

***On Gardens***  
***Rethinking the Relation of Nature and Architecture from a Philosophical Regard***

Workshop of the joint research project of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences entitled  
*Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) concepts – Philosophical, Sociological and Historical Analyses*  
within the framework of the *Celebration of Hungarian Science*

Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2023, 11 AM (CET)

Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of Philosophy,  
4 Tóth Kálmán street, Budapest, 7th floor, lecture room B.7.16

***Programme***

12.00 Opening words (Béla Mester, project leader on the Hungarian side)

1<sup>st</sup> section: Theoretical interpretations of the urbane space (chair: Béla Mester)

12.10 Basia Nikiforova

*The Gravitation of Non-place Theory as a Phenomenon of Philosophical Debate*

12.30 Ádám Smrcz

The Tragedy of the Commons

The History of an Idea and its Application to modern Urban Planning

12.50 Tomas Kačerauskas

*The Urban Garden as Source of Philosophical Schools*

13.10 Discussion

13.30 Lunch break

2<sup>nd</sup> section: Models of the urbanisation (chair: Basia Nikiforova)

15.00 Kálmán Tóth

Gardens as Privilege

Mid-19<sup>th</sup> -century British Industrial Cities in István Gorove's 1844 Travel Memoire

15.20 Gábor Kovács

*City and Countryside in the Interwar Hungarian Populism*

*László Németh and the Idea of an Alternative Urbanization*

15.40 Discussion

3<sup>rd</sup> section: Case studies on the history of the urbanism (chair: Gábor Kovács)

16.00 Zsolt Bátor

Photographic Abstraction in 'Huerta y ciudad'

A case study

16.20 Béla Mester

Three Pictures of a Historical Scene

Interpretations of the 19th-century Usage of the Public Realms

16.40 Borbála Jász

Barcelona's urban Greenery Project

17.00 Discussion

17.20 Concluding remarks (Basia Nikiforova)

## *Summaries*

Zsolt BÁTORI

(Kodolányi János University, Research Centre for Arts and Creative Industries)

### **Photographic Abstraction in ‘Huerta y ciudad’**

A case study

This paper explores the various forms of visual abstractions in photography through a case study of a number of images from my photography series ‘Huerta y ciudad’ (The orchard and the city). I argue that Kendall Walton’s (1970) system of standard, variable, and contra-standard aesthetic properties is especially useful for refining important distinctions among the ways abstractions may be utilised in photographic works. The types of abstractions are important creative choices in all the three distinct categories, and these choices result in photographic properties that are constitutive to the photographic meaning of both particular images and photographic series as well.

Photographic abstraction is one of the important photographic means of the general artistic modes of presentation Arthur Danto (1981) discusses. According to Danto, the way artworks present their content is also part of their artistic meaning, and thus to be taken into account when interpreting the artwork as a whole. While of course not all photographs are artworks, the specific kinds of photographic abstractions utilised for the construction of photographic meanings are also to be interpreted when interpreting the artistic and non-artistic meanings of photographs. When Roland Barthes (1981) introduces his notion of *punctum*, his explication and examples also indicate that *punctum* might well be the result of an interplay between the kind of photographic abstraction utilised and the depicted content of the image. For as Barthes argues, depicted content alone may only result in *studium*, when our interest in the photograph is based on and extends to our interest in the phenomenon itself that is being depicted in the image. Our interest in the photograph only transcends the depicted content when *punctum* stabs us with the way the depicted content is presented by the image.

**Keywords:** *photography, abstraction, properties, meaning construction, interpretation, evaluation.*

Borbála JÁSZ

(Kodolányi János University, Research Centre for Arts and Creative Industries)

### **Barcelona’s urban Greenery Project**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Barcelona emerged as a pioneering example of rational urban planning, thanks to its adoption of an orthogonal grid structure. This transformation aimed to expand the old Gothic inner city into a new, modern, and more habitable district known as the Eixample, which introduced a unique city structure centred on neighbourhood units. This vision materialized through the creation of ‘Plan Maciá’ in 1932, a collaborative effort between Le Corbusier and Francesc Maciá, envisioning Barcelona as a utopian metropolis. Contrary to the typical approach in European historical cities, such as Paris, which involved the destruction of the old urban environment, Barcelona’s evolution followed a distinct path. The city’s further development began in conjunction with the preparations for the 1992 Olympic Games, and it favoured expansion over destruction.

This development persisted with the introduction of the ‘superblock’ or ‘superilla’ project, especially focused on urban transformations. In my paper, I present the various phases of the Superilla project from 2013 to 2030, along with the Barcelona Nature Plan 2030, which builds upon it. „*The Superblock programme prioritises street-calming, giving more weight to pedestrians and sustainable mobility, increases greenery and promotes citizen interaction. The programme implements a network of green axes and new squares that safely linking up facilities and green spaces for people, reduce local traffic and put pedestrians and clean air at the centre.*” The greenery program is primarily aimed at promoting biodiversity, species protection, and the enhancement of the city’s green infrastructure.

