



Interpreted Past, MEANINGFUL PRESENT, Oriented Future:

Two Central-European Phenomena Approached by Applied Political Philosophy in Tertiary Education

Agnes Beretzky Ph.D.

(Historian & Assoc. Prof., Institute of English Studies,
Károli University of the Reformed Church in
Hungary)

Applied Political Philosophy (APF)
"seeks to address real and pressing
contemporary [political] matters that
interest, concern, trouble, and puzzle
non-philosophers (or ought to do so)"
(David Archard, 2017)

TWO trends in post- communist Central Europe:

**1. An increasing millennial
disengagement with politics**

**Question 1: How to enhance social
responsibility through tertiary
education/ in history teacher training?**

APF in the curriculum:

- ❖ provides two-way interaction:
(philosophical principles shape discussion
of practical issues which enables one to
reflect upon previously established
principles)
- ❖ assists students to make sense of
present public affairs → genuine
involvement

**2. To varying degrees the past
hateful historical narratives are still
upheld.**

**Question 2: How to tackle the present
global challenges in a historically
conflict-ridden region?**

- ❖ By the harmonization of the various
interpretations of the past via
alternative conceptualizations.
Examples:

- June 4, the Peace Treaty of
Trianon as *The Day of National
Cohesion* against the day of loss
and mourning
- June 2020: Slovak PM, Igor
Matovič invited 100 ethnic
Hungarians and reflected on the
two peoples' common heritage
- Géza Jeszenszky's *Lost Prestige*
(2020) discusses the changing
British assessment of Hungary
devoid of self-pity and self-
delusion
- ❖ By strengthening regional (V4)
identity + shared transnational
values and goals

APF in the curriculum:

- ❖ provides room for (self-)reflection
(on the structural differences of the
various types of national
consciousness)
- ❖ offers space for students to
articulate their own values without
recourse to moral relativism