

**Narrativization of the National Past
Finnish-Hungarian Conference to be held on
16-17 September 2016, Budapest**

Organised by the *Arts and Sciences Serving the Building of the Nation in Nineteenth-century Hungary* Research Group (K 108 670)

Conference Programme

16 Sept.

Venue: 30, Országház street, Pepita room, HAS RCH

Chair: Gábor Gyáni

10:00–10:15 *Welcome and Introduction*

10:15–10:40 Péter Dávidházi: Performative Narrativization in Petőfi's *National Song*

10:40–11:05 Tuomo Lahdelma: Eino Leino's History of Finnish Literature

11:05–11:30 Gergely Fórizs: Nation-building or bricolage. Narrativization of the nation in aesthetics. The examples of Alajos Szentmiklóssy and Godofréd Müller

11:30–12:00 *Discussion*

12:00–13:00 *Lunch Break (Buffet, 30, Országház street)*

13:00–13:25 Anssi Halmesvirta: Macronationalism – yet another nationalism

13:25–13:50 Miklós Konrád: Narrating the Hungarian–Jewish national Past. The “Khazar Theory” and the Integrationist Neolog Jewish Scientific Discourse

13:50–14:20 *Discussion*

14:20–14:40 *Coffee Break*

14:40–15:05 Jyrki Pöysä: Nationalism and Finnish folklore studies

15:05–15:30 Béla Mester: Narratives of the Hungarian Philosophy within the Framework of the 19th-Century National Culture

15:30–15:55 Janne Vilkkuna: The Finnish Antiquarian Society as a Nation Builder

15:55–16:25 *Discussion*

17 Sept.

Venue: 53, Úri street, Conference Hall (2nd floor), HAS RCH Institute of History

Chair: Péter Dávidházi

10:00–10:25 László Lajtai: Defining and conceptualising the nation in the Hungarian history textbooks during the “long 19th century”

10:25–10:50 Olli Heikkinen: Finnish National Orchestra Narrated

10:50–11:10 *Discussion*

11:10–11:35 András Cieger: „National Genius” and the Hungarian Science of Law

11:35–12:00 Sándor Hites: Narrativizing the Economic. Julius Kautz and the history of national economic thought

12:00–12:30 *Discussion and Closing Remarks*

12:30–13:15 *Sandwich lunch*

Planned cultural programme

Short guided tour at HAS Research Centre for Humanities (Brief history of the buildings)

Hospital in the Rock <http://www.sziklakorhaz.eu/en>

Boat trip on the Danube

Abstracts

Tuomo Lahdelma; "Eino Leino's History of Finnish Literature"

The Finnish author Eino Leino published in 1910 his work *Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden historia* (History of the Finnish Literature), which compliments his collection of essays *Suomalaisia kirjailijoita. Pikakuvia* (Finnish Writers. Snapshots), first published in 1909. These two works share the same worldview, but instead of essays falling between fiction and non-fiction, the field this time is literary history, a sub-field of the literary science. *Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden historia* is very succinct and resembles a list, clearly aiming at a scientific contribution to the field of literature. Paradoxically, in spite of aiming at a scientific work, Leino's theses are more central and his argumentation is less rich than that in his collection of essays from the previous year. As in *Suomalaisia kirjailijoita* Leino does not regard literature published in Finland, but written in Swedish a part of the repertoire of Finnish literature. This is in contrast with later perceptions that emphasize the multilingual nature of Finland's literature. In *Suomalaisia kirjailijoita* Leino presents those writers and works that form the Finnish national literature. In *Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden historia* Leino portrays the whole development that eventually gave birth to the Finnish national literature.

Olli Heikkinen: Finnish National Orchestra Narrated

Although, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as official National Orchestra in Finland (Suomen Kansallisorkesteri), Helsinki City Orchestra has been considered being one. For example, in its trip to England in 1934 it used that name. According the history books and

the orchestra itself Helsinki City Orchestra was founded by conductor Robert Kajanus in 1882. However, there had been an orchestra in the city in every concert season from 1860 onwards conductors and players changing in the usual way. What are the reasons and agendas behind choosing the year 1882 as the foundation year? In my presentation I argue that the main agenda was nationalistic. I examine the textual strategies used in establishing the year 1882 as the foundation year, especially in the two histories of the orchestra published in 1932 and 1992.

