

ABSTRACTS

Bernadette Baumgartner: The Catholic Church and the German Movement in Szatmárnémeti in the Interwar Period

The most debated issue concerning the German movement developed between the wars in Szatmár county is its connection with the Catholic Church and the way this connection was regarded. Two contrasting points of view were formulated on the role of the Catholic Church and its priests: according to Hungarian politicians and the clergy of that time the movement was anticlerical, while Germans considered that on the contrary, the Church was against the movement. It is a fact however, that the Church played a decisive role in the everyday life of the Swabian villages, not only due to the well-known devoutness of the Swabians, but also because schools were owned by the Church. Due to its role as a “national fortress”, the school had a key-role for both parties. It is also a fact, that almost the entire clergy had a rather Hungarian identity, and it tried to enhance its influence and power. The reports of the parsons clearly show that where the greatest part of the villagers spoke Swabian, and had a Swabian identity, the switch to German in education took place almost without any difficulties, and the Church itself didn’t really hinder it. Problems arose where the inhabitants partly or entirely Magyarized. Wherever the leaders of the movement claimed that the language of the education and of the religious service should be exclusively the German, in spite of the fact that parents didn’t require this, moreover, they definitely protested against it, tensions increased. Nevertheless, in this sense the Romanian state efficiently supported the leaders of the movement.

Keywords: national identity, Swabian identity, Catholic Church, education

Gabriella Hermann: The History of the American Transylvanian Association, 1952–1977

My study aims at exploring a so far hardly discussed aspect of the emigration from Hungary to America. The purpose of the *American Transylvanian Association* was to represent Hungarians of Transylvania, left alone again in a minority status, towards Western governments, and to ensure the

union and information of emigrants of Transylvanian origins. The Association was an interesting patch of the American Hungarian Diaspora consisting of wholly different community cultures, and it had very essential achievements in many fields. Its most important, still valid outcome was to support the activity of its president, Béla Teleki when establishing a close relation with the *Hungarian Human Rights Foundation* (HHRF), and to ensure comprehensive spiritual, moral and financial support to the activity of the Foundation. The *Committee for Human Rights in Romania*, founded in 1976, got its name in 1983, following the implication into the fight against the oppression of the Hungarians from Slovakia. At the beginning, until the change of the Romanian regime “the most important aim of the organization was to draw the attention of the American and international decision makers to the infringements against Hungarians in minority”. An outstanding achievement of this activity was reached in 1987, “when the Congress voted four times against the awarding of the most favoured nation status to Romania, which would have meant a reward to the Ceaușescu regime.”

Besides the close relationship between the two organisations, the similarities of their purposes gave grounds for the research of the history of the American Transylvanian Association, since both organisations tried to enhance the situation of the Hungarians of Transylvania not by claiming the annexation of Transylvania to Hungary, but through elaborating partnerships with Western governmental bodies and human right authorities. The difference between the Foundation established by Hungarian young men being second-generation Americans with different socialization backgrounds, and the Association is that the former didn't hope even secretly the restoration of the borders valid before the Treaty of Trianon.

My research applies an interdisciplinary approach, namely I tried to place the activity of the American Transylvanian Association and to explore its history within the context of the emigration from Hungary to America, of the prevailing situation of Hungarians of Transylvania, and of the American–Romanian, Hungarian–Romanian relationships. I grouped the available data around the following three aspects:

1. The idea of establishing the Association and the viewpoint formulated by its leaders concerning Transylvania;
2. The deed of foundation of the Association and the first phase of its human rights related activity;
3. The changes in the minority rights politics and the activity of the Association from the second part of the 1970s, and its relationships with other organisations.

I could not offer a comprehensive answer to each issue in my study; there are certain matters that can be elucidated only by exploring other sources as well. I tried to sum up these at the end of my study. The most important aim of this study was the presentation of the main nodes of this emigration organisation and the placing of it into an international context.

