Attila Melegh:

“VITAL FORCE OF THE NATION”

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF POPULATION DISCOURSES IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY IN EASTERN
AND SOUTHERN EUROPE

This talk is integrated into efforts to explore new ways of comparing discourses on population in the 20th century in order to better understand the sources of various forms of demographic nationalisms and demographic extremisms. The methodological innovation lies in the comparative analysis of the interplays between discursively constructed global and local hierarchies. The comparative work on discourses is supplemented by a historical demographic analysis of demographic processes, fertility, mortality, family formation and the labor market as various appearances of globally embedded local inequalities. During the talk a pool of texts written by demographers, social scientists and public intellectuals in the relevant epoch will be analysed. This talk will also show some preliminary results concerning texts by people like Corrado Gini, Pál Teleki, Alajos Kovács.

Attila Melegh is a sociologist and historian. He has taught in the United States, Russia, Georgia and Hungary, now associate professor at Corvinus University, Budapest, professor at Pal Tomori College as the founder of the international studies program. He is the head of the SEEMIG program at the Central Statistical Office. He does research on population discourses, migration and on global social change in the 20th century. He is the author of 3 books in English and Hungarian, and over a hundred scientific publications