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ECONOMIC RELATIONS,
1920–1941

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It has been more than half a decade since the history of the political and economic relations between the Soviet Union and Hungary, a problem area handled quite ambivalently by Hungarian historiography prior to that time, became the focal point of my scholarly interest. Right at the beginning of my studies I felt that the reexamination of this historical problem, because of the fragmentation of its source materials, its international complexities and the linguistic competency essential for the study, made this a much greater challenge than the study of a strictly national or of a local historical problem. In these areas the researcher could work with relatively readily circumscribed sources which could usually be found in the local, urban, or provincial archives. The research difficulties were due not so much to the problems of arranging the various trips to Russia, but to the problems in overcoming the bureaucratic and administrative barriers which characterize the Russian archives and which created highly unfavorable working conditions, unknown to most Hungarian scholars and difficult for them to comprehend.

I would certainly not have been able to engage in productive research activities if I did not have individuals standing behind me and providing me regularly with professional advice and personal encouragement. First and foremost I wish to thank the members of my family, my wife Szilvi, my mother and my sister for the endless patience and understanding they have shown during many years and long absences. When I was writing my book they were my principal support. The essential institutional framework, the professional support, the existential background and confidence necessary for my studies, as well as the

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