Tomas KAČERAUSKAS

(Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Department of Philosophy and Cultural Studies)

### ***The Urban Garden as Source of Philosophical Schools***

The presentation covers philosophical, communicative, and educational issues and examines four schools of ancient philosophy concerning the garden environment and walks in it. On the one hand, the garden indicates an exit both from the urban environment and from everyday activities, as well as from instrumental thinking. On the other, such a daily practice as a walk is associated with a “bypass”, i.e. metaphysical thinking. For example, when talking about pleasures, Epicurus paid attention not to satisfy the needs of the body, but to mental activities that are cultivated among friends. Stoa was a space for both festive narratives and everyday meetings. Zeno chose Poecile Stoa for his teaching and discussion of the possibility to meet both virtue and truth while walking with his students. Thus, the stoa was a safe and open place for all passers-by to develop their virtues. As for Aristotelian Lyceum, the walk has several layers. Here one learned by walking after the teacher in the covered galleries. In addition, the walk can be called an interdisciplinary study, which was matched by the multifunctional environment of the lyceum. Finally, the walk is related to Aristotle’s first substance and the scientific approach “from beneath”. This later evolved into empirical and field research. The platonic garden out of the city – the academy – also indicates several things. First, in choosing an academic path, we seek to be heroes of wisdom and virtue. Second, the academic environment represents liberation by breaking away from what is irrelevant and untrue. Third, the dead people buried on both sides of our path to the garden of the Academy are full-fledged interlocutors in our communication with ancient philosophers. The paper concludes with a consideration of Eco’s walks through the woods of imagination and fiction, which emerge as an alternative to philosophy, which also requires a “way out” and a “bypass”.

**Keywords:** *garden out of town, walks, Epicurean Gardens, School of Stoa, Aristotelian Lyceum, Platonic Academy.*

Gábor KOVÁCS

(Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of Philosophy)

### ***City and Countryside in the Interwar Hungarian Populism László Németh and the Idea of an Alternative Urbanization***

Hungarian populism was an ideologically heterogeneous, institutionally loosely organized movement of writers and sociologists. It existed in a dichotomous cultural-political-ideological force field. Their opponents, ‘urbanites’ were the representatives of the West-narrative; they continued the 19<sup>th</sup>-century tradition in which successful modernisation meant catching up to Western models. They attached the values of Enlightenment: rationality, individualism, liberal democracy. The hot debate between them and the populists rendered a deep cleavage in Hungarian culture with long-term consequences up to our days. Both camps opposed the authoritarian Horthy regime but from different perspectives: urbanites did it standing based on classical Western liberal democracy, while populists wished a social revolution emancipating peasantry not only in political, but in economic and social meaning. At the centre of their conception was a land reform putting an end to the reign of large estates. László Németh, one of the main ideologues of Hungarian interwar populism, outlined a theory of alternative urbanisation in the 1930s. The kernel of the conception is the opposition of Budapest–Debrecen. Debrecen, the Calvinist Hungarian city, with its special cultural atmosphere created by its peasant–citizen population, is situated in Eastern Hungary, at Great Hungarian Plain, next to the Hungarian–Romanian border. The well-known, to some extend anecdotic, figure of the ‘tzivisch’ (civis) of Debrecen was a peasant–entrepreneur, who, from the perspective of László Németh, could be the archetype of an alternative modernisation and alternative urbanization. The theory is connected with the idea of the Eastern Gulf Stream. This metaphor comes from his historical philosophy giving a privileged position to the Central-Eastern European region. At the beginning of modern times, according to the approach of Németh, this region had an abortive chance for producing an autochthonous historical trajectory at the buffer zone of the Turkish, Russian and Habsburg Empires. Németh, in the 1930s, in the shadows of emerging totalitarianism, hoped that there was possible to revitalise this hidden cultural tradition and to launch a new historical experiment carrying a new chance for avoiding the servile emulation of foreign models, including the Western, Anglo-Saxon capitalism, the German Nazism and the Eastern Russian communism. This was a typical third road utopia.

Béla MESTER

(Research Centre for the Humanities, Institute of Philosophy)

### **Three Pictures of a Historical Scene**

#### **Interpretations of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Usage of the Public Realms**

In my essay, recently published in the conference-book entitled *On Gardens: Nature as Matter of Expression*, it was discussed the changing function of several emblematic public realms of the cities of Buda and Pest in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, focussed on the garden of the Hungarian National Museum in the centre (*City Agora or City Garden? An Urbanistic Dilemma in the 19<sup>th</sup> -century Hungary*). In the present paper, it will be offered a detailed analysis of a detail of this complex topic, from the point of view of the cultural memory, incarnated in the changing pictorial expressions. In my abovementioned article I focussed on two features of the changing social usage of the public realms: the transition of the function of the Museum Garden from the scene of political mass-demonstrations to the everyday relaxation of the common people; and the expression of both the mass-demonstrations and relaxation in the cultural memory, especially in the *fin de siècle* literature and in the visual representation of the emblematic historical events. In the Hungarian cultural memory, the scene of the speech of Sándor Petőfi on the stairs of the Museum on the 15<sup>th</sup> March, 1848, has an emblematic role; however, he never had a speech in this place, on this day. (He had numerous significant speeches in different places of the city in the first days of the revolution.) The visual representation of Petőfi's speech is contrary to the synchronic pictorial representations of the events of the revolution what focussed on the common people as an actor of the history, not on the emblematic leaders of the nation. In the present paper, it will be offered a reconstruction of the process of the changing visual representation of this emblematic scene of the Hungarian revolution of 1848, via three 19<sup>th</sup>-century pictures. The last one is multiplied graving with a clear subtitle that the scene is the speech of Petőfi, the previous one is the same graving without subtitle, on the frontispiece of the brochure of Petőfi's poem set to music, and the oldest one is an aquarelle, with the same scene from the same perspective, but with different representation of the revolutionary people and its leaders.

