

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2011.

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Abstract: *This article questions the validity of Deborah S. Cornelius's claims which she presents in her recently published book on interwar and World War II Hungary. These exonerate the revisionist, anti-Semitic and war-time policies of the Horthy regime. The monograph also presents the Hungarian leaders in an undeservedly positive light. The author of the review demonstrates that Cornelius's representation of the past was accomplished by the selective reading of primary and secondary sources. Cornelius also commits too many factual errors in order to justify some of her assertions.*

Keywords: Hungary, World War II, anti-Semitism, Holocaust, Miklós Horthy, Pál Teleki, Hitler, Stalin

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Most historians of contemporary Europe believe that World War II grew out of World War I and would agree with the late Raymond Aron that these two conflicts represented "the thirty years' war (1914-1945) of the twentieth [century]" (Aron 1966, 297). Deborah Cornelius, therefore, is on the right path in starting her book, *Hungary in World War II*, with the 1918–1919 revolutions—brought about by the collapse of the defeated Austro-Hungarian Empire and the peace treaty that was foisted upon Hungary. She is also correct in examining the course of history in interwar Hungary, which led the country to participate in World War II, as borne out by her thesis. She states that the harsh Peace Treaty of Trianon that Hungary received from the allied Great Powers and Hungary's drive to have the victors "rectify" it "...is key to deciphering the Hungarian behavior in World War II" (4). Her thesis is not new, but her mostly uncritical approach to examining this period makes the book an apologia for the counterrevolutionary Horthy regime. Her conclusion, as voiced in the introduction, is a requiem for the ancient regime: "Of great consequence for the nation was the destruction of its traditional leadership and the very structure of society. Few could have imagined the nature of the system, which was to replace the regency of Admiral Miklós Horthy" (6).

In her introduction Cornelius justifies her publication by claiming that "During the... forty years of Communist rule, history was presented from the Soviet point of view." Furthermore she states that "After forty years of censorship, most people knew only the version of history they had learned in school," and that her task "is to reveal the story of Hungary in World War II" (4). This claim about the monolithic character of Hungarian historiography under state socialism and about a break between pre- and post-1989 historiography is greatly exaggerated. If one examines pre-1989 monograph- and article-length publications, one concludes that the break with party line historiography, in fact, had occurred by the late sixties. I

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tend to agree with the prominent Hungarian historian, Gábor Gyáni, who sees a continuity in Hungarian historiography from that time onward. He attributes this to the "more liberal political and intellectual atmosphere of the Kádár era, which allowed scholars to travel to the West and accommodate some of the concepts and findings of the 'bourgeois' social sciences and humanities. This included a less ideological rigor..." (Gyáni 2009, 250). Gyányi admits that before 1989 there remained certain taboos such as discussion about Trianon, and "several crucial incidents during the Second World War, and especially the role that the Soviet Union played in liberating the country from Nazi rule, [and] the Jewish past (the Holocaust in particular).... But it was not wholly unimaginable, even in these cases to depict the inter-war period in a way that at least matched the requirements of the period following 1989" (Gyáni 2009, 251). Another leading Hungarian historian, Ignác Romsics, noted: "During the 1970s and 1980s there was a continuation of the evolution of expertise in historiography. During these years, thanks to this process, the depiction of Horthy and the Horthy era became more and more realistic and varied" (Romsics 2008, 242).

Hungary in World War II is unfortunately also saturated with imprecision, inaccuracies and omissions, so that the author's factual accuracy can be challenged as early as the Introduction, where she offers a historical summary. She writes: "The lure of regaining Hungary's lost territories combined with Germany's stunning early successes [in WWII] persuaded many that the restoration of the territories might be won through a German alliance" (5). Yet the fact is between November 1938 and March 1939, before the outbreak of World War II Hungary had already regained some territories from Czechoslovakia. The return of Northern Transylvania from Romania as a result of the Second Vienna Award was not the consequence of a Hungarian-German Alliance either, as Hungary joined the Tripartite Pact only thereafter. Moreover, by arbitrating Hungarian-Romanian differences, Italy and Germany wanted to avoid a war between the two east European neighbors in order to steer clear of oil supply problems from Ploesti. Only the return of some territories from Yugoslavia, among the smallest gains relatively speaking, was achieved in an unofficial alliance with Germany, with the consequence of Prime Minister Pál Teleki's suicide, which was an act protesting the joint action.

The factual problems continue in the very first paragraph of chapter one when Cornelius identifies the Central Powers without mentioning Turkey, or when she identifies the Entente victor states, and inaccurately includes Russia. Communist Russia, in fact, dropped out of the Entente once she had signed the December 1917 armistice at Brest-Litovsk. This act violated the Secret Treaty of London of September 1914, when the Entente powers agreed not to drop out of the war unilaterally. Equally imprecise is to claim that Charles I "abdicated in favor of a republic." The Hungarian king's abdication statement, signed on November 13, 1918, in Eckartsau, recognized the future form of the state, whatever it would be (Siklós 1978, 132).

In her description of the liberal democratic revolution, the author seems to embrace the right-wing canard that identifies the Minister of War Béla Linder and his prime minister, Count Mihály Károlyi, as traitors for dismantling the Hungarian army, which allegedly made Hungary unable to resist the occupation of Hungarian territories by the forces of the successor states. She writes: "Colonel Linder, minister of war, in a move that soon proved to be a mistake, dismissed the army on November 2, with a slogan 'I never want to see a soldier again' (9). In fact, Linder's words are taken out of context. The writer Béla Menczer recalled: I was an eyewitness when in front of the troops on Parliament Square he declared that he did not want to see the kind of soldier of the past, blindly taking orders, but an armed citizen who wants to serve his people.

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Next day the press reported in headlines that Minister of War Linder 'does not want to see a soldier,' whereas the meaning of his appeal was that there was a need for an army more aware of its élan and discipline" (Menczer 1995, 51). Indeed discipline was a major concern of the Károlyi government in November 1918, as undisciplined troops returned from the Italian front with weapons and looted and terrorized the countryside. In an essay written on the fifth anniversary of the 1918 revolution, the reporter László Fényes, who in 1918 was government commissioner of the "armed citizenry," the National Guard that that was set up to keep internal order, wrote that upon their return to Hungary the troops "Could not be used for further service, they had to be disarmed because of their bitter spirit. How many a notary, district administrator, steward, renter, and grocer, can thank his life for this decision. Naturally they now make the loudest noise.... We have attempted the impossible, with little result, to stem destruction by the revolution" (Fényes 1923, 133).

The expansion of Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia at the expense of Hungary led to the collapse of the Károlyi regime and the rise of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, which started to organize resistance against what was called Entente imperialism. Cornelius explains that the Communist-Socialist government was a coalition, though the truth is that the two Marxist parties fused. She also claims that "Their leadership was composed primarily of Hungarian Bolsheviks, the majority Jewish, who had returned from the Russian POW camps full of revolutionary fervor" (18). On the next page she speaks of the government-sponsored Red Terror carried out "with ruthless and brutal recriminations against the people on the country-side [sic]...." The "People's Commissar for Military Affairs Tibor Szamuely..." personally killed and tortured many Hungarians" (19). The image that emerges here is of Jews killing Hungarians, a propaganda claim of the interwar counterrevolution. Yet the truth is that a good number of the Red Terrorists were Christian Hungarians (Karsai 2001, 215) and the so-called Jewish leaders of the Hungarian Commune had abandoned the faith of their parents for Marxism, as had Admiral Horthy's super-rich bridge partners, who were also converts from Judaism. If some of the government leaders believed in the use of terror, this was motivated by their Communist ideology, which encompassed the lessons of the French Revolution and, more recently, the Civil War in Russia.

While Cornelius describes the brutalities of the Red Terror vividly, she does not provide numbers for the dead. Consequently the reader may suspect that an inordinate number of innocents fell victim. On the other hand, she does offer numbers for the victims of the White Terror of the counterrevolution, estimating that between 1,000 to 5,000 people were murdered. This could be seen by the reader as a relatively small number in light of Hungary's total population or of the bloodletting that was to come in World War II. Numbers for the Red Terror, however, do exist. According to the 1922 report of the government prosecutor, Albert Váry, which breaks down the incidents of the Red Terror per village, 590 people were murdered by the communists (Váry 1993, 1). This indicates that in the midst of war against the neighboring invaders and counterrevolution the Reds killed less people than the White Terror squads following the collapse of the Soviet Republic on August 1, 1919, when they offered no resistance to the Romanian troops who even occupied Budapest. The White Terror, however, also had a long-lasting significance, which was pointed out by Béla Bodó. "It had given birth to the idea of national resurrection through violence, which remained on the regime's agenda until 1945, despite the restoration of the prewar liberal-conservative state structure. It marked the beginning of two decades of anti-Semitic agitation, which could not but weaken the moral fiber of both the

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elite and general population"(Bodó 2006, 85). It is possible, therefore, to see the Hungarian governments' policies between 1920 and 1945 as an on-and-off war against the Jews and its neighbors.

Describing the fall of 1919 the author returns to the Jewish theme. She writes: "a nationalist and anti-Semitic hysteria swept the country. Blame for the defeat and dismemberment of the nation was placed on communists and Jews who had played an important role in the 1918 revolution and made up more than half of the people's commissars in the Bolshevik government." This description, however is not followed by analysis. There is no explanation that the anti-Semitic wave was generated by the counterrevolutionaries whose rabid anti-Semitism preceded the revolutions (Bodó 2011, 15), nor that it was a case of scapegoating. After all, it was the Soviet Republic alone that tried to defend Hungary's integrity by organizing military offensives against the Czechoslovak and Romanian forces that were pushing into Hungary. What is implied in Cornelius's description is the belief that the Jews were responsible for the anti-Semitism of interwar Hungary, and this was spontaneously generated in response to their role in the revolutions. Cornelius also distinguishes between Miklós Horthy's National Army, which is described as having reestablished "law and order" and executed "ringleaders of the Soviet Republic," and the paramilitary detachments who are described as the lawless marauders killing "Jews, poor peasants and workers," and taking their "revenge for the revolution" (29). These military detachments, however, were the auxiliaries of the National Army (Fejtő 2000, 199). What she also fails to mention is that most of the dead were innocent victims and many of the Jews were also poor.

