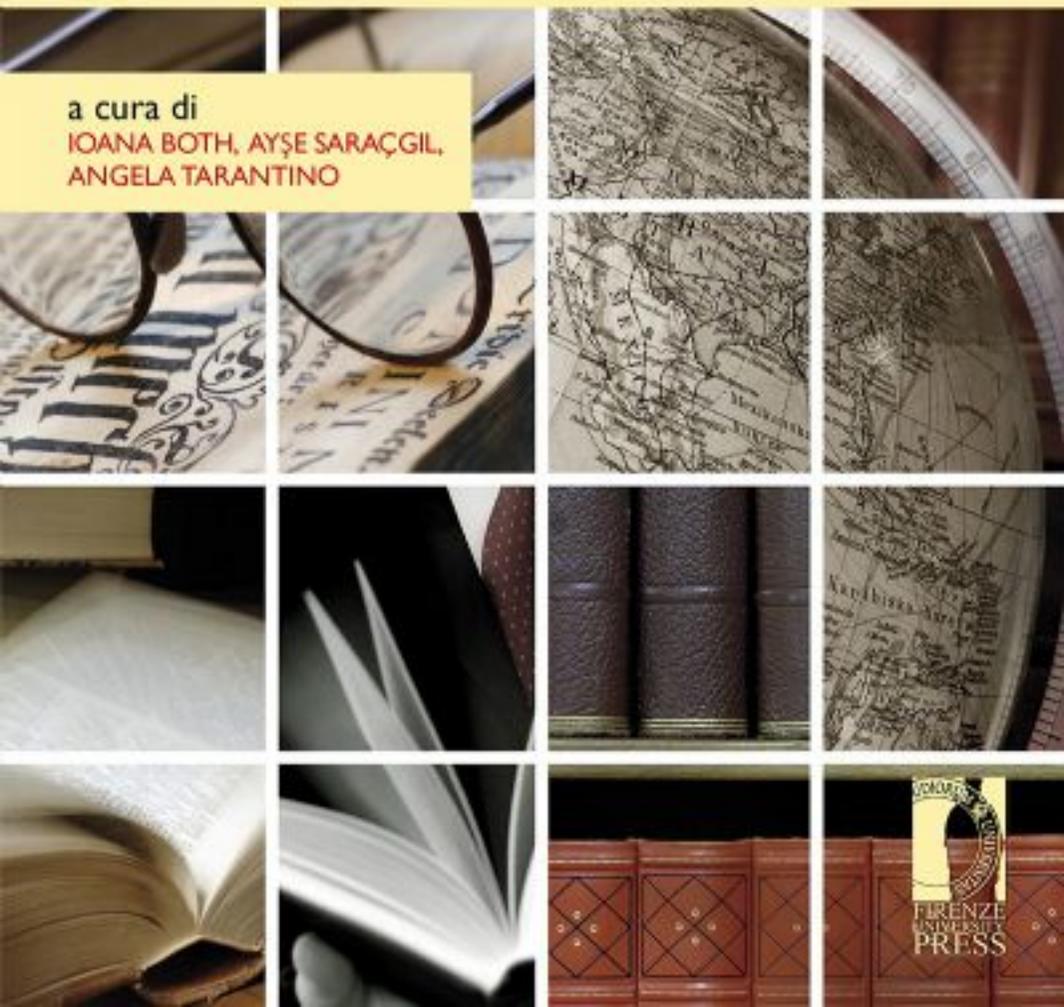


Storia, identità e canoni letterari

a cura di
IOANA BOTH, AYŞE SARAÇGİL,
ANGELA TARANTINO



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Levente T.
Szabó

À la recherche ... de l'éditeur perdu. Sámuel Brassai and the First International Journal of Comparative Literary Studies*

