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I. (TRANS)FORMATION OF THE URBAN CULTURAL SPACE

PHILOSOPHERS IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE OF THE CITIES – THE BIRTH OF THE NATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES FROM THE SPIRIT OF THE EDITORIAL OFFICES AND SALOONS IN THE 19TH CENTURY

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The aim of our paper is to offer an analysis of the phenomenon of the national philosophy of the 19th century. We will analyse this concept as a consequence of the emergence of the public sphere of the city in the function of the cultural capital of a national culture and the centre of the press. Our instance is the development of the philosophical public sphere of the double cities on the opposite banks of the Danube, Buda and Pest (today Budapest). This public sphere was organised in native language by the newly established organisations of the literature, humanities and sciences, such as different societies of writers, with a distinguished role of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS, since 1825). By our hypothesis, it is not an accident phenomenon that the topic of the national philosophy has emerged within the framework of this new public sphere. Expressed more clearly, the concept of the national philosophy depends on a special grade of the development of the public sphere of the centre of the national press – at least in the Hungarian case.

Keywords: Buda and Pest, city as an intellectual space, early 19th century Hungary, national culture, national philosophy, press, public sphere.

Introduction

In the historiography of classical nationalism it is a commonplace that modern nations as working political and cultural communities are connected with an appropriate level of the press, especially with periodicals in national languages (Hobsbawm 1992;

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Kedourie 1993). In other words, Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities" were imagined in the medium of the modern press (Anderson 2006). This idea was not unknown for the contemporaries and factors of the process of making the modern nations. A well-known concept for description of the different type of the human communities in the contemporary philosophy of history, Johann Gottfried Herder's *publicum* was a concept connected with different media. A *publicum* of the modern age is the community of press in this system of ideas. From our point of view, this concept of community based on its communication is more fruitful than Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's juridical approach of the same communities, being summarised in the concept of the state. Herder's system has offered not only a description of a particular situation of his age. These *loci* of his works, especially his *Ideen* and his *Letters of Humanism* had a function in planning of these processes. They have used it on the hands of the organisers of the new, national spaces of the public sphere, in Central Europe, earlier than a relevant reception of Hegel has appeared in the nation-building processes of the same nations[1].

However, the periodicals have inevitable roles in the birth of the modern nations, the evidences of the researches of the early history of the Central European periodicals make us convinced that a network of separated writers, linked by the press, only, is not enough for making a national community[2]. It needs an inspiring personal atmosphere for the authors, which is not offered by the communicational technologies, i.e. press-machinery and the network of post-lines, carts and offices, only. By a symbolical expression we can call it the space of the editorial offices and writers' studies. The function of this pair of the concepts of the *press* and the *editorial office* are parallel with the contemporary parallelism written by psychologists on the modern telecommunication. It is the relationship of the face-to-face and video conferences, and their needed ratio for a well-functioning human group of communication, being the directory board of a multinational industrial company or a research group of scientists. The ideal space for the maintenance of these inspiriting spheres both in the 19th and in the 21st centuries is the *city*. It has a well-known special quarter, at least a street of the writers

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[1] "Nation-building" is a classical term of the national studies, first expressed by Ernest Gellner (Gellner 1983). However, the term is used for every kind of the genesis of the ancient and modern nations, including the processes of present; it is historically based on the experiences of the case of the nations of the 19th century Habsburg Empire.

[2] By the influential book of Eric John Ernest Hobsbawm it is the last level of the age of *proto-nationalism*, when the unified national language has emerged as a prerequisite of any politically relevant nation-building process (see Hobsbawm 1992, especially the second chapter). In Hungarian case it is the age of the Linguistic Reform with the leadership of a literary gentleman of North-East Hungary, Ferenc Kazinczy, who has organised this cultural movement from a typical mansion of a contemporary Hungarian gentleman in the countryside (today it is the Museum of the Hungarian Language). By the evidence of the memoirs of a representative of the next generation of the Hungarian intellectuals, Gusztáv Szontagh (1793–1858), entitled *Memoirs from My Life* (Szontagh 1849–1851), there was a clear generation gap between the communicational possibilities of the two generations of the men of letters in Hungary. Kazinczy was almost bankrupted because of the costs of his large correspondence, needed for his activity as a cultural organiser, a few decades later some people could find their livelihood "by his pen", in the literary world of Pest (actually Sándor Petőfi, a symbolical Hungarian poet was the first *professional* writer in the Hungarian literature.).

and editors in every 19th century city, with book-shops, in its centre sometimes with the old representative building of the guild or society of editors[3], and cafés as clubs for the different groups of writers[4]. It is an inspiriting sphere for the personal co-operation, discussion or debate for the people who transfer the conclusions of this intellectual activity via the medium of the printed words.

