

**KELLÉK AND KELLÉK(LET)**  
*A Hungarian Journal of Philosophy in Cluj*  
*Retrospection on the publication of the 10th number*

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“The Dasein as being-in-the-world is at the same time being-with-each-other, being with others: it means sharing the same world, meeting each other, being with each other in the way of being for each other.”<sup>1</sup> The periodical *Kellék* represents such conscious meeting points; it is a spiritual enterprise which aims at creating a dynamic and colourful professional horizon based on firm values, ensuring the continual enrichment, enlargement and renewal of this horizon.

This is how the spiritual and professional workshop called *Kellék* was launched in December 1994 as a result of the sacrificial work of philosophy students. Creating the framework of a student periodical and working paper, the *Kellék* wished to end the vacuum of professional expression, as there was no professional philosophical forum in Cluj. This explains the pressing need for this enterprise. The initial phase of seeking ways and means was characterised by an interdisciplinary nature. The former student paper is now the only philosophy periodical in Romania published in Hungarian. It has become the mediator of philosophical texts (papers, workshop proceedings, studies, essays, translations), everything that can be called philosophy. It does not stick to certain genres, limits are drawn by the inner rhythm of thinking. The *Kellék* embodies a spiritual attitude which is faced with multidirectional objectives. It tries to fulfil various needs on a high professional level.

With this responsibility and commitment in mind the periodical wishes to enlarge the basis of interpersonal relationships so that the poliphonous sound structure should represent the starting point of values. Discovering the importance of professional self-expression and the cultivation of the professional self, the periodical provides an open platform for publication for the most talented students. It works as the professional forum of young people starting out on a career and ensures a safe framework for their “first steps”. (The competition announcements also enhance free philosophical thought.) The conscious cultivation of philosophical tradition manifests itself in the careful selection of the professional

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Az idő fogalma (The Concept of Time)*, in: Balogh Brigitta: *Hallhatatlanság, Kellék*, nr.6, p.100.

manifestations of recognised theoretical writers and of the various, rich and unique values of the history of philosophy. Besides the need for promoting Hungarian philosophical tradition, the periodical urges permanent contact with philosophical publications in Romanian (and other languages) and professional workshops. Setting aside the limitations of space and time, *Kellék* strengthens the outlines of a spiritual belonging together which has undertaken the publication of contemporary philosophical trends besides traditional works of philosophy. This helps to speed up professional communication and place it in a wider context. The periodical works as a radiating medium which gathers different spiritual attempts of self-expression but also aims at widening the rich scale of systems of thought and value, binding together an endless number of possible creative circles. Beyond the enrichment and tinging of knowledge the periodical conveys valuable and various approaches. Besides helping philosophy students in their preparation, it is a spiritual workshop for Hungarian intellectuals in Transylvania.

The wide range of topics mirrors the large span of objectives. It is organised round more systems of motives and thoughts which can be approached from various professional perspectives. This far-reaching system of knowledge is structured by a heightened sensitivity for the history of philosophy and history of culture tradition.

F. Nietzsche cannot be avoided by any 20th century trend of philosophy since the specific issues raised by Nietzsche's philosophy mark the stages of the way leading to the deeper understanding of contemporary philosophy. Thus *Kellék* has dedicated a whole issue to the life-work of Nietzsche, throwing light on the hidden connections of this "cave-dwelling" philosophy. The specific Nietzschean voices which determine contemporary artistic, religious and moral experiences unfold from this non-traditional creative picture. A (possible) psychoethical model emerges which could re-establish man's way of being as an individual.

From the numerous trends of contemporary philosophy *Kellék* has surveyed the most important questions of French phenomenology. It lays stress on the presentation of the representatives of this period (the date of publication of their works is also given), and it pays special attention to the work of Lévinas.<sup>2</sup>

It is difficult to find one's way around in the chaos of 20th century ideas and spiritual endeavours which represent mostly individual tastes. The periodical reveals the pitfalls of the absolute sovereignty of the postmodern which is the "... exhaustion of fashion due to the supersaturation of possible variations and combinations which leads to a decline in style and way of life."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Lévinas' study entitled *Diakronia és megjelenítés (Diachrony and Representation)* was translated by Szigeti Attila.

