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De-Stalinisation in Hungary from a Gendered Perspective: The Case of Júlia Rajk.

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9 *Andrea Pető*
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14 ‘Grief is the common language of humanity,’ commented Radio Free
15 Europe on 6 October 1956 at the time of the reburial of László Rajk,
16 the hardline communist Minister of the Interior in Hungary, who was
17 executed as an alleged ‘Titoist’ after a show trial in 1949.¹ In this chapter,
18 I analyse two unique features of the process of de-Stalinisation in
19 Hungary. The first is its timing: the process began much earlier than in
20 any other eastern bloc country, and indeed almost immediately after
21 the death of Stalin, with the appointment of a reformist, Imre Nagy
22 (1896–1956), as Prime Minister in July 1953.² The second is the key
23 role played in the process by a woman, namely Júlia Rajk (1914–1981),
24 László Rajk’s widow. The two processes are linked, as Júlia Rajk and
25 her husband belonged to a privileged group in post-1945 Hungarian
26 society, having been prominent members of Hungary’s underground
27 communist movement in the 1930s and early 1940s. Yet this influential
28 couple, and their infant son, fell victim to the first Soviet-style show
29 trial in Hungary in 1949.

30 Júlia Rajk, born as Júlia Földes in 1914, grew up in Budapest in a
31 working-class family that had strong communist traditions.³ In the
32 1930s she lived for a while in Paris and became active in promoting Red
33 Aid for Spain. She re-entered Hungary at the beginning of the Second
34 World War and worked illegally for the party, before being arrested,
35 with her husband, by police loyal to the fascist Arrow Cross regime in
36 December 1944. Between 1945 and 1949, as the wife of László Rajk, who
37 had also been a legendary leader in the Spanish Civil War, Júlia Rajk
38 (known in Hungary as Rajk Lászlóné or Mrs László Rajk) became a lead-
39 ing functionary in the communist-controlled Democratic Association of
40 Hungarian Women (MNDSZ). In a trial that took place in March 1950,
41 nine months after her arrest, she received a five-year prison sentence,

1 having been convicted of supporting her husband's so-called 'subversive
2 policy'. On completion of her sentence, she was released from prison
3 in June 1954 as Györk Lászlóné (Mrs László Györk). She signed her
4 subsequent appeals to the leaders of the Hungarian communist party
5 requesting official rehabilitation using both names – Rajk Lászlóné and
6 Györk Lászlóné. The son of Júlia and László, also called László, was a
7 five-month-old baby when his mother was arrested in June 1949. The
8 infant was taken to an orphanage and renamed István Kovács, the most
9 common name in Hungary. After László Rajk's reburial on 6 October
10 1956, Júlia regained the right to use her married name (Mrs László Rajk)
11 and her son once again became László Rajk Jr.

12 Two names and two personalities in post-1945 Hungarian history
13 became taboo subjects. The first was Júlia's executed husband, László
14 Rajk (1909–1949), who was posthumously rehabilitated and reburied in
15 1955–1956. The second was Imre Nagy, who, having lost office in April
16 1955, served again as Hungarian Prime Minister during the Revolution
17 of October–November 1956. Nagy was executed as a traitor in 1958
18 and buried in an unmarked grave; his reburial in 1989 marked the end
19 of communism in Hungary. The link in the public mind between the
20 two names is based in part on the high-profile political role played by
21 Júlia Rajk. Like Nagy, she took refuge in the Yugoslav embassy on 4
22 November 1956, and was part of the group removed to Romania after
23 the completion of the Soviet invasion, although, luckily for her, she did
24 not face any criminal charges in relation to the events of 1956. She was
25 granted permission to return to Hungary in October 1958, and gradu-
26 ally became a key figure in the opposition movement, demanding the
27 rehabilitation of Nagy and his fellow martyrs.

28 The most striking aspect of Júlia Rajk's life, however, was her relent-
29 less insistence on achieving her husband's unconditional political
30 rehabilitation. This moral human achievement is all the more remark-
31 able given that it was founded on Júlia's capacity for self-effacement
32 and her refusal to dwell on her own plight. As she lacked any formal
33 power within the party, her mastery of the universal 'language of grief'
34 played a crucial role in spurring decision-makers in the nomenclature
35 into action. The 'language of grief' is first and foremost a women's lan-
36 guage, and this gave Rajk her confidence. Standing up for her executed
37 husband gave meaning to her own years in prison. As a wife fighting
38 for the honourable burial of her husband, she was also raised above the
39 controversies and dividing lines of Hungarian politics more generally.
40 The struggle, however, did not end with the graveside photograph of
41 Júlia accompanied by her son, taken at her husband's reburial at the

1 Kerepesi cemetery in Budapest and published in the international press.
 2 The fact that a reburial was held inspired the leaders of the Hungarian
 3 Revolution, who saw how it was possible, using the telephone, to mobi-
 4 lise hundreds of thousands of people for a 'cause'. The implacability of
 5 Júlia Rajk and her insistence on the broadest publicity for her husband's
 6 reburial on 6 October 1956 rendered the event a psychological dress
 7 rehearsal for the 1956 Revolution.

8 In later periods too, Júlia Rajk campaigned consistently for the full
 9 rehabilitation of the victims of Stalinist terror. However, the victims
 10 for whom she fought had all belonged to one or another branch of the
 11 Hungarian labour movement, whether as communists, social democrats
 12 or unaligned 'progressives', and all of them had been subjected to the
 13 unlawful actions of the regime in the period of 'high Stalinism' between
 14 1949 and 1953. The victims of political terror in the years 1945–1948,
 15 which had seen the complete replacement of Hungary's political elite,
 16 the nationalisation of its industry and commerce, the persecution of
 17 leading figures in the Church, the repression of anti-regime elements
 18 linked to the army or the middle-class Smallholders' Party, and trials of
 19 alleged economic 'saboteurs', lay outside her area of interest.⁴

20 In this chapter, I shall first briefly explore the life of Júlia Rajk, and
 21 then turn to the history of the rehabilitation process in Hungary up
 22 until the crucially important reburial of László Rajk. I shall show how
 23 Júlia Rajk utilised the 'language of grief' in her relentless struggle against
 24 two key political figures in post-war Hungarian history: Mátyás Rákosi
 25 (1892–1971), who was General Secretary of the Hungarian communist
 26 party from February 1945 to July 1956; and János Kádár (1912–1989),
 27 Minister of the Interior from 1948 to 1950 and himself a victim of the
 28 purges, who spent the years 1951 to 1954 in jail, only to be released,
 29 rehabilitated and elevated to the posts of party General Secretary (on
 30 24 October 1956) and Prime Minister in place of Nagy (after the Soviet
 31 invasion on 4 November 1956). Both men personally sabotaged any
 32 real attempts to work through the past, including their own shadowy
 33 roles in the Rajk trial and related abuses of state power. They could do
 34 so only as long as they could argue that confronting the crimes of the
 35 past would merely assist the enemies of communism.