The connection between the concept of *national philosophy* and these public spheres of the city and the press is not evident in a usual research of this topic. However, the link between the transition of the public sphere and the nation-building process, and the relation between the histories of the national philosophy and the history of ideas of nationalism are clear; we lack the interpretations of the direct relationship between the national philosophies and the transformed public sphere of the age of the nations in Europe. It is a methodological problem at the first level: there were rarely used the tools of the analysis of the public sphere in philosophical historiography. In the following chapters we will analyse the concept of national philosophy as a phenomenon caused by a special communicational situation that of the unique public sphere of the city in the function of the cultural capital of a national culture based on the typographical texts. Our instance will be the first Hungarian "public philosopher", Szontagh. (The term "public philosophy" in the contemporary discourse meant the philosophy out of the schools, universities, appearing mainly on the pages of published books and periodicals.) In the writings of this figure and mainly in the debate on his papers for the first time the term "national philosophy" in Hungarian discourse has emerged. This term and this discourse depend on the new public sphere of the city as a cultural capital of a nation by our hypothesis.

In the following we will at first offer an outlined image of the communicational circumstances of the contemporary Hungarian culture by the evidences of the memoirs of the witnesses. We will focus on the emergence of Buda and Pest as cultural double-capitals of Hungary in the first decades of the 19th century, and the acculturation of Szontagh to this intellectual environment[5]. (It was a typical story for his generation. The main figures of the Hungarian culture were born in different parts of the country, and settled in Pest by the endeavour to form the new Hungarian culture in its communicational centre.) Below we will show the change of the public sphere as a theoretical problem for the contemporary thinkers by three examples, all of them from the oeuvre of Szontagh. Our first example is the role of the women in the public sphere of the literature in the mirror of a contemporary debate from 1826, as a

[3] In Hungarian case it is the Board of the Book-Merchants of the city of Pest, since 1795 (today Association of Hungarian Editors and Book-Merchants).

[4] From the beginning of the 19th century to the end of the World War II every literary group has his favourite café in Budapest. Petőfi's favourite was the *Pilvax*, where the Revolution in 1848 was planned. Before his marriage his post address was *at the Pilvax*, and he often wrote his poems in this café, amongst them romantic poems about the wild nature. Using the favourite café in the neighbourhood of the editing houses and editorial offices as a study was general in this epoch amongst the writers.

[5] By the traditional Hungarian historiography it is the Age of the Reforms from the foundation of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1825 to the Revolution in 1848. One of the endeavours of this epoch is to make the double-cities a *real* economical, political and cultural capital of the country.

theoretical problem. The second instance is the interpretation of the role of philosophy in a national culture as a *critique* of all the phenomena of the present, "in life and in literature" (1828). Our third point will be a consequence of this philosophical mission statement in the really published criticisms in the next decades. After that we will outline the birth and the contemporary meaning of the term "national philosophy" from the new genre of philosophical criticism, and its decline under transformed communicational circumstances. At the end of the paper we will try to demonstrate that the new communicational structure and role of Pest was a prerequisite of the emergence of the concept of the national philosophy, and in the original meaning this concept was dependent on this particular communicational situation.

