

RICHÁRD GYÉMÁNT

TIVADAR SURÁNYI-UNGER*

(1898–1973)

I. Biography

The third head of the Department of Statistics in Szeged was vitez Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*. Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* was born on 4 February 1898 – in the “metropolitan city” of Hungary – in Budapest.¹

He graduated from the Lutheran grammar school in his hometown, in Budapest. He pursued his university studies in Budapest, at the Pázmány Péter University and the universities of Graz and Vienna. In Graz, the capital of Styria, he received a doctorate in law and political science in 1919, and in Budapest, first in 1920 a doctorate in humanities (philosophy) and economics in 1921. A few years later, in 1924, he also passed the exams for judges and lawyers.² His teaching “career” began in 1925 when he was appointed as a private tutor at the József Nádor University of Technology. The following year, in 1926, he was already teaching at the Miskolc Law Academy. Then, as the successor of Dezső *Laky* (1921–1926) and Ferenc *Kováts* (1926–1929), he worked at the Department of Statistics of the Franz Joseph University³ in Szeged from 1929. In 1928 he was appointed as a private tutor, and at the same time – from 1929 – he became the head of the Department of Statistics in Szeged. His tenure as head of the Department of Statistics and Economics and later of the Department of Economics and Finance, lasted from the beginning, from 1929 to 1939. During his years in Szeged, he was appointed first – on 24 January 1929 – a public extraordinary lecturer, and then – on 29 June 1933 – a public ordinary lecturer.⁴ His responsibilities essentially included the teaching of the courses of economics and statistics. From the time of the appointment of Károly *Schneller* (1893–

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¹ KENYERES 1982. Online availability: <https://www.arcanum.hu/hu/online-kiadvanyok/Lexikonok-magyar-eltrajzi-lexikon-7428D/s-778D5/suranyi-unger-tivadar-77C7E/> (Downloaded: 17. August 2019.)

² KOVÁCS – LENCSES – RÓZSA 2014, 641.

³ The Department of Statistics in Szeged – under the chairmanship of Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* (1929–1939) – was called the Department of Statistics and Economics from the academic year 1929/1930 to the academic year 1934/1935, and then from the academic year 1935/1936 to the academic year 1939/1940 it was called the Department of Economics and Finance. Then, with the return of Károly *Schneller*, the department split up. As *Schneller* only took over the teaching of statistics, the lectures in economics and political science were left to Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*. BALOGH, ELEMÉR ET AL. 1996, 96-97. HORVÁTH 1993a, 7.

⁴ BALOGH ELEMÉR ET AL. 1996, 65.

1953) as head of the department, in 1939, for a year, he solely taught economics.⁵ During his years in Szeged, in the academic year 1936/1937 he was Dean of the Faculty of Law and Political Science, and in the academic year 1937/1938 he was the Provost of the Faculty.⁶ Tivadar *Unger-Surányi* left the University of Szeged – officially – on 19 October 1940. Later, between 1940 and 1945, he became the head of the Department of Economics and Finance at the Elizabeth University in Pécs. After the Second World War – in 1945 – he emigrated but remained on the staff of the University of Pécs as an academic professor on leave until 1948. He was released of his post on 20 February 1948 by the Minister for Religion and Public Education. By that time, Tivadar Unger-Surányi had been living abroad with his family for many years.⁷

One of the most significant figures of the Franz Joseph University in Szeged – today the University of Szeged – was professor Tivadar *Unger-Surányi*. Professor Róbert *Horváth* (1916–1993), who later – between 1953 and 1986 – was also head of the Department of Statistics, wrote the following about Tivadar *Unger-Surányi*: “He embarked on his academic career as an economic philosopher and economic historian, and he retained this preference for the cultivation of economics to such an extent that the cultivation of statistics occupied a relatively minor place in his academic work. At first, he did more to support his theoretical work in crisis history, and later to support his career as a practical economic politician and as a price-government commissioner.”⁸