37 **The struggle for her own rehabilitation**

38
 39 Júlia Rajk could not believe she was being set free when, on 14 June
 40 1954, at the end of her five-year sentence, she was taken from her cell
 41 to the prison gates. After her release, with an identity card issued in the

1 name of Mrs László Györk, she began a new life. She had nothing, as all
2 her property had been confiscated. On 8 July 1954, the Ministry of the
3 Interior ordered its Department of Investigations to conduct a review
4 into the case of Mrs László Rajk.⁵ To proceed with an appeal hearing, the
5 documentation from the 1950 trial was required. However, 'despite a
6 diligent search of the operational records at the Ministry of the Interior,
7 the official record could not be found', so the investigators had 'no
8 option but to reconstruct it'.⁶ In other words, all the official papers and
9 documents that the court needed to see before it could consent to an
10 appeal were missing. Witnesses later complained that at the new trial
11 in 1955, they were put under pressure to say things, just as they had
12 been in 1949.⁷

13 The case review was concluded on 9 September 1954 with the find-
14 ing that the original conviction was unsafe. In his summing up on
15 14 September 1954, Kálmán Czakó, the Chief Public Prosecutor, drew the
16 following conclusion: 'We have further established that Mrs László Rajk
17 could not have taken part in the conspiracy organised by her husband,
18 as there was no such conspiracy, and none of the people questioned
19 had any knowledge of it, whereby Mrs László Rajk could not have
20 known about it either.'⁸ In a report dated 24 September 1954, Czakó
21 recommended an appeal hearing for the former MNDSZ functionary
22 Mrs László Rajk, merging the case with two others, namely the case
23 of Márta Tauszky, who remained in detention and would later be con-
24 victed of espionage, and the case of the industrial turner Imre Gayer,
25 who had already been executed. The manner of the review procedure
26 was just as impersonal and humiliating as the original court hearing.
27 Neither the original hearing nor the review into it made reference to the
28 nature of the case. The official application for an appeal hearing stated
29 dryly that Mrs László Rajk had served her sentence and that her 'acquit-
30 tal was to be expected'. It also indicated that witnesses named Boris Fáí,
31 Mrs Döbrentei and Faludi, former colleagues of Júlia Rajk, would be
32 called to give evidence.⁹ A copy of each of these reports was submitted
33 to Rákosi's secretariat, which was closely monitoring developments.¹⁰

34 The appeal hearing began on 12 October 1954 and ended on 26 July
35 1955, when a closed session of the Special Council of the Supreme
36 Court, citing lack of evidence, acquitted Mrs László Rajk of taking part
37 in a conspiracy to overthrow the people's democratic state order. In
38 its grounds for the verdict, the court noted that in the original case,
39 both the police and the court had proceeded in an unlawful fashion. It
40 also acknowledged that with respect to her work for the MNDSZ, 'no
41 more than a distant link can be made with the acts mentioned in the

1 indictment'.¹¹ However, the veracity of the two witness statements that
2 were said to be 'indifferent' was upheld. Indeed, the witnesses repeated
3 word for word the statements that they had made in 1949, according
4 to which Mrs László Rajk's work in the MNDSZ had been less than
5 adequate; in fact, her performance was branded a failure.¹² In another
6 humiliation, she was asked by the prosecutor whether it was true that
7 on hearing of Rajk's death she had welcomed the news, as it meant she
8 would get his watch. Júlia, with her experience of prison life, knew that
9 watches were the objects that disappeared first.¹³ Thus, although she
10 received a legal rehabilitation, it did not amount to a moral or political
11 one. People were dissatisfied with the appeal hearing, and regarded it as
12 being no less defective than the original show trial.

13 Beyond the appeal hearing, rehabilitation was a slow and gradual
14 process. Mrs László Rajk continuously bombarded party comrades with
15 letters, requesting a resolution of 'the matter'. The 'matter' in question
16 was the restoration of her party membership, which turned out to be
17 a good choice of approach for several reasons. Party membership was
18 a 'sacred' issue: it was subject to the judgement of fellow communists,
19 the only valid reference group in the eyes of loyal party members. Júlia
20 also knew how she could influence this decision-making group by way
21 of her political contacts. As a reinstated party member, she could make
22 better use of her policy of 'being personally present', for in her person
23 and by way of her person she was living evidence that crimes had
24 been committed by the Rákosi regime between 1949 and 1953. It is no
25 surprise to learn that letters from Mrs Rajk and encounters with her so
26 alarmed communist functionaries that they duly filed reports to their
27 superiors.

28 This is what happened on 17 August 1955, when, at a personal meet-
29 ing, communist official Lajos Ács handed Mrs László Rajk her renewed
30 party membership card, while nonetheless informing her that she
31 had received a severe reprimand. Such disciplinary measures were no
32 joke – the party statutes determined exactly who could be reprimanded
33 and at what forum. In such cases, the 'culprit' was entitled to attend
34 the disciplinary meeting. In Júlia's case, however, a formal error had
35 occurred. As Ács informed her, she had been reprimanded for failing to
36 tell the party that in late 1944, while she and her husband were being
37 held prisoner by the Arrow Cross, László Rajk had denied his commu-
38 nist past. This accusation repeated the false logic of the 1949 show trial,
39 because it was clear to everyone that Júlia could not have been present
40 in person when her husband allegedly made the statement in ques-
41 tion. Mrs Rajk could not be intimidated. In a letter to the Central Party

1 Control Commission (CPCC), dated 18 August 1955, she demanded a
2 full public hearing so that she could prove – with witnesses – that she
3 had been telling the truth. For the CPCC, another public hearing was
4 the least attractive option. However, for Júlia, who had considerable
5 experience of ‘Kremlinology’, the tone and content of Ács’s message
6 indicated that her struggle was far from over, as ‘given the manner of
7 the ‘rehabilitation’ of my husband, *Comrade* László Rajk [she considered
8 it important to emphasise the comrade part, but the italics are mine,
9 A. P.], it is now clear to the entire international working class that, in
10 place of the trumped-up charges, further accusations – ones that have
11 already been made in the past [concerning events in 1944] – are to be
12 brought against him’.

