

Paul Shore (2012)

Narratives of Adversity Jesuits on the Eastern Peripheries of the Habsburg Realms (1640–1773)

Data opublikowania: 15.09.2014

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(Budapest: Central European University Press)

ISBN: 978-615-5053-47-4

Historia, Kulturoznawstwo, Teologia

Angielski

Addresses the experience of Jesuit missionaries, teachers and writers along the peripheries of the Habsburg lands, which stretched to Moldavia, Ukraine, Serbia and Wallachia, and which were continually torn with ethnic tensions. The time scale of the study is from the “high tide” of the Society (often labeled “the first multinational corporation”) in the fourth decade of the seventeenth century, until its suppression in 1773 by Pope Clement XIV. The book examines several of the communities situated along the periphery and the records that they left behind about their interactions with the local populations. It constructs a vivid picture of Jesuit life on the frontier that is built up in mosaic fashion and livened by compelling anecdotes. The Jesuits of Royal Hungary exercised a baroque expression modeled after the larger western cities of the Habsburg lands, which was a fragile splendor in part defined by the need to defend Catholicism from the hostility of Orthodox, Lutherans, Calvinists, and others.

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“There is no comparable work in any language on this subject. The book is wide-ranging, covers a large chronological and geographic space, is informed by careful study of a variety of different manuscript and archival sources, and built on complete familiarity with the secondary literature, in many languages. The author

is an acknowledged international authority on the Jesuits in Central and Eastern Europe. There are no competing books."

Martyn Rady, Professor of Central European History, University College London

2012

394 pages

978-615-5053-47-4 cloth \$60.00 / €55.00 / £50.00