For a long time methodological nationalism seems to have dominated the reconstruction of the history of the first international journal of comparative literary studies, «Összehasonlító Irodalomtörténelmi Lapok» (Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum, 1877-1888), published in Cluj/Kolozsvár, Romania¹. Many interpreters of the phenomenon invented the national self in and within the journal, where it could have been more proper to assume hybrid identities, or not to raise the questions in ethnic or national terms whatsoever². For instance, the collaborators of the very large network of the «ACLU» are often characterized along national and ethnic patterns, even though this hinders understanding their role in the life of the journal: the alleged 'Hungarian' Podhors(z)ky Lajos writes about Bulgarian, Albanian, and several Oriental languages and literatures; the 'Romanian' Dora d'Istria's interests go to Greece, Albania, the United States, Russia and their logic can hardly be perceived if linked exclusively to an ethnic group. Neither did the founders themselves of the polyglot journal succeed in escaping this narrow vision. One of them, Hugo von Meltzl, has usually been labelled either as a German or Hungarian depending on the ethnic status of the interpreter. Moreover, from an orientalizing perspective the figure of 'the German' Meltzl has often been considered to be 'more foundational' and even exclusively important as compared with 'the Hungarian' Sámuel Brassai. There has been a tendency to tell the story of the review as a basically German or Western story, a 'West in the Easternmost parts of Europe', reducing the narrative to the personality and oeuvre of Meltzl and simply assuming that his alleged 'German-ness' was the sole key to the innovative idea of the journal and the large network around it. This hidden methodological nationalism has made Sámuel Brassai, the other founder and editor of the «ACLU», almost invisible in the histories of the journal³. Of course, this is partly due to the lack



of basic philological information on the 'share' Brassai took, from the financial background up to the conceptual work, in shaping the journal's long-term profile. Brassai (1797-1897) had already had an established scholarly career decades before the «ACLU» came out: a well-known preceptor in the 1820s, in the 1830s already a popular college professor and editor of the first specialized Hungarian weekly dedicated to the popularization of science, expert in a series of disciplines ranging from history and geology to mathematics, linguistics and pedagogy, he was elected corresponding (1837), then regular member (1864) of the Academy. In the 1860s he was the director of the Transylvanian Museum Society and in 1872, at the start of the Cluj/Kolozsvár University he was appointed professor of mathematics (later also of comparative linguistics and Sanskrit) and also became the first vice-rector of the new university. In 1877, when he consorted with Meltzl to found the «ACLU», he already had a huge publication record, not to speak about his past endeavours as an editor of several specialized journals. In spite of this, he is often considered to be the 'minor' founder of the «ACLU» and his role in the editing process of the review is often neglected.

There is also a philological mythology in the secondary literature that follows the decision of Brassai to secede from the «ACLU». In most cases even the correct year is missing, not to speak of the motivation and terms of this official breakup. Some have spoken of personal and irreconcilable differences, others commented upon an alleged minor role of Brassai in the publishing process. A cluster of important unpublished and still unknown archival documents from the Archives of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church could shed light not only on the exact date and reason for reorganization of the «ACLU», the interpersonal relationships within the journal at the beginning of the 1880s, but also the economic background of the publishing process which has always been a missing piece of the puzzle in the histories of the «ACLU». On November 2, 1883 Meltzl and Brassai signed a cluster of semi-official documents that put an end to the reorganization of the editorial office after Brassai decided to leave the «ACLU». The 'statement and acknowledgement' is at the same time both a reading of the state of affairs regarding the «ACLU» and also a tribute to Brassai. The specimen signed by Brassai is missing, but the Brassai collection preserved Meltzl's version also countersigned by a witness. According to this

[a]s is done in such cases, we have thoroughly examined the economic and administrative registers of the latest two years of the scholarly journal *Acta Comparationis* (Ö. I. L.) we used to publish together on our own charge from 1877, and the two series of our other venture, *Fontes* that we have been publishing from 1878 in parallel with our journal. Already on 24th October, at our sharing we assayed and divided our stock in hand, and I took my share from our issues left over from former years. Due to the lengthy ailment and absence of Meltzl⁴ this was the occasion when we could finally do our economic accounting and sharing of this last two-year period. Based on

all the receipts at hand and all the other editorial and publishing records I hereby state with a good conscience that I have no claim whatsoever from my former fellow editor, Dr. Brassai Sámuel. Let me notice as well that after our scholarly venture was set back due to the above reasons in 1883, I myself also took over half of our mutual editorial resources (i.e. unused papers, reference books and alike). Let me make clear that I wish to preserve as usual the name of Mr. Brassai, the best critic and aesthete of our country, on the front-page of both of our ventures that will go on from 1883 onwards, too. Preserving his name as a founder (*fundator*) is not just my great fortune, but also an amiable obligation. Of course, this does not imply any material or moral duty, liability or consequence for me or my fellow editor, at least till we decide otherwise in a contingent future contract to be signed later.⁵

