

HISTORY

ERŐS, Vilmos**Ethnohistory in Hungary (Elemér Mályusz and István Szabó)****Abstract**

The above study offers an overview of one of the most renowned Hungarian medievalists in the 20th century and of his school of „ethnic history“ („népiségtörténet“). In the first part the author describes the roots, program, aims and most important institutions of this ethnic history, as well as the major works it produced. Yet Mályusz dealt not only with ethnic history, but also with ecclesiastical, intellectual and social history, or the history of the institutions, the study treats these briefly as well. Alongside Mályusz, the other major representative of ethnic history was the Debrecen-based historian István Szabó, who after World War II deepened this kind of research with a view mainly to the history of the peasantry. In this he was related to the movement of the so-called „populist writers“, whose „third road“ approach, as the study demonstrates, exerted a considerable influence on his interpretation. Finally, the study portrays the important source publication activities of the two historians (which reinforced the social historical character of their oeuvre), and also the politico-ideological implications of their works.

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

¹ Cf. E. Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie*, (Oldenbourg:München, 1911); H.E. Barnes, *A History of Historical Writing*, (Dover Publications: New York, 1963); E. Breisach, *Historiography*, (Chicago-London, 1983); and Georg G. Iggers, *New Directions in European Historiography*, (Wesleyan University Press: Middletown, 1975); *Atlas of European Historiography. [The Making of a Profession 1800-2005.]* Edited by Ilaria Porciani and Lutz Raphael. The European Science Foundation. (Palgrave Macmillan: New York, 2010).

Monumenta Germaniae Historica, which went back to 1819), 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 authors-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 a "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.

² For the development of Hungarian historiography, cf. Emma Léderer, *A magyar polgári történetírás rövid története* [A Short History of Hungarian Bourgeois Historiography], (Budapest, 1969); Ágnes R. Várkonyi, *A pozitívista történetírási élet a magyar történetírásban* [Positivism in Hungarian Historiography], I-II, Budapest, 1973; Bela Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*, (New York:Columbia University Press, 1976). For Hungarian historiography between the two world wars, see also Ferenc Glatz, *Nemzeti kultúra-kultúra/nemzet* [National Culture a Nation of Culture], (Budapest, 1988.)

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] 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 outstanding 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* (1918), and in his *Bethlen Gábor* (1929), Szekfű expressly models his approach on Meinecke's⁵, 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* (1920), the veritable Bible of the period. Here, he depicts the nineteenth-century Hungarian liberals responsible for the disintegration effected by 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 of *Magyar Történet* (Hungarian History, 1929-1933), a seven-volume synthesis he published 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

³ Cf. Gyula Pauler, 'A pozitivizmus hatása a történetíráásra' [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 Szekfű's major works, in chronological order: *A Magyar állam életrajza* [A Biography of the Hungarian State] (Budapest: Dick Manó, 1918); *Három nemzedék* [Three Generations], (Budapest, 1920); *Történetpolitikai tanulmányok* [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 Klueping, "'Vernunftrepublikanismus' und 'Vertrauensdiktatur'", Friedrich Meinecke in der Weimarer Republik", *Historische Zeitschrift*, 1986 (242): 69-98.

"passion" was Protestantism, which, as Szekfű saw it, was *ab ovo* 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) in-fighting 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 *Állam és nemzet* (State and Nation, 1942), he rejected both the French notion of a political nation and the German "ethnic nation" concept, 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/or to restore Hungary's territorial integrity.

One historian who strongly and openly opposed Szekfű's views right from beginning of his own professional career was Elemér Mályusz. The first tilt in his intellectual and ideological jousts with Szekfű was his "A reformkor nemzedéke" (The Reform Generation)⁶. In this study Mályusz refutes Szekfű's claim that the middle nobility of the Reform Era was prompt-ed to armed confrontation with the Habsburgs only by its obsessive determination to redress the Court's encroachment on its political privileges and argues that its goal was the country's embourgeoisement. To substantiate his interpretation, Mályusz points 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 a 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

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.

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/Puritan 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 embourgeoisement 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*[spiritual history]-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 again⁹. 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 '20s. His own doctoral thesis, *Turóc megye kialakulása* [The Formation of Turoc County] published in 1922¹¹, deals with a topic that anticipated the theses his students were to write ten years 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 study¹² on the challenges of doing local history.

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

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], (Kecskemét, 1936); Elemér Mályusz, *A magyar történettudomány* [Hungarian Historiography], (Budapest: Bolyai Könyvek, 1942).

