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## ABSTRACTS

### Anna Birkás: The History of Economic Policy as Party History. Iván T. Berend and the Writing of Party History in the Mid-1960s

In the post-1956 years, when the socialist era first became a subject matter of national historiography, the study of the party's past by the officially established party history collective at the MSZMP (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party) was complemented by researchers from other historical institutions, for example by economic historian Iván T. Berend.

Berend's first work in this field, *Economic Policy at the Start of the First Five-Year Plan 1948–1950*, published in 1964, was a turning point in his career as a historian. The analysis of the book's content and reception, as well as the context in which it was written shows that it also functioned as a thesis on party history proper. From the perspective of analysing historical economic processes Berend was able to formulate at times ideologically sensitive observations concerning the party, thus the book became something of a critical party history. The subsequent debate between Berend and economic politician István Friss concerning the monograph made some genre characteristics of party history as a fusion of ideology and academic discourse marked and palpable.

With this work, Berend has proven that he was in possession of a type of knowledge within the traditional institutional framework of learning (i.e. academic-university circles), which can integrate academic research and ideology even in the most ideologically charged environment, that is, regarding the Party. In his memoirs he noted that it was thanks to this volume that his career became intertwined with the birth of the so-called New Economic Mechanism model.

### Zsuzsanna Bögre: The Dynamics of “Selective” Forgetting and “Selective” Remembering through the Prism of Coping with Trauma

Through the study of a life story, the essay presents remembering and forgetting mechanisms that have developed and operated back-to-back throughout the years, seemingly inseparable from one another for an outsider. The analysis concentrates on how and what individuals narrate – those who have processed their trauma and those who have not. The study is based on interviews (a biographical and several other structured ones), as well as archival sources and a documentary. The life story of the individual presented in this essay is characterised by a mixture of personal trauma and historical trauma, and an intertwining

ing of remembering with forgetting—in this case more involuntary repression than reparative oblivion. It demonstrates that the ideal processes of forgetting and remembering, as described by Plato and Aristotle, tend to be irrevocably entangled in real life.

### Péter Gerhard: Legitimate Campaign Expenditure or Electoral Fraud? The Case Files of a Trial

The study sheds light on some of the contradictions in the perceptions of electoral fraud in the Age of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy through a civil suit conducted in 1910 at the Royal Court of Budapest. In the focus of the lawsuit stood the dividing line between legitimate and illegitimate campaign expenditure and the three verdicts clearly suggest that contemporary judiciary practice had no unambiguous stance concerning the issue. Budapest attorney Manó Ság was the plaintiff, and Protestant pastor József Irsay the defendant. Both held Independence Party mandates in the house of representatives in the electoral cycle ending in 1910. The subject matter of the case was 4000 crowns, which Ság demanded to be paid by Irsay as recompense for the electioneering he had undertaken for the pastor. This means that although the case was not one of typical electoral fraud, the judges still had to present their views about questions of electoral arbitration because the question was whether it was legal to hand over sums of money to canvassers for campaign purposes. While the court represented one standpoint in this question, the court of appeal decided the opposite, and finally the supreme court ruled the original court decision. This process clearly indicates the Hungarian legal system's uncertainty surrounding the legality of campaign expenditures and the fact that they were unable to establish a uniform judicial practice in this question. The study presents the contemporary regulations as well as the proceedings of the trials to demonstrate how these discrepancies between legal standards and everyday judicial practice manifested in the arbitration process of the judges.

### Gábor Gyáni: Forgetting as Political Myth

A nation, as Ernest Renan acknowledges, cannot exist without forgetting. Forgetting and selective memory as primary factors in the creation of community do not occur spontaneously: they are the result of a nation's memory politics implemented by force. The instrumentalisation of history is the alliance of power and forgetting. The history of the twentieth century, especially the European memory of the Second World War, is replete with examples for this.

Firstly, the case of France is especially illuminating. After the war, the history of the French collaboration and the existence of the Vichy-regime were shrouded in silence and oblivion for a decade and a half. Instead, the French resistance was selected to be remembered with a special emphasis on the French as victims. It was not until the 1980s that the French began to come to terms with the past, but even this development failed to bring an honest acknowledgement of collaboration.

