The Hungarian Historical Review. Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae – New Series, ii, 4 (2013): Teréz Oborni (ed.), *Bethlen: The Prince of Transylvania*, 233 pp.

It has already became customary in the Hungarian-speaking scholarship that research on the outstanding personalities from the Hungarian and Transylvanian history is presented on the occasion of anniversaries. Among recent examples, there are publications on Francis II Rákóczi (2003), Stephen Bocskai (2006), Mathias Corvinus (2008) and Gabriel Báthory (2009). Following this pattern, in 2013 the historians concentrated on the figure of Gabriel Bethlen (1580–1629), prince of Transylvania (1613–29) and elected king of Hungary (1620–1). An excuse for that was the 400. anniversary of his accession to the Transylvanian throne. A previous similar accumulation of the studies on Bethlen occurred in early 1980s, due to the 400. birth anniversary.[1] Like the predominant majority of the earlier publications, the 2013 contributions took the form of special issues of periodicals and edited volumes with a considerable role of published conference papers.[2] As far as the recent scholarship is concerned, of special importance for the international audience have been the thematic issues of *The Hungarian Historical Review*, a journal re-established in 2012 (formerly as *Acta Historica Academiae*

[1] Kálmán Kovács (ed.), *Bethlen Gábor állama és kora* (Budapest, 1980) (includes the bibliography of works on Bethlen till 1980 by László Mihály Hernadi, available at <http://mek.oszk.hu/03900/03971/> [Accessed March 31, 2014); László Makkai (ed.), *Bethlen Gábor emlékezete* (Budapest, 1980); László Makkai (ed.), *Bethlen Gábor kronikásai* (Budapest, 1980); Lajos Demény, *Bethlen Gábor és kora* (Bukarest, 1982); see also the issues of *Századok*, cxv (1981), cxvii (1983).

[2] An exception is the monograph by Dénes Hárai, *Gabriel Bethlen, prince de Transylvanie et roi élu de Hongrie (1580–1629)* (Histoire Hongroise, Paris, 2013). The main conferences on Bethlen were held in Miskolc (May 2–3, 2012) and Cluj-Napoca (Oct. 24–26, 2013), with further events in Budapest (smaller conferences and exhibitions in the Hungarian National Archive and Hungarian National Museum); the papers of the first conference have already been published: Klára Papp and Judit Balogh (eds.), *Bethlen Gábor képmása* (Speculum Historiae Debreceniense, 15, Debrecen, 2013), several papers were released in a more extended form in the volume: Gábor Kármán and Kees Teszelszky (eds.), *Bethlen Gábor és Európa* (Budapest, 2013). Recent editions of the primary sources related to Bethlen's policy and intellectual history of the age: Kees Teszelszky, *Szenci Molnár Albert elveszettnek hitt 'Igaz Vallás Portréja' (1606) avagy holland – flamand – magyar szellemi kapcsolatok a kora újkorban / True Religion: A Lost Portrait by Albert Szenci Molnár (1606) or Dutch – Flemish – Hungarian Intellectual Relations in the Early Modern Period* (Budapest, 2014); Gábor Almási, *A Secretissima Instructio (1620). A kora újkori politikai paradigmaváltás egy Bethlen-kori röpirat tükrében* (Budapest, 2014).

Scientiarum Hungaricae, 1951–89) and published by the Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of History, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

The volume consists of eight papers by Hungarian historians, all devoted to various aspects of Bethlen's reign (1613–29) and five book reviews, supplemented by a list of variants of geographical names and a map. Some of the papers have previously or simultaneously been published in Hungarian.[3] The introductory paper by Ágnes R. Várkonyi provides an outline of the main events of Bethlen's rule. Based predominantly on Hungarian scholarship and source editions, it gives an overview of the reference literature, with a useful historical background (concerning topics as Bethlen's family, origin, stages of his political career). Várkonyi focused on Bethlen's place in the contemporary European politics and the concept of his 'presence' in Europe. The general character of the paper has only allowed to point out some aspects of the reign which Várkonyi consequently handled in the context of broader European phenomena (information flow and propaganda, new political science and its impact on political practice, princely cultural policy). A separate section focuses on the alliance between Hungarian, Bohemian, Moravian and Transylvanian estates on the eve of the Thirty Years' War ('Confederation' of 1620). This political project, although unsuccessful – primarily because of the defeat of the Bohemian uprising in the battle of White Mountain – helped Bethlen sign a satisfactory treaty with Ferdinand II in Nikolsburg two years later. In general, the paper provides a good introductory overview. However, the reader can feel somewhat misguided, as the text concludes quite abruptly at the events of 1626, with no coverage of the last years of Bethlen's reign.

A much more detailed analysis can be found in the extended form of this paper in Hungarian.[4] In the volume discussed here, a deeper study on the image of Bethlen in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Hungarian historiography is further offered in the paper by Péter Erdősi, researcher of the Báthory period in Transylvania. He compared the established image of the prince with that of his predecessor on the Transylvanian throne, Sigismund Báthory, and focused on the themes of their youth and characteristics of princely courts, in order to point out the differences between the 'weak' Sigismund and the 'wise' Bethlen. As Erdősi states, the historiographic narratives rooted in a polarising approach to history, trace back to the early seventeenth-century authors. This is how similar aspects of the two biographies served to develop different interpretations, inspired by religious and political motives.

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[3] *Századok*, cxliv, 4 (2011) – papers by T. Oborni, I. Horn (journal issue with 5 papers on Bethlen's reign); Kármán and Teszelszky (eds.), *Bethlen Gábor és Európa* – extended version of paper by Á.R. Várkonyi.

[4] Ágnes R. Várkonyi, 'Bethlen Gábor jelenléte Európában', in Kármán and Teszelszky (eds.), *Bethlen Gábor és Európa*, 9–75.

It has also been the case for historiographic images of other Transylvanian princes of the period, such as Gabriel Báthory, contrasted with Bethlen and Stephen Bocskai.

Three papers in the issue concern Bethlen's diplomacy and foreign policy. No doubt the reason was the intended international readership, but the choice reflects the perspectives of current research as well. In the 1610s and 1620s Transylvania caught attention in Europe and the country's participation in the Thirty Years' War made its European presence more important than ever before in the short history of the principality. For this reason Bethlen's diplomacy, although of long lasting research traditions, still proves to be a likely matter of study and can be approached anew. In the issue Teréz Oborni investigates the diplomatic manoeuvres of the prince in the relations with the Habsburg sovereign of Hungary, Mathias II, at the beginning of Bethlen's rule. Due to secure his power, Bethlen had to get it recognised also by the Emperor, which was eventually brought along in 1615 by means of the Treaty of Nagyszombat (Trnava). The Oborni paper is a study of diplomatic pragmatism; it tracks the stages of the diplomatic task to stay loyal to the Ottomans and to gain peace from the Emperor at once – a game Bethlen had to play in just like his predecessors, but which he undoubtedly further mastered. In 1615 he recognised the Habsburg suzerainty and a plan of a joint anti-Ottoman war (in a secret section of the treaty). The laboriously negotiated and fragile agreement became a rather tactic step, as it survived only four years, when Bethlen entered the Thirty Years' War on the Bohemian side.

