "A hun történet és szerzője" [The History of the Huns and its author], *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 67 (1963): 446–76; József Gerics, "Adalékok a Kézai krónika problémáinak megoldásához" [A contribution to the solution of the problems in Simon of Kéza's chronicle], *Annales Univ. Sc. Budapestinensis de R. Eötvös nominatae, Sectio Historica* 1 (1957): 106–34; Jenő Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet, politikai teória és történetszemlélet Kézai Simon Gesta Hungarorumában" [Social theory, political theory, and the historical approach of Simon of Kéza's *Gesta Hungarorum*], *Századok* 107 (1937): 569–643, 823–78. (Wherever, in what follows, space does not allow more detailed analysis, I refer to this longer study of mine in Hungarian).

9   For the significance for intellectual history of Simon of Kézai's *Gesta Hungarorum*, see principally Péter Váczy, "A népfelség elvének magyar hirdetője a XIII. században: Kézai Simon mester" [A Hungarian propagandist of the principle of the people's sovereignty in the thirteenth century: Master Simon of Kéza], in *Károlyi Árpád emlékkönyv* (Budapest, 1933), 546–63, as well as passim in the works of Horváth, Gerics, and Szűcs cited in the previous note, and Gyula Kristó, "Kézai Simon és a XIII. század végi köznemesi ideológia néhány vonása" [Simon of Kéza and some features of the ideology of the gentry of the late thirteenth century], *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 76 (1972): 1–22. For the "modernization" of the Hunnish history in the fifteenth century, see Elemér Mályusz, "A Thuróczy-krónika és forrásai" [The Thuróczy chronicle and its

signed to the Magyars their place in European history within the medieval world-picture.

The Hunnish origin of the Magyars is, of course, a fiction, just like the Trojan origin of the French or any of the other *origo gentis* theories fabricated at much the same time. The Magyars in fact originate from the Ugrian branch of the Finno-Ugrian peoples; in the course of their wanderings in the steppes of Eastern Europe they assimilated a variety of (especially Iranian and different Turkic) cultural and ethnic elements, but they had neither genetic nor historical links to the Huns.[10] There existed in ancient Magyar tradition an origin-saga (the saga of the magic hind) which in some of its motifs resembles the origin-sagas of the Hunnish and other steppe peoples, but even these elements preserve only trace memories of Onogur, Alan, and Khazar ties.[11] The historical memory of the Magyars in the middle of the tenth century reached back through their sagas to the Khazar Khaganate (seventh to ninth centuries).[12]

The belief in the identity of Huns and Magyars appears in the Christian West in the tenth century, although at first it coexisted with other theories. One

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sources], in *Tudománytörténeti tanulmányok*, no. 5 (Budapest, 1967), 105–24; Péter Kulcsár, *Bonfini magyar történetének forrásai és keletkezése* [The sources and origin of Bonfini's Hungarian history], Humanizmus és reformáció [Humanism and reformation] 1 (Budapest, 1973), 28–52.

10 For a review of the question (with the earlier literature), see Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 126–46. Hun tradition could conceivably have been transmitted through Onogur-Bulgarian mediation, since this people was a part of the remnants of the Hun empire of Attila's sons in the Pontus region (at the head of the list of the Danubian Bulgar's earliest princes stands the name *Irnik*, son of *Avitochol*, the Bulgarian form of *Hernac*, son of Attila.) There is, however, no trace of such a motif in the Magyar tradition of ancient times. It is still an open question whether the Székely did or did not have their own Attila-tradition, and rests on the assumption that the Székely can be identified with the Bulgarian tribal fragment referred to in Muslim sources as s.k.l (*eskil, iskil*); see György Györffy, "A magyar nemzetségtől a vármegyéig, a törzstől az országig. I." [From the Hungarian nobility to the county, from the tribe to the country], *Századok* 92, nos. 5–6 (1958): 74–80. [The issue is still wide open, and the identification is seriously questioned by Turkologists.]

11 János Berze Nagy, "A csodaszarvas mondája" [The saga of the magic hind], *Magyarságtudomány* 1 (1942): 157–75. For the literature on the question, see Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 11–38. For more recent discussion, see Jenő Szűcs, "'Gentilizmus': A barbár etnikai tudat kérdése" ["Gentilism": The question of barbarian ethnic consciousness], (Diss. C.Sc. Budapest, 1970), posthumously published in Jenő Szűcs, *A magyar nemzeti tudat kialakulása* [The formation of the Hungarian national consciousness] (Budapest, 1997), 7–295; see also Jenő Szűcs, "Gentilism," chapter 3 in this volume; Jenő Szűcs, "Zwei Fragmente," in "Studien zum Nationalbewusstsein: Mittelalter und Gegenwart," ed. János M. Bak, Special issue of *East Central Europe/ l'Europe du Centre-Est: Eine wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift* 20–23, no. 2 (1993–96): 55–90.

12 For the interpretation of Constantine Porphyrogenitus' reports (*De administrando imperio*, chs. 38–40), and for the chronological basis of the tradition, see esp. János Deér, "A IX. századi magyar történet időrendjéhez" [A contribution to the chronology of ninth-century Magyar history], *Századok* 79–80 (1945–46): 3–20; Károly Czeglédy, "A kangarok (besenyők) a VI. századi szír forrásokban" [The Kangars (Petchenegs) in sixth-century Syrian sources], *Magyar Tud. Akadémia Nyelv és Irodalomtudományi Osztályának Közleményei* 5 (1954): 243–276. For a summary of these problems, see Szűcs, "Gentilism" chapter 3 in this volume.

source of this belief was the inclination to regard all the peoples who descended upon Europe from the fifth century onward as the "scourge of God" against the Christians and as one and the same people. From here sprang, for example, the notion of an Avar-Magyar (or even a Hunnish-Avar-Magyar) identification.[13] The other support for telescoping the two peoples into one was the fact that the name *Ungri~Ungari~Hungari* generally given to the Magyars in the West was reminiscent of the name *(H)unni*. In reality, it derives from the name of the On-ogur confederation of tribes to which the ancestors of the Magyars once also belonged, and which entered Medieval Latin after transmission and transmutation through old Slavic and Byzantine sources (where it appears in forms like *Ongri~Ugri*).[14] The song of the Nibelungs established this identity and the prestige of the works of Godfrey of Viterbo confirmed it. Indeed, by around 1200 the Hunnish origin of the Magyars was taken for granted in the West.

Not so, however, with the Magyars themselves. To be sure, in this period certain ideological advantages of the identification had already been recognized by the so-called Anonymus (Magister P.), a Hungarian chronicler who had studied probably in Paris. Starting from the notion that Pannonia was once the land of *Athila rex*, he identified *Ecilburg* (the *Etzelen bürge* of the song of the Nibelungs; in Hungarian, Óbuda) as "Attila's town," and the Székely as "the people of King Attila." He could then present the legendary ruler of the Huns—some confusion and contradictions notwithstanding—as the ancestor of the Árpád dynasty, so that the Magyar conquest could be seen simply as the assertion of their "right of ownership" (or in modern terms, their historical claims) over Pannonia. However, these three motives are all that appear regarding the Huns in his *Gesta Hungarorum*. How could he give the Magyar people ancestors like the Huns, whose name still had such hateful associations in the Christian West?[15] Even around 1250 the royal court of Béla IV still refused to

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13   The *Annales Alemannici* (MGH SS 1: 40 ff.) at the beginning of the tenth century are the first to refer to the Magyars as *gens Hunorum*. For the relevant sources, see Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 129–31. Certain seeds of this theory appear also in Widukind (*Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres*, MGH SSrG 60:28–29), who identifies the Magyars with the Avars, and regards the latter as the remnants of the Huns, also recounting the Hun origin saga as told by Jordanes.

14   Bálint Hóman, "A magyar nép neve a középkori latinságban" [The name of the Hungarian people in Medieval Latin], *Történeti Szemle* 6 (1917): 129–58, 240–58; Elemér Moór, "Die Benennung der Ungarn in den Quellen des IX. und X. Jahrhunderts," *Ural-Altaische Jahrbücher* 31 (1959): 191–229.

15   *Anonymi (P. magistri) Gesta Hungarorum*, SRH 1:33–117 [for a recent bilingual edition see *Anonymi Bele regis notarii Gesta Hungarorum—Anonymus, Notary of King Béla: The Deeds of the Hungarians*, ed. tr. and annot. by Martyn Rady and László Veszprémy, in *Anonymus and Master Roger* (Budapest–New York: CEU Press, 2010), 2–129 (Central European Medieval Texts, vol. 5)]; cf. Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 134–36.

countenance any notions of his association with Attila.[16] Yet three decades later, Ladislas' cleric had succeeded in promoting the Hunnish origin theory to a central truth, and his account of Magyar history, which he culled from the chronicles of the previous two centuries, was preceded by a separate "book" of similar length (*Hunnorum gesta*) containing a detailed account of the glorious ancient past of the "Hun-Hungarians."

Now it would be quite wrong to picture Simon as an isolated dreamer preoccupied with some novel vision of history at odds both with ideas current in contemporary Europe and with the Christian conception of history earlier prevalent in Hungary. On the contrary, as philological research and source examination progress, there emerges clear evidence for the many interconnections between his sources and for the extent to which the work is embedded in the contemporary intellectual world, the author's idiosyncratic ideas notwithstanding. It has long been recognized that the epic materials that form the basis of his Hunnish history derive not only from Jordanes's *Getica* (551) and Godfrey of Viterbo's *Pantheon* (1189) but from a surprisingly broad range of reading. For example, while visiting Venice he studied a lost history of the city containing numerous references to the Huns (which might, in fact, be identical to a *Historia Attilae* known to us only from references). His Italian shows the influence of the Venetian dialect, and it seems clear that he studied Roman and canon law in nearby Padua. He had been to France as well, and is the first Hungarian writer to record a French place-name in its French form (*Chalon*). What is more, he incorporated local French legends at certain points in his history of the Huns; for example, he located the site of the battle of Catalaunum near "Beauvoir" (*Campus Belvider*, one of a number of places so-called).[17] Research has also identified the two main theoretical foundations of the work, scholastic rationalism and Roman law (both of which can be connected with his north Italian studies).[18] More recent studies suggest that we ought to give rather more credence to the author's assertion in his prologue that he gathered the materials and ideas for his work from far-flung sources *per Italiam, Franciam ac Germaniam*. For it can be shown that more than once he introduces memories of

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16 Augustin Theiner, ed., *Vetera monumenta historica Hungariam sacram illustrantia* (Rome, 1859), 1:230.

17 The relationship to the written sources has already been clarified by Domanovszky, *Kézai*, 37–70, and Sándor Eckhardt, "A pannóniai hún történet keletkezése" [The origins of the Pannonian Hun history], *Századok* 62 (1928): 18–19, 30–31, and passim.

18 For details, see Horváth, *Árpád-kori*, 374–82; Gerics, "Adalékok," 111–12, 115ff.; Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 589–95, 602–12.

his own travels into his account of Attila's three expeditions against Western Europe. On one such journey, begun before 1269, he went to France as a member of a diplomatic mission and travelled down the Rhine valley, through Burgundy to Lyons, and from there home via northern Italy. Then between 1269 and 1271 in another diplomatic matter as Queen Elizabeth's cleric he twice traversed Charles of Anjou's southern Italian kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, travelling as far as Messina. It must have been during the 1270s (or, at any rate, between 1272–1283) that he studied at the university of Padua and earned his degree of magister. Returning home, and now the king's cleric, at the beginning of the 1280s he set to draft his newly conceived "Hun-Magyar" history, based on his readings, experiences, and adventures.[19]

Much relies here on his experiences and adventures! His reading of literature could provide no support for his Hunnish-Hungarian identification nor sufficiently satisfying details of Hunnish glory. This he remedied in two ways. First, he simply transferred to the Huns a whole series of events he had read about in old Hungarian chronicles regarding the Magyar conquest of Pannonia and the Hungarians' assaults on the West in the tenth century. This account was then enriched with colorful material from his varied personal experiences. Ancient ruins at home or abroad he imagined to preserve some vestiges of the Huns; names of places which could be linked with the Huns according to the "etymological" methods fashionable at the time were worked up into "historical" episodes; every turn of phrase, every legend which he had picked up at home or abroad was put to good use. His literary sources were often terse in their discussion of the Hunnish expeditions, but as he had himself been to most of the areas mentioned in Jordanes and Godfrey of Viterbo, he filled in the details from his own travel experiences and his knowledge of geography. The history of the Huns thus unfolded on a field of action which embraced not only Pannonia but Western Europe as well, and their deeds became legendary epics in which almost every actor, motif, and turn of events is a unique fusion of literary sources, oral traditions, etymological deductions, and personal experiences. What bound them together was "logic," and what conferred authenticity was the repeatedly-expressed conviction that present-day realities—a ruin, name of a town, a turn of phrase, any element of the world of experience—can be used to deduce the past from the present if one proceeds reasonably, matching contemporary elements with references in the written sources. Everything hinges on ingenious

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19   For details, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 573–80, 836–67.

but rational combinations. This is valid not only for the epic but also for the theoretical content of the work.[20]

This approach to the past and the methodology it involved was very much "up-to-date" and fashionable at this time. Just as writers of history in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries increasingly strove to free themselves from the rigid formulas of ecclesiastical historiography, so too they tried to distance themselves from the dry rhetoric of the annals and chronicles. The *Gesta*, with their attempt at a coherent, even "novelistic" narration, proved a suitable literary medium for setting the "one-off" deeds of kings, magnates, bishops, and abbots in a new historical perspective within the larger groupings of peoples now taking shape, Europe's emerging nations. Between the old, overly broad perspective of the world chronicles and the excessively narrow horizons of monastic, provincial, or town records, the middle of the twelfth century saw the beginnings of medieval "national" historiography (Abbot Suger, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, Geoffrey of Monmouth), which after 1200 spread to Europe's new peoples too (the Danes Sven Aggeson and Saxo Grammaticus, the Norwegian Snorri Sturluson, the Polish Vincent Kadłubek, the Hungarian Anonymus, etc.), which was to find its most striking vernacular expression in the mid-thirteenth century continuation of the *Grandes Chroniques de France*. It was a time of feverish activity and competition among men of letters throughout Europe as they sought to find in the past ancient, admirable, and glorious persons (preferably ones who had also played a conspicuous role in antiquity) whom they could make into the ancestors of their own *gens* or *natio* by the application of "scientific" methods—the combination of historical, logical, and etymological arguments—and with the aid of oral traditions and legends which were becoming fashionable at that time. A number of peoples vie in the claim to Trojan descent (the English, the Celts of Wales, the French, the Germans, and some Italian towns), with the French emerging as undisputed victors. In other cases, etymological inspiration was furnished by the Greek Danaids (for the Danes) or the Greeks themselves (e.g., *Graccus*, the founder of *Cracus*/Cracow for the Poles), and so on.[21] The climate was, therefore, already

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20   The peculiar mechanism of Simon's historiographical method was discussed by Eckhardt, "A pannóniai," particularly 17ff., 47–56. See also Horváth, "A hun történet," 466–76; Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 863–64, 869–72.

21   Herbert Grundmann, *Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter: Gattungen-Epochen-Eigenart* (Göttingen, 1965), 15–17; Anneliese Grau, *Der Gedanke der Herkunft in der deutschen Geschichtsschreibung des Mittelalters* (Leipzig, 1938); Maria Klippel, *Die Darstellung der fränkischen Trojanersage in Geschichtsschreibung und Dichtung vom Mittelalter bis zur Renaissance in Frankreich* (Marburg, 1936); Halvdan Koht, "The Dawn of

ripe when Master Simon, roaming *per Italiam, Germaniam, Franciam* during the 1260s and 70s, meditated on his future work. At home, too, the precedents had been set by Master P.'s first somewhat timid initiatives.

The ancestor question was, in fact, already settled. For Christian Europe had by then agreed to agree on the Hunnish descent of the Magyars. And once a Hun-Hungarian identity was accepted in the West, other combinations could hardly be given serious consideration, nor was there need to. It is customary to seek an explanation for the genesis of the Hunnish theory in the "pagan" Cuman environment of Ladislas IV's court toward the end of the 1270s (Ladislas being Cuman on his mother's side). But while this doubtlessly contributed to the acceptance on the king's part of an affinity with Attila (which, as we have seen, his grandfather Béla IV had still refused to countenance), this is in itself insufficient explanation for Simon's adoption of the notion. The king's cleric did not in fact share his master's pagan leanings; indeed, he tactfully ignored them in his writings, even presenting the king as the loyal son of the Holy Mother Church with which Ladislas was, in fact, forever quarrelling. The significant fact is that by the thirteenth century European public opinion was so far reassured of the general consolidation of Christianity that it was prepared to consign the horrors associated with Attila and the Huns to history. This swing is reflected in the report quoted above which Humbertus de Romanis delivered at the Council of Lyons (1274): the conversion of the formerly terrifying "barbarians" was pronounced a great victory of the Christian Cause, and the Hungarians—now unquestionably of Hunnish descent (*Huni qui et Hungari*)—were received into the family of Europe's peoples.[22] By now Master Simon, if anyone, was in the position to know that in elaborating his theory he would be working well within the consensus of European public opinion.

The advantages were obvious. In their own way, the Huns, too, were an "ancient" people, and of their glorious and conquering past there could obviously be no doubt. Moreover, the Hunnish descent completely fulfilled an important ideological criterion of all such theories: the ability to support claims of historical right. It demonstrated that the Magyar conquest was nothing other than

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Nationalism in Europe," *American Historical Review* 52 (1947), esp. 270–77; Hermann Heimpel, "Alexander von Roes und das deutsche Selbstbewusstsein des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 26 (1930): 50–55; Borst, *Turmbau* 2: 700ff., 767ff., 912ff.

22 Cap. V: Quod ista septem genera persecutorum iam pene enervata sunt praeter Saracenos … Barbari non comparent praeter Tartaros, qui etsi solos Hungaros persequuntur"; Cap. VI: "Nam Wandali qui et Poloni, et Huni qui et Hungari, Gothi qui et Daci sunt effecti Catholici," in Giovanni Domenico Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (Venice, 1780), 24:110.

the assertion of the rights of the Hun-Hungarians "returning" to Pannonia (so Master Simon's second book, on Hungarian history proper, is entitled *Liber de reditu*). What is more, the Hunnish past could, with a twist, be fitted into the Christian view of history which required that a people should have fulfilled even in ancient times a certain function in the evolution of Christianity. Already in the first *Vita* of St. Stephen there occurs the notion of the still-pagan Hungarians as the *flagellum Dei*, the instruments of the Almighty in chastising Christendom for its sins. Of course, in the earlier Christian view of history it was primarily Attila who was "the scourge of God." But Master Simon was able to revive this *topos* and go a step further. In his account of the famous meeting at Ravenna (Ch. 17) he has Attila, about to attack the pope, being turned back by a vision which enjoins on him instead to massacre the Arian heretics in the interests of the papacy. With this innovation, Attila is exalted to the position of a defender of the Church; he has attained a function within, so to say, the *ecclesia militans*.[23]

Proving the Hunnish origin itself did not cause much difficulty. European public taste had not only rehabilitated the formerly despised world of oral traditions and sagas (*fabulae*) but had assigned to them a definite "theoretical" role. Simon was clearly familiar, on the one hand, with the ancient Magyar descent-saga preserved in oral tradition (which by around 1200, as Anonymus indicates, one could hear only in "the false stories of the peasants, and foolish songs of the minstrels," *ex falsis fabulis rusticorum vel a garrulo cantu ioculatorum*); on the other hand, he discovered an early saga concerning the Huns in Jordanes's *Getica*. The two were related in certain motifs (the pursuit of the hind and the abduction of women). The names of the two eponymous brothers in the Hungarian saga, *Hunor* and *Mogor*—in fact, the legendary personification of the historical relationship between the Onogur and the Magyar—offered tempting possibilities, the name of the former resembling as it did the name of the Hun people.[24]

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23   *Vita Sancti Stephani regis* ("Legenda maior"): *Unde contigit divine pietatis intuitu in filios perditionis et ignorantie... Ungaros videlicet... clementi visu de celo prospicere, ut quos ad ulciscendas prevaricationes Christianorum de sedibus naturalibus in occiduas partes occulto perpetuitatis consilio prius destinaverat, hos... de via iniquitatis ad iustitie semitam ad spem in eternum permanentis perduceret retributionis*" (SRH 2:378). For the notion of "function," see Ernesto Sestan, *Stato e nazione nell'alto medioevo: Ricerche sulle origini nazionali in Francia, Italia, Germania* (Naples, 1952), 33; Friedrich Otto Hertz, *Nationality in History and Politics: A Study of the Psychology and Sociology of National Sentiment and Character* (London, 1945), 280; Dietrich Kurze, "Nationale Regungen in der spätmittelalterlichen Prophetie," *Historische Zeitschrift* 202 (1966): 3, 10, 23.

24   For the growing value of oral tradition, see János Honti, *Anonymus és a hagyomány* [The Anonymus and tradition], Minerva 60/1 (Budapest, 1942), esp. 14–15, 21ff. Nevertheless, even the Anonymus, around 1200,

This provided Simon with his key argument for the Hun-Hungarian identity, which he was thus able to support with western "literary" authority. In fact, it was his sole piece of "historical" evidence, but his exemplary scholastic argument in the prologue appeals to the authority of Holy Writ (*per textum comprobatur*) and the natural order (*natura rerum*) to confirm "rationally" that the origin of the Magyars resembles that of the "other nations of the world" (*sicut mundi nationes alias*).

However, this "proof" in itself can hardly be said to be his most important achievement, even though he managed at the beginning of his work (Ch. 4) to give it canonical validity by tying it to the biblical genesis of peoples and to the building of the Tower of Babel, thus finally locating the *natio* in the family tree of Europe's peoples on Japheth's branch. For this was essentially a routine task, fitted into a prepared scheme. The significant point is that Simon was able to present the historical identity of the Hun-Hungarian "nation" as an unbroken entity "from ancient times to our own days." Proceeding from this, he effectively overthrew previous historical viewpoints.

In order to appreciate the significance of this, one must glance at the preceding state of affairs. Historiography began early in the Middle Ages with the "*Volksgeschichte*" (the *origo* or *historia gentis*), which reached its flower in the sixth to eighth centuries (Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, the so-called "Fredegar," Isidore of Seville, Paul the Deacon, Bede, etc.). This form attempted to coordinate the "barbarian" traditions of the new peoples just stepping onto the stage of history—Western and Eastern Goths, Franks, Lombards, Anglo-Saxons, etc.—with the universal viewpoint of Christianity, but in such an "ethnocentric" way as to still preserve the framework of each people's history, with their individual origins and their own heroic past (*acta regum et bella gentium*). The productive epoch for this kind of historiography came to an end with the eighth century (Widukind's Saxon history in the tenth century is but an epilogue). After the dispersal of the original peoples themselves, the horizon of history on the one hand expanded, as testified by the appearance of world-chronicles, and on the other, contracted into localism. Thus, that which starts in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is (as has already been said) a new kind of phenomenon reflecting the new integrating currents: it is the

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was reluctant to write down the Magyar origin saga. That this legend was written down only in the thirteenth century was proven by Horváth, *Árpád-kori*, 13–29, 297–98, 317; cf. Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 615–16. For the probable transformation of *onour-unour-unor*, see Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 30–31. [This etymology has been seriously challenged lately, e.g., by András Róna-Tas, "Ugor, ogur, or ugur: Remarks on the name 'Finno-Ugrian,'" in *Ünnepi könyv Mikola Tibor tiszteletére* (Szeged, 1996), 265–69.]

seed of "national" historiography.[25] But all this developed in the old Europe. When after the millennium a series of new peoples confronted the task of reconciling their own "barbarian" traditions with the norms of Christendom, the altered historical situation left little scope for the kind of compromise observable earlier. In form, the Christian chronicle-literature that was now produced is also the "history of the people" genre (as shown by the title *Gesta Ungarorum* of its first fruits in Hungary, written around 1060 and reconstructable from fragments). Its content, however, is very much less so. The fully developed system of values of Europe's Christian feudal system demanded the stifling of the pagan, "barbarian" past. The early Hungarian *Gesta* accepted the artificial literary theory of "Scythian" origins which took shape in the monasteries of the West and was first conceived of by Abbot Regino of Prüm (in 908). The real *origo gentis* and real past of the pagan Magyars lived on until the thirteenth century, but only in the "false tales of the peasants" and slowly reduced to the level of folktales. This *Gesta* discussed as much of the pre-conversion past as its author could glean from the annals of Altaich and from Regino, and discussed it with the same prejudices, being none too sparing in denunciatory epithets and judgments.[26]

In this respect, the attitude of the early Hungarian chronicles differs but little from the historiography of the other "new barbarian" of Eastern and Northern Europe. The goal was assimilation at any price, so that, as has been aptly said by Arno Borst, "each country could feel like a Christian microcosm."[27] The pagan past, the ancient past itself was considered a kind of genealogical antecedent of secondary importance. For according to the Pauline teaching passed on by the Church Fathers, through the mystery of baptism man becomes "a new creation" (*nova creatura*), born again through the waters of baptism (*renascitur homo ex aqua*). He wins, therefore, his true human essence, his *humanitas*, only through becoming a Christian, a *fidelis Christianus*, in contradistinction to his original "natural" self (*homo naturalis seu animalis*). What was true of the individual was also true of peoples. The term "people," *populus* or *gens*, refers in this view not to some immanent and *naturalis* entity but, from the ecclesiastical point of view, to the masses of believers, or from the lay point of view, to the mass of subjects (*fideles subditi*), whom Divine Providence had subjected to the power of the rulers (the *populus subiectus* or *subditus*).[28]

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25 Grundmann, *Geschichtsschreibung*, 12ff.

26 Elemér Mályusz, "Krónika-problémák" [Chronicle problems], *Századok* 100 (1966): 714, 725.

27 Borst, *Turmbau*, 2: 701–3.

28 Walter Ullmann, *The Individual and Society in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore, 1966), 7–24.

So, in the sources of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, in the chronicles and legends, in the characters and decrees, the "people" of Hungary appear simply as *gens regis* or *populus regni*, the people of the Christian monarchy, in other words, the great mass of the subjects of the realm. In the thirteenth century, *Hungarus* is a mere derivative of *regnum Hungariae*; a "Hungarian" is one who is the subject of the king, who was born in this country, or, as a contemporary (1205) definition unambiguously states, a *persona que originem de regno Ungarie duceret*.[29] Genuine *historia* is viewed as beginning with Baptism, when, as King Stephen's Greater Legend (c. 1083) expressed it with biblical sonority, "the sons of perdition and ignorance," this "wild and roaming people, the Magyars," who had, in the pagan past, "been lost in darkness, saw a great light."[30] The fundamental historical watershed in this view of history comes with the acceptance of Christianity, and with the increasingly mythicized St. Stephen; everything that came before is degraded to insignificance and damned as "prehistoric." Otherwise, the Hungarian chronicles of the eleventh and twelfth centuries are mostly preoccupied with the past of the members of the Christianized Árpád dynasty. Of "society" proper the only notable personages who appear in the historical picture are those who play an active role in the fortunes of the dynasty.

This formula begins to loosen around 1200. The Anonymus especially did much to free it up as he searched for a continuity between the pagan past and the *nobilissima gens Hungarie*, turning his attention not only to the ancestors of the dynasty (*gesta regum*) but also to the antecedents of the contemporary noble families (*gesta nobilium*), whose existence he tracked back to the time of the original conquest.[31] It was Master Simon, however, who finally dispensed with the formula in the interests of the emerging *esprit laïque* and "national" historiography.[32] With this, historical consciousness undergoes a fundamental transformation. The theme of Christianity as a turning point that marked an epochal change does not disappear, but what was previously considered lacking in inter-

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29 For the terminology, see József Deér, "Közösségérzés és nemzettudat a XI–XIII. századi Magyarországon" [The sense of community and national self-consciousness in Hungary of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries], in *A Gróf Klebelsberg Kuno Magyar Történetkutató Intézet Évkönyve* 4 (Budapest, 1934), 97–100; see also Jenő Szűcs, "Entstehung des ungarischen Nationalbewusstseins," in *Studien zum Nationalbewusstsein*, 11–54, and Jenő Szűcs, "Gentilism," (chapter 3 in this volume). The charter of 1205 is published in Nándor Knauz, ed., *Monumenta ecclesiae Strigoniensis* (Esztergom, 1874), 1:181.

30 *SRH* 2:378, 380.

31 János Győry, *Gesta regum—gesta nobilium* (Budapest, 1948).

32 See Otto Brunner's instructive analyses in *Adeliges Landleben und europäischer Geist* (Salzburg: Otto Müller, 1949), 62–90, as well as Walter Ullmann, *The Individual and Society in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore, 1966), 104–16.

est, what indeed was denied expression as mere prehistory, "the wanderings in darkness," now expanded and became the critical point of historical consciousness and a focus of social-political debate.

According to the new *Gesta Hungarorum*, from the genesis of languages and peoples at Babel through the migration of the Magyar ancestors from their legendary seat at Meotis to Scythia, where the "multiplied" people were divided into 108 clans, the Hungarian *natio* was "until today" (*usque hodie*) a close kinship of blood. This ethnic unity was disturbed neither by their wanderings from Scythia until they "first" conquered Pannonia; nor as they subjugated half the world from the Don to the Rhine under the leadership of Attila; nor on their return to Scythia, only to rally their strength for their "return" to Pannonia in 872 (!) and for its conclusive occupation. There is, therefore, no break from the Flood to the thirteenth century, in spite of the various vicissitudes in the life of this people and in spite of the variability of fate, of its "fortunate and unfortunate" turnings, the account of which fills the twenty-three chapters which make up the "Deeds of the Huns."

The major category of historical thought, as well as the agent of history's transmission, is the *natio* itself, whose historical continuity is ensured primarily by its common origin. The number 108, projected back into antiquity, is probably nothing other than the historicization of the number of the *genera* (loosely related groups of aristocratic and noble families all claiming descent from common eleventh- and twelfth-century ancestors) which could be counted around 1280.[33] The second criterion of people's historical existence is the identity of its language. The Huns, in our author's view, spoke Hungarian, for Hun and Magyar were not two related peoples but one and the same, which at one time just happened to be referred to principally as "Hun" but later was called *Hungarus*. Just one illustration of the kind of tortured etymological deductions which such reasoning permitted is the notion that *Ispania* derived its name from the Magyar *ispán* (head of a royal county).[34]

It has been customary to regard Simon's work as a unity which can be divided structurally into two basic components, the Hun and the Hungarian

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33 Györffy, "A magyar nemzetségtől a vármegyéig," 26.

34 ...*capitanei... qui Hunorum lingua spani vocabantur, ex quorum nominibus tota Ispania postmodum est vocata* (Ch. 12). Similarly, it was after Attila's brother Buda that Attila's town *Oubuda* was named (Ch. 13), and several Hun captains got their names, "etymologically," from thirteenth-century Hungarian toponyms (Cuwe, Erd, Turda, etc.), see also Horváth, "A hun történet," 467–71. The concept of "kindred peoples" is also formed on the basis of kindred languages: thus, a group separated from the nation in antiquity *statura et colore Hunis similes, tantummodo parum differunt in loquela, sicut Saxones et Turingi* (Ch. 14).

gesta, with two more or less inorganically attached "appendices" (a so-called Advena catalog, and a "second appendix"). These, however, are artificial demarcations, based on structure and genre, and manage to ignore the essential fact that the basis of the work is the origin-fiction and that the structure of the work is dictated by the logic of this. The writer himself gives us the key in a short digression at the end of Ch. 6. According to this, "pure Hungary" (*pura Hungaria*) consists of the descendants of the 108 clans established in ancient times "without any intermixing" (*absque omni missitalia*); those who subsequently became part of it were either newcomers (*advenae*) or the descendants of prisoners of war (*ex captivis oriundi*). These categories mirror the structure of the work as a whole. A synonym for the history of the Huns is "the first book of the entry" (*liber primus de introitu*), while Hungarian history from the conquest to 1282 is subsumed in "the second book of the return" (*secundus liber de reditu*). The conceptual unit of the first two books, as the author expresses it in Ch. 76, tacitly referring to the common content of both, is the history of "pure Hungary" (*pura Hungaria*). What follow are not "appendices" but two further "books"; for to these, too, the author assigns the name *liber*. The first deals with the noble newcomers of foreign origin (*De nobilibus advenis*); the other is a dissertation on the non-noble social elements: those of foreign origin, and those descended from prisoners of war (*conditionarii . . . ex captivis oriundi*). The conceptual unit of these latter two books is the "mixed" elements (*missitalia*). The fourfold construction is, therefore, conceived in a conceptual dualism, according to which even within the kingdom of Hungary there are "pure Magyars" as well as "mixtures." This conceptual dualism forms the main historical organizing principle of Simon's *Gesta*.[35]

It would be a mistake to interpret this unhistorical origin-fiction, asserted with such consistent logic, as the seed of some racial theory. Note that not one word is said against the "mixtures." Rather, in a somewhat clumsy way it serves to counterbalance the rigid Christian conception of history. Moreover, this his-

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35 For the details of the construction and the constructional principles of the work, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 616–20. The pairs of conceptual opposites in Simon's *Gesta* are clear: *pura Hungaria~missitalia; verus alumnus regni Scitiae~missitalius exterae nationis; de Scitia oriundi~missitalia* (chs. 6, 22, 55 – SIMON, 22–24, 72, 124). This peculiar word is a derivative of *miscitare* "to mix, to mingle" (cf. Du Cange, *Glossarium*, 5:176) corresponding to the medieval Italian forms *mischiare, meschiare* (Florentine *mestiare*) and derivatives (e.g., *mischiato, mistamente*)—see Carlo Battisti and Giovanni Alessio, *Dizionario etimologico Italiano* (Florence, 1954), 4:86. The forms *missitalium* or *missitalius* demonstrate the same characteristic Venetian phonetic peculiarity as Simon's name for Venice, *Venesia* (Ch. 15); cf. Eckhardt, "A pannóniai," 4. This is one of the linguistic proofs of Simon's Venetian sojourn.

torical principle, as suggested above, is intersected by another. Socially, both groups are divided into nobles and non-nobles (*ignobiles*). Thus even as the work concludes with a social-theoretical discussion, the history of the Huns is introduced by a similar dissertation on the ancient origins of social inequality in the "pure" Hun-Magyar society. We shall have more to say of this later. It is enough here to note that the agent of history is the "true" or "pure" (*vera*, *pura*) *natio*, whose conceptual opposite is every foreign (*extera*) *natio*.

The above is not merely a conceptual principle; it is an ordering principle in the Hunnish history as well. For in this fanciful construct Pannonia before the Huns was a kind of historicized Holy Roman Empire, whose ruler was the German (*Alamannus natione*) king Detricus—a figure created from elements of the Dietrich of Bern legend—whose people were a peculiar Roman-German-Lombard (!) hodgepodge. The "pure" Huns were, therefore, in danger of "admixing" with this product of the author's imagination, especially when, under Attila, their empire extended from Cologne in the West to the *Lithuani* in the North and Zadar in the South. It is for this reason that the author scrupulously separates the Huns even in their institutions from every *extera natio*, and the latter are given a separate governor in the person of Attila's brother Buda (Ch. 10). In lifestyles, too, the two elements diverged (ibid.), as well as in their military organizations (Chs. 10, 12, 15). After Attila's death it was the *extera natio* which caused the outbreak of factionalism (Ch. 19); and so on.

It is instructive to compare in verbal detail Master Simon's *Gesta* with the version of Hunnish history by an unknown compiler of a few decades later (the so-called fourteenth-century chronicle composition),[36] as it draws attention to an important development in the history of ideas. For the compiler was evidently at a loss for what to do with the details we have been discussing above. Either he left them out or he distorted their meaning, using extracts of the text only where "*extra natio*" could be interpreted as referring also to some "foreign" individual, and he nowhere uses the word "*natio*" as Simon does to refer to the Hun-Hungarians themselves. It is worth noting that Simon was the first to use the word *natio* to refer to his own people, and moreover with a highly positive connotation. Indeed, in his conceptual system peoples or "nationalities" are generally referred to as *nationes*. But in the earlier chronicles of Hungary, in legends

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36   This lost construction became the basis of the late medieval chronicles of Hungary (*SRH* 1:239–505); [For a recent bilingual edition see *Chronica de gestis Hungarorum e codice picto saec. XIV, - Chronicle of the Deeds of the Hungarians from the Fourteenth-Century Illuminated Codex,* ed. tr. by János M. Bak and László Veszprémy (Budapest–New York, 2018) (Central European Medieval Texts, vol. 9)]; see also note 8.

and in legal writings, the writer's own people are always referred to as *gens*. The term "*natio*" either simply meant "descent," or referred to foreign, largely barbarian and pagan tribes, with some pejorative connotation.[37]

This eleventh- and twelfth-century usage is consonant with the contemporary European use of concepts which stretched back to antiquity. The word *natio* preserved its etymological and semantic affiliation with the notion of "birth" (*nascor*), in close relationship with the concept of *natura*; and "natural origin" counted as a value neither in later antiquity nor in the Middle Ages. It is, therefore, understandable that the word *natio* in its more comprehensive sense referred both in classical and medieval Latin principally to unorganized, barbarian, or pagan tribes, somewhat analogous to the modern ethnographic concept of *Naturvolk*.[38] The word begins to express a higher value in Europe in the thirteenth century, as the conceptual offshoot of the renaissance of the idea of origin which marked the beginning of the early "national" outlook. Around 1250 we find *natio regni Angliae* (its vernacular form, *nacion: inglis man par in commun*, appears around 1300). The French *nation* enters French literature in the 1260s and '70s, where it refers to the totality of "the French." At about the same time the concept emerges within the Italian urban setting in the forms *natio*, *nazione*. The "ideological" character of the theories of origin emphasizes the notion that a people (*gens*) belongs together principally through its common "birth, descent, origin," and in virtue of this forms one and the same *natio*. And, as the latter has by now acquired value, the word itself comes increasingly to express a specific value.[39] So in this respect, too, Master Simon joins the mainstream in his "up-to-date"

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37 See Note 29. The concept *natio Hungarica* first appears in Hungary in 1298 in a charter: Gusztáv Wenzel, ed., *Árpádkor új okmánytár: Codex diplomaticus Arpadianus continuatus*, Mon. Hung. Hist. I. Diplomataria (Budapest, 1874), 22: XII, 619.

38 *Thesaurus linguae Latinae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1925–34), 6/2: 1842–1865 (G. Meyer); Kurt Heissenbüttel, *Die Bedeutung der Bezeichnungen für "Volk" und "Nation" bei den Geschichtsschreibern des 10. bis 13. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1920); Karl Bierbach, *Kurie und nationale Staaten im früheren Mittelalter (bis 1245)* (Dresden, 1938), esp. 10–37. See also Franz Walter Müller's basic study: Franz Walter Müller, "Zur Geschichte des Wortes und Begriffs 'nation' im altfranzösischen Schrifttum des Mittelalters bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts," *Romanische Forschungen* 58/59 (1947): 201–7.

39 *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1933), 7:30; Frédéric Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IXe au XVe siècle* (Paris, 1888), 5:462; Müller, "Zur Geschichte des Wortes und Begriffs 'nation,'" 247–321. For the Italian use of the words, see Niccolò Tommaseo and Bernardo Bellini, *Dizionario della lingua Italiana* 3/1: 451; Heissenbüttel, *Bedeutung*, 78–90. For the German terminology, see Walther Müller, "Deutsches Volk und deutsches Land im späteren Mittelalter," *Historische Zeitschrift* 132 (1925): 460ff. The use of the French "*nation*" is rooted in a conception already formulated around 1300 in a legal dissertation: *gens… qui sont nez hors du royaume*, in other words, the entire people "born" within the French kingdom form one and the same "nation"; see Bernard Guenée, "État et nation en France au Moyen-Âge," *Revue Historique* 237 (1967): 25.

way, for a time confusing, even dumbfounding his near contemporaries, as the reaction of the fourteenth-century compiler strikingly illustrates.[40]

It is not the intention of this study to delve into the multifaceted subject of the genesis of "nationalism" in the Middle Ages.[41] Let two concrete examples suffice to demonstrate through what intellectual contradictions and historiographical debates the new concept had to fight to gain recognition.

Simon tells how after the death of Attila and the dissolution of his empire his legitimate son, Csaba, returned to the "nation of his father" (*ad patris nationem*) in Scythia and began at once to agitate for a return "in order to take vengeance on the Germans." The later chronicler predictably baulked at the first phrase: in his version Csaba returns to "the abode of his father" (*ad paternam sedem*). The rest he omits: Csaba merely encouraged the return with his "admonitions."

Another episode is of even more interest. Master Simon, although evidently fond of Csaba, nevertheless condemns him at one point. He recounts how Csaba, on returning to Scythia, "boasted of his mother's nobility" (*nobilitate genitricis in communi se iactaret*—Csaba's mother was supposedly the daughter of a Greek emperor). For this the Hunnish nobility "held him in contempt" (*ipsum contemnebat*), saying that he was "not a true scion" (*non verus alumnus*) of Scythia but "a mixture from an alien nation" (*missitalius exterae nationis*), and in consequence, he was not given a wife in Scythia. Two generations later the compiler of the fourteenth century still does not understand this conception, or does not accept it. He replaces the entire account with the brief statement that "on his grandfather's advice" Csaba sought a wife elsewhere. This trivialization effectively glosses over the significance of the claims implicit in Simon's original version about origins and "public opinion" among the Hunnish nobility. Nothing could better highlight the difference in outlook of the two authors.[42]

This is all the more significant because Csaba is the only figure in Hunnish history whom Master Simon links genealogically with one of the prominent baronial families of his own time (viz. the Aba clan). All the other heroes and Hun captains owe their names to etymological inventions. For the author consciously avoided giving any contemporary baronial family the pretext for deduc-

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40 For a detailed account of the sources, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 626–31.

41 For some theoretical aspects of this complex of questions, see Jenő Szűcs, "'Nationality' and 'National Consciousness' in the Middle Ages," chapter 2 in this volume.

42 Chs. 20 and 22, SIMON, 68–73. Specifically, in the thirteen cases where the two versions can be examined in parallel, we find six cases where the later chronicler either left out or substituted something else for the word *natio*; in certain places, failure to comprehend the word's new value has led to the misinterpretation of the action of the epic itself.

ing "rights" from the history of the Huns. As we shall see later, what Master Simon strove to deduce from Hunnish antiquity was, apart from the Hungarian "nation," the principles of "constitutional law," and this precisely in defiance of the highborn of his times. Thus, even his sole "actualizable" hero, the putative ancestor of the Aba clan, is found to have a blemish: he is a "mixture," not a "real" Hun![43] What is striking in this story is the transformation in attitude. The prominence conferred to by social origin in those days is no longer, in itself, an absolute value (could one, after all, imagine a greater claim to prominence in those days than the blood of emperors?); if it is not conjoined with the "purity" of the *natio*, it can only have a lower place in the scale of values.

Master Simon's other latent debate is conducted with his predecessor in historiography, Master Ákos, who a decade earlier, around 1272, had rewritten the earlier Hungarian chronicles. What inspired Master Ákos, a descendant of the wellborn Ákos kindred, was the idea of a unified aristocracy. He, too, accepts the "Scythian origin"; nevertheless, he saw the new nobles who arrived in the course of the establishment of the kingdom of Hungary as the social equals of the Hungarians (*nobilitate pares Ungaris*). He gives three criteria for *nobilitas*: settlement of relatively long duration in the realm; intermixing and intermarriage with the Hungarians (*Ungaris inmixti*); and, finally, the acquisition of land.[44] When it comes to discussing the same principle, Simon, without directly arguing against his predecessor, gives a different order of preconditions for noble status. First in importance is service to the king; second, the possession of a grant of land; and only last, a longer term of residence in the country. It is particularly characteristic of our author that regarding the second precondition he uses the term fief (*pheudum*), thus attributing to Hungary a feudal system it did not have, and so faithfully "ordering" Hungarian reality according to the European model.[45] For present purposes, however, the decisive difference between them is this: Master Ákos regards as positive the "intermixing" of foreigners and Magyars (*Ungaris inmixti*), whereas Simon would see this as negative (cf. *missitalius exterae natio-*

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43 The important ideological and chronological character of this work has already been pointed out by Horváth, *Árpád-kori*, 447–49.

44 *SRH* 1:303–4; see also Elemér Mályusz, *Az V. István-kori Gesta* [The *Gesta* of the time of Stephen V] Értekezések a történeti tudományok köréből 58 (Budapest, 1971), 53ff., esp. 61–64.

45 Ch. 94: *qui servientes regibus vel caeteris regni dominis ex ipsis pheuda acquirendo nobilitaem processu temporis sunt adepti* (SIMON, 174); ch. 91: *latisque et amplis pheudis in diversis Hungariae partibus noscitur investisse* (SIMON, 170), whereas the fourteenth century chronicle version has: *latis et amplis hereditatibus* (*SRH* 1:192, 297); *iobagiones vero castri... ad regem venientes, terram eis tribuit de castri terris, ut pheuda castri* (*SRH* 1:193). Hungarian legal terminology had hardly ever employed the term *pheudum*.

nis). In the long run, belonging to a "nation" comes to take precedence in the system of values over being wellborn.

Simon's historical conception was quick to influence the attitudes of the nobility. It undermined the notion of the mythicized figure of St. Stephen as the point of departure of Hungarian history—that it was he who "redeemed" the nation and led it out of the "darkness"—although this had been the guiding principle of the early chronicles and legends and was still present in a charter of Béla IV of 1231: only through the holy king's merits "did this land pass from sorrow to joy, from slavery to liberty."[46] In 1290, the Styrian Ottokar von Horneck already bore witness to the rejection of this theory in favor of the claim of the nobility that "it was their ancestors who vanquished the pagans with their mighty strength, suffering the loss of so many lives."[47] In much the same way Matthew of Paris recounts the French nobility boasted but a little earlier that it was they who were "the principal members of the kingdom," and that the establishment of the kingdom can be "attributed to the sweetness of battle," in other words, to their ancestors, the glorious descendants of the Trojans.[48] Overall, in spite of dissonant chords which accompanied the process, the genesis of medieval nationalism advances irreversibly throughout all of Europe in the thirteenth century. One of its most far-reaching consequences was undoubtedly to prepare the way for the laicization and secularization of thought, and, in particular, of attitudes toward history.

Simon's Social Theory: The Origins of Human Inequality

As long as the ecclesiastical vision of history was unchallenged and the "descending conception of government and law" prevailed in the social and political spheres,[49] little theoretical explanation was required to explain the facts of the "social structure." The Church Fathers had already justified human inequality in terms of the theological thesis of original sin,[50] while "society," at least as

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46 Franz Zimmermann and Carl Werner, *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen* (Hermannstadt, 1882), 1:54.

47 *Si (Ungarn arm und rich) jahen... ir vordern hetenz mit grozen kraft den heiden erstriten und heten ouch darumb erliten vil manigen bloutes guz... Oesterreichische Reimchronik*, lines 40771–40779 (*MGH Dt. Chr.* V/1); see also Emma Bartoniek, "A magyar királlyáavatáshoz" [On the inauguration of the Hungarian kings], *Századok* 57 (1923): 279. For the demonstrable effect of Simon's *Gesta* in the 1280s and 1290s, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 635–36.

48 Hertz, *Nationality*, 215.

49 Walter Ullmann, *Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages* (London, 1961), 20ff.

50 For a historical survey of the question, cf. Robert Warrand and Alexander James Carlyle, *A History of Medieval Political Theory in the West* (Edinburgh and London, 1928) 5: 21–26; Hans von Voltelini, "Der

regarded from above, seemed relatively homogeneous, since Divine Providence had placed the mass of humanity predetermined for subjection, the *populus subiectus*, under some lay authority or other. Differences within each such social unit and "people" were similarly explained in terms of the "functional" scheme of the World Order, which preordained for each and every person a place in the field of prayer, war, or work (*oratores, bellatores, laboratores*).

Should, however, a more "historical" explanation of social inequalities be sought, that, too, was offered in terms of the predominating viewpoint. The acceptance of Christianity was not only the starting point of history in this view, but in Hungary as elsewhere some mythical legislator became the source of all right and all liberty. By the turn of the eleventh to the twelfth century the ancestral hereditary estates were already spoken of as "the donation of St. Stephen," so by the thirteenth century every freedom (*libertas*, i.e., socio-legal *conditio*) was considered as something instituted by the holy king (*instituta a sancto Stephano*). And because the concept of freedom was itself relative, it was viewed essentially as the grant of privilege from above. Thus in the relatively unsettled and mobile social structure of the eleventh and twelfth centuries there existed as many "freedoms" between the two extremes of servitude and the evolving "golden liberty" of the nobility as there were social strata, groups, and statuses.[51] A "historical" explanation of the origin of servitude, we have cause to believe, had already been given in the lost eleventh-century primary *Gesta*: the occupying Magyars had reduced all the people they found in Pannonia to servitude.[52]

Only the highest social stratum, the wellborn, were able to shake off the influence of the canonically sanctioned *a sancto rege* conception. The evidence suggests that by the eleventh century there existed a "seven Magyars" theory, according to which true *nobilitas* consisted in being descended from one of the seven chieftains who led the Magyars in the conquest of Pannonia. This idea was

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Gedanke der allgemeinen Freiheit in den deutschen Rechtsbüchern," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Germ. Abt.* 57 (1397): 189–207; František Graus, *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger im Reich der Merowinger* (Prague, 1965), 282ff.

51 Péter Váczy, *A szimbolikus államszemlélet kora Magyarországon* [The era of the symbolic view of the state in Hungary] (Pécs, 1932) esp. 35–38, 54ff.

52 The relevant text of the eleventh-century *Gesta Ungarorum* as far as one can reconstruct it from the unanimous testimony of the texts of the Anonymus, Riccardus, Alberic of Trois-Fontaines, and Thomas of Spalato, was probably the following: ...*totum populum (Pannonie) in servitutem redegerunt*; cf. Bálint Hóman, *A Szt. László-kori Gesta Ungarorum és XII–XIII. századi leszármazói* [The *Gesta Ungarorum* of the time of St. Ladislas and its twelfth- and thirteenth-century derivatives] (Budapest, 1925), 15–32; Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 589–99.

extended around 1272 by the same Master Ákos referred to above to include all the great families of his times.[53]

These embryonic "social-theoretical" ideas, however, became increasingly obsolete as the earlier heterogeneity of statuses and "freedoms" gave way in the course of the decisive thirteenth century to new structures more in line with contemporary Europe: a unified nobility on the one hand, and an integrated dependent peasantry on the other. By the 1260s and '70s, the concept of *nobilis* broadened to include all the nobility, while by the end of the century the Hungarian term for tenant peasant, *jobbágy* (Latinized as *iobagio*), became a common term to include the diverse "non-noble" (*ignobilis*) and dependent strata of society.[54]

But the earlier "historical" notions became similarly obsolete, especially after Master Simon radically broke through the traditional historical limits and set up the *natio* as the basic historical point of reference. In doing so, however, even he could hardly ignore the fact that the mass of the peasantry were predominantly *natione Hungarus*, which naturally raised problems for the old theory of the subjugation of the "peoples of Pannonia." In any case, as a cleric who had studied Roman law he had at his disposal more modern techniques for explaining the origins of the foreigners. The fourth section of his work is given over to a historical account of the status of these diverse elements, presented in terms of the *ius gentium* (or as he calls it, *mos gentium*) of Roman law, on the premise that these persons were originally prisoners of war.[55] Within his view of history, however, this could refer only to the foreign and "mixed" (*missitalia*) elements of the population. It left open the question of the origin of the peasant masses within the "pure" (*pura*) Hun-Hungarian nation, for, as he notes himself, "if every Hungarian descended from one and the same mother and one and the same father, how can one be called noble and the other non-noble?"[56]

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53   For the contention that the text fragment *qui autem de istis septem nati sunt, ipsi sunt modo viri nobiles terra Ungariae*, which appears in Alberic of Trois-Fontaines' world chronicle, originated in the eleventh-century *Hungarian Gesta*, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 587. For the hidden debate of Master Ákos with the ancient Hungarian Chronicles, see *SRH* 1:292–93; see also Mályusz, *Az V. István-kori*, 53ff.

54   The formulae for ennoblement have been carefully collected by Péter Váczy, "A királyi serviensek és a patrimoniális királyság" [The royal *servientes* and the patrimonial kingship], *Századok* 61 (1927): 235–262; Elemér Mályusz, "A magyar köznemesség kialakulása" [The evolution of the Hungarian lesser nobility], *Századok* 76, no. 9–10 (1942): 272–305, 407–34. For the concept of *jobbágy*, see István Szabó, "Jobbágyság-parasztság: Terminológia, fogalom, társadalomszerkezet" [*Jobbágy*-status and peasantry: Terminology, concept, social structure], *Ethnographia* 76 (1965): 10–31.

55   *SRH* 1:192–94. For the Roman legal background, see Horváth, *Árpád-kori*, 374–77.

56   Ch.7, SIMON, 30–31.

The question is, in fact, anticipated in the theoretical analysis near the beginning of his work (Ch. 7), where he recounts the biblical and legendary stories of the genesis of peoples and the "Scythian" epoch—in short, among his account of "ancient times" marking the beginnings of Hunnish history proper in "the sixth age of the world." In the medieval conception of time this was more or less equivalent to the end of "prehistory" and to the beginning of "history." In Master Simon's account each Hun was originally the equal member of a free and self-governing *communitas*, and it was customary to call to arms "in the name of God and the people" each man capable of bearing arms "to hear the counsel and precept of the *communitas*." There were some, however, who refused to comply with this order, who "treated it with contempt" (*contempsissent*), without being able to justify their absence. The punishment of these, as prescribed by the *lex Scitica*, was either to be cut in two with a sword, "exposed to hopeless situations" (*exponi in causas desperatas*), or cast into servitude. He concludes that "it was these kinds of crimes and excesses (*vitia et excessus*) which separated one Hungarian from another." The state of non-nobility is the consequence of this "crime" (*casus criminis*).[57]

This account differs decisively from the two explanations current at that time regarding the origins of human inequality, both the Christian-patristic theory of *peccatum* and the Roman legal concept of *ius gentium*. *Ignobilitas* is here the consequence of a specific "crime," the legal result of the refusal to obey the call to arms embodied in a concrete "judgment." Historians have heretofore been unable to account for the source of this idea. Yet there was a country where the idea appeared in the same century, first as an epic motif, and later as a mode of theoretical argumentation: France. In 1315, when Louis X sent out commissioners to examine the legal status of the serfs, the ordinance identified as the origin of their condition of servitude the crime of their ancestors, their "misdeed" (*mesfait=méfait*). As Marc Bloch has already noted, the nature of this "historical sin" was then familiar to all; it required no further explanation.[58]

And, indeed, its prehistory stretched back at least a century. One first finds it in the *Chanson de Gui de Bourgogne*, written after 1211. Charlemagne had been fighting for three decades against the Moors when a group of his men, 4,700 soldiers, deserted from the war, in punishment for which they and all

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57   Ibidem: *Vitia itaque et excessus huiusmodi unum Hungarum ab alio separavit, alias cum unus pater et una mater omnes Hungaros procreavit, quomodo unus nobilis, alter innobilis diceretur, nisi victus per tales casus criminis haberetur.*
58   Marc Bloch, *Rois et serfs: un chapitre d'histoire Capétienne* (Paris, 1920; reprint Geneva, 1976), 132, 142–52.

their descendants were reduced to servitude; these were the first serfs. This motif then transcends its local bounds and is modified in the course of the thirteenth century. Those concerned are no longer deserters from battle but "cowards" who had refused the call to arms (*couards d'Apremont*); moreover, Charlemagne decides on their punishment not after but before the campaign. It was in this form that the story found its way into the *Roman de Renart le Contrefait*, a poem written at the beginning of the fourteenth century, which even informs us that the story is a common subject of discussion.[59] From the epics it found its way into jurisprudence, indeed, into one of the most notable collections of French customary law, the *Coutumes de Beauvaisis* of Philippe de Beaumanoir, written between 1279 and 1282. Here the motif has already lost its connection with the epic context and has been built into a wider sociopolitical theory. According to this, in the beginning every man was free, but as people "multiplied," pride and envy led to dissensions and wars. At this point the communities of the people (*les communautés du peuple*) elected for themselves kings, transferring to them jurisdictional authority, leadership in war, and the right to promulgate edicts. And so that there should be someone to protect the people from "bad judges," the bravest and wisest men were granted *seigneuries*. It is their descendants who are the nobles. The origin of the *serfs* is more diversified: some had been prisoners of war, others had chosen servitude voluntarily, and so on. Many, however, were the descendants of those who, when the king had sent out a general call to arms, had been reluctant to appear. All those who had refused the call to arms without good reason were reduced to servitude.[60]

These motifs have clear parallels in Master Simon's account which also, as we shall see later, discusses this issue in terms of "constitutional law" (they differ in this, that in Philippe de Beaumanoir's theory the focus is on providing a theoretical underpinning for the position of the *rois de France*, whereas Simon of Kéza is concerned to do the same for a self-governing *communitas*, though at a later stage, he, too, introduces the notion of the election of a king). The common motifs are the following: (1) the original equality of the human community; (2) the interrelationship of the "multiplication" of people and the move toward the

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59 Henri Lemaître, "Le refus de service d'ost et l'origine du service," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 75 (1914): 231–38; cf. Bloch, *Rois et serfs*, 151.

60 Lemaître, "Le refus," 235. Cf. François Olivier-Martin, *Histoire du droit française des origines à la Révolution* (Paris, 1948; reprint Paris, 1984), 248. Philippe de Beaumanoir's work treats the origins of servitude in two places (c.1453 and 1438): Philippe de Beaumanoir, *Coutumes de Beauvaisis* (Paris, 1900), 2: 235–36, 218.

delegation of authority;[61] (3) the separation of the judicial, military, and legislative aspects of authority;[62] (4) the emphasis on the provisions made for the control of "bad judges" and for the nullification of inappropriate sentences;[63] (5) finally, the explanation of the origins of servitude as the consequence of the disobedience of the call to arms. In the French version, of course, the decision is the king's, while with the Huns the judgment is passed by the community.

Nevertheless, it is not the parallelisms that are of decisive significance. Master Simon was too much in command of his material to resort to mere copying from his sources. In any case we cannot be sure that the source here was Philippe de Beaumanoir's text. But clearly we are dealing with a widespread tradition. We can read in the *Roman de Renart* that it was a matter of common discussion that there lived in Paris alone at least a thousand *serfs* of such origins at the time the novel was written.[64] We do not know whether or not Simon had travelled in northern France, but we do know that he travelled through Burgundy, where the conception had received its first literary formulation at the beginning of the century. Knowing Master Simon's predilection for incorporating into his work bits of information culled from here and there, we need hardly be surprised that epic and later legal elements of the *Charlemagne* tradition became embedded in his notion of the historicized Hun *communitas*. In essence, therefore, the idea seems to be another of those motifs deriving from *Francia* which are hinted at by the author in his prologue.

Italia, too, provided its contribution, in the form of the threefold mode of punishment prescribed by "Scythian law" as the consequence of the "crime." The three kinds of punishment mentioned above could not have arisen from the historicization of contemporary Hungarian legal practice. They are, however, similar to those three modes of punishment (*publica iudicia*) prescribed by Roman law for common crimes.[65] The first, as we have seen, was the execution by sword of those who had refused to obey the edict of the community. In Roman law, too,

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61   Beaumanoir: *quant li peuples commenca a croistre*; Simon of Kéza: *multiplicati Huni in Scitia habitando...*; whereupon the "historical" deduction follows in both.

62   Beaumanoir: *...si eslurent roi et le firent seigneur d'aus et li donnerent le pouior d'aus justicier de leur mesfés, de fere commandemens et establissemens seur aus...*; Simon of Kéza: *...capitaneos inter se scilicet duces vel principes praefecerunt.... Constituerunt quoque inter se rectorem unum... qui communem exercitum iudicaret, dissidentium lites sopiret, castigaret malefactores, fures et latrones.* In the case of the call to arms, *unusquisque armatus... debeat comparere communitatis consilium praeceptumque auditurus...*

63   Beuamanoir: *...et pour ce qu'il peut le peuple garantir contre... les mauves justiciers*; Simon of Kéza: *si rector idem immoderatam sententiam definiret, communitas in irritum revocaret...*

64   Lemaître, "Le refus," 233.

65   This has been pointed out by Gerics, "Adalékok," 112ff., cf. Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 589–95.

in the case of the most serious common crimes, the first capital punishment (*poena capitalis*) was death, in the case of high treason, execution by the sword.[66] The second sentence seems obscure if one does not know that in the expression *exponi in causas desperatas* the word *causa* is being used in a specific sense, as a technical term of Roman law meaning "legal status."[67] It is not a matter, therefore, of generally exposing the condemned to some hopeless situation, but rather of reducing him to one of many such "legal statuses" or conditions. Neither is the use of the plural merely coincidental. For although in Roman law the second sentence was banishment, its severity was of several degrees, varying from a specified length of time of punishment (*relegatio in tempus*) to deportation with the loss of civic rights or banishment to some island (*relegatio in perpetuum, in insulas deportatio*).[68] Hungarian criminal law contained no analogues; it was, therefore, enough to reproduce the essence of the mode of punishment. Finally, one finds that the third mode of punishment also has analogies in Roman criminal law, for the more serious instance of "civic death" (*mors civilis*) was condemnation to forced labor in the mines, as a consequence of which the condemned became a slave (*servus poenae*). In fact, the commentaries (e.g., *Accursius*) speak simply of "servitude" rather than specifically "slavery in the mines."[69] Thus, Simon's *detrudi in servitutem* precisely matches the term in Roman law.[70]

But what of the *lex Scitica* itself—the notion of the legal combination of judgment and servitude being the enforcement of a definite "law"? Is this perhaps another case of Roman law in Hun-Scythian garb? In Roman law specific *leges* applied to various common crimes, and high treason was dealt with under the so-called *lex Julia maiestatis*; this covered every kind of conspiracy, rebellion, treachery, "everything perpetrated against the *populus Romanus* or its security."[71] The notion that the model of the *lex Scitica* was the *lex Julia* certainly fits with what we know of our author. We have seen that he tells how the call to arms was issued in the name of *Vox Dei et populi Hungarici*; he refers to

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66 Dig. 37.1.13; 48.1.2; 48.13.6, pr. etc.; often simply *poena mors*. The *capitis amputatio* referred to political crimes, e.g., Dig. 48.19.8; 48.19.38; Cod. 9.8.5 (*gladio feriatur*).