Buda and Pest as the city of writers in the early 19th century

We should describe the character of our witness and guide, Szontagh before his years in the capital, to explain a careful evaluation of his remarks on the intellectual life of Pest. As a youngster, he was a typical figure of a multilingual region before the stabilisation of the modern national linguistic standards. He was born in a trilingual (German-Slovak-Hungarian) part of Upper Hungary, and was educated in an old-fashioned Latin school. The machinery of the standardisation process of the languages of his childhood was an elementary experience in his early years; however, this process was not developed in synchrony in these three languages. Language for him remained always an artefact tool, the matter of choice; consequently he was immune from any substantial concept of the language, or a use of etymological argumentation in philosophy and history, frequented in his age. He wrote about his early scholar language command in context of the birth of his first writing in his memoirs (at first he tried to write in German. These experiments were never published and we lack their manuscript):

> "The development of my first writings was retarded by the circumstance that I have never learnt to write in my schools not in Hungarian, nor in German[6]. I have learnt Latin grammar and rhetoric, not German. To compose my first planned work I had to discuss philosophy, rational religion and theology for describing the Christianity as a positive religion with its different denominations. Before them I had to learn German grammar, rhetoric, and, at first, orthography"[7] (Szontagh 1849–1851)[8].

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[6] The third spoken language of his childhood was the Slovak. In here he speaks about his choice between the German and Hungarian as a language of writing, consequently he did not mention the Slovak as an option.

[7] A sign of his autodidact German language command by the evidence of his German manuscripts that he has never learnt the so-called *Deutsche schrift*. (His German manuscripts are mainly notes and extracts from German books.)

[8] Szontagh's above quoted memoirs remained for us in two variations, an autograph and a contemporary copy by another hand, probably prepared for a printed edition. We have used both of them in deciphering of the text. In the following we will disregard the (somewhere inconsistent) page numbers and the registration of the differences between the manuscripts in the quotations of the memoirs. By a philological point of view the first step must be to edit a standard Hungarian text of the memoirs. We have started this philological work in the last year by the support of the Hungarian Cultural Found, within the framework of the research program entitled *After the Trial on Hegel: The Turn of the History of the Hungarian Philosophy in the Middle of the 19th Century* (NKA-2502/1075).

After his vain literary experiments in German, Szontagh had chosen the Hungarian with the same handicap in the skills of the elaborated language. When he arrived to Pest, he was just after his first Hungarian publications. Without the intellectual experience of the city he probably remained intelligent country gentleman with rare publications in the serious periodicals, and with a weak connection with the important points of the cultural network of his age and country. He arrived in the best time to observe the cultural acceleration of the city. He remembers the enlargement of the Hungarian printings in his memoirs by these words:

> "The editing houses have offered free copies[9], and Kiss[10] has bought every new book published in Hungarian. I have read all the periodicals, brochures and books as soon as they have appeared. I had all the recent Hungarian literature for a while. After that it became impossible. Hungarian literature has differentiated in its branches, and I had to restrict myself to several specialities" (Szontagh 1849–1851).

The vividness of the newly developed intellectual life of Pest has really shocked Szontagh. It was a change from the life-style of the amateur literary gentleman of the country-side to that of the professionals who work for periodicals and are ruled by their deadlines. At first he can describe this new character using the romantic *metaphor of illness*, only:

> "Look around the men of studies. You can recognise them from their long, pale faces. Look this scientist, what figure is he who has not enough reason to conserve his body, despite of his knowledge? You cannot find any life or vividness in him, the piles dwarf his body, he regards the world throw the dark eyeglasses of the hypochondria, and born from the blood of the Scythian heroes[11], he is afraid of every noise" (Szontagh 1849–1851).

These words are not the signs of an experienced veteran of wars, regarding the *sybarites* of the new city life. However, these sentences were formulated as descriptions of other people; we know that they are based on his own personal experiences during the intensive intellectual work on his first monograph, entitled *Propylaea for a Hungarian philosophy* (Szontagh 1839). We can reconstruct by the evidence of the published and unpublished sources that precisely planned mercantile and intellectual machinery worked in the background designed by the editing house, with organised subscription, advertisements in the serious periodicals, and, of course, with strict deadlines for every contributor. Probably it was the first time when Szontagh has really seen the system of the cultural communication of the city in action, in his own

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[9] He speaks about the copies offered for the reviewers here. He became soon a frequented reviewer in the fields of philosophy and the novel.

[10] Károly Kiss was his comrade in the last years of the Napoleon wars, and in the time of the peace. Kiss as a writer was a member of the contemporary young Romantic Movement, he published his short stories in the periodical of this movement intitled *Aurora*. As a contributor to the Hungarian linguistic reform he had modernised the Hungarian military vocabulary.