Géza Pálffy described the events of 1619–22 from the point of view of the Hungarian estates and in context of the crisis of the Habsburg Monarchy. Therefore, he stressed the international perspective. The paper offers then an inspiring parallel to an important recent study of Sándor Papp[5], who analysed the Transylvanian-Hungarian/Habsburg relations in the context of Ottoman policy. In 1619–21, following the Bethlen's military successes, only a small group of the political elite remained loyal to Ferdinand II, some were forced to join the Transylvanian prince. Remarkably, among Bethlen's adherents in the Kingdom of Hungary, there were many aristocrats who did not support Stephen Bocskai in 1604–6. Ferdinand II faced a critical situation: the crisis reached its peak by the fall of 1620. In spite of acquiring the royal insignia

[5] Sándor Papp, 'Friedensoptionen und Friedensstrategien des Fürsten Gábor Bethlen zwischen den Habsburger- und Osmanenreich (1619–1621)', in Arno Strohmeyer and Norbert Spannenberger (eds.), *Frieden und Konfliktmanagement in interkulturellen Räumen. Das Osmanische Reich und die Habsburgermonarchie in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Stuttgart, 2013), 109–28. Cf. *idem*, 'Bethlen Gábor, a Magyar királyság és a Porta (1619–1621)', *Századok*, cxlv, 4 (2011), 915–73; *idem*, 'Bethlen Gábor ismeretlen hadjárati terve II. Ferdinánd és a katolikus Európa ellen', in Kármán and Teszelszky (eds.), *Bethlen Gábor és Európa*, 103–27.

with the Holy Crown of Hungary, Bethlen resigned of coronation – a decision characterised by Pálffy as a step of a self-limited "ruler of great consequence" and a "true *Realpolitiker*", but (as the author argued, in contrast with the predominant and well-established judgements of Hungarian historiography) a decision clearly taken not with the intention to unify the country (nor in a spirit of Hungarian patriotism Bethlen was often considered to follow). Pálffy concentrated on the meaning of the often neglected compromise between Ferdinand II and the Hungarian estates, which was reached in the summer of 1622, at the Diet in Sopron (Ödenburg), following the peace treaty with Bethlen in Nikolsburg. The agreement involved a solution that remained in custom till the nineteenth century, namely the enactment into law of the privileges of the estates from 1608, as part of the coronation diploma of 1618. The paper deals thoroughly with the negotiations, methods to handle the crisis, and its results for the political balance of power in the kingdom, also in the symbolic and ceremonial dimension (coronation of Queen Eleonora Anna Gonzaga in July 1622). An interesting case was the career of Szaniszló Thurzó, a Lutheran and follower of Bethlen elected palatine in 1622, who largely benefited from the compromise the Habsburg ruler decided to bring about; by the way, the latter is shown here as much more flexible a ruler than usually portrayed. Thurzó's advance marked the strengthened position of the estates. Another significant career that resulted from the redistribution of power was that of Miklós Esterházy. Bethlen's wars against the Habsburg Monarchy brought, therefore, interesting results for the political elite in the Kingdom of Hungary. The other outcome was the fatal devastation of Hungary before it could recover from the consequences of the Long Turkish War (1591/3–1606). However, the compromise of 1622 proved to be durable, as in the following years Bethlen didn't find support among the Hungarian estates any more.

The third paper on political and diplomatic history in the volume is Gábor Kármán's study of Bethlen's diplomats in the missions to the Protestant courts of Europe. In contrast to the older scholarship, Kármán rated the performance of the corps in a much more nuanced manner. Failures of the diplomats (like insufficient language skills, lack of required documents), as the author argued, not necessarily informed the European image of the prince. The paper has a thematic construction: the author divided the diplomatic corps into groups: main were the 'Czech/Palatinate' (post-1620 emigrants with Matthias Quadt as main figure, mostly serving also other Protestant rulers) and the 'Silesian' group (diplomats in Bethlen service). They received different tasks, what allowed the author to argue for a dual and specialised character of Bethlen's diplomatic activity. Separate categories were 'wandering diplomats' and adventurers, like Jacques Roussel or a Polish nobleman Zygmunt Zaklika, whose awkward behaviour caused critical judgements of the prince's diplomacy among the historians. As Kármán stated, most of

Bethlen's diplomats to Protestant courts were of foreign origin (but less than 30 per cent in total number) and served more than one ruler during their career: both features were common practice. In Transylvania, the number of foreigners in diplomatic service was falling from the 1640s onwards. Like during the reign of Bethlen, they were still occasionally appointed to long-distance missions, but not to fulfill tasks in the neighbouring countries. The author explained the change by the end of the migratory wave of experts of the 1620s and not by the structural change in the principality's system of foreign policy, significantly improved by Gabriel Bethlen.

Although the papers on Bethlen's foreign policy, diplomacy and European presence seem to prevail in the issue, the volume contains also three papers on internal matters of Transylvania – a fact particularly valuable to international reader with limited access to original recent research published in Hungarian or Romanian. Ildikó Horn offered an in-depth analysis of the princely council in the period of Bethlen. The reign, often simply labelled as of 'absolutist' character, lacked a more concrete approach to the means and effects of the Prince's policy towards the elite. The paper, full of numeric data, diagrams and charts, delivers evidence for his methods. The council, briefly and skilfully reshaped by the prince, became in fact a kind of government, consisting of specialised councillors who were commissioned tasks in their respective areas of expertise. This allowed Bethlen to make use of the council as a tool for achieving his political agenda and handling the socially complex Transylvanian elite. Horn analyses the group of councillors from multiple points of view, like social and ethnic origin, confession, their rank in the hierarchy, offices and duties. Remarkable is the relatively big number of Catholic councillors (13 of total number of 32 councillors in the years 1613–29, compared to 9 Calvinists, 6 Unitarian, 3 Lutheran and 1 Sabbatarian), a proof that, as Horn states, "from the mid-1620s on the Catholicism and Habsburg orientation could no longer be automatically linked in Transylvania", but also for the ongoing religious changes in the Transylvanian elite, the effects of which (strengthened representation of Calvinists) were to be seen only later.