Contrary to Cornelius's claim, anti-Semitism was not generated spontaneously as a response to the Soviet Republic in 1919. It had existed before, and was merely amplified as defeat in World War I was becoming more and more evident. For this reason, on August 7, 1918, the ex-prime minister, István Tisza, in a speech to Parliament, assailed in the strongest terms the spread of anti-Semitism and the insinuation that the Jews were war profiteers. Rather, he hailed the bravery of the Jewish officers at the front (Vermes 1985, 430). Yet Jew baiting continued unabated. During the late fall of 1918 peasant rebellions took place at several localities on the countryside and at times these were accompanied by anti-Semitic pogroms (L. Nagy 1995, 17). According to statistics gathered by Jewish organizations in a few short months 6,206 Jews were beaten up and robbed during these anti-Semitic riots (Kádár and Vági, 2008).

In 1920 there was no statesman to follow in the footsteps of Tisza. Following the parliamentary elections of January 1920, the internationally recognized geographer, Count Pál Teleki, became prime minister. Teleki was a pathological anti-Semite, whom the author tries to whitewash in the book. Thus it was easy for Teleki to ride the wave of popular anti-Jewish sentiment: "By the middle of 1920 anti-Semitism had become a societal issue with many demanding that civil rights to Jews be curtailed, citing the participation of Jews in the revolution and the high incidence of Jews among war speculators." Yet Cornelius fails to point out that most of the Jews did not support the communists and, as Tisza pointed out, were not speculators. She notes that campus radicals also "blamed the Treaty of Trianon on the communist government of Béla Kun and its heavy Jewish make-up"(31). In this case again, the author fails to inform her readers that these charges were entirely baseless. Hungary's new borders were drawn at the Paris Peace Conference early in March 1919, well before the rise of the Soviet Republic on March 21. In fact, the peacemakers actually drafted the neighbor countries' borders, rather than Hungary's. Moreover, the treaty, just like the Treaty of Versailles for Germany, held

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Hungary guilty for starting World War I and punished it for that act and not for the rise of the Soviet Republic. Furthermore, the author overlooks the fact that "societal" attitudes were also stoked by churchmen (Fazekas 2008), such as Bishop Ottokár Prohászka, who, as his biographer notes, "became the standard in the 'solution' of the Jewish question. He spoke openly about blocking the Jewish gains and his speeches and articles, albeit inadvertently, contributed to the anti-Semitic extremism of the era" (Gergely 1994, 191) Prohászka became a member and voice of the best known anti-Semitic "race defense" organization, the Association of Awakening Hungarians (Ébredő Magyarok Egyesülete). In the summer of 1921 members of the National Assembly, representing the association, took their "Christian-national" oaths before Bishop Prohászka (Fazekas 2008). At the same time popular writers, such as Dezső Szabó reinforced anti-Semitism among the middle and lower middle classes, while for the intelligentsia and educated middle class the prominent historian Gyula Szekfű's anti-Semitic writing in *Három Nemzedék* [Three Generations] was a source of inspiration (Karsai 2001, 215; and Szekfű 1989, 328–344).

The author points out that the impact of the Peace Treaty of Trianon was seen by the Hungarian population as a "miscarriage of justice," but not to the extent that it required the pursuit of integral revisionism, symbolized by the propaganda slogans "Everything back" and "No, no never" (27). The author rightly sees this revisionism as a foreign policy goal for twenty years, "although several of the most prominent leaders did not expect complete revision of the treaty...." In the chapters covering the interwar period, however, there is little discussion of the various aspects of revisionism. The author also fails to note that revisionist propaganda was needed for internal reasons, as well, because it helped to legitimize the counterrevolutionary Horthy regime with its sham parliamentarianism. Revisionism also contributed to the creation of the cult of Regent Horthy, a topic that is also not touched upon.

The term counterrevolutionary does not appear in the author's description of the twenties and thirties, although the Horthy regime proudly identified itself with it, with the ideology of the counterrevolution embracing the Christian-national course. The Christian component privileged the so-called historic classes, putting an accent on the so-called Christian genteel middle class. Its national component simply meant that it excluded the Jews, against whom there had to be a permanent race defense (Gergely 1987, 72–73). Thus the Numerus Clausus Law which the author makes out to be a kind of affirmative action for the underrepresented "so-called Christian middle class" [in fact it was called the Christian national middle class-PP](37) was not simply a response to amorphous societal pressure but the consequence of a well-thought-out ideology, which would light the way to the Holocaust of Hungarian Jewry. It was not merely the brainchild of Minister of Education Haller and a few radicals, as the author claims, but the law was passed by the majority of the National Assembly. During the debate Bishop Ottokár Prohászka defined the issue when he declared that the proposed law is "...racial self-defense. Since step-by-step Christendom feels that it is pushed aside by the attacks, by the corruption of the people's soul, which surely can be called de-Christianization, my honored fellow Jewish citizens should not take this as hate-mongering or racial persecution" (Karsai ed. 1992, 45). The role of the churches in spreading anti-Semitism and revisionism in the twenties and thirties is not discussed by the author although later, their weak attempts to save the Jews during the war is.

The Numerus Clausus Law, which established higher education quotas for Jews according to their proportion in the population is labeled as being "discriminatory" by the author (31). This sounds like a rather mild judgment, compared to the conclusions of other experts.

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François Fejtő, for example, stressed that it was the first post-war anti-Semitic law in Europe that was based on racial principles (Fejtő 2000, 200). László Karsai sees the Numerus Clausus Law as the first instantiation of anti-Semitism as Hungarian state policy, which was followed by the First Jewish Law in 1938 (Karsai 2001, 217). Mária M. Kovács has recently stated that, in fact, it was the first Hungarian Jewish law and it was kept on the books until 1928 in spite of the fact that by 1925 it became evident that often the "Christians' quotas" at the universities could not be met (Czene 2012).

Cornelius also tries her best to exonerate Prime Minister Teleki of full responsibility for the Numerus Clausus Law by claiming that "he defended the act, although condemning generalizations about Jews. In his arguments he distinguished between integrated Jewry who identified themselves with national goals and the newly immigrated and not assimilated *Galicians*, who in his view were responsible for the revolution and justified the discrimination" (31). It would have been welcome for the author to point out that in this declaration Teleki engaged in scapegoating and rationalization. The Yiddish-speaking Galician Jews were indeed recent immigrants, refugees from the World War I war zone, who were escaping the conflict between the Russian and Habsburg forces. There were no Galician Jews among the leaders of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and among the Jewish intelligentsia in general (Hajdu 2005, 61). Moreover, the author's claim that at the end of the nineteenth century Jews from Galicia, escaping from Romanian and Russian persecution (37), entered Hungary is incorrect; at that time Galicia was a possession of Austria. Nor was there a wave of Jewish immigration to Hungary at that time (Hajdu 2005, 58).

In 1928, when Teleki was protesting the government's intention to alter the Numerus Clausus Law in response to foreign pressure, in a speech in the Upper House, he expanded the Jewish immigrant circle to include not only Galicians but Russians and Romanians as well. He labeled them as the anti-national Jewish majority in Hungary. The former prime minister also declared: "we have here a race war." In the speech he defined race not as a biological but a cultural entity, developing never-changing "physical and characteristic traits." For Teleki, the Numerus Clausus Law was a way to defend Hungary from becoming Jewish (Teleki, 1928).

Cornelius's second chapter, which starts with the Numerus Clausus Law, also describes the social strata "Society in a Truncated State." The political and economic consolidation under Prime Minister István Bethlen is part of the chapter. Neither of these policies are tied to revisionism, which would be, as she justly claims, a major component of the coming war. For example, some important aspects of the Austro-Hungarian border dispute of 1921, which could be considered as counterrevolutionary Hungary's first war against its neighbors, are neglected. The conflict is merely identified as a peaceful compromise brokered by the Italians (39–40). No mention is made that it came about as a response to a government-backed armed resistance to the Austrians (Swanson 2000, 89; and Zeidler 2009, 480) by Hungarian irregulars, including Iván Héjjas's Rongyos Gárda (Ragged Guard). The Sopron plebiscite allowed Hungary to keep the city that was first accorded to Austria in the Peace Treaty of Trianon. This successful use of force provided a good lesson for the future and in the fall of 1938, the Hungarian government winked approval to the organization of a paramilitary group, the Ragged Guard, by Iván Héjjas of the Burgenland fame, to confront the Czechoslovaks even before the Munich Conference took place (Ormos 2000, 2:550) and soon thereafter bring about the successful recovery of Ruthenia. Part of Ruthenia was returned to Hungary in November in the post-Munich First Vienna Award, still leaving a rump with the Czechoslovaks wherein the Ruthenians consisted of 75.9 percent,

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the Christian Hungarians 4.8 percent, and the Jews 12.1 percent of the population. These units, trained by the Hungarian military, lost over one hundred men in clashes with Czechoslovak forces, but they were unable to change the status quo (Móricz 2001, 68–70; and Ormos 2000, 2:563). A description and discussion of these military events are also missing from the book. In fact, many events and developments that are relevant to the history of World War II are missing, while tangential events are included, such as the 1937 March Front, or the 34th International Eucharistic Congress in Budapest in May 1938.

