Ablonczy, Balázs. "Waters, Leslie. 2022. *Borders on the Move: Territorial Changes and Ethnic Cleansing in the Hungarian-Slovak Borderlands, 1938-1948*. Rochester, University of Rochester Press (Rochester Studies in East and Central Europe)." *Hungarian Cultural Studies.* e-Journal of the American Hungarian Educators Association, Volume 15 (2022): http://ahea.pitt.edu DOI: 10.5195/ahea.2022.469

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The history of the Hungarian-(Czecho)Slovak border-area in the twentieth century has already received much attention in Hungarian historiography, in memory politics and in local history, but until recently the presentation of this history has been mostly ethnographic and Hungaro-centric, focusing on the the post-World War II period of 1945-1948 and based mainly on Hungarian sources. In 2012, Leslie Waters completed her doctoral dissertation at UCLA, titled *Resurrecting the Nation: Felvidék and the Hungarian Territorial Revisionist Project, 1938-1945*, which probably prepared and equipped her for her new work of a decade later. Waters's perspective on the problems of this border region, especially its eastern half, helps readers to break out of the overly Hungaro-centric paradigm that all too often governs the study and discourse of the period and the region in question. Waters boldly draws heavily on Hungarian, Czech and Slovak sources as well as on ego materials such as memoirs written or recorded orally from Slovak, Hungarian and Jewish persons by the USHMMM and the USC. Even more importantly, she finally puts the history of this border region into a theoretical framework that breaks with the decades-long discourse of the suffering of the two nations and, basing herself on more recent genocide and borderland studies, she places the bloody 1940s decade of the Hungarian-Slovak borderland within a comprehensive, internationally informed and comparable framework. Yet, Waters would not impose this newer theoretical framework at all costs. For example, when she disagrees with other researchers on the issue of the possibility to create an ethnically homogeneous nation-state as opposed to one with a hegemonic majority, she is able to challenge her disputants, relying not only on historical documents but also on Slovak and Hungarian works of and about language and literature.

Following a thorough theoretical Introduction, Waters divides her study into four major units: the 1938 territorial reoccupation, the wartime policies toward minorities and – as an issue unto itself – anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, and the postwar period of population exchange/expulsion. Waters is thorough and careful in her handling of a vast amount of available sources and is thus able to survey the political conditions of the region in the period under study,

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ISSN 1936-8879 (online)

which were not always clear. Still, some minor errors did slip in. For example: before 1945, Hungary did not receive or send abroad any ambassadors, so Hungarian diplomats serving in foreign countries were named "ministers" and not "ambassadors," and their place of service was named "legation" and not "embassy." There are also other misnamings, as in the spelling of the name of Gáspár Alapy, the mayor of Komárom/Komarno (176). Interestingly, the author chose to use either Hungarian or (Czecho)Slovak geographical names in every given period. She therefore uses the Hungarian region-name of Felvidék when discussing the period after 1938, while referring to the same town as Kassa (between 1938 and 1945) and Kosice (before 1938 and after 1945), which is a thing that a Hungarian or a Slovak historian of the region would find very difficult to do. This courage, or perhaps neutrality, also leads the author when she passionlessly analyzes the meaning of the "Felvidék spirit" (37-43) and shows that each of the two sides meant something different by this same term, which practically undermines the content and messages of many newspaper articles and essays written by authors on both sides.

Waters's primary aim is "understanding how changes to the map affected people on the ground" (214), and she achieves this aim perfectly: she shows how the absurd desire to erase the other ethnicity, or the wish to create a so-called pure national space, often turned the lives of the inhabitants of the borderland upside down, and how they were all harmed by such projects. While the author is aware of the extreme ethnic complexities of the region, she also acknowledges that multiple or even local identities and interests may still coexist in the same region. This happens, for example, in her discussion of the re-Slovakization of towns in Eastern Slovakia, or in that of the Hungarian support of the preservation of the Eastern Slovak dialect. Besides Hungarians and Slovaks, the other communities inhabiting the region were small, ever-shrinking and primarily urban groups, but their presence between the two world wars was and is to this day far from negligible, as is indicated by numerous data about these groups cited in the book (e.g., Éva Kovács's findings on the cohesion of the Jewish population of Kassa/Kosice, the electoral scores of the Slovak and German branches of the National Christian Socialist Party, and more). There is no doubt, however, that the voluntary choice of identity does not explain, for example, the shocking decrease (by at least 12,000 people) in the population of Kassa/Kosice after 1938. Instead, here we can clearly identify a deliberate expulsion policy on the part of the Hungarian administration. Waters masterfully shows, through individual life stories and diaries, the effects of the state's exclusionary policies in the region and how the theory and practice of an ethnically homogeneous or at least dominant state became increasingly intentional and cruel during the world war.

What seems to be missing in Waters's study is the use of certain works by major researches of the region. One such expert whose works are barely consulted is the Hungarian historian from Slovakia, Árpád Popély, who, due to his tenacious work over the past several decades, has become an authority on the post-1945 Hungarian history in Slovakia and the population exchange enhanced by the decrees of Czechoslovak President Edvard Beneš. This lack is particularly striking because it is precisely the section on the Czechoslovak-Hungarian population exchange that seems somewhat rushed. While Waters uses her own research to draw attention to the means by which the Hungarian authorities tried to reduce the number of Slovaks in Hungary who applied for resettlement, she relies mainly on studies by others in her treatment of those expelled from Czechoslovakia to Hungary, and even that only briefly, although some local stories could have helped her to shed more light on this painful and still emotionally-charged history. Edit Csilléry has likewise written important studies (accessible online) on the

so-called *nemzethűségi eljárások* or loyalty procedures enacted following the territorial restitutions, which Waters could have just as well relied on in her discussion of these procedures in the second chapter of her book.

Despite some minor flaws and lacks, Leslie Waters's *Borders on the Move* is an important work for both international historiography and Hungarian and Slovak historiographies. By its treatment of ethnic violence, genocide and other borderland phenomena, all from an outsider standpoint, as well as by its touching upon economic and social-welfare issues and use of ego materials, this new study frees its topic of its usual bilateral and often provincial context and thus makes this case-study interesting also for larger academic audiences and reading publics.