In 1935, he was accepted as a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Farkas *Heller*, a regular member, Alajos *Kovács*, vitez Gyula *Moór*, Dezső *Laky*, and Ákos *Navratil*, corresponding members, were his recommenders.⁹ After the Communist takeover (1948), he was excluded from the ranks of academics and was only rehabilitated after the regime change in 1991.¹⁰

Between the two world wars, he was involved in the drafting of several legislative acts as an economic policymaker, and later he was appointed price-government commissioner. At the request of Prime Minister Count Pál *Teleki* (1879–1941) (1939–1941), he was head of the Economic Studies Department at the Prime Minister’s Office and executive vice-president of the Hungarian Economic Information Committee.¹¹

Professor *Surányi-Unger* was also an internationally recognized authority. During his years in Szeged, he was invited to the University of Southern California in Los Angeles as a visiting professor three times (1935, 1937, 1939).¹² His contact with foreign countries intensified after the Second World War when he emigrated. In the spring of 1945, he left for Austria with his family, from where he emigrated to the United States, also with his family. Initially, between 1946 and 1949, he became a

⁵ GYÉMÁNT – KATONA 2008, 97.

⁶ BALOGH ET AL. 1996, 86.

⁷ SIPOS 1997, 181–182.

⁸ HORVÁTH 1992, 225.

⁹ *Tagajánlások 1935-ben [Member pledges in 1935]*, Magyar Tudományos Akadémia. Budapest, 1935. 37.

¹⁰ In 1991, the Presidium of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences repealed its decision of 23 April 1948, which had declared the exclusion of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on the grounds of unfairness. This decision rehabilitated Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* and four other corresponding members of the Academy – Károly *Balás*, Károly *Papp*, Henrik *Schmidt* and Zoltán *Vámosy*. EGRI 1991, 109–110.

¹¹ HILD 2019, 141.

¹² GYÉMÁNT – KATONA 2008, 97.

professor at the Syracuse University in New York State, founded in 1870, however, this “relationship”, albeit shared with Göttingen (Universität Göttingen), continued until his retirement.

Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* has taught at several universities abroad as a visiting professor. In 1945 and 1946 he was invited to Innsbruck, the capital of Austrian Tyrol, and in 1950 he returned to the University of Los Angeles for the fourth time. He subsequently visited universities in Germany, including Kiel (1952), Berlin (1953, 1954) and Munich (1955). Then, from the second semester of 1958, he divided his time and teaching between the universities of Syracuse and Göttingen, alternating between the two, each semester. He retired in the United States in 1964, however, he continued teaching in Göttingen until 1966. He then retired for good.¹³ In Göttingen he was elected Dean in 1964; at the same time, he was Head of Department until 1958 and 1966. Other universities were also able to claim him as a visiting professor. In Europe he visited Sankt Gallen, Marburg and Tübingen. He also worked in some universities on the Asian continent, including Shanghai in China and Mumbai in India.¹⁴

Surányi-Unger has published extensively. Until his emigration (1945), his writings were published both within and beyond the Hungarian borders. The total number of these publications is estimated at 105. Abroad, he has mainly published in English and German. After his emigration, he published another 60 papers in English, German, French and even Japanese.¹⁵ These could not have been officially published in Hungary.

The fact that several scientific societies included him among their members is proof of his outstanding expertise. He was a member of the *Hungarian Statistical Society* (HSS) from 1926, and later became a member of the board of trustees in 1937. He was also vice-president of the Scientific Committee of the *National Statistical Council* (NSC) and the *Scientific Committee of the Hungarian-German Society*. As a member of the electoral committee, he participated in the work of the *Hungarian Economic Society* and the *Hungarian Foreign Affairs Society*. He was also a founder and board member of the *American Association for Comparative Economics* and a founder and – until his death – director of the *Institute for the Study of Economic Systems* (*Institut zum Studium der Wirtschaftssysteme*) in Göttingen.

In 1939, he was awarded the French “*Ordre de Mérite Agricole*” for his work in the field of French agricultural research.

The long and eventful – scientific-academic and personal – life of Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* ended on 1 November 1973 in New York, USA.

