

ABSTRACTS

Katalin Balogné Tóth: “Back to Judaism!” The Páva Street Synagogue as a Symbol and a Field of the Religious Conservatism of the Pest Israelite Congregation during the Interwar Period

The study examines how the intensification of anti-Semitism, the growing militant public mood after World War I and especially its loss, and the introduction of *numerus clausus* in 1920 triggered dissimilationist efforts in the policy of the Pest Israelite Congregation, which had previously been promoting assimilation in the 19th century. Using various types of sources, the elements of the new congregational policy reform are interpreted, focusing on the life of a specific synagogue community (Páva Street Synagogue, Budapest).

Kinga Julianna Dezső: “Évêque malgré lui”: The Episcopacy of Imre Révész during the Horthy Era

Imre Révész Jr. served as the bishop of the Trans-Tisza Reformed Church District from 1938 to 1949, perhaps the most tumultuous decade for society, economy, politics, and, in connection with these, for the Hungarian Reformed Church in the twentieth century. The study examines the beginnings of Révész's episcopal ministry, specifically the period from 1938 to 1944, focusing on his relations with the political system of the Horthy era, the emerging ideologies (especially antisemitism and Hungarianism), and with the Horthy family itself. It sheds light on how this relationship influenced the bishop's ecclesiastical governance, public life, and political engagement. To date, Révész's activities have not been thoroughly examined from this angle, so it is important to clarify how a Reformed bishop related to a political system that defined itself as operating along Christian values. Did he have to agree with every action, and if not, could he voice his disagreement? In this regard, the study employs secondary sources to reevaluate the prevailing historical perception of Révész and aims to uncover fresh insights into the early years of his episcopal governance. It does so by the examination of the Révész estate, available since 2017 in the Archives of the Trans-Tisza Reformed Church District and the Manuscript Library of the Trans-Tisza Reformed Church District and College.

Gábor Koloh: The Mobility of Reformed Clergy in the Danubian Church District Between the Two World Wars

The study examines the pathways of social mobility through an analysis of the occupations of the fathers and, where applicable, fathers-in-law of Reformed clergy, and then looks at the emergence of female teachers, which shaped prevailing trends at the time. The first part of the study, focusing on the Danubian Church District, confirms the phenomenon observed elsewhere: during the interwar period, the proportion of second-generation clergymen diminished. This decrease can be explained not only by the growing disillusionment of first-generation clergy but also by their deteriorating living conditions. The analysis of the occupations of their fathers and fathers-in-law concluded that more than a third of clergymen became sons-in-law to men from their own or a similar social group, and for about 20-25% of them marriage resulted in upward mobility from their original social layer. However, the multi-generational examination also reveals that a larger part of the village clergy came from insular environments, which affected the extent of their social involvement within their small communities.

Péter Sándor Sulák: “We are to Hold the Collectives under Holy Water”: Cooperation Strategies of the Szolnok County Clerical Peace Committee in the Early Period of Forced Collectivization (1950–1956)

Exploring the ecclesiastical social history of forced collectivization, the study focuses on Szolnok County as a case study in the context of the Sovietization of rural parishes in the Great Hungarian Plain, and its indirect church policy impact on the religious life the region's Catholic and Protestant parishes. Concerning the operation of the Clerical Peace Committees and the relationship between the State Office for Church Affairs and party organizations, the research analysed documents from the Propaganda Department of the Hungarian Workers' Party, apparatus documents by county and district level party committees and the chief ecclesiastical officer of the County Council, as well as the contemporary press. The study presents the societal utilization of various advocacy techniques deployed by the Peace Priest Movement, traditionally depicted as the transmission belt of the state-socialist dictatorship, through the limited platforms of publicity provided by the state. It examines the effects of the relations between individual pastors and the local representatives of power on congregational life and changes in religious tendencies across this denominationally heterogeneous county. In addition to nuancing the historical canon about the tactics and motivational factors behind their cooperation, the study goes beyond

the vertical relationship between state power and ecclesiastical society and side-steps “oppression-suppression” dichotomy to investigate the advocacy capabilities of the middle and lower clergy through the lens of their interpersonal relationships and potential to advocate their interests. The findings are expected to expand our existing knowledge on the socio-historical effects of the waves of collectivization that began during the Rákosi era and offer a more complex approach to the historical evaluation of the Peace Priest Movement.

Lajos Szász: Reformed Church Elite in the Nineteenth Century: The Deans of the Trans-Tisza Reformed Church District

Examining the members of the nineteenth-century Reformed church elite from a social history perspective, the study focuses on deans, as the leaders of the mid-level ecclesiastical administrative units, the church districts. It scrutinizes the family background, education, spouse’s background, and the life trajectories of the children of 47 deans from four church districts. Both in terms of qualifications and ancestry (forebears of intellectual and noble backgrounds), the deanery stood out from the rest of the clergy. The research concludes that the clerical profession was becoming a broadening channel for upward social mobility over the course of the nineteenth century. Many of the children of deans chose higher-prestige lay professions and married into such families. However, at the same time, the demand for the self-reproduction of the clerical order was in decline.

Orsolya Völgyesi: The Priests of the Bokor Community: The Ecclesiastical Networks of a Catholic Renewal Movement in the 1970s and 1980s

The Catholic Bokor Base Community was founded in the late 1960s by a Piarist monk, György Bulányi (1919–2010). Their small community format was modelled on the early Church and they consistently implemented the principle of universal priesthood, rereading and reinterpreting the Gospels in small groups—upholding the idea of the ultimate renewal of the Church’s mission and structure. These tenets together made the practice of this community unique both within the Hungarian Catholic Church and among small Christian communities before the change of regime.

The study outlines the group profile of priests who joined the Bokor community: who could identify with the theology and practice of Bokor during the 1970s and 1980s, for longer or shorter periods? How was the first Bokor community of priests formed, how did this type of relational network develop

around Bulányi, and what kind of layers did it have? What was the generational distribution of Bokor priests in later years and which seminaries did they come from? What conflicts did they have with their church superiors? Did they remain steadfast in their priestly vocation, or did they eventually choose a secular life?