Two authors deal with Bethlen's policy toward towns. Art historian András Kovács describes the efforts of the prince to create a new centre of power and representation in Alba Iulia (Gyulafehérvár) after the crisis and fall of the town at the beginning of the seventeenth century. This involved the construction of fortifications, depicted here more comprehensively also as a project of social and economical consequences. The plan partly failed due to low defensibility of the castle, which forced George Rákóczi II to consider other places for this purpose (Fogaras/Făgăraș, Szeben/Sibiu). On the contrary, Bethlen did not abandon his plans to develop a princely palace and cathedral in Alba Iulia as well as to revive the town, not least with the academic college. It succeeded, but the wide-ranging plan of the prince to transform the capital into an ideal representative town with topographically

ordered seat of the estates not surprisingly proved to be unrealistic. Kovács gathered interesting and scattered data from a variety of sources, however, the paper apparently lacks conclusion and the illustrations are of uneven quality and therefore not always clear enough.

The second study on towns concerns the relation between Gabriel Bethlen and the town of Brassó (Kronstadt/Braşov), one of the wealthiest towns of the principality. Zsuzsanna Cziráki has based her research on the precise account books of Brassó. Thus, the study is part of recent intensive research on the Saxon towns, possibly because of their preserved extensive archives, whose importance and scale make them important not only to local history but to the history of Transylvania and the region as well. Recently, Cziráki has published a monograph on this subject.[6] The princely visits to the Saxon town, made on the basis of an old privilege, help clarify the image of the political relations between the central power and town self-government. Again, the inner tension of Transylvanian politics comes to the fore, which also comes out at once as a local example of some aspects of the premodern statebuilding. Hosting the court and princely household – an undertaking financed by the town also when they stayed in the vicinity of Brassó – cost really a lot (approx. 1,000–1,600 forints, including the gifts, compared to 1,300–1,500 forints spent by the town on a single military campaign of the prince) and therefore became a matter of discussion, and was at times resisted. The number of guests was negotiated, as the hosts had in mind the oppressive policy of Prince Gabriel Báthory. Bethlen fixed the relations with the Saxons and forced them to compromise, as he intended to increase his influence over the significant political and economic player, the privileged Saxon *Universitas*. In any case, as numerous cases show, both sides managed to build the relationship on deals and measured decisions. The core of the paper and its most valuable part is a detailed description of food supply, accommodation and court, which gives an insight into the culture of everyday life (even if hosting a prince was quite rare event), court history, urban history and commerce.

The issue of *The Hungarian Historical Review* on Gabriel Bethlen is not a comprehensive volume on the prince and his reign, but nor it was intended to fulfil this task. Therefore, the narrow character of some papers is not a disadvantage. They provide evidence of the research currently undertaken. Is seems that editors have made a good choice in concentrating on political and diplomatic issues, whilst the issue of princely propaganda and image has been investigated quite intensively in the last years and dominated some of the anniversary publications as well. Seemingly, there is a gap in papers based on Ottoman sources in the issue, but a balance for that gap are papers

[6] Zsuzsanna Cziráki, *Autonom közösség és központi hatalom. Udvar, fejedelem és város viszonya a Bethlen-kori Brassóban* (Budapest, 2011).

published recently elsewhere, also in English.[7] Most of the papers were basically intended for use of experts in the field, but, as a result, the editors avoided producing just yet another anniversary publication for the general reader. The issue delivers a set of papers which deal with the period from diverse angles and on various types of sources: from local to international. The texts are well-documented and no doubt essentially contribute to the international research. What is perhaps most striking regarding the historical research on Bethlen and his era presented in this volume and in other recent Hungarian publications on Bethlen, is that despite a long-studied subject, in this case political and diplomatic-service history can still provide us with new findings.

proofreading Tristan Korecki *Szymon Brzeziński*

David Frick, *Kith, Kin and Neighbors: Communities and Confession in Seventeenth-Century Wilno*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 2013, 529 pp.

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as a multi-religious and multiethnic country has repeatedly been discussed in historical studies. It seems that the topic ranks among the well recognised ones. The monograph by David Frick, summarising the many years of studies on the denominational socio-topography of Wilno, is quite distinctive as far as research on the Commonwealth is concerned. First, it describes the functioning of representatives or exponents of the multiple confessions and religions within urban communities, rather than the nobility. Second, the multi-religious and multiethnic quality is analysed from a micro-historical perspective. This methodological proposal is decisive with regards to the uniqueness and value of the book.

The author focuses on the seventeenth-century Wilno, as perceived by its residents. The question of what the daily coexistence of representatives of the many denominations and religions looked like within a defined urban space is basic for the monograph as a whole. Frick investigates the strategies of building a network of interpersonal contacts that were applied by representatives of the various religions. Wilno is compared to West-European multi-confessional cities. The micro-historical analysis enables the reader to

[7] Balázs Sudár, 'Iskender and Gábor Bethlen: The Pasha and the Prince', in Gábor Kármán and Radu G. Păun (eds.), *Europe and the 'Ottoman World': Exchanges and conflicts (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries)* (Istanbul, 2013), 141–69; Gábor Kármán and Lovro Kunčević (eds.), *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden and Boston, 2013) (papers by Gábor Kármán, János B. Szabó); Sándor Papp, 'Friedensoptionen'; for Hungarian-language references, cf. *idem*, 'Bethlen Gábor, a Magyar királyság'.

meet the people and learn how the seventeenth-century Wilno 'sounded' and 'smelled'. Frick has been inspired by the research done by Benjamin Kaplan and the catalogue of questions he proposed around the conduct of 'ordinary people', which means those who shaped everyday toleration in the urban areas.

The study under review is based upon quite an extensive source base, presented in detail in Frick's previous publication.[1] The rich municipal and ecclesial archives, sermons, funeral orations, and polemical literature were used in the first place. It is noteworthy that most of the sources have been taken advantage of for the first time. The study's chronology extends to the whole of the seventeenth century; the period was selected owing to the source material being preserved in a good condition. Micro-historical and linguistic tools have been used in the analysis of the sources.

The monograph is composed of two basic parts. The first analyses the private and public urban space, with the narrative spinning around the category of space. The second describes the people (of various confessions) who functioned within the space; confessional categories are of relevance there.

In the first part, of special interest are the chapters on urban public space. Following a very detailed source query, the author has outlined a map of Wilno's denominations of the 1630s (pp. 21–58). The individual districts are described in terms of their religious and social profiles. Frick has managed to find that confessional settlement areas functioned within the town. These included Protestants (the elites lived at the Castle Hill; the upper classes, in Niemiecka [German] Street; *horodnitstvo* [belonging to the Castle's territory] – the poorest groups); Orthodox-Uniates (the elites – the area around the Marketplace; the lower strata – between the Town-hall to Rudnicka Gate and Gate of Dawn [*Ostra Brama*]; Subocz and Sawicz Streets); Catholic (the elites – the Marketplace area; ecclesial settlements [*jurydyki*] between Skopowa and Bernardyńska [Franciscans Observants] Streets), and the Jewish community (the vicinity of Niemiecka, Szklana [glass], and Żydowska [Jewish] Streets). The individual quarters were rather homogeneous socially; some areas were linguistically homogeneous as well. For instance, the author argues that the vicinity of Niemiecka Street was populated by German-speaking people using a variety of dialects (including the Jews who spoke Yiddish; p. 35). The description of public space is very interestingly complemented by a chapter on the various calendars functioning in the town (pp. 77–98), showing in what ways the method of measuring time influenced the shaping of the public space.

