



HAS

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Role-Models of the Intelligentsia in East-Central Europe
Case Studies from Poland and from Hungary

international workshop within the framework of the bilateral research project of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, entitled

The role of intelligentsia in shaping collective identities of Poles and Hungarians in 19th and 20th centuries

Tuesday, September 5th, 2017; 4 Tóth Kálmán st., 7th floor

Programme

15.00

Opening Words (Béla Mester)

15.10–15.40

URSZULA IDZIAK-SMOCZYŃSKA, BARTOSZ-BEDNARCZYK

The Noble Family as “point d’excès”. Redefining the totemic definition of nobility through the lens of Alain Badiou’s mathematical ontology

15.40–16.10

RAFAŁ SMOCZYŃSKI

The uses of noble legacy in today Poland

16.10–16.30

Coffee Break

16.30–17.00

GÁBOR KOVÁCS

An outsider Hungarian intellectual: national character and modernity in the thought of the traditionalist Béla Hamvas

17.00–17.30

Béla MESTER

Reflections of a Hungarian, and a German Intellectual to the World Crisis: Authentic Tradition, Axial Time, and Flow of Traditions

17.30–17.40

Concluding Words (Rafał Smoczyński)

Summaries

URSZULA IDZIAK-SMOCZYŃSKA, BARTOSZ-BEDNARCZYK
Institute of Religious Studies, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland

The Noble Family as “point d’excès”. Redefining the totemic definition of nobility through the lens of Alain Badiou’s mathematical ontology

In our paper we are planning to redefine the category of “family” denoting the relationship of selected members postnoble/post-aristocratic milieu in Poland using Alain Badiou’s terminology. Badiou’s ontology based on mathematical set theory and generic theory is the most developed complex and revolutionary ontology of the XX–XXIth centuries. However it is rarely adapted to new empirical studies probably because of its novelty and complexity (mathematical background). We are not envisaging to base our reflection on the empirical case study made by Smoczyński/Zarycki but instead perform a translation of the Durkheimo-Lacanian theoretical standpoint about the phenomenon of (let’s call it shortly) “totemic nobility” into the generic truth process based on “etat de situation” (state of even) from “Being and Event” (Badiou 2005).

GÁBOR KOVÁCS
Institute of Philosophy of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary

An outsider Hungarian intellectual: national character and modernity in the thought of the traditionalist Béla Hamvas

The theory of Béla Hamvas on Hungarian national character is one of the lesser-known aspects of his oeuvre concentrating upon the question of self-redemption by the help of ancient esoteric wisdom hidden in the holy books of different world religions. The paper puts the conception of Hamvas concerning national character into the interwar Hungarian and European context giving special emphasis to the German thought. The main hypothesis that national characterology was a reaction to the modernity-crisis of the inter-war period culminated in totalitarianism. Hamvas wasn’t an exception to the rule from this respect: his national characterology had been intertwined with his cultural criticism: the core of his theory was the resacralization of soulless, profanized modernity.

Béla MESTER

Institute of Philosophy of the Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary

Reflections of a Hungarian, and a German Intellectual to the World Crisis: Authentic Tradition, Axial Time, and Flow of Traditions

A basic element of Béla Hamvas philosophy of crisis is an experiment for the reconstruction of the authentic tradition. Hamvas' concept of tradition has significant parallelism with Karl Jaspers' theory of *axial time*. This paper offers an analysis of the parallelism between Hamvas' ideas about the sacred books as fragments of the unwritten *ancestral tradition* of the humankind and Jaspers' theory about the foundations of the unicity of the humankind in the works written in the *axial time*. Assmann's theory of *cultural memory* will be used as a theoretical frame of this comparison. By the hypothesis of this paper, a common element of the topics of the German and Hungarian thinkers is the transition of the *cultural memory* from the *ritual* to the *textual coherence*, clarified by Assmann's theory. In the second part of this paper it will be exemplified Hamvas' endeavour for the *canonisation* of the unwritten *ancestral tradition* in written form by his commented edition of Confucius.

RAFAŁ SMOCZYŃSKI

Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland

The uses of noble legacy in today Poland

In the post-World War Two Polish nobility was commonly considered as an anachronistic social group what was related to the post 1945 confiscations of their properties and the decline of legal and political privileges of this class. In other words, from a formal point of view, Polish nobility ceased to exist, however, this group did not simply vanished. We should not talk about the disintegration of the former noble milieu, but rather its reorganization. In an attempt to expand deliberation on these "reorganization strategies", this paper analyses major social actors in contemporary Poland who use the noble legacy in their collective identity building practices. By "use of the noble legacy" this paper means any form of social practice or discursive and institutional reference to the origin, identity, and values of Polish historical nobility.