In the author's description of the impact of Hungarian refugees from the neighboring states one can indeed see issues related to the future war. She notes that the refugees' influence in Parliament, in the civil service, and education was proportionally greater than their number. Yet Cornelius fails to point out that in their case another Numerus Clausus Law was not introduced to limit their influence in proportion to their numbers. Rather, as she points out, "no government dared to alienate the refugees" (43). They, on the other hand, stoked the fire of revisionism, aiming to "resurrect Hungary" (44).

An interesting part of the book is Cornelius's examination of the political and cultural life of the Hungarian minorities in the "ceded territories." According to her, the Hungarian minority in general was dissatisfied with its status. It is unfortunate that while she discusses the various Hungarian political parties in Czechoslovakia, she overlooks the important presence of Hungarians in the Czechoslovak Communist Party.

The discussion on the minorities is followed by the impact of the Anschluss, which is seen as contributing to the rise in the membership in the most successful Hungarian extreme right party, the Arrow Cross. A major staple of the extreme right was anti-Semitism, and the author quotes from police reports indicating that common theme of the extreme right was Jewish economic dominance. Cornelius cites some of these reports. For example at the meeting of the Hungarian National Socialists a speaker demanded land reforms touching the large estates and the 3,500,000 yokes of Jewish held land. Unfortunately the author does not point out that the figure was propaganda and grossly inflated. By 1938 Jewish landed and wooded property amounted to 830,000 yokes, or 5.2 percent of the total (Csősz 2005, 178). In contrast, the Catholic Church held 862,704 yokes, as mentioned by the author (56).

Cornelius attributes passing of the First Jewish Law by Parliament in 1938 as the consequence of right wing pressure and the government's attempt to deflate the extreme right. She notes: "Although relatively moderate for the time, it brought an abrupt departure from the constitutional tradition of the 1867 [Jewish] emancipation and importantly it broke with the principle established since 1848 of the equality of all citizens." All this, however, could have been said about the Numerus Clausus Law of 1920. Moreover, the elimination of the anti-Jewish racist clause of the Numerus Clausus in 1928 did not mean the end to the discrimination against the Jews in terms of admissions to the universities, but simply that discrimination was carried out more subtly (Kovács 2005, 136). In fact, with its percentages, the 1938 law was a further refinement of the 1920 law, as it was also racist and now the quotas were applied not to university students but to the professions. Furthermore, it should have been noted by the author that the quotas were based on manipulated statistics; Hungarian Christians and Jews were treated as two monolithic groups, with no consideration to the urban and agrarian character of various populations. For example, when Budapest was 23 percent Jewish, the new ratio of 20 percent Jewish representation in the free professions belied the claim of proportionality. Job discrimination existed even before it was sanctioned by the First Jewish Law. For example, the

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historian Mária Ormos noted that "in practice at the Radio, the [First] Jewish Law was introduced before it was promulgated" (Ormos 2000, 2:575).

Identifying the Christian churches as the defenders of the Jews, Cornelius claims that during the debate in the Upper House on the First Jewish Law, the "church leaders," such as Cardinal Serédi and Bishop Gyula Glattfelder "raised objections" (75). A different picture appears, however, in an essay by Randolph Braham. He writes: "Constituting a major bulwark of the counterrevolutionary regime, the Christian church leaders were among the most vocal supporters of the government's determination to 'solve' the Jewish question. As *ex officio* members of the Upper House, they argued vigorously for the adoption of the anti-Jewish law, demanding only minor adjustments in support of the converts.... In a similar vein, that Jusztinián Cardinal Serédi, the Prince Primate of Hungary, spoke in support of the legislation" (Braham 2001, 6–7).

While the Győr Program, which introduced the war economy in Hungary, was passed by Parliament before the First Jewish Law, the author deals with it in an inverted chronological order. Prime Minister Kálmán Darányi in his introduction of the program alluded to the coming of an anti-Jewish law when he declared that the Jews had separated themselves ethnically and were not interested in the fate of the Hungarians (Erényi 2000, 90). Cornelius, however, only sees the program as a preparation for an inevitable war due to Hungary's geographical location and its policy of revisionism (76). The five-year plan was supported by the Chief of the General Staff Jenő Rácz and the program included the expansion of the armed forces to 107,000 men. Since this number far surpassed the Trianon limitations, it would have been useful for the author to describe briefly the history of the post-Trianon armed forces before the outbreak of WW II. The author could have also explained when the proscribed general staff was reestablished. A discussion of the post-Trianon paramilitary (levente) training in schools should have been detailed in a text dealing with the precedents to World War II.

The increased German influence over Eastern Europe is covered in the book, although German-Hungarian relations during the thirties could and should have been discussed in greater detail. It is surprising that the primary sources Cornelius uses are the selectively collected documents published during the communist Kadar era, whose secondary source output was criticized in the Introduction as being unreliable. Would she not have wanted to use the same assessment for documents selected for publication by the communists? An explanation would have been welcome on this matter. Of course Cornelius could also have used the multi-volume document collection from the German Foreign Ministry, *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918–1945*.

Among Cornelius's other primary sources are memoirs, which she seems to take uncritically, particularly those of the diplomat György Barcza and Regent Miklós Horthy. The unreliability of Barcza's writing has been exposed by Pál Pritz (Pritz 2011a; Pritz 2011b; and Czetler 1997, 167), and Horthy's memoirs, written during his post-World War II Portuguese exile, are not taken seriously by most historians (Sakmyster 1994, viii; and Turbucz 2011, 221). On the other hand, Horthy's secret papers, which do provide some insight to Horthy's policy and mentality, are quoted by the author more circumspectively (Szinai and Szűcs, eds. 1972). Could it be that this primary source would have challenged Cornelius's attempt to rehabilitate the regent? For example, Cornelius uses and quotes Horthy's memoirs to indicate that he opposed the draft of the Second Jewish Law because it was "inhuman and harmed patriotic Jews long resident of the country who were as much patriotic as he was" (98). The author reinforces her

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

argument by quoting Horthy's letter of October 14, 1940, to Prime Minister Teleki, printed in the *Secret Papers*, using it as a proof that the regent also objected to the implementation of the Second Jewish Law for economic reasons: "...when I consider the raising of our standard of living as one of the important tasks of the government...it is impossible to discard the Jews, who have everything in their control, in one or two years, and to replace them by incompetent, mostly valueless vociferous elements, because we may flounder" (108). Had the author continued to quote from the text, the reader would come to a different conclusion than Cornelius does: "We need a generation for that task. It may be that I was the first one who preached anti-Semitism aloud, yet I cannot observe at ease the inhumane, sadistic, baseless humiliations, when we still need them." The first sentences of the paragraph, which is followed by Cornelius's quote also indicates that the essence of the letter is not the toning down of the Second Jewish Law, but that Count Teleki should moderate his vehemence in shaping the Third Jewish Law. Horthy continued: "As far as the Jewish question is concerned, I was an anti-Semite throughout my life, I never kept contacts with Jews. I have considered it unacceptable that here in Hungary every factory, bank, wealth, business, theater, newspaper, commerce, etc., is in Jewish hands, and the image of the Hungarian—especially abroad—is the Jew" (Szinai and Szűcs, eds. 1972, 262). What his words indicate is that in the fall of 1940 he wished to slow down the dispossession of the Jews for pragmatic reasons. By the middle of 1944, however, he gave his blessings to their destruction and the stolen Jewish wealth was expected to fill the gap in the wartime state budget while at the same time it was also redistributed among various segments of society (Kádár and Vági 2003, 224).

Ironically, Horthy's concern about the economic impact of Teleki's anti-Jewish policies may have been shaped by Otto von Erdmannsdorff, the minister representing Nazi Germany in Hungary, who had warned Horthy several times in November and December 1938 about the need to slow down the Hungarian government's anti-Jewish measures in order to avoid economic chaos (Frank, ed. 2003, 218–219). According to Cornelius, the Second Jewish Law "aimed at the limitation of Jewish encroachment in public life and the economy, but it went much further than the first..." (106). It is hoped by this reviewer that Cornelius does not actually believe this characterization of the Hungarian Jewry up to 1939 and that she is only identifying the official title of the law (Law IV of 1939, On the Limitation of Jewish Penetration of Public Life and the Economy) and does not condone its contents. Later on the author tries to mitigate the impact of these laws by claiming that these were circumvented (167–169), as if this makes the law acceptable.

Horthy's genuine anti-Semitism was further demonstrated in the same letter referred to and sanitized by Cornelius, when he described his role in the establishment of the Order of Vitéz, whose members distinguished themselves in World War I and during the fight against the Hungarian communists. He expected the order to be a reliable force to support him as the Supreme War Lord against foreign attacks and internal revolutions. He wrote: "At its establishment, it was mainly the idea of racial purification that inspired me....The bravest and the most decorated Jew is excluded." (Szinai and Szűcs, eds. 1972, 261) Horthy's image as reflected in the letter is not the one that Cornelius wishes to project when it comes to the Hungarian autocrat. The existence of the order also escapes the author's attention, although it had some military significance and the regent attached to his name the title that went with the membership: Vitéz Miklós Horthy of Nagybánya. In similar fashion, Cornelius also obfuscates Count Pál Teleki's role in the shaping of the Second Jewish Law. She tries to whitewash him

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

and diminish his role as a shaper of the Numerus Clausus. In the case of the Second Jewish Law, Cornelius claims that it was the work of Teleki's predecessor, Béla Imrédy and that Teleki went along because he believed that "it was necessary to pacify the supporters of the extreme right" (106). In fact, as Imrédy's minister of culture and education, Count Teleki had a major role in shaping the law and he wrote most of the preamble, which defined a Jew on racial terms (Ablonczy 2006, 181). Cornelius also claims that Teleki "believed that with this law the Jewish question, for Hungary, at least, would be closed" (106). In fact, in his speech of April 15, 1939, to the Upper House he mentioned that had he drafted the proposed law alone, it would have been more severe (Karsai 2001, 218).

