

Ethnohistory in Hungary between the Two World Wars: Elemér Mályusz and István Szabó

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Historical method as we know it today was established in the nineteenth century when the professionalism pioneered by Leopold von Ranke was adopted first by German historians, and then spread to France, England, the United States, and even Russia and Italy.¹ The gist of Ranke's methodological reform was to apply the techniques of textual criticism to the writing of history. What counted as historical evidence from that time on was documentary sources: deeds, grants, and charters. Verifying the authenticity of these sources and establishing what exactly they meant came to be considered the historian's most important task, and the single best guarantee of historical objectivity, the historian's duty being, in Ranke's words, to tell his tale *wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*. Essentially, all the contemporary advances in the teaching of history served to promote the new methodology. The departments of history being set up at the major European universities for the first time ever offered a new kind of professional training, one which included exercises in source criticism, and the study of auxiliary disciplines such as diplomacy, paleography, heraldry, epigraphy, and so on. There were also other indications of the growing emphasis on professionalism. Vast source collections were published (most of them modeled on the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*), and historical journals sprang up all over Europe, as did historical societies dedicated to the coordinated research of the particular nation's history.

Reformist that he was in the sphere of methodology, Leopold von Ranke was thoroughly conservative in his philosophy of history. Ranke put the weight of his immense authority behind the established practice of identifying "history" with affairs of state and foreign policy, expressly formulating the doctrine of the primacy of foreign

affairs (*Primat der Außenpolitik*). He held that historians, like politicians, must focus not on social issues or a nation's internal conditions, but on the problem of power and the shifts in the balance of power. The struggle of the various nations to maintain what power positions they had, Ranke argued, or to extend their sway at the expense of the others, was the very driving force of history. Due in no small part to Ranke's immense prestige, historians continued to focus on narrative political history, and on the lives of statesmen and military leaders, "great personalities" who shaped their times. This entire approach, called historicism by some scholars, took a modern turn with the advent of New History in the United States, the *Annales* in France, and the new social history that started in Germany after the Second World War. What all these schools had in common was the determination to establish "scientific" history writing. Reassessing the role of the historian, they emphasized not so much the critical evaluation of the sources, but the need to analyze the law-like regularities behind all phenomena, and the main trends of development. These law-like regularities, they held, were most evident in a society's material culture and the patterns of social and economic development. To reconstruct them, one needed to study not documentary sources, but new types of historical evidence: maps, censuses, church registers (for births and deaths), tools, foodstuffs, and so on. To help investigate this source material, the "scientific" schools turned to the insights and techniques of the "other" social sciences: ethnography, geography, linguistics, anthropology, archeology, sociology, and economics. The change was reflected also in the training recommended for would-be historians. Rather than focusing on the auxiliary sciences, as their nineteenth-century counterparts did, historians were encouraged to acquire competence in all the social sciences. All the above schools concurred in their repudiation of Ranke's *Primat der Außenpolitik*. They concurred also in their belief in the *Primat der Innenpolitik*, i.e., that the main responsibility of the historian lies in fostering initiatives aimed at improving society.

The modernization of historiography under the impact of New History and the *Annales* began in the inter-war years, but it was only after the Second World War that the "scientific" trend really came into its own. The Rankean type of narrative political history, however, has more than managed to linger on, as the *Historikerstreit* of the 1980s so spectacularly demonstrated.

In Hungary it was not until the post-1867 dualist era that historians came to identify with the professionalism advocated by Ranke.² The landmarks of this development were similar to those marking the progress of historicism elsewhere: source publications, reliance on the auxiliary sciences, and the establishment of historical societies and journals. And while few historians were as rigorous as Ranke in their sifting of the “historical evidence,” narrative political history was the focus of most history writing. There were, of course, initiatives that went counter to the prevailing trend. Gyula Pauler, for instance, who had high praise for Comte’s positivism, advocated probing for the universal features of human progress, and urged the investigation of collective, mass phenomena, and aspects of life generally subsumed under the heading of cultural history.³

Between the two world wars the dominant trend in Hungarian history writing was *Geistesgeschichte* (spiritual history, sometimes called intellectual history or the history of ideas) as represented by the works of Gyula Szekfű, Bálint Hóman, Gyula Kornis, Tibor Joó, József Deér, and Péter Vaczy. Fully versed in the works of Ranke, Meinecke, Dilthey and Lamprecht, Gyula Szekfű, the most prominent of these historians, was also the one to conclude that Hungarian history would lend itself admirably to a consistent synthesis.⁴ In his *A magyar állam életrajza* [The biography of the Hungarian state] (1918), and in his *Bethlen Gábor* [Gábor Bethlen] (1929), Szekfű expressly models his approach on Meinecke’s,⁵ and tells the entire story from the vantage point of *raison d’état* and the national point of view. This meant that for him the central issue of Hungarian history was the territorial integrity of historic Hungary, the Hungary of St. Stephen. This particular outlook is even more evident in Szekfű’s *Három nemzedék* [Three generations] (1920), the veritable Bible of the period. Here, he blames the nineteenth-century Hungarian liberals for being responsible for the disintegration that resulted in Trianon. Blinded by the political tradition of the nobility’s struggle for Hungarian independence throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, ran Szekfű’s indictment of the liberals, they construed the word “freedom” to mean “independence from the Habsburgs,” and failed to realize that the territorial integrity of historic Hungary (i.e., Hungarian rule over the nationalities) could be maintained only with the support of an outside great power, namely, the Habsburg Empire. (This correlation was something that Széchenyi had recognized, and Szekfű, accordingly, esteemed him as by far the greatest Hungarian.)

One finds the same train of thought in all the sections that Szekfű wrote in *Magyar Történet* [Hungarian History] (published in 1929-1933), a seven-volume synthesis he produced together with Bálint Hóman. (Szekfű authored the period stretching from King Matthias Corvinus and the Renaissance to the date of publication). In the final analysis, at every stage of Hungary's history, we find him dividing the leading politicians into two groups: those who believed in "Small Hungary" and those who believed in "Greater Hungary". The "small Hungarians" were those whose primary goal was national independence from the Habsburgs. But this aspiration of theirs, he maintained, was motivated not by some lofty ideal — the love of freedom, for example — but by selfish "class interest" (the nobility's determination to protect its privileges), coupled with a passion for dissension and upheaval inherited from their Eastern ancestors. Another name for this "passion" was Protestantism, which as Szekfű saw it, was inspired by the resolve to spark denominational conflict and create disorder.

The "great Hungarians" on the other hand, had always appreciated that the great power status of the Habsburg Empire was a historical necessity. They recognized the need for political compromise, and strove to promote social reform and the nation's material improvement and intellectual progress (naturally, with Habsburg support). Szekfű's synthesis presents the Baroque culture of the eighteenth century as the zenith of Hungarian history, a time when the country's territorial integrity had been more or less restored, when religious (Protestant vs. Catholic) and political (Estates vs. absolutism) infighting no longer undermined the unity of the nation, when the country's economic and cultural development picked up momentum, and its resettlement began.

Even in the late '30s, Szekfű was very much preoccupied by matters of external politics and national sovereignty. In his *Allam és nemzet* [State and Nation] (1942), he rejected both the French notion of a political nation and the German "ethnic nation" concepts, and presented a uniquely Hungarian notion, one rooted in St. Stephen's tolerance toward the "foreigners". It was a nation concept which guaranteed the country's minorities a high degree of autonomy, while its *raison d'être* was to safeguard and restore Hungary's territorial integrity.

