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Bakk, Miklós – Süli-Zakar, István – Szilágyi, Ferenc (2019): Partium – Borders, Ethnic Groups and Territorial Development

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The volume presents the development of the Partium region through different historical periods up to the present day. The central theme of the volume's four main, partly separate chapters is thus Partium as a region. The authors approached the topic from different perspectives and investigated the area using different research methods. The processing of the topic is certainly unique and thought-provoking. Actually, four separate studies form the main chapters. These studies do not form a complete unit, rather they complement each other, which makes the book transparent and comprehensible to the reader. The studies are made up of many subsections, and there is a separate bibliography at the end of each one.

The author of the first chapter, István Süli-Zakar, presents possible ways of cross-border cooperation and the possibilities of territorial development realised with the help of this in the Central and Eastern European region. Süli-Zakar begins with a historical introduction of the origin of Euro-regions. For example, the economic cooperation between Germany and France, which forms the basis of the EU. At the same time, several subsections deal with the possibilities of possible cooperation and transformation between Hungarian and Romanian settlements, counties and regions along the border. I consider it important to emphasise that although the focus of the study is on the Partium region, the author also discusses international collaborations (for example: the Interregio Euro-region, established in 2000, or in the Danube-Kris-Mures-Tisa (DKMT) Euro-region).

The second chapter presents Miklós Bakk's study on the ethno-regional models of Europe. Bakk begins his study with a detailed historical overview, which examines the formation of the state from the initial processes of nation-building to the formation of the modern state. The author presents many relevant definitions related to the topic. During the presentation of ethno-regional models, the author presents several models that are also significant in the literature. For easier understanding and transparency, he uses tables that systematise the various models. One section illustrates the state and administrative structures that exist and operate today by presenting several European states, regions and autonomous regions (the Åland Islands, Catalonia, the Basque Country, North Tyrol, the decentralisation of the United Kingdom), and a significant historical event affecting the population. As an example, he examines the cases of France and Romania in detail.

The third chapter presents the concept and development of the Partium region in detail from the Battle of Mohács to the present day. The author of the chapter, Ferenc Szilágyi, presents the most important historical events of the region in detail. The author's most important focus in terms of historical events was how the examined region was shaped. Based on this, the subsections follow one after the other in chronological order. Szilágyi highlights the Battle of Mohács, as a result of which Partium became an independent region for the first time, then the time of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, when the region also belonged here, thanks to the Compromise of 1867. The next very important historical event is the Treaty of Trianon, as a result of which the historical territory of the Partium region is divided in two by the new Romanian-Hungarian border. I think it is important to point out that the author does not only give the reader a historical presentation, but also presents ideas that were never realised in real

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life. In my opinion, this gives us a much more comprehensive picture of the situation in the region. The focus of the study is primarily on administrative and territorial reorganisations, but Szilágyi also highlights the various and relevant social, ethnic, economic and infrastructural features of the region.

The fourth chapter of the book was also written by Szilágyi. The chapter focuses on the possible autonomy of the region. The author introduces the possibility of the Partium region's self-determination, more precisely the potential directions and obstacles related to it. He emphasises the following arguments in favour of autonomy: multiculturalism, the cohesive force of the region, geographical location. The author mentions the lack of regional identity as the most significant obstacle on the road to autonomy, both on the Hungarian and Romanian sides. The mentioned aspects can be read through a comparison with Szeklerland.

The book aims to provide a comprehensive insight into Partium as a historical region, and covers regional reforms, Euro-regions and ethno-regional models, possible ways of cross-border cooperation. The theoretical and practical usefulness of the volume is unquestionable. The volume contains important scholarly findings for specialists dealing with territorial analysis and regionalisation. The style of the volume is basically objective in tone, transparent and well organised, so in my opinion, it is an easy-to-consume and enjoyable read for everyone.

I wholeheartedly recommend the volume to your attention!