

ABSTRACTS

Miklós Bakk: The Narrative, or the Evolution of Understanding

Instead of putting forward a narrative of his own about the RMDSZ (Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania), the author attempts to provide an overview of the development of the collective thinking (both scientific and quasi-scientific) about the alliance. He also argues that the very development of these ways of thinking is indicative of the changes of the political context the most important political organization of the Hungarians from Romania was exposed to during the last 25 years. In what follows the author offers a narrative-like account of these changes: from the perspective of the changes of the context, he reviews those theories and paradigms, which determined the way how we perceive the RMDSZ's activity, in some places indicating issues which might open new possibilities for interpretation.

Keywords: RMDSZ, narratives, model of self-government, political journalism, language of politics, minority nation building, pillarized societies, ethnic party, historic dimensions

Zsolt Attila Borbély: The 25 Years of the RMDSZ: From the Hungarian National Self-Government to a Competitive Political Party in Romania

The article traces the development of the RMDSZ in a chronological fashion, from the founding of the organization through the exit of the “internal opposition” to the emergence of the alternative Hungarian organizations (the Hungarian National Council of Transylvania, the Hungarian Civic Party, the Hungarian People's Party of Transylvania). The author distinguishes three phases in the history of the RMDSZ. The first lasts until October 25, 1992, the date that marked the proclamation of the autonomy claim of the Hungarian community. The second, “autonomist” phase lasts until November 28, 1996, when the RMDSZ joins the governing coalition. Finally, the third era is called “the Neptun way”, after the (in)famous meetings that took place at the homonymous seaside resort, where the RMDSZ leaders reached a compromise with the Romanian political elites. Besides, the article discusses in great detail the conflicts leading to the creation of

the Hungarian challenger organizations, conflicts that have been present within the RMDSZ since the very beginning in the author's opinion, and which can be traced back to differences in ideology, worldview, as well as generational features. The author identifies two such distinct camps. The first group, which successfully maintained its dominance within the organization, is characterized as prioritizing cooperation with the Romanian governments while pushing the goal of autonomy to the background, while the second group is described as being autonomist and willing to undertake conflicts with the Romanian state in order to further their goals.

Keywords: Hungarians in Romania, RMDSZ, autonomy, political cleavages, governmental participation

Tamás Kiss: Increasing Marginality, Ethnic Parallelism and Asymmetric Accommodation. Social and Political Processes Concerning the Hungarian Community of Transylvania

The article outlines some of the major social and political processes affecting Transylvanian Hungarians, being framed as a progress report about the phenomena and challenges that the political elites of the Hungarian community should reflect on. The author puts forward and discusses three interconnected theses about the Transylvanian Hungarians, which is also reflected in the structure of the article (which consists of three major sections). The first statement is that the institutional system of the nation-state creates a serious power asymmetry, which leads to the increasing marginalization of the Hungarians in Romania. This thesis is assessed through an analysis of the demographic and ethnic stratification processes in Romania. The second statement postulates the existence of some sort of ethnic parallelism, with regard to both the political programs of the elites and the societal realities. However, this parallelism is only partial, which also leads to the gradual erosion of the Hungarian community. The author supports this claim by presenting data about the ethnically integrated and non-integrated fields of society, with special emphasis on the public administration and education systems. Third, the author argues that the actual integration strategies deployed by the political elites only reproduce the power asymmetries. To this purpose, the author analyses the strategies of the main actors of the ethnopolitical game: the Romanian minority rights regime, the strategies of the RMDSZ and the options of the Hungarian government.

Keywords: Hungarians in Romania, RMDSZ, minority rights, power asymmetries, ethnic stratification, ethnic mobilization, control and cooptation, dual citizenship

Levente Salat: The 25 Years of the RMDSZ - in the Mirror of the Goals

The paper evaluates the political performance of the RMDSZ from the perspective of the chances of the Hungarian minority in Romania to perpetuate its collective existence in the traditionally inhabited territories. The evaluation builds on previous findings in the literature which highlight a radical shift in the priorities of the organization: before joining the governing coalition in 1996, the main focus has been on organizing the Hungarian minority as a parallel society and seeking international support in achieving this goal, but after the first four years spent in the Romanian government, the RMDSZ changed its strategy and became interested in channeling resources of the Romanian state to the community it claimed to represent. The paper provides, on the one hand, arguments which explain this shift and lists an important number of achievements which followed. On the other hand, the author critically addresses the issue of the conclusion which the leaders of the RMDSZ proved reluctant to draw from the experience of participation in governing coalitions, which have yielded the main political organization of the Hungarian minority more and more vulnerable, not only in the internal context, but with regard to the ambitions of the successive Hungarian governments, too.

