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BIBLIOGRAPHIA HUNGARICA (1998) • REVIEWS IN BRIEF

ART

FÖLDÉNYI, F. László:
A testet öltött festmény

[The painting incarnate]
Pécs: Jelenkor
Kiadó, 1998. 299 p.
(Ars longa.)
ISBN 963-676-125-6

A collection of essays by a well-known professor of aesthetics (Eötvös University) and art critic. The author's earlier works include a study on Restoration drama (1983), a book on Caspar David Friedrich (1986) and another on György Jovánovics (in German) (1994) as well as an analysis of Goya's *Saturn* (1993). Subtitled 'Visits to studios' this book presents contemporary Hungarian (avant-garde) painters and sculptors and interprets their work in a manner reminiscent of a deep spiritual exploration: an art critic's objective train of thought dissolved into a journey of personal and subjective dimensions. Of the twenty-five portraits, those of Károly Kelemen, István Nádler, and Dezső Váli deserve special mention.

ECONOMICS

INOTAI, András:
**On the way
Hungary and the
European Union**

Budapest: Belvárosi
Könyvkiadó, 1998. 230 p.
ISBN 963-9114-01-4

Over the past decade, Hungary's twin aspirations—backed by all three of its successive governments—have been affiliation with Nato and with the European Union. This volume is a selection of

studies in English on Hungary's preparations for European Union membership by a leading authority on the subject. Inotai, who heads the Institute for World Economics at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, argues that EU-enlargement will further modernization in the Hungarian economy and will also yield substantial benefits for the big member states.

MIHÁLYI, Péter:
**A magyar privatizáció
krónikája 1989–1997**

[The chronicle of
privatization in Hungary
1989–1997.]
Budapest: Közgazdasági
és Jogi Könyvkiadó, 1998.
457 p.
ISBN 963-224-168-1

Following the communist takeover in Hungary, the populace was deprived of its possessions by nationalization across the spectrum. The almost absolute ownership of the state went unchallenged for four decades, until 1989, when the demise of communism gave rise to a sweeping claim for restituting civic relations of possession. The series of measures that followed in the ensuing period of less than a decade is the theme of this book. It depicts a metamorphosis of society from deprivation to 'de-deprivation', i.e. to private ownership. Mihályi provides ample statistics: in eight years (1990–97) some 2,000 companies worth 1,600 billion HUF (37 billion USD) (at 1990 value) were sold. The bodies that managed and monitored the process were: ÁVÜ (State Property Agency) from 1990; ÁV Rt. (Hungarian State Holding Company) from 1992; and

a merger of these two in 1995: ÁPV Rt. (Privatization and State Holding Company). The book presents a large number of case studies. It tells the story of the first strategic big companies (insurance), sold as early as 1989, the documents relating to which are—strangely enough—kept under tight lock and key and are inaccessible even today. The case of Antenna Hungaria is an example of failure in the privatization process.

Péter Mihályi is not a disinterested spectator: he gave up his status as a researcher at the Institute of Economics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to join the mainstream of privatization in 1993 and has held senior jobs in state administrative bodies. Chapter-titles include: Changeover and privatization; The legal framework of privatization; Institutions of the privatization process; Quasi-proprietors (self-governments, social security board); Selling strategic companies, e.g. MALÉV, MOL etc.; Theoretical issues. The author addresses the theoretical questions toward the end of his book, which also prompts him to draw the lessons from the specific practice of privatization in Hungary. His lessons, however, appear to be apologetic on some points.

For the non-professional reader it sounds too cynical to admit that privatization is for the propertied elite. There may well have been other routes toward a shared aim of society, but the creation of a broad propertied middle class, the grand vision at the advent of Hungary's new-born freedom, was invariably ditched by the successive governments.