Before his suicide on April 3, 1941, Teleki had input into the early formulation of the August 1941 anti-Jewish "race defense" law, which in a June 1940 answer to an interpellation in the Lower House he described as a more restrictive legislation than the Second Jewish Law (Ablonczy 2006, 224–225). The act he envisaged went farther than the Nazi Nuremberg laws (Gerlach and Aly 2005, 51) and was known as the Third Jewish Law. It was passed after his suicide. This law is mentioned in Cornelius's book only in passing (199). It was during his prime ministry that the 1939 military law leading to the establishment of the infamous Jewish labor battalions, the reestablishment of the Numerus Clausus, and the law on the expulsion of Jews from the judiciary, were issued. In 1940, as the leader of the Hungarian Boy Scouts, he expelled Jewish boys from the organization on racial grounds (Ungváry, 2004). Furthermore, on November 20, 1940, at a meeting with Hitler in Vienna, the Hungarian prime minister called on the Führer to solve the Jewish question once and for all. In the course of the conversation it was agreed to that following the expected quick victory the Jews would be expelled from Europe (Germany, Auswärtiges amt 1962, 11:635). All this would seriously contradict Cornelius's exculpatory assessment of Teleki's role in the formulation of anti-Jewish laws.

While Hungarian-German relations before the war does get the attention of the author, the same cannot be said of Hungarian-Italian relations, and more importantly of Hungarian-Soviet relations, a discussion of which is missing almost completely, although it was the Soviet Union that Hungary attacked on June 27, 1941. While studies in this area were underrepresented during the Communist era for understandable reasons, recent publications of primary sources, including the various volumes of Soviet diplomatic documents published since 1992 by the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation, and secondary monographs and essays, have filled the gap (Kolontári 2009; Seres 2010; Sipos and Szücs, ed. 1989, Pastor, ed. 1992; and Pastor, 2004).

Cornelius mentions that "Under German pressure Hungary again established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union on September 23, [1939], and sent József Kristóffy to Moscow" (118). The problem with this statement is that the author never states when diplomatic relations were first established and why direct ties were cut and when. From her statement one would assume that it was the Hungarians who ended contacts because of the "anti-Soviet nature of Hungarian foreign policy" (118). In fact, it was Moscow that suspended direct relations in March, though diplomatic contacts continued through a third country. The Soviet action was triggered because Hungary joined the Anti-Comintern Pact. Hungary had done this to express its appreciation to Germany and Italy for its arbitration and the First Vienna Award of November 1938, through which Hungary regained most of the cross-border areas in Czechoslovakia that were ethnically Hungarian.

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

While it is true, as Cornelius claims, that Hungary pledged volunteers and some war materiel to Finland late in 1939, thus appearing to show an anti-Soviet Hungarian policy, the number of volunteers amounted only to a battalion of 341 men. They actually arrived two weeks before the end of the Russo-Finnish war and saw no combat. The goal of the Hungarian action was not to create friction with Russia but to demonstrate to the British and French, in the midst of the so-called "Phony War," that Hungary was following a foreign policy independent of Germany. With this gesture the Hungarian leaders hoped to win over the Western allies to support their revisionism (Kolontári 2009, 310–311).

Another proof that Hungary did not conduct an anti-Soviet policy was reflected by its attempts to establish closer commercial relations with the USSR in order to buy raw materials needed for its industries since nothing of the kind could be bought from the West following the outbreak of WW II. In January 1941, while the volunteers were being readied for Finland, the Soviets were invited to participate at the Budapest International Trade Fair, which they accepted. When the fair opened on May 2, the Soviet Union was represented by the largest foreign pavilion, which was visited by the regent (Seres 2010, 132–136). The friendly gestures by both the Soviets and the Hungarians, however, did not stop Viacheslav Molotov during his negotiations in Berlin in November 12–13, 1940, from demanding from the German leadership, on Stalin's order, a sphere of interest over Hungary (Pastor 2004, 741). Significantly, the author, relying only on a secondary source, mentions the meeting only within the context of Hitler's strengthened conviction of Molotov's intransigence over Finland during the negotiations "that there was no way to deal with the Soviet Union other than war" (138). Yet his Directive No. 18 on a Mediterranean winter campaign, issued just before the start of the negotiations with Molotov on November 12, indicates that Hitler was already bent on war with Russia: "Regardless of the outcome of these conversations, all preparations for the East for which verbal orders have already been given will be continued. Further directives will follow on this subject as soon as basic operational plan of the Army has been submitted to me and approved" (Trevor-Roper 1964, 43). Had Cornelius looked at these primary sources, more significant conclusions could have been drawn about her own theme: Hungary in World War II. These clearly indicate that what Stalin achieved after his 1945 victory, placing Hungary in the Soviet sphere, he had already demanded from the Germans in 1940 (Bezymenskii 2000, 349; Stalin 1940; and Germany, *Auswärtiges Amt* 1962, 11:567). Directive No. 21, Code Barbarosa was issued on December 18, and the German attack on the USSR commenced on June 22, 1941. Hungary followed suit on June 27, 1941. With the attack Hungary's war against its neighbors reached full circle. It started with Austria in 1938, then with Czechoslovakia in October 1938, and with Slovakia and the fighters of the Ruthenian paramilitary *Sich* in March 1939 in rump Ruthenia. The Hungarian army's invasion of Ruthenia on March 14, had casualties: 160 Hungarian troops died and 400 were wounded (Iryna, Haponenko-Tóth, 2004, 84). During the short conflict, called the "Little War," clashes with the Slovak forces involved limited aerial, artillery and tank battles, and Hungarian aircraft dropped bombs on the Slovakian Spišská Nová and Ves (Igló) airfields (Ablonczy, 2006, 180; and Mihályi 2012, 72). These clashes are not covered by Cornelius.

The recovery of Ruthenia also had an aspect that related to the Hungarian war against the Jews. Following the Hungarian attack on the Soviet Union, Galicia was temporarily occupied by Hungarian troops. The government's decision to expel from Hungary Jews who could not prove their Hungarian citizenship presented the opportunity to government commissioner of Ruthenia, Miklós Kozma, to have close to 18,000 Jews, many of them Hungarian, forcibly transferred to

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

Galicia. On August 1, 1941, Wehrmacht troops replaced the Hungarians there and upon German pressure the Hungarian minister of the interior, Ferenc Keresztes-Fischer, ordered a halt to the transfer on August 9, but the expellees were not allowed by the Hungarian authorities to return to Hungarian territory. On August 27–28 the SS units and the Ukrainian volunteers exterminated most of these defenseless people at Kamenets Podolskiy (Gerlach and Aly 2005, 72; Ormos 2000, 2:764–765; Brenzovics 2004, 116–117). François Fejtő considered this mass murder a dress rehearsal for the deportation of Hungarian Jewry. Alas, for Cornelius, the first step in the Hungarian Holocaust was not important enough to record.

Hungary also intended to use war against Romania in order to recover Transylvania, but as Cornelius points out, Hitler pressured the Hungarians and the Romanians to negotiate (127). When negotiations failed, the Second Vienna Award through the binding arbitration of Germany and Italy divided Transylvania in August, 1940. All this is well described by the author, as well as the reestablishment of Hungarian authority following the military march into Northern Transylvania. The war against the local Romanian population in the form of atrocities by the military in the multi-ethnic region came about because between September 4 and November 26 the recovered territory was under military administration. Where Cornelius's narrative is somewhat misleading relates to Teleki's resignation "in September 1940" (133), as she does not make it clear that it was not accepted by Regent Horthy.

The war against Yugoslavia was the first instance in which Hungary attacked in common with Germany. The USSR, which became Hungary's neighbor after its invasion and conquest of eastern Poland on September 17, 1939, was attacked by Germany on June 22, 1941. Hungary followed on June 27.

Cornelius claims that Hitler's military plans to start a war against the Soviet Union were first formulated on July 31, 1940, in response to the fact that he became "aware that in July Stalin had contacted the British government, suggesting the possibility of an alliance in which Soviet Union would change sides" (p. 127). This astonishing and false claim is not substantiated with a reference source. The truth is that in the wake of France's defeat and British humiliation at Dunkirk, Stalin had no reason to propose an alliance with Britain. Rather, he tried to appease Germany by reporting British attempts to improve relations and detach Russia from Germany. On July 1 the new British Ambassador Stafford Cripps had an unprecedented conversation with Stalin. He spoke of a need to reestablish a new global balance of power, which would include Russia's primacy in the Balkans. Stalin declared that Russia was not interested. Furthermore, he stated that even with the defeat of France, Germany did not become a hegemonial power (Ministerstvo Innostrannikh Del 1995, 23:394–395). On July 13, on the instructions of Stalin, the "memorandum of this conversation" was handed by Commissar of Foreign Affairs Molotov to Count Werner von Schulenburg, the German ambassador in Moscow (Ministerstvo Innostrannikh Del 1995, 433) who sent its summary to Berlin on the same day. In turn, on July 17, Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop instructed Schulenburg to acknowledge to Molotov that the government took note of the contents of the memorandum with interest and greatly appreciated this information" (Ministerstvo Innostrannikh Del 1998, 807; and Germany, Auswärtiges Amt 1962, 10:208).