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

¹¹ Cf. Mályusz's "Turóctól Thuróczyig", where he recalls that in the early '20s, he had wanted to write up the settlement history of all of Upper Hungary: "Turóctól Thuróczyig", (prepared for publication by Istvan 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.

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 1931¹³, 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/unconscious* 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* [spiritual history], 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 science 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 történettudomány* [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

¹³ Elemér Mályusz, 'A népiség története' [Ethnohistory], in *A magyar történetírás új útjai* [New Trends in the Writing of History in Hungary], Edited by Bálint Hóman (Magyar Szemle Társaság: Budapest, 1931), pp. 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 Székfű 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".

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, Malyusz 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"[Volksboden] and "the cultural ground"[Kulturboden] of the Magyars in medieval times. "A magyarság es a nemzetiségek Mohács előtt" and "A középkori magyar nemzetiségi politika" both appeared in 1939¹⁷, 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, Le., 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 of 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

¹⁶ Cf. 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 pp.

¹⁷ Elemér Mályusz, 'A magyarság és a nemzetiségek Mohács előtt' [The Magyars and the Minority Nationalities prior to Mohacs], *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 Cf. 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)

settled on large, contiguous tracts of land, but interspersed among the Magyar population, obviously with a view to accelerating their assimilation.

Mályusz does not moot 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, Malyusz 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 would be to publish "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 too. I have already mentioned some of his social historical studies, but to them can be added f.e "A patrimoniális királyság", "A karizmatikus királyság", "A magyar köznemesség kialakulása", "A magyar társadalom a Hunyadiak korában", "A Rákóczi kor társadalma".²⁰

In these studies Mályusz depicts/outlines a sketch about the whole 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 - following Mályusz - possessed always a higher elite imbued with European culture and political capability. This social rank was in Hungary the leading force of the social reforms and modernization, even that of embourgeoisement in opposition to the

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 Cf. Elemér Mályusz, 'A patrimoniális 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. pp. Elemér Mályusz, 'A magyar köznemesség kialakulása', [The Development of the Hungarian Nobility.] *Századok* (76) 1942: 272-305, 407-434.

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

Western countries where the "third estate" fulfilled this task. 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 - turns out, that they had an aristocratic constitution.²²

Other important directions of Mályusz's researches were his partly already also mentioned ecclesiastical and spiritual history (Geistesgeschichte) studies. The most outstanding of them were in this respect (partly already mentioned) - "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.], "Az egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon" [Ecclesiastical society in Hungary in the Middle Ages.], and - respectively - "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 Thuróczy and its Sources.], "V. István-kori geszta" [The Gesta of the Age of Stephen V.] 23, etc.)

From these studies is obvious that Mályusz did not reject unanimously the Geistesgeschichte tradition, only that sort of it represented by Hóman and Szekfű - they eulogized/glorified namely the line of the Middle Ages, Baroque, Romantic Period - embodying/epitomizing much more the values of Catholicism and neglecting/defying the significance of the other line, of these sequels of ideas/Weltanschauungen, the Gothic, Renaissance, Enlightenment being more favorable to the Protestants.

Similar ideas can be detected in the field of Mályusz's ecclesiastical researches. For example. in his "Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon" (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 reformation/Protestantism which stemmed/arose of a deep social and cultural desire and by this motive can be explained its rush spreading all over the country at the beginning of the 16-th century.]

²² Cf. 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 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 /deputies 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 Cf. 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 Cf. Elemér Mályusz, *Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon*. [Ecclesiastical society in Hungary in the Middle Ages.] (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971.)

Another important figure of the Hungarian "ethno history" was István Szabó²⁵, whose synthesis/summary about the development of the history of the Hungarian population was already mentioned.²⁶ According to the literature dealing with the historian from Debrecen²⁷ there are three main fields of his historical research/activity:

Firstly his researches referring to the history of his native city, Debrecen including his studies about the history of the town during the revolution in 1848-1849, when it became for the first time the capital of the country²⁸. 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 discussions, and provoked fierce criticism on the side of communist historians, on which details I'm going to come back later. Other important studies of Szabó concerning the history of his native city and of its surroundings (The Great Hungarian Plain) include: "A debreceni tanyarendszer kialakulása." [The making of the settlement/hamlet 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 most important/striking feature of these studies that he started originally with the political aspects of the history of the city ("histoire evenementielle", "drum and trumpet" history), then gradually deepened this problematic towards the direction of social historical aspects. His main concern became (cf. his studies later about the Haiduks, market towns, etc.³¹) the possibilities of a special Hungarian way of modernization/bourgeois development mainly based on the peasantry. According to him the situation of the peasantry even in the Middle Ages was improving, and even e.g. the phenomena of "deserting" at the end of the Middle Ages, the decline can be explained not by the deteriorating/aggravating situation,

