

ABSTRACTS

Imre József Balázs

■ ***State Assignments of Teachers in Socialist Romania and Éva Cs. Gyimesi's Protests***

Keywords: *deportation, dissidence, labor policy, protest, state assignment*

The article examines the way in which Éva Cs. Gyimesi, in a formal petition, drew a parallel between the contemporary practice of assigning newly graduated university students to compulsory work placements and the earlier communist institution of forced residence. The study argues that this comparison was far more than a rhetorical gesture: it exposed the underlying continuity between different mechanisms of state control over mobility, labor, and personal autonomy within the socialist system. By linking graduate placement policies to practices associated with political coercion in an earlier phase of the regime, Cs. Gyimesi challenged the officially promoted interpretation of placement as merely a guaranteed employment opportunity and a socially beneficial labor policy. The authorities' reaction demonstrates that the analogy touched upon a particularly sensitive political and ideological issue. State representatives sought to frame the placement system exclusively in terms of workers' rights, social integration, and economic necessity, thereby depoliticizing the compulsory dimensions of the practice. However, the article shows that, within a broader international and historical context, enforced forms of population movement, relocation, and restricted residence inevitably carried associations with coercion and political repression, and could inevitably be linked to the homogenizing efforts of the national communism of the late Ceaușescu regime.

Nicolae Balotă

■ ***"Sacrifice Is Essential to Living an Upright Life": Answers to Ovidiu Pecican's Questions***

Keywords: *adaptation, deportation, forced labor, prison, state socialism*

In a reflective interview Nicolae Balotă, as an internationally well-known literary scholar, recounts to Ovidiu Pecican his experiences following imprisonment under the communist regime, with particular attention to the period of forced residence that followed his release from prison. The interview offers a nuanced testimony situated at the intersection of political repression, memory, and personal rediscovery. Balotă describes how, after years spent in prison, he was relocated to the village of Lătești, a settlement near the Danube created by displaced populations from the Banat region during the Stalinist period. Through his recollections, the scholar explores how spaces shaped by coercive state policies simultaneously became sites of adaptation, reflection, and partial recovery of individuality. Particular emphasis is placed on the paradoxical nature of forced residence in Balotă's narrative. Although he remained under surveillance and deprived of genuine freedom, he recalls this period as the only time in his life when he truly experienced rural existence. The interview contrasts the confinement of prison with the relative openness of the Danube landscape, and with the solidarity between the inhabitants of Lătești.

Tamás Gusztáv Filep

■ ***Zsigmond Kemény in 1848***

Keywords: *journalism, Zsigmond Kemény, 1848, Pesti Hírlap, political agenda*

The appreciation of Zsigmond Kemény's oeuvre has been informed by the interpretation and evaluation of his writings concerning the author's role in 1848-49's Hungarian revolution and independence war. He was the leading columnist of *Pesti Hírlap* at the outset of the Peoples' Springtime. In his opinion pieces he promoted the centralist agenda. He shared the positions of Antal Csengery and József Eötvös,

aiming at a constitutional social life based on liberties achieved and lacking revolutionary disorder. As an elected deputy in parliament he supported the government of Count Batthyány. The main concern of his journalism before the open confrontation between Vienna and Hungary's government was the future and preservation of the Habsburg Empire. Later the main argument of his writings became the defence of lawful foundations and constitutional order. He repeatedly discussed Pan-Slavism as the primary threat, while he soon accepted that the Croatian unrest is based on real societal demand. Kemény as a columnist and as an official protected the ideals of 1848 and rejected those of 1849, as someone who would not renounce the chances of peace. Kemény, joined by Csengery, resigned from his leading position at *Pesti Hírlap* by the end of 1848.