13 At the fateful meeting with Ács on 17 August 1955, Júlia fought tooth
14 and nail for her cause: she expressed her ‘indescribable joy, relief and
15 pride at becoming a party member once again’. Party membership also
16 meant protection: ‘Now that I have been returned my party membership
17 card, I consider it my communist obligation to fight for the party in an
18 even more consistent and determined manner than before.’¹⁴ Probably,
19 it was this that most worried the party leaders, who were rather fearful
20 of meetings with her, and sought, where possible, to delegate the task
21 of talking with her to subordinates. For her part, Júlia did not expect
22 to receive any favours or good-will from the party, even if it did quietly
23 rescind the decision to reprimand her. In her ongoing battle for justice,
24 she looked for and found allies among those repressed leftists and party
25 veterans who supported the process of working through the past.

27 The rehabilitation of László Rajk

29 At her appeal hearing in July 1955, Júlia made use of her right to the
30 last word to highlight three goals: ‘I ask that my husband László Rajk
31 be rehabilitated, that I should be allowed to bury my husband, and that
32 my son be given back his real name.’¹⁵ Yet her most important demand
33 was the following: ‘My wish and my request is that my name be restored
34 to me.’¹⁶ The fight to win back her name was part of the struggle to
35 rehabilitate László Rajk; its outcome would determine not only Júlia’s
36 own fate and that of her son, but also the fate of the whole country.

37 Securing full moral and political rehabilitation was no easy task,
38 however. The case of László Rajk had fundamentally altered the com-
39 munist party apparatus’s outlook on life. Members of the party appa-
40 ratus were initially made to believe that Rajk had been a traitor. Now
41 they were being told that this had not been the case. Perhaps the best

1 way to illustrate the party apparatus's distorted perception of Rajk in
2 the mid-1950s is to cite the generally held opinion that he was guilty
3 of deliberate deception because he had falsely confessed to the charges
4 against him during his trial in September 1949 and had thus misled
5 thousands of loyal party workers. Rajk's apparent submissiveness would
6 subsequently be addressed by Júlia in an essay published in 1969.¹⁷
7 Until that time, however, she had to sit through the appeal hearings,
8 which continued to search relentlessly for suspicious events in the life
9 of her executed husband.

10 The Department of Investigations of the Ministry of the Interior
11 began its review of the Rajk case on 3 May 1954. It reported on its
12 actions on an ongoing basis to the Department of Special Affairs of the
13 Chief Public Prosecutor, Czakó. An official inquiry was ordered by the
14 Minister of the Interior, László Piros, on 9 July 1954. The reports exam-
15 ined the veracity of various witness statements made in the case, but
16 the drafters of the reports received no guidance as to a 'new concept or
17 strategy', and thus they awaited instructions. Most of the cadres work-
18 ing on the review were trusted members of the old guard. A report dated
19 3 September 1954 examined whether or not László Rajk had worked as
20 a police informer under the pre-war, anti-communist Horthy regime,
21 following his first arrest in 1931.¹⁸ An investigation of this issue bore
22 little political risk, because in the 1930s, most of the leaders of the
23 Hungarian communist party, including those still in the top positions
24 in the 1950s, were already in exile in Moscow, and thus could not be
25 implicated. A summary report was drawn up, with five incriminating
26 arguments and 12 exonerating arguments. The investigation related to
27 Rajk's activities up to the end of the Second World War, with the aim of
28 discovering signs of treachery. Included in the evidence cited was a wit-
29 ness statement by Mrs László Rajk recalling that László Rajk had made
30 no mention of being a police informer during his trial by the Arrow
31 Cross in March 1945.¹⁹ The summary report, noting that the confes-
32 sions during the 1949 interrogations and trial had been made under
33 duress, recommended a new trial and the release from prison of the
34 surviving members of the Rajk group.

35 The political context was now broadly favourable, as the rehabilita-
36 tion of communists sentenced in show trials was crucial to the 'New
37 Course' implemented by Nagy during his first term as Prime Minister
38 from July 1953 to April 1955.²⁰ On 18 September 1954, Czakó submitted
39 to the Chairman of the Supreme Court a motion for the retrial of László
40 Rajk and two others who had been executed as alleged co-conspirators,
41 Tibor Szőnyi and András Szalai.²¹ In a further memorandum sent to

1 Nagy on 22 September 1954, Czakó proposed an appeal hearing for Rajk
2 and his associates. The memorandum was also received by the party
3 General Secretary, Rákosi.²²

4 For the party, of course, it was clear that 'Case No. 1' was the most
5 sensitive of all the cases now under review relating to communists sen-
6 tenced in show trials. There were three big risk factors: first, a fear of
7 addressing the issue of responsibility and in particular of naming those
8 ÁVH (secret police) officials who had been involved in extracting false **AQ3**
9 confessions; second, the issue of how to handle the shadowy role of
10 Soviet advisers; and third, the likely continued presence of Júlia Rajk at
11 the appeal hearings. Indeed, the latter did not hesitate to tell informal
12 contacts, acquaintances and colleagues about the rehabilitation process
13 and the anomalies surrounding it. Moreover, she openly discussed
14 developments with her friends – and this at a time when Khrushchev's
15 'secret speech' condemning Stalin was still well over a year away. All
16 of these risks, and especially the last, threatened the authority of the
17 party and ultimately came to undermine the entire Rákosi regime. This
18 in turn highlights three unique features of the de-Stalinisation process
19 in Hungary – the decision to start reviewing show trials involving com-
20 munist and social democrats at an early stage after Stalin's death; the
21 difficulties caused by the party's inability to keep the existence of such
22 appeal hearings secret; and its failure to prevent released prisoners or
23 relatives of executed party comrades from speaking out.

24 By November 1954, according to a report written by the Deputy
25 Minister of the Interior and ÁVH Major-General István Dékán, 89 case
26 reviews had been completed, including those of Júlia Rajk and the
27 future party General Secretary Kádár, the latter having been released in
28 July 1954 from a life sentence imposed after a show trial in December
29 1952.²³ A follow-up report, dated 28 December 1954, stated that 'we
30 have established that the political crimes of László Rajk and his associ-
31 ates did not exist in reality'.²⁴ However, in the winter of 1954–1955, fur-
32 ther progress was delayed by a power struggle in the highest echelons of
33 the party leadership.²⁵ On 17 February 1955, Prime Minister Nagy sent
34 a letter to the Politburo in which he expressed his profound dissatisfac-
35 tion at the slowness of the case review process. Two factors were causing
36 delays: first, the weakness of the three-member rehabilitation commis-
37 sion, appointed by the Politburo in May 1954 to establish a framework
38 for dealing with cases where party comrades had been wrongly con-
39 victed. According to Nagy, this commission was 'incapable of accom-
40 plishing its task', treated the written evidence as its own property, and
41 refused to share it with members of the Politburo. The other reason was

1 difficulties in 'holding to account those against whom grave evidence
2 had arisen in the course of the investigations', namely police interroga-
3 tors. Nagy proposed the disbandment of the commission and recom-
4 mended that future decisions should be taken directly by the Politburo.
5 He threatened to resign if his proposals were rejected, because he 'could
6 not accept responsibility' for what was happening.²⁶ The letter suggests
7 a certain amount of naivety on Nagy's part; he seems to have failed to
8 recognise the three-member commission's true purpose (to preserve the
9 authority of the party) and vainly hoped that the Politburo's involve-
10 ment would guarantee the continuation of the rehabilitation process.

