

However, this volume deals – we hope – with the outlining of the beginnings of a major mental shift, which is being conditioned by the spreading of the means of informatization, but what – in its essence – must take place beyond them, on the background of new professional, structural, mental, and even cultural challenges and competences.

Nothing but such a modification can engender the implementation of the “novelties” to turn into an undeniably organic process, which does not pervert into cheap intentions of being by all means “abreast with the times”. That is: in order to become a process indeed, a decision, an effort and a competence that “sees” not just the trends, but the – and perhaps: especially – the *senses*. Because this way some *chances* might articulate for the regainment and rebuilding of a new *culture* of the librarian profession and of the institutions of library, a culture seriously affected, here, especially by the occurrences in the sixth and seventh decades of the past century and through the “generation shift” that took place at that time...

We repeat that the book by Olimpia Curta represents a well-structured attempt that hints – at least to us – exactly in this direction! Hence, beyond the “techniques” and “methods”, it guides towards the problematization and reproblematicization of the *senses*! We moreover are confident, that the work shall be continued, and the future doctoral dissertation by the author shall allow for chapters in these particular directions.

Approaches to the History of Hungarian Philosophy

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Nomen est omen. The name Áron (Aaron) must have originally referred to inspiration or (at least) perspicacity. Either way, the Áron Publishing House from Budapest usually presents its readers with excellent books, and what is more – considering their appearance and content – at a reasonable price. A brilliant example thereof is the book entitled *Közelítések a magyar filozófia történetéhez* (Approaches to the history of Hungarian philosophy), published in 2004, edited by Béla Mester and László Percz, part of the *Recepció és kreativitás* (Reception and creativity) series, and *Nyitott magyar kultúra* (Open Hungarian

culture) sub series. The volume was written in collaboration with the Philosophy Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

The volume contains 14 papers. The oldest of the authors is Vasile Muscă (born in 1944), the youngest is Márton Tonk (born in 1973.) Both of them, as well as others, teach at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca. Both of their papers (as well as that of Zoltán Bretter) refer to Károly Böhm already in the title, whose outstanding, systematic activity justly enables us to speak about a “Böhm-school” here in Cluj.

The volume is extremely rich in data and ideas. There will be experts, no doubt, who will appreciate its virtues more profoundly and at length. I will only confine myself to scanty notes and comments.

The book comprises four major parts. I will largely follow this structure.

1. The group of articles entitled *A magyar filozófia tere és nyelve* (The space and language of Hungarian philosophy) takes up almost half of the entire volume.

1.1. Béla Mester (who also signs the Preface together with László Percz) presents one of the most influential Hungarian thinkers of the 19th century in a study entitled *Szontagh Gusztáv és a magyar filozófia fogalmai* (Gusztáv Szontagh and the concepts of Hungarian philosophy). In his national philosophical program – writes Béla Mester – one should not see a pursuit for a substantial Hungarian philosophy: much rather an attempt for the construction of a scientific-literary publicity in Hungary (p. 11.) The movement of the fairly eclectic *harmonisztika* (harmonistics) tried to seem a movement of some extent, but the relationship of master and disciple appears nowhere in the history of the “school” – argues the above-mentioned scholar (p. 21).

1.2. László Percz, Associate Professor at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics, committed researcher of Hungarian philosophy (rehabilitating several authors long ignored), outlines the formation of Hungarian philosophical institutions. He was also the author, together with Judit Hell and Ferenc Lendvai L., of the work published in 2000 also at the Áron Publishing House, entitled *Magyar filozófia a XX. században* (Hungarian philosophy in the 20th century). (He dedicated a copy of it to a person from Braşov as to “a living classic of the research of Hungarian history of philosophy”. Of other people born in the city of Braşov, he also speaks about Gyula Moór, as well as Lajos Prohászka, “probably the only author considered a real genius” of Hungarian philosophy between the two world wars. The

famous commentator of Aristotle, Niels Offenberger, also born in Braşov, should be mentioned as well. Another volume is also worth noting here, entitled *Szép rendbe foglalva* (In a fine order), published in 2001, the title of which cites János Apáczai Csere (17th century Hungarian scholar), and indeed, an essay on Apáczai from this volume has been dedicated by the author to the writer of these lines. László Percz likes to dedicate to persons whose family names mean some kind of profession: Kerékgyártó (an artisan who makes wheels), Mészáros (butcher), etc.)*

1.3. *A magyar filozófiai műnyelv kialakulása Apáczaitól a 19.-20. század fordulójáig* (The formation of the Hungarian philosophical language from Apáczai to the turn of the 19th-20th century) is the title of a well-documented treatise by Sándor Laczkó. Linguists may lack several things – for instance, in matters of the assessment of the achievement of the Transylvanian Sámuel Köteles. Nevertheless, it is a good thing that Laczkó quotes Bernát Alexander's pertinent standpoint: "There is no other way more efficient for spreading philosophical education than acquainting the students with the brilliant authors of philosophy" (p. 113). It is also a detail most welcome that he enlists the 29 volumes of the *Filozófiai írók tára* (The handbook of philosophical writers, 1881-1919).