67 *Thesaurus linguae Latinae* (Leipzig, 1906–1912), 3:687–88, e.g., "*in servilem causam deductus*" (Dig. 4.5.3.1).

68 Hermann Gottlieb Heumann and Emil Sekcel, *Handlexikon zu den Quellen des römisches Recht* (Jena, 1909; reprint Graz, 1958), 191. For the relevant parts of the *Digesta*, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 592.

69 For example, already *in Dig*. 48.19.2.pr. (Ulpianus) the punishment is simply *sevitus*; Accursius *gl. ad Dig*. 48.19.28 (Callistratus) sv. *Metalli coercitio*: "Haec inducit servitutem, ut supra eo 1. *aut damnatum*" (= *Dig*. 48.19.8).

70 E.g., *in carcere detrudere, in metallum detrudi per senteniam, in servilem conditionem esse detrusi*, etc. (Dig. 4.2.22; *Cod*. 5.5.3; Cod. 8.51.2). See Heumann and Seckel, *Handlexikon*, 143.

71 *Dig*. 48.1.1 (Ulpianus); Inst. 4.18.3–11.

the persons who give the call to arms as *praecones*, just as in ancient Rome professional criers or *praecones* called the armies to the *censura*; and as a lawyer, he could well have regarded the refusal of the call to arms, on the Roman analogy, as a "criminal case" (*casus criminis*), a crime against the *populus Hungaricus*.

So, the *ignobilitas* that resulted from the refusal of the call to arms, originally a French motif, is set in a Roman legal framework as "criminal law." The explanation for the existence of servitude thereby acquires a contemporary "scientific" aura. In France, the historical framework was provided by the Charlemagne tradition; in Hungary, by the history of the Huns. In fact, what we are seeing in both cases is the evolving self-consciousness of the nobility inventing a myth for itself. For the theory expressed a definite need of the times, providing a "historical" explanation for a particular social attitude. The story of the *couards d'Apremont* had actually no historical basis even in France; the historical Charlemagne had been concerned to protect rather than to repress the free social elements.[72] What is being justified is the boundary which sought to divide nobles and peasants into two separate groups on the basis of their participation or non-participation in military service. The fact is that in thirteenth-century Hungary the most diverse elements were still going to battle together, including large numbers of "non-nobles";[73] but the nobility was by now feeling that it needed to present itself as the sole warrior class. The identification of *bellator* and *nobilis* had already begun to appear in the diploma-formulae from the middle of the century, where the nobility is characterized as the community of warriors (*bellantium collegium*).[74] Concurrently, the "true" or "golden liberty" of the nobility was rising ever higher above the diverse other "freedoms" distributed through society.

This self-concept was supported by attitudes common throughout Europe. The primary one was the increasingly popular theory of "functionalism," which perceived secular society in terms of the dualism of warriors and workers (*bellatores~laboratores*).[75] This view was given support in turn by the glossators to the newly revived Roman law, who defined two basic "species" of mankind, freemen and servants (*liberi~servi*)[76]—the necessary corollary throughout me-

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72 Lemaître, "Le refus," 237–38.

73 József Molnár, "A királyi megye katonai szervezete a tatárjárás korában" [The military organization of the royal counties at the time of the Tatar invasions], *Hadtörténeti Közlemények* 6 (1959): 222ff.

74 Váczy, *Államelmélet*, 22.

75 Jean Batany, "Des 'Trois Fonctions' aux 'Trois États'?" *Annales E.S.C.* 18 (1963): 933–38.

76 Originally, for example, Dig.1.1.4 (Ulpinaus): *iure gentium tria hominium genera esse coeperunt*… But see also the gloss of Accursius: *Item quomodo sunt tria genera? Imo tantum duo, scilicet liberi et servi quia liberti liberi sunt.*

dieval Europe being that the *nobilis* is the only "truly" free man.[77] As we have seen, Simon had already overthrown one traditional historical obstacle, the *a sancto rege* division point. Having done so, he was then able to present the social divisions of mankind—nobility and non-nobility—not as the creation of the "holy king" but as a development from ancient times. The origin of human inequality was thus given not only "historical" and "legal" underpinnings but also received a boost in "moral" status. For the refusal to answer the call to arms had been a repudiation not only of martial *virtus* but also of the major political virtue, loyalty;[78] those, therefore, who had preserved this virtue, the nobility, rose above the peasantry even in "moral" stature.

The New Center of Political Thought: The *Communitas*

When Simon begins his discourse on social theory with "*Igitur in aetate sexta saeculi . . . ,*" this was not a random choice of words. In the medieval conception of time, the "sixth world epoch" indicates not only that "prehistory" has given way to "history," but that we are dealing with what in modern terminology we would call identical "structures": within this epoch there already operate identical norms and regularities, and "history" itself with its own causality is now a mere chain of events. So for the author the *aetas sexta saeculi* is in a certain sense already the here-and-now, *nunc*, the present.[79] Certainly his wider historical horizon stretches back to biblical and legendary times, and in this perspective the "nation" is an uninterrupted continuity from the beginning of the world "until now" but the social and political norms which are valid "even until today" developed later, in the "sixth world epoch." He therefore makes clear at the beginning that although the Hun-Hungarian *natio* "descended from one father and one mother" in antiquity, as far as social organization is concerned "today" also provides a valid structure. The *separatio* of the people into nobles and non-nobles, although it occurred secondarily, nevertheless also occurred long ago.

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77 It is in the thirteenth century that there takes root in Western Europe, too, the idea that the *militaris* service is identical to the *nobilis et bellicosa* way of life, therefore also with the concept of *libera conditio*; see Léopold Génicot, "La noblesse dans la société médiévale," *Le Moyen Âge* 71 (1965): 557.

78 For *fidelitas* as the highest *virtus politica*, see Ágnes Kurcz, "Arenga und Narratio ungarischer Urkunden des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 70 (1962): 337–41.

79 Simon of Kéza, Ch. 3: *olim in veteri testamento, et nunc sub aetate sexta saeculi...* (SRH 1:142; SIMON, 8). For the attitude to time, see Ernst Bernheim's great work: Ernst Bernheim, *Mittelalterliche Zeitanschauungen in ihrem Einfluss auf Politik und Geschichtsschreibung* (Tübingen, 1918); also Herbert Grundmann, "Die Grundzüge der mittelalterlichen Geschichtsanschauungen," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 24 (1931): 326–36.

At the same time, he clarifies the basic principles of "constitutional law," which center on the theory of the ancient *communitas*. Naturally, he says, in "historical times" it was already an "isolated" *communitas* which was the agent of history, for already in the days of the Huns there existed a nobility (*Hunnorum nobilitas*; Ch. 22). It has long been recognized that this theory of *communitas* expresses nothing other than the demand of the "general congregations of the realm" (if not "diets") of the assembled lower nobility in the 1270s and 1280s[80] to acquire a share in power, to ally themselves with the king against the anarchical government of baronial groups and factions.[81] This is an instance of the needs of a "premature corporatism"[82] being articulated in a historicized manner, for in actuality it was still the baronial groups and factions which ruled the political scene at the time.

In this field, too, Simon was ahead of his times. For, although the concept of *universitas regni* appears in a diploma as early as 1299, it is only after 1330 that the expression "*universae nobilitatis communitas*" is incorporated into the Hungarian politico-legal conceptual system.[83] The nobility as a "body" (*consortium*, *collegium*, *coetus*, *societas*) does, indeed, appear from the middle of the thirteenth century in the formulae of the patents of nobility, but only as the "body of warriors," not as a "body politic," *corpus politicum*, in the organism of the kingdom. What is more, it is only in these decades that there is a movement away from the archaic outlook which saw the emerging nobility as, metaphorically speaking, the king's broader retinue (*Gefolgschaft*). To the middle of the century a member of the lower nobility is referred to as the "servant of the king" (*serviens regis*), a member of the king's *familia*. Ennoblement meant that the new noble could, so to speak, feel at home in the king's court, in his house (*in domo regia*); his liberty to do so was the expression of royal favor (*gratia*), which he was bound to recom-

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80 Erzsébet S. Kiss, "A királyi generális kongregáció kialakulásának történetéhez" [Towards a history of the formation of the Royal General Congregation], *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis: Acta Historica* 39 (1971).

81 Cf. esp. the works of Váczy, Horváth, Gerics, and Kristó listed in notes 8–9.

82 György Bónis, *Hűbériség és rendiség a középkori magyar jogban* [Feudalism and corporatism in medieval Hungarian law] (Kolozsvár, n.d. [1947?]), 170.

83 1299: *universitas nobilium Ungarorum, Saxonum et Cumanorum; nostre universitatis coetus = universi barones et nobiles regni Ungarie*, György Fejér, ed., *Codex diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis*, ed. (Buda, 1841), 7/5:502–504; 1330: *universe nobilitatis communitas*, Márton György Kovachich, *Supplementum ad Vestigia comitiorum apud Hungaros... celebratorum* (Buda, 1798), 1:268. For a survey of these questions, see József Holub, "La Représentation politique en Hongrie au Moyen-Âge," in *Xe Congrès International des Sciences Historiques*, Rome, 1955: Études présentées à la Commission Internationale pour l'histoire des Assemblées d'États (Louvain and Paris, 1958), esp. 88–89.

pense with loyal service (*servitium*).[84] It is in the course of a transitional period (1266–83) that the nobleman becomes unqualified and unequivocally *nobilis*, at a time when the letters of patent still refer to him in the intermediate terms of *serviens seu nobilis*, *nobilis serviens*. Thus, until the 1280s there is lacking the conceptual foundation which could transform an essentially vertical viewpoint into a horizontal one; in other words, which would establish that *nobilitas* is neither solely the creation of the Holy King (as still in the Golden Bull of 1222, referring to the liberty of the "royal servants"), nor a manifestation of the grace of the existing monarch (as the diplomas imply), but rather is an ancient development, with a very old "historical existence." This change, too, was Simon's work.

According to the fictional history of the Huns, in the sixth world epoch the *communitas* chose for itself six captains (*capitaneos* or *duces*). They also appointed a rector charged with judicial duties, but with the proviso that the community could at any time revoke its decision and discharge any such *capitaneum et rectorem* guilty of a "lapse" (*errantem*). At the start Attila himself was also just one of the captains; it was only after the "first" conquest of Pannonia that the Huns elected him as *rex*. However, this transitional "monarchical" age came to an end with Attila's death, whereupon power returned to the hands of the *communitas*. So, from the time of the return to Scythia, throughout the "second" conquest, and up to the time of St. Stephen's father Prince Géza, it was again the "communal" constitution that was operative (*dum se regerent pro communi*, Ch. 10). This multifunctional notion contains several elements: self-government through replaceable officials elected *pro tempore*, i.e., for a specified time (Chs. 7, 42); the legislative function of the *communitas* and its ability to promulgate an *edictum*; the passing of sentences and the bringing of decisions in military matters (this is held to apply as much to the western campaigns of the tenth century as to the earlier period; e.g., Ch. 40); the composition of the army (Ch. 8); and so on. But since those who had refused to obey the edict of the *communitas*, the call to arms, had been reduced to servitude, it was a distinct *communitas* who already in the Hun epoch exercised all these rights.

Historians have exhibited considerable uncertainty regarding the source of the *communitas*-theory. On the domestic scene, certainly, it was unprecedented.[85] Thomas Aquinas's political theory might suggest itself, given Simon's scholastic

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84 Váczy, *Államelmélet*, 9–23.

85 For details of the proof that Simon introduced the concept of *communitas* into the chronicle literature, and that the occurrence of this concept in the later chronicles is derivative, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 598–601.

training.[86] However, this can scarcely be the direct or sole source, for we find that Aquinas regarded the ideal constitution (*optima politia*) to be that form of mixed government (*regimen commixtum*) which somehow blends these elements: royal authority (*ex regno*), the will of the wellborn (*ex aristocratia*), and the power of the people (*ex democratia id est potestate populi*).[87] However, in Master Simon's primitive constitution it is only Aquinas's third component which explicitly appears (i.e., democracy, meaning at this time, of course, no more than what Aquinas defined it to be: "the people have the right to choose the prince"). Even the mixed *politia* he envisions as a later development has only two components: the *rex* and the *communitas*.

Here again a closer look at the language used by the writer to express his conceptual system provides us with the key to the problem. It becomes evident that he imagines that in the smaller component units of the Hun "communal" system and in their military groupings there are operative "corporate" principles and elements of self-government analogous to those existing in the larger unit; the synonymous expressions *communitas* (occasionally in its Italian form *commune*), *coetus*, *consortium*, *societas* apply to these as well. These terms, the conception itself, the characteristic linking of the Whole and the Part, and in particular the term first appearing in Ch. 19, "*pars sanior*" (a significant technical term referring to the "qualitative" principle in corporate constitutionalism), all point unequivocally to one and the same conceptual system: the corporate doctrine unified into a theoretical system by the middle of the thirteenth century.[88]

Thanks to Otto Gierke's fundamental studies,[89] we now recognize that this theory-cluster, though it had its roots in Roman and canon law, was a particular result of thirteenth-century jurisprudence, and introduced a new conceptual model of "society" which revolutionized European political thought. In its original role, the "corporation" was a social unit (*societas publica*) owing its purely internal autonomy (the election of superiors, the administration of justice, the principle of representation, self-government) to the grant of a privilege by some superior authority. In time, however, the theory came to recognize the "sovereignty" of the *societas*: in other words, to maintain that such an organized social

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86 Váczy, "Népfelség," 557–59.

87 *De regimine principum* 1.2.105.I. See Ignatius Theodore Eschmann, "Studies on the Notion of Society in St. Thomas Aquinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 8 (1946): 1–42; Franz-Martin Schmölz, "Societas civilis sive Respublica sive Populus," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Öffentliches Recht* 14 (1964): 28–50.

88 For details, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 602–4.

89 Otto Friedrich Gierke, *Das deutsche Genossenschaftsrecht*, vol. 3, *Die Staats-und Korporationslehre des Alterthums und des Mittelalters und ihre Aufnahme in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1881), 188–478.

unit can have legitimate existence without the permission of a superior authority (*sine licentia superioris*, *absque autoritate principis*).[90] This new model had the potential to transform the vertical, descending conception of social and political relationships in a horizontal direction. For on this basis the individual was no longer primarily the subordinate (*fidelis subditus*) of some lay or ecclesiastical authority but the member of an overarching association, of an autonomous society (*membrum universitatis* or *communitatis*). Similarly, no longer could each mass of people be comprehended only as a "people" of subjects (*populus subditus*), but rather as a legal personality (*persona repraesentata* or *politica*), "represented" by certain individuals or certain groups capable of confronting even the ruler himself. For here as elsewhere in medieval philosophical thought the principle of unity asserted itself, which saw analogous principles governing the internal structure of each element of human society from its smallest units to its broadest, the Universal Church. According to this model there existed a variety of social units within the continuum ranging from the village community (*communitas vici*) to the universal Christian community, all functioning according to similar common "corporate" principles. From this there developed an intermediate stage, the nucleus of the later *Ständestaat*, the concept of *universitas* or *communitas regni*. This represented one pole in a dualistic theory of the state (the *status regni*), standing in contradistinction to the "king's state" (*status regis*) and participating in government as a body politic through "representation." Its members might be mortal, but as a self-sustaining legal personality, it maintains its identity; it "never dies" (*nunquam moritur).*

At the same time, it followed that the individual, too, was liberated from his exclusively subordinate political status. The thirteenth century was thus a time of the "rebirth of the citizen,"[91] although of course within strict bounds, as a member of a corporate "society" fortified on all sides with prerogatives. The Italian city-states excepted, it was still only the nobleman at best who could, within the structures of monarchy, sense something of the status of the citizen of antiquity (the *civis*) and of "civil" political relations. In fact, the circle could be even narrower; in England, for example, the *communitas regni* was identical with the

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90 The glossators had already deduced a multitude of rights from the essence of the corporation, "durch welche dieselbe als ein gesellschaftlicher Organismus mit einer eigenen und selbständigen Sphäre des Gemeinlebens, als eine Macht über seine Glieder ausgestattetes Gemeinwesen charakterisiert wird" (Gierke, *Genossenschaftsrecht*, 215) and "Indem sie (die Juristen) die alten Definitionen wiederholen, unterstellen sie die Summe aller menschlichen Verbandseinheiten einem gemeinsamen Gattungsbegriff und einer gemeinsamen Theorie" (Gierke, *Genossenschaftsrecht*, 355).

91 Ullmann, *The Individual and Society*, 104ff.

aristocracy even at the end of the thirteenth century.[92] Nevertheless, all this did not alter the fact that a model of a "political society" had emerged whose cohesion were determined not "from above" but from within—as Thomas Aquinas summed it up, "within the unity of law and public utility" (*unitas iuris et communis utilitatis—De Regimine Principum* 11, 2, 42, 4).

That Simon's political theory was conceived in this climate of ideas is suggested both by his terminology and by the familiar analogy of Whole and Part. Corporate self-government is the "organizational principle" of the fictitious ancient Hun society. Again, the immediate source of his theory could hardly have been Thomas Aquinas. For Aquinas, the *communitas* could not exist without the sanction of higher authority,[93] whereas in Master Simon's fiction the *communitas* is already a given. It antecedes the monarchy (the election of Attila as king) and remains in sole possession and exercise of power until the very beginning of the Christian monarchy. It thus reflects the view of contemporary jurisprudence which sees *communitas* as capable of existing without higher authority.

This model also owed much to another political theory newly evolving in the thirteenth century from Roman law, the theory of the delegation of power. According to this, the *populus* was the original source of law and power, and only subsequently and secondarily did it delegate its authority to the ruler.[94] At Simon's historical starting point in the "sixth world epoch" the Hun *communitas* is the ancient "constitutional form" of the *populus Hungaricus*, and this state of affairs is altered only when the Huns elected Attila to be "king over them," *Romano more* (Ch. 10), after the conquest of Pannonia. This has given rise to a view that Simon was a sort of noble-republican propagandist: as if, confronted with the Western-style monarchy of his day, he looked back with nostalgia to an ancient "Hun-Scythia" utopia which, in Váczy's words, "is cast up by the waves of time, and therein disappears again after its years of glory and greatness."[95]

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92 William A. Morris, "Magnates and Community of the Realm in Parliament, 1264–1327," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 1 (1943): 58–94.

93 *Societas publica... non potest constitui, nisi ex superioris auctoritate* (*Contra Impugn.*, ch.3); *Omnis communitas aliqua lege ordinatur* (*Sent.* 27.1.1); see Eschmann, "Studies on the Notion of Society in St. Thomas Aquinas," 8.

94 It is more accurate to speak here of the theory of the delegation of power than of the "sovereignty of the people," which would tend to give rise to anachronistic notions. For a summary of this and related questions, see Michael Wilks, *The Problem of Sovereignty in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1963), esp. 184–226; e.g., "The idea of separation of powers whose invention is sometimes attributed to Locke and Montesquieu can therefore be said to be quite clearly envisaged in the political thought of the later Middle Ages. Sovereignty does not reside in any one part of the political community, ruler or people, but is shared between them. Strictly speaking, the term cannot be applied to either."

95 Váczy, "Népfelség," 560–61; for a critique of this, cf. Gerics, "Adalékok," 107–9.

But this misses the point. In contemporary European theories the *populus* is never "sovereign" in the modern sense; it merely provides, in the wake of the ruler's assumption of its original power, a kind of limited "historical" source for the present. This is what Simon meant, too.

The "historically" fluctuating relationship of *communitas* and *rex* is portrayed quite anachronistically but in a manner consistent with the author's theory. The ancient form of self-government changes in Attila's time. But the expression "in the Roman manner," referring to the manner of the election of the king, is not meant to censure as "foreign" or Western the monarchical form of government. "*Romano more*" is here simply a synonym for the word *voluntarie* used elsewhere;[96] in other words, the election of a king "in the Roman manner" means the voluntary and free delegation of power, in medieval technical language *voluntaria subiectio ac consensus*.[97] And although the earlier "communal" functions and jurisdictions became vested in the ruler during Attila's monarchical rule, the *communitas* does not disappear. Rather, a kind of "mixed" *politia* comes into existence, for power is not Attila's alone but belongs both to the Huns and their ruler (*Hunnorum dominium et Ethelae*, Ch. 14). Thereafter, from the death of Attila to Prince Géza, the original constitution of the *communitas* again becomes operative, and it is only the Christian monarchy which again brings about a fresh change. Master Simon is careful, however, to leave the *communitas* some degree of participation in power even after this time—in fact, continuously to his own days. Thus, for instance, still in the time of Géza and St. Stephen the agreement of the *communitas tota*, its *assensus*, was necessary for the acceptance of the pope's decree (Ch. 95). Similarly, after the death of St. Stephen it was not only the aristocracy, as the texts of the old chronicles maintain, who strove to settle the nation's disorders, but the aristocracy and the nobility together (*principes et nobiles regni*, Ch. 46). King Coloman, too, modified his measures out of respect for the *communitas nobilium*.[98] These and similar explanations and interpolations establish the continuing presence of the *communitas* throughout the developments of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The author's concept of *communitas* not only has roots in his corporate theory and the theory of the delegation of power, but aligns itself with particular trends in legal thinking. For there were two schools of thought in contempo-

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96   Simon of Kéza, Ch. 10: ...*Romano more Huni super se Ethelam regem praeficiunt*; Ch. 8: *Tunc Romani Ditricum Veronensem Alamannum natione... super se praefecerant voluntarie* (*SRH* 1:149, 150; SIMON, 34, 38).

97   Gierke, *Genossenschaftsrecht*, 571.

98   For details, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 608–9; Kristó, "Kézai," 14–16.

rary jurisprudence. According to the first (whose representatives included Irnerius, the founder of the Bologna school, and Placentinus, the distinguished master of the French school of Montpellier at the end of the twelfth century) the will of the *populus*, once expressed, is a unique, irrevocable historical event, and as such had no present political consequences at all. For, if the Roman legal maxim is taken at face value, the people vested "all their power" (*omne suum imperium et potestatem*) in the ruler, and so retained none of it.[99] However, according to a second viewpoint developed among others by Azo, the preeminent master of the Bologna school around 1200, the delegation of power does not mean that the people had totally renounced their power, for, in fact, they retained something of it subsequently. Therefore, although certain individuals can be excluded from legislating, the entire *universitas seu populus* cannot. Authorities like Bulgarus and Johannes Bassianus in the twelfth century, and Odofredus in the thirteenth, concurred with the second interpretation. In debate with Placentinus, Hugolinus insisted that the people did not delegate power in such a way as to retain nothing of it (*non transtulit sic, ut non remaneret apud eum*); rather, they made the ruler merely "the custodian, so to speak" (*quasi procuratorem*) of power.[100]

It was essentially the latter school of thought on contemporary constitutional theory which guided Simon. The ideas which inspired him originated in the *scartabellos*—that characteristically Italianate word he used for the sources he found scattered *per Italiam*, *Franciam ac Germaniam* (Prologue, Ch. 2)—which included not only his books on Roman law but also contemporary tracts on jurisprudence which he read in Padua. In fact, these works were also available at home; the library of one of his colleagues at the royal court, Master Ladislas (fl. 1277), had not only the complete *Corpus Iuris Civilis* but

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99 Irnerius (*gl. ad Dig.* 1.3.32, *de legibus*): *Loquitur hec lex secundum sua tempora, quibus populus habebat potestatem condendi leges.... Sed quia hodie potestas translata est in imperatorem, nibil faceret desuetudo populi*; Placentinus (*Summa Inst.* 1.2): *Nam popolus in principem transferendo communem potestatem, nullam sibi reservavit, ergo potestatem leges scriptas condendi, interpretandi et abrogandi*. Francesco Calasso, *I Glossatori e la teoria della sovranità: Studio di diritto comune pubblico* (Milan, 1951), 72.

100 Azo (*Summa Codicis*): *Dicitur enim translata id est concessa [sc. potestas] non quod populus omnino a se abdicaverit eam... Nam et olim transtulerat, sed tamen postea revocavit*; idem, *Lectura Codicis* 1.14.12: *Dic ergo, quod hic non excluditur populus, sed singuli de populo... quia plus fecit ipse, quam aliquis aliorum. Ideo singuli excluduntur, non universitas sive populus*; Odoferdus (*Comm.in Dig.* 1.3.32): *Nam populus bene potest hodie legem condere, sicut olim poterat.... Item non obstat, quod alibi dicitur, quod populus omne imperium legis condere transtulit in principem... quia intelligo transtulit id est concessit, non tamen a se abdicando*; Hugolinus (*Distinctiones*): *Sed certe non transtulit sic, ut non remaneret apud eum, sed constituit eum quasi procuratorem ad hoc*. For the entire complex of questions, see Gierke, *Genossenschaftsrecht*, 566 ff.; Carlyle, *A History of Medieval Political Theory*, 2:56–67; Calasso, *I Glossatori*, 72–78; Wilks, *Problem of Sovereignty*, 184–86.

other books of Roman and canon law like Azo's *Summa*.[101] Simon did not seek a cultural "ideal" in the ancient past of the Huns. On the contrary, he emphasizes the positive turning point that came about at the time of Prince Géza and King Stephen with the renunciation of their nomadic, "despoiling" mode of life. He accepts the dualism of *gens Christiana* and *populus barbarus* (Ch. 99), and, far from being an opponent of the Christian monarchy, can be seen as the "king's propagandist."[102] Rather, the purpose of his political theory is to prove that the ancient Hun-Hungarian *communitas* did not disappear with the coming of the monarchy, that it did not vest its power in the kings without (in Hugolinus's succinct phrase) "some of it remaining with it." Thus, the theoretical burden of his work ties in closely with one particular trend in contemporary jurisprudence and in the political theories just then finding definition. At the same time, it expresses within a colorful and eminently readable epic framework a political claim beginning to make itself heard around 1280 in Hungary, that the king should grant to the body of the nobility assembled in the *generales congregationes* a part in the exercise of power and legislature, even as, in its turn, the *communitas nobilium* (who find a spokesman for the first time in this work) shows itself willing to support and strengthen the royal power in the face of those "inclined to an indolent life," the aristocracy (*vivere volentes otiose*, Ch. 96).

Two Authors, Two Histories within One Europe

In December of 1270, a group of four men were heading southward on horseback from Naples toward Catona at the tip of Calabria, intending to cross by boat to Messina in Sicily in order to convey the greetings of the new king of Hungary, Stephen V, to Charles of Anjou on his return from Tunis and the last Crusade. Besides the leader of the diplomatic mission, a canon of Esztergom, Master Sixtus, we know of two other figures in the group, the clerics Master Simon of Kéza and Master Andrew. Master Andrew (known as Andrew of Hungary) was soon to enter the service of the son of Louis IX, Count Peter of Alençon, and went with his new master to France, where around 1272 he wrote an account of Charles of Anjou's rise to power, the *Descriptio victoriae ...*

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101 *Mon. Eccl. Strigon.* 2:71–72; cf. Endre Ivánka, "László mester esztergomi prépost könyvtára" [The library of Master Ladislas, provost of Esztergom] *Theologia* 4 (1937): 216–26.

102 For details, see Gerics, "Adalékok," 122–30.

Karoli regis Siciliae.[103] Simon of Kéza returned home, and a decade later in Buda, as he was writing his *Gesta Hungarorum*, he wove details of his adventures on this voyage into the story. For example, in one colorful episode of the events at Ravenna (Ch. 17) we learn that the Hun captain Zovárd roamed through Apulia to Calabria, the area of Catona and Reggio di Calabria, and on his return he devastated Southern Italy up to Monte Cassino. Needless to say, the Huns never reached Southern Italy. The inspiration for this episode came from the travel of the author, as he crossed Apulia—and, starting from Naples, also Calabria—in the fall of 1270 on a diplomatic mission. On the return journey Simon crossed from Messina to Catona, and from January 27 to February 27 of 1271 travelled through Calabria, detouring through Apulia to Monte Cassino, in order to accompany Charles of Anjou to Rome.[104] Catona, in the tip of Italy, inspired the author to another of his wonted etymological fancies: "Cato was born and lived here," he later wrote. Even if Cato was not really born there but in Tusculum, one might still attribute a certain symbolic significance to this quaint association of words. It is unlikely to have been a display of classical learning. Cato's name at this time was principally known from the popular late-antique collection of sayings, the *Dicta Catonis*, which had served as a textbook of grammar since the "Dark Ages." It is, nevertheless, connected with a new interest in the Roman past which arose in the northern Italian universities through the study of Roman law, an interest to which Cato's "sayings" were the more closely relevant as the most widely used textbook; Accursius's *Glossa Ordinaria* frequently called attention to them (*ut dixit Cato*).[105] This, in turn, links with the reviving interest in ancient ruins, something which, as we have already seen, served the author as a mine of ideas for characters and episodes in Hunnish history. Many things coalesce, therefore, in this historical moment around the turn of 1270–71, when in the tip of Calabria, the Hungarian cleric, preoccupied with his vision of a glorious Hunnish past, lets his thoughts and fancies roam back to antiquity. The new conceptions of history writing and the revived study of Roman law, the arising interest in antiquity, and the need for a glorious national past mingle to form the peculiar "Roman-Hun" mixture, transported into the world of contemporary "Europe," which provided the epic

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103 Published in *MGH SS* 24 (Hannover, 1882), 559–80. For a reconstruction of this diplomatic mission, see Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 841 ff., esp. 847–55.

104 Szűcs, "Társadalomelmélet," 853–55.

105 Wayland Johnson Chase, *The Distichs of Cato: A Famous Medieval Textbook* (Madison, 1922). Accursius *gl. ad Dig.* 1.1.2 sv. *et patriae*; cf. *gl. Dig.* 9.2.7.4 and 32.1.101.

and theoretical basis for the *Gesta Hungarorum*. And let us not forget that as the idea was taking shape in our author's head, he had before his eyes on the ferryboat the flower of French, Spanish, and Southern-Italian knighthood returning from the last Crusade.

The two Hungarian clerics on the scene both left a single work for posterity; both works preserve the memory of personal experience with contemporary Europe. But here their paths diverged. *Andreas Hungarus* did not return home, but continued to wield his pen in the service of one of the most interesting and dynamic rulers of the time, Charles of Anjou: he also upheld a theory of empire which interestingly combined the universalism of the Middle Ages with the nascent new theory of the state.[106] Simon of Kéza returned home to write a work which was to influence his nation's historical consciousness for centuries. It was not only their paths which diverged; the spirit of their works diverged as well. On the one hand, there is Master Simon's fantastic historical construct, in which even his memories of southern Italy serve to enhance the Hun-Magyar glory, and in the theoretical tone of which every bit of knowledge gathered abroad is reflected in the *hic et nunc* of social and political realities and the claims of the emerging "estates" in contemporary Hungary. On the other hand, there is Master Andrew's *Descriptio*, undoubtedly at a higher level both in organization and literary merit, which used its sources to present a basically authentic account of contemporary history, but with a biblical tone of universalism and a corresponding partisanship with the Guelph and hatred of the Ghibelline cause. These works represent the two diverging roads of the medieval spirit: the one seeks primarily, even within the universalism of Christianity, the particular place of his own nation; the other adopts unreservedly the "supranational" world of ideas. In the final analysis, however, both represent one and the same unity: the history of a Europe coalescing into one in the course of the thirteenth century.

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106 Emile G. Léonard, *Les Angevins de Naples* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), esp. 103ff.; Laetitia Boehm, "De Carlingis imperator Karolus, princeps et monarcha totius Europae: Zur Orientpolitik Karls I. von Anjou," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 88 (1968): 1–35.

Nation and People in the Late Middle Ages[*]

Functional Disorders Debated Yet Again

Many years ago Géza Perjés introduced the notion of "national self-esteem (or alternatively: public sensibility) disorder" into the debate about nationalism, together with diagnostic criteria and therapeutic recommendations; noteworthy in many respects, but provoking contradiction in other dimensions.[1] It would be foolish in principle to deny the existence of certain disorders, especially as regards the diverging visions on history where differences of opinion are framed with a special emphasis; discussions over the past decade have provided a good many examples of that by now. All these confusions not only in self-esteem and general disposition but also in notions and attitudes did not arise in recent years, but long before. Old psychological conditioning and habits of thought, often

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[*]   This essay by Szűcs illustrates the intensive public polemics evolving around the problem posed by the history of "nation," "nationalism," and "patriotism" in Hungary in the 1960s and early 1970s. Szűcs is responding here to the criticism made by an early modernist colleague, Géza Perjés (1917–2003), an expert in military history, directed at the arguments in his abovementioned, polemical book. Perjés, referring principally to the history of popular resistance to the Ottoman aggression after the 1526 Battle of Mohács, and to views formulated in the Reformation, claims that Szűcs was erroneously hypercritical by denying the historical existence of "some kind of" idea of the "nation" among the "people": a "popular patriotism" existing since the Middle Ages. Szűcs responds in the rhetorical style of public polemics, but with clear historical reasoning; this is why we decided to include the translation of this article in our volume. On the other hand, we decided to omit the first and the last part of the essay, which dissect the argumentation of Géza Perjés on early modern and Reformation matters, with a number of further references to contemporary Hungarian writers, such as Gyula Illyés, whose influential essay on "Rootlets," alluding to the archaic historical roots and sources of popular national consciousness and emotional identification became an oft-mentioned metaphor in these historical and ideological debates. All this seemed to us very hard for a foreign audience to understand, even with contextual explanatory notes.

[1]   Géza Perjés, "A nemzeti önérzet zavarai (Gondolatok a nacionalizmus vitához)" [The disorders of national self-esteem (Thoughts on the nationalist debate)], *Látóhatár* 4, nos. 7–8 (1967): 699–702.

appearing in a new pattern or form, continue to have an impact; inherited frames of mind and vicious circles of logic burden public discourse and historical consciousness today. Not long ago I devoted a book to the analysis of this phenomenon,[2] in which, addressing the neuralgic points and zones of the debate—with regard, among other things, to "pre-national" forms of consciousness and popular patriotism—I attempted to find more solid conceptual starting points and historical answers. My ideas were perhaps debatable; nevertheless, it does not help matters any if misunderstandings turn into the focus of a controversy, with the neuralgic spots of the debate needlessly proliferating through the addition to the existing disorders in "public sentiment" and concepts of a new one: a functional disturbance in the debate. Sadly, the latest contribution to this historical controversy, the concluding part of an extensive historical essay recently published by Géza Perjés,[3] is itself not free from this kind of malady, precisely at those very same neuralgic spots where he takes issue with alleged assertions from my work mentioned above.

Humanist Side Currents in Medieval Concepts of Nation

As regards medieval concepts of nation in Hungary, alongside the mainstream nationalism of the noble class there are also two narrower, humbler streams. The mainstream, with its feudal bent and "political" makeup, sprung forth from the soil of the "premature" society of estates around the 1280s from a source tapped by Simon of Kéza, forming a current which coursed through the mindset of the nobility of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and Thuróczy's *Chronica Hungarorum* to Werbőczy's *Tripartitum*, to spread out into a broadly surging river at diets on the Field of Rákos in the Jagiellonian era. Parallel to this, one of the "narrower" streams arose in the 1440s at the home of János Vitéz, the bishop of Nagyvárad (Oradea, Romania) and swelled into the swift, clear mountain brook of Janus Pannonius's poetry. Its fountainhead corresponded to the aforementioned bodies, but its current flowed with undiminished force on its own autonomous path and into the sixteenth century. Without going into any detail, it is worth noting the double enrichment of motifs in this humanist stream.

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2   Jenő Szűcs, *A nemzet historikuma és a történetszemlélet nemzeti látószöge* [The historicity of the nation and the nationalistic viewing angle of history] (Budapest, 1970).

3   Géza Perjés, *Az országút szélére vetett ország* [A country cast by the side of the road], *Kortárs* 16, no. 1 (1972): 118–31.

One is a certain degree of social criticism (self-criticism) in place of the arrogant and illusory nationalism of the nobility and its plenitude of social and moral fictions. For instance, it appears in the poetry and pamphlet literature of Mihály Keserű, Bálint Hagymássy, and Márton Nagyszombati from the early 1500s up until the eve of Mohács. Nagyszombati's 1800-line piece of poetry (from around 1522) is nothing less than a single grandiose acclamation, exhortation, and appeal to the *Hungara nobilitas* to heed its conscience, acknowledge its crimes, weaknesses, sins of belligerence, and lies, and finish with its discord, abandon its oppression of the *misera plebs*, the wretched masses, and put an end to disregarding the honor of the throne with the aim of "defending the beloved homeland (*dulcis patria*) with heavy weaponry" against the Turks. The other motif is the aspiration for cultural refinement (*civilitas* or *urbanitas*) and preoccupation with the humanist ideal of virtue (*humanitas*)—though not, as yet, an appreciation of the splendor of the mother tongue—coupled with the concept of "nation" (*natio*, *gens*) and the professed welfare of the homeland (*salus patriae*). That is why, around 1510 Janus Pannonius, the humanist poet whose intellect could ennoble the "barbarians," would become an emblem for Hungary's humanists, stemming largely from the ranks of the lesser nobility but by this time already with sporadic cases of burgher origin. The general intention of this undercurrent, which had been haunted by the image of the "fallow Hungarian land" since Janus, was to fructify and enrich the spirit of the homeland by cultivating the literature. All this was wholly alien to the mainstream current, or if such ideas arose at all, it was only in the form of puffed-up justifications for the *absence* of such motifs, in the shadows of "Scythian virtues"; as the otherwise not exactly uncultured Werbőczy himself summed it up: "It is widely recognized that Hungarians have always been readier to wield arms and working tools without which they could not have sown or reaped, than the volumes of Cicero, Livy, Sallust, and Aulus Gellius . . . " The inference here is that basically this is how it should be.

Notwithstanding a certain reshuffling of motifs, when speaking of the makeup of "national" consciousness during Jagiellonian-era humanism we should not lose sight of two factors which made that generation deviate from the attitude of Vitéz or Janus. One of these is the fact that the stated social critique becomes typically two-way: accordingly, the "homeland's ruin" was caused on the one hand by the misdeeds of the great lords and corruption of the nobility and on the other by the peasant war and the breach it had caused in the "fatherland's welfare." After 1514, this dual logic became commonplace among the

humanists. The second factor is that the desire for learning and reverence for the values of the era so often transformed seamlessly into empty swagger (as was the case with, for instance, Sebestyén Magyi: this land "gave birth to the greatest, most outstanding poet of our age" who is "fully the equal of Virgil; indeed, surpasses him. . . . "). It also took the form of a characteristic apologetic reflex (as with Benedek Bekényi: the only reason the homeland's glory is not as resplendent as it might be is that due to the ceaseless wars there are too few Hungarian writers and poets, and foreigners "with malicious envy" refrained from speaking of their deeds). At times it is hardly possible to distinguish these kinds of stock phrases from the nobility's head slogans.

None of this, of course, alters the fact that this was on the whole still a new current which, from the 1530s onwards, added yet another new motif—the discovery of the value of the mother tongue, to the extent that Gábor Pesti, in the foreword to his Hungarian translation of *Aesop's Fables* (1536), formulated the abovementioned program: the need for "diligence" "to contribute a droplet to the glory of their homeland by refining their own language and intellect, and to promulgate these in an ever-widening circle." In any event, traces of continuity for this idea can also be perceived since the 1440s–50s, with Janus Pannonius, at the heart of this late medieval process, becoming able to proclaim in the voice of a liberated individual: "With my intellect, homeland, I made thee noble . . . !"

Medieval Conditions for Another Side Current

The second side current deserves attention because it is the organic medieval precedent of the metamorphosis in consciousness that Géza Perjés attributed to the Reformation alone; it deserves particular attention because it has remained, until now, largely unidentified. Perjés was right about the fact that over the course of the sixteenth century, mainly under the influence of the Reformation and in the form of a novel symbiosis in many respects, a number of interrelated elements alien to the Hun-Scythian mindset became part of the transformed national consciousness in the early modern era. He is incorrect, however, in frequently emphasizing that the abovementioned elements were first articulated by the representatives of the Reformation. Most of these elements were already *in statu nascendi* at the twilight of the Middle Ages. In this manner, a medieval world in crisis and undergoing disintegration had laid the groundwork for everything that the Reformation was a consummation of, and gave ample expression to, around the mid-sixteenth century in Hungary.

The notion itself, fostered from Old Testament reminiscences of "election"—albeit at that juncture without "nationalist" tuning—stretches back to medieval heretical sects, in Hungary to Hussite doctrines arising in the 1430s in the country's southern regions, which the Inquisition proved incapable of completely eradicating; indeed, all the signs indicate that around 1514 they became an influential force. It is common knowledge that Hussites also translated the books of the Old Testament into Hungarian, including the story of the Maccabees, with passages surviving in the so-called *Vienna Codex*. The fate of the Jews lent itself particularly well as an analogy for Hungarians: among the tenets noted by Hungary's Hussites we can find the theme of "God's people." In a similar manner it can be demonstrated (as I outlined briefly in my book) that the idea of "election" galvanized the crusading peasants of 1456 in their defense of Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade, Serbia), and the ensuing rebellion (nipped in the bud as the insurrection was beginning to flare). This very same idea (which I shall return to below) propelled the crusading peasants of 1514 in their march from Buda to Temesvár (Timişoara, Romania) to go battle the Turks and the nobility alike.

Similarly demonstrable as early as 1470—though for the time being, equally not, of course, in "nationalist" colors—is the chiliastic-inspired doctrine of the "Fall," the calamities being the consequence of "our Sins." This doctrine was also present outside Hungary, precisely in those areas of Latin Christendom where the Turkish menace triggered internal social problems (e.g., in Styria, Carinthia, and Carniola). The general mood of crisis within Christianity in the declining Middle Ages projected an Apocalyptic mysticism onto these concrete issues. Also widespread in Hungary, such approaches to the matter were first summarized by Oswald of Lasko (Laskai Osvát) in his work *Sermones Dominicales*, printed in 1498 (cf. *Sermo* 123). The role Oswald played here is especially interesting from the perspective of what is about to be said. Already at this time, the work claimed that the Antichrist to come was to be identified with the Turks, and the Turks' seizures counted as one of the signs of the approaching Doomsday, and its imminent arrival at that! The moralizing theological explanation: the blows of the "ungodly people of Mohammed" were inflicted by the Lord on his own (Christian) people for the sins of the Christians. What, then, were the indisputable signs that pointed towards the impending coming of the Antichrist? Among others, it consisted of the weakening of faith, the reign of evil, the end of wisdom, and "the wealthy living without mercy or sense of justice. And it will most certainly be the case," it continues, "that the highborn are more concerned about the afflictions of their dogs and animals than those of

their people; they will torment their subordinates, harass them with different duties, and flay them unlawfully." For these reasons the first adherents of the Antichrist would be the high and mighty (*magnates et potentes*). As we see, the general apocalyptic mood of the late Middle Ages and the lines of reasoning gleaned from almost contemporaneous tractates got tangibly focused upon the distinctive problems of the Jagiellonian era. In this train of thought the Turkish problem and the social tensions fused into an organic ideological bond.

We have now reached the third important constituent which Perjés aptly terms "social conscience" but again ties it to the Reformation alone. The social tensions in late medieval society did not only fulminate in heresies; the problem was latent in direct and oblique forms in spiritual movements which signaled a crisis in Catholicism: in currents of the "new piety" or *devotio moderna*; in Hungary, for instance, the mysticism of the Pauline Fathers, and other paths like in the down-to-earth activities of the Observant Franciscans, the most popular of the mendicant orders in Hungary. The deeds of Pelbart of Temesvár, who was active mainly during the reign of Hungary's Matthias Corvinus (indeed, personally opposed to Matthias) are fairly well known in this area; but a "nationalist" cast or label was still absent from his social criticism. The situation was quite different in the case of the only slightly younger Oswald of Lasko (who died in 1511, whereas Pelbart died in 1483). The elements of his conceptual frame of reference, which are designated here, were bound together in a wholly individual fashion.

A few words about his person and the current he belonged to are necessary here. The stricter, reformed branch of the Order of Friars Minor (the Observants) was the sole religious order in Hungary which, unlike all other orders, prospered and thrived with special vehemence at the twilight of the Middle Ages. Suffice it to say that whereas around 1450 they had thirty convents, by 1517 there were seventy spread out over the country—an expansion that was unparalleled in an age of the general decline of monasticism and their more or less ineffective internal reforms. Naturally, the fact that the order was favored by the ruling powers and magnates (with the Hunyadi family at the forefront) played a major role in this development, since the spiritual army of the bare-footed friars who lived among the people in their grey habits, could be used both as a militant force against heretics and "schismatics," and for anti-Turkish propaganda and mobilization, as "army chaplains" of sorts. Indeed, they were practically the only ones who could be utilized for all this successfully. The emergence of Observantism per se was originally a conservative reform intended to restore the original

strictness of the Franciscan Rule and, more widely, the faltering religious life, and even more broadly the shaky authority of the Church. But, as is often the case, the return to the tenets of "Christlike poverty" and "true" Christianity continually produced heretics and near-heretical modes of behavior within the movement itself. At the same time, the Observants did not cut themselves off from the "world"; indeed, in keeping with their mission they always circulated among the general population and preached in their native tongue. It is well known that it was the Observant Franciscans, along with the Dominicans, who assisted at the birth of the nascent monastic literature in the Hungarian language around 1500. As to what they preached, this can largely be pieced together from the collections of model sermons that the occasional erudite member of the order would write in Latin for didactic reasons but with the purpose that it should be used in the native language. These collections, which had relatively large print runs and were published repeatedly, served the purpose—as we learn in the aforementioned prologue by Oswald of Lasko—of placing in the hands of less-educated friars guidelines on how they were to preach "most especially for the spiritual development of the rural, that is to say, peasant, population." But the Observants not only retained a close connection to the world, they also did not cut themselves off from secular currents. Oswald of Lasko himself, who played a prominent role in the leadership of the Hungarian vicariate from the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards, while acting as guardian (*custos*) of the order's monastery in Pest (in 1497 and 1506), also maintained close contact with Mihály Szobi and István Werbőczy, leaders of the party of the lesser nobles, and with the nobles themselves, who assembled at Rákos field and were eager to offer money and valuables to the convent in Buda (it was located next to the place where a Franciscan church stands today). This is where Oswald of Lasko produced his works, just opposite Werbőczy's residence in Pest on the other side of the Danube, and barely half an hour's walk from Rákos field, immediately to the east of Pest. Something of the ambiance of the Rákos field assemblies would have filtered into the Observant convent; in any event around this time one can already perceive an imprint of the "Hun-Scythian" consciousness on the order's constitution of 1499, which was at that moment still quite alien in ecclesiastical circles. Moreover, the prologue to *Gemma fidei* (Faith's Bud), a collection of sermons that Oswald of Lasko had published in 1507, is virtually a programmatic summary of the principles of the nobility's nationalism. In the shadow of this "program," which was conceived clearly in the tone of the celebrated Decree of Rákos (1505), and was not unknown to scholarly literature,

Oswald's other speeches, attesting to a different content than the slogans from Rákos field, remained largely unacknowledged. Above all, in his earlier *Sermones de sanctis* (first published in 1497), in the sermons on Hungarian saints—primarily King Stephen I and King Ladislas I—another concept of "nation" resounds, one that is much more deeply embedded in contexts other than that which has been prevailing on nearby Rákos field.

A New Concept of "Nation" at the Twilight of the Middle Ages

While the term "nation" found in the documents of the estates from around 1500 (and even much earlier) is normally identified unambiguously with the nobility, the text selected by Oswald of Lasko for the beginning of the second sermon *De sancto Ladislao* (*Sermo*, 49) was already approaching the matter from a different angle: "And remember that I am your own flesh and bone," said Abimelech to the men of Shechem (Judges 9:2). "These words," wrote Oswald, "might also have been uttered by St. Ladislas to all Hungarians from whose lineage (*progenies*) he had descended." A short disquisition follows: In what manner do the Hungarians belong together? Before all else through ties of kinship, comes the answer. To the foreigner we are only bound by the friendship of Christian love (*amicitia charitatis*), but something more binds us to our own people: "the natural order, that is to say, the origins (*naturalis ordo vel origo*) from which we cannot sever ourselves." He deems it necessary to add to this, however, that such a bond may be stronger or weaker depending on one's degree of virtue (*bonitas virtutis*). St. Ladislas was truly Hungarian with respect to descent and nation (*natione*), "therefore we should love him and, befittingly, more than others." But not for this reason alone. In line with the three-part order of reasoning of scholastic models, the second argument consists in the fact that this is what fairness and justice (*aequitas*) demand in return for his good works: "he governed our nation, protected us from enemies, and sustained our faith." Thirdly, we must love him for his unusual virtues (*virtutes*). With this the first part of his reasoning ends. The second begins thus: nevertheless, how many of us, among others noblemen, knights, and even papal legates, have called his sainthood into question! And why? Among other things, because by his own hand he shed a great deal of blood, not only of pagan Tatars but also of Christian Germans (!) of the true faith. This objection, asserts Oswald, may be dismissed with two arguments. On the one hand, he had to do this because this was what the natural order of things—"bone from bone, blood from blood"—demanded; on the other, it can be demonstrated

by the authorities (*auctoritate*) that "he shed blood lawfully (*licite*)—in defense of himself and those who belonged to him." At this point a string of quotations follow, which are drawn from authorities ranging from St. Ambrose to St. Thomas Aquinas. The point of interest here is that whether transmission consists of patristic, canonical, or scholastic sources, in the final analysis all the principles aligned originate from antiquity. For instance, as passed on by St. Thomas Aquinas, a maxim of Roman law was the precept for driving away hostile forces using lawful force (*vim vi repellere*), occurring in a number of places in the Pandects, the sixth-century codification of Roman law (e.g., *Digesta* 1, 1.3; 9.2, 44.4; 43, 16.1, 27). This was the foundation of the medieval theory of a just war (*iustum bellum*), which was also absorbed into canon law, insofar as even the clergy, in certain circumstances, had the right under natural law, as Oswald of Lasko puts it: "to defend themselves and kill their assailant." The most powerful argument is a tenet quoted directly from Cicero: "Anyone who fails to defend against or to oppose aggressive force, even though he might, commits the same sin as that of betraying his parents or friends or homeland!"

Omitting now further interesting details and sparing also a detailed commentary, let it suffice to highlight three important circumstances. One of these is the appearance of a concept of "nation" (with its theoretical underpinnings) which embraces incontrovertibly every Hungarian. In this case, we should not be disturbed that this new notion is conceptually cemented with the theoretical bonds of blood or descent, because not only archaic but also medieval discourse had no other way of expressing the notion of a tight, organic social cohesiveness than by relying upon the ancient, "natural" conceptual model of consanguinity and kinship (as opposed to modern thinking, in which such features appear only in base discourses). Nevertheless, what is noteworthy here is the modifying function of virtue—i.e., not a "natural" but an acquired attribute. The second circumstance is that blind xenophobia, inseparable from the nationalism of the nobility is totally absent here, with love tying us to foreigners, just more of it to one's own nation. Lastly, the moral duty to defend the homeland, underpinned by strong theoretical references, speaks for itself, and thereby the whole chain of thought is rounded off. It is not difficult to recognize here, with references to pagans and (in an ahistorical context) Germans and a portrayal of the ideal ruler (not detailed here), a longing for a redemption of the Jagiellonian era which had been thrust into helplessness.

With all this, however, we still do not have the complete picture. There are three sermons on St. Ladislas and two sermons on St. Stephen. Motifs which are

subordinated elsewhere get here a stronger voice. The emphasis, naturally, is on contrasts: "O, exemplar of Hungarians born today! O, model of perfection for the highborn! O, light of every Christian!" King Ladislas, the supplication goes, how different is this age we live in! The central thought of the first sermon (*Sermo*, 48) is the corruptness of the judicial system (". . . when justice is defended least of all, the law is stifled"). Hard words from the prophet Isaiah are leveled at the reader by the author: ". . . contrary to many a merciless judge today," for instance; whereas the sermon closes, in contrast, with the idea that in his own era the saintly king "preserved justice for the poor on trial. O, King Ladislas, if only you could pass judgment on the greedy and liberate the just, since injustice rules and deceitfulness is triumphant nearly everywhere."

The third exhortation sermon (*Sermo*, 50) delves even deeper into social conditions. Here the central idea is abuse of authority, misappropriation (*usurpatio*), and gaining the upper hand. Wherever one looked, properties were extorted and innocents cheated out of their inheritance: "Anyone who carries out such things is a thief and malefactor and shall find himself in eternal sin . . . no servant should be obliged to submit to a lord such as this and pay taxes!" Step by step, the sermon leans towards the serfs and against the usurpation of power in this sphere:

O, God of truth, look down from your throne on how your heritage is being squandered! Justice is being trampled in the dust by highborn men (*principes*) inasmuch as they do not pay their servants, claiming that they have not entered into agreement with them. Furthermore, they do not permit their servants to dispose of their goods as they wish on death, and they confiscate for themselves the inheritances of those who die without relatives, which is robbery! . . . Furthermore, they engage frequently in hunting, compelling people to take part to their detriment, and they also trample the crops and vines of the poor. They compel their servants to enter marriages against their wishes. Furthermore, they plunder, imprison and coerce under oath those who wish to relocate to the property of another, thereby depriving them of their freedom, although that cannot be purchased with any amount of gold. . . . They burden their servants with unduly heavy taxes, and collect these, if need be, through imprisonment and by forcing them to reap crops, to fell the hay, to gather mounds of grapes, to dig moats around their castles and build walls, such that the poor people, incapacitated by exhaustion and hunger under the weight of these burdens, cry out to the Lord, begging for vengeance, and their cry reaches the

ears of the Lord, who in the words of the prophet Micah: "Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; is it not for you to know judgment? Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones. Who also eat the flesh of my people . . ." Oh, thee wellborn lords [*domini principes*] who thrive from the sweat of the poor and grow fat on the fasting and hunger of the poor, if you do not contritely abstain from the injustices that have been listed and fail to remedy what you have done, ye shall not be permitted to behold the glorious face of the Lord!

The limits placed upon freedom of movement, the central levy of an additional tithe on the income of serfs, the increase in burdens of the serfs, the curtailment of peasant rights, and an aggravation of the corvée demanded of serfs—all of these are combined here with formidable precision (this is before 1497!), so already in the first decade of the Jagiellonian era all this points towards 1514, the year of vengeance. Also appearing in the sermon is the statement that "nature created all men equal," which may well have been commonplace in medieval thinking, but in the context of a text where, alongside its many details the tenet is further augmented with St. Gregory the Great's argument ("nothing is more beastly than a man who has been granted reason but does not avail himself of it; for as long as men live by reason, their condition [that is, their social rank] is equal") and where the "doctrine of resistance" is also promulgated on a theoretical level, the commonplace begins here to assume a more concrete position. This latter doctrine can also be detected in Sermon 49: "And anyone may take up defense against even his own superior, inasmuch as that superior unlawfully seeks to do him harm."

Of course, we need to be aware that some of the sermons of this nature were aimed at awakening the conscience of the ruling class: details administering moral lashings and the intention to agitate were not necessarily delivered to the common people or peasants. In another sermon which inveighs against the state of the Church, Oswald of Lasko warns: "none of this is to be stated before the general public (*in vulgo populo*) lest they [the priesthood] make themselves hateful before the people." It is also indisputable that the tone here is to a large extent one that aims to shift the blame. It is suggested that the magnates and barons alone are responsible for the depravation of public affairs: they alone are the guilty ones. With this in mind, the storyline partly corresponds with the propaganda that the lesser nobility's party began to spread during that same

period. As a whole, however, it should not be brushed aside in its entirety with a label of "social demagoguery"; the sermon is all too clear and unambiguous for that. I personally find it more fitting to speak here of the awakening of a "social conscience," something that Géza Perjés associated with the Reformation. With regard to the topic at hand, in the 1490s this social conscience, this social criticism with a Christian essence appears together with and also relates to the concept of "nation"—not in a narrow, estates-bound sense but in a socially broad sense, and with the notion of "election" projected onto it. In the second sermon on St. Stephen (*Sermo*, 77)—which, incidentally, reflects views similar to the latter notion—one motif is noticeably sonorous, that is: "This strong people, whose blood and bones cover the valleys and mountains of different lands, was intended by God to be the shield of Christianity against the Grand Turk [i.e., the Sultan] so that, through their uprightness and bravery, holy Christianity should enjoy a much longed-for peace." In light of the above, this parlance, with by this time several centuries of history behind it, conveys something different from that we hear from the documents produced by the estates; in all likelihood for Oswald of Lasko the term "people" (*gens*) cannot have been utterly different as a category from the "*natio*," which he uses in the sermon on Ladislas. Taken together, the cognitive framework which emerges here is exactly the same—not only in essence but also in detail—as what Géza Perjés related to the Reformation in his study.

But let us not jump too far ahead. It would be premature to declare that here we have evidence of the "popular patriotism" which has long been sought and speculated on. It would hardly be methodologically sound to conclude that these ideas mirror the worldview of the "people." The appearance of a cognitive object at the threshold of consciousness is not identical to its popularization. Indeed, there are cogent arguments that would oppose such hasty conclusions. Though it is true that some 1400–1500 Observant Franciscan friars were active throughout Hungary during the 1510s and 1520s (the order had 1,472 members in 1523, a significant number under the conditions of the day), Franciscan sources of that period contain no evidence that this concept had taken root or become popularized within the circles of the Barefoot Friars. Viewing the matter with modern logic, could anything have been more opportune in April and early May of 1514 than to employ this type of conceptual material—provided that this material was indeed at hand for the fomenters themselves and could be expected to seriously resonate among those who were to be fomented—in provocative sermons aimed at rallying the population into an

army of crusaders to fight the Turks (and when no one was yet aware that this venture would soon erupt in a peasant revolt). Purely by chance I happened to come across sources that, while fragmentary, still preserved some of the stock phrases that resounded in those decisive spring months. Among them was the internal correspondence of the Observants, a copy of a rousing address (*exhortatio*) as well as a circular letter and a letter of commission from the vicar which directs members of the order who were proclaiming the crusade "to animate and ignite the hearts of the faithful who will fight in this military undertaking." As had also been the case in 1456, the charge of publicly proclaiming the bull and organizing recruitment were activities that belonged almost exclusively to the Observant Franciscans. A minute indication of the motif analyzed above can indeed be detected in the following: "For nearly a century Hungarians have been carrying the shield of the Christian faith and manfully sheltering the entire Catholic Church." There was, however, nothing new in this because the notion itself was already a hundred years old by this time. In any case not a word, thought, or trace of a thought can be related to Oswald of Lasko's ideas described above. On the other hand, there is much more affinity between the ideological vocabulary within these sources and authenticated documents from May and June of the leaders of the peasant uprising (more on this, briefly, below). It is normal that a long period of time elapses between the birth of an innovation in reasoning and its widespread adoption.

As for its genesis, there is no question that the initial configuration of the metamorphosis of the discourse is crucial. A unique amalgam took place between certain (conceptually prior) elements in Christian thinking and a store of motifs rooted in estates-bound and humanist political thinking; its pattern became more "closed" from a Christian point of view, but more "open" from the societal point of view (in other words, it allowed more possibility for a plebeian interpretation). Discovering these hidden developments, however, is a task that awaits future efforts. Analysis is the mechanism through which historiography proceeds and sources are its raw material. This cannot be replaced by sheer speculation or a priori hypotheses. In consideration of this, let me close this short digression by repeating what was stated at the outset: at the twilight of the Middle Ages, within the complex process of the evolution of the early form of national consciousness, this is only one side current, and one which, for the time being still remains close to its fountainhead.

Clarification of Recent Misunderstandings
about Nationality–Related Group Consciousness

All this, of course, is no more than makeshift notes on the interesting questions raised by Géza Perjés. Its purpose is to trace back along the fine strands that have been articulated (and which I do not "want to neglect" in the least, as Perjés infers) to reach the source of these phenomena; in that way, it is not meant to refute but rather to supplement his discourse.

