

ABSTRACTS

Gergely Krisztián Horváth: Peasant Literacy and the Educational Reforms of Moson County in the 1830s and 1840s

This study examines the institutional conditions of literacy in the former Moson County. Moson, due to 70% of its population being German, was the only German-majority county in historical Hungary. As the first censuses in the second half of the nineteenth century demonstrate, the county also boasted the best rates of literacy in the entire country. The study explores the background and causes of this phenomenon. It suggests that the tradition of widespread literacy originated in Protestantism, which is testified by the popularity of handwritten hymnals, and that it was preserved among the mostly recatholicised German population. It is perceptible that county authorities paid increasing attention to education from the 1830s. They regularly monitored the condition of schools, supervised compulsory school attendance, and took sanctions in cases of truancy. These efforts were indubitably fruitful. The logistical regression analysis of the literacy figures of the Census of 1880 by cohorts shows that those born between 1830 and 1849 had 75% higher chance to learn to read and write than those born before 1829. The gender differences are also significant. While women born later had twice the chance to be literate than those born before 1829, this figure in men is 53%.

Áron Nagy-Csere: From Shanty Town to Model Estate: Socialist Urban Rehabilitation or the Instruction of the Poor?

The author of this study suggests that the mainstream texts of social sciences, defining themselves as value neutral and apolitical, often represent the rather problematic concept of urban rehabilitation as unambiguous. This practice has contributed to the widespread uncritical use of the term. The author aims to revise the concept of urban rehabilitation and suggests that the dominant norms regarding this term in discourses are not self-explanatory, but rather reflect complex power relations. The study reveals those covert power struggles in urban rehabilitation that manifest themselves in external, and often forcible, interference with the living conditions of groups that have little or no ability to protect their own interest. Following the short review of the 'discovery' of shanty towns, and the nineteenth- and twentieth-century ideas and scientific approaches to

these, the study presents the differences and similarities between the attitudes towards them in the Horthy period and during the socialist regime in the 1950s and 1960s. In the second half of the study, the author zooms in on texts about demolition of the emergency housing of the Mária Valéria estate in Budapest. The study provides a detailed discussion of the disciplinary instruction, that is the stigmatisation and criminalisation, of the poor, as well as the socialist technique of dividing them into 'deserving' and 'undeserving', which, in the author's view, has roots in pre-Socialist traditions.

István Gergely Szűts: 'Half of the emergency dwellings are issued to refugees...': Conflicts of Interest and Prejudices in the Housing in the First Half of the 1920s in Miskolc

In connection with the consequences of the Treaty of Trianon, until recently, little has been known about the nearly 430 000 people who repatriated in Hungary from beyond the new borders. Their arrival and integration fundamentally influenced everyday life in Hungary, and especially in their host settlements. This study examines the first phase of integration, the process of acquiring living quarters in one specific city.

Between 1916 and 1921 tens of thousands of refugees passed through Miskolc, one of the major traffic hubs of Northeast Hungary. About 3500-4000 of them settled here, and their accommodation and provision created serious challenges for local authorities. Due to the dire shortage of flats, they were forced to wait for the outcome of their housing application in railway wagons, storehouses and other non-residential buildings unfit for human dwelling. The supervision of housing was officially the remit of the Housing Bureau, which was established in 1917. However, due to the dearth of available flats, insufficient capacity, suspicious corruption cases, and the continuous attacks on their operation, the office was not able to perform this duty satisfactorily. As a result, the local housing market increasingly relied on informal channels and illegal ways. Naturally, this created serious tension not only between the refugees and residents, but also between various groups. Besides the authorities using their influence in these conflicts, most cases were characterised by personal attacks and deep-rooted prejudices. The acute shortage of flats and the resulting tension were only relieved, albeit only to some extent, by the new building campaigns in the second half of the decade.

Zoltán Tóth: What is the 'Cube' House? How does the Educated Middle Class See a Type of Workers' House?

Spread across the entire Carpathian Basin, the so-called 'cube' houses developed as a separate type of workers' house in the 1950s, and began to mushroom in suburban areas and rural settlements with industrialised sources of income. Their owners relinquished their peasant status and wished to represent their new standing with their new homes. The middle class, mostly intellectuals expressing their opinion in written media, watched them with not even thinly veiled dismay. They saw them as unoriginal, uniform, and unfit both architecturally and as a home to maintain rural lifestyle, yet they pointed out astutely that social mobility was the reason for its popularity. As Miklós Mojzer correctly stated, 'this model found its way to the hearts of the masses who have just abandoned their peasant lifestyles and are now filled with the desires of the *petit bourgeoisie*'. The history of the deprecation of the new workers' homes is associated with the history of the bourgeois middle class itself: people who had managed to elevate themselves above the old boundary line of the former estate society and wished to preserve their social status in this middle position.

Laura Umbrai: Communal Housing Policy in Budapest during the Second World War

Prior to the Second World War, Budapest had already been struggling to solve the housing problem for half a century. The perpetual shortage of flats eventually forced the authorities to respond, and as a result over 20 000 small flats were built in Budapest under their auspices by the end of the war. However, the war hindered the active contribution of authorities, and the large enterprises were replaced by less costly transitional solutions. At this point, the leadership of Budapest decided to transform already existing attic spaces into flats. This policy change was significant, not only because the number of new available flats increased, but also because the metropolitan model was soon followed by private entrepreneurs. As a result of the war, Budapest authorities also had to secure air-raid shelters for all the buildings held by the city. In addition, the ravages of war did not spare small flats and many completely perished. These were rebuilt either by returning residents after the war or by new residents who applied for a licence for self-funded reconstruction of the damaged properties in return for tenure.

Judit Valló: Anti-National Dwellings or Symbols of Modern Urban Life? Small Flats for the Middle Class in Budapest in the 1930s

The increasingly popular modern blocks of flats introduced a thus far unknown type of residence into the Hungarian housing market between the two world wars. For example, the high quality, high-rent, one bedroom flats (six types thereof), sometimes containing a hall or a maid's parlour. The most popular of these were 30-31 m² studio flats. This type of flat was not simply smaller than previous models of middle class homes, but their proportions and layout were also entirely novel compared to previous ones. While the previously central kitchen disappeared or found place in one corner of the tiny hallway, the bathroom became an obligatory fixture in all of the new studio flats. As opposed to contemporary notions, the 1941 census figures for Budapest housing suggest that rather than providing homes for young and childless civil servant couples, these flats were mostly occupied by single people. Studio flats were typically occupied by economically active, working men and women, as well as widows living on pension. The independent activity of these tenants on the housing market, especially the latter two groups, was a novelty in this period.

The type of single woman with a middle class or intellectual jobs appeared in Budapest in the 1930s. Many of them, such as Hilda Gobbi (discussed in present study), had been born into middle class families with stable income and were raised to become wives and 'professional' homemakers. However, reaching adulthood they faced a transformed world, where their families' or their own lifestyle necessitated their income as well. By 1941, those who were successful at switching over from dependants into self-sufficient working women entered the modern housing market of the capital as independent tenants of the new studio flats.