Anssi Halmesvirta: MACRONATIONALISM - YET ANOTHER NATIONALISM

Instead of regarding the demand of national independence or autonomy as central features of national movement, I assume that national movement primarily represents the members of a nation in the name of shared material and cultural interests. It calls people to subjugate their interests in class, religion, ethnic group or party to the advantages and interests which they share with fellow-citizens. This generalization I tried to prove with a Finnish case in Eger in a conference titled "Ország, Nemzet, Csoport, mint Identitáskepző tényező" in May 2016.

Now I want to go one step further and imply that the generalization can be applied to a supranational context. I mean that even the so-called macronationalism which, for example, united Finns, Estonians and Hungarians ideologically in the interwar years, was an extension of this sharing of interests. Keeping to today's thematic of narrativization, one may say that the plotting for it to these nations was provided by ideas and metaphors about 'common ancestry', linguistic affinities and, in order to make macronationalist policy in terms of cultural-political rapprochement and reunion with the destination to elevate their political profile between West and East as bulwarks of Western civilization and its values. The above cited interest-laden definition of nationalism applied to macro-nationalism implies that although every nation individually and separately promotes and defends its own shared material and other interests, nations can, in particular historical circumstances, have some common interests to defend and promote which extend over borders. One prominent example of this macronationalism is just the so called kinship ideology that embraced Hungarians, Finns and Estonians already in the end of the nineteenth century.

Janne Vilkkuna: The Finnish Antiquarian Society as a Nation Builder

The Finnish Antiquarian Society (FAS, Suomen muinaismuistoyhdistys) was founded in 1870 by 22 young academicians of Helsinki university. This paper deal with the FAS ideology and activities before the independency of Finland 1917. Finland had become 1809 a grand duchy of Russia after being part of Sweden for 700 years. The founders had both scientific antiquarian and nationalistic goals. One essential of the latter was to find and publish the lacking memories of the nation. The resources for this kind of activities were minimal but the founders realized a nationwide network when anyone, then even women, could join the society. FAS got between 1870-1920 about 1700 members, mainly people from the upper class.

Through its members and network of local agents FAS could collect effectively a national collection of prehistoric objects. The society also gave students grants to make regional

inventories and arranged several art historic expeditions to mediaeval churches. The collections were aimed for the future national museum. FAS begun its publication activity in 1874.

Before the founding of the Antiquity Act and State Antiquarian/Archeological Commission (now National Board of Antiquities) in 1883 and 1884 the FAS was the main body to do antiquarian, especially prehistoric, research in Finland. The State Historical Museum was founded 1893 (named National Museum of Finland 1916). After these state organizations FAS main task became popular enlightenment and the most important Finnish publisher of antiquarian research.

It may not be a coincident that the Antiquarian Society in Sweden (Svenska fornminnesföreningen) was also founded 1870. FAS is still active.

Jyrki Pöysä: Nationalism and Finnish folklore studies

Three topics are discussed regarding Finnish folklore studies: (1) the long historical interest in folklore and mythology, (2) the history of folklore studies and the (3) uses of Kalevala for nationalistic purposes.

It is a commonplace to see folklore studies as a thoroughly nationalistic endeavour, as an example of cultural nationalism. However, the interest in folklore, mythology and Finnish language is much older than the discipline, counting its beginning from 1880's (the first chair in the University of Helsinki). Within the discipline, there have been different phases of thinking about Finnishness and the nation. The dominant right-wing nationalistic thinking came to an end in 1970's and 1980's when the new generation of folklorists came to force.

Kalevala was compiled from authentic Karelian folklore in 1830's by Elias Lönnrot, doctor of medicine and a member in nationalistic activist group called Lördagssällskapet ('Saturday Society'), aiming to promote Finnish language and literature. Kalevala (published in two versions, in 1835 and in 1849) became an important testimony for the demands for better position for Finnish language, even though most of the members of the intellectual group were not even able to read it because of their mother tongue being Swedish.

