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**THE *ANNALES* AND MEDIEVAL STUDIES
IN HUNGARY**

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THE ANNALES AND MEDIEVAL STUDIES IN HUNGARY

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This paper was originally prepared for an Italian overview of the impact of the *Annales* in Eastern Europe, organised by Clara Castelli, and was published in Italian as "Le 'Annales' e gli studi medievistici in Ungheria", in: *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica. Rivista del Dipartimento di Storia moderna e contemporanea dell'Università degli studi di Roma 'La Sapienza'*, 1/1998 (publ.: 1999), pp. 105-24. In this slightly augmented English version I have incorporated some of the valuable information contained in the articles of my colleagues published in two parts in the same review (2/1997, 1/1998).

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to assess the impact in Hungary of the French school of historiography, *Annales*, on four levels. It begins with a brief overview of the translations of the past decades, and considers cases of personal and institutional co-operation between French and Hungarian historians. Then, in the second part a more general enquiry is attempted, a kind of *Rezeptionsgeschichte*, which presents first the principal trends and varieties of medievalist scholarship in Hungary, outlining the possible points of contact and dialogue with the *Annales* historians, and subsequently some important oeuvres are presented, where these encounters really produced results.

I have already had the honour of recalling the importance of the French school of medieval studies for Hungarian historiography at two exceptional events. In April 1994 I participated in an unusual conference, a kind of oral *Festschrift*, arranged for the seventieth birthday of Jacques Le Goff by Miri Rubin at the Centre for History and Economics, King's College, Cambridge, where an international gathering of medievalists revisited the various subjects that have attracted Le Goff's interest over the years and have been enriched by his innovative research. Le Goff was present and responded eloquently to the challenge in each instance. Among the fields addressed there was a special section entitled 'Le Goff and Medieval History in Central and Eastern Europe': I had the honour of speaking about his relationship to Hungary.¹

Three years later, in November 1997, a similar tribute was offered to the historical œuvre of Georges Duby, who had died the previous year. Organised in the Musée de Cluny by Vivianne Huchard, Dominique Iogna-Prat, and Guy Lobrichon, partly as a continuation of two previous conferences resulting in the 'Mélanges Duby',² an entire day was dedicated to papers assessing his contribution to various fields of history. Although overshadowed by a sense of loss at Duby's still recent departure, the presentations clearly showed how much his abundant historiographic production had inspired the medievalist scholarship of several generations.

In 1993, the first class of the recently-founded Medieval Studies Department of the Central European University started work in Budapest with forty graduate students from sixteen countries, mostly--though not exclusively--from the former socialist bloc. We began with a questionnaire in which we

¹ The conference papers, mine included, have since been published: *The Work of Jacques Le Goff and the Challenges of Medieval History*, ed. Miri Rubin (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1997), pp. 223–37. The present text is partly based on this essay and develops its observations.

² 'Histoire et société: mélanges offerts à Georges Duby', Université de Provence, Aix-en-Provence, 1992; *Georges Duby: L'écriture de l'histoire*, ed. Claudie Duhamel-Amado et Guy Lobrichon (Bruxelles: De Boeck-Wesmael, 1996).

asked students to name three historians who had been influential in shaping their interest in the Middle Ages. Counting the scores, with no small satisfaction we found Jacques Le Goff and Georges Duby leading the list, followed by two of their East European friends: Aaron Jakovlevich Gurevich and Bronisław Geremek. Although this cannot be taken as representative proof of their impact upon scholarly circles, this popularity among Central European students clearly has indicative value. This influence is partly due to the large number of translations of their works into various East European languages. Personal and institutional contacts with them and with other historians of the *Annales* circle have also been important. An adequate understanding of the popularity of the *Annales* school in Hungary and Eastern Europe, however, requires a broader enquiry.

After presenting further evidence concerning the factors of influence already mentioned, I shall give a brief outline of the traditions of Hungarian medieval studies, and show the context in which the scholarly exchanges with the *Annales* historians took place from the 1960s onwards. Against that background, I shall describe various encounters with the *Annales* historians at conferences, in joint research projects, and in common institutions. I hope in this way to be able to approach the main issue more closely, the intellectual reasons behind their attraction to Eastern Europe and the great attraction they have exerted upon Eastern European scholars.

Starting with the question of the translation of their works, and comparing the Hungarian situation with that of other Central and East European countries,³ Georges Duby is somewhat ahead of his illustrious *confrère* in numerical terms, with Hungarian versions of his *History of French Civilisation* (written jointly

³ I have inquired among my Central and East European students about translations of works by *Annales* historians. I also make use of the valuable suggestions of Damir Karbic (Zagreb), Marina Paramonova (Moscow), Maja Petrova (Sofia), Ryszard Grzeżik (Poznan), Anna Sierpowska (Warsaw), and Renata Mikołajczyk (Cracow); one important part of the picture, the considerable Romanian reception, is unfortunately missing—however, see the recent study by Alexandru Duța, 'Le 'Annales', la storiografia rumena e il progetto «mentalités»', in *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica*, I/1998, pp. 125–38.

with Robert Mandrou), *The Age of the Cathedrals, Men and Structures in the Middle Ages* and *The Knight, the Lady, and the Priest, The Trials of Joan of Arc* (written jointly with Andrée Duby), and *Dialogues on History* (with Guy Lardreau).⁴ With the further addition of *Bouvines* and *L'An Mil*, this list was very similar in Poland.⁵ Besides the large number of translations, however, one might also note the absence of other very important works by Duby, such as the *Mâconnais* monograph, the *Rural Economy*, and *The Three Orders. Feudal Society Imagined*.⁶ Nevertheless, no other foreign historian has had so many works translated into Hungarian, perhaps with the exception of the Dutch medievalist Johan Huizinga, a 'rival' against whom George Duby would have been happy to 'compete'.

