

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

Westernisers and “Narodniks”

Dichotomous Identity-Generating Narratives in the 19th–20th-century Polish and Hungarian Intellectual History



Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of Philosophy
Thursday, July 30th, 2020; Tóth Kálmán st., **5th floor, room B.5.33**

Programme

11.00–11.10 *Opening Words* (Béla Mester, project leader on the Hungarian side)

1st section: Early Modern and Contemporary Political Thinking in Poland

(Chair: Béla Mester)

11.10–11.40 GÁBOR GÁNGÓ

Towards the transformation of political culture

Pufendorf's reception in Royal Prussia

11.40–12.10 RAFAŁ SMOCZYŃSKI

Nesting orientalism in the debate over civic responsibility in Poland

12.10–12.30 *Coffee Break*

2nd section: Polish-Hungarian Comparative Case Studies

(Chair: Gábor Gángó)

12.30–13.00 BORBÁLA JÁSZ

Polish and Hungarian Parallels in Socialist Architecture Theory

13.00–13.30 PÁL TAMÁS

Neauthoritarianism in the Polish and Hungarian Party Elites in 2000–2025

13.30–14.30 *Lunch Break*

3rd section: Studies from the 19th-20th-century Hungarian Philosophy

(Chair: Gábor Kovács)

14.30–15.00 PÉTER ANDRÁS VARGA

The Quest for a "New Hungarian" Philosophy – and Its System

The Case of Cyrill Horváth SchP (1804–1884) and His Memory

15.00–15.30 BETTINA SZABADOS

Methodological Approaches in Migration Research

The Hungarian Emigrants in Vienna in the 1920s

15.30–15.50 *Coffee Break*

4th section: Hungarian Utopias before and after the WWII

(Chair: Rafał Smoczyński)

15.50–16.20 BÉLA MESTER

A Fictional Mirror of the "War-Philosophy" in the Military Propaganda of the Great War.

Mihály Babits's Dystopia

16.20–16.50 GÁBOR KOVÁCS

„The time is out of joint...”

The idea of an alternative history in the Uchronia of István Bibó

16.50–17.00 *Concluding Remarks* (Rafał Smoczyński, project leader on the Polish side)

A brief description of the project proposal

This project should be understood as a follow up of the previous research carried out by the Polish and Hungarian partners from the Polish Academy of Sciences and Hungarian Academy of Sciences entitled *The role of intelligentsia in shaping collective identities of Poles and Hungarians in 19th and 20th centuries* (2017–2019). The planned research, in turn, focuses on one of the central aspects of the modern intellectual history, citizenship patterns and power relations in Hungary and Poland, namely, on self-identification discourses which mirror Polish and Hungarian relationship with the Western countries, and the East. The research project focuses both on the description of the historical roots of the dichotomic discourses as expressed by the “Occidentalists” and Nationalist fractions of both countries’ elites within the interdisciplinary perspective of the history of ideas, political philosophy, post-colonial studies and historical sociology. Within three years we intend to hold at least three working meetings (in 2020 and 2021) and final conference in 2022.

Summaries

GÁBOR GÁNGÓ

Scientific Advisor, Institute of Philosophy, Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest

Towards the transformation of political culture

Pufendorf's reception in Royal Prussia

The academic gymnasia in Royal Prussia, Gdańsk, Toruń and Elbląg, had deserved an outstanding place among the institutions that formed the intellectual shapes of this region of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 16th–18th centuries. In the consolidation of their functioning during the relatively stable period after the Swedish wars, Ernst König, who assumed the rector's position in Toruń from 1667 to 1681 as well as in Elbląg between 1688 and 1698, played a paramount role. My paper discusses both periods of Ernst König's career in a unified narrative, embedding König's reception of Pufendorf in the context of the rector's scientific and pedagogic efforts.

My paper intends to show that Pufendorf's works accomplished varying functions in terms of König's changing didactic objectives. König's principal objective consisted in the transformation of the teaching methodology of political science with the help of Pufendorf's works rather than in the introduction of modern science and philosophy into the curricula of the German gymnasia in Royal Prussia. In the main fields of his competence, ethics and politics, König did contribute to challenging Aristotelianism, in Toruń as well as in Elbląg.