From the very beginning the discipline of Finnish folklore studies marked a clear separation from using Kalevala as a source for folklore studies or Finnish history. At the same time the discipline together with its main institutions has gained a surplus from being a gatekeeper for "real" Kalevala, the authentic folk poems. In a way, the uses of Kalevala for legitimizing the imagined history of Finnish nation and the work of folklorists still goes on, having as a latest example the publication of Kalevalan kulttuurihistoria ('Cultural history of Kalevala', 2008, 578 pages, over 20 writers)

Péter Dávidházi: Performative Narrativization in Petőfi's *National Song*

One of the tasks chosen for the Finnish-Hungarian conference titled *Narrativization of the National Past* is to scrutinize "the ways in which the urged cultural identification with the »imagined community« of a modern nation was actually performed either in the sciences or

the arts”; moreover, in this context the term *narrativization* is meant to refer “to the textual or quasi-textual techniques and tools that were effectively applied for providing the rule of a national idea over any other forms of alternative identity constructs”. My paper attempts to explore how this identification was both urged and performed by Petőfi’s famous poem *National Song* in 1848 and what kind of textual and quasi-textual techniques were applied to make it work.

László Lajtai: Defining and conceptualising the nation in the Hungarian history textbooks during the “long 19th century”

The paper proposed aims at sketching an overall picture about the main trends of representing the abstract category of nation in its discursive pedagogical dissemination from the inauguration of compulsory education of the history of Hungary (1777) till the dusk of the Dual Monarchy. By way of comparing some telling excerpts from history textbooks of crucial importance written and used during the period concerned one can observe the manifold, overlapping and sometimes even contradictory semantics and rhetoric strategies covered by the usage of the word *nemzet* and its synonyms within their chiefly civic, ethnic/cultural and social/legal connotations.

Gergely Fórizs: Nation-building or bricolage. Narrativization of the nation in aesthetics. The examples of Alajos Szentmiklóssy and Godfréd Müller.

Contemporary descriptions at the beginning of the nation project in the early 19th century talk about nation as an already existing entity that ought to be brought to self-consciousness. Contrary to this, the term of nation-building, put into vogue by historically oriented political scientists in the 1950s and 1960s, implies that the nation is something that formerly did not exist, and had to be invented or at least radically changed in a conscious process. The paper examines two early Hungarian essays on aesthetics by Alajos Szentmiklóssy and Godfréd Müller (1830/1841), in which ‘nation’ emerged as a central category, and comes to the conclusion that their methodology is somewhere between recovery and inventing, therefore it cannot simply be typified as nation-building, but rather as *bricolage* in the sense Jacques Derrida lends to this word. According to Derrida the *bricoleur* uses "the instruments he finds at his disposition around him, which had not been especially conceived with an eye to the operation for which they are to be used and to which one tries by trial and error to adapt them, not hesitating to change them whenever it appears necessary".

Miklós Konrád: Narrating the Hungarian–Jewish national Past. The “Khazar Theory” and the Integrationist Neolog Jewish Scientific Discourse.

The aim of this presentation is to show how a minority, in this case emancipated Hungarian Jews, or more precisely, Neolog Jewish scholars and intellectuals strove to use the national past of their host society to further their own integration. By offering the vision of a common “origo”, a common Jewish-Hungarian past (that never was), the famous “Khazar Theory” elaborated in the early 1880s by the Pest rabbi and historian Samuel Kohn, and then taken up and further developed by generations of successive Jewish historians and publicists, ambitioned to construct a new narrative of the national past in order to convince Christian Hungarians that their own history, which they were supposed to cherish, and abide by its

values, obliged them to recognize their Jewish fellow citizens as true Hungarians. Neolog Jews' incapacity to realize that their version of the Hungarian(-Jewish) past did not succeed to convince those for whom it was destined is a tragic testimony of Hungarian Jewish assimilation, of Jews' blind faith in the strength of the national idea which they tried in vain to reframe according to their own—Jewish and Hungarian—interest.

Béla Mester: Narratives of the Hungarian Philosophy within the Framework of the 19th-Century National Culture.