The first volume by Le Goff to appear in Hungarian (and indeed in most other East European languages) was his *Intellectuals in the Middle Ages* in 1979.⁷ *Medieval Civilisation* followed in Hungary only in 1998: for some reason, Poland has so far been much more receptive.⁸ As for translations of other *Annales* historians, Marc Bloch's *Feudal Society* was the first, appearing in Hungarian--to begin with in an abridged version (only a quarter of its original

⁴ Georges Duby and Robert Mandrou, *A francia civilizáció ezer éve*, translated by Péter Ádám and Pál Pataki (Budapest: Gondolat, 1975); Georges Duby, *Emberék és struktúrák a középkorban*, translated by László Vekerdi (Budapest: Magvető, 1978); *A katedrálisok kora*, translated by Anikó Fázsy and Sándor Albert (Budapest: Gondolat, 1984); *A lovag, a nő és a pap. A házasság a középkori Franciaországban*, translated by Anikó Fázsy (Budapest: Gondolat, 1987); Georges Duby and Andrée Duby, *Jeanne d'Arc pereit* (Budapest: Európa Könyvkiadó, 1989); Georges Duby and Guy Lardreau, *Párbeszéd a történelemről* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993).

⁵ Georges Duby, *Historia kultury francuskiej. Wiek X--XX* (Warsaw, 1967); *Czasy katedr. Sztuka i społeczeństwo 980--1420* (Warsaw, 1986); *Rycerz, kobieta, ksiadz. Malzenstwo w feudalnej Francji* (Warsaw, 1986); *Bitwa pod Bouvines. Niedziela 27 lipca 1214* (Warsaw, 1988).

⁶ Georges Duby, *L'économie rurale et la vie des campagnes dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris: Montaigne, 1962); *La société aux XIe et XIIe siècles dans la région mâconnaise* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1971); *Les trois ordres: ou, l'imaginaire du féodalisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978).

⁷ Jacques Le Goff, *Az értelmiség a középkorban*, translated by Gábor Klaniczay (Budapest: Magvető, 1979; new edition, Budapest: Osiris, 2000); in Polish: *Inteligencja wieków srednich* (Warsaw, 1966); in Croatian: *Intelektualci u srednjem vijeku* (Zagreb: Graficki zavod Hrvatske, 1982); and in Bulgarian: *Intelektualcite prez srenovekovieto* (Sofia: Universitetsko izdateastvo, 1993).

⁸ *Kultura sredniowiecznej Europy* (Warsaw, 1970); *Czlowiek sredniowiecza* (Warsaw: Volumen, 1996); *A középkori Európa műveltsége* (Budapest: Osiris, 1998).

length)--in 1974; a translation of his *Apology* appeared recently in Hungarian.⁹ Braudel's *Civilisation matérielle* was translated in Hungary in the 1980s, but his *Méditerranée* appeared only relatively recently.¹⁰ Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's *Montaillou* had to wait even longer, until 1997.¹¹ There are also translations of various articles by all the above-mentioned authors and some of their colleagues, including Jean-Claude Schmitt, Roger Chartier, and Alain Boureau. In the 1970s and 1980s, the popularisation of this school of ideas was also served by the rapid Hungarian translation of Gurevich's *Categories of Medieval Culture* (1974) and *Medieval Popular Culture* (1987).¹² It was from these two books that the Hungarian reading public became acquainted with the image of the French 'nouvelle histoire' on medieval culture. One should add that the impact was not, of course, limited to translations: many French authors are read in French, and the presence of the review *Annales E.S.C.* in most academic and university libraries has been an equally important source of influence.

The second important factor mentioned above was the long and continuous tradition of personal and institutional contacts with the *Annales* group. The *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS)* has regularly sent historians to Hungary since 1966 (as they did to post-1956 Poland and to pre-1968 Czechoslovakia). Le Goff and Braudel were among the most frequent visitors.¹³ In 1969, when Le Goff became Braudel's successor as director of the *EHESS*, these visits became regulated by an exchange agreement

⁹ Marc Bloch, *A történelem védelmében*, edited by Domokos Kosáry, translated by Domokos Kosáry, László Makkai, and Pál Pataki (Budapest: Gondolat, 1974); *A történész mestersége. Történelemelméleti írások*, translated by Eszter Babarczy, Domokos Kosáry, and Pál Pataki (Budapest: Osiris, 1996).

¹⁰ Fernand Braudel, *Anyagi kultúra és kapitalista gazdaság*, translated by Pál Pataki (Budapest: Gondolat, 1985); *A Földközi-tenger és a mediterrán világ II Fülöp korában*, translated by Éva R. Szilágyi (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó–Osiris Kiadó, 1996).

¹¹ Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou, egy okszitán falu életrajza (1294-1324)*, translated by Gabriella Jászay, Sándor Csernus et al. (Budapest: Osiris, 1997). There also exists a Polish translation: *Montaillou, wioska heretyków 1294–1324* (Warsaw, 1988).

¹² A. J. Gurevics, *A középkori ember világlképe* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1974); *A középkori népi kultúra* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1987).

¹³ Jacques Le Goff gives many fascinating descriptions of these contacts with Eastern Europe in his *Une vie pour l'histoire. Entretiens avec Marc Heurgon* (Paris: La Découverte, 1996).

between the *École* and the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which led to a series of bilateral conferences and consultations. Fernand Braudel lectured in Budapest in the early 1970s about the *longue durée*, Mandrou about the *Bibliothèque Bleue*, Le Goff on the notion of *mentalité*, and Hungarian historians debated the methods propagated by the *Annales* circle. Conferences discussed the comparative issues of social history, such as *Paysannerie française, paysannerie hongroise*, and *Noblesse française, noblesse hongroise*.¹⁴ In 1977, a well structured French–Hungarian historical conference took place at Tihany, near Lake Balaton, in an elegant Communist Party residence. Its theme was *Objets et méthodes de l'histoire de la culture*, which provided the first occasion for Georges Duby, Jacques Le Goff, André Burguière, and Joseph Goy to present the methods of historical anthropology to their Hungarian colleagues. Attempting to meet this new challenge, the Hungarians invited some folklorists to the discussion, since, in the absence of colonies, there were very few anthropologists in Hungary.¹⁵ In 1980, some important French–Hungarian preparatory discussions for the coming Economic History World Congress were held in Balatonalmádi (with Maurice Aymard as one of the principal moderators)—*Annales* members made an outstanding contribution to the congress which was held in 1982.¹⁶ In 1980, there was another notable French–Hungarian conference on *Intellectuals* (to which I will return later), and these bilateral discussions continued into the 1980s, covering

¹⁴ Fernand Braudel, 'A történelem és a társadalomtudományok. A hosszú időtartam', *Századok* 106 (1972), pp. 988–1102; Robert Mandrou, «Magas kultúra és népi műveltség a XVII–XVIII. századi Franciaországban. A ponyvairódalom», 104 (1970), pp. 118–125; Jacques Le Goff, «Van-e Annales-iskola?», 102 (1968), pp. 145–157; *Paysannerie française, paysannerie hongroise: XVIe–XXe siècles*, ed. Béla Köpeczi and Éva H. Balázs (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1973); *Noblesse française, noblesse hongroise: XVIe–XVIIIe siècles*, ed. Béla Köpeczi and Éva H. Balázs (Paris: CNRS–Akadémiai, 1981).