The argument concerning private space sounds less convincing. Frick begins by describing the buildings in detail; then, he 'enters' the houses and analyses who shared the house and in what ways the private space was arranged (pp. 59–76). At this point, important in the analysis is the description of the buildings and the physical description of house interiors, enabling to

[1] David Frick (ed.), *Wilnianie. Żywoty siedemnastowieczne* (Warsaw, 2007).

precisely define the residential space. As Frick demonstrates, shared rental of apartments and rooms by those identifying themselves with different denominations was a frequent case. Using the sources available, the considerations comprised in this chapter mostly deal with instances of Christian-Jewish cohabitation (pp. 60–3). Cohabitation of people of various religions offers certain interpretative problems, for, as the author remarks, lease of rooms was in most cases driven by economic considerations; ethnic or religious aspects were of no major importance to such decisions (p. 68). Whilst this finding seems apt, it undermines, to an extent, the validity of the argument proposed in the subchapter being discussed. It is moreover obvious that the neighbours or housemates took part in the daily life. The question remains open whether this translated into rendering the social bonds more solid.

The considerations on urban space are closed by a chapter on the languages used by the inhabitants of Wilno and on the language stereotypes ascribed to the individual confessional groups. The multilingual aspect of modern Wilno is pointed out, and examples of linguistic hybrids quoted; made up of two or more languages, such peculiar coinages are found particularly vivid in the suburbs (p. 114).

The second section of the study offers a very interesting description of contacts between representatives of various confessions. Following a conscientious analysis of the sources, Frick argues that, as opposed to the polemical literature and religious propaganda, the confessional borderlines were very often crossed. The shared space and the resulting (in most cases) membership in, and identification with, a specified social stratum was crucial in building a network of human contacts. Confessional borderlines are found crossed in every area Frick has researched.

This particular section of the monograph spins the narrative around the major events in the lives of seventeenth-century Wilno locals. The following areas are discussed in the subsequent seven chapters: birthday, christening feast, appointment of godparents; education; betrothal and marriage; marriage disputes; functioning of artisan guilds; senescence and care of the aged; dying/death. There are two more chapters, on the language used in litigation and on the developments related to the Moscow occupation, both using linguistic tools.

Let us quote some of Frick's findings. He argues that selection of the godparents was a means of building contacts and strengthening the social position; hence, the denomination of a godfather/godmother-to-be was less relevant (pp. 116–31). Such baptismal alliances were most often established among Protestants of different denominations; in topographic terms, the phenomenon was mainly characteristic to the area of Zamkowa [Castle] Street, which means that the elite was primarily involved. This was not the only occurring constellation: Orthodox-Lutheran or Uniate-Catholic alliances sometimes also appeared. Similarly, the confessional limits were crossed in

education, which is true for crafts guilds. As Frick rightly points out, the guilds functioning in Wilno were multi-religious organisations; moreover, some associations admitted the option for apprentices to learn the tricks of the trade and get employed with Jewish craftsmen (pp. 144–6). Also, the confessional borders were crossed in the course of university studies (pp. 155–60). Being a student with the local Jesuit Academy (College) was an important item in the resumes of Wilno residents of all confessions, marking the beginning of their tertiary education. Mixed marriages were a frequent phenomenon (pp. 209–13); while typical especially to the higher social strata, it is found to have much less often appeared among the poorer people. Alliances for marriage appeared the most frequently among the Lutheran and Calvinist elite, populating Zamkowa Street, as well as the Orthodox and Uniates who mainly resided in Subocz and Końska [horse] Streets. Divorces were not unknown to the seventeenth-century Wilno. Frick has managed to observe that divorcing was most typical to the local Ruthenian (i.e. Orthodox and Uniate) people. In this context, an interesting hypothesis is proposed whereby the tradition of Lithuanian customary law which admitted divorce was more vivid among the Ruthenian populace (pp. 246–7).

Extremely interesting and pertinent is the reasoning on the functioning of crafts guilds (pp. 248–73). As Frick argues, in multi-confessional towns, guilds were primarily economic organisations where religious activity was of lesser importance. One can only consider whether the hypothesis that Wilno was exceptional in this respect within the Commonwealth is right (p. 249); the phenomenon may have actually been typical to the whole of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. As is known, the statutes of Wilno guilds posed a model and example copied in the Duchy's many other towns.

The deliberations on the old age and care of the old people begin with analysis of the functioning of the Beggars' Fraternity, which also was multi-confessional (p. 325). Similarly, Catholic and Uniate hospitals, which were largely managed by the municipal authorities, extended their assistance not only to the coreligionists in need, whereas the other Catholic institutions are found more homogeneous (p. 331). In the light of the denominational polemics, the Orthodox-Uniate collaboration in aiding the indigent proves rather astonishing (p. 330). Interesting are the remarks on the topography of poverty, especially as regards the emphasised fact that most of the local poor people lived in a close neighbourhood with those most affluent (garrets and basements, p. 351). The discussion on the cycle of life is concluded with a chapter on expiring. Analysing the rhetoric of the last wills of people of various religions, Frick shows various models of death of a Christian (pp. 359–64). Presented are some bequeathals, and we are told how guardians for underage children and widows were appointed. As was the case with the matrimonial policy or selection of godparents, Protestant alliances are the most visible in this area again (pp. 364–78).

The other two chapters, the one on appearing before the court and on the Moscow occupation, are somewhat different than the others; as aforesaid, both use linguistic tools. The language of litigation is discussed in the former (pp. 276–83). The basic litigation formulae and oaths made by representatives of various religions are analysed. The analysis of court documents has enabled Frick to hypothesise that incessant litigations were one of the factors that allowed to maintain peace and calm in heterogeneous communities (p. 275). The arguments concerning the Moscow occupation are interesting; of special value seems the analysis of Konigsberg's sources concerning refugees from Wilno, showing that the people of all the confessions from this town found refuge in Prussia. Moreover, neighbourly contact networks continued to function in exile (pp. 292–300).

