

ELTE Summer University

Central Europe as a distinct historical region in Europe: a legal and political science introduction

Organizer: Balázs Fekete (ELTE Faculty of Law Department of Socio-Legal Studies)

Schedule

	Monday 02.08.	Tuesday 03.08.	Wednesday 04.08.	Thursday 05.08.	Friday 06.08.
		Central Europe as a Historical Region	Central European Political Cultures	Welfare Regimes in Central Europe	Central Europe and EU Law
10.30- 12.00	10.00 Opening	Miklós Lojkó <i>The concept and reality of Central Europe from 1700 to 1918</i>	Krisztina Arató <i>Political Identity in Central and Eastern Europe</i>	Sára Hungler <i>Introduction to the European Social Model and EU social policy</i>	Éva Gellérné Lukács <i>Posted workers' rights from a CEE perspective</i>
13.00- 14.30	Alexandra Mercescu <i>Is There Such a Thing as Constitutional Identity?</i> (workshop)	Miklós Lojkó <i>The best and the worst of times: Independent Central Europe 1918-1945</i>	Boglárka Koller <i>European identity of CEE nationals</i>	Sára Hungler <i>Different welfare models in CEE countries</i>	Réka Somssich <i>Preliminary references from Central European countries</i>
14.45- 15.45		Miklós Lojkó <i>Dependence and interdependence in Central Europe, 1945 to 2010</i>	Thomas Lorman <i>Blind Eyes and Self-Interest: Great Britain and the Misinterpretation of Central Europe, 1918- 1990</i>	Sára Hungler <i>Case study: family policies in CEE countries</i>	Réka Somssich <i>Actions for annulment and infringements procedures from and against Central European countries</i>

Short description

There has been a certain tension between Central European governments and the bodies of the European Union due to various controversial issues in the last ten years. And, the Western public opinion have been using such terms as democratic backlash or the erosion of rule of law when discussing new Central European legal or political developments, while some Central European governments have frequently been claiming about the application of double standards with regard to their countries. This apparent disagreement may be due to the fact that the European Union may look as a homogenous entity from an external point of view, but the

existence of internal dividing lines is undeniable, too. A major internal dividing line is certainly the difference between the Western member states and the newly coming Central European ones. This summer university course is focused on studying certain important features of Central European legal and political cultures that back the division between the Western and the Central European parts of the European Union. Since one dimensional approaches can only have a little scholarly value with respect to such a complex issue, the course will integrate the discussion of historical, political and legal issues in order to provide the students with a complex and interdisciplinary approach. At the end of this course, students will certainly have a better understanding of those legal and political factors that make Central Europe a distinct legal and political entity as compared to other parts of the European Union.

Executive summary

This summer university course is focused on studying certain important features of Central European legal and political cultures that back the division between the Western and the Central European parts of the European Union. Since one dimensional approaches can only have a little scholarly value with respect to such a complex issue, the course will integrate the discussion of historical, political and legal issues in order to provide the students with a complex and interdisciplinary approach. At the end of this course, students will certainly have a better understanding of those legal and political factors that make Central Europe a distinct legal and political entity as compared to other parts of the European Union.

02.08. MONDAY: OPENING AND WORKSHOP

02.08. Monday 10.00 Opening

02.08. Monday 13.00-14.30

Is There Such a Thing as Constitutional Identity?

ALEXANDRA MERCESCU (WEST UNIVERSITY OF TIMISOARA) (ONLINE)

A prominent notion in comparative constitutional studies, constitutional identity has emerged as very controversial. Hailed as a shield against the aggressive expansion of federalism or as a useful weapon for the defence of human rights, the notion has equally been accused of denoting nationalism or dangerous essentialism. Drawing on examples from Central Europe, this workshop will interrogate the ideological, legal and political assumptions behind this notion, and it will do so against the background of global constitutionalism, that is the belief in a universal constitutional vocabulary. Thus, it will try to determine whether there is such a thing as constitutional identity and if so whether it can usefully operate in the realm of legal practice (constitutional adjudication).

Select readings

Angeli, Oliviero. 'Global Constitutionalism and Constitutional Imagination'. *Global Constitutionalism* 6, no. 3 (2017): 359–376.

