

KÖNIGTUM UND STÄNDE IN UNGARN IM 14.–16. JAHRHUNDERT. By *János M. Bak*. Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa, vol. 6. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1973. vii, 195 pp. DM 36, paper.

This first book, by a Hungarian-born Canadian scholar and professor of history at the University of British Columbia, is the result of intensive research in late medieval Hungarian history which Bak began with his Göttingen dissertation in 1962. It shows a thorough grasp of the sources, historiography, and problem areas of the subject. In fact, the introduction, notes, and appendixes, which make up one-third of the book, serve as the best available introduction to the period for those who do not read Hungarian. Appendix 2 is an especially fine survey of medieval Hungarian coronation ceremonies and is in the best tradition of the author's mentor, the late Percy Ernst Schramm.

The book's main theme concerns the development of the Hungarian *ständestaat* between 1301 and 1547. The arrangement is chronological, except for the last chapter where Bak argues convincingly that Stephan Werböczy's "doctrine of the holy crown" (1514)—which in later centuries acquired almost mystical veneration—had its origin in the late medieval struggles between king and estates. In analyzing the development of the *ständestaat*, Professor Bak combines political, constitutional, and institutional history with careful interpretation of the changing meaning of terms such as king, kingdom, crown, and community—crucial terms for an understanding of the late medieval state.

Hopefully, this valuable work will be published in English. A new edition might include the promised (p. 95, n. 6) comparative study of Eastern European states, further editing, translations of the twenty Latin documents, and a subject index.

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URAM, KIRÁLYOM . . . : A XV. SZÁZADI MAGYARORSZÁG HATALMASAI. By *Erik Fügedi*. Budapest: Gondolat, 1974. 253 pp. Illus. 57 Ft.

Hungarian historical bibliography is enriched by the publication of Erik Fügedi's interesting book. The title of the book, which in English translation means "My lord, my king," immediately suggests certain reservations and prejudices to the reader. However, as the author explains, the title is not really historical, but only a motto, which symbolizes the order and state concept of old Hungary. Fügedi's goal is research and analysis of the state system and the leading class of the Hungarian kingdom of the fifteenth century. In the introduction, he gives a general picture of the political, social, and economic life of fifteenth-century Hungary, and immediately directs the reader into the analysis of the country's administrative system. The symbol of the state, and the most important person, was the king. Without him there was no kingdom. For this reason, the author analyzes broadly the king's moral and legal position, his coronation, his curia, and court. Administrative sections of the state—for example, the church hierarchy and the nobility—are also examined.

The book is very informative. The author knows his material, his presentation is clear, and his arguments are persuasive. He strives for objectivity and does not base his explanations solely on Marxist-Leninist criticism of medieval society. The

author also includes some significant statistical tables, demographic diagrams, maps, and photographs portraying the Magyar kingdom of the fifteenth century. It is a pity, however, that the author did not write this book on a strict scholarly basis. He uses many quotations without identifying sources or bibliographic data. He rarely uses footnotes and only for the more important documents and translations. He only notes works of the most significant authors, like Holub, Karacsonyi, Fraknoi, and Malyusz, neglecting to mention the books of authors whose works are less important, but valuable contributions to the literature of that age. Finally, while asserting his interest in the fifteenth century as a whole, he focuses on the reigns of three particular kings: Vladislaus I (1440–44), Ladislaus V (1445–57) and Matthias Corvinus (1458–90).

This generally well-balanced and well-written book makes a useful contribution to the study of fifteenth-century Hungarian history.

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A SZÉP MAGYAR KÖNYV 1473/1973: AZ ÖTSZÁZ ÉVES MAGYAR KÖNYVMŰVÉS ZET KÉPESKÖNYVE. By *Tibor Szántó*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1974. 629 pp. 125 Ft.

The book under review is a historical document of the five hundred years of book printing in Hungary. From the beginning, book printing involved high caliber artistic creation, exemplified in the formal development of engraving, typesetting and composition. The volume is, therefore, neither a work of literary history nor a history of books produced in Hungary in the period 1473–1973, but rather is an extraordinary collection which brings to the eye of the reader selected examples of artistic achievement in print and other forms of impression. These examples include eminently beautiful cover pages, bindings, and illustrations.

Matthias Corvinus, the last national king of Hungary, brought book printing to that country in 1473. The establishment of the printing shop at Buda is regarded both as a cultural and a political event. The introduction of printing stimulated interest in books and created a wider demand for them. Despite increased production, however, the book long remained a work of art reflecting the spirit of the historical period in which it was created.

Gutenberg and the printers following him probably did not intend to make “books” in today’s sense of the word. Their mission was to replace the handwritten codices and to change their external appearance, proportions and ornamentation. Book production in the age of Matthias Corvinus is best characterized by richly ornamented codices bound in silk and gold.

The volume contains 532 items, beginning with the “*Chronica Hungarorum*” printed in Buda by Andreas Hess in 1473. Two hundred sixty-seven books were printed in Hungarian shops from 1473 to 1523, but this promising beginning was abruptly halted by the Turkish conquest of parts of Hungary including Buda. During the Reformation, Hungarian book printing was resumed under Habsburg control, and print shops, supported by the church and by private interests, were also established in the independent principality of Transylvania. Under these conditions, a typical Hungarian form of typesetting developed slowly. However, by the sixteenth century, book production reached about nine hundred volumes.