Elemér Mályusz

One historian who strongly and openly rejected Szekfű's views right from the beginning of his own professional career was Elemér Mályusz. The first tilt in his intellectual and ideological jousts with Szekfű was his article "A reformkor nemzedéke" [The Reform Generation].⁶ In this study Mályusz refuted Szekfű's claim that the middle nobility of the Reform Era was prompted to armed confrontation with the Habsburgs only by its obsessive determination to redress the Court's encroachment on its political privileges and argued that its goal was the country's ennoblement. To substantiate his interpretation, Mályusz pointed to the reports of the various county committees appointed by the 1791-92 Diet, which already contained the outlines of a program of modernization and "bourgeois transformation". As for the anti-government posture of the uneducated lesser nobility, that, Mályusz maintained, was a consequence of their deteriorating social status and their resentment of attempts by the great landowners and the central government alike to curtail their customary rights through enclosure.

Mályusz also rejected the interpretation advanced by Szekfű in *Magyar Történet*, his main objection being to the inconsistency of Szekfű's vision of the country's cultural development.⁷ Szekfű saw the Hungarian Renaissance as confined to the reign of Matthias Corvinus, and gave no explanation for the subsequent "immobility" that set in up to what he considered to be the beginning of the Baroque in the eighteenth century. Mályusz, on the other hand, held that "the Renaissance" was applicable to the Hungarian culture of the entire sixteenth century, and that the seventeenth century was already the time of the Baroque in Hungary. In other words — and this is Mályusz's main thesis — Hungary's early modern cultural development kept pace with the intellectual and cultural trends of Western Europe, and had kept abreast even in earlier times for — as he demonstrated with an analysis of the legend of Blessed Margaret of the House of Árpád⁸ — as early as the thirteenth century, Hungary had been able to absorb the Gothic, the most modern cultural trend of that time. Mályusz also took exception to Szekfű's views on Transylvania and the Transylvanian Reformation. As he saw it, both the Transylvanian educational system, with its emphasis on the natural sciences, and the Transylvanian Reformed denominations, with their gospel and practice of tolerance, were veritable harbingers of the Enlightenment. In short, Hungarian

cultural development at the time was on a par with that of England and the Netherlands.

Mályusz considered the tolerant religious policies of Ferenc II. Rákóczi to be the culmination of this development, and proof that, left on its own, Hungary would have been capable of ennoblement and modernization. One of the gravest tragedies of Hungarian history, he maintained, was the period of Habsburg reaction that set in following Rákóczi's defeat — a time of resurgent religious fanaticism and subverted national sentiment, a time when Hungarian Protestants were driven off their lands and foreigners were brought in and were settled all over the country.

In essence, it was on a political and ideological plane that Mályusz attacked Szekfű's *Geistesgeschichte*-inspired interpretation of history. The most serious shortcoming of this representation of Hungarian history, as Mályusz saw it, was that Szekfű attributed far too positive a role to the Habsburgs, and seemed to have no sense of Hungary as a sovereign and autonomous culture. A dangerous attitude, given that Hungary could depend on nothing but its own strength in the pursuit of its national aspirations — and here Mályusz, too, was thinking of Trianon. Thence his eagerness to see ethnohistorical research start up; it was, he believed, the only way to demonstrate the sovereignty of Hungarian culture. This was an issue he would return to time and time again.⁹ In other words, Mályusz realized that to win his battle against *Geistesgeschichte*, he needed not only to refute its ideology, but also to transcend its methodology.

The roots of Mályusz's ethnohistory¹⁰ go back to the early 1920s. His own doctoral thesis, *Turóc megye kialakulása* [The Formation of Turoc County] published in 1922,¹¹ deals with a topic that anticipated the theses his students were to write a decade later. That all this, though not called ethnohistory at the time, was part of a full-fledged historiographic program is illustrated by Mályusz's 1924 study on the challenges of doing local history.¹²

After describing the work of Dezső Csánki and Károly Tagányi, two late nineteenth-century pioneers of local history and historical geography, he goes on to urge historians to follow the lead of the German *Territorialgeschichte* [territorial history], and focus more on local history. The study of "non-documentary" sources (land registers, church registers, place names, etc.) would facilitate the clarification of questions of settlement history, public administration,

property relations, and genealogy, and would lend a sociological dimension to Hungarian historiography.

The importance of the sociological approach to the study of local history remained a key concept also in "A népiség története" (Ethnohistory) written in 1931,¹³ and the most comprehensive formulation Mályusz would ever give of his program. The study starts with a definition of the notion of "the ethnic". As opposed to "the national", the conscious expression of a people's cultural and political aspirations, "the ethnic" was shorthand for the spontaneous ways and cultural preferences of a particular people. The best way to get started in ethnohistorical research, he went on to say, was to write "synthetic" local and/or county histories. By "synthetic" he meant just the opposite of the village by village approach of the prewar county histories: the historian was to focus on the small, organically related historic, geographical units: estates, valleys, plains, and so on — units he would later call "cultural regions", and whose study he expected to reveal an entire network of Southern, Eastern and Northern cultural contacts.

Mályusz honed his theory by clashing swords with proponents of the most powerful historical ideology of his time.¹⁴ Taking a direct stab at *Geistesgeschichte*, its preoccupation with Western cultural influences and its exclusive reliance on the evidence of the written word, he set ethnohistory the task of concentrating on "spontaneous" cultural elements such as roads, means of transportation, architecture, settlements, systems of local political and administrative organization, and "anthropological" data of every kind that might serve to give an accurate picture of the day-to-day life of the people.

Mályusz's views on the nature and techniques of ethnohistory, were thus fully developed by the time he came to give his "Introduction to Ethnohistory" course in the 1936-37 academic year. One of the main issues addressed in the lectures was the matter of the "auxiliary disciplines" which Mályusz proposed to "modify" with a view to making them integral parts of the discipline of ethnohistory. He was particularly enthusiastic about the potential of ethnography and of linguistics, attaching great importance to the study of dialects (and their exact geographic mapping), and to tracing the origins of place names and personal names. He was also keen to have his students learn to use questionnaires, and to set up the institutional framework of ethnohistorical research.¹⁵

The last of Mályusz's theoretical works on ethnohistory was the series of articles collected and published as *A magyar történet-*

tudomány [Hungarian Historiography] in 1942. In these articles he called upon the most prestigious of the country's scholarly bodies — the Academy of Sciences, the Budapest Pázmány Péter University, the Historical Society — to shift the focus of their activities to ethnohistory. The Academy, he suggested, should offer bursaries to students of ethnohistory, which he wanted to see introduced as one of the subjects in which prospective secondary school teachers could major at the university. Mályusz also called upon his fellow historians to chart the layout of all the towns in Hungary, to do research on the question of assimilation, and to introduce the notions “ethnic ground” [*Volksboden*] and “cultural ground” [*Kulturboden*] among the accepted terms of historical geography. The program carried explicit political overtones as well: the Historical Society, Mályusz submitted, would do well to set up an institute for the study of the Jewish question. It was this book that cost Mályusz his job at the university after the war, when he was also stripped of his membership in the Academy of Sciences.

Mályusz was not just a theoretician, first and foremost he was a practicing historian. His first attempt to put his program of ethnohistory into practice was his doctoral dissertation, in which he examined how, thanks to a consistent policy on the part of the exchequer, the crown land of Zólyom evolved in time into the noble county of Turóc. His next work of ethnohistory was written ten years later at Pál Teleki's behest. *Geschichte des ungarischen Volkstums* (finally published in 1940)¹⁶ tells the story of the peoples of Hungary focusing on the Magyars' internal colonization of Pannonia in the decades following the Conquest, the progressive consolidation of their rule over the entire area, the settlement of the region by successive waves of immigrant peoples, and the pattern of social development that evolved in the region up to Werbőczy's time.