²⁵ Literature about Szabó cf. 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 rhetorics.] (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 Cf. István Szabó, *A magyarság életrajza.* [The Biography of the Hungarian People.]. (MTA: Budapest, 1941.)

²⁷ Cf. 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 Cf his doctoral dissertation Szabó István, *Debrecen 1848/49-ben.* [Debrecen in 1848-1849] (Debrecen, 1928).

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

³⁰ Cf. István Szabó, 'A debreceni tanyarendszer kialakulása.' [The making of the settlement/hamlet 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.] *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium*, 1934: 89–97; István Szabó, 'A debreceni uradalom a mohácsi vész korában.' [The estate of Debrecen at the age of Mohács.] *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium*, 1935: 85–90; István Szabó, 'A debreceni közösség.' [The community of Debrecen] *Debreceni Képes Kalendárium*, 1940: 73-77.

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

exploitation of the peasantry, but much more by the "sweeping/attracting effect" of the market towns, offering the possibility of higher standard of living, respectively culture within their walls.³²

Another important field of research of Szabó's was his before mentioned "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), 'A magyarországi nemzetiségek településtörténete' [The Settlement History of the Nationalities in Hungary]³⁴, 'A középkori magyar falu'[The Hungarian Village in the Middle Ages] (1966), 'A falurendszer kialakulása Magyarországon'[The Making of the Hungarian Village System] (1969)³⁵.

As also mentioned above, in these studies Szabó explored meticulously e.g. the proportion of the Hungarians and other/Slavic people during the 9-th and 10-th centuries (Conquest), the questions of assimilation in the Middle Ages, the devastations of the Turkish occupation, the new settlement in the 18-th century, the developments (migration-immigration) of the 19-th century. These studies (like that of Mályusz's) can be evaluated by two different points of view: by the methodological one they strengthened /underlined the social historical aspect of his orientation. In contrast to Szekfű³⁶, he concentrated much more on the social, population aspects of Hungarian History ("Biography of the Hungarian People"³⁷), applying/leaning vastly/widely on the also mentioned/touched methodological innovations of Mályusz (new, non-written sources, cooperation with allied sciences, linguistics, statistics, geography, ethnography, etc., carrying through the geographical point of view/regional history). From the ideological aspect he represented the "ethnic" nation concept, in contrast to Szekfű's "political" nation theory. That meant for example³⁸ that he analyzed the history of the questions of assimilation in the Hungarian history from its beginnings, stating from the time when the Hungarian "ethnic" character took shape even 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 "foreigner"s in the administrative apparatus, Szabó evaluates it as a detriment to the Hungarians.³⁹

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

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

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

³⁵ Cf. 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 Cf. Szekfű, Julius: *Der Staat Ungarn. Eine Geschichtsstudie*. (Stuttgart-Berlin: D.V.A., 1918.)

³⁷ Cf. István Szabó, *A magyarság élet rajza*. [The Biography of Magyarodom.] (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat 1941.)

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

³⁹ It should be remarked that after 1945 - like Mályusz - Szabó 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, village system 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, plays/games, housing, furnitures, utensils, plot system etc.) But

The third important direction of the historical researches of Szabó's was the history of the Hungarian peasantry (in fact his main field of research). His best known works/studies in this respect comprise "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), "Tanulmányok a parasztság történetéhez a kapitalizmus korában" [Studies about the peasantry in Hungary in the Age of Capitalism"] (I-II. (Edition, 1966).⁴⁰

The best way to analyze the standpoints and evaluate the theories/ideas developed by Szabó in these works seems to be to focus on the heavy debates/controversies that these works evoked. One of them was about (with Gyula Kristó f.e.) the level of the Hungarian culture/civilization during the conquest of the Carpathian Basin and later in the early Middle Ages.⁴¹ In his famous book ("The making of the Village System in Hungary") Szabó held the view that the so called winter settlements/dwellings("téli szállás") can be regarded as the forerunners/antecedents of the Hungarian village system. This interpretation meant at the same time, that the Hungarians could be called/were not nomadic, but half nomadic people in that period, that is to say that they had a much higher level of civilization and standard of living even before the conquest of these territories and further in the Middle Ages than e.g. Otto von Freisingen (who despised them with very harsh words.) described them in his chronicle.

