

The author does present lively portraits of the leading members of the imperial family. Empress Elisabeth emerges as a beautiful but frigid neurotic with lesbian tendencies. Her son Rudolf is a suicidal psychopath. Archduke Franz Ferdinand, a pigheaded bigot, almost deserves to be assassinated. The most appealing figure among these hapless blue bloods is the emperor himself, toiling at his royal chores with a Spartan discipline relieved only by moments of bourgeois domesticity in the company of his beloved Katherina Schrott. The book is especially effective in depicting the dramatic, the sentimental, or the sensational. The chapter on the tragedy at Mayerling, for example, is gripping. The account of the murder of the empress is sure to move even the hard-boiled. The description of the Redl affair will titillate the reader, while the events at Sarajevo will sadden him. The best section deals with Austrian, or rather with Viennese culture. Here the author is in his proper milieu, skillfully portraying the writers, musicians, painters, and scientists who endowed the doomed capital with such artistic and intellectual vibrancy.

The basic weakness of the book lies in its inadequate treatment of the vital political and social questions confronting the empire. The center of the stage is monopolized by Vienna and the Viennese. Even the Hungarians appear as little more than dashing magnates dressed in picturesque costumes and speaking an unintelligible tongue. As for the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Ruthenians, Rumanians, Croats, and Slovenes, they are shadowy figures somewhere in the background, driven by vague resentments and obscure aspirations. The nationality problem, so central to the history of the Habsburg realm, is barely mentioned. The forces of industrialization, urbanization, and democratization, which were undermining the agrarian and authoritarian structure of society in Central Europe at the time, are dismissed with casual allusions or picturesque generalities. Those readers who are interested in the lives, loves, and sorrows of the beautiful people of a hundred years ago will find in this book just what they are looking for, told with verve and imagination. But those seeking an understanding of the fundamental issues which faced the Austria of Franz Joseph and Elisabeth had better turn elsewhere.

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EÖTVÖS JÓZSEF OLVASMÁNYAI. By *Miklós Bényei*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972. 231 pp. 22 Ft.

JOSEPH EÖTVÖS AND THE MODERNIZATION OF HUNGARY, 1840–1870. By *Paul Bódy*. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1972. 134 pp. \$5.00.

The recent upsurge of interest in Baron József Eötvös (1813–71), Hungarian liberal statesman, political thinker and novelist, was undoubtedly intensified by the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of his death in 1971. Often dubbed a *doctrinaire*—a term that is more disparaging and less humorous in Hungarian than its modern American equivalent, *egghead*—Eötvös spent his life expiating the sins of his class, and particularly of his family, whose unbroken tradition of providing servile civil servants to the Habsburg crown brought its name into disrepute. For a long time Eötvös seemed to be largely the property of literary scholarship, and not without reason. His novels possess remarkable artistic qualities, and at

least one of them, *The Village Notary*, a panoramic portrayal of Hungarian society in the 1840s, is a masterpiece (in which significant Victorian critics found the constructive perfection of Fielding, the lifelike coloring of Walter Scott, and the graphic touch of Dickens, when it was published in English in 1850).

His political ideas, like those of his fellow Centralists—the name was not applied because of the political position they occupied (between the conservatives and the radical followers of Kossuth), but rather because of their resolute efforts to increase the power of central authority over local administration (*megyes*), a policy they believed to be prerequisite to successful reform—never gained much support. He was criticized by contemporaries for relegating the cause of national independence to second place and by later critics for the comparative lack of influence his ideas had on Hungarian political thinking. On the other hand, Marxist scholars, until quite recently, have also found fault with Eötvös because, like Széchenyi, he never claimed to be a radical, let alone a revolutionary.

The portrait that emerges from György Szabad's speech, "Eötvös József a politika útjain," delivered at the commemorative session of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1971, and published with extensive notes in *Századok*, deserves mention here as an introduction to the two volumes under review. Szabad successfully surveys Eötvös's career, from his debut in the political arena as an ardent champion of liberal opposition (seeking thorough reform and envisaging a stable state capable of preserving these reforms) to the tired and overworked minister, who, after the Settlement of 1867, saw his schemes frustrated. Mr. Szabad argues that Eötvös, in spite of reservations, supported dualism because he was unable to perceive the contradiction in the external and internal forces which were ultimately responsible for its birth.