Keywords: Hungarians in Romania, RMDSZ, autonomy, governmental participation, parallel society, resource allocation, dual citizenship

Levente Salat - Dorottya Lakatos: The Discursive Spaces of Minority Politics in Romania. Strategies and Topoi in the Parliamentary Speeches of the MPs of the RMDSZ and the Romanian Political Parties

The article applies the method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to assess the strategies and argumentative schemes (topoi) employed by the minority (Hungarian) and majority (Romanian) actors in the Romanian parliament with regard to topics related to ethno-political claims (minority rights and resource allocation). The analysis covers the speeches and interventions delivered by the MPs of the RMDSZ and the Romanian political

parties from the parliamentary cycles 1992-1996, 1996-2000 and 2008-2012. The results confirm the hypothesis that the strategy of the RMDSZ has shifted in the 2000s: while during the 1990s the efforts of the Hungarian MPs were concentrated mainly on securing minority rights, in the late 2000s resource allocation claims clearly take precedence, despite the defective implementation of minority rights. Among the argumentative strategies of minority MPs two types clearly stand out: references to the legislation in force and demands for its enforcement (including international documents), respectively emphasizing the potential advantages (also for the majority population) of granting minority rights. The scrutiny of parliamentary activity also reveals that the attitude of the ethnic Romanian MPs has been generally dismissive of Hungarian claims, the number of interventions endorsing minority demands being very low, and confined to language rights and education issues. Among the dismissive argumentative strategies of the majority once again two types emerge as most characteristic: claims that certain minority rights would infringe on the legislation in force, and emphasizing the fact that the official language of the country is Romanian.

Keywords: RMDSZ, ethnic mobilization and counter-mobilization, Critical Discourse Analysis, parliamentary speeches

Csongor Szabó: The Public Administration of Ciuc County, 1918–1940 (2)

The history of the public administration of Transylvanian counties in the interwar period is a less revealed field. The study attempts to present the functioning of public administration in Ciuc county, more precisely Miercurea Ciuc and Gheorgheni from the end of World War One, when this territory was annexed to Romania, until the Second Vienna Dictate, when it entered again under Hungarian rule. This period can be divided into several shorter periods on the basis of political events and various administrative reforms. It was characterized more or less by centralization; through elected bodies, local administration elites had the power to interfere in certain issues, yet decentralization could be carried out only to a limited extent.

The article concludes in fact the findings of a fundamental research, which focused mainly on changes in personnel in the public administration of Ciuc, on the local application of administrative reforms, on the relationships between the Romanian and Hungarian elites of the county, on compromises, and applied chronology as a structuring principle.

Keywords: public administration, Ciuc county, administrative reforms

Tamás Szabó: The Institutionalisation of the RMDSZ's Foreign Politics

The aim of the paper is to review the institutionalization of the foreign relations and policies of the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania from the founding of the organization until the signing of the Hungarian–Romanian bilateral treaty. The author tries to answer the following research question: what means and opportunities does an ethnic party have in the domain of foreign policy to further and enforce its interests?

The study traces the foreign relations of the RMDSZ and proposes a delimitation thereof into distinctive periods. Drawing the lessons from the negotiations of Romania's accession to the Council of Europe and the Hungarian–Romanian bilateral treaty, the author assesses the positions and the main results of the foreign policy of the RMDSZ. Finally, the intensity of the foreign relations of the RMDSZ with other states and non-state actors is also addressed.

Keywords: transnational politics, RMDSZ, foreign policy

The Chronology of the RMDSZ's Foreign Relations (1989–1996)

The chronology (compiled by Tamás Szabó) provides a detailed presentation of all the events, actions, negotiations and meetings from the 1989–1996 period, involving the representatives of the RMDSZ, as well as various actors in the domain of international minority rights protection and actors that had an impact on how the minority rights of Hungarians from Romania were enforced.

Keywords: minority policy, RMDSZ, representation, European Council, minority rights