

Summary

We confess being at a loss to see what mission a periodical is supposed to serve in a situation where global natural disasters are intermingled with the threat of a third world war. Even more so because the “daily life” of the creators and the readers of our journal is currently defined by this “situation”. And so is the journal itself. (Since the fall of the socialist regime, it has been unheard of that the state fails to invite any applications for the following year’s cultural funds. We can only hope to keep seeing you in 2023.)

Therefore, we are trying to hold on to the roots from our past. Jews entered Hungarian history in the early 19th century Era of Reforms, and this is also when they entered the art scene – or the popular culture of the time. A key figure in this process, József Tyroler, is presented to us by his descendant, Sándor Térei. (Another such character is Márk Rózsavölgyi, whom we are planning to commemorate soon by publishing Jenő Mohácsi’s relevant novel *Hegedű és koldusbot* [Violin and Beggar’s Cane] with an LP’s worth of supplements.)

On the 100th anniversary of Ignác Goldziher’s death, Hedvig Ujvári gives an overview of the great orientalist’s career, focusing on his relationship to Hungary and Hungarians. Levente Olosz has written the history of the Israeli years, right up to now, of the periodical *Új Kelet*, founded in 1918 in Kolozsvár. Louise O. Vasvári, who studies the Holocaust from a gender theory perspective, draws a multi-layered picture of the social history of Hungary based on the Holocaust memoir *Biri mama* [The Deportation Memoir of Mama Biri], published by the Kieselbach Gallery. Instead of a book of revelations, Mihály Vajda wrote an essay, entitled *A másik Pándi* [The Other Pándi], about a revelatory situation. There are books, if not in Hungary, where sons are looking into the Nazi crimes committed by their fathers and relating the drama of facing those revelations. However, it is entirely unique to investigate and highlight the crimes committed (if “merely” in the intellectual sphere) by a Jew in the Rákosi and Kádár régime. Complete with a Holocaust memoir and other “heavy” documents, the book, *Teherpróba* [Tested under load: Critical points throughout the career of a literary politician], was compiled by András Kardos, Pál Pándi’s son, who also wrote the introduction.

This year, there have appeared two significant novels where one of the protagonists is the town of Pécs: one is *Vénusz jegyében* [In the Sign of Venus] by Orsolya Péntek and the other is Gergely Bikácsy’s *Vad Mecsek* [Wild Mecsek]. We have asked the authors to share their thoughts about each other’s writings, and the result was outstanding. László Bernát Veszprémy gives an account of the career of the Békéscsaba Zionist rabbi, Ödön Szabó/Yeshurun Elyahu (1914–2003), enclosing his memoirs discussing the role that he played in the Holocaust, pointing, from a right-wing Zionist perspective, to the responsibility of the Jewish leadership in the critical months of 1944.

Reading Notes by Ágnes Huszár is a review of the latest entries to Holocaust literature. The most intriguing one – which we should publish in Hungarian – is *Das Prachtboot. Wie Deutsche die Kunstschätze der Südsee raubten* [The Magnificent Boat. How the Germans Stole the Art Treasures of the South Seas] by Götz Aly, which looks at the problem from an entirely new (and very timely) aspect.

The two book reviews by Norbert Haklik are also thematic: he inspects powerful works discussing the Holocaust of the Hungarian Jews in the southern territories of historical Hungary, focusing on the role and the responsibility of the “occupying” (or reclaiming) Hungarian administration.

Besides poems by Ákos Szilágyi, Tamás Vasas and Sándor Tatár, we can read some of the works by Jewish American poet Gerald Stern, who died this year, translated and prefaced by Gábor Gyukics.

But since we do not want to miss out on the ongoing war, we are also sharing some of the Ukrainian Hasidic stories collected by Mór Gilányi at a First World War Russian POW camp, as they bear such a shocking resonance with our reality today.