As I stated in the opening paragraphs, I also have to call attention to issues where Perjés himself, I regret to say, labors under a misapprehension. It is a minor detail, barely worth mentioning, that he calls me to account for an abstract of a paper related to the Reformation (published in 1963), the full text of which only deals with the period up to the 1470s, which would have made it difficult to address the effects of the Reformation. Much more striking is the manner in which the raw nerve of the decade-long debate comes to the fore here as well. Perjés claims that I asserted in my book *The Historicity of the Nation* that the elaboration of the feudal framework "eradicated . . . from the hearts and minds of the peasantry any notion of a Hungarian homeland and nation." On the contrary, as Perjés puts it: "the common people did indeed have *some sort of notion or concept* of a homeland and nation" (the italicization is, of course, my own - J. Sz.).

Neglecting "rootlets," at least in the way that Perjés interprets and employs the metaphor of Gyula Illyés, is something I cannot be accused of. What I already intimated in effect in in my above-mentioned book, and have since reinforced in great detail with source material in a work of 450 pages (relying upon what can be teased out with the combined resources of philology, historical linguistics, historical ethnography, and comparative social anthropology), is that *some sort of notion* of a wider ethnic community was present not only in the seventeenth or even the fifteenth century but as far back as the ninth and tenth centuries (indeed, in all likelihood, even earlier). The Hungarian people held *some sort of notion* of a wider ethnic community, which, by all indications, appears to have Iranian origins but undoubtedly was already formed in Ancient Hungarian by the words *nemzet* (nation) and *nemzetség* (clan or nationality). Not only can traces of this notion be substantiated but its constituent and structural elements, or general contours at least, may be reconstructed; indeed, much direct and indirect evidence and ethnosociological considerations suggest that the concept (which is more than a concept—it is referred to as "We-consciousness" in the field of social psychology) may have been more "ideologi-

cal" and more powerful among society's armed freemen than among the masses, who after the eleventh and twelfth centuries, gradually sank into local isolation. It was definitely still in existence around 1200. The Anonymus and the wealth of Hungarian legends surviving into the thirteenth century are prominent witnesses to this, but there are also important supportive elements which are less familiar. Never and nowhere did I suggest that after this period this consciousness disappeared without a trace, though undoubtedly *another kind* of mental structure arose among the emerging nobility and the newly formed serfdom. I would like to make mention of this for the record and would refer to pages 54, 59–61, and 96 of the booklet under discussion,[*] where pertinent results of a larger manuscript soon to be published may be found; these results lack extensive documentation, of course, but are explicitly stated. For the sake of a conceptual distinction (and following a usage that is widespread internationally), I have termed this cognitive object a "nationality-related group consciousness," and I have ascribed to it specific functions, although it is precisely in the functional sense that I differentiated it from the ideological notion of "national consciousness" that was developing secondarily, bit by bit, during the Middle Ages. I never imagined or claimed that a Transylvanian peasant did not feel connected in *some* way—specifically through bonds, partly through language, and partly as a result of the state framework—with a noble in Upper Hungary or Transdanubia. I never wrote anything of the sort in my work; what I attempted to present was something entirely different. Is there any need for me to explain to Perjés, who was trained in sociology and psychology, that the socio-psychological group consciousness ties an individual in many a manner to a wide variety of possible relationships, yet with varying degrees, among which certain grades, hierarchies, and loyalties may be observed? These, in turn, are distinguishable with regard to social stratum and historical era creating *typical* (and under certain conditions "normal") configurations. Need I explain to Perjés, with his excellent sense of history, that in this connection the medieval framework is *utterly different* from the modern one? And need I ask Perjés, who possesses great erudition, to reread in my work the pertinent, but necessarily abridged, passages which address this issue? What would transpire from this is that I did not deny the existence of the stated "some sort" or "any kind" of notion he calls me to account for; what I was talking about was that this cognitive content of the "popular" (peasant) mentality, universal (peasant) outlook which

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[*]   Reference is to Szűcs, *A nemzet historikuma és a történetszemlélet nemzeti látószöge.*

is barely discernible in historical sources, this archaic, "nationality-related" group consciousness, broken up in a powerful and primary feudal division of society, is of *another nature* than the sense of "national" identity of the nobility since the late thirteenth century. The new sensibility was clearly isolated from and alien to the peasant cognitive worldview for a long period; the latter consisted of a group sensibility, not an *idea*; a feeling, but not an *ideology* embracing primary group loyalty; and thus, of necessity, was not a *political* factor. It is precisely in the sub-political sphere that it served an important function inasmuch as it was capable of withstanding the dynamic and multidirectional shifts in political loyalty and community structures over many long centuries. The ethnic group's principal bond consisted in safeguarding—and simultaneously having the capacity of absorbing—language and customs.

Allow me to remind Géza Perjés of the political dimensions, or at least fragments, of the cognitive content of this mentality; let me call his attention to the text of the so-called *Game of Polish Ladislas*, together with the related literature. This text, also adapted by Zoltán Kodály, is one of the most archaic dramatic relics of Hungarian folk origin, extant in a great many (more than a hundred) variants, and degenerated into a children's rhyme (the so-called "bridge rhyme") and a wedding party amusement in recent centuries. In its original form, it emerged in the 1440s and is the folkloristic legacy of a destructive internal party strife, of which a passionate criticism—and also its characterization as an "Iron Age" of anarchy—is known from the same time, from a book of correspondence ("*epistolarium*") of János Vitéz. It was a time when havoc was wreaked on the country and its population because of the fights between the German party (the future infant Ladislas V, his mother Elizabeth, and their body of loyal supporters) and the Hungarian party (Wladislas I and his body of loyal supporters). The story itself could have been formulated in the mid-fifteenth century by a schoolteacher for his pupils, recording his words, but its original meaning gradually became blurred and it ended up being turned into a children's game. Its historical and narrative core consists of a discussion between the army of Good King Wladislas ("Polish-Ladislas"), preparing to cross a river, and ferrymen. The former say to the latter: "We are the army of Good King Wladislas/We are weary from travel/Good ferrymen, carry us over the Danube!" The essence of the conflict is that the ferrymen (by whom we should understand the "people") are suspicious and have no intention of taking them across, so they respond to ever-newer promises with ever-newer counterarguments:

- Whose people are you?
- Good King Polish-Ladislas's
- And where is your Polish King Ladislas?
- We bring the king with a crown of diamonds

- He is our enemy, too!
- On what basis your enemy?

- You are pagans!
  The other day you passed by
  You broke the leg of our bridge
  You still have not repaired it

Thereupon the army offers everything it can. It promises to repair the bridge with pinewood, brass-pewter, or pure gold, but:

- Where would you get pure gold?
- We went up to the Blessed Virgin's little garden
  Asked nicely and she gently gave . . .
- That's a lie, because you stole it!

And on it goes. In some variants the designations of *people* and *German people* ("army, *exercitus*") appear in the text, where "Hungarian" and "German" are, of course, ethnic or national categories, but in what context? There is one variant where the question "Whose people are you?" continues with: "of Elizabeth or of Polish Ladislas?" If Elizabeth's, they will be carried over the river, but if of Polish (that is, "Hungarian") Ladislas, i.e., of Wladislas, then they will not! To be sure, it is not easy to adjust the cognitive world of the peasant of the time to the categories of "nation" at that time. In any event, an analysis of this nugget of pure gold that fortunately survived may discover a wholly different alloy from what some historians would like. Visceral mistrust, antipathy, and hatred of all men bearing arms, all men who are braggarts and pompous ("Where would you get pure gold? That's a lie, because you stole it!"), towards an "enemy" who is not necessarily foreign but *eo ipso* "pagan"—these are the categories. The dominant tone: "He is our enemy too!", however much he was Hungarian, like the army on the far bank of the river. None of this, however, means that there did not exist in the ferrymen *some* perception of Hungarians belonging together; it is

just that it was not a *political* perception. It is quite another matter that when the Turks—a truly "pagan" people—appeared on the far side of the river, the ferrymen did not merely engage in a game of questions and answers but drew their concealed weapons, including hatchets, bows and arrows, straightened scythes, and swords (despite a ban on weapons in principle, landlords would turn a blind eye to this because of their own brawls and private wars). Thus, they would attempt to prevent their crossing—because they were their enemy too.

Yet another matter, and of a different nature from that of the nationality-related group consciousness of the peasantry, is to what extent the "ethicized" or "territorialized" emotions, which I have termed in my book patriotism (in a well circumscribed sense) might have been part of that sunken worldview. It is within *that* context that the issue of Transylvania and Upper Hungary addressed by Perjés came to be mentioned in my book. To be precise, in the sense that it is ahistorical to suppose that "the idea of a broad political territory from the Northern Carpathians to the lower Danube from Dévény [Devín, Slovakia] to Brassó [Braşov, Romania], known at one time as the kingdom of Hungary (*regnum Hungariae*), would have occupied the same place in the psyche of the people from that time—and from every social strata at that—in the same way that today it is natural to us to call the political territory of the national community 'our native land.'" The peasantry, by and large, was "aware" of the existence of a political and geographical entity of this nature. This is not the issue, however, but whether they recognized it as their *homeland*, in the sense that the notion and its related concrete sentiments, experiences, and ethical demands would determine their decisions and put the weapons in their hand? It is also an abstract matter, for even today who is familiar with all the remote regions of one's homeland? This distinction and along with it the significance it might have for historical theory and methodology, which were outlined in my book, are not unreasonable taken together. Because the position is not, as Perjés suggests, that "philology can offer only meager evidence" to substantiate a "spontaneous" ideology "coming from the people" and a broad concept of homeland. No, philology has no evidence at all to offer with regard to this question. For what it does offer meager evidence (indeed, I made some reference to these data in my book) is that *homeland*, according to sources with peasant origins, or which might be connected with the cognitive sphere of the peasantry, is *always* the village, the immediately surrounding countryside, the familiar frame of life, where a man is "at home"—up to the end of the sixteenth century at least. Until meager evidence to the contrary is dug up, this is a reasonable premise.

"He Is Our Enemy Too": A Few Words on the Ideology of the Dózsa Uprising

On the far bank of the river, precisely at Belgrade, on the lower Danube the fearsome army of Mehmed II (the "Conqueror") appeared in early July of 1456. On the near bank (indeed, breaking through to the Turkish camp on the far bank) around 30,000 peasant crusaders stood their ground. In mid-May of 1514 around 50,000 armed peasant crusaders were to turn weapons that had been intended for use against the Turks against the nobility. How do these facts fit into the theoretical framework outlined here?

It would be ill-advised, within the scope of this essay, to attempt to summarize even the most basic conclusions that might be drawn about the ideological motivations of these two movements. At the same time, it is not merely the symbolic anniversary of the birth of György Dózsa, designated by general consensus—symbolic by common consent[*]—a duty of obligatory commemoration, but above all the subject itself that demands that at least a few words be said in connection with the matter under discussion.

Let it be noted from the very start that relatively few reliable sources are available on the ideology behind Dózsa's uprising, at least in comparison with other roughly contemporaneous large peasant movements. The humanist narratives of historians of the day that have been preserved possess many kernels of truth but many more fictional elements. From the point of view of the history of ideas, however (especially with regard to utterances attributed to peasant leaders and their conceptual makeup), they do not possess much credibility because they are little more than stylistic exercises in classical-style humanist orations. There are altogether four documents originating from the crusaders themselves; apart from a few eyewitness reports (reliable because they were produced during the course of the events themselves and were intended exclusively for informational purposes) and the internal logic of the events themselves, these serve as our only sources.

If this material is examined to determine which conceptual devices were used to express the aims of the crusaders themselves, then two classes may be clearly discerned. The first is the wealth of Christian motifs of the period, plain and simple. The "sacred undertaking" is therefore "by the will of God the Almighty," "for the cause of Christianity in its entirety" against "the most infidel

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[*]   Szűcs is referring here to the quincentenary of György Dózsa's birth which is undocumented but widely accepted to have been in Dálnok, Transylvania [Dalnic, Romania] c. 1470.

and most treacherous (*perfidissimi*) Turks" and later, by mid-May, simultaneously against the "infidel-faithless" nobility (*infideles*), and those who oppose this venture will "be excommunicated as the Devil's accomplices" and will have "the punishment of eternal damnation" inflicted upon them (and of course, by the by, loss of their head and livestock and impalement). The second source is the common secular and political argumentation of the age, well known from documents that number in the thousands, according to which the whole venture, undertaken not only to the call of the pope and Archbishop Bakócz, but "by the will of the whole kingdom (*totum regnum*)," "for the protection of this kingdom (*hunc regnum protegere*, etc.)" in order to thwart "the destruction of the kingdom," which with the aim of "assisting this kingdom" everyone had to support, because otherwise "he is rebelling against this kingdom," or to put it differently, acting "against the entire kingdom, which is to say (*seu*!) the Christian faith."

Just as this "state propaganda," which highlighted the ethical and political duty to rally to the defense of the *regnum*, had already been employed in Hungarian documents for two hundred and fifty years, the characteristic fusion of secular political and Christian argumentation in itself had a history of more than a century: this has been the general tone in the mobilization against the Turks since the end of the fourteenth century. This is how the Crusade had originally been declared. The circular letter of the vicar of the Franciscan province, which may be dated to April 1514 and survived in the aforementioned letter-collection of the order, entrusted all *custodia* in Hungary with announcing the bull, proclaiming "the defense of the Christian faith and especially this kingdom of Hungary" (*pro religionis Christiane et presertim huius regni Hungarie defensione . . .*), whereas the order given to the army priests referred merely to the "sacred campaign/enterprise against the enemy" (*sancta expeditio*). The connections are obvious, but it does not hurt to mention that in the written order that György Dózsa had distributed from Cegléd and in the writ, still dated the early half of May, from the crusader lieutenants Tamás Aszalói Kecskés and Lőrinc Megyaszói Mészáros it is exclusively the stock of Christian motifs that is drawn on, whereas in the letters of crusader army commander Ferenc Bagoly from Gönc (May 31) and a crusader from Sárospatak whose name is unknown (tentatively, early June), the Christian and, let us say "state" arguments, interweave. It should also be noted that no words, allusions, or motifs in the writings of the crusaders betray any knowledge of the reasoning or intellectual subject matter analyzed above in connection with the sermons of Oswald of Lasko.

One may raise the question of whether the written record of the crusaders may be regarded as homogeneous, since from the middle of May what was originally a crusader army had become a rebel camp and "illegitimate" enterprise (the bull had been withdrawn) and combat against the nobility was openly proclaimed. What is distinctive about this is the fact that this volte-face had no effect on the ideological charge; it remained homogeneous, the goals being expressible with the self-same *topoi*. The rebels, at least in respect to Dózsa's main force, did not abandon the original aim of it being a campaign against the Turks until the end of May; they wanted to simultaneously vanquish their lords and the Turks. This demonstrates, among other things, Dózsa's moral grandeur and, equally, the movement's vulnerability. The Turkish affair was not a side issue even after the movement switched to an overt uprising. A keen-eyed Italian wrote from Buda at the time (June 15) that the Hungarian barons and nobles, who even during the period of the late Matthias "had long been absent from the constant fighting," were still idly at leisure and yet inflicted intolerable burdens on their serfs "on the pretext that this was to defend the border castles." The connection between these two matters, the mixture of social and moral outrage, was quite apparent in the beginning of the uprising, when, on the morning of May 25, as an eyewitness testifies, the crowd charged menacingly at the Buda monasteries of the Dominicans and the Franciscans, shouting things like "How long have the lords and nobles been preparing to fight against the Turks? It's been twenty years or so by now! It's all just a scam!" Gáspár Heltai, a sixteenth-century chronicler of the deeds of the Hungarians, recalled the incident in this way: "They have sucked our sweat and blood and now they hide and dare not fight against the Turks for our country! Rally, let's march on these cowardly frogs!" The fact that Dózsa did not lose sight of the cause of the Turkish campaign even as half the country was aflame in a peasant war is corroborated, first and foremost, by the determined and persistent southward progression of his main forces.

The preservation of the balance of this dual objective could only be assured conceptually through one thing: the chiliastic sense of "election," the consciousness of being a "chosen people" which had guided the Hussites (along with most plebeian movements in the Middle Ages) and, according to available sources, was also the ideological leitmotif of the peasant war in Hungary. Dózsa himself called his own army a "blessed crusader people" (*benedicta gens cruciferorum*) and "holy squadron, blessed assembly" (*sancta turma et benedictum conventiculum*), and referred to a "holy mission" against the "infidel-faithless" nobility.

Warriors themselves were calling each other "brother" like the Hussites and "devout servants of the holy cross" (in the Gönc letter), who would be helped by "God on high and the holy cross," "the victorious symbol of which is emblazoned on our breasts" (in the letter from Sárospatak). The motifs of denial of services in money that were extorted unjustly and with force (*vi et iniuste*, in the letters from Kecskés and Mészáros) and of the legitimacy of "revenge for oppression" (in the letter from Sárospatak), on the other hand, are eerily similar to what appeared in Oswald of Lasko's ominous (and admonitory) vision, published more than a decade earlier.

Of course, this by no means suggests that the peasants learned all of this from the Franciscans. The latter were no longer leading recruitment by mid-May, though individual friars (including Observants) and priests, students and lesser noblemen still continued to proceed with them, and even, in more than a few cases, belonged to the body of the general leadership and wrote these documents that remained to us. It is more likely the case that certain ideas present in the peasantry's sphere of thought triggered certain intellectual mechanisms under these conditions. In large part these ideas inevitably were derived from a Christian frame of reference (no other system of motifs was yet in existence in that era for the formulation of social problems). The mechanism comprised a radical interpretation of this set of ideas, and the stimulus was supplied by a combination of factors which interacted together in unascertainable dimensions, including latent heretic currents, lively and morally based currents of social criticism within the official branches of the Church, the internal crisis of the medieval world, and the peasants' instinctively anti-feudal "biblical exegesis." This set of ideas did not exclude secular political categories (for instance, the notion of defense of the *regnum*), and was exceptionally open, and in a highly flexible manner, towards the ecclesiastical sphere, but all the signs indicate that it remained, as yet, resolutely closed to the era's ideas about "nation" and "patriotism." But how can one state this with certainty? For historians of ideas the fragments of the written heritage of Hungarian peasants which have survived through happenstance are the same type of evidence as excavated fragments of the pedestal of a column, a keystone, or a window frame would be to an archaeologist. Often the archaeologist and art historian are obliged (and able), on the basis of such fragments, to reconstruct an entire column or window, or indeed the structure of an entire church, as medieval master craftsmen worked according to certain defined systems; if all that is found at a certain place are Gothic stone fragments from the fourteenth century, they can state with complete certainty, at

least, that it was not a Renaissance building which stood on that site. It is much the same with the "archaeological" relics of a lost world of ideas.

The foregoing says nothing at all about the true *causes* of the uprising, but of course this was not the intention. The issue of subjective knowledge depends on how one may express different goals and intentions with the aid of historically given and accessible ideas. This may be "false" (in the philosophical sense), but it is rare in history that people are able to express their goals adequately; the picture that is formed may be flawed (it almost certainly is), but at the same time *that* is based on sources which reflect the reality relatively faithfully. And at least it is not the sort of notion which deems as "adequate," on a purely speculative basis, connections projected back from much later centuries.

As far as the "instinctive sphere" is concerned, in the final analysis the same lies at the root of the internal mechanism of Hungary's peasant war, albeit in a more developed form, as has been seen in the background of the *Polish Ladislas game*. For a host of several tens of thousands of peasants, under the token of "election" and decades of humiliations, to believe viscerally that two "infidel," "pagan" foes—the Turks (*perfidissimi*) and the nobles (*infideles*)—could be destroyed at one and the same time, they must long have had a visceral sense that noblemen were liars and "robbers" (we only need to consider the verse "That's a lie, because you stole it!"), they must have, for a long time, repeatedly declaimed the motto "You're pagans!" or the other notable one that applied to noblemen and Turks equally, "He is our enemy too."

Why Did the Matter of Popular Patriotism Become a Neuralgic Spot?

For all that, why should it not be permissible to discuss popular patriotism in a vague or general, analogical manner in connection with the Dózsa rebellion and other early peasant movements? Assuming no attempt is made to fashion out of it a foundational historical category or a guiding principle of historical theory; after all, to a greater or lesser extent, one is always obliged to work with retrospective categories.

Let me pose the question once more emphatically: Why and to what extent has the issue of popular patriotism become a neuralgic spot, and in that sense almost a "public concern" in our debates? Certainly not through any weight of its own but rather through its historiographic connections.

It could not have possessed such force on its own, as it is inconceivable for such theoretical matters, which are as good as intangible in the historical

sources, to stir up such a tempest. In full awareness of the pertinent international literature, I can vouch that nowhere in Europe, in either historiography or common knowledge, is there, or has there ever been, any ominous meteorological disturbance around this question. Firstly, it has been presumed or acknowledged to a greater or lesser extent that "some sort of notion" of nationality was also general among the lower social strata, especially in ethnic frontier zones and during situations of conflict (at times of war, in cases of foreign occupation, or when social tensions coalesced with ethnic antagonisms). Secondly, any sober researcher is well aware that this became a historical factor along with and indeed subordinate to other factors; just as there is little disagreement that in the Middle Ages, and in feudal structures in general, the structure of consciousness had a characteristically estate-bound articulation; there were no "germs" of latent mystical cognitive elements lurking in it that were subsequently brought to flower, by long centuries of historical development, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (though naturally, as we have seen, these were not without precedents). The peasantry gained access to the intricate ideas related to nation and patriotism (and the sentiments that are inseparable from them) with the abolition of serfdom: this was when the "people" started to become part of the "nation."

Translated by Tim Wilkinson

The Ideology of György Dózsa's Peasant War[*]

Preliminary Notes on Sources

In what terms is it justified to speak of ideology in the context of peasant uprisings? If the notion of ideology is defined (in the way it frequently is) as being a theoretically homogeneous body of views and ideas related to the social and political conditions upon which it intends to exercise a direct repercussion, this definition does not in all its particulars fit the programs of peasant movements. However, it is hard to make definitions conform neatly to historical reality. In truth, "ideological" elements of this kind—a set of idea-driven notions, value judgments and demands aimed at transforming society and the sphere of politics—can be found in all peasant movements, some of which are more or less shared between movements, next to others that are completely unique. Yet on the whole, as well as in all their manifestations, despite all their fragmentariness and structural looseness, these ideological elements form characteristic ideational structures whose main body may justifiably be called an ideology.

It is all the more justified to speak of ideology when the apparent fragmentariness is due primarily to limitations in source data and knowledge, while on the other hand, the qualifier of "instinctive" that is so often stereotypically tagged on to peasant movements derives mainly from the mode of perception. However, in all their tragic frailty, despite objectives either unreal or markedly

illusory, there is a good deal more of a conscious (i.e., ideological, in the sense above) nature to peasant movements than is generally considered to be the case. A reliable reconstruction depends, of course, on the extent to which we are able to enter such a movement's particular notional system and ideological mechanisms, and this is methodologically contingent on a whole series of fundamental groundwork. General source analysis (including unraveling links between texts, and interconnections in conceptual history) is part of this work, as well as a source-critical approach, especially as it follows from the nature of these movements that there are, in general, relatively few written texts directly and authentically reflecting their program: there are, for instance, in the case of the Hungarian peasant uprising of 1514 just four written items to represent the "self-made literature" of the insurgents. In all further instances, the information provided can only be reliably projected back onto the reality by correcting the characteristic angle of distortion source by source, or source group by source group. The cases of "pseudo sources," where such a correction is no longer possible, should be excluded. Last but not least, a precondition for such examination is the precise chronological assignment of the major motifs and episodes from the point of view of the history of ideas, as the internal logic of the events is itself, in a certain sense, a "source."

It is no accident that these methodological aspects should crop up even in an introductory note. In investigating the way Dózsa's image has evolved over the last four-and-a-half centuries it has been customary to take almost only changes in approach into account. Though important, it is not the sole historiographic approach, especially where the result consisted in registering such evident facts that the basic position of modern-day historians (to say nothing of writers and visual artists) in their judgment of 1514 was determined by their relationship to the idea of feudalism in terms of historical theory, and in present-day terms, to the idea of revolution in general. It is by no means of secondary importance what coordinates are used to determine an assessment's possible room for maneuver, for not even the best of intentions can rectify poor bibliographic "points of coordination" that are either faulty or not methodically marked out. Though valid in general, it is all the more true of Hungarian historiography, that if the "positivist" or "liberal" era of writing history on a certain subject failed to carry out certain basic operations, or performed them imperfectly, a series of unchecked assertions were passed down to the present. As far as research into Dózsa is concerned, Hungarian historiography has undoubtedly been fortunate with Sándor Márki, inasmuch as his preliminary

studies, preparing his monograph, published after 1883, were followed by his book, *Dósa György*,[1] in which he managed, on the basis of an impressive body of source data, to reach a kind of synthesis in a process that had already commenced some decades earlier, during the so-called Reform era with Mihály Horváth and others, aimed at emancipating the assessments of the peasant war from the fetters of a feudal viewpoint. This good fortune was not without its faults, however, not only in that—as it has been customary to note—the extent of this emancipation was limited by the approach of the liberal bourgeoisie, but also because Márki's methodological facilities fell well short of his relatively modern viewpoint. To this day the only scientific monographer of the peasant war, Márki was barely acquainted with the requirements of a critical appraisal of sources, and his endeavors were chiefly concentrated on finding some way of "reconciling" data from diverse sources of highly divergent value. As a result, he left a whole string of unfounded identifications and chronological conclusions to posterity, which have had unchecked repercussions in history writing itself ever since, for one thing, and served with canonical status as the germ of literary delusions, for another. One of the chief omissions was a failure to even attempt an assessment of the value of the first literary accounts of the peasant war as a source, to clarify, in other words, the question: to what extent the tales written by a row of sixteenth-century humanist writers, from Taurinus (1480?–1519) to Miklós Istvánffy (1538–1615), can in any sense be regarded as sources, and to what extent do their suggestions cover the historical reality emerging from other—primary—sources?

Research since then, of course, has made great strides in uncovering the economic and social causes for the uprising as well as the history of the ideas behind it. To refer only to the latter, the fundamentally important investigations of Tibor Kardos's recent monograph on Hungarian humanism,[2] and, on the heels of preparatory studies in 1952 and 1956, György Székely's study on the ideology of Dózsa's peasant war,[3] have advanced our knowledge by unearthing previously unknown data, new standpoints and connections, and thereby, quite understandably, fresh debatable or open questions have been brought to the fore,

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1   Sándor Márki, *Dósa György* (Budapest, 1913).

2   Tibor Kardos, *A magyarországi humanizmus kora* [The age of Humanism in Hungary] (Budapest, 1955).

3   György Székely, "A török hódítók elleni védelem ügye, a Dózsa-parasztháborútól Mohácsig" [The case of the defense against the Ottoman conquerors from the Dózsa Peasant War to Mohács], *Századok* 86 (1952): 118–48 ; György Székely, "A huszitizmus és a magyar nép" [Hussitism and the Hungarian people], *Századok* 90 (1956): 331–67, 558ff; György Székely, "A Dózsa-parasztháború ideológiájához" [On the ideology of Dózsa's peasant war], *Századok* 95 (1961): 473–504.

above all in regard to the fount of the ideas that went into the ideology of the uprising. Yet even these investigations did not touch on what might be called the "infrastructural" aspects that were previously adumbrated. Márki's conclusions in that respect have, for the most part, remained intact, and indeed—to mention only one that touches most directly on the subject—his reference to "Dózsa's speeches" found in a group of sixteenth-century humanists (Taurinus, Tubero, and Iohannes Michaelis Brutus), albeit with critical reservations, have remained important sources for the history of ideas behind the uprising and, furthermore, in the context in which they had been placed by Sándor Márki ("Speech at Cegléd").

In this vein, if it is held true that the internal logic of events is itself a source, care must be taken not to let authenticated and fictitious elements get mixed up in the course of reconstruction, nor is it a matter of secondary importance exactly where a motif which is of interest from the point of view of the history of an idea belongs—temporally and spatially—because to grasp the relevant turns in the historical turmoil depends largely on this. Put differently, not even an investigation into the history of ideas can do without answers to a much more fundamental question in the writing of history: "*wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*—what actually happened and how did it in fact happen?"

It is commonly held that historical knowledge is an issue of "quantitative" nature: the more new data come to light, the broader the database, the closer historical reality—almost automatically—can be found. The matter is far from being this simple however, as sources are exceedingly varied in a qualitative sense—i.e., where their value is concerned. Often "new data" will only increase the confusion at first sight, intensifying contradictions, and if, instead of analyzing the reasons for those contradictions a method of "bridging" them is opted for, far from getting closer to the truth it becomes even further removed. Research on Dózsa in the decades around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century found itself in this predicament.

A rapid glance at the source base on the peasant war, at least in its broad outlines, cannot be avoided. For a long time, up until the middle of the nineteenth century, the main basis of knowledge on Dózsa's peasant war, or at least its "guiding thread," was the *History of Hungarian Matters* by Miklós Istvánffy. Indeed, an account more neatly rounded, more coherent, and more indicative is not to be found among texts that may in any sense be considered sources, than the one written in the final years of the sixteenth century by this historian called "the

Hungarian Livy."[4] However, he was the last in a line of historians begun by the Moravian-German Taurinus—Stephan Stieröchsel—who started his "heroic epic" about the peasant war, the *Stauromachia, id est cruciatorum servile bellum*,[5] in the court of Archbishop Tamás Bakócz, and completed it in the course of 1518–19 at Gyulafehérvár (Hermannstadt in German, Alba Iulia in Romanian) in Transylvania. He was the only Hungarian humanist who could possibly have been an eyewitness, had he not happened to have been far away, in Vienna, during the fateful weeks towards the end of May and June. He was nevertheless in a position to write up most of the immediate and authentic body of facts, though rather than expanding his sketchy knowledge of what had happened, most of his aspirations were exhausted in stringing on to it a series of borrowings from a dozen or more humanist authors and writers from antiquity, starting with Lucan's *Pharsalia* (*Bellum Civile*), and wallowing in the snobbery of mediocre copycat humanist poets, shrouding events in a murky fog instead of dedicating himself to *historiae veritas*. The more sober-minded and critical Ludovicus Tubero (Ludovicus Cervinus; 1459–1527) of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) was only able to reconstruct events from secondhand information in the 1520s,[6] which is all the more the case with Paulus (Giovio) Iovius (1483–1552), who probably inserted the history of the Hungarian peasant uprising into his world history[7] not much later, and even more so with the wandering Venetian humanist, Iohannes Michaelis Brutus (Gianmichele Bruto; 1517–1592), who, after a three-year stay in Transylvania, followed his master and patron, István Báthori, to Poland and there, having few original reports on which to rely, he committed to paper, around 1580, his all the wordier disquisition about the events of 1514.[8] Miklós Istvánffy set down his account even later, about eight decades after the events in question, and having few original reports on which to rely, drew his own unquestionably fluent, readable, and well-edited account partly from his humanist antecedents, partly from elements of oral tradition, even, here and there, using actual documents.[9]

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4   Miklós Istvánffy's *Historiarum de rebus Ungaricis libri XXXIV* (Cologne, 1622) was written around the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, but not published until 1620 in Cologne; it was first published in Hungarian translation in 1867–68 as *Magyarország története 1490–1606* [History of Hungary, 1490–1606], 2 vols.

5   István Taurinus (Stieröchsel), *Stauromachia, id est cruciatorum servile bellum* (Vienna, 1519); new ed. László Juhász (Budapest, 1944).

6   Ludovicus Tubero, *Commentaria suorum temporum* (Ragusa, 1784).

7   Paulus (Giovio) Iovius, *Historiarum sui temporis libri XLV* (Florence, 1550–52).

8   Iohannes Michaelis Brutus, *Ungaricarum Rerum libri* (lib. 11) in *Monumenta Hungariae Historica*, *Scriptores* XII, ed. Ferenc Toldy (Pest, 1863), 360, 385.

9   Istvánffy, *Historiarum de rebus Ungaricis*.

This group of humanist historians is not homogeneous, of course, but they are a united group in as much as they all formed their secondary assessments into a rounded whole from the remove of a certain time lapse, whether years or decades, and as time progressed learning from each other, and at the same time striving to outdo each other. For they are also united by their ideals concerning the way history should be written: none of them content with communicating facts; indeed, it was not so much the "facts," but the task of "editing" or "compiling" which set their quills going, with the objective to discern the mainsprings behind events, their connections and causal relationships, even where they had very little in the way of source documentation to rely upon.

They are, furthermore, raised retrospectively to the status of a group by the circumstance that for a long time—in certain respects, to this very day—their suggestions left the most vivid impression on the common knowledge of history in Hungary. A factor in this is that the texts of most of the writers in question have been published either as selected passages, or in their totality, in translations ranging from poor to excellent, in a series of editions by László Geréb,[10] let it be added, with highly ambivalent results. For much as these editions have been successful, indubitably bringing people closer to the problematic aspects of 1514, they have also rendered these aspects equally precarious. What matters here is not just, or even primarily, the frequent inaccuracy of the translations and the sometimes completely incomprehensible whimsicality of the selection of the chosen extracts, but, first and foremost, the total lack of a reliable outline as to their value as sources, of critical notes and objective explanations (and at the same time, the superficial exiguousness of the way the writers are presented), which, taken together, come to an almost biblical suggestion: Ecce! "Written in this book" you find the true history of 1514 . . . (A further problem is the unprofessional, naïve endeavor by which the publications have aspired to coerce individual humanists into what is called a series of "progressive traditions," above all the servilely anti-peasant Taurinus, who was mediocre in the extreme, both as editor and in the standard of his poetry.)

Yet, this popular group of humanist writers, while not lacking completely in value as sources, comes *at the very bottom* of the value-hierarchy of sources. The groups of sources preceding these humanists will now be considered in a likewise succinct form. Following the written memoirs that come down from the

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10 László Geréb, *A magyar parasztháborúk irodalma 1437–1514-ig* [The literature of the Hungarian peasant wars 1437–1514] (Budapest, 1950).

insurgents themselves (though as mentioned earlier, this is restricted to a mere four documents) the scale of value comes out roughly as follows:

(1) private letters, communications, and ambassadorial dispatches which arose concurrently with the events (i.e., during the course of May to August 1514) whose authors were, to a greater or lesser extent, placed outside the fundamental zones of tension (ethnic German burghers or foreigners, Italian diplomats and ecclesiastics, the king of Hungary's Bohemian courtiers), the writings themselves giving a report at a definite point in time about immediate experiences or current news, primarily for information purposes and in a language (German, Italian, or Czech, with a single exception) which does not have the obligatory formalism of Latin;

(2) ordinances and letters originating from secular and ecclesiastical government (the royal and archiepiscopal chancelleries, powerful lords, counties, certain feudal dignitaries) and municipal authorities in the period from May to August (that is, still during the unfolding of events) which, for all their hostile prejudice, having as yet no suspicions of the consequences, and being conceived in an "hour of need" and likewise at a precisely definable point in time, reflect the momentary state of affairs;

(3) legal records (formal instruments, interrogations of witnesses, etc.) which may have originated months or years after the collapse of the peasant rebellion, while the information they carry can reliably be projected back to one or another aspect of the developments. Set against this bundle of altogether around one hundred documents, to be considered jointly (because individually, of course, they are like the tesserae of a mosaic), is a much thinner and more well-defined group of sources that it is customary to call "narrative sources"—since individually they do, indeed, survey the entire process of the uprising in a more coherent, more "narrative" manner (though originating as they do after the event and from uneven bases of information, they are exposed to a greater risk of tradition-oriented distortion and spurious editorial intervention than the previous three groups)—which itself can be clearly divided into three further subgroups;

(4) records in the shape of *memoirs*, which may possibly have been committed to paper two or three decades later, but written by persons who personally lived through the events and whose primary goal was not the shaping and arranging of a "literary" account (they were not capable of doing so), but to record their firsthand recollections. The value of the three sources falling into this subgroup is not reduced but rather increased (in spite of obvious errors on points of detail) by their naïve directness and at times uncouth, even "barbarian" style,

not least the circumstance that they recorded their recollections from three "provincial aspects" quite independently of one another, indeed having lived through the events in three separate regions of the country. György Szerémi (c. 1490–after 1548) was chaplain in the town of Gyula at the point in time when he experienced the peasant war. What lends special value to his memoir in this case is precisely its subjective bias, its virtually unreserved affirmation of the peasants' cause, because through this his turns of phrase, his scale of values, his conceptual structure complements the figuration that may be extracted from the writings of crusaders.[11] The events were contemplated from Syrmia by an unidentified Hungarian-speaking chronicler mentioned by Antal Verancsics (Antonius Verantius; 1504–1573), and from Buda by a similarly simple, anonymous clergyman who probably belonged to Archbishop Bakócz's entourage (whose jottings are in a codex which is preserved in Vienna).

(5) Foreign contemporaries who were in possession of direct oral communications, and under no particular constraint to order their accounts either chronologically or conceptually, set down what they had heard in 1515, while it was still fresh in their minds—such as Johannes Spiessheimer (Cuspinianus, 1473–1529) and Riccardus Bartholinus, the Italian secretary to the bishop of Gurk (in contrast, the simple literary paraphrase made at the end of the year 1514 by Ianus Vitalis Panormitanus of a contemporaneous German handbill or "newssheet" [belonging to Group 1] has no self-standing value as a source)—or else they preserved information from sources whose credence is of the first rank but are no longer themselves extant, such as the on-the-spot May–June ambassadorial reports by Antonio Surriano, Venetian envoy to Buda, or the no later work by the Venetian Daniele Barbaro (and probably, indirectly, also Iovius).

Last of all comes the previously mentioned line of humanists from Taurinus to Istvánffy belonging to Group 6, who can only partly be regarded as actual "sources"; they are better seen as the first historiographers of the peasant war. (Other chronicles from the sixteenth and seventeenth century have no value at all as independent sources.)

Going on to survey how the picture of Dózsa evolves in the modern age more closely, considering the viewpoint of the sources on which it is based, it can be said, in short, that up until the latter half of the nineteenth century very little of the first four groups was known (and the fifth only partially), which meant that

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11   Georgii Sirmiensis, *Epistola de perdicione regni Hungarorum*, in *Monumenta Hungariae Historica*, *Scriptores* I., ed. Gusztáv Wenzel (Pest, 1857), 58–62.

it was the sixth group almost exclusively which served as the basis for the historical overview with, as mentioned, the "Hungarian Livy," Istvánffy providing the guiding thread. The ratio only started to alter in favor of the earlier groups with the publication of source documents in the decades around the turn of the century, and significantly as a result in particular of Sándor Márki's own researches.[12] Curiously, however, when Márki was acting as a monographer he was unwilling to notice that on many cardinal issues the combined testimony of the first five groups was decidedly at odds with the suggestions of the sixth group he was espousing; he saw his task, never acknowledging the distinctions and scales of values of the various groups of sources, as being one of smoothing out the contradictions that showed up even here, by artificial combinations and haphazard estimations, all at the cost of no little logical confusion. Since his own summing up (in 1913) there has been no significant expansion of the array of basic sources, nor any specifically critical analyses of sources, so that in regard to "the events" the "coordinates" combined by Márki remained valid; anything of any value that has since come into being relates to domains beyond these coordinates.

However, more recently the ratios have changed yet again, and significantly at that. As a result of two decades of collecting work, Antal Fekete Nagy raised the size of Groups 1–3 to around seventy-five texts; starting from this raw material, a manuscript of the complete archive on the peasant war is now ready and awaiting publication under the editorship of Géza Érszegi and colleagues. Not long ago, I had the good fortune of participating in the editing work for this publication, and later becoming a copy editor.[13] Notwithstanding that, it must be reiterated that a body of data in itself, almost as a matter of course, solves nothing: it is still only raw material, an agglomeration of texts, which on first encounter raises further questions, or indeed, one contradiction after another. Still, the exceptionally fortuitous opportunity that the complete (at least as things stand at the moment) core of primary sources on a subject area had been brought together, prompted me to embark on a systematic critique of the sources, drawing in the whole legacy of sources (including Groups 4–6), and an attempt to untangle the snarled-up threads. This was also stimulated by the fact that as the blind luck of research would have it, quite unrelated to any of the above events, in a hitherto unknown codex (in a Franciscan epistolary that had

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12 Márki, *Dósa György*.

13 Antonius Fekete Nagy, Victor Kenéz, Ladislaus Solymosi, and Geisa Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum in Hungaria rebellium, anno MDXIV* (Budapest, 1979).

been produced not much later than 1515) I came across a group of writings which gave a key with respect to the heretofore murky antecedents of the outbreak of the uprising. As a result of the analysis, the contours that emerged in ever so many respects when examining precisely the critical weeks of the uprising's incipience were first and foremost the stages by which a given element of reality started to split apart from the direct information of the primary sources (Groups 1–3), where the spatial and temporal distinctions were still clear, and as early as late 1514 and in the course of 1515 would be established as a mere "motif," independent of time and place (some parts of Group 5), but meanwhile, in spite of all the obscuration, how the true internal links were preserved with contemporaneous eyewitnesses (Group 4), until eventually, between 1580 and 1600, the aforementioned humanists (Group 6) gradually rearranged the elements into a new kind of "system" in which, due to the characteristic distortions of tradition striving for a "rational" explanation, and a marked desire to dramatize—aiming for unity of time, place, and action—the disintegrated motifs were fitted together again into what was undoubtedly a rounded and suggestive, yet historically utterly false overall picture.

Even modern historiography has not managed to extricate itself from the suggestive influence of these narratives; indeed, Sándor Márki has made matters worse through his aforementioned "harmonizing" efforts, as he basically squeezed the often authentic sources into shaping the raw material for an essentially fictitious epic, authenticating it with the authority of a modern-day historian in the process. Let it suffice to cite just two examples. Few episodes in Hungarian history have imprinted themselves as firmly, even in a pictorial sense, as that of Dózsa departing from under Pest at the head of a rebellious army some time after May 15, 1514, and going on to "proclaim a popular uprising" in a "speech" in the Cegléd market. It will no doubt come as a surprise that this has no foundation (however weak) in the sources, apart from an identification which has not been properly thought through, and a seductive analogy—that moved Márki as well—that Kossuth also proclaimed the popular uprising of 1848 in Cegléd! Or can a better-known figure in the Hungarian historical imagination be found than that of "Lőrinc Mészáros, priest of Cegléd" who, leaving Pest on Dózsa's side, became the very embodiment of revolutionary radicalism? Yet, we are actually dealing with a syncretic figure here, assembled from two (and possibly three) real historical personages; besides which neither Lőrinc Mészáros, a preacher for the crusade in the area around the town of Szikszó in Northeastern Hungary, nor the legendary priest named Lőrinc, supposed to

have joined Dózsa's army in the area of Békés and Gyula, were by Dózsa's side in the camp at Pest. Let this suffice for now by way of examples, because what matters is that after many decades, the most important source on the uprising, a call to arms to be found in a single extant copy of the original in the archives of Bártfa (Bardejov)—bearing no date—issued in the name of György (Dózsa) Székely *ex Cegléd* (commonly referred to as Dózsa's "Cegléd manifesto"), fitted in such a self-explanatory way into a sequence of events unverified by source data—and indeed, contradictory to all known authentic sources—that subjecting the date, circumstances, and context of its genesis to genuine scrutiny seemed superfluous. Yet, while precisely this form of examination may force us to surrender a few of our popular conditionings in regard to history, it would at the same time be enriching to be able to reconstruct the dynamics of 1514 in the process of its gradual evolution—even in respect of its ideological mechanism.

Naturally, the present study is not the place to give more than a preliminary and rough synopsis of a far more ample and comprehensive disentanglement, which, suitably documented, belongs to the pages of a specialist journal.

The Beginnings of the Peasant War Enveloped in the Crusader Army

The Hungarian Peasant War of 1514 belongs to a group of peasant uprisings in Central and Eastern Europe in which the Turkish question and the eruption of social tensions are linked not merely by the internal and external constraints of the situation, but also in that precisely the characteristic intertwining of these factors supply the foundations for their ideological superstructure.[14]

Hungary's 1514 is not isolated, lacking precedents or parallels. In all affected countries, the expansion of Turkish power brought to the surface not merely the weaknesses (at times the frank breakdowns) of the feudal military machinery, but exposed the internal contradictions of the *whole* social and political structure with elemental force, rendering it into a sensitive reality. To some extent the

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14 Based on the documentation assembled in the *Monumenta rusticorum*, an up-to-date monograph was written by Gábor Barta and Antal Fekete Nagy, *Parasztháború 1514-ben* [The peasant war in 1514] (Budapest, 1973). They have corrected several mistaken combinations by Sándor Márki which essentially modified the "coordinates" of the history of the Peasant War. I am grateful for the possibility to consult this book still in manuscript. With a critical evaluation of the entire documentation and with the consideration of additional, hitherto unknown source material, I could strengthen the observations of Fekete Nagy and Barta and, partly modifying them, reach also new conclusions. [More recent historical treatment of the 1514 Peasant War was assembled in a 500th anniversary conference in 2014: *Revolt, Violence and Memory: Peasant Uprisings in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*].

idealistic scheme of the medieval world order had always been a fiction in insisting that a higher, divine dispensation had allotted social functions among the praying clergy (*oratores*), the combatant nobility (*bellatores*), and the laboring masses (*laboratores*), but by this time it not only became an undeniable fact that this system was functioning badly, but to worse effect, any "moral" justification for the social existence and privileges of the aristocracy and nobility based on the labor of their serfs came to be shamelessly disregarded, because they would cower in their castles and country houses in critical situations, and the brunt of the role of *bellator*, the warrior, had to be borne by the serfs. Moral outrage opened the floodgates to a whole mass of accumulated social grievances and discontent. An eyewitness record at Buda states that on May 25, 1514, the day after an attempt to disperse the peasant crusader army, the seething common people in the streets were shouting things like: "Since when have the lords and nobility been arming (against the Turks)? Nigh on twenty years! It's all (everything happening here) villainy!" This mob, as can be learned from a letter dated May 26, streamed into the crusader army stationed by Pest with the idea: "they seek to help each other mutually, to fight together against *the nobility*." Decades earlier, in the 1470s, developments by the same logic would lead, in the provinces of inner Austria, first to the setting up of peasant self-defense communities, and later to local peasant assemblies and alliances, and finally to a general peasant uprising (1478). What is specific to 1514 in Hungary is that the peasant war was fomented in a crusader army that had been proclaimed by papal bull and was originally organized by the ecclesiastical and secular governments in the guise of an anti-Turkish enterprise from which, as a matter of course, the nobility were lacking from the very start; from the very outset the recruiting priests and monks sought to have red crosses sewn onto the chests only of serfs in their thousands. Nor was that phenomenon without its precedents. Let it suffice here to refer to a precedent, to be dealt with elsewhere, that a 20,000–30,000-strong crusader army of exactly the same composition had already once—with the defense of Belgrade by John Hunyadi's forces on July 23, 1456—almost entirely anticipated the outcome of 1514.[15] What was striking in Dózsa's peasant war

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15 Jenő Szűcs discussed these precedents in a separate study: Jenő Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia és az 1514. évi parasztháború (Egy kódex tanúsága)" [Franciscan Observance and the 1514 Peasant War (The testimony of a codex)], *Levéltári Közlemények* 43 (1972) 213–63. The results of this were integrated in the German version of the present study: Szűcs, *Nation und Geschichte*, 332–41, and in a greater detail in "Die oppositionelle Strömung der Franziskaner im Hintergrund des Bauernkrieges und der Reformation in Ungarn," in *Études historiques hongroises, 1985 publiées à l'occasion du XVIe Congrès International des Sciences Historiques par la Comité Nationale des Historiens Hongrois* (Budapest, 1985), 483–513.

even in relation to Europe, however, is that it consummated in a more determined, radical and, it may be said, more consistent form than earlier movements of the same type observed elsewhere.

Not that this was its only particular feature. If by way of comparison some near-contemporaneous peasant movements are considered, and the half-century of local preparations—reaching back to the 1470s—for the 1525 Great Peasants' War of Germany first and foremost, for all the common or analogous features two singular aspects of the Hungarian peasant war must be highlighted and explained in their uniqueness unless they are to be relegated among the mysteries of history.

One of these aspects is the astonishing temporal velocity and equally temporal parallelism by which developments in May 1514 shot to a boiling point essentially simultaneously within the course of two to three weeks, and also spread from one region to another, and thereby acquired their ideological justification just as rapidly. This phenomenon is striking and calls for explanation, because there is not a single basis in the source literature to suggest that in Hungary the peasant war was preceded by any organizational or ideological forerunner comparable to the case in Germany—a series of local associations, "*Bunds*" or "Twelve Articles"—covering over half a century.

The second aspect worth considering is the circumstance that the ideological character of the Hungarian peasant uprising cannot be classified under either of the two prototypes exhibited by the near-contemporaneous movements. The tenets of these latter, inasmuch as they were socially radical—that is, they rejected the feudal order in its entirety—was generally profoundly permeated by a chiliastic mysticism and asceticism and thereby attained "proto-communistic" principles such as, for example, the demand for common ownership, a community of goods. However, inasmuch as the movements themselves were socially moderate (that is, they stayed with a program of a sort of "regulated" feudalism) their "more realistic" nature found expression in their demands barely going beyond the alleviation of burdens and the restoration of "ancient customs." The reason why the Hungarian peasant war of 1514 occupies an individual position in the series of European peasant wars from an ideological point of view is that within the short space of three weeks its ideological shift transcended the notion of a "regulated" feudalism and reached the idea of a radical reshaping of the entire social order in a manner such that the leitmotif was not mysticism (although unsurprisingly here too certain chiliastic features played a part) and, to the best of our knowledge, the principle of a community of goods was not even

mooted; equally, the relatively "realistic" nature of the program which emerged was specifically not embodied in "articles" or demands for the alleviation or abolition of certain feudal burdens.

This calls for explanation all the more in that, given the past history and position of Hungarian serfs, there was no foundation or possibility for them to start off from concepts of a "peasant order" such as those that provided institutional bases or outlines in certain German and Austrian provinces from which examples or a starting point could be drawn. Nor was there any trace in Hungary of an active social critique within circles of the urban burghers that would have prepared the ground; not only are antecedents of the "*Bundschuh*" type, or the "*Armer Konrad*" ("poor Conrad") type of farmer organizations lacking, but so are reform programs of the "*Reformatio Sigismundi*" type. It is also questionable to what extent traditions of the 1437 peasant uprising in Transylvania, which comes into the reckoning as a direct precursor, can be taken account of as such, given that the programs of 1437 and 1514 are so different, and that Transylvania per se joined the peasant war at a fairly late stage, and only as a subsidiary theater of war.

Certain ideological antecedents and sources from the end of the fifteenth century onward do, of course, come into account, and research in recent years has begun to map them. Before all else, the dormant Hussite traditions, now even perhaps enjoying a revival, as well as the social critique within the official Church (documented by György Székely),[16] especially the branch inclined to spiritualism (analyzed by Tibor Kardos)[17] deserve attention, calling for a closer study as to the extent to which, and in what proportions these factors (and possibly others, which have hitherto not been taken into account) asserted themselves in the specific situation of 1514.

The course taken by events in Belgrade during the summer of 1456 conceal by no means insignificant lessons for assessing all the above. Although they cannot be detailed here due to constraints of space, it is not unwarranted to recall one or two episodes. Then, as in 1514 (as we shall see), the task of preaching the crusade and recruitment fell largely to the stricter (Observant) branch of the Franciscans, specifically in part to some who are known by name, and in part to the small army of Hungarian friars who hid anonymously behind what—as a result of subsequent hagiographic sedulousness—became the hugely inflated fig-

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16 Székely, "A huszitizmus," 589.

17 Kardos, *A magyarországi humanizmus kora*, 375–76, 384–87.

ure of St. John of Capistrano.[18] The text for the rousing words of encouragement was chosen largely from the books of the Old Testament, with the crusader army, the *populus cruce signatus*, gaining its mission on the analogy of the "chosen people," the *populus Israel*; as regards the basic tone, let it suffice to quote from one of the sermons, delivered on July 22: "God has *chosen* the weak, *the poor*, and the fallen of the world to confound and disperse *the mighty . . .* " The dualism characterizing the relationship between the crusader army and the "mighty" Turks may indeed have virtually transposed itself into a social dimension.[19] Or a line of thought in one of Capistrano's sermons as summarized by him in a letter to cardinal Capranica might be quoted:

> Your servant beheld a great strife in the heavens between the Sun and Moon and the stars. The Moon and the stars, attacking the Sun, gained victory. Dazed and astonished, I was dumbfounded, not understanding what this might betoken. The Sun defeated by the Moon: God's mysterious judgment! Almost paralyzed, I gave up all hope . . . it was then that the *vox spiritualis* spoke within me: God's decisions are unfathomable! . . . I again reviewed the matter, and I came to the conclusion that: the mightier shall serve the lesser, and the end is nigh (*major serviet minori et finis properat*)![20]

Whatever may have been the intention, whatever lay at the back of this interpretation, the final words of this mysticism, abounding in "visions" as they do, lean towards a familiar range of ideas: towards an eschatological realm of thinking in which, with the proximity of the end of the world and the millennial rule of the

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18   On the siege of Belgrade and the role of St. John of Capistrano see György Balanyi, "Nándorfehérvár ostroma és felmentése 1456-ban" [The siege and the liberation of Belgrade in 1456], *Hadtörténelmi Közlemények* 12 (1911), 167–96; Ödön Bölcskey, *Capistranói Szt. János élete és kora II.* [The life of St. John of Capistrano and his times]. (Székesfehérvár, 1923), 248–345; Johannes Hofer, "Der Sieger von Belgrad, 1456," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 51 (1931): 163–212; Johannes Hofer, *Johannes von Capistrano: Ein Leben im Kampf um die Reform der Kirche* (Innsbruck, Vienna and Munich, 1936), 601–50; Franz Babinger, *Der Quellenwert der Berichte über den Entsatz von Belgrad am 21./22. Juli 1456*, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie, Phil.-Hist. Klasse (1957/6), (Munich, 1957); Béla Pettkó, ed., "Kapisztrán János levelezése a magyarokkal" [The correspondence of John of Capistrano with the Hungarians], in *Történelmi Tár* 2 (1901): 162–222.

19   The most detailed information stems from Giovanni de Tagliacozzo, especially his letter of July 28, 1456, in Antal Áldásy and Lajos Thallóczy, eds., *Magyarország melléktartományainak oklevéltára* [Documents from the side-provinces of Hungary] (Budapest, 1907), II, 8off., and his Memoir of 1460, in Lucas Wadding, ed., *Annales Minorum seu trium ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum*, Tom. XI (Florence, 1932), 750ff. As for the events of July 1456, see 754–58; the text of the sermon of July 22: 782–83.

20   Capistrano's letter was preserved in the memoir of Nicolaus de Fara written around 1462: *Vita clarissimi viri fratris Joannis de Capistrano*, c. XIII (Buda, 1523), 34. The sermon was delivered still before the Belgrade events, on August 24, 1455, in Székesfehérvár.

"lesser," that is, the poor (*minores*) being transplanted from monastic mysticism into the chiliastic expectations of the plebeian movements of the late Middle Ages, in which the roots of the ideology of many a peasant uprising of this era can be found. Crusader peasants may have heard, now in the name of the cross, trains of thought of this nature from camp priests, much as they had heard them from Hussite preachers two decades earlier at secret gatherings in the depths of forests; the notion of divine "election" recalled with uncanny accuracy the heretic idea of the "election" of the *populus Dei*, a central article of faith of the Hussites in Southern Hungary.[21] On the day following the victory of Belgrade, on July 23, 1456, as can be learned from eyewitness accounts, the peasant crusaders "declared that the victory God had given them the previous day was not the work of some barons from Hungary." Turmoil (*turbatio*) was fomented, with some of those who were present "having been roused by this, prepared to march against the rebels." At this, the very same day, Hunyadi and Capistrano urgently disbanded the army; had they not done so, as a contemporary commentator puts it, "they would have killed many crusaders." As far as ideological influences are concerned, it is worth taking note of a curious paradox which sprang, in point of fact, from the internal constraint and logic of the situation: the same intellectual milieu transmits "legitimate" ideological arguments in the name of the cross specifically, that led to the eruption of social tension and formulation of heretical trains of thought, whose primary function would have consisted in overcoming them.

April–May 1514 is most distinctly reminiscent of that July day in 1456 recounted above, even in the sense that a range of ideas that revolved around crusading per se were, so to say, already present in "ready-made" form. The question superseding all the others, therefore, is when and where the uprising began to mature enveloped in the crusader war? Already the portrayal of this historical moment common today is a belated product of artificial combinations, including the circumstances and chronology of events leading to the camp at Pest being picked up, as well as the central element of declaration of the "manifesto" of the uprising in Cegléd.

In brief summary[22] of what the primary and authentic sources attest: Pope Leo X's bull was proclaimed by Archbishop Bakócz on April 9, 1514, in Buda. At first it had little success, because by the time he appointed György Székely

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21 Székely, "A huszitizmus," 558.

22 The first step for establishing a correct chronology was made by Barta and Fekete Nagy, *Parasztháború*, 72–73, 80–88. I have provided a new critical revision of the sources in Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia," 237–41.

(Dózsa) as commander on April 24, there were as yet only a few hundred men in arms. Following this, however, the crusaders suddenly began to gather at greater speed. By May 8 (as reported by a hitherto unknown letter written on this day), in a fortnight, 15,000 peasants had gathered in the camp by Pest. Sources for these dates do not in the least intimate, however, any form of agitation or unrest, though as many as three completely independent reports about the news at Buda have remained extant for May 8–13. Each still reflects unequivocally on preparations for a military crusade. Not even the king's decrees of May 15, announced in Buda, can be pinned to any manner of uprising. And yet in Esztergom, on this very day of May 15, Archbishop Bakócz unexpectedly suspended the call for the crusade and any further recruitment due to the latest news reports and growing complaints of the nobility according to which overbearing and bogus preachers of the crusade "with sacrilegious impudence and malign audacity" were recruiting people "in various regions of the kingdom" (*in diversis regni . . . partibus*), and conducting all sorts of "assemblies" at which they incited to the denial of services and taxes, and indeed, obedience to their superiors in general—overall general rebellion, *seditio*, was brewing in effect, attacks against the manor houses of noblemen had already started.[23]

Not a word about Dózsa either in this edict or in a series of reports from Buda a week and a half later (anywhere at all in the capital before early June) can be found, and understandably so, because by then Dózsa and the main army were a long way away, beyond the Tisza, and well out of the purview of the inhabitants of Buda. According to a report by Szerémi—the sole authoritative contemporary and eyewitness (since he experienced the events in residence)—Archbishop Bakócz's first, earlier mentioned, ordinance of May 15, banning the raising of recruits, reached Dózsa in Békés (almost 200km/125 miles) from Buda.[24] All other circumstances indicate that Dózsa had set off from Pest with his 10,000-strong main army as early as May 9–10 (leaving 5,000 behind in the camp), under a forced march; even as smaller groups of recruits assembling in the provinces had to be picked up, he advanced on his own roundabout way through the trans-Tisza region, originally and up to that point still undoubtedly against the Turks. The exact circumstances under which camp was struck are not entirely clear, but it seems very likely that news concerning Turkish military operations in Croatia, which reached Buda on May 8, played a role. The original

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23   This important document is being published only now. Municipal Archive Košice, Suppl. H. 30 (Mon.).
24   Barta and Fekete Nagy, *Parasztháború*, 75–76; Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia," 239.

intention was probably that the crusader army form the central column of a three-pronged troop movement, with Péter Beriszló, Ban of Croatia, on the right wing, as he was at this time moving southward with "gathered forces of the country" through Transdanubia in Western Hungary, and János Szapolyai, Voivode of Transylvania on the left wing, already pushing ahead past the lower reaches of the Danube. It is, in essence, possible to reconstruct even the stations at which, and under the impact of what experiences, anger against the nobility mounted virtually step by step in the main army and its leader.[25] None of this can be dwelt on in any detail here; let it suffice to note that the first station was Mezőtúr, followed by Békés, then Gyula. But all this took place after mid-May, and past the eastern bank of the Tisza, so spatially also at a fair distance from the popularly cited Cegléd! By that time, Dózsa did indeed have a Father Lőrinc by his side, who had joined him somewhere in the region of Békés or Gyula. What is more, he had in all probability joined along with around 2,000 peasants who had shortly before, on May 22, fought the nobles at Várad (Grosswardein in German, Oradea in Romanian) in the first armed engagement of this peasant war. Even a later military operation carried out at Apátfalva may have belonged to the push against the Turks, only for the subsequent defeat (on May 26–27) to finally redirect the main army to making war on the nobility.

