

**„TEKINTS REÁNK, TEKINTS, SZABADSÁG” AZ 1848–49-ES
FORRADALOM ÉS SZABADSÁGHARC 175. ÉVFORDULÓJA
ALKALMÁBÓL TARTOTT MAROSVÁSÁRHELYI NEMZETKÖZI
TUDOMÁNYOS KONFERENCIÁK TANULMÁNYKÖTETE
[„LOOK UPON US, LOOK, FREEDOM” CONFERENCE VOLUME
OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES HELD
IN TÂRGU MUREŞ ON THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE 1848–49 REVOLUTION AND WAR OF INDEPENDENCE] ED.
ZSOLT-JÓZSEF TAMÁSI. TÂRGU MUREŞ,
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REVIEWED BY LORÁND NAGY¹

The memory of the 1848–1849 Revolution and War of Independence remain one of the most intensively researched fields in Hungarian and Transylvanian historiography. Among the commemorative volumes published on the 175th anniversary, however, the book entitled “Tekints reánk, tekints, szabadság”, edited by Zsolt-József Tamási, clearly stands out. The publication contains the edited proceedings of two international academic conferences held in Târgu Mureş. The volume brings together sixteen studies by ten authors, including the editor himself, who contributed two independent papers in addition to the foreword. Although the studies are presented sequentially in the book, from a reviewer’s perspective it is particularly instructive to examine the material by grouping it into three distinct thematic categories. This analytical framework effectively follows the internal logic of the volume, guiding the reader from microhistorical military events through ecclesiastical dimensions and individual destinies to the complex questions of collective memory. The studies are methodologically sound and written in a clear, readable style that avoids unnecessarily dense academic jargon. As a result, the volume is accessible and engaging both for professional historians and for a broader readership.

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- 1 NAGY Loránd is PhD Student, Babeş-Bolyai University, Religion, Culture, Society Doctoral School, E-mail: lorand.nagy1@ubbcluj.ro, ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-1601-6114>

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The first thematic category identified in this review focuses on military events, national defense, and the organization of local units. Dezső Garda offers a detailed analysis of the 1849 War of Independence in the Gyergyó region, highlighting the reorganization of the Honvéd army and the National Guard under the leadership of Sándor Gál. He outlines the successful containment of counter-revolutionary forces arriving from the directions of Reghin (Szászrégen) and Toplița (Maroshévíz), as well as the heroic battles fought against the Tsarist intervention troops. One of the major source-based contributions of Garda's study is the publication of a nominal list containing the names of 221 deceased local freedom fighters. Gyula Nemes draws on extensive village-history research to demonstrate the intense participation of the population of Marosszék in the revolutionary turmoil, paying particular attention to local institutional leaders and political commissioners such as József Magyarósi Szőke and Baron Károly Apor. Sándor Pál-Antal contributes two studies to this section. The first analyses the administrative and military measures taken by István Dobozy as government commissioner for Marosszék and Târgu Mureș in the spring of 1849, while the second provides a much-needed overview of the military career and tragic execution of András Tamás, a Honvéd lieutenant colonel and martyr of Csík, enriching the local history of post-war reprisals with valuable data. Attila Süli's comprehensive study concludes this military section. Based on original archival research, it reconstructs military organization in Marosszék and Târgu Mureș and details the logistical and armament difficulties faced by the local national guards, the 12th Honvéd Battalion, the Kossuth and Mátyás Hussars, and various rifle units up to the Russian occupation of 1849.

The second—and perhaps most nuanced—analytical category consists of the papers examining the role of the churches, contemporary sermons, and pastoral careers. Jenő Imreh's first study analyses a festive Sunday sermon delivered on 26 March 1848 by Lajos Medgyes, a Reformed pastor from Dej (Dés), exploring how revolutionary ideology was reflected in pastoral rhetoric. In his second paper, Imreh analyses the synodal minutes compiled in November 1849 by Sámuel Z. Bodola, offering a precise and striking account of the immense human and material losses suffered by the Transylvanian Reformed Church. The situation of the Franciscans within the Mureș Deanery is also thoroughly explored in a study focusing on the monasteries of Târgu Mureș and Călugăreni (Mikháza). This paper discusses the circular letters of Provincial Minister Márton József Keresztes and the capture of Târgu Mureș, while also highlighting the distinctive figure of Rafael Pál András, the guardian of Târgu Mureș, who served as the only Transylvanian-born army

chaplain in the Hungarian army. The study concludes by examining the post-revolutionary reprisals that affected the friars. Zsolt Tamási contributes two papers to this ecclesiastical section. His first study compares the Roman Catholic diocesan initiatives of 1822 and 1848 concerning the situation of monks, shedding light on the enduring decentralizing effects of Josephinism. His second paper analyses the complex legal and political relations between the Hungarian revolutionary government and the Catholic rites in Transylvania—Roman, Armenian, and Greek Catholic—explaining the historical factors that eventually pushed Romanian Greek Catholic believers into the opposing camp. This section is completed by two papers by Péter Zakar. The first introduces Sándor Bíró, the Reformed pastor of Réty, who supported a radical political program, organized a national guard, and was later forced into hiding. The second analyses the radical, pro-republican speeches and Transylvanian agitation tours of the young Roman Catholic priest János Bardocz.

Finally, the third category brings together the studies dealing with the involvement of social groups, female narratives, and collective memory. Sándor Pál-Antal recalls the spring of 1848 in Târgu Mureş, focusing on intellectual youth—chancellery clerks and college students—and on the widening ideological rift between Hungarian and Romanian national ideas during the debates. Gréta Somogyi further deepens this local context through two highly insightful studies. The first examines the role of nearly 200 chancellery clerks and law interns attached to the Royal Court of Appeals, highlighting how their initial, shared multi-ethnic enthusiasm was gradually shattered by emerging ethnic conflicts, ultimately leading to civil war. Somogyi's second paper presents a fascinating female narrative through the memoirs of the writer Janka Horváth, sister of the martyr Károly Horváth. It reveals the deep family tragedy behind the Makk conspiracy of 1854, including house searches and harassment by the state authorities. As a fitting conclusion to the volume as a whole, Mihály Sebestyén analyses the political processes of collective memory, pointing out that, because of absolutist censorship, the earliest memoirs remained personally motivated and self-justifying, and that the official public commemoration of 1848 had to wait almost half a century, until the political rise of liberalism.

From a professional standpoint, this volume is unquestionably credible and has considerable source value, since the authors do not merely repeat well-known historiographical narratives. Instead, they successfully incorporate previously unpublished archival sources, synodal minutes, ecclesiastical schematism, and private memoirs, while maintaining an appropriate critical distance and a high degree of objectivity throughout. Although the volume offers exceptionally rich

REVIEW

regional and thematic coverage, the inclusion of a comprehensive index of names or historical maps illustrating military movements would have further enhanced its practical usefulness, especially for international researchers. Nevertheless, this volume, edited by Zsolt-József Tamási, is a methodologically sound, multifaceted, and pioneering work. It demonstrates that it remains possible to say something fresh, original in perspective, and scholarly valuable about the events of 175 years ago. The book addresses a significant lacuna in historiography, serves as an indispensable source base for historians, university students, and local researchers, and fully deserves the attention of the international academic community.