¹⁵ *Objets et méthodes de l'histoire de la culture*, publié sous la direction de Jacques Le Goff et Béla Köpeczi (Budapest: CNRS–Akadémiai, 1982). Contributors included Kálmán Benda, André Burguière, Georges Duby, Éva H. Balázs, Domonik Julia, Domokos Kosáry, Béla Köpeczi, Miklós Lackó, Jacques Le Goff, László Makkai, Emil Niederhauser, Mona Ozouf, György Ránki, Jacques Revel, Albert Soboul, Vilmos Voigt, and Károly Vörös.

¹⁶ *Eighth International Economic History Congress*, Budapest, 1982.

various subjects (among them modern urban development and the uses of literacy in early modern times).

In the 1990s, relations with the *EHESS* were reformulated to integrate the vital dimension of graduate education. An *Atelier Franco-Hongrois d'histoire sociale* was created at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, in 1988, under the direction of György Granasztói, Jacques Revel, and Rose-Marie Lagrave. This joint venture, preparing Hungarian students for an eventual scholarship at the *EHESS* and also for a possible DEA or doctoral thesis in Paris, became the model for a series of similar institutions in Prague, Warsaw, Bucharest, Sofia, and Moscow in the early 1990s. A system of academic satellites is thus being developed by the *EHESS* in the ex-communist countries.¹⁷

The personal participation of leading French historians in all these exchanges has by no means diminished over time. I shall enumerate only the medievalists, although it should be noted that equally strong contacts were developed between French and Hungarian experts on modernity and the Enlightenment, the exchanges being initiated by Éva H. Balázs, Domokos Kosáry, Kálmán Benda, László Makkai, and Béla Köpeczi.

From the 1970s onwards, the leading role on the French side was taken by Georges Duby: the success of his translated books first presented to a wider Hungarian readership in the 1970s the full and impressive panorama of French *nouvelle histoire*. His various academic visits allowed him to make a number of public appearances at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Institute of History, and the Budapest French Institute, where his popular TV film series *The Time of the Cathedrals* was presented, and subsequently broadcast on Hungarian TV. As if to crown this series of exchanges, Georges Duby became the first President of the Academic Advisory Board of Collegium Budapest, the

¹⁷ For more detail on this *Atelier* at Eötvös Loránd University, where I worked for many years on the academic council with Ágnes Rényi, Mihály Sárkány, and Gyula Benda, see Rose-Marie Lagrave, *Voyages aux pays d'une utopie déchu* (Paris: P. U. F., 1998), pp. 53–113.

first Institute for Advanced Study in Central Europe, founded in 1992 with the international support of seven European states. The participation of Duby in the building of this new academic institution, his lectures, seminars, and his renewed presence in Budapest, made a deep impact in the 1990s, and integrated the *Annales* in various ways into its academic programs (when his term ended, Maurice Aymard, then Jacques Revel became members of the same Board, and among the guests of Collegium Budapest we can count Daniel Nordman, André Vauchez, Evelyne Patlagean, Roger Chartier, Dominique Iogna-Prat and Jean-Pierre Vernant).

The other personality of the *Annales* school very much involved in contacts with Hungary is Jacques Le Goff. In 1985, he was awarded an honorary doctorate by Eötvös Loránd University, which gave him the opportunity to introduce his project *The Medieval Imagination*. For the past ten years he has been chairman of the French–Hungarian joint commission of historians, responsible for co-ordinating various joint enterprises. One of the results of this work was the first exclusively medievalist French–Hungarian conference organised in March 1994 in Lyon on the subject of *The City and Religion at the End of the Middle Ages*. Besides French and Hungarian scholars, it also included Polish, German, and Italian participants.¹⁸ Le Goff is on the Academic Board of the Medieval Studies Program—already mentioned—of the Central European University in Budapest, where among the invited professors we may find French medievalists close to the *Annales*, such as Evelyne Patlagean, Jean-Claude Schmitt, Nicole Bériou and Alain Boureau. One may also name in this same category some of the East European colleagues participating in our activities, such as Bronisław Geremek, A. J. Gurevich, Aleksander Gieysztor, Hanna Zaremska, František Šmahel, and Andrei Pippidi. On a visit to Hungary in 1994, Le Goff arranged a meeting at Collegium

¹⁸ The conference was organised by Jacques Berlioz, Jacques Chiffolleau and Gábor Klaniczay. Participants included: Kálmán Benda, Stanisław Bylina, Nicole Bériou, Pál Engel, Ilona Sz. Jónás, Edit Madas, Marie-Anne Polo de Beaulieu, Jacques Rossiaud, József Török, and André Vauchez.

Budapest of the editorial consortium of his *The Making of Europe* series (including the publishers Laterza, Beck, Blackwell, Critica, and Seuil, now also joined by a Hungarian, Atlantisz, and a Polish publisher, Volumen). This gathering helped to open up the thematic field and range of the authors of the series to include more on Central and Eastern Europe.¹⁹

This rather dry enumeration of visits made by French scholars should suffice to illustrate the quantity, frequency, and contents of these scholarly communications. I should now like to turn to the Hungarian side, to what one might call the 'Rezeptionsgeschichte'. Before I do so, however, it is worth briefly outlining the tradition of medieval studies in Hungary, all the more so because linguistic and geographical distance has tended to isolate Hungary (in common with all the other countries of Eastern Europe) to such an extent that it is still usual for European scholarly syntheses to locate their geographical border at the River Elbe, and to ignore what lies beyond. The overcoming of this limited vision is precisely one of the qualities of the *Annales* circle which I intend to discuss here.

Hungarian medieval scholarship (like that of neighbouring Central European countries) dates back to the national revival movement of the nineteenth century. Even at that time, inspired by analogous efforts in Germany and Austria, it gave rise to the publication of nearly a hundred volumes of Latin sources (the existence of which continues to be largely ignored by those historians who complain of the linguistic inaccessibility of information concerning the Central European Middle Ages).²⁰ This collective enterprise of critical source editions was carried on into the twentieth century. In 1938, the series *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum* was published by Imre Szentpétery,

¹⁹ See our notice in *Budapest Review of Books* 4 (1994), pp. XX.

