

COMENIUS AND HUNGARY: ESSAYS. Edited by *Éva Földes* and *István Mészáros*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1973. Illus. 240 pp. \$11.00.

In November 1970, as part of the world-wide celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of Comenius's death, the Pedagogical Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian National Commission of UNESCO organized a commemorative conference entitled "Comenius and Hungary." The resulting volume is the first in a Western language to deal with Comenius's work at Sárospatak, where the Czech-Moravian educator lived between 1650 and 1654 and where he first had the opportunity to put some of his pansophic ideas into practice. It represents the work of German, Czechoslovak, and Hungarian scholars.

As a volume, *Comenius and Hungary* suffers from the well-known ills of a conference format. The articles are uneven: some are excellent scholarly contributions; others are no more than polite generalities suitable for such an occasion. Moreover, the organization of the volume is somewhat confusing. The reader might find it helpful to begin with István Mészáros's "On the History of the Sárospatak School in the 15th and 16th Centuries," to continue with "Comenius's School Reforms at Sárospatak" by Lajos Orosz, to follow this with the more specialized studies, and to conclude with Erzsébet Ladányi's "The Graduates of the Sárospatak School in the Time of Comenius."

The two thoughtful, well-researched articles by the editors of this volume deserve special mention. Mészáros's study dispels the mistaken notion that prior to Comenius's arrival the school of Sárospatak was a collection of almost illiterate students—that no reform had touched the school of the Rákóczi, the princely family of Transylvania. Éva Földes's imaginative work on the possible connection between the Anabaptists of Sárospatak and Comenius's educational ideas is intriguing though speculative.

In sum, this volume, although at times in a confusing manner, will help to evaluate Sárospatak's place in Comenius's lifework: its importance in the practical application of Comenius's theoretical ideas.

EVA S. BALOGH  
*Yale University*

HILFSVÖLKER UND GRENZWÄCHTER IM MITTELALTERLICHEN UNGARN. By *Hansgerd Göckenjan*. Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des östlichen Europa, no. 5. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1972. x, 261 pp. DM 38, paper.

Notions such as "no man's land" or "strike force" are modern, but the strategic realities they represent are as old as the idea of ethnic self-defense, as Mr. Göckenjan's book shows in the case of the medieval Hungarian border guards. They existed before the conquest of the Danube basin; their guarding of the medieval frontiers was a survival of ancestral patterns once employed in southern Russia. In the steppes the only natural obstacle was distance. An artificially ravaged zone was therefore created between the Hungarian tribes and their hostile surroundings. Any possible entrances to the defended area were entrusted to people who belonged to immigrant tribes, which was a specific status that remained marginal to the established social system.

Steppe defense patterns having thus been transplanted to the Danube basin, a first iron curtain fell between the post-Carolingian Western world and the newly