There are few sources that might reveal what happened before this moment, how their relationship commenced and evolved. Meltzl came (back) to Cluj in 1872 when he was appointed professor of German studies at the local university, and in the half decade before the start of their common journal, the «Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum», the two had no common scholarly venture. Of course, this does not mean at all that they did not have any close contact. Brassai was the first vice-rector and the senior scholar of a university where his colleague began his university career as the youngest fellow of the academic faculty: the initial pool of appointed professors was so restrained that the relationships among them must have become personal almost from the first moment⁶. And as a former graduate and professor, permanent mentor and academic supervisor of the Unitarian College, Brassai surely noticed Meltzl, the former graduate of his beloved college. Nay, the two must have exchanged their ideas not only in matters of university administration and scholarship, but also regarding specific literary and linguistic issues, since Brassai came to be appointed also the (extraordinary) professor of Sanskrit at the same faculty Meltzl was working at. But it is not only the probable and very palpable meetings, discussions between the two future founders of «ACLU» that could be really interesting, but the possible common scholarly interests, presuppositions, beliefs that paved the way for the two to found their scholarly venture in 1872. These common denominators can be viewed as 'the probable scholarly interfaces, spaces of juncture, intermingled and overlapping scholarly knowledge' of the two prominent scholars. Many former discussions on the beginnings of the «ACLU» overemphasized the role of Meltzl exactly because they neglected these professional interfaces that offered an interpretive framework to explain the «ACLU» as a joint scholarly venture, and not just the creation of one or the other founder. Let me identify two major overlapping elements of these common denominators that emphasize the decisive scholarly contribution of Brassai to the founding and the initial years of the «ACLU»: the foregrounding of literary translation and the communicative view of foreign language acquisition.

I. Brassai perceiving translation as an essential part of literary life

There are only few nineteenth-century Hungarian (literary) scholars for whom translation played such a paramount and basic role as it did for Sámuel Brassai. While most of his literary contemporaries both in and outside Hungarian literature placed translation on the edges of literary life, Brassai portrayed it as a central, decisive, utmost communicational form of literary communication and the scholarly world in general. Certainly this somewhat peripheral nature of nineteenth-century literary translation was also a side effect of modern nation-building mechanisms that saw cross-national literary processes and practices (like ethnically hybrid literary forms and oeuvres etc.), dubious and even threatening the alleged 'autochthonous purity' and 'autonomy' of national literatures. From this perspective, translation was a kind of 'unwelcome necessity' of classic nineteenth-century literary nation-building. Therefore it is not surprising that translation and translators regularly attracted fear, criticism or, at least, acid comments from hard-line nation-builders. Translators have always been somewhat more 'invisibly' constructed in comparison with the other actors of the literary field⁷, but their in-between position made them even more suspicious in nation-building processes that preferred clear-cut ethnic identities. That is one of the main reasons why nineteenth-century literary thinkers and practitioners 'beware'd' of assigning literary translation a central role in national literary life. In such a framework Brassai seemed an odd-one-out figure when he made translation a key issue of literary life, and not only 'theoretized' literary and non-literary translation and translatability, but also experimented with translations from a relatively large range of languages.