[11] It is an ironical reference to a myth of the Scythian origin of Hungarians, at least the gentles. (It is similar to the Polish *Sarmatism*.)

business. (Just after he finished the manuscript, he had to travel for a spa therapy to his homeland for similar syndromes described above.)

His first book has served as an entrance card for him to the top and heart of the communicational system of the city. It was the Philosophical Department of the HAS, and later the private saloon of Count István Széchenyi. The lecture room of the Academy in the heart of Pest, near the port on the left bank of the Danube in his memoirs appears as the first democratic convent of Hungarians, where the magnates, bourgeoisie and other commoners were equal, at least in the Republic of the science. (In its early times the Academy has functioned partly as a counterinstitution of the University of Pest, which was controlled strictly both by the earthly and ecclesiastical powers.) The people of the saloon of the count have formed a "thinking tank" of a proto-party of the middle-way liberalism in the scale of the contemporary Hungarian archaic parliamentary system.

Our observer was always a conscious witness of these processes and he has seen the importance of his experiences. By his interpretation the history of the nation is almost identical with the change of the communicational structure of the centres of its literary culture, and he focuses in his analyses on these features of the observed intellectual life:

> "In Hungary the political movement rose from the literature. <...> The battle of pens, which has fixed the standard of the Hungarian grammar, written language and prose, has made move the Hungarian spirit. It was made oriented after to the field of sciences by Széchenyi[12] with the foundation of the Academy [1825], and later to that of society. I will be a biographer of this literary-social movement, and I will not mainly focus on the history of this main important affair of our, rather on its philosophy of history" (Szontagh 1849–1951).

After an overview of his subjective, sometimes shocking experiences in the New World of the intellectual life of the city, and his plans for a philosophical summary of these experiences we should see his opinions about the contemporary questions of the new communicational sphere of the city. First of all we should say about the role of the women in this sphere.

A female glance in the new public sphere of the city

Before being a professional writer, just after he arrived to Buda[13], Szontagh met the problem of the transition of the public sphere of the city in an actual and highly sensitive form, as a participant of a debate about the publications of women. It was started with a book-review of Éva Takáts[14] on a volume of plays. ("Original Comedies

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[12] The Hungarian Academy of Sciences never was a royal organisation. It was established by private initiative and financial support of Count Széchenyi based on the act of the Hungarian Parliament.

[13] Szontagh and his comrade, Kiss were officers of the garrison of Buda in this time.

[14] However, Takáts was the wife of Ferenc Karacs, the well-known chalcographer and cartographer of his epoch; she has never signed her publications as Mrs. Karacs.

and Sentimental Plays of Gábor Sebestyén", see Takáts 1822; the reviewed volumes were entitled *I. Female Practice. II. Pál Katzki, or the Golden Ring Rediscovered*, see Sebestyén 1822). This short writing had two novelties in the history of the Hungarian criticism; its author was a woman and its argumentation was focussed on the female characters as stereotypes about women, of the analysed plays. The discussion of this case has become a debate on the possible female roles in the public sphere since the first step. The opinions were highly polarised; on the one side it was the scriptural literalism of Gábor Sebestyén, the author of the reviewed plays who neglected the rights of the women for the public speech in any form, based on I Cor 14: 34: "Let your women keep silence" ("Exclusional Privilege from the Heavens", see Sebestyén 1826). The moral *bottom* of the debate was a fictive published letter with a pseudonym of a known organiser of the prostitution of the double cities, as a friend of Takáts. Its publication is the sign of both the good moral and *naïvety* of the editors; they were not familiar with the world of prostitution and did not make informed themselves about the circumstances of an anonymous manuscript ("A Speech from West: My Letter to a Friend Concerning Our Sex", see Szivonyáné 1827).

