

useful contribution to our knowledge of a period which might be characterized as the twilight of tradition-bound Hungary in the emotionally charged atmosphere of the prewar years.

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IMRÉDY BÉLA ÉS A MAGYAR MEGÚJULÁS PÁRTJA. By Péter Sipos.  
Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970. 261 pp. 56 Ft.

During the past five to six years the historians of Eastern Europe have undertaken a more detailed study of the popular and bourgeois fascist movements. Nowhere is this process more advanced than in Hungary, as this book by Professor Sipos illustrates. Although it contains little that is new about Imrédy and his political activity, the book is significant for its objective treatment of the subject. The Horthy regime is not dealt with as a single entity—a “counterrevolutionary, fascist system”—and is not labeled categorically as “fascist.” Clear distinctions are made between the archconservatives (Horthy and Bethlen and their followers) and the déclassé malcontents of the “middle-class Hungarian gentlemen” (the followers of Gömbös and later Imrédy) who proposed a fascist solution. Another important line is drawn between the bourgeois fascists and the proletarian fascist movement of the Arrow-Cross under Szálasi.

Unfortunately the use of the term “demagoguery” to refer to any quest for social justice other than a Communist one, and “Lumpenelements” as the definition of those proletarians who answer such an incongruent appeal, still persists, even though this would make the mass appeal of the Arrow-Cross incomprehensible. There is little reference to Szálasi’s (until 1944) intransigent Hungarian patriotism, which foiled his cooperation with the Germans. Sipos dwells rather on the accommodating attitude of Hubay, who was thrown out of the Arrow-Cross because of it.

On the positive side, the social analysis of Imrédy’s supporters, though not radically new, is well documented and detailed for the first time. Another amply documented, if not edifying, revelation is that Imrédy’s main support came not so much from Trianon Hungary as from the Hungarian bourgeoisie of the territories “regained” from Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, and above all from the opportunistic Hungarian bourgeoisie of Transylvania, indeed the mainstay of Imrédy’s support.

A great drawback of Sipos’s work is that it ends essentially with the year 1941 and does not treat in detail the unfolding of Imrédist activities during the decisive years 1942, 1943, and 1944. Imrédy’s party cooperated with the Germans through E. Veessenmayer more than any other political group; they practically invited the German occupation of March 1944; they were the essence of the collaborationist government which was formed later; the Imrédist bear the bulk of responsibility for the anti-Jewish horrors and for the treasonable information furnished the Germans about any attempt to extricate Hungary from the Holocaust; they closed ranks with Szálasi in October 1944. In these efforts they were generously supported by the large number of opportunistic “fellow travelers” of Imrédy’s brand of fascism in the Government Party—who only because of expediency did not join Imrédy openly. Reményi-Schneller) together with Horthy or Kállay or Bethlen as “Government Not to point this out clearly, and to lump these people (such as L. Szász and L.

Party" (MÉP), is mistaken. This distinction has to be made in order to understand the events of 1942–44—and Imrédy's role in them.

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THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION. By *David Pryce-Jones*. New York: Horizon Press, 1970. 127 pp. \$4.95.

This book is essentially a pictorial chronicle. Numerous photographs showing crowds milling in the streets, Soviet tanks in action, scenes of fighting, key personalities, and so on, convey the drama and agony of the unequal struggle; the text provides a running commentary. The longest chapter (pp. 61–103) is devoted to a day-by-day account of the two weeks of Hungary's revolutionary upheaval (October 23 to November 4, 1956). This central section is surrounded by shorter chapters dealing with the antecedents and the aftermath of the revolutionary crisis up to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968.

A short picture book, of course, offers little scope for exploring the social and political background of the events described and illustrated. Accordingly, the pre-Communist period receives only summary treatment, but the reader is given at least a glimpse of the main issues facing Hungarian society. Developments since 1956 are dealt with even more sketchily, so that the specific character of the Kádár regime does not come through at all. It is different with the central part, devoted to the revolutionary crisis itself. This section not only conveys the drama of mounting social and political tension with its denouement in a shattering climax, it also shows in some detail how one thing led to another. Mr. Pryce-Jones has a good grasp of the general conditions as well as the contingent circumstances determining the course of events. Thus he properly stresses the importance of the Soviet-Yugoslav rift and of the succession crisis following Stalin's death in explaining the mounting difficulties encountered by the Hungarian and other Communist-bloc regimes during the 1950s. The strength of nationalism as a political factor is also brought out clearly.

The narrative is punctuated by well-chosen, brief quotations from prominent as well as anonymous participants in the revolutionary events. Thus we get a good idea of the mounting radicalism of the masses, forcing Imre Nagy to go farther in defying the Soviets than he had intended. In this connection, however, some crucial historical details remain in the dark—inevitably so, since the key data are not available.

Why did the Soviets intervene? Pryce-Jones singles out the Suez crisis as the main determining factor, but this may well be doubted. The abolition of the one-party system may have carried more weight: had the Soviets let this decision stand, their whole Central European position might have become untenable. Pryce-Jones, however, does not go into the radical political implications of the abandonment of one-party rule. He only speaks of the "coalition" government formed by Nagy, without pointing out how different this was from the "coalition" devices adopted by the Communists at earlier times. Thus we are left with a fragmentary picture, but even so the book does give an evocative, searching record of one of the most tragic episodes in recent history.

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