All this emerges unambiguously from the first five groups of sources outlined in the introduction, each supplementing the others in the information it provides, and it is only in the retrospective rehashing of actions typical of the humanist writers in Group 6 that a new kind of "scheme" is confronted: fragments of traditions and motifs of the events of three weeks—with Dózsa's conversion (as well as, in Istvánffy's narrative, the figure of Father Lőrinc)—blur into events at Pest, which related to the remnant army that had been left there after the final withdrawal of the call for the crusade on May 24, and the entire complex amalgamating in "dramaticized" fashion at Pest before Dózsa sets off. Yet even in this version of the epic no shred of a basis for a "declaration of peasant war in Cegléd" can be found. Dózsa's "speech" is made either before they have set out (i.e., near Pest) or else due to the illogical editing (of Taurinus), at best a guess may be risked: he refers to a "second speech," purportedly by Dózsa, made while he was still near Pest, or else at the confluence of the Tisza and the Danube (though in reality Dózsa never visited the place). However strange it

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25   The most decisive witness to this is Chaplain György Szerémi who observed the events from nearby: Georgii Sirmiensis, *Epistola de perdicione regni Hungarorum*, 58–62.

may seem, the sole foundation for this traditional vision is that Sándor Márki, without any reflection, placed the order handed down in Cegléd (but bearing no date), and customarily referred to as the "Cegléd manifesto," into the sequence of events as if it were self-evident, without so much as raising the issue of the flagrant contradiction in which its gist stands with respect to developments emerging plainly from all of the primary sources.[26] Without the slightest mention of the Turks, the order calls upon people to take up arms against the nobility and, indeed, already condenses within itself the program of the entire conduct of the peasant war and its ideological foundation. The cardinal question from the point of view of the topic under discussion here is the following: did the ideology of the peasant war pop up like a "deus ex machina" at the very outset, or did it evolve through several stages? As will soon be shown, this important document did not originate at this point in time, but later, under quite different circumstances, and only then came to be proclaimed at Cegléd.

In other words, for numerous reasons not to be touched on here, it is necessary to break with the simple static notion that a single leader "began to organize the popular uprising" (Márki).[27] Matters advanced towards their final outcome in a far more complex manner. Even Dózsa himself drifted almost step by step over the best part of three weeks to reach the point at which he did indeed become leader of the peasant war. Every authentic source and circumstance indicates that the uprising began to ferment not in the camp by Pest, nor even in the main body of the army, but "in the countryside," indeed *in diversis regni partibus*, earliest of all. All this happened if not in the first week of May, then the second week at the latest (when peace still reigned in Buda and Pest), at various gathering-places independently of each other and in parallel, until one can see around May 20 (with Dózsa as yet to take his decisive stand!) the emergence of the most important foci and centers where the crusader forces would de facto embark (without any central "manifesto") on the peasant war.

On the basis of sources, it is possible to outline four regions where events can also be pinpointed in temporal terms with adequate certainty.[28] These places should be noted, because they bear significance for what follows. The first is the region of Abaúj and Zemplén counties, with Szikszó at one pole (along with the neighboring villages of Megyaszó and Aszaló, from which the people who issued

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26 Márki, *Dósa György*, 87–104, 174–94.
27 Márki, *Dósa György*, 172.
28 Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia," 242–44, Notes 86–96.

the earliest crusader document came) and Sárospatak at the other. As can be learned from the archbishop's letter from the center in Szikszó, already in mid-May "virtually the whole county has turned to revolt." The second is the border-line area of Békés and Bihar counties, with the town of Gyula at one pole (people fleeing from the peasants had moved to its castle at the beginning of May), and the town of Várad, where the first major clash between peasants and the nobility took place on May 22, at the other. The third is the area around Csanád, with the bishop fleeing no later than around May 20. The fourth and last region is made up of Bodrog and Bács counties (the more southerly part of which is the Danube-Tisza interfluve), where hosts of insurgent peasants were likewise ubiquitous in keeping a watch on the roads around this time.

As to whether there is any connection between these seemingly scattered gathering-places of crusaders—which were, for the time being, all independent of the main body of the army under Dózsa—it depends on whether anything new can be said about the hitherto obscure question of the proclamation of the crusade and the organization of recruitment. The codex mentioned in the pre-amble does offer new insights, because contemporaneous copies of pertaining documents are collected in it.[29] In order to draw inferences, one naturally has to go back to April. After April 9, Archbishop Bakócz proclaimed the bull in Buda and in Pest by way of his own confidants and, simultaneously, had copies sent to several dioceses. For their part, however, the bishops had no relish for the cru-sade, and even in the center of the country, as seen earlier, the preparations pro-ceeded falteringly. Bakócz's confidants were chosen in part from his own milieu in Esztergom, and in part from among Italian clerics, and as can be read in a later archiepiscopal document, "they were exceedingly few." Therefore, the arch-bishop chose to alter the framework after a certain time: the task of preaching the crusade and recruiting the army with regard to the whole territory of the country outside Buda and Pest (except Transylvania) was entrusted to the orga-nization of the province of the Franciscan Observants, appointing Blasius Dézsi, the Vicar of the Order, as his *specialis delegatus* to attend to everything. Except for the initial words, the document of appointment itself, and even the date, are no longer extant, but several circumstances make it probable that it bore the same date as another in which the archbishop assigned the same functions with regard to the territory of Transylvania to Bishop Ferenc Várday, his vice-legate,

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29   OSzK. Cod. lat. 432. For the description of the manuscript and the circumstances of its creation see Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia," 218–34.

namely April 25. What has survived, however, is an encyclical letter from Vicar Blasius Dézsi to the district superior, or guardian (*custos*), of each of the ten custodies (*custodia*) into which the vicariate of Hungary was divided, whereby he, by the authority invested in him, appointed them in turn as his subdelegates, ordering that they urgently entrust "every appropriate *frater*," especially every guardian, "to toil with all ardor that this grace should come to the notice of every Christian believer as soon as possible." There has also survived the text of the letter of commission (*Ad bellum–predicatori*) by which the guardians and subdelegates authorized the individual preachers of the crusade to proclaim and organize the "holy military campaign" (*sancta expeditio*), "to fire the souls of the faithful who are fighting in this campaign," instructing them to join the commander of the expedition at a suitable point in time (in line with formulary custom, a letter N stands in the place of Dózsa's name). Instead of the wearisome length of the full text of the papal bull there were summaries for public use and an instruction (*instructorie*) which, presumably, agreed again in large part with the known text sent to the bishop of Transylvania. In this way it becomes possible to understand the reference in a previously known letter of June 7 as to how the bull reached the Franciscan guardian of Várad, who then passed it on (in contravention of the rules, as it happens) to Transylvania.[30]

If the areas where the movements and rebellious "assemblies" of crusader peasants were first palpably present are now recalled, one cannot help but notice the intriguing circumstance that the foci and poles of turbulence everywhere coincide with the site of an important monastery of the vicariate of the Observant Franciscans. At one end of Abaúj-Zemplén district, near Szikszó, was the monastery of (Abaúj)-Szántó, and the Sárospatak monastery at the other; in Békés and Bihar counties there was, on the one hand, the monastery at Gyula and the one at Várad on the other; further to the south was Csanád monastery; ultimately, with a chain of Observant monasteries stretching along the Danube from Kölyüd (Kolut, Serbia) to Futak (Futog, Serbia) and Kabol (Kovilj, Serbia) (here are, location by location, the areas where recruitment for the 1456 crusade took place), with the (Szerém)újlak (Ilok, Croatia) *custodia* in the more southerly reaches of the Danube-Tisza interfluve.

That there are links can hardly be called into doubt, even if, to begin with and in and of themselves they attest to no more than the sole organization in

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30 OSzK. Cod. lat. 432, f. 92–94. 102v–103. The text is published in the appendix of Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia," 257–58.

Hungary at the time, which could be mobilized countrywide for such a task, and could meet with perhaps unsuspected success in drumming up the peasant masses over a period of two to three weeks, from the end of April to mid-May. Because it is also true that just as he had entrusted the Observant Franciscans with organizing the recruitment of the army, Archbishop Bakócz subsequently charged them with general dispersal, having definitively withdrawn the bull on May 24. That this had been the course of events in Buda and Pest was already known; but now an order by Vicar Blasius Dézsi appointing a commissioner to quell the disorders has come into our possession. Nor is the context in which this appointment is being entertained without interest, for, to start with, the commissioner is enjoined if he notices any sign of malice against the Order, "above all on the part of the Conventual friars," that they were to be resisted in any way possible.[31] Knowing the strained relations harbored by the two branches into which the Franciscan Order had split in 1446, a moderate trend (Conventuals) and those who adhered strictly to the Rule (Observants), there can be no doubt where the explanation for the organic link between these two matters lies: the former grabbed at the opportunity to hit out at the latter—it is plain to see, they were the cause of the present disorders.

And in fact, however unintentionally, the cause they were. The question may however be raised though: was it in fact all that unwilled? In the years directly preceding the peasant war, serious internal wrangling and crises had become manifest among the Observant Franciscans.[32] The text of an encyclical letter of encouragement (*exhortationes*) has survived from the spring of 1512 of the type that was generally sent out annually to all the chapters in a vicariate to be read out in the monasteries. In this particular letter, the vicar at the time, Gábor Pécsváradi, alludes in grave terms to "scandalous" and scandal-mongering members of the Order, "sin-infected" (*scelerati*), who had gained ground in the Order's Hungarian province, and of whom the Order had already rid itself, yet whose baneful example was continuing to spread. "It pains me," the letter reads, "that very many friars, their life being corrupted, stray scandalously and incur damnation, imagining they may permit themselves suchlike and even baser things as they see (the aforementioned) sinful friars practicing, and the danger is ever greater that many, deviating from the path of perfection and the virtues of the Order, debauched by the scandalous example of these conceited friars, either cast

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31 OSzK. Cod. lat. 432, f. 111v, Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia," 258–59.

32 Szűcs, "Die oppositionelle Strömung der Franziskaner."

off the habit of our holy Order altogether or deviate day by day from the path of salvation . . ." The problem was included in the agenda for the following year's assembly of the Visegrád chapter (May 15, 1513), where severe punishments were adopted to counter "the causes of this scandal"; indeed, the most incorrigible and restive of the Order's members were excluded from the monasteries. (It is a noteworthy fact that the same Imre Esztergomi who wrote the short account of the above episodes, was the guardian of the Abaújszántó cloister.)

One year later, as described, the task of recruiting crusaders fell upon this "scandal-laden" organization, and exactly a year to the day after the abovementioned event Archbishop Bakócz's ordinance of May 15, 1514 gives peculiar weight to accentuating "apostates" and excommunicants (*apostatas et excommunicatos*) among the high-handed, "false and hostile" preachers of the crusade. However, leaping a further year ahead to the first meeting of the vicariate to be held since the peasant war (May 27, 1515), among the resolutions brought up, the first specific point after the stereotyped invocation of the Order's virtues is: "let not a single friar dare to take up, or bestow or preach the cross without the permission of the vicar . . ." Then there follows a detailed and lengthy regulatory enactment of the procedure by which guilty friars are to be interrogated and punished; specifically, pursuant to Article 1514/48, which prescribed the visitation and punitive procedure to be used by prelates against clerics who had participated in the uprising (under normal circumstances, bishops had no say in the Order's disciplinary proceedings). Meanwhile, in the codex in question, under the title *Nota circa agenda*, can be found a note as to how every "apostate" of the Order (*apostatam nostre religionis*) should be arrested and thrown in jail; how the apostasy, after investigation, is to be reported to the vicar "in order that the like should no longer be allowed to roam on the loose, piling evil upon evil."

It should be noted that internally, in such literature directed at simple friars, Franciscans always avoided mentioning "sins" and heresies by their exact name lest it thereby involuntarily popularize the views that were interdicted. From Oswald of Lasko, among others, it is also known exactly what "apostasy" denoted in the Franciscan conceptual vocabulary: heresy and suspected heretical views and behavior—an epithet earlier applied to Hussitism and later to the Reformation.

If we take stock of the ecclesiastics who took part in the peasant war, many secular clergymen are to be found, but they are all parsons simply leading a squad off to the Crusades from their village or market town. In comparison, three (possibly four) clerics who fought as captains at the head of larger military formations are known of. All had been friars, and it is known of one of

them, the captain of the troop from the county of Tolna, that he was a former friar (*un capo*, *stato frate*) who had already left his Order earlier as an "apostate"—which is not surprising if it is considered that both canon law and the regulations of the religious orders forbade participation as armed combatants; so anyone who fought and "killed," and in an excommunicated enterprise at that, would be *eo ipso* an "apostate." All the evidence of reliable facts and circumstances also point to the legendary Father Lőrinc himself being from the area around the town of Várad, if not from Várad itself (another preacher of the crusade, this one from the Szikszó area, bore the family name of Mészáros, whilst the designation "of Cegléd" makes an isolated appearance only very late in the day with Istvánffy, and might denote a place of origin just as well as being a mere retrospective insertion for identification purposes). Moreover, since Lőrinc is generally said to be a priest (e.g., *Laurentius pap*, *Lorenzo pop*), while in some places he is described as a friar, there is a reasonable ground for suspicion as to whether he may have been one of the Order's "apostates," and more particularly, from the very convent of Várad where—in light of what we know—the guardian had behaved "irregularly."[33]

With an overview of the links outlined above, Observant Franciscans' social critique—which recent literature considers, if not in its totality and not with a uniform interpretation, as a potential ideological source of the peasant war—has quite a different ring to it. There is no question, however, that in the collection of exemplary sermons by Pelbart of Temesvár (c. 1440–1504) and Oswald of Lasko (c. 1450–1511), which were repeatedly printed after 1497 this critique had its own "demagogic" role in that it made the secular arm of the ruling class responsible exclusively (and indeed, to be more accurate, Oswald targeted the barons explicitly) for the "sins" committed. That, however, does little, on the one hand, to alter the fact that the facts of social oppression were unambiguously dissected and evaluated as "sin" in these speech samples, while on the hand—quite apparently—the *results* of propaganda campaigns in history have not always been aligned with their subjective *goals*. For in a certain sense in this case, it is truly possible to speak of mass propaganda. According to a hitherto unknown account, around 1514–1515, 1,700 friars lived in the seventy houses belonging to the vicariate of Hungary (specifically the province of the Observant branch, which had by then for decades been regarded as a de facto separate

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33 Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia," 249–54; the fact that Lőrinc must have been originally a friar in Várad was recognized by Barta and Fekete Nagy, *Parasztháború*, 112.

Order), numbering nearly one-third of the total friar population for the whole of Europe north of the Alps![34] (It is not within the scope of the present article to analyze the manifold reasons accounting for the particular virulence of this movement in late medieval Hungary.)

Nor, equally, is it right to completely ignore a curious ambivalence which was the essence of Franciscan Observance: already back at its origin in the thirteenth century, the movement had been a spiritually motivated attempt at internal reform of the Franciscan Order (indeed of the Roman Catholic Church as a whole), yet at the same time the Church conducted itself as a militant defender of an authority which was not, fundamentally, of a spiritual kind. That contradiction became embodied within the movement itself over the course of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries in ever-renewed struggles of "conservative" and "radical" spiritualism. It belongs to the natural history of Observance that heretical and quasi-heretical attitudes were constantly and simultaneously sprouting out of one and the same soil as such blatant representatives of the *ecclesia militans* (in certain respects they are reminiscent of the later Jesuits) as James of the Marches (Giacomo della Marca) and John of Capistrano, who both played a part in Hungarian history. If the known fact that, two to three decades after the peasant war, Franciscan Observance was the most combative among the early opponents of the Reformation, while also spawning the earliest and most combative reformers, be added to the picture, a closer understanding of the role of this important trend emerging around the uprising will become possible.

Let us take into account (in very abbreviated form) the most important elements of social critique which appeared almost dogmatically, as the result of protracted discussions, in the collections of model sermons of Pelbart of Temesvár and Oswald of Lasko (especially the latter), chiefly the items about Hungarian saints in Oswald of Lasko's *Sermones de sanctis* [first published in 1497]: (1) Equality is man's "natural condition" (*naturalis conditio*); inherently "it was not given to man that he should rule over men." (2) God permitted rule in this world for various reasons; "nowadays, however" (it is intoned on repeated occasions) power is often nothing more than abuse and flouting of justice (*usurpatio*), because "force has become justice" and "the cause and justice of the poor (*causa et veritas pauperum*) are nowadays being trampled underfoot by ruthless judges." (3) Nowadays subjects are crippled by unjust exactions (*iniustis exactionibus*), to

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34   OSzK Cod. Lat. 432. f. 232–34. For a similar account that can be seen in this list of houses and convents dated to 1509, see Wadding, *Annales Minorum*, XV, 401–4.

wit, with unusually burdensome taxes, by withdrawing the right to free movement and testamentary disposition, by increasing the socage, by imposing the selling-off of wine and beer—burdens with which "the mighty harry their villeins against custom and practice (*contra consuetudinem et illegitime*)." (4) A lord who flouted his power in this sort of way is none other than "a thief and robber, and he shall be committing an eternal crime . . . subordinates are not obliged to obey and pay taxes (*nec tali domino subditi tenentur obedire et solvere tributum*)".[35]

The original purpose of the sermons, of course, was to awaken the moral conscience of the ruling class. "Oh, ye highborn lords who prosper on the sweat of the poor, growing fat on the fasting and hunger of the poor, if ye shall not contritely abandon the injustices that have been listed . . . ye shall not behold the glorious countenance of the Lord!" addresses Oswald of Lasko the country's dignitaries. But these model sermons, precepts, and trains of thought could also be employed by those who, "corrupted with sin," turned against the order of the world and fell into the trap of "apostasy," turning to the peasants. According to Archbishop Bakócz's previously mentioned ordinance of May 15 (repeated on May 24), the apostate preachers of the crusade were agitating for a refusal of services to landlords (*census dominorum temporalium*), royal taxation (*dica regie maiestatis*), and other customary dues (*alia consueta debita*); indeed, "the refusal of obedience to superiors" (*obedientiam superioribus denegare*) generally.[36] In one of his sermons (*Sermones de sanctis*, 50), Oswald of Lasko closes his speech with the dramatic proclamation of a moral lashing: "the oppressed poor cry out to the Lord to plead vengeance, and their outcry comes to the ears of the Lord, who had his prophet Micah say: 'Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel; is it not for you to know judgment? Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones. Who also eat the flesh of my people . . .'" When the year of vengeance came round, at the crusaders' mutinous assemblies (*conventicula*) in the first fortnight of May 1514, the "apostates" even demanded that "the tax officials and the dictators be slain," and here and there crusaders were already assailing the manor houses of the nobles, plundering their goods and putting them to the torch—one after the other the complaints of the nobles reached the court of the

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35 I have analyzed Oswald of Lasko's sermons in detail in my study: "Die oppositionelle Strömung der Franziskaner."

36 The events are represented in a similar way in Bakócz's ordinances of May 15 and 24; see also the Chapter Archive of the convent of Lelesz, Acta 1514/11 and MOL (Hungarian State Archives) DL 82401; as well as Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 72–81.

archbishop of Esztergom. This was incidentally all done strictly under the sign of the cross; after all, it was also written by Oswald of Lasko that at the Last Judgment, a cross would mark the banners of the saved.

The texts can almost be superimposed. Nevertheless, nothing would be more one-sided than to "derive" the ideology of the peasant war on a "mono-factored" basis from the sermons of the Observant Franciscans; in what follows, attention will also be drawn to other elements. Still, the foregoing serves as a warning: there is no guarantee that in terms of influence, the monks' social critique and "heresy," at least where their outcome was concerned, can be precisely and clearly delineated, particularly when it comes to the "apostates" of the years 1512–1515 just discussed, who united both in their person.

The "Apostasy" of the Crusader Realm of Thought

In its inception, therefore, the peasant war was already brewing at assemblies of crusaders held at various points in the country during the first half of May; its seeds, in all certainty, were cast from the very first days of May—bearing in mind the speed at which news travelled in those days (a decree or item of news, for example, would take four or five days to pass from Buda to Szikszó)—and the circumstance that Archbishop Bakócz, given his attachment to the crusader expedition for well-known reasons of prestige, was obviously only prompted, by mounting complaints (indeed, accusations) and cogent reasons, to suspend it on May 15. The ordinance reflects a nationwide movement already decidedly *in statu nascendi*, at least in respect of the mutinous assemblies. (The May 24 ordinance of dispersal is, in respect of the reasons detailed and description of events, merely a reiteration of the earlier one, or if anything, even sketchier.) The earliest demands were at the start directed at refusing the burdens of seignorial and state taxes, and services in general, as well as at loosening feudal ties, and at eliminating the executive organs of seignorial and royal power. This does not, in itself, actually amount to an "ideology," but is an elementary expression of general dissatisfaction accumulated over several centuries. The powers that be naturally tried to make it appear as if the common, innocent people were being wickedly "misled" by certain individuals (*populus communis per iniquios seductores deceptus*).

Since the assembling crusader companies were the hotbeds of dissatisfaction, and the words found for its expression were those of certain "apostate" preachers of the crusade, the circumstances defining the lines of force along which the ideology of the peasant war preeminently started to build up around

(i.e., the specific anti-feudal demands) were already given by the middle of May. It was no doubt no accident that the first stage of these developments did not involve the main body of Dózsa's army, but palpably centered around Szikszó in Abaúj County, one of the previously mentioned foci. It is from this part of the country that the earliest piece of crusader writing stems, a proclamation by two crusader captains (*principes cruciferorum*), Tamás Kecskés and Lőrinc Mészáros, situated in the two neighboring villages of Aszaló and Megyaszó. The writing cannot be dated reliably (it survived in a mutilated copy with no dateline), but it may be supposed on the basis of various circumstances that it arose in the first half of May, and at the latest by the middle of the month.[37]

The writing itself, which would pass through many hands, is formally no more than a sort of extract from a bull, a simplified edition or brief summary (*summarium*), indicating only the subject (itself significantly modified); at the same time, it was characteristic of what, in the archbishop's ordinances, was referred to as a "high-handed" and "false" bull. This is indeed what it was, in part, because in general the ideology of the uprising was naturally rooted in the realm of crusader thinking.

Given that the full text of Leo X's bull of September 3, 1513 is known,[38] it provides an opportunity for instructive comparisons to be made. The crusader mode of thought at the time this bull appeared comprised fundamentally three interdependent elements. The first element embodies the nature and goal of the enterprise, and the matter of authority. Accordingly, the campaign was a "saintly undertaking" against Christianity's "infidel" enemies, the Turks, proclaimed by the pope by virtue of the authority he had obtained from the Almighty; an authority which on this occasion he was devolving upon his legate, Archbishop Bakócz. The second element is the spiritual reward for participants; anyone who plays a part, whether in person or indirectly (through engaging the services of mercenaries) obtains absolution of all sins. The third element itemizes the sanctions that will be imposed on obstructers, inhibitors, or nuisances for the undertaking; their punishment, irrespective of social status or dignity, is excommunication

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37 Vilmos Frankl (Fraknói), "Adalékok az 1514-ik évi pórlázadás történetéhez" [Data to the history of the Peasant War], *Századok* 6 (1872), 440. (Municipal Archive Košice, Suppl. H. 239; Mon.) The fact that this Lőrinc Mészáros is not identical with the Priest Lőrinc, Dózsa's most important deputy leader, was observed by Barta and Fekete Nagy, *Parasztháború*, 112–13: for the birth of this writing see Szűcs, "A ferences obszervancia," 242.

38 The entire text of the bull is published for the first time in Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 35–54, 60–63 (Arch. Segr. Vat., Reg. Vat. vol. 1006, f. 34–52). The summary from April 3, 1514, is in MOL Dl 82390.

and everlasting damnation, from which only the pope may grant absolution.

Step by step, the ideologues of the 1514 uprising unfurled the thoughts behind its justification from these elements. The *summarium* of Kecskés and Mészáros is the first step, inasmuch as it does not, so far, break the triple structure, though it modifies each of the three elements in such a way that taken together they deviate from their original purport, and serve something completely different from what they stood for in their original manifestation.

Let it suffice here to restrict ourselves to the most important reinterpretations. As far as Element 1 is concerned, the nature and the goal are as yet completely identical with those of the bull, but there is now a major shift in terms of authority. True, in their introduction, the issuers of the *summarium* name the triad of pope, archbishop, and king, but these lines are left hanging in the air both grammatically and in terms of their content, because in what follows, they proclaim the principles in their own name (as *principes cruciferorum*) and, by avoiding the authority laid down in the bull, in such a way as to make the crusader army appear as an undertaking that has come about directly through the will of God (*ex voluntate omnipotentis Dei*).

In regard to Element 2, the matter rests on a number of smaller, but not insignificant modifications. For instance, a person who offers assistance of any kind—horse, cart, weapon, money—will win the same absolution of sins as an active participant (nothing is said about this in the bull), and this absolution will be valid forevermore, even for descendants (*sine fine in filio filiorum posterumque eorum*), which is wholly irregular and dogmatically absurd. Finally, the document finds it necessary to stress especially: "those who are poor, yet still offer assistance relative to their strength" shall obtain the same absolution (nothing is said about that either in the bull). As can be seen, an "irregular theology" begins to emerge in the guise of crusader thinking.

Even more important than this, however, is Element 3, the detailing of the sanctions with the excommunication of those who defy it "like a limb of the devil" (*tamquam membra dyaboli*), a formulation that as such is alien to the text of the bull, but is consonant with one of the formulations of the articles of faith issued by the Hungarian Hussites in the 1420s and 1430s, as recorded by James of the Marches.[39] The foregoing culminates in the precept that if the collectors

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39 Pál Lukcsics, ed., "XV. századi pápák oklevelei" [The charters of fifteenth-century popes], in *Monumenta Hungariae Italica* 2 (Budapest, 1938), 21–25, especially 23 ("Quod prelati excommunicantes populum dei sunt membra diaboli et antichristi"). These parallels have recently been observed by Székely, "A Dózsa-parasztháború ideológiájához," 502.

of money extort the money from the army unjustly (*iniuste*), "the whole assembly (*tota conventus eorum*) should rise up against them, and even if they should slay every last one of them, they should suffer no detriment"! Here the noteworthy feature is not just that the declaration of the legitimacy of vengeance on the part of the whole community is in sharp contrast to any dogmatic possibility, but even more that the emphasizing of the *questores* (by which all tax collectors, generically are to be understood) and of customs (*theloneum*) in the following point becomes noticeably detached from the specific situation and gains a more general sense. This is all the more the case in that in reality it would never enter the head of an official, however forceful, that there could be a pretext for a demand of any sort of "tax" on a crusader army, while customs-free delivery of food supplies was a prerequisite regulated in the bull. This is in fact about a denial of taxes and customs together with a legitimation of collective vengeance on the part of the community as a whole—still fully clothed in the guise of the crusader ideal and the legality this ensures—and, conjointly, a decided shift towards their generalization. The crusader ideal "legitimizes" the demands—direct and immune from transmissions—of the peasants of the "assemblies" referred to in Archbishop Bakócz's ordinances!

It is a notable circumstance, furthermore, that even "plain speaking" is accompanied by particular rules distilled from crusader sanctions. It was seen earlier that the archbishop's ordinance of May 15 already shows an awareness of the fact that mutinous assemblies were calling for the killing of landlords' officials and royal tax collectors. On the other hand, the inflammatory apostates constructed a strange, "dogmatic" precept even in relation to this: anyone who "cast a stone or rock" at the killed "would receive an indulgence for one hundred days." This is the point, then, at which one can discern the start of the transformation which points towards the next stage in the ideological shift: the entire internal structure of the crusader domain of thinking begins to shift and rearrange itself. Here Element 2, the spiritual reward, becomes the due of a person who attacks feudalism.

The phase of ideological construction reflected in Kecskés and Mészáros's *summarium* might be called the "apostasy" of the crusader realm of thinking: the ideological structure in itself is still more or less intact, and even the Turks have not yet disappeared from the specification of the goal, but in reality, the modification of the most critical details, from authority to sanctions, serves to legitimize a peasant uprising.

Essentially the same stage is reflected by another crusader document from the same region: a letter, probably from late May, by an anonymous crusader

(*belliger cruciferorum*) from Sárospatak: the consciousness of "crusader broth-ers" who, acting as direct instruments of God and "the holy cross," profess and assert the justification for vengeance.[40]

In contrast, a voice in several respects quite different sounds from a third piece of writing from the same region, a letter by Captain Ferenc Bagoly, date-lined May 31, sent from the village of Gönc.[41] As already emphasized by earlier research,[42] the prominent role given to *regnum* in the system of values is particu-larly striking here: the crusader army itself is the "kingdom's" cause, and was gathering "at the will of the kingdom" and "in defense of the kingdom"; anyone who hindered this "rebelled against the kingdom." What comes to the fore here is not the counterbalancing of the ideological elements of *fides* and *regnum* in it-self; that is, indeed, almost a natural, so to say, "official" formula. In the Francis-can vicar's encyclical to preachers, the aims of the "sacred host" appear in this form: *pro religionis Christiane et presertim huius regni defensione.*[43] The striking aspects of Ferenc Bagoly's letter are, on the one hand, the internal proportions, with no less than seven references to *regnum* in the short letter, set in different contexts; on the other hand, the fact that in sharp contrast to other writings from crusaders, it is written in a simultaneously entirely moderate yet plaintive tone; and lastly, but most significantly, in respect of "authority" it does not share the concept which had already evolved by the middle of May. The short text also re-fers to the command or mandate given by the pope or the archbishop no less than four times, whereas despite the conflicting situation which prompted the letter, not a word is said about the prospect of any definite sanctions.

All this deserves noting, because it indicates that one should not suppose the ideology of the crusader forces to be some sort of homogeneous entity; one has to reckon with shades of belief. This particular letter is an important document for demonstrating that the element of *regnum* has to be reckoned with in the peasant scale of values early in the sixteenth century (according to the reply from Kassa (Košice, Slovakia), Bagoly was a *providus* (serf), so undoubtedly not a captain stemming from the petty nobility). On the other hand, even knowing what subsequent developments were, it has to be considered a decidedly extreme

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40 Frankl (Fraknói), *Adalékok*, 442–43 (Archivum Civitatis Cassoviae, Suppl. H. 299), see Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 96.

41 Frankl (Fraknói), *Adalékok*, 440–41 (Archivum Civitatis Cassoviae, Suppl. H. 282), see Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 92–93.

42 Székely, "A Dózsa-parasztháború ideológiájához," 497–98.

43 OSzK Cod. lat. 432, f. 92.

variant, not at all "typical" of the mainstream of the evolution of the crusader ideal into the revolutionary ideology of a peasant movement. This kind of basic ideological position did not recur either at the time or later on, either in direct sources or indirect pieces of information. For lack of data, it can no longer be established whether there is any link between the letter's unique position and the fact that all crusader activity in the direct neighborhood of Kassa ceased at the beginning of June (i.e., this part of the army dispersed pursuant to the May 24 order by Church and "kingdom"), whereas insurgent crusader peasants were still taking up arms in Kecskés and Mészáros's presumed district, the area around Szikszó, for instance, as late as around June 21.

Dózsa's Volte–Face and the Genesis of the "Cegléd Manifesto"

Let us turn our attention to the main body of the army under Dózsa's command. The mounting dissatisfaction in the army being mobilized against the Turks, accumulating ever since Mezőtúr—and in the meantime grown to number something like 30,000 men—reached fever pitch in the area of Gyula, when news arrived that an advance party had been routed at Apátfalva by the combined forces of Count István Báthori of Temes, Miklós Csáky, bishop of Csanád, and the county nobility, with some of the crusaders drowning in the River Maros. Dózsa set off during the night to surprise the nobles by assailing them and vanquishing them at Nagylak (Nădlac, Romania). Spectacular impalements that were effectuated later the same day marked the true declaration of a peasant war on Dózsa's part. The impalements at Nagylak, as will be seen, have their own symbolism: in this first demonstrative manifestation, the impalements are nothing but a display of vengeance, a direct response to the fact that, before mid-May, the lords dragged the leaders of a crusader formation from Mezőtúr to Buda and impaled them.

A radical turning point: May 28 at Nagylak, a town by the River Maros.[44] The army had already been joined a while before by Ambrus of Túrkeve, "enthused to the point of fury" (*furibundus*)—as György Szerémi puts it—who had completed studies in theology with distinction at Cracow. Also present by then was Father Lőrinc, with regard to whose role the core of Istvánffy's characterization can be accepted as authentic, only it should be set back in time and place to the tradition from which the figure originated: the end of May and the area of the

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44   The significance of this turnover was emphasized by Barta and Fekete Nagy, *Parasztháború*, 80 ff.

Maros. News of all sorts of "elections" trickling back to Buda in distorted forms after May 31[45] also have some foundation in reality: from that point onwards, the army regarded itself as a community, which had cut all organizational ties with the official crusader expedition and was endowed with its own particular internal goal. Nevertheless, it was the ideal of continuity that also served to express discontinuity. Cut off from the authority of the papal bull and the archbishop, the new authority is clarified: as we know from Szerémi, Father Ambrus *dedit authoritatem sibi consecrandi gentem ad sanctam crucem* (where the context and the mediocrity of the author's knowledge of Latin leaves some uncertainty over who the *sibi* refers to, though most likely it is intended to mean he "gave *himself* the authority for the rededication of the army").[46] The central ideological element of the order for battle issued in Cegléd to be discussed further on had evolved by this point: "the blessed folk of the crusaders" (*benedicta gens cruciferorum*) had come to be called on, the concept of an elected army fulfilling a divine mission and consecrated by its own priests, at the very moment developments also moved in this direction, as we have just seen, in far-off Abaúj.

Historiography, up until now, has not been clear enough about what has perceptibly come to light from more recent sources: how the methodically and strategically sound concept of such an indeed nationwide peasant war emerged in the Maros area between the victory at Nagylak and the occupation of Lippa (Lipova, Romania) between May 28 and June 6. Everything was decided in that one week. After Dózsa had given up the campaign against the Turks and did indeed declare war on the Hungarian nobility, he could by no means be seen as some sort of a "lay" peasant leader who set himself at the head of an army of serfs to lead them blindly to storm forts and castles. He personally did not take part in any siege as a military leader but set up his headquarters about two miles south of the Maros, systematically reorganized his army, and launched a series of coordinated troop movements. Different bodies of troops occupied all the important fortifications northwestward along the Maros; he himself prepared to march against Temesvár (Timişoara, Romania), giving orders for some of the forces from Bács and Bodrog counties to join him. At the same time, during the

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45   An anonymous Czech report came to Buda on May 31: "Krále sobě zvolili, biskupy sobě zvolili, probošty a jiná jmüna uhersckych pánuov, patsyšdbana..." (They elected their king, they elected their bishops, they elected their provosts and other Hungarian lords), Schwartzenberg-Archive, Třeboň 3608b; see Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 90.

46   Georgii Sirmiensis *Epistola de perdicione regni Hungarorum*, 60; on the significance of "consecration," see Kardos, *A magyarországi humanizmus kora*, 379–80.

first few days of June he sent four other troop formations off to proceed in the four directions of the compass. One of these pushed eastward into Transylvania; a second troop with Father Lőrinc at its head set off northeastward into Bihar County; the third and fourth troops retraced northward and northwestward, respectively—following the same path Dózsa himself had taken southward during the previous weeks—in order to push partly for Buda and partly into Heves and Abaúj counties, after crossing the River Tisza.[47]

It is these latter two troop movements which are of more interest for present purposes, because—contrary to all assumptions to date—it is behind these troop movements that the "Cegléd manifesto" has its role. For this reason, it is necessary to stay, however fleetingly, with this phase. One needs to be aware that, as opposed to the construction of humanist narrators (and this also applies to most modern-day writers of history) who merged different narrative elements into one another and also distorted the chronology, in the early days of June, János Bornemisza, the constable of Buda Castle, in part routed and in part pacified the remnant force of some 3,000–5,000 men from the original crusader army that had been left by Pest. So, the traitorous act committed by Ambrus "Száleresi" (Schaller? Seiler?), held by tradition, occurred not three weeks or more later at the Battle of Gubacs, but at the beginning of June. At the same time, a united army of nobles from Nógrád, Hont, Pest, and Heves counties, which had taken to horseback, dispersed or routed the smaller crusader detachments between the upper part of the Danube-Tisza interfluve and the Heves area. In that way in the first week of June the curious situation arose that while, starting from the more southerly part of Transdanubia, across the southern part of the Danube-Tisza interfluve to Transylvania, in much of Hungary east of the Tisza and the area around the River Maros (reaching up to the northeastern regions of the country), a large chunk of the kingdom's castles and manor houses were going up in flames, in the more northerly parts of the area from Pest to the Tisza everything was, for the time being, peaceful. During the days around June 10, Dózsa's strategy punctured the almost self-satisfied mood of the nobility of the abovementioned four counties.

On June 16, records of the news (*novum*) show that "in this week" (i.e., June 10–16), two large forces of crusader troops had crossed the Tisza, with one pitching camp by Tiszavárkony and the other near the market town of Heves. Further movements of both formations can also be traced through extant

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47   On the details see Barta and Fekete Nagy, *Parasztháború*, 96–114.

sources. The one that had camped by Várkony on the night of June 21 appeared just two miles from Buda (at Gubacs), with its advance guards already engaging in skirmishes with mounted troops foraying out of Buda Castle. The strength of the formation was estimated by various sources at 5,000–7,000 men, with Dózsa's younger brother, Gergely, as their captain, and the path of this part of the army will have naturally taken them from Tiszavárkony through Cegléd. The second formation split in two, with one branch laying siege to Debrő Castle in Heves County on June 21, and the second marching towards Szikszó, the main center of Abaúj County. The strength of the besieging force at Debrő was likewise estimated around 7,000 strong. György Dózsa's strategy, that is to say, was entirely clear and resolute: having broken with the feudal "kingdom" (one of the senses of *regnum* in this period being "the nobility"), he now, for one thing, launched an attack, under his younger brother's leadership, on the country's capital city and "head" (*caput regni*), and secondly he sent new forces to unite the crusader units that had been scattered in Heves and Abaúj counties, but were still holding out here and there, so as to reattach that part of the country to the territory stretching from the River Tisza to Transylvania, which practically lay under his control. Detailed pieces of information confirm in every respect a report by Antonio Surriano, Venice's envoy to Buda, who always kept himself well-informed: the counterpart to Dózsa's attack on Temesvár was to send his brother against Buda.

Meanwhile forces of the nobility from the northerly parts of Abaúj County had already captured Szikszó; indeed, the small town had become their gathering place, but they were almost eyeball to eyeball with a larger crusader force in the same area. Then, at ten o'clock in the morning on June 21, Johann Sayczlich, one of the leaders of a team of reinforcements for the nobles from the city of Kassa, quickly adds the following postscript to a letter he has been writing: "*Der Zekel Jorg hat den tagn wnndt die stund bryff her ken Zyxo geschickt, das man sy zue czyhen sollen, wnndt hym beystatt thun.*" That is, this day a document in the name of György Székely has appeared in Szikszó, the content of which—a call to arms—is none other than the "Cegléd manifesto."[48]

The sole known example (a copy) of that call to arms addresses in general terms all towns, market towns, and villages throughout Hungary, but "most es-

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[48] The only copy of this most important document of the Peasant War, titled "Ex Cegled," without precise dating (Archivum civitatis Bartphae, No. 4443, in Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 121–22) has been (erroneously) dated since Márki, *Dósa György*, 156, 158, 174–84, to the time when György Dózsa pulled out of Pest towards the Great Hungarian Plain in the first half of May.

pecially those in Pest and Outer Szolnok counties." The four counties mentioned sent notifications on June 16, that after the conflagration which had earlier reduced the fate of counties from Bihar to Temes to ashes, "this week Heves, Outer Szolnok, and Pest counties likewise started to go up in flames, and there is no doubt that this will also spread to Abaúj . . . " (Medieval Outer Szolnok was the county in which Tiszavárkony lay; the western borderline started near Cegléd and ran eastward until the area around Mezőtúr and nearby Túrkeve.) The nobility's prognosis was not far off the mark, because, as has been seen, the same call to arms used after June 10 to mobilize the country as the peasant army headed from Várkony to Buda, was used again to mobilize the inhabitants of Abaúj County in conjunction with another army operation on June 21. The latter is, in fact, the copy that was passed by those Kassa dwellers who were encamped at Szikszó back to Kassa, where it was copied and sent for information to Bártfa (Bardejov, Slovakia), where this copy sent from Kassa has been preserved. If any doubt still remains that this important document relates to Gergely Dózsa's advance on Buda, it should be dispelled by the fact that the more or less distorted German and Italian translations of the intitulation (Dózsa's heading) which gained currency in the West all, without exception and to some degree independently of one another, broadcast reports from Buda of a situation after mid-June (June 17 or later); there was no trace of such motifs in news sent before mid-June.

One of the faults made in the chronological placement of this decisive document until now, was that no one could imagine its inception in any way but with the personal presence of György Székely (Dózsa), who must indeed have himself passed through Cegléd around mid-May. Quite apart from the major difficulties sticking with this personal link to Dózsa would cause both in terms of the document's contents and its chronology, if it is to be called (not entirely unjustifiably) a "manifesto," multiple copies of which reached various points in the country, that personal presence is not in fact a necessary condition. In fact, the call to arms most likely originated in the early days of June, in the area between Nagylak and Lippa, with Gergely Dózsa sending multiple copies out, on behalf of his captain general, from Cegléd, a station of his march on Buda after Tiszavárkony, in mid-June (June 10–21), and as such does indeed represent the most important document of the already-declared peasant war. This also eliminates another contradiction that caused no end of difficulties for the notion that has been upheld hitherto; in this regard, György Szerémi—whose reliability on these matters has increasingly been vindicated in the light of the recently un-

earthed sources—reports categorically that Dózsa "did not have a notary" before Mezőtúr. On the other hand, given the line of Dózsa's march in May, Cegléd lies well before Mezőtúr! We are now in a position to state with great certainty that this call to arms is a version edited by Ambrus of Túrkeve, which also accounts for the impeccable Latin of this most important of all sources on the peasant war, the precise and accurate Latin of formulaic phrases and concepts, as compared with the greater or lesser linguistic garbling of other crusader documents—after all, the editor had completed studies in theology.

The General Notion of a Popular Crusade

The "Cegléd manifesto" (there need be no qualms about sticking to the traditional name) is nothing other than a synopsis of what had become established as the ideology of the peasant war: a change of step in ideas which supersedes the "apostasy" manifested in Kecskés and Mészáros's *summarium*, thereby radically unpacking the justification preeminently for the war against the nobility from the realm of crusader thinking. Two tiny, but all the more telling philological parallels allow one to gain an insight into the ideological mechanism.

The text announces the war by means of a quite singular, far from everyday formula: everyone is obliged to enlist in the army in order that this "sacred" and "blessed" enterprise be able to "restrain and curb" the might of the infidel (traitorous) noblemen (*vires et manus . . . infidelium . . . nobilium cohercere et refrenare . . . valeat*). Archbishop Bakócz's instruction of April 25,[49] which authorized the bishop of Transylvania and the Franciscan vicar to proclaim the "holy military expedition," includes the formula . . . *ut hostium* (viz. the onslaught of the infidel enemy, the Turks, *perfidissimorum Turcarum*) *impetus refrenari aut coerceri possint*. The textual connection is obvious, and all the more so, in that the bull of 1513 included a still more remote formula (*ad cohercendos eorum hostium impetus*). In other words, the essence of the matter is, as it were, captured here philologically: an inversion of the crusader domain of thinking under the badge of crusader ideals, with "infidel Turks" being replaced by "infidel (traitorous) noblemen" (as *infidelis* can intimate both simultaneously)!

But the notion of "restraining, curbing" is also supplemented by a third synonym in the Cegléd manifesto: *compescere* ("confine," "hold in check," "tame"). This is to be found in several instances in Archbishop Bakócz's ordinance of

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49 Bakócz, document of April 25: *Tudománytár* 2 (1842), 255–57.

May 15, which has been mentioned several times before, and here specifically in a context (the rubric of the sanctions), which shows the closest relationship with the formula by which the sanctions are spelled out in the order composed by Dózsa in early June and promulgated at Cegléd in the middle of the month. Bakócz's ordinance obligated all ecclesiastical authorities to "curb" the rebels, if necessary, with the assistance of the secular armed forces; Dózsa's order obligates the populace of towns and villages to "curb" the nobility. The parallels are best demonstrated, of course, with the original Latin passage:

Bakócz, May 15
...*sub pena excommunicationis* precipimus et *mandamus, quatinus* habita presencium notitia eodem (i.e., the excommunicated and apostate preachers and their assemblies) *coerceatis et compescatis*. Qui si cessaverint et paruerint *bene quidem*; alioquin... *prescriptas penas* in eos *incurrere* volumus.

György Székely *ex Cegléd*
sub excommunicationis... pena... mandamus et committimus ... *quatenus* mox statim visis presentibus (should hasten to Cegléd in order that the holy army should) *cohercere* et refrenare et *compescere* valeat (the forces of the infidel nobility). *Que si* feceretis *bene quidem*; *alias in penam prescriptam incurretis.*

Here too the connections between the texts are unmistakable, which in itself conceals a further fascinating lesson. These formulas do not in fact appear in this complete form in Archbishop Bakócz's definitive May 24 writ of inhibition. In other words, if Ambrus of Túrkeve, who was also familiar with the latter too (having joined the main body of the army at Nagylak) nevertheless reverted to the formulations of May 15, with the nobility likewise understood as being "rebellious," he demonstrated thereby that the first suspension of the expedition had already exercised a decisive psychological impact on the main body of the army, when it was still in Békés; that was when the fermentation had begun. On this point, microphilology offers at one and the same time a psychological source. This fully bears out Chaplain Szerémi, in whose recollection it was there, in Békés, that Dózsa broke out for the first time in angry words: "I am not a child, nor an idiot that you should play with me; by God and the holy cross, I shall set upon you!"

If the Cegléd manifesto were now subjected to the same structural investigation as undertaken in the foregoing for the Kecskés-Mészáros interpretation of

the bull, it may be concluded that the internal structure of the crusader sphere of thought had been rearranged, and in a certain sense overturned, but that the rearrangement consisted basically of nothing other than a consistent and radical implementation of the logic inherent in that sphere of thought. In an ideological sense, the peasant war was no more than an effectuation of Element 3, the sanctions of the crusader realm of thought, since the nobility had violently (*violenta manu*; in the bull, *violare*) attacked the holy enterprise, and "risen up" against it (*insurrexunt*). The nobles were therefore "unfaithful" and at the same time "traitorous" (*infideles*) since they had attacked a sacred matter and were consequently fitted for damnation, foul beings (*maledicti*; in the bull, *maledictio*), in essence similar to the Turks; the war against them ("the attempt to curb them") follows logically from Element 1 of the realm of thinking, and now emerges as the goal of the crusade. As a result, the inner structure of this way of thinking is largely remodeled:

(1) With regard to the nature of the undertaking, it continues to be "holy" (*expeditio sancte congregationis*, *sancta turma*). The goal, as we have seen, is the restraint and curbing of the "infidel" (traitorous) nobility. It gains authority, on the one hand, from God Himself, as mediated by the blessings or benedictions of his priesthood, and in this way the army are "blessed people" (*benedicta gens*, *benedictum conventiculum*); and on the other, from the king of Hungary (more on this is to follow below). Dózsa himself adopts his titles in accordance with this dual authority: on the one hand, as leader of the elect, *princeps cruciferorum*; and on the other (in his secular capacity, one might say), as captain general, *supremus capitaneus*.

(2) The reward for participation? As it happens the manifesto has nothing to say on this, which is understandable if it be considered that it was not, in fact, a "manifesto" but a military order. More will be said later about the fact that by early June, in the area along the river Maros, there had emerged some concepts in this regard as well, and not in the form of spiritual rewards either.

(3) The sanction no longer addresses those who grumble about and obstruct the crusade, as this element of crusader thinking ipso facto was taken over into the war that had been declared against the nobility, but is addressed to those who were reluctant to join the army of the chosen. This is a new element in terms of its purport, an analysis of which in the following, will offer a key to a further important source of ideas.

Of course, there is no suggestion here that the ideology which was emerging in the Maros area was constructed purely from the crusader domain of thought;

indeed, some decidedly "secular" elements can be disentangled, but its substratum was a radically and chiliastically interpreted crusader ideal. Space does not permit this to be fully unwound in all dimensions, but let it suffice to indicate that the cross remained the main symbol. It was not only the troop units from Abaúj and Zemplén counties who called themselves "faithful servants of the holy cross" (*fideles servi sancti crucis*), and specified their transcendental assistants as "the Most High God" and "the holy cross, whose victorious symbol we bear on our chest and which we shall under no account back out on," as can be read in the already-cited letter from a crusader warrior from Sárospatak.[50]

The main body of Dózsa's army itself advanced under this banner. It is precisely its hostile prejudice that authenticates in this connection a memoir by Matthias Künisch, the chaplain to George, margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach (Georg der Fromme), which recorded that Dózsa's envoy on June 10 called on the defenders of Solymos Castle (Iňačovce, Slovakia) to surrender with the final argument: "Do not act against the cross" (*Nicht wider das kreuz tett, nen*).[51] Contemporaneous sources also attest[52] that later (e.g., on June 18) the priests of the peasant war continued to invoke the common people to rise up "on behalf of the cross," and the memoirs of György Szerémi are reliable on this point too: up until the end, on July 15, the shibboleths were the *sancta crux* and a shout of Jesus's name repeated three times over, and the outlook which Szerémi professes to be his own as well, was that anyone who attacked the peasants "attacks the holy cross"; anyone who was on their side was "for the holy cross." It would be worthy of special analysis, for which there is no opportunity here, to look into the polysemantic role of *fides* as a central concept in the crusader ideology (with simultaneous connotations of "faith," "faithfulness," and "oath"), and of the antithetical pair of *fidelis—infidelis*, which in this conceptual system was the primary borderline between "us" and "them" (the enemy).[53]

This way of thinking had an underlying chiliastic load, because there is no doubt that divine "election" was an essential component. This was not, however, submerged in an eschatological gloom; its undeniably "lay" assemblers who are to be mentioned below refrained from doing so. Judgment Day, Anti-

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50 Frankl (Fraknói), *Adalékok*, 442–43, cf. footnote 40 above.

51 In the memoir of the chaplain dating from August 25, Archivum Publicum Norenbergense, Brandenburgica 1033; see Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 208–13.

52 Contemporary information from Trencsén also attests that "*communem populum nomine crucis ad insurgendum concitant*," *Századok* 6 (1872): 445.

53 Georgii Sirmiensis, *Epistola de perdicione regni Hungarorum*, 67–69.

christ, "thousand-year kingdom"—formulations of that kind may have come up and played a role, but there is no trace of them in the sources. From where, then, did the ideological substratum come? This latent debate, in my view, can now be decided fairly categorically in the light of new data and links. The composite as a whole indubitably moves a long way from the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church, but it is still not explicitly heretic, not being compatible with, for instance, the Hussite articles of faith. It need only be compared with the precepts of the radical Hussites (Taborites) of Southern Hungary in the 1420s and 1430s, as recorded by James of the Marches.[54] With them it was a matter of complete denial of the Roman Catholic Church and papal power, which is not the case here; with them there was a rejection of excommunication in general, while here it was an important tool in the hands of the "elect"; with them there was a repudiation of all representations, including that of the cross, whereas here even the crucifix plays a role, the cross is actually the supreme symbol; with them a renunciation of the taking of oaths, whereas here mutual avowed pledges and swearing on the cross are common motifs; with them the sale of indulgences was rejected, while here it is a weapon in the hands of the revolutionary priesthood; with them, lay priesthood and a disavowal of monasticism were principles, whereas here parsons and monks took a prominent role, and so on. With an awareness of these contrasts in mind, it is scarcely possible to speak of direct or dominant Hussite influences. The investigations of the author bear out a conjecture advanced by Tibor Kardos who, in starting to look for the main source of the currents acting within Franciscan Observance in the heresy of the Spirituals (followers of Joachim of Fiore), draws attention to a commentary by Petrus Johannis Olivi on the *Book of Revelation*.[55] The analogies were close, and indeed quite direct, for Olivi specified those who were marked with the cross as a "sign of God" (*signo et charactere Dei*), as a form of the army of "new soldiers of Christ," the "chosen people" (*electi*), who after much suffering, tolerance, and tribulation were destined for victory and annihilation of the "sect of the Antichrist." Since there can be little doubt that the "scandal-sewing" and "sin-infected" members of the Observant Order of Franciscans in Hungary in 1512–13 were in good part the same as the "false and hostile" preachers of the crusade and "apostates" of

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54 See also the similar statements of the Hussites who fled to Moldova (1461), cited in footnote 39 above: Coli. E. Fermandzin, *Acta Bosnae potissimum ecclesiastica* (Zagreb, 1892) (Monumenta Spectantia Historiam Slavorum Meridionalium 23), 245–48.

55 Kardos, *A magyarországi humanizmus kora*, 375–76, 384–87.

1514, this intellectual stratum of the leadership had to be aware of this realm of thought, transmitting it and harmonizing it with the then prevailing, more or less ready-made crusader ideology.

None of this excludes the possibility that certain Hussite traditions or dormant fragments might have had a hand in the emergence of this ideology. As György Székely has already pointed out,[56] the emphatic element of the justifiability of vengeance, benediction offered independently of the official Church, the notion of a *membrum dyaboli*, and also, as will be shown further on, expropriation of the Church's worldly goods, perhaps even the principle of "one bishop," are in all likelihood motifs of Hussite origin.

In the end, as already emphasized, in many borderline cases it is in fact impossible to separate clearly and distinctly "heretic" doctrines from elements deriving from monastic "apostasy," because the views themselves coincide; indeed, most likely the individuals who transmitted them were for the most part identical. But the main point is not so much to ascertain the exact "proportions" (that would be impossible anyway) as the fact that in 1514, in accordance with its own inner, autogenous laws, self-standing in its final outward appearance and heretic by nature, an ideology was built up with little doubt through several stages (but at least two stages as evidenced by sources) that can now justifiably be called the broad concept of a popular crusade. This outgrowth is peculiar to Hungary (its elements have antecedents stretching back to 1456), having no near equivalent among any of the European peasant uprisings, just as there is no sign anywhere else of the notion of a "crusader army" being so tightly identified with the notion of a "peasant uprising" as occurred in Hungary during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Those who were living in these centuries and feared a peasant movement would, following Calvinist theologian and writer Péter Méliusz Juhász (1536–72), refer in dialect to a "crusader host"; and then there was Péter Császár (1600–32), the serf leader of a peasant uprising in the Upper Tisza area in 1631–32, who in seeking a symbol for his uprising, had a crusader standard attributed to Dózsa brought from Ráckeve, the Danubian town twenty-five miles south of Pest . . .

Another matter of note on this subject is that although there is always some sort of link to be found between revolutionary movements in this part of the world, it is not absolutely necessary to think of the revolution as being imported. There are certainly some sources which hint obscurely at Bohemians coming to

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56 Székely, "A Dózsa-parasztháború ideológiájához," 499, 502–3.

Hungary in 1514;[57] yet these are to be kept separate from surmises and concerns that were manifested in the papal court,[58] because the basis of these was that if any sort of "disturbance of the peace" were to be manifested anywhere in Central and Eastern Europe the Church in Rome would immediately search hysterically to find the handiwork of the "Bohemians." Quite another criterion needs to be applied, however, to a specific message sent from Buda by an Italian priest, an auditor of Archbishop Bakócz, regarding an agitation by certain Bohemians on June 15, 1514.[59] It is possible, as it happens, to trace its nucleus in the source literature with Bartholomew, Duke of Münsterberg, the Bohemian supporter of Wladislas II Jagiello, the Hungarian king, who came with a military escort from Poland via Bohemia, and arrived in Buda in the middle of June 1514. On the other hand, a messenger named Lénárd Bor arrived at Szikszó from Buda a week later, on June 21, with news that the king had engaged 400 mercenaries and wished to dispatch them down the Danube against Dózsa; when, on boarding the ships, they learned what the objective of their expedition was, they slew their captain and went over to György Székely/Dózsa's side.[60] It is certain that these two pieces of information are linked, particularly in view of the coincidence of their points in time (and also, not least, the consideration that in Hungary at this time the term mercenary was in practice synonymous with Bohemian soldier). It was not "10,000 warriors" from Bohemia who fought in Dózsa's army (as a Czech chronicle rather naïvely put it), but 400. Not that this has much to offer from a viewpoint of the history of ideas because, as it has been observed, the ideology of the peasant war had already attained maturity.

The relationship in 1514 was, if anything, the reverse from what it had been in the 1420s and 1430s: the "brothers in Bohemia," having been pushed into the background, began to take heart from the lead shown by the Hungarian peasant uprising, as can be learned from a July 18 letter by Leo, Lord of Rosental (Lev Zdeněk z Rožmitálu), High Burgrave of Prague (and at the same time also a chief spokesman for Czech feudal anarchy): "these 'people,' on the pretext of

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57 Székely, "A huszitizmus," 589; Tibor Kardos, "Huszita típusú kantiléniáink" [Our cantilenes of a Hussite type], *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 57 (1953), 86–88.

58 The report of the Venetian envoy in Rome of July 7 sums up well the general mood in the Curia; Archive of Venice, Dispacci di Roma 1514, 65; cf. Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 150–51.

59 *Magyar Történelmi Tár* 13 (1867), 250.

60 In the report of the leader of the troops of Kassa, Johann Sayczlich of Szikszó, on June 21: Archivum Civitatis Cassoviae, Suppl. H. 302; cf. Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 125–26.

support for the king, are preparing to follow the example of the Hungarian crusaders . . . " The Czech peasantry and urban paupers, however, were now caught in an iron vise from both sides. The Bohemian echo of the Hungarian peasant war had just given rise to the assembly on Kutná Hora at the end of June, where in view of the danger, the rancorous feudal parties had hurriedly made up their differences and, with mutual oaths of support, set up a defensive alliance; on the other hand, the king's supporter, the said Duke Bartholomew, having returned to Prague on July 1, on Wladislas's authority had recruited a Czech military force several thousand strong to suppress the Hungarian peasant uprising.[61] In this vise, Kolín, Poděbrad, and other Hussite strongholds, indeed the Bohemian peasantry in general, were unable to budge.

The Transylvanian Szekler Model

The ideal of a popular crusade is by no means the same as the ideology of the Hungarian peasant war. The program also had a stratum explicitly secular in origin and nature; it was in the context of this stratum and together with it that the body of ideas that has been outlined above made up a unified whole. An Italian informant, Niccolò de Zuanne, on the basis of reports received from Italians living in Buda, wrote on August 11 that after Dózsa had been captured, János Szapolyai, who at the time was the voivode of Transylvania, asked him: "What were you expecting? What was your plan?" To which Dózsa is supposed to have replied: "*come el volea renovar el Regno de Hongaria*"—he had wanted to renew, to "renovate" the country.[62]

In looking for the springs of this "renovation," let us start off once more from an interesting point in the Cegléd manifesto, the sanctions. According to these, Dózsa ordered the people to join up on pain of "excommunication and everlasting damnation," along with a loss of their own heads and livestock, should they fail to do so—which is consistent with his "dual capacity," because as *princeps cruciferorum* he places in prospect a spiritual punishment for ignoring the crusader ideal, whereas as captain general this is the customary worldly sanction for not obeying a call-up. Not content with that, though, the following punishment also awaits the insubordinate: they shall be hanged or impaled in front of their

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61   On the events in Bohemia see František Palacký, *Geschichte von Böhmen* (Prague, 1836–67) V/2, 306.

62   Marco Allegri, Nicolò Barozzi, Guglielmo Berchet, Rinaldo Fulin, and Federico Stefani, eds., *I. Diarii di Marino Sanuto* (Venice, 1887), XIX, 17.

house, their belongings will be destroyed and plundered, their house demolished, and even their family will not be spared. Lest there be any misunderstanding, this threat applies not just to nobles, but to those of his own class, burghers, the inhabitants of market towns, and rural serfs.[63] Researchers have always skated over this detail, perceiving it to be simply a terrifying threat of deterrence showing haphazard severity.

Years after the peasant war was suppressed, the stewards of the castle of Hunyad (Hunedoara, Romania) report in 1520 that preparations were underway in the market town of Monostor (Mănăştur, Romania) in Temes County for fresh turmoil, sewn by the same individuals who had in the first round been crusaders, and were again "holding assemblies (*congregationes*) outside the usual places and proclaiming in the manner of the Szekler people (*more Siculorum*) that anyone reluctant to come to the assemblies would have their house demolished and leveled to the ground . . ."[64] Monostor was a long way away from the land that had been apportioned to the Szekler people in Transylvania, so the *mos Siculorum* can only relate to the crusader period.

Two accurate and vivid accounts—descriptions sprung from the quills of Miklós Oláh (Nicolaus Olahus, 1493–1568) and the previously mentioned Antal Verancsics—are extant from the mid-sixteenth century about the conduct of constituent assemblies of the Szeklers. These accord in stating that if, at such a gathering, anyone came forward with proposals which would have limited Szekler liberties ("*Willkür*"), or anyone did not comply with a call-up order from the army, the entire community would fall "bodily" (*agminatim*) upon that person's house and raze it to the ground, and if they manage to lay hands on the offender, they killed him.[65]

By going through the whole series of documents, it can be settled to full satisfaction that this was not a matter of an act of tyranny, but of ancient legal custom: in these cases, the ritual house demolition was a verdict of the assembly at the seat, *tota communitas*, which incidentally was complemented by the custom that if a condemned person were subsequently pardoned, the community would rebuild the dwelling. The frequency of uprisings by the Szekler in this era (1466, 1492, 1498, 1511, 1519) was in all instances presaged by a rash of house demoli-

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63 See footnote 48.