The last chapter, offering a sort of summary, concerns the conflicts. In analysing the anti-Jewish incidents in the former half of the seventeenth century, the author proposes an interesting hypothesis – not supported with relevant arguments, though – that the Jews were the most alien group in the multi-confessional town, and thus often fell victim to attacks (p. 409). Following David Nirnberg, Frick argues that violence was an indispensable element of coexistence of the majority and minority alike. Resuming the phrase 'communities of dispute', described earlier in the book, the author emphasises that mutual integration of members of the various religious communities is attested by their appearing together before the courts.

Frick compares Wilno to West-European multi-confessional towns, discerns and describes the differences, and argues that the coexistence model found in Wilno was the closest to so-called bi-confessional cities where the urban space was deliberately distributed among the communities functioning within it. Emphasised is the tolerable liberalism and easiness with which the confessional borders could be crossed in the Commonwealth's town; Frick traces the roots of this phenomenon back to the pre-Christian traditions in the Grand Duchy.

The monograph excellently reflects the problems related to socio-topographic analyses. One has to primarily notice that in spite of a broad chronological framework assumed, what the reader receives is a static image. It might seem that the political and social developments of the century exerted virtually no impact on the life of the town. The focus on case studies regarding individual families causes that the other families, or entire areas of the city, have remained insufficiently researched. The major shortcoming in this context is a much superficial approach to the local Jewry. Although the study's subtitle tells us that coexistence of (Christian) confessions, rather than religions, would be dealt with, Frick has actually resolved to include in his analysis members of other religions – the Jews in the first place. But this procedure was not necessary; what is more, instead of rendering the study more worth of appreciation, it does the converse. The Jewish quarter remains an unsurveyed spot in the detailed map of Wilno being drawn:

it is the only area that has not been described in social terms. The Jews are to remain anonymous; Frick does not even identify the representatives of the top elite; they remain outside the scope of his basic analysis. The catalogue of questions used by the author with respect to Jews is different than the one for Christians. He would not ask about the strategies employed by the Jewish dwellers in the building of a network of contacts with their Christian neighbours, and is not interested whether topography played a part in Jewish-Christian contacts. An evident drawback is that the studies of Izrael Klauzner have not been taken advantage of; in spite of what Frick says about them (p. 428, footnote 12), they are fundamentally different, in the source layer primarily, from the studies of Sergeĭ A. Bershadski. In his description of the Jewish community, Frick has made several elementary mistakes. For instance, he mistakes the Jewish head-tax with the general head-tax which in the 1670s was paid by Jews on equal footing with the Christians. As it seems, he not quite satisfactorily highlights the influence of the Jewish religious law on the daily life. The rules of kosher are not referred to at all, although they are basic for a number of issues discussed in this study (residential space, ritual slaughter, dressmaking). Such perfunctory treatment of the Jewish community makes one cautious in approaching the author's hypothesis whereby the Jews were the most alien group in the multi-ethnic community. Hence, it seems to me that this monograph would have been more interesting and coherent with the Jewish aspects left outside of the analysis.

In summary, it has to be stressed that in spite of its shortcomings, the Frick monograph is an excellent piece of reading. Moreover, this publication is very interesting, and no less important. It offers an interesting methodological proposal for studies on multi-ethnicity and multiplicity of denominations. Let the hope be entertained that similar studies will be carried out also with respect to the other multi-confessional and multicultural towns or cities of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

trans. Tristan Korecki *Maria Cieśla*

Jerzy Ogonowski, *Sytuacja prawna Żydów w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1918–1939. Prawa cywilne i polityczne*, Żydowski Instytut Historyczny im. Emanuela Ringelbluma, Warszawa, 2012, 161 pp.

Jerzy Ogonowski was a law historian and the author of the well-known and highly regarded monograph *Uprawnienia językowe mniejszości narodowych w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1918–1939* [The language rights of national minorities in the Republic of Poland from 1918 to 1939]. The work discussed here, published after the early death of its author in 2008, is the continuation of his interests.

The book is not very lengthy with a little over 150 pages and this is one of its strengths. The author avoided overloading the work with information that was only remotely connected to the subject, a fault which is sadly rather typical of today's writings. It is enough to say that he managed to describe the legal situation of the Jews in the three partitions just prior to Poland regaining independence on two pages – including all the important information.

The main part of the book is preceded by an introduction which contains all the essential information about the Jewish community of the Second Polish Republic, presenting its size, locations, the languages spoken, as well as the political, financial, occupational, and social divisions that existed amongst the Jews. It is not only the ability to include all the key information that is worth admiration, but also the short – and very accurate – explanation, which introduces the Jewish minority of the interwar period to the reader. The author even found enough space to critically analyse some of the basic sources (such as censuses), to explain the phenomenon of the Hebrew language and to describe the basic guidelines of various political orientations.

After this short introduction, we receive the main part of the book which is closely linked to the issue of the legal standing of Polish Jews. The author, as a lawyer, does not only read the letter of the law, but also explains the rules of its functionality in practice. He explains, for example, that the term 'formal equality' does not have to be read in opposition to practical equality, but it means that in certain circumstances it is allowed to derogate from legal equality. As for the Jews of the interwar period, they were excluded not only during the confirmation of the officer's degrees assigned by the authorities of the occupying countries, which is a very well-known fact, but also in other cases, often unknown even to researchers of Jewish history. The author not only deals with the laws relating directly to the Jews, but also with the ones which, although they were not directly used against them, or more broadly – against national minorities – were nonetheless affecting these groups. Two examples would be the legal profession act that restrained the representatives of minorities from accessing the profession, and the denaturalisation act of 1938, which, although it did not mention the Jews specifically, was formulated in a way that hit their rights.

The work is arranged by topics. Subsequent parts are focused on citizenship, military duties, problems with language rights, names and surnames, identity documents, marriage and divorce, registration of marital status, education, business (industry, crafts, and trade), public service and free professions, associations, societies and unions, and finally – communication with Palestine and the Jewish diaspora. It is difficult to discuss all these topics in a brief review. It may only be worth noting that we are dealing with two types of laws and regulations. Some legislation should apply to all citizens, but for various reasons distinguished Jews – like in the case of citizenship, where they had to take into account the agreements of the Little Treaty of Versailles, or

public service, in theory accessible for all. There were also areas in which the question of nationality or religion was crucial – matters relating to family and marriage, language rights, and last but not least, communication with Palestine.

The author deals with rarely raised legal issues and writes about problems which have hardly ever been mentioned even by experts on the Jewish issues of the Second Polish Republic. He writes, for example, about the situation of stateless Jews – a non-marginal group, because they counted several hundred thousand people. One of the most interesting chapters is the one about military service. Here you can see the dilemma of the authorities, in having to admit army recruits of different nationalities, whilst at the same time fearing their presence (although, as the author notes, they were the least worried about the Jews). It should be noted that in this chapter – as in all the rest – Ogonowski does not only describe the rules, but also shows what consequences they had – for example, how reluctantly the army welcomed Jews in 1920, interning volunteers as well as recruits at the Jabłonna camp. Also, it is a fascinating and little-known fact that the allotment to different areas of the military depended on nationality: aviation, the navy, communication and the military gendarmerie were reserved only for Poles. It appears that this information was not widely known even to those concerned, because even in the contemporary Jewish press there were no complaints about this type of discrimination. The author also points out how problematic the Jews were from the Polish point of view, being seen as illiterate because they did not know the Latin alphabet.