Another important tenet of the thoughts/results of Szabó's was the persuasion, that the situation of the Hungarian serfs (peasants improved during the Middle Ages.⁴² In 1954 e.g. he published a study, launching a discussion with the "Young Turkish" representative/spokesman of the Marxist historiography, György Székely, about the significance and interpretation of the serf laws, issued/enacted in 1951.⁴³ In this study he attempted to prove that these laws mirror not the aggravating/deteriorating situation of the peasantry, because they regulate not the paying but the levying-in obligation of the taxes (nona, ninth) so they represented an obligation/burden not for the peasantry but that of the aristocracy/lords. In the preceding years a heavy/grave epidemic(pests) swept over the country (and Europe, 1948-49) after which aroused a wide 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 noble gesture could have been afforded

here he let prevailed/materialized ideological, "rhetorical" points of view also in the vein of the earlier heavily attacked "ethno/population" history: he applied the "community" notion of Ferdinand Tönnies, in portraying the relation between the peasants/serfs/tenants and their lords (and other members of the community) which was based on mutuality, aid, and other bounding/linking sides of common work and culture.

⁴⁰ Cf. 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 the the 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 Cf. for example Gyula Kristó, 'A honfoglaló magyarok életmódjáról'. [About the Standard of Living of Hungarians in the 10-th Century.] *Századok* (129) 1995/1. 3-62.

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

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

by the big proprietors/the lords, and barons the lower nobility could not allow it (they lived exclusively from these revenues) and that's why they enacted the law about the obligation of levying in the nona(ninth) on the Diet of 1351. (According to Szabó - which was already of course a common place among the Hungarian historians - this laws was in tune with the other laws of that Assembly, they represented the interests of the nobility anyway.)

Szabó's third paramount/main debate with the Marxist historians touched(comprised) 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, the students of whom analyzed/explored mainly the big estate structures in the Hungarian economy and society in the early modern period.⁴⁵ The theoretical and ideological basis of these studies was intended against Gyula Szekfű's "Geistesgeschichte" school, according to which the Hungarian historical evolution is part of Western Europe, and for instance Transylvania was the last bastion of the European culture, renaissance, baroque, enlightenment, Protestantism, etc. in contrast to the culturally underdeveloped/inferior Balcan and East-European territories. Domanovszky and his followers contested this theses and wanted to emphasize (instead of the cultural superiority of the Hungarians) much more the common features/the similarities of historical development of these "small nations".⁴⁶ and they found these parallel motifs in the circumstances of social historical developments/circumstances. Applying/using the notions/models of the German agricultural history they distinguished the terms "Grundherrschaft"(demesne) and "Gutsherrschaft"(estate). According to these theses the East-European (among the Hungarian) development "took a curb"/took a turn from the Western one at about the beginning of the 16-th century, when instead of the "Gutsherrschaft" a new form of big estates, the "Grundherrschaft"(demesne) came to the fore in these territories, which meant/had the consequence, that the nobility and the lords took the agricultural production (instead of making the free peasant hiring plots/freeholder system as in Western Europe, which become a direct forerunner of the modern capitalist system) in their hands. The consequence of this "turn" was the aggravating/deteriorating situation of the peasantry/serfs in these territories, the modernization process came to a standstill, the bourgeoisie remained weak, the phenomena of the so called "refeudalization" process strengthened in a striking degree causing other political problems later, for example the failure of bourgeois revolutions, etc.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 (to the East from Elbe) which had the

⁴⁴ Cf. Pál Pach Zsigmond, *Der Bauernaufstand vom Jahre 1514 und die 'zweite Leibeigenschaft'*[The peasant uprising in 1514 and the 'second serfdom'] in Pach, Hungary and the European economy in Early Modern times, (Budapest 1994). pp. 275-301.

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

⁴⁶ There are many parallels in this respect with the views of István Hajnal. About him cf. 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 Cf. 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.