II. Academic work

Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*'s research was mainly in theoretical economics, economic history, and business cycle theory, but he also dealt with questions of economic philosophy. He also considered the solution of foreign economic problems to be an

¹³ SIPOS 1997, 182.

¹⁴ GYÉMÁNT – KATONA 2008, 97.

¹⁵ SIPOS 1997, 182.

important area of his research. In the latter field, he focused on the economic issues of Eastern Europe, to which his academic work was an important contribution.

He made a conscious effort to combine the possibilities offered by the various “disciplines” and to grasp the so-called “interdisciplinary links”. Although more than 160 of his works have been published, his best-known work is perhaps his textbook of *Magyar nemzetgazdaság és pénzügy* [*Hungarian National Economy and Finance*], published in 1936.

Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*’s approach was activist, convinced that only a purposeful, active state economic policy could overcome socio-economic problems.¹⁶

After publishing a few small studies, Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* already in 1921 published a major book for the Hungarian professional public. The 160-page book is entitled: *A gazdasági válságok történetének vázlata 1920-ig* [*A Sketch of the History of Economic Crises until 1920*]. The author stated the following about the aim of the book: “I aimed to present as complete a history of the crises as possible, at the expense of which - for understandable reasons - I had to make concessions only in order to preserve the work in its present modest volume, so I shall touch briefly only on the economic crises of the minor states and the ancient and medieval periods, the latter step being mainly due to lack of practical expediency. The conditions of those times were so different from those of the present, and their crises so different in form, that I must consider their detail beyond the scope of my subject; but, by their particular and local character alone dwarfs the importance of the economic disturbances of the modern age.”¹⁷ At the same time, the author excuses himself for the sometimes dry and depressing statistics, but, as he has indicated, their application is essential.

Surányi-Unger began his book by defining the concept of economic crisis and describing its types. The author distinguished five major types of economic crisis. At the same time, he referred to Arthur *Speithoff*’s “six” division.¹⁸ Nor has he ignored the interpretations and sayings of major economists in world history, such as David *Ricardo* (1772–1823). In particular, the economic crisis is a natural “intermezzo” in the course of social development.¹⁹

After clarifying the conceptual and theoretical background, the economic crises of antiquity and the Middle Ages are first discussed and explained in a linear order. He notes that “major monetary crises were also encountered in antiquity; these were mainly caused by the simultaneous minting of large quantities of gold.” He cites the conquests of Alexander III (Alexander the Great) (356–323 BC), king of Macedon (336–323 BC), and the Gallic campaigns of Julius Caesar (100–44 BC). Then he comes to say that, although there were crises in the Middle Ages, “the largely shallow medieval economy could not have produced major shocks.”²⁰ A natural consequence of low economic standards was, for instance, famines, which in the British Isles, as an example, were on average a decade apart.

¹⁶ KOLLEGA TARSOLY ET AL. 2000, 91–92.

¹⁷ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1921, 4.

¹⁸ SPIETHOFF – SCHUMACHER 1918, 228.

¹⁹ RICARDO 1846, 160.

²⁰ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1921, 9–11.

Surányi-Unger has written extensively on the economic crises of the early modern period. He first briefly describes the so-called “*Lübeck trade crisis*”. “*It is an interesting symptom, however, that the first major shock of this kind did not occur in the then-booming Pyrenean states of England or Holland, but in the economically strongly downwardly trending Hansa, and especially in Lübeck.*”²¹ He saw the reason for this in the “shift of emphasis” caused by the discovery of America in 1492.

The world’s first major stock market crash, the so-called “*Dutch Tulip Mania*” (1637), was not left out of the description of the crises that affected the Dutch, one of the “most sober-minded” nations in the world. Trading in tulip bulbs as a commodity with a fictitious value had disastrous consequences. There was a time when a tulip bulb could buy a canal-side (“gracht”) house in Amsterdam.²² The country struggled to recover from the crisis caused by the speculative frenzy.

Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* wrote mainly about the British Isles in the context of the recent crises. For example, the “*goldsmith era crises in England*”, the “*The Great Recoinage of 1696*” and the “*Bank of England crises of the 18th century*” are not missing from his description of economic crises. However, he has also written about the economic problems of France under King Louis XIV of France (1643–1715) in the context of the “*Law system*”. The value of the work lays in its intention to give a brief, comprehensive characterization of each economic collapse. His work is easy to follow even for the “layman”. Due to space constraints, it is also worth noting that the “focus” of this book is rather on the economic events of the 19th century. There is also a separate chapter on the economic problems in the aftermath of the First World War. The author examines each of the economic crises country by country, including Britain, France, Japan, the United States, Italy, Germany and Russia. He also devotes a chapter to the economic crises in Hungary.²³

In 1923, after his first book was published in Hungary, he presented again a major publication to the professional public. His book, in German, was published in Jena of Thuringia. He published the book, or more precisely its first volume, with his own money, as the German publisher – Gustav Fischer – saw no “guarantee” of a return. In 1923, Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* was only 25 years old and unknown to the German professional public. His work – entitled *Philosophie der Volkswirtschaftslehre. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Volkswirtschaftslehre* – became a huge success; the 400-page book was virtually “snapped up.”

The German publisher – in 1926 – published the second, thicker volume of 547 pages already at his own expense. This substantial work, consisting of two volumes, dealt with the methodological issues of economics, including its history of development in the light of philosophical developments. His books were essentially concerned with the “philosophical strands” of economics.²⁴

Surányi-Unger was very prolific during this period. He had not even allowed himself a moment to breathe, and in 1927, in Germany, he published another book, *Die Entwicklung der theoretischen Volkswirtschaftslehre im ersten Viertel des 20. Jahrhunderts*. This time

²¹ Ibid. 11.

²² *Hollandiában véget ér a tulipánláz* [Tulip Fever ends in the Netherlands]. 7. February 2006. National Geographic. https://ng.hu/kultura/2006/02/07/hollandiaban_veget_er_a_tulipanlaz/ (downloaded on 12. August 2019.)

²³ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1921, 13., 14., 29–68., 90–124., 159–160.

²⁴ *Tagajánlások 1932-ben* [Member pledges in 1932], Magyar Tudományos Akadémia. Budapest, 1932. 24–25.

he described the “current” – at that time – trends in the development of economics, with special reference to the specific features of, for example, Germanic and Anglo-Saxon research trends, and made comparisons between them. He did not neglect to present the results of research in different cultural areas.²⁵

The “resounding success” of his second book is indicated by the fact that during his stay in the United States (1931), his latest German-language volumes, entitled *Economics in the Twentieth Century: The History of its International Development*, were published in English, in an expanded version. The young Tivadar Surányi-Unger was greatly assisted in the publication of this work by Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman of Columbia University.²⁶

The early works of the young researcher, published abroad, captured the relationship between economics and philosophy. He was particularly suited for this, as his education predestined him for it. He was also one of the first to summarize the history of the development of economics. Nor was he far removed from examining the philosophical foundations of economic theories.²⁷ After his initial work, he turned his attention steadily to economic policy and business cycle theory.²⁸ In the field of economic policy, he considered state involvement and intervention to be of primary importance.²⁹

The aforementioned trend in his life “culminated” mainly in the 1930s.³⁰ A good example of this is his paper *A gazdaságpolitika tudományos alapkérdései* [*The Scientific Foundations of Economic Policy*] (1927). “This work seeks to highlight the normative nature of economic policy and, on this basis, to identify the guiding aspects of economic policy. Its results are undoubtedly debatable, but this work is also a testimony not only to the author’s thorough training but also to his talent for reflection and his excellent writing skills.”³¹ His writings also appear in the field of the relationship between economics and statistics. The most important examples of these are *Statisztika és a közgazdaságtan* [*Statistics and Economics*] (1927) and *A statisztikai módszer szerepe a közgazdaságtanban* [*The Role of the Statistical Method in Economics*] (1928).

