

## ABSTRACTS

**Ágnes Karolina Bakk**

### ■ *Phantom Touch: What Does Virtual Happiness Look Like?*

Keywords: *virtual reality, social life, phantom touch, embodiment, interaction*  
This essay explores the nature of the phantom touch experienced on social VR platforms through social interactions. The phantom touch has the potential to induce happiness in users. The study outlines how VR has emerged as both a technology and an imaginative concept. It examines how social virtual reality platforms can facilitate socialization and connection with friends. It highlights that some users experience phantom touch during simulated face-to-face interactions. The conclusion posits that this type of touch, while highly speculative, may contribute to a greater sense of fulfillment in users' otherwise less stimulating virtual lives.

**Mária Barabási-Geréb**

### ■ *A Few Directions to Happiness*

Keywords: *seeking, alone, together, nothing, everything*

Happiness can be found in watching the wild ocean in the South or picking sour berries in the North; it can be experienced while sitting alone or being surrounded by a crowd. However, happiness can also manifest as the ability to forget, if only for a moment, that you are seeking it. To be perfectly candid, happiness resembles the feeling I have now – what a relief that the résumé in English is finally ready!

**Mária Botházi**

### ■ *Variations for Happiness*

Keywords: *happiness, Romania, dictatorship, regime change, way of living*  
This essay examines the evolving social landscape of happiness and how people in Transylvania have related to it before and after the regime change. In the past, happiness was neither an expectation nor a prevalent concept in public discourse; today, it is regarded as a desired and essential state of

being. Achieving happiness has become a societal challenge and a collective endeavour.

**Csanád Demeter**

### ■ *Entertainment in the “Golden Age”*

Keywords: *communism, entertainment, socialist culture, May Day celebrations, festivals*

In Romania, following Nicolae Ceaușescu's rise to power in 1965, a period of temporary relaxation ensued, during which the dictator made gestures that were previously unimaginable until the mid-1970s. However, after the announcement of the “small cultural revolution” in 1972, all aspects of culture were subordinated to the one-man dictatorship, and opportunities gradually diminished. By the 1960s, the foundations of socialist culture had already been established, signifying a cultural landscape directed, financed, and controlled by a single-party state. Despite these constraints, questions arise: how did ordinary people survive the reign of terror during communism? How did they entertain themselves, outsmart the system, and access cultural and educational opportunities? This study aims to provide answers, highlighting several examples from the “treasury of small joys”.

**Tünde Dimény-Varga**

### ■ *Our Culinary Pleasures: The Impact of Food, Cooking, and Eating on Our Mental Well-Being*

Keywords: *gastronomy, psychology, happiness, gastro-psychology, mindfulness*  
Eating is a pleasure and a universal human experience. However, both the positive aspects of eating and the nature of happiness have only recently become subjects of psychological research. What connections can be found between eating and positive emotions? What insights does gastro-psychology, a relatively young discipline, provide on this topic? For humans, food has served not only as a means of survival but also as a source of pleasure. Nutrients ingested through food can

exert a relatively rapid effect on our mood, and conversely, our mood can influence our digestion. It is important to be more aware of the potential pleasure-enhancing effects of food, cooking, and eating. Therefore, it is advisable to become as fluent as possible in one's "gastronomic mother tongue", while also acquiring some knowledge of a "gastronomic foreign language".

**Szilárd Ferenczi**

■ ***Lives Unlived: The Loss of, and the Search for Happiness in the British Crime Series *Unforgotten****

Keywords: *loss of happiness, TV series, murder, family*

The author seeks to provide a fresh perspective on the British crime series *Unforgotten* (2015-present, ITV, 5 seasons) by employing the motif of loss of happiness, which defines the past and present of all secondary characters introduced in each season. These characters have a significant connection to the murders investigated by DCI Stuart and DI Khan. The loss of happiness is a harrowing experience for all involved in every case, even if it does not stem directly from the violent crime; rather, it develops over time, fuelled by the secrets buried within each character – secrets that, when revealed, could potentially destroy their lives once again. By offering a bottom-up perspective on serious socio-moral issues, the series also addresses the banality of cruelty, framing the loss of happiness among individuals as a societal issue.