64 July 1, 1520, Hunyad. Staatsarchiv München, Brandenburgica 1056/17.

65 Nicolaus Olahus, *Hungariae liber II. Atila* (Vindobonae, 1763), 197; Antonius Veranchich, *De situ Transsylvaniae, Moldaviae et Transalpinae*, *Monumenta Hungariae Historica*, *Scriptores* II., ed. László Szalay (Pest, 1857), 146.

tions, and in point of fact the call-up into the army in such cases (e.g., in 1492) contains the same wording of the clause regarding sanctions as the Cegléd manifesto.[66] Even in instances where the king or the voivode of Transylvania strove to mitigate the custom (1499, 1519), the essence of the regulation was that henceforth the community should not "on its own authority" utilize house demolition and the traditional manner of death sentence against those who were judged to have infringed the liberties, and could only do so with the knowledge of the Szekler county head (the "*székelyispán*").[67]

On this point, then, the Cegléd manifesto adopts an element of Szekler customary law, and when this lead is followed up, one comes across a number of other specific elements of similar origin. Also, elements of this kind are the ancient character of communal coercion of call-ups for army service and attendance of the assembly, or the carrying around of a bloody sword as a form of call-up to the army, which which in those days was indeed an exclusively Szekler custom (see e.g., the military regulations from 1463).[68] And perhaps one of Dózsa's titles (the secular one) also comes from here, as all signs indicate that the *supremus capitaneus* was not an original title dating from April 24, 1514, because in contrast to the forms *rector* and *dux*, with which most of the authentic contemporaneous sources (the previously mentioned letter mandating the camp priesthood itself) are acquainted, this was the Latin title of the military leader of the Szekler seat.[69]

In other words, the Szekler model of the situation is repeatedly evident in the concept that arose in the Maros area. Is it not possible, therefore, that this also lurks behind several of the broader plans for political and social reform? The tenets substantiating the basic formula of "renovating the country" are fairly well-known: the king remained, the nobility were to be eliminated, and just one bishop would be retained in the Church organization. These motifs have survived in multiple contemporaneous items of intelligence quite independently of each other, so there can be no doubt as to their authenticity. Their tim-

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66   Károly Szabó, ed., *Székely oklevéltár* [Szekler documents] (henceforth quoted as SZO), I. (Kolozsvár, 1872), 314–15, III. (Kolozsvár, 1890), 86, 122; 134, 177, 207.

67   SZO. I. 338–39; III. 143.

68   SzO I. 196ff. For the custom of the carrying around of a bloody sword, see the anonymous report in *Történelmi Tár*, N. S. 6 (1905), 274, and Antonio Bonfini, *Rerum Ungaricarum Decas I.* ed. József Fógel, Béla Iványi, and Ladislaus Juhász (Lipsiae, 1936), 56 (lib. 2, 199).

69   SzO II, 41; in Hungarian *főkapitány* or *főhadnagy*, József Fógel, Béla Iványi, Ladislaus Juhász, eds., *Rerum Ungaricarum Decas I.*, 316, II, 140; cf. János Connert, *A székelyek intézményei a legrégibb időktől az 1562-i átalakulásig* [The Szekler institutions from the olden times to the transformation in 1562] (Kolozsvár, 1901), 33.

ing is also not accidental, because as the news spread in Buda around the middle of June,[70] the reform program had to belong to the same early-June transformation as the three-branched military maneuver and the Cegléd army call-up order itself, which as it happens captures the basic principle in the most authentic manner: Dózsa himself is "a subject solely of the king of Hungary, not of the lords" (*regis Hungarie tantummodo subditus et non dominorum*). What role did Dózsa envisage for himself, though? According to one communication from Buda on June 17, Dózsa also sent a letter to the king: the country should be left with the king alone, a single bishop, and two lords (*zwen herrn, die dem künig dienen*); the rest, if they remained "intractable" for any length of time, would have to be eliminated.[71] There are several credible reports to the effect that indeed only one or two "lords" would remain—first and foremost, Dózsa himself. According to Chaplain Künisch's memoir, Dózsa called for the surrender of Solymos Castle on the grounds that unlike he himself, George of Brandenburg was no longer a lord (*nicht mehr eyn herr*). According to Antal Verancsics, a Hungarian diarist, one of the captains of Southern Hungary, Antal Nagy had it proclaimed in his camp that apart from the king and his son, "no one is a lord in Hungary, only . . . György Székely and then he himself, Antal Nagy."[72] Presumably, there were of course diverse notions on the matter, but given what has been outlined so far, the "two lords" motif (a solitary mention, unfortunately, but it is not inconceivable that it likewise stems from Dózsa himself) does justifiably raise the question of whether this was another notion which had a Szekler model as its basis. In the circumstances under which the Szeklers of those times were living, principle and praxis were fairly widely separated; ordinary members of the community had more than a few "lords" to burden them, above all the ruling class, the estate of the "*primores*," which had risen to prominence from the ranks of the Szekler society itself. The Szekler rebellions of the preceding decades were directed at "curbing" precisely these "*primores*," including the voivodes of Transylvania and their familials, who were trampling on their rights. In principle, however, to the Szekler worldview only "two lords" existed between the king and the autonomous community of freemen: the *székelyispán*

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70   These sources are cited by Székely, "A Dózsa parasztháború."

71   An abstract from this letter ("auff datum XVI Iunii dits iars") is a variant of the tract printed in various German presses in the summer and fall of 1514: "Ain groß wunderzaichen..." (Bayrische Staatsbibliothek, München, Rar. 351; Akadémiai Könyvtár, Budapest, RM IV, 88).

72   For Künisch's report: cf. footnote 51; Verancsics: *Memoria rerum...*, in *Monumenta Hungariae Historica* II, *Scriptores* III, ed. László Szalay (Pest, 1857), 8.

(admittedly for decades this had been one and the same person as the voivode of Transylvania) and the royal superintendent (*királybíró*) of the Szekler communities ("seats").

Loyalty to the king and the "one bishop" principle do not call for explanation, being widespread attributes of peasant uprisings in Europe. Nor is there much need to refute the fairytale of the election of a "peasant king," which had already begun to spread by the end of May, partly a product of distortion by news- and horror-mongers, and partly a product of foreign interpretations of the Cegléd manifesto; the *princeps cruciferorum* in Dózsa's title (identical, incidentally, with the title borne by the crusader captains Kecskés and Mészáros) became the basis for a semantic shift to "prince, sovereign," out of which German *kunig* and Italian *eletto re* were among the forms which emerged in translations of the title. The most decisive refutations in this respect reside in the sources, which sprang up on the spot, in Maros district. On June 10, Dózsa was rendered homage "by the will of the king," and in his recollections none other than Georg Prantner, the man who led the defense of Solymos, gives Dózsa the title that was actually used there at the time: *der kreutzer hawpman*.[73] Finally, no lengthy proof is required to show that by elimination of the nobility (the phrase ingrained in chancery jargon was *delere nobilitatem*) it is not their physical elimination which is implied, but their abolition. Dózsa did wish to eradicate all those who in the light of his own principles proved "traitorous and infidels" (*infideles*). His own most credible statement on the subject is again what is to be read in the Cegléd manifesto, where, as has been seen, three synonyms are employed: "curbing," "restraining," and "holding in check" the nobility.

What could he have had in mind with regard to the arrangements of society? In regard to this there are, first and foremost, two most authentic pieces of information, but unfortunately these are potentially misleading because both are couched in such mediocre Latin that one has a hard time understanding them. One of them comes from the interrogation of a witness in 1515, the relevant line of which, in the view of the author, was correctly interpreted by György Székely: a nobleman was granted clemency by the crusaders for promising that "he would be stirring people up as much as any serf."[74] The second is a report from Chap-

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73   Prantner recalls this at the end of August: "Jaenisch diack wer geschickt von der kreutzer hawpman, der wegeren were inn daß schloß gutlich einzugeben, von wegen kunigklicher mayestet…" Archivum Publicum Norenbergense, Archivum familiae Brandenburgensis, 1052/I. Cf. Fekete Nagy, Kenéz, Solymosi, and Érszegi, eds., *Monumenta rusticorum*, 217.

74   According to a testimony in Sasvár in Ugocsa County, on May 15, 1515: a witness "audivit a ceteris rusticis"

lain Szerémi, which can be considered as good as a "crusader source," not merely on account of being well-informed, but also on the basis of its conceptualization: he guesses that Father Lőrinc's principle was "*si . . . victoriam optinemus, quilibet nobilium habebit.*" As it stands, it makes no sense, being badly formulated, but as his Latin is full of passages which are obscured by similar ellipses, often precisely parts related to a genitive plural, the sense can be retrieved as being: " *. . . quilibet* [*rusticorum status* or *bona*] *nobilium habebit,*" that is, every peasant shall gain noble status or the goods of the nobility. The two pieces of information are seemingly at odds with each other. The first reduces a noble to the level of a peasant, whereas in the second, a peasant is seeking to raise himself to the level of a nobleman. Yet taken together, for that very reason, it probably illustrates fairly unambiguously the likely reality at the time, the Szekler people's typically intermediate position between the "true" nobility and the peasantry; that is, the Szekler conditions were most likely at the forefront of Dózsa's views for his idea of renovation: the extension of Szekler *libertas* and property rights to Hungary's peasantry.

With knowledge of the foregoing data and connections we are, after all, to some extent in a position to weigh up a later report by Gianmichele Bruto, who, with reference to Cuspinianus (Spiessheimer), states in two places that the goal was supposed to have been the effacement of the nobility, "the creation of a single, equal estate," the retention of a single bishop, along with a redistribution of the properties of the nobility and Church to those who had distinguished themselves in the campaign.[75] None of that would have aroused any suspicion if it had in fact been what Cuspinianus had said, because the Viennese humanist did actually spend three weeks in Buda in September 1514, and again a longer period in October and November of that year; for all his prejudice and confusions over times, he is relatively well-informed. However, in his *Diarium* (1515) there happens to be not a single word on the last and most critical of the factors. As a result, the information about the redistribution of land is Bruto's alone, from the 1580s. All the same, the Venetian humanist, during his relatively short stay of altogether three years in Transylvania, did manage to acquire a few (rather meager) elements of the tradition, and inasmuch as Dózsa did indeed have in mind a settlement of the position of the Hungarian serfs on the model of Sze-

that a certain nobleman, captive among the rebels has promised that if they spared his life, "adaucter (?) tantum gubernat, quantum unus colonus." Andor Komáromy, ed., *Történelmi Tár* (1897), 492; Székely, "A Dózsa-parasztháború ideológiájához," 493, Georgii Sirmiensis, *Epistola de perdicione regni Hungarorum*, 69.

75   Sirmiensis, *Epistola de perdicione regni Hungarorum*, 69.

kler rights of freedom, as a matter of fact there would have been nothing extraordinary in the manner of a redistribution of land; more than that, it was the only conceivable solution that was ready to hand.

At this point, it is no longer possible to avoid addressing the matter of the so-called "Dózsa speeches." It may have been noted that not a word of these popular texts has been drawn upon in the present attempt to reconstruct the ideology of the peasant war—and with good reason. Only one of the troubling factors in regard to these texts, widely known in three sets of editorial hands, is that none of the three descriptions included give even the faintest shred of evidence that these were delivered in Cegléd (nevertheless, it would appear that the power of the historiographer should not be despised, because ever since Márki's day, popular and unpopular editions have handled them as the most self-evident of facts; indeed, the fiction of a "Cegléd speech" may even be slipped in by way of a subtitle), but that in fact they most certainly were never delivered. Not that Dózsa's vocabulary ran to little more than the sort of clipped commands that have been preserved by authentic sources ("*fleece the beast*" and the like). Nor would there be anything surprising in that; it is only natural that Dózsa spoke in a befitting manner to his army, and just as natural that in point of fact, he left the delivery of speeches to those whose vocation it was: the revolutionary priests. However, the oratorical performances we are aware of present fundamental difficulties when subjected to critical scrutiny of their sources and content. The role of the *oratio* emulating models of antiquity in humanist historiography is well known: the writers use a classicizing toga in part to clothe the explanation for events, in part to mask the tricky brunt of what had to be said (in this instance the opinion about the nobility). That in itself would not rule out the possibility of a writer occasionally weaving in a traditional element into the rhetoric: this is an area in which the late Bruto, for instance, comes unstuck because the grittier kernel of his mannered and grandiloquent torrent of words is either present in his sources (Cuspinianus, Tubero, Iovius) or is augmented with erudite elements (e.g., the crumbs of an "organic constitutionalism") that are not only bound to be alien to peasant mentality, but are also jarring in the context of the other constituents of the speech. As has already been indicated, Stieröchsel-Taurinus could have been the greatest user of traditional elements, but the views of the general public interested in history has barely been grazed by the thorough philological study of Zoltán Császár in which, from passage to passage, he showed the literal quotes on the one hand, and, on the other, the narrative borrowings from the authors of antiquity in relation to these "speeches." Discounting these,

along with the commonplace contemporaneous humanist *topoi* lashing the lifestyle of the nobility and describing the nature of *virtus*, one is left with altogether two "nubs" where a direct literary source is not demonstrable: the equality of human beings in the age of Adam and Eve (although that was an element familiar to all from the near-contemporaneous German peasant movements) and the contrasting of "servility" with "liberty" (a widespread antique motif regardless of any concordances of texts).

In the case of the Ragusan Tubero, it is a matter of a more sober, rational text with fewer slavish borrowings from literary works, but one can no doubt separate out in a similar manner an agglomeration of literary inspiration, moralizing, and a body of knowledge of general social critique from elements which possibly derive from oral tradition; if the latter are inspected more closely, however, they are nothing but generalities. At this point the chief underminer of the credibility of the "speeches" kicks in: the "speeches" are lengthy and well-formed, but they contain nothing at all of the most characteristic and specific structural elements of the genuine and authentic ideology which can be extricated from primary sources! Not that this should be any surprise: the writers may have been informed—at the cost of greater or lesser distortion—of the events which occurred, but it was not part of the humanist approach to cross-examine the peasants who had heard firsthand the utterances of Dózsa or his preachers at Temesvár or by the Maros. Roughly, all they knew at most (what had been "said" here and there) was that certain speeches had been delivered. The curious thing is that these same humanists preserved more fragments of the authentic tradition about the peasant mentality in the narrative texts than in the "speeches"; for them an oration was something different—a specimen of rhetorical composition intended as a masterpiece. . . . When Taurinus presents in Dózsa's voice that as a boy he had heard sermons of this kind from friars in cowls (i.e., from Franciscans), and goes on to imitate them, this does not mean that Taurinus had any specific information about Dózsa having been heard to make such a declaration, but something quite different: it is an organic element of the propagandist thread running through the entire "epic," according to which the man responsible for what happened was not Archbishop Bakócz, it was far more the Observant Franciscans who were left carrying the can, because the demagogue in question may well have learned his style from them. In this sense, of course, this is also a source, but on the whole these "speeches" are sources for the social critique and body of knowledge of the writers themselves; any credibility of the possibly genuine elements is vitiated, if that is possible, by the approach

adopted in humanist historiography, because these vapid generalizations, "left-over" elements which lack the least individual characterization, are extremely suspect even in themselves.

Having, with good reason, eliminated the fictional "Dózsa speeches" from the sources, to sum up briefly, it can be ascertained that the ideology of the Hungarian peasant war of 1514 had two substrata. The first of these was the general notion of a popular crusade, already analyzed at length, which in turn sprang from several sources, and is an independent creation of mainly ecclesiastical participants in the uprising (all the signs point to them being primarily the representatives of an "apostate" mysticism of a heretical nature). Most clearly identifiable among those whose features come to prominence are four such individuals: the two provincial crusader preachers from Szikszó, Tamás Kecskés and Lőrinc Mészáros, along with Father Lőrinc and Ambrus of Túrkeve from Dózsa's own milieu. The "secular" substratum is no less than the model of Transylvanian Szekler relations, which was increasingly effective the more it found a receptive audience among the representatives of market town freedoms (it is deemed unnecessary to expand upon the nature and significance of these freedoms, given that modern research happens to have dealt most intensely with precisely this aspect of the question). In all likelihood, this is a matter of György (Székely) Dózsa's personal role. After all, the Szeklers themselves had nothing to do with the peasant war, and even in principle, it is scarcely conceivable, given that their liberties in themselves were, to some extent, more "feudal" in nature than to allow the Szekler to have felt any sense of community with the serfs. The accidental circumstance that a former Szekler became the leader of the peasant war (because he was a former Szekler, who was to became a leader only in the course of events) made it easier for a fairly definite program to be evolved within what was relatively a very short space of time, and moreover a program that one has difficulty imagining would arise, in view of their situation, among the ranks of Hungary's serfs, and also of such a nature that it had, to some extent, a sobering influence in clamping down on extremism rooted in chiliastic mysticism. It is in this way, and for this reason, that the program could be at once very radical and, at the same time, "realistic"— a fairly unique variant in the history of peasant uprisings in Europe.

Skipping many of the details, let three further ideological features, which show that these two substrata merge into a highly organic unity, be highlighted purely as markers. There are several signs indicating that some form of a vigorous notion of "freedom" must have played a role in the way that the Hungarian peas-

ants thought about the world, and this is more than merely an archaizing motif in the fictional "Dózsa speeches." It has a natural role, because it sprang equally from the basic precept of a radicalized *naturalis conditio* that was passed on by the Church, as well as from the idea of Székely *libertas*. Secondly, "acts of revolutionary violence," which do not need to be apologized for, emerge unambiguously from the authentic sources (the compulsory enlistment in the army, threats, and merciless regulations also targeting the peasants themselves), following almost automatically from the "asceticism" and conviction of a sense of "election," as well as the well-known rigor of communal coercion among the Szekler. Third and last, the notion of justified vengeance, to be carried out relentlessly, is equally traceable to both revolutionary mystique and the Szekler mentality, which, as has been seen, knew no mercy vis-à-vis enemies of their freedoms.

The ideological structure of the peasant war was also precisely expressed by its symbols. The symbolism of visible and palpable things is of extraordinary significance in every social movement, especially the older popular movements. Dózsa's people had two symbols or even badges, one might say: the red cross and the bloody stake. The movement was accompanied, from the end of April until its final downfall in early August, by a white flag upon which there was a crimson cross, as well as the cross sewn to the chests of the peasants. But the stake was not merely a practical device for executions. A document of August 25 says of the burghers of Zagreb, who were following the example of the Hungarian crusaders: "in their comings and goings they carried a pointed stake before them on the example and manner of the false and rebellious crusaders." In Solymos Castle, Georg Prantner and Chaplain Matthias Künisch awaited in anguish and tears the moment when the long procession of the enemy would march in clutching stakes. Contemporary letters report that György Dózsa sent out bloodied stakes alongside a bloody sword to the villages. The stake had a dual symbolism: it was a symbol of vengeance against the nobility and also a threatening emblem of communal coercion for the peasants. Divine "election" and vocation of the "blessed people" on the one hand, and social vengeance and the stern dictate of the community on the other: they were just as organic and inseparable elements of a unitary ideological structure, in just the same way as those two—for us hardly reconcilable—instruments, the cross and the stake, necessarily complemented each other in the summer of 1514.

This analysis modifies, alters, and rearranges many of the matters in the widely held historical picture that are current in the general consciousness. This follows from the internal ferment of this research; further investigation, in the

possession of newer data and perceptions, will no doubt modify the picture still further. The deductions reached here will shatter certain customary notions and visions. An attempt has been made to offer something else in exchange: something to hang on to in the dynamic of historical ferment, and above all ideological ferment, with an attempt being made on certain points to outline with more pronounced features the world of ideas—the tragically failed goals and desires—of people who were living at the time, those ideas, goals, and desires which may, perhaps, bring the physiognomies of their formulators, faded through the remoteness of centuries, a step closer. The intelligentsia of the peasant war (the first group of revolutionary intellectuals in Hungarian history), including its leader in person, may thereby also come a step nearer, somewhat nearer as individuals, than was the case hitherto; while the uprising itself may find some stronger threads than heretofore, linking it into a general European phenomenon and current, that of a popular-radical pre-Reformation. These findings may perhaps offer some compensation for the losses.

Translated by Tim Wilkinson

The Three Historical Regions of Europe[*]

This study is dedicated to István Bibó (1911–1979), who was a political scientist and thinker, not a historian, although history was an essential part of his work.[1] It is not only that as a political scientist he made use of his exceptional historical knowledge and the sensitivity of his inferences, nor is it even that in devising exceptionally acute diagnoses of the last century he created a self-standing historical oeuvre. There is more to it than that. He set an example for historians by recognizing that the frameworks that exist behind historical events play a critically

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[*] This text was originally written for the samizdat *István Bibó Memorial Volume* (*Bibó-emlékkönyv*, 1980), which could only be published legally after the regime change in 1991. However, Szűcs was offered an official venue to publish his essay already in 1981: "Vázlat Európa három történeti régiójáról" [The three historical regions of Europe: An outline], *Történelmi Szemle*, no. 3 (1981): 313–59; and, due to the great interest, soon after it was also published in book format: Jenő Szűcs, *Vázlat Európa három történeti régiójáról* [The three historical regions of Europe] (Budapest: Magvető, 1983); and in English: Jenő Szűcs, "The three historical regions of Europe: An outline," *Acta Historica*, no. 29 (1983): 131–84. A shorter version was published as "The three historical regions of Europe (an outline)," in *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives*, ed. John Keane (London: Verso, 1988), 291–332. The current translation is a revision of the more complete version published in *Acta Historica*. The specific conditions of the birth of this text explain the extensive engagement with the oeuvre of István Bibó (imprisoned after the 1956 Revolution and marginalized afterwards, to be rediscovered by opposition circles in the 1970s as a key figure of an alternative, radical democratic political tradition) in the introductory section of the text.

[1] If this study begins with a reference to István Bibó, who died in 1979, draws insight from his work along the way, and ends with a consideration of his conceptual notions, it is not solely a question of propriety; nor is my intention here an *in memoriam*. Many a scholar has presented an analysis of Hungary's regional and historical position, but apart from Bibó, there is virtually no one whose entire system of thought would be shaped to such a degree by a conception of this sort. His perspective is provocative enough to draw the interest of historians, especially to understand the relationship of state and society, which also fascinated this scholar of political science and legal theory, as well as of public administration. For the reasons just mentioned this study is the result of a particular context, as other premises might have equally been selected. And as far as its genre is concerned, it is no more (and given the spatial constraints could not have been more) than an outline.

important role over the course of a long period of time, which also help the present to identify political courses of action and set limitations. Unfortunately, Bibó never reached his objective, but the essence of his work lies between a sober definition of limits and a maximalist analysis of the possibilities that present-day reality has to offer: what could or should be done to augment the prospects of a society whose historical and structural limitations have fueled a demand for a revolution and for democratic transformation when history is charged with responding to this demand under non-revolutionary conditions? In terms of long-term opportunities and constraints, István Bibó described Hungarian history as a sequence of three phases. Expressed simply: in the first 500 years after the turn of the millennium this society belonged to the West according to its societal framework, or at any rate close, "with only a difference of degree" and in "a fairly simplified context, with provincial characteristics." But this tie with the West was broken by historical catastrophes and for more than 400 years it was forced to follow an Eastern European type of development marked by "inertia within the power relations of society," "deadlocks," and hopeless attempts to return to the West. These attempts continued until the latter half of the nineteenth century, when they arrived at a strange "impasse." Bibó believed that in 1945 it was possible to transcend this impasse and to "reunite itself with Western social evolution." The heart of his work consists in gauging the opportunities and constraints that escaping from a "history of impasses" would entail.[2]

There is a tragically poignant piece of evidence of the deadly earnestness with which István Bibó took history. In hospital a few days before he died, when illness had already made his speech halting and faint, Bibó held forth on the subject of the Third Estate.[3] He became absorbed by some obstinate effort in proving that it was mistaken to make an automatic identification of the notion of the *Tiers État*

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2 The essence of István Bibó's work, born of a profound and far-reaching outlook on modern history, is well expounded in two extensive studies: István Bibó, *A kelet-európai kisállamok nyomorúsága* [The miseries of East European small states] (Budapest, 1946) (particularly the chapter entitled "A politikai kultúra deformálódása" [The deformation of political culture]; and István Bibó, "Eltorzult magyar alkat, zsákutcás magyar történelem" [The distorted Hungarian self: A history of impasse], *Válasz*, no. 8 (1948), 289–319. [Both are available in English in István Bibó, *The Art of Peacemaking: Political Essays by István Bibó*, trans. Péter Pásztor, ed. Iván Zoltán Dénes (New Haven, 2015), 130–80 and 199–232.] The most concise exposition of the notion can be found in István Bibó, "A magyar társadalom fejlődése és az 1945. évi változás értelme" [The development of Hungarian society and the significance of the 1945 changes], *Válasz*, no. 7 (1947): 493–504.

3 The text was published as István Bibó, "A kapitalista liberalizmus és a szocializmus–kommunizmus állítólagos kiegyenlíthetetlen ellentéte" [The supposedly unbalanced contrast between capitalist liberalism and socialism-communism], in István Bibó, *Válogatott tanulmányok*, ed. István Bibó, Jr. and Mária Hegedős, vol. 4 (Budapest, 1990), 759–982.

with the bourgeoisie. The Third Estate had in fact been formed originally by "All," by all who had not shared in the privileges of the nobility. Although the bourgeoisie soon identified the Third Estate with itself (thus making possible the rise of a Fourth Estate and then of a Fifth, composed of those who remained outside the Fourth) certain models originally related to it apply to "All." The conclusion he came to (although he was overtaken by fatigue and then death) was one he had committed to paper over thirty years before and then twenty-five years before. He asserted that democracy was not a kind of "bourgeois superstructure" but "the objective technique for exercising freedom," which socialism might acknowledge (and adapt) just as safely as a type of pen made in the West or the superiority of Morgan's theory of heredity, despite its being of a "Western type."

History entails not only structures but also models, and although the internal composition of these models may change, their validity remains and acts through the ages—so István Bibó might have argued in that last study of his. In the following, I shall attempt to reexamine, at least in outline, the changes in the frameworks that have defined the fabric of Hungarian history, in line with Bibó's studies written more than three decades ago, but also bearing in mind his final message.

Where Do the Inner Boundaries of Europe Lie?

One very pronounced line runs southward across Europe from the lower course of the Elbe-Saale, along the Leitha and the Western perimeters of ancient Pannonia, that is, on the Eastern frontier of the Carolingian Empire around 800 AD. In the previous three centuries, the region to the west of that line had witnessed the natural symbiosis of late ancient Christian and Germanic tribal elements whose first development, if crude and impermanent, was the "renewal" of the *Imperium* itself. Even at that time the region was often designated as the "West." Of course, the term *Occidens* was not originally considered distinct from other parts of Europe, for instance, from "Eastern Europe"—a term that even with hindsight carried little meaning before the turn of the millennium; the concept referred to the ancient "world" that encircled the Mediterranean as distinguished from the Eastern successors of the *Orbis Latinus*, Byzantium, and Islam, which had conquered its southern half. Many believe that we may only speak of European history as such beginning around 800, when major historical developments shifted northward to Europe prompted by the Arab conquests,

which robbed the Greco-Roman civilization of the southern territorial expanses stretching from Syria to North Africa and as far as Hispania. The early conception of Europe had been purely geographical.[4]

Around this time an organic "structure" was beginning to crystallize in its Western realms; it was neither ancient nor German, but a feudal Christian society. In order to characterize this new entity, the region began as early as the death of Charlemagne (814) to appropriate the term *Europe* for itself, albeit wrongfully, as it embodied only one pole of a nascent Europe. Byzantium occupied the other pole, although initially it entertained no European aspirations; in fact, with a center in Asia Minor, it was hardly a European entity in the geographical sense either. Until the turn of the millennium, the empire was resolved to preserve the Eastern heritage of the "Romans" (as they continued to call themselves) from the "Barbarians," even at the price of territorial losses. It achieved this aim by continually carrying out reforms characteristic of antiquity and by maintaining an exceedingly self-protective rigidity. Thus, the history of Europe after the turn of the millennium was founded on the absorption of the territories in between these two poles and the heterogeneous world that lay still further north. The Occident, which at one time referred merely to the Western extremity of a putative Europe, had become "Western Europe," and Byzantium had abandoned its defensive immobility. One can speak of the existence of European regions from this point onwards.

A further prominent border was established between these dominant forces, particularly after the Great Schism of 1054. It ran roughly parallel to the abovementioned border, but situated to its east, and stretched from the region of the Lower Danube to the Eastern Carpathians, advancing northward along the forestland separating the Eastern Slavs from the Western Slavs and Poland from Russia and reaching the Baltic regions by the thirteenth century. As early as the twelfth century, the designation generally used for the region west of this territory was *Europa Occidens (Occidentalis)*; ostensibly the former Elbe-Leitha boundaries had clearly been forgotten. Hardly had *Europa* evolved from a purely geographical notion into a synonym for Christendom—indeed for a social framework and cultural entity—than it was torn in half by Roman and Byzantine pressures. In the Middle Ages there was an ever-increasing tendency to sub-

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4   For a conceptual background on the subject, see Heinz Gollwitzer, "Zur Wortgeschichte und Sinndeutung von 'Europa,'" *Saeculum*, no. 2 (1956): 161–72; Geoffrey Barraclough, "Die Einheit Europas im Mittelalter," *Die Welt als Geschichte*, no. 11 (1951): 97–122.

sume under Western Europe the zone that stretched from the Elbe to the Carpathian curve and from the Baltic to the Adriatic: that is, the new region which had been annexed to the realm of the former "Carolingian Europe," including Scandinavia. Is this, in fact, what it became?

Leaving aside for a while the matter of what needs to be proved, let me briefly refer at this early stage to two "border aspects."

First, let me say that the degree of definition and existence of Europe's new internal borders after the turn of the millennium might be illustrated by several types of maps other than the one showing dioceses. Examples might be maps showing the dissemination of the Romanesque and Gothic styles of architecture, or of the Renaissance and the Reformation. Moreover, it might be demonstrated by charting, for example, autonomous cities, corporate freedoms, the system of estates, and a series of other structural characteristics which are difficult to depict visually. The eastern limit of all those phenomena, allowing for some seepage beyond, was the eastern border of the Polish and the Hungarian Kingdom, and further north the eastern border area ruled by the Teutonic Knights (later East Prussia), although in such kinds of map the density of points or hatching would certainly diminish strikingly beyond the borders of the old Carolingian Empire. Yet, some thinning out would also be observable from the Rhine eastward. The line of the old Roman *limes* would show up on Europe's morphological map, thus presaging right from the start the birth of a "Central Europe" within the notion of the "West."

The other aspect is a regression. A very sharp line of demarcation, which was in fact to cut Europe into two parts from the point of view of economic and social structure after 1500, divided off the far larger, more easterly part as the scene of the second serfdom. Moreover, Europe in our own times, another 500 years later still, is divided more clearly than ever before into two "camps" almost exactly along that same line (with a slight deviation in Thuringia). It is as if Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt had studied carefully the *status quo* of the age of Charlemagne on the 1130th anniversary of his death.

My attention, of course, is drawn to the area between those two borderlines (not absolute in either direction), since Hungary is enclosed between them. This area has been termed by an imperfect but nonetheless acceptable and fairly new terminological consensus "East Central Europe." It may sound paradoxical to say that the considerable surges of history flowing over both borders oblige me to pay far greater attention to the areas to the west and the east of this area than to the area itself.

The achievements of medieval Europe remained crude and unfinished in the East. The areas to the south and to the east of the Russian territory—the bulk of the territories that would eventually become Russia (which would occupy exactly one half of the entire European landmass)—were neither "Russian" nor "European" until the modern era. They formed a westward wedged extension of the nomadic world and the Eurasian steppe region penetrating into geographical Europe, where several peoples, among them the Hungarians, had crossed over to the Carpathians. But following the turn of the millennium the narrow tip of that wedge yielded, joining the region under discussion. Since the thirteenth century that sizable wedge of land was known as the Mongolian Empire. A succession of events occurred, beginning with the Golden Horde relaxing its clutch (1480), continuing with the Russian conquest of the khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan (in 1552 and 1556) together with the annexation of the territories in Southern Ukraine under Polish rule (1667–86), and concluding with the annihilation of the Crimean Tatar Khanate in 1783. These developments carry no less significance within the panorama of European history than they do for the history of the Russian state, which had constructed (and had simultaneously incorporated into the very notion of Russia) a model of a homogeneous "Eastern Europe" derived from heterogeneous entities that stretched from the White Sea to the Black and Caspian Seas and from the Polish frontier to the Urals. These ongoing developments led to the "internal expansion" of Europe and the impetus of the plough and the formation of towns in early modern times, which, by the Middle Ages, had now reached beyond the Baltics and Carpathians to the aggregations of land around Kiev and Moscow. What was achieved in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the Dnieper, Don, and Volga region was similar to what "Europeanized" Europe had no doubt accomplished five centuries earlier between the Rhine and the Vistula, Memel, Tisza, and Maros, albeit in a more intensive manner.

When comparing the structural models of European regions, one cannot neglect this final inclusion into the Eastern half of Europe; nor, of course, can one neglect the European penetration of another Asian territory when the Middle Ages was nearing its end. From a southeasterly position, an exceptionally massive wedge entered the body of Europe, affecting the Southeast European region, where the process of "Europeanization" was nearly complete, albeit in a rudimentary form, comparatively speaking. For several centuries to come the whole area was newly designated Rumelia, while the Asia Minor segment of the declining Byzantine Empire, which had been swallowed up long before at the

time of the Seljuk advance, was referred to thereafter as Anatolia. Since the protruding tip of the Ottoman Empire terminated in Eastern Europe—more precisely in Hungary—the latter's new role as a "borderland" became an important factor in the formation of regions, while simultaneously relieving Eastern Europe of that function.

The coordinates of Europe were roughly as follows: the first expansion of the "Barbarian" peoples, having absorbed the heritage of Western Rome, led to the conceptual birth of the "West" (500–800); following the pacification of the new "Barbarians" the first great eastward and northward expansion of the West (1000–1300) extended the frontiers of *Europa Occidens* to include Northern and East Central Europe. Meanwhile under the rule of Byzantium, which safeguarded Western Roman traditions in the East, a "residual" Eastern Europe and Southeastern Europe was formed. Since the latter's territories would gradually become independent from the European framework over the next half a millennium at the time of Byzantium's decline at the end of the Middle Ages, it will be disregarded.

Two ventures prompted the arrival of the modern era: one was the second great Western expansion (1500–1640) which, in crossing over the Atlantic, annexed America (and step by step also absorbed Scandinavia); the other was the great expansion of "truncated" Eastern Europe, which brought Eastern Europe to "completion" with the annexation of Siberia, which stretched all the way to the Pacific. East Central Europe became wedged between these two regions, and at the dawn of a modern epoch it perceived with dismay that while Western history had redrawn a border that was thought to have paled, the final (and most oppressive) wave of the invasions of the previous millennium coming from Asia Minor was lapping against its shore; it no longer knew whether it still belonged within the framework of *Europa Occidens* or whether it had slipped away.

The initial regional territorial arrangements, subsequent shifts, and adaptations to the challenges of history determined the structural frameworks that have defined modern Europe ever since.

The Development of Western Europe

What did the original Western model consist of—at least from the perspective of István Bibó? His viewpoint (one of several possible) is founded in a search for the deepest-reaching roots of a "democratically organized society" and the "formation of a political community." The elements pointed out by Bibó, drawing on the works of István Hajnal, regarding this early phase—such as the custom-

ary, personal, and mutual obligations and rights, and the stabilizing frameworks for the "small circles of freedom" that would prevent concentrations of power and serve as vigorous opposition to "brutally expedient" methods of unilateral subordination—were all real and vital, though such conditions did appear separately in successive medieval frameworks. Yet, the point at issue involves something more all-encompassing; this can be demonstrated by taking a momentary look back to the West at various stages of the Middle Ages.

If one considers concepts such as "natural law," "social contract," "popular sovereignty," the "transfer of power," or the "separation of powers," one will usually recall the names of Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu, and Rousseau, and, of course, the French Revolution and its aftermath. To be sure, considerably fewer know that such key issues were first debated a good five centuries earlier in Paris, Bologna, and Oxford, albeit in contexts remote from and alien to those of the modern era. What is more, at the height of the Middle Ages, in the "great century," the thirteenth, such notions were as much at the heart of political theory as they were in the great century preceding the modern era, i.e., the eighteenth. If one searches for the roots of "social development in the Western sense" (as Bibó put it) or seeks to identify the "original characteristics" of the West (as Marc Bloch would have put it), such a consideration is important since one such characteristic of the West is the structural—and theoretical—separation of "society" from the "state," or more precisely, a social structure that would make such a theoretical separation feasible.

This kind of separation is not an endogenous feature of human history. Of course, all states are built upon some type of society, but the weight of 5000 years of civilization induces the emerging state to find a justification for itself that is "external" to society, thus creating an operational mechanism in which society appears to be the derivative of the state and not vice versa. For any given societal sector to exist autonomously, independent of the state (even if functionally connected to it) is quite exceptional, the luxury product of history as it were. Such an exceptional case is the Greek *polis*, conceived as the natural political form of the archetypal autonomous society, the *koinonia* of free citizens. Another case in point is the Roman *res publica*, where the power of the *populus Romanus* was exercised primarily within the framework of public law. But Greek democracy in practice lost its cogency within Hellenistic empires, as the Roman idea of the republic, having become a fictive notion, also found itself in an imperial impasse. These early historical antecedents did not directly contribute to the social development of Europe. Nothing, of course, could be more re-

moved from the medieval West than the notion of democracy; only a handful of Italian city-states flirted with the idea of the republic, and then only in a highly aristocratic fashion. Nevertheless, there existed an organic historical continuity which resulted at last in the emergence of modern Europe. If Western feudalism alone was capable of formulating the concept of *populus seu societas civilis*, it is not because feudalism in the West held itself to be the heir of antiquity and that its philosophy was grounded in Aristotelian premises; in these terms, Byzantium was more faithful to its principles and, for a time, even Islam seemed a worthier heir. In effect, during the Middle Ages Western scribes dug up Aristotle's *Politics* in Arabic libraries. But Arab scholars had not known what to make of it, in contrast with his other manuscripts on mathematics, astrology, and medicine. This discrepancy in sensibility can be explained by the fact that whereas the subject of politics was to some degree familiar in the feudal West, the other two civilizations had no common ground with which to link it to their societal structures. At the dawn of the modern era, the archaic form of *civil society* had to be liberated from its "feudal context" in order to apply it to an entirely new state model. Notably, however, this approach was not particularly unusual since historically the model itself and likewise its relationship to the state had already been established. No such thing had occurred in the Byzantine Empire, Islamic world, or China: that is to say, within other cultures which had long boasted of higher "indices of civilization"; nor indeed had such a thing occurred in Kiev.

These parallels are not dictated by a self-serving interest in *Kulturmorphologie*. The nature of Western development can be traced back to its genesis, and understood primarily by contrasting it to other civilizations. What Byzantium protected with an unyielding vigilance was a specifically developed half of an integrative framework that had been abolished formally long before, in 395: it clung to the relics of the Eastern Roman Empire with its traditionally urban civilization and centralized, bureaucratic state structure. In the meantime, Islam exhibited great flexibility in incorporating not only Arab traditions but also the heritages of Persia, Mesopotamia, and of the southern half of the *Orbis Latinus*. Nevertheless, the world of Islam followed the typical ancient developmental models of civilized cultures, integrating urban civilizations of various origins and blending elements of the Persian and Byzantine centralized state structure into its own military and theocratic autocracy. The first 500 years of Western history reveal an utterly uncharacteristic "takeoff" as compared to other rising civilizations: it took place amidst breakdown instead of union, and amidst civilizational decline, re-agrarianization, and mounting political anarchy.

That said, one can also observe a particular kind of integration occurring at the heart of the medieval West: the absorption of ancient and barbarian traditions (which Byzantium had managed to avoid with Pyrrhic victories). But this was not a mere rearticulation of diverse elements as with Islam; indeed, in the Dark Ages it seemed that these elements had gradually become so organically entwined that they neutralized each other.

Today it has become increasingly clear that latent within this state of general deterioration were basic conditions for the dynamics which would soon after reverse the auspices of the West and mark its distinction from the other two successors of Rome. Here it will suffice to refer to three related considerations. Firstly, restricted by agrarian and local infrastructures—in which land was considered the only source of wealth and prestige—the West found itself in a position where it was forced to escape the chronic technological and productive stagnation that represented the bottleneck of every civilization, ancient and contemporary alike. The "agrarian revolution" which occurred during the "Dark Ages" lay the groundwork for the appearance of a new urban culture and created the historical conditions for the internal expansion of the West.[5] This would spawn a demographic explosion which nearly doubled Europe's population between 1000–1300.

Secondly, the dissolution of "public authority" and of political sovereignty in general were built-in structural conditions that encouraged the establishment of urban culture forming a decidedly Western model, the autonomous city. The absence of centralized states naturally made it impossible to transform budding towns into centers of administrative, military, and economic activity (likewise inexistent at the time), which would have been the circumstances in the dominions of Byzantium and Islam. Enclaved between agrarian economies regulated by different legal and political authorities, Western towns took up elements of sovereignty into their own local entities. They also developed a new economic formula—that of the autonomous urban economy.

The third aspect is the creation of a dense urban network. While the combination of the agrarian revolution and the autonomous town did not generate, until the modern era, metropolises with millions of inhabitants (a handful of

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5   On the first "agrarian revolution" and its demographic and social correlations, essential readings include: Georges Duby, *L'Économie rurale et la vie des campagnes dans l'Occident médiéval*, 2 vols (Paris, 1962); and Bernard H. Slicher van Bath, *The Agrarian History of Western Europe, 500–1850* (New York, 1963). The "external" and "internal" expansion of the West has been well illustrated in Jacques Le Goff, *La Civilisation de l'Occident médiéval* (Paris, 1964), 87ff, and in *Das Hochmittelalter* (Frankfurt am Main, 1965).

such urban centers did exist in the Islamic world under the Abbasids, and in China under the Sung Dynasty), but it did create a dense fabric of towns, sparking an intensity of commodity exchange which dominated the economic and social structure in ways that other civilized cultures had never seen.

In recent decades historians have in fact rehabilitated the Dark Ages. As things go, development in the West cannot be measured by any static "civilizational" criteria, even long after the turn of the first millennium. The ruthless pillage of illustrious and gleaming Byzantium in 1204 revealed the chronic insecurity of the crusaders; conversely, the scholars of the "twelfth-century Renaissance," who drank in the knowledge of antiquity from Cordoba and Sicily thanks to the Arabs, exhibited reverential admiration for the *Orientale lumen*. The secret of Western development is neither veiled in the "Faustian soul," as Spengler believed, nor is it learnt from its "cumulative" model, which differs considerably from the "cyclical" patterns of Asian civilizations, as Toynbee taught. It lies, rather, in the display of its distinctive developmental tempo, wherein cumulative change led consistently to structural transformation. From another angle one might say that the frameworks themselves possessed the innate ability to surpass their own self-imposed constraints. How right István Bibó was to identify the Western model with "mobility" and deviation from the Western model with "inertia." The preliminary conditions for the Western dynamic of assimilation following the turn of the first millennium was the breakdown that preceded it, and herein also lies the condition for the separation of "society" and "state."

In distant historical eras the term "society" naturally did not refer to "all of the people"; a concept which *sub specie historiae* is quite recent: barely 200 years old. The character of a civilization and its tempo of development are determined by a number of factors which are deeply ingrained in a society and its economy. The crystallization of new societal forms, however, always directly depends on the functional relationships by which the internal conditions and values define the role of a small social stratum within the political sphere. This political segment of society is not necessarily identical with its "ruling class," which, as a rule, is itself rather difficult to define very precisely. Historically, the political authority of highly developed cultures was predominantly "top-down." According to this arrangement it makes little difference whether the legitimacy derived from power is wholly theocratic (as in the Islamic world following the establishment of the caliphate), fundamentally secular (as in Confucian China), or a mixture of the two (as in Byzantium, where ancient and oriental authority was

combined). It is quite incidental whether the state framework is principally military (as with Islam), predominantly civilian and bureaucratic (as with China), or based upon a balance of the two (as with Byzantium). One common denominator of these developed civilizations is that the situation of the groups directly exercising power, both on regional and state level, is defined by what Max Weber referred to as "prebendal" dependence.[6] Whether the land was fully monopolized by the state (as with Islam) or only partly so (as in Byzantium and China) is of no consequence. A second common feature is that the city would serve as a center of civil and military administrations, the state "tax-levying system," and the exchange of goods (which is usually closely monitored by the state). This results in a settlement without autonomy and without uniform laws, consisting of an agglomeration of civil servants and military personnel, merchants, artisans, and landowners who exercise their power locally. The third commonality is the scarceness (or complete absence) of "intermediary" actors with independent social or legal standing between public servants and the peasantry, whose legal status varies depending on the local conditions. When such entities do exist, they do not carry much weight.

Of course, these political frameworks are to some extent susceptible to the kind of centrifugal dynamics evidenced by power struggles between various factions of the governing strata: conflicts between the court cliques (consisting, for instance, of clergy, Mandarins, or Praetorian Guards) and regional-level parties, or between civil and military factions. These battles could result in an empire being divided between contending members of a dynasty (Islam) or contribute to the total destruction of the civilization itself (Byzantium). In some cases, successive conflicts, following a spiral pattern, might also lead to the periodic reinforcement of the imperial center (China). In essence, the offshoots of a divided empire would fully retain the original political structure: upheavals generally take the form of court intrigues, palace revolutions, or military coups that do not alter the relationship between the "political segment" of society and the state.

In this respect as well, the West had created an entirely new model. It began with the breakdown beyond recognition and subsequent dissolution of both forms of state in the tension and brief coexistence of which it was originally conceived. Within a period of barely three centuries (sixth to eighth), the sacred authority of the German *regna* based on retinue was dissolved as definitely as the institutional regime of the *Imperium* and Roman public law. This dismember-

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6   On the "prebendal" structures see Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen, 1976), 558, 601ff.

ment not only occurred within the "state" sphere, as the original "social" frameworks had collapsed as well: the Germanic tribes disintegrated as fully as the socio-legal community of the residual Roman *populus*. The former, despite their myths of origin, were formations dependent on the power structure of the Migration Age (*Heerkönigtum*), while the latter, despite every fiction maintained about public law, was derived from the imperial framework of the late Roman period. With the dissolution of state power, political sovereignty itself became a mere illusion; and with social disintegration, all the traditional forces of cohesion disappeared. Initially even the private ownership of land, the supreme crystallizing force, assisted with the political and social disintegration.

Only one institution survived these developments intact: the Church. This is no less significant than the developments themselves. At some point during the power vacuum and chaos that arose, the Western Church was released from the dependence it had assumed since late antiquity during the reign of Constantine the Great (337) when *ius sacrum* was a branch of *ius publicum*. Justinian also reproduced this arrangement in Byzantium (532). At the same time, the fall of the Roman Empire had delivered the Roman Church the opportunity to disengage itself from "caesaropapism." It was St. Augustine who said that "Christian society" (*societas fidelium*) possessed an identity independent from the existing power relations but it permeated these secular relations by virtue of necessity; they were "thoroughly mixed" (*invicem permixta*). Pope Gelasius (493) then swiftly converted this idea into actual institutions. The West's separation of the sacred from secular, the ideological from the political, was particularly fertile; without it future nation-states, future "freedoms," the theoretical emancipation of "society," the Renaissance, or the Reformation would never have ensued.[7]

There was another important separation that occurred if one considers the original structures referred to earlier. The early Carolingians had attempted to forge a political synthesis out of the Ancient-Barbarian symbiosis. This was, in fact, the only effort made by the West to unite its assorted heritages, that is, to connect the notions of "civilization" and "imperial" (or political) integration (following here in the footsteps of most earlier and contemporaneous high cultures). The "renewal" of the *Imperium* around 800 was an attempt to revive ancient imperial traditions that had been passed on by the Roman Church, draw-

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7   On the roots of medieval political thinking stretching back to St. Augustine, see Anton-Hermann Chroust, "The Corporate Idea and the Body Politic in the Middle Ages," *Review of Politics*, no. 9 (1947): 423–52, and Gerhart B. Ladner, "Aspects of Medieval Thought on Church and State," *The Review of Politics* 9, no. 4 (Oct 1947): 403–22.

ing on the vestiges of the Frankish institutions. But these institutional remnants had already been exhausted, and the temporary edifice was destroyed once and for all by a new fourth element that arose from below and which Charlemagne tried to use to balance what was fundamentally an unstable construction: vassalage.[8] Thus in the West it was decided once and for all that "civilization" and "political frameworks" were to remain separate. One should not be misled by the fact that in the West the project of restoring the *Imperium Romanorum* persevered for another three centuries after 962. In reality, this was hardly more than a delusive policy towards Italy of the German kings. The only visible end result of this policy was the postponement until the nineteenth century of the opportunity to realize a unified German state; incidentally, this facilitated the crystallization of a new regional notion—that of "Central Europe." This imperial notion entered into a conflict with the demands of the *sacerdotium* (i.e., the other branch of universalism) and—in line with the propensity of structures to transcend themselves, which was characteristic of the West—ultimately contributed to the creation of its own antithesis by generating the nation-states.

Once reduced to its most basic elements the long-term stability of the West was ensured precisely because "top-down" integration would be impossible. Rather, integration would begin "bottom-up" and in its first phase of development (ninth to eleventh centuries) would follow a distinctively vertical orientation.[9]

The emergence of vassalage was not prompted by noble intentions, but rather by force of circumstance. With the dissolution of central government, entering into a relationship of dependence through a form of "private law" between individuals was the only way to establish security and enhance personal power or prestige. In itself, there was nothing particularly novel about a relationship of dependence between individuals: the German military retinue (*comitatus, Gefolgschaft*) had been of this nature, as was the late Roman *clientela*. All prefeudal societies had known this form of dependent relationship, including nomadic ones; it had served as the bonding agent of every feudalistic society from Kievan Rus to Japan. But Western vassalage differed from these cognate frameworks in

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8   On the contractual nature of vassalage and feudal ceremony, see Marc Bloch *La société féodale: La formation des liens de dépendance* (Paris, 1939), 350–53, 357. On the correlations between the feudal province and the law, see Otto Brunner, *Land und Herrschaft* (Brünn, Munich and Wien, 1942), particularly 124 ff., 186–268.

9   On the "descending" and "ascending" tines of forces of law and government, see Walter Ullmann, *Principles of Government and Politics in the Middle Ages* (London, 1961). On the strands of contractual thought, see Fritz Kern, *Gottesgnadentum und Widerstandsrecht im früheren Mittelalter* (Leipzig, 1914), 251 ff.

two important ways: on the one hand, it had succeeded in incorporating into its fabric nearly all of the elements of society that had remained free following the social erosion, and on the other, Western vassalage had not established itself beneath the state structure or adjacent to it, but had virtually taken its place, substituting the very notion of state with that of "social" relationships. Western feudalism possessed additional characteristic traits which through the centuries eventually seeped down under the surface of a proper "feudal society." One such distinguishing feature was the "contractual" nature of vassalage. The commendation ceremony always entailed an allegiance between a more powerful and weaker person; thus, the relationship was, as a matter of course, one that was fundamentally unequal. The "fealty" was a one-sided obligation assumed by the vassal, but the feudal lord also assumed customary fixed obligations from that moment on. Indeed, the *fidelitas* itself was conditional upon the more powerful party's fulfillment of the contractual obligations. If these obligations were not met the charge of *felonia*, or breach of contract, applied with as much force as it did to an "unfaithful" vassal. Thus, there was a contractual relationship between unequal parties under which both incurred reciprocal obligations. While under particular circumstances this inherent feature of Western vassalage might have been more of a fiction than a reality, the pretense itself still exerted an influence by operating as a norm; in time it affected lower ranks of society by the same token. The relationship of peasant and landlord assumed a contractual nature around 1200, not because this form of agreement already existed in the upper echelons around 900, but because the dynamics of progress and the new variety of integrative dynamic (by this time horizontal) had offered a limited and conditional type of "freedom" at the level of the peasantry. This unparalleled "contractual" acknowledgment of a relationship—however overtly unequal—was an emblematic social "conditioning" (using István Bibó's term, who used it to denote cognitive reflexes which developed over the ages and were not purely psychological but also determined by social structures).

Another distinctive feature was the maintenance of a person's human dignity even under subordination. It was a general custom outside of Europe—and in the Russian principalities as well—that the "servant" would bow towards the ground, embrace the hand of the lord, or even fall on his knees, prostrate and kiss repeatedly the hem of the lord's garment. In the Western *homagium* ceremony the vassal would genuflect with head erect and place his hands into the clasped hands of his lord, and the new affiliation was finally sealed with a mutual kiss. An age that articulated itself with spectacular gestures and strongly

expressed symbols succeeded in articulating an archetypal relationship that fully strove to translate this symbolism into practice. The impact of these conventions was far-reaching, influencing even the gestures used to express religious devotion. The Church, for instance, borrowed the Western posture for prayer of clasped hands from the vassalage ceremony (the Christians of Ancient Rome had turned to God with outstretched arms). In analogous fashion the Orthodox prevailing custom of prostrating oneself on the ground and covering the feet of saints with kisses was an extension of the demeanor of the "servant." Naturally, human relations were even more thoroughly permeated by these attitudes. Each peasant revolt in the West was the expression of human dignity flouted by a landlord's "breach of contract" and the assertion of the right to "freedom." There was also an ethical dimension to all of this. The "honor" of the individual occupied a central place in the value schema of antiquity, and the "fidelity" of the subordinate was of vital importance in every society bound by dependency frameworks. The two were morphologically exclusive; the knight's *honor* and the vassal's *fidelitas* only fused naturally under Western feudalism. The constituent role that human dignity played in European political relations was not inherited from antiquity but was derived directly from feudal customs. It was preserved, too, over the course of institutional reforms.

Moreover, the territorial consequence of Western feudalism, a large number of small provinces with their own particular customary law, presented a much more suitable terrain for the development of directly applicable law and for the elaboration of law as "custom" (*mos terrae*) than would the overly extensive and uniformized political and administrative frameworks crudely dismantled from above. Decentralization was the means through which, at the local level, the "ascending" principles of law and government would ever more prevail over the "descending" mechanisms of enforcement, as Walter Ullmann indicated in his typology of legal history. This also applied within the cultural sphere as a general rule. The profusion of feudal courts, this colorful milieu which nevertheless shared a set of common values, served as a breeding ground as early as the eleventh and twelfth centuries for a Christian, but autonomous lay culture, value system, and moral principles. In effect, these courts were also the birthplaces of national literature. Having divested themselves of many affectations and eccentricities, they encouraged the reconciliation between "valor" (*virtus*) and "temperance" (*temperantia*), the characteristic trait of the European demeanor.

Once the old formulae had been almost entirely eliminated, the mannered, ceremonious mélange of feudal culture developed its own distinctive new rap-

port between society and state. In the most fully developed phase of the feudal framework, the state's fiscal, administrative, military, and judicial functions were divorced entirely from the power of the sovereign. Instead, these functions were distributed among different tiers of society, where each was gradually incorporated into the similarly tiered system of landownership. The doctrine according to which the sovereign power of the monarch was a divine right hovered, bereft of all meaning, over this complex social network, and the same goes for the Augustinian legitimization of power in terms of the "safeguarding of peace and justice" on earth. The power of the king was real insofar as it was exercised not as a sovereign but as a *suzerain* (a feudal overlord). One might argue that the shreds of sovereignty were absorbed into the newly formed "political" sphere of society, if there were any sense in doing so—for the fragmented new picture no longer resembled any kind of sovereignty—and an exclusively vertical model of feudal society had barely anything in common with a coherent "political society." It is well understood that territorial status and feudal dependence did not automatically coincide. In the long run this paradox would be highly significant precisely due to its paradoxical nature: the notion of sovereignty had become utterly relativized and its fragments scattered precariously into the sphere of "society"; thus, if they so wished, the great liege lords could still consider themselves a kind of "political society." And it was in just such an environment that the embryo of the *contrat social*, destined for so great a future, was conceived.

Like all offspring, the social contract had two parents: feudalism and the Church. The latter was independent of secular power (a situation particular to the West), yet under Pope Gregory VII it did intervene in worldly affairs, and with a more ardent "freedom" than ever before. The social contract was first promoted as a theoretical principle around 1080 in a radical Gregorian treatise. The ruler was said to be bound to the people (*populus*) by a contract (*pactum*); but if the sovereign "violated the contract through which he had been elected" it could be annulled and dissent would be justified. One identifiable condition behind this declaration was the division of Christian universalism into two branches. By its own inherent logic this split incited the papacy to argue for the weakening of the emperor's position by banishing the secular dominion from the sphere of the sacred; as its power was derived from the earthly realm, secular rule was accorded authority merely over the temporal affairs of men. As a result, an irreversible chain of events was triggered: European thought turned again towards antiquity, the realm of politics was extricated from the realm of theology, and remnant "barbarian" notions of power were eliminated for good. The idea that

the "people" constituted the basis of power was extracted from Justinian's *Institutiones*; initially the argument merely served as a legal stratagem to counter a tyrannical emperor. However, the early theories of state contain no precise notion of a "contract," though Cicero alludes to a kind of *pactio* between the ruler and the people and the Old Testament also makes mention of a covenant between the elders of Israel and King David in Hebron. A further background condition did not come from antiquity but from feudalism, whose contractual basis had found its way into the sphere of the "state" about 200 years earlier. For example, the Frankish and Aquitanian nobles (high-ranking vassals of Charles the Bald) declared that if the king "took action that diverged from the contract in any matter" (*contra tale pactum*) he would be removed from the throne (856). This idea grew directly out of the feudal *felonia*. The relationship between the king (as suzerain) and his vassals took the form of a pseudo-"constitutional law agreement" as early as the ninth and tenth centuries, just as the oath of allegiance sworn to the king echoed the feudal formula: "I shall be faithful as a man who swears fealty to his liege lord. . . . " Subsequently, within less than two centuries, the notion of the social contract would free itself from its vestments of fealty, just as a "society" had developed that could, in large measure, assert a relationship with the state akin to that of the ancient *populus*; its feudal vestiges, on the other hand, would be shed in the course of time, alongside the emergence of a societal model which would include "every person."

This process would never have been activated had the West not deposed political sovereignty within its first three centuries and had it not distributed its remains within a social structure that developed vertically "from below" within the next three centuries. Over the course of three more centuries this process gathered momentum because the particularly strong vitality of Western growth during the "second feudal age" (1050–1300) created horizontal forces that perforated the vertical string of dependencies.[10] Initially this was realized through the new integrating forces of society and later through those of the state. Thus, having reaffirmed its purpose, sovereignty was divided between an emerging "political society" and the rulers of monarchies that were once again on the path towards consolidation.[11]

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10   On the notion of the "second feudal age," see Bloch, *La société féodale: La formation des liens de dépendance* 164ff and Le Goff, *La Civilisation de l'Occident médiéval*, 14–18.

11   On the initial transformation of political thinking, see Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, 1957). A still essential work on the beginnings of medieval legal theory is Otto von Gierke, *Die Staats- und Korporationslehre des Altertums und des Mittelalters*

The structure which had evolved by the turn of the millennium had a basic feature which was historically unmatched; it was broadly universal in terms of its implications for civilization but strictly local with respect to its political relations. The dynamic tension which developed between these polarities produced eruptions of activity which included the Crusades, the reconquest of the Mediterranean Basin, and the expansion of Europe. It also led, inevitably, to the notion that chivalry—which had been "vertically" integrated into feudal relationships—was at the same time a "horizontal" pillar of Christianity. In the ninth and tenth centuries the conviction that alongside secular powers the ecclesiastical hierarchy formed an earthly estate (*oratores*), an autonomous and institutional unit, and a "mystic body" (*corpus mysticum*) crystallized. This outlook led to the idea that warriors (*bellatores*) of this world, irrespective of their political allegiances, were also components of an autonomous entity and "estate" of a similar nature purely by virtue of their societal "function." The notion of the estate was first propagated by the Church around 1000 and included a tacit acknowledgment that laborers (*laboratores*) also formed a kind of "functional estate." The structural condition for this was the absence of centralized state powers that would have managed this "functionality" through the organism of the state. The material condition was generated by urbanization and the agrarian revolution which translated into a sudden increase in living standards and the stature of the knight. This led the knights to believe that as "warriors of Christ" they should be entitled to the same freedom as that enjoyed by "Christ's mystic body." The "freedom of the Church" (*libertas ecclesiae*) had become a critical slogan during the Investiture Controversy and the notion of freedom of the nobility (*libertas nobilium*) sprouted from the same soil.