11 Such hopes were reinforced when, in a letter to the Central Committee
12 on 9 February 1955, Minister of the Interior Piros listed the names of
13 the ÁVH officers who had committed criminal acts. He proposed that
14 the officers in question be investigated by a committee of state secu-
15 rity officers and then be sentenced to expulsion from the party and/or
16 imprisonment.²⁷ However, in April 1955, Nagy himself was dismissed
17 as Prime Minister and deprived of his membership of the Politburo and
18 Central Committee, rendering him no longer able to influence events
19 from the inside. The three-member rehabilitation commission now
20 comprised Rákosi, Lajos Ács and Antal Apró. The latter had been co-
21 opted as a recent beneficiary of the rehabilitation process and was very
22 willing to cooperate.²⁸

23 In a report on 6 April 1955, the Department of Investigations of the
24 Ministry of the Interior warned of the greatest danger presented by the
25 appeal hearings: 'When the convicted state security officers are being
26 heard [as witnesses], in particular Gábor Péter [the former head of
27 the ÁVH who was himself purged and imprisoned in 1952], attention
28 must also be given to the fact that they will try to shift responsibility
29 for the cases they fabricated onto some of the Party leaders and onto
30 Soviet comrades, and it is inevitable that the names of some of the
31 members of the party's Central Committee will feature in the proceed-
32 ings.'²⁹ Mentioning such names was, of course, taboo. In June 1955, the
33 Ministry of the Interior came up with a solution when it suggested that
34 the 'top secret nature' of the Rajk case made it vital to ensure that the
35 appeal hearing 'be divided into separate parts and [that] only the most
36 necessary persons [are] examined as witnesses'.³⁰

37 In July 1955, the Politburo decided to accelerate the rehabilitation
38 process, whereby, with the exception of the Rajk case, 'all other cases
39 should be concluded' by mid-October.³¹ The appeal hearing for László
40 Rajk and his associates was delayed until 23–25 November, when it was
41 finally held at the Hungarian Supreme Court.³² Prior to the hearing,

1 however, Rákosi gave a report on 'new' developments in the 'Rajk
2 case' at a Politburo meeting. He stated that Rajk had been responsible
3 for Hungary's worsening relations with Yugoslavia, because 'he had
4 kept the party in the dark about his first detention [in 1931] and the
5 grave circumstances surrounding it'.³³ Shortly before this meeting, on
6 5 November 1955, the rehabilitation commission had come to a deci-
7 sion concerning the witnesses. As far as cases subject to review were
8 concerned, the commission's report mainly cited the witness statements
9 and accounts used at the original trials, and did not challenge their
10 veracity. At the carefully staged appeal hearing for Rajk and associates,
11 the witnesses were asked the very same questions, and in their responses
12 they repeated their previous statements word for word, in the arcane
13 language of party functionaries.³⁴ Moreover, the witnesses made no
14 attempt to present László Rajk in a positive light. Indeed, when he was
15 called to give evidence on 24 November 1955, István Tömpe stated the
16 following: 'In my view, Rajk was a coward *in 1949 too*, and that is why
17 he agreed to play along with the lie [my italics, A.P.]'.³⁵

18 The court acquitted László Rajk of the crime of espionage and con-
19 spiracy on grounds of absence of culpability, and it acquitted him of
20 crimes against the people on grounds of lack of evidence. In November
21 1955, a Central Committee resolution placed the blame on former
22 ÁVH head Péter and on Rajk himself, as the latter had concealed the
23 'grave circumstances' of his detention in 1931.³⁶ In reality, the light
24 sentence received by László Rajk in the case brought against party
25 activists arrested at Budapest University in 1931–1932, which was
26 repeatedly mentioned as suspicious 23 years later, reflected his minor
27 status in the trial and the fact that – not for the first time – the Horthy
28 regime's police force was unaware of his real identity as a leading com-
29 munist functionary. Furthermore, none of his co-defendants in 1932
30 had incriminated him. In short, even though László Rajk was found
31 innocent of the criminal charges that he had faced in 1949, some of the
32 witness statements at the appeal hearing, and the Central Committee's
33 November 1955 resolution on the case, placed him under continued
34 political and moral suspicion. The battle to restore his reputation was
35 still not over.

37 **The contradictions and complexities of rehabilitation**

38
39 In accordance with the instructions of the party leadership, the reha-
40 bilitation of party members was supposed to be carried out in 'greatest
41 secrecy'. Júlia Rajk fought against this tendency, whereby her first step

1 was to use the name Mrs László Rajk. For instance, although she was
 2 examined at the Supreme Court during the appeal hearing for László
 3 Rajk in November 1955 as ‘Mrs László Györk’, she nevertheless signed
 4 her statement as ‘Mrs László Rajk’. On hearing the name Rajk, many
 5 party members felt a shiver go down their spines – either because they
 6 had allowed themselves to be persuaded of László Rajk’s guilt or because
 7 they had testified against him in various public forums or even in a
 8 court of law.

9 After the appeal hearing for László Rajk and his associates in
 10 November 1955, the regime applied pressure on Júlia by way of the
 11 party secretary in the Eighth District of Budapest, where the Szabó Ervin
 12 Library – her place of employment since February 1955 – was situated.
 13 It assigned József Suhajda the task of persuading her of the ‘incorrect-
 14 ness of her position’ and that her attitude ‘was causing many problems,
 15 as she merely criticised and refused to accept help’. Suhajda agreed to
 16 undertake the task – doing so, however, against his better judgement (‘It
 17 would have been better to reject the task’). He told Júlia that ‘although
 18 her conduct was fully understandable given what had happened to
 19 her murdered innocent husband, it was nevertheless very costly and
 20 was preventing closure’. In response, Júlia employed a tactic that had
 21 already proved successful: she openly stated her opinion and then told
 22 Suhajda what she had experienced. The loyal party functionary Suhajda
 23 was so shocked by Mrs Rajk’s words that he could still remember them
 24 almost 30 years after their meeting: ‘Do you not know that, despite all
 25 the promises [that his life would be spared if he confessed], my hus-
 26 band was taken to the gallows and that he was still saying “Long live
 27 the party! Long live the Soviet Union”?’ Suhajda questioned how Rajk
 28 had allowed himself to get into such an awkward position. ‘Why did
 29 they not get people to talk to her who had worked with her husband
 30 and who knew what had happened? I couldn’t give answers to *a lady*
 31 *devoured by pain* [my italics, A.P.]’ Júlia’s words evidently came as a
 32 shock to this party functionary; he was confronted by a wife in mourn-
 33 ing for her husband, who was merely asking for justice, and for her
 34 husband to receive the proper funeral he deserved.³⁷

