

ABSTRACTS

Loránd Balla: “The ethnic question is, as a matter of fact, a language question.” The Cultural Strategies of the Temesvár / Timișoara Association for the Promotion of the Hungarian Language in a Multi-Ethnic Town

The study uses the example of the Temesvár Association for the Promotion of the Hungarian Language (*Temesvári Magyar Nyelvet Terjesztő Egyesület*, TMNTE) to explore how the local and national assimilation efforts were present in the operation of a civil organisation. Further, the author also examines the ethnic composition of the membership as well as the role of the various ethnic minorities of the city in the operation of the association. Namely, who supported the association? Why did they choose to explicitly express their loyalty toward the idea of the Hungarian state in this way?

One of the most unique features of the TMNTE, founded in 1882, is its founders’ German heritage. In addition, immediately after its foundation one of the main aims of this educational association was to counter the Austrian *Schulverein* which was established to promote the use of the German language in the schools of Temesvár (now Timișoara, Romania).

The linguistic-cultural Magyarisation of Temesvár was implemented with varying intensity between the 1880s and the First World War. The aim of the local authorities in then Southern Hungary was not only the assimilation of the region’s smaller ethnic minorities, but also achieving Hungarian dominance all over the others within the whole ethnic composition. Besides the traditional means of cultural assimilation, the TMNTE also organised Hungarian language courses, established crèches, and attempted to influence the theatre scene – with modest success.

Ádám Iváncsó: Ruthenian Students and the University of Debrecen, 1938–1945

Nearly two decades after the trauma of the 1921 Versailles Treaty, it seemed that the Hungarian revisionist politics proved to be successful and the Kingdom of Hungary had a new chance to steer away from its previous mistakes. The ethnic issues that had led to the disintegration of the country were once again in the limelight. The Ruthenian population of Transcarpathia, which used to be the least problematic minority before the 1920s, became just as much a wasp’s nest as the Slovaks, Romanians, and Serbs had been before. Accordingly, Hungar-

ian ethnic policy began to exercise more tolerance and empathy towards them. Instead of demanding full assimilation, only loyalty was expected, and Hungary tried to channel the attitudes and identity of the Eastern Slavic population in this direction. The education of the young Ruthenian intelligentsia was regarded as a key issue in shaping the future, and the Hungarian government selected the University of Debrecen to become the host institution of this initiative.

András Keszei: People, Ethnicity, Religion. Classifying Hungarian Jewry in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century

The biggest challenge in classifying social groups is finding a durable definition. Besides the constantly changing scholarly approaches, this is primarily caused by the changeability of the social groups themselves. To resolve this double uncertainty, the present study proposes to use dynamic nominalism which places the emphasis on the changing realities of social phenomena and groups, as well as the factors that bring about these changes. Accordingly, a group may be presented in historiography as it is formulated by the members of the given group and outsiders, their authorities, institutions, professionals and intellectuals, often in response to each other's definitions. Expressing the changes of the background, intellectual environment and aims of the actors and their definition, the groups are portrayed in motion. Based on this premise, the study traces the definitions of the Hungarian Jewry between the 1780s and 1848: this heterogeneous religious group, fragmented by internal conflict and interests, formed its own identity in response to the challenges posed by the external attitudes, expectations, the legal environment and major political programmes. The diversity of responses, ranging between accepting and rejecting urbanisation and Magyarisation, resulted in vast differences between the self-definitions and behaviours of specific actors, as well as in a social reality constructed as a group. In the case of the Jews, their national, ethnic and religious character, as well as the possibility to separate these aspects, was an important issue for the contemporaries. Between the last decades of the eighteenth century and 1848, the changes of economic, social and intellectual atmosphere alleviated the isolation and created a situation that demanded new strategies of self-definition from the Hungarian Jews.

Gábor Koloh: Parenthood in Völgység and Ormánság.
The Comparative Fertility History of the Kismányok and Vajszló
Districts (1790–1894)

The study is based on the comparative analysis of the birth control practices of the Protestant Hungarian population of the Ormánság region and the Lutheran German population of the Völgység region. The main research questions concern the regional and ethnocultural characteristics of parenthood in these regions. Besides the birth registers as the traditional primary source for family reconstruction, the study is also based on family books compiled by German researchers for some individual settlements. The geographical scope is limited to seven settlements in Ormánság, and three in Völgység. Similarly to the Hungarians in Ormánság, the German population of Southern Transdanubia also displays low fertility rates, which suggests the presence of conscious birth control well before the demographic transformations. The changes associated with the economic restructuring between the end of the eighteenth and the middle of the nineteenth century affected both the Hungarian and the German groups in a similar manner; and the decreasing tendency also continues well into the last three decades of the nineteenth century. The findings of the study suggest that birth control is a practice employed in response to a crisis situation, which in this case appears as a regional characteristic. While higher fertility rates among older German women are certainly in correlation with ethnocultural factors, this phenomenon is of a secondary significance in this particular region.