Mária Gál

■ ***Fourteen Years and Two Purple Letters***

Keywords: *forced residence, oral history, social exclusion, state socialism, terror*

The article examines the phenomenon of D. O. (domiciliu obligatoriu, or forced residence) in communist Romania as one of the most revealing manifestations of the regime's repressive logic and mechanisms of social exclusion. Drawing on the methodological conditions that characterized historical research immediately after the fall of communism, the study reflects on the difficulties scholars faced when attempting to reconstruct the history of postwar political persecution. In the absence of accessible archives, researchers were compelled to rely primarily on oral history testimonies and contemporary press sources, which often provided fragmentary or contradictory information. Through successive interviews, however, previously silenced aspects of the communist system gradually emerged, and the author published a volume about the topic in

1996. The study emphasizes that the regime's policies, despite their ideological claims of constructing a morally superior and socially just order, relied systematically on terror, coercion, and the destruction of basic human rights. In this context, the measures directed against the aristocracy, nobility, and other categories labeled as "class enemies" represented an especially radical form of political persecution. The author reflects also on the slowness of commemorative, healing processes.

Bíborka Kúrti

Perspectives, Memory, and the Tensions Between Human and Animal Narratives

Keywords: *deportation, narrative structure, nonhuman, temporality, trauma*

The article by Bíborka Kúrti examines the narrative and conceptual differences between *It's Raining in Moscow*, a novel by Zsuzsa Selyem, and the memoir of her grandfather, István Beczásy, with particular attention to their contrasting approaches to temporality and the representation of trauma. The study argues that the Beczásy memoir follows the conventions of classical autobiographical narration through a linear and coherent treatment of time, in which events of his deportation unfold according to a stable chronological sequence and traumatic experiences remain narratively identifiable and reconstructable. This structure reflects the traditional logic of memoir writing, where the retrospective organization of events seeks to establish continuity, causality, and interpretive coherence within personal and historical experience. In contrast, Selyem's novel fundamentally disrupts this linear conception of time through the use of animal narration. The article demonstrates how the nonhuman perspective relativizes temporality by placing human existence alongside the lives of animals, trees, and other living beings characterized by radically different temporal scales. As a result, time no longer progresses as a unified

historical trajectory, but instead emerges as a fragmented coexistence of multiple forms of life and duration. Unlike the conventional memoir form, the novel resists organizing events into a single comprehensive narrative, thereby destabilizing the notion of history as a coherent and closed sequence of past events, and as a result, trauma becomes dispersed across human and nonhuman perspectives, preventing its consolidation into a unified narrative structure or a stable interpretive model.

Katalin Lakatos-Fleisz

■ ***Life in a Spiritual Gulag***

Keywords: *crying, gaze, madness, purity, sunlight*

The article analyzes Bruno Dumont's 2013 film *Camille Claudel 1915* by closely examining motifs of gaze, purity, sunlight, tears, and madness. It foregrounds the film's intent to distill a few days of Claudel's prolonged institutionalization, illuminating the visual symbolism beneath its austere surface.

Kinga Lázár

■ ***"I Write Because My Mother Could Not" – Matrilineal Heritage as a Tool of Self-Representation in the Anthology Reinventing the Enemy's Language***

Keywords: *Native American women's writing, self-representation, decolonial methodology, counter-discourse, indigenous literary studies*

The article examines the anthology *Reinventing the Enemy's Language* (1997), edited by Gloria Bird and Joy Harjo, focusing on how the volume's authors represent matrilineal heritage as a strategy of self-representation. To this end, I identify the knowledge transmitted through female lineage along three mutually constitutive dimensions – the sacrality of the body, the relationship to language, and the responsibilities traditionally associated with women in tribal communities – interpreted through Brant Castellano's and Janice Hill's defining characteris-

tics of Indigenous knowledge. A further aim is to outline an ethical, non-native methodology that complements literary analysis with anthropological sensitivity.