Róbert Horváth, who later became the head of the department (1953–1986), wrote the following about Tivadar Surányi-Unger’s statistical work: “His first major works on statistics reflect a change in scientific understanding: his 1928 major study on the role of statistics in economics provides information for Hungarian economists, and his 1929 German-language monograph, the *Mathematical Statistics Handbook*, provides information for Central European economists in general. He did not, however, write any textbook on statistics other than the latter, and his university notes, published in 1929, were based on the stenographic notes of a student and were not changed afterwards. (This work, a cautious attempt to provide a textual summary of the essentials of mathematical statistics for law students, reflects mainly the influence of Béla Földes.)”³² *Surányi-Unger*

²⁵ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1927a, 1-2.

²⁶ *Tagajánlások 1932-ben. [Member pledges in 1932]* 1932, 25.

²⁷ KOVÁCS – LENCSE – RÓZSA 2014, 641.

²⁸ BEKKER 2000, 17.

²⁹ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1927b, 110–127.

³⁰ KOVÁCS – LENCSE – RÓZSA 2014, 641.

³¹ *Tagajánlások 1932-ben. [Member pledges in 1932]* 1932, 25.

³² HORVÁTH 1993, 1003.

considered himself an economist but did not dispute the role of statistics in the study of certain economic issues, although his work also draws attention to the differences and “dangers” of this approach. *Surányi-Unger*’s views on the role of statistics in economics include the following: “[...] *the better the "applied" parts of an economic curriculum are built up, the more it can draw on the aids of statistics even at its starting points. This explains the phenomenon that in less abstract economic theory research, the statistical method, which is purely empirical in composition, has such a relatively wide scope of application.*”³³ Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*’s work – whether in economics, statistics or economic policy – is always concerned with theoretical and philosophical questions. He sought the link between the problems of economics and economic policy and the work of the “great thinkers”.³⁴ However, he cannot be regarded as “just” a theoretical “room scientist”, since he has made several study trips abroad and, based on his experience, has also shed light on practical issues.

It was thanks to his wide-ranging knowledge of philosophy and economics and their literature that Professor Willy *Moog* (1888–1935) asked him to write a volume on economic philosophy. Thus, was born his work “*Geschichte der Wirtschaftsphilosophie*” (1931), which became one of the “milestones” of his work on economic philosophy.

Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* was constantly travelling, but these trips were not always for lectures but for research. He travelled to areas of importance for the world economy. He visited the United States and Japan, but also the Soviet Union and Australia. The purpose of these trips was to gain a deeper understanding of the economic conditions and development of each country. He published articles and studies about his study trips in German journals. Thanks to his study trips, he wrote, for example, *Amerika társadalmi problémái [The Social Problems of America]* (1929), *Der nationale Gedanke in China und in Indien* (1930) and *Über das theoretische Grundproblem der sowjet-russischen Wirtschaftspolitik* (1931). Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*’s work had already become significant by the early 1930s. As a result of this, for the first time, in 1932, an attempt was made by its recommenders – full member Jenő *Gaal*, and corresponding members Farkas *Heller*, István *Dékány* and Ákos *Navratil* – to elect the extremely prolific Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* as a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences – in the II. class A) subclass. The first attempt failed. Nevertheless, it can be said that Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* has already written more than 30 publications, several of which have been published abroad, thus increasing the author’s recognition at home and abroad.

Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*’s academic work took a major turn in the 1930s. In 1935, his Academy’s recommenders wrote the following about the renowned economist: “In addition to his articles published in the *Jahrbücher für Nationalökonomie und Statistik*, he again came up with a major German work in 1933 entitled »Weltwirtschaftspolitik im Entstehen«. This work provides an in-depth analysis of public needs from the author’s particular point of view, grouping these needs according to the various state objectives. *Surányi-Unger*’s book also reflects the wide-ranging knowledge which the author has acquired not only through his reading and academic reflection, which exceeds the usual level in professional circles but also through the broadening of his horizons, which is the

³³ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1928, 9.