The author also claims that it was Hitler's decision to attack the Soviet Union that led to the Second Vienna Award. She writes: "On July 31, 1940, Hitler mapped out plans with his military leaders for the attack he was considering against the Soviet Union. He realized that the price to be paid for the use of railroad lines in Hungary might be the satisfaction, at least in part,

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

of Hungarian revisionist demands" (127). This unconvincing thesis is borrowed from two Hungarian historians whose works she endnotes (n. 91, 437). The first is a translated monograph by the diplomatic historian, Gyula Juhász. *Hungarian Foreign Policy, 1919–1945*, published in 1979 (Juhász 1969, 221–222) and the other is a university textbook on the history of Hungary, 1918–1945, published in 1995. Unfortunately, neither of these publications has source notes to support the claim. All this indicates a methodological problem—Cornelius's uncritical use of secondary sources, and the failure to use primary documentation to verify and buttress a position. Furthermore, a few pages later, Cornelius mentions that when Germany attacked the Soviet Union "the Germans did not need to use Hungarian territory" (147), which appears to contradict her earlier claim about the German need of Hungarian railway lines to attack the USSR.

The author should have examined the relevant pages of General Franz Halder's diary, which provides evidence for Hitler's first decision to attack the USSR. Hitler called it a "verbal order" in his Directive No. 18. However, these two documents, which do not include operational details, do not speak of Hungarian railway lines to be used to invade the Soviet Union Germany (Auswärtiges Amt 1962, 10:373–374). Moreover, according to Halder's diary, the direction of the German attack was envisaged by Hitler to come from the Baltic area and Poland, not through Hungary or the Balkans. Documents also indicate that Hitler favored a settlement between Hungary and Romania, and Bulgaria and Romania in order to assure stability in the Balkans. This would ensure the undisturbed supply of oil for Germany from the Ploesti wells. In this connection the Führer declared his support for Hungarian revisionism and also for stability when he stated that "Germany could not be indifferent to what happened to the Rumanian oil wells." (Germany, Auswärtiges Amt 1962, 10:181). Hungarian railway lines were used in October by the German troops to reach Romania, with Budapest's consent, ostensibly to protect the oil fields (132). However, that was after the Vienna Award and was within the context of Balkan stability as Germany desired and had no aims designed to bring about an attack on the Soviet Union from that direction. In December, the German troops used the Hungarian railways to transport troops for the invasion of Greece. For this eventuality the Hungarian permission was given by Csáky to Ribbentrop on November 21, 1940. In his Directive No. 20 of December 13, "Undertaking Marita," which outlined the military operation against Greece, Hitler, therefore, could confidently state that the German troops transported through Hungary "will be explained as reinforcements for the [German] Military Mission in Rumania" (Trevor-Roper 1964, 48).

Cornelius mentions that perhaps the most important cost of the Second Vienna Award was Hungary joining the Tripartite pact of September which ended "Teleki's policy of neutrality" (132). Perhaps it would have been more precise to state that with Teleki's backing, Hungary became an ally of Germany. Not mentioned by the author was that on November 20, 1940, the ceremonial signing of Hungary's adherence to the pact in Vienna was attended by the Führer and Prime Minister Teleki. Later on that day, Hitler outlined to Teleki and Csáky, the representatives of Germany's new ally, Hungary, his views about Russia. However, instead of being truthful and mentioning his plans to attack Russia, he told his Hungarian guests that "he would try to in some way or other to bring her into a great worldwide coalition," as "Germany should win as many friends and allies as possible" (Germany, Auswärtiges Amt, 1962, 11:633). Clearly, Hitler did not wish to give away his secret order and wished to keep Hungary in the dark. Evidently, he did not need his new ally's assistance for he expected a quick victory over the Soviet Union.

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

The undeclared war against the Soviet Union started on June 22, 1941. Cornelius's fifth chapter covers Hungary's attack on the Soviet Union, although she picks her words so carefully that the nature of the Hungarian aggression is mitigated. Her introductory sentence: "Less than three months after Teleki's suicide, Hungary entered into a state of war with the Soviet Union" (146). Just as the official Hungarian communiqués did, she avoids the term declaration of war. She also claims that "By spring 1941 Hungarian political leaders knew of Hitler's plans for the attack" (147), but this is not substantiated by an endnote, nor is there an explanation how they learned about it and what the government was prepared to do in case a war erupted between two great powers, both of which were Hungary's neighbors. Though not mentioned by Cornelius, Hungary was officially notified only on the day of the German attack through a letter from Hitler to Horthy. The German minister in Budapest, Otto von Erdsmanndorff, who delivered it, reported back to the German Foreign Ministry that Horthy declared enthusiastically that, "For 22 years he had longed for this day, and was now delighted. One hundred and eighty million Russians would now be liberated from the yoke forced upon them by 2 million Bolsheviks. This decision by the Führer would bring about peace, since England and the United States would now have to realize that Germany could no longer be defeated militarily and with possession of the rich raw material and agricultural areas of Russia was secure with respect to military economy and food supplies" (Germany, Auswärtiges Amt 1962, 12:1077–1078).

This quote is especially significant as it indicates that Horthy assumed that Germany would be victorious over the USSR, and thus it is no surprise that he supported Hungary's attack on the Soviet Union with an easy heart, particularly following the bombing of the Hungarian city of Kassa, allegedly by Soviet planes on June 26, 1941. This raid, by warplanes whose country of origin is still debated, served as a pretext for war. Cornelius correctly states that the "Kassa incident was no *causus belli*..." (150). She buttresses the flimsiness of the Hungarian claim by referring to the wartime American bombing of the Swiss border town of Schaffhausen which did not lead to the declaration of war by Switzerland (440, n. 14). Perhaps it would have been more relevant to refer to another incident involving the Hungarian town of Szeged, and the airfields of Pécs and Siklós, which were bombed by Yugoslav aircraft on April 7 or 8, 1941, following the German attack on Yugoslavia. Hungary did not use these incidents, in which three bombers were shot down over Szeged and six planes over Pécs and Siklós, to declare war on Yugoslavia. Rather, on April 10, Prime Minister Bárdossy used the implosion of the Yugoslav state as a pretext for the Hungarian occupation of its pre-Trianon territory of south Baranya and Bácska. There was only minimal resistance to the Hungarian forces, in which sixty-five troops were killed and 212 wounded (Enikő A. Sajti 2004, 156–157).

Cornelius attempts to put the responsibility for Hungary's entry into the war against the USSR squarely on the back of Prime Minister László Bárdossy, even though it was the regent who was the first to be informed of the attack and it was he who ordered a retaliatory blow. Cornelius claims that it was not clear "if he was thinking of a declaration of war or only reprisals" (149). She seems to go along with Horthy's claim in his memoir that Bárdossy presented him with a *fait accompli*, and she states that Bárdossy did not consult the regent when he drafted the declaration of state of war between Hungary and the USSR (149–150). A specialist of the period, Pál Pritz, is more convincing in stating that Bárdossy merely carried out the wish of the Supreme War Lord Horthy: "The role he accepted was an important one but it was not the leading role. The leading role was that of Regent Miklós Horthy's, who later denied having had any part in the action" (Pritz 2004, 36).

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

Cornelius does not cover the precedents in the start of Hungary's war and only mentions that Commissar of Foreign Affairs Molotov denied Soviet complicity in the bombing of Kassa. More significant is the fact that the day after the German attack the Council of Ministers decided on Hungary's break in the diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of the Tripartite Act. On the same day, on June 23, 1941, Molotov called in to the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs the Hungarian minister in Moscow, József Kristóffy, and wanted to know Hungary's intentions at this critical juncture. In order to keep Hungary out of the war, he declared that the USSR had no demands on Hungary and harbored no aggressive design. He stated that his country supported Hungary's claims at the expense of Romania, which was already at war with the USSR. The Hungarian envoy, lacking any instructions from Budapest, told his interlocutor that Hungarian press and radio reports stated that Hungary did not intend to go to war (Pastor 2004, 745). On the same day, late in the evening, Permanent Deputy Foreign Minister János Vörösmarty informed the Soviet minister in Budapest about the diplomatic break (Kolontári 2009, 384), which by next day was known in Moscow, and was seen as a hostile act. Probably for this reason Kristóffy's attempt to see Molotov again was turned down. A ten-minute discussion with his deputy concentrated on the details of the closing of the Hungarian Mission and the departure of the staff. Kristóffy lacking new instructions from Budapest also reiterated his earlier statement that Hungary had no intention to start a war against the USSR. Yet the diplomatic break was followed by a declaration of the state of war on June 27. The changes in Soviet attitudes toward Hungary were radical. While on June 23 Molotov supported Hungarian territorial gains if it stayed out of the war, early in December Stalin told the visiting British foreign secretary, Anthony Eden, that Hungary would suffer territorial losses as it "had to pay the deserved penalty for her behavior during this war" (Rzheshkevsky 1996, 11). However, how Hungarian troops behaved in the war on Russian territory, is also a topic not covered by Cornelius. The historian Krisztián Ungváry in his history of the Hungarian army points out that the occupying Hungarian troops, along with the Germans, engaged in the massacre of Russian POWs, civilians, and Jews (Ungváry 2005, 211–215). Cornelius's failure to note the brutalities is an especially glaring omission because she references Ungváry's monograph to point out how the Hungarian invaders were unprepared to fight the war (172 and 443 n. 70). Selective reading of primary and secondary sources to prove a thesis, however, is typical of Cornelius's approach, which is an unacceptable practice for an historian.