Miklós Bényei's painstaking examination of the literature that influenced Eötvös's intellectual development deserves high praise. Eötvös read in five languages and, fortunately, his library was preserved. Bényei divides Eötvös's library collection into five categories—fiction, philosophy, history, political science, and natural science—and discusses each category in detail. Evidence is offered by the author to support Eötvös's competence in philosophy (sometimes questioned) and his surprising proficiency in the natural sciences.

Paul Bódy's book is also an ambitious undertaking. He sets out to examine Eötvös's career in the broader context of the modernization of Hungary. The work, a revised version of his Ph.D. thesis (1964), utilizes some unpublished documents and successfully explores many of Eötvös's accomplishments. Understandably, Bódy does not deal with Eötvös's literary work, except to call *The Village Notary*, in a somewhat patronizing manner, "his best-known literary effort" (p. 43), and to make a questionable reference to "the Hungarian language now refined by Kazinczy from the original popular idiom" (p. 17).

Bódy's main concern, however, is Eötvös the political thinker and social reformer (although within this context the relevance of the novels is apparent). In sketching the Centralists, he compares their ideas to those of Kossuth and his followers, arguing convincingly that on all practical issues the Centralists' position was better conceived. This, in turn, indicates the Centralists' strong theoretical foundation—which Bódy attributes primarily to the influence of Guizot, Sismondi and Tocqueville. However, Bódy contends that Eötvös's basic tenet, complete social transformation without violence, was psychologically motivated, stemming from his background and childhood experiences.

The author's only digression is the chapter on the revolution of 1848–49, essential for a better understanding of Eötvös's career both before and after this period. Although he took little part in the events, the account of the revolution illustrates well the differences between his position and that of Kossuth. Perhaps the best part of the book is the section devoted to what Mr. Bödy has to say about Eötvös's critique of nationalism. Not only is Eötvös placed in a broader East European context (for example, comparison to Palacky's doctrine on nationality), but the growing intellectual isolation of Eötvös, the minister, is also linked, in an excellent analysis, to the twilight of Hungarian liberalism.

Bödy's book is a major contribution to the extensive Eötvös literature. Unfortunately, however, even Mr. Bödy does not seem to be aware of D. Mervyn Jones's penetrating and meticulous textual analysis of Eötvös's chief theoretical work, *The Dominant Ideas of the 19th Century and their Influence on the State (1851–54)*.

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A MAGYARORSZÁGI SZOCIÁLDEMOKRATA PÁRT ÉS AS AGRÁR-KÉRDÉS—1900 ÉS 1914 KÖZÖTT. By *Dezső Farkas*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973.

A MAGYARORSZÁGI SZOCIÁLDEMOKRATA PÁRT ELLENZÉKE ÉS TEVÉKENYSÉGE, 1906–1911. By *Lajos Varga*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973.

Contemporary Marxist historians in Hungary have an avid interest in the period between the 1890s and 1914, a period that exhibited agrarian unrest in a countryside characterized by the extremes of landless millions and giant estates and the struggle of a majority of peasant landowners to survive on tiny, uneconomical plots. This period also witnessed the birth and growth of the Hungarian Social Democratic Party which, however, was primarily concerned with socialist education and organization of industrial workers in the cities.

The books by Dezső Farkas and Lajos Varga deal respectively with the agrarian position of the party and with its overall political tactics. Both are critical of the Social Democratic leadership, which, torn between faithful adherence to orthodox Marxism and the realities of a primarily agrarian country, alternated between emphasis on revolutionary rhetoric, strikes and demonstrations and a policy of compromises and negotiated deals.

The critical approach is certainly warranted in the case of the party's agrarian policy, described by Farkas in a thorough, scholarly, and well-documented, though somewhat dry manner. This well-organized book presents a methodical survey of views on the agrarian issue, including those of the party's opponents. But the emphasis is heavily on the arguments themselves, at the expense of the human drama involved in the agonizing ambivalence of the party leadership toward the peasantry. Nevertheless, the book focuses sharply on the confusion of opinions in the party, the doctrinaire rigidity of most leaders, and their inexcusable blindness to the real needs of millions of impoverished peasants.

Farkas's criticism is basically sound and valid in the theoretical sphere. It does not deal with the methods and tactics actually used by the party in the countryside. Such an omission, whether intentional or accidental, saves his book from the