²⁰ See Imre Lukinich, *Les éditions de sources de l'histoire hongroise, 1854-1930* (Budapest, 1931). The most important series are: Georgius Fejér, *Codex Diplomaticus Hungariae ecclesiasticus ac civilis* (Budae, 1829-1844), tom XI + prodromus = vol. 43; Gusztáv Wenzel, *Árpádkori Uj Okmánytár. Codex Diplomaticus Arpadianus* (Pest, 1860--Budapest, 1889), tom. 1-22; I. Nagy, F. Deák, and Gy. Nagy, *Hazai Okmánytár. Codex diplomaticus patrius. 1068-1627* (Budapest, 1891), 8 volumes.

with the participation of a number of outstanding medievalists.²¹ The medieval interests of the Hungarian scholars were shaped principally by the German historical school. Under Ranke's influence, it was from here that the impetus came for *Geistesgeschichte*, which was explored by Gyula Szekfű, a leading historian of early modern times in the inter-war period, who also produced relevant work on the Middle Ages. Another important figure, Sándor Domanovszky, formerly a chronicles expert, published a five-volume series in the 1930s on Hungarian cultural history. Emulating Jakob Burckhardt and Aloys Schulz, he complemented the traditional picture of high culture with material culture and the history of medicine, costumes, dance, and folklore.²² Some historians followed more closely the German research on royal symbols and on the sacredness of rulership, including József Deér, Péter Váczy, and Bálint Hóman.

The most important medievalist of his generation, beyond any doubt, was Elemér Mályusz, who addressed many different subjects, including political history, the nobility, palaeography, religious mysticism, Weber's methods, and literary themes. He initiated an interesting new trend of 'settlement history', from which a new generation of social historians emerged in the late 1930s.²³ István Hajnal, a historian of writing and technological development, arranged a series of debates on the confrontation of history and sociology in the early 1940s.²⁴ In addition, there was an interesting cult of Johan Huizinga, to which I have already alluded: not only was his *The Waning of the Middle Ages* translated, but also a wide range of his other works (*Homo Ludens*, *In the Shadow of Tomorrow*, *History of European Small States*, *Collected Studies*).

²¹ *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum*, ed. Emericus Szentpétery (Budapest, 1938).

²² *Magyar művelődéstörténet*, ed. Sándor Domanovszky (Budapest, 1936).

²³ A bibliography of his works is available in a *Festschrift* dedicated to him on his 85th birthday: *Mályusz Elemér Emlékkönyv*, ed. Éva H. Balázs, Erik Fügedi, and Ferenc Maksay (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1984), pp. 443–456.

²⁴ István Hajnal, 'Történelem és szociológia', *Századok* 73 (1939), pp. 1–32, 137–66.; reprinted in *Technika és művelődés*, ed. Ferenc Glatz (Budapest: História, 1993), pp. 157–204.

Good use was made of his research by some art historians to characterise the Angevin and Luxemburg periods in Hungary.²⁵

This sketch of the pre-1945 era shows that medieval studies represented a lively field of Hungarian scholarship, one which could easily have communicated with contemporaneous French historiography. Yet it did not do so. While massive German influence was felt in Hungary, Bloch, Febvre, and the *Annales* remained completely unknown. Was it because of the *Petite Entente* (Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia, Hungary's hostile neighbours, under French leadership), or was it because of some cultural difference of a more sophisticated kind? It is hard to tell. The *Annales* circle was ignored even by the few French-oriented Hungarian scholars, such as Astrik L. Gabriel, whose interests lay in dynastic relations and universities;²⁶ Sándor Eckhardt, who explored various literary myths, from *Sicambria* to *Sans-souci*;²⁷ János Győry, who dealt with medieval chronicles and troubadour poetry;²⁸ and István Hajnal, already mentioned, whose *Histoire de l'écriture* also appeared in French.²⁹ The situation changed abruptly with the advent of communism. Schools of research ceased and the German orientation was supplemented by a Russian one--the ignorance of French (and English) historiography remained much as it had always been.

Hungarian research into medieval history in subsequent decades acquired several new traits. However dogmatic its methods may have been, the introduction of Marxism brought, besides the obligatory study of the class

²⁵ I have analysed the Hungarian Huizinga reception in the introduction to the new Hungarian translation of *The Waning of the Middle Ages*: Johan Huizinga, *A középkor alkonya* (Budapest: Európa, 1976), pp. 269–84.

²⁶ Astrik L. Gabriel, *Les rapports dynastiques franco-hongrois au moyen âge* (Budapest, s.d. [1944]); *Student Life in Ave Maria College, Medieval Paris. History and Cartulary of the College* (Indiana: Notre Dame, 1955); *The Educational Ideas of Vincent of Beauvais* (Indiana: Notre Dame, 1956); *Garlandia. Studies in the History of the Medieval University* (Indiana: Notre Dame, 1969).

²⁷ Alexandre Eckhardt, *De Sicambria à Sans-souci. Histoires et légendes franco-hongroises* (Paris: PUF, 1943). For a belated French assessment of his work, see Jacques Revel, 'A Francophile from Sicambria. A Tribute to Sándor Eckhardt (1890–1969)', *Budapest Review of Books* 7 (1997), pp. 142–47.

²⁸ János Győry, *Gesta regum – Gesta nobilium. Tanulmány Anonymus krónikájáról* (Budapest: OSZK, 1948).

²⁹ István Hajnal, *L'enseignement de l'écriture aux universités médiévales* (Budapest, 1954).

struggle, a number of important new studies in economic history, including agriculture, the peasantry, mining, trade, and urban development. Among them, the first monograph by Jenő Szűcs on Hungarian towns was particularly notable.³⁰ Together with the economic historian Zsigmond Pál Pach,³¹ in the 1950s Szűcs outlined a regional comparison with the West, as well as a kind of evolutionary theory for the sixteenth-century reverses of Hungarian economic development which led to backwardness in modern times.