Keywords: American Transylvanian Association, Béla Teleki, Hungarian Human Rights Foundation, the minority rights politics

Veronika Kaszás: Seeking Diplomatic Solution to Transylvanian Refugees' Issue in Hungary between 1987-89

From 1987 on, when a large number of Transylvanian refugees arrived to Hungary, the unprepared state had to face a delicate social, legal and political problem, which they could not even call by its name, due to the international circumstances. Namely, according to socialist ideology, a „*refugee*” could not possibly emigrate from another „*socialist friendly state*”.

The study examines the role of the Hungarian diplomacy in handling this unique issue in the frame of the international forums of the Eastern block, as well as through relations to the Western international actors, which mainly paid attention to the human rights perspective of the emerging situation. The precautious acting of the Hungarian government has increased the importance of non-governmental organizations, such as the Hungarian Red Cross, churches, the forming opposition and Hungarian emigrants in Western countries, which took decisive steps often with the co-operation or at least silent consent of the Hungarian government.

The author presents the way of getting in touch with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the ambivalent discussions of joining the 1951 Geneva Convention, which provided the simplest way to settle the situation of refugees within the UN's framework.

The content is based on the archives of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Foreign Affairs Department and the Agitation and Propaganda Department of the Hungarian Socialist Labour Party (*MSZMP*), the archives of the Hungarian News Agency (*MTI*), the Foreign Affairs yearbooks and on interviews with some actors of this era.

Keywords: diplomacy, migration, Transylvanian refugees, UNHCR, 1951 Geneva Convention

Erika Keszler: The Representation of Hungarians from Romania in the European Parliament in the Light of the Speeches of EP Members

The accession to the European Union offered Romania new possibilities, in the same time it meant new responsibilities and challenges as well. However, in order to make use of these possibilities, we need to know the different modalities how ethnic groups and different social groups can enforce their interests.

This study investigates the ways how minority representation makes use of the new conditions, of the new possibilities offered by the EU with regard to the extension of representation and of minority rights.

The legal representation of national minorities is an especially difficult matter, since the EU does not treat them on community level, that is it doesn't have any relevant set of directives; therefore the issue remains within the competence of the member states. Although the application for joining the EU by the Central and Eastern European Countries brought the protection of traditional minorities into the centre of international consideration, and raised the issue on the level of a political criterion, after the accession it was thrust into the background, and it didn't develop further on a discursive level.

Thus the question comes up: what steps can the representatives of national minorities take in order to support their rights and to achieve results, even though the EU doesn't directly treat the issue? In lack of a minority right legal system, which are the appropriate methods?

Csaba Sógor, Gyula Winkler and László Tőkés represent the Hungarian minority of Romania for five years already at the European Parliament. This study examines their activity as MEPs, focusing on their work related to minority representation. However, before such a detailed examination, we must give an overview of the representational processes at the European Parliament as well.

Keywords: Csaba Sógor, Gyula Winkler, László Tőkés, European Parliament, Hungarian minority

Levente Salat: Political Community from the Point of View of the Relationship between Majority and Minority

For the first time between the wars, then after 1945, at the time of the consolidation of the communist regime, the endeavour of the political and

cultural elite of Hungarians from Romania to set straight the relationship between the fraction of the Hungarian nation rested in Romania and the Romanian state led to two, equally disadvantageous outcomes. On one hand it became obvious that the way how Hungarians of Transylvania conceive their integration into the structure of the Romanian state was irreconcilable with Romanian national interests. On the other hand the resoluteness of the Hungarian political elite from Romania in looking for autonomous ways of integration since 1920, the switch of power, gave grounds for suspicions of the Romanian authorities concerning the political aims of the Hungarian minority. In the interwar period the distrust was expressed as the central component of the minority politics of the newly constituted Romanian state, for example the authorities, while trying to organise the administration of the newly acquired territories, put down the educational, cultural and religious institutions, and the diverse forms of the civic life of the Hungarian minority as the hotbed of subversive activities, and formed their attitude towards these accordingly. Following World War II, and the Hungarian revolution of 1956 in particular, the communist authorities concluded that the interest of Hungarians of Romania of having autonomous institutions puts at risk the safety of the Romanian state, and this produced a series of measures found necessary.