Veronika Szeghy-Gayer: The Slovak–Hungarian–Jewish–Czech
Kassa / Košice in the First Half of the Twentieth Century

The study examines the changes of ethnic distribution and the opposing urban images of the nation-building elites in Kassa (now Košice, Slovakia) between 1910 and 1945. In these few decades, censuses mirrored the framework of two different nation states. After 1930, two thirds of the population of the town, which by 1910 had become predominantly Hungarian-speaking, was registered as “Czechoslovakian”. After the First Vienna Arbitration in 1938, however, the absolute majority of the population identified themselves again as Hungarian. Due to forced migration and re-Slovakisation, Hungarians largely disappeared from Kassa between 1944 and 1948, while the local Jewry was nearly completely annihilated in 1944. Such large-scale fluctuation in the self-identification of the urban population provided an ample argument for the Hungarian, as well as the Czech, and the Slovak elites to consider the town as their own national space. The first half of the study provides an analysis of the censuses, as well as data about the language use and voter preferences of Kassa residents, followed by the

reconstruction of the local national elites' image of the town itself. The conclusions emphasise that rather than being a testimony to split, ambiguous, or multiple identities, the national self-definition of Kassa residents of various ethnic affiliations, as well as its evident fluctuation shown in statistical records, can be explained by the individuals' conscious personal decisions developed in response to parallel nation-building processes.

Imre Tarafás: *Ethnic Minorities in National History. The Representation of Ethnic Minorities in Hungarian Historical Surveys in the Age of Dualism*

The study examines the representation of ethnic minorities in historical monographs written by Ignác Acsády, Lajos Baróti, Vilmos Fraknói, and Henrik Marczali in the Age of Dualism (1867–1918), as well as in the series edited by Sándor Szilágyi to commemorate the thousand-year anniversary of the Hungarian Kingdom in 1896. It focuses primarily on the historical vision stemming from the two main trends of the question of minorities – united political nation versus homogeneous nation state – as seen through the debate of Béla Grünwald and Michal Mudroň. The study continues with the marked role of the same issue in the programmatic texts of the increasingly institutionalising national historiography. After examining the careers of the selected historians and the circumstance of writing their works, the study analyses the representation of ethnic minorities in the narratives of the Magyar conquest of the Carpathian Basin and the 1848–1849 War of Independence, mainly focusing on the implicit definitions of the nation and the constructs formulated in opposition to minority narratives. Although there are differences between attitudes towards specific ethnic minorities, especially discernible in narratives about the War of Independence, the findings of the study suggest that the narratives correspond with those of the theoreticians of the nation state idea: they identify the concept of nation with ethnic and linguistic Hungarianness and represent ethnic minorities as passive participants in Hungarian history. It is, however, incorrect to label all the historians examined as wildly chauvinistic.

Dániel Veress: *Architecture in the Service of Nation-Building: Search for a National Style in Hungarian, Polish, Czech (and Austrian) Architecture Before 1925*

Architecture, just like literature and music, was involved in the nation-building processes, architects also sought ways of expressing their national identities and

characteristics. The most composite displays of this patriotic approach to architecture were the attempts at distinct national styles which aimed the comprehensive nationalization of the art of designing buildings. In my article I compare these often movement-like strivings and divide them into twin groups by socio-historical factors. According to my multiscopic and comparative research, three macro dichotomies shaped the relationship between architecture and nationalism in (post-)Habsburg Central Europe.

First and foremost, these would-be styles emerged in Hungarian, Czech, and Polish architecture, while no peculiar Austrian (style) endeavour was elaborated. Due to an almost complete lack of Austrian (ethnic/national) identity, the issue was considered marginal or even dismissed among the Austro-Germans. *Secondly*, Hungarian, Czech, and Polish architects strove for comprehensive acknowledgement as national styles, whereas only some of them achieved this aim. It is striking that all successful efforts became fully-fledged under the aegis of an independent nation-state. Accordingly, the nationalist stirrings of the Hungarian architects, whose nation enjoyed a semi-independent status within the empire since 1867, reached this fully-fledged condition prior to the collapse of Austria-Hungary. During the very same decades, Czech and Polish attempts had to wait for this achievement until the foundation of the Czechoslovakian and Polish nation-states in 1918. *Thirdly*, the sources of inspiration for these would-be nationalist styles varied. The Czechs rather stood under the influence of urban culture while the Hungarians and Poles were mainly influenced by vernacular building and folk art. I could trace back this dichotomy to another socio-historical phenomenon: the unevenness of urbanisation and industrialisation within the empire's distinct regions. (For the English version of the article see: Shelekpayev, Nari et al. [eds.] [2016]: *Empires, Nations and Private Lives. Essays on the Social and Cultural History of the Great War*. Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars.)