

“*La pluma es la lengua del alma.*”
(Miguel de Cervantes)

ISTVÁN ORMOS: AN ACADEMIC PROFILE

István Ormos was born on 15 June 1950 in Szeged, South Hungary, into a family of physicians of two generations. Thus, not surprisingly, after finishing secondary school in 1968, he became a medical student in his hometown. However, after five years of diligent studies, his juvenile interest in the Semitic languages made him abandon the profession of his parents and grandparents. He decided to continue his studies first in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Szeged, and then, from 1974 on, at the Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, in the only department of Arabic and Semitic philology in Hungary at the time.

Apart from his major subject, he also took classes in a whole range of Semitic languages. In 1977 he spent a year with a scholarship in Baghdad furthering his knowledge of the Arabic language, then obtained his MA degree in the next year. The following two years found him in Cairo, where he also attended classes of Ethiopian languages, Ge'ez and Amharic.

In 1980, he embarked upon his career as a university lecturer, which has continued to this day, educating generations of students. Over the past four decades, he has taught a wide range of subjects, including the analysis of various texts in Classical Arabic, other Semitic languages such as Hebrew and Syriac, comparative Semitic linguistics, and Arabic sources for the prehistory of the Hungarian people. He was appointed to the professorship of Arabic and Semitic studies in 2012, also being the head of the department between 2010 and 2015.

By virtue of his former studies at the faculty of medicine, the history of mediaeval Arabic medicine remained one of his main fields of interest in the following years, leading to his doctoral dissertation on Avicenna's treatise on phonetics in the early eighties. In particular, he examined Avicenna's theory of sound and voice production, as well as his views on the structure of the larynx and the tongue. He then conducted further research on this subject, as a result of which he published several articles on Avicenna and other medical topics, alongside many book reviews concerning the history of Arabic medicine.

István Ormos's interest in the Semitic languages urged him to visit Ethiopia in 1984 for the sake of furthering his studies in Ge'ez and Amharic. This research eventually resulted in several of his publications, among others the translation of a selection from *The life of Saint Täklä Haymanot*, followed by an article on his life as a source for the popular religious practices in Ethiopia.

Ormos joined the Oriental Collection of the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences as part-time curator of Arabic and Hebrew manuscripts in the mid-1980s, from which post he resigned after twenty years of service at the end of 2003. His employment at the library gave him the opportunity to organise colloquia and publish several volumes and articles on the basis of the Oriental Collection.

From the eighties onwards, István Ormos has carried out thorough research on the Arabic sources concerning the early history of the Hungarian people. This resulted in his profound intimacy not only with the primary sources but also with the relevant scholarly literature on the subject. This is shown by a series of long review articles – or, better said, collections of meticulous essays – in which he attempted to provide a comprehensive analysis of the relevant geographical and historical sources.

In the mid-nineties, he became acquainted with a prominent figure in Egypt at the turn of the 20th century, the Hungarian architect Max Herz – or, as known in Egypt, Herz Pasha – through his correspondence with the Hungarian scholar of Islamic Studies, Ignaz Goldziher. Subsequently, István Ormos's extensive research in Hungary, Vienna, Cairo, and elsewhere led him to a comprehensive knowledge of the life and career of Max Herz, with particular attention to his various activities in Egypt as an architect, conservator, museum director, and architectural historian. His research on the subject resulted first in his habilitation dissertation in 2003, and then, six years later, in his fascinating two-volume monograph on the life and activities of Max Herz Pasha. Since this publication, Professor Ormos has continued his research in the field, mainly by further exploring a particular sphere of Herz Pasha's career: the planning and implementation of the Cairo Street at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893 at Chicago. After several thought-provoking articles, he has now completed a monograph on the topic, which is to be published later this year.