The article of Szontagh and his comrade was the *top* of the same debate ("Duel for Lady Éva Takáts for the Virtues and Rights of the Sex of Women", see Szontagh, Kiss 1826). It was crucial because of its theoretical level and its position in the public sphere. A sign of the malleability of the contemporary standards of a debate of the public sphere that the authors have borrowed a metaphor of the well-known *duel for a lady*; and have signed their article as lieutenants, i.e. persons qualified for duelling. Within the framework of this metaphorical duel a modern civic value of the freedom of speech was explained. By the system of ideas explained in the article, Hungarian society is a composite of separated social groups with different experiences, connected by the modern media of the printed periodicals, and one of these separated spheres of life and experiences is that of women. Being the national community has this medium as the only common sphere for its every members; the communication of the experiences of the separated life-spheres of the social groups within the nation is a general and individual human right, "an original right of humanity", and an important national interest. The article directly refers the role of the gentry and middle-class women in the transformation of the public sphere of saloons by the language and topics of the discussion in them for the interests of the community. The conclusion of the article meant a symbolic integration of women into the proto-political community of Hungarians; it offered a suffrage for women at least in a literary Republic. The contemporary middle-class women have understood the gesture and have answered in a symbolic way, with a *wreath of poets* "from the ladies of Pest".

The birth of the national philosophy from the spirit of the philosophical book-reviews

The career of Szontagh as an author has developed with the differentiation of the public sphere. There were formed special new genres of periodicals, including the first one

only for reviews in the forties. In this time Szontagh became gradually from amateur to professional, from "writer for everything" to an intellectual with a special ecological niche in the city jungle: the most important reviewer of the philosophical books written in Hungarian and a significant critic of the genre of novel. At the beginning of this career he has formulated his *ars poetica* as a critic and as a philosopher as well ("On the Literary Reviews", see Szontagh 1985, first published in 1827). His manifesto had offered an outlined analysis of the whole of the public sphere, and the role of the philosopher as a critic and reviewer in it. The political connotations of his *ars poetica* are clear; by his opinion the public sphere of the discussions on the pages of the periodicals is the modern equivalent of the *agorae* and *forums* of the antiquity. The top of the structure of the public sphere incarnated in the periodicals is the special genre of *reviews*[15]. The life of the nation symbolically appears for him as a chaotic amount of printed writings with reviewers who organise them into a system and evaluate them by a hierarchy of values. Gradually established a canon of the national classics, critics introduces a substantive element into the vivid vegetation of the literature as a mirror of the national life. This literary canon and the ideas of the canonisation process form a concept of the *nationality*. It is important that Szontagh does not speak here about the criticism of the *belles-lettres*, only. He regards all the written publications as a subject of a needed criticism, mentioning the sphere of politics with an emphasis. In his thought a national culture is impossible without criticism, and a nation identical with its culture, conclusively a nation cannot develop without professional critics. The last element of the program of Szontagh that writing reviews and critics is a theoretical work, a task of philosophers. A conclusion of his thought is that *a nation can be formed only by its philosopher*. On the other hand, he has offered a new role for the philosopher in the new media of the nation-building process, by his words that of the writer of the "public philosophy".

The role of this kind of philosophy in the canonisation and nation-building was conscious in the activity, and had important consequences in the practice of Szontagh as a critic, and his all writing activity, including his substantial works were connected with his cultural role as a reviewer. A concept of the public sphere was always important for him in his writings on any topic. It is mirrored clearly in his role in the great literary debate about the genres of *epic* and *drama*[16]. The central question was, whether it is an age of the epic, or the drama in Hungarian literature. The lower level of the discussion focussed on cultural politics, concerning the effectiveness of the regular competitions of the National Theatre and the most important literary societies for writing original plays and epics with relatively significant awards. Under this concrete

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[15] The most important foreign model for the planned Hungarian review was the *Edinburgh Review*.

[16] The actuality of this debate has been offered by the contemporary European movements. In this time the first pieces of Kalevala and the works of *Scandinavism* were published, amongst them the *Fritjofs saga*. In the time of this debate they were known in Hungarian in translated extracts published in the most important periodicals. On the other hand, it is the age of the foundation of the first Hungarian theatres with permanent troupes, and with a permanent need for new plays in Hungarian.

problem a more theoretical question was hidden: what is the genre of the modern literature, which is fitted to the communicational system of a modern nation? (We should not forget that in the thought of Szontagh this communicational system is almost identical with the nation itself.) From this point of view both the epic and the drama are in the sphere of the ancient and modern *orality* fitted to a relatively restricted audience. By his opinion it is not the age of epic, nor the drama, but that of the *novel*, the genre that is more close to the mentality of the *homo typographicus* of the modern age, and to the needs of a modern nation, consisted of this kind of people. (Hidden empirical evidence under his theoretical statement is his influential criticism about the first really successful Hungarian novel. Expressing it by the ideas of his critical *ars poetica*, his criticism has made this novel a part of the national canon.)

