

# The CEU Center for Religious Studies

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to a lecture by

Zsombor Tóth

(Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest)

## Tertullian and the Political Theology of Exile in Early Modern Culture

A Case Study

Thursday,  
March 7, 2013  
5:30 PM

CEU, Nádor utca 13  
Room 001

*Reception to follow*

**Abstract:** This lecture, with its focus on the early modern period, will investigate the development of Calvinist martyrological discourses and its functions within the church. I will attempt to exhibit how the theological concept of martyrdom, as an act of witnessing, functioned as an invented tradition and, further, how this concept contributed to the articulation of political discourses, reflecting the significance of early modern political exile at this time. Moreover, this case study attempts to reveal, employing both Hungarian and Latin sources, a special emphasis on the Tertullian influence within this political theology, as it correlated and incorporated the experience and textual heritage of religious persecution with early modern proto-nationalism. My argument concludes with the claim that, through the act of invention, the loyalty of the martyr towards the True Church (*Vera Ecclesia*) becomes the prototype of a patriot's loyalty to his fatherland (*Patria*).

Zsombor Tóth is Senior Research Fellow and Secretary for Scientific Affairs at the Institute for Literary Studies for the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest. A CEU alumni, he received an MA in East-Central European History from CEU in 2007, a PhD in Early Modern Hungarian Literature from KLTE University, Hungary in 2004, and most recently, a PhD in Hungarian Ethnography and Anthropology from BBU, Romania in 2011. Publications include *A történelmem terhe [The Burden of My History. Selected Essays in Historical Anthropology]*. (Cluj: Korunk Press, 2006) and *A koronatanú: Bethlen Miklós [The Memoirs Of Count Miklós Bethlen and the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Hungarian and English Puritanism]* (Debrecen: Kossuth Lajos University Press, 2007).