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 points for Szabó's studies/ideas (expressed/developed in his studies partly before and during the Second World War, but mainly after 1945, cf. "Studies about the history of the Hungarian peasantry"1948, and "The possession of the serfs..1946)⁴⁹ were the results of the Domanovszky school, that means the similarities of the East European development (instead of stressing the one sided Western/German orientation of the Hungarian culture and history respectively.) But - according to/so Szabó - the Hungarian development neither belongs exclusively to the Eastern phenomena (East European), because – e.g. - the Hungarian serf never was a "holop", a slave who could 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 (cf. 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 among the ranks of nobility, etc.). This tendency continued after the revolution of Dózsa too⁵⁰, when after a short/certain time the serfs could move freely again and opened many possibilities to improve their situation, they could move to market towns (so become bourgeois), they could become members of the military garrisons ("végvári vitézek"), they could become "Haidu", and in the 18-th century the German peasants could not have been attracted to repopulate these territories 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 "The possession of the serf⁵²"-1946, in which he explores/analyses meticulously/in its details the rights of the peasants for possessing vineyards, for cleared forests, etc.). We have to add to the above mentioned interests his special interest for the phenomena of "hamlet"-s/settlement (tanya), which from the end of 18-th century (with the market towns) became a special feature of the Hungarian development (first of all in the Great Plain), proving that not all of the peasantry belonged to the superiority of lords/nobles so there are many signs/signals of a bourgeois development in Hungary that could have been based on these free peasantry.

All in all - according to Szabó's ideas - the Hungarian development can be placed between Eastern and Western Europe (it is a Central European, transitional phenomenon), and this idea meant at that time a direct and fierce opposition to the official, Marxist ideology, embodied in many respects a "third way/road" theory (conceived between the two World Wars by the famous populist writer Németh László⁵³) and with

⁴⁸ Ibidem.

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

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

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

⁵² Cf Szabó, *A jobbágy birtoklása az örökös jobbágyság korában*. [The possession of the the serfs in the age of the perpetual serfdom.]

⁵³ Cf. László Németh, *Sorskérdések*. [Fate questions.] (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó 1989.) There are some similarities with the ideas of the Romanian writer and thinker E. Lovinescu. Cf. Ibidem: *A modern román civilizáció története*. [The history of the modern Romanian civilization.] (Palamart Kiadó, 2002.)

this Szabó was, in a certain sense, a forerunner of Jenő Szűcs's well-known theory about the three regions of Europe (written/conceived in the 1980-s.⁵⁴)

In the historical activity of both historians (Mályusz and Szabó) played a very important role in the field of editing sources. Mályusz's work in this respect includes "The Papers of Palatinate Archduke Alexander Leopold, 1170-1795", 1926, "Documents Concerning the Toleration Edict", 1939, "Documents Concerning the Age of Sigismund", 1951-1958? etc. That of István Szabó's are the followings "Ugocsa County", (1937) "Papers for the History of the Hungarian Peasantry", "The decima/tax-rolls of Bács Bodrog " etc.⁵⁵

The first remark that can be noted to the interpretation of these activities is that they secured a very solid scientific basis for their researches and theories, partly from which their high scientific authority(credibility) originates and that's why, for instance, that Mályusz's criticism were taken more seriously against Szekfű, than that of the populists, or of National Romantic School (Jenő Csuday, István R. Kiss , Jenő Zoványi .⁵⁶)

This also resulted in the fact, that, based on the very profound source collections about the "Documents Concerning the Age of Sigismund", the Hungarian scientific audience has quite a Clear picture about Sigismund. In the literature published prior to Mályusz he was portrayed as a non-national ruler not being interested at all in the problem of the Hungarian nation that's why he was either very often despised or neglected. Mályusz - in tune with his source editions - discovers him as the initiator of many modernization tendencies of the country (c.f. his laws concerning/supporting the towns, the institutional system, etc.) and in this way he was placed between Róbert Károly and King Matthias, as the three outstanding pledger of the social and institutional reforms/modernization of Hungary in the second half of the Middle Ages.⁵⁷ (About Matthias such kind of a source collection is not available that's why we don't possess such a solid/balanced picture about him than about Sigismund.)

The other important feature of these source collections is that they represent the social historical approach to the Hungarian history of both historians. From one side they treat questions of social history (with Mályusz's great introduction e.g. in the cases of "The Papers of Palatinate Archduke Alexander Leopold, 1170-1795", 1926, "Documents Concerning the Toleration Edict", 1939, in which he depicts the social and cultural background of the periods analyzed. From the other side these collections contain in many respects so called non written and non-charter sources which reflect much more the social history of wider historical ranks of the society (upper classes, even that of the peasantry in the case of Szabó). These new sources include: settlement names, person-names, letters of peasants, village laws, peasant letters, tax polls, tribunal papers, town maps, municipal papers, etc. In their cases e.g. the cooperation with

⁵⁴ Cf. Jenő Szűcs, *Vázlat Európa három történelmi régiójáról*. [About the three historical regions of Europe.] (Budapest: Magvető, 1983.)