Mályusz's next major works with an ethnohistorical slant grew out of the lectures he gave in the latter half of the '30s on “the ethnic ground” and “the cultural ground” of the Magyars in medieval times. *A magyarság és a nemzetiségek Mohács előtt* and *A középkori magyar nemzetiségi politika* both appeared in 1939,¹⁷ the latter giving rise to considerable controversy, and not just in academic circles. In the study on the country's ethnic composition prior to Mohács, Mályusz argued that in respect of the ethnic composition of the population, fifteenth-century Hungary fell into three major areas: 22 counties inhabited only by Magyars, 26 counties where Magyars comprised 80 percent of the

population, and 9 counties where Magyars were a minority, i.e., they comprised 20 percent of the population. From all this he concluded that the medieval Kingdom of Hungary was Magyar in character — not primarily because of its Magyar political institutions but because of its predominantly Magyar population. Mályusz had made much the same point in his lecture series on the Magyars in medieval times, where he demonstrated that the House of Árpád had pursued a deliberate settlement policy in establishing villages in the Military Frontier Zone for the protection of the Magyar population.¹⁸ Addressing Szekfű in his *A középkori magyar nemzetiségi politika*, Mályusz presents yet further evidence to support his contention that there was nothing arbitrary in the immigration policies pursued by Hungary's medieval kings. A close study of place names of medieval origin, he points out, indicates that the immigrant peoples were not settled on large, contiguous tracts of land, but interspersed among the Magyar population, obviously with a view of accelerating their assimilation.

Mályusz does not dispute the reality of a tolerant, “democratic” nationality policy, one that respected the autonomy of the minorities, but he dates it not to the time of St. Stephen but to the fifteenth century, a time of growing influence for every one of the three estates, a development which tended to strengthen the local organs of self-government. In other words, unlike Szekfű who, by way of providing the Kingdom of St. Stephen with moral legitimacy, posited a spirit of tolerance toward the national minorities going back to the “Catholic spirituality” of St. Stephen, Mályusz insisted that tolerance was a product of social development. His purpose was to prove the strength and autonomy of Hungarian culture. The spirit of ethnic tolerance, he claimed, was not the legacy of some foreign priest — the author of the *Libellus de institutione morem* (written in the name of St. Stephen for the instruction of his son Imre) — it was something that the Hungarian nation achieved through mobilizing spiritual resources of its own.

As the first step to providing ethnohistory with an institutional framework, in 1932, Mályusz, working under the auspices of the National Archives, started a seminar, rather a working group on the settlement history of Upper Hungary. The aim was to establish the exact border between the Hungarian and Slovak linguistic zones; the tangible outcome was the publication of the *A magyarság és a nemzetiségek* [The Magyars and the National Minorities] series.

Another milestone in the institutionalization of ethnohistory came in 1937 when the Institute for Ethnohistory and Settlement History was set up at the Pázmány Péter University. The institute was meant to publish the *Település és Népiségtörténeti Értekezések* [Studies in Settlement History and Ethnohistory], the series in which the doctoral dissertations submitted by Mályusz's students would appear.¹⁹

As indicated earlier, other important researches of Mályusz's can be referred to also. I have already mentioned some of his social historical studies, but to them can be added for example "A patrioniális királyság," "A karizmatikus királyság," "A magyar köz-nemesség kialakulása," "A magyar társadalom a Hunyadiak korában," "A Rákóczi kor társadalma."²⁰

In these studies Mályusz outlined the development of the Hungarian society, from its beginnings till the 19-th century and even further.²¹ One of the most striking features of this panorama is the central position of the nobility, which — according to Mályusz — possessed a higher elite imbued with European culture and political capability. This social elite was in Hungary the leading force of the social reforms and modernization, even that of embourgeoisement, in contrast to the Western countries where the "third estate" fulfilled this function. The bourgeoisie in Hungary could have played the same role since it was of German origin and analyzing the self-government policy of the towns reveals that they had an aristocratic constitution.²²

Other important directions of Mályusz's researches were his partly ecclesiastical and spiritual history (*Geistesgeschichte*) studies, some of which have been already mentioned. The most outstanding of these were "Árpádházi Boldog Margit" [Blessed Margaret of the House of Árpád], "A türelmi rendelet," "A pálosrend a középkor végén" [The Paulist Order at the End of the Middle Ages], and the monographs *Az egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon* [Ecclesiastical society in Hungary in the Middle Ages], *A gótika Magyarországon* [The Gothic in Hungary], *Magyar renaissance - magyar barokk* [Hungarian Renaissance, Hungarian Baroque], *A felvilágosodás Magyarországon* [The History of Hungary in the Age of Enlightenment.] and his chronicle-studies: *Thuróczy János krónikája* [The Chronicle of János Thuróczy], and *V. István-kori geszta* [The Gesta of the Age of Stephen V.],²³ etc. From these studies is obvious that Mályusz did not reject completely the *Geistesgeschichte* tradition, only the type of *Geistesgeschichte* represented by

Hóman and Szekfű. Similar ideas can be detected in Mályusz's ecclesiastical researches. For example in his *Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon* [Ecclesiastical Society in Hungary of the Middle Ages] (the roots of which go back to the thirties, to his lectures at the University of Budapest, entitled "A gótika Magyarországon")²⁴ he attempted to prove that the paramount feature of the social development in Hungary was the "secularization" process, the formation of a certain secular intellectual rank within the society. This prepared the (also secular) ideas of the Reformation and Protestantism which arose from deep social and cultural desires.

István Szabó

Another important figure of the Hungarian "ethnohistory" was István Szabó²⁵ whose synthesis about Hungary's demographic development is widely known.²⁶ According to the literature dealing with this historian from Debrecen,²⁷ Szabó was involved mainly in three fields of historical research.

First of these fields was his researches dealing with the history of his native city, Debrecen, including his studies about the town during the revolution in 1848-1849 when it became for the first time the capital of the country.²⁸ After the Second World War he returned to this theme when on the occasion of the centenary of the revolution he edited — with the well-known protestant bishop and church historian, Imre Révész Jr. — the book with the title *Debrecen*, the capital of the independence war in Hungary.²⁹ The book stirred up heavy debates and provoked fierce criticism from communist historians, to which subject I'm going to get back later. Other important studies of Szabó concerning the history of his native city and its surroundings (The Great Hungarian Plain) include: "A debreceni tanyarendszer kialakulása" [The development of the settlement system around Debrecen], "A tokaji rév és Debrecen" [The ford of Tokaj and Debrecen], "A debreceni közösség" [The community of Debrecen], "*Debrecen a történelemben*" [Debrecen in the history (of Hungary)], etc.³⁰

The striking feature of these studies is what he started originally with the political aspects of the history of the city ("*histoire evenementielle*," "drum and trumpet" history), then shifted gradually towards the social historical aspects. His main concern became (see his later studies about the haiduks, market towns, etc.³¹) the possibilities of

a special Hungarian ways of bourgeois development based mainly on the peasantry. According to him the situation of the peasantry even in the Middle Ages was improving, and at the end of the Middle Ages the decline can be explained not by the deteriorating situation, exploitation of the peasantry, but much more by the “attracting effect” of the market towns, offering the possibility of higher standard of living within their walls.³²

Another important field of research for Szabó was his “ethno-” or “population” history studies. His main works in this respect include the *Ugocsa county* (1937), The biography of the Hungarian People (1941),³³ *Az asszimiláció a magyarság történetében* [The Assimilation in the History of Hungary] (1942), [The Settlement History of the Nationalities in Hungary],³⁴ *A középkori magyar falu* [The Hungarian Village in the Middle Ages] (1966), *A falurendszer kilakulása Magyarországon* [The Development of the Hungarian Village System] (1969).³⁵