Cornelius's sixth chapter deals not only with the destruction of the Hungarian Second Army on the Don, near Voronezh, but with such an event as the massacre of 3,000 civilians at Újvidék (Novi Sad), the city recovered by Hungary following its war on Serbia. The massacre related to Serb partisan attacks, which were "getting out of hand" (p. 188). Cornelius's description, however, is imprecise as the massacre of Serb and mostly Jewish civilian groups was not limited to Novi Sad, but also reached the near-by villages. In Novi Sad 1,246 men, women and children out of a population of 63,985 were massacred; 809 of the massacred were Hungarian speaking Jews (A. Sajti 2004, 282). According to Cornelius, due to the illness of the regent, "the responsible officers were only brought to trial in December 1943" (191), while later she claims that the need to improve relations with neighbors was the chief motive (264–265). An authority on the massacre, Enikő A. Sajti, suggested that the real reason behind the belated attempt to try the guilty was the "regent's concern about the outcome of the war" (A. Sajti 2004, 301; and Gerlach and Aly 2005, 73). The specter of defeat made him think of punishment in the

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

hands of the Allies. Compensation was expected to be paid to relatives of the victims, with the exception of those who were Jewish.

Cornelius also makes it appear as if the "anti-partisan" massacres only took place in territories regained from Serbia, but, in fact, anti-partisan raids took innocent victims following the occupation of Ruthenia (Pintér 2008, 61–68) and Northern Transylvania. In the latter, 919 Romanians fell victim to the so-called spy and guerilla hysteria between August 30 and November 1, 1940 (Ablonczy, 2011, 60). The most infamous massacres took place in Ördöghút (Treznea) and Ippen (Ip)(Ablonczy 2011, 61–63; and Ungváry 2005, 79). In Hungary as a whole the wartime Horthy regime's judiciary executions for anti-state activities amounted to 250–300, and about 15,000 were imprisoned (Pintér 2008, 78). Cornelius only reports that starting in March, 1942 there were a "series of anti-leftist raids, which lasted for several months and resulted in the arrest of a number of Communists and other leftists including Communist Party leaders Zoltán Schönherz and Ferenc Rózsa. Rózsa died from torture and Schönherz was executed" (204). These executions took place during the prime ministry of Miklós Kállay, who, according to Cornelius, was appointed because Horthy blamed Prime Minister Bárdossy for the state of war with the Soviet Union and the United States (198). Cornelius, however, does not offer any source for this surprising claim.

Kállay's anti-Jewish policy is also presented in a positive way by Cornelius, who presents Kállay's expropriation of Jewish-owned estates as being done in the interest of Jews. "He hoped to keep new Jewish measures that would not hurt the majority of Jews and could always be revised after the war" (201). She also claims that the compensation was given for the expropriated property, but what she fails to tell her readers is that the compensation was paid with thirty-year 1.5 percent interest-bearing bonds that were in frozen accounts. Thus the state treasury did not have to expend any money on the transaction. Kállay's solution, therefore, was the continued theft of Jewish property and the act is often identified as the Fourth Jewish Law. The law also prohibited Jews from buying land. Yet Cornelius aims to minimize all this by telling an "apocryphal story" suggesting that Kállay did not mean to "pass radical rules against the Jews" (201). The evidence points to the contrary. In a speech on April 20, 1942, he declared that "the Jews must be picked out and expelled from land use and ownership" and further on he stated: "there is no other solution than the expulsion of 800,000 Jews (Gerlach and Aly 2005, 71)." Cornelius overlooks the fact that it was also under Kállay's administration that Act 14, 1942, was introduced, which stipulated that "Jews cannot carry on armed military service." They would be drafted into the army's labor service only. Their "corporeal disciplining and moral training...expected to bring about results (Vértes, ed. 1997, 161)." The brutal treatment the unarmed Jewish troops in civilian clothes experienced in the hands of their Hungarian Christian commanders and keepers on the Russian front is legendary.

In 1942 the Hungarian Second Army's front was at the Don. Cornelius vividly explains the conditions that existed there even for the non-Jewish troops who were inadequately armed, clothed and supplied. This force, comprised of 207,000 men, "one third of Hungary's military strength," was sent to the Russian front in the spring of 1942. According to the author, the Second Army was sent by the military leadership reluctantly, because of the fear of a Romanian attack on Hungary (187). Cornelius in an endnote claims that 17–18,000 troops of the sixty-nine labor companies were also attached to the Second Army (445 n. 29). A recent source puts their number at 37,275 in the operational area (Rákos and Verő 2008, 15). They experienced hardship at the hands of their commanders and shared the adversity of war with the armed non-Jewish

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

troops. Soviet partisans, artillery attacks, the weather, and incursions made the life of the troops hell. In January, 1943 (Cornelius puts it to November, 220) when the winter cold was almost unbearable, the Soviet counteroffensive began, leading to the destruction of the Second Army. Yet quoting from a memoir designed to underscore the harsh conditions for the troops, Cornelius sums up the recollections of a veteran the following way: "They looked with longing at the members of the labor companies, since they worked behind the front and were not exposed to the Russian artillery" (215). Does Cornelius really believe that the Jews had it better at the Don? It seems that way, since she fails to explain the anti-Semitic comment of her memoirist. Further proof for her attitude can be found when she relates that on the other side of the front the Soviet officers who retreated were put into penal battalions "much worse than the Hungarian labor companies, were given the most dangerous work, sent ahead through minefields" (206). She seems oblivious to the fairly widely known fact that Jewish labor battalion troops were routinely ordered to walk through minefields or to pick up mines with their bare hands. Péter Hanák, the prominent historian and former labor serviceman recalled: "A favored form of the annihilation of labor servicemen was mine picking as they were untrained and lacked tools." Clearly, a major goal in this book is to paint the most favorable picture of Hungary's wartime role by bending the truth. When Cornelius offers unreferenced statistics of Hungarian losses, however, it is hard not to see that the Jewish labor company losses were greater than of those who were in uniform: "About 50,000 Hungarian soldiers were killed or froze to death in the course of fighting and retreat. Seventy thousand were taken prisoner or disappeared. Of the 50,000 unarmed labor number only 6,000 to 7,000 returned home" (225). Cornelius claims that only recently "the full chronicle of the war has been made known to the public... Reporting on the war was one of the last tabus to be lifted... For a long time the only story the public knew was that the unwilling army was sent out at German urging as cannon fodder and conducted itself poorly" (219–220). Her aim is to prove the heroic stand of the troops in spite of adversity. The real taboo, however, is the discussion of the cruel behavior of the troops of the Second Army as occupiers of Soviet territories (Schweitzer 2012, 46–48), which Cornelius fails to talk about, although she goes into great detail in describing the cruelties the Soviet troops engaged in later on when they occupied Hungary (374–377).

It was during the Second Army's occupation in the USSR that Vice Regent István, the son of Miklós Horthy, crashed his plane on August 20, 1942, near Alekseevo-Lozovskoe. Cornelius claims that "the hopes that had been attached to him died with him." Her declaration reflects the fact that in addition to engaging in the mythologizing of Regent Horthy, she does the same for his son who, on the initiative of the regent, was elected vice regent in February 1942. Disregarding the fact that Horthy wished his son eventually to inherit the regency (Olasz 2010, 364), she perpetuates the myth of István as an Allied sympathizer. Using a source entitled *Horthy István repülő főhadnagy tragikus halála* [The Tragic Death of Flight Lieutenant István Horthy] she claims that just before his death he told his wife that the Germans were losing the war and "not being able to change the situation... he had decided upon his return [from the front] to go either to England or the United States to see if he could do anything there for his country" (p. 212). The author fails to ask the question: if the vice regent wanted to go west, why did he go east? Also, Cornelius, in another example of uncritical acceptance of testimonies to justify her position, fails to inform the reader that this questionable contention was committed to paper by István's widow in May 1992 (Antal, ed. 1999, 11–15). Ignoring inconvenient truths is, unfortunately, a recurring technique used by Cornelius to paint a positive picture of the

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

Hungarians during the war. An example is her depiction of the populists' Balatonszárszó Conference that took place between August 23 and 29, 1943, in the "spirit of optimism" by the "reformers" (p. 254). Among the many speakers from the populist intellectual elite was the "well known writer László Németh, who reflected the hopes that Hungary would emerge unscathed from the war...Between fascism and communism he offered possibility of a third way through which Hungary would retain its independence" (255). Cornelius, however, fails to inform her readers that the speech she quotes from and which reflects a postwar vision, also paints the world with the brush of anti-Semitism. Summing up the past, Németh declared that "From the monarchists to the race defenders, everybody, even the clergy felt obliged to submit to the hegemony of the Jews. And now we have a kind of peace to which they will provide the cue, and they could be named the saviors....It is natural that the vengeful Jews....had to become stronger during the past four years and one has to have bad ears if one does not hear the sound of the sharpening of the knives. For Shylock needs a heart" (Györffy et al. 1983, 221). And not one of the six hundred in attendance questioned Németh's words. As Fejtő noted in his history of Hungary's Jews, "It was neither the German occupation, nor the possibility of genocide that preoccupied Németh, but the 'revenge of Shylock'" (Fejtő 2000, 245).

The chapter which includes the history of Balatonszárszó covers the various official peace-feelers as well. These came about as a consequence of the turning points of the war, decisive victories on both the eastern and western fronts. As Cornelius points out, German intelligence was informed of these attempts to drop out of the war. By then the Soviet troops were facing the last Hungarian defensive obstacle, the Carpathians. An allied faint towards the Balkans (270) also could have contributed to Hitler's decision to have Germany occupy Hungary and pressured Horthy to accept this option. Cornelius makes no historical judgment about the wisdom of Horthy's decision to submit to Hitler's demands, although she mentions that this is a much debated question in Hungary. She claims that it was General Szombathelyi who convinced the regent that resistance was futile (275) and concludes that "Unfortunately, because he retained his position as regent, the Allied powers regarded Hungary as a Nazi vassal state and not as an occupied country" (287).