35 The November 1955 resolution of the Central Committee on the
 36 Rajk case, blaming Péter and Rajk himself, was made known to Júlia, in
 37 accordance with the Central Committee’s wishes, by way of the party
 38 branch organisation at the Szabó Ervin Library. Júlia apparently stood
 39 up and stated that she disagreed with the contents of the resolution.
 40 She asked for the matter to be investigated by the CPCC and the Central
 41 Committee.³⁸ Her words appear to have had an effect. In a letter dated

1 7 December 1955, 'Comrade Mrs László Rajk' was asked to attend an
2 appointment in Akadémia Street at 10 a.m. on 8 December.³⁹

3 Not much remains by way of records of this meeting or of Júlia's
4 subsequent correspondence with the party leadership. Her main
5 achievement was to compel the party bosses to address her concerns;
6 they could not simply pretend that she did not exist or that her name
7 was Mrs László Györk. Whenever she felt she was being mistreated,
8 she would immediately pick up a pen and write. Her most important
9 demand was that her husband should receive a proper burial.⁴⁰

10 In April 1956, Apró, in his capacity as a member of the rehabilitation
11 commission, prepared a report for the Politburo on the principles gov-
12 erning the rehabilitation of those senior party comrades who had been
13 wrongly convicted and who were entitled to have their expulsion from
14 the party reviewed in line with a Politburo resolution of 21 May 1954.
15 According to the report, cases concerning 234 individuals had been
16 investigated. Of this number, 132 individuals had been convicted
17 and imprisoned, 102 had been acquitted, 43 had spent time in pre-
18 trial detention, 18 had been interned, and 41 were relatives of those
19 sentenced.⁴¹ By now the wildest rumours were circulating about Júlia
20 Rajk – for instance, that she was to receive a villa in the Second District
21 of Budapest, or a monthly pension of 5,000 forints, or a job as manager
22 of the most beautiful patisserie in Budapest. It was even alleged that Tito
23 had personally sent her money via the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest.⁴²
24 However, the report simply stated that her party membership had been
25 restored and that she had received compensation amounting to 92,193
26 forints, a two-roomed apartment with *middle-class comforts* [my italics,
27 A.P.], child benefit of 700 forints, an annual four-week holiday, and an
28 entitlement to special hospital treatment and to convalescence at a san-
29 atorium. She had received more than any other rehabilitated individual,
30 but not as much as the rumours claimed. The report also detailed the
31 rehabilitation of other members of the Rajk family who had received
32 party punishments in the aftermath of the 1949 trial.⁴³

33 The question of financial compensation to rehabilitated communists
34 was initially handled by the Ministry of the Interior, but was later man-
35 aged by a party commission headed by Apró. This was one area, indeed,
36 where the party felt able to compromise. In total, rehabilitation resulted
37 in the payment of a sum of 4.9 million forints to the victims, and this
38 was coupled with the awarding of 150 apartments, 245 one-week holi-
39 days, and 63 hospital treatments. But there were also weaknesses in the
40 process, including, as even Apró admitted, a failure to settle financial
41 matters in a satisfactory manner. The court proceedings were 'slow and

1 gradual', and 'were not receiving adequate publicity, which resulted in
2 further delays and the unsatisfactory treatment of rehabilitated persons
3 by certain bodies and functionaries'. Furthermore, 'relatives of the exe-
4 cuted individuals questioned why they were not permitted to exhume
5 the bodies of family members'.⁴⁴

6 At a meeting on 19 April 1956, the Politburo approved a list of reha-
7 bilitated party members and then passed a resolution ordering that
8 posthumous rehabilitation notices be read out at the former workplaces
9 of the deceased by 31 May at the latest. It also stipulated that the Chief
10 Public Prosecutor should issue certificates stating cause of death to the
11 relatives.⁴⁵ A symbolic moral rehabilitation of those communists who
12 had been executed as supposed traitors thus took place, but controver-
13 sies surrounding their funerals and reburials still lay ahead.

14 15 **Reburial**

16
17 In her battle for the memory of her husband and for her own name,
18 Júlia Rajk was forced to fight on several fronts. First, on account of
19 her husband's term as Minister of the Interior, she had to deal with
20 the hostility of those who were opposed to the party and its strangle-
21 hold over Hungarian political life. Also hostile to her were exiles in
22 the west, who struggled to fathom the 'emotional myths' that arose
23 around a man who had once been the iron-fist Minister of the Interior
24 for a communist regime. Meanwhile, the old party leaders, people who
25 at one time had been close comrades of her and her husband, publicly
26 called Mrs Rajk a traitor to the workers' movement. In spite of these
27 attacks (or perhaps because of them), Júlia Rajk did not give up. She
28 was determined to have her husband properly buried and to win back
29 her name.

30 The public debates held by the Petőfi Circle, a new forum for dissident
31 opinion, helped to prepare the way intellectually for the revolution of
32 October-November 1956.⁴⁶ The Circle's 'partisan debate', held on 18 June
33 1956, and attended by many former members of the underground
34 communist movement, was Júlia's first public appearance as Mrs László
35 Rajk since 1949. Her speech on that day was particularly significant
36 because it established the linguistic framework for faithful communists
37 to express their criticism of the past actions of the Rákosi regime. Unlike
38 previous meetings held by the Petőfi Circle, at the 'partisan debate' com-
39 munist who had been sentenced after show trials publicly proclaimed
40 that despite their imprisonment, they still believed in communism and
41 Leninist ideals. What they also wanted, however, were radical changes

1 in the policies and composition of the party leadership. Still, for mem-
2 bers of the public attending the meeting, the most interesting aspect
3 was to see 'how the communists bash each other in the debate'.⁴⁷ In the
4 end, the meeting lasted until the early hours of the next morning. Its
5 important message was that the communists were now agreed on the
6 need to face up to the past – something they had previously denounced
7 as a fetish of 'right-wing reactionaries'.