Mercescu, Alexandra. 'Is There Generic Law? The Issue of Constitutionalism' in *Rethinking Comparative Law* ed. Simone Glanert, Alexandra Mercescu and Geoffrey Samuel. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2021 [forthcoming].

03.08. TUESDAY: CENTRAL EUROPE AS A HISTORICAL REGION

03.08. Tuesday 10.30-12.00

The concept and reality of Central Europe from 1700 to 1918

MIKLÓS LOJKÓ (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF HUMANITIES SCHOOL OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES)

As a politically or culturally significant phrase, Central Europe has not been around for a long time. Unlike the Mediterranean (largely Catholic and Orthodox) South and the (in modern times) Protestant North, it is not a classic region of the European political or even geographical narratives. This session will trace how, after the ideological convulsions of the Napoleonic wars, German and Czech intellectuals painted their nations into the centre of the European mental map. Question marks remained, however, where Central Europe really was (where do East and South-East begin?) and whether German, Slav or indeed Hungarian leadership would be more acceptable to the peoples of the region.

Select readings

Naumann, Friedrich. *Central Europe*. Translated by Christabel M. Meredith. London: P.S. King & Son, Limited, 1916.

Seton-Watson, R.W. *German, Slav and Magyar: A Study in the Origins of the Great War*. London: William and Norgate, 1916.

Szűcs, Jenő. 'The Three Historical Regions of Europe'. *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29, nos. 2–4 (1983): 131–84.

Garton Ash, Timothy. 'Does Central Europe Exist?' *The New York Review of Books*, October 9, 1986. <https://www.visegradgroup.eu/the-visegrad-book/ash-timothy-garton-does>

Garton Ash, Timothy. 'The Puzzle of Central Europe'. *The New York Review of Books*, March 18, 1999. <https://www.visegradgroup.eu/the-visegrad-book/ash-timothy-garton-the>

Just, Tony. 'The Rediscovery of Central Europe'. *Daedalus*, 119 no. 1 (1990): 23–54.

Rupnik, Jacques. 'Central Europe or *Mittleuropa*?' *Daedalus*, 119 no. 1 (1990): 249–78.

Wandycz, Piotr S. 'What's in a Name?' Introduction in *The Price of Freedom: A History of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

Johnson, Lonnie R. 'Where is Central Europe?' Introduction in *Central Europe: Enemies, Neighbors, Friends*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Péter, László. 'Central Europe and its Reading into the Past'. *European Review of History*, 6, no. 1 (1999): 101–111.

Pándi, Lajos, ed. *Köztes-Európa, 1763-1993 (Térképgyűjtemény)* [Middle Europe: A Historical Atlas]. Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 1997.

03.08. Tuesday 13.00-14.30

The best and the worst of times: Independent Central Europe 1918-1945

MIKLÓS LOJKÓ (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF HUMANITIES SCHOOL OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES)

It was the Versailles Peace Treaty of 1919 and its auxiliary treaties that made Central Europe into cast-iron geopolitical reality. As Naumann's Germanic *Central Europe* concept could not be contemplated in the aftermath of the Great War and fragmentation in the vast areas between Germany and Russia posed an evident threat to the peace of Europe, Great Britain, France and Italy attempted to foster new forms of integration under their own aegis during the first decade of the postwar era. Yet, no force could stop Germany from taking the lead in the region from the '30s, leading to a catastrophic endgame. Yet, these twenty-seven years also saw the tentative beginnings of understanding the necessity to reconcile the desire for independence in prosperity and the need for negotiated interdependence among the Central European nations.

Select readings

Seton-Watson, Hugh. *Eastern Europe Between the Wars, 1918-1941*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945.

Macartney, C.A., and A.W. Palmer. *Independent Eastern Europe*. New York: St Martin Press, 1962.

Palmer, Alan. *The Lands Between: A History of East-Central Europe since the Congress of Vienna*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970.

Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Historical Atlas of East Central Europe*. Vol. I of *A History of East Central Europe*, edited by Peter F. Sugar, and Donald W. Treadgold, Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 1993.

Lojkó, Miklós. *Meddling in Middle Europe: Britain and the 'Lands Between' 1919-1925*. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2006.

