

An exciting topic addressed by Levinger is the idea of happiness implied in the constructivist visions. Imagining a humanistic world of a totality, which would restore a (presumably) lost harmony, and anticipating the power of new technologies used for the benefit of humankind were cornerstones of the constructivist utopias thriving in central Europe in the early 1920s. The future world was anticipated as belonging to the “collective human being” (111). Therefore, artworks had to reflect regulated compositions, “in unity with the organic whole in nature” (120)—a precondition of human happiness.

The chapter on Władysław Strzemiński’s *Unism* also underlines the importance the Polish artist—similarly to Teige—attributed to typography as part of the visual arts “since a printed page was seen before it was read” (174). Typography demonstrated standardization, bringing visual works close to industrial production: an interconnection, which was key to the concept of constructivism as rational order. Levinger demonstrates Strzemiński’s mathematical method of image making also applied to sculpture and architecture. In their use of color, both Strzemiński and his wife Katarzyna Kobro relied on primary colors and followed the principle of standardization. The last chapter of the book is dedicated to *Poetism*, Teige’s “dialectical counterpart of constructivism” (226), a dynamic, conceptually and practically unlimited direction, which, rhyming to the earlier discussion of constructivism and the vision of happiness, also sets “joyful communal life” as its goal (227).

As most iterations of constructivism, *Poetism* also endeavored to terminate alienation. Throughout Levinger’s thoroughly researched book, the overview of constructivism in central Europe reveals the many different local contexts, each bending the original Moscow idea. Four original texts complete the volume.

## **Ed. Judit Pál, Vlad Popovici, Oana Sorescu-Iudean. *Elites, Groups, and Networks in East-Central and South-East Europe in the Long Nineteenth Century.***

**Central and Eastern Europe: Regional Perspectives in Global Context, vol. 12. Paderborn: Brill Schoeningh, 2022. xviii, 362 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. \$170.00, hard bound.**

Alex Drace-Francis

University of Amsterdam

Email: [A.J.Drace-Francis@uva.nl](mailto:A.J.Drace-Francis@uva.nl)

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The title of this book might suggest a variety of approaches. The table of contents brings more clarity, revealing an intention to study a range of types of elite across an equally diverse set of regions, including Bohemia, Hungary, Transylvania, Serbia, Bulgaria and Bessarabia, as well as in urban milieux such as Eger, Ljubljana, Dubrovnik and Cluj. The term “long nineteenth century” is justified by one paper on the first half of the eighteenth, and one on the situation after the First World War; but the core focus of the volume is on the period 1850–1914.

The book is divided into three parts, respectively, on functional and administrative elites; marriage, kinship and elite formation; and political elites and networks. Each part showcases three or four case studies. In Part I, Sabine Jesner writes about the Habsburg military and economic administrators operating in the Banat of Temesvar in the first half of the eighteenth century; Klára Hulíková Tešárková, Martin Klečacký, and Alice Velková about the district captains of Bohemia from 1875 to 1910; and Szilárd Ferenczi about the municipal elite of Kolozsvár/Cluj in roughly the same period. In Part II, Irena Selišnik and Ana Cergol Paradiž investigate marriage

patterns in late nineteenth-century Laibach/Ljubljana; Aleksandra Vuletić analyzes marriage and family structure in Serbia, with an eye to broader social dynamics; Anita Berecz looks at the kinship ties of local council members in Eger, Hungary; while Judit Pál and Vlad Popovici consider the links between family ties and parliamentary elections in Transylvania. In Part III, Jonathan Kwan provides a new analysis on the formation of the Constitutional Party in Austria; Oliver Panichi on Catholic Serbs in Austrian Dubrovnik; and Dobrinka Parusheva on power networks in turn-of-the-century Bulgaria. Svetlana Suveica's chapter concludes this part with an analysis of Bessarabian Russian networks in post-Versailles Europe.

All the contributions are based on thorough research, often using new archival sources, and many are original reconstructions of elite circles, parties and networks hitherto little known to scholars. Of particular interest is the relation between the parts—for example, how emerging urban social hierarchies relate to kinship practices and strategies, and how in turn this affected the formation of political groupings.

The volume is to be admired for its regional diversity. The reader is left genuinely impressed with the various and detailed reconstructions of elite activity in different municipalities, principalities, and provinces. In general, the focus is on middle-ranking elites at the province or city level: we do not encounter too many archdukes, generals, or archbishops. This is true of locations too: there is hardly anything on the big cities of the region, whether Vienna, Budapest, or Istanbul. I would have been interested to read more about the dissemination of models of politics, administration, and family structures across the different spaces covered in this book. The opening study by Jesner gives a good understanding of center-periphery power relations in the early eighteenth-century Habsburg Banat; and the closing one by Suveica shows a transnational network of Bessarabian elites making a case for their province in Versailles and elsewhere in 1919 and after. But I wondered in other cases whether there was a similar dynamic at play, or whether the various case studies do not lend themselves to generalization on this point. It could also have been useful to include some analysis of smaller spaces, be they distribution of elites in urban or rural districts or even organization of domestic space within elite households, at a time when the public/private divide was configured differently and had consequences for access to power and class relations. Gender issues receive strong attention in the chapter by Selišnik and Paradiž, but are not really taken into consideration elsewhere. Otherwise, the volume is a fine example of painstaking research clearly expounded, and shows well the links between social history and political dynamics in modern central and eastern Europe.

## **Ed. Reima Välimäki. *Medievalism in Finland and Russia: Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Aspects.***

**New Directions in Medieval Studies. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022. xxiv, 238 pp. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Figures. Tables. Maps. \$85.00, hard bound.**

Teemu Oivo

University of Eastern Finland  
Email: [teemu.oivo@helsinki.fi](mailto:teemu.oivo@helsinki.fi)

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The book *Medievalism in Finland and Russia* aims to contribute to international medievalist studies with less researched national cases to help establish medievalist studies in these