8 The words spoken by Júlia Rajk at the meeting were noted down;
9 they deserve our special attention, as she rarely made public speeches.
10 It is clear even from the edited, published version that it was not a
11 prepared speech. Her words were spontaneous, and she spoke from
12 the heart. When she appeared on the rostrum, she was applauded for
13 around ten minutes. And at the end of her speech, 'the hall resounded
14 with approval'.⁴⁸ She spoke in a clear and considered way, posing many
15 rhetorical questions. The effectiveness of the speech was due to her
16 credibility as one who had suffered at the hands of the Rákosi regime.
17 She compared and contrasted the prisons of the Horthy regime with
18 those of the communist authorities, concluding that prisoners had
19 received better treatment in the former. Rather than make statements,
20 she asked:

21
22 How is it possible that the reactionaries saw what the comrades failed
23 to see? Where is the error in the system? What allowed [party offi-
24 cials] not only to make mistakes, but also to commit grave crimes?
25 Where is this error, which still exists? I must say that the people
26 who now want to rehabilitate [the victims] are the same ones who
27 sentenced them, who murdered them, and who sent them to the
28 gallows.

29
30 Júlia then analysed the anomalies of the rehabilitation process, in
31 particular the Central Committee resolution of November 1955 con-
32 cerning the Rajk case. With great conviction, she noted that László
33 Rajk had been a good communist and a suitable role model for young
34 communists.

35
36 I feel that the Rajk issue constitutes a part of the process by which
37 they [the supporters of Rákosi] have destroyed this country economi-
38 cally, politically and morally.... Relying on the Hungarian people,
39 we – all of us, the old underground communists and the new intel-
40 lectuals – must now reinstate Leninist norms. They forced the old
41 comrades out, and this all started with the trial of Rajk in 1949.⁴⁹

1 The message was clear: the old comrades had been purged by newcomers
 2 who had caused much damage to the party. The task was therefore
 3 to accomplish László Rajk's rehabilitation, because this would allow for
 4 a return to the old communist path which had broad national support.
 5 Moreover, the spirit of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the
 6 Soviet Union needed to be applied in Hungary, and this would necessarily
 7 result in leadership changes. The speech aroused people's emotions, but it
 8 also presented a clear political programme. The personal suffering of Júlia
 9 Rajk, the credibility of the 'language of grief', added weight to her words.
 10 She received a standing ovation from the 2,000 people in attendance.

11 Meanwhile, as she still did not know where her husband had been
 12 executed or what had happened to his remains, Júlia continued to
 13 bombard the authorities with letters. By the spring of 1956 the party
 14 leadership was under great pressure. In the wake of Khrushchev's
 15 denunciation of Stalin in February, party veterans began making public
 16 demands for clear answers concerning the Rajk trial. At a meeting on
 17 24 May 1956, the Politburo reached a decision on additional measures
 18 related to the process of rehabilitation. They approved a proposal call-
 19 ing for the creation of a three-member commission, consisting of a
 20 member of the Politburo, the Chairman of the Supreme Court, and the
 21 Chief Public Prosecutor. It was accepted that there could be no further
 22 delays; an authorisation for exhumation of those executed after the Rajk
 23 trial would have to be given.⁵⁰

24 The minutes of the Politburo's meetings show that the party lead-
 25 ership wanted complete control of the reburial event: it was to be
 26 attended only by invited comrades, and the party leaders considered it
 27 natural that Mrs Rajk would want to take part. On 27 September 1956,
 28 the authorities informed the four widows concerned (Mrs Rajk, Szőnyi,
 29 Szalai and Pálffy) by telephone that their deceased husbands' bodies
 30 had been found and that a burial would take place at the Kerepesi ceme-
 31 tery on the morning of 1 October. They were told to present themselves
 32 in Gödöllő in order to identify the bodies.⁵¹

33 According to the medical expert, the identification of László Rajk was
 34 relatively simple, as the skeletal remains placed on the sheet revealed a
 35 man of tall stature with gunshot damage to the forearm, a wound Rajk
 36 had received in the Spanish Civil War. Júlia Rajk was visibly shocked by
 37 the sight of the 'moldy and ant-ridden collection of bones'. She became
 38 even more determined to fight for her husband's full rehabilitation.
 39 She also had exact ideas concerning the burial proceedings: 'Since they
 40 have already staged a show trial, they should now hold a show burial,'
 41 she said.⁵²

1 Júlia Rajk never faltered throughout the lengthy process of prepar-
2 ing for the funeral and the controversy over the various arrangements:
3 when and where it should be held, whether to have a funeral bier, who
4 should speak, whether the public should be allowed to attend. She told
5 the authorities that if the public were denied access, she too would
6 lay her flowers at the fence; and she asked for a postponement of the
7 event until 6 October. Until the very last moment, the party leadership
8 refused to countenance a public burial. At Júlia Rajk's behest, the party-
9 opposition made multiple telephone calls in Budapest, telling people
10 that the widows intended to stay away from the funeral unless the
11 authorities relented on their conditions. In this way, within a day or so,
12 the whole of Budapest could be mobilised and pressure placed on the
13 party leadership. It was then that people understood the extent of the
14 power that lay in their hands.

15 On 5 October 1956, 12 hours before the burial was due to begin, the
16 party leadership finally recognised the embarrassment it would suffer if
17 Mrs Rajk stuck to her word and refused to attend. At the last moment,
18 therefore, they gave permission for the cemetery to be opened to the
19 public. At the burial, both sides wished to avoid a disturbance. 'It is
20 enough if they see just how many we are,' said Júlia's friends, who
21 had fresh memories of Soviet tanks on the streets. Everyone was fully
22 aware that the burial represented more than a tribute to the victims; by
23 attending the funeral, people were clearly making a political statement.
24 In the preceding 30 years, no one could remember so many flowers with
25 the same words: 'We shall not forget.' Instead of a small crowd of 'mobi-
26 lised' party members (which the Politburo had originally anticipated),
27 in the end hundreds of thousands of people passed by the funeral bier
28 and stood at the grave. And all of this was due, first and foremost, to
29 Júlia Rajk's steadfastness.

30 The burial process itself was of course a historically familiar means
31 of connecting private feelings of mourning with a public performance,
32 while the universal 'language of grief' deployed by Júlia helped to over-
33 come the opposition of the communist decision-makers. Following the
34 iconography of the Pietà, women were mourning men (fathers, sons
35 and partners). In the 1950s secular context, the widows and the orphans
36 of purged party functionaries were also seen first of all as victims, even if
37 the relatives they mourned had at one time been hardline ministers and
38 officials of the communist regime. This opened the way for hundreds of
39 thousands of people to demonstrate their solidarity with four grieving
40 women, who had unjustly suffered the loss of loved ones, while express-
41 ing criticism of the communist system in a seemingly non-political way.

