

Albert Kovács' political career

Lajos Bodnár

Albert Kovács (1838-1904), one of the prominent representatives of liberal theology in Hungary, served as a Member of Parliament from 1881 to 1896 in addition to his work as a theological teacher. As an MP, he represented his homeland, the so-called “Marosvásárhely-Region” from 1881 to 1892, and, in his last parliamentary term, the voters of Kovászna, in both districts in the colours of the Moderate Opposition, the later National Party. As a representative, he was particularly involved in debates on public education. He criticized the irregularity of the law in connection with the Secondary School Act and outlined the benefits of secularization in connection with a possible revision of the Public Education Act. He also paid special attention to the financial situation of teachers. He raised his voice in favour of giving fair salaries and pensions for teachers. In order to protect the youngest, he advocated the creation of the Kindergarten Act. He considered the teaching of the ancient Greek language in high school to be essential in order to acquire scientific thinking. In addition to public education topics, he also expressed an opinion on various church policy issues. Moreover, Kovács sought a balance between state and church rights in relation to the issue of civil marriage. As a liberal patriotic politician, he also took a firm stand on the reception of the Israelite religion and advocated the free practice of accepted religions in general.

Stormy synagogue sale in Lágymányos or The Vomiting Fate of a Jewish Place of Worship in Budapest (1959-1966) (Introduction and Archive Documents)

Attila Novák

There is a widespread view among scholars dealing with the history and society of Hungarian Jewry after 1949, according to which Jewish leaders grateful to the communist power renounced solidarity — in fact, against their own Jewish peers. Archival sources do not reinforce (or complicate) this view. Although some Jewish leaders were heavily involved in the selling of the synagogues, but there were rabbis and other people - serving at the Jewish community - who opposed these acts and demonstrated against also. Attila Novák's study deals with the selling story of a Budapest-synagogue with a mini-study and the publication of the original state security documents.

