

ABSTRACTS

Róbert-István Antal

■ ***Socialism, Transylvanian Identity, and Nationalist Accusations: The Life of Lajos Jordáky (1913–1974)***

Keywords: *Lajos Jordáky, double identity, dogmatic socialist, Hungarian patriot from Transylvania*

Lajos Jordáky, a former social-democratic and later communist politician, was regarded as a man with a dual identity: a dogmatic socialist and a Hungarian patriot from Transylvania. He joined the Communist Party of Romania in October 1944, but by 1946, he was expelled, accused of deviating from the official line and Hungarian nationalism. In 1952, he was arrested, tried, and sentenced to 12 years in prison for high treason. He was released in 1955, but was arrested again in 1957, accused of collaborating in the case of István Dobai's Memorandum. After six months of criminal investigation, Jordáky accepted the role offered by the authorities: he performed self-criticism, condemned the 1956 events in Budapest, and admitted to being a Hungarian nationalist. Gradually, his views shifted, adapting to the party's official narrative. By the end of his life, he believed that the nationalist and retrograde tendencies within Hungarian cultural life in Romania could only be countered from an official position. Consequently, in 1972, he rejoined the ranks of the Romanian Communist Party.

Róbert-István Antal

■ ***The Most Famous Székely Communist, László Luka (1898–1963)***

Keywords: *László Luka (Vasile Luca), Hungarian communist, Romania*

Born in Székely Land, László Luka (Vasile Luca) became the highest-ranking Hungarian communist politician in Romania. In the chaotic aftermath of World War I he joined the radical socialist movement in 1919 and was one of the founders of the

Communist Party. He rose through the ranks of the party during the interwar period, becoming a member of the Central Committee. Throughout this time, he was imprisoned several times, and in 1940, he was sent to the Soviet Union. During the war, he served as an officer in the Soviet army and also worked within the Comintern. At the end of the war, he returned home and became a prominent figure in the party leadership, serving as Minister of Finance and a member of the Secretariat. In the late 1940s, he was an advocate of strict party loyalty and alignment with Stalin's policies. Despite this, he became a victim of a show trial, was arrested in 1952, and sentenced to life imprisonment. He died in prison in 1963.

Tamás Beck

■ ***From Beaufret's Second Question to the Incarnation of "das Man": A Possible Interpretation of a Key Passage in the Letter on Humanism***

Keywords: *Martin Heidegger, ontology, das Man, ethics, Heraclitus*

In this brief paper, I examine a specific section of Martin Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism*, where the German philosopher attempts to define the foundational relationship between ontology and ethics. More precisely, I aim to offer an interpretation of this passage that emphasizes the role of disciplines somewhat removed from the core of ontological theory – ranging from sociology of knowledge and depth psychology to the philosophy of science. My study does not shy away from presenting “heretical” ideas, which have yet to be considered by others, and I am willing to take responsibility for the potential criticism this may incur. The argument includes the theory of the unconscious as proposed by Freud, as well as aspects of deconstructionism, which later achieved prominence in the postmodern era. In the final section of the paper, I devote special attention to a startling conclusion: an anecdote

about Heraclitus, as discussed by Heidegger, leads me to infer that “das Man”, granted total anonymity by *Being and Time*, can, in certain historical contexts, become identifiable with specific individuals or powers. While I explore these interdisciplinary connections, I remain anchored in the primary issue: how does Heidegger, in his later works, envision the grounding of ethics through ontology?

György Csepeli – Richárd Papp

■ ***“One Must Not, and It Is Not Proper to Talk About This”: Non-Jewish Readings of Distrust Related to Holocaust Memory***

Keywords: *Hungary, Holocaust, Jews, memory, trauma*

The Holocaust is the Philoktetes wound tormenting every European country occupied by Hitler’s armies between 1939 and 1945. Paradoxically, it may be the Germans who feel this pain the least, as they have nowhere left to escape the curse of their role as perpetrators. This article presents the results of research on the memory of the events in Hungary, the last theatre of Hitler’s European campaign against the Jews. The researchers returned to the sites of the drama that unfolded in the summer of 1944, searching for traces of the vanished Jewish life in both the physical and social-psychological spaces, where the void created by the destruction of the Jews is filled with fear, distrust, confusion, silence, and cognitive dissonance. Based on the research findings, it can be stated that 80 years after the Holocaust, in Hungarian villages, small towns, and Budapest, both within and outside the current national borders, today, in Macbeth’s words, “nothing is, but what is not”.