Both the failure of integration efforts and the distrust of the authorities regarding the political aims of the Hungarian minority proved to be an irksome heritage after the change in 1989. From the point of view of minority politics one of the most important consequences of the change certainly was that in the course of the transition to democracy one could not dispute the necessity of the political representation of the Hungarian minority, and prevent it from organising this representation. Thus the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DAHR), established with a spectacular velocity and emerging on behalf of Hungarians from Romania, as an acknowledged participant of the multi-party system, could place on the agenda again the unsettled relationship between Hungarians and the Romanian state, within the framework of democratic processes. However, a particular paradox can be highlighted in the twenty-years activity of the DAHR: the organisation is the steadiest party of the Romanian political field, continuously present in the Parliament since 1990, and from 1996 (apart from a short period) it is part or supporter of the executive power; despite of this spectacular result, several important elements of its political programme proved to be unachievable – mainly precisely those which are related to the integration of the Hungarian community into the structure of the Romanian state.

Undoubtedly, the situation of the Hungarians of Transylvania improved a lot in the last twenty years. Certainly the present legal condition and political status of this community transferred under Romanian rule is the most consolidated since the Trianon Treaty, while the extended network of educational and cultural institutions financed by the Romanian state in accordance with the constitution is to ensure the continuity of the Hungarian identity. Despite of this impressive turn, the views of the Romanian majority and of the Hungarian minority concerning the ways of integration diverge radically, and the promising outcomes of the last two decades didn't result in the rapprochement between the standpoints regarding the mutually acceptable institutional conditions of their coexistence. Public opinion polls and different sociological investigations constantly reflect conflicting identity structures and ethno-political options (or, at best, which mutually ignore each other); these give reasons for raising the question: can Hungarians of Transylvania be regarded at all as part of the Romanian political community?

This study undertakes to answer the question by comparing a few important statements by the literature on political community with the image reflected by the polls and other types of identity research carried out during the last 10-15 years regarding the inherent division – perceivable mainly along ethnic cleavages – of the political community seen as the totality of Romanian citizens. At the end of the study I shortly discuss the issue of what effect might produce the legal possibility to easily acquire Hungarian citizenship on the examined relationships.

Keywords: political community, Hungarian minority, Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania, political representation, integration

Attila Szavári: The Politics of Pál Teleki Regarding Transylvania: Conferences in Transylvania

At the beginning of the Hungarian Occupation (1940–1944) prime minister Pál Teleki vigorously set to reintegrate the Eastern parts of Hungary and regions of Transylvania re-annexed to Hungary. The execution of this large-scale task was preceded by accurate preparations. In autumn 1940 meetings led by Teleki (or his delegates) were organised, during which the participants, besides planning the future, discussed the *ad hoc* treatment of issues ensued from the re-assignment, and executed actual solutions. These conferences offered a certain cross-point between the views of the prime

minister, the ideas of the Hungarian leaders and the ambitions of the Transylvanian (Hungarian) political and economic elite. Teleki had two purposes: 1. He wanted to coordinate the interests of Hungary and of Transylvania; 2. He asked for solution proposals from the competent persons when discussing the issues.

The conference series was launched almost simultaneously with the entering of the Hungarian Army. The present study focuses first of all on the conference held in October in Kolozsvár, which had a decisive role, as the methods discussed and accepted there (in general) were the basis of the Hungarian administration. The importance of the meeting was increased by the fact that it lasted for two days, and the almost hundred participants had the possibility to express their views concerning the future of Transylvania.

The issues discussed can be ranked into five groups:

I. Religious and educational matters.

a. Regarding the issue of religious versus state school the speakers had a common point of view, reflecting an interim condition suitable above all to Hungarian interests. This means that where the national interest required the maintenance of the public school (turned into a Hungarian school, in case of mixed, Romanian and Hungarian population, or in isolated Hungarian communities), they left that school. But where the Hungarian population represented the majority, they *could decide* for a religious school – provided that they ignored the doubts of bishop Ravasz (regarding the impoverished churches).

