***Intellectuals and Their Road to Political Power***

*Eastern European Socialism as a Civilizational Model of Rational Redistribution in the Theory of György Konrád and Iván Szelényi*

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The famous book of György Konrád and Iván Szelényi entitled Intellectuals on the road to class power was connected with many threads to the Hungarian innovative Marxism of the 60s. However, its authors did not belong to the Budapest philosophical school grouped around György Lukács recruited from his disciples but they had undeniable been inspired by the ideas of the “Marxian renaissance” set as an aim by these philosophers: Ágnes Heller, Ferenc Fehér, Mihály Vajda. György Márkus etc. It was a belated work finalised in 1974, after the failure of the Hungarian reform period had begun in 1968. It could not be published: it became a samizdat-book whose authors were kept under police surveillance and, at last, Iván Szelényi had to emigrate abroad.

The authors questioned one of the main dogmas of the official Marxism: according to their theory it was the intellectual class which monopolized political power in Eastern European Socialism and the working class was subordinated to the intellectuals possessing the key positions in the interwoven state and party bureaucracy. This position, according to the theory, was an apex of the historical trajectory of the intellectual as a historical phenomenon: in the age of capitalism it had appeared as a social stratum but in the era of Socialism it organized itself as a ruling class. Konrád and Szelényi, using the notions of the Weberian and Marxian theories, described “existing socialism” as an independent Eastern European civilizational model rooted in the traditions of the region; here society had traditionally been colonized by the state. This kind of socialism, according to the theory, was economically based upon the system of rational redistribution which was a modern version of the traditional redistribution of ancient Eastern despotic states: the authors borrowed the theory of the Asian mode of production coined by the contemporary Hungarian sinologist, Ferenc Tőkei elaborating a new version of Marxian historical philosophy. At the end of the book the authors outlined a third road theory: the intellectuals marginalised in the system of “existing socialism” would give a helping hand to the working class to articulate their own class interests and to give rise a new kind of socialism different from Eastern European repressive one.

**Keywords:** intellectuals, power, ruling class, Eastern Europe, rational redistribution, third road

***Authorial Self and Modernity in the Mirror of the Diaries and Memoirs***

*A Case Study from the 19th-century History of the Hungarian Intelligentsia*

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Diaries and memoirs were always eminent sources of the history in general, and especially of the history of the intelligentsia. The simplest case of the usage of these written historical sources is a comparison of the data of the official documents and the private, uncensored records, concerning the same historical events. In my lecture it will be offered another interpretation of the diaries and memoirs, mainly written by the intelligentsia, it is an analysis of the typical ways of the self-creation of the authorial personalities, or the birth of the modern authorial self. The role of the diaries and memoirs in the process of the conscious self-reflection and their contribution to the emergence of the modern individual personalities are well-known facts of the intellectual history. My lecture intends to analyse a special form of the creation of the modern individual personality; it is the self-creation of a writer as a conscious personality, often with a clearly formulated opinion about his or her own social role.

In my lecture it will be offered several examples from the 19th-century history of the Hungarian intelligentsia. Probably, it is the epoch when the production of the diaries and memoirs and their role in the formation of the modern cultural life was the greatest. This period is around identical with the modernisation of the cultural industry in Hungary, dominated by the periodicals with their deadlines, fixed lengths and professional editing houses on the one hand, and the cultural nation building, on the other. Concerning the possible social and cultural role of the intelligentsia, it is the moment of the birth of a new type, called *public intellectual*. In my lecture, I will focus on three written sources, a diary of a Calvinist student of theology, Péter Tóth from the College of Sárospatak, as a witness of the self-reflection of a would-be member of the intelligentsia, the memoirs of an influential *public intellectual,* Gusztáv Szontagh, written in the end of his career, and a belletristic printed diary of a young intellectual, János Asbóth, written as a preparation for his autobiographical novel, published several years after his diary. My lecture is a continuation of my previous lecture within the framework of the same Polish-Hungarian bilateral research project read in February, 2018 and it partly based on my philological researches concerning the edition of Szontagh’s above-mentioned memoirs.

**Keywords:** authorial self, Gusztáv Szontagh, János Asbóth, modern culture, nation building, Péter Tóth, public intellectual

***Fragments of Masterpieces***

*The Origin of Georg Lukács’ Early Aesthetic Writings*

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In 1911 a young Hungarian philosopher came up with an idea of a systematically written philosophical work, which aim was to base methodologically the principle of aesthetic. This young philosopher was Georg Lukács, whose early Neo-Kantian work amused Max Weber. Thanks to Max Weber the young Lukács became famous in the intellectual circle of Heidelberg and he had prospects to have a great academical career. Lukács was interested in the essential problems of philosophy, but he also sought to have an answer for them. Lukács stood at the crossroads between an academic career and messianism, one of these roads leads to the solving of the most important philosophical problems. However, his early work, the *Philosophy of Art,* was never finished, but he began to write the *Heidelberger Aesthetics* in 1916, which had the same question as the *Philosophy of Art*. Lukács’ aim was to get a post-doctoral qualification in university of Heidelberg with his *Aesthetics*, but his application was rejected, and the *Heidelberger Aesthetics* stayed in fragments.

In my presentation I will examine the origin of Lukács’ early aesthetic writings and the cause of their incompletion. The incompletion of these works was not only a sign of the break of a promising academical career, but the history (the Great War and the Hungarian Aster Revolution) also changed the circumstances. The talented young Lukács had to choose between the ethical sphere and the action. In my analysis I will focus on Lukács’ dilemma and how his development of thinking affected his early aesthetic works.

**Keywords:** Georg Lukács, Max Weber, Philosophy of Art, Aesthetics, ethics, messianism