**Katalin Lakatos-Fleisz**

■ ***What Do We Want from Venice? The Image of Venice in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century Hungarian Prose***

Keywords: *Venice, image, emotional content, travel, literary tradition*

What is the purpose of traveling to Venice today, and what motivated the travellers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century? To what extent can the popularity of Venice be traced back to a general image awaiting manifestation in the form of a visible

city – as an image carries emotional significance and evokes a desire for connection? This study explores this general image within 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>-century literary works, ranging from Dezső Kosztolányi to Éva Bánki.

**Beáta Lázár**

■ ***Factors Influencing University Choice among High School Students in Transylvania***

Keywords: *higher education, marketing, higher education choice, information, decision making*

High school students face a complex decision when selecting their future higher education institution. This paper examines the factors influencing the university choices of Hungarian high school students in Romania, with a particular focus on a website that aids them in the decision-making process. The research questions address the criteria they employ to choose a higher education institution, the language they use to gather information, and the role of a Hungarian-language university site in facilitating their decision. The aim of the research is to map the university choice habits of the target audience, exploring aspects such as the importance of the Hungarian language, the significance of studying locally, and the availability of information.

**Dénes Lőrinczi**

■ ***Balázs Orbán and the Gendarmerie: An Opposition Perspective on an Armed Guard Corps***

Keywords: *Transylvania, gendarmerie, 19<sup>th</sup> century, Balázs Orbán*

The Hungarian Royal Gendarmerie was definitively dissolved in 1945 due to its complicity in war crimes. Previously, during the era of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, opposition parties, despite differing political views, sought the dissolution of the Transylvanian gendarmerie, viewing it as a symbol of Habsburg oppression since 1849. Following the end of the Hungarian Revolution and War of Independen-

dence of 1848-1849, many revolutionaries fled to Turkish territories, where they were under the protection of the sultan. During this time, the young ethnographer Balázs Orbán also arrived in the Ottoman Empire to resolve matters related to family inheritance. The young Transylvanian baron's relationship with the revolutionaries significantly influenced his political conduct and career. The purpose of this study is to examine the extent and nature of the aversion toward the gendarmerie in Balázs Orbán's political conduct, as well as to explore any possible changes over time, considering the various reforms of the gendarmerie. A statement from local press may also be included in the examination of Balázs Orbán's opposition to the gendarmerie, and more broadly, the current state of public safety. The author argues that one should not reject the gendarmerie solely because it was initiated by the government; instead, it is essential to consider the changes the gendarmerie brought to the region's public safety. The conclusion of the study suggests that separating Balázs Orbán's different roles – as the ethnographer who left behind significant academic work on Szeklerland and as the parliamentarian demonstrating specific political behavior – may prove beneficial.

**Laura Nistor**

■ ***The Measure: Happiness – An Overview of the Specificities of Happiness Measures***

Keywords: *happiness, subjective well-being, indicators, index, World Happiness Day*

This review focuses on various happiness measures and the specific approaches utilized in subjective quality-of-life studies. These studies have developed distinctive indicators and measurement tools to express subjective well-being in relatively straightforward and interpretable quantitative data. The measurement of happiness can be integrated into these efforts,

with happiness measures designed to assess individuals' feelings of joy regarding their overall lives or specific areas of life. The review examines the specificities of the World Happiness Report, the Happiness Measure, the Well-Being Index, and other macro-level happiness measures.

**Emőke Pál**

■ ***I'm Happy and Full of Expectation When I Get a Role and Start to Discover It – Interview by Gábor Gyórfy***

Keywords: *acting, film, theatre, public, happiness*

Throughout her career, Emőke Pál has been drawn to deep and complex themes that possess social significance and resonate with audiences. She believes in artistic freedom and is eager to engage in new projects, face challenges, and explore creative formal solutions, both on stage and in film. Teaching at the university presents a unique challenge for her. To date, she has appeared in three major feature films, and her performance in the lead role in *Heights and Depths*, a film about the death of climber Zsolt Eröss, earned her the award for Best Actress in a Leading Role at the Hungarian Motion Picture Festival. In this interview, she shares insights into her career challenges and the joy she finds in acting.