BORBÁLA JÁSZ

Junior Researcher, Institute of Philosophy, Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest

Polish and Hungarian Parallels in Socialist Architecture Theory

After WW2 in Eastern Central-Europe the main goals of architecture were the reconstruction of destroyed cities and building houses for the people with the building method of the classical modernism. After that, a new era emerged, the socialist realism with the motto: "Socialist by content, national by form." There are parallels between architectural embodiment of this ideology in Poland and Hungary.

Socialist Realism held in the Polish architecture only a short period, from 1949 to 1956. The two periods could be described with two congresses, which aim was to clarify the current architectural style which was supported by the Soviet regime: the renaissance based socialist realism. In Hungary, the end of the WW2 was a sharp edge historically, but in the politics and the society, not in the approach of architecture. After the renovation in 1951 a disputed situation, the *Great Architectural Debate* had arisen. Architect had to care about humankind and to glorify the social equality due to use the style of the golden age of the country: the classicism.

In my talk first I compare the ideological background of the Polish and Hungarian architecture, second, I analyse the parallels at the level of examples: (1) historical reconstruction, (2) symbolic landmarks and (3) industrial cities.

GÁBOR KOVÁCS

Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Philosophy, Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest

„The time is out of joint...”

The idea of an alternative history in the *Uchronia* of István Bibó

1968, undoubtedly, was a turning-point in the history of modernity; this statement is true for Europe but in different meanings in the case of Western and Eastern Europe. The student revolt on the Western side of the iron-curtain demanded the realization of participative democracy and the demolition of neo-capitalism; while in the countries of the 'existing socialism' emerged the vision of a human-faced socialism putting an end of one-party dictatorship and command-economy. István Bibó, who was living in an inner emigration, wrote an enigmatic essay entitled *Uchronia* outlining the idea of an alternative history. Behind this conception was a special philosophy of history based on the idea of moderate determinism giving a great role for political-intellectual elites in history-making. The 'original sin' of European civilisation had been committed in the 15th century when the universal Christian Church of the Middle ages had been disintegrated because of the Reformation and Christianity ceased to be an intellectual-moral framework of modern world – it is the central topic of the essay. The history of modernity had been derailed due to the Jacobin dictatorship serving as a terrible model for the dictatorships of the 20th century. The paper intends to reconstruct the train of thought of the *Uchronia* in the context of the Bibó's oeuvre.

BÉLA MESTER

Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Philosophy, Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest

A Fictional Mirror of the “War-Philosophy” in the Military Propaganda of the Great War

Mihály Babits’s Dystopia

Mihály Babits’s novel entitled *Aviator Elsa* has a distinguished status in the history of the Hungarian dystopias, one of the rare ones that describes concretely the future Hungary as the scene of its dystopic narrative. Babits wrote his novel in the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, and the core of the fictional society described in the novel is the idea of the *perpetual war*, characterised as an extended form of the experiences of the Great War in the description of the war technology on the frontiers, in the picture of the frontiers–hinterland-relationship, and in the analysis of the war ideology, as well. A dystopic, but characteristically Hungarian social milieu offers an opportunity to show the disintegration of the *lifeworld* and culture of the Hungarian élite and middle class. Several customs of the middle class lifestyle and common opinions survived in the fictional world of the novel, but they lost their original significance and meaning, and remained just the elements of the daily routine. In the description of the disintegration of the cultural world, Babits focuses on two fields, the university life on the one hand, and the structure of the war ideology as a new dominant world-view, on the other. The first one is a detailed, but purely fictional description of the decline of the culture; the single concrete element based on the experiences of the Great War is a description of a feminised university milieu, referred to the real circumstances in the last war years in several faculties. From the point of view of our project, Babits’s second approach is more important; the dichotomy of the national rhetoric and the experiences of the *first global war* of the humanity offer an opportunity for the cultural criticism, and for rethinking the relationship of *national* and *universal* from the point of view of the perpetual war. In his novel, Babits uses not only the primitive slogans of the propaganda of the last war, only; his description is seriously based on the Hungarian version of the “war philosophy” what was a wide-spread phenomenon of the European intellectual life in the war years. The most characteristic figure of the Hungarian “war philosophy” was the doyen of the Hungarian philosophical life, Bernát Alexander. In the planned lecture it will be analysed the relationship of Alexander’s texts and Babits’s relevant loci. The planned lecture follows the topic of my lecture held in the previous project period entitled *Pessimist Hungarian Utopias in the Interwar Period*.