Last but not least, mention must be made of another territory in István Ormos's manifold scholarly projects: he wrote the biography of two previous heads of the Arabic Department. After a series of articles, he also published a book on one of them, Mihály Kmoskó, in which he not only draws a sensible portrayal of the private and public life of Kmoskó but also provides a detailed insight to the society of Hungary in the aftermath of the First World War. In this brilliant book enriched by extensive notes and illustrations, the author also presents a special gem to the readers in the appendices: the edited report by Kmoskó on his official travels in Greater Syria in 1916.

In tribute to Professor Ormos's erudite and enduring contributions to the wide-ranging fields of scholarship described above, his colleagues, friends, and former students offer the following papers to celebrate the occasion of his seventieth birthday.

PUBLICATIONS OF ISTVÁN ORMOS

A. Books

1985

A törzsek származásáról, avagy A kincsesbarlang [On the Origin of Tribes or the Cave of Treasures]. Budapest: Helikon Kiadó. [Translated from Syriac].

1986

Csodatévő Takla Hájmánót [Saint Täklä Haymanot]. Budapest: Helikon Kiadó. [Translated from Ethiopic].

1992

A Scheiber-könyvtár katalógusa [Catalogue of the Scheiber Library]. Ed. É. Apor. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtára. [Co-authored].

1995

Goldziher, Ignác, *Az arabok és az iszlám: Válogatott tanulmányok* [The Arabs and Islam: Selected Studies]. 2 vols. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtára. [Edited volume].

2005

Goldziher Memorial Conference. Budapest: Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. [Co-edited with É. Apor].

2009

Max Herz Pasha (1856–1919): His Life and Career. 2 vols. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.

2010

Adalékok a magyar őstörténet arab forrásainak kutatásához: Tüzetes viszontválasz Zimonyi Istvánnak [Notes on the Research on Arabic Sources for Hungarian Prehistory: A Thorough Counter-Response to István Zimonyi]. Budapest: Author. [Updated in 2012].

2017

Egy életút állomásai: Kmoskó Mihály 1876–1931 [Stations in a Life: Mihály Kmoskó 1876–1931]. Budapest: Historia Ecclesiastica Hungarica Alapítvány.

The Early Magyars in the Jayhānī Tradition: Reflections on István Zimonyi's Book "Muslim Sources on the Magyars". Budapest: Author.

2020 (in press)

Cairo in Chicago: at the World's Columbian Exposition, 1893. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.

B. Articles and book chapters

1982

“Abenteuer eines Irakers in Brasilien”. *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 36:1–3. 215–226. [Co-authored with G. Hazai].

1985

“Observations on Avicenna’s Treatise on Phonetics”. *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 39:1. 45–84.

1986

“A Key Factor in Avicenna’s Theory of Phonation”. *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 40:2–3. 283–292.

1987

“The Theory of Humours in Islam (Avicenna)”. *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 5–6. 601–607.

“A humorális elmélet Avicenna Kánonjában” [The Theory of Humours in Avicenna’s Canon]. *Keletkutatás* (ősz). 63–68, 148.

1988

“An Unknown Poem by Avicenna”. *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic* 1. 134–141.

1991

“The Hebrew Collections in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences”. *Hebrew Studies: Papers Presented at a Colloquium for Hebraica in Europe Held at the School of Oriental and African Studies*. Ed. D. Rowland-Smith, P. S. Salinger. London, British Library. 56–57.

1992

“Az MTA Könyvtárának középkori kéziratai egy berlini kiállításon” [Medieval Manuscripts from the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences at an Exhibition in Berlin]. *Magyar Tudomány* 99 (New Series 37:7). 856–857.

1993

“Surgery in Arabic: Aspects of a Technical Term”. In: *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Arabic Lexicology and Lexicography (C.A.L.L.)*. Ed. K. Dévényi, T. Iványi, A. Shvitiel. *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic* 6–7. 215–232.

“Bemerkungen zur editorischen Bearbeitung der Galenschrift ‘Über die Sektion toter Lebewesen’”. In: *Galen und das hellenistische Erbe: Verhandlungen des IV. Internationalen Galen-Symposiums veranstaltet vom Institut für Geschichte der Medizin am Bereich Medizin (Charité)*. Ed. J. Kollesch, D. Nickel. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner. 165–172.

