

types of births, and how this imagery not only was apparent in scientific texts, like William Harvey's *Exercitationes de Generatione Animalium*, but also in the poetry of John Milton. Thus, Gilbert does not separate science from art or from religion, but, instead, shows her readers how scientists like Harvey drew from Judeo-Christian imagery and Greek mythology to describe scientific productions and how literary authors like Milton lent their voices to the use of birth as a symbol for intellectual creativity.

Unfortunately, some authors who contributed to this collection were unable to write simply and clearly, and, as a result, they lost their reading audience. In order to describe a work as truly interdisciplinary, it must hold the attention of many different readers and avoid jargon that is discipline specific. Individuals who read *The Arts of 17th-Century Science* may decide to skip these selections, and enjoy the essays that speak to them. That decision would not be unwise because, as a whole, the book is greater than some of its individual parts.

Agnes R. Varkonyi. *Europica varietas–Hungarica variatas 1526-1762*. Budapest: Akademi Kiado, 2000. 302 pp. \$62.00. Review by HUGO LANE, POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, BROOKLYN, NY.

As the Latin title suggests, this book is a collection of essays about Europe and Hungary from 1526, the year of the Battle of Mohacs, when the Hungarians came under Habsburg rule, to 1762, the year before Joseph II was elected Holy Roman Emperor. Subjects covered in the book range from the relationship between the end of witchcraft prosecutions and public health in eighteenth-century Hungary to efforts by Hungary, and later Transylvania, to win European wide support during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. In addition, there is a closing essay entitled "An Undivided Europe?" that makes clear that Varkonyi sees her work

as testimony to Hungary's current claim to be included in the new Europe being created by the European Union.

By far the most interesting of all these articles is "Public Healing and Witchcraft" in which she discusses the important role folk healers, mostly women, played in Hungarian society even though they could be subjected to trials as witches. As elsewhere in Europe such trials dropped off in the early eighteenth century, but what is particularly intriguing is how Varkonyi then relates how well-intentioned new laws intended to limit medical treatment to doctors, surgeons, and midwives did not end up providing adequate health service to most Hungarians. Thus lay healers, now freed from prosecution as witches, continued to play an important role in health care in Hungary.

Unfortunately, this piece is atypical of the essays in this book and seems to have been included as further means to demonstrate Hungary's strong connection with Western Europe, which is the main theme of this book. This is a well-worn concern among Eastern or East Central European societies. Still, the essays in the book, by showing that seeds of that division can be found from the beginning of early modern times, provide ample evidence that the division between Eastern and Western Europe was not a phenomenon originating in the Enlightenment Europe. Thus, while Varkonyi makes it clear that Hungarians knew the works of Erasmus, Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius), Hugo Grotius and others, Hungarians' efforts to use the concept of European unity propagated by these writers to win support against the Ottoman invasion had little effect. We also learn how, once the Ottomans had retreated, Hungarians sought to use international diplomacy to win recognition for Hungary and Transylvania as separate independent states.

Non-specialists in the region likely do not realize how much attention the plight of the Hungarians received among the English and the French over time. Yet against Varkonyi's intentions, her research shows that while a few influential figures in those countries concerned themselves with Hungary's plight, when it came to actually making diplomatic and military decisions, the fate of Chris-

tian Hungary under Ottoman rule mattered little. Thus, the French never gave up their alliance with the Muslim Ottoman Empire in order to unite with the Habsburgs to save Hungary from Ottoman rule. Even when the French did demonstrate some diplomatic support by bringing the separate Hungarian principality of Transylvania into the negotiations of the Treaty of Westphalia as an ally, they did so only at the last minute and expressly as an ally of the French, not as an independent state.

Similarly, while Varkonyi's argument that there was a pro-Hungarian party in England at the time of the War of Spanish Succession is doubtlessly correct, English perceptions of Hungary's significance seem always to have been driven by English interests. As she herself admits, the Duke of Marlborough's concern about the Hungarian cause was directly related to his desire to have the Habsburg troops, then poised to attack the principality of Transylvania, shifted westward to fight the French. Moreover, when the English saw a chance for a separate peace with France they took it, thwarting Prince Ferenc II Rakoczy's plans to use an international conference to end the War of Spanish Succession as a means to secure Hungarian and Transylvanian independence. As result, Hungary and Transylvania came under Habsburg rule with only limited concessions to their respective political elites.

For Varkonyi, the lesson for Western Europe is clear. Including Hungary in European international system and taking Hungary's commitment to European unity and European values like religious tolerance seriously are essential for the future security of Europe. But even if specialists in East Central Europe would be sympathetic to that belief, as well as with her assertion that Western Europeans learn more about their Eastern neighbors, this book does little for her cause on three counts. First, given that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were relatively peaceful periods, the notion that Europeans lost a great deal by not paying more heed to Hungarian interests at the outset of the eighteenth century does not stand up to scrutiny. (Even if the twentieth century was not, it is hard to accept that this can be explained by not taking Hungary more seriously in the seventeenth and eighteenth centu-

ries.) Second, the implicit suggestion that the French and English strategic thinking on a global scale made the Hungarian cause a regular consideration in their diplomacy comes off as incredible. If anything, it suggests that Hungarians have as much to learn about Western European history, as Western Europeans and Americans have to learn about East Central Europe. Finally, for a work meant to increase awareness of a neglected region, strangely little attention is given to some basic essentials. There is no guidance for the pronunciation of Hungarian names, and considerable background information about political relations among the other East Central and Eastern European states during the early modern period is assumed. Biographical and contextual information for the Hungarian figures she focuses on is usually assumed, making it harder to appreciate their significance. Consequently, insights about how the Hungarians understood what it meant to be European in early modern Europe are not as easy for non-Hungarian specialists to grasp as they ought to. Still, if the book does not do what it aimed to, it is good to have these essays available in English, and perhaps they will inspire specialists in early modern, French, English, and Habsburg history to look at the Hungarian question in these countries in a new way.