HISTORY

**BECK, Tibor –
GERMUSKA, Pál:**
**Forradalom
a Bölcsészkaron**

[The Revolution at the Arts
Faculty.]
Budapest: 1956-os
Intézet, 1997. 240 p.
ISBN 963-04-7482-4

The title refers to the considerable role of the Faculty of Arts of Eötvös Loránd University Budapest in the 1956 Revolution. The faculty's location in the center of the capital near Elizabeth Bridge enhanced its role on several occasions. (Memorable political events were also the March 15th demonstrations in the 1970s usually quelled by the police). The authors, young historians from the 1956 Institute for the Research of the Hungarian Revolution, call their book a study of micro-history on politics, institutions, and society. The first two chapters contain a brief account of the university prior to the Revolution of 1956, its loss of autonomy in 1948 and its restructuring along Stalinist lines, then the period of 'ripening' and revival of campus life, the legendary circle of students *Kolhoz Kör* on the eve of the Revolution. Chapter III is the chronicle of the Revolution at the Faculty, the story of the Revolutionary Student Committee, and the Committee's daily, *Egyetemi Ifjúság*, an influential paper at the time. Chapters IV and V tell the story of the retribution process, the disciplinary measures which are then discussed by the authors against the legal and political background. A portrait of the Vice-Rector Tibor Szamuely covers his activities as a pacifier, and his abrupt

and calculated removal from his post by the Party's top leadership in 1958.

GOSZTONYI, Péter:
**Budapest lángokban
1944–1945**

[Budapest in
flames 1944–1945.]
Budapest: Móra Ferenc
Könyvkiadó, 1998. 206 p.
ISBN 963-11-7410-7

Gosztonyi escaped from Hungary in 1956, studied at Zurich University, then headed the Berne-based Documentation Center of Eastern Europe from 1963 to 1996. A well-known historian and expert on the region, he has authored some thirty books. In the 1970s and 1980s many of his works—mainly those on the 1956 Revolution—were banned in Hungary, but copies smuggled in and circulated did an immeasurable service in helping young Hungarians acquire a knowledge of their true history. His present book on the siege of Budapest puts the enthralling events in a wider context and enriches the data with quotations from interviews with scores of participants (e.g. German SS-Commander of Budapest Karl Pfeffer-Wildenbruch) and with eyewitnesses (e.g. Gyula Litteráti-Loótz, the only Hungarian officer to have witnessed the death of the Soviet envoy Steinmetz, blown up by a mine on Üllői út on December 29, 1944).

SZEKERES, József:
**A pesti gettók 1945
januári megmentése**

[Saving the ghettos of Pest
in January 1945.]
Budapest:
Budapest Főváros
Levéltára, 1997. 278 p.
(Várostarténeli
tanulmányok.)
ISBN 963-7323-14-7

Pál Szalai (1915–1994), the protagonist of this book, was a book-dealer by profession, a high-ranking commissioner of the Arrow Cross Party turned aide to Wallenberg, who played a crucial role in rescuing the residents of the Budapest Ghetto from destruction. The subtitle refers to the main sources of Szekeres' narrative: the story of the 'Magyar Schindler' (a term coined by the historian-author) is based on a list of original eye-witness reports (e.g. Jenő Lévai), a number of newly-released archival documents (e.g. those from the Federal Archives of Berne), and on Szalai's own memoirs, which he handed over himself in the early 1990s to Wallenberg-researcher Mária Ember. Hungary as a safe haven proved illusory when German troops occupied the country in March 1944. By July 1944, deportation of the Jews from the country had been almost completed, when that of the Jews of Budapest was blocked by the order of a top-ranking German leader. Himmler's order in late July—extraordinary and in stark contrast to the orders from Berlin that had preceded it—must have been caused by a series of developments earlier in July: the successful Allied invasion in France, the recapture of Rome by the Allies, and the plot against Hitler on July 20, 1944.