BETTINA SZABADOS

Junior Researcher, Institute of Philosophy, Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest;

PhD student – Eötvös Loránd University

Methodological Approaches in Migration Research

The Hungarian Emigrants in Vienna in the 1920s

After the downfall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic approximately hundred thousand people, who took part or only sympathized with the system, had to flee to Vienna or through Vienna. These emigrants reorganized their life and had their own press, own leaders and groups in abroad. A particular research of the emigrant’s activity begun only in the last decade and propose various questions of methodology. (1) First, what circumstances (e.g. politics of memory) influenced the migration research, (2) how reorganized the emigrants themselves (e.g. social democrats, radicals, moderates) and (3) what were their forums (e.g. papers and/or coffee houses).

One other significant aspect is, that the migration research is a variety of other scientific fields, it includes sociology, history, history of ideas, history of philosophy, and even belongs to literary studies (the literary works of emigrants are impressions of the *Zeitgeist*). Therefore, migration research of the Hungarian emigrants in Vienna can add new aspects and directions to the history of ideas and to the Austrian and Hungarian history of philosophy of the 20th century. So, the main question of this presentation is that what kind of information are available for a research, what are the different approaches and how can be these processed and be a methodological ground for a research in history of philosophy.

RAFAL SMOCZYŃSKI

Assistant Professor, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw

Nesting orientalism in the debate over civic responsibility in Poland

This paper focuses on the instrumentalization of gender and sexuality in recent Polish political campaigns. Locating current political debates in a cultural-historical context of long-established hierarchical divides, it conceives of gender and sexuality as 'empty signifiers' deployed in political struggles (for hegemony) over notions of civic responsibility, good citizenship and articulations of Europeanness. Similarly, it takes 'Europeanness' as an empty signifier, without any essential meaning. It argues that these signifiers are key to understanding recent mobilizations around moral frontiers in Polish politics. Illustrative examples serve to elaborate how LGBT rights and sex education are instrumentalized among both self-proclaimed liberals and right-wing nationalists. Liberals as well as nationalists seek to guarantee the moral integrity of the nation according to an antagonistic logic. On both sides of the political divide, we witness a self-orientalizing positioning towards the European 'core', whether it is phrased in terms of sexual modernity or Christian civilization.

PÁL TAMÁS

Research Professor, Institute of Sociology, Centre for Social Sciences, Budapest

Neauthoritarianism in the Polish and Hungarian Party Elites in 2000–2025

The Hungarian and Polish political parallelism presents major question marks in political works for reconstruction of social world after pandemic. The real questions here would be (a) the dilemmas of ideological polarization in the party system, (b) structures of mentality (confrontative pasts), (c) in some questions of social masses, in Hungary in others in some environment other are more personal, more emotional, more personal stylistic relationships in Hungary and more Catholic bounded groups in Poland. The territorial relationships are in Poland stronger, then in Hungary. But, since 2017 the Polish religious landscape is rather stable, however the gender structure of the cities is more dynamic.

But the Kaczyński project in the 25 years became more radical; from an ideological point of view is now more populist, then Christian democratic one. The new political Catholicism in that time is reformulated first of all in South-Eastern Poland. The Fidesz established a sort of political alliance with the Catholic Church, among others based on the expansion of Catholic school politics. The elite of the small reformist church is more populist, national and in some form more reactionary (Horthy, etc.), then the others. From the early 2000s the Hungarian Churches are more populists, the elites is ready to present their loyalty to the government. But more and more anti-government urban churches are also present in the public space. The government is focused on the churches as carriers of the societal stability.

5 years ago in Poland a new division line is emerging. There is a new radical conservatism introduced division between liberalism and democracy. Orban would be non-pro-US. *Mentalność* occupational is a Polish innovation. The Polish parties are changing their allies, dominated with shorter political deadlines. The Hungarians are interested in Orban's long term political vision, without serious allies. They are long term, multiyear relationships.

Generations. In the Hungarian and Polish political life the generational concepts are fundamentally different. The Polish political generations are short term, after every few years the first line is replaced by a next younger generation. This is a sort of Westernization of the dynamic landscape of political age-groups. In the Hungarian case Orban restructured the age groups. The generations are absent in a certain sense. Or in a more complicated form the mutual loyalty of group solidarity of the Fidesz founders from the Dorm of the Budapest Law School creates a counterpoint for other contacts of the founding generations (with all later wings until 1992–1993). After that time a monolithic around Orban personal network is emerging since that time instead of educational cohorts, joint training milieus personal subordination becomes central. The new leaders entering into the elites are not forming urban, educational, or ministerial cohorts. In the last 10 years inter-group ideological solidarity is also absent, or almost nor existing in those networks. Well-established friendships exist in those groups only accidentally.