Another relevant aspect of this new research was a kind of nationalist–*independentist* ‘red thread’ glorifying the Hungarian struggle for independence against the Ottoman and the Habsburg empires. This actualising vision of a belligerent national history became a convenient ideology for the 1956 uprising; after this, Marxist historians quickly set out to ‘denationalise’ and ‘depoliticise’ the past. The denationalisation was carried out in the course of the ten-year-long ‘Erik Molnár’ debate, named after the director of the Institute of History, who reinterpreted the struggles for independence of the Hungarian nobility—such as the Rákóczi revolt in the eighteenth century—as a typical *Fronde* against an absolutist ruler. In Hungary’s case, he happened to be Austrian, so the resistance could also draw upon nationalist phraseology. The depoliticising tendency, on the other hand, came rather from historians of the nineteenth century who shifted the focus of interest from the 1848 revolution to the 1867 *Ausgleich* and the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

Strangely enough, both of these ideologically inspired historiographical reinterpretations of the ‘Kádár era’ opened up a path to methodological innovation. On the question of nation and nationalism, for instance, Jenő Szűcs published a series of interesting, provocative essays, and a book on the

³⁰ Jenő Szűcs, *Városok és kézművesség a XV. századi Magyarországon* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1955).

³¹ Zsigmond Pál Pach, *Nyugat-európai és magyarországi agrárfejlődés a XV-XVII. Században* (Budapest: Kossuth, 1963); idem, “Das Städtewesen in Ungarn im 15-17. Jahrhundert” in György Székely (ed.), *La Renaissance et la Réformation en Pologne et en Hongrie*, (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1963), pp. 97-164.

prehistory of 'people' and 'nation',³² in which he made good use of German studies on '*Gentilismus*', and also on anthropology, folklore, and linguistics. He compared the ethnogenetic processes of the early medieval West with those occurring among Eastern Europe's 'new barbarians' between the ninth and the eleventh centuries, and this became a starting point for his later work as summarised in his 'The Three Historical Regions of Europe'.³³ The increasing interest in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, on the other hand--inspired by, among others, Péter Hanák--gave rise to a new history of everyday life, material culture, urbanisation, and economic structures.

Having outlined these dominating currents, one should also stress the diversity of historical research which survived under the homogeneous veil of the Marxist historical vision. Outstanding social historians continued their work: Elemér Mályusz published a synthesis on medieval Hungarian ecclesiastical society in 1974, while István Szabó and Vera Bácskai conducted important research on the peasantry and on the late medieval borough system respectively.³⁴ Philological traditions of chronicle analysis, an important branch of Hungarian medieval studies, remained very influential. One of the representatives of this field, György Györffy, also published a historical geography of the period of the Árpád dynasty and a biography of Saint Stephen,

³² Jenő Szűcs, *A magyar nemzeti tudat kialakulása. Két tanulmány a kérdés előtörténetéből* (Szeged: Magyar Őstörténeti Könyvtár, 1992); see also my review in *Budapest Review of Books* 4 (1994), pp. 25–29; idem, *Zwei Fragmente*, in *Studien zum Nationalen Bewußtsein: Mittelalter un Gegenwart*. (ed.) János M. Bak, Special Issue of *East Central Europe—L'Europe du Centre-Est. Eine wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift* Vol. 2023, pt. 2 (1993–1996), pp. 55–90.

³³ Jenő Szűcs, 'The Three Historical Regions of Europe', *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29 (1983), pp. 131–84; also published in *Civil Society and the State: New European Perspectives* (London, 1988), pp. 291–332; in German: *Die drei historischen Regionen Europas*. (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Neue Kritik, 1981); Italian: *Disegno delle Tre Regioni Storiche d'Europa*. Presentazione di Giulio Sapelli. Traduzione, introduzione e note di Federigo Argentieri (Rubettino, Soveria Mannelli, Catanzaro, 1996).

³⁴ Elemér Mályusz, *Egyházi társadalom a középkori Magyarországon* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971); István Szabó, *A falurendszer kialakulása Magyarországon (X-XV. század)* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1971); Vera Bácskai, *A magyar mezővárosok a XV. században* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1965).

king of Hungary.³⁵ Political history remained the principal pursuit of Hungarian history writing, however.

This is the background against which we should assess the impact of the French *nouvelle histoire* from the 1960s onwards. In this period, 'methodological reform' was the order of the day, advocated mainly by a number of scholars at the Institute of History in opposition to Marxist hardliners at the University. The socio-historical achievements and the new regional, serial, and anthropological methods of the *Annales* could well be interpreted as compatible with a loosened notion of Marxism. The French analytic tools for the history of culture (*mentalité, système des valeurs, psychologie historique*) were also easily absorbed by this reformist Marxism which now stressed the interrelatedness of economic, social, and mental structures, instead of the earlier rigidly deterministic patterns.

The visiting *Annales* historians deliberately tried to ease the intellectual hostilities between East and West by proposing themselves as interlocutors. Not blinded by ideological prejudices, they saw very well that under the veil of Marxist dogmas a number of interesting things were being done in history.

These Franco-Hungarian discussions in the 1970s drew upon a similar Polish experience which had started earlier. By this time, many studies and monographs by leading Polish historians were available in French translation,³⁶ and their results came to be absorbed by international scholarship as the fruits of an autonomous school of history writing. The innovatory tendencies of Polish historiography had a stimulating effect on Hungary, too. A young Hungarian historian, Áron Petneki, often frequented Bronisław Geremek's

³⁵ György Györffy, *Kronikáink és a magyar őstörténet* (Budapest: Néptudományi Intézet, 1948); *Az Árpád-kori Magyarország történeti földrajza*. (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1963, 1987), vols. I-III; *Isván király és műve* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1977).

³⁶ Aleksander Gieysztor and Tadeusz Manteuffel (eds.), *L'Europe aux IX^e-XI^e siècles. Aux origines des États nationaux* (Warsaw, 1968); Tadeusz Manteuffel, *La naissance d'une hérésie. Les adeptes de la pauvreté volontaire au moyen âge* (Paris-La Haye: Mouton, 1970); Witold Kula, *Théorie économique du système féodal. Pour un modèle de l'économie polonaise XVI^e-XVIII^e siècle* (Paris-La Haye: Mouton, 1970); Bronisław Geremek, *Le Salarial dans l'artisanat parisien aux XIII^e-XV^e siècles* (Paris, 1968), and *Les Marginaux parisiens aux XIV^e et XV^e siècles* (Paris, 1976).