We have seen Szontagh's opinions about the public sphere of a modern nation, dominated by the periodicals, concerning the function of female writers and literary genres, and we could observe that they are the part of a philosophical analysis of a modern communicational community, called nation. In the following we should focus on his criticism of the contemporary philosophy and later on his philosophical opinions, and his concept on the meaning of the national philosophy. In the historiography of Hungarian philosophy the most of his criticisms on philosophical works are the parts of the so-called *trial on Hegel*, the first Hungarian philosophical debate, which was discussed purely in Hungarian and dominantly on the pages of periodicals. During the development of the Hungarian debate on Hegel we can observe the unconscious formation of a concept of the national philosophy from the elements of his analyses of the national public sphere by different approaches mentioned above. Every concrete criticism on a contemporary work of a Hungarian Hegelian philosopher, or a discussion paper directly concerned the questions of Hegelianism has a contextual meaning and relevance on the pages of a periodical within the framework of a vivid national cultural and political life. Every new Hungarian term of Hegelian philosophy or an analysis of any actual phenomenon of the Hungarian culture based on Hegelian concepts and terms must be evaluated directly in the context of the needs of the synchronic discourses. In this daily context every criticism has a hidden element, a question about the position and role especially in the development of Hungarian philosophical life, and generally the national life incarnated in *writing acts* in the medium of the press.

His first philosophical work that uses in the title the term "Hungarian philosophy" is actually a collection of extracts from his former reviews and discussion papers from our point of view. (It is important that it is true regarding the aim of the present paper, only. However, he uses pieces of texts from his former writings directly, and he deciphers his former pseudonyms for avoiding the accusation of plagiarism, his volume should be considered as a uniform monograph, intellectually rooted in the world of book-reviews.) The eclectic roots of Szontagh's own philosophy originated from the Scottish common-sense school and Immanuel Kant, have a secondary meaning in here, only. We should interpret this work from the point of view of the present paper, as a document of the birth of an unconscious concept of national philosophy

from the spirit of the conscious theoretical critiques. The sporadic notes of the book-reviews about the role of the appropriate work in the actual discourse of Hungarian culture must become a general thesis about the role of the *philosophy as a whole* in the national culture in general. A further requirement is that this thesis must offer a description of a philosophical style, which is fitted to this function. The relevance of his answer highly depends on the context and the time. He offers an overview of the contemporary European philosophy, later he evaluates the Hungarian philosophical literature of the last decades in this context and tries to make an honest forecast for the *near future*, only. In his political philosophy, published some years later, the context between the needs of the proto-political community of Hungarians and philosophy is clearer ("Propylaea for a Social Philosophy with Regard of the Circumstances of Our Country", see Szontagh 1843). Every philosophical opinion mentioned in his former work appears as a political idea in the later one, and the role of philosophy is described in the national life as a theoretical basis of the political life with its different opinions and debates. Szontagh remains within the framework of the forecast for the near future, focused on the analysis of the biggest political debate and its basis in the media in the last chapter of his work; for instance the rationalists become *political rationalists* similar to the Oakeshottian meaning of this expression. (The importance of his book, highly depended on the daily context, is based on its connection with the very crucial pre-Revolutionary years in the Hungarian political ideas.)