Norbert Falusi

■ ***István Apáthy: The Tragic Fate of the Hungarian Natural Scientist***

Keywords: *István Apáthy, Transylvanian Hungarian politician, natural scientist*

Born in Budapest, István Apáthy was one of the leading figures of the Transylvanian Hungarian political elite at the turn of the century. He engaged in debates on nationalities, agrarian issues, and electoral rights, representing the opposition to the 1848 independence goals, advocating for Hungarianization proposals put forward by regionalist nation-building elites, and supporting the expansion of suffrage. Some of Apáthy’s political goals were realized, but only after a lost war for Hungary, which radically changed the framework for political activities that had existed before 1918. The worldview that had supported the societal, economic, and political system – founded on the unique blend of “great statehood” and national sovereignty – collapsed with the fall of dualism. Meanwhile, Apáthy was also a world-renowned natural scientist, one of the founders of neurobiology in Hungary, and was appointed rector of the University of Cluj in 1903. This paper discusses the tragic fate of István Apáthy, the natural scientist.

János Fodor

■ ***Between Two Governments: An Evaluation of György Bernády’s Political Role in Transylvania***

Kulcsszavak: *György Bernády, Transylvanian Hungarian politician, Marosvásárhely (Târgu Mureș), mayor*

György Bernády (1864–1938) was a versatile public figure and a defining personality in 20th-century Transylvania. As mayor of Târgu Mureș, he was praised for his city development efforts. As a county prefect and member of parliament, his political career was centered around the defense of the minority Hungarian community’s interests. During his mayoralty, he became a key figure in the economic and cultural revitalization of Târgu Mureș. Bernády played a key role in Romanian Hungarian politics between the two World Wars: through his pamphlets, parliamentary work, and connections in Hungary, he sought to

safeguard the rights of Transylvanian Hungarians within the new state framework. While his political approach often divided public opinion, his pragmatic attitude and influential connections made him a significant personality. Despite numerous efforts in the past decade to promote his public activities and popularize his work, Bernády's recognition has mostly remained confined to regional boundaries.

János Főcze

■ *The Career of Gyárfás Kurkó, an Instinctive Politician (1909–1983)*

Keywords: *Gyárfás Kurkó, Hungarian politician, 20th century, Transylvania*

Gyárfás Kurkó was an iconic figure among Transylvanian Hungarians in the 20th century. His political views were shaped both by his humble Székely origins and by the popular front politics of the Romanian communists in the 1930s. A stubborn and tenacious organizer, he rose to become the leader of the Hungarian People's Union (Magyar Népi Szövetség) in the late 1940s, only to be arrested in 1949, primarily due to his support for an autonomous Hungarian People's Union independent of the Communist Party. In 1951, he was convicted of treason, alongside other prominent Transylvanian Hungarians, and sentenced to imprisonment. He remained incarcerated until 1964. After his release, he started anew as a factory worker in Brassó (Braşov). He passed away in 1983. This study aims to outline the career of this remarkable individual, though a comprehensive historical biography remains a vital task for Transylvanian Hungarians who must confront their 20th-century past.

János Kristóf Murádin

■ *Count Miklós Bánffy, the Transylvanian Politician*

Keywords: *Count Miklós Bánffy, political activity, Transylvania, 20th century*

This article provides a brief analysis of Count Miklós Bánffy's political activity

in Transylvania during the early 20th century. It examines his position within Transylvanian politics, as well as his role in shaping the broader national political landscape of the time. The study focuses on the political struggles between the two dominant ideologies of the period: classical liberalism and conservatism, presenting the two key figures representing these ideologies in Northern Transylvania – Count Miklós Bánffy and Count György Bethlen. The main objective of the study is to enrich the existing understanding of Miklós Bánffy's personality and political goals, based on prior research. The source material for this study includes archival documents, published collections of documents, specialist books, published and online studies, memoirs, and contemporary press articles.