Basia NIKIFOROVA

(Lithuanian Culture Research Institute, Department of Contemporary Philosophy)

### ***The Gravitation of Non-place Theory as a Phenomenon of Philosophical Debate***

We observe a remarkable convergence between geography and philosophy and the growing conviction that philosophy and geography now need each other. Collaboration between the two fields has been evident ever since concerted attention to place began when published Edward Relph's *Place and Placelessness* (1976) and Yi-Fu Tuan's *Space and Place* (1976). Non-place or nonplace is a neologism coined by the French anthropologist Marc Augé to refer to anthropological spaces of transience where human beings remain anonymous, and that do not hold enough significance to be regarded as "places" in their anthropological definition. The term was introduced by Marc Augé in his work *Non-places: introduction to an anthropology of supermodernity*.

The philosophy of place tries to understand how humans grasp place as such, and how different practices can yield different experiences of place.

Places are fragmentary and inward-turning histories, pasts that others are not allowed to read, accumulated times that can be unfolded but like stories held in reserve, remaining in an enigmatic state, symbolizations encysted in the pain or pleasure of the body. Non-place is a crack in the system that saturates places with signification and indeed so reduces them to this signification that it is "impossible to breathe in them". Heidegger named something like that an "uprooting in one's origins". Heterotopia has two general functions: heterotopia of illusion creates a space of illusion that exposes every real space and the heterotopia of compensation is to create a real space – a space that is other. In this line stay such important for our research non-places as temporary detention camps, refugee camps, border infrastructures and airports that include border infrastructure.

**Keywords:** *bordering practice, city as asylum, Deleuze–Guattari, Derrida, Foucault, Wittgenstein, heterotopia, non-place, place, space.*

Ádám SMRCZ

(Ludovika University of Public Service, József Eötvös Research Centre, Research Institute for Politics and Government)

## **The Tragedy of the Commons**

### The History of an Idea and its Application to modern Urban Planning

The term, *tragedy of the commons* refers to situations when self-interested agents tend to sacrifice the long-term goals of their communities for the sake of their own benefits whereby, on the long run, they end up harming themselves as well. The term itself was coined by ecologist Garrett Hardin in 1968 in order to call attention to the dangers of population growth within limited resources, but the idea goes back to forerunners as old as David Hume, San Bernardo da Siena or even Aristotle, all of whom, apparently, applied it in different contexts and for different purposes.

In my proposed talk, I aim to give a brief enumeration of the different formulations of this idea, while outlining its usage in the discourse of contemporary city planning and architecture.

Kálmán TÓTH

(Ludovika University of Public Service, József Eötvös Research Centre, Research Institute for Politics and Government)

## **Gardens as Privilege**

### Mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century British Industrial Cities in István Gorove's 1844 Travel Memoire

*“The factory owner leaves his factory and goes to the countryside, but his chimney is puffing smoke, which his workers are forced to breathe in; he returns to his carpeted rooms, they into their moldy holes, he returns to his garden, they return to their filthy back alleys.”*

István Gorove (1818–1881) was one of the well-known and respected politicians and political thinkers of the Dual Monarchy. He was born into a Hungarian noble family of Armenian origin, his father, László Gorove was a writer and classical liberal politician in the Reform era. In his book *Nyugot: Utazás külföldön* [West: A journey abroad], he recollected the experiences of his journey to Western Europe in 1842–1843.

He attributed the greatness of England largely to its factories, and especially the textile industry. In his description of the life and working circumstances in the industrial cities of England, he emphasizes the sharp contrast he observed between the living standards of the factory owners and the workers. The former live in the countryside near the town in a beautiful manor, where the air is clean and fresh, while the latter live in extreme poverty, under appalling circumstances unfit for human beings. Gorove finds this contrast highly unjust, as those who contribute the most towards the wealth of the nation are almost completely excluded from its benefits.

In my lecture, I will be focusing on the urbanistic aspects of Gorove's description of British industrial cities and the connections between the social and the environmental. In these industrial regions, healthy living conditions were associated with living outside the urban environment, housing in the middle of large gardens. Factory workers were completely deprived of these, as they were forced to spend their lives entirely in inhumanely designed urban environment. Gorove did not content himself with identifying this contrast, but also tried to find solutions within the existing social framework.