Himmler most possibly thought that in the face of Germany's impending defeat he might win points with the Allied powers by sparing the lives of Budapest's Jewry. But the Arrow Cross coup in the fall of 1944 and the siege of Budapest in the winter of 1944/45 still held a mass of dangers and a great deal of suffering in store. In early

January 1945, amidst the fiercest of battles, the Ghetto of Budapest was the target of a fiendish scheme: some second-rank Arrow Cross leaders together with their Gestapo counterparts drew up plans to exterminate the residents of the Ghetto and set it on fire.

The key role in thwarting this plan was played by Szalai. On January 15, the plotters convened at the Hotel Royal and their supporters were also rallying in force. Szalai learned about the plot in the cellars of the City Hall, and rushed to seek the help of the moderate German general Schmidhuber. General Schmidhuber turned to City Commander Pfeffer-Wildenbruch who, presumably acting on a message from Himmler himself, immediately put a stop to the action.

WOJTILLA, Gyula:

A mesés India

[Fabulous India.] 2nd ed.

Budapest:

Édesvíz Kiadó, 1998.

254 p.

ISBN 963-528-235-4

First edition: 1988 by Gondolat Kiadó Budapest. The publisher of the series *Édesvíz* (Sweetwater) is apparently thriving: there is keen demand for books on subjects in which it specializes (including esoterica, reincarnation, astrology, self-healing). India is certainly exotic enough to be included. The author is a professor at József Attila University, Szeged. His book on India's cultural history is an apt contribution to a series initiated by Ervin Baktay's two-volume history *India* (1932).

As revealed by the subtitle—From the ancient Vedic civilization up to the 18th century—Wojtilla restricts his discussion to

the period prior to colonization in the 18th century, when the decline of the Mughal Empire and the East India Company's rise to political power from 1757 onwards resulted in British rule. The book is illustrated and is generously sprinkled with quotations from original sources and illustrations of Indian works of art, which the reader will find very helpful.

LINGUISTICS

ORSZÁGH, László – MAGAY, Tamás:

Angol – magyar nagyszótár

[English-Hungarian dictionary.]

Budapest: Akadémiai

Kiadó, 1998. 1779 p.

ISBN 963-05-7514-0

ORSZÁGH, László – FUTÁSZ, Dezső – KÖVECSES, Zoltán:

Magyar – angol nagyszótár

[Hungarian-English dictionary.]

Budapest: Akadémiai

Kiadó, 1998. 1583 p.

ISBN 963-05-7515-9

From its foundation in 1828, the publishing house Akadémiai Kiadó was a stable and reputed company which belonged to the Academy of Sciences. By the mid-1990s, it was undergoing a severe financial crisis. In 1996, the Dutch giant Kluwer lent a helping hand and bought the publishing house from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences with minority shares retained by the latter. Apparently, the deal allayed fears of (immediate) bankruptcy and concomitant elimination from the market. Only a powerful and competent publisher like Akadémiai Kiadó can

perform the complex and arduous process of editing and publishing an established bilingual dictionary. A completely revised edition of the big Ország which has now appeared—the first two volumes of a new series of Classical Dictionaries—is nothing short of extraordinary: it signals that the famed trademark is right back on track. In the post-war years, an exceptionally talented team of lexicographers, including Ország emerged. Their (deserved) impact was so powerful and lasting that their dictionaries virtually dominate even in the late 1990s. (Előd Halász: German; Sándor Eckhardt: French; László Hadrovics and László Gáldi: Russian; László Gáldi: Spanish; Gyula Herczeg: Italian). These dictionaries, as János Sós Péter, the general manager, declares in the Preface, will be published again in a completely upgraded form within the series. In English it was Professor László Ország whose comprehensive bilingual dictionary was—and is—omnipresent as a national institution. After earlier minor compendia by Ország the first big edition was published in 1960. This was then revised in 1976, chiefly by Ország himself and by Tamás Magay.

László Ország (1907–1984) was an English and American linguist whose work was pioneering in several respects. A student of the distinguished Eötvös College of Budapest University he received a scholarship to Rollins College in Florida that advanced his future career. Upon graduation he became professor at Pázmány University. Before his memorable dictionary, he wrote several works considered as pioneering in their respective domains.