1 Meanwhile, the 1956 revolution, which began with student-led
2 demonstrations in Budapest on 23 October, opened a new chapter in
3 the process of de-Stalinisation in Hungary. The failure of the Hungarian
4 authorities' cautious approach to rehabilitation in 1953–1955, which
5 had been limited to the elite and barely impacted on ordinary citizens,
6 led inexorably to the 1956 revolution, whereby the reburial of László
7 Rajk and his associates served as a timely rehearsal. On 4 November 1956,
8 when the Soviet army occupied Hungary, Júlia Rajk asked for political
9 refugee status at the Yugoslav embassy. Like Nagy and members of his
10 cabinet, she was subsequently kidnapped by Soviet forces and taken
11 to Romania. She spent two years there, but was then given permission
12 to return to Hungary as Júlia Rajk. After 1958, she was known simply
13 as 'Júlia', becoming a real 'institution' in Hungarian society. Over the
14 years, she became known as someone who always protected the weak
15 against the abuses of the powerful. She also negotiated with the party
16 leadership on behalf of anti-communist intellectuals. She helped estab-
17 lish a dog shelter, the first NGO in Hungary since the imposition of a
18 ban on independent associations in 1951. In a case of transnational
19 activism, she collected signatures in support of the human rights group
20 Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia. At a time when few people made char-
21 ity donations, Júlia used the compensation she received for the loss of
22 her husband to support a fund for talented university students. When
23 the first proto-feminist movement was organised to protest against a
24 proposed tightening of abortion laws in 1975, she was the first person
25 to sign the petition. Her name at the top of the list served to reassure
26 other participants in the first dissident action in Hungary since 1956.
27 Júlia died in 1981.

29 **Conclusion**

31 This chapter has examined the first wave of the rehabilitation process in
32 Hungary, which coincided with Stalin's death and Nagy's 'New Course'.
33 In 1956, in the aftermath of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party
34 of the Soviet Union, an investigation was launched into the conduct of
35 members of the state security forces, but its scope was very limited. At a
36 meeting in July 1956, the Central Committee decided to conclude the
37 process of rehabilitation, which had been underway for almost three
38 years and had seriously damaged the party's prestige and authority.
39 It was at this juncture that heads rolled: the party General Secretary,
40 Mátyás Rákosi, was dismissed on 18 July, while Mihály Farkas, the
41 former Minister of Defence, was expelled from the party. In this way,

1 the party hoped to achieve closure. Nonetheless, real and unqualified
2 closure was never on the cards, either before or after the 1956 revolu-
3 tion. As Júlia Rajk remarked in an interview in 1980:

4
5 One cannot say of murder that it is [due to] the cult of personality.
6 And this was murder. It was an intentional murder ... if a nation fails
7 to confront its past, then its future will also be full of lies. And it is
8 full of lies. In a word, the entire social structure needs to be democ-
9 ratised.... My husband was not rehabilitated. They simply named a
10 street after him. That's not rehabilitation.⁵³

11
12 On 27 November 1956, after the crushing of the revolution and the
13 assumption of power by Kádár, the Chief Public Prosecutor decreed the
14 collective dismissal of former members of the ÁVH and ordered a review
15 of their previous conduct. The true aim of this measure was to legitimise
16 the establishment of a new state security force rather than to call to
17 account, morally and politically, personnel from the former organisa-
18 tion. We know from research undertaken by Magdolna Baráth that
19 under the terms of the Chief Public Prosecutor's decree, the conduct of
20 4,986 former ÁVH personnel was reviewed, of whom 3,048 had been
21 active in the operative forces and 1,923 had been working in other areas
22 (office work, dispatch and so on). In total, 4,971 persons whose con-
23 duct had been subject to review were exonerated. They received official
24 certificates declaring that they had not been involved in unlawful acts
25 committed by the state security forces. This meant they were employ-
26 able by any state or communal organ or by a commercial enterprise.
27 Only 15 former members of the state security forces (11 in Budapest and
28 four in other areas of the country) were denied such certificates.⁵⁴ Of
29 course, it was unrealistic to expect much from this process, since Kádár,
30 as Minister of the Interior between 1948 and 1950, had himself played
31 an active part in Rajk's demise, just as he had abandoned Nagy in 1956
32 and allowed him to be executed in 1958.

33 All of this rendered Júlia Rajk a crucial figure. Utilising the 'language
34 of grief', she fought on the front line for justice – for the communists
35 and social democrats who had been imprisoned or executed under the
36 Rákosi regime, and for their wives and widows who would otherwise
37 have had no one to speak for them in the male-dominated world
38 of Hungarian politics pre- and post-1956. A further round of reha-
39 bilitation – undertaken once again rather half-heartedly and limited
40 in scope – began after a Central Committee resolution in 1962. By
41 17 October 1962, the authorities had received 352 petitions, relating in

1 the most part to rehabilitation of purged party members after intern-
 2 ment or resettlement (expulsion). In connection with the unlawful trial
 3 and conviction of members of the workers' movement, 122 individu-
 4 als requested financial compensation or other forms of material assis-
 5 tance.⁵⁵ In reality, however, there were hundreds of thousands of victims
 6 of Hungary's Stalinist communist regime, and until the late 1980s their
 7 chances of rehabilitation were rendered slimmer against an official view
 8 of history that still legitimised the communists' coming to power in
 9 the late 1940s and depicted 1956 as an attempted 'counter-revolution'.

10 From Rákosi to Kádár and beyond, selectivity, secrecy and non-
 11 transparency of the various waves of rehabilitation since 1953 con-
 12 tributed to a 'war on memory', which only somebody of Júlia Rajk's
 13 determination and courage could oppose. In spite of some remarkable
 14 moments of reconciliation in Hungarian history since her death, such
 15 as the public reburial of Nagy in June 1989, three months before the
 16 country's final transition to multi-party democracy, the 'war on mem-
 17 ory' continues to this day to characterise the country's politics and even
 18 its parliamentary debates, as far as the working through of the commu-
 19 nist past is concerned.

20

21 **Notes**

22

- 23 1. Gallicus in Radio Free Liberty, 22 June 1956, Reflector, No.C-339. Országos
 24 Széchenyi Könyvtár (National Szechenyi Library) Radio Free Europe
 25 Collection 451/1083. p. 2.
- 26 2. M. Baráth, 'Az MDP vezetése és a rehabilitáció (1953–1956)', *Múltunk*, no. 4.
 27 (1999), pp. 40–97.
- 28 3. For more on Júlia Rajk, see A. Pető, *Rajk Júlia* (Budapest, 2001).
- 29 4. For a broader overview, see L. Borhi, 'Stalinist Terror in Hungary, 1945–1956',
 30 in K. McDermott and M. Stibbe (eds), *Stalinist Terror in Eastern Europe: Elite
 31 Purges and Mass Repression* (Manchester, 2010), pp. 119–40.
- 32 5. Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történelmi Levéltára (Historical Archives of State
 33 Security Services, henceforth ÁBTL) I. 1.b. (1500–208/60.a.) p. 5.
- 34 6. ÁBTL I. 13. -b. (V-142753), p. 8.
- 35 7. See e.g. ÁBTL I. 13. (V-142753), p. 29 (Testimony of Károlyné Döbrentei,
 36 6 July 1955).
- 37 8. ÁBTL I. 13. (V-142753), p. 1.
- 38 9. ÁBTL I.1.e. V-142/673/5, pp. 296–8.
- 39 10. Magyar Országos Levéltár (Hungarian National Archive – henceforth MOL)
 40 276. f. 65., p. 6.
- 41 11. ÁBTL I. 13. (V-142753), p. 39.
12. Ibid., p. 43.
13. ÁBTL I. 13. -b. (V-142753), p. 27.
14. MOL 276. f. 65. cs. 52. öe., p. 219.
15. ÁBTL I. 13. (V-142753), p. 33.

