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 Tél: +40 264 593236, +40 364 405558; fax: +40 264 595927; e-mail: keresztenymagveto@unitarius.com.
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ABSTRACTS

Károly Halmos: *Balázs Orbán's Visions of History*

Although nowadays Balázs Orbán is not considered to be a historian, his views on history have been discussed for decades. Aladár Lászlóffy, László Kósa, Gyula Ortutay, Lajos Kelemen (in reverse chronological order) were the most important contributors to the topic. The leitmotiv of Professor Kósa's thorough analysis is that the evaluation of the opus magnum of Balázs Orbán has changed from being a historical work in the 19th century to being a source of history in the late 20th century. This present paper argues that on the one hand a broader look at historiography lets us find the genre of the Description of Seklerland among the protohistoricist historians like W. H. Riehl, and on the other hand that Balázs Orbán was not a naive historian – he could and did write „proper” history if he wanted.

Sándor Kovács: *Balázs Orbán and the Unitarian Church*

While appreciating Orban Balazs's life-work, there was little consideration about his decision to change his religion. In this work we try to discover the reasons why he chose the Unitarian religion, and to discover why the “greatest Szekler” chose the smallest Transylvanian church as his spiritual home. By quoting the memoirs of his contemporaries and the writings of Orbán, we try to sustain our opinion that beyond his change of religion there are not only religious but political reasons. In the appendix of our work we quote interesting parts from the pocket-book Orbán used during his journey. This valuable relic was given by Ármin Koncz to Géza Nyiredi, the teacher of the Unitarian College, and Nyiredi offered it to the Unitarian Library in 1912. These quotes seem to prove our presumption that Orbán travelled not only in Szeklerland, but also all around Transylvania and the Partium. The pocket-book which is now part of the Unitarian section of the Academic Library contains Szekler dialect words and expressions which could be new data for researchers of Balázs Orbán's work.

Katalin Sárjai Szabó: *Balázs Orbán and the Question of the Emancipation of Women*

At the end of the 19th century Balázs Orbán did not actively participate in the debate about the emancipation of women, but there are many hints in his work wherein he declares the most radical view of his time, by saying that women need to have equal rights with men.

In 1875 he published an article in the newspaper „Baloldal” with the title „Some things about the East, and especially about women”. This article complements his work “Journey in the East” where he tries to disclaim the western view about women from the East. The article has a different meaning showing how he thought about women while in the East, and how this view formed his radical view about their emancipation. He thought that women have special practices to make their lives livable, because they do not have equal rights with man no matter where they live. He refers to the historical argument which says that there were many women in history who proved that they were suitable for political roles. Because women do not have law-given rights, they try to influence men behind the scenes. He says that there is no difference between eastern and western women, because they are the same in terms of oppression and lack of visibility. He thinks that women can make change in the family only if they take on man’s role and responsibility and try to live up to it.

Balázs Orbán saw the problem of the emancipation of women through the eyes of a democrat, and he developed his opinion by seeing no difference between the situation of the western and eastern women, and considering there is no difference between these two worlds.

Mihály Szécsényi: *Balázs Orbán in the Reflection of Memorial Speeches and Commemorations*

Every generation reconsiders history, and tries to interpret the work of the predecessors according to its own needs. This happened to Balázs Orbán’s life-work too. At the beginning he was considered and appreciated to be a maverick politician. After the Great War he became a symbol and role model of the man who tried to summarize the great values of his community. There he gets the title of the “greatest Szekler”, and he becomes a mythological person. There are many who have attempted to continue his work in the same spirit even nowadays believing that beyond strengthening the national and regional identity, it will have some scientific application as well. Furthermore, prior to WW II,

professionals like Lajos Kelemen, Gyula Ortutay and László Kósa, evaluated his work by studying and processing his life-work. Under the post-war dictatorship, Socialism found no use for Balázs Orbán, so his symbolic importance scarcely changed. And there has not been enough time since the 1989 „revolution” to be able to distinguish the man from the mythological person.

József Simon: *The Status of Philosophy in the Tradition of Transylvanian Antitrinitarism*

The role of philosophy in early modern Protestant thinking turns out to be quite ambivalent regarding the cultural trends of 16th and 17th centuries. It is obvious that the emergence of modern philosophy is tightly bound to the attitudes exercised by Protestants in the Netherlands and England at this period. However, these cultural attitudes were embedded in an antiphilosophical framework. This ambivalence cannot be eliminated since the main target of Protestant criticism of philosophy was the ideologically compromised wisdom of the schools in the middle ages or pagan antiquity. If an antiphilosophical attitude can be seen as a common feature of Protestant thinking, it is nevertheless the very initiator of new philosophy as well. My study investigates this twofold role of philosophy played out in the history of Transylvanian Antitrinitarian intellectual reflections in the period 1568–1598. According to the thesis of the papers, philosophy gained an increasingly higher and higher reputation among radical Protestant intellectuals in Transylvania. This story begins with the refusal of philosophical terms in theological debates in the late 1560s, develops through the emancipation of human epistemology (philosophy and fiction) in theological issues in the 70s and reaches its end in the application of a very large spectrum of Aristotelian philosophy in antitrinitarian exegetics in the 80s and 90s. In this sense I invite the Reader to participate in a colourful journey through the ambitious intellectual experiments by Ferenc Dávid, Jacobus Palaeologus, Christian Francken and György Enyedi.

György Gaal: *Pál Kolozsvári Dimién (1655–1720)*

Pál Kolozsvári Dimién was the most prominent figure of Kolozsvár/Cluj's scientific life at the turn of the 18th century. He was born there, and after graduating the local College, he continued his studies at the University of Leiden. He spent seven years in Leiden (1682–1689) studying theology, philosophy and medicine. He took his doctor's degree in medicine at Leiden. His printed

thesis written in Latin discusses the genesis, the functioning and the perishing of the human body. Returning to Kolozsvár, Dimién was elected rector of the Unitarian College, but he also practiced medicine. This was the period when the Habsburgs began ruling Transylvania, so the College's building was taken over by the Catholics. In 1693 the Unitarian College was forced to move into rooms in dwelling houses. A great fire destroyed these houses, so Dimién was sent to Holland to solicit help for reconstruction. He collected a huge sum of money. Soon the Catholics demanded back the central church of the town as well. Dimién was sent to Vienna to convince the emperor not to confiscate the church. In 1710 Dimién was elected first Unitarian minister of Kolozsvár/Cluj. In March 1716 the Catholics, supported by the Austrian army, occupied the central church. Two years later the school was also evicted from the new building across from the church. These disastrous events contributed to the death of Dimién in January 1720. His finely carved tombstone no longer exists in the graveyard, but the Latin inscriptions about his life and career are still preserved. They contain some references to his theological and medical activities.

János Pál: Forced to Find a Way. Strategies of the South Transylvanian Unitarian Church

The Second Vienna Arbitration Act, despite the continuity of being a public law, created a new situation in the life of that portion of the church which remained in Romania. The Hungarian and Romanian nation-building strategies were antagonistic and resulted in the South Transylvanian minority's situation becoming more oppressive: both the Hungarian and Romanian sides turned this minority into an argument for their own side.

It is known that the Romanian side wanted to recover their lost territories, to build up a homogenous, uniform nation state, while the Hungarian side wanted back those regions which were still under Romanian authority.

Our paper aims to relate the demographic, administrative, political, educational and church social situation in South Transylvania, and to point out those strategies of the Unitarian Church which helped them compensate against the negative tendencies harming church life which emerged as a consequence of the Second Vienna Arbitration Act.