Hungarian Political Protestantism as Interaction at the Turn of the Century
Kovács, Kálmán Árpád

There are numerous interpretational variants of Political Protestantism. The one best capturing its significance is the argument that politics was the most important integrating factor for Hungarian Calvinist denominations from the mid-19th century onwards. This applies not only to public political statements, but also intra-denominational ones as well. This study attempts to shine a light on the interactive nature of the issue. Interaction means how individuals mutually reacted and responded to each other. The author’s focus is on the two decades encompassing the turn of the century. The author touches upon antecedent and post-period circumstances only to the extent that they are necessary for understanding the events of the 1889–1909 period. By laying down these timeline markers, the author essentially is attempting to analyze the gradual transition from the so-called Tisza Era (in terms of Church policy, 1858–1898).

Concerning external orientation, Political Protestantism laid down two public policy goals to bring about denominational convergence: to serve the Hungarian nation and to have Article XX of 1848 passed. Calvinism was called the ‘Hungarian religion’, three determinative threats to which were: ethnic fragmentation, the strengthening of clerical (conservative, reactionary, Ultramontane and Jesuit) Catholicism and socialism’s disruptive effect on society. The author plans to devote a separate study to these problems, looking at them from a broader context.

We cannot say that Protestant Church policy was identical to secular politics, for in its interior setup a unique duality is observable, moreover, on the transcendence immanence axis. In this coordinate system, theological liberals wished to decouple the church from even this most insignificant dogmatic minimum, which in the most extreme cases devolved into secularized cultural Protestantism. In contrast Neo-Orthodox and revived operatives wished to strengthen the church’s biblical, dogmatic and creedal characteristics. Although no formal schism ever occurred, the politicized nature of Protestant Church life caused continuously strained and diverged relations among the participants. Thus in Hungary, Political Protestantism did not evolve into a factor capable of driving ideology, but instead remained more of a tool with its own unique flavor and historical mode of reasoning.

Weeping in Jesuit Missions in 17th Century Italy
Száraz, Orsolya

Recent studies both in the history of emotions and other disciplines analyse crying in a social, historical and cultural context. Jesuit penitential missions can also be a productive field for such research, as emotions leading to penitence and conversion obviously had an important role in such missions, and reports often mention participants who shed plenty of tears. Therefore, this paper aims at presenting the meanings, emotions, functions, gestures and rites connected to tears and crying in 17th-century peni-
tential missions in Italy, based on manuscript and printed sources, draw-
ing on the specificities of Jesuit spirituality. Following Barbara H. Rosen-
wein, it considers 16th–17th-century Jesuits an emotional community
which, as a textual community, mediates views, teachings and preferences
about crying and connected emotions. It also shows the patterns of weep-
ing and penitence, taken from known sources, mostly the Bible and hagi-
ographic works. These patterns were used on the one hand by the mission-
aries who offered these as examples for the participants, and on the other
hand by the authors of reports on the missions who employed these pat-
terns to subsequently compare the participants to these.

Law-Maker Activity of the Reformed (Calvinist) Church in
Upland and Subcarpathia (Slovakia) in the Interwar Period

Harsányi, Béla

The given study presents the organizational and legislative work of the
Hungarian reformed church which was annexed to Czechoslovakia after
the World War I, and it was necessitated by the integration of the new
state. The Czechoslovak government considered the reformed church as
the seedbed of the Hungarian irredentism, thus they demanded from the
church to create a Slovakian diocese, a full independence from the Hungarian
church and complete loyalty. The representatives did not pay enough
attention to this on the Levice (Léva) Synod which was held in June, 1923.
Minor amendments have been made in relation to the code of the Second
Budapest Synod from 1907. However the government did not want to ac-
cept it. They persuaded the church representatives by promises and by
pretending benevolence that they themselves would ask the code for adap-
tation, and later through long negotiations, through veiled and less veiled
threats, abusing their power and ignoring the church autonomy, they have
channeled their amendments through the text of the code. They have cre-
ated the law article about the Slovak diocese ignoring the rights and the
will of the church and the affected congregations. In January 1928 the
synod that meets in Bratislava (Pozsony) would have the task to approve
everything. Though the members of the council had the ability of compro-
mise, they were willing to accept certain changes only in a modified form.
Perhaps due to this the state ratification of the law did not take place. They
have cited to the differences between the Hungarian and Slovakian texts,
to the disagreements between the state agencies and thus the ecclesiastical
laws remained idle till that time when the areas have been returned to
Hungary, when the congregations again returned to the original church
district for a little while.
Baptists in Hungary between 1945 and 1950

Bacsó, Benjámin

It is strange to look back to the period of Hungary after the cataclysm of the Second World War when the Baptist community had great expectations in the fulfilment of the theorem of ‘the free state, free church’. The leaders of the community were working on it, arguing and writing for it in order to have it happen. Nonetheless the positive steps, the Baptists had to face disappointment. Although on the surface the state tried to be separated from the church, in reality in the background they were trying to build their bigger influence. We all know that between 1960 and 1961 the state is intervening even deeper into the lives of the churches.

In the modern history of Baptists 1950 is an inner border of an era that brought the closure of opportunities which they have recently achieved. The politics tried to play the ‘big churches’ against the ‘small churches’ or to put it differently the ‘free churches’ against the ‘the church of the people’. These denotations on their own display a lot of the argument of this era. The speech of József Révai in 1950 and the decree of the MDP showed how the attitude towards the small churches had changed. The ‘politics of salami’ by that time in the life of the evangelic, the reformed and the catholic churches had brought the changes. In 1948 the church founded schools were nationalised and in 1950 the operating permit of the convents were deprived. By this time it was clear the state is playing for the atrophy of the churches. The Baptists and the small churches could only enjoy their freedom until ‘the turn’ was on the big churches. The history of these five years from the perspective of the Baptists is about how the earlier hopes have vanished in the evolving dictatorship.