Party socialization. The PiS is not a final structure, but a transformation of the right-wing in different generations. This is not causality, but consequence of change inside of the party. The political technologies are given, there is a 5–6 years long process is needed for producing the new quality of the right-wing movements starting from the classical anti/communism reaching the new style of the right/wing party as a new formation. The Fidesz is a generational misunderstanding of the liberals. For them in the beginning it was a younger copy of the 1956 Petőfi movement (in the reburial of Imre Nagy they gave the political space for Viktor Orban's first public performance for this purpose). Their first political advisors were György Bence, András Kovács – former dissidents but non liberals. When Orban starts to move toward the right wing conservatives, they both, are being Jews leave the internal group of the Fidesz intelligentsia.

In Hungary soc-lib alliance was central, in the Polish case the liberals existed in a separated form, the Polish left wing and the populists existed together. The popular left and the liberal Jews were separated.

PÉTER ANDRÁS VARGA

Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Philosophy, Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest

The Quest for a “New Hungarian” Philosophy – and Its System

The Case of Cyrill Horváth SchP (1804–1884) and His Memory

The history of philosophy in Hungary is rich in less-studied obscure, but captivating figures and the nineteenth-century philosopher and Piarist priest Cyrill Horváth undoubtedly belongs to them. Cyrill Horváth *SchP* (1804–1884) – not to be confused with his namesake Cyrill Horváth *OCist* (1856–1941), who was similarly an ordained priest embarking upon a successful career as humanities scholar that had led to corresponding (1912) and ordinary (1925) membership of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (not to mention authoring Neo-Thomistic philosophical publications in the early 1890s) – exhibits a biographical trajectory that itself spanned between two poles, one distinctively pre-modern and another characteristically modern (this dichotomy being embedded in the broader societal changes, respectively the Piarist Order’s embracing of a more secular educational setup determined by the *Entwurf* of 1849). E.g., on the one hand, Horváth was not only a clergyman who extensively indulged himself in writing patriotic and ecclesiastical poetry, but he was bestowed the corresponding (1834), and shortly thereafter the ordinary (1836) membership of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences while being a secondary school teacher in Szeged, Southern Hungary (it was also indicative of the situation’s pre-modern character, that the Szeged gymnasium also included two extra pre-university lyceum classes). On the other hand, in 1864 Horváth became appointed as an ordinary professor to the chair of philosophy at Faculty of Humanities of the University of Budapest (it constituted the faculty’s only philosophical chair until the appointment of Friedrich von Bärenbach [Medveczky Frigyes] in 1882). On this occasion, Horváth was again bestowed a membership of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (namely, the honorary membership), which one might regard as an acknowledgement of the different situation.

Yet, it is not only the biographical trajectory of Horváth that epitomizes the tensions inherent in cultural and scholarly modernization, but first and foremost the memory of Horváth by his immediate contemporaries. Horváth died on November 5, 1884, just three days before the planned public celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of his membership of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. At the beginning, there were sporadic reports of a philosophical *opus magnum*, presenting Horváth’s oft-announced philosophical synthesis, “lying in the desk of his author, ready for publication, including even an index of subjects.” However, the harsh judgement on Horváth was pronounced already in the next November by none else than Imre Pauer, Horváth’s successor at the university and the orator at the memorial session of the Academy: “I have examined [Horváth’s] papers up to their minutiae, and I have failed to find a complete system anywhere,” except for a less exciting three-pages-long note. Upon that, Horváth quickly relapsed into philosophical oblivion. As his most significant student, Bernhard Alexander, himself a professor at the university (1895, ordinary professor: 1904) witted in hindsight: Once, “his hands extended and almost in a sepulchral voice, slightly confused,” he accused us “of trying to steal his philosophical system.” Yet, “we [Alexander and his fellow student József Bánóczy, Weiss] failed to learn any philosophy from him, except from the books he lent to us.”

In my presentation, I aim to explore the mechanisms of philosophical memory surrounding Horváth (including his self-interpretations), with a special attention to the metaphilosophical conceptions inherent in them, against the backdrop of the novel situation of post-Hegelian academic philosophy (*Universitätsphilosophie*) in the late nineteenth century.

Post nubila Phoebus!



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