b. The speakers arguing for the compulsory teaching of Romanian language – in three-lingual Transylvania under Hungarian rule – commonly decided that it has to be introduced, for it is necessary for the local (Hungarian) administration. (Pál Teleki: *“It is always the ruler who has to speak several languages, not the ruled.”*) However, Árpád Paál – although he admitted: in regions with Romanian population Hungarians needed to speak the local language – expounded his doubts concerning a foreign language, which could possibly effect the young Hungarian generations (mixed thinking), and the future Romanian viewpoints (further language-related claims of Romanians, e.g. in the army).

c. Concerning professional education, we have to highlight the summing up of bishop János Vásárhelyi, arguing that the schools to be established had to be suitable for the (Transylvanian) region’s social and economic conditions. Again, dispute wasn’t characteristic. The speakers had similar opinions as the education authorities reflecting the official stand-

point (e.g. Béla Teleki and state secretary Béla Lukács on the agricultural schools to be introduced in Transylvania).

d. Concerning isolated communities, the speakers also agreed on the procedures to be followed, taking into account the interests of Hungarians living in Northern Transylvania. The most important elements of these were: 1. *"Not a single Hungarian child should be in want of Hungarian education in primary schools."* (Béla Teleki); 2. *"Irrespective of the isolation degree of the community he lives in, a Hungarian child has to learn Hungarian. This is the sine qua non, this ensues from the thesis of three languages, and it does not matter if he learns another language better first, he will learn Hungarian as well."* (bishop László Ravasz)

Concerning religious and educational politics, the participants followed without exception the primary principal of Transylvanian (mainly Hungarian, to a smaller degree national) interests in the carrying out of the tasks.

II. Economic and financial issues.

a. Besides workdays, transport, raw material, market, social care and credit, one of the most important issues was:

b. The issue of conversion, which divided the experts, and they didn't manage to close the debate at this meeting. 1. First of all opinions differed regarding whether the conversion problem could be seen as settled (Gábor Tusa), partly solved (Elemér Patzkó) or – as Árpád Kovács argued on the second day – it wasn't that significant as others had represented it, and *"the entire economic reconstruction should be assimilated to the Hungarian farmer support system."* 2. There were speakers who requested more support to the *revival of the Transylvanian crediting system* (Ákos Hinleder-Fels), and who would have annulled the land registries *with this purpose*, or simply would have cancelled them by a law – similarly to the special lists owned by rural districts (Zoltán Bölöni). 3. Others disapproved this view, arguing that *this would mean a disadvantage both to the creditors and the debtors*. Instead they would have maintained the conversion record, and nullified the ban on charge, for debtors avoided the latter anyway through the banks (Elemér Patzkó), but 4. Hinleder-Fels didn't consider this a legally practicable plan. 5. The simplest solution to the problem was offered perhaps by Endre Nizsalovszky, who would have elucidated the content of the land registry data representing the guarantee for the conversional creditor, in order to be able to decide whether the property ensured security (if yes, to what degree) for a further credit. (This was supported by Gábor Tusa as well.) Furthermore, on the second day of the conference, he argued that in the case of registering the reconstruction, the bank, which was primarily in-

volved by the credit operation, should be assigned as the legal representative of all the concerned creditors. “*Let’s authorize this [institution], to give registry priority to a new creditor against the reconstruction registry, to the extent of a standard mortgage debenture [...] if there is a cover.*” 6. When concluding the debate, Gábor Tusa added that in the meantime the debt diminished to the half, and if the farmer couldn’t pay his “little debt” during 18 years prescribed by the law, he isn’t credit-worthy – thus he wouldn’t get further credits.

III. a. The revision of the Romanian land reform. The authoritative point of view – consisting of several elements – was formulated by prime minister Teleki. One part of this view was that Teleki – agreeing with other speakers – rejected the *restitutio in integrum*, namely the restitution prior to the Romanian land reform. A further important part of his contribution was the setting up of the *Transylvanian Agrarian Reform Research Committee*, through which: 1. He wanted to see clearly concerning the Romanian land reform (highlighting its national, social, legal particularities and financial impacts); 2. He wanted to achieve settled conditions (a “land distribution” body to be established afterwards on the basis of the study of the committee would have managed seizure and distribution). It is to mention at this point the rejection of the remarks of main county head Mihály Toldalaghy (the necessity of a political solution as soon as possible, in order to calm public opinion) by Teleki, who repeatedly stressed that with respect to Transylvania he would like to ignore political parties when treating or solving disputable matters.

