ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

Peter MIHALYI: Janos Kornai’s influence on contemporary Hungarian economic policies
This paper is the first attempt in the scholarly literature worldwide to review the second most important part of János Kornai’s oeuvre, his contributions to the contemporary Hungarian economic policy discussions. While Kornai’s theoretical works, such as the critique of the neoclassical equilibrium theory, the model of the shortage economy, the concept of the soft budget constraint etc. are well-known both internationally and in Hungary as well, there has been so-far little attention paid to take a stock of those writings which were conceived to influence the ongoing economic policy discussions in Hungary. The upcoming 90th birthday of Kornai is an excellent opportunity to take a stock of the main messages and their impacts of the cca. 12 papers and two books which were born between 1956 and 2015.

András SIMONOVITS: What have I learned from János Kornai?
I worked in János Kornai’s research group between 1970 and 1990 and we have remained in close contact since then. Concerning research, I helped him to work out the mathematical details of his prototype models. During our cooperation I was able to see how he chooses important and interesting economic problems and how he models them. As a tutor, I also participated in his extramural university research seminars in the 1970s, where he gave selected students a lively reading list and at each seminar a different student reported on the subject. Third, I saw him as a scientific leader, organizing domestic and international conferences, following the international norms when this was not yet customary in Hungary. Since 1990, he was able to speak up against antidemocratic and anti-capitalist tendencies, frequently menacing the long march from socialism to capitalism. With my modest possibilities I always tried to follow his example, even when I taught more formal subjects or fought against pension populism. Last but not least, he is a good friend, who is equally at home in economics, politics but also music, literature n family. I wish I could enjoy his company for a long time.

Dóra GYŐRFFY - Miklós ROSTA: The significance of János Kornai in economics education
Celebrating the 90th birthday of János Kornai, the article examines his place in economics education. In spite of the significant honors from all over the world, his works are sadly missing from standard economics textbooks. The article first reviews the possible reasons for this omission (end of socialism, holistic approach, Western reception), then emphasizes Kornai’s particular methodology and approach to real-world problems as reasons to serve as a model for future generations in economics. The enduring relevance of Kornai’s work is illustrated by an analysis of the post-2010 Hungarian political and economic system. Finally, we consider the practical difficulties of teaching Kornai in the context of mass education in universities.

The paper is a tribute for the works of János Kornai. In our readings his works is part of political economy, the key characteristic of that is the social embeddedness of economic activities. This approach, basic concepts, and terms of Kornai were adopted and adapted in the Business Economics textbook, which has been taught at the Corvinus University of Budapest since 1989. The paper takes the textbook as illustration. Main claim of our paper is that the social embeddedness of economic activities is getting further relevance in higher education in a globalized and digitizing world.

Balázs SÁRVÁRI: „In good hands”

I belong to the youngest generation of the Kornai-students. This group was born around 1989 which means that we are the first who do not have any personal memories about the socialist system. In the article through personal experiences I try to describe how did we study and absorb the messages of Professor Kornai and how do we try to spread those to the next generation of economists. The Kornai effect reached us in quite different historical and economic circumstances, hence it motivated us to raise new questions. However we do not differ at all from any previous groups of the Kornai-students in saying: we are „in good hands”.