



Challenges, Conflicts, and Opportunities. 100 Years of State- and Nationhood in Central and Eastern Europe

– International Conference at Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania –

As a new chapter of an ongoing, long-term, and vivid institutional relationship between *Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania (SHUT)* and the *Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities (RIRNM)*, the abovementioned international conference (a.k.a. ‘#Challenges100 Conference’) took place in the period of 15–17 November 2018. The hosting venue of the Conference was the main building of the Faculty of Science and Arts (SHUT), Cluj-Napoca/Kolozsvár.

This international scientific event was organized to present some important ongoing investigations, research, and theoretic models dealing with the social, political, historical, financial, or legal aspects of state- and nation-building in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) of the past 100 years. The concepts of state- and nationhood, the dilemmas of the social integration, unification or even disintegration in the multiethnic countries of the debated territory were the main topics of this international conference. Besides the presentation of the latest research domains in this area of science, another important goal of this conference was scientific network building for researchers from all over the world dealing with social sciences.

The Conference had six thematic panels within which more than 30 presentations were held. At the Challenges100 International Conference, in order for all willing researchers to be able to participate and discuss each other’s research, there were no parallel panels. After a short opening plenary held by representatives of the two main organizing institutions – Mr Tibor Toró (SHUT) and Mr István Székely (RIRNM) –, the first panel’s main topics were language rights and minorities. Here a number of five presenters (researchers, academics, and even young PhD fellows) took the floor and presented their research/papers for the numerous crowd. Besides the ‘big picture’ type of papers, the audience could hear a couple of presentations of researches where the main methodology was linguistic landscape. The second panel on the first day of the Conference

was entitled 'History, Nation-Building I: Romania and Others'. This panel hosted three presentations dealing with the 'Great Union' of Romania and the period before. After a short lunch break, the third panel was somehow a continuation of the second one, bearing the title: 'History, Nation-Building II: Habsburg Empire and Others'. The panel's chair, Mr Tamás Kiss, moderated the five paper presentations in this section. Scientists from all over Europe, from Birmingham to Budapest or from Vienna to Cluj-Napoca, presented and debated upon their ongoing researches about one of the greatest empires of XIX-century Europe, the Habsburg Empire.

On the first conference day's afternoon, there were organized two book presentations. 'Embers of Empire. Continuity and Rupture in the Habsburg Successor States after 1918' was the first volume presented by Marta Filipova (University of Birmingham, UK). Paul Miller and Claire Morelon (Berghahn) edited the book in 2018. The second volume presented in this section of the Conference was edited by Tamás Kiss, István Gergő Székely, Tibor Toró, Nándor Bárdi, and István Horváth and had the title 'Unequal Accommodation of Minority Rights. Hungarians in Transylvania', a contemporary approach research of the usage of minority rights and language rights in a multiethnic region of Eastern Europe, Transylvania.

The last three panels were held on the second day of the Conference. The morning panel dealt with kin-state topics. Following this panel, in which 5 participants presented their research on kin-state issues from several countries such as Albania, Ireland, Hungary, or even the Islamic minority of the Dobruja/Dobrogea region, the next panel was entitled 'Autonomy'. The four presenters of this panel came from four different institutions and four different countries. The dilemmas of autonomies were presented by the case studies of the South Caucasus region, Catalonia and Transylvania. The last panel dealing with 'Identity, Development, Post-Socialism' was a much more theoretical one with three presentations of identity-related research from Romania, Finland, and Hungary. After this, the participants of the Conference visited the newly inaugurated 'House of Religious Freedom Museum' in Cluj-Napoca.

The three-day Conference ended with an optional trip to Turda/Torda. Here the participants visited one of the most spectacular touristic objectives of Transylvania, the Salt Mine of Turda, and also the Monument of Religious Freedom. As an ending of the Conference, the organizers made possible a guided city tour of Cluj/Kolozsvár by night.

The Challenges100 Conference hosted more than 30 presentations, debates, discussions, interviews, and collateral events. The participants came from 8 different countries, 10 cities of Europe and the United States. There were participants presenting their papers from the Sapienza University of Rome (ITA), the University of Tampere (FIN), Dublin University (IRL), the University of

Birmingham (UK), the Austrian Academy of Science, Vienna (AT), the Hungarian Academy of Science, Budapest (HUN), the organizing institutions from Cluj-Napoca (SHUT and RIRNM), from the Adrian College (Michigan – USA), from the London School of Economics (UK), the Central European University from Budapest, etc.

‘Challenges100 International Conference’, according to the closing ideas of the organizers and the reactions of the participants, was a success. The two main goals of the event, to learn about the ongoing investigations in the domain but also to enlarge the scientific network of researchers in this field of study, were accomplished. Sapientia University and the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities organized this scientific event as part of their biannual regular conference series. As the previous four events were a success, this conference was a good continuing episode of this series.

Ferenc Török

PhD student

Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania,

Faculty of Science and Arts, Cluj-Napoca

Department of International Relations and European Studies