As also mentioned above, in these studies Szabó meticulously explored the proportion of the Hungarians and other peoples during the 9-th and 10-th centuries, the questions of assimilation in the Middle Ages, the devastations of the Turkish occupation, the new settlement in the 18-th century, and the demographic shifts of the 19-th century. These studies (like those of Mályusz) can be evaluated by two different points of view: by the methodological one they strengthened the social historical aspect of his orientation. In contrast to Szekfü,³⁶ Szabó concentrated much more on the social, population aspects of Hungarian history,³⁷ applying widely the methodological innovations of Mályusz (relying on new, non-written sources, cooperation with allied sciences, linguistics, statistics, geography, ethnography, etc.). From the ideological aspect he represented the “ethnic” nation concept, in contrast to Szekfü’s “political” nation idea. That meant for example³⁸ that he analyzed the history of assimilation in Hungary’s history from its beginnings, stating from the time when the Hungarian “ethnic” character took shape at the time of the occupation of the Carpathian Basin. Basically this character (in spite of the different stages and phenomena of assimilation, settlement of other nationalities, etc.) didn’t change during the later development. Or, if it changed, e.g. in the 18-th century, with the settlements of the Germans and other foreigners in the territories administered from Vienna, Szabó evaluated it as a factor that worked to the detriment of Hungarians.³⁹

The third important direction of the historical researches of Szabó's was the history of the Hungarian peasantry. His best known works in this respect are *A magyar parasztság története* [The history of the Hungarian peasantry] (1940), (the first synthesis of the history of this important social class, apart from the book of Acsády), *A jobbágy birtoklása az örökös jobbágyság korában* [The possession of the serfs in the era of second serfdom] (1946), *Tanulmányok a magyar parasztság történetéből* [Studies on the history of the Hungarian peasantry] (1948), and the two volume *Tanulmányok a parasztság történetéhez a kapitalizmus korában* [Studies about the peasantry (in Hungary) in the Age of Capitalism] (1965).⁴⁰

The best way to evaluate the ideas developed by Szabó in these works seems to be to focus on the controversies that these works evoked. One of them (which was co-authored with Gyula Kristó) described the level of the Hungarian culture during the conquest of the Carpathian Basin and later in the early Middle Ages.⁴¹ In his famous book about the evolution of the village system in Hungary Szabó advanced the view that the so-called "winter settlements" can be regarded as the antecedents of the Hungarian village system. This interpretation meant that the Hungarians of the times were not nomadic, but a half nomadic people, that is to say that they had a much higher level of civilization and standard of living even before the conquest of the Carpathian Basin.

Another important tenet of Szabó's researches was the conclusion that the situation of the Hungarian serfs improved during the Middle Ages.⁴² In 1954 he published a study, launching a debate with the "Young Turk" spokesman of the Marxist historiography György Székely, about the significance and interpretation of the serf laws, enacted in 1351.⁴³ In this study Szabó attempted to prove that these laws do not mirror the deteriorating situation of the peasantry. In the preceding years an epidemic swept over the country after which emerged a severe shortage of manpower and the feudal lords attempted to attract the serfs to their demesnes with the promise of not levying the taxes for a certain period. This gesture could be made by the big land-owners but not by the lower nobility and that is why in the Diet of 1351 they enacted the law levying the *nona* (ninth). According to Szabó this law was in tune with the other laws of that Assembly.

Szabó's paramount debate with the Marxist historians dealt with the so-called "second serfdom" theory, which became one of the fundamental tenets of the Marxist historiography after the Second

World War.⁴⁴ The roots of Szabó's ideas go back to the researches of the famous agricultural history school led by Sándor Domanovszky whose students explored the big estate structures in Hungary's economy and society in the early modern period.⁴⁵ The theoretical and ideological bases of these studies was intended against Gyula Szekfű's *Geistesgeschichte* school, according to which Hungary's historical evolution is part of Western Europe, and for instance Transylvania was the last bastion of the European culture: the Renaissance, the Baroque, the Enlightenment, Protestantism, etc. in contrast to the culturally underdeveloped Balkan and East-European territories. Domanovszky and his followers contested this thesis and wanted to emphasize (instead of the cultural superiority of the Hungarians) much more the similarities in the historical development of these small nations,⁴⁶ and they found these parallel motifs in the circumstances of social historical developments. Applying the models of the German agricultural history they distinguished the terms *Grundherrschaft* (demesne) and *Gutsherrschaft* (estate). According to this thesis the East-European (among them the Hungarian) development took a turn from the Western one at about the beginning of the 16th century, when instead of the *Gutsherrschaft* a new form of big estates, the *Grundherrschaft* (demesne) came to the fore in these territories, which had the consequence that the nobility and the lords took the agricultural production in their hands — instead of establishing the freeholder system of Western Europe, which become a direct forerunner of the modern capitalist system. The consequence of this “turn” was the deteriorating situation of the peasantry in these territories, the modernization process came to a standstill, the bourgeoisie remained weak, and the phenomena of the so-called “re-feudalization” process strengthened causing other political problems later, for example the failure of bourgeois revolutions.⁴⁷

After the Second World War and with the communist takeover, the new Marxist historiography capitalized linked together (for his own political/ideological sakes) with the ideas of Lenin about the “Prussian” way of capitalistic development in Eastern Europe (from the Elbe River to the East) which had the function to deliver a legitimizing ideology of the Soviet occupation of this region (and justify the political decisions of Yalta dividing Europe, and rendering Eastern Europe to the Soviet interest sphere.)⁴⁸

The starting point for Szabó's ideas developed in his studies partly before and during the Second World War, but mainly after

1945,⁴⁹ were the outcomes of the debate with the Domanovszky school, that means the similarities of the East European development (instead of stressing the one-sided Western orientation of the Hungarian culture and history respectively). But, according to Szabó, the Hungarian development neither belongs exclusively to the Eastern phenomena, because for example the Hungarian serf never was a *holop*, a slave who could not possess any personal rights. Therefore we cannot speak of a “second serfdom” in Hungary, not even of a first one in the Middle Ages, as we could observe in the former studies (see his debate with György Székely) the situation of the peasants were improving even at that period (they could freely move to another place, or flee to market towns, they could even elevate themselves to the ranks of nobility, etc.). This tendency continued even after the Dózsa uprising,⁵⁰ when after a certain time the serfs could move freely again which opened many possibilities to improve their situation: they could move to market towns, they could become members of the military garrisons, they could become “*hajdu*”. In the 18-th century the German peasants could not have been attracted to repopulate territories depopulated during the Ottoman occupation with the promise of becoming serfs, deprived of all personal rights and possessions.⁵¹

One of the most significant studies in this respect written by Szabó is *A jobbágy birtoklása...* [The possession of the serf...] (1946) in which he analyses in detail the rights of the peasants for possessing vineyards, forests, etc. We have to add to the above mentioned interests his special fascination for the phenomena of the “farmstead” (*tanya*), which from the end of 18-th century became a special feature of the development of Hungarian settlement patterns (first of all on the Great Plain), proving that not all of the peasantry belonged to the great nobles — so there are many signs of a bourgeois development in Hungary that were based on a free peasantry.