Warsaw circle of disciples, and then enthusiastically spread the news of the French-style methodologies in Hungary; Geremek himself visited Budapest several times. There were a number of common projects with Polish historians, such as Antoni Maćzak on travel diaries, Maria Bogucka on material culture, and Jerzy Kłoczowski on religious history.

The early 1970s saw the emergence of a general climate of intellectual innovation in Hungary. Other new trends were developing, such as the rebirth of sociology, the literary debates on semiotics and structuralism, and the new economic history. The *Annales* historians Braudel, Duby, Mandrou, and Le Goff were close to the centre of these movements, bringing new ideas and inspiration.

This is a general picture of the context of the *Annales*' reception. A special case was the intriguing use of Le Goff's monograph on intellectuals in the Middle Ages. (I know the story intimately, since I was its translator while still a student in the early 1970s). One of the scandals of Hungarian intellectual life in 1973, part of the backlash resulting from the rigid ideological climate following the crushing of the Prague Spring, was the police investigation against the sociologist Iván Szelényi and the writer György Konrád for writing a book entitled *Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*,³⁷ which interpreted the political structures of the Brezhnev and Kádár era in terms of an exaggerated sense of guilt, as leading towards the realisation of the utopian notion of the class power of intellectuals. This would have materialised in Eastern Europe in the form of power-sharing between the party bureaucracy, technocrats, and even the tolerated--if frequently scolded, sometimes harassed, but still privileged--dissidents. The book was based upon an ambitious yet vulnerable historical and sociological framework, including theoretical references to Weber, Mannheim, and Gerschenkron. The idea must have been in the air; about the same time, similarly controversial conclusions were proposed about the intellectuals by the

³⁷ György Konrád and Iván Szelényi, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*. New York, 1979.

radical American sociologist Alvin Gouldner.³⁸ As a result of the scandal Szelényi was given the option of going abroad, and Konrád, who refused to accept this, was finally permitted to stay, but was silenced for several years.

Professional sociologists started to cope with the challenge of these ideas by way of a general sociological inquiry concerning the role of intellectuals, which, according to the ambiguous rules of the late socialist political game, was both an act of limited but discernible solidarity and a form of political neutralisation. It was under these ambivalent conditions--which, as a student, I did not clearly perceive at the time--that I was commissioned to translate Le Goff's book. The translation first appeared in a small publication of the Sociology Department for internal use only, and supplied historical raw material for a book by the chairman of that department, Tibor Huszár, a skilful academic politician. He relied to some extent upon Le Goff's analyses to mediate between the provocative propositions of Konrád and Szelényi and his own reform-Marxist, Gramscian ideas.³⁹ In any case, Le Goff's book soon reached a larger public and started to have an impact independently of these political intrigues. It helped launch one of the first non-fiction scholarly paperback series in Hungary 'Gyorsuló idő' (Accelerating time), which faintly recalled a similar French series ('*Le temps qui court*').⁴⁰

Probably because of the ongoing debates around Konrád and Szelényi, and partly because of Le Goff's book, which turned out to be such a success, the 'saga of the intellectuals' continued until the beginning of the 1980s, when a large Franco-Hungarian conference was organized on this same topic, with the participation of Jacques Le Goff and a number of his colleagues. Besides the francophile team of Hungarian historians, this also included some sociologists,

³⁸ Alvin Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the New Class* (London-New York, 1979).

³⁹ Jacques Le Goff, *Az értelmiség a középkorban*, translation and preface by Gábor Klaniczay, *Szociológiai Füzetek* 11 (Budapest: Az Oktatási Minisztérium Marxizmus-Leninizmus Főosztálya, 1976); Tibor Huszár, *Fejezetek az értelmiség történetéből* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1977).

⁴⁰ Cf. the publication cited in Note XX.

such as Zsuzsa Ferge and Victor Karády, and literary and art historians from both countries.⁴¹ It is hard to judge whether it was this conference which finally settled the 'intellectuals issue', or whether it was solely contemporary events which made it disappear from politics. As his responses to the colloquium's *Questionnaire* show, Jacques Le Goff may well have been aware of the ambivalent general connotations of this whole topic. In defining the intellectual's collective responsibility, he felt it necessary to add: «*la défense des droits de l'homme*».⁴² The cultural influence of a translated book frequently produces such ambivalent effects; but it is rather rare and the sign of a good instinct when somebody manages to readjust his decontextualized message on the spot.

Let me illustrate, finally, the panorama of the *Annales*' scholarly impact in Hungary with a few examples. The list is not very long; there are no more than half-a-dozen medieval scholars who have produced relevant new research which could be attributed directly to the influence of the *Annales*. (The number would double if I were to include Early Modern historians, but that is beyond the scope of this article.)

Two important research projects in the 1970s were more closely linked to Georges Duby. Ilona Jónás, Professor of Medieval History at Eötvös Loránd University, studied and carried out research under his direction in Aix. She dealt first with agrarian history, and later, in 1977, she defended her thesis on fourteenth-century craftsmen in Paris (still unpublished).⁴³ Duby's inspiration is

⁴¹ *Intellectuels français – intellectuels hongrois XIII^e--XX^e siècles*, publié sous la direction de Jacques Le Goff et Béla Köpeczi (Budapest: CNRS–Akadémiai, 1985). The contributors included: Gábor Barta, Roger Chartier, Zsuzsa Ferge, Erik Fügedi, Joseph Goy, Éva H. Balázs, Yves Hersant, Victor Karády, Károly Kecskeméty, Tibor Klaniczay, Domokos Kosáry, Béla Köpeczi, Miklós Lackó, Jacques Le Goff, Lajos Németh, Albert Soboul, André Stegmann, György Székely, Jacques Verger, Károly Vörös, and Imre Wellmann.

⁴² *Intellectuels*, pp. 314–15.

