

Foreword

This volume contains the English translation of the somewhat altered text of my book written in 1960 and first published in Hungarian in 1964 under the title *1848 Széchenyije és Széchenyi 1848-a* (The Széchenyi of 1848 and Széchenyi's 1848). These modifications of text fall into two categories. On the one hand, since the Hungarian publication of the book, I have found in the course of unrelated research some additional data which could be added usefully to the work; I have now included these in the text. On the other hand, the original version occasionally refers much too sketchily to some aspects of Hungarian history not directly relevant to the subject of this study, of which non-Hungarian readers are unlikely to have sufficient knowledge; I have expanded these references for the sake of clarity.

I should like to emphasise, however, that these alterations of text have not modified in the slightest the essence of my book. Indeed, not even the criticism dealing with the original version have persuaded me to change that. On the contrary: the observations of my critics — those attacking the work as well as those supporting it — have merely strengthened my viewpoint.

I shall not discuss in detail here the nature of my critics' objections, partly because it would be too lengthy an exercise and partly because a considerable proportion of my critics expressed their views only in spoken words before the publication of the Hungarian version and refrained from committing themselves to print afterwards. But to give an idea of these criticisms, I include in the Appendix a lecture I delivered in 1966 dealing with the essential objections.

And thus I leave the field to my hero, Count István Széchenyi, in the hope that the account on the following pages of his struggle with the complex problems of Hungary during the 1848 revolution will perhaps bring the reader closer to the issues of the time. These are still relevant, to a large extent, to the whole of modern Eastern and Central Europe.

György Spira

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