For Brassai this central focus on translation made this practice equal any other type of literary practice. In a famous and much disputed series of essays in the early 1860s, entitled *Still a Few Things on Translation*⁸, he compared the seemingly divergent literary practices of everyday literary criticism and translation, and the comparison turned out to be in favour of the latter. It was not usual in the heydays of nineteenth-century Hungarian criticism to argue in a critical review that literary criticism itself had only a limited effect on the literary scene, and it could never change literary taste in such a paramount way as translation had always done⁹. This unorthodox vision and comparison was not entirely new for those who had known Brassai and his literary endeavours from earlier decades. He had always stressed the role of translation as a toolkit of conscious cultural policy that was able to level cultural differences both inside national and among international literary cultures. Already in the 1830s, when he was entrusted with editing «Vasárnapi Újság», the first Hungarian popular weekly, his main concern was to assure high-level qualitative reviews and translations. Many of these thematised a series of problems that would recur

even within the «Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum». For example, already in 1835 a series of his essays presented the Kirghiz Cossacks struggling in an uneven political and cultural environment and advanced solutions in order to alleviate the cumbersome burden of cultural inequalities¹⁰. In this context, Brassai saw the review essays themselves as forms of cultural translation that aimed at rehabilitating a suppressed culture in the Russian political framework.

Therefore literary translation was not a simple technical question for Brassai, but he envisaged it as a deeply political and cultural act already from the 1830s onwards (and not only in the late 1870s as a partner of Meltzl at the «Acta Comparationis»). This is why he was so convinced of his opinion that translation could be the only major chance for less fortunate literary cultures, like the Hungarian one, to reconstruct and reposition themselves in an international cultural scene:

cultivation and taste actually polishes our joys, they make our delights more and more noble and elevated. And while it is completely true that the masterpieces are not shut out from us, but translation makes them truly accessible for us.¹¹

The radical democrat who raised many eyebrows in the Unitarian College of Kolozsvár/Cluj during his professorship and directorate with his liberal attitude, and who had to flee after the failure of the 1848-1849 revolution actually reimagined the national and international literary scene along democratic values. From this perspective translation was the threshold of equal opportunity. On the one hand, it guaranteed genuine opportunities within the national culture that, in Brassai's vision, used to bar several social groups from the mere chance to cultivate taste through formal education and foreign language acquisition. For this reason translation was a 'revolutionary' act, a potentially subversive mechanism of social engineering that could make society better, less hierarchical and open to taste: «Why are translations important?» he asked himself rhetorically:

They are essential exactly for the reason why the philanthropist Lord Brougham invented the *penny magazines*, i.e. the budget-priced press, the rural libraries, the reading clubs of the workers, the popular public readings. It is exactly why the jealous, reserved and aristocratic Englishmen repudiated themselves, and opened the 'National Gallery', the 'Zoological Garden', the 'Adelaide Gallery', the museum in Southampton and in many other places also for the crowd in shirtsleeves and monkey-jackets. Why should I enumerate further examples when I can utter it in an emphatic sentence: the real and efficacious benefactor of the people is the one who helps and secures their unalienable rights, the rights that never become forfeited. And is there any right more beautiful and interesting for the people than to become cultivated according to their abilities? And there is no such impeccable part of cultivation as the nourishment of the noble taste.¹²

In Brassai's argumentation translation is the most natural and, at the same time, the most subversive part of national literature, since it is the most effective form of a social engineering that allows the literate to improve and to democratize society. On the other hand, it is the same type of balancing effect that had always made translation appealing in a global context for the co-founder and co-editor of the *Acta Comparationis*. From his perspective, in this supranational framework translation is able to become a modern solution for the huge cleavages and inequalities that separate from one another the various literary cultures¹³. For Brassai translation was thought to be a disruptive and challenging experience, the only one that would bring an awaited equality of chances for 'smaller' and 'less known' literatures, like Hungarian:

I am positive that this was a righteous *paupertatis testimonium* about the state of Hungarian literature. I hope you won't take it in bad part. Believe me, I acknowledge the degree Hungarian literature managed to get to in spite of so many adverse and rankling circumstances. [...] But if we do not feel for our aching parts, we might forget to remedy our misery. [...] I reckon I succeeded to demonstrate that all these numerous hardships, especially with us, can be solved only by translations.¹⁴