All in all, according to Szabó, Hungary’s development can be placed between Eastern and Western Europe — it is a Central European, transitional phenomenon — and this idea was at that time in direct conflict with the official, Marxist ideology. It embodied in many respects the “third road” theory conceived between the two World Wars by the famous populist writer László Németh.⁵² Szabó was also, in a certain sense, also a forerunner of Jenő Szücs and his well-known theory about the three regions of Europe conceived in the 1980’s.⁵³

Mályusz and Szabó played very important roles in the editing and publishing of historical source materials. Mályusz’s work in this

respect includes a volume containing the papers of Palatinate Archduke Alexander Leopold, and another volume of documents dealing with Joseph II's Toleration Edict, and still another one dealing with the age of King Sigismund. Other relevant documentary collections of István Szabó are the records of Ugocsa County, another volume containing documents dealing with the history of the Hungarian peasantry, and still another containing the tax-rolls of the Bács Bodrog region.⁵⁴ The first remark that can be made regarding these publishing activities is that they secured a very solid scientific basis for their theories. These documentary collections underpinned, for example, Mályusz's criticism of Szekfű and later of the populists, or the members of the National Romantic School (Jenő Csuday, István R. Kiss, and Jenő Zoványi).⁵⁵

This also resulted in the fact that, based on the very scholarly source collection about the documents regarding the age of King Sigismund Hungarian academics today have quite clear picture about Sigismund. In the literature published prior to Mályusz's volume he was portrayed as a ruler not being interested at all in the problems of the Hungarian nation — that was why he was either despised or neglected. Mályusz discovered him as the initiator of many modernization tendencies of the country (including his laws supporting the towns, the institutional system, etc.) and in this way he was placed between Róbert Károly and King Matthias as one of the three outstanding promoters of the social and institutional reform of Hungary in the second half of the Middle Ages.⁵⁶

The other important feature of these source collections is that they feature the approach to Hungarian history of both historians. Mályusz in his introduction to these volumes depicts in detail the social and cultural background of the periods covered. These collections contain many so-called non-written sources which reflect the wider social history of several elements of society, including the upper classes, and in the case of Szabó, even the peasantry. These new sources include settlement names, names of persons, letters written by peasants, village laws, tax polls, tribunal records, town maps, municipal papers, etc. And they represent an interdisciplinary approach: Anthropology, Ethnography, Linguistics, Geography, etc., which was deemed necessary in order to explore and in solving historical problems.

In this connection a supplementary remark can be added that in the case of Szabó these activities included also ideological aspects.

After the Second World War he initiated (on the centenary of the revolution of 1848-49) a series of documentary volumes pertaining to the history of the Hungarian peasantry.⁵⁷ For this undertaking (supported warmly by another outstanding social historian, István Hajnal⁵⁸) Szabó employed the strict scholarly methods and wanted to recruit the collaborators including Imre Wellmann, Jenő Berlász, Kálmán Guoth,⁵⁹ Bálint Ila and others — all old fashioned, “bourgeois” historians. But the leadership of this undertaking was taken out from his hands by people who alleged that Szabó portrayed relations between the serfs and their lords as being too idyllic, neglecting the “class war” fought between these social classes.⁶⁰

Finally we have to refer briefly to the political aspects of Mályusz’s and Szabó’s historical writing. Mályusz’s main work in this respect is his pamphlet *The Fugitive Bolsheviks*⁶¹ that Count Pál Teleki had commissioned him (along with Szekfű) to write in 1927.⁶² In the end Mályusz wrote the work alone because Szekfű had taken over the editorship of *Magyar Szemle* (Hungarian Review.) C. A. Macartney evaluated the book as a genuine political pamphlet (being full of invectives) because in the work Mályusz denounced the most important participants of the revolutions in 1918-19 (already in emigration at that time) as traitors whose behavior during the revolution and emigration could be explained by their egoistic, anarchic “revolutionary soul”, which was embodied foremost of all by the “Jewish” Max Stirner. In this respect another stone of astonishment in Mályusz’s career is his also widely known book entitled *A magyar történettudomány* [The Hungarian Historical Scholarship] (1942), published originally in a form of a series of articles in the extreme right oriented journal of Béla Imrédy, *Egyedül Vagyunk* [We Are Alone]. In this work Mályusz claimed that the whole Hungarian historical scholarship needed restructuring according to the principles of *Volksgeschichte* or ethnohistory. (He regarded ethnohistory not as one of the many branches of history, but he felt that all other branches should be reconstructed in order that they pursue exclusively “ethnohistorical” researches.)

In the introduction of this book Mályusz conceived his ideas about the “political” and “ethnic” nation proposing the carrying through of the latter, which comprised the purging of the Hungarian nation from the foreigners, its enemies (Jews first of all). Mályusz even claimed the establishment of an institution for the research of the

“negative” role of the Jews in Hungarian history, but his proposal has not been materialized.

The political consequences of István Szabó’s views about Hungarian historical development are reflected by the fierce debates about his books: studies about the Hungarian peasantry and Debrecen the capital of Hungary during the second phase of the independence war 1848-49.⁶³ The second of these works was especially heavily criticized by Marxist historians who alleged for example that Szabó was too lenient toward of the so-called “Peace Party” and eulogized the role of burghers of Debrecen — instead of the role of the working class. The most striking charge against Szabó was that he and his followers were uncritical of Kossuth’s peasant policy. Szabó had justified Kossuth’s policy of “free soil possession” and opposed the approach (of land distribution) advocated by more radical leaders (Vasvári, Táncsics, etc.) of the revolution. Szabó stuck to the rightness of the policy of Kossuth claiming that the land distributing policy of the leftists would have alienated the nobility from the goals of the revolution and the independence war. Szabó was right: the nobility was the leading force of the rebellion against the Habsburgs in 1848-49 — and even in the uprisings of the previous centuries.⁶⁴

The officials of the reigning power didn’t dare to touch Szabó personally, although he was persecuted to a certain extent, but two of his collaborators were sentenced to prison in the infamous penal colony of Recsk with the accusation of a planned uprising against the regime. Many followers of him took an active part in the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 when he was elected to a co-president of the revolutionary committee at the university of Debrecen in that October-November days of the uprising against the Stalinist-communist system.

Conclusions

At this point we can venture an evaluation of the contribution Mályusz and Szabó made to Hungarian historiography. Mályusz’s ethnohistory was the revival of the positivist traditions of the nineteenth century. The legacy of positivism, as his contemporaries were quick to point out, was evident in his preoccupation with the collective, and with the law-like regularities of development, and in his concentration on cultural history. But ethnohistory proposed to give an account of

cultural development with full regard to its grounding in economic history and historical geography. Instead of political and administrative units, it took organically related historical and/or geographic regions for its units of analysis, and investigated them at all levels and with all the tools that we have come to associate with micro-history and micro-geography. The picture is tainted, however, by the fact that the contemporary inspiration of Mályusz's ethnohistory was the *Volkstumskunde* associated with Aubin, Kötzschke, Keyser, and Spamer in the inter-war years. *Volkstumskunde* itself harked back to the nation concept espoused by Herder, Arndt, Fichte and the brothers Grimm, which posited race and ethnicity as the basis of nationhood, and defined national affiliation in terms of a community of descent, language and culture. It was an approach humanist in inspiration, but wide open to racist exploitation. Thus it was that by the turn of the century, the pan-German movement had made it into an ideology of world domination, one serving to substantiate the doctrine of the Germans' racial superiority over the Slavs. Allied with *Ostforschung*, another *fin-de-siècle* intellectual trend, *Volkstumskunde* came to present German history as essentially a crusade to spread German culture and to extend the area of German settlement (the German "ethnic ground" or *Volksboden*), principally toward the east. Empire building: the founding of cities, the introducing of the German legal system, organizing churches, was, according to this view, at the very heart of German history, as was the struggle for pan-German unification. (Paradoxically, for all its chauvinism, *Volkstumskunde* proved to be a highly fruitful trend in German historiography. As opposed to the tradition represented by Troeltsch, Meinecke, and the concentrating on the state, and the history of ideas and great personalities *Volkstumskunde* explored collective phenomena and material culture for sources of historical evidence, and encouraged a basically interdisciplinary approach.⁶⁵

Considered purely as a methodology, *Volkstumskunde*, like Mályusz's ethnohistory, would have had the potential for providing relatively impartial, in-depth depictions of particular segments of the past. There is, however, no way to disregard their political and ideological thrust. Mályusz's introductory lecture to the second semester of his course on ethnohistory leaves absolutely no doubt as to his explicitly political agenda. His studies of the early 1930s on the new German nationalism bear this out. Post-war Europe, he noted (and would continue to reiterate for another decade), had given rise to a

new kind of nationalism, one predicated not on state formations, but on ethnicity.

