

## ABSTRACTS

**Miklós Csapody**

■ ***Blood in the Boots (Literature, Memory, Forgetting)***

Keywords: 1942-1943, *Don Bend*, *Hungarian army, victims, remembrance*

In the spring of 1942, Prime Minister Miklós Kállay sent 200,000 troops to the Russian front to strengthen Hungary's position in the struggle for Transylvania, following the German demand. These soldiers' equipment was not comparable to that of the Germans or the Russians. The army, which in January 1943 had a total of approximately 245,000 soldiers and 50,000 Jewish forced labor servicemen, lost some 128,000 soldiers and 45,000 forced labor servicemen in one year: 173,000 men in total. Other figures put the number of killed and wounded at 50-50,000, with 80,000 missing and 42,000 captured. The press was silent about the greatest catastrophe in Hungarian military history, the writers were unaware of it, and after 1945 the survivors were branded as fascists by the communist regime. Many of those who returned home were recruited and monitored by state security until 1989; those who spoke about their imprisonment were sent to Recsk for forced labor. Victims could not be commemorated; families could not mourn their dead. A change only occurred in the 1960s. The turning point came with István Nemeskürty's essay *Requiem egy hadseregért* (Requiem for an Army), which refuted the false communist explanation of history. *Requiem* brought the forgotten victims into the public consciousness, making the facts part of national self-awareness.

The search for human and historical justice continued in the 1980s with Sándor Sára and Sándor Csoóri's monumental documentary series *Krónika* (Chronicle), which the authorities tried to prevent from being shown under Soviet pressure. The study traces the process in which the mourning and the struggle for truth, silenced for decades, has been accompanied by a confrontation with the regime in poetry, epic literature and essays, as well as in music and film, in Hungarian literature in Hungary, in Upper Hungary, Transcarpathia, Transylvania, and Vojvodina.

**László Karsai**

■ ***Jewish Forced Labor Servicemen at Don, 1942-1943***

Keywords: *Jewish forced labor servicemen, Don River, 1942-1943*

Some 39,000 Jewish forced labor servicemen were sent to the Don River with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hungarian Army in the spring and summer of 1942. In the anti-Semitic Horthy-regime it was quite natural that Jews could not fight with arms in the so-called "anti-Communist crusade", which was in reality a war of genocide. Some 16,000 Jews were stripped of their ranks. They were forced to wear yellow (the converted Jews white) arm bands. They had no appropriate winter clothes in the Ukrainian ringing frost. They cleared the minefields, built trenches, roads, and bunkers. Many of their officers and guards tortured them, stole their rations, beat them to death, etc. Some 23,000 Jewish forced laborers perished during the 1943 January-February offensive of the Red Army. The present study is based on the published literature on the subject, the protocols taken

in 1945 at the offices of the National Committee of the Care of Deportees, and the documents of the Hungarian people's courts.

**Pritz Pál**

■ ***The Barbarossa Plan – in Retrospective***

Keywords: *Barbarossa Plan, attack against the Soviet Union, sending of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hungarian Army to the Eastern Front*

The Barbarossa Plan, which ordered the attack on the Soviet Union, had deep historical roots and a profound impact on the fate of the Hungarians. The author of the paper briefly presents the antecedents from the history of ideas, on the basis of which the aim of the Williamite liberal imperialist Germany was to achieve European hegemony and the position of a dominant world power. Hitler's Germany wanted the same thing with the enormous difference of race theory. Therefore, the study also answers why no document signed by Hitler ordering the *Endlösung* was ever produced. In the meantime, the reader learns why the Führer was sure of Hungary's unsolicited participation in the aggression, and how Berlin forced the Hungarian leadership to send the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hungarian Army to the Eastern Front in early 1942.

**Péter Szabó**

■ ***Hungarians in the Don Bend: The History of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hungarian Army (1942-1943)***

Keywords: *World War II 1942–1943, Don bend, 2<sup>nd</sup> Hungarian Army*

Why was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hungarian Army sent to Russia, 2000-2500 kilometers away from its homeland? How many were lost in the Don bend? The questions keep coming back.

Over the past more than half a century, the answers to these questions have often been formulated with incorrect data and hypotheses, also depending on the evolution of politics. For a long time, all you could read and hear from renowned and not so renowned writers was that the Hungarian soldiers who fought in World War II were thrown in like cannon fodder, in exchange for hoped-for advantages. In his study, the author describes how some units of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hungarian Army conducted their anti-Partisan operations behind the front line, how the soldiers perceived the conditions in the Russian and Ukrainian territories affected by the war and the local population, what tragedy befell the Hungarian forced labor servicemen, and what the everyday life of the front-line soldiers was like.