Due to this cross-cultural and supranational susceptibility that met with a social sensitiveness, translation became for Brassai a cultural artefact, mediating within and between cultures. That is why his interpretation of fidelity in matters of translation was a deeply cultural one. For him fidelity to the original stood in reinterpreting and reintegrating it into the new cultural context as if it had always been an essential part of it, without forcing the text to lose its ties to its original cultural framework. This double consideration of the original and the new cultural context, and the cultural transformation of the text made him affirm that only a tiny part of the so-called translations deserve their names, most of them being simple mechanic and less reflexive works¹⁵. This perspective and his theoretical linguistic beliefs ahead of his time made him reconsider the conventional basics also regarding the fundamental unity of translation. From the 1830s onwards, one of the major innovative ideas Brassai pleaded for was linked to the basic unity of translation. By emphasizing the crucial role of the wider cultural context and the culture-bound character of literary texts, he shifted the focus unit of translation from the word to the larger dynamics of the sentence. Certainly this was not only an issue of translation theory for him, but also a vision deriving from his contextual linguistic theory emphasizing the role of the pragmatic context when understanding words. To his mind words were always elusive when they were discussed and viewed isolated from their position in the sentence, the paragraph and the text¹⁶. This surprisingly modern linguistic philosophy returned in an applied form in his views on the basic item of the literary and other types of

texts to be translated. And he certainly also tried his principle out in practice from the 1830s till the 1890s translating from a series of languages.

But was this vision and focus on translation as a central mechanism of literary life, and a culturally embedded pursuit independent from the way Brassai perceived foreign languages, their acquisition and usage? Or, was it exactly the well-known easiness with which he learned foreign languages, his deep interest in the learning and teaching of foreign languages, his commitment to the comparative linguistic method and discipline, through which translation could become so crucial for him?

2. Sámuel Brassai and the revolutionizing of the teaching and learning of foreign languages

Most of the literature on the «Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum» has highlighted the figure of Hugo von Meltzl/Meltz Hugó as the bilingual, polyglot and cosmopolitan figure, connoisseur of several languages, professor of not only German studies, but later also of Italian and French ones. It was again him who has been portrayed as the ideal think tank figure behind the «ACLU», the one who graduated from a Western university, obtained his doctorate with a thesis on the philosophy of language acquisition¹⁷, and built an impressive scholarly network around the «ACLU» based on these polyglot abilities and meritocratic past. Archival documents that have recently turned up showed that this image was an accurate one even on a smaller scale: for instance, in order to be able to teach his students the *Edda* and Norse mythology, he started learning Icelandic, and taught the *Edda* along with a crash course in Icelandic language and culture¹⁸. And this is only one sample of the rich material that shows an expert of a multiple of local and foreign languages and literatures, from the Romanian to the Roman one¹⁹.

Though he is hardly ever remarked in the international literature focusing on the «ACLU», for the Hungarian contemporaries of Meltzl and Brassai, it was Brassai who embodied the ideal polyglot scholar. He spoke Latin, German, French, Romanian and English. He was one of the first Transylvanian scholars to emphasize the knowledge of the latter, certainly, due to his confessional background: as a member of the Unitarian Church he had thorough connections with the international (especially Northern European and American) Unitarian community. After returning to Cluj from Pest in 1859, he became professor of Greek and Hebrew in the Unitarian College, and held down this position till 1862. But the list of the languages he spoke, understood or/and read, did not come to an end: he also came to read Russian and Turkish. A letter written in 1870 to the famous literary historian and university professor, Ferenc Toldy can shed light not only on another language he knew, but also on the way this figure, often overstated as the 'last polyhistor' of his century, approached foreign language acquisition:

In the 1850s, for the sake of comparing languages with one another, I learned the Sanskrit language to a certain extent. Since for me the value of any language in itself is worthless, the moment I reached a certain level, I tried to learn more about the literature of this language. Since at that time there were only few resources I could use in Pest, I had to purchase most of them at my own expense. Thanks to this circumstance and as a gift of Pulszky, even at this moment my library is so rich that it supplements the ones in Pest. Being fixed in such a manner for Sanskrit studies, I have read in the original four voluminous chrestomathies, the separately edited episodes of *Mahabharata*, out of which two (the *Nalus* and the *Bhagavadgita*) are fair-sized books themselves. I also succeeded in reading three books of the other sizeable epic, the *Ramayana*, the most important five dramas, but also the *Hitopadesha* and the *Lilavati*. *I am positive that, based on these, I master this language more than any member of my nation.*²⁰