These included a history of American literature (1935), an English grammar (1944) and his first English–Hungarian dictionary based on modern lexicographical methods (1948). After 1948 he taught at Debrecen University for two years, when he joined the staff of the Linguistics Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In collaboration with Géza Bárczi he was in charge of the Dictionary of the Hungarian Language, a decade-long undertaking. In 1957, he was allowed to return to teach in the English Department of Kosuth Lajos University in Debrecen. His study on words of English origin in the Hungarian vocabulary, published in 1977, was a pioneering work. In 1970, he received the Gold Medal of the London-based Institute of Linguists; in 1977 he was awarded the Révai medal by the Hungarian Linguistic Society, and the O.B.E. in 1979. By way of a personal aside, I cherish his memory as his contact in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in the 1970s, when as adviser to the Library he contributed to building up the Library's magnificent *Americana* collection.

The major reviser of the 1976 edition as well as the editor-in-chief of the present handsome *English–Hungarian Dictionary* is Tamás Magay, Founding Professor of the Department of English at the Károli Gáspár Calvinist University in Budapest. The 'cast' or list of editors, consultants and language advisors is impressive. This also applies to the *Hungarian–English Dictionary*, which was coordinated by Associate Professor Zoltán Kövecses of Eötvös Loránd University. Even a cursory

look will show that the gist of a dictionary, the glossary, has been completely revised and broadened to include, among other things, an almost complete set of contemporary computer terminology such as webmaster, homepage (the absence of hyphen reflects the latest usage of these terms in the language). The typographic arrangement of locutions under an entry is a delight to the eye (if—in some cases of usage—not to the mind, as the Hungarian equivalents are rather too strong). But the theme of obscenities is a wider problem and exceeds the limits of a short presentation. Compared to the earlier editions of two-plus-two volumes, the present format of one-volume each is much easier to handle. But the lithmus test—for me—is that I could locate two words not found in many a big compilation: the words 'unfazed' and 'spin-doctor' are both among the entries—which means the dictionary passes with flying colors. I did locate one error, though, which should be corrected in subsequent printings: VRLM is erroneously given instead of VRML, which is all the more serious, as the term is related to language (Virtual Reality Modelling Language).

**The diversity of linguistic description
Studies in linguistics
in honour of**

Béla Korponay

Eds. József Andor, Béla Hollósy, Tibor Laczkó and Péter Pelyvás.
Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos Tudományegyetem, 1998.
320 p.
ISBN 963-472-253-9

A tribute to mark the 70th

birthday of Professor Emeritus Béla Korponay, professor of English Language, a great scholar and teacher at Kossuth Lajos University for the past 45 years. Korponay's major fields of interest are case grammar and cognitive linguistics. His prolific publications in these areas have earned him international recognition. This is also reflected in the imposing bibliography. The authors of this collection of papers in English include J.M. Anderson (University of Edinburgh), G. Győri (Janus Pannonius University, Pécs), Y. Ikegami (Showa Women's University, Tokyo), A. Kertész (Kossuth Lajos University, Debrecen), and S. Starosta (University of Hawaii).

LITERARY STUDIES

SZŐRÉNYI, László:

Delfinárium

Filológiai groteszkek

[Dolphinarium. Scholarly grotesques.]

Miskolc:

Felsőmagyarország

Kiadó, 1998.

232 p.

ISBN 963-9109-13-4

A collection of short writings on grotesque, or rather absurd, phenomena in the life of Hungary prior to the changeover in 1989. The first essay, "*Ars Mutilandi Hungarica*," clarifies the book's title: it refers to the widespread practice of bowdlerizing. The word derives from the 18th century topos '*Ad usum Delphini*', the simplified texts prepared for the French Dauphin. In the early 1980s, Szőrényi enriched the term with a contemporary meaning. (Literary historian György Bodnár rightly states that 'dolphinology' is a word copyrighted by Szőrényi.) Having scanned

the editions of classic Hungarian writers published over the past forty years he found that almost the entire corpus of Hungarian literature was subjected to arbitrary editorial practice, (signalled or unmarked) expurgation and even rewriting. (The causes of this (mal)practice were ideological.) Naturally, the author was unable to publish his findings before 1985, when a portion of the text, including some hilarious examples and anecdotes, appeared in the literary monthly *Alföld*, followed by yet another period of prohibition until 1989.