03.08. Tuesday 14.45-15.45

Dependence and interdependence in Central Europe, 1945 to 2010

MIKLÓS LOJKÓ (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF HUMANITIES SCHOOL OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES)

The iron casket of Soviet rule in East-Central Europe from 1948 to 1990 did not exactly offer negotiated interdependence among nations or even within the federal states of the region. Yet, especially at junctures like 1968, the concept of Central Europe ripened during this period among leading intellectuals and perhaps bound the mental ties closer together than ever before. It is no wonder that the Visegrád Group of countries (now known as the V4: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) was formed a few months after the fall of the Berlin Wall to encourage closer economic, cultural and even military cooperation among its members. In our age of populist (disintegrationist) politics and growing popular alienation from democratic institutions, does belonging to Central Europe still hold out the promise of economic progress, individual freedom and flourishing ethno-cultural diversity for the citizens of this region?

Select readings

Glenny, Misha. *The Rebirth of History: Eastern Europe in the Age of Democracy*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990.

Kirchner, Emil J. *Decentralization and Transition in the Visegrad: Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia*. Studies in Economic Transition, edited by Jens Hölscher, and Horst Tomann. London: Macmillan, 1999.

Bell, Imogen, ed. *Central and South-Eastern Europe 2002*. 2nd ed. London: Europa Publications Limited, 2001.

04.08. WEDNESDAY: CENTRAL EUROPEAN POLITICAL CULTURES

04.08. Wednesday 10.30-12.00

Political Identity in Central and Eastern Europe

KRISZTINA ARATÓ (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF LAW INSTITUTE OF POLITICAL SCIENCES)

To what extent does a common culture exist among the countries of Central and Eastern Europe? Are their worldviews relatively similar? And to what extent are their basic value systems compatible with those of the publics of western Europe?' These questions are posed in a study written by one of the most widely known political scientists, Ronald Inglehart. And indeed, these are our questions, too, in our seminar - as political culture relates not only to the institutional, not only to the policy level but the day to day understanding of peoples in the European Union.

Select reading

Inglehart, Ronald. 'East European Value Systems in Global Perspective'. In *Democracy and Political Culture in Eastern Europe*, edited by Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Dieter Fuchs, and Jan Zielonka, 67–84. London: Routledge, 2006.

04.08. Wednesday 13.00-14.30

European identity of CEE nationals

BOGLÁRKA KOLLER (NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT OF EUROPEAN STUDIES)

The lecture focuses on the current dilemmas of European identity in the CEE region by assessing the post-enlargement experiences in the EU. Is the civic component of European identity fading away in ECE countries? Do CEE citizens trust their European and national institutions? Who are "the others" for CEE citizens inside and outside its borders? Are there any commonalities and differences between CEE member-states with regard to identity formation patterns?

Select reading

Koller, Boglárka. Identity Patterns in East-Central Europe in a Comparative Perspective. *Journal of Comparative Politics* 9, no. 2 (2016): 85–98. <http://www.jofcp.org/assets/jcp/JCP-July-2016.pdf>

04.08. Wednesday 14.45-15.45

Blind Eyes and Self-Interest: Great Britain and the Misinterpretation of Central Europe, 1918-1990

THOMAS LORMAN (UCL SCHOOL OF SLAVONIC AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES) (ONLINE)

This class will look at three critical moments in Hungarian history, 1918, 1945 and 1990 and examine how British diplomats and politicians misunderstood what was happening. It will argue that a narrow idea of self-interest limited British involvement in Hungary, and wider

Central Europe, abandoning her friends and emboldening her enemies. In 1918 that failure emboldened the Bolsheviks, in 1945 it emboldened the Communists and in 1990 it emboldened the critics of the new pro-western reformist democracy.

Select readings

Bátonyi, Gabor. *Britain and Central Europe, 1918-1933*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. (See esp. chapter 8, R.W. Seton-Watson, and William Steed, 'The Twin Erinyes of Magyarism'. The whole of part 2 of this book, which focuses on Hungary, is also worth reading.)

