

## ABSTRACT

### **In Memoriam Gáspár Bíró**

#### **SALAT, Levente: The Heritage of Gáspár Bíró as a Thinker**

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The essay briefly reviews the career of Gáspár Bíró from the perspective of the meetings at the intersections of the professional careers of Gáspár Bíró and the author. After the shared experience of a Hungarian dissident movement in Romania in the 1980s, Gáspár Bíró moved to Hungary, where he made a spectacular career as a researcher and teacher of international law, minority rights in particular, and as a high-ranking civil servant and an officer at such prestigious organizations as the UN and the Council of Europe. The author, who remained in Transylvania and studied the theory and international practice of minorities there, assesses the intellectual heritage of Gáspár Bíró from that perspective. According to the essay, the oeuvre of Gáspár Bíró is a unique example of the combination of erudition in the history of ideas, theoretical grounding and direct experience in international organizations.

#### **HOFMANN, Rainer: Good Advice from Gáspár Bíró**

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The former president of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities mentions three factors why the presence of Gáspár Bíró had a key role in the Committee; he was an indubitable and widely recognized expert on the subject; he had participated in the drafting negotiations of the Convention, and he could provide first-hand information on the factual, legal and political background of its provisions; and, finally, his personal history, having lived as a minority Hungarian in Romania, destined him to be member of the Committee. The author regarded Gáspár Bíró as one of the important and ineluctable figures of minority rights codification and control, and proves this by describing four cases involving him.

#### **Izsák, Rita: The Experiences of the UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues in the First Three Years of the Mandate (2011–2014)**

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The author in her remembrance of Gáspár Bíró discusses the experiences of the UN Special Rapporteur and the mechanisms of the international organization. The main duty of the Special Rapporteur is to promote the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities. In order to do so there are several

means available to her/him: thematic studies, country visits, individual complaint procedures, and the annually organized Forum on Minority Issues.

In respect of the second half of the mandate, the author mentions her endeavour to respond much faster to daily political and geopolitical events, and to speak up in concrete matters by way of shorter visits of a few days only. In general, minorities need to be encouraged to cooperate and exchange information round the world. Attention needs to be drawn to those regions where the word *minority* has such a negative connotation that it hinders communities from cooperating with the mandate, and to understand the usefulness and applicability of the system of minority protection.

### Episodes of the Great War

#### JENEY, Éva: A Divisive Past that Can be Shared:

##### Notes on French Internment

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When World War I broke out, Aladár Kuncz, renowned as single-book novelist, happened to stay in a French village. He managed to get back to Paris, but missed the last train to Hungary. In October 1914, he was interned in Noirmoutier along with his literature-teacher colleague Gyula Soltész, the writer Andor Németh, the linguist Géza Bárczi, the journalist, editor and essayist Imre Lakatos, the novelist Gusztáv Rab, often called the “Hungarian Flaubert” at the turn of the century, and the sculptor Gergely Finta (Oszkár Zádory).

The aim of the paper on civil internment camps is to present the historical context of the experiences of imprisonment during the First World War, with special regard to the historical, cultural and literary historical connections of Aladár Kuncz’s novel *Fekete kolostor* (Black Monastery), who had a prominent role in the history of Hungarian-French cultural connections and letters.

#### BRÄNDSTRÖM, Elsa: Among Prisoners of War in Russia and Siberia between 1914 and 1920

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Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize and called by her contemporaries as the “Angel of Siberia”, Elsa Brändström, a representative of the Swedish Red Cross, published her memoirs entitled *Unter Kriegsgefangenen in Rußland und Sibirien 1914–1920* in Berlin in 1922, which is a significant source of the Siberian events of the Russian Civil War after World War I, and which had several Hungarian facets. Even the Hungarian literature of the 1920s and 1930s often referred to it.

Never published in Hungarian, we selected three chapters from her book. The most important among them is perhaps the description of the Siberian takeover by the Czechoslovak legion, the military of action of the Czech

troops who were in theory discharged from the war and on their way via Vladivostok and boat back to Europe, and who, in a matter of a few days, occupied the entire line of the Trans-Siberian Express, enabling the establishment of the White State (Governorship) of Admiral Kolchak. From a Hungarian point of view, this is important due to the atrocities described by chapter three: the Czechs killed or executed many POWs (mostly Hungarians, as we know from other sources) primarily because tens of thousands of the Hungarians, the so-called internationalists, took sides with the Reds.

The first section is an attempt at a typology of the mentality of the POWs of various nations, and though stereotypical at times, it is founded on the personal experiences of the author.

**KULCSÁR, Beáta: "Our 1914/15 Fight with the Russians":**

**Géza Foris's War Memoirs**

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The soldiers serving on the front during World War I recorded their dramatic experiences in diaries, memoirs and letters. A Torda (Turda) carpenter, Géza Foris, belonging to the Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia) infant battalion, penned his experiences on the Galicia front. The paper discusses his recollections and poems. It presents the experiences of a common soldier both within and without the theatre of war, his thoughts on being conscripted, the war, the community (the nation, his military unit), and his feelings, hopes and frustrations during military action. The paper also tries to place his experiences in the context of other front experiences, and compare them to those of other common soldiers or officers.

**BAZDULJ, Muharem: Young Bosnia**

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Born in Bosnia, the writer in his thirties now lives in Sarajevo and Belgrade. He is a member of the generation dispersed as refugees round the world by the war in Bosnia, but, like Gavrilo Princip and his school mates who plotted to assassinate Franz Ferdinand, they too are "young Bosnians". Ever since, Princip has been regarded as a terrorist, moreover a Serbian nationalist. Bazdulj writes how odd it is that his memory was obliterated especially in Sarajevo, though Young Bosnia, never an established movement, was anationalist and idealist, and though they saw Serbia as the Yugoslav Piedmont, they had nothing to do with Serb nationalism. The Austro-Hungarian propaganda of the time presented him as such, as would the Bosnians from the 1990s, adding to him Radovan Karadžić and his associates.

Bazdulj points out how ironic history is, and while other assassins are recorded in history books as freedom fighters, Princip was likewise recorded so, yet only in socialist Yugoslavia, royal Yugoslavia had wanted none of him, just as today's Bosnia and Serbia don't. Young Bosnia wanted a common democratic state for the southern Slavs, and Franz Ferdinand was hated by

not only them. Bazdulj's essay examines these odd twists in historical memory, and though one-sided, it is interesting precisely for this.

### On the Research Trip

**"The more I research the field, the more complex the answer seems to me to be"** – Tamás Gusztáv FILEP interviews Stefano BOTTONI 97

### Review

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