

opposing them on the other side of the frontier, and, on the other hand, with the princes of Transylvania. This correspondence constitutes first-rate source material concerning not only the everyday problems of the province under occupation, as well as of the frontier territory (military conflicts even in times of peace, taxation, transit commerce, and so forth), but also the political relations of the two great powers.

The letters of the pashas of Buda, written mostly in Hungarian (even if addressed to one of the Viennese officials), are to be found in great numbers in the Austrian and Hungarian archives. Their publication started about half a century ago, when 451 letters written between 1553 and 1589 appeared in the volume compiled by Sándor Takáts, Ferenc Eckhart, and Gyula Szekfű: *A budai basák magyar nyelvű levelezése* (Budapest, 1915). The venture, however, was not continued. The fact that Takáts quoted many passages from later letters as well, in his numerous books dealing with this period, could not fill the gap. It is the continuation of this initiative that Gustav Bayerle has now undertaken. His present volume contains 107 letters written by the pashas of Buda in the years 1590–93. The letters are published in their original Hungarian text, but with English summaries. The reader finds himself in a period when the relations between the Habsburg and Turkish empires, previously more or less consolidated in spite of recurrent disputes, are becoming gradually more tense. The dark shadow of the long Fifteen Years' War (1593–1606), which was to ruin Hungary in unprecedented measure, can be seen approaching. The correspondence is less frequent. The letters contain more self-justification, more threats. They try to conceal the military preparations.

The publication is exemplary. The texts are flawless. The introduction, though short, gives all the essential information. For the sake of completeness we should like to mention that two further unpublished letters of Sinan Pasha to Chief Commander Miklós Pálffy (1591) are to be found in the manuscript department of the National Széchényi Library, Budapest (Fol. Hung. 431).

F. SZAKÁLY
Budapest

HUNGARY IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: THE DECLINE OF ENLIGHTENED DESPOTISM. By Béla K. Király. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1969. xi, 295 pp. \$9.75.

The frustrated teacher of East European history, struggling with the limitations imposed by the scarcity of English-language literature in his field and the poor quality of much of it, is apt to welcome new works with gratitude. In his introduction Király rightly notes that Henrik Marczali's *Hungary in the Eighteenth Century* (1910) is now out of date as well as difficult to obtain. Király's book therefore fills a definite need.

It is disappointing to have to point out a number of puzzling shortcomings. Although the bibliography is excellent and up to date, in the text the author apparently eschewed much of the recent literature on the East European Enlightenment, electing to base most of his work on a handful of outdated if often excellent secondary works in Hungarian. Sources most frequently referred to are such standard works as Hóman-Szekfű's history of Hungary (1935–36), Béla Grünwald's *A régi Magyarország, 1711–1825* (1888), and Marczali himself. Király fails to explain

what impelled him to ignore many excellent and pioneering works by East European and Western scholars.

The author's apparent unawareness of new data and interpretations of this period has led him to perpetuate a number of errors which have been handed down by generation after generation of Hungarian historians. Thus he states (citing as his source Acsády's book on Hungarian serfdom, published in 1910) that Hungary's population in 1711 had dropped to an incredibly low two and a half million. Although the bibliography cites a recent work edited by József Kovacsics, *Magyarország történeti demográfiája* (1963), which exploded the myth that exaggerated the devastation caused by the Turkish conquest of Hungary, the text ignores this revision altogether. Király ignores recent debates about the meaning of Josephinism in the Habsburg lands, and neglects the problems of the complex motivations of Leopold II, Joseph's enigmatic and ambivalent successor, and the Hungarian Jacobin movement whose failure marked the end of enlightened despotism in the Habsburg monarchy. The author's attempts to justify these lacunae are unconvincing, and his cut-off date of 1790 is unacceptable.

Király's account of the rich literary revival of the period is based on secondary sources, rather than on his own analysis of the literature of the Hungarian Enlightenment—a lively, stimulating, and seminal period of Hungarian history. At the same time he is to be commended for his excellent account of social classes and relations in this still underdeveloped country, and on his elucidation of the complex political and constitutional relations in a Hungary possessed of an anachronistic political and constitutional structure upon which the Habsburgs attempted to impose a more Western or, if you like, "enlightened despotism."

Perhaps the book's greatest fault is its lack of new interpretations and its failure to throw light on the significance and impact of the French and German Enlightenment on an underdeveloped society.

It is an unhappy duty to point out these weaknesses in a highly welcome and useful work. Yet if American scholarship is to compete with the vast erudition and incisive analytical insights of European scholars working in the same area, such as Professors Silagi, Benda, et al., we may have to do some soul-searching regarding the quality of training and the values of our academic system. These methods encourage and even force scholars to publish semifinished books, when additional research, editing, and polishing would result in a genuine contribution to scholarship.

MARIAN A. LOW
John Jay College, CUNY

VÁROSAINK MÚLTJA ÉS JELENE. By *Kálmán Eperjessy*. Budapest: Műszaki Könyvkiadó, 1971. 308 pp. 44 Ft.

By the end of World War II the writing of local history in East Central Europe was in many instances colored by local patriotism. The overwhelming majority of local historians were not professionally trained scholars, nor were they able to apply up-to-date methodology. Professor Kálmán Eperjessy (b. 1893) is one of the few historians who have not succumbed to such rather political motivations. Since the closing years of the twenties he has devoted his unstinted energy to local historiography, conducting research in Vienna and Budapest as well as in many