**Abstracts**

***Concrete as the separation from the West after WW2 in Eastern Central Europe***

**Borbála Jász**

Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Research Centre for the Humanities

Institute of Philosophy

Budapest, Hungary

jasz.borbala@btk.mta.hu

In Eastern Central Europe the era of socialist realism lasted for a few years (1948–1954) and came to a sudden halt on the 31st December 1954. After that, a new age emerged in the region: the era of house factories and house blocks, and it was based on scientific planning and on opposing individualism. This so-called Khrushchevian architectural turn grounded a new way of architectural thinking in the 1960s with a strong focus on social responsibility. The ideology of house factories is a return to the classical science-based modernist architectural theory in the interwar period.

The usage of concrete for the prefabricated panel constructions was technological and ideological. The usage of the rooms in a blockhouse was planned scientifically, similarly to the planned construction of mechanised cities. The ideological aspect was to distinguish socialist architecture from the typical Western materials of the Cold War: steel and glass. It is interesting to note that Khrushchev sent Soviet architects to Western Europe to study the technology of precast concrete systems. The panel-technology made the process of building quicker and cheaper. The concrete as the liquid stone made the method of prefabrication possible and embodied the required social equality spatially and on the surface.

In my presentation I explain the theoretical ground how concrete could provide social equality and at the same time separation from “the decline of the West”. For this utopian equality how the Eastern Central-European political and ideological power was built first the façadism of the Socialist Realist, and second the prefabricated house blocks with ferro-concrete structure. Although the theoretical change between Socialist Realism and Soviet/late modern was done immediately, the practical change was longer. This transitional period was illustrated by the born of experimental housing estates in Eastern Central-Europe.

**Keywords**: Socialist Realism, eastern Central Europe, concrete, house blocks, power of the state

***Informal urban settings: cases in Vilnius***

**Tomas Kačerauskas**

Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies

Faculty of Creative Industries

Vilnius Gediminas Technical University

Lithuania

Email: tomas.kacerauskas@vgtu.lt

The current analysis addresses cases of both informal and illegal settlements in Vilnius, Lithuania. By using semiotic means (specifically, semiotic quadrates), the author presents the Romany district (*tabors*), as well the Šnipiškės district, describing the circumstances of their emerging and comparing these cases. In addition to that, the philosophical questions about the dichotomies “formal/informal”, “temporal/eternal”, “order/chaos”, “legal/illegal” are discussed. On the one hand, the illegal buildings serve as a signal about too high barrier of bureaucracy, about a surfeit of law and even about the violation of certain rights. On the other hand, some urban districts can become illegal because of a changed urban vision reflected in a new general plan. The paper also analyses the issue of public interest. Additionally, the tendency of democratic society to turn into bureaucratic society is analysed.

**Keywords**: informal settings, social minority, public interest, urban development.

***Budapest or Debrecen? – Ideas of alternative modernization and alternative urbanization in the theory of László Németh***

**Gábor Kovács**

Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Research Centre for the Humanities

Institute of Philosophy

Budapest, Hungary

kovacs.gabor@btk.mta.hu

Historical Greater Hungary, as a consequence of the Trianon Peace Treaty, after the WWI, lost not only the two thirds of its territory and a half of its population but the majority of its historical cities as well. Budapest, the capital of the shrunk country, as a Central European metropolis, became an island modern of urbane civilization in a country inhabited mostly by countryside peasant population. This new situation, as a cultural reflection of the suffered shock, brought birth to a new wave of cultural criticism borrowing mainly the patterns of the contemporary interwar German conservative revolution. In the focus of this cultural criticism emerged an anti-urbanism choosing Budapest as the main target of its critique. The Hungarian capital, an object of national proud in the late 19th century, became a guilty city, a terrain of modern civilization following the alien patterns of Western modernity and creating a ‘bastardized’, ‘nation-alien’ (Volksfremde) megapolitan culture incompatible with Hungarian national character. The response of the interwar Hungarian cultural criticism to the challenge was the elaboration of the theory of alternative modernisation associated with the conception of alternative urbanization. László Németh (1901–1975), the outstanding writer of the 20th century Hungarian literature and an important ideologue of the interwar period, worked out the theory the ‘Eastern European Gulf stream’ based on the hypothesis of an autochthonous Eastern-Central European civilizational model. The paper intends to give a critical analysis of this conception.

**Keywords:** alternative modernization, alternative urbanization, cultural criticism, national character, ‘Eastern European Gulf stream’

***The Usage of Common Sense in the Public and Urbane Philosophy of European Modernity***

**Béla Mester**

Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Research Centre for the Humanities

Institute of Philosophy

Budapest, Hungary

mester.bela@btk.mta.hu

After its Aristotelian and Stoic roots, the concept of common sense as a significant philosophical term has emerged again in British thought, especially in the œuvre of Shaftesbury, and in the Scottish Enlightenment. It was a special answer to the challenges of modernity emerged as the spirit of urbanity, with serious consequences toward the ideas on human nature, and the possible descriptions and transformations of society, in context of the urbanisation process. In my presentation, an outlined description of the role of the concept of common sense in the development of modern Continental, especially Central European culture from its dominance in the 18th century till its decline rooted in several controversies in German philosophy will be offered. In conclusion, the consequences of the elimination of this term in academic philosophy will be outlined, especially for the possibilities of a public philosophy as the incarnation of the urbane spirit.

**Keywords:** urbanism, common sense, Scottish Enlightenment, Central European philosophy, public philosophy