This actual report about the state of affairs of the Hungarian philosophy written by a professional reviewer and critic later has become the concept of a substantial national philosophy in the Hungarian culture. In this process Szontagh was not absolutely innocent; in his last years, in the fifties he spoke about the "system and method of the Hungarian harmonistics", and tried to reconstruct a philosophical "imagined tradition" of the "harmonistic school" from the past of the Hungarian thought. The inadequacy of the term "national philosophy" without the context of its birth from the spirit of the periodicals and reviews was explained when it has appeared as a requirement of the professional philosophers expressed by their non-philosopher environment. The most characteristic document of the failure of establishing a national philosophy is the inauguration speech of Bernát Alexander in the HAS ("National Spirit in Philosophy", see Alexander 1893). Alexander as a philosopher was highly sceptical about the possibility of any new philosophical system; consequently he has chosen the field of history of philosophy. (Actually he was the first professor of history of philosophy, the owner of a new professorship of this discipline of the university in Budapest. The vocabulary of his translations from the classics is inevitable in the Hungarian philosophical terminology.) By the first look Alexander was in the same communicational situation as Szontagh some decades earlier[17]; he thought his task was to accelerate the Hungarian

[17] Amongst other features, their assimilation histories are similar. Szontagh was born in a German-speaking family; Alexander was the first Hungarian professor of Jewish origin. His identity was that of a typical Hungarian-Jewish urban citizen: by his nationality Hungarian and by his religion Jewish. His insistence on this composite identity was strong enough to avoid the tacitly offered conversion for his university career.

philosophical thinking with translations and interpretations of classics, teaching and continual philosophical reviewing of the phenomena of the Hungarian culture from the theatre to the philosophical writings. However, Alexander was similarly influential to Szontagh in formation of the public opinion about philosophical questions, lived in the same city, and in a developed form shared his national liberal political opinions[18], he worked in another institutional framework of the scholar communication. In his time the university was more open and free, and the Academy has lost its former role as a supporter of an alternative public sphere. Alexander has spoken in the new public sphere not against the spirit of the university, but *as a university professor*. In this context the culturally inherited requirement of the national philosophy has changed its meaning. Szontagh, the self-employed man of letters could discuss the Hungarian philosophy of the future without its substantial description for a while in the thirties and forties, when the periodicals were full of the questions of the future of the Hungarian novel, poem, theatre, etc.; Alexander, the professor had to conceptualise this term. We can describe the problem by the instance of his inauguration speech in the Academy. His ideas about the national culture needed the term of "national philosophy"; and his task as a philosopher, a professor in this national culture needed his own formulation of this national philosophy. This task was not solvable on the basis of his philosophical opinions; consequently he has composed a speech of cultural history and philosophy of history with the term of "national spirit" in its title, but without a word about the positive description of a national philosophy.

The failure of Alexander in the positive formulation of the national philosophy was determined by the changed structure of the public sphere both of the nation and the city of Budapest as the capital of the nation. The unified virtual world of the books and periodicals, imagined by Szontagh as an incarnated national culture, has fragmented by sub-spheres of topics and disciplines, and in these scholar worlds the concept of a national philosophy has emerged as a chimera; which is needed by the national cultural tradition, but impossible in the scholar community. The counterfigure of Alexander in the Hungarian philosophy, Károly Böhm has solved the same problem easier; he decided to write the first Hungarian philosophical system, but in the argumentation in the six volumes of this main work he has never used the concept of national philosophy or other national points of views[19]. Based on the above mentioned instances of Szontagh, Alexander and Böhm we can reconstruct a transformation of the public sphere. In the golden age of Szontagh's career the political, social,

[18] Alexander's sympathies to the party of government, i.e. the national liberals, were clear.

[19] At the beginning of his career, Böhm was a contributor for a while (1876–1878) to the *Philosophische Monatshefte*, edited in Leipzig. Based on his early writings published in this periodical in German, the editors have offered the possibility to write his masterpiece in German and publish it in Leipzig. After a short hesitation Böhm has chosen the Hungarian language, and from this choice he has never published in German. However, it was a crucial decision in his life, based on his patriotism; it has concerned the language of his philosophy, only, and not his philosophical ideas. (Böhm's thought is a highly individualistic system without a detailed political philosophy. In his system of ideas the concept of nation and the all other possible terms of any community have a secondary importance, only.)

cultural and philosophical strata of the virtual world of the new medium of the periodicals seemed to be a unified whole. Later, the generation of Alexander and Böhm inherits the cultural requirement of the concept of "national philosophy", but they lack this unified public sphere to explain it. They could express their political opinions as influential intellectuals[20], their ideas about the contemporary culture as reviewers and critics, and their philosophical theses as scholars[21]; but writing philosophy as a politician, or speaking on politics as a philosopher gradually became an illegitimate discourse. It meant the end of the concept of the national philosophy in the Hungarian case. The changes of the national public sphere and the role of the term in this changing virtual world are clearly mirrored by the recent monograph of László Perecz on this topic ("Nation, Philosophy, "National Philosophy", see Perecz 2008). However, Perecz discusses the term of "national philosophy" from the beginning of the 19th century to the end of the World War II as a continuous narrative, for a reader of his book it is clear that the figures and works of the second half of his book are out of the mainstream scholar philosophy, being part of the frequented genre of national characteristics of the *fin de siècle* and the interwar period Central Europe.