But the logical progression of these matters did not conclude here. As mentioned previously, it was the partition of sovereignty in the West that led to its most distinctive feature: urban autonomy and a combination of rights and spheres of influence, which, in other advanced civilizations, would be under the dominion of the state. Meanwhile, during the Dark Ages the idea of the model city of antiquity had not completely fallen into oblivion in Northern Italy; from here it spread towards Flanders in the northwest and then eastward as urban areas gradually expanded. This favored the emergence—from the "functional"

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und ihre Aufnahme in Deutschland, vol. 3 of *Das deutsche Genossenschaftsrecht* (Berlin, 1881.) A recent work on the development of state interpretation is Tilman Struve, *Die Entwicklung der organologischen Staatsauffassung im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1978).

scheme of ideals of the *laboratores*—of a new stratum of burghers rather than a heterogeneous urban "populace," who realized the new notion of freedom (*libertas civium*). Around 1120 the French abbot Guibert of Nogent remarked indignantly that the whole of Western Christendom echoed the "new and infernal names of the communes . . . which have been established by servants in defiance of all legal and divine ordinances."[12] This is an indication that this social framework had fully evolved. It took only two or three generations for the successors of the irate abbot to regard these communes as completely natural— one of the many "freedoms" that existed in the world—and even deriving their existence from natural (that is, divine) law.

No other period between the Roman *res publica* and the French Revolution so loudly and insistently pronounced the motto of freedom as the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the West. Even the voice of the peasantry was beginning to be audible in the chorus. First it was the voice of the settlers of newly cultivated lands, and with increasing volume the voices of other peasants; the threat of moving to the urban areas was the weapon they possessed (this served as a model from which positive rights issued). But the efforts of peasants were also supported by arguments relating to the economic vitality of the "second age of feudalism" and ostensibly these were potent enough to persuade or intimidate the landlords of that era. Jointly, these factors naturally extended "freedoms" down to the lowest levels of the social hierarchy; these "freedoms" even constituted an organizing principle of the entire framework, though for the lower echelons it became increasingly clear that the coin of "freedom" bore the word *libertas* on one side only; on the other side the value of freedom was qualified and relativized by a "privileged legal status." Naturally, some aspects of the notion of freedom were familiar in the feudal systems of other regions as well, even for the rank and file. But it is worth emphasizing that the elimination of servitude and the intermediate statuses—which provided the whole of the peasantry with positive and uniform, if limited, rights that were not only sanctioned through "custom" but also guaranteed through a written contract—was a thoroughly Western trait. The principle that "no tax can be levied unless it be in writing" (1142) spread from northern France to the very limits of *Europa Occidens*.

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12   On the roots of society's triple "functional" segmentation, see Georges Duby, *Les Trois Ordres ou l'imaginaire du fèodalisme* (Paris, 1978). For the words of Guibert of Nogent, see Le Goff, *La Civilisation de l'Occident médiéval*, 79.

The notion of the "multiplicity of small spheres of freedom," which István Bibó rightly identified as the foundation of Western development, was based upon a few critical concepts: unity in plurality meant that over the course of time "freedoms" grew to be a prime organizing principle for the social framework. It eventually became the factor that drew a sharp line between the medieval West and so many other civilizations: the introduction of the notion of "society" as an autonomous entity. While the boundaries between hierarchically divided groups were always determined by a higher authority, the authority did not always precisely correspond to sovereignty. Everywhere legal maxims and customs were imposed in a bottom-up ("ascending") fashion and this trend intensified with the extension of these "freedoms." Even in the smallest village, a number of minor laws were applied by the local community, starting with the regulation of land use. Those rights continued to expand to different levels of the social hierarchy to the extent that the rulers themselves could do nothing without the *consilium et auxilium* of their vassals. It was the sum of these collective rights, legitimized gradually through custom, that were called "freedoms." One could go into further details here but at this point this can be avoided as the very period in question searched for and eventually found the abstract principles which made it possible to discern the common traits from the multiplicity of local forms.

One may also say that development both in principle and in practice produced social groups that worked more or less autonomously, but it is more expressive to say that the autonomous social existence itself became legitimized in principle.

On the one hand, there were the experiential facts of reality to count on, and on the other the Christian philosophical principle of the "unity of plurality," combined with the idea of St. Augustine that Christianity itself was a kind of "society" with a dual existence. The two *civitates* of St. Augustine mean not two "states" but a dual "society" (*duas societates hominum quas mystice appellamus civitates duas*). According to the concept that became predominant in the ninth and tenth centuries, the society of Christians was "embodied" on Earth by the Church; consequently it was of a corporate nature, the "mystic body" mentioned above. Since the Part reflects (and needs to reflect) the Whole, a kind of "political theology" soon started to sprout from theology, reaching its peak with John of Salisbury's *Policraticus* (1159) which interpreted every legally existing human community, including the state itself, as a kind of *corpus mysticum politicum* and searched for its common working principles. The decisive turn took place when, in twelfth-century Bologna, an exploration of the full texture of Roman law was followed by the birth of

European jurisprudence, which led to the development of an autochthonous medieval theory of society and the state, free of either theological or classicizing features.[13] The road from theology led through the glossators, canon lawyers, commentators, and through the works of St. Thomas Aquinas to scholasticism, and through the activity of the legists to political publicism. The whole productive period (to which only that between Bodin and Montesquieu can be compared) reached its peak with Marsiglio of Padua's *Defensor pacis* (1324)—a distillation that shows the nature of a structure in a concentrated form.

Oddly enough it was really beneficial that some thinkers submerged themselves in speculative abstractions which today seem to be strangely hairsplitting, for it would otherwise have been difficult to identify the common denominators of the working principles of the various types of existing communities, villages and towns, provinces and kingdoms, and the universal Church that topped it all. (This quintuple "typology" was the most widespread.) It was precisely that penchant for speculation that assisted the breakthrough: existing elements of reality had to be interpreted in such a way so as to express the definite point in common that then affected reality. For example, could one consider a knight or some subject of a lord to be a "citizen" in the sense of the ancient *civis* or the burgess of the Italian towns, and could their relations be *civilis*? Hardly, one should say. But since the thinkers of the age did so, they distinguished certain objective, "structural" elements which then affected the structure itself.

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries brought three new forms of theoretical emancipation to the underpinning "freedoms" that had already been established.[14]

Firstly, groups that were subordinated to various authorities had to be liberated notionally from their unbalanced position of subjection (*populus subditus*). Consequently, a model was devised by which all of the "peoples" (*populus*) deemed legitimate were considered at the same time a corporate (*corpus*) community (*universitas* or *communitas*). These communities were integrated in the great organism of Christian society as autonomous "societies," each fulfilling a separate public function (*societas publica*). The most radical scholars, such as Baldus de Ubaldis, went as far as acknowledging the legitimacy of any social group of public utility without the authorization or special permission of a higher authority (*sine auctoritate principis, absque licentia superioris*). Contend-

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13   On questions of state theory, see Gaines Post, *Studies in Medieval Legal Thought: Public Law and the State, 1100–1322* (Princeton, 1964).

14   On the several aspects of the "liberation" of the individual, see Walter Ullmann, *The Individual and Society in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore, 1966).

ing with the higher authority, each autonomous society of this type was to possess a legal or political status (*persona ficta* or *politica*, *repraesentata*) including the "principle of representation" and also concrete communal rights. Undoubtedly, the great scholars of that period considered Christendom as an organism which consisted of societies of varying size and efficiency which, however, operated under identical internal principles.

Secondly, individuals who were subordinate to various powers had to be liberated notionally from their dependent status as subjects (*fidelis subditus*). This followed logically from the preceding notion of emancipation. By classing real-world relationships into unambiguous normative categories, it became clear that every individual possessed a dual status: aside from being a "subject," he or she was equally a "member" of a social community (*membrum communitatis*, *societatis*) and thus was to be accorded specific communal rights. In sum, the individual formed part of a horizontal legal framework independently of any "vertical" ties of dependency.

Thirdly, man the subject, natural being, and Christian believer also had to be liberated notionally as an Aristotelian "political being" (*animal politicum*). As such, it would be necessary to disentangle the notion of politics from the realm of ethics, where it had long been consigned by theology. This was not accomplished by legal scholars but by philosophers, who first interpreted politics as *ethica publica* and then clearly pointed out that man was a political being "by nature" and that—apart from the Christian and "theological virtues" of faith, hope, and love—"political virtues" were themselves factors in the formation of community (Aquinas). The word *politizare* appeared in the common language of the West around 1250. In this era scholars rejected Aristotelian naturalism; by adopting the Neostoic model of the Romans, man's political status was understood to be more than a "natural" category of being and the polar notions of *naturalis-civilis* expressed this new conception. Thus, the notion of a *societas civilis* appeared in the West in the mid-thirteenth century as a synonym for the sort of autonomous society outlined above; it appeared as a facsimile of the ancient *populus*, which had been understood long ago as a "unity of law and public utility" (*unitas iuris et publicae utilitatis*), that is, it was viewed within a feudal context as the basic model for a marked "political society" and *civilis* relationships.[15]

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15   On the notion of "society," see Ignatius Theodore Eschmann, "Studies on the Notion of Society in St. Thomas Aquinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 8 (1946): 1–42; Franz-Martin Schmölz, "Societas civilis sive Respublica sive Populus," *Österr. Zeitschrift für Öffentliches Recht* 14 (1964): 28–50.

This model needed confronting with reality from two directions. One was from the web of feudal allegiances, where the confrontation depended on power relations. The other direction was from the feudal state. Of course, among the "societies" that existed in principle, there was a place for a category of *communitas regni*, even around 1200, and it was, moreover, the highest in the hierarchy of the earthly communities, although it had hardly any meaning since the monarchic frames themselves were fairly hollow in those days.

The characteristic of Western development was not merely that it generated a structure capable of prompting such thoughts. It extended to the fact that (as in the place of the yet-to-be-discovered elements in Mendeleev's table) the thinking assigned a place to the "social" pole of the state well in advance and defined in theory the relation of the ruler and the political sector of society before that relation became institutionalized in the form of assemblies of estates around 1300. Curiously enough, practice can more or less be said to have followed theory.

It was not only the making of the jurists, but also of the head of Christianity, who had sought allies in his fight against the emperor among the consolidating monarchies, which remained outside the tension between the *Sacerdotium* and the *Imperium*. When Pope Innocent III declared the maxim of *rex imperator in regno suo* in his famous bull of 1202, he gave his blessing in advance to the sovereignty of the nation-states, which in those days were still in the process of formation. The maxim said that the king must be accorded the totality of rights which had been given to the sovereign under Roman law, and which up to then had been vindicated exclusively by the emperor. Paradoxically it was Christ's vicar on earth who allocated the "plenitude of power" to the kings, at least in principle, while on the other hand he considered all worldly power as owing allegiance to the pope. The highest spiritual authority accorded earthly powers an entirely secular legitimacy, and the universal high power confirmed the nation-states which then swiftly dissolved universalism. A century later, the strongest of those nation-states, that of France, toppled that highest spiritual authority as well, in the person of Boniface VIII. These productive paradoxes, too, were confined as characteristics to the development of Europe.

In reality, of course, monarchies started to grow strong not because they were authorized to do so by the pope (and Roman law had in any case been discovered without papal leave), but because the power sources for state integration had appeared. All this was development: the urbanization as well as the noble estate that grew out of the transformation of feudal law over the heads of the great feudal lords, or the estate of lawyers trained by the Church. The newborn

nation-states were separated by a gap of about 500 years from the imperial and German institutions going amiss in the early stages of the given civilization. They were entirely new morphological formulae. The developments that had raised the French monarchy during the period from Philip Augustus to Philip the Fair (1180–1314) out of its feudal fragmentation are by and large known of.

The Roman law and theory of the state, objects to the abovementioned papal gesture, were merely a manifestation of ambivalence at the most delicate point, despite their profusion, since they had developed from an amalgamation of the republican and imperial principles. The maxim of Ulpian that power had originally been possessed by the people and later transferred to the emperor could lead equally in the direction of "popular sovereignty" and of "absolutism," depending on what part of the syncretic material was selected and what emphasis was given to it. Certainly, the material had by then enabled sovereignty to be defined, and the changing reality had led to the very posing of the question, since there already existed rulers and social forces whose relationships had to be defined. They were not each other's derivatives as was the case e.g., with Islam, where the question did not even emerge because the theocratic discretionary power of the caliph and later the emir or sultan was seen as the "realization" of the holy law, the *sharia*, encompassing politics, warfare, taxation, and jurisdiction. The development in the West was from the outset different since the German ruler had already been bound to the "custom" represented by the heads of society, and the Church had already made it accepted in the early Middle Ages that a Christian ruler had a moral duty to realize Augustine's principle of *pax*, *iustitia*, *pietas*: the "tyrant" who acted against those duties could legally be deprived of his throne. But state theory was also imbued deeply with political theology mentioned above, whereby the king was only the "head" of the "mystic body" of state, among whose "parts" he had to maintain harmony. The points still to be cleared up about that ideological structure were the identity in real life of the "members" of the *corpus politicum* on whom the function of the Roman *populus* devolved, and the question of which function: that of the republic or of the Empire?

The clarification took place between 1200 and 1300, on the basis of the axiom that the source of power was the "people." There was hardly anyone to dispute that, apart from the extreme hypocrites of the papal court. Divine grace presented no great problem either, since it could easily be surmounted by stating that in the last resort power derived naturally from God but through the mediation of the "people" (*mediante populo*). Already for the twelfth century glossa-

tors (some of whom still thought in a doctrinaire way, as if Emperor Justinian still ruled the world) the key problem was whether the people had transferred "all its power" (*omne suum imperium*) to the ruler or "retained some of it," as Odofredus and others including the Bolognese majority were already claiming. Moreover, a few in that circle, for instance Hugolinus, made the very radical claim that the king only headed the state as a *quasi procurator.* But who were "all" of whom the "people" was composed?

The answer as early as the thirteenth century was the *civilis societas*, the kind of corporate community that could reproduce itself within the framework of the monarchy as well, so long as it existed in a town or a province. But who were the members of this "society"? Of course, it was acknowledged in the period that in a broad sense the people meant "all the people," but a people for itself was only a *naturalis* multitude and not a *civilis* "society." The key notion in bridging the problem was included in the "representation" principle of corporate theory.[16] A community was *persona politica* (or *repraesentata*) in that it was more than the sum total of its members by virtue of its "eternal" identity, and it had gained that attribute since its "qualitative" part, its *qualitate* and not its *pluralitate*, "represented," i.e., embodied it as *pars senior.* It had in fact become clear before the first assemblies of estates arose that the Church, the nobility, and the burghers, as the élite among the "members" of the *corpus politicum*, "represented" the *communitas* of the kingdom before the "head" of the body politic, the ruler.

That idea of *pars pro toto* was equally as axiomatic, as the idea was widely accepted by the thirteenth century that the people was not merely a historical and theoretical source of power, but in some ways took part in exercising that power. At all events, the term *regimen politicum* was deserved only by a government in which some sharing of power took place. But how should power be shared? Many left that most difficult question unanswered, satisfying themselves with the thought that sovereignty was shared in some undecided fashion within the body politic. A somewhat more precise answer came out of natural law, which was drawn into that sphere of thought, while retaining some of the "absolutist" elements inherent in ancient theory. Even before 1300 it was argued that an exceptional "case of emergency" (*necessitas*) might arise, for instance an invasion, a rebellion, or a heresy, when natural law would authorize the ruler (who in such

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16   On the principle of "representation," see Gierke, *Die Staats- und Korporationslehre des Altertums und des Mittelalters*, 222 ff. On questions of sovereignty, see Michael Wilks, *The Problem of Sovereignty in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1963).

cases was the *lex animata*) to act in a way absolved from the observance of the laws (*legibus solutus*), i.e., in an absolute way, to levy taxes and declare war, but he could only do so in an emergency and in favor of "public good." The ancient theory that imperial order was equal to the law was only valid in such a case. Under normal circumstances the guideline was human law (*lex humana*), derived from natural law and invested in the "people," and as a rule the king himself was subject to the law (*rex sub lege*). The ancient theories of absolutism could be balanced by another principle which had been extracted from the recesses of the codex to become the watchword of feudal "parliamentarianism": the concerns of all must be approved by all (*quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus approbetur*). The next step was taken by Marsiglio of Padua, who clearly defined the notion of "legislative power" (*legislator humanus*). The ruler, as the administrative head of the state (*administrator rei publicae*), could only act and command by virtue of his authorization from the legislative power; at the same time, the ruler himself was a governing "part" (*pars principans*), in relation to the other "parts" of the state, which were represented in the legislature. The theory contained the germ of what today is called the division of powers.

The structure, whose theoretical development was completed within a single century, began to function practically in the decades around 1300, in the form of assemblies of estates, but for two reasons in not a spectacular way. On the one hand, the workings of the state were restrained rather than promoted by divergent feudal self-interests, and on the other, the whole economic and social structure of the West had gone into a deep and lasting crisis by the time the political mechanism appeared. But one should seek in the Middle Ages neither for any kind of anticipatory ideal of "parliamentarianism" nor for the germ of democracy. Yet, the low level of efficiency of the political mechanism, the selectiveness of the "political society," and the feudal division of "freedoms" do not detract from the achievement that the models themselves had been formed and proved in the microstructures to be very effective. The medieval "technical revolution" that happened concurrently produced both awkward and inefficient machines and a great many machines that operated well and had been entirely unknown to antiquity. The majority scarcely resemble modern machines at all, but that does not alter the fact that, for instance, the camshaft that operated machines with many tools, or the flywheel that balanced the deviation in the turn of a windmill, were no less than the discoveries of the principles of synchronized control and the centrifugal regulator. Historians of technology see the medieval technical revolution that ended in the fourteenth century as fitting into the

modern industrial revolution that started in the eighteenth century "almost as completely as the coastlines of the Old World and America."[17]

Here it is worth drawing attention to yet another important aspect. In the medieval West, the notion of "society" was naturally only able to follow the contours of an already existing structure. Nevertheless, the basic model possessed an inbuilt capacity not only to shrink but also to expand. Once it became a norm in the West that the ruler was answerable to the "people," this of course did not imply accountability towards the "subjects" in general, nor that he was accountable to the physically present representatives of the estates. The ruler was under the control of the *populus*, which every legal practitioner knew to be a composite identity and legal entity amounting to more than the sum of its parts—an entity that "never dies" (*nunquam moritur*). Although this distinction is subtle, it left open certain possibilities, since the model stipulated that the ruler was accountable to "society" in the abstract.

Development Beyond Western Europe

Traditionally, the dispatch of legates to Quedlinburg (973) and the crown sent by Pope Sylvester II to King Stephen (1000) are considered to have placed the Hungarians into the tableau of Christian Europe. Certainly, having realized the dangers and advantages of the expansion of the West (as the Christianized Piasts did with the Poles and the Přemyslids with the Czechs), Prince Géza and King Stephen had thrust Christianity on the Hungarians, as a result of which the name *Europa Occidens* soon came to cover this expanding area. The notion of the "West" spread along with Latin Christianity: it became a civilizational concept. But for a long while civilization and structure belonged to different coordinates.

For instance, the Rurikids forced the Russians to take Christianity from the opposite pole of Europe, but at the beginning the structure of the state and society in the region of the "new barbarians" showed more internal similarities than Esztergom (or Gniezno or Prague) did to Rome, or the Kiev metropolitan did to Byzantium. Nor did it make much difference whether the institutional models derived from the West or from Byzantium, since the state of Kiev absorbed at least as much influence from the Normans as it did from the Byzantines. The common feature was that the elemental force of the historical change

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17 On the technical revolution, see Walter Endrei, *A középkor technikai forradalma* [The technical revolution in the Middle Ages] (Budapest, 1978) (the quotation is on page 85).

provided the ruling power with an enormous preponderance over the fairly amorphous societies and, in terms of Theodor Mayer's typology, the states were formations of "retinue character" placed on territorial and institutional bases.[18] The proto-feudal Slav *druzhina* or the type of retinue relationship of the Hungarian *jobbágy* (the Hungarian word originally meant any follower ranging from those of the noblest birth to the warriors of the castles) determined that the power structure should be one of concentric circles around a center of power, as in the western Germanic kingdoms of the sixth and seventh centuries.[19] The social structure lent itself to similar analogies: the Church and a narrow stratum of aristocrats by birth were separated from an entirely heterogeneous peasantry (including a significant number of slaves) by a malleable, dissoluble middle stratum of which a significant proportion was attached to the structures of early feudal institutions. If the Roman institutions of the Church and the Carolingian-inspired institutions of the state seemed on the one hand to be slightly more developed, this was amply counterbalanced on the other by the fact that the early Russian state could rely, in the shape of the populous trading centers of Kiev and Novgorod (which served as the meeting points of the Byzantine-Baltic and Arab trade on the route "from the Varangians to the Greeks"), on an urban basis unknown in the West before the reconquest of the Mediterranean.[20] In the early centuries the parts of this region were more tightly connected to one another by political and dynastic ties than any single parts of it were either to the West or to Byzantium. At least until about 1200 there appeared to be an autochthonous "Eastern European" feudalism in the making, culturally orientated in two directions, but drawn together by common structural features.[21]

That temporary and uncertain regional formation broke up rapidly in the decades after 1200. The early Kievan state was particularly interesting as it hinted at the possibility of an "original" symbiosis of late antiquity and the Barbarian sphere between the Byzantines and the Russians at the eastern pole of

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18 For the state development typology quoted, see Theodor Mayer, "Die Ausbildung der Grundlagen des modernen deutschen Staates im hohen Mittelalter," *Historische Zeitschrift* 159 (1939): 462–64.

19 On the typological position of the early Hungarian state, see Jenő Szűcs, "König Stephan in der Sicht der modernen ungarischen Geschichtsforschung," *Südost-Forschungen* 31 (1972): 17–40. The parallels in the Merovingian Age have already been pointed out by Péter Váczy, *Die erste Epoche des ungarischen Königtums* (Budapest, 1935).

20 On the Russian parallels, see Marc Szeftel, "Aspects of Russian Feudalism," in *Feudalism in History*, ed. Rushton Coulborn (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956).

21 On the sphere of problems to do with Eastern European "original characteristics," see László Makkai, "Les Caractères originaux de l'histoire économique et sociale de l'Europe orientale pendant le Moyen Âge," *Acta Historica Academiae Scient. Hung.* 16 (1970): 261–87.

Europe, similar to the symbiosis which had grown up in previous centuries in the West between the Romans and the Franks. But that possibility soon vanished, because the expansion of the West (1204) led to the defeat of the exhausted Byzantine Empire, soon followed by the Mongol invasions, which concentrated the burgeoning force of Eurasian nomadism (1223 and 1243), cutting the Russian territory off from the Black Sea and subduing these disintegrated principalities for more than two centuries. As a result, the amorphous Eastern European archetype of feudalism got more or less solidified in this region. At the same time, the wave of "internal expansion" by the West started to spill over the border of the former Carolingian empire with an elemental strength while filling the framework of the "civilization" of *Europa Occidens* with ever more structural content in the eastern zone. The aggressive side-effects (*Drang nach Osten*) were mainly typical in the northern parts from the Elbe to the Baltic; in general, the spread of the heavy plough, new systems of cultivation, and urbanization led to a shift eastward of the "freedoms" discussed above, and that shift was an important element in a creative destruction of the early feudal system of state and society. That wave of development first split up and then integrated into new formations the rough fabric of early feudal society, the formation that a recent attempt at typology has called "state serfdom."[22]

All of what István Bibó listed as the Western "structural features" of medieval Hungary—the formations of the nobility and the autonomous burgess-stratum that appeared alongside the "freedom of the Church," the concomitant absorption of the condition of servitude, and the homogenization of the peasantry ("the first enfranchisement of the peasant population"), which failed to take place in the more easterly regions—were real and important structural elements produced by the truly explosive transformation that unfolded in scarcely one and a half centuries (1200–1350).[23] Nothing could be more characteristic of the rapidity of the development than parallel events at the two opposite poles of the structure. In the 1270s, the representatives of the Church and the nobility began to assemble, in parallel with the West or even ahead of some Western countries, for the first national "general meetings" and the idea of a *communitas*

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22 See Karol Modzelewski, "The System of the Ius Ducale and the Idea of Feudalism," *Quaestiones Medii Aevi* 1 (1977): 71–99.

23 On the structural change after 1200, for example in urban development, see Erik Fügedi, "Die Entstehung des Städtewesens in Ungarn," *Alba Regia* 10 (1969): 101–18; in peasant society, Jenő Szűcs, "Megosztott parasztság—egységesülő jobbágyság" [Divided peasantry—Unifying serfdom], *Századok* 115 (1981): 3–65, 263–319; in the sphere of the nobility, Elemér Mályusz, "A magyar köznemesség kialakulása" [The formation of the Hungarian lesser nobility], *Századok* 76, no. 5 (1942): 272–305, 407–34.

regni began to come to fruition.[24] In the same decade, only with a couple of decades of delay compared to the West, there appeared instances of landlords and peasants making "contractual" agreements before Church bodies exercising notarial functions.[25] All those features very clearly divide the Carpathian Basin (along with the Bohemian Basin and the Polish Plain) from the "autochthonous" Eastern European structures: where the Church was subordinate to the power of the princes; the archaic "serving" nature of the nobility, subject to the princes and boyars, precluded any corporate unity and prevented the forming of an autonomous burgess-stratum (for even where there were elements of autonomy, as in Novgorod and Pskov, the council was dominated by boyars); and the peasantry presented a highly heterogeneous picture that embraced all, from the "free" peasants on the newly cultivated lands, via those at the various degrees of personal dependence, down to the enslaved *kholop*. There is no need to list other elements here, for Bibó has already highlighted the most important of them. But the question remains as to whether it suffices to speak of "a simpler fabric and a more provincial character" by comparison with the West.

The shift from the Western margin of Eastern Europe in the geographical sense to the Eastern margin of Western Europe in the structural sense was principally marked by the specific temporal contraction and rapidity of development. Social structural elements that developed organically in the West in several stages over almost 500 years (from the ninth to the thirteenth century) through the dismantling of parts of previous achievements and rearrangement of the main points at every stage, appeared in the eastern zone, including Hungary, in a concentrated form, within hardly more than one and a half centuries, parallel with one another. It is hardly surprising that the forms they took were in some places inorganically truncated or raw, in others still unarticulated, rough, or mixed, or in yet others demonstrating here and there various archaic features or differing from their pattern in their proportion to one another. The West undoubtedly served as the "pattern," even if the decisive transformation cannot be considered a straight imitation, since the internal preconditions had existed in every field before 1200, which was, moreover, the main explanation for the quick pace of the transformation. But one cannot deny that there was an "imitative" element, since readymade forms and models did help to speed up the

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24   On the assemblies at the end of the thirteenth century, see Erzsébet S. Kiss, "A királyi generális kongregáció kialakulásának történetéhez" [Towards a history of the formation of the Royal General Congregation], *Acta Historica Univ. Szegediensis* 39 (Szeged, 1971).

25   See Jenő Szűcs, "Megosztott parasztság—egységesülő jobbágyság," 296–310.

internal sequence of events. Another specific feature of the medieval "modernization" of the region was that reorganization "from above" was disproportionately more important than at the scenes of the original emergence of these structures. As has been shown above, the characteristic of Western-type feudalism was that its basic elements had arisen spontaneously, from below. The internal principles of organizing "society" were dominant over those of the "state"; the new monarchies were built on elements that already existed, and the activity of reforming them entailed the manipulation, reappraisal, and rearrangement of those elements. The type of "reform ruler" whose activity centered around creating the basic elements of the structure (one might think either of the settlements, reforms concerning the serfs, urban policy, and the introduction of feudal organizing elements or the knightly milieu) was a typically Eastern European phenomenon, examples being Béla IV, Charles Robert, Ottokar II Přemysl, Charles IV, Władysław I Łokietek, or Casimir III.

The specific dual aspect of the Eastern region of *Europa Occidens* in the Middle Ages derived from the fact that the roots the basic elements of the Western type or structure had taken did not go deep enough. Let us consider vassalage as an example. After the dissolution of the early feudal system of institutions and of the primitive "retinue-like" structure, the elements of vassalage and the Estate system appeared in parallel with each other, whereas in the West they had been products of two successive stages in history. That prevented the kind of deep cultivation by which the deeply stratified structure of vassalage prepared the soil in the West. For instance, the aborted Hungarian version of vassalage, the *familiaritas*, lacked that deeply rooted institutional system and permanence, as did the fief itself.[26] When Hungarian historians with their traditional "etatist" orientation exult the fact that in the end the unity of the medieval Hungarian state was never split by feudal disruption, they forget about the negative effects. One thing lacking, for instance, was the fertile cultural and legal function of territorialism. Moreover, it followed from the faintness of a chivalrous milieu that Hungarian only became a literary language some three centuries after the Western languages; alongside the comprehensive forms of vassalage there was little room in Hungarian history for an organic, autochthonous knightly culture. But because the "deep cultivation" was absent, a disproportionately wide stratum of nobility

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26 On the problem of vassalage in Hungary, see Elemér Mályusz, "A magyar társadalom a Hunyadiak korában" [Hungarian society in the age of the Hunyadis], in *Mátyás Emlékkönyv* [Matthias memorial volume] vol. I (Budapest), 309–433; György Bónis, *Hűbériség és rendiség a középkori magyar jogban* [Vassalage and estates in medieval Hungarian Law] (Kolozsvár, 1944).

appeared very early, and having soon gained political self-awareness and autonomy, conquered the inherited regional framework of the early feudal state—the county—while simultaneously blocking the "ascending" process of local legalism, whose framework in the West was the feudal territory. All that had far-reaching consequences on attitudes too. The very word *familiaritas* also refers to an archaic patriarchal relation of some kind. Not only the fief itself and other well-defined systems of institutions and ceremonies were lacking, but also the "reciprocity of unequals," the emphasized contractual character of the personal bond. While members of this lesser nobility did not throw themselves at the feet of their lords like their Eastern counterparts, they did not perform the symbolic play of the preservation of human dignity in the state of subordination that was performed by their Western counterparts. Their attitude remained somewhere between the two. Possibly they confirmed their agreement over the conditions of subordination by shaking hands, after the "Hungarian fashion," as this complimentary gesture was already called in the thirteenth century. The relationship asserted itself in principle by the emphatic respect for "humanity and honor," while in practice it worked rather "downwards" and had much more of the character of "service" than did vassalage in the West, as is reflected by the other term used for the Hungarian quasi-vassal: *serviens.* This intermediate situation between the Western and the Eastern models is fairly apparent, even though it was a few degrees nearer to the Western model than to the Eastern.

Structures of the Western type can be detected everywhere in Hungary, although they were deformed to some degree: either incomplete (as the towns were, for example) or disproportionately overgrown (as was the nobility). The primary deficiency of autonomous towns of the Western type was not caused by the fact that where the formula was "complete" (in the free royal and mining towns) the majority of the population was not ethnically Hungarian, but by the fact that this sector of urbanization became confined to scarcely four dozen towns which rapidly grew up during the wave of development between 1200 and 1350, and it remained small in proportions later on as well.[27] Meanwhile the mass basis of urbanization remained a hybrid formation, since the several hundred market towns were "Western" in character but represented a higher degree of peasant "free-

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27   On the proportions of the nobility and the bourgeoisie, see István Szabó, "Magyarország népessége az 1330-as és az 1526-os évek között" [Hungary's population between the years 1330 and 1526], in *Magyarország történeti demográfiája* [Hungary's historical demography], ed. József Kovacsics (Budapest, 1963), 88–98; and about Poland: Karol Górski, "Les structures sociales de la noblesse polonaise au moyen âge," *Le Moyen Âge* 58 (1967): 73–85.

doms" rather than a lower degree of burgess freedom. On the other hand, it followed from the inorganically fast pace of development that the free lower landowner strata, which had prematurely organized themselves already in the late thirteenth century into a "corporation" of nobility, did not exclude by natural selection the inappropriate elements; those who rose above the peasantry by their privileges but were rendered unsuited to performing the functions of nobility by their "peasant-like" features. Thus, the Hungarian Middle Ages bequeathed to the modern period a mass nobility comprising 4–5 percent of the population (and in Poland's case around 7–8 percent), as compared with an average of 1 percent in the West. These included the boorish and uneducated lesser nobility imbued with an overall awareness of its privileges and justifiably dubbed by Bibó the "most noxious phenomenon in the development of modern Hungary." In fact, the only undistorted "Western" element in the Hungarian social structure up to the end of the Middle Ages had been formed by the peasantry, which obtained a unified legal status in the fourteenth century. This was expressed in the peasants' attempts to prevent themselves being pushed off the periphery of the Western type of structure, defending themselves with their unified awareness of *universitas* (in 1437) or of being a chosen, "blessed people" (in 1514), at times when they felt the "freedoms" they had obtained were being fundamentally threatened. But the fate of the serfs was decided in the long run by the responses the *corpus politicum* gave to the subsequent challenges of history.

Hungary's social formation was again "Western" in the sense that it had, already in the 1270s–1290s and particularly after 1400, clear ideas about the separate, autonomous position of the "political society" within the state, yet deviated from being Western in that its concepts were still one-sided. It never, for instance, crossed the mind of Simon de Montfort in England that he should do other than summon two burgesses from every town when the hour for feudal "parliamentarianism" had come (in 1264), but when that hour came in Hungary (in 1276) it entered no one's head to invite representatives of the townspeople. Nor did it occur to anyone later: the deputies of the royal towns took part irregularly at the diets, at most as observers.[28] Occasionally, for mere propaganda purposes, the towns also were referred to as "members of the realm" (*membra regni*), but there was little meaning behind it, whereas it had become axiomatic

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28 On the problem of representation, see József Holub, "La représentation politique en Hongrie au Moyen Âge," in *Xe Congrès International des Sciences Historiques, Rome 1955, Études,* Louvain and Paris, 1958, 79–121, and the same author's "Quod omnes tangit...," *Revue historique de Droit Français et Étranger* 4, no. 29 (1951): 97–102.

by the late Middle Ages that the deputies of the nobility were "representatives of the whole body of the realm" (*totum corpus regni repraesentantes*). For that precise reason it was ultimately a simplified and one-sidedly interpreted digest of the whole complex theoretical fabric outlined above that struck root in Hungary and permanently ruled out any chance even in theory of widening the "pars pro toto" kind of interpretation. Since the political sector of "society" was identical with the nobility, and the nobility in Werbőczian terms embodied, in person, the *populus* under constitutional law and constituted a "mystical body," "the members of the Holy Crown," responsibility by the ruler for the abstract notion of society was ideologically excluded. "Society" as the ruler's partner consisted exclusively of the concrete totality of the nobility.

So, what structure did Hungarian history originally have? A "sincere history" could scarcely be satisfied with the generalizations or very broad cultural features implied by belonging to *Europa Occidens.* In terms of regional typology, one thoroughly secondary consideration is "high culture." Janus Pannonius's poetry cannot compensate for the raw local color that he himself also thought rather raw and called in the humanist manner "barbarous." Obviously the overall "constitution" of Hungarian history can principally be perceived in the structures where Bibó also sought it. Yet in terms of the basic elements, one feels there is an argument for applying, even concerning the medieval context, the notion of "East Central Europe" to the entire region. It adopted Western types of models and norms, but in an Eastern European milieu, characterized by a structural modification detectable in almost every aspect. Of course, there were minor differences: Bohemia showed forms rather more "Western" than Hungary while Croatia was rather more archaic, and Poland was in most respects highly similar. Ultimately Hungary's structure in relation to the West can be discerned by such cut-and-dried figures as that every twentieth to twenty-fifth person in Hungary at the end of the Middle Ages was a nobleman, in contrast to every hundredth Frenchman; at the same time every fortieth to fiftieth person in Hungary was a free city-dweller in contrast to every tenth in France.

Absolutism and the "First Crisis" of Feudalism (1300–1450)

The more fortunate regions of Europe can mark the beginning of modernity with victorious dates such as 1492: the discovery of America. Entrenched in the memory of less fortunate regions are the dates of catastrophes such as the 1526 Battle of Mohács and the advent of the Habsburgs. Russian historians also might

introduce the modern era with triumphant dates such as the "gathering of the Russian lands" or any one of the dates tied to the annexation of the whole of Eastern Europe (1478, 1480, 1502, 1552, and 1556) if they did not insist on treating the modern age as synonymous with the predicament of the change of societal "formations" rather than the synchronic beginning of a new European era.

Such dates are symptomatic of course. Nevertheless, one radical revision in the way historical eras are perceived was recently achieved: in order to comprehend modernity, one must start with the "first crisis" of feudalism (1300–1450). Since European historians initiated a detailed reconstruction of the period and began to consider it in light of the establishment of the early modern world economy (lasting from 1450 to 1640), their results lead us to perceive the crystallizing European regions as responses to the challenges posed by the crisis. As Immanuel Wallenstein's audacious theoretical attempt at a synthesis was published only recently, no one would fault Bibó for blaming Hungary's historical structural distortion on catastrophic historical events. But it would be incorrect to begin, as he did, with the great peasant revolt of György Dózsa in 1514, since that calamity was an outcome of circumstances rather than a cause. Nor would it be wise to commence with the accession of the Habsburgs, since posing the question this way would set up a trap from which it would then be difficult to escape. A third group of phenomena has recently come to be perceived in a different light since the presentations at the International Congress of Historical Sciences, held in Rome and Stockholm (1955, 1960), and the Marxist account of Perry Anderson (*Lineages of the Absolutist State*), which promises a fresh approach, laying emphasis on the morphology of the early modern state system: the "Age of Absolutism." Societies in different historical regions largely transposed the task of responding to the challenges posed by the crises to their states, while the states themselves mostly reflected the regional opportunities. In this way, the "transposition" to the states made them the most active factors in regional formation, and this extends to the present day.

The medieval model, in which the Western type of relationship between society and state was drawn up, bears a resemblance to the unfinished cathedrals and the torsos of "Gothic Titanism" (Le Goff) that stood for centuries without tower, nave, or façade in the squares of Beauvais, Narbonne, Cologne, Milan, and Siena. Plans for their completion only commenced in the nineteenth century, which bears symbolic undertones, in fact. Both phenomena have a common root: the *civilis societas* and *corpus politicum* of the state remained equally torpid for centuries, only suggesting the possible contours of a gigantic apse,

since a crisis in the whole structure had brought the builders themselves to the brink of ruin after 1300.

Europe was able to escape from its "first crisis" of feudalism because the state either temporarily—or permanently—rose in rank to dominate society. It varied from region to region whether the construction site tasked with completing the gigantic torso of the Middle Ages fulfilled its mission in the nineteenth century, reaching what Marx had articulated in 1875: "*Freedom consists* in *converting* the *state* from an *organ superimposed* upon *society into one completely subordinate* to it; and *today*, *too*, the *forms* of *state* are *more free* or *less free* to the *extent* that *they restrict* the '*freedom*' of the *state*.'"[29]

The first crisis of feudalism occurred at a time when growth was restrained in almost every direction by the limitations of the framework. In the West, this was the eve of the fourteenth century. In consequence, the "growth crisis" turned into conditions everywhere that reflected a slump, which included agrarian and monetary crises, desertion of villages, a drastic fall in the population, and political anarchy. But there was no force as yet available to radically dismantle the social structure. Expansion of the economic space was needed to surmount the crisis, while the nature of that expansion (or its hopelessness) determined whether feudalism, having already been prolonged in one way or another, would turn into capitalism or continue to survive in the same form. The crisis first affected the most developed and densely populated regions. Around 1300, three-quarters of Europe's population lived in the West—that is, in one-fifth of the European territory. Afterwards, the first waves of famine (1315–1318), exacerbated by relative overpopulation, brutally exposed various crisis phenomena.[30]

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29 The series of crises in the fourteenth century (which can be considered as the "first crisis" of feudalism) were first revealed in Edouard Perroy, "À l'origine d'une économie contractée: Les crises du XIVe siècle," *Annales E.S.C.* 4 (1949): 167–82. The debate on the question (including the opinions of Rodney Howard Hilton, Evgenii A. Kosminskii, Michael Postan, and Friedrich Lütge) have since filled volumes. A balanced summary of the matter can be read in Léopold Génicot, "Crisis: From the Middle Ages to Modern Times," in *Cambridge Economic History of Europe I* (London and New York, 1966), 660–741. The works mentioned in the text are Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York, San Francisco, and London, 1974), and Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London, 1974). I have extensively used the stimulating analyses of both in my line of thinking (particularly the latter concerning the nature of absolutism and its regional types). The words quoted from Marx on the relation of the state and freedom occur in his "Critique of the Gotha Programme," in Marx-Engels, *Selected Works in Three Volumes* (Moscow, 1969–70), 3: 25.

30 On the distortion of the western structures in the late Middle Ages, see Kenneth Bruce McFarlane, "Bastard Feudalism," *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 20 (1945): 161–81. The fact that it was the towns that first emerged from the crisis was pointed out in Georges Duby, "Les sociétés médiévales: Une approche d'ensemble," *Annales E.S.C.* 26 (1971): 10–42.

The Eastern regions continued for a good while to maintain an ambivalent growth trend and the crisis finally arrived only a century and a half later, when the West was already beginning to recover from its own.

Ultimately, the *punctum saliens* for recovery in the West was the fact that even before 1300, the whole framework's center of gravity shifted once and for all to the urban economy. This branch of the economy was the first (as the crisis affected all strata) to recover, partly by intensifying its links with East Central Europe as a region where its market crisis could be resolved and where its need of precious metals could be satisfied. In the long run the regions beyond the Elbe would pay for the West's recovery. At the same time, the rejuvenation of Western cities forestalled the nobility's efforts to drive the crisis beneath the *corpus politicum* and force the peasantry to carry the whole burden. The armed retaliation with which the nobility responded to the great peasant revolts of the fourteenth century was to no avail, since the impulse of the economy proved to be stronger; in the process of overcoming the crisis a major accomplishment came to pass: by the end of the Middle Ages the West had relaxed the bonds of serfdom. The regulating principles of the peasant-landlord relationship became rent and land tenure. The nobility's other reflex to wrestle its way out of the crisis had equally failed. It sought to compensate for a diminished income through "chivalrous banditry" (Postan) and the devastating anarchic style of warfare displayed in the Hundred Years' War and the Wars of the Roses; in other words, to recover its wealth by disrupting the state mechanism.

Eventually the *corpus politicum* emerged from the crisis through a particular reorganization of its forces. By the end of the Middle Ages the monarchies, relying on the cities (and essentially subjecting the Church), were faced with a nobility whose income had been exhausted and whose social standing and resources had deteriorated through civil war; a nobility that expected the state henceforth both to provide it with offices and military positions and to safeguard its privileges. Within this framework the West found the force it needed for expansion on a far greater scale than the one that followed the turn of the millennium. Through geographical discoveries and colonization, this expansion led to the foundation of a "world economy" in early modern times. Of course, another long century passed between the strengthening of new monarchies such as the France of Louis XI (1461–1483) or the England of Henry VII (1483–1509) and the emergence of absolutism with its threefold solution: preserving what was salvageable from the feudal system, preparing the terrain for capitalism, and developing the framework for the nation-state.

In fact, the response of East Central Europe to the crisis was organically related to the response in the West.[31] Nonetheless, in terms of the nature of its response, the case of Eastern Europe was more comparable, if for no other reason due to its very emergence. This was the other expansive model based on the project of "gathering the Russian lands," which was gradually taken over by the Grand Duchy of Moscow (in the fourteenth century) to be turned into a central agenda by Ivan III (1462–1505). This program was a response of the "incomplete" Eastern European feudalism to the late medieval crisis. The crisis displayed symptoms analogous to those of the West: population decline, devastation of villages, decline of cities, demographic decrease, and political anarchy, and the situation was further aggravated by the Tatar occupation. The overall outcome was not only three centuries of Russian expansion (which gave rise to the internal colonization of Eastern Europe); in effect, an immense Eastern appendage tagged on to the edifice, becoming the equivalent, as it were, of the North American appendage of the *Occidens*. While the *conquistadores* were expanding the Western world economy to the Indies, after the first expeditions to Siberia (1581–1584) the Cossacks advanced as far as Kamchatka, outlining the possibility of another "world economy." One can speak about a "Russian world economy" in early modern times insofar as other world economies besides the European one existed (for instance, the Chinese). Each possessed its own center, periphery, and external regions. The parallelism exists not in their relative significance but in their internal structure. It can also be perceived in the growth of the Russian economy, notwithstanding its "painfully sluggish" pace of development (V. O. Kluchevsky), during the decisive sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, at a time when general decline was deforming the regions between Russia and the West. Apart from the more obvious contrasts, there were two basic differences that prompted Russia's confrontation with the West. One was the obstinate preservation in the West of the principle of division. Just as it became obvious after the death of Charlemagne that the imperial frameworks of "civilization" could not be maintained, so it became obvious following the death

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31   On the problem of the "Russian world economy," see Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*, 302–24. A summary of the East Central European turn of events is given in Arnošt Klíma and Josef Macůrek, "La Question de la transition du féodalisme au capitalisme en Europe centrale (16e–17e siècles)," in *International Congress of Historical Sciences: Stockholm 1960; Rapports IV* (Göteborg, 1960), 84–105, and in Reginald Robert Betts, "La société dans l'Europe centrale et dans l'Europe occidentale," *Revue d'histoire comparée* 7 (1948): 167–83. On the Hungarian relation, see Zsigmond Pál Pach, *Nyugat-európai és magyarországi agrárfejlődés a XV-XVII században* [Agrarian development in Western Europe and Hungary in the fifteenth–seventeenth centuries] (Budapest, 1963).

of Charles V that the attempt to fuse the "world economy" with the *Imperium* was incompatible with a framework that by this time had stretched over the Atlantic to America. In contrast, the Eastern European model, which extended through Asia to the Pacific, was based on a fusion of these three spheres, thus more akin to the oriental structures. Its "economy" was identical with the imperial framework emerging on the basis of the civilizational conception of the Third Rome (Moscow), until it eventually became the periphery of a European world economy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The other fundamental difference was that the Western model was based upon the elimination of serfdom, while the Eastern model was based on its maintenance. A decisive element in Russian expansion was the agrarian colonization of large territories that offered a virtually unlimited space for the mobility of the peasantry. Seeking to profit from this expansion, as well as being in need of setting a brutal and definitive limit to peasant mobility, the Russian nobility was forced under the authority of the state with more intense duress than the Western nobility had experienced through its existential crisis. The dates of the first drastic restrictions, and finally the total abolition of peasant migration and other minimal freedoms (1497 and 1649 respectively), were just as visibly milestones in the development of Russian absolutism as were the dates of territorial expansion (1480 and 1679) mentioned earlier.

What lay between these two zones of expansion was exactly East Central Europe. It was forced into a defensive position not only due to its limited potential for territorial enlargement, nor in response to Ottoman military offensives. The main reason was that it was too much a part of the Western "world economy," but since the Middle Ages it had served as its periphery, and therefore had a weak infrastructure and economic basis. It was exactly the Western urban economy's solution to the crisis (the development of an export industry and of capital investments) which after momentary stimulation caused the weakness and permanent stagnation of the very factor which determined the fate of the peasantry in the West: the urban economy. Together with this, the growing urbanization of the West led to a demand for agricultural produce, causing the great estates in the East, which were built up through forced labor, to become partners in an East-West division of labor. Consequently, after 1500 the nobility in this region succeeded in doing what the paralyzed nobility of the West had failed to do after 1300: shift the burden of the crisis on to the peasantry. The legislative omens of the "second serfdom" appeared with remarkable synchronicity in Brandenburg (1494), Poland (1496), Bohemia (1497), Hungary (1492 and

1498), and conspicuously Russia (1497), although their conditions and causal factors were diverse. The great masses of Russian peasantry had never been liberated, in the Western sense, from the "first serfdom," and the Russian economy did not depend on the West.

After 1500, two common denominators began to obliterate the Eastern border of *Europa Occidens* (which had become more pronounced after 1200) while progressively strengthening the Elbe-Leitha boundary (which after 1200 had begun to fade). One of them consisted in the fact that the nobility had good reason to accept the authority of a strong state, since it was state power that would most effectively see to it that the laws binding the peasantry to the soil would be implemented; without this enforcement the latter would escape or rebel by evoking its "ancient freedoms." The other was the presence of Eurasian territories in both regions. At the height of its power, the Ottoman Empire pressed forward as far as the region of the Sava and the Danube (and the Pontic zone) and was a far stronger opponent than the Golden Horde of the Dnieper-Don-Volga region, which was in decline. Ottoman conquest was a serious problem for Poland as well as for Hungary and Croatia, for it threatened Poland's eastern flank in the Ukraine. Despite such common conditions, there was an important disparity. The nobility of this region—in contrast to the Russian nobility—possessed a clearly defined (if one-sided) conception about its societal role that was rooted in its institutional system; the nobility knew that it "represented the country" and the "freedom of the country" within the *corpus politicum* of the state. The more the crisis intensified the power of the nobility over the peasantry, which also negatively affected the urban economy, the more one-sided became their beliefs. This context makes it easier to understand why, in the twilight of the Middle Ages, the nobility in this defensive region hesitated, far more than did those of the two expanding regions, about whether to act in accordance with their own fundamental interests or to insist on their "freedom." Initially it leaned towards the latter, as evidenced by its rejection of the attempts of monarchs in Bohemia, Hungary, and Poland (in 1471, 1490, and 1492 respectively) to consolidate their rule as they had in the West. Afterward, the principal feature of the region was to be its familiarity with every possible variation.

This, in essence, was the situation in Europe around 1500. As to the outcome, the Age of Absolutism, another important event ought to be considered. Not only did the superstructure of the early modern era's emerging new state system create a measure of "convergence" out of diversity within Europe, but the established state system also attempted to attain equilibrium with its own in-

herent forces. The state had begun to regulate the economy and exert domi-
nance over "society," and had as its means the seventeenth century's "military
revolution" (only seven years of that century saw no major international con-
flict); as a result, the more the power of the economic base diminished in the
East, the more the state apparatus reinforced itself. Finally, a balance of arms
corrected their relational disequilibrium, which by the end of the seventeenth
century the doctrine of "balance of power" elevated to a theoretical level. In-
deed, around 1680, the armies of Frederick II and the Romanovs each num-
bered about 200,000; this was the same figure as, say, the French army of the
Grand Siècle, though they represented a different burden to the treasury and,
more importantly, for the national revenue. Armies of this size could only be
maintained through "top-down" state control of society and the economy; the
more Eastern the polity was, the more brutally and forcefully was this domi-
nance exercised. Similarly, the competitive relationship between state and soci-
ety, which existed throughout Europe, was most strained in the Eastern regions.
While this affiliation would become still further strained, Western societies as-
serted themselves more and more energetically up until the French Revolution
(despite every effort of the state to control them). It was in order to resolve this
conflict that the peculiar notions of "enlightened absolutism" and of "revolution
from above" (which had appeared long before Stein, Gneisenau, Hardenberg,
and others articulated it in Prussia after 1806) were launched. Symptomatically,
these phenomena would appear once again in a zone extending to the frontiers
of the erstwhile Carolingian Empire.

The absolutist state in the West was a "compensation for the disappearance
of serfdom," while in the East it was a "device for the consolidation of serfdom"
(Perry Anderson).[32] Despite the mood of consolidation and "convergence" with
which the ruling circles of eighteenth-century Europe complemented their
more competitive relationships, this would not mask the fact that diverse re-
gional frameworks resulted in three distinctive relationships between society
and state. Two extreme models, equally pronounced, were to be found in the re-
gions in expansion, while variants of these reflected the agonized, desperate ef-
forts of East Central Europe within a zone flanked by uncertain and permeable
borders. Today, few would consider the difference between Western and East-
ern absolutism in Europe to be that the former retained a balance between the

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32   On the "competitive" nature of Eastern European absolutisms, see Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*,
     212–20.

nobility and the bourgeoisie, while the latter preserved an austere form of feudalism. In fact, both were feudal. The fundamental difference between them was that Western absolutism would defend the nobility and some elements of feudalism against the corrosive effects of capitalism while at the same time it self-interestedly contributed to its erosion; Eastern absolutism contained no such contradiction, since there were few, if any, corrosive forces at work. Aside from all this, their purpose and function were similar. All absolutist states had close functional and reciprocal ties with the regional form of a "world economy"; they were important agents in its development and its main beneficiaries.[33] On this basis the state would seek to subordinate society, which was its immediate goal, while its long-term endeavor was the reorganization or modernization of society: that is, preparing the groundwork for modernity. The means utilized for such maneuvers were also similar in East and West: development of a bureaucracy and an army, centralization of its administration, homogenization of its subjects, economic protectionism, and a new form of legitimization of power.[34] And yet, despite all of these parallels, every structural element in the East and West models present sharp contrasts due to great differences in the medieval infrastructure of the state-society relationship, as well as in their new economic bases.

The sharp differences materialize in the pace and overall timeframe of development. In the West, the feudal constituents of the medieval *corpus politicum* relinquished their resistance only gradually and unwillingly, and at the price of frequent rebellions against the ruler with his ever-increasing (but not yet absolute) power. The state therefore only succeeded in coming out on top in the seventeenth century. In France, the clearest *terminus post quem* of absolutism was the last Estates-General (1614–1615). Only afterwards did the true engineers of absolutism such as Sully, Richelieu, and Colbert gain ground on the basis of Bodin's plans, which had until then remained but a scrap of paper. Moreover, the most developed areas either abandoned the system early on (as in the Netherlands) or endured through a limited absolutism lasting less than half a century

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33 On the correlation between economic development and absolutism, see Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (London, 1946). Some of the opinions in the debate on the question are Paul M. Sweezy, "The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism," *Science and Society* 14 (1950): 134–57; Dobb's reply, Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*, 157–67; and Rodney Howard Hilton and Christopher Hill, "The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism," *Science and Society* 17, no. 4 (1953): 348–71. The debate reemerges time and again, particularly in the periodicals *Science and Society* and *Past and Present*.

34 On the four mechanisms of absolutism and "statism" in general, see Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*, 136–48.

(as in England). In the West, the framework outlived the eighteenth century only in areas where the shifting of the center of the world economy to the Atlantic region and the regional internal reorganization of the West had created a "semi-periphery" of economic and social structures (Spain, Portugal, and Southern Italy). Even if this was exceptional, the medieval *corpus politicum*, which had undergone internal changes, could develop—through a dialectical unity of revolutionary conflicts and organic continuity—into the basis of modern parliamentarianism, as is the case with the Long Parliament of the English Revolution. In England, the Stuarts represented something of an obstacle to the organic transformation of the medieval *civilis societas* into a modern civil society, while in other places the part absolutism played was to facilitate that process. In the West at least, absolutism was a decisive but episodic historical affair, forming one of the dynamic "cumulative" transformations that prepared the terrain for further structural change.[35]

In the East, however, Russian absolutism served as a framework for cumulative changes down through the centuries.[36] It established—albeit somewhat crudely—every basic element of this form of government from the reign of Ivan III to the reign of Ivan IV (1462–1584); including such precociously developed forces as the *oprichnina* of Ivan the Terrible—the "state within a state" terror organization that kept tabs on all opposition and eliminated the refractory boyars, confiscating their lands. Prior to 1905, the only episode to shake the foundations of Russian absolutism over the course of four centuries was the "Time of Troubles" in 1605–1613. After 1613, the Romanovs managed to consolidate the framework to such an extent that Count Stroganov would write in his memorandum to Alexander I: "In all our history, the peasantry was the source of all disturbances, while the nobility never stirred: if the government has any force to

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35 On the nature of absolutism, see Victor Gordon Kiernan, "State and Nation in Western Europe," *Past and Present* 31 (1965): 20–38, and Erik Molnár, "Les Fondements économiques et sociaux de l'absolutisme," in *XIIème Congrès International des Sciences Historiques: Rapports IV; Vienna* (1965), 155–69. An earlier survey of the problem is that of Fritz Hartung and Roland Mousnier, "Quelques problèmes concernant la monarchie absolue," in *Relazioni del X Congresso Internazionale di Scienze Storiche IV, Florence, 1955* (1955), 1–55, and of Roland Mousnier, "Les XVᵉ et XVIᵉ siècles," in *Histoire Générale des Civilisations IV* (Paris, 1954).

36 On the Russian development, see Henryk Łowmiański, "The Russian Peasantry," *Past and Present*, 26 (1963): 102–9, and Robert E. F. Smith, *The Enserfment of the Russian Peasantry* (London and New York, 1968). On the question of estate forms, see George Vernadsky, "Feudalism in Russia," *Speculum* 14 (1939): 300–23. On the development of absolutism in general, see George Vernadsky, *Tsardom of Moscow, 1547–1682*, vol. 5 of *A History of Russia* (New Haven and London, 1969), and Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*, 328–60.

fear and any group to watch, it is the serfs and not any other class." The weak and short-lived Estates Assembly (*zemskiy sobor*) was introduced "from above" by a decree of Ivan IV for purely tactical reasons: namely, to win over the nobility of the Western Russian and Ukrainian territories under Polish and Lithuanian control. After the assembly had codified serfdom's bondage to the soil for eternity (1649) and thus fulfilling its role, it faded into oblivion. An equally clear indenture was drawn up by the Prussians only a few years later (in 1653). In both cases, the nobility renounced its role in the state structure and received in return a guaranteed *corvée* and the denial of the rights of serfs. Consequently, modern Russian history was marked (as Stroganov had asserted) by the Bolotnikov, Razin, and Pugachov form of peasant uprisings that swept periodically, and with brutal force, over the vast territories of Russia. One of the models of absolutism was a historical episode achieving an integration that transformed the West; the other assumed a durable form of existence that integrated the whole of Eastern Europe.

As was mentioned earlier, one of the instruments of absolutism in both East and West was the establishment of a bureaucracy that would ensure its smooth operation, and an army that would multiply its force. But while the basis of the nobility was common to both, East and West followed two different models. In the West, the state divided the nobility: it offered civil and military positions of authority to one faction while neutralizing the other by guaranteeing its privileges and letting it grumble. The West's "bureaucratization" of the nobility was most typically accomplished through the sale of offices (the French *paulette*). In this way, the state achieved three goals with a single policy: it increased revenue, blocked the clientele system of the magnates, and, by buying off one division of the old nobility and turning them into professional office-holders, opened up the path for the bourgeoisie (*noblesse de robe*) to penetrate the state apparatus. Purchase of office bureaucracy became a form of capital investment and a vehicle of social mobility, while the practice of farming out taxes and other fiscal devices enabled the growing bourgeoisie to be incorporated into the state's cadre of high-ranking officials. Behind the aristocratic courtly milieu of the "feudal" state the system was shaped by capitalist operating principles, as was the army, whose reorganization also turned into a business "enterprise." Apart from that, the nobility remained a corporate entity outside of the state sphere. In the East, absolutism began after 1478 when Ivan III created a "service nobility" (*pomeshchiki*) which depended exclusively on the power of the tsar and had an interest in both territorial expansion and con-

fiscation. The next phase occurred when this new nobility came to predominate over the old nobility who had possession of free estates (*votchina*). Absolutism was fully consolidated when Peter the Great merged the two by extending the principle of service to all of the nobility; in this way he created a single service nobility of fourteen ranks who were incorporated into the bureaucracy and the army. Thus—after minor reforms under Nicholas I in 1831—the archaic bond of service sustained the "modernized" absolutist structure all the way up to the Great Revolution. A nobleman was *eo ipso* either a civil servant or an army officer; social rank and bureaucratic hierarchy became one. The West, having turned the whole of the nobility into interested parties, selectively incorporated it (along with certain bourgeois elements) within the state, while the East carried out a kind of "etatization" of the entire nobility.

The West subordinated society to the state; the East etatized it. Everywhere absolutism strove to homogenize its subjects, and there was no difference in principle between, for instance, the views of Louis XIV ("*mes peuples*") and that of the tsars with respect to the indivisible unity of the people. But in practice the variety of local autonomies and "freedoms" were never eliminated in the West. At most they were curtailed or subjected to state control. The particularities of amalgamated entities and provincial features were a great deal more diverse under any ancien régime than they were under even the loosest variant of the modern state. Periodically, the nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the peasantry would organize a united revolt in order to demand the reestablishment of their respective "freedoms," as was the case in France from the period of the "wars of religion" to the *Fronde* (1648–1653). Between these medieval "liberation movements" and the French Revolution some 150 years had elapsed, punctuated regularly by local peasant movements in response to heavy taxes. This gap can only partly be explained by the intensification of absolutism. The earlier campaigns, in effect, had become anachronistic. The new bourgeoisie, enriched by mercantilism, had no need for particular "autonomies." Centralization was not strong enough to homogenize the subjects thoroughly, but it was effective enough to start blurring the relativized traditional "freedoms"; their content, however, became more homogeneous with the rise of the new bourgeoisie. István Bibó aptly observed that the early modern state "administered by rallying rather than annihilating" the colorful world of traditional and social organisms. Of course, this only took place in zones where these traditional structures existed. The first deed of Russian absolutism under the aegis of the unification of Russian lands was that when Ivan III occupied Novgorod (1478), a city that had enjoyed an ex-

ceptional degree of autonomy: he deported the entire governing strata, the boyars, and the merchants, confiscated their property, and placed the city-state under a governor. The city of Moscow was the model—the center of administration and military power and an agglomeration that included boyars, civil servants, soldiers, merchants, artisans, and agrarian workers, each group individually dependent upon the central power—a circumstance typical of all the cities in the Russian lands. Even the privileged rich merchants (*gosti*) were chiefly commercial agents of the tsar. In the ensuing centuries, all of the cities in the newly colonized territories adopted this model: from Tsaritsyn to Archangelsk, further on to Ufa, and then towards the East. The feeble remnants of the local boyar self-government (*guba*) were eliminated by the first Romanovs, who annexed all territories to the central apparatus of the state by organizing them into provinces. One of the productive contradictions of Western absolutism was that its subjects sooner or later began to turn their *libertates* into a unified *liberté* within the remaining latitude offered by the state. The direction taken by tsarist absolutism allowed no such dissent, and consequently the notion of "society" as a mass of dependent subjects was established.