⁴³ Ilona Jónás, *Párizs adóízető polgársága a 13-14. század fordulóján*, Budapest, 1977, manuscript. Two parts have been published in French, however: 'Le groupement de bourgeoisie commerçante et artisanale de Paris suivant le rôle des contributions pour 1313', *Annales Universitatis Scientiarum Budapestiensis de Rolando Eötvös nominatae. Sectio historica* 5 (1963), pp. 27–52; 'Structures sociales de l'industrie textile parisienne à la fin du 13^e siècle', *Annales Universitatis Scientiarum Budapestiensis de Rolando Eötvös nominatae. Sectio historica* 16 (1975), pp. 3–34.

also behind the excellent book by Ágnes Kurcz on the culture of Hungarian chivalry. Kurcz applied the methods Duby used in the *Mâconnais* and in *Guerriers and paysans*, counting carefully in the charters the denominations of *strenuus miles* and *aulae regie miles* in order to demonstrate the somewhat belated emergence of this social group in fourteenth-century Hungary, and presented their material culture, living conditions, dress, tournaments, *mentalité*, and literature.⁴⁴ The investigations into urban history by György Granasztói, the first to embark on joint research with a colleague at the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales*, Michel Demonet, were pioneer experiments in the computer-based reconstruction of late medieval urban topography.⁴⁵

Manifold echoes of the *Annales* may be found in the work of László Makkai, a good friend of Fernand Braudel: he analysed the material culture and '*caractères originaux*' of the Hungarian feudal evolution; he gave a general presentation of «*grand domaine et petites exploitations*» at the 1982 International Congress of Economic History (where he tried to strike a balance between the positions of Maurice Aymard and Guy Bois).⁴⁶ The Hungarian *Annales* reception should also include János M. Bak, who recently returned home from Vancouver, and whose investigations on the symbolism of royalty have frequently come into contact with those of Jacques Le Goff, notably at the 1988 Toronto conference on Coronations, and the Paris '*Majestas*' conference in 1990.⁴⁷ Finally, without being too immodest, let me also mention my own

⁴⁴ Ágnes Kurcz, *Lovagi kultúra Magyarországon a 13-14. században* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1988).

⁴⁵ Michel Demonet and György Granasztói, 'Une ville de Hongrie au milieu du XVe siècle (analyse factorielle et modèle social)', *Annales E.S.C.* 37 (1982), pp. 523–51.

⁴⁶ László Makkai, 'Les caractères originaux de l'histoire économique et sociale de l'Europe orientale pendant le Moyen Age', *Acta Historica* 16 (1970), pp. 261–87; 'Grand domaine et petites exploitations, seigneur et paysan en Europe au Moyen Age et aux temps modernes', in *Eighth International Congress of Economic History*, Budapest, 1982, 'A' Themes, pp. 5–46; 'Ars Historica: on Braudel', *Review* 6 (1983), pp. 435–53.

⁴⁷ János M. Bak (ed.), *Coronations. Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual* (Berkeley–Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990); Heinz Duchhardt, Richard A. Jackson, and David Sturdy (eds.), *European Monarchy. Its Evolution and Practice from Roman Antiquity to Modern Times* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1992).

studies on heresy, popular religion, sainthood, and witchcraft, which have been significantly stimulated by encounters with Jacques Le Goff, Georges Duby, Jean-Claude Schmitt, and many other historians of the *Annales*.⁴⁸ Two scholars whose work illustrates this historiographical impact in rather more detail are Erik Fügedi and Jenő Szűcs, both of whom unfortunately died a few years ago.

A disciple of Elemér Mályusz, Fügedi, who started his career—specialising in ecclesiastical and urban history—in the 1940s, was relatively marginalized in the 1950s and 1960s as the librarian of the Statistical Institute. Turning this to his advantage, he became an expert in historical demography and statistical and quantitative methods, which became a useful skill in the 1960s. In the 1970s, already nearing his seventies, he was perhaps the quickest and most active in reacting to the challenges of *nouvelle histoire*. His response to Jacques Le Goff's 1970 questionnaire on mendicant orders provoked an interesting debate in Hungary, where it emerged finally that the original thesis could not hold. Fügedi's critics pointed out that the coincidental connection between the towns and mendicant orders, at least in Hungary, could be explained by the mere fact that both were patronised by royal power rather than in terms of the emergence of a spontaneous relationship. Instead of supporting the ingenious original hypothesis, the Hungarian debate indicates the caution needed when making broad international comparisons.⁴⁹ Fügedi returned to the same problem in connection with a pioneering study of the fifteenth-century

⁴⁸ Gábor Klaniczay, 'Sainthood au Moyen Age. Traditions, métamorphoses et discontinuités', *Cahiers du centre de recherches historiques*, Paris, EHESS, 1989/3, pp. 69–80; 'L'image chevaleresque du saint roi au XIIe siècle', in *La royauté sacrée dans le monde chrétien*, ed. Alain Boureau and Claudio Sergio Ingerflom, Colloque de Royaumont, mars 1989, (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1992), pp. 53–62; 'Le culte des saints dynastiques en Europe Centrale (Angevins et Luxembourg au XI^e siècle)', in *L'Église et le peuple chrétien dans les pays de l'Europe du Centre-Est et du Nord (XIV^e-XV^e siècles)*, Actes du colloque ... de Rome (27–29 Janvier 1986), École Française de Rome, Roma, 1990, pp. 221–47. *The Uses of Supernatural Power. The Transformation of Popular Religion in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, translated by Susan Singerman, edited by Karen Margolis (Cambridge: Polity Press–Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); *Az uralkodók szentsége a középkorban. Magyar dinasztikus szent-kultuszok és európai modellek*. Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2000), forthcoming in English: *Holy Rulers and Blessed Princesses. Dynastic Sainthood in Medieval Europe*. translated by Éva Pálmai, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

⁴⁹ Erik Fügedi, 'La formation des villes et les ordres mendiants en Hongrie', *Annales E.S.C.* 25 (1970), pp. 966–87.

miracles of St. John of Capistran in the borough of Ujlak (Ilok), presenting the economic, social, and symbolic aspects of pilgrimage.⁵⁰

Fügedi's real historical theme was the social and cultural history of the Hungarian nobility, and here Georges Duby was his main inspiration. In his monographs and essays he presented a rich panorama of the rituals of the royal court, tournaments, copious feasts, daily life within the castles, and the oral and written culture of the nobility in medieval Hungary.⁵¹ His last major book was on the kinship system of a lesser Hungarian noble clan, the Elefánthy (a Hungarian version of *Oliphant*), a masterpiece of historical anthropology which could stand comparison with Duby's account of the counts of Guines.⁵² Indeed, Georges Duby invited him to give a lecture at the Collège de France in 1989 and presented his work with a warm recommendation.