István Bethlen (but also István Bíró, member of the Upper House) highlighted the triple division of the re-assigned territories (areas across the Király-hágó, former counties, Szeklers’ land): Romanian land reform applied three different methods in these regions, therefore the former prime minister suggested three means for the revision of the land reform (in which Hungarian interests should be given a specific importance in his view, e.g. the Hungarian landowner class should be rendered viable). Furthermore Bethlen argued that besides jurists, farmers also should be present in the research committee (according to bishop Vásárhelyi representatives of the church should be present as well). But Teleki firmly rejected this, because he wouldn’t have liked to establish a forum with too many members (instead he preferred the convening of different committees and conferences); he promised though that the committee would hear everybody during the investigation of the issue. Yet the prime minister supported the proposal of Béla Teleki concerning the enlargement of the committee and the changes

in its constitution (four more delegates from different parts of Transylvania).

We can see from the aforesaid that Teleki's opinion prevailed when controversial issues were debated. The prime minister firmly insisted on his main arguments, and he indicated as the target to be achieved the consideration of the interests of Hungarians of Transylvania (national and social criteria); in the same time he regarded the question as an integral part of the land reform issue of entire Hungary (see the groups and classes participating at land distribution).

b. Concerning the repatriation of Hungarians from the old Kingdom of Romania the participants discussed the issue rather as a matter of priority (should the rural or the urban population be repatriated first) or urgency issue (e.g. Imre Mikó: the urban Hungarians of Romania, who don't have the right to opt, should be brought back urgently); Teleki tried to decrease this characteristic, since in his view the primary aim was to repatriate hundred percent of the Hungarians emigrated to Romania. Regarding the directions and locations of the settling, the speakers preferred to fix these along *economic* (the repatriated should be ensured appropriate placement according to their profession: János Szabó, Teleki) and *national* (setting up of a viable relationship between the Hungarians living along the Tisza and the Szeklers: János Vásárhelyi, László Ravasz, Teleki), and *not* – partly achieved – *political* principals.

IV. Public education outside school. There wasn't any serious divergence among the participants on this matter either, moreover, they came to an agreement. Of course, the prime minister's opinion was prevailing again: alike Albert Figus (tasks have to be adjusted to local conditions), Teleki would have liked to settle the issue according to the specific interests of different regions. Furthermore, the participants differentiated the issue according to nationality: Teleki would have entrusted the Saxons with the administration, while Figus would have charged the former Hungarian party with the assignment of the educational body in the case of Germans with Hungarian identity, who were under the influence of Nazism. They also wanted to create the educational body of Romanians (Elek Kiss, János Jósika).

V. Legal matters. The speakers agreed that more or less the Transylvanian legal system had to be conformed to the Hungarian legal system (e.g. regarding the co-operational legal system), namely legal uniformization has to be accomplished. Concerning civil law, by the time of the conference Endre Nizsalovszky had concluded an agreement already with the repre-

sentatives of the Transylvanian legal system. There was a minor disagreement concerning uniformization, namely: 1. It should be achieved following a cautious transition (Transylvanian jurists), or relatively fast (Bálint Kolosváry, Árpád Kovács); 2. It should become effective in Transylvania omitting the differentiations between orders still existing in Hungary (this was the request mostly of experts supporting Transylvanian interests); 3. In what concerns laws on bills and checks, those valid in Transylvania would have been extended to other parts of Hungary, as at that time the Hungarian law was more obsolete.

Following the discussion of the examined topics, the study touches upon their accomplishment, in so far as relevant sources were available. Finally it is worth to mention that the standpoint and guidelines of Pál Teleki – expounded at the Transylvanian conferences as well – were followed by the prime ministers following him as well in their Transylvania-related politics.

Keywords: Pál Teleki, Hungarian Occupation, integration, educational issues, economical issues, the revision of the Romanian land reform, legal matters