- 1 16. Ibid., p. 29.
 2 17. For the full text of the 1969 essay, which appeared in the magazine *Kortárs*
 3 in the form of a 'Letter to Aladár Mód', see Pető, *Rajk Júlia*, pp. 251–6.
 4 18. ÁBTL I. 1.e. (V-142/673/5), pp. 239–46.
 5 19. Ibid., Report on the spying of László Rajk, 26 August 1954, p. 247.
 6 20. Baráth, 'Az MDP vezetése és a rehabilitáció'.
 7 21. ÁBTL I.1.h. (V-143/415), p. 21.
 8 22. ÁBTL I.1.e. (V-142/673/5), p. 286.
 9 23. ÁBTL I. 1.b. p. 63, report dated 12 November 1954. On Kádár, see Borhi,
 10 'Stalinist Terror in Hungary', p. 133.
 11 24. ÁBTL I. 1.b. (101–5446/1/54.), p. 59.
 12 25. On this internal fight, see Baráth, 'Az MDP vezetése és a rehabilitáció',
 13 pp. 67–74.
 14 26. MOL 276. f. 53. cs. 227. öe., p. 111.
 15 27. Ibid., p. 112.
 16 28. MOL 276.f. 62/28.öe., p. 18. Letter of 17 March 1955 to László Piros.
 17 29. ÁBTL I. 1.b., p. 72.
 18 30. Ibid., p. 66. Report of 11 June 1955.
 19 31. MOL 276. f. 53. cs. 250. öe., p. 156. Report by Apró Antal on 3 October 1955.
 20 32. ÁBTL I.1.h. V-143/415.
 21 33. Quoted in Baráth, 'Az MDP vezetése és a rehabilitáció', p. 76.
 22 34. ÁBTL I. 1.b., pp. 127–34.
 23 35. ÁBTL I. 1. h. (V-143/415), p. 179.
 24 36. Ibid.
 25 37. All of the above quotes are taken from Suhajda's account of this meeting.
 26 See his autobiography, dated 2 September 1983, in *Politikatörténeti Intézet*
 27 *Archivuma* (Archive of the Institute of Political History) 867. f. 2/s-304.,
 28 p. 46.
 29 38. MOL 276. f. 65. cs. 52. öe. p. 267. Letter of 6 December 1955.
 30 39. MOL 276. f. 65. cs. 52. öe., p. 262.
 31 40. MOL 276. f. 65. cs. 52. öe., p. 270. Letter of February 1956.
 32 41. MOL 276. f. 53. cs. 272., p. 17.
 33 42. Open Society Archives, Budapest Rajk Lászlóné file, 205/12/0/101/18.
 34 43. Gyula Rajk received 25,000 forints in cash, an apartment, and a monthly **AQ8**
 35 pension of 1,300 forints; Györk Lajosné was returned her holiday home;
 36 Jenőné Rajk was given a job; and Zoltán Rajk had his party membership
 37 restored and was admitted to the university with a scholarship. See MOL
 38 276. f. 53. cs. 287. p. 72. Details of Júlia Rajk's financial compensation can
 39 be found at ÁBTL IX/6-1, p. 81. and IX/6.2., p. 10.
 40 44. MOL 276. f. 53. cs. 272. öe., p. 17.
 41 45. Ibid., p. 18.
 42 46. On the Petőfi circle, see A. B. Hegedüs, 'The Petőfi Circle: The Forum of
 43 Reform in 1956', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, vol. 13,
 44 no. 2 (1997), pp. 108–33.
 45 47. ÁBTL V-150001/5, p. 15. Testimony of István Márkus.
 46 48. A. B. Hegedüs (ed.), *A Petőfi Kör vitái hiteles jegyzőkönyvek alapján* (Minutes of
 47 the Petőfi Circle), Vol. 4: Partizántalákozó-Sajtvita (Budapest, 1991), p. 203.
 48 49. For the text of the speech, see Pető, *Rajk Júlia*, pp. 246–50.
 49 50. MOL 276. f. 53. cs. 288. öe. 3,

- 1 51. For further details, see M. Potoky Strasser, *Il mito che e' caduto: Ungheria*
- 2 *1945–1956* (Rome, 1991), pp. 113–20.
- 3 52. Discussions with Mrs Rajk, 10 December 1956, in Documents from Romania,
- 4 1956 Institute, p. 5.
- 5 53. Interview with Júlia Rajk by Bokor Péter, 1980, in Országos Széchenyi
- 6 Könyvtár (National Széchenyi Library), Collection of Historical Interviews,
- 7 142. B., p. 53.
- 8 54. M. Baráth, 'Felemás desztalinizáció. A törvénysértések lezárása és az állam-
- 9 biztonsági szervek átszervezése Magyarországon 1962-ben', *Betekintő*, no. 3
- 10 (2012), pp. 8–9.
- 11 55. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 12
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Query Form

Book Title:	McDermott
Chapter No:	Chapter 03

Queries and / or remarks

Query No.	Query / remark	Response
AQ1	Could you please provide the volume for the endnote reference Baráth (1999)?	
AQ2	Should this be Mrs Faludi or something else?	
AQ3	Might it be worth mentioning in brackets as Államvédelmi Hatóság / State Protection Authority, or do you think that would be unnecessary information, beyond 'secret police'?	
AQ4	Is this bracketed information required? (I.e. As it is not a direct quote that you have amended.)	
AQ5	Her husband has not yet been mentioned in the text – should he have been?	
AQ6	Is it correct that more than one of her friends said this (i.e. in chorus?) or might it read better as e.g. 'said one of Júlia's friends, many of whom had...?'	
AQ7	Please could you provide a volume for this endnote reference Baráth (2012)?	
AQ8	We have changed florints to forints in line with other occurrences as well as online sources; hope this is okay	