Finally, there is Jenő Szűcs, considered by many to have been the greatest Hungarian medievalist of recent decades. I have already mentioned his work on medieval towns and on the origins of national consciousness. In both areas he used a very broad comparative framework, in a regional context characterised by different rhythms of evolution in the West and in the East. The outcome of this work was a long essay first published in *samizdat* in a memorial volume for the dissident political thinker István Bibó (published in book form in 1982), and soon to be translated into English, French, and Italian, with an introduction by Fernand Braudel.⁵³ Szűcs takes the opportunity to present a sophisticated conception of the changing position of Central Europe, presenting

⁵⁰ Erik Fügedi, 'Kapisztránó János csodái. A jegyzőkönyvek társadalomtörténeti tanulságai', *Századok* 111 (1977), pp. 847–87.

⁵¹ Erik Fügedi, *Ura, királyom. A XIV. századi Magyarország hatalmasai* (Budapest: Gondolat, 1974); *Castle and Society in Medieval Hungary (1000-1437)* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1986); *Kings, Bishops, Nobles and Burghers in Medieval Hungary* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1986).

⁵² Erik Fügedi, *Az Elefánthyak. Egy köznemesi klán a középkori Magyarországon* (Budapest: Magvető, 1992). See János M. Bak's review: 'The Elefánthy Saga', *Budapest Review of Books* 4 (1994), pp. 129–34. An English translation appeared in 1998: *The Elefánthy. The Hungarian Nobleman and His Kindred* (Budapest: CEU Press, 1998).

⁵³ Jenő Szűcs, *Les trois Europes. Préface de Fernand Braudel* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985); see also István Bibó, *Miseria dei piccoli Stati dell'Europa orientale* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994); on Szűcs's book, see my study 'Jenő Szűcs e le tre regioni storiche d'Europa', in *Annuario 1996. Studie e documenti italo-ungheresi*, diretti da József Pál, Accademia d'Ungheria in Roma, Istituto Storico Fraknoi, Roma, 1997, pp. 107–114.

the long-term, repeatedly obstructed development of civil liberties and democratic institutions in this region and their frequent shortcomings--in this context, I should emphasise that he was very much influenced by a new reading of Marc Bloch's *Feudal Society*. Some of his most original remarks concentrate upon the observation that the 'second feudal age' came to Central Europe only in the thirteenth century. On this view, the Mongol invasion played a role as an impetus for new development (fortified towns, new-style chivalric armies, urban liberties, unified nobility and peasantry) similar to that of the raids of the Hungarians in the tenth century in the West. These observations led Szűcs to his last work, a monograph on the age of the last Árpádians (second half of the thirteenth century), in which he investigated in great detail all the economic and social aspects of this important transformation; this work still awaits translation into English.⁵⁴

The scholarly interchange between the French historians and Szűcs was not very intensive during the latter's lifetime. I know that he knew them, but went in different directions and worked in different scholarly styles. Szűcs was interested in understanding the reasons for the persistence of East–West regional differences. His theoretical observations were troubled by his dissatisfaction with the end results of this historical process which he experienced in his own lifetime. Among his French colleagues, Jacques Le Goff had also been interested in this topic since his *Civilisation de l'Occident médiévale* and his study on the 'horizon onirique' of medieval Europe.⁵⁵ Le Goff is extremely interested in the cultural use of this regional difference, its enrichment in terms of aesthetic and human values, and its perception as something 'marvellous', generating fear and leading to enthusiastic fashions; and he has concerned himself with assessing existing conflicts and preparing

⁵⁴ Jenő Szűcs, *Az utolsó Árpádok* (Budapest: História, 1993).

⁵⁵ Jacques Le Goff, 'L'Occident médiéval et l'océan Indien: un horizon onirique', in *Pour un autre Moyen Age. Temps, travail et culture en Occident: 18 essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), pp. 280–98; *Das alte Europa und die Welt der Moderne* (München: Beck, 1994).

the ground for their solution in terms of an open Europe. In the last few years, Jacques Le Goff has picked up this thread once more in his book series *The Making of Europe* and his recent investigation on its periphery, bringing together his ideas with those of Jenő Szűcs in the absence of a personal meeting which never took place.

I am certain that the problem of the definition of Europe--in particular its concept, whose roots go back to the Middle Ages and which renders history a living force for explaining and shaping the present--holds the clues for explaining both the *Annales* historians' attraction to Eastern Europe and its reciprocation. Each of them, of course, had other means of building these contacts. By way of conclusion, let me briefly juxtapose the different ways of Georges Duby and Jacques Le Goff.

Georges Duby's historical work presents a multifaceted, balanced vision of the economic, social, ideological, and cultural dimensions of the medieval *Occidens*, situating his principal French and Mediterranean fields of research in a comparative panorama extending from England to Germany--it seems that he did not devote special attention to what Oscar Halecki, the great Polish historian, has called the «borderlands of Western civilisation».⁵⁶ He did not deal with the distribution and impact of Western economic, social, and cultural patterns in the East; he did not directly address the problem of Eastern Europe's 'otherness'. He was an attentive observer, a persuasive spokesman, an inspired poet, and a suggestive missionary for the medieval West. Duby's vivid portrayal caused Central European scholars (and here the parallel with Johan Huizinga comes to mind once more) to take the view that the splendour of the French Middle Ages, with all its precious heritage, also belonged to them as a common European past. In this way he encouraged us to represent and interpret our own Middle Ages, and to add it to the common European heritage with the same

⁵⁶ Oscar Halecki, *The Borderlands of Western Civilisation. A History of East-Central Europe* (New York: Ronald, 1952).

artistic sensitivity and loving care: he awaited the results with attentive appreciation.

Jacques Le Goff's approach may perhaps be best illustrated by his public lecture in Budapest in March 1994, entitled 'Les périphéries de l'Occident médiévale'. Unlike Duby, he addressed this problem several times during his career. When he was asked about the different evolutionary rhythms of the two or three Europes proposed by Jenő Szűcs, he protested with some degree of indignation. This evolutionary perspective, he said, made little sense from his medieval point of view, in terms of which Europe extended from the *Ultima Thule* of Ireland to Jerusalem and beyond--from Santiago de Compostela to the lands of the ferocious Scythians. Europe was--and is--something to be made and remade, something which cannot be done by enumerating the defections of the internal and external peripheries, but rather by integrating them while learning from their differences.

Whatever the different paths taken by these two scholars, the outcome of this vision and the underlying *mentalité* are very similar. It was of considerable help to us East Europeans--or simply 'other Europeans'--in difficult moments (after 1956, 1968, and 1981), and we still need it now, when, although the problems may be different, the need for understanding and communication remains the same.