Perhaps the most problematic aspect of Mályusz's concept of an "ethnic nation" was that it necessitated his excluding the country's Jews from the body politic. "Let us exclude the Jewry from our nation," he wrote; "let us dismiss, in amicable accord, all those who do not, in their heart of hearts, feel that they are thoroughly Hungarian."⁶⁶ Admittedly, Mályusz was not a racist: he did not believe that history was, in essence, the struggle of the various races for *Lebensraum*, with the superior races winning. In fact, in his "A népiség története" of 1931, he criticized German historians for identifying "culture" with German culture. The task facing Hungarian historians, he insisted, was to preserve for posterity what the Magyars had achieved jointly with the Slavs in the way of culture.

Mályusz's (and Szabó's) cultural nationalism was anti-German in several respects. For one thing, his very emphasis on the autonomy of Hungarian culture implied resistance to Hitler's attempts at expansionism. But there was also another aspect to it. Mályusz's cultural nationalism, as he himself admitted,⁶⁷ was meant to lay the groundwork for revisionism. His resolute underscoring of the strength and autonomy of Hungarian culture was meant to provide an alternative to Szekfű's vision of a Hungary whose fortunes were irrevocably tied to that of the Habsburgs.⁶⁸ Given the opportunity, Mályusz was suggesting, Hungary would be capable of carrying through a territorial revision on its own. All in all, however, Mályusz might most equitably be judged as having posited — as opposed to Szekfű's concept of nation as state — concept of the nation as culture.⁶⁹ For all its manifest ideological and political bias, in respect of methodology, ethnohistory anticipated some current approaches to social history. The lesson might prove as timely as the German re-visitation of *Volkstumskunde* has proved to be.

On the other hand we should remark that with the studies of Szabó in applying much more on the lower ranks of the society, the progressive message, the sociological aspects of the Hungarian "ethno-history" became much stronger, even paramount, which was able to offer a real alternative to the reigning *Geistesgeschichte* orientation between the two world wars. On top of all that, with his striving for applying the so called "third road" theory it became one of the most important opponents of the dominating communist historiography after 1945. This idea can be seen as a "scientific" protest against the Soviet

system and occupation. On the other (methodological) side it strengthens even the comparative aspects of the Hungarian historical understandings, which epitomizes the overtaking of the one-sided Hungarian-centered view of this scholarship and opens a door towards a comparative, East-Central European history.

NOTES

¹ E. Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie* (München: Oldenbourg, 1911); H.E. Barnes, *A History of Historical Writing*, (New York: Dover Publications, 1963); E. Breisach, *Historiography* (Chicago-London, 1983); Georg G. Iggers, *New Directions in European Historiography* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1975); *Atlas of European Historiography (The Making of a Profession 1800-2005)*, edited by Ilaria Porciani and Lutz Raphael (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); and Vilmos Erős, *Modern historiográfia. Az újkori történetírás egy története* [Modern historiography. A history of modern historical writing] (Budapest: Ráció Kiadó, 2015).

² For the development of Hungarian historiography see Emma Léderer, *A magyar polgári történetírás rövid története* [A Short History of Hungarian Bourgeois Historiography] (Budapest, 1969); Ágnes R. Várkonyi, *A pozitívista történetészlelet a magyar történetírásban* [Positivism in Hungarian Historiography], I-II, Budapest, 1973; Bela Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976). Ignác Romsics, *Clio Bűvöletében: Magyar történetírás a 19-20. században — nemzetközi kitekintéssel* [In the spell of Clio: Hungarian historiography in the 19th and 20th centuries — with international perspectives] (Budapest: Osiris, 2011). For Hungarian historiography between the two world wars, see also Ferenc Glatz, *Nemzeti kultúra - kulturált nemzet* [National Culture – a Nation of Culture] (Budapest, 1988.)

³ Gyula Pauler, “A pozitívizmus hatása a történetírára” [The Influence of Positivism on the Writing of History], *Századok*, 1871(5): 527-645, 624-641; and Gyula Pauler, “Comte Ágost és a történelem” [Auguste Comte and History], *Századok*, 1873 (7): 225-241, 391-406, 462-481.

⁴ Szekfü's major works, in chronological order: *A Magyar állam é/etrajza* [A Biography of the Hungarian State] (Budapest: Dick Manó, 1918); *Három nemzedék* [Three Generations] (Budapest, 1920); *Történet-politikai tanu/mányok* [Historical-political Studies] (Budapest: Magyar Irodalmi Társaság, 1924); *Bethlen Gábor* (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1929), *Magyar történet* [Hungarian History] (Budapest: Magyar

Történelmi Társulat, 1929-33), and *Állam és nemzet* [State and Nation] (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1942).

⁵ For Meinecke see Walter Hofer, *Geschichtsschreibung und Weltanschauung* (München: Oldenbourg, 1950); Ernst Schulin, “Das Problem der Individualität (Eine kritische Betrachtung des Historismus-Werkes von Friedrich Meinecke)” [The problem of individuality. A critical analyses of the historicism-work by Friedrich Meinecke], *Historische Zeitschrift*, 1963 (197): 102-133; Hans Kluefing, “‘Vernunftrepublikanismus’ und ‘Vertrauensdiktatur’, Friedrich Meinecke in der Weimarer Republik,” *Historische Zeitschrift*, 1986 (242): 69-98.

⁶ Elemér Mályusz, “A reformkor nemzedéke” [The Generation of the Reform Period], *Századok*, 1923 (57-58): 17-75.

⁷ Elemér Mályusz, “Magyar reneszánsz, magyar barokk” [Hungarian Renaissance-Hungarian Baroque], *Budapesti Szemle*, 1936 (241): 159-179, 293-318; (242): 86-104, 154-174.

⁸ Elemér Mályusz, “Árpádházi Boldog Margit” [Blessed Margaret of the House of Árpád], in *Károlyi Árpád emlékkönyv* (Budapest, 1933), pp. 341-384.

⁹ Elemér Mályusz, “A történettudomány mai kérdései” [The Problems of Doing History Today] (A Lecture given in Kecskemét in 1936); Elemér Mályusz, *A magyar történettudomány* [Hungarian Historiography] (Budapest: Bolyai Könyvek, 1942).

¹⁰ Elemér Mályusz, *Népiségtörténet* [Ethnohistory], ed. Soós István (Budapest: MTA Történettudományi Intézete: 1994).

¹¹ Mályusz’s “Turóctól Thuróczyig,” where he recollects that in the early 1920s he had wanted to write up the settlement history of all of Upper Hungary: “Turóctól Thuróczyig” (prepared for publication by István Soós), *Sic Itur ad Astra*, 1990/1-2: 128-138.

¹² Elemér Mályusz, “A helytörténeti kutatás feladatai” [The Tasks Facing Research into Local History], *Századok*, 1924 (57-58): 538-66.

¹³ Elemér Mályusz, “A népiség története” [Ethnohistory], in *A magyar történetírás új útjai* [New Trends in the Writing of History in Hungary], ed. Bálint Hóman (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1931), 237-69.

¹⁴ Elemér Mályusz, “Három folyóirat” [Three Journals], *Századok* (68), 1934: 45-65.