In the chapter on name changing, the author also refers not only to the law, but gives examples of the impact of certain moves in practice – first of all, what penalties threatened Jews, who, without a court decision, officially began to use their Polish name instead of their Jewish one, which, it seems, was widespread amongst assimilated Jews.

The chapter on Jewish marriages is truly fascinating. It turns out that although the rabbis granted marriages – state courts, completely unfamiliar with the rules of the Jewish religion, had to grant divorces. According to the author, in fact, in these situations, it was the rabbis who, as appointed experts, passed the decisions, especially in the former Russian partition. Anyway, it turns out that in some cases, the courts of the Second Polish Republic applied the rules of the Jewish faith, despite not knowing them at all – The Supreme Court repeatedly had to speak on such decisions.

The author also describes the problems associated with the so-called ritual marriages – valid religiously, but not legally. Their existence and the problems resulting from them are widely known, but so far I have not met with reflections on how both the state and the Jewish community could practically ignore this issue for the entire period of the Second Polish Republic and not do anything towards changing the law or the custom. The problems arising from the existence of these marriages were in fact very serious. Aside from

the number of allegedly 'illegitimate' children, widows and orphans did not receive pensions, they could not inherit, nor did they receive compensation in the event of an accident. The author is probably right when he says that for this situation we can blame not only, or even primarily, the imperfect civil law of the Second Polish Republic, but most of all, the backwardness and conservatism on the part of the Jewish community.

Moreover, not only marriage, but the registration of newborn citizens of the Jewish faith was also an unresolved problem. While reading this chapter, it is hard to believe that such an incredible mess prevailed in this field in a twentieth-century European country.

Only two parts of the work are slightly weaker than the rest. The first is the entire chapter called 'Prowadzenie przemysłu, rzemiosła i handlu' [Running industry, crafts and trade]. For such a small volume, the author devotes too much space to industrial law itself (which is the same for everyone) and to the relatively well-known data, concerning the participation of Jews in industry, crafts and trade. We find here only a little information about the regulations and laws – apart from the well-known Sunday trading ban, recognised by the contemporary Jewish community as discriminatory. There is also no information about the banning of ritual slaughtering, which hit not only Jewish religious life, but also Jewish businesses. The second weakness of the work is the section on higher education, which is too short and definitely far too vague. The author only mentions the *numerus clausus* and the 'Ghetto benches', ignoring the entire discussion of whether these solutions have a legal base and are compatible with the Constitution.

Although it is extremely difficult to even briefly discuss the rich content of this thin book, it is clear just from the indication of the content of a few chapters that it raises problems little-known not only to the general public, but also to many historians of this period. The language is also one of the many advantages of this work. Holding in your hands a book about legislation, you generally expect dry, legal language and perhaps a useful, but rather boring read. The work of Jerzy Ogonowski is definitely useful, but not dry, nor boring. The author not only cites the relevant laws and regulations but illustrates them with specific examples and anecdotes. He also seeks to show how the law functioned in real life and what the consequences of certain laws were. Pre-war caricatures and jokes and some photographs of documents have been included, but in this case, unfortunately, they are not always well-chosen for the text.

In other words: this is definitely a book that every researcher interested in the history of Polish Jews, national minorities or even more broadly – in the history of the interwar period, should have in their own reference library. And, by the way, it is surprising that such a fundamental work for the study of the situation of the Jewish community in the Second Polish Republic has come out so late.

trans. Enys Launder *Anna Landau-Czajka*

Maksym Hon, *Iz kryvdoyu na samoti: Ukrayins'ko-yevreĭs'ki vzayemyny na zakhidnoukrayins'kych zemlyakh u skladi Pol'shchi (1935–1939)*, Rivne, 2005, 192 pp.*

Although the contacts between Polish and Ukrainian historians have lately been quite animate, the dialogue between the two milieus is remarkably selective. It extends to a rather small group of issues – in fact, a set of so-called tragic chapters in the mutual relations of both nations. Among the numerous facts attesting to this state of affairs is that the extremely important book by Maksym Hon on the Ukrainian-Jewish relationships within the Second Republic of Poland in 1935–9, published in 2005, has only recently fallen into my hands; the book has remained completely unknown in Poland. This is the first attempt in the Ukrainian historiography, and, it seems, the only one which is based on serious source query, that undertakes a systematic analysis of this extremely important issue. The reference source for this publication consisted, in the first place, of the archival repository of Polish central and regional authorities of the 1930s (official documentations of authorities of various instances; periodical reports of provincial [voivodeship] and county [*powiat*] authorities; court records). Another important item was the output of Jakub Hoffman, a teacher, outstanding social activist and parliamentarian, from Volhynia. Plus, archival resources of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists–Ukrainian Insurgent Army (OUN–UPA), kept in Ukrainian archives. The author has moreover carried out a systematic query of selected items of the press – Ukrainian, Jewish, and Polish (extending to i.a. *Dilo*, *Ukrayins'ki Visti*, *Avangard*, *Chwila*, *Biuletyn Polsko-Ukraiński*).

The study is structured according to the issues discussed. Chapter 1 deals with the influence on the Ukrainian-Jewish relations of both nations' attitude toward the Polish state. The author remarks that most Jewish milieus proved loyal with respect to Poland. Their basic goal was to attain the possibly most advantageous position within the country's existing legal and political system, and to opt for stabilised international arrangements. This latter aspect was particularly important after Hitler came to power. The stance displayed by the Jews in Poland encountered a negative reception from the Ukrainian national movement to which refusal to acknowledge the Polish state as a rightful sovereign of the lands referred to as the Western Ukraine was fundamental. Hon indicates that the above-outlined primary dissimilarity in the perception of Poland as a state was among the substantial drivers preventing a real political cooperation between both nations, including in the 1935 'Polish-Ukrainian agreement' time.

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* This review was first published in Polish in *Roczniki Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych*, lxxiii (2013), 326–9.