⁵⁵ Cf. *Iratok a türelmi rendelet történetéhez*. [Documents Concerning the Toleration Edict], Edited by Elemér Mályusz. (Budapest: Magyar Protestáns Irodalmi Társaság 1940.) *Sándor Lipót főherceg nádor iratai, 1790-1795*. [The Papers of Palatinate Archduke Alexander Leopold, 1790-1795], (Budapest: Magyar Történelmi Társulat, 1926.) *Zsigmondkori ok levéltár* [Documents Concerning the Age of Sigismund], I. 1387-1399, II/1. 1400-1406, II/2.1407-1410. Edited by Elemér Mályusz. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1951-1958.) István Szabó, *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.)

⁵⁶ About the National romantic School cf. Vardy, *Modern Hungarian Historiography*.

⁵⁷ Cf. Elemér Mályusz, *Kaiser Sigismund in Ungarn 1387-1437*. (Budapest: Corvina 1990.)

other social sciences (interdisciplinary approach) - Anthropology, Ethnography, Linguistics, Geography, etc. - was necessary in order to explore the ways of their application in solving historical problems.

In this respect a supplementary remark can be made, for example in the case of Szabó these activities included also ideological/"rhetorical" aspects. After the Second World War he initiated (for the centenary of the revolution of 1848-49) a series of source editions pertaining to the history of the Hungarian peasantry.⁵⁸ For this undertaking (supported warmly by another outstanding social historian, István Hajnal⁵⁹) Szabó elaborated the strict "scientific" method, collected the collaborators (Imre Wellmann, Jenő Berlász, Kálmán Guoth⁶⁰, Bálin Ila...etc., - all old fashioned, "bourgeois" historian). But the leadership of this undertaking was taken out from his hands accusing Szabó that in these collections He portrayed the relation between the serfs and their lords as too "patriarchal" too idyllic, neglecting the class war the conflict the fight between these social classes.⁶¹

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"⁶²; Count Pál Teleki entrusted him (with Szekfű) with completing the text in 1927.⁶³ In the end Mályusz wrote the work alone, because Szekfű took over at that time 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 book Mályusz despised the most important participants of the revolutions in 1918-19 (already in emigration at that time/in the 20-s) as traitors of the Hungarian nation whose behavior during the revolution and emigration could be explained by their egoistic, anarchic "emigrant/revolutionary" "soul", which was epitomized/embodied first of all by the Jewish (Max Stirner). In this political/ideological respect another stone of astonishment in Mályusz's carrier 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 which our historian claimed the restructuring of the whole historical scholarships (including Academy, Archives, Universities, Hungarian Historical Association, etc.) according to the principles of Volksgeschichte/Ethnohistory. (So he regarded the "ethnohistory" not as one of the many disciplines of history, but - following his intentions - all other disciplines should have been "gleichgeschaltet"(statalized)/reconstructed in order that they pursue exclusively "ethnohistorical" researches.)

⁵⁸ Cf. Erős (Ed.): *A harmadik út felé. Szabó István történész cikkekben és dokumentumokban*. [Towards the Third Way. The Historian István Szabó in articles and documents.]

⁵⁹ Ibidem.

⁶⁰ Already dead at that time.

⁶¹ Erős (ed.): *A harmadik út felé. Szabó István történész cikkekben és dokumentumokban*. [Towards the Third Way. The Historian István Szabó in articles and documents.]

⁶² In German Cf. Elemér Mályusz, *Volkskommissare und Genossen im Auslande*. [The Fugitive Bolsheviks] (Munich, 1931) Cf. Note 67.

⁶³ Cf. István 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.

In the introduction of this book Mályusz conceived his ideas about the "political" and "ethnic" nation proposing the breaking/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 the Hungarian history, but - to tell the truth - his proposal has not been materialized.)