¹⁵ The lecture dealing with anthropography has not been included in the edition of *Népiségtörténet* in 1994. Mályusz had given three reasons for attaching importance to anthropography: its methodology lent itself to a degree of objectivity equal to that of the natural sciences; it helped to

reconstruct ancient history; it could be crucial to determining the origin of certain ethnic groups, e.g., the Székelys. Unlike Szekfü who held that the concept of race had no place in history, Mályusz approved of research aimed at establishing the racial origins of peoples. He rejected, however, the identification of “race” with “ethnic group”.

¹⁶ Elemér Mályusz, *Geschichte des ungarischen Volkstums von der Landnahme bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters* [Hungarian Ethnohistory from the Conquest until the end of the Middle Ages] (Budapest: Pannonia-Bücher, 1940), 120.

¹⁷ Elemér Mályusz, *A magyarság és a nemzetiségek Mohács előtt* [The Magyars and the Minority Nationalities prior to Mohács], *Magyar Művelődéstörténet* II (Budapest, 1939), pp. 105-124; and “A középkori magyar nemzetiségi politika” [Nationality Policy in Hungary in the Middle Ages], *Századok* (73), 1939: 257-94, and 385-448.

¹⁸ Elemér Mályusz, *A középkori magyarság település- és nemzetiségi politikája*. [Settlement- and nationality policy in Hungary in the Middle Ages] Edited by Soós István (Budapest: Lucidus, 2002).

¹⁹ As we know from Elemér Mályusz’s memoirs, a total of eight dissertations appeared in the “Település és Népiségtörténeti Értekezések” series. See Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*, pp. 248-49.

²⁰ Elemér Mályusz, “A patrimonális királyság” [Patrimonial Kingship] *Társadalomtudomány*, 1933/1-2: 37- 49; Elemér Mályusz, “A karizmatikus királyság” [Charismatic Kingship] *Társadalomtudomány*, 1934/3: 153-178; Elemér Mályusz, “A magyar társadalom a Hunyadiak korában. A hűbériség és rendiség problémája” [Hungarian Society in the Age of the Hunyadis. The Problem of Feudalism and Estatism.] In Lukinich Imre (ed.), *Mátyás király emlékkönyv születésének ötszázéves évfordulójára*. I (Budapest, 1940), 309-433. And Elemér Mályusz, “A magyar köznemesség kialakulása” [The Development of the Hungarian Nobility] *Századok* (76) 1942: 272-305, 407-434.

²¹ Elemér Mályusz, “Kossuth működésének társadalomtörténeti háttere” [The Social Historical Background to Kossuth’s Activities] *Napkelet*, 1928(6), 11: 166-183.

²² Elemér Mályusz, “Geschichte des Bürgertums in Ungarn” [The history of bourgeoisie in Hungary] *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 1927 (20): 356-407. The self-government of the cities — so argues Mályusz — consisted of the inner (small) council and the outer (big) council, the members of the later (originally all of the citizens) elected the representatives of the former body. After a certain time the members of the big council were not elected, but nominated by the older families, because

they wanted to keep away the immigrating (mostly non-German, Hungarian) inhabitants from the leading positions of these communities.

²³ Elemér Mályusz, *Magyarország története a felvilágosodás korában* [The History of Hungary in the Age of Enlightenment], edited by István Soós (Budapest: Osiris, 2002). Elemér Mályusz, *A Thuróczy-krónika és forrásai* [The Chronicle of Thuróczy and its Sources] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó 1967). Elemér Mályusz, *Az V. István-kori gesta* [The Gesta of the Age of Stephen V] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971). Elemér Mályusz, “A pálosrend a középkor végén” [The Paulist Order at the End of the Middle Ages] *Egyháztörténet*, 1945 (3): 1-53.

²⁴ Elemér Mályusz, *Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon* [Ecclesiastical society in Hungary in the Middle Ages] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971).

²⁵ For literature about Szabó see Vilmos Erős, “Szabó István körül” [About István Szabó], *Aetas*, 2000/3: 110–126; Vilmos Erős, “Szabó István és 1848/49” [István Szabó and 1848-1849], *Valóság*, 2003/7: 94–108; Vilmos Erős, *Asszimiláció és retorika* [Assimilation and rhetoric] (Debrecen: Csokonai Kiadó, 2005); Vilmos Erős ed., *A harmadik út felé. Szabó István történész cikkeiben és dokumentumokban* [Towards the Third Way. The Historian István Szabó in articles and documents] (Budapest, Lucidus Kiadó, 2006); Vilmos Erős, *A szellemtörténettől a népiségtörténetig (Tanulmányok a két világháború közötti magyar történetírásról)* [From Spiritual History to Ethnohistory. Studies about the Hungarian Historiography between the two World Wars] (Debrecen: Debrecen University Press/Egyetemi Kiadó, 2012).

²⁶ István Szabó, *A magyarság életrajza* [The Biography of the Hungarian People] (Budapest: MTA, 1941).

²⁷ Vilmos Erős, *A szellemtörténettől a népiségtörténetig (Tanulmányok a két világháború közötti magyar történetírásról)* [From Spiritual History to Ethnohistory. Studies about the Hungarian Historiography between the two World Wars].

²⁸ In his doctoral dissertation Szabó István, *Debrecen 1848/49-ben* [Debrecen in 1848-1849] (Debrecen, 1928).

²⁹ István Szabó ed., *A szabadságharc fővárosa, Debrecen, 1849. január-május* [Debrecen, the capital of independence war in 1849] (Debrecen, 1948).

³⁰ István Szabó, “A debreceni tanyarendszer kialakulása” [The making of the settlement system around Debrecen] *Föld és Ember*, 1929/5: 214–244. István Szabó, “A tokaji rév és Debrecen 1565–67-ben” [The ford at Tokaj and Debrecen in 1565-67] *Debreczeni Képes Kalendárium*, 1934: 89–97; István Szabó, “A debreceni uradalom a mohácsi vész korában [The estate of Debrecen at the age of Mohács], *Debreczeni Képes Kalendárium*, 1935:

85–90; István Szabó, “A debreceni közösség” [The community of Debrecen] *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium*, 1940: 73–77.

³¹ István Szabó, “A hajdúk 1514-ben,” *Századok* 1950 (84): 178–198, 478–488.

³² István Szabó, “Hanyatló jobbágyság a középkor végén” [Declining Serfdom at The End of the Middle Ages] *Századok*, 1938 (72): 10–59.

³³ István Szabó, *Ugocsa megye* [Ugocsa county] (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1937).

³⁴ István Szabó, *Népiségtörténeti tanulmányok* [Studies in Ethnohistory] edited by Vilmos Erős (Budapest: Lucidus Kiadó, 2005).

³⁵ István Szabó, *A falurendszer kialakulása Magyarországon (X–XV. század.)* [The Evolution of the Village System in Hungary in the 10-th to the 15-th Century] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1966); István Szabó, *A középkori magyar falu.* [The Medieval Hungarian Village] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1969).

³⁶ Julius Szekfű, *Der Staat Ungarn. Eine Geschichtsstudie* (Stuttgart-Berlin: D.V.A., 1918)

³⁷ István Szabó, *A magyarság életrajza* [The Biography of Magyar-dom] (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1941).

³⁸ Erős, *Asszimiláció és retorika* [Assimilation and rhetoric].

³⁹ It should be mentioned that after 1945 Szabó, like Mályusz, was not able to pursue further these population history studies. Despite this he published some smaller essays concerning these questions and two major monographs about the settlement history and the village network in the Middle Ages. In these masterpieces he deepened in many respects the social historical aspects of his former researches concentrating — beside the historical demography, social and settlement history — on the historical-anthropological aspects of the problem. (Feasts, church going, games played, the housing, furniture, utensils, the plot system, etc.)