<sup>3</sup> Gregus Zoltán, *A divat margójára íródó festészet (Painting on the Margin of Fashion)*, in: *Kellék*, nr.10, p.67.

It demands the exclusion of important thinkers from the philosophical horizon, moreover, it explains the value of cultural products by their commodity nature. It sets up the balance of phenomena and forms it according to its own principles<sup>4</sup>, and places society in the spectacle of meaninglessness.

While sketching the professional aspect of *Kellék* it is important to note that besides encompassing the wide span of contemporary philosophy it also deals with ancient classical philosophy. It revives some of the most important and interesting aspects of ancient Greek philosophy. Besides the philosophical suppositions of pre-Socratic thinkers the periodical offers an inside view of the Platonic and Aristotelian corpus, presenting some unavoidable concepts (soul<sup>5</sup>, logos, law, etc.) The nuanced survival of Hellenism in the religious-social framework of the Christian community is also presented.

As the periodical is Hungarian, it cannot evade the presentation of Hungarian philosophical tradition, in the form of modern revisions. *Kellék* acquaints readers with the possibilities and the reason for the existence of Hungarian philosophy, pointing out the contradictions arising from the national-particular versus universal nature of this philosophy: "...the question should not be whether there is Hungarian philosophy but if it is at all possible for philosophy to be Hungarian (that is, national)."<sup>6</sup> In addition, it brings attention to the reception of the Hungarian history of philosophy abroad and the history of influence of philosophical trends rooted in Hungarian culture.<sup>7</sup> Aiming to promote Hungarian philosophical tradition, the periodical gives an insight into the thought of Tavaszgy Sándor, Joó Tibor, Polányi Mihály and it presents in a written form the final debate of the Böhm Károly International Conference organised by the Hungarian Philosophy Department, the Diotima Friendly Society and the Transylvanian Museum Society where experts from Transylvania and abroad were invited.

The special spiritual "offer" of the philosophy of literature represents a unique colour in the thematic palette: involving men of letters, philosophers, art philosophers it tries to communicate with art on the language of philosophy and draw the common inner limits of philosophy and literature. Besides Hungarian literature (the mode of being in Pilinszky's poetry, for example) the periodical deals with world literature works (Shakespeare, Dostoevsky) which unfold a

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<sup>4</sup> "...does his vocabulary have some important motivation demanded by the message of the text, or is this only about a misinterpreted break with tradition for the sake of vulgarity and mockery?" (Kulcsár Iringó: *A posztdecens szóhasználatról, On Post-Decent Language*), in: *Kellék*, nr.10, p.77.

<sup>5</sup> "... Aristotle thinks that the soul and the concept of life therefore can be explained from the perspective of concrete activity, *praxis* (usage, working, presence)." (Ilyés Szilárd, *A lélekdefiníció ontológiai megalapozottsága, The Ontologic Basis of the Definition of the Soul*), in: *Kellék*, nr.8-9, p.93.

<sup>6</sup> Demeter Attila, "*Nemzeti*" *filozófia* ("National" Philosophy), in: *Kellék*, nr.4-5, p.57-58.

<sup>7</sup> Excerpts from Larry Steindler's work (*A magyar filozófia történetírásának tükrében*) were translated by Balogh Brigitta and Csutak Gabriella.

philosophical core appearing as a concept with an axiological-metaphysical character.