**Tünde Póka**

■ ***Active Person = Happy Person?***

Keywords: *happiness, well-being, values, physical activity, self-compassion*

What does psychology say about happiness and beliefs surrounding it? What is happiness, and what determines its level? Can we enhance our happiness, and if so, how? This paper seeks to address these and similar questions, highlighting the significant role of value-congruent goals and actions, particularly physical activity. We will explore how physical exercise can contribute to maintaining our well-being and what strategies we can employ to meet the recommended

guidelines for exercise while optimizing our motivation to engage in training. Finally, the study will discuss the important role of self-compassion in our efforts to improve our overall well-being.

**Szidónia Rusu – Emese Vita**

■ ***PhD Students' Well-Being and Satisfaction: Analyzing Hungarian PhD Candidates in Transylvania***

Keywords: *PhD students, well-being, supervisory support, workload, mental health*

The well-being and satisfaction of PhD students are receiving increasing attention in academic research, reflecting broader concerns regarding this group's mental health and overall well-being. Studies indicate that PhD candidates often encounter heightened mental health challenges, such as stress, anxiety, and isolation, compared to their peers with master's degrees. This study focuses on Hungarian PhD students in Transylvania, analyzing the factors influencing their happiness and satisfaction. Based on data collected in 2021 through a non-representative survey of 126 PhD candidates, this research identifies key factors contributing to their well-being, including internal and external motivators, supervisory support, and the effects of workload and personal circumstances. In conclusion, the well-being and life satisfaction of PhD students are influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including supervisory support, workload, personal resources, and cultural context. The study recommends institutional strategies to enhance their overall well-being and academic success.

**Krisztina Sófalvi**

■ ***800 Kilometres on the Scallop Shell Trail: The Happiness of Pilgrims***

Keywords: *El Camino, ship, scallop, signs, freedom*

This summary reflects on personal

experiences along the Saint James' Way in Spain. It briefly outlines the history of El Camino, the spread of the tradition, and the nature of the pilgrimage: its starting and ending points, the places it traverses, and the experiences it offers to pilgrims. It captures the happiness of pilgrims found in carefreeness, freedom, closeness to nature and God, the marvels of built heritage, and the constant guidance of the scallop shell, the emblem that connects all pilgrims. At the same time, it emphasizes the individuality of each experience, noting that everyone must follow their own path. The conclusion is that the El Camino will never truly end; once a pilgrim, always a pilgrim, forever longing for new journeys.

**Péter Tóth-Lipták**

■ ***Mirror, Mirror, Tell Me! René Girard's Theory of Mimetic Desire***

Keywords: *René Girard, mimetic theory, philosophy, history, civilization*

René Girard (1923-2015) was a historian, philosopher, social scientist, literary critic, religious scholar, cultural analyst, and a thinker in the fields of anthropology and theology. He was also a provocateur, an intuitive philosopher, and someone with a keen insight into the essence of things. He could be described with numerous other labels depending on how one views the French scholar's body of work. Girard, one of the most distinctive theorists of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, enjoyed growing recognition worldwide due to his unique perspectives on the entirety of human civilization, including both its history and contemporary aspects. His name is associated with several controversial concepts that, when considered together, form a comprehensive theory about human evolution and nature, the development of religion and culture, and interpretations of biblical texts.

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## TÁMOGATÓK



„A szubjektív életminőség-fordulat az 1960–1970-es években jelent meg és vált egyre népszerűbbé, azaz a felismeréssel párhuzamosan, hogy az egyre intenzívebb gazdasági növekedés és életszínvonal-emelkedés ellenére az egyének elégedettsége, boldogsága nem növekedett az objektív erőforrásokkal párhuzamosan. Azt stagnálni vagy akár csökkenni kezdett. Ide kapcsolható az ún. boldogságpáradoxon jelenség, amely azt hivatott kifejezni, hogy különösen a fejlett gazdasággal rendelkező országokban a jövedelem hosszabb időszakon át történő növekedése nem járt együtt a jólét vagy a boldogság hasonló mértékű növekedésével.”

(Nistor Laura)

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