

# Foreword

This special issue of the *Hungarian Philosophical Review* presents papers resulting from current research on Austrian philosophy. The topics are mainly historical, however they provide an in-depth analytical reconstruction and interpretation of the views discussed. Part of the papers focus on lesser known aspects of and connections within the diverse strands of the Austrian philosophical tradition, others address some important influences of Austrian philosophy (including also philosophical aspects of psychology, linguistics and mathematics) on Hungarian intellectual life and academia.

The topics discussed are the following: Guillaume Fréchette provides an analysis of Brentano's views on perception. Denis Fisette writes on the reception of Mach by Brentano and his students. Christoph Limbeck-Lilienau investigates the influence of Meinongians on the First Vienna Circle's views on logic. Thomas Uebel presents a new understanding, and a possible defence of Carnap's methodological solipsism he advocated in *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*. Christian Damböck investigates the "plagiarism" or "Ideendiebstahl" charge according to which Carnap in the *Aufbau* allegedly had taken over views of Husserl formulated in the *Ideen II*. Gergely Ambrus discusses Schlick's Austrian psychophysical identity theory and its similarity to certain views of Russell and to contemporary Russellian monists, David Chalmers in particular. Friedrich Stadler provides a general context and background to these particular issues with an overview of "Austrian philosophy" at the University of Vienna from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In addition, we also present papers about the diverse influences Austrian philosophy as broadly conceived exerted on Hungarian thinkers. Csaba Pléh discusses the influence of Karl Bühler and his school on Hungarian psychology and linguistics; Miklós Rédei analyses the connections between Gödel's and von Neumann's views on the foundations of mathematics. Péter András Varga discusses the *peregrinatio* of the Hungarian philosopher Bernhard (Bernát) Alexander, a noted Kant scholar and a major figure in Hungarian intellectual life at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In some more detail: Guillaume Fr chet te’s paper *Brentano on Perception* discusses what may be taken as the “standard view” of Brentano’s theory of perception, according to which perceptual experiences constitute a subclass of intentional experiences. Fr chet te argues that the standard view cannot be supported either by sense-datum theory, or adverbialist or representationalist theories of perception. Further, he suggests, Brentano’s understanding of optical illusions presupposes the distinction between the subjectively and objectively given, which challenges the standard view, and fits better with an account of perception as openness to and awareness of the world.

Denis Fisette in his *The Reception of Ernst Mach in the School of Brentano* outlines the most important elements of this reception. First he discusses Brentano’s lectures on positivism in which he evaluates Mach’s theory of sensations. This is followed by a presentation of the early reception of Mach in Prague by Brentano’s students; then the relation between Mach’s descriptivism and phenomenology is established, showing that Mach’s phenomenism was indeed a source of Husserl’s phenomenology. Further, Mach’s contribution to the controversy on Gestalt qualities is also examined as well as Mach’s debate with Stumpf on psychophysical relations and Husserl’s criticism of Mach’s alleged logical psychologism.

Christoph Limbeck-Lilienau focuses on some less familiar aspects of the history of the precursors of the later Vienna Circle. First, he puts forth the historical thesis that, due to the lack of archival sources, it may be questioned whether the so-called “First Vienna Circle” existed at all, at least as a regular discussion group. Second, he uncovers hitherto unknown or neglected connections between the First Circle (Neurath, Frank, Hahn) and a group of philosophers strongly influenced by Meinong (as e.g. Alois H f ler). Limbeck-Lilienau argues that – besides the well-known influences of Mach and the French conventionalists – the interaction with the Meinongians paved the way for the reception of the new symbolic logic and especially of Russell’s philosophy of logic and mathematics. Further, he claims that Neurath, and probably also Hahn, endorsed a logical realism similar to that of Russell and Meinong, which they renounced only after the reception of Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*.

Christian Damb  ck addresses a charge against Carnap that was formulated already in the 1990s by Verena Mayer and then by Guillermo Rosado Haddock, and was further radicalized in a recent article of Mayer, according to which Carnap in his *Aufbau* took over substantial parts from Husserl’s (then unpublished) *Ideen II* without acknowledging his sources. Damb  ck refutes these claims, differentiating between several senses of plagiarism and „Ideendiebstahl”, and arguing that Carnap – though he might have been acquainted with Husserl’s manuscript – cannot be accused of plagiarism even in the weakest sense.

Thomas Uebel in his *Overcoming Carnap’s Methodological Solipsism: Not as Easy as it Seems* presents a novel understanding and a possible defense of Carnap’s

methodological solipsism advocated in *Der logische Aufbau der Welt*. He brackets Quine's "is-at" objection against the constructional system of the *Aufbau* (published in *Two Dogmas* in 1951), and concentrates on Neider's objection, according to which the intersubjectivity of the meaning of the concepts constructed by the *Aufbau* methods is not achieved. Uebel suggests that there are remarkable resources to resist this charge, drawing on the distinction between re-creating and simulating intersubjectivity, if one takes Carnap's descriptions of the aim of the constructional programme literally. Uebel has extensively investigated Carnap's physicalist turn in previous publications, this paper however approaches this development from a new angle, and provides further insights to Carnap's goals in the *Aufbau* as well as to his reason for – finally – abandoning methodological solipsism that has been the epistemological fundament of the *Aufbau* programme.