Chapter 2 analyses how the Ukrainian-Jewish economic conflict unfolded. It is argued that the reason behind it was a structural contradiction between the interest of the Jews who strove to maintain their then-existing positions in non-agricultural sectors of the economy and the interests of the Ukrainians for whom exceeding the limits of agricultural jobs and building of their own commerce and manufacturing industry was the sine-qua-non condition for getting out of material destitution and to undergo social modernisation. The conflict, visible in as early as the 1920s, flared up in full force during the Great Depression and did not die out until the World War broke out. The two nations' fierce economic rivalry had a political dimension too: the Ukrainian politicians emphasised that development of networks of Ukrainian economic institutions, particularly as part of cooperative structures, is a form of legitimate struggle for the national rights. What is more, since 1932 the radical Right formations' (OUN, Front of National Unity) organised political actions (inciting to boycott Jewish enterprises, exerting pressure on the local Jews to leave their residential localities, the 'window war', leafleting actions, sporadic cases of physical violence) meant to reinforce the Ukrainian economic actions. The economic conflict and its ideological envelope no doubt strengthened the barriers separating both nations.

Chapter 3 is focused on giving grounds to the statement whereby the 1930s saw the popularisation in the West-Ukrainian public opinion of the notional cluster *żydokomuna* ('Yid-Commies', 'Judeo-Bolsheviks'). In the twenties and thirties, certain Jewish milieus were open to radically leftist and communist slogans; this did not pose a problem, though, for at the same time, a considerable part of the Ukrainian political spectrum represented *radianophiliac* (i.e. pro-Soviet) attitudes. However, early in the thirties, especially in face of the Great Famine, the Ukrainian camp definitely reoriented their attitude toward the USSR and communism; moreover, radically nationalist and extremely anticommunist views began spreading among the Ukrainians.

Meanwhile, some of the Jewish leftist milieus did not shift to unambiguously anti-Soviet or anticommunist positions. Moreover, after a number of Ukrainians, Belarusian and Poles turned their backs on communism, the role of Jewry in communistic organisations in Poland grew. This paved the way to the formation of the idea claiming Jews to be the main advocates of communism, thus being guilty of the tragedy of the Ukrainians within the USSR and continually posing a threat to the Ukrainian national interests (pp. 96–7). Anticommunist canvassing with anti-Jewish colouration grew intensified in 1936, the year of the tenth anniversary of the assassination of Symon Petlyura. Numerous publications emphasised the Jewish support for the Bolsheviks in 1917–20 and, thereby, an adverse influence of the Jews on the lot of the Ukrainian struggle for independence; dominance of Jews in the leadership teams of the Russian and international communist movement was pointed out to. Ardentness in spreading anticommunism with a strong

tint of anti-Semitism was peculiar to the radical Right, but – let us emphasise – the slogans propagated by them were not replied with a resolute repulse. The only thing the Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (UNDO) afforded was declarations emphasising that not all the Jews were communists. The leftist milieus remained silent, in order to avoid accusations that they also remained under Yid-Commies' influence. There is no need to explain that the extensively propagated 'Judeo-Communist' stereotype was for many a Ukrainian an important factor determining their attitudes toward the Jews in their own social environment – and, particularly, 'in general'. The spreading and propagandist utilisation of this stereotype did not foster the building of mutual affection or understanding.

Chapter 4 expands, to a considerable extent, the threads from the preceding sections. Analysed is the Ukrainians' and Jews' attitude to the two major political forces orientated toward struggle with the existing *status quo* – Hitlerism and communism. It is not much surprising that Hitler's 1933 utterance claiming that a collapse of bolshevism and emergence of a powerful Ukraine are the only potential reinstating factors for a balance of powers in Europe and for international peace (p. 114) made the Ukrainians enthusiastic. If one adds to it Hitler's opinions on Jewry as expressed in his *Mein Kampf*, and well known to the contemporary Jews, the definite dissimilarity between how the Ukrainians and the Jews perceived Hitlerism becomes rather clear. As furthermore convincingly argued by Hon, from the Jewish standpoint, communism and Stalin were perceived as the only power capable of taming the political ambitions of Hitler himself and the Third Reich. The awareness of the completely contradictory ideological-political orientations had no bearing on the ongoing Ukrainian-Jewish relationships, but indeed paralysed any serious attempts at interoperability in the political arena.

The last chapter gives an account of the attitudes of various Ukrainian political milieus toward the Jewish issues. The author demonstrates that the Communist Party of Western Ukraine was the only political entity that broke the Ukrainian-Jewish separation. In 1923, its members were some 1,300 Ukrainians, 250 Jews, and 150 Poles. This multiethnic party acted in defence of the Ukrainian rights and against anti-Semitism. Given this context, less important was the fact that local inter-ethnic conflicts and disputes appeared within the organisation (campaigning against 'nationalistic deviations': Ukrainian or Jewish; rivalry in Volhynia in the 1930s; *etc.*). The Ukrainian and Jewish leftist formations (e.g. the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party, the Bund) opposed the expanding nationalism and were open to arguments of the other party. The Ukrainian centre could spot the substantial contradictoriness in both nations' interests, but it declared the will to build a peaceful coexistence and, as far as possible, cooperation offering both parties a better bargaining position with respect to the Polish state (the press discussion of 1937–8).

The most difficult to interpret, according to the author, is the radical Right's attitude to the Jewish question. Hon emphasizes that for the OUN, the major opponents were the 'Poles' and 'Muscovites' (p. 148). In the early 1930s, the OUN leaders, noticing intensified anti-Jewish demeanour, emphasised that it was rooted in the National Democrats' canvassing whilst also being, rationally, grounded in the economic crisis. The then OUN's and Front of National Unity's attitude toward Jews was exacerbating, to which trend the Nazi Germany also contributed. From 1935 onwards, the extreme rightists were running a permanent campaign against the 'Yid-Commies' and strengthened their actions for economic boycott and extortion of Jewish entrepreneurs to leave the rural areas. 1938 saw the emergence of *Avangard*, a periodical making use of open anti-Semitism.

In the last section of the study under review, the question is posed about a general balance of Ukrainian-Jewish relationships on the eve of WWII. In reply, the author refers to the paradigm of reciprocal isolation and sense of detachment. This argument is richly confirmed by the source material quoted.

Throughout his argument, the author focuses on presenting the factual material which is an output of a rich and discerning search query of the sources. Most of the occurrences he described just have become part of scholarly circulation because of this very book. At the same time, Hon clearly shuns the formulation of any far-reaching conclusions or generalisations. This is due to the fact that the matter being described is so complex and ambiguous that it is very easy to make a disastrous error; however, regardless of its value, the study in question is but a research reconnaissance in an unknown space. Further research on the issues discussed in the book ought to be an in-depth analysis of the social and economic situation of the south-eastern lands of the Second Republic. Only such analysis would allow for verifying the veracity of the opinions and beliefs of the participants of the period's developments, which tend to be credulously repeated by historians of today. Another research postulate that appears while reading this book is the need to embed what was going on in Eastern Galicia and Volhynia in the context of the Second Republic as a whole. It is only a comparison between Western Ukraine with central Poland and the north-eastern lands that may offer an opportunity to venture further-reaching conclusions.

