Comrade Baron: A Journey Through the Vanishing World of the Transylvanian Aristocracy

with author

Jaap Scholten

On March 3, 1949, practically all of the Transylvanian aristocracy were arrested in their beds and loaded into lorries. Communism demanded the destruction of these ultimate class enemies. Under the terror of Gheorghiu-Dej and later Ceaușescu the aristocracy led a double life: during the day they worked in quarries, steelworks and carpenters’ yards; in the evening they secretly gathered and maintained the rituals of an older world. To record this unknown episode of recent history, Dutch writer Jaap Scholten travelled extensively in Romania and Hungary and sought out the few remaining aristocrats. He spoke to survivors of the Romanian Gulag and asked the question: How is it possible to rebuild anything in a country that finds itself in a moral vacuum?

Jaap Scholten studied Social Anthropology at the Central European University in Budapest, among other fields. He has published seven books, including collections of short stories and three novels. The English edition of his book Comrade Baron was released by Helena History Press on May 1, 2016 and distributed worldwide through Central European University Press.

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12:30pm – 2:00pm
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