Whether it wanted it or not, far and wide the absolutist state became the largest economic "entrepreneur" of the period (as Braudel also pointed out). While the form that Western mercantilism generally took was that of the capitalist enterprise established under state protection, the logic of Russian mercantilism dictated the expansion of the traditional commercial and manufacturing monopolies of the tsar. Under Peter the Great and his successors, this assured state dominance in all of the key industries, especially those of war (shipbuilding and Ural iron mining) and foreign trade. Even during the century when the ancien régime had already turned its back on mercantilism, in France, for instance, the growth of industrial capital was around 60 percent, allowing the bourgeoisie to act as a catalyst of the abovementioned combination of freedoms. At the same time, economic growth in Russia always primarily assisted the state itself. Undeniably, in "competitive" terms this was the only really effective means through which tsarist Russia in its final hours had surpassed France to become the world's fourth largest steel producer and the fifth in overall industrial production.

"Absolutism" itself is an imprecise term in two ways: it says both too much and too little. Neither in principle nor in practice was the power of any of the Western monarchies limitless or independent from all law (*legibus solutus*): that is, "absolute" in the true sense of the word. Scholars who treated absolutism such

as Grotius, Bodin, or Hobbes never effaced "society" from the theoretical schema. The concepts that had accumulated by the High Middle Ages (from natural law to social contract and Roman law) were considered and developed further to create modern versions of the medieval principle of divine grace and the late ancient idea of "irrevocable" transfer of powers. But the "absolute" power of the sovereign over legislation, tax collection, and other domains was not "unrestricted" in principle—but it was "uncontrolled" in practice, which is not the same. On the one hand, the "people" did not control the sovereign *pars pro toto* as, according to the "contract," the people transferred the natural rights that were theoretically due to them. On the other hand, there was a principle that was still theoretically upheld according to which (as Bodin put it) the sovereign "had no right to infringe upon natural law" or do anything "without just or reasonable cause." Nothing that could be turned to the advantage of the society was eliminated from the ideological framework: these were merely consigned to a theoretical "subordination" within the social framework (just as what remained of the "body politic" was condemned, in practice, to passivity); the sovereign's power limitations were transferred to the moral sphere (which in practice was guaranteed by the survival of those remains). As soon as the conditions were ripe, all these theoretical elements could be used to pull the rug out from under the sovereign in one single move and organize them around the belief in popular sovereignty. It is rather symbolic that Montesquieu (who was, for a time, president of the parliament of Bordeaux) should have been at once a pioneer of modern state theory and a representative of the aristocratic opposition to absolutism.

The legitimization of Russian absolutism followed an entirely different formula. At the behest of Ivan III, around 1480, some monks unearthed manuscripts which included elements of the Byzantine, autocratic mysticism of the state; the mission of the "tsar of all Russians" was to be God's vicar on earth and connected with this aim was the vision that Moscow was a "third Rome," whose subjects were to render it "service." Since there was no institutional or notional tradition of social autonomy apart from the great boyars' de facto (though less articulated) involvement in the exercise of power, the only remaining sources of opposition were the constantly reemerging movements tending towards profound mysticism within the Orthodox Church. But from the outset they appeared to be in a hopeless situation, as the will of the Church was subservient to that of the state according to the Byzantine model. The Gordian knot was cut by Peter the Great, who created a Holy Synod that ultimately brought the whole of the Eastern Church under complete subjection by the state (1721). Not even in theory did

there remain room left to maneuver for any level of society under the state ideology which had been wrought out of the indissoluble triad of orthodoxy, autocracy, and the Russian people. This ideology oriented the triad towards a single focus: the personal power of the Tsar. From this convergence point radiated the true "faith" together with the sphere of "just" authority towards the "true" unity of the nation. The legitimization of Western absolutism consisted of a declaration of the "legitimacy" of power, while Russian autocracy was content to declare the mystical "truth" of power. Both of them forced their opponents to adhere to the same conceptual framework. While in the West, the rivals of absolutism referred continuously to their liberties and progressively voiced the slogan in the singular instead of the plural (so much so that in the decade preceding the French Revolution the terms "freedom" and "representation" seemingly merged in the parlance of conservatives and radicals), in the East, the opposition, in the vein of the state authority, invoked the one true and total "justice," never managing to free itself from that magic circle even in the modern era.

The persistence of the divergence between the Eastern and Western models is one of the particularities of development. In a sense, the divergence was accentuated within the framework of "convergence" that was introduced in the eighteenth century. The turning point was marked by the outcome of the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1715) and by the reforms of Peter the Great (1689–1725). The war—modernity's "First World War"—offered a new dimension to the "competitive" relations that had imbued the early modern state within the West, since England and the Netherlands, whose revolutions had eliminated the ideology of absolutism, emerged as the real winners, while the strongest model of absolutism, France, emerged as the real loser. The result was an ossification of French absolutism which shifted the competitive relationship within the model absolutist state to the tension between the state's retrograde structure and the emancipative forces of society. Enlightenment in the West was the concern of society, not of the state. The Western parable of absolutism was then completed by the French Revolution, after which the state, which had gained ascendancy over a premature and crisis-ridden medieval *societas civilis* as a result of the expanding world economy, helped to free society-as-"subject" from the crisis; but eventually an elevated *societé civile* gained ascendancy over the crisis-ridden state.

The Eastern parable of absolutism looked quite different. To hold its ground as it competed with the West, the Russian Empire was forced to "open a window" to Europe, renounce its own separate "world economy," and join the European one. It also made enlightenment the concern of the state by "civilizing" its

subjects in such a way that they remained subjects (and not *civiles*). That course of modernization was initiated quite deftly by Peter the Great. His reforms (and their continuation, particularly under the reign of Catherine the Great) should be assessed not from the customary standpoint as Russia's Europeanization but as having accomplished "Eastern-Europeanization" in the sense that his project was vigorously extended in every possible direction. It was Peter the Great who said: "Now we need Europe for a few decades, so that we can effortlessly turn our back on it later." Therefore, the possibility for movement, while limited and controlled exclusively "from above," would open up within a framework (and a "nationalized" European region) characterized by its social and political inertia. The result was that the Russian imperial framework would give birth to the Russian nation, just as nations in the West were forged out of absolutism. But convergence concealed a difference in this domain as well. Under the Western model, society freed itself from absolutism as a theoretical trustee of sovereignty, in a way that would allow it to control the state in a concrete manner. Under the Eastern model, the Russian nation remained, both in principle and in practice, a social framework subordinated to the "freedom of the state" (Marx).

East Central Europe

As we have seen, the area that lies between these two regional models crossed the threshold of modernity amidst newly developing "Eastern European" conditions, but with defective "Western-like" structures. Precisely as a result of this duality, the early modern era in this middle region produced a number of variant models instead of one that was cohesive, as if all of the possible combinations and permutations had been under experimentation.

In the northern half of the region, two extreme variants were attempted. This was the area destined by its location to be the first, by way of maritime Baltic trade, to assimilate itself to the industrial and agrarian division of labor in the expanding global economy of Europe, and to do so to the greatest extent in terms of volume. Thus it was the first area to adopt the "second serfdom," and the one to do so most consistently. During the economic boom (1550–1620), grain was chiefly (and to an increasing degree) shipped to Bruges and Amsterdam from the ports of Stettin (Szczecin), Danzig (Gdańsk), and Königsberg (today Kaliningrad). The ships were sent by the German *Gutswirtschaft* over the Elbe and by the Polish great estates tended by forced labor. The beneficiaries were the nobility of one very large and one very small state. The Polish-Lithua-

nian Union was the largest state formation in sixteenth-century Europe, extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea and from Silesia to the regions of Kiev and Smolensk. The Electorate of Brandenburg was, in early modern times, one of the smallest principalities in the region and one of the least urbanized territories of the Holy Roman Empire, with a feudal structure predominantly determined by the *Herrenstand* and *Ritterstand*. It attained some political significance only after the Hohenzollern dynasty had acquired the other pole of their future power, the heritage of the Teutonic knights: East Prussia (1618).

It was precisely because of Baltic prosperity and the surplus baggage of Eastern Europe that the selective "political society" of the Polish nobility set out on an extreme path: by stretching ad absurdum its unilaterally "Western" circumstances inherited from the Middle Ages, it established a kind of noble *res publica* which was entirely unprecedented in Europe.[37] Relying on the initial strength of the *Rzeczpospolita Polska*, which organized the Polish-Lithuanian Union into one entity defined by constitutional law (1569), radically rejecting the dynastic principle and subordinating the elected ruler to the Estate Assembly (the Sejm) from which the towns were excluded (1573), the Polish nobility tried to behave as if it were living in an expansive region. This was in fact the case, since by incorporating large areas of White Russia and the Ukrainian territories beyond Volhynia and Podolia, this state was in part responsible for initiating Eastern Europe's "internal colonization" as far as the Dnieper area. Subsequently, it remained a dominant political agent in the region until the last third of the seventeenth century. In the cultural sphere, these circumstances provided the foundation for the innovation of Copernicus and the Polish renaissance, known as the "Polish Golden Age," with Cracow as its center. As if it meant to illustrate the contradiction between the models of the West and East, this noble *res publica* developed an unusual "anti-mercantilist" policy that, in principle, excluded Polish merchants from marketing the grain of Polish landlords, and presented the business to foreign (mainly Dutch) merchants (1565). The attempt to have a "Western type" of noble society running the state on an "anti-absolutist" ideological basis ran into hopeless obstacles in every direction. By the end of the seventeenth century the general economic depression had ruined the manorial

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37   On the Polish problem, see Jerzy Topolski, "La Régression économique en Pologne," *Acta Poloniae Historica* (1962): 28–49, Marian Malowist, "Poland, Russia and Western Trade in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," *Past and Present* 13 (1958): 26–39; Marian Malowist, "Über die Frage der Handelspolitik des Adels in den Ostseeländern," *Hansische Geschichtsblätter* 75 (1957): 29–47; Witold Kula, "Un economia agraria senza accumulazione: La Polonia dei secoli XVI-XVIII," *Studi Storici* 3/4 (1968), 612–36.

economy, the urban basis having already been destroyed. The extreme noble "freedom" of feudal parliamentarianism (*liberum veto*), which bound the ruler hand and foot and paralyzed the state, also excluded the noble state from the "military revolution" of the period. Lacking a well-trained infantry and artillery—or a standing army of any kind—the noble cavalry, hopelessly outdated, suffered an easy defeat at the hands of the Swedish, Prussian, and Russian armies in quick succession. After this, the revenge of the Orthodox peasantry led by the Cossacks resulted in the annexation of Ukraine to Russia under the banner of Khmelnytsky (1648 and 1654). What all of this led up to is well-known: after a series of partitions (in 1772, 1793, and 1795) Poland disappeared from the European map. Its place was taken by three neighboring absolutist powers: Prussia and Russia, which in the meantime had become political actors of European significance, and the Habsburg state. It was emblematic that over the grave of Poland stood the three greatest figures of "enlightened absolutism": Frederick II, Catherine the Great, and Joseph II. This absurd, overstretched attempt on the part of the nobility in East Central Europe to preserve a medieval "Western" structure when "Eastern European" conditions were more and more predominant resulted in utter failure.

The smallest state formation in the region, the Electorate of Brandenburg, followed an entirely different path.[38] The Hohenzollerns and the Junkers interpreted (although not without initial hostility) the "Eastern European" turn of history in a rather different way. Abandoning the distorted "Western" circumstances they had inherited, they adopted a model of absolutism whose military and bureaucratic structure approximated the Eastern model more closely than that of any other European absolutist state, although they implemented this model with the precision characteristic of the West. Brandenburg-Prussia—due to its methodical expansion northward and eastward (into Pomerania) and westward (into Magdeburg, Altmark, and so on), its systematic obliteration of the estates mechanism, its unswerving attempts to fuse the nobility with the bureaucratic machinery and the army (making the Junkers an exemplary Western variant of the Eastern "service noblemen"), and its effective adaptation of mercantilism—played a significant role in Europe as early as the reign of Frederick I, the Great Elector (1640–1680). His successor and namesake turned the country into a military power and kingdom (1713–1730), after which Frederick the

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38 On the Prussian development, see Hans Rosenberg, *Bureaucracy, Aristocracy, and Autocracy: The Prussian Experience, 1660–1815* (Cambridge, 1966).

Great (1740–1786) acquired Silesia and raised the Prussian kingdom to the level of a model absolutist state and a major political force that also proved flexible enough to transpose (under Napoleon's influence in 1806) the ideas of "revolution from above" into practice. This ended up being a condition for this variant of the East Central European model—whose diametrical opposite, Poland, had disappeared from the map, with its Western part swallowed up by Prussia—to seize the only realistic opportunity to successfully unify Germany, which had existed thus far only as a conglomeration of several hundred territories straddling three great historical regions of Europe. Of course, the success of the Prussian kingdom was ambivalent in comparison with the successes of the two regions on either side of it. Bibó appropriately remarked that somewhere, at some time, and by some means, the region's countries always had to pay a high price for the distortions of their history. Eventually fascism and its consequences were the currency in which Germany was obliged to pay for having won its unity "from above," under the stamp of an "Eastern" initiative and by way of internal hindrances and deviations of democracy; that conclusion forms the leitmotif of Bibó's unpublished study, "The Causes and History of German Hysteria" (*A német hisztéria okai és története*, 1942–44).

Between these two extremes offered by the region, the *domus Austriae* generated a hybrid variation. Austrian self-irony might explain the fact the House of Habsburg managed to compress the whole southern part of East Central Europe into a single imperial conglomerate for nearly four centuries with the motto *Tu felix Austria nube*, evoking the successful strategy of dynastic marriages. The consequences might be described with Czech self-irony in the spirit of *Švejk*. Hungarians, on the other hand, are perhaps less prone to engage in self-ridicule; in order to do so they would have had to acknowledge the paradoxical situation that, on the one hand, Hungarian society genuinely suffered under this historical arrangement, and on the other, its elite contributed, at decisive moments of history, to the maintenance of this framework. As to its origins, neither tactical marital arrangements (1515), national character, a fatal historical catastrophe (1526), nor the alleged grave historical miscalculations or feudal "treachery" can account for it. In the final analysis, what aided the Eastern branch of the House of Habsburg in acquiring the Bohemian and Hungarian kingdoms was the fact that without the transient expansional illusions and prospects of the Poles, the "political society" of this zone was compelled to accept that it lived in a region whose position was "defensive." Looming in the shadows of the Czech nobility was the region's most characteristically "West-

ern-style" response to the first crisis of feudalism, Hussitism, whose traditions threatened the entire nobility with upheaval after the tides had turned in the "Eastern European" relationship between peasant and landlord. In contrast, the Hungarian nobility was not only compelled to endure the visceral memory of the nightmarish turn of events of 1514, but also forced to hold itself up after a knife had been thrust into its back by Eastern despotism. But the greater part of the Hungarian nobility was so "Western" that it was utterly incapable of conceiving of a compromise with the Ottoman powers, abandoning its collective political rights and feudal freedoms. Nor was it willing to give up its cultural tradition, broadly conceived, that is to say, its "Christian freedom" (*Christiana libertas*), as this complex configuration had been referred to since the mid-fifteenth century. Certainly, there was no shortage of political maneuvering. The small Principality of Transylvania, for instance, managed to adapt to a never-ending series of tactical schemes at the mercy—and through the consent—of the Sultan, who also needed just such a remote and diminutive buffer state. This type of mercy was not extended to the rest of Hungary, where in the meantime the House of Habsburg had made its case with the compelling argument that its own experience from the period previous to 1526 demonstrated that the sum of the annual income of the Crown derived from the totality of an independent Hungarian kingdom was only sufficient to cover the annual expenditure for the border fortress defense system in the south "in times of peace"; it was certainly not adequate to fend off the Sultan's dreaded army of 100,000, which was unparalleled in Europe at the time. Around 1526 and thereafter, the Habsburgs were the only power in a position to alter that imbalance.

The view of history that consoles itself with daydreams is inclined to forget three factors. One is that it was not the Battle of Mohács that ruled out the possibility of a "national monarchy." By then the Hungarian Kingdom had been obliged on and off for a century and a half to seek wider dynastic frameworks through personal unions, Polish, German, Habsburg, or Bohemian.[39] Even under the great monarchic endeavor of King Matthias, attempts had been made to widen the framework by conquests in the direction of Moravia, Silesia, and Austria. The fact that Buda lay outside the centers of dynastic integration belongs among the lost historical opportunities. But after 1490, Hungarian "polit-

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39 On the developments before the Battle of Mohács, an objective and balanced analysis is to be found in Domokos Kosáry, *Magyar külpolitika Mohács előtt* [Hungarian foreign policy before Mohács] (Budapest, 1978).

ical society" played no small part in the loss of such an opportunity. The second factor likely to be forgotten is that once no other realistic alternative than Vienna remained, the Vienna-Pressburg relation (Buda being out of the question physically too) was for a long time not only legitimate by traditional "Western" standards but also operated more or less in concordance with those standards—including its disorders and the uprisings that tried to correct them and in which there was nothing unique as they belong to the general European tableau of tensions and clashes between absolutism and the estates. The third factor is that the Habsburg dynasty, although it was far from wishing to lay down its life or spill its blood in the cause of the liberation of Hungary, played a significant part in preventing the Ottoman wedge from penetrating more deeply into the country, and even that ambiguous role cost Vienna more than all the revenue it was able to squeeze out from the rest of Hungary. Of course, none of these observations contradict the fact that the series of "bad compromises"—so central to Bibó's image of history—really did begin in 1526. The real tragedy is that one could scarcely conceive of any "better" compromise or any fuller absolution from the constraints of compromise. The Hungarian (like the Bohemian) nobility lacked the strength of the Polish, but it had far greater strength than the Brandenburg-Prussian. That is why it ended up with a third model: a bad compromise, but one unquestionably Western in character, being confined within the Habsburg dynastic framework.

Over the course of nearly four centuries the unifying framework of the Habsburg dynasty was marked by a unique in-between, indeed ambiguous, position between the Eastern and Western prototypes of the European state system. Although the demarcation lines of the "second serfdom" extended over this new edifice, the agrarian structures of the Austrian hereditary provinces remained fundamentally Western; this led, in two isolated areas (Tyrol and Vorarlberg) to a political consequence that was exceptional even in the West: representatives of the peasantry were incorporated into the provincial body politic. At the same time, the state model was "Eastern" insofar as its "imperial" nature resembled the Russian model. Nevertheless, it was also decidedly different in that centralization of the imperial realm ultimately never reached beyond the stage of a design. Dynastic unity and centralization of military and financial administration was continuously contravened by the traditional autonomy of individual "countries" and provinces alike—more often than not with a force that was unparalleled even in the West. The tempo of development of Habsburg absolutism displayed an obvious similarity to that of the West. The conflicts that erupted

between the ever-strengthening state and the defensive forces of the estates took the form of "religious wars" and resulted in the periodic appearance of "national" slogans. These flare-ups were only subdued after the state's definite turn towards absolutism in the seventeenth century. On the other hand, the first decisive turn took place—in Bohemia at least (1620)—with a truly "Eastern" kind of brutality and continued in Hungary in 1670 with an attempt at a similar showdown. This met with much stiffer resistance than expected and led, within half a century, to a compromise that would naturally have been quite unimaginable in the East, yet had no parallel in the West either. Neither was there any precedent for the course taken by the Austrian hereditary provinces to safeguard the fragmented remains of their regional autonomy, with their political structure based on Estate assemblies and the medieval liberties of the nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the peasantry, while nevertheless developing, in tandem, the basis for absolutism in the spirit of an unconditional faith in the dynasty. In the late eighteenth century, at its *punctum saliens*, this semi-Western configuration employed a characteristically Eastern strategy by taking the matter of enlightenment into its own hands instead of the societies of its "peoples," even though at that point it was considered the last European bastion of papal clericalism. Having completed the program of enlightenment with partial success and partial failure, following the great historical watershed of 1789, similar to Russia, it had become a "prison of nations." This fundamental fact persisted even after the fiasco of an unsuccessful revolution and the failed revival of a unified empire; again, in a semi-Western way, towards the end of the nineteenth century it turned into a framework for rapid modernization and capitalism. Its inevitable demise was due to the fact that in an age of nationalism it was too late to turn a "prison of nations" into a framework for the free coexistence of its constitutive peoples. The dissolution of this structure was followed by mounting chaos rather than diminished tensions, due exactly to the hybrid nature of this state which had persisted for nearly four centuries. By its very nature, absolutism was quite unsuited for forging modern nations (nation-states or linguistically-defined nations) out of its "peoples," although in both East and West this was one of the fundamental (if unevenly executed) historical functions of absolutism.

The entire history of the Habsburg Monarchy can be seen as an attempt to keep something which was intrinsically unstable in equilibrium, suspended between the two extreme variants of East Central Europe: the Polish and the Prussian. If we can speak of an enduring core principle in this framework that is ambiguous in every respect—apart from the total supremacy of the dynasty—it

was the House of Habsburg's introduction within its own imperial frameworks of a small-scale "East Central European" version of the division of labor that had characterized the emerging modern world economy. The decisive foreboding of the things to come had appeared with the Peace of Westphalia (1648), after which the Habsburgs were driven out of Western Europe politically. This was reinforced by the repeated failures to establish monopolistic commercial industries modeled after the West over the course of the next half century, signaling that the prospects of the Habsburgs to entrench their state within the Western segment of the world economy were faint. Consequently, the Habsburgs secured a division of labor between Western (industry) and Eastern (agriculture) economic structures within their own East Central European political framework. The political conditions for this in the hybrid Western sphere were given because the Habsburg *Hausmacht* managed to gain the upper hand over its dismembered hereditary provinces with relative ease, and in part by virtue of the fact that this Western dynasty never hesitated to wipe out the entire "political society" of a country through absolutist means—even transgressing those in the East. After the Battle of White Mountain (1620), this happened to Bohemia, as the court deftly selected from among its "countries" the one which, already during the sixteenth century, had produced twice as much in income and economic potential as the original *Erbländer*. By annihilating the cream of the Bohemian nobility, confiscating more than half of their lands, "excising" the old Bohemian ruling class, and supplanting it with a cosmopolitan aristocracy who would be loyal to the dynasty, the Habsburgs secured three important gains.

Firstly, they established a ruthless absolutist government in Bohemia, anchoring it as a hereditary province. Secondly, the imperial administrative system and high command acquired high-ranking senior officials which, again, resembled neither the Western variety (with its practice of purchasing offices) nor the Eastern (consisting of a subservient nobility), but was a third type, which however lacked the nation-forming ethnic unity common to both. Thirdly, the Habsburgs secured a territory which they could develop into a complex regional model featuring a new aristocracy with a subordinate Eastern-type "second serfdom" and Western-type state-generated mercantilistic industrialism. Hence, it was principally in Bohemia, which existed for centuries under a foreign dynasty (throughout which period the aristocracy remained foreign and the domestic nobility held no sway) that East Central Europe's most bourgeois nation would develop as a product of Habsburg absolutism's only— accidental and inadvertent—nation-building venture. It did not even manage to unite the *Öster-*

reichische Erbländer into a real "Austrian nation." Then, more obtrusively and with plenty of clamor, there was another stalwart populace with a very feeble middle class: the Hungarian nation, which existed not so much through the good offices of the Habsburgs as in spite of them. According to the "Habsburg division of labor," Hungary was cast as an Eastern actor, owing to both its geographical position and its estates system, which was more entrenched than that of Bohemia. The questionable rewards granted to its "political society" proved to be a punishment for the nation itself, whereas in Bohemia the punishment that followed the collapse of its estates turned out to be a reward.

The picture of the "cruel Habsburgs" that has been impressed so deeply into the Hungarian view of history has eclipsed in practice the purpose of that cruelty, by which all conflicts were resolved: the compromise between absolutism and the estates. Once again there was certainly no equivalent European pattern or example of it. Unfortunately, neither the heroic fights and the bloody revenges, nor the conflicts of the Hungarian "long seventeenth century" that began with the Fifteen Years' War and ended at the Peace of Szatmár (1593–1611), left lasting marks on modern structures, apart from creating a tendency to forget how between 1608 and 1670 there was a good half century of compromises, itself an unprecedented occurrence. The marks instead recall the "division of labor" which in Hungary helped stabilize an early modern "Eastern" type of transformation (that consequently distorted the medieval Western forms further) by leading up to a medieval-style "Western" compromise (which was already anachronistic in terms of early modern Western coordinates).

If one reviews history through Bibó's eyes, from the point of view of the historical preconditions of the "organization of democratic society," we have to disregard emotions that in their right place might well be entirely justified, forget the daydreams that in their own place are also entirely pointless, and foreswear the self-contained moralizing that glosses our understanding of history. We need to do this, even though such omissions will always scandalize the subscribers to an emotional, daydreaming, moralizing conception of history. The issue is not whether or not the struggles against the Habsburgs were full of colorful episodes or whether or not those struggles were justified at all. An intelligent view of history makes clear that these issues can easily be separated from the factors that had a role in defining structures in the historical *longue durée*. Dreams after the event are too frail to connect these two kinds of approach. The dreams begin by saying that the Habsburgs might have been forestalled, for instance by accepting an alleged "proposal" of Suleiman. They continue by stating that there

was an idea of some kind of "national absolutism" at work in the depths of the anti-Habsburg movements. They end by concluding that these movements could have achieved some freedom for the serfs. But since the existence of any "proposal" of any kind around 1526 cannot be proved and the chances for a "better" compromise were altogether unrealistic, the ideas in the mid-seventeenth century and after undoubtedly centered on a monarchical alternative subordinated to a noble republic of the Polish type. Nothing was further from the nobility's mind than setting the peasantry free from the "second serfdom," since that was the vital condition for their existence irrespective of whether they lived under a republican (Poland), absolutist (Prussia and Bohemia), or estate dualist framework (Hungary), even if their best representatives, the minority like Ferenc Rákóczi II, really did consider something of the kind and also implemented it with smaller groups since István Bocskay (such as the privileges of the haiduks). Rákóczi sometimes complained bitterly when he came into conflict with outright feudal self-interest. As soon as the battles were over, however, the tender shoots of a wider, more comprehensive concept of social freedom, which had sprung up here and there, were swiftly cut back, at least until the flowering of the Reform Age (1825–1848) and the subsequent "spring of the peoples." The movements of the Hungarian "long seventeenth century" undoubtedly meant something different and more than the Fronde-type uprisings of the same period, which sometimes had a similarly broad social base, since the alien nature of absolutism could temporarily forge a premature "national" front. That said, the Hungarian movements cannot be compared in their structure, or in their function of forming a modern "national society," to the Dutch Revolt and War of Independence that shook off the yoke of Spanish absolutism.

After 1526, Hungarian history did not simply come to an "impasse," as Bibó suggested; it became trapped in a blind alley whose recesses in modern times were in fact mapped out in detail by Bibó with merciless perspicacity. In essence, this deadlock meant that Hungarian history, with its "Western-like" predisposition (albeit weak, deficient, and jaundiced), was pushed by the "Eastern European" historical crisis into an "East Central European" framework that, in principle, prevented the state from effectively overcoming this crisis by following either the purely Western or the Eastern model. The region's severely defensive position excluded the possibility of a Western type of "national monarchy," while the existence of the Western-type *corpus politicum* essentially prevented Russian-style unilateral subordination to any kind of imperial absolutism. The one-sided political society of the nobility, which stubbornly preserved the estate

pole, was occasionally able, with fits and starts, to rally the masses from "beneath" the *corpus politicum* behind the banner of "national freedom." But it was unable to modernize itself from within. However, it cannot be blamed for this failure, since, apart from the Netherlands and England, the medieval *civilis societas* was unable to independently carry out this kind of self-modernization anywhere in Europe. Thus the anachronism remained: while the West set out towards national absolutism and the East towards imperial autocracy, Hungary's noble society did not (and could not) imagine any other solution—even in the face of changing conditions within the imperial framework—than that of sticking with the medieval dualism of royal power and the estates, which finally produced lasting if normally partial success in the eighteenth century. Political culture itself became stuck in hopeless anachronism, too. While in the West popular sovereignty started to emerge from the social contract at the expense of the power of the sovereign (while nothing valuable developed out of the totality of autocracy in the East), in Hungary the petrifaction of the idea of the Holy Crown, inherited from the Middle Ages and summed up by István Werbőczy, remained the focal point of political thinking and state theory. Quite specifically, this political society, being influenced by the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, continued, even at the Diet of 1790–91 (as Ferenc Eckhart put it so expressively), to hold "Montesquieu and Rousseau in one hand and the *Tripartitum* in the other"[40]—the latter expressing the mystery of the Holy Crown, whose essence was that only the nobility could be the "members" of the realm's mystic "body." The situation was not exactly as Bibó said when he counterposed the essentially "mendacious construction" of the 1867 *Ausgleich* with the earlier feudal period whose structure and burdens "could be called, and moreover called themselves what they were." First of all, the structure itself was entangled in twofold lies. The dynasty kept saying that it "was doing good" or intended to do good to its "peoples" in Hungary, but it was prevented from doing so by the rebellions, which of course was a pure fabrication, because of the division of labor mentioned above. On the other hand, the nobility kept complaining about the endless suffering of the "Hungarian nation" in its recriminations, which as time passed became a twofold lie, because when talking of the nation the nobility only meant itself (which by European standards had begun to become an unadulterated lie by then), and because it did not suffer very much

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40   The passage is quoted from Ferenc Eckhart, *A szentkorona-eszme története* [The history of the idea of the Holy Crown] (Budapest, 1941), 254.

in any case. In spite of all that, as early as the year of the destruction of the Bastille, a noble "national" uprising was brewing against Joseph II, who wanted to free the serfs "from above." At that time only the narrow intellectual group of the Josephinists were compelled to face the tragic contradiction of modern Hungarian history: the traversing axes of national independence and social progress. The reason why the nobility had, for quite some time, hardly suffered at all was that its compromise with the Habsburgs had left it a practically untrammeled master of its own serfs, and at the same time it had retained the sectors of the state that were its due by the feudal rules of the game. Besides the local, county administration (of which it had remained in possession after 1526 in a normative way) it had been granted an organ of central government with a restricted sphere of influence: the Governing Council.

The Hungarian variant, by contrast with the Polish one, was only capable of a partial success or seeming success since its system of estates was weaker; but since it was stronger than either the Prussian or the Bohemian variant, Hungary excluded itself far more than Prussia or Bohemia from the partial successes of enlightened absolutism, particularly from the benefits of the revolution "from above." All else from which it excluded itself (a capital city, a modern state apparatus, economic organization, political culture, and so on) has been listed by István Bibó in his work on "The Miseries of East European Small States," where he remarked that Hungary "had to face the fact that no one had established a modern state and national organization for them, a process that had taken place elsewhere in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries."[41] Nor had anyone accomplished the forming of a nation. Of course, the feudal Hungarian body politic had lacked the strength to forge a *nationalité d'État* out of the historical framework of the state as it did not intend to do so and was devoid of the required means. Importantly, even those monarchies which eventually turned out to be "national monarchies" had no such intention, but they possessed the means to achieve this. At the same time, the Hungarian framework had enough strength to maintain the fiction of an estate-based *nationalité d'État*, while being too much rooted in the estates system to take notice of the birth of linguistic nations behind the fiction and to draw reasonable conclusions from that in good time. The most visible and tragic way in which the partial success and the poor compromise rebounded in the long run was through the national question: in comparison, it was far better to disappear from the map for a century and a half, as

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41   "The Miseries of East European Small States," in Bibó, *The Art of Peacemaking*, 136.

Poland did, or to be degraded into a hereditary province for three centuries, as Bohemia was. Few have seen so clearly as István Bibó how dominant a role was played by the fiction of historical Hungary in the false turns made during Hungary's modern history. Hungarian history had to pay in manifold ways for being forced into the hybrid East Central European model, but the heaviest price was doubtless the necessity to abandon not only the fiction of state-nation, which was anyhow impossible to realize, but also the realities of the linguistic nation.

Apart from notorious historical distortions in the structure of its society and economy, Hungary also paid for its most awkward predicament with the engenderment of a distinctive latent malaise in its social-cognitive framework, which was diagnosed accurately by Bibó. Nevertheless, some of these maladies proved so grave precisely because they did not (as Bibó believed) stem from a relapse that had occurred after the healing processes of the Reform Age and the 1848–49 Revolution, but stemmed from more ancient organic disorders. Was it not a symptom of this malady that the ruling strata of a society—within which every uprising was ultimately aimed at political compromise—should for centuries delude itself into believing that it was forever rebelling and resisting? The delusion was so strong that it still exerts a considerable influence on Hungarians today. Was the juxtaposition of an exaggerated inherited "spirit of domination" (also central to Bibó's analysis) and the "humility of the serf" not also symptomatic? Another indication of the malady was the particularly unbalanced and depressive contrast of the state of "defiance" and the passivity of *nil admirari* pointed out by the poet Mihály Babits: the resigned submission that takes for granted that all major decisions are made somewhere "higher up."[42] The source of these symptoms was not purely derived from the Eastern European turn. They were more directly the result of a one-sided construction based on compromise, in which local frameworks of authority, barely controlled by the central power, represented a kind of compensation for the total management of state administration, whereas in other regions the absolute state itself started to create a professionalized balance in this broader framework.

Yet, the picture is not so hopelessly dark, even though the present sketch intends to do no more than flash some light on the frameworks that were formed during the period of prolonged feudalism, and on the synchronous and asynchronous elements within those frameworks. Moreover, the "Western-like" cor-

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42   The analysis is in Mihály Babits, *A magyar jellemről* [On the Hungarian character] in *Mi a magyar?* [What is the Hungarian?], ed. Gyula Szekfű (Budapest, 1939), 52.

rection did not merely occur in cultural history, the instances of which we usually bear in mind. From the point of view of the Hungarian literature, art, and education of the period, the Leitha had never become a border; their orientation was uninfluenced by the Habsburg framework and formed an organic part of *Europa Occidens* by stretching beyond that framework ("in a simpler texture, with a provincial character," as Bibó put it). But to prove that "high culture" in itself is far from equal to correction, it is enough to recall how nineteenth-century Russian literature, which was maybe the greatest of the age, did not correct Russia's nineteenth-century structure in the least, while Hungary's "Eastern European" turn, although distorting the structures, could not eliminate the organizing principles of law and freedom. In that context the issue was not the nobility's interpretation of those notions or the inflation of them, which was about to rebound since it had by then become anachronistic. It was unable in any case to rebound strongly enough to destroy the structures of the "small circles of freedom" inherited from the Middle Ages entirely. In that respect Habsburg absolutism was no more restrictive than the absolutism of any Western state. Moreover, in the slightly modernized prolongation of medieval dualism of royal power and the estates there was a certain internal logic; for instance, some elements of urban freedom, while being controlled by the state and under the thumb of the county, still went unquestioned. More importantly still (since it concerned more than nine-tenths of the country's population), not even the peasantry's circumstances were in full synchronism with Werbőczy's *Tripartitum*, with the deprivation of civil rights that had followed from the status of *perpetua rusticitas*. That less spectacular, hidden, but stoutly stubborn resistance with which the remains of the peasantry's "rights and freedoms" stood out at grassroots level in the village communities against the pressure of the "second serfdom" was far more important than the resistance of the nobility wearing its mantle of panther skin. In some ways, the two were also connected in the anti-Habsburg movements which on a lower level preserved the concept of freedoms in such islands as the market towns, the haiduks, and the settler communities. Recent research has shed more and more light on the number of ways in which the peasantry's mobility and personal and communal rights ("customs") loosened the grip of the "second serfdom" in Hungary.[43] It seems they did so in many

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43 For an abundance of material on the surviving peasant "freedoms," see János Varga, *Jobbágyrendszer a magyarországi feudalizmus kései századaiban, 1556–1767* [System of serfdom in the later centuries of Hungarian feudalism, 1556–1767] (Budapest, 1969).

more places than in the German territories beyond the Elbe or in the Polish or Bohemian lands. Another interesting finding is the chronological fact that the grip became tighter in the eighteenth century, when the consolidated compromise of the ruler and the estates took place.

Of course, while their form had been distorted, the persistence of Western-type frameworks help us to understand a seeming contradiction. On the one hand, the strong estates system of Hungary could prevent the state from implementing reforms "from above" around the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to a far greater extent than was the case in Austria, Bohemia, or Prussia. On the other, within scarcely a quarter of a century, the finest of the nobility were capable of a renewal that made them take the matter of reform and then revolution "from below" in hand, inaugurating what was perhaps the most European period in Hungarian history—the "greatest attempt to return to the main track of Western development" (Bibó). Since this was the point from which Bibó was to follow in detail and in such an evocative manner the hopes and impasses of historical development—Hungary's contorted course within the "East Central European" model, as it were—it seems an appropriate point at which to end this study.

Epilogue

Does anything follow from history? A lot follows from it, but in a form outlined by Bibó like this: "I do not believe in hundred percent necessities in history. I do believe there are within the great outlines a greater or lesser number of opportunities that can either be bungled or directed toward fortunate paths."

Anyway, these outcomes are rarely unanimous and are far from simply linear. It is enough to think of the reform concept of Istvan Bibó and Ferenc Erdei concerning administration, focusing on the model center of their proposed merger of city and county: the market town of the Great Plain. This was considered an Archimedean point in their plan for a democratization of the state administration from below.[44] Was the market town of the Great Plain a "Western" type of formation? From the point of view of its origin, with its communal freedoms and self-government, it was undoubtedly an "East Central European" variant of it;

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44 Bibó's ideas on administrative reform remained mostly in manuscript, e.g., István Bibó, *Társadalmi reform és közigazgatás* [Social reform and administration] is a lengthy work that examines the historical antecedents, too. A short summary is contained in István Bibó, "A magyar közigazgatásról" [On the Hungarian public administration], *Városi szemle* 33 (1947): 285–94.

yet without the special breadth and tolerance of the Sultan's financial policies it could not have tided itself over the critical early modern period or succeeded in preserving itself. If these peasant towns had not been *khass* estates (estates of the Sultan's treasury) but had remained within the early modern, "East Central European" scope of the *oppidum*, the landlords' reaction would certainly have been to keep a tight rein on them, as was done in Habsburg Hungary, where there was no analogy to them at all. These potential patterns of modern democratic administration were confined within the borders of Turkish-ruled Hungary, and through them the Ottoman Empire paid some kind of compensation for the economic, cultural, and ethnical destruction it perpetrated. Such paradoxical outcomes occur sometimes. One may also think of the Balkans, where the Ottoman conquest stalled the possibility of autochthonous development for centuries and distorted the structures, but made sure that when Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Bosnia were finally liberated in the nineteenth century, their landowner class had long ago been exterminated. Since no hereditary aristocracy could form under the Ottoman system of land tenure, suddenly societies of small peasants emerged out of the Ottoman sea at a time when East Central Europe was still suffering under the *latifundia*. And if one bears in mind that in all Southeastern Europe only the two more loosely dependent Romanian principalities preserved the strata of boyars and phanariots, experiencing a local variant of the "second serfdom," then the specific and paradoxical interdependence of history and democratic opportunities can hardly be denied.

The "East Central European" character of Hungarian history is a specific formula, since in a hybrid way it has a dual aspect: on the one hand, its early modern "Eastern European" turn increased the distortions and unbalance of the economic and social structure (and thus the petrification of social and political relations) by comparison with the Western formula; on the other, this turn could not completely erase the "Western" elements of that structure. So it was a formula which triggered (to use Bibó's key terms) "wrong conditionings," such as the reproduction of the "spirit of domination" and of the "humility of the serfs," and likewise the inclination to "false constructions" and to fixing an "order of immobility," with the "mechanism of fear" overcoming the "mechanism of reason." At the same time, the same formula contained elements that in lucky cases could be made suitable for "movement towards greater freedom." In Bibó's thinking, 1945 was a historical turning point, because it assigned the task of a transformation that had more real chance than any since around 1500, more than any between 1825 and 1849 or in 1918–19, but with the specific feature that the impasse, which

had worsened in the preceding phase of history, meant society itself had not made any preparations for the turn and so did not possess that "irresistible dynamism" which is the basic feature of truly revolutionary situations.

When this task of transformation was assigned, hardly anyone saw so clearly as Bibó the roots of the dual historical heritage or the actual situation with its own specific duality. A leading idea in his whole work is that one side of the duality demanded the revolutionary transformation of the structure, but it could only be valorized by the development of democracy, offered by the other side of the duality. One without the other would bring back the wrong historical conditionings, in one way or another. The theoretical crux of Bibó's historical and political viewpoint was that revolution and democracy belong together, and that the former in theory is a precondition of the latter. But in the dimensions of Realpolitik, he faced up with analytical responsibility to the fact that while Europe's two outer regions had produced their own revolutions (the West in the sixteenth–eighteenth centuries, the East in the twentieth century) the region between them, including Hungary, had only failed revolutions, partial revolutions, and as partial successes, revolutions "from above." In 1945 too, the opportunity for revolution and democracy had arrived not "from below" but from outside. Although István Bibó never formulated it like that, the historical dilemma he attempted to solve both on a theoretical level and by practical proposals was how—in a situation which for historical reasons had put forward the need and chance for a "revolution from above" in a socialist variant—to place the processes under the control of democracy "from below" and cause them to develop along that line. The "revolution from above" was a necessity that followed from the "Eastern European" background, while the democracy "from below" was a historical chance presented by the "Western-type" elements: in theory a perfectly consistent "East Central European" model (even though Bibó only used this term in his later writings).

The model had at least three important premises in the coordinates of necessity, non-necessity, and possibility. One of them was the necessity that the socialist revolution was, as Bibó put it, "a great historic endeavor to escape from the impasse of Eastern social development," and a "further correction and completion" of the process of mankind's full liberation. The second was that it was unnecessary to place this Eastern demand under the hereditary Eastern European techniques of power and bureaucracy or to "set aside" the Western techniques of freedom, particularly if there existed certain internal historical and structural preconditions for democracy's objective techniques which were not

superstructural. The third was that the "revolution in human dignity" was an absolute precondition for democracy, because thereby people could experience democracy's own strength, have a chance to choose and control their leaders and expel them if necessary, and learn by direct experience that public concerns were their concerns as well. For that the chance lay in the institutional and radical establishment of the foundations of a self-governing state administration and of the start of a state structure functioning "upwards from below," according to Bibó's reform program. That was how revolution "from above" might have obtained its own line "from below."

It would be difficult to question the internal historical logic of that model. It is another matter that in retrospect one might be justified to question whether the program of "limited and planned revolution" Bibó drew up in 1945 was sufficient by comparison with the internal requirements. But it was not Bibó's intention to appear as a theorist who could offer a solution to everything. Whether this program was realistic is made questionable, among many other things, by the fact that, with regard to the country's political representatives of the time, it was too left-wing and "revolutionary" for the right and too right-wing, too "bourgeois" and "plebeian" for the left. Nor could it become a program for the plebeian party of his own either, and it aroused no reaction from the centrist parties. But even the lack of mass support does not prove unconditionally that it was unrealistic, since support could only have been gauged if the mass base had been more clearly shown by the development of the institutions and the "objective techniques" of democracy. It is unjustified to brand unrealized chances of history as unrealistic solely because they were not realized. One may dispute other things in the program too, and naturally the best partner with whom to do so would have been Istvan Bibó himself, since if there was anything missing from his thinking it was a belief in its own totality. Amidst the completely transformed coordinates, one may say of Bibó's work that although almost all his concrete proposals have become outdated, his historical and actual analyses have all remained valid, and in the sphere between the two almost all the theoretical concepts developed on a historical basis, although not unrevised, are opportune. His basic position, which he put down several times and meant to serve for a long trend, is also valid and opportune: chances inherent in reality are not necessarily realized—their realization depends on effort and goodwill.

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Questions of "Origins" and National Consciousness*

1. Notions relating to the origin of people and state were already organic constituents of the "national" consciousness that had already begun to form in Europe around halfway through the Middle Ages; moreover—unlike the typically modern notions—they formed the chief ideological pillars of these structures. Nevertheless, in regard to the origin of peoples, these notions per se had very little to do with the actual ethnogenesis. The peoples of medieval Europe learned to believe in fictitious "prototypical peoples" that their lettered scholars constructed for them in the Middle Ages from remaining scraps of historical, geographical, and ethnographical information of late antiquity; to the extent that such beliefs took root, these theories of origin were subsequently transformed into myth. Only exceptionally, and then in a subordinated position, which was usually divested of meaning, was a genuine historical core or ethnic tradition preserved in these constructions which at one and the same time served the historical and logical integration of their own people into God's plan for the universe, and the accentuation of differentiation, specific "function," and identity within the Christian republic. This applies to virtually all the archaic "national" mythopoesis of medieval Europe, from the Trojan origins of the French to the Hunnish origins of the Magyars.

The other question of genesis, that of the state, by its very nature posed itself again differently in the Middle Ages than it has done in modern times. Medieval man was preoccupied less with the origin of a "state" per se than with the

genesis of a given kingdom (*regnum*) as a "national territory." In theories of origin, which were rooted in a hypothesized autochthony, of course, legitimization converged with ethnogenesis, whereas in the other European subtype—the one to which Hungarian notions belong—prominence was given to the act of an ancient conquest. In just the same way as the original lands settled by the descendants of King Priam, following their flight from Troy, legitimized the possession of Gallia for the French, so did the conquest of Attila and his Huns buttress the "historical right" of the Magyars to the lands of Pannonia, subsequently validated by the "second coming"—what in Hungarian is called the *honfoglalás* (conquest)—by the Hun-Magyars. It is well known that while the figure of King (Saint) Stephen I of Hungary was indeed the source of diverse religious and legal myths in the Middle Ages, it still lost that "alpha" quality for a long time in the specific "national" structure of consciousness which was evolving at the end of the thirteenth century.

At variance as these ideas were with historical realities, they were all the more fitting for the ideological needs of the age; to the extent that they welded fictive elements into a unity, they served well the need for myths, and meanwhile, precisely through that combined ideological-mythical quality, they provided a cohesive power for group awareness. Jointly they incarnated a characteristic premodern structure of consciousness in which the beginning of "national" history—*historia gentis*—fundamentally served to legitimize the present. The mythical legitimizing power of ancestry acted as an ideological bridge—spanning the centuries and structures—to bind together the *origo* of people and state (national territory) with the reality or needs of the present.

After the eighteenth century, this broadly spanning ideological bridge broke down—in principle at least—under the burden of incipient modernist thinking. After the invention of the concept of historicity and historiography's declaration of intent to become a science, as well as the simultaneous emergence of the nation as a collection of preeminently modern (civic) communal relationships from the jumble of projections (some of them mutually contradictory or overlapping) of the "national" structures of feudalism, the dimensions themselves, in principle, were also transformed.

Sooner or later the true course of ethnogenesis was clarified which, more often than not, proved to be a much more complex configuration than being reducible to a single "proto-people." Sooner or later the true facts about the emergence of the state also came to light, a configuration which proved to be much more tightly bound to the given structure than to be capable, in and of itself, of

providing a legal source under modern conditions. At the same time, national consciousness based on the emerging "civic relationships" (and in proportion to the extent to which they measured up to reality) found its cohesion primarily in existing linguo-cultural and/or politico-institutional factors to which history served more as a backdrop, as it were, by way of a historical infrastructure which was by now conceptually separating from the present. Inter alia the origin both of people and state took its place among the historical elements of the modern national identity construction. To put it another way, the unconditional, tight, and subordinate relationship of history and ideology was, in principle, broken. Of course, certain "historical ideologies" continued to live on, to some degree, in every national consciousness; in addition, new ones were also born, while the sphere of collective emotions naturally fomented historical motifs aplenty—but as elements of a consciousness of historical identity, and not of a meaningful national ideology.

In principle, that is. For in practice, ever since the nineteenth century transcending medieval reflexes and the transformation of the structure of consciousness tended to take place only where the existing state and the nation—as formulated in modern terms—more or less coincided, which is to say: where the nation-state arose, that could be declared as "national" without any substantial theoretical or practical difficulties. Putting it this way already signals that nevertheless a problem did still remain even in Western Europe, which the "ethnic renaissance" of our own day is starting to bring to the surface. Not even the transformation of structures of consciousness itself was always and everywhere clearly consistent, but that is not a matter that concerns us here. What does concern us is that in this part of the world, call it Central and Eastern Europe, the state and national frameworks have remained—or have become—to such a degree separated from each other during the process of state-formation in the modern and contemporary times that the state could only be declared "national" at the cost of the greatest theoretical or practical difficulties (or not even at that cost). In this region the medievalistic subordination of history to ideology remained, or rather was reproduced and in its own way modernized, in direct proportion to these difficulties. In other words, the broadly spanning ideological bridge which had once connected the origins of a people and state over the centuries and structures (indeed, by now, the facts of the past and the present) was rebuilt or even, in effect, newly built.

Bridge-building calls for a lot of material, time, and patience. Therefore, since the nineteenth century, the broadest-spanning of such ideological bridges

over which one may unreservedly move between the long bygone and the present have preeminently moved in the prevailing "successful" constellations, or else have sought to make the crossing between the two banks by other means. It is well known that since the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, the Hungarian national consciousness had been able to enjoy its own ambivalent sense of achievement, and thereby, after much genuine and deeply-felt frustration of which it had been mindful ever since the sixteenth century, wringed out a state structure in which it was able to formulate, both "upwardly" as well as "downwardly," its own "nation-state ideology," albeit at the price of no small difficulties. Historical genesis gained a dominant role in this ideology, although in a different way from the role it had played in the Middle Ages.

This ideology was constructed not without some precedents, not without, one could say, a historical infrastructure. To explain that, one must briefly revert again to the Middle Ages.

In medieval Hungary, indeed right up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, three different notions (and realities) of "nation" coexisted. For a start, a "Hungarian" (*Hungarus*), and thus, conceptually speaking, counting as one of the *gens Hungarica*, was anyone who was a subject of the kingdom of Hungary (*regnum Hungariae*). At the same time, the stance conceptually gave clear recognition to the separate identity of all who were differentiated as a group by virtue of their "nation," which is to say by origin (*natione*) as well as by language and customs (*lingua et moribus*); in other words, precisely what nowadays we would call ethnic identity was not at all foreign to this stance. What counted as truly valuable, however, was for somebody to be considered as belonging to a third kind of "nation"— that is, fitting into the framework of a *natio Hungarica*, organized not simply by virtue of being a territorial subject, or even by linguo-cultural affinity, but in a feudal-corporate sense. The condition for this was belonging to a privileged political community of the country (the *communitas regni*), conceived as a "body" (*corpus*) and "represented" in the national diet or assembly, but not, it so happened, being able to speak the language. At least at the level of the nobility the existence of a multilingual feudal "state-nation" belonged very much to the sphere of a reality, which went back many centuries. In other respects, it was an essential feature of the structure that it did not contain any compulsion to make a decision. Everybody was, as it were, born into his own particular double or triple "national" status, while the divided identities got on well together.

It should be noted, however, that the historical charge of the archaic Hungarian "national" consciousness by its very nature proved not particularly suitable to

serve this feudally and ethnically organized harmony. Beyond the stubborn myth of origin which inhered in the historical suggestion, the "ethnic" notions of Hun-Magyar consciousness (according to these convictions, for instance, Attila's Huns already spoke Hungarian) necessarily excluded from the community of "national" sentiment even the noblemen who spoke a different tongue and were of another *natio* even though otherwise, in their capacity as subjects by place of residence, they were "Hungarian" (of the *gente Hungarus*) and moreover belonged as members of equal rank to the political community of the feudal *natio Hungarica*. But the myth of the historical state was also unsuitable to inspire anybody who was obliged to accept that their ancestors had played no other role at the "second coming" of the Hun-Magyars than to be conquered. It is thus easy to understand why the burgeoning countermyths of the leading strata of the national minorities considerably antedated their political movements.

Even if the old structure possessed yet other, different inner contradictions, it could not be argued that the nineteenth-century concept of the "state-nation" was entirely devoid of a genuine historical basis. If it still proved to be a fiction, the reason for that was that the sociopolitical ground slipped irreversibly under the originally medieval "national" structures. In the nineteenth century, and especially after 1867, the dominant strand of Hungarian public opinion fell into the trap of a fatal illusion, namely imagining that the bonds over many centuries of being a *Hungarus* subject and member of the feudal "state-nation" could be fused by raising them to the level of modern citizenship; that is, somehow translated into a modern "state-nation" in much the same way as the English or French, over the course of around eight centuries, had fused diversities of provincial "nationalities" into a single nation. That was not only a vain illusion, but proved a folly insofar as it led to an awful loss of footing, as the theoretical postulate was inclined to resort to the practical compulsion of assimilation (even if that may, perhaps, seem relatively mild when viewed through the prism of recent developments in the region), whereas the national minorities began to formulate their own cultural-linguistic identity in the political categories of the age—and this was the age of nationalism. Contemporaneously with the ushering in of this age, the Hungarian national consciousness itself was faced with a new type of dilemma, falling into what one might call a chronic identity crisis from which, for a long time, it was incapable of extricating itself. The new age was by now characterized by an obligation to decide; everyone had to belong to *a specific* nation, and consequently the archaic compromise of divided and overlapping "national" identities ceased to exist. Who was Hungarian? Was it on the

grounds of one's linguo-cultural identity that one was Hungarian, or could one, along with others speaking a different tongue but forming part of a virtual political nation (civic construct) that was being propagated, be "Hungarian"? Before 1918, at least in theory, the latter was the dominant of the two models in propaganda and in schooling, whereas on German-speaking lands the duality of "*Kulturnation*" and "*Staatsnation*" had been put forward as hypothetical constructs even before the turn of the century. The concept of a "*Kulturnation*" simply expressed the fact (and has been used in this sense to the present day) that the historically *evolved* national community, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, is frequently not identical with a civic community, but is organized on the basis of distinctively linguo-cultural features.

The greater the cost of theoretical and practical difficulties of adhering to the postulate of the "state-nation," the greater the role given to the newly erected ideological bridge between the long bygone and the present.

The new ideological bridge around the time of Hungary's millennial celebrations in 1896 no longer served so much to link ethnogenesis and the present day, and still less, in medieval fashion, the conquest and the present—even though the celebration of the foregoing thousand years was just becoming actual (nor did it want for fireworks)—as the by then updated motif of "historical right" had already been transposed onto the state of King (Saint) Stephen I. This is readily understandable without needing any further explanation given that the age already had clear historical concepts of the state, which were only outstripped by a well-developed (in some senses overdeveloped) sense of constitutional law, while in its system of values conquest was obsolete as a ground of self-justification and legitimization. But it is also understandable that the historical-ideological center of gravity shifted with great difficulty from ethnogenesis to the origin of the state. This happened not only because of the reality of an existing linguo-cultural construct, but because the fiction of a historicized "state-nation" required historical justification; and also because a certain loss of footing took place in clarifying the real ethnogenesis of the Hungarian people in a European field—to no negligible repugnance on the part of the prevailing public mood. The Finno-Ugrian origin of the Magyars, after a faint first dawning during the Reform Age of the 1830s and 1840s, only started to break through in the latter third of the century as a real slap in the face to the Hunnish conditioning which had taken root over the centuries. In the scales of the prevailing system of values no ideological advantage, and even more disadvantages, stemmed from the disillusioning knowledge brought by science. As a result, the

"Turk" backers emerged who, stepping into the place of the Huns, emerged as the winners of the Ugrian-Turkish tussle that was fought out for nearly half a century after the 1870s in the media and the forums of public opinion which set the general tone, maybe not in a scientific sense, but most certainly in terms of sheer volume. Naturally, this was by virtue of its ideological charge, since in its national self-characterology it no longer sustained bellicose conquering qualities as much as a millennial "state-forming capability"—though the former was not completely eclipsed either. Apart from the romanticized vision of Árpád Feszty's huge (15 meters high, 120 meters wide) circular panorama, *The Conquest*,[*] along with a few ornamented sabres unearthed around the same time and some rich grave furniture recovered from burial sites dating from the Age of Conquest, it was essentially the epic *Gesta Hungarorum*, composed around 1200 by an anonymous Magister P., which insisted on a conquest of "the inhabitants of the land" (i.e., Slavs).

Instead of an obsolescent Attila and his Huns, St. Stephen was made the alpha of the ideology of a historical state, indeed a state myth, which determined the Hungarian national consciousness. At the time of the 1867 Compromise with Austria this was all the more natural in that the first enduring compromise with the house of Habsburg, during the eighteenth century, already preceded it with a version of the medieval religious and legal myth of the "holy king" that had been projected onto a state perspective, albeit with what at the time was still a one-sidedly Roman Catholic Church complexion. As these aspects are generally familiar, the particulars of the thinking around "one thousand years of existence as a state" may be dispensed with here. I do not suggest that this line of thinking was built upon a fiction in the way that the "historical state myth" of medieval Hungary had been, let alone the crops of fresh myths of this nature, which subsequently blossomed in the region. The historical state of Hungary at the time was genuinely about one thousand years old even if in the limited sense that it was overwhelmingly responsible for creating, down the centuries, the very nationalities which then set about eradicating from memory even the historical reality of this historical frame. All the same, this way of thinking was shot through with fictional elements, and not because of any doubts about the uninterruptedness of the one thousand years of continuity of Hungary's exis-

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[*]   Painted in 1894 and originally put on display in Hősök tere (Heroes' Square) in Budapest before being shown in London for eleven years from 1898, and then returned to Hungary. Since 1995, the restored panorama has been placed in the National Historical Memorial Park at Ópusztaszer, north of Szeged.

tence as a state (though after 1526 the continuity of Hungary's existence as a state was one-sided in that it applied only to the feudal polarity), but because there was such a large disparity in the dimensions of the first millennium and those of the present. The famous injunction in King Stephen's Admonitions to Prince Emeric (His Son): "*Nam unius linguae uniusque moris regnum, imbecille et fragile est*"—the country which has but one language and one custom is weak and frail—for instance, was less suitable for the purposes of legitimizing a multilingual nation as a postulate in the nineteenth century. Nor were the accomplishments of the institutions of state organization capable of rousing the enthusiasm of national minorities towards an institutional system that they already found insufficient in the nineteenth century. The further "constitutional" myths that were tacked onto the concept of the state, such as the theory and mysticism of the Holy Crown, or the doctrine of ancient constitution, also proved outworn in the face of modern constitutionalism and parliamentarism.

It is fair to say that the dominant thrust of the Hungarian public thinking on constitutional matters had jammed up at some point during the process of modernization of the mental structure; in many respects it reproduced the medievalistic structure of "history," as a system of reasoning spiked with fictions and myths.

This structure survived the breakup of historical Hungary caused by the 1920 Treaty of Trianon; indeed, it was reinforced by it inasmuch as the postulate was then addressed not to the apostrophized "nation" of a by then non-existent civic state framework, but to a historical state which had lost more than two-thirds of its land. However, after 1918–1920, the mythical charge of "St. Stephen's idea" not only gained in strength and in proportion to the extent to which it was placed into the service (partial or total) of territorial revision, but as was inherent to the "bridging" role, it also came to the forefront in another projection. For as an ideological bridge, by virtue of its inherited function as it were, it was called upon to bridge with its own great ideological arch not just the real deficiencies of the idea of "one thousand years of statehood" but, at one and same time, the serious and unsolved social problems of ever-present reality (above all the execrable heritage of the "thousand-year" system of latifundia, "the country of three million beggars" as Hungary was called at the time). To put it another way, the symbiosis of this way of thinking with Hungarian conservatism appeared unbreakable; indeed, between the two world wars, the symbiosis is widely known to have become ossified. At the same time, however, it seemed that the dual ideological nature of the event of the foundation of the

state divested of its real historical dimensions was unchangeable, which would in itself have been enough to cause confusion in the consciousness.

This confusion was intensified by two further burdens on the statics of the ideological bridge. Since the undisputed basic gesture of St. Stephen's undertaking to persuade the Hungarian people to turn to the West became linked after 1920, in the terminology of conservative historiography and propaganda, to the unfortunate topos of a "Christian-German cultural community," the topos itself and its background won a false overtone and a possibility of distorted interpretation in proportion that, on the other hand, Nazism, too, stepped forward clothed in an obscure "medieval" symbolism and showed a partiality for alluding to a false analogy to the likewise "thousand-year" Holy Roman Empire of Germany (the "Third Reich"). The second burden is that the symbolism inherited by the cult of St. Stephen from the eighteenth century ("the country of the Virgin Mary") fitted well even with legitimism, as in its origins it had been conceived of as a compromise with the house of Habsburg. As a result, for any Hungarian who was dissatisfied with society's immobility, feared the danger of German fascism, or rejected restoration of the Habsburgs, the false ideological symbioses and crossed lines which proliferated between the two world wars had virtually discredited the very memory of the foundation of the state, and not simply as an "ideological" riverhead that was burdened with myth but also, before long, as a natural historical element of national consciousness.