The political consequences of István Szabó's view about the Hungarian historical development can be grouped around the fierce debates about his books, "Studies about the Hungarian peasantry" and "Debrecen as the capital of the independence war 1848-49".⁶⁴ The later work was heavily disputed/attacked by the Marxist/communist historians, pointing out/alleging that the authors were too comprehensive toward the attitude of the so called "Peace Party" during the revolution in 1949-49, they eulogized the role of the "cíviss" (burghers of Debrecen instead of the working class) they were not tough enough in the fight against the traitor', enemies of the revolutions which caused finally its failure. The most striking reproach/criticism against Szabó was that he developed the idea about Kossuth's peasant policy. Szabó justified him in the case of the policy of "free soil possession" being right at that time instead of the "land distributing" policy of the lefts (Vasvári, Táncsics, etc.). Szabó stuck to the rightness of the policy of Kossuth (approved it), which leaned first of all on the nobility, claiming that the land distributing policy would have alienated the nobility from the goals of the revolution and the independence war. Meanwhile the nobility was the leading force of the rebellions against the Habsburgs even in the previous centuries and the idea of the social/bourgeois reform was not far from them either (in tune with Mályusz's ideas.)⁶⁵

The officials/the representatives of the reigning power didn't dare to touch Szabó personally, although he was persecuted to a certain extent, but two of his collaborators/pupils were sentenced to prison, in Recsk (with the accusation of a planned uprising/uproar against the regime) and many followers/students 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 power/system.

Perhaps it is time, at this point, to venture some evaluation of Mályusz's and Szabó's "ethnohistory"'s contribution 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.

⁶⁴ Cf. Szabó (ed.), *A szabadságharc fővárosa, Debrecen, 1849. január-május*. [Debrecen, the capital of independence war in 1849.]

⁶⁵ Cf. Cf. Erős, *A szellemtörténetől a népiségtörténetig*. [From Spiritual History to Ethnohistory.]

So far, so good. 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 their doctrine of the Germans' racial superiority over the Slavs. Allied with *Ostforschung*, another *fin-de-siecle* intellectual trend, *Volkstumskunde* came to present German history as essentially a crusade to spread German culture (the German "cultural ground") and to extend the area of German settlement (the German "ethnic ground" [Volksboden]), principally toward the east. Empire building and "civilizing"-founding cities, introducing the German legal system, organizing churches-was, on 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 Below-concentrating on the state, 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.⁶⁶

Considered purely as a methodology, *Volkstumskunde*, like Mályusz's ethnohistory, would have had the potential for providing relatively impartial, indepth 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 precluding 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"⁶⁷

⁶⁶ From the latest literature of "Volkstumskunde" cf. Oberkrome, Willi, 1993. *Volksgeschichte: methodische Innovation und völkische Ideologisierung in der deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft 1918-1945*. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck-Ruprecht, 1993); Fahlbusch, Michael, *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*, 1997/43: 133-154; *Volksgeschichten im Europa der Zwischenkriegszeit*. Edited by Hettling, Manfred (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 2003.)

⁶⁷ Mályusz's anti-Semitism goes back to the '20s. In his "Kossuth működésének társadalmi háttere" [The Social Background of Kossuth's Political Activity], he puts the blame for the lull 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 type" identified by Max Stirner as most common among Jews.

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 side to it. Mályusz's cultural nationalism-as he himself admitted⁶⁸ 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 Habsburgs⁶⁹. 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*-the concept of *nation as culture*.⁷⁰ 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 revisitation of *Volkstumskunde* has proved to be.



⁶⁸ Cf. 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 set up of a Hungarian Historical Institut.] *Történelmi Szemle* 1998/1-2: 113-126.

⁶⁹ 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, meanwhile "ethnohistory" on the material, even everyday life, notwithstanding the political/ideological implications of these differing conceptions. But both were at the same platform, in opposing the narrow political, "historie evenementielle" historiography of the Dualist Age, rather that of National Romantic School.

⁷⁰ 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 "ethnohistory" became much stronger, even paramount which was able to offer a real alternative against the reigning *Geistesgeschichte* orientation between the two world wars. On top of all that, with his striving for applying the so called "third way/third road" theory it became one of the most important opponents of the dominating Marxist/Communist historiography after 1945, respectively 1948. This idea can be evaluated as a "scientific" protest against the Soviet system and occupation with which gains a tantamount ethical/moral character. On the other (methodological) side it strengthens even the comparative aspects of the Hungarian historical understandings, with which epitomizes the overpassing of the one-sided Hungarian-centered view of this scholarships and breaks a way towards a comparative, East-Central European History.