The German occupation is covered in a full chapter. Its consequence was Hungary's full mobilization against the Soviets. The economic and financial problems brought on by the ongoing war and the German occupation are also described. Cornelius notes correctly that the fact that "the Hungarian economy did not collapse can be explained by the extensive confiscation of Jewish wealth" (290). What she should have added is that this looted wealth came from Jews who soon became the victims of the final solution. She also fails to mention that the looted Jewish wealth, including family homes, was also redistributed among the population. Two young Hungarian historians called this process grave robbing, although they reminded readers that the property of the victims was taken before they were sent to Auschwitz (Kádár and Vági n.d.). Krisztian Ungváry in his monograph on Hungary's military forces in World War II summed up these developments aptly: "Only with the occupation of Hungary could the expropriation and redistribution action, which has been propagated for years, begin. We must note, however, that this did not detract from the popularity of the occupiers. To the contrary, the plundering of the Jews had a stabilizing impact on the state of affairs. For many the distribution of wealth, due to the deportation, made it worthwhile to remain steadfast on the side of the Axis....Hundreds of thousands of administrators undertook the selection, ghettoization, and plundering of Jews. Other hundreds of thousands, if not millions, came into contact with Jewish assets through

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

various claims" (Ungváry 2004, 232). Forceful words, though most of these are missing from Cornelius's narrative. While Ungváry's sentences appear as an indictment of Hungarians for the Hungarian Holocaust, Cornelius puts major responsibility on the back of the occupiers (p. 292), "the German shadow government was everywhere and supervised the measures against the Jews" (p. 298). The grave robbery is minimized by the claim that later the communists did the same: "Jewish assets estimated to make up 20 to 25 percent of the nation's wealth, were impounded. Ironically, this measure affecting the Jews was to be used by the communists a few years later to nationalize the wealth of all Hungarians" (295). Making this parallel is shockingly insensitive since "all Hungarians" were not sent to the gas chambers after their wealth was "impounded."

Though Cornelius attributes the "full cooperation" of Hungarian authorities to the speed of the deportation she explains that this was possible because the Germans had destroyed the traditional Hungarian political leadership (292). The fact is, however, that four out of the ten ministers who served in the coalition Sztójay cabinet that bore the German stamp of approval were also members of the previous government (Bölönyi 1987, 104–105). Miklós Horthy also remained head of state, and as such he "consented to the deportation of at least the Jews from the northeast and probably of all Jews outside of Budapest..." (298). The regent's consent led to the extermination of 475,000 Hungarians who, according to the Jewish laws, were identified as Jews. The Hungarian authorities did not only cooperate, but were full partners in the Holocaust. It was László Endre, state secretary for Jewish affairs in the Ministry of Interior, who proposed to Adolf Eichmann that the number of transports be increased fourfold. Had the original deportation plan been used, instead of the half million, "only" 170,000 to 180,000 Hungarian Jews would have reached their final destination (Csepeli and Vági 2011, 43). Yet Cornelius seems to take at face value the claim of Rudolf Vrba, an Auschwitz survivor, that it was due to the Hungarian Jewish Council's failure to inform the Jews facing deportation about Auschwitz that led to Eichmann's success in rapidly transporting the Hungarian Jews to the extermination camp (306). Vrba's contention, however, had been rejected by historians of the Holocaust, including Yehuda Bauer (Engel n.d.).

While Cornelius seems to blame Hungarian Jewish leaders for the enormity of the tragedy, Cornelius also tries to exonerate Regent Horthy by claiming that once the regent realized that he is not a prisoner of the Germans, and learned of the brutal treatment of Jews through the Auschwitz Protocols (which also generated international protest), he ordered a stop to the deportation of Jews from Budapest (309–310). She claims that "the Final Solution was beyond his imagination..." (304). For proof she marshals an early June 1944 letter Horthy wrote to his prime minister Döme Sztójay in which the regent protested the ill treatment of the Jews. She writes: "He considered it necessary to carry out immediately measures to prevent the excess brutality and to provide exemptions to baptized Jews and those of special merit..." (p. 305). "Exemptions" from what? From the gas chambers? That Cornelius fails to explain. Horthy, however makes it clear in the same letter that Jews who are not useful to the economy could be "removed from their place of activities" (Szinaí and Szűcs, eds. 1972, 452). Removed to where? By removal he had to mean deportation, although he wanted the Jews put in the cattle cars kindly. His argument was not different from the one he voiced in his 1940 letter to Teleki, in which he also mentioned his goal of getting rid of the Jews only when they were no longer needed. His awareness as to what was to happen to the "removed" can be culled from the draft of a letter, the final version of which he sent to Hitler on May 7, 1943: "It was Your Excellency's

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron.*" AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

reproach that the government did not carry out the extermination of the Jews as profoundly as it happened in Germany, and is desirable in the rest of the countries"(Szinai and Szűcs, eds. 1972, 398). It was international pressure that made Horthy stop the deportations. Cornelius speaks of international reactions but does not consider these crucial in Horthy's decision. She mentions as if in passing the "message from President Roosevelt with remonstrances in a threatening tone" (p. 307). To be more precise, Roosevelt stated that the deportation of Jews to Poland was the same as mass murder and directed the Hungarian government's attention to his statement of March 24, 1944. In that document the president promised criminal trials to leaders and functionaries who "in the satellite countries... knowingly take part in the deportation of Jews to their death in Poland.... (Roosevelt 1944) Historians identify President Roosevelt's threat and international pressure, the great military victories of the Grand Alliance, the July 2 carpet bombing of Budapest during which flyers were dropped warning the government about the mistreatment of Jews, and hopes for armistice negotiations as having forced Horthy to stop the deportation on July 6 (Gerlach and Aly 2005, 264–273; Karsai 2007, 72–91; and Sebők, 2004, 208–213). Cornelius does not see Allied military victories as a cause for Horthy's decision, rather, she claims that "If Horthy had attempted to intervene earlier, it is quite possible that he would have been removed or silenced, but by the end of June the general military situation for the Germans was desperate" (310). In an essay published almost fifteen years ago the top authority on the Hungarian Holocaust stressed that those who try to rehabilitate Horthy are the "cleansers of history." (Braham, ed. 1998, 43). Sadly, Deborah Cornelius appears to be such a cleanser.

With the Arrow Cross takeover of October 15, 1944, Cornelius goes into detail about the non-Communist Hungarian resistance to the Germans and their Hungarian henchmen. Her reason for this is found in her introduction: "the official version included the assertion that only Communists had been participants in the resistance against German occupation and the profascist Arrow Cross rule" (1). They were, however, not the only ones who were identified, after all Budapest street names of the Communist era attest to this, but there is no question that the Communist role was overemphasized. The pendulum swings and Cornelius overemphasizes the accomplishment of the non-Communist resisters. Randolph L. Braham may have the correct answer when he declares: "Postwar Hungarian historiography notwithstanding, there was no meaningful resistance anywhere in the country, let alone organized opposition for the protection of Jews....It was primarily in Budapest that Christians and a variety of church organizations were ready to offer shelter to Jews, saving thousands of them from certain death" (Braham, ed. 1998, 39).

In light of Horthy's responsibility for Hungary's attack on the Soviet Union and for his responsibility for the Hungarian Holocaust the question arises why was he not tried at the Nuremberg war crimes trial, or in Hungary by one of the People's Courts. Cornelius provides two answers. The first incorrectly claims that "Horthy was spared because he saved the Budapest Jews" (393). This claim should be considered as part of the Horthy myth. The second is closer to the truth: Stalin "absolved" him, by telling a visiting delegation in Moscow that "he is an old man," and "one should not be permitted to forget that he made the offer for an armistice in the fall of 1944"(393). The armistice negotiations are described in Cornelius's monograph, but some important aspects of the talks are not treated. This is due to the author's disregard of a crucially important monograph by Mihály Korom, *Hungary's Provisional National Government and the Armistice (1944–1945)*. Perhaps the date of its publication, 1981, made her

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

think that the book presented the "Soviet point of view" (1). This publication, however, made a splash when it appeared, as readers learned from it that the reviled "counterrevolutionary and reactionary" Horthy was actually Stalin's candidate for head of state over a Soviet supported provisional government. Stalin favored "flexibility" (Kenéz 2006, 27) and Horthy was expected to provide a legal continuity in Hungary and a kind of stability that could make a moderately paced consolidation of communist power (Korom 1981, 333). The same information could have been gained from archival sources since the Ernő Gerő Papers, on which Korom based his claim, are now open for research in Budapest at the Archives of the Institute of Political History. But this is another archive Cornelius failed to utilize during her ten-year-long work on the monograph.

When the Germans decided to put an end to the Hungarian government's secret armistice negotiation, they forced Horthy to appoint the Arrow Cross leader Ferenc Szálasi head of a fascist government on October 15, 1944, and then made the regent abdicate. Stalin did not mind his abdication as a response to German pressure, but resented the appointment of Szálasi, who had annulled the Hungarian-Soviet pre-armistice agreement, forcing the Soviets to continue fighting the war on Hungarian soil. According to the notes taken at the time by Ernő Gerő, one of the exiled Hungarian Communist leaders in Moscow, Stalin declared: "We would have accepted him. But he was taken away by the Germans. They forced him to sign a document. If there is a document, the circumstances of how it was created do not matter. Horthy is a moral nullity." (Korom 1981, 326; and Fülöp 2010, 303). Horthy was viewed as no longer being needed for continuity. Yet Stalin was careful not to create problems for the new Hungarian government. For this reason, as Gerő wrote it down, he did not favor having the exiled Hungarian Communist in the post-fascist government: "the people will regard them as men dependent on Moscow" (Korom 1981, 329). This also explains the real reason why Stalin did not push for the war crimes trial of Horthy. That he was old and previously favored signing an armistice with the Soviets did not matter. Stalin did not make emotional decisions. He was a cool pragmatist. He did not want a negative decision about Horthy to come from Moscow. He was aware of the strength of Horthy's wartime cult of personality, and he did not wish to create a martyr of him.