The aim of my lecture is to offer an analysis of the phenomenon of the so-called “national philosophies” emerged in the beginning of the 19th century. At first it must be describe the 19th-century concept of “national philosophies”. However, this term signs an *essentially contested, malleable* concept; it is possible to distinguish it from the similar expressions of the 20th-century discourse of the *national characteristics*, putting it into the context of the 19th-century nation-building processes. The emergence of the phenomenon of the “national philosophy” will be interpreted in my lecture as an answer for the structural change of the scholar public sphere in the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, especially in the philosophical life. It was a turn from Latin to the national languages and from the institutional network of the universities to the extended and more heterogeneous audience of the modern scholar periodicals. However, the sphere of this new public philosophy was a realisation of Immanuel Kant's *philosophia in sensu cosmopolitico*; it remained in the trap of its national language, contrary to its universal aims.

Within a few decades, philosophies written in national languages have met a double challenge in the task of their self-identification within the frameworks of the universal philosophy, and that of the national cultures. A consequence of this challenge was the emergence of the different conceptions of the “national philosophy”. The dominant form of the philosophical self-interpretations of the new, modern national cultures that has used a concept of “national philosophy” was the publication of visions and manifestoes about the philosophical thought of a nation *in the future*. However, in the Hungarian culture are known similar manifestoes, as well, the dominant form of the formation of a “national philosophy” was the *creation of a national narrative of the regional philosophical past*, in the Hungarian case. The possible causes of this feature will be observed in the second part of my lecture; by my hypothesis the causes have rooted in the special Hungarian institutional background, concretely in the policy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

In the third and last part of my lecture there will be outlined the two first serious 19th-century works of the historiography of the Hungarian philosophy; that of Pál Almási Balogh in the Hungarian Reform Era and that of János Erdélyi after the revolution of 1848; both of them supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The analyses of these works will be focussed on the possibility of a Hungarian narrative of the history of philosophy, and its possible relationships with the universal narratives. In the end of my lecture it will be discussed the consequences of this tradition of philosophical historiography for the history of philosophy in the contemporary Hungarian culture.

András Cieger: „National Genius” and the Hungarian Science of Law

My paper intends to show the role of the science of law (especially the constitutional law and legal history) in the Hungarian nation building at the second half of the 19th century.

First of all I will focus on the narrative elements of the construction of an independent legal development (e.g. thousand-year old constitutionalism; British-Hungarian relationship; Hungarian exceptionalism) with special regard to the works of Professor Ákos Timon (1850-1925). I would like to examine the functions of these myths analysing scientific debates and using university text-books, professors' private letters and official university documents.

Sándor Hites: Narrativizing the Economic. Julius Kautz and the history of national economic thought

Signaling the birth of Hungarian political economy as a "national science", Julius Katz in his 1868 magnum opus *A History of the Ideas of National Economy in Hungary* aimed to demonstrate that despite its apparently rudimentary state for centuries, Hungarian economic thought had in fact produced an "originality" equal to other achievements of national culture and, as such, had given due expression to "our racial characteristics". Relying on (and later, in turn, inspiring) the German historicist school, Kautz erected a grandiose edifice. Blaming "adverse alien influence" for past backwardness, he traced allegedly idiosyncratic Hungarian economic principles and institutions from the prehistoric age through medieval and early modern times to the triumphs of 19th century economic nation-building.

Published only three years after Ferenc/Franz Toldy/Schedel's *A History of Hungarian National Literature* (1864-65), Kautz seems to have built an epic construction similar to that of Toldy in narrating an (ostensibly) continuous national development. Reading Kautz's path-breaking economic history in the context of Toldy's emblematic literary history, my paper hopes to uncover the common features and the discrepancies (as well as the latent rivalries) between the two. Celebrating an organic development of Hungarian economic ideas from the first "initiatives" and "juvenilia" to the "commencing of a more original development" ultimately reaching a "universal" level, what rhetorical or narrative devices did Kautz employ and what generic models or plot structures did he draw on? Compared to Toldy, what sort of historical periodization (with its climaxes, crises, and prospects for further development) did he establish while building a continuous narrative? By presenting a history of Hungarian economic thought, to what extent did Kautz share Toldy's vindictive voice? And to what extent did he present the development of economic ideas as supplementing the cultural efforts of nation-building (while Toldy tended to see "material interest" as inimical to humanist-national *Bildung*)? How and why did Kautz provide a historical narrative of something, i.e. economic thought, that, according to many at the time, had universal and timeless laws?