Besides thematically more fixed writings appearing in *Kellék* there are also such flexible textual modes which reveal in longer or shorter essays the actual problems of the author: There are some thoughts that can be developed further: why does the problem-raising nature of philosophy compel the person dealing with philosophy to perpetually confront loneliness?<sup>8</sup>; what is the reason for the ideological neutrality of the modern state?<sup>9</sup>; what kind of foundations of the thinking man as an existence should be strengthened so that the shock of the “emptied reality” be dissolved on the level of existence?<sup>10</sup>; how does the impossibility to step into others’ space of being affect our relationships? (because it is not *your* or *his* self postulated as “I am”, but my *interpretation* of it that comes in contact with *me*)<sup>11</sup>; The presentation of the remarkable Polish philosopher, Leszek Kolakowski, serves the deepening of the philosophy of religion education. He searches for new ways in the relationship between God and man (mystical experience), relying on logical argumentation as well.<sup>12</sup>

The results of the work of Hungarian philosophers known worldwide which refer to many decades (Heller Ágnes, Vajda Mihály) published in this periodical, help us to find various approaches to issues raised by the history of philosophy as well as personal interpretive methods. We can deliberate over the opinion of these experts on the vital questions of those dealing with philosophy today (“What is philosophy for *me* is really questioning” - interview with Vajda Mihály). The *Kellék* selects from writings published in Hungary (in the *Különbség* and *Pompeji* periodicals from Szeged), those which complete philosophical knowledge. The editors of the *Kellék* try to make creative work easier when they pick out newly published works from the huge and opaque specialist literature

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<sup>8</sup> “... [philosophy] always brings us closer to the problem, but it does not make possible its cognitive possession because of the lack of answer, it only allows the decrease of distance between us to a certain extent. It creates a state of in-betweenness as it takes us to that limit but then leaves us alone.” (Veres Zoltán, *A filozófia hátulnézése, The Unfaithfulness of Philosophy*, in: *Kellék*, nr.4-5, p.65.

<sup>9</sup> “...the modern democratic state renounces to take a stand in ideological questions. Therefore the modern state does not have orthodoxy (either Christian or Marxist), because this state is ideologically neutral: this means that there cannot be orthodoxy in the modern state.” (Demeter Attila, *Filozófia és nyilvánosság, Philosophy and Publicity*, in: *Kellék*, nr.10, p.19.)

<sup>10</sup> “Schelling’s attempt to ‘dissolve shock’ is characterised by a strong faith... The commandment of love... is an essential requirement... So this is not a choice or a decision, but a commitment besides the Good.” (Demeter Szilárd, *A filozófiában régecskébb meghonosodott mélabús hangnemről (On Melancholy in Philosophy)*, in: *Kellék*, nr.8-9, p.153.)

<sup>11</sup> Balogh Brigitta, *Hallhatatlanság*, in: *Kellék*, nr.6, p.102.

<sup>12</sup> “One thing is sure: in spite of the mistakes, inconsistency and infinity of the mystical experience of God the being and essence of God, his Unity and Multiplicity is given at the same time, that is, God returns in it to his own concept, his original meaning.” (Tonk Márton, *Leszek Kolakowski: A vallás (Leszek Kolakowski: Religion)*, in: *Kellék*, nr.1, p.76.

(there is a rich list of such works in the periodical); they present a more general view and draw attention to the inside of the text.

The annual supplement of the *Kellék*, the *Kelléklet* which has had two numbers up to now, has a special, unique character. The variety of the writings published (which are initiated from the mixture of traditional, personal and various linguistic articulatory elements) does not loosen the consistent assertion of the quality criterion. The possibilities of collage technique offer free chains of words and thoughts which can be varied in individual ways. The talented young poets of contemporary Hungarian literature also contribute to the creation of this favoured spiritual-cultural topos.

These two publications are able to confirm together more successfully the development of a creative and autonomous stratum of intellectuals.

Finally I would like to note that I have taken the authors and their writings in the *Kellék* into consideration without the claim of covering all. There are many more who have helped with their unselfish work and knowledge. My intention was to offer a broad view of this unique periodical which fulfills various needs and has a philosophical aspect. I hope that it is interesting not only for specialists but it also commands interest from a broader audience. "Philosophical life has two ways: lonely meditation and communication, that is, understanding each other through acts, words and listening together to silence."<sup>13</sup> As for me, I believe in the power of the latter.

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<sup>13</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Bevezetés a filozófiába (Introduction to Philosophy)*, Budapest, 1996, p.139.