Kertesz, Stephen D. *Between Russia and the West: Hungary and the Illusions of Peacemaking: 1945–1947*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984. (This book is dated but devastating. It is a superb read from a Hungarian diplomat who witnessed the tragedy first-hand.)

Becker, Andras. 'The Dynamics of British Official Policy towards Hungarian Revisionism, 1938–39'. *The Slavonic and East European Review* 93, no. 4 (October 2015): 655-691.

Schopflin, George. 'Conservatism and Hungary's Transition'. *Communism* 40, no. 1–2 (January 1991): 60.

Lojkó, Miklós. *Meddling in Middle Europe: Britain and the 'Lands Between' 1919-1925*. Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2006.

05.08. THURSDAY: WELFARE REGIMES IN CENTRAL EUROPE

05.08. Thursday 10.30-12.00

Introduction to the European Social Model and EU social policy

SÁRA HUNGLER (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF LAW DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR LAW AND SOCIAL LAW)

The European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) aims to set up key principles and rights capable of supporting fair and well-functioning labour markets with the ultimate goal of creating better-performing economies and more equitable societies. The major question for this summer school course is the following: What are the prospects of social integration under the EPSR in Central European countries? To predict scenarios for the prospect of social integration in the region first it is necessary to examine by a functional comparative method whether social and employment law institutions important for the EPSR demonstrate sufficient level of similarities in CEE countries

05.08. Thursday 13.00-14.30

Different welfare models in CEE countries

SÁRA HUNGLER (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF LAW DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR LAW AND SOCIAL LAW)

Getting familiar with the different welfare models; examining the prospects of social integration under the EPSR from the perspective of CEE countries.

05.08. Thursday 14.45-15.45

Case study: family policies in CEE countries

SÁRA HUNGLER (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF LAW DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR LAW AND SOCIAL LAW)

Case study: analysing family policies and clustering CEE states, examining how state and workplace policies support parents and their children in developing, earning and caring

Select readings

Hermann, Christoph. 'Crisis, Structural Reform and the Dismantling of the European Social Model(s)'. *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 38, no. 1 (February 2017): 51–68. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X14555708>.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Establishing a European Pillar of Social Rights, Brussels, 26.4.2017 COM(2017) 250 final

06.08. FRIDAY: CENTRAL EUROPE AND EU LAW

06.08. Friday 10.30-12.00

Posted workers' rights from a CEE perspective

ÉVA GELLÉRNÉ LUKÁCS (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF LAW DEPARTMENT OF PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW AND EUROPEAN ECONOMIC LAW)

The issue of posting and posted workers' rights has always been surrounded by heated discussions hence this type of employment is on the borderline of free movement of workers and freedom to provide services. The main question is whether workers' rights or freedom of undertakings to provide services shall prevail when it comes to working conditions, remuneration, residence rights and social benefits. On the surface the answer seems obvious: of course workers' rights shall be protected! But when we dig deeper, the picture gets blurred and we find out that we are in the middle of a trade clash between East and West and posted workers might not be protected but might lose their jobs as a result of the new regime (Directive 2018/957/EU). During the lecture we will examine the key issues and we will solve a concrete case in this regard with the aim to widen your thinking horizon.

Select readings

Gellérné Lukács, Éva. 'European Labour Authority – the Guardian of Posting?' *Hungarian Labour Law Journal*, no. 1 (2018). http://hlj.hu/letolt/2018_1_a/01.htm

Fekete, Sára. 'The Challenges of Defining Posted Workers'. *Hungarian Labour Law Journal*, no. 1 (2018). http://hlj.hu/letolt/2018_1_a/02.htm

06.08. Friday 13.00-13.30

Preliminary references from Central European countries

RÉKA SOMSSICH (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF LAW DEPARTMENT OF PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW AND EUROPEAN ECONOMIC LAW)

Preliminary references are nowadays already common tools of the judicial activity of judges from Central European countries which acceded to the EU 17 years ago. The lecture will focus on the frequency of references coming from these countries and will try to ascertain whether there might be identified common points, interests or trends concerning these references.