The confusion was further deepened by the increasingly frustrated condition into which the Hungarian national consciousness plunged after 1920, having long left behind the (in any case ambivalent) sense of achievement of the era after 1867. Trianon was far from the exclusive source of that frustration; indeed, the more removed from conservatism the major groupings who represented public consciousness in society were, the more tormenting it was that they experienced other problems at least as keenly as they did the disintegration of historical Hungary, as a historically determined, peculiarly national sense of failure—whether it was the failure of the revolutions or, more generally, the burial of the democratic hopes of the early years of the century, or the pressing need to find a solution to the agrarian question, and the problems of peasant existence in Hungary. On this side it was not customary, of course, to seek compensation in the remote historical past, but in opposition to the present day and a search for ways of tackling the problems which were of present relevance. At the same time, however, these groupings did also, albeit involuntarily, measure themselves against history and, to some degree, the distant past, though they were greatly

irritated by the "compensatory" character which undoubtedly also inhered in the historical myths as has just been outlined. It is understandable that for anyone to whom the legacy of "one thousand years" of feudalism caused the greatest anxiety, the millennium of St. Stephen could not offer much historical solace; indeed, the king who founded the state would hardly have been congenial as a historical symbol, even had the aforesaid ideological symbiosis not encumbered it with Hungarian conservatism. Besides that, the problem of the West also added a significant weight to reflexes on this point. Conservative historical ideology was "pro-Western" in the sense that it absolutely required integration of the Hungarian people in the state system and culture of the West as a dominant idea linked to the founding of the state. However, anyone who kept their eyes fixed primarily on the position of the peasantry could not find many "Western" achievements, to be sure. It is easy to understand from these contrasts that by around 1900, when thinking of the problem of genesis, certain streams of the progressive movement—including eventually the movement of populist writers which emerged during the 1930s—sought "historical" compensation for their own "nationally" experienced sense of frustration in a diametrically opposite direction to traditional Hungarian political nationalism.

What was paradoxical about the situation, and equally a grotesque symptom of the distorted way of thinking characteristic of the times, was that after 1920 similar reflexes were reinforced not just to the left of traditional conservatism, but also in ideological realms falling well to the right. The nebulous myths on the "Eastern" origins and "racial" character of the Magyars had already been lurking well before then. Their denouement, however, was most likely hastened by—over and above the immanent propensity which resided in the thinking of the extreme right—the sense of failure of that social milieu aroused both by disenchantment with the "West" linked to Trianon and by the subsequent political marginalization which occurred during Hungary's post-World War I consolidation under Prime Minister István Bethlen.

It is a fact that during the interwar period there was an antinomy of Magyars not being a "Western nation" but an "Eastern people" (or in its extreme form: a race) which had sprung from widely separated ideological soils at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and came into leaf in ways which were similar in many respects. If ideas of ethnogenesis in the national consciousness had been subordinated to the myth of the state at around the time of the millennium, then after 1920 the myth became uncoupled from the historical state on the aforementioned tracks to move toward the idea that the Hungarians are "the

people of the East." Nothing could be more mistaken and unjust than to assert (as, in point of fact, those who professed the similarly false antinomy of nation versus progress were prone to assert at the time) that this movement in the same direction, having started off in two utterly different directions, was proof of, so to say, a morphologically related ideological structure. The sometimes-parallel shifts into "Oriental" ancestral mists that were made by Hungarian Turanism,* or kindred racist myths, like the one cherished by the populist movement, are largely explained by a shared negativity: the counterpointed nature of the compensatory mechanism turned against the historical myth fostered by official Hungary.

What has been outlined so far regarding the period which elapsed between 1867 and 1945 is one side of the coin; on the other side there is the state of the other half of the population of historical Hungary, where, after 1918–1920, national consciousness did not have to struggle with compensating for frustrations, but set about legitimizing the status quo historically in the full flush of a sense of achievement. The almost thousand-year political unity of the region disintegrated, but not its historical unity, and it is unlikely it ever will. Consequently, its ideological interactions are closely bound up with the topic, if only because the irritations that came from this side contributed to the derangement of the Hungarian national consciousness.

The process of fabricating historical fictions which got under way after 1920 on both sides of the northern and southern ranges of the Carpathians was not lacking in antecedents; at the same time, even in the upbeat state of the interwar period, in more than one respect it was still more comprehensible than what was later to be unleashed in this region. It was comprehensible as it had been a matter of a rancor of undisguisedly "bourgeois" nationalisms (over what was *shared* history, among other things, which was truly hard to disentangle), a phenomenon which was completely natural, while nationalism itself appeared as the declared program of a contest fought by laying one's cards on the table. The reacquisition of so-called "ancient Slav" lands under the rubric of the Greater Moravian heritage, or the regaining of the "third principality of Romania" under the historical legal title of Daco-Romanian autochthonism, began increasingly to entrench itself into the national consciousness of neighboring territories. Its spread was inhibited, however, by the fact that the dominant element of the "Czechoslovak nation" founded in the year 1918 found its own

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*   A pan-nationalist ideology, present in Hungary as well as Turkey and Bulgaria during the first half of the twentieth century, which stressed the common origins of these peoples in the steppes of Central Asia.

legitimacy not so much in historical theorizing than in a democratic ideal directed at the present. A brake was also present in the kingdom of Romania, where the postulate of a Daco-Romanian continuity, which had been genuinely medieval in contour and structure throughout its entire substance, was just one of the competing hypotheses of Romanian ethnogenesis and did not become a generally accepted view.

Beyond this, the contest of nationalisms proceeded with the cards being laid on the table and had no need of overriding historical rationales. The irritated reaction of these historical fictions in terms of the derangement of the Hungarian national consciousness in its "historical" focus was eventually a side effect.

2. So much for the past. The immediate past can be dated to the liberation of the entire region. The year 1945 awakened a fresh spring of hopes of, among other things, a resolution of the historical-ideological confusions. What is more, the hopes entitled one to even more than that: a modern-style liberation of conscious minds from the sway of a historicism reproduced by modern-day nationalism. Among other things, a hope glimmered that the construct of a historical *origo* itself, in relation to both people and state, might be freed from a myth-laden "ideological" field in order finally to take up its own worthy place in national consciousnesses as a major basic historical element of identity.

In this context a basic condition was given, and completed by the developments around two further dates, namely, the developments in 1947 and 1948–1949. The first was the year of the Paris peace treaties, the second the "year of regime change" for the entire region. The first emphatically confirmed the status quo of the state frameworks that had been established in 1920, whereas the second signified that these states were, in the future, to be brought to a common denominator in the spirit of the common goal of socialism. The latter, in the projection of what is our present concern, ought to have meant that they would find a common denominator of history in the spirit of Marxism.

The coordinates were ostensibly different in every respect from those preceding 1945. From a Hungarian point of view, to start with, society was forced to acknowledge (and now there was no room for any illusions) the political reality that the existing Hungarian *state* was not the same as the historical Hungary that had been "founded" at the time of the first millennium; consequently, it could never again be an object of ideological myths or postulates—"national ideology" of any kind—as it had been in the past. The historical Hungarian state, in point of fact, now had become definitively "history" in the consciousness as well. Secondly,

however, the existing Hungarian *nation* in a political sense was also not the same as the product of this historical Hungarian state, yet what stands in contrast to the latter is not "history" but the reality of the present, even though more than one quarter of the Hungarian-speaking population lives in political frameworks other than the Hungarian one. Even if it was no easy matter to approve of this, it had to be acknowledged that this nation likewise cannot be a subject for "national ideology" in a *political* sense; what was left open was the question of whether it might be a subject for ideology in any sense or the subject for a plain consciousness of identity. Thirdly, the dominant approach and methodology of *history* is also, in principle, not identical with, but of a nature different from that of nationalist historiography. Fourthly, the system of people's democracy that emerged in the whole region was itself not, in principle, identical with the agglomeration of states bearing mutual grudges in the past.

Hungary's "national history" had to be located in this fourfold-defined coordinate, including, among others, its alpha, the genesis of its people and the state.

Against all the listed "non-identities," on the other hand, stands the fact that national consciousness is itself a *sense of identity* by virtue of its own inner logic, and specifically a form of a sense of identity of which a sense of *historical continuity* is an important component. Without this there can be no national consciousness, or else it is present but disturbed. Historical continuity of course does not mean an identity of "non-identity" in the Heraclitean sense of not being able to step twice into the same river, even though it is nevertheless the same river. The regulating system that is called on to validate this dialectic is history writing—to the extent that this is a science. National consciousness, however, in looking to the past does seek identity even in "non-identities," not necessarily on ideological grounds, but in order to intimate the fact of identity in itself.

The matter of genesis, our present concern—and then not so much in its projection of the genesis of the people as rather that of the founding of the state—among a wide range of other subjects, has a far-flung connection between the distant past and the present, but not in the metaphorical sense of an "ideological bridge" mentioned above. The founding of the Hungarian state in itself is important from a wide variety of historical angles; its main significance for the national consciousness, however—and this also applies even at a level of elementary association—is necessarily the fact that in the given historical moment of danger, at the turn of the first millennium, it preserved and integrated into European history an ethnic group, the Magyars, out of which, over many centuries, the modern Hungarian nation emerged. (Equally, historical consciousness is in-

complete if it fails to keep in mind, even at the level of elementary association, that from the very beginning the state was built up from several ethnic groups, and over the course of time it was itself responsible for creating nationalities of a predominantly new ethnic tenor, which in the modern era then went the way of national separation.)

A cardinal question, even at the level of elementary association, is: what is the *existing* Hungarian nation that postulates its own identity, and seeks its historical continuity and identity (even in "non-identity") on precisely that account? The people who are living in Hungary and who constitute the nation in a *political* sense? No, it postulates its own identity together with those whose historical archetype (and also "non-identity") it shared in the *historical* process of becoming a modern nation, with whom it shares objective links of *language and culture* in the present, as well as a subjective "We-consciousness" based on these elements. The elementary association is particularly self-evident in the case of the state founding, since the Hungarian state founded at the turn of the first millennium is—for the national consciousness—the chief historical product of the one-time reality of historical Hungary which by now became history, and, at one and the same time, virtually its sole perceptible, hard daily *reality*.

But does such a nation exist either in theory or in the hard daily reality? According to European national theory it does. The term most commonly used in this domain is "cultural nation" in conceptual contrast to "state-nation." Even socialist practice would place no obstacle to the theoretical or practical existence of such a nation if at any time a consensus had seriously emerged and later come to fruition on the sole possible solution to the national question in this part of the world: a confederation of states. In reality, however, the socialist practice has brought nothing new as compared with the region's nineteenth-century structure. It was built on the principle of state-nations, such as the Hungarian postulate after 1867 discussed previously—with one difference, that is, but that difference does carry considerable weight. The national minorities of historical Hungary (which were more or less—but never sufficiently—recognized as entities in their own cultural character) prior to 1918 did not reckon themselves at all, or hardly at all, as being "national" within the national frameworks which were only born after 1918 and of which they subsequently became parts. The Hungarian-speaking ethnic group who lived in the Carpathian Basin, on the other hand, was part of a clearly and precisely definable modern nation that established itself historically and had existed historically.

There is no such nation, however. Even the Hungarian notion is based on the fact that, on the one hand, there exists such a thing as the Hungarian *nation* within Hungary's state framework and, on the other hand, there are "Hungarians" (Magyars). The World Federation of Hungarians (*Magyarok Világszövetsége*), for example, does not appear to make a clear distinction in principle between the parts of the nation taken in the above-defined sense and the scattered fragments or individuals who live on as historical communities on all sides beyond the country's borders. Not even according to an official Hungarian point of view does there exist such a nation which may be found both in reality and in the national consciousness itself.

I am not flagging the problem for any purpose of national theory, though I might do so with that, too, in mind, but as something which has a specific connection to my chosen subject. It is my task to assess questions of historical genesis—the foundation of the Hungarian state inter alia—in today's national consciousness. Still, the situation is that as an element of the national consciousness, the foundation of the Hungarian state, through elementary associations, also evokes an image of historical Hungary. If in principle and in the mundane facts of practice there exists "legally" a Hungarian nation in the sense that has been outlined, the identification with it "historically" does not pose any problem; if it does not exist, however, then the cluster of motifs, the foundation of the Hungarian state, through the associations it arouses, moves into the domain of the prohibited, the deranged, or the suppressed.

This is almost certainly not unrelated to the odd contrast, one that is perceived as fact—and one that is to be discussed later on—that this cluster of historical motifs shifted after 1945, even as a historical element of the national sense of identity, from the dominant, indeed ideologically weighted position which it had been occupying in the Hungarian national consciousness of earlier eras into, so to say, a state of weightlessness. The modern transformation of this structure of the national consciousness started with, among other things, this weightlessness. As to whether that was good or bad I shall not assess for the time being, but two more phenomena that can likewise be perceived as facts can be ranged alongside it. One is that in some of Hungary's neighboring countries both the ethnogenesis, and the nebulous, historicized theories of the "state" connected with it, not only gained weight in the process of developments after 1945, they also took on the sort of "ideologically" legitimizing, indeed mythical character to which reference was made in the introductory comments. The other phenomenon is that one may explicitly observe in this transformation of

the Hungarian national consciousness a more recent shift, even if this is not in the direction of the main movement: a development of "compensatory" myths of ethnogenesis. These three phenomena can hardly be unrelated to each other.

At this point it becomes comprehensible why I considered it necessary to insert into my argument a historical retrospect to the Middle Ages. This is not a matter of an obligatory reversion to Adam and Eve, but of the "wide arches" that are observable in the structures of the consciousness. As for the following, for reasons of limited space, I shall eschew the superfluous detailing of phenomena in just the same way as in my prefatory thoughts.

3. In regard to the evolution of the coordinates which developed after 1945, I shall start out from the state of consciousness in the year 1945: strictly speaking, that is still a long way from my subject; indeed, it will necessitate a big digression. However, I may be excused for dealing, if not with the subject in the strict sense, then nevertheless with its aura.

Objectively, Hungarian society was completely liberated in 1945, but only part of it (the better part) experienced it as a "success." Of course, this should not be understood as a statistical quantity. At the same time, the whole of society again had to confront a set of "national frustrations." Many people, of course, clambered out of the ruins in a mood of "we came out badly once again," but the aforementioned "better part" sought for the "*whys*": why did we get mixed up yet again (as a nation) in a cul-de-sac; what closer and wider causes led us towards a "distorted" history? In a certain sense, looking at the past was even more painful than it had been after the revolutions of 1918 and 1919, as at least back then we had "heroically done our bit," whereas the consequences of 1947 were experienced as frustrations by both parties: that was perhaps the sole common denominator. Beyond that, society's better part (and only that part) still had a guilty conscience, and justifiably so, for even impotent indifference is "sinful" on the grounds that "he who keeps silent among sinners is their accomplice."*

When a national community is in such a psychological and mental condition, the primary methods of relief are to be found not in the past, but in present activity. In this respect, as it happens, the position was exactly the inverse of that after 1918–19: it was favorable and opened up new vistas. But relief cannot be successful without assimilating the past. Collective guilt as a normative system was brilliantly analyzed by Elemér Hankiss in his recent book, *Diagnózisok*

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* A quote from Mihály Babits's *Book of Jonah*.

(Diagnoses, 1982), pointing out the necessity for healthy mechanisms of relief, on the one hand, and the injurious consequences of omitting them. The same goes for frustration: if healthy mechanisms of resolution are not set in progress, then that leaves two erroneous tracks: repression and compensation.

We are now back to history, and more specifically the quality of the approach to history in national consciousness.

After 1945, a process of national self-examination got underway with the object of awakening the consciousness to the causes of frustration and guilt, but equally for healthy relief in the spirit of "non-identifying" identity. Its most eminent pioneer was István Bibó. All at once the outlines of a historical self-examination—and, moreover, an attitude to viewing history—were sketched out, which, in treating its structure, was critical and analytical, capable of seeing both "good" and "bad" together, which will for simplicity's sake be referred to hereinafter as an attitude centered on national self-reflection. There was no shortage of great predecessors: if I mention just the names of the statesmen-writers István Széchenyi, József Eötvös, and Oszkár Jászi, the poet Mihály Babits, or even the late works of Gyula Szekfű, I will have made it clear that an identity of political or ideological persuasion is not at all absolutely essential; still less is it a historian's mere "scholarly task," though it does no harm if a historian also considers laying the foundations of that attitude to be his own vocational task. It is my belief that the better part of Hungarian society who represent its consciousness took note of the revival of that attitude and was ready to participate in the collective inquiry. The other side, obviously, sought to forget and repress everything as soon as possible. It is also true that in order that this critical and analytical inquiry should become, as it were, a national or communal reflex, it was paradoxically not beneficial if, in the midst of the suddenly blossoming opportunities for activity, the relief mechanisms overly indulged themselves in party political activity. Despite all this, between 1945 and 1948, much more so than ever before, there was a possibility for a "self-reflective" stance on national history to evolve.

The leaders of the Communist Party of Hungary (MKP) who returned from Moscow did not just join in the unfolding of national self-criticism, but were among the sharpest critics. But they also brought back an attitude according to which, when pushed to extremes, there are "goodies" and "baddies," with the former deserving to be rewarded, but the latter to be exposed and punished, while the middle ground was to be won over. They also brought back such a view of history. In history there were "goodies" and "baddies," "progressives" and "reactionaries"; the former had to be followed, the latter "unmasked," but there was

not much middle ground. This new model of the ideology of national history had evolved during the 1930s: the accentuation of the progressive and independentist traditions as examples against the exploitative Horthy regime and all-devouring German fascism undoubtedly had a noble mobilizing intent. That in itself, in a very broad sense, was also justified as the Communists did indeed wish to see progress; indeed, they were its vanguard. In the historical ideology in question, however, to the extent that certain leaders of the MKP began to serve not so much progress as the near-fatal discrediting of the socialist cause itself, it carried a characteristic legitimizatory implication: "I follow the 'goodies,' consequently, *since* I follow them, I too am good." This is to say nothing of the immanent snags of "historical ideology" and its internal conceptual and methodological contradictions that Erik Molnár started to rake up after 1960.

From the point of view of the national perspective of history, attitude, and self-esteem (indeed a sense of identity), the changeover after 1948–49 was not fortunate because, among other reasons, it cut short the mechanisms for relieving frustrations and the conscience of guilt that had got underway, obstructed the possibilities for a self-reflective historical approach, and lastly, encouraged the revival of the old reflexes which it intended to obliterate.

The new mechanism branches into two seemingly diametrically opposed directions. One of these was, instead of relieving the conscience of guilt, that of engendering it, which assumed the dimensions of veritable "campaigns," which embraced the whole of society and followed a time-honored mechanism for exercising power: "arousing a guilty conscience in you in such a way that you can only hope to obtain absolution from me, and in that way you come to be dependent on me"—a dependence to which it was again Elemér Hankiss who drew attention. A reckoning on a, so to say, national historical scale was also left out, and in its place the stigma of a "guilty (fascist) people," which was never written down in that form but hinted at and paraphrased all the more strongly, was propagated. "The outlet for a muddled and murky consciousness, or partial awareness, of crimes that have been committed, tolerated, or only recognized in retrospect, was thereby blocked in Hungarian society" (Hankiss). Such a condition can give rise to anxiety, fear, a diffuse malaise, but it may just as soon switch over to a complete absence of a conscience of guilt. This duly happened. It was precisely this area into which the matter of a national identity also slipped. The decision taken in the Paris peace treaty of 1947 ought to have been digested, and the appropriate conclusions drawn from that. The Communist Party did many things to oppose the decision, but after it had been handed down, the decision got caught up in a

logic of the following kind: "You received this as a punishment because you are a culpable, fascist people, Hitler's last ally; resign yourself to it and forget it; as a culpable people, submit to the punishment." Of course, after 1948–49, irrespective of this, the entire complex of questions was placed under an ideological lock and key in the entire region. The society's national consciousness was stifled.

In the other direction, a nationally colored progressive-independentist historical ideology persisted, though by now as a "thesis" provided with a Marxist stamp, which was essentially of much the same inherited consistency, as it had been formulated for a noble propaganda goal after 1933. Historians were expected to "verify" this, and they did what they had to do. They accentuated anything that was progressive and laid bare anything that was retrograde. A discussion of the inherent scholarly weaknesses of this way of looking at things does not belong here, and anyway, by and large, they can now be considered as having been cleared up, but four aspects are worth mentioning in the context of the present train of thought.

For one thing, the line of history highlighted was in general marked by names (Dózsa, Rákóczi, Kossuth), which, given that they had strung historically disparate qualities onto the same chain, was from the outset pretty abstract. Secondly, this abstraction became even more abstract to the degree that the listed series of names rigidified into a kind of litany at the end point of which the name of the communist leader, Mátyás Rákosi, was supposed to be understood. In that sense also an "ideological bridge" was created, which with its own independentist and progressive coloring was destined to overcome the fact that the politics which crystallized by around 1950 was, on the one hand, anything but national and, on the other hand, progress had plunged itself, as well as the cause of socialism, into a disaster. Thirdly, in addition to mechanically churning out countermyths ("people's patriotism") to obsolete myths, the attitude had an explicitly "compensatory" character: even if you don't feel comfortable in your national garb, at least you have a "splendid" history and grand heroes. Fourthly, this way of looking at selective "highlights" of history did not teach people to think. As both historical and present-centered thinking form part of a system of intercommunicating vessels, a person who is unable to analyze the past (and only seeks to retrospectively reward the goodies and unmask the baddies) is also incapable of analyzing the present, and vice versa.

As a result of this, history was left in the sphere of "ideology." By the latter, the word is not to be understood in the widespread usage ("Marxism"), and the construct had very little to do with Marxism. Just as the possibility of society it-

self clarifying and processing the frustrations and sense of guilt that were felt to be "national" was omitted, all of that was bottled up or shaken off ("I am not *so* guilty as to have it cast in my face every day; I am *not* guilty"). In return it was given an "ideological" and "compensatory" attitude to history, merely reinforcing compensatory tendencies which, having been inherited from the past, were in any case already present. The possibilities of developing a self-reflective model as outlined above were stymied.

After 1956, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) jettisoned the former "official" historical ideology. Since then, there has been no canon; history has been dropped from the "ideological" sphere. There is nothing wiser a political power can do than that; this separation is itself one of the important aspects of modernization. On the one hand, history was entrusted to Marxist historians; on the other, through open debate, to a process of self-purification of the social consciousness. Of such a nature was the so-called "Erik Molnár debate" of the 1960s, extending into the 1970s, which it is nowadays unbecoming and unfair sagely to disparage just because, on the one hand, all kinds of extreme opinions, in some cases not of a particularly high standard, were formulated in it and, on the other hand, we have since (in part) moved on from its dimensions. It was a phase of a major process of self-purification, although maybe not a resoundingly successful one, for the debate entered Hungarian public discourse at a peculiar point in time. For one thing, it was around then that after the repression (and the 1956 explosion) a national sentiment was searching for new routes, which, since the self-examination that got underway between 1945 and 1948 had been balked, did not always adjust to the (euphemistically speaking) dialectic of the identity of "non-identity." For another thing, it was also a time when conditions were starting to ripen for a kind of national indifference as a result of economic improvement ("refrigerator socialism") and certain belated trends of the time. It was likewise Hankiss who analyzed a 1978 public opinion survey in which, in answer to the question of what in his/her own country the respondent was proud of, 75 percent of Hungarians questioned opted for the standard of living and economic outcomes, just 17 percent for "social and political institutions," and 2 percent in all for "human qualities" (sadly, "pride" in the country's history did not figure among the points in the questionnaire, though that would hardly have produced any significant change in the proportions). In this way, Hungarian social consciousness was not truly able successfully to process, or even understand, the debate in question, though that was less of a problem than if no debate at all had taken place.

The essential point has been the possibility for the unfolding of a process of self-purification. More than likely, of course, for a long time there will remain some very old mental reflexes that had in fact been reinforced by the 1950s; among other things, a magical belief in the power of propaganda, coupled with a "compensatory" mechanism. Like a drop in the ocean, this attitude was recently reflected in József Magyar's instructive documentary film about schools.[*] A truly startling scene unfolds in a class of teenagers when, in response to a question as to who would stay in Hungary if they could move freely, not more than three or four children raised their hands. In response to the reporter's further questions, the teachers excuse themselves with the following: "Alas, only one lesson a week is set aside for 'education of patriotism.'" Such a teacher is quite likely convinced that if he/she had two lessons, or maybe five, by the time they would have three hours a week devoted to the purpose maybe six children would be won over to the homeland, inspired by its "splendid" and unambiguously "positive" history.

4. After that digression, I now return to the coordinates of state, nation, history, and historical region which evolved after 1945, and especially after 1948, more closely in relation to the problems of historical genesis.

As regards the connection of state and national identity—or, to be more accurate, "non–identity" in the case of Central and Eastern Europe—I can only refer back to the fact that over the entire region Stalinism suppressed the problem institutionally, and in the specifically Hungarian context Rákosism did so ideologically. The problem has not been suppressed since the 1970s, but neither has there been any definite formulation of its character. Yet until the existence of a Hungarian nation in the sense outlined above is clarified sufficiently—either at the theoretical level or the level of its "connections" with practice—one must also count with the disturbance of national sentiment in connection with this; and for another thing, for reasons that have already been alluded to, one cannot expect that the motif of, for instance, the founding of the state will swing over in a healthy manner from an earlier, "ideologically" confused domain into a clear realm of consciousness of historical identity. With regard to the axis of historical perception, I must refer back to the foregoing digression. The mutual interdependence of the identity problem and the ideological mech-

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[*]   *A mi iskolánk* [Our school], a seventy-five-minute film from 1983, concerns the tasks, the problems, and the successes of the Hungarian educational system, and was seen by many thousands of teachers at the time.

anisms of the Rákosi era was likely the reason why the foundation of the Hungarian state was not placed on the VIP list of "progressive traditions" at the level of the "official" ideology. To be more accurate, it ended up in an already half-open drawer, from which it could be pulled out every now and then, though in a given case the drawer may itself also be closed. One had to keep one eye on the neighbor, and the other on the "guilty people" to see whether in this or that case they were taking it badly.

This explains how in the case of such a demonstrative—and indeed, in its very compactness, the most eloquent—symbol of the sense of historical continuity, the national coat of arms suggesting total discontinuity came to be created in contrast to those of Czechoslovakia or Poland, for example. Admittedly, the historical coat of arms was not created by King Stephen, and in fact the memory of the House of Árpád is only represented in the alternating bars of red and white and the patriarchal cross.[*] It is admittedly also true that the additions to the shield are also expressive of historical Hungary (albeit not according to the senseless "readings" of irredentist ideology). The fact is that after 1945 the national coat of arms simply *had to be* modified, but that not even a faint symbolic *element* was left to express the country's historical identity was all too outrageously typical. The new national coat of arms was intended as a reward, in order that Hungary's population would feel itself as having been "reborn," like a *nova creatura* after the baptismal water in Christian symbolism,[**] but in reality it was a punishment for the "guilty" people.

Three further remarks on the topic. One is that even the currently used national coat of arms fails to express a continuity of identity either in its heraldic overall picture or in its present character of lacking any sort of "historical" element. As regards pertinent lessons of 1956, for example, for one thing the memory of the Hungarian national flags of 1956, with a central hole left by ripping out the postwar coat of arms, should be taken note of as a need for theatrical manifestation toward this symbol; but on the other hand, to the best of my knowledge, not even a faint hint of any kind of irredentist atmosphere was shown during those twelve days, despite that being the best moment of its man-

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[*]   The heraldic description of the historical coat of arms is a crown of St. Stephen (since the eighteenth century the cross on the crown is bent) over a shield, the left-hand half of which (or "dexter" from the bearer's point of view) bears eight alternating red (*gules*) and silver (*argent*) bars, with the right-hand half having a patriarchal cross (*cross lorraine argent* on *gules*), rising from a crown in gold (*or*) on a green triple mound (*compartment vert*).

[**]   See 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

ifestation. For this issue, in that sense, 1956 might even be perceived as a test case. In the recent past, Hungarian society did not take the crown and coronation insignia up in their "ideological" capacity, but as "tangible" symbols of the fact of historical identity and continuity. All these testify to mental structures being in a process of transformation. The third remark is that the fashion for designing coats of arms, which has evolved in Hungary over the past two decades, does not for the time being cast a good light on the character of that mental consciousness in itself. The fashion for coats of arms, which is evident especially in the creation of coats of arms for cities is, in part, a healthy phenomenon as it signals a strengthening of local and communal ties, though for the most part they are preposterous new confections (which reject not only symbols that are considered to be "feudal" or "clerical" but even entire historical heraldic figures) testifying to a confused apprehension about admitting to historical continuity, notwithstanding the fact that a coat of arms is not "ideology," merely a symbol documenting *identity*. In Czechoslovakia and Poland, it is not just the country itself, but also towns and cities in general which have retained their historical coats of arms.

The fact that King Stephen was not entered on the VIP list of "progressives and fighters for independence" may have been inexplicable in the absence of the connections that were in part intimated earlier, for if there is a portrait gallery of progressives, and—with some reinterpretation—"independentists," the first picture of it would unequivocally have had to be one of King Stephen. In an abstract way he was indeed there among the "progressives" (albeit half in the drawer), but accompanied by a continual urge to explicate: back *then* a class society was progressive, *now* it is a classless society. The ideologizing of the "independence" motif was already present in the pre-1945 structure, inasmuch as it was anti-German, since Stephen did not ask for the crown from the Holy Roman Emperor, but from the pope, and so the country also stayed outside the "conceptual" framework of the Holy Roman Empire. This is an unhistorical line of argument strictly speaking, as the actual crown was in fact received by the young Vajk* "by courtesy and encouragement of the emperor" (*imperatoris gratia et hortatu*), and dependence would not in any case have meant a loss of sovereignty in the modern sense; this degree of historicizing is, however, still tolerable to the ordinary historical consciousness. Even in this line of thought, though, it is typical that it was not so much out of any association of ideas with national "sover-

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*   Stephen's heathen name.

eignty" that King Stephen was given the status of reserve stock in the picture gallery, but because by mechanically adopting the general model of Eastern European applicability it could be listed as a topos, which could be assigned as a main chapter heading in school textbooks to the present day: "The fight of the peoples of Eastern Europe against Germanic conquerors." What is *historically* half true and half untrue, and certainly in no way fitted into those school textbooks, is that the Ottonian dynasty and its successors—antedating Hitler, as it were—constantly worked away at subjugating Eastern Europe, while the peoples of Eastern Europe were constantly preoccupied with warding off Germanic incursions. Over and beyond this, the necessity for historical progress could also have been included among the motifs, but for understandable reasons that was not such a gratifying matter. The assignment of free peasants into "decuries" and "centuries" of serfs around 1000 AD, and the political line taken with the peasants around 1950, might have roused unwanted direct associations.

The founding of the Hungarian state nevertheless does have two obviously delicate aspects. One of these is the accommodation of the population to the Western structure. That could have been reinterpreted in the sense of (and this logic would not have been foreign to the era) the progressive force having been the West *back then*, but *now* it being the East. An attempt to do so was indeed made, but it did not really take off, and it could not have taken off because it would have been all too obvious that through the foundation of the Hungarian state the Hungarian people *truly* did become a part of the West, and in some shape or form it had stayed that way down the succeeding centuries. Here then is a problem that can only be addressed in terms of a "nationally self-reflective attitude to history," and not from a basic position that has been simplified to "slogans" and "examples." Did Hungarians truly become a "Western" people? If so, then to what extent? If not, why not? What is the *structure* of this history? If it became partly "East European" but also retained a bit of its "Western" character, does it not then follow that socialism (a Western idea which had gained currency in Eastern Europe) ought to be fused with that other Western innovation of democracy? Enquiries into such and similar questions and associations prompted by the founding of the Hungarian state could not be undertaken during the 1950s. The other ticklish aspect has already been touched on earlier: the state was founded, but *what sort* of a state? What is the tangible historical identity of that kind of state, which can also be perceived *ethnically* today?

These were regarded as delicate, even embarrassing questions back then, and consigned the founding of the state to that drawer reserved for national histori-

cal consciousness, which was normally kept half-open, but could be firmly closed at any time. Those reflexes survived the 1950s. When in 1970, the time came around to celebrate what, by common consent, was the millennial anniversary of King Stephen's birth, naturally there were festivities; around August 20, every daily and weekly newspaper and magazine made available its obligatory commemorative piece, and in the city of Székesfehérvár, which was the capital at the time of Stephen, a very brief (half-day) academic session was also organized of such brevity as I do not recall ever having experienced elsewhere. After that: a deafening hush. (The Poles, clearly falling into the other extreme, celebrated their own millennium of statehood for a full decade.) The scientific secretary of Székesfehérvár Museum resigned his post due to conflicts with local state organs, because in their view he had made "too much of a fuss" of the jubilee.

The ideological mechanism went into operation not long after 1945 in order to (rightly) drive back traditional distorting notions, and partly in order to forestall undesired associations of ideas. The thesis was formulated that the foundation of the Hungarian state can be explained by fundamentally Slavic influences, and moreover by carrying over the institutional bases of "Slavic states" in Pannonia. There is no question that Erik Molnár was also motivated by some justifiable and fitting intentions of redress, as it was possible to account for the far more complex influence of the Slavic population of the Carpathian Basin than had been the custom (out of bias) before 1945. On the other hand, however, there is also no question that the necessary scholarly basis to enunciate that "notion" was lacking; it would have been fit to propose further investigation into the matter as a desideratum. The "notion" was ideological, and was made all the more so in being vulgarized. A "historical" construct lurked vaguely in the background (with some people at the time present just to scrape up as much from the construct of "historicity") that there is a model *today*, and already *back then* the Slavs were our model, with the model lying crisscross behind the early centuries. Similarly, around 1970, György Györffy was still metaphorically in the dock on charges of "anti-Marxism" because, according to the prosecutor, he had attempted to derive the foundation of the Hungarian state not from *borrowings* from the Slavs but from internal *social contingencies*. In point of fact, he regarded the role of the armed escort as being a decisive factor (an elementary seminary precept has it that the state is a machine for the enforcement of power); secondly, constructing the polarity of "richness" and "famine," he had perhaps supposed the internal structure of society as being more extreme than it actually was (nota bene: Marxism deems the state to be a product of class relations). It

was an interesting example of an "ideological" precept being declared as being Marxist; nevertheless, due to scholarly opposition, especially on the part of linguists, the "*Entlehungstheorie*"—borrowing hypothesis—only acquired semi-official status, but in that capacity it still crops up in textbooks to this day.

Lastly, one further important aspect of the topic needs to be brought up. Whilst the now dominant school of thought—due to the "national" inhibitions—partly consigned the abovementioned ideas about the foundation of the Hungarian state to the drawer, whereas on the other hand there were almost no inhibitions about declaring the country's feudal movements to be "national," most paradoxically it also partly consigned to the drawer the fact that historical Hungary had been a *multinational* state from the very outset, and became so even more as time went on. It was not that this fact per se was denied in general, but that in this connection it tended to be pulled out of the drawer along with the idea that here, too, a historical prototype of the "guilty nation" could be detected: "repression of the national minorities," which is complete nonsense and an untrue charge prior to the nineteenth century. At the same time, precious little is to be found in old textbooks and popular history pamphlets about what the Hungarian state really was, and details on *just how much* and *in what way* it was multinational. Alarmingly, that imprint is still left in many minds. A typical case is the tourist who returns to Hungary from Slovakia, let us say from the district around the Orava valley, and seethes out of "nationalistic" aggravation at the use of Slovak for place names and personal names; he is in many cases only betraying his own ignorance, because in the selected instances it really was the then-emergent Slovak ethnic group which bestowed the names on the villages, and the person in question may well have been (at least partially) Slovak. (A starkly different matter is the anomalous automatic equation of "Master MS as a Slovak painter.")* The mirror image of this is a typical reproach that so often pains Transylvanians when a tourist from Hungary, buying thick woolen blankets in Kolozsvár/Cluj or Szeklerland says: "How well they speak Hungarian! Where have they learned it?"

In the ideological prohibitions, confusion, and suppressions outlined so far, at least in regard to "consciousness-regulating" factors, we have now passed well beyond the 1960s. Of course, the general public consciousness has not yet got over them because the repercussions of the "fifties" abate only slowly in people's minds. The fact is that, as a matter of history, the cause of the founding of the

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* Master MS—late Gothic painter active in Upper Hungary in the sixteenth century.

Hungarian state has been handed over to historians. György Györffy's mono-graph on King Stephen has been a bestseller,[*] and of course the rock opera based on the story of King Stephen was a huge success,[**] though it is hard (and completely irrelevant) to judge how much of that is attributable to the music, how much to the content, and how much to the flag sporting the national colors that flutters across the background from time to time. Nonetheless, according to my own experiences, the state of *relative* "weightlessness" referred to in the introductory argument still pertains to this day, with the following comments on examining consciousness to serve as a supplement. However, an imagined state of equilibrium is not helped by a sense of irritation received by national consciousness outside the borders of Hungary, without those concerned taking part in any genuine domestic "consciousness-regulation" in this area.

I endeavor to deal in as summary fashion as possible with the fourth determinant of the coordinates of the area of inquiry, as this is not the place to present, even in a nutshell, something that has barely received attention in Hungarian scholarly forums for four decades. "Guilty consciences" in this part of the world following 1945, it is common knowledge, did not pose much of a problem elsewhere. The general public consciousness deemed the memory of Tiso's Slovakia[***] eliminable with the Slovak uprising. The procedure was simple enough: the Czechoslovak state framework labeled Slovakia's Magyar ethnic minority almost *explicitly* a "guilty people," and meanwhile a historical fiction (ancient Slovakian land and people that had been forcibly Hungarianized over the course of time) already played a big role in its ideology of "re-Slovakization"; indeed, the historical right to the reannexation of the "ancient Slovak lands" was asserted even at the level of the Communist Party. Romania's breakaway in August 1944, on the other hand, apparently rendered the memory of that country's own fascism forgettable, while distorted concepts of "guilty peoples" who should be expelled arose in the region, as well as elsewhere in Europe.

The new postwar era differed from the interwar period not just in the weight shifted unequivocally to constructs which, though present, had not been dominant before 1945, but also because these were central to the "state ideology,"

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[*]   György Györffy, *István király és műve* [King Stephen and his achievements] (Budapest, 1977).

[**] Rock opera *István a király* (Stephen the King) by Levente Szörényi and János Bródy, recorded in 1983.

[***] Jozef Tiso (1887–1947) was a Roman Catholic priest and activist in the Slovak People's Party who became Prime Minister (1938–1939) of the autonomous Slovak government after Munich, then President (1939–1945) of the Slovak Republic when it was established as a Nazi protectorate. After the war he was tried and executed for collaboration.

more latently so in the case of Slovakia, in a frankly manifest manner in Romania, and increasingly so in the 1960s and 1970s. The only difference was that as far as academics were concerned, this was not a matter of state and party discipline in Slovakia, but it became so in Romania.

As far as vulgarizing historiography is concerned, one might recall one of the first paragraphs of the present essay where, by contrast, the characteristics of the medieval structure on the basis of internal features of the Middle Ages are summed up. Belief in a fictitious "prehistoric people" that was created by means of a pedantic literary construct? Instead of a Moravian substrate, a substantial population of which lived only in the river valleys of the northwestern parts of the Carpathian Basin (one element of the Slovak ethnic group that emerged in the late Middle Ages from a population in which Czech, Moravian, Polish, and Ruthenian settlers were mixed from the thirteenth century onwards), there is a proto-nation, which already lived as a "Slovak" people in what, by and large, is the present-day territory of Slovakia in the ninth century. In place of Romanians of disputed and complex origin, who in the twelfth century were gradually moving from Wallachia to the Fogaras (Făgăraş) and Hátszeg (Haţeg) districts in Transylvania (who thus made up the first element of a mass of ethnic Romanians to settle there from the thirteenth century onwards over the centuries) there was, on the basis of the anonymous Magister P.'s "historical romance," a Daco-Romanian autochthonous population living in "vassal states" from southern Transylvania to Bihar (Bihor, Romania). All of the foregoing is fiction; the "historical" rights for the purposes of map drawing now reach a crescendo. The true border of the Empire (Principality) of Greater Moravia marked by the River Garam (in Slovak: Hron) is moved not just to the projected border of today's Slovakia but at times even as far as the Hungarian town of Szolnok. The Daco-Romanians are increasingly inclined to settle on state borders along the lines of the River Tisza and its White Körös and Black Körös tributaries. If it is possible for the introduction to a serious-minded and basically sound document published in 1971 to contain the statement that this fictitious "ancestral land" was "usurped" by the Magyars, in the background to it there lies a *belief* in the fiction, the likes of which are now more or less boundless at the levels of popularization. The Romanian "founding of the state" currently stands at an order of magnitude several millennia ago, and a myth of autochthony in recent years has been fused with an intensified tendency of cultural myths (highly developed Slavs versus nomadic "marauding" Magyars; Romanians who were intensely Christian an uncertain length of time ago versus heathen Magyars) and myths

of self-characterology (sturdy, humane Romanians versus "wild," conquering Magyars). In place of a summary, I shall merely refer to Point 3 of this study, and to the fact that not long ago the topic was finally summed up—as it happens, precisely in connection with how this all has repercussions of an, as it were, irritative nature on a certain awakening appetite of the Hungarian national consciousness for "historical" mythopoesis—by István Fodor with a topic which is of a high standard and also popular. But where would such an article appear? In *Múzeumi Közlemények* (Museum publications) 1982, no 1, no less,* whereby the information remains hermetically sealed from the "general public." Yet, it is impossible to evade touching on the entire subject sooner or later, not just in scholarly reflections (which are not relevant here) but also at a popular level, precisely because of the irritative effect that it has on public discourse. Anyone may experience what I have in the recent past, in connection with several invitations to lecture as a consequence of an article of mine which appeared in *História*.** Almost half of the questions on the topic of "the peoples of medieval Hungary" have been prompted by the Daco-Romanian hypothesis.

The state of the entire subject matter in popular thought would be measurable in principle through the sociological survey that Antal Bőhm and György Csepeli are currently engaged in. It is a pity that just two questions in the study, the raw data of which I have been able to inspect, relate to the foundation of the state.

What does, at least, emerge from the part of this study which involved 600 individuals of intellectual occupations, is that a minuscule 7 percent of this stratum were able to accept the Slavic hypothesis (with 15 percent undecided), while it is noteworthy that the vast majority (79 percent) opted for "*necessary* accommodation to the *patterns* of more highly developed Western Europe," with 55 percent of these opting for "an *original* approach to *amalgamating* Magyar traditions and European requirements."

The sole question from this comprehensive survey of altogether 1,600 individuals (stratified into those having an intellectual job, skilled workers, and semiskilled workers) which is pertinent to the present study was formulated as follows: "In your view, would St. Stephen be satisfied with the Magyar people if he were to be resurrected today?" 6 percent of those questioned in total (though 12 percent of

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* See also István Fodor, *In Search of a New Homeland: The Prehistory of the Hungarian People and the Conquest*, trans. Helen Tarnoy (Budapest, 1982).
** The major popularizing historical periodical in the period, launched in 1979.

the intellectuals) answered "the question is bad" or "nonsensical," which I personally consider to be a relevant response given that it is hard to give a serious answer to the question at the level of historical thinking. The answers are of some value, but it stems from the nature of the question that it is of no use to what we are curious about now; that is, their perception of history, but, above all, people's *general* (political, financial, moral, etc.) sentiment. Nevertheless, I have processed the sample of raw data made available to me according to types of response.

What is probably of primary significance in connection with the subject of the present paper is that 24 percent of both worker categories were unable to answer because "I don't know what he had in mind," "I don't understand history," "I don't bother myself with things like that," "I don't know how he reigned," etc., whereas there were no such answers among those in intellectual jobs. In these cases, one has to wonder if the persons questioned took the question they were asked "seriously" and were unable to answer it as such, but it is not reassuring that in the consciousness of one worker in every four there was registered indifference, gaps in knowledge, or the aforesaid trivialization in some indefinable ratio.

The remaining responses can be placed into five contrasting categories for each group (any major stratified differences are given in parentheses).

Proportionally the largest group is composed of those who answered positively to the stereotyped reference to progress ("the country has developed considerably," "progress has been huge," "big changes have taken place," etc.), but equally those who answered negatively without offering any explanation—or to be precise: 15 percent each (8 percent–12 percent–28 percent versus 8 percent–20 percent–12 percent respectively). The previous unknown fraction can most likely be taken as relating to the specific topic of the present study, whereas the rest cannot be evaluated. One may also add here the 7 percent (24 percent–0 percent–4 percent) who gave a positive response relating to the continuity of the people or state, the counterpole of which is the 4 percent (12 percent–2 percent–0 percent) who gave answers of the type, "the country has become small . . . due to its area on the map or population." The latter extremely low scores are a sign that irredentist sentiment has practically ceased to exist in Hungary, as even those giving a negative answer are not necessarily thinking of territorial revision. At all events, the "activity" of intellectuals on both sides of the response is striking.

The other three types of responses have nothing to say on attitudes to history. The counterpole to the 4 percent who gave a positive (*yes*) answer which was significantly politically motivated ("we built socialism" or "this is the regime he wanted") is 8 percent of the *no* category ("the Magyar people are not autono-

mous," "he was pro-Western," "the people of those times were more advanced than we are"); the counterpole to the 3 percent who cite "good laws," "order," or "organization" is the 9 percent who gave a morally motivated negative answer ("the population was more diligent, tougher, etc., back then," "there is too much indiscipline, immorality now" etc.); and finally the financially motivated 5 percent who responded positively ("we have a good life," "due to the country's economic development," "things are going well for us" etc.) can be counterposed to the 5 percent who gave a religiously motivated negative answer ("he was an extremely religious king," "people are not religiously minded nowadays").

The structure is highly divided, which was only to be expected. There is little more to be gleaned from the survey in regard to attitudes to history.

5. What about the fate of the other genesis problem, that of the origin of the Magyar people, after Hungary's liberation? It has followed from the turn of events that the Turanist culture of the interwar period has sunk well below the public sphere, while from another angle, the public arena is now held by those who, for the most part, espouse the account available from "The Prehistory of the Magyars" (1943), edited by Lajos Ligeti.* As to what there was in between, it is hard to know.

Certainly, it was beneficial for the subject area itself that it was not dragged into the ideological domain. In some sense, this is acknowledged by the relevant question in the above survey of the awareness of individuals in intellectual occupations: "Does the origin of a people have any significance?" Some 60 percent of those asked gave a positive answer, but added that it was only of scientific significance, while according to a further 22 percent it had "hardly any" significance, and altogether only 14 percent opted to state that ethnogenesis had "profound significance." This is largely in accord with the result of another stratified survey according to which slightly more than two thirds (67.9 percent) of respondents profess the Magyars to be a people of Finno-Ugrian origin.

What of the other third? Almost exactly a tenth of those surveyed either did not know what the origin of the Magyars was or expressed no opinion, which is rather a lot, while the gap in between is practically filled by a camp, amounting to 19.7 percent of those questioned, who took the line that the Magyars are descendants of the Huns, with only minimal proportions believing they are of

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* Lajos Ligeti, ed., *A magyarság őstörténete* [The Prehistory of the Magyars] (Budapest, 1943), (facsimile edition: Budapest, 1986).

Turkic (1.5 percent) or Sumerian (0.8 percent) origin. It is to be noted, then, that as we near the end of the second millennium, one Hungarian citizen in five still (or already) holds by a Hunnish origin.

There is something surprising about that result. It is widely known that in the early years of the twentieth century, and also later between the two world wars, it was the pro-Turkic party who in public forums provided combative opposition to the idea of a Finno-Ugrian origin, and even at this level the Huns were held on record as in the realm of legends. The dwindling of this faction seems to indicate that the "traditionalist" opposition of the modern age has no substantial succession to carry it over the changes marked by 1945; its continuity has been broken. Equally, the new opposition grouping of "Sumero-Magyarologists" was also unable to muster a camp of support worthy of mention, even in the mid-sixties when it was at its height. The vast majority of these groups were people who, for whatever reason, did not wish to take part in the modern era's enterprise of clarifying the ethnogenesis of the Magyars and cling on to a far-fetched fiction which is seven hundred years old.

The tiny group of Sumerian fans would need no further mention here were it not for a single aspect. All that one needs to know about the topic is contained in Géza Komoróczy's marvelous little book, *Sumer és magyar*? (Sumerian and Magyar?, 1976). It is a question of a small sect of fanatics of no social significance who, from time to time, lay siege to the press and book publishers, but otherwise live in their own world, swapping manuscripts with each other, but the psychic soil for the myth, which sprouted in the American exile community of the 1950s,* is fairly evident. For those who have completely lost their footing, the traditional solaces are ineffective; what they need as compensation is at least the thought that the Magyars were among the "ancient peoples" of human culture. The "heightening" of a myth by taking it ad absurdum is an old symptom, incidentally, for the intensifying debates of "nationalisms" in the late Middle Ages. The Germans wanted to compensate for the patent lacunae of their self-realization in their own "national" character in contrast to other, more successful peoples by it becoming a central article of faith that Adam himself already spoke German, because that was the language of *all mann* (the etymological source of the Latin name for the Alemannic dialects of the West Germanic peoples). What is noteworthy in the context of "Sumero-Magyarology," is the fact that

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* See Francisco Jos Badiny, *The Sumerian Wonder (How We Found the Sumerian Language on the Medieval Linguistic Remains)* (Buenos Aires, 1974).

there is just one other part of the world outside the American continents where the doctrine has won any significant following, and that is Transylvania. Naturally, it is not measurable, but clear as daylight that, especially since the unearthing of tablets at Alsótatárlak (Tărtăria, Romania) became public knowledge,* the movement is much more vocal and has gained more ready access to the public than in Hungary. Public opinion is a factor to which, merely out of courtesy, even scholars pay attention. The most obvious explanation was articulated by Komoróczy: "We may be almost sure that the popularity in Transylvania of the idea of a linguistic affinity between Sumerian and Hungarian is most directly related to the dogged adherence of the official line to Daco-Romanian continuity." It is also almost sure that the readily traceable influence of the previously described irritation can be captured on this point.

Sheltering as they do in Hungary under the level of print culture, the much more sizeable camp of believers in a Hunnish origin is hard to approach. We are in the fortunate position, however, to have had at hand two literate adherents as well recently, so that the phenomenon can be studied from the source materials as it were. As it happens, I had the good luck of being one of those to trigger the process nearly a decade ago with a study on Simon of Kéza, which "rides roughshod over the cause of a Hunnish-Magyar connection," as it says word for word in a bulky pamphlet by ex-journalist László Sebestyén (*Kézai Simon védelmében* [In defense of Simon of Kéza], 1975), multiplied copies of which made the rounds at the time and which was one of the informative sources of the resuscitated Hunnic theory. The other was the writer Ferenc Kunszabó, who has most recently taken up the cudgels with his at times none too gentle meditations about supposed traces of the Huns which have come to light in Switzerland.** I encountered the influence of some of Kunszabó's earlier meditations on history in the reactions to a lecture I gave in a university club, whereas a smaller movement had gathered around Sebestyén and pushed the defense of the Huns onto the agenda of various clubs until, sad to say, intervention from higher official quarters broke up the agitation. Sad to say, because if it had not happened the way it did, we would be much wiser about the natural history of the phenomenon. This way, however, the way of thinking reflected in the sources indi-

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* The Tărtăria tablets are three tablets of unbaked clay, originally unearthed by Nicolae Vlassa in 1961. These bear incised symbols, resembling those on Sumerian clay tablets. They were once believed to date from c. 4000 BC, though more recent radiocarbon dating has pushed the date back to as long ago as 5500 BC.

** Ferenc Kunszabó, "Hunok Svájcban?" [Huns in Switzerland?], *Kortárs* 11 (1981): 1793–96; Ferenc Kunszabó, "Töprengés egy idült lépéstévesztésről" [Reflections on a chronic inadequacy], *Forrás* 11 (1981): 17–23.

cated and the anonymous mass of the public—put at around 20 percent by the survey—can only be connected hypothetically.

However instructive it would be to analyze the methods employed by the inchoate "Hunnology," there is no space to do so here and now. The methods are instructive because they weirdly match the ingenuity of the medieval chroniclers. For a start, then, at the level of linguistics: or to be absolutely precise, the naïve "etymologizing" of the Middle Ages. According to the chronicler Simon of Kéza, who lived around the year 1280, the name *Hispania* had been taken from the Hungarian (hence axiomatically Hunnish) *ispán*; seven centuries later, Kunszabó, at Hüningen (Huningue) just outside Basel, arrives at exactly the same notion in connection with the word *Wiese* (meadow): Hey presto! That's nothing but the "Hunnish" (hence axiomatically Hungarian) word *víz* (water)! The methodology, by the way, is much the same in "Sumero-Magyarology." The other methodological condition: just as medieval chroniclers would rummage around indiscriminately in picking together texts by the authors of antiquity, so too does today's awakener of the Hun idea from the fiddle-faddle of his reading matter, only to regurgitate the undigested mess, "gathering the forkfuls together . . . in a hayrick," as Sebestyén himself describes the products of his own diving. And lo and behold! . . . everything comes together. That, of course, is the way, for instance, *Hispania* and *ispán* are also matched, to follow the example of the late György Bartal* in the case of the Parthian word *megistan* that he came across in Pliny (and who actually used it in the sense of great man, grandee, magnate, etc.)—well, what else could it mean than *megyeispán* (county chief)? Filled with "exultation" at hitting every such bull's-eye, like Sebestyén in his pamphlet, Kunszabó in the Val d'Anniviers—that is to say: "valley of *Hunvér*" (i.e., Hunnish blood)—his own enlightenment dawning on him during a stroll. And he is just as inclined to inform us that the cerebrations of Sumerologists are likewise full of such Eureka! moments.

With regard to the topic of the present study, it is not the method, but two circumstances in particular that are worthy of note. The first is the psychiatric background and motivation.

According to both authors, the Hun origin of the Magyars is, as has been seen, a "cause." A national cause. Sebestyén propagated his own pamphlet ("this valorous document in the Hun-Magyar cause," as he terms it) among those

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* György Bartal, Sr. (1785–1865) lived much of his life near Pozsony (present-day Bratislava) and, alongside various court and ministerial appointments, was a noted historian of medieval law.

deemed worthy of receiving it on the grounds that he was fulfilling "a *service* in an important *communal matter*" when calling upon every decent Hungarian to take an unspecified action. Kunszabó, too, has grim misgivings in establishing that "we are witnesses to a devilish misstep in the field of official research into the Hungarian language, but also the entire related area of research into origin and development." Why is the situation devilish, and why is the cause a cause? Because the trickery of the "Habsburg administration" coerced Hungarians back then for the false doctrine of the Finno-Ugrian origin of the Magyar people in order to "thereby use this, too, to sap *the nation's self-knowledge and self-confidence.*" This self-knowledge and self-confidence have been suffering from that coercion ever since; the spiritual liberation of Hungary is in large measure a function of the acknowledgment of common identity with the Huns. In close concord with this, from a perspective of nearly ten years earlier, comes the logic of Sebestyén, who set about "suing back" the Hun descent of the Hungarians in order that we may at last regain "*the healthy spirit of our national consciousness.*" It should be noted that the complete piffle which sees Finno-Ugrian studies as German opium is once again consonant with the peculiar reasoning of Sumerologists, along with that other stigma that it is part of the prevailing "official" scholastic dictatorship. "A Finno-Ugrian origin is insisted on by the camp of current occupants of university chairs, indeed one might well say the political 'backwoodsmen,'" writes Sebestyén, and meanwhile those who believe in the Huns and Turks "suffer the fate of beaten field armies." This makes for a doubling of the orchestration, with the violoncello's sweet tone of anguished concern for the national consciousness constantly lacerated by strident horn tones of bubbling temper.

In the historical perception lies the other noteworthy circumstance. It was not by chance that in the passage cited above Kunszabó, in one and the same breath, labeled "research into origin and *development*" as being a chronic misstep. In a "rumination," which appeared years ago in the columns of a daily newspaper, he grumbled that historians were not accepting an account of income dating from the reign of King Béla III as proof that Hungary was at the same level of development as England and France. Why did they do this? To sap the nation's *self-confidence*? And then by means of the peculiar logic of tempestuousness, he went on to ask why there was a continual need to make comparisons of Hungary's history, and to measure it by European yardsticks, when it stands sui generis in accordance with its own autotelisms. The thinking of the Hunnologist who had come forward a decade before is also in perfect accord

with this—by now independent of the Huns. Sebestyén himself lets it be known that he had first and foremost winced and then taken pen in hand at the kind of search for "synchronicity" in European historical development that I myself engage in, which implants "*faint-heartedness*" in the nation. "It is not hard to recognize," he writes, "that the reason why Hungarians started to become more European at the end of the thirteenth century, as Jenő Szűcs sees it, is because the Tatar campaign *broke* the spine of our hitherto sovereign statehood that had previously still proved more vigorously effectual against the West, and we had to have more recourse to our neighbors on this account." Leaving the absurdities on a number of counts aside, and to rephrase the words, it was *external violence* which broke its spine, otherwise Hunnish-Magyar autotelism would have continued to prove effectual . . .

For newfangled Hunnology it is not only the Finno-Ugrian origin which is irritating, but also universal history; the Hunnish consciousness is nurtured on the soil of autotelism—that is the basis of this "perception of history." Nevertheless, what could be more laughable than to treat this phenomenon, which is raising its head as, so to speak, an ideological "threat"? It is more expedient to investigate the causes of the compensatory mechanism lying behind it.

Last of all, I would like to point to yet another phenomenon in this subject area. Gyula László's hypothesis of a "double conquest" per se cannot of course be mentioned in the same breath as the above. It is the thesis of a fellow academic, fully deserving of all respect, who on this point believes he can link research into the Avars with Magyar prehistory, and at his every articulation he stresses the hypothetical nature of the surmise.[*] The noisy and triumphant reception with which the theory is greeted on every hand does, however, point to an interesting symptom in certain sectors of public opinion.

In these sectors the hypothesis naturally manifests as a certainty; more importantly, somehow it is always brought up in conjunction with the Daco-Romanian speculation, as a counterpoint to it. In other words, an *irritation* arriving from the southeast somehow brings to mind a prehistoric motif of a "historical right," even though subsequently this had seemed to have been truly removed. In this way it is understandable that László's hypothesis is an achievement that has also been greeted enthusiastically in "Sumero-Magyarological" climes, even though it has absolutely nothing to do with it, with the exception of the antedating, taking into account the fact that the "double occupation"

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[*] See for example Gyula László, *The Magyars: Their Life and Civilisation* (Budapest: Corvina, 1999).

gives it a modest start of two centuries (and not millennia). Nor is everybody content to leave it at that; some seek to take the detective work further. It was likewise in issue 11 of the monthly *Forrás* in 1981 that Endre K. Grandpierre came forward with a new theory (by now called the "one-off conquest," for like others, he ranks Finno-Ugrists as the German opium of the post-1849, Bach era) according to which the ancestral Magyars carried out the "original settlement" in an "indefinite primeval age"—and this was repeated not once, but no fewer than *seven more times*. This diverting treatise is instructive from a certain angle. The implication of the Huns concerns the fifth century AD, the "double conquest" the seventh century, and as if that were not enough, a need is felt to fall back on a "primeval age," while it is not hard to spot the influence of the millennia of the Daco-Romanians in the parrying mechanism.

Finally, one more remark is due. It might be raised as an objection that my presentation is neither proportional nor balanced. Yet, I was not aiming at proportionality or balance, as my intention was to devise a diagnosis. One states in a medical diagnosis not that *otherwise* the body is healthy, but that certain organs are not healthy.

Translated by Tim Wilkinson

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A long essay entitled *Three Historical Regions of Europe*, appearing first in a samizdat volume in Budapest in 1980, instantly put its author into the forefront of the transnational debate on Central Europe, alongside such intellectual luminaries as Milan Kundera and Czesław Miłosz. The present volume offers English-language readers a rich selection of the depth and breadth of the legacy of Jenő Szűcs (1928–1988).

The selection documents Szűcs's seminal contribution to many contemporary debates in historical anthropology, nationalism studies, and conceptual history. It contains his key texts on the history of national consciousness and patterns of collective identity, as well as medieval and early modern political thought. The works published here, most of them previously unavailable in English, provide a sophisticated analysis of a wide range of subjects from the myths of origins of Hungarians before Christianization to the political and religious ideology of the Dózsa peasant uprising in 1514, the medieval roots of civil society, or the revival of ethnic nationalism during the communist era. The volume, with an introduction by the editors locating Szűcs in a transnational context, offers a unique insight into the complex and sensitive debate on national identity in post-1945 East Central Europe.

" Jenő Szűcs was a pioneering figure in the constructivist analysis of ethnic and national identities from late Antiquity through the Middle Ages, but also a major critic of the misuses of national past in his native Hungary. The full scope of his extraordinary scholarship has been too long ignored in the English reading world, and this sensitive translation of his most significant publications makes available to a wide public the breadth of his analyses of nation, ethnic consciousness and political ideology when once more these issues are at the forefront of European political debate."

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