**Sándor Szakály**

■ ***Two generals from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Hungarian Honvéd Army: Vitéz Gusztáv Jány, Colonel General – Count Marcel Stomm, Lieutenant General***

Keywords: *2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Hungarian Honvéd Army, 1942-1943, Don bend, Gusztáv Jány, Marcel Stomm*

During the fights of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Royal Hungarian Honvéd Army in the Soviet Union in 1942-1943, about 250-260,000 soldiers and forced labor servicemen of served in the army. The bloody losses (killed, missing, wounded, prisoners of war) suffered during the fighting – in practically a year – are estimated at 120-150,000. The performance of the army was judged at the time (and even subsequently) by the character of its military leaders. But who led this army? Generals

and staff officers, of whom two generals are especially worthy of mention. One of them, the commander of the army, was General Vitéz Gusztáv Jány, and the other, Count Marcel Stomm, the commander of III Corps, from 1 February 1943 Lieutenant General. Two military leaders, with almost identical starts in their military careers, war experience between 1914 and 1918, then the Royal Hungarian Honvéds.

Both of them are mostly rated on the basis of some individual orders they have issued. Is this fair? How did their fate unfold and how did their lives end almost identically, with a death sentence? (Implemented in the case of Jány, pardon in the case of Stomm.) 20<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian soldiers' fates.

**Rita Szűts-Novák**

■ ***Ilona Berta's Work in Women's Education Based on István Gyertyánffy's Epilogue to the Image of Women***

Keywords: *István Gyertyánffy, Ilona Berta, history of education, women, women's education*

In the diaries of István Gyertyánffy (1834-1930), a Hungarian teacher and educational writer (1865-1870), one can also read copies of

some of his letters. In his last diary, he also referred to his three last correspondents, the most important for him, whom he calls his good friends, and with whom he kept in touch in private letters even in the days of his diary writing. He mentions Sándor Imre, Emil Gyurman, a doctor, and Ilona Berta as his confidants. Ilona Berta (1862-1945), one of the most important figures of the time in the field of women's education, was present at all the important meetings and conferences, such as the meeting of the Hungarian Pedagogical Society held on 21 February 1914, where the discussion focused on the unfortunate situation of women's education. Gyertyánffy explained the ideas of Theano education (the education of girls to become good wives, housewives, farmers, in short, good mothers) in even greater detail in his Epilogue to Theano: Thoughts on the Practical Implementation of Theano Educational Ideals, which he dedicated in gratitude to Ilona Berta, the former director of the Elizabeth School for Women. The aim of this article is to present their professional relationship, their intellectual influence on each other and their efforts to educate women.

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„Ha a Don mellett pusztultak elszáraztában valami fordulatot hozott, az a *Requiem egy hadseregért* volt. Nemeskürty a Horthy- és a Rákosi- rendszerben egyaránt elhallgatott oseményeket, a feledésre ítélt áldozatokat a köztudatba nem visszahelyezte, hanem beemelte, a tényeket a nemzeti önismeret részévé tette. A mű kulcsmondata: »Ezek az emberek megfagytak és elvéreztek és meghaltak és megszebesültek és szenvedtek és megőrültek és hővakságot kaptak és éhen haltak, és kihunyó tudatuk utolsó értelmes fellobbanásával hazagondoltak, igen, a hazájukra, amelyről tudták, bizonyosan tudták, hogy nem a Donnal kell megvédeni: de ha már egyszer mégis ott kellett meghalniuk, és sok vad s madár gyomra lett koporeója feláldozott testüknek, akkor legalább egy könnyet ejtsünk értük.« Már csak az volt eldöntendő, hogy a domi katonák áldozatok voltak-e vagy hősök. »Aki nem lehet hős, lehet azért becsületes és bátor ember. Ami a 2. magyar hadsereg százezer halottját illeti, legjobban úgy van velük a nemzeti emlékezés, mint a második világháború minden magyar katonái és polgári áldozatával: sem hőssé magasztalni, sem elfelejteni nem szabad őket! [...] szerencsétlen áldozatokká lettek, pedig lehetek volna hősök is.«

(Csapody Miklós)

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