³⁴ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1927b, 115.

result of his travels throughout almost the entire educated world. The common features and trends in the public needs of the civilized world, beyond the philosophical perspective of public needs, are what the author seeks to capture in this work and to assess in terms of the emergence of world economic policy. This work also shows that the author has a definite line of research, the results of which he seeks to develop in his work.”³⁵

The efforts of the academy’s members were finally crowned with success. In 1935, Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* was elected a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The renowned economist did not rest, however, and published further important works. In 1935, for example, he published a 30-page work entitled *Gazdasági rugalmasság és változékonyság [Economic Flexibility and Variability]*. This was followed by *Magyar nemzetgazdaság és pénzügy [Hungarian National Economy and Finance]* (1936). This massive textbook – nearly 620 pages – is considered by many to be the most famous “representative” of Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*’s academic work. Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* wanted to achieve a threefold goal with the publication of this massive volume. As he said in the introduction to the book, written in Szeged: “I have a threefold aim. The first is to provide a comprehensible first introduction for those interested in Hungarian economics and finance, even without professional preparation. Secondly, to provide my students with a short textbook. And thirdly, to review the path of my economic research from the height of a summary of my findings so far.”³⁶ The second objective, namely the publication of a short textbook, is somewhat modest, because the book is by no means short, but rather a detailed work aiming at completeness. At the same time, the author has made no secret of the fact that the work is a retrospective of his work to date, and a summary of his work. As *Surányi-Unger* wrote: “It is good to look back sometimes on our journey so far, to draw from its unified viewpoint to guide us in our future endeavors.”³⁷ The structure of Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*’s volume is essentially twofold. The general part deals with the so-called “Social Economy”. Within this, the first book is entitled “Szabad gazdaság” [Free Economy] and the second “Közületi gazdaság” [Public Economy]. The second, special part is entitled „Magyar jólét” [Hungarian Welfare] (Book 3). The volume is accompanied by an appendix, a literary review, which includes a rich index of names and subjects. As stated in the introduction to the book: “The main body of the present work [...] is divided into two parts. In its general part, it explains the basic principles of social economics which are equally necessary for understanding all kinds of broader economic contexts. Among them, however, it emphasizes above all those that are important for our Hungarian national economy. [...] The special part then gives the special social economics, i.e., applies our general lessons to our Hungarian welfare. [...] Of the three books in the work, the first two are devoted to the general part, the third to the special part. Our first book illuminates the permanent basis and framework of all social-economic life, the context of a free economy. [...] Our second book, on the public economy, then explains the context of the living social economy. [...] Our third book, which contains the special part, first looks at the special features of our Hungarian national economy from the point of view of public objectives. Finally, it reviews the most important issues of our Hungarian

³⁵ *Tagajánlások 1935-ben. [Member pledges in 1935]* 1935, 36–37.

³⁶ *SURÁNYI-UNGER* 1936b, 3.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

*economic policy Hungarian social policy and Hungarian public finances in an interdisciplinary perspective. Based on their examination, it also points to practical ways that can lead to a higher standard of our overall welfare.*³⁸

Following the publication of the voluminous volume *Magyar nemzetgazdaság és pénzügy* [Hungarian National Economy and Finance] (1936), the author was awarded a prize by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1937. The swift recognition was certainly a tribute to the author's considerable work. The textbook focuses on economic policy, but also deals with general issues of price regulation and capital management.³⁹

Surányi-Unger's work has gone on to be published. The second edition of the book was published in 1943, during the Second World War. The second edition was published in two volumes of 852 pages, rather than one, partly for reasons of space. At the same time, the two volumes were justified by the fact that the first volume, containing the general part, was expected to become obsolete much more slowly than the second volume, which provided a special part based on the latest economic statistics.⁴⁰

At the end of the study, it is worth pointing out that Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* also dealt with the outstanding importance of the capital, Budapest, as did Dezső *Laky* (1887–1962), the first head of the Department of Statistics in Szeged. Of course, the two approaches differ – also in content. While Dezső *Laky* was concerned with the population development of the capital city between 1900 and 1920, Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* examined the economic importance of Budapest within our country.