Select readings

Toshkov, Dimitar. 'Compliance with EU Law in Central and Eastern Europe'. *L'Europe en Formation*, no. 2 (December 2012): 91–109. <https://doi.org/10.3917/eufor.364.0091>

Leijon, Karin. 'National Courts and Preliminary References: Supporting Legal Integration, Protecting National Autonomy or Balancing Conflicting Demands?' *West European Politics* 44, no. 3 (April 2021): 510–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2020.1738113>.

06.08. Friday 13.00-13.30

Actions for annulment and infringements procedures from and against Central European countries

RÉKA SOMSSICH (ELTE UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF LAW DEPARTMENT OF PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW AND EUROPEAN ECONOMIC LAW)

As any Member State of the EU, countries which joined the Union in 2004 are equally entitled to bring cases to the Court of Justice and seek the annulment of certain EU acts they consider as harmful for their economic or political interests. At the same time they might also be sued by the Commission for non-compliance of EU law. The lecture will make an attempt to identify certain specificities of these direct actions.

Faculty

Krisztina Arató is full professor and director at ELTE University, Faculty of Law, Institute of Political Science in Budapest. She studied history at ELTE University in Budapest and political science at the Victoria University of Manchester, England. She wrote her PhD dissertation on the social dialogue system of the EU at Corvinus University, Budapest. She is currently the president of the Hungarian Political Science Association. Her research interests are history and theory of European integration, and civil and social dialogue. She authored and edited textbooks about the European Union (*The Voyage of Europe* with Boglárka Koller, in Hungarian, the Political System of the European Union, co-edited with Boglárka Koller) and recently contributed to the volume *The European Parliament Election of 2019 in East-Central Europe. Second-Order Euroscepticism*, edited by Vit Hloušek, and Petr Kaniok (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020) on the Hungarian case.

Éva Gellérné Lukács is an Associate Professor at the Department of International Private Law and European Economic Law at ELTE University, Faculty of Law. She is responsible for altogether 8 courses at the Faculty in different legal subjects (in particular free movement of persons, health insurance law, institutions of the EU, international and European social law). She has been working for more than 15 years as a civil servant in the Ministry of Human Affairs of Hungary. In that capacity, between 2004-2017, she was the appointed member of the Administrative Commission for the Coordination of Social Security Systems (AC) and the MISSOC, and participated in the work of the Social Protection Committee (SPC). At present she is the independent member of the Conciliation Board of the AC. Her main research field is free movement of persons and social rights of persons in the EU. She is the author of more than 100 articles, chapters in books (both Hungarian and English). She is the academic coordinator of the English-speaking LLM program of the Faculty of Law. She was granted the Knights Cross – Award for Merit of the Republic of Hungary by the President of State in 2004 for the Work performed for the Accession of Hungary to the European Union.

Sára Hungler is an assistant professor at the Social and Labour Law Department. She teaches Hungarian and European social and labour law, and equal treatment. She earned her PhD degree in 2015. Her research field covers gender equality and family policy with special regard to vulnerable groups, such as Roma or unemployed mothers. She is a researcher at the Institute of Legal Studies, where her research focuses on regulatory changes in social law. She is awarded with a post-doctoral scholarship by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office, she is currently researching social integration in the Visegrad countries with emphasis on family policy and women's rights. She is regularly publishing her results in Hungarian and international journals, she recently published her first book on human rights and workplace democracy.

Hungler, Sára. *The Dual Nature of Employee Involvement*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2020.

Hungler, Sára. „Local Interests and Social Integration in Europe”. In *Between Compliance and Particularism: Member State Interests and European Union Law*, edited by Marton Varju, 255–

81. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-05782-4_12.

Boglárka Koller is a full professor, head of Department of European Studies at the University of Public Service, Ludovika, Faculty of Public Governance and International Studies. She graduated at the Corvinus University, Budapest as an economist in 1998; she also holds an MA in Nationalism Studies from the Central European University, Budapest and an MSc in European Studies from the London School of Economics and Political Science. Her main research areas are history and theories of European integration, differentiated integration and multi-speed Europe, Europeanisation in Central and Eastern Europe. She has numerous publications on European integration among which there are three books (*Nemzet, identitás és politika Európában* [Nations, Identities and Politics in Europe] [Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2006]; *Európa utazása* [The Voyage of Europe], co-authored with Krisztina Arató [Gondolat Kiadó, 2015]; *Képzelt Európa* [Imagined Europe], co-authored with Krisztina Arató [Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2013]) and several edited volumes. Published an edited volume with Alexei D. Voskressenski: *The Regional World Order* at Lexington, USA and contributed to *L'Europe, une fracture à retardement* volume edited by Violaine Delteil and Xavier Richet (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2019) with a chapter 'Differentiated Union. The Only Way Forward or One That Leads to Disintegration?'