This cold Soviet pragmatism is also reflected in a November 13, 1944, talk of Commissar of Foreign Affairs Molotov with the Hungarian Committee formed out of Horthy's armistice delegation in Moscow. Discussing the kind of new government the Soviets favored Molotov stated that "It may be that the Moscow-based Hungarians could be useful, too, but especially those should be regarded who are respected in Hungary. Jews must be counted out" (Gati 1986, 38). Clearly, the Soviets were aware that regardless of the fact that the Hungarian Moscovites had long abandoned their Judaism, anti-Semitism, which was put into high gear through the Jewish laws and the deportations, still ruled the minds of the majority of Hungarians at home. Jews in that atmosphere, whatever their abilities were, were not wanted or "respected in Hungary." Proof for this were the twelve smaller or larger pogroms that took place there after the end of the war in 1945 and 1946 (Kádár and Vági 2008; and Standiesky 2007, 37–38, 141–154). This kind of violence is overlooked by Cornelius as she goes into great detail about the brutalization of the civil population by the occupying Soviet forces. The rapes and looting are described in vivid colors and backed by tragic testimonies. Cornelius attributes these acts to the Soviet view of Hungary as an enemy state and because the Soviet troops were "told that all Hungarians were bourgeois" (375). Peter Kenéz, the author of one of her secondary sources, however, offers a better explanation: vengeance for the cruelty of the

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

German, Romanian and Hungarian forces visited on the population in the Soviet Union. He also notes that where the military resistance to the Soviet troops was more difficult to overcome, vengeance was greater. (Kenéz 2006, 38–39). He also mentions acts of kindness toward children begging for bread, and in a footnote writes about his own positive encounter with some Russian soldiers (Kenéz 2006, 42–43; and also Márai 2006, 97–98). No such humane act is brought to the reader's attention by Cornelius, and she does not refer to an oral account which is a frequently used technique in the book.

My mother tells of an act of Russian kindness when she relates that in February 1945 she asked a Russian soldier leading a horse on the Angyalföld (Pest) street to shoot the horse so that her two starving little boys would have some food. The soldier shot the horse, and not only my mother, but her neighbors in a working-class apartment building were able to cut slices of flesh to feed their starving families. Being only four, I do not remember how the meat tasted, but I remember how some Russian soldiers took us boys to uncle Suhajda's pastry shop by the Winkler movie house, or how some others took me on a ride on the rollercoaster in the English Park, the amusement park in the City Park.

Cornelius also mentions that the Soviet authorities conducted systematic looting of artworks from public collections and also "famous Jewish collectors" (p. 375). She should have remembered, however, that the Jewish collections and other properties had been looted a year earlier by the Hungarians from the rightful owners, who soon after perished in Auschwitz. Thus, in this case, it was the turn of the looters to be looted.

In connection with the mass rape of women in Hungary by Soviet soldiers, Cornelius mentions that when Milovan Djilas complained about the conduct of the Soviet troops, Stalin told him that "the soldiers needed to have a little fun" (p. 377). Djilas however, had not complained about the rape of Hungarian women, but about the rape of women in Serbia, a country that was not a Soviet enemy. These events, therefore, were symptoms of a pervasive problem in the huge Soviet Army—the maintenance of discipline. Russian armies, tsarist and communist, seemed to have this problem throughout the centuries. In the Soviet case, it may have been easier to condone the lootings and rapes committed by the troops than to put a stop to them.

Part of the looting of Hungary was through the collection of reparations, which is aptly described by Cornelius. The use of forced labor taken from enemy countries to help in the reconstruction of the USSR was part of the understanding made at Yalta, as is pointed out by Cornelius. This was not limited to POWs as claimed by Cornelius (380); the topic of the discussion at Yalta was about manpower (Plokhy 2010, 110). Most of the Hungarian POWs were captured in the last phase of the war on Hungarian territory. Cornelius, however, claims that the majority of the 600,000 to 700,000 "abducted" were not POWs and a third were never soldiers (380). According to her "330,000 to 400,000 survived the Soviet prison camp world," and that mass repatriation began in 1957. Her statistics come from Tamás Stark's 2006 monograph (Stark 2006, 252–253). but even that work does not speak of mass return after 1957. Instead, it mentions that after the death of Stalin in 1953 the remaining Hungarians citizens were repatriated (Stark 2006, 250). Cornelius at the end of chapter mentions the 2005 appearance of a documentary collection, which was edited by a mixed committee of Russian and Hungarian scholars. It was published in Russian, which she was unable to read, but the book's existence was footnoted by Stark. In 2006, however, the book was published in Hungarian. Had she consulted it, perhaps she would have noted from the excellent introduction that the documents

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

from the Russian archives indicated that Stark's numbers were inflated. The total number, including the 32,915 interned civilians, the rest POWs, was 541,530. About 55,000 died in the camps. By the end of 1953 12,231 remained in POW camps and in 1955 the last 370 Hungarian citizens left the camps for Hungary (Varga et al., eds. 2006, 21 and 30–31; and Varga 2009, 141–213).

The authors of the essay in the book of documents also reminded the reader that "the documents in the volume contradict the trend that the German death camps designed for the destruction of Jews and the Soviet POW and internment camps should be judged the same way." They stress that in the latter case there was no attempt to achieve mass extermination, an *endlösung*. It was in the interest of the Soviet employers to keep the captives in good health and if they weakened, they were sent home (Varga et al. eds. 2006, 31). It seems that Cornelius is also one of those who subtly want to draw a parallel between the wartime treatment of the Jews and the Hungarian POWs. Her estimated numbers for the POWs taken to camps are similar to the number of the Hungarian Jews that were taken to the Nazi camps is the same—600,000. She calls the transport of the POWs to camps deportations, the same term used for the shipment of Jews to the death camps. Even her selected oral history interview suggests a similarity to the fate of the Jews as the reader learns that an unsuspecting retired officer in Sopron followed Soviet orders to report to the authorities [like the Jews had to], then he was "loaded with other prisoners into the cattle cars," and later died in an Odessa hospital (382).

Cornelius's last chapter also covers the postwar political developments and the ascendancy of the Hungarian Communist Party. In describing the recruitment of "former low-ranking Arrow Cross members" into the Party she states that "The party encouraged them to join: since all of the Moscow leaders except Imre Nagy were Jewish, they welcomed the former nationalists" (396). But why would they welcome the nationalists? This is not explained. Is it because the party leaders, including Nagy, were internationalists, but wanted, for the sake of popularity, to create a party with a nationalist face? If that is the case, why is it important to know that all but one were Jewish? Is it not more important to know that all were internationalists, including Nagy? Or is it important to know about the religious make up of the atheist Communist leadership, though Nagy's religious background is not provided, because Cornelius wants to let the readers conclude that the Christian right was correct—the Jews are not Hungarians? This chapter also includes a section on reconstruction but there is little information about that. The cover page of the book shows a section of the destroyed Chain Bridge, which, along with Budapest's other four bridges, was blown up by the Germans. Beyond the rubble, however, one can see the Kossuth Bridge, which was opened for traffic on January 15, 1946, and became a symbol of the reconstruction in Budapest. Nothing is mentioned about this in the book, which make the photo all the more significant. Cornelius mentions the runaway inflation (402) but how it was halted remains a mystery. Her story concludes with 1948 when the bogus coalition was replaced by a monolithic Communist Party dictatorship. The monograph has no conclusion where the author sums up her major arguments.

The book is peppered throughout with human interest stories, some collected by the author herself, but some from archives. It seems that gathering these stories was the only archival work she did, as she references few important primary sources that could be found in the Hungarian archives. The stories Cornelius includes are interesting and add color to the narrative, but distract from the scholarly nature of the book, which, according to her introduction, is her primary intention.

Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

Another problem with the book is the careless editing. Hungarian names are offered in several versions. István Csáky's name is also spelled as Czáky on the same page (127). Barcza is spelled Barczy (272), and Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky is Bajczy-Zsilinszky on the same page (p. 352) or earlier Bacszy-Zsilinszky (p. 253). Balatonszárszó is misspelled as Balatonszársó on p. 253, but on the next page in a subheading it appears, also incorrectly, as Balaton Szárszó. A well-prepared index could have eliminated the problem, but in fact the index is also imprecise and some names mentioned in the book are missing. For example, Béla Linder's and József Kristóffy's are not listed. László Németh is in the index for page 253, but not for 255. The Anti-Comintern Pact related to Poland gets two page numbers, 103, and 433, but Hungary's joining of the pact, as described on p. 90 is not indexed. The Potsdam Conference mentioned on pages 378, 380, and 404, but only the first page number is in the index, etc. Lastly, the maps included in the book can only be deciphered with a magnifying glass.

In a recent interview Imre Kertész, the Nobel prize winning Hungarian novelist, voiced an observation that a number of Hungarian historians (Szita 2012) also embrace, "Auschwitz, the Shoah, this page of history was not processed in Hungary. Zero introspection. That country never asked why it was systematically on the wrong side of history" (Kertész 2012). Clearly Deborah Cornelius's book, written by an American scholar, will not inspire Hungarians to take responsibility for the individual and collective wrongdoings of their predecessors. It is a monograph that depends almost solely on selectively picked and read secondary and primary sources. She offers evidence chosen in a fashion that disregards contradictory facts or interpretations, often found in the same publications, in order to rehabilitate a dark chapter of Hungarian history.

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Peter, Pastor. "Review Article: Inventing Historical Myths—Deborah S. Cornelius. *Hungary in World War II. Caught in the Cauldron*." AHEA: E-journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 5 (2012): <http://ahea.net/e-journal/volume-5-2012>

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