Péter Bence Marosán

■ ***The Context of Context and Phenomenon: An Attempt at Self-Interpretation***

Keywords: *rationalism, Enlightenment, meaning of life, transcendental philosophy, phenomenology, phenomenological metaphysics*

Since the time of René Descartes and his contemporaries, modern philosophy has sought to ground science, humanity's entire worldview, and society itself upon the principles of pure rationality. Yet in the radical materialism and atheism that emerged during the Enlightenment – in thinkers such as Claude Adrien Helvétius, Paul-Henri Thiry d'Holbach, and the Marquis de Sade – the meaningfulness of both the world and human existence ultimately appeared to be called into question. The transcendental philosophies beginning with Immanuel Kant may therefore also be interpreted as desperate attempts to preserve belief in the meaningfulness of human life while remaining compatible with the principles of radical rationality. The same intention can be observed in the classical figures of phenomenology, such as Edmund Husserl, and likewise among contemporary phenomenologists such as László Tengelyi and Balázs Mezei. In my book *Context and Phenomenon III: The Anatomy of the Absolute*, I likewise attempt to defend belief in the meaningfulness of human life in a manner consistent with contemporary scientific research, on the basis of phenomenological philosophy – that is, a mode of thinking which takes subjective, first-person experience as its constant point of orientation.

Róbert Csaba Szabó

■ ***Between Amateur and Professional Theatre: Two Case Studies – An***

Analysis of the Theatrical Performances of András Sütő and Zoltán Hajdu's The Barefoot Bride and Magda Simon's The Hundred-House Wedding

Keywords: *amateur performance, collectivization, socialist realism, state socialism, theatre*

The Hundred-House Wedding and The Barefoot Bride were among the frequently performed theatrical productions of the 1950s in Romania's Hungarian theatrical culture, staged in several theatres and reaching broad audiences through amateur performance groups. Both works were considered preferred cultural outputs by the state socialist regime and received official recognition through awards. Their narratives foreground a theme of particular significance for state propaganda: the collectivization of the agriculture. At the centre of both plays is a love story, through which the conflict between younger and older generations is articulated, with the acquisition of land serving as the primary stake. The protagonists of these works embody the heroes of the emerging social order: peasants and workers.

László Szarka

■ ***The Idea of a Homogeneous Slavic Nation-state: Edvard Beneš's Presidential Decrees and the Decrees of the Slovak National Council***

Keywords: *collective guilt, Czechoslovakia, minority, nation-state, Second World War*

Edvard Beneš, the country's second president, played a central role in the reestablishment of Czechoslovakia, which had ceased to exist after a brief two-decade period. With the help of his government-in-exile and State Council, established in London between 1940 and 1945, he secured the support of the Allied powers from 1941 onward for the restoration of the Czechoslovak state and the elimination of the German minority. Presidential decrees, which ensured the functioning of the state as legal norms with the force of

law, played a key role in this process. The article specifically examines the decrees targeting the German and Hungarian minorities based on the principle of collective guilt, as well as the similar decrees issued by the Slovak National Council in 1944–1945. In the concluding section, the author examines the reasons why, since 1989, it has not been possible to draft a similar declaration of reconciliation in Hungarian-Czechoslovak or Hungarian-Slovak relations as those that had already been issued in German-Hungarian relations at the time.

Attila Tárnok

■ ***English-language Fiction in the Caribbean: Women Authors***

Keywords: *Caribbean, colonial society, fiction, migration, novel*

In Caribbean novels the representation of childhood is an obsessively recurring theme; authors may feel it an impediment to give voice to their childhood experiences, and they depict a restrained social environment which impels the protagonists to leave their native islands in search of channels for further development when reaching adolescence. Female authors, Merle Hodge and Jamaica Kincaid might even experience a double disadvantage. The analysis of their novels, *Crick Crack, Monkey* and *Annie John* serve here as illustrative examples.

András Visky – Vera Prontvai

■ ***We Can't Remain Innocent***

Keywords: *barrack dramaturgy, metaphysics, open dramaturgy, theatre, trauma*

In a discussion about András Visky's literary and theatrical works, Vera Prontvai and the author offer possible interpretations of Visky's oeuvre in connection with keywords like trauma, heritage, continuity of traditions, captivity, metaphysics, transformation. The novel *Kitelepítés (Deportation)* by Visky offers a new perspective on his previous works, and it triggered an important wave of new interpretations that are dealt with in the discussion.