The memory of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution in the Kádár Era is an example for replacing the image of a violent past with screen memory (*Deckerinnerung*). The Kádár propaganda brought the atrocities perpetrated by “counter-revolutionaries” to the forefront, but remained decidedly silent about the significantly more grievous violence carried out by the Hungarian Secret Service and the Soviet troops.

Finally, the wilful forgetting of the entire Jewish past in line with the Nazi racial ideology went hand in hand with replacing the historical significance of a Biblical people with the concept of the Germans’ historical vocation. One of the means to achieve this was the physical destruction of the Torah and synagogues, as well as the creation of the concept of the Jewish Museum in Prague.

## Zoltán Hidas: The Culture of Remembrance and the System of Forgetting

The study first briefly summarises selected milestones of the transformation of historical consciousness in the modern era. The “Saddle Period” (*Sattelzeit*), to use the term Reinhart Koselleck coined to describe the decades around 1800, not only brought about the mobilisation of time but also a raise in valuing the present. The study then goes on to demonstrate two radically different concepts of time, both committed to use theoretical consistency in order to grasp the perspectives on time opening up in the present. In line with the perspectivism that characterises contemporary historical consciousness, both uses the present as the starting point but attributes different roles to the past. With regard to its primary focus, one of these, the sociological theory of structural functionalism is organised around the *forgetting* of past events: systems select memories from an endless available supply in order to maintain the operation of the current system, which means that all that is not necessary at that particular point in time is forgotten and whatever furthers communication is remembered. This results in the paradox that the main function of memory is forgetting. In the other approach, that of cultural *memory*, the order of shared experiences is carried by remembering communities of meaning. Narratives enable us to look back and forward, too, and novelty always appears in the shape of the reconstructed past.

## András Keszei: Forgetting, Society, History

The role of forgetting can be examined on various levels depending on the interpretive model, ranging from the isolated individuals of earlier psychological studies, through the dynamic memory systems seen as the result of social activities by sociology and anthropology, to the concept of long-term cultural memory manifest in and canonised by objects and texts. Individual-psychological, social-communicative and historical-cultural levels fuse in the practice of recall: looking at this process from the angle of forgetting, they make remembering selective. On the long term, the fate of events, knowledge and practices that remain unrecalled is fading and eventual oblivion, which can be interpreted as the dynamic relationship between these three levels.

Identity is another important interpretive factor of the social practice of remembering, and thus that of the practice of the inseparable forgetting too. The self-image of the individual and society, based on the prevailing self-images, presents expectations to the individual and society: how do they see themselves and what should they be like? The social forces in various historical periods outline their own specific patterns of remembering and forgetting. Depending on their position, certain social groups can have more or less power and efficiency in hindering identity-transforming processes, whereas some do not have a real chance for this. Due to the nineteenth- and twentieth-century modernisation, as well as mass migration and lifestyle change, in many places, traditional worlds have been relegated to museums and oblivion. In a world of accelerating time and ephemeral phenomena and experiences, the cultural amnesia brought about by modern space creation and market economy can be counterbalanced by a precisely drawn, order-centred past which gains currency as an important point of reference in one's identity.

## György Kövér: The “Unforgettable” Memory of Tiszaeszlár

The previous study of the author explores what the participants of the Tiszaeszlár Trials, including Károly Eötvös, Miksa Szabolcsi, József Bary, and Móric Scharf, remembered (and forgot) when they felt that the time has come to reminisce. Continuing in this vein, the present essay traces what “memories” are produced and carried forward by those who do not have their own experiential recollections about the trial. These include traces of memory which found no place in the grand narrative of the case and stayed on the level of local memory and oral transmission. The semantic memory knowledge of the second and third generation who have no episodic memories of their own, has been fully embedded into the procedural memory of the older generation of locals. Beyond analysing family histories hiding in the shadow of “great intellectual discourses”, historians can also explore the output of journalistic or ethnographic data collection projects that deal with local memory.