

ABSTRACTS

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.

Elek Rezi: *Theology and Culture. Remarks on László Szabédi's Unitarian Belief*

This study deals with the religious and theological orientation of the famous Hungarian Unitarian poet, linguist, and university professor László Szabédi (1907–1959). The author shows in detail that in spite of Szabédi's controversial general view of life (ideology) during the social and political changes after the First World War and under the pressure of communist ideology following the Second World War in Transylvania, Szabédi remained faithful to his Unitarian

heritage. His religious and theological attitude was based on the spiritual education of the Unitarian College, Kolozsvár. The author also tries to answer a very interesting question: What were the reasons why the Unitarian theological student László Szabédi gave up his theological education and ministerial training at the Unitarian Theological Academy in Kolozsvár?

Juliane Brandt: *The Unitarian – A Noble Savage, Bürger and Patriot.*
Notes regarding Mór Jókai's *There Is One God Novel*

The novel „Egy az Isten“ (“There Is One God”, a title hard to translate in foreign languages, which quotes the usual inscription on Unitarian church doors in Transylvania) by the Hungarian author Mór Jókai is generally regarded to be a work “on Unitarians”. Superficially reading the story, this seems to be right – the novel obviously describes a small denomination nearly unknown even in larger Hungary, praising its virtues illustrated by the example of a hero who represents it. Manasse Adorján is introduced as an exotic gentleman, hailing from a far-away community, with very specific customs and ideas, but impressively standing the test of the novel’s world – a perfect noble savage. With his virtues as well as representing a diligent, virtuous, self-sufficient community, and his conduct toward the political events in his Transylvanian home-country, he may be regarded the “ideal type” of the “Bürger” – both laboring bourgeois and citizen –, or patriot, respectively.

But, the Unitarianism presented in the novel is not at all that simple and free of problems. The irony in dealing with several characters, as well as the structural position of the idealized community of Torockó within the novel, and also further immanent hints in the narration, do not falsify, but contradict this simple reading. Religion – idealized Unitarianism – is the complement of the nearly idyllic situation in the little Unitarian town. In many respects shown in the analysis, it ensures its functioning in this self-sufficient and self-restricting way, which, on the other hand, puts off for a long time conflicts with government and politics as well as the contradictions of the modern world, which appears as its counterpart.

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