In his two-volume work *Budapest szerepe Magyarország gazdasági életében I-II*. [The Role of Budapest in the Economic Life of Hungary I-II], the author covered the period between 1925 and 1934. Tivadar *Surányi-Unger's* work was prepared at the request of Lajos *Illyefalvi I.*, Director of the Statistical Office of the Budapest Metropolitan City of Statistics. The author of the volumes wrote: “I present my statistical research on the economy and finance of Budapest in this book. [...] My main aim has been to provide a clear overview for a wider readership. [...] It is for purely technical reasons that this book is published in two volumes. The first volume contains the first two parts of the work, on agriculture and industry, and trade and commerce. In the second volume, we present the third, fourth and fifth parts of the book, examining credit, income distribution and the public household, and summarize our findings.”⁴¹

The two-volume work was published in parallel with the *Magyar nemzetgazdaság és pénzügy* [Hungarian National Economy and Finance], also published in 1936. The author explicitly referred to this parallel work in the following way: “If the reader wishes to obtain more detailed and systematic information on the questions of national economics and finance which are only incidentally touched upon here, I draw his attention to my other work, which was written in parallel and which I have mentioned.”⁴²

As already mentioned, Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* left his homeland, Hungary with his family after the Second World War in 1945. He foresaw that the “new” regime that was “taking shape” would not be favorable to his later work or that of his colleagues. He

³⁸ Ibid. 1–3.

³⁹ KOVÁCS – LENCSEŠ – RÓZSA 2014, 641.

⁴⁰ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1943, 1.

⁴¹ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1936a, 7.

⁴² SURÁNYI-UNGER 1936b, 7.

was right. The academic careers of renowned economists such as Farkas *Heller* (1877–1955) and Ákos *Navratil* (1875–1952) ended in an undignified manner. Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*, on the other hand, moved to the United States with his family after a brief stay in Austria. There he continued his academic work and acquired American citizenship. In the last decades of his life abroad, he turned partly to international and comparative economics and partly to his earlier research in economic philosophy. In many of his writings, he examined and analyzed the differences between the market economies of the West and the socialist economic systems of the East, with particular emphasis on the ideological features.⁴³

After the Second World War, Tivadar *Surányi-Unger* – according to Róbert *Horváth* – “still recognizes three target systems on the plane of economic policy theory: the North American one, followed by some Western European ones, which try to improve capitalism by means of experimental economy, and thirdly, the Soviet economy and its followers. In practice, however, there are only two “blocs” because the differences between the first two target systems based on capitalism are really only instrumental and thus negligible.”⁴⁴

At the end of his life, *Surányi-Unger* returned to his former favorite subject, to economic philosophy. His last book, *Wirtschaftsphilosophie des 20. Jahrhunderts*, published in 1967, was also written in this spirit.

The – “statistical” – significance of Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*’s scientific work is increased by the fact that “he was the first in the international literature to attempt to develop statistical economics, ahead of the research of Colin Clark and Jean Fourastié.”⁴⁵

After a sketch of Tivadar *Surányi-Unger*’s academic work, it is worth quoting one of his statements, which is still relevant today, as a concluding thought: “*Science has two proletarians: the statistician and the historian. As a result of their long, sweaty work, their individuality is completely lost, because of the demands of strict objectivity the diligent worker, who tirelessly piling up data, must disappear into the background. The finished work is then the basis that can be processed and built upon, the fruit of which the worker enjoys, reaps its rewards; its commodity is the element of the medium that moves the public, the final factor in the production process. The statistician and the historian modestly retreat behind the machinery of the bustling factory, and with speedy diligence continue their hard work, aware that the whole factory rests ultimately on their shoulders. Both the theoretical and the practical economist can only build on the foundations laid by the two disciplines mentioned above. [...] to successfully move on to new paths is only possible armed with these two weapons of empiricism. As the statistical method has recently gained ground in a gratifyingly wide range of circles, so worrying is the symptom of a move away from the historical basis. Even in the remedy of our economic ills, the search for similar situations in the past and the extraction of their lessons can lead to far more results than the mass accumulation of empty, idea-like fictions hanging in the air.*”⁴⁶

⁴³ HILD 2019, 142. 177.

⁴⁴ HORVÁTH 1993, 1009.

⁴⁵ KOVÁCS – LENCSES – RÓZSA 2014, 641.

⁴⁶ SURÁNYI-UNGER 1921, 3.

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