This richness of the languages spoken could explain why one of his first main publications targeted an issue that became a touchy question in the Hungarian nation-building process of the early nineteenth century: the much contested and debated relationship of the ‘national language’ with ‘the foreign’ ones. Brassai was a thorn in many of his contemporaries’ flesh when already in 1837, in the first year of his professorship at the famous Unitarian College of Kolozsvár/Cluj, he published a pioneering and provocative study on the acquisition of foreign languages²¹. Unlike many of his colleagues, he did not circumvent national language against foreign ones in an age that offered a novel sociolinguistic balance among ethnic identity and the languages spoken. He chose the harder way: to argue for the multiple utility of foreign language acquisition also in the cultivation of national languages. The theoretical argumentation was not against ‘national’ or ‘foreign’, but against the ideal of the universal language. This, he thought, would be useless, trivial, boring, and dangerous for the variety of languages that generate cultural and literary value. From this perspective, conscious, theoretically prepared and modern practical foreign language acquisition would be the perfect interface that enables the productive criss-crossing of different literary cultures. Moreover, there were a series of direct literary consequences of this early methodological stance. According to the most important of these, he thought that there was no local/national literary criticism without a wide-ranging global literary orientation. This attitude was not met with general enthusiasm in a period when the new, emerging, canonical-to-be genre of literary criticism still aimed at the position of the most representative genre of Hungarian national literature.

Brassai did return to the issue of foreign language acquisition, not only theoretically, but also with a solid, ever-growing palette of methodologically innovative course books. Among others, highly successful titles like *French Language Master for Free*²², *Learn German with a Logical Leader*²³, *Neue Unterrichtsmethode der lateinischen Konjugation mit Tafel und Katheketik*²⁴ [New Teaching Methods of the Latin Conjugation with Tables, Questions

and Answers], *How to Teach Latin Declination in a Logical, Fast and Successful Way?*²⁵ show the sources we should turn to when looking for the methodological-theoretical formulations of Brassai's surprisingly modern vision on language acquisition.

But the «ACLU» proved to be a focal point for Brassai in matters of language teaching and learning since he resumed his core ideas in a longer German essay simply entitled *Vom Sprachunterricht* [On Language Acquisition] in 1881. He must have found his publication especially important, because shortly after the essay was published again under the title *Die Reform des Sprachunterrichts in Europa. Ein Beitrag zur Sprachwissenschaft* [The Reform of Language Teaching in Europe. A Contribution to Linguistics] in the accompanying series of the «ACLU», entitled *Fontes*²⁶. There is no possibility to analyse the work in detail here, but it should be stated that it offers a ground breaking comparative perspective for language acquisition. Instead of the dominant (structural) method of his age that focused on grammar acquisition, Brassai went hand in hand with or even anticipated the later 'theoretical boom' of Henry Sweet, Otto Jespersen and others who began to advance the role of practice and interaction in second/foreign language acquisition. His vision and practice that emphasized the role of communicative language teaching and learning was a truly revolutionary idea in his time. Even if it could have been a remarkable proof of Brassai's international presence and influence through the «ACLU», it is hardly known that the 1881 publication of *Die Reform* seems to have triggered much of the famous German debate of 1882 that denounced the 'obsolescent methods' of language teaching. In his well-known 1882 *Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren!* (Language Teaching Should be Reformed), Wilhelm Viëtor, the famous initiator of the reform movement in matters of language teaching, recalled Brassai's recently published essay²⁷. Quoting him approvingly, he spotted a core metaphor of the Transylvanian scholar: «Gesetzt, ein Tischlermeister wollte einen Lehrjungen sein Handwerk lehren; wie würde er nach des Donatus System verfahren?» (Let's suppose, a carpenter would try to teach his apprentice his handicraft. How would he proceed along the system of Donatus?)²⁸. The emblematic figure of the German language teaching reform then went on to argue in favour of one of his central theses, i.e. the sentence as the basic context of language teaching and learning, a thesis Brassai had already been advocating five decades earlier. All in all, it seems that for Viëtor Brassai's booklet was one of the major 'magnetos' through which he came to articulate his position, also giving us a chance to retrospectively rehabilitate Brassai's modern view on language teaching and learning.