Miklós Lojkó is Associate Professor of Modern History at the School of English and American Studies of Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. Visiting Professor at the Department of History of the Central European University, 2005-2015. PhD graduate of the University of Cambridge. His teaching and publications concentrate on political, economic and cultural ties between Western, Central and South-Eastern Europe during the first half of the 20th century.

Publications

Lojkó, Miklós. 'Uncertain Beginnings in Danubian Central Europe: Embedding the new states system in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, 1919-1927'. In: *Vom Nachkrieg zum Vorkrieg: Die Pariser Friedensverträge und die internationale Ordnung der Zwischenkriegszeit*, edited by Ulrich Schlie, Miklos Lojko, and Thomas Weber, 59–76. Andrassy Studien zur Europaforschung 26. Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2020.

Lojkó, Miklós. 'The Age of Illusion? The Department of Overseas Trade between the Two World Wars: Three Case Studies.' In *The Foreign Office, Commerce and British Policy in the Twentieth Century*, edited by John Fisher, Effie G. H. Pedaliu, and Richard Smith, 115–140. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Lojkó, Miklós. *Meddling in Middle Europe: Britain and the 'Lands Between', 1919-1925*. Budapest, New York: Central European University Press, 2006.

Thomas Lorman is a lecturer in Central European History at University College London's School of Slavonic and East European Studies, where he has been teaching since 2010. He also serves as editor of the journal 'Central Europe' and has published a number of studies of Slovak and Hungarian history focusing on the first half of the twentieth century. He currently teaches a range of courses on Central European history, including 'The Contested Country – Hungary,

1790-1990’, ‘Czechoslovakia in the Age of Extremes, 1918-1993’ and ‘The Crisis Zone: Central Europe, 1900-1990’ and is currently starting a new research project on the last month of the Hungarian parliament in 1918

Selected Publications:

Lorman, Thomas. *The Making of the Slovak People's Party. Religion, Nationalism and the Culture War in Early 20th-Century Europe*. London: Bloomsbury, 2020.

Hörcher, Ferenc, Thomas Lorman, eds. *A History of the Hungarian Constitution. Law, Government and Political Culture in Central Europe*. London: I.B.Tauris, 2019.

Alexandra Mercescu is a Lecturer in Law at the West University of Timisoara (Romania) and an affiliated researcher at CLEST (Centre for Legal Education and Social Theory, Wrocław University, Poland) and Nomos (Centre for International Research on Law, Culture and Power, Jagiellonian University, Poland). She holds a PhD in comparative law from La Sorbonne for which she obtained the 1st Prize of the “Centre français de droit compare”. Alexandra is the author of *Pour une comparaison des droits indisciplinée* (Basel: Helbing Lichtenhahn, 2018), the editor of *Constitutional Identities in Central and Eastern Europe* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2020) and a co-author of *Rethinking Comparative Law* (forthcoming with Edward Elgar). During the current academic year Alexandra received the re:constitution Fellowship – a joint programme of Exchange and Analysis on Democracy and the Rule of Law in Europe promoted by Forum Transregionale Studien and Democracy Reporting International. Besides comparative legal theory and constitutionalism, her academic interests also lie in populism, legal epistemology, the relation between law and culture and legal education.

Réka Somssich is a full professor of Law at the Faculty of Law of ELTE University Budapest. She has been teaching there EU law and private international law since 2001. From 1997 until 2010 she worked as a lawyer at the EU Law Department of the Hungarian Ministry of Justice what she was heading from 2004 on. During this period she participated at the accession negotiations of Hungary to the EU and afterwards she was acting as agent of the government at the European Court of Justice. She defended her PhD thesis in 2007 and completed the habilitation procedure in 2016. Since 2016 she is vice-dean in charge of education and student matters.