Levéltári Szemle / Archival Review - 2020

Résumé of the 1st issue:

In the first issue of the Archival Review, as an introduction for 2020, an inspectorial report was published by Gergő Bendegúz Cseh, describing the audit experience of the Archives in Hungary in 2019, as well as writings mainly on digitization and archival history. The first study of the series on digitization projects in church archives is a paper on the results of the Historical Archives of the Kalocsa Archbishopric, by Andor Lakatos. Pál Rosdy's archival historical retrospective of the early years of the National Catholic Collection Centre covers also the subject of church archives. The study of Tamás Szálkai, which shows the steps taken by municipal archivists to increase their wages, is still a current issue of the archives story. The reader can learn the results of a number of research essays based on archival documents from the article on the topic of land distribution and agricultural collectivization, by Gábor Csikós. In addition, this issue contains a review of the volumes revealing the sources of Cardinal József Mindszenty's milieu, by Zoltán Ólmosi, and the 2019 bibliography of the archives in Hungary.

Gábor Csikós: Axe Blows – Redistribution, murder and collectivization in Pusztamonostor (1945-1955)

The study untangled the threads of a murder that took place in Pusztamonostor in 1949. The article not only explains the history of the families concerned, but also analyses local conditions. Through their presentation, the author illustrates the goals and methods of the Communist leadership and the press, and at the same time that in many cases they have proved to be ineffective and even counterproductive. In the case of Pusztamonostor, that is indeed what have happened. Despite all the efforts of the press in this direction, the murdered Miklós Borbély did not become a martyr of the era, and despite threats and violence, local residents refused to sow before the dictatorial regime.

Andor Lakatos: Digitisation and e-research in Kalocsa (2009-2019)

For more than ten years, the Historical Archives of the Kalocsa Archbishopric has been involved in digitization, database building and online publication. The project, which was initially launched on a pilot basis, now boasts nearly 2 million images, and now includes cross-border research and processing activities, in addition to the data processing of parishes' archival material in today's Hungary. In addition to reviewing the steps taken under the project, the study also draws a number of lessons. In the author's view, archival work has to adapt increasingly to the challenges of the era and the expectations of society. This requires a change of approach on the part of archivists, and methodological transformation is also essential in the course of archival work.

Pál Rosdy: The early years of the National Catholic Collection Centre

Catholic bishoprics, also fulfilling their canonical duties, have long considered it their task to collect and preserve diocesan records. However, this was not combined with creating reference and arrangement of the archival material and its making it available to researchers. That is why Gyula Szekfű had proposed the establishment of a national body between the two World Wars to focus on this work. However, practical progress in this area was only made after World War II. As a first step, archivists of state archives gained access to the materials kept in the bishoprics, so that meaningful arrangement and completion of finding aids could be started in many places. Then, in 1969, the Catholic Church itself took the initiative by setting up the National Catholic Collection Centre. As the first appointed archivist for the Collection Centre, the author experienced the beginnings up close, so his recolleation gives an authentic picture of the Centre's starting years.

Tamás Szálkai: "The archivist receives a regretful and inimical allowance..." – The struggle of municipal archivists to classify them in higher pay classes (1903-1907)

In the spring of 1903, amid cheers at the inaugural congress of the National Association of County Officials, a legislative proposal was adopted that wanted to settle the wages of county employees nationally and uniformly, aligned with those of state employees in similar positions. Only one archivist was involved in the preparation of the proposal, and perhaps this is the reason why significant number of county archivists felt later unworthy of the payment settlement for them. As a result, several of them began to organize and started a movement to settle archivist wages fairly. Although the movement did not achieve its goal, it played a major role in the subsequent creation of the National Association of County Archivists, an advocacy body for county archivist groups.