Nation, patria, religion and liberty - old and new political discourses in the textual tradition of the Bocskai-rebellion and the 17th century political thought in Hungary

9. 6. 2016 od 14:00
zasedací místnost FLÚ AV ČR, Jilská 1, Praha 1

István Bocskai’s uprising in 1606 was the first political event when the Hungarian estates engaged in a wide international diplomatic and propaganda activity that addressed the estates of the neighboring countries. The revolt was discussed often and in detail in the early modern European press and diplomatic correspondence and our research group at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences aims at surveying the production of the broadly defined propaganda texts, both printed and handwritten, and their circulation. On the one hand, our research attempts to outline the general problems of information history in relation to the revolt and its historical context of communication, primarily the communication and propaganda challenge posed by the propaganda machine of the Habsburg court and the answers Bocskai’s uprising gave to this challenge. On the other hand, it endeavors to show the role of printed propaganda material and its relation to manuscripts sources, and their functions and interaction. A special attention is paid to the question of which genre and which language were used addressing certain targeted groups of readership, as the languages of the propaganda material cover from Hungarian, German, Latin through French and English to Swedish. As a result, we intend to survey the European reception of the rebellion’s propaganda documents: channels, mediators, and media. On the top of it, the final aim of our research is to reconstruct the political language(s) of the revolt and its opponents and the role the propaganda war played in creating a new political vocabulary.

In our presentation we would like to shed light on the political, diplomatic and textual contexts of the literary productions, including manifestoes, printed declarations and diplomatic letters compiled by Bocskai’s diplomacy. A special focus will be given to the manifestos designed for the Bohemian, Moravian and Silesian estates – their relationship to other propaganda material of the Bocskai revolt and the further fate of these texts. In the last section of the paper we shall give an outlook on the further developments of the propaganda activities that can be connected to the Hungarian estates under Princes Gábor Bethlen and György Rákóczi I of Transylvania.

Gábor Kármán’s main research interests include the foreign policy of the seventeenth-century Transylvania, the participation of the Hungarian lands in European intellectual networks and the tributary states of the Ottoman Empire. His books include Transylvanian Foreign Policy after the Peace of Westphalia (L’Harmattan, 2011, in Hungarian), and A Seventeenth-Century Odyssey in East Central Europe: The Life of Jakab Harsányi Nagy (Brill, 2015).

Márton Zászkaliczky’s research fields cover the political theology of the Reformation, the political thought of early modern Hungary, esp. of the Protestant reformers and the Bocskai uprising. His publications include as co-editor with Balázs Trencsényi, Whose Love of Which Country? The Intellectual History of Patriotism and the Legacy of Composite States in East-Central Europe (Brill, 2010), and „The language of liberty in early modern Hungarian political debate“ in Freedom and the Construction of Europe - New perspectives on philosophical, religious and political controversies, ed. Martin van Gelderen, Quentin Skinner (Cambridge University Press, 2013).