The emphasis on translation as a central literary mechanism and the communicative view of foreign language acquisition are two main focal points that could serve both as master examples of innovative scholarly interfaces of Brassai and Meltzl, the two founders of «ACLU», and, at the same time, the

obvious, key role Brassai played in the formation of the profile and beginnings of the «ACLU». From this point of view «ACLU» seems not the heroic venture of a single scholar, but a real *joint venture* of both of the founders and editors, Sámuel Brassai and Hugo von Meltzl.

Notes

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¹ The most important literature on the topic: S. Kerekes, *Lomnitz Meltzl Hugó 1846-1908* (Hugo von Meltzl from Lomnitz, 1846-1908), Minerva Társaság, Budapest 1937; Gy. Gaál (ed.), *Összehasonlító Irodalomtörténelmi Lapok* (Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum), Kriterion, Kolozsvár 1975; A. Berczik, *Lés débuts hongrois de l'histoire littéraire comparée*, «Acta Litteraria Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae», 2, 1959, pp. 215-249; H. Fassel (Hrsg.), *Hugo Meltzl und die Anfänge der Komparatistik* (Hugo von Meltzl and the Birth of Comparative Literary Studies), Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2005; D. Damrosch, *Rebirth of a Discipline: The Global Origins of Comparative Studies*, «Comparative Critical Studies», 3, 1-2, 2006, pp. 99-112.

² For a deeper and wider analysis regarding methodological nationalism and its consequences, see: J. Leerssen, *National Thought in Europe: A Cultural History*, Amsterdam UP, Amsterdam 2006; J. Leerssen, *Viral Nationalism: Romantic Intellectuals on the Move in 19th-Century Europe*, «Nations and Nationalism», 17, 2, 2011, pp. 257-271.

³ Before one would think that this is an exclusively non-Hungarian or Western peculiarity of research, let me stress that even the best Hungarian research papers of the latest years focused exclusively on Meltzl: see for instance the excellent overview of I. Fried, *Az Összehasonlító Irodalomtörténelmi Lapok nyomában* (Tracking the Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum), «Tiszatáj», 3, 2007, pp. 95-107. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the author.

⁴ Meltzl is speaking of himself in the third person singular.

⁵ Archives of the Transylvanian Unitarian Church, Sámuel Brassai's Collection. Miscellaneous MSS. Miscellaneous correspondence.

⁶ There is no philological evidence whether the two had ever met before 1872. Meltzl graduated from the Unitarian College in a period when Brassai had to flee from Cluj, due to his role in the local events of the 1849 revolution, and survived the 1850s partly in Pest.

⁷ See J. Delisle, J. Woodsworth (eds), *Les Traducteurs dans l'histoire*, Presses de l'Université de l'Ottawa, Ottawa 2007.

⁸ S. Brassai, *Mégis valamit a fordításról* (Still Some Ideas on translation), «Szépirodalmi Figyelő», 1, 19-20, 27-28, 30-33, 48-50, 1861, pp. 289-291, 305-307, 417-419, 433-436, 465-468, 481-485, 497-501, 513-515, 753-757, 769-771, 785-788.

⁹ S. Brassai, *Mégis valamit a fordításról*, cit., 1, 48-50, 1861, pp. 787-788.

¹⁰ See S. Brassai, *A kirgiz kozákokról* (About the Cossacks of Kyrgyzstan), «Vasárnapi Újság», 2, 85-87, 1835, pp. 731-750.