Conclusions

At the beginning of this paper we have outlined a mediated conceptual network of the analysis of the concept of the national philosophy. We have linked the known theses about the dependence of the modern nation on the media of the modern press; and the need of every communicational technology for an inspiriting, creative centre of communication, which is available by personal experiences, not by technological tools, only. In the 19th century Hungary this role was fulfilled by the cultural space of the newly developed double-capitals, Buda and Pest. In the following we have applied this mediated cultural structure for a special concept of this epoch, the "national philosophy". In the analysis we have used our recent philological researches in the Archive of the HAS, concerning the memoirs of the witnesses of this age and an important figure in the history of Hungarian "national philosophy", Szontagh. At first we have summarised his report about his cultural shock during the process when he became a professional writer from an amateur literary gentleman, then his active observations on the changed public sphere, concerning the new *female glance* emerged in it. In the last part of this writing we have analysed the malleable concept of "national philosophy", which emerged from the spirit of the book-reviews, as a tool of a special reflection on the philosophical life within a national culture; and the process, in which it could not be the part of the academic philosophy, and remained just a chimera. We have not

[20] However, Böhm was a supporter of the main party of the parliamentary opposition, the Hungarian Independence Party, and Alexander that of the governing national liberals; these political programs concerning the concept of the national culture were similar.

[21] Böhm has established the first academic periodical in Hungarian concerning philosophy (*Hungarian Review of Philosophy*, since 1882).

discovered any element of the communicational space of the city which was not known when Buda and Pest did not function as cultural capitals; there were female writers and philosophical debates earlier and far from Budapest in the Hungarian culture. The new phenomenon is the composite and the everyday experience of these elements, rare ones before, in the space of the cultural city for the influential writers, who transfer these concentrated and conceptualised elements via the machinery of the modern communication, i.e. the press. This conceptualisation depends on the medial context of its development, and some concept survives the recontextualisation, some of them not. The concept of "national philosophy", being too strongly linked to its original context, seems to be the part of the last group.

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FILOSOFAI VIEŠOJOJE MIESTŲ ERDVĖJE: NACIONALINIŲ FILOSOFIJŲ ATSIRADIMAS REDAKTORIŲ BIURŲ IR SALONŲ ATMOSFEROJE XIX AMŽIUJE

Béla Mester

Santrauka

Straipsnio tikslas – pateikti XIX a. nacionalinės filosofijos fenomeno analizę. Šis konceptas čia analizuojamas kaip viešosios miesto sferos iškilimo rezultatas, neatsiejamas nuo nacionalinės kultūros ir spaudos centro kultūrinio kapitalo. Tiriama dvejopų miestų filosofinės viešosios sferos raida kaip priešprieša Danubės, Budos ir Pešto (šiandien Budapešto) bankams. Ši viešoji sfera buvo organizuojama gimtąja kalba naujai įsteigtų literatūros, humanitarinių ir kitų mokslų organizacijų, tokių kaip skirtingos rašytojų bendruomenės, ypatingą vaidmenį atliekant Vengrijos mokslų akademijai (nuo 1825 m.). Pagal čia pateikiamą hipotezę neatsitiktinai nacionalinės filosofijos tema iškilo naujoje viešojoje sferoje. Tiksliau tariant, nacionalinės filosofijos konceptas priklauso nuo atitinkamai besiplėtojančios nacionalinės spaudos centro viešosios sferos – bent jau Vengrijos atveju.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Buda ir Peštas, miestas kaip intelektinė erdvė, ankstyvoji XIX a. Vengrija, nacionalinė kultūra, nacionalinė filosofija, spauda, viešoji sfera.

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