Csaba Zoltán Novák

■ *The Traveler: Roads and Stations, Images from Károly Király's Political Career*

Keywords: *Károly Király, Romanian Hungarian politician, 20th century*

Károly Király, or as his name appears in Securitate documents, "Utazó-Călătorul", had a long and eventful career that spanned multiple political systems and eras in 20th-century Romanian politics. He began his political journey as an ethnic Hungarian party activist during the Stalinist period, progressing through key stages of party training. He proved to be a loyal and effective party cadre, eventually attaining a position that few could reach (and even fewer among Romania's Hungarian community): county first secretary and a member of the Central Committee. However, personal and political motivations led to a break with the party leadership, marking a shift in his career. The former activist, initially critical of the party's mechanisms of power, gradually became an outspoken critic of the national minority policy, a stance that, in the context of the time, was a significant and

daring move. His uncompromising personality likely played a role in this, as well as the fact that the political avalanche triggered by his actions could not have been stopped without serious compromise. His social capital gained from resistance brought him back into the political spotlight during the regime change, but amid the rapid historical events and the newly established democratic rules, he was unable to firmly re-establish himself in politics.

Ignác Romsics

■ A 20th-Century Transylvanian Aristocrat: Count Béla Bethlen (1888–1979)

Keywords: Count Béla Bethlen, 20th-century Transylvania, government commissioner of the whole Northern Transylvania

Béla Bethlen traced his origins to an ancient Transylvanian noble family. The Bethlens were one of the largest families in the region, the easternmost part of historic Hungary. He was born on 2 November 1888 at Aranyosgyéres (now Câmpi Turzii), near Torda (Turda). He studied law at the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj) and the University of Berlin, and also agricultural science at the Agricultural Academy of Kolozsmonostor (Cluj-Mănăştur). He received his doctorate in 1910 from the University of Kolozsvár (Cluj). After graduating, he joined the public administration of Kolozs County. During World War I he served as a company commander. After the signing of the Trianon Peace Treaty in 1920, which detached Transylvania from Hungary and attached it to Romania, he decided to remain in his homeland. He settled with his family in Bethlen (Beclean) and focused on farming. His estates amounted to barely one thousand yokes. In public life, he held leading positions within the Transylvanian Reformed Church. The Second Vienna Award of 1940 divided Transylvania between Hungary and Romania. The district where Bethlen lived was awarded to

Hungary. The Hungarian government then appointed him head of administration for two counties. He remained in this position until the German occupation of Hungary in March 1944. His activities as a regional leader were characterized by deep humanism and a desire to foster peaceful relations between Romanians and Hungarians. After the fall of the pro-German Sztójay cabinet in August 1944, he again accepted a government position. He became government commissioner for all of Northern Transylvania, which had belonged to Hungary since 1940, until the end of 1944 when the Soviet Red Army arrived. His conduct once more earned the respect and gratitude of both nationalities. Despite his circumspect political behavior, he was arrested by Romanian authorities and sentenced to several years in prison in a show trial in 1945. He was released in 1954. Although rehabilitated in 1959, he did not receive any pension until 1964. During these years, he earned his living as a worker. In the 1970s, he worked on his memoirs, which were published in Budapest only in 1988. He died on 6 November 1979 in Kolozsvár. His ashes are interred in the famous Házsongárd cemetery in the city.