¹¹ S. Brassai, *Mégis valamit a fordításról*, cit., 1, 20, p. 307.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ This was an issue that preoccupied also Meltzl in his essay reflecting not only on the first international literary congress, but also on the international mechanisms and cleavages of global literary life.

¹⁴ S. Brassai, *Mégis valamit a fordításról*, cit., 1, 19-20, pp. 291 and 307.

¹⁵ Cf. Ivi, p. 289; H. Meltzl, *La réforme littéraire en Europe. Quelques observations a propos de l'ouverture du Congrès littéraire international a Paris en Juin 1878*, «Journal de Littérature Comparée», 31, 2009, pp. 38-48; 32, 2009, pp. 12-20.

¹⁶ See J. Péntek (ed.), *A nyelvész Brassai élő öröksége* (The Living Heritage of Brassai, the Linguist), Erdélyi Múzeum-Egyesület, Kolozsvár 2005.

¹⁷ H. Meltzl, *Stellung, Maas und Methode der Philosophie in der Gymnasial-Pädagogik* (The Perspective and Method of Philosophy in the Pedagogy of the Grammar School), Kollmann, Leipzig 1872.

¹⁸ The Romanian Archives (Cluj), Archives of the Cluj University, Faculty of Letters, 352/1875.

¹⁹ The history of the university of Cluj, and especially that of the nineteenth century Faculty of Letters, has not been thoroughly researched. We have recently come across the latent official sources of the institution that have never been systematically processed, reviewed and interpreted. A forthcoming monography will treat these sources in depth: T.L. Szabó, M. Zabán, *The History of the Faculty of Letters of Kolozsvár/Cluj (1872-1892)*. For a selections of these sources: T.L. Szabó, M. Zabán (eds), *Dokumentumok a kolozsvári Bölcsész-, Nyelv- és Történettudományi Kar történetéhez* (Archival Documents of the Faculty of Philosophy, Languages and History from Kolozsvár / Cluj, 1872-1892), Kolozsvári Egyetemi Kiadó-Presa Universitară Clujană, Kolozsvár 2012.

²⁰ Brassai aspired to the newly established department of Oriental languages and literatures of Pest University, and was unpleasantly surprised when he came to know that the vacancy was filled. The letter was written in this peculiar context to his influential fellow scholar who was university professor of Hungarian language and literature at that time. The original of the letter is to be found at the Archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences: MTA K Kt. Irod. Lev. 4r. 105. Italics in the original. Translation by the author.

²¹ S. Brassai, *Nyelvtanulás* (Language Learning), «Nemzeti Társalkodó», 7, 6-8, 1837, pp. 81-91, 97-105, 113-124.

²² S. Brassai, *Ingyen tanító francia nyelvmester* (French Language Master for Free), Stein, Kolozsvár 1863.

²³ *Okszerű vezér a német nyelv tanulásában* (A Logical Guide in Learning German). As a telltale sign of its success, in 1864 the textbook appeared for the seventh time.

²⁴ This was edited in Leipzig in 1881 by Johannes Minckwitz, one of the important collaborators of the *Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum*.

²⁵ S. Brassai, *Hogyan kelljen a latin hajtogatást ésszerűen, gyorsan és sikeresen tanítani* (How to Teach Latin Declination in a Most Logical, Quick and Successful Way), Stein, Kolozsvár 1872.

²⁶ S. Brassai, *Die Reform des Sprachunterrichts in Europa. Ein Beitrag zur Sprachwissenschaft* (The Reform of Language Teaching in Europe. A Contribution to Linguistics), Sumptibus Editorum Actorum Comparationis Litterarum Universarum, Trübner & Co., Kolozsvár-London 1881.

²⁷ W. Viëtor, *Der Sprachunterricht muss umkehren! Ein Beitrag zur Überbürdungsfrage von Quousque Tandem* (Language Teaching Should be Reformed), Gebr. Henninger, Heilbronn 1882. Translation by the author.

²⁸ Ivi, p. 67 (translation by the author). The original position of the passage and the metaphor in Brassai's booklet: S. Brassai, *Die Reform*, cit., p. 9.

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