⁴⁰ István Szabó, *A magyar parasztság története* [The History of the Hungarian Peasantry] (Budapest: Magyar Szemle Társaság, 1940), István Szabó, *A jobbágy birtoklása az örökös jobbágyság korában* [The possession of serfs in the age of the perpetual serfdom] (Budapest: MTA, 1947), István Szabó, *Tanulmányok a magyar parasztság történetéből* [Studies about the history of the Hungarian Peasantry] (Budapest: Teleki Pál Tudományos Intézet, 1948). István Szabó (ed.), *A parasztság Magyarországon a kapitalizmus korában (1849–1914)* I–II [Studies about the peasantry in Hungary in the Age of Capitalism (1849–1914)] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1965).

⁴¹ See for example Gyula Kristó, “A honfoglaló magyarok életmódjáról” [About the patterns of living of Hungarians in the 10-th Century], *Századok* (129) 1995/1. 3-62.

⁴² Szabó, *A magyar parasztság története* [The History of the Hungarian Peasantry].

⁴³ István Szabó, “Az 1351. évi jobbágy törvények” [The serf laws of the year 1351], *Századok*, 1954 (88): 497–527.

⁴⁴ Pál Pach Zsigmond, “Der Baueraufstand vom Jahre 1514...” [The peasant uprising in 1514], in Pach, *Hungary and the European economy in Early Modern times* (Budapest 1994), pp. 275-301.

⁴⁵ Erős, *A szellemtörténetől a népiségtörténetig* [From Spiritual History to Ethnohistory].

⁴⁶ There are many parallels in this respect with the views of István Hajnal. About him see László Lakatos, *Az élet és a formák. Hajnal István történelemszociológiája* [The Life and its Forms. The Historical Sociology of István Hajnal] (Budapest: Új Mandátum, 1996).

⁴⁷ Vilmos Erős, “Szabó István ellentörténelme-i az 1950-es években [István Szabó’s “counter-histories” in the 1950’s], *Magyar Szemle*, 2012/3: 98-119.

⁴⁸ Ibidem.

⁴⁹ István Szabó, *A jobbágy birtoklása az örökös jobbágyság korában*. [The possession of the serfs in the age of the perpetual serfdom]; Szabó, *Tanulmányok a magyar parasztság történetéből* [Studies about the history of the Hungarian Peasantry].

⁵⁰ Szabó, “Hanyatló jobbágyság a középkor végén” [Declining Serfdom at The End of the Middle Ages].

⁵¹ Stefan Szabó, “Das Ungarntum des Tieflandes im 18. Jahrhundert” [The Hungarians of the Great Hungarian Plain in the 18-th century] *Ungarn*, 1943: 369-375.

⁵² László Németh, *Sorskérdések* [Fate questions] (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó 1989). There are some similarities with the ideas of the Romanian writer and thinker E. Lovinescu. See his *A modern román civilizáció története* [The history of the modern Romanian civilization] (Palamart Kiadó, 2002).

⁵³ Jenő Szücs, *Vázlat Európa három történelmi régiójáról* [About the three historical regions of Europe] (Budapest: Magvető, 1983).

⁵⁴ Elemér Mályusz ed., *Iratok a türelmi rendelet történetéhez*. [Documents Concerning the Toleration Edict] (Budapest: Magyar Protestáns Irodalmi Társaság, 1940); Mályusz ed., *Sándor Lipót főherceg nádor iratai, 1790-1795* [The Papers of Palatinate Archduke Alexander Leopold, 1790-1795] (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1926) and the multi-volume

work Mályusz ed., *Zsigmondkori oklevéltár* [Documents Concerning the Age of Sigismund], I. 1387–1399, II/1. 1400–1406, II/2.1407–1410 (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1951–1958). István Szabó ed., *Bács, Bodrog és Csongrád megye dézsmalajstromai 1522-ből* [Tax rolls from the counties Bács, Bodrog and Csongrád from the year 1522] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1954).

⁵⁵About the National Romantic School see Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*.

⁵⁶Elemér Mályusz, *Kaiser Sigismund in Ungarn 1387-1437* (Budapest: Corvina 1990).

⁵⁷Erős ed., *A harmadik út felé. Szabó István történész cikkekben és dokumentumokban* [Towards the Third Way. The Historian István Szabó in articles and documents].

⁵⁸Ibidem.

⁵⁹Already dead at that time.

⁶⁰Erős ed., *A harmadik út felé. Szabó István történész cikkekben és dokumentumokban* [Towards the Third Way. The Historian István Szabó in articles and documents].

⁶¹Elemér Mályusz, *Volkskommissare und Genossen im Auslande* [The Fugitive Bolsheviks] (Munich, 1931), see note 67.

⁶²István Soós, “Szekfű Gyula és Mályusz Elemér A vörös emigráció című műve” [The work of “The fugitive Bolsheviks” by Gyula Szekfű and Elemér Mályusz.] in: *A negyedik nemzedék és ami utána következik. Szekfű Gyula és a magyar történetírás a 20. század első felében* [The fourth generation and what follows after. Gyula Szekfű and the Hungarian historiography in the first half of the 20th century] edited by Gábor Ujváry (Budapest: Ráció Kiadó, 2011), pp. 238–250.

⁶³Szabó ed., *A szabadságharc fővárosa, Debrecen, 1849. január-május* [Debrecen, the capital of independence war in 1849].

⁶⁴Erős, *A szellemtörténetől a népiségtörténetig* [From Spiritual History to Ethnohistory].

⁶⁵For the latest literature on *Volkstumskunde* see Willi Oberkrome, *Volksgeschichte: methodische Innovation und völkische Ideologisierung in der deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft 1918-1945* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck-Ruprecht, 1993); Michael Fahlbusch, *Wissenschaft im Dienst der nationalsozialistischen Politik? “Die Volksdeutschen Forschungsgemeinschaften” von 1931–1945* (Baden–Baden: Nomos, 1999); Karen Schönwaelder, “The Fascination of Power: Historical Scholarship in Nazi Germany” *History Workshop Journal*, 43 (1997): 133–154; Manfred Hettling ed., *Volksgeschichten im Europa der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003).

⁶⁶ Mályusz's anti-Semitism goes back to the '20s. In his essay "Kossuth működésének társadalmi háttéré" [The Social Background of Kossuth's Political Activity], he puts the blame for the delays in Hungary's modernization squarely on the Jews, arguing that it was the amoral selfishness of the post-Compromise Jewish immigrants that shattered the two social classes which had the potential of becoming the backbone of a democratic bourgeoisie: the urban middle class and the middle nobility. He makes the same kind of argument in "A vörös emigráció" [The Fugitive Bolsheviks] a notorious series of articles that appeared in *Napkelet* in 1931. Here, responsibility for the revolutions of 1918-19 is laid at the door of the selfish and anarchic "personality types" represented by Max Stirner as most common among Jews.

⁶⁷ See his manuscript memorandum to Domanovszky of 1928, in the Manuscript Archives of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The manuscript was published by Vilmos Erős with the title "Mályusz Elemér feljegyzése egy Magyar Történeti Intézet felállításáról" [Elemér Mályusz's memorandum about the establishment of a Hungarian Historical Institute] *Történelmi Szemle* 1998/1-2: 113-126.

⁶⁸ I would like to remark at the same time that not even the school of Szekfű represented an exclusively state centered, political history. The most important difference between them was rather, that *Geistesgeschichte* focused more on the higher, elite culture, while "ethnohistory" concentrated on the material, even everyday life, notwithstanding the political or ideological implications of these differing conceptions. But both were on the same platform, in opposing the narrow political "*histoire événementielle*" historiography of the Dualist Age, rather that of National Romantic School.