Gergely Ambrus presents Moritz Schlick's "Austrian" psychophysical identity theory, presented in the *Allgemeine Erkenntnislehre*, and compares it with the Russellian monist views of Russell (formulated in *The Analysis of Matter* and *Human Knowledge*, for example) and also to David Chalmers' position, a representative of contemporary Russellian monism. A close similarity of Russell's and Schlick's views was already stated by Herbert Feigl long ago; so the goal of the comparison is to see in detail to what extent Russell's and Schlick's views are really akin, and further to determine the relation of some contemporary Russellian monist views to these historical ancestors. As a result, Ambrus argues that all three accounts share some fundamental tenets, namely linguistic physicalism, an ontology which may be described as physicalist dualist property pluralism, and a sort of dual-language account of the psychophysical identity thesis, which is an alternative to the reductionist materialism of e.g. Smart, Armstrong and Lewis. Further, he claims that Schlick, Russell and Chalmers all ground these tenets on a structuralist account of the meaning of physical terms, which, however, they lay out in importantly different ways.

Friedrich Stadler provides an overview of "Austrian philosophy" during the "long 20<sup>th</sup> century" through an institutional history of the Department of Philosophy with the main figures teaching philosophy at the University of Vienna. After a short review of philosophy as a key discipline within the Faculty of Philosophy, the development is described mainly from 1848 onwards with a focus on the last century. The personal and institutional breaks and continuities are characterized by a thematic analysis of the philosophical research and teaching in historical context. This is done with a focus on the typical Austrian "scientific philosophy" in its relation to alternative dominant currents. This specific dynamics becomes manifest on the one hand with the significance of philosophy within the Faculty of Philosophy and, on the other, with its role and function *vis à vis* the other classical faculties. The process of a gradual dissolution and diversification of the Faculty of Philosophy up to the present indicates this changing

role of a long-term, dominant “royal discipline”. Nevertheless, the restructuring and renewal of philosophy as a discipline and research field since the University reform after 2000 appears as a successful and promising turn with an increasing international visibility and appreciation.

The other papers discuss diverse influences of Austrian philosophy and related subjects on Hungarian philosophy and science. Csaba Pléh reviews the influence of Karl Bühler and his school. First he surveys the influence of Bühler’s works on *Denkpsychologie* on Valéria Dienes, Ferenc Lehnert/Lénárd, Antal Schütz and Imre Molnár, and then provides a detailed analysis of the influences of the mature Bühler of the Vienna years both on Hungarian psychology and linguistics. He displays the work of two Hungarian experimental psychologists, Paul (Pál) Schiller von Harkai, who did postdoctoral research in Vienna, and Ludwig (Lajos) Kardos, who was a PhD student of Bühler in Vienna. Schiller von Harkai developed a functionalist theoretical psychology combined with the Gestalt ideas of Lewin and Bühler. Kardos extended the sign-based perceptual theory of Bühler into a successful mathematical theory of light constancy that interpreted contextual influences on a general model. Besides Bühler’s reception in psychology Pléh also deals with the impact of Bühler’s theory of language on Hungarian linguistics: his reception by Gyula Laziczius, and his influence on Laziczius’ student, the linguist and psychoanalyst Iván Fónagy.

Miklós Rédei’s paper investigates the parallels and divergencies of Kurt Gödel’s and John von Neumann’s life and career. They were both born in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, had similar social background and education, and their careers had many parallels and partly overlapping research topics. Rédei presents these overlaps and personal encounters, beginning with the first major intersection of their interests, Gödel’s incompleteness theorems. Rédei first reconstructs the initially different but later converging interpretations of the second incompleteness theorem (which von Neumann also independently proved), and then, widening the scope of investigations, turns to Gödel’s and von Neumann’s general views on the nature mathematics. Rédei convincingly shows that although Gödel was a Platonist while von Neumann emphasized the empirical element in mathematics, the relation of their views is more complex; Gödel also acknowledged the role of empirical scientific theories for inventing new mathematical ideas. Their inspiration and attitude however was still significantly different, as von Neumann’s mathematical innovations were initiated in most cases by empirical sciences from quantum mechanics to economics (game theory), while Gödel’s interest and inspiration came mainly from pure mathematics and philosophy.

Péter András Varga’s reconstructs the early influences on Bernhard (Bernát) Alexander at the University of Vienna in 1868–1871. Alexander was an eminent scholar, later to become a major figure in Hungarian intellectual life: by the turn century he became a respected university professor, public writer and art critic,

a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, serving also as the President of the Hungarian Philosophical Society. The paper investigates the influences Alexander received at the first station on his peregrination at the University of Vienna. This is interesting for it informs the reader both about the early formation of Alexander's thought as well as it provides insights into the philosophical scene in Vienna around 1870, before Brentano's arrival – hence presenting one of the rare intersections between the history of Austrian and Hungarian philosophy. The paper is supplemented with a document, an excerpt from Alexander's intellectual diary from the Vienna period, edited and introduced by Barnabás Szabados, Bettina Szekér and Péter András Varga.

*Gergely Ambrus – Friedrich Stadler*



# UNITY AND TENSIONS IN AUSTRIAN PHILOSOPHY