1.4. The work of András Mészáros, professor at the Comenius University in Bratislava, is the longest in the volume. Its title is: *Iskolai filozófia Felső-Magyarországon a 19. században* (Philosophy in the schools of Northern Hungary in the 19th century). It completes in many respects the author's book published in 2000, *A filozófia Magyarországon...* (Philosophy in Hungary...). The book's special merit is that it offers the bio-bibliography of the most important philosophy teachers in its scope. (p. 60-180).

2. The reception of philosophy in the 19th century: this is the subject of the second, and also shortest part of the volume, containing only two articles. (Of course, it is sometimes difficult to assess whether somebody was receptive or rather creative).

2.1. Péter Egyed writes about Pál Sipos under the title of *Az erdélyi paradigma* (The Transylvanian paradigm), using the term paradigm as an example, a *model* applied for argumentation or comparison. In his opinion "there can be no doubt about his originality", but, since he could not publish his philosophical essays, "it was an irreparable loss for Hungarian philosophy that this Kantian-Fichtean philosopher with an excellent language and clarity of ideas was excluded

* The author's name (Hajós) is also one of such names, meaning a seaman.

from it” (p. 197.) At any rate, Sipos’ work and afterlife expects further studies.

2.2. *Schelling filozófiájának magyarországi vonatkozásai a 18. század végén és a 19. század első évtizedeiben* (The Hungarian references of Schelling’s philosophy at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century) – this is the title of a much awaited work by Dezső Gurka. In this, there is a separate chapter on the influence of Jakab József Winterl’s dualistic chemistry (his *Prolusiones* published at Buda, in 1800) on Schelling’s natural philosophy.

3. The articles of the major part of the volume entitled *Filozófiai kreativitás a 19.-20. században* (Philosophical creativity in the 19th and 20th century) are mostly connected to Károly Böhm.

3.1. Imre Ungvári Zrínyi’s study entitled *Filozófus attitűdök* (Philosopher attitudes) presents Böhm’s system. According to him, “The idea of a system built upon a single basic principle, actually the basic thesis of a self-preserving and self-sufficient subject in Böhm’s philosophy derives from Fichte.” (p. 230.) “Böhm in the most important questions (...) reclined upon the example of Lotze’s system” (p. 236.) If I may note: in the 1942 edition of his *Aesthetics* “heavenly beauty”, *noéthon kallo* should be correctly transcribed into Hungarian not as *noethon callo*, but *noéthon kallo*. (I shall not go on finding other mistakes, but I should note that the 1996 volume of Böhm’s writings is “outstanding” in the faulty transcriptions of Greek words).

3.2. Márton Tonk treats the work of Sándor Tavaszy and the Böhm-school in Cluj-Napoca in his essay *A kantianizmus magyar recepciójának történetéből* (Fragments from the history of the Hungarian reception of Kantianism). He repeatedly emphasizes that the school of Baden, especially Rickert influenced Böhm / Tavaszy (p. 258, 272). According to Tonk’s opinion, Fichte influenced Tavaszy only by the mediation of Böhm’s work. (It is a pity that the author does not quote Tavaszy’s confession published in the *Erdélyi Múzeum* journal in 1933: “We accept the attacks of these catastrophic times, and take on the yoke placed upon us, because we claim with Fichte that the spirit, while overcoming its limits and bearing its burdens, becomes not only freer but also stronger.” In volume 2 from 1942 of the journal *Szellem és Élet* Tavaszy wrote: “The ethos and pathos of Fichte’s philosophy could have had a positive influence on our education of generations, had a congenial translator opened up these sources earlier.”) In Tonk’s view existentialism for Tavaszy does not mean the *replacement* of idealism, but its *correction*. (NB: the chronological breviary entitled *Tavaszy*

Sándor filozófiája (The philosophy of Sándor Tavaszy), written by the author of these lines, has long been awaiting publication).

3.3. Zoltán Bretter's essay, *Századvég vagy századforduló* (End or turn of the century) speaks about the fact that "both Böhm as the creator of the first (and only) [?] Hungarian philosophical system and Bernát Alexander as the creator of the system of institutes of philosophy in Hungary aimed at establishing (though in different ways) the place of philosophy in Hungary."

3.4. Vasile Muscă outlines another pair of portraits, under the title of *Titu Maiorescu és Böhm Károly – egy filozófiai párhuzam* (Titu Maiorescu and Károly Böhm – a philosophical parallel). While Böhm is the creator of "the first well elaborated philosophical system written in Hungarian", his Romanian contemporary "is satisfied by laying down the basis of a higher standard philosophical life" in Romanian culture (294). A selection from his writings in Hungarian translation appeared in 1985.

4. In the last part of the volume, entitled *A "társasági filozófia" lehetőségei* (The possibilities of a "social philosophy") Gábor Gángó explores the reception of József Eötvös' politics between 1850 and 1913; Béla Mester studies the Hungarian reception of John Stuart Mill's works; and Gábor Kovács compares the writings of the philosopher of law Barna Horváth and the political thinker István Bibó. All three essays are thoroughly documented, have a good sense for problematic issues, and are careful in their judgments. Their detailed presentation is the task of another review.

(Finally, let us make a few more comments within brackets: the name of Sándor Domanovszky appearing on page 424 should be replaced by the name of the historian of philosophy Endre Domanovszky, about whom a study was published in the 4/1994 issue of the journal *Világosság*. Another philological detail would be that the name of Haşdeu should be written without the small comma – *cédille* – under the letter s.)