The list of expected studies can be extended, which is of no relevance to the remark that Maksym Hon's book ought to be considered an important scholarly occurrence in the studies of the history of the Jewish people, Ukraine, and the Second Republic of Poland.

trans. Tristan Korecki *Włodzimierz Mędrzecki*

Béla Tomka, *A Social History of Twentieth-Century Europe*, Routledge, London, and New York, 2013, 526 pp., index of personal names, institutions, and concepts

A Social History of Twentieth-Century Europe by Béla Tomka is a major, and in a way unparalleled, achievement in the field. Its synthetic, transnational, and comparative character will certainly make it a standard companion (or, simply, a textbook) for students, and all curious, non-expert readers willing to get familiar with the main themes in the social history of the continent summarised in just one, even if huge, volume. Clearly, the book does not make claims to primacy and originality in its method; its merit, instead, rests with its erudition and the ambition to synthesise the achievements of the dozens of authors from various fields, as listed in the endnotes. This makes the book a useful introduction for those interested in further readings. However, its main ambition is certainly the comparison of dominant trends and tendencies in social developments across the continent, emphasising national differences and, when possible, European unity above the regional divisions.

The book has a short list of respectable predecessors who have established what can be called a 'standard social history of Europe in the twentieth century'; these authors include Hartmut Kaelbe, Colin Crouch, Max-Stephan Schulze, or Frank B. Tipton and Robert Aldrich. However, Béla Tomka's study appears to be the first one to escape the focus on Western Europe, and attempt to integrate East-Central Europe, or the so-called 'new EU countries', into the picture. The North-West division, as the author himself declares, plays a minor role in the book. Also the East-Southern, or Balkan region, seems neglected: Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia and Albania are covered only accidentally when discussing statistical data, and other countries of former Yugoslavia as well as Greece are virtually absent. The author deliberately decided not to cover the former Soviet Union, which seems understandable because of the immense difficulties which it would imply for statistical comparisons, but still appears regrettable for a number of reasons. Most importantly, this decision has made the book a study in the social history of 'what would become the European Union', rather than Europe as a continent.

The geographical scope alone makes the book original, although the author's ambition or, say, disposition, to emphasize the pan-European character of the problems discussed, rather than regional specifics, is certainly debatable. As he himself explains in the introduction, an important reason for choosing this method of presentation was the nature of available statistical data, predominantly structured along the political divisions (published by government agencies). This reveals the pioneering character of Tomka's work, and suggests that there is still a lot to be done in the field of regional comparisons in European history, dominated by 'the West and the rest' paradigm. Apparently, some important problems have been lost by such a structuring of

the book. The most striking of them, in my opinion, is the general character and evaluation of the short- and long-term changes brought about by socialism (or, if one likes, communism) in East-Central Europe. Tomka's tendency to focus on the pan-European phenomena, the transnational comparisons, and the long-term trends, does not allow more profound analysis of the impact of the communist project on the East-Central European nations. His decision not to cover the Soviet Union – Tomka prefers numerous analogies to the U.S. instead – also does not help his readers see the specifics of the developments on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain. Moreover, there is scarcely anything to be found on the pace of the communist transformations, the obstacles to their implementation, their acceptance, and the resistance to them (see pages 105–8). In other words, although the author did a lot to escape the 'West and the rest' paradigm, his choice of evidence and literature did not allow him for escaping it too far away.

Strikingly, the analysis of other radical social projects for the continent, such as fascism and Nazism, which marked its twentieth-century history so distinctively, also occupies a marginal position in the book (pp. 293–6). This, apparently, is to be explained by the author's general tendency to trace the history of the continent as a stream of processes culminating in its present shape, and to neglect those that belong (or are popularly believed to do so) exclusively to the past. In other words, it is the perspective of a sociologist interested in history rather than that of a historian interested in sociology. Still, it seems regrettable that such hotly debated mass social movements as the revolts of 1968, the popular resistance to communism, and the right- and left-wing radicalism have only been briefly mentioned in the book (pp. 297–9).

Apart from the 'Introduction' and 'Conclusions: the societies of Europe and Europe as a society in the 20th century', the book consists of eight chapters: 'Population'; 'Families and households'; 'Social stratification and social mobility'; 'The welfare state'; 'Work, consumption and leisure'; 'Politics and society'; 'Urbanization'; 'Education, religion and culture'. Among them the two first ones, which belong to the area of Béla Tomka's personal expertise, are probably the best and most illuminative. Still, there is a clear link between all parts of the work that can be described as an attempt – laborious, heavily documented, and impressively stiffed with statistical data – to present the transformation from the industrial society (in the West) and the predominantly agricultural (East, North, and South) to the post-industrial, pan-European society of the end of the twentieth century. In chapters covering the welfare state, politics, work and leisure, the emphasis is clearly put on the post-WWII period up to, roughly, the early 1990s, according to the tendency, mentioned above, to trace the historical origins of the present state of affairs.

Generally, each chapter consists of three main, variously organised parts: (i) The analysis of a huge amount of statistical data relevant to the problem and covering, if possible, all the countries under consideration, and occasionally

some statistical indices (such as the Gini coefficient, the Human Development Index or the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare). (ii) The survey of the most influential theoretical approaches and literature on the subject. (iii) Concluding comments, typically aiming at the identification of the long-term processes culminating in the present and allowing for some prognoses concerning their future. This method, as mentioned, appears perfectly fit for students and those interested in further readings. However, because of the synthetic nature of the book, the huge number of problems addressed, and data analysed, the author does not actually have enough space to get into details, nor to move the academic discussion forward, but still attempts to pay tribute to the achievements of his predecessors and colleagues, and the scholarly standards of his field. Some results of this method of presentation seem questionable: much room is devoted to polemics that lead to conclusions obvious and scarcely illuminating. For example, one needs a lot of patience to get through a half-page long definition of the family, provided on page 49, and crowned with an endnote; the same is true for the no less long, and astonishingly banal, discussion of the impact of the rising employment of women on their social position and family relationships on page 71. Unfortunately, the same style of presentation prevails in 'Conclusions': the main findings of the long sub-chapter dedicated to the problem of periodisation are as follows: the major turning points in the twentieth-century history of Europe were the two world wars and the fall of communism.

A Social History of Twentieth-Century Europe is certainly a sophisticated and multifaceted synthesis of major themes in the field, and an impressive overview of the literature on the subject. It also seems a handful companion for those who are not ready or able to get through the entire volume, and merely wish to consult it with respect to some of the eight main problems identified by the author. Finally, its original goal of integrating East-Central Europe into the Western-oriented tradition of social sciences should again be stressed. Obviously, its pioneering character makes it vulnerable to criticism, and an excellent starting point for further discussions.

Adam Kożuchowski