POLITICAL SCIENCES

KÖRÖSÉNYI, András:

A magyar politikai rendszer

[The Hungarian political system.]

Budapest:

Osiris Kiadó, 1998.

391 p.

ISBN 963-379-326-2

This volume is a comprehensive survey, a panorama of Hungary's political structure after the change of system. Its author, András Körösnéyi, is professor at the Law Faculty of Eötvös Loránd University Budapest. The author's models were country monographs by Klaus von Beyme (on Germany), David Hume (on Italy), and Vincent Wright (on France). This volume consists of three major parts, or fourteen chapters. The first part (Chapters I-II) discusses the non-institutional conditions and actors of politics. The major themes discussed are: the political culture; the heritage of communism; political leaders and the elite; the sociocultural make-up of M.P.s. The second part

(Chapters III-VIII) discusses the non-state actors of the institutional system. The major themes are: the parties; their political role and their images; the party system and the spectrum of parties; types of coalition; voter attitudes; participation; persuasion strategies; elections; distribution of votes; mandates; pressure groups and lobbying. The third part (Chapters IX-XIV) presents the governmental system in detail.

The themes discussed are: constitutional traditions; checks and balances; government; the Prime Minister's role; government as a body; selection of ministers; portfolios in a coalition; character and style of leadership; domains of decision-making; public administration; parliament and its actors; the Constitutional Court; the President of the Republic. In a summary the author defines Hungary's place in the typology of democracies (majoritarian or consensus-based) devised by Arend Lijphart. Körösnéyi claims that although Hungary's system is closer to the consensus type, it fails as yet to meet all the key requirements due to the political elites' competitive strategy—as opposed to a desired cooperative strategy. (See András Cieger's review on pp. 164–168 of this issue.)

RÉTI, György:

Budapest – Róma

Berlin árnyékában

Magyar-olasz

diplomáciai

kapcsolatok 1932–1940

[Budapest and Rome in the shadow of Berlin.

Hungarian–Italian diplomatic relations

1932–1940.] Budapest

ELTE Eötvös Kiadó, 1998.

299 p.

ISBN 963-463-158-4

Diplomat and historian Réti carried out extensive research in foreign affairs archives both in Italy and in Hungary in order to give an authentic account of a most intensive period of Hungarian–Italian diplomatic relations (1932–1940). In a preface, Giuseppe Vedovato draws attention to 19th-century antecedents, the parallel aspirations, sympathies and kindred developments of struggles for freedom by Lajos Kossuth and Giuseppe Garibaldi. The volume explores the foreign policy of four successive administrations of the Horthy era. Prime Ministers Gömbös, Darányi, Imrédy, and Teleki consistently sought support from Mussolini in Italy to counter growing German influence. But as Hitler intensified his pressure on Italy, Réti points out, Mussolini was unable to provide his Hungarian ally with the necessary support.

DOBSZAY, Tamás–

TÓK, János–

SALAMON, Konrad –

SZERENCSE, Károly–

TOMBOR, László:

Tisztelt Ház! A magyar országgyűlések története 1848–1998

[Honored Parliament!

The history of Hungarian national assemblies

1848–1998.] Budapest:

Puskás Tivadar Távközlési

Technikum, 1998.

219 p.

ISBN 963-03-4611-7

A commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Hungary's first modern parliament. A team of historians chronicles Hungary's national assemblies from 1848 up to the latest events before the elections in spring 1998, including the last sessions of the outgoing Parliament.

■ ZSOLT BÁNHEGYI