



Metaphors of Masses, Crowds, Swarms, and Multitudes in Central and Eastern Europe, 1920's/2020's

Conference Programme

Conference venue: ELTE BTK, Múzeum krt. 6-8, ground floor, room
no. 40, H-1088 Budapest

The surging and the dispersing crowd, the destructive and the organised crowd, the intelligent swarm and the savage herd, the “smart mob” and the global multitude: many attempts have been made to conceptualise the phenomenon of the crowd, and many examples show how different attributes and metaphors give specific meanings and significance to the diverse aspects of the phenomenon of the crowd.

Focusing on the Central and Eastern European region, the conference will explore the hypothesis that the post-World War I conjuncture of notions sharpened the distinction between the organized and the uncontrollable mass of people, while the more differentiated terminology in contemporary theoretical discourses seeks to take a more emphatic account of the scale, internal dynamics and structural laws of the crowd. This shift can be seen, among other things, in the modification of animal metaphors, whereby animal attributes first tended to be used to describe a wild, violent, uncontrollable mass, but, in our days, they rather refer to a crowd having mobile centres and being capable of intelligent actions.

Conference of the Research Project
The Crowd. Cultural Attributions of Meaning 1920/2020
Department of Aesthetics, Institute for Art Theory and Media Studies,
Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest
(NFKIH OTKA_K-137650)

Thursday, 7 September

4.30 pm

opening address and short introduction of the research project
The Crowd. Cultural Attributions of Meaning 1920/2020

5-6.30 pm

Karsten Lichau (distinguished speaker, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin): The Silent Crowd. Sounds, Emotions, and the Body Politic

Friday, 8 September

9.30-11 am

Marie-Noëlle Yazdanpanah (Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Digital Humanities, Vienna): “For us, BÜHNE is everything that has an audience”: The popular, mass cultural claim of the Viennese magazine *Die Bühne* in the 1920s

Béla Rásky (Wiener Wiesenthal Institut für Holocaustforschung, Vienna): Choreographing the Masses But Missing the Masses: Political Mass Spectacles in Austria in the 1920s and 1930s

11.30 am - 1 pm

Naser Šećerović (University of Sarajevo): Going to Heaven or Going to Hell: Some effects of the de-individualisation in 20th century Bosnian-Herzegovinian literature

Florian Ruttner (Collegium Carolinum, Prague): “Why Do People Accept Ideologies That Contradict Their Conscious Interests?”. The Reception of Critical Theory’s Early Deliberations on Social and Mass Psychology by the Historical Group in Prague

1-2.30 pm

lunch break

2.30-4 pm

Andrea Timár (ELTE, Budapest): Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice*: Reading Contagion with Arendt, Butler and Cavarero

Eszter Ureczky (University of Debrecen): Cholera and Crowds in Contemporary British and Hungarian Historical Fiction: Matthew Kneale’s *Sweet Thames* (1992) and Gergely Péterfy’s *The Stuffed Barbarian* (2014)

4.30-6 pm

presentation and round table of the project *Matrus*, a collective theatre production on the topic of the crowd
closing discussion