

Summary

The book *Herbartovi dědicové (Herbart's Heirs)* follows up on one of the key (but currently often neglected) areas of modern Czech philosophy that developed during the 19th century, especially in its second half. Thematically, it touches on the roots of Czech formalism, which makes this publication, in the field of aesthetics as a science, a unique insight into the process of historical development and the specific direction of Czech realist thought.

Jan Svoboda's introduction is followed by Otakar Hostinský's *Herbartova estetika (Herbart's Aesthetics)* from 1891, which has not yet been published in Czech, but is a key study. Herbart himself did not write any systematic work on aesthetics. This original and quite extensive study can be considered a seminal work in terms of the importance of its ideological intent, in which Hostinský (1847–1910) collected and systematically sorted all of Herbart's original statements on aesthetics and art with the necessary scientific acrimony. In doing so, he succeeded in critically pointing out the fundamental differences in some of Herbart's positions, which had long been professionally matured in him and which, by their original nature, differed significantly from the positions of the so-called Herbartian school of abstract formalism, especially its main protagonist Robert Zimmermann (1824–1898), but also Hostinský's older colleague and Zimmermann's follower Josef Durdík (1837–1902), then working at the University of Prague. The impact of this important work proved Hostinský right and led to revolutionary consequences for Hostinský. The revelation of the original historical form of the Herbartian conception essentially brought to an end the era of the Zimmermann interpretation of Herbart, and the authenticity of the *concrete formalism* that Hostinský's systematic selection from a number of Herbart's philosophical reflections had both extracted and confirmed, could have become the desired starting point for a modern aesthetic view of Wagner's operatic reform, and consequently for the defence of Smetana's conception of a national Czech opera, as well as for the inclination towards artistic truthfulness, which Hostinský used to condition and favour realism in art against idealistic artistic tendencies. These facts were also the reason for the considerable foreign acclaim that Hostinský's compendium soon enjoyed among the professional public.

The second part is devoted to contemporary ideological reflections on this traditional philosophical issue by foreign or domestic authors and offers a necessary methodological perspective on its creative input and potential contribution to newer currents of thought, whether formalist, struc-

turalist, or otherwise scientifically oriented. The text prepared for this part of the book by the French Bohemist and expert on Czech literature Xavier Galmiche can be seen as a concise and very pertinent introduction to the historical context of how philosophers, historians of ideas, and art theorists within a generation have realized the necessity of returning to the sources of this philosophy, especially in France, where it was hitherto rather unknown. This programmatic interdisciplinary collaboration essentially pursued two tasks. One was to analyse the birth, development, and aims of the aesthetic formalism that emerged in Central Europe from Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776–1841) and Bernard Bolzano (1781–1848). The other was to deepen our knowledge of the Prague centre of thought beyond Germany and Austria. The outcome was a colloquium that explored the importance of the Prague centre for the rise of formalist aesthetics and the variety of methods of its interpretation, from different scholarly perspectives, whether in the fields of philosophy, German studies, or Slavic studies.

The ambitions of this meeting were great. The aim was to reflect on the conditions and ways of transferring the epistemological (aesthetic formalism) and methodological (experimental aesthetics) tools developed by the Herbartian school in the Austrian context to various formalist and structuralist currents of European thought, including Russian formalism. By examining how general aesthetics has been misunderstood within critical discourse, the colloquium participants thus sought to rethink the links of continuity between it and applied aesthetics (art history, literary history, etc.). In the next step, the role of Herbart's work in the constitution of nineteenth-century scientific psychology and other disciplines, such as ethnopsychology and linguistics, as well as the role that the "Herbartians" played in defining and institutionalizing Austrian thought after 1848, was gradually revealed anew. On the other hand, this colloquium also wanted to raise the question of what role aesthetic formalism played in the revival of literary criticism, which had long been neglected within general aesthetics at the expense of criticism of art and music.

The research impact of this colloquium is not negligible. The discovery of the existing connection between nineteenth-century formalism and the structuralism of the Prague linguistic circle created the conditions, for example, for the translation of Jan Mukařovský's texts. Four of these contributions are collected here in an updated form in Czech translation. Some of the texts have since been published in Czech or have been reworked or significantly enriched in terms of their content. They form the second thematic part of the book in a logical sequence. In spite of their specificity, all

the contributions share the intention to search under the label of aesthetic formalism for links between the philosophical traditions of several cultural areas: German and Austrian, Russian and Czech. This dialogue can also be sought between epochs. This is the aim of the eighth paper included in this collection, which analyses the traces of the concept of “beauty” among Czech Herbartians, which is inherent in the fourteenth-century Czech thinker Tomáš Štíttný. The common goal is to understand the phenomena of appropriation and adaptation of Herbartianism in the Czech lands and elsewhere.

In her contribution, Carole Maigné examines the extensive process of historicization that Zimmermann introduced in his *Geschichte der Aesthetik* (1858) in an attempt to understand what the formalist position means in this conception. Vlad Ionesco’s text can be seen as a certain extension of the horizon of this historicizing issue, as he approaches the analysis of Alois Riegl’s texts with the intention of revealing how Zimmermann’s aesthetics influenced Riegl and to what extent he justifiably sets himself against it. Following these more general historical analyses of Zimmermann’s formalism, Celine Trautmann-Waller examines the development of the so-called formalist aesthetic in Prague and explores the ways in which Hostinský’s writings attempt to present a Herbartian aesthetic that is faithful to its original sources, emphasizing the place that music occupies within it and the role played by considerations of notions of the concrete, value, and convention. Josef Zúmr, in a certain thematic continuity, then outlines the terminological difference between “programmatic” and “general” aesthetics as Otakar Hostinský understood the term in his time. The dialogue between cultures also had its historical and philosophical background in terms of the search for continuity of Czech thought. Jan Svoboda draws attention to this fact and points to a certain curiosity of Czech philosophical thought, which is the relationship of Czech Herbartians to Tomáš Štíttný. In the turbulent period of the Czech Revival, Štíttný captivated our Herbartians with his conception of beauty, which they saw as parallel to the aesthetic views of J. F. Herbart. After this historical-philosophical excursus, in which the author concludes by suggesting a possible thematic connotation with Whitehead’s notion of “eternal objects”, Mojmír Grygar reflects on abstract art as it is understood today and presents its basic features. Catherine Depretto discusses Russian formalism. She reflects on the significance that has been attributed in recent years within the terminological apparatus of Russian formalism to the substrate of German psychology, including Johann Friedrich Herbart, asking whether this connection definitively challenges previously offered interpretive paradigms. The book concludes with Igor Pilshchikov’s contribu-

tion, which examines definitions of verse and descriptions of the relationship between meter and rhythm as proposed by scholars of Russian poetry. Building on their observations, he devises a constructive definition of the concept of meter as a system of permissions and prohibitions that govern the distribution of word stresses and word boundaries in a verse line. He also formulates constructive definitions of the versification systems used in Russian poetry (such as syllabotonic verse, logaoedic verse, *dolnik* and *taktovik*, and pure accentual verse).