Péter Sas

■ Loyalty and Service: Károly Kós as a Politically Engaged Figure

Keywords: Károly Kós, Transylvania, 20th century

For Károly Kós, Transylvania represented home. As an architect, he successfully revitalized Hungarian national architecture by drawing on the design heritage of houses, churches, and agricultural buildings preserved in the region. The distinctive culture of Transylvania can only be understood through the mutual influence of the cultures of the peoples living there. This mutual influence forms the foundation of his Transylvanist theory. Károly Kós spiritually identified with the cultural treasures of Transylvania and the people who created them

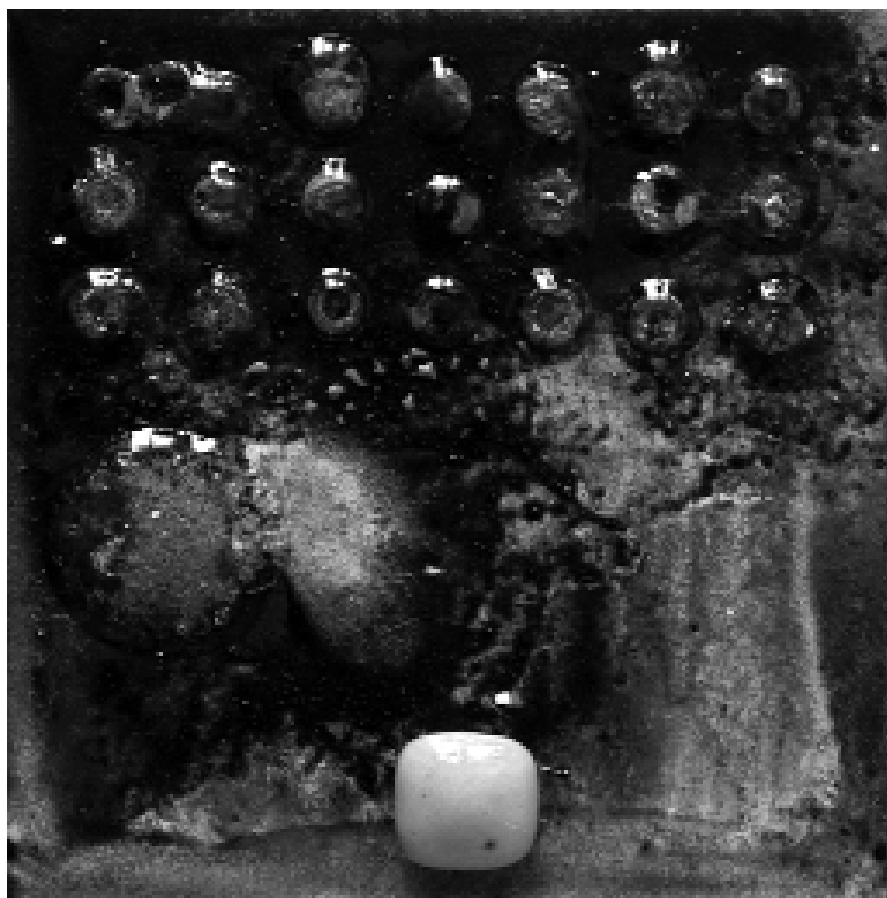
through their work. After the Treaty of Trianon, he took on their representation as a politician, doing everything in his power to ensure the success of the struggle for Transylvania's autonomy. His workplace and residence, known as Varjúvár (Raven's Castle), became one of the emblematic buildings of Kalotaszeg.

György Sümegi

■ **László Paulovics**

Keywords: *Paulovics László, visual arts, Transylvania*

This article is an obituary of László Paulovics, the visual artist who passed away in December 2024.



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TÁMOGATÓK



„Az egykori külügyminiszter politikai tevékenységének alkonyában azonban legalább annyi érdekes részletet nyújt, mint pályájának Trianont közvetlenül követő zenitje. Legyen hát ez a rövid tanulmány kísérlet arra, hogy rávilágítsunk: gróf Bánffy Miklósról, akire író, grafikus, díszlet- és jelmeztervező, színpadi rendező volta mellett, méltán emlékezhetünk úgy is, mint Erdély népeinek sorsát mindig szívén viselő és annak jobbra fordításáért élete végéig tenni igyekvő politikusra.”

(Murádin János Kristóf)

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