1994

“Apameai János: Három értekezés” [Three Tracts by John of Apamea]. In: *Az isteni és az emberi természetről: Görög egyházatyák*. Ed. J. Háy. Budapest, Atlantisz. II, 179–211.

“Takla Hájmánót etióp szent élettörténete (*gadl*) mint történeti és néprajzi forrás” [The Life (Gadl) of Takla Haymanot: A Source for the Study of Ethiopian Popular Religion]. *Keletkutatás* (tavasz). 15–31, 127–128.

“Biographical Notice”. In: *Studies in Honour of Károly Czeglédy on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*. Ed. A. Fodor et al. *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic* 8. xiii–xv.

“The Life (Gädl) of Täklä Haymanot as a Source for the Study of Popular Religious Practices in Ethiopia”. In: *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Popular Customs and the Monotheistic Religions in the Middle East and North Africa*. Ed. A. Fodor, A. Shvitiel. *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic* 9–10. 305–332.

1995

“Survival of an Old Literary Genre: Al-Baġdādī’s Account of His Journey to Brazil”. In: *Proceedings of the 14th Congress of the Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*. Part Two. Ed. A. Fodor. *The Arabist: Budapest Studies in Arabic* 15–16. 187–193.

1996

“A specializáció gyökerei az arab-iszlám orvostudományban” [The Origins of Specialisation in Arab-Islamic Medicine]. *Keletkutatás* (tavasz). 19–40.

“Egy magyar építész Egyiptomban: Herz Miksa Pasa (1856–1919)” [A Hungarian Architect in Egypt: Max Herz Pasha (1856–1919)]. *Keletkutatás* (1996. ősz/2002. tavasz). 203–230.

“In memoriam Czeglédy Károly (Pápa, 1914. December 21. – Budapest, 1996. Június 20.)”. *Keletkutatás* (1996 ősz/2002 tavasz). 301–305.

1999

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2001

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“Kaufmann Dávid és gyűjteménye” [David Kaufmann and His Collection]. In: *Örökségünk, élő múltunk: Gyűjtemények a Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtárában*. Ed. G. Fekete. Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtára. 221–269.

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2002

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2003

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2005

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2007

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2008

“The Funerary Mosque of Sultan Qayitbay in the Northern Cemetery: Some Aspects of Herz Pasha’s Methods of Conservation”. In: *Dirāsāt wa-buḥūṭ fī l-āṭār wa-l-*

ḥaḍāra al-islāmiyya: Kitāb taḍkāri li-l-ustād ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān Maḥmūd ‘Abd at-Tawwāb. Ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd as-Sattār ‘Uṭmān *et al.* Alexandria: Dār al-Wafā’. I/2, *al-‘Imāra*, 594–616.

2009

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“The Cairo Street at the World’s Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893”. In: *L’orientalisme architectural entre imaginaires et savoirs*. Ed. N. Oulebsir, M. Volait. Paris: Publications de l’Institut national d’histoire de l’art, Picard. 195–214.

2010

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2012

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2013

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“A Szultán Ḥasan-mecset kútjai Kairóban: Esettanulmány Herz Miksa pasa műemlékvédői gyakorlatából” [Fountains of the Sultan Ḥasan Mosque in Cairo: A Case Study of Max Herz’s Conservation of Monuments]. In: *Peritia Linguarum: A vienne-i zsinat és a nyelvek oktatása*. Ed. M. Maróth. Piliscsaba: Avicenna Közel-Kelet Kutatások Intézet. 33–68.

2014

“Cairo in the New World: Facets of Max Herz Pasha’s ‘Cairo Street’ at the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago”. In: *History and Islamic Civilization: Essays in Honour of Ayman Fu’ād Sayyid*. Ed. O. Kohela. Cairo: ad-Dār al-Miṣriyya al-Lubnāniyya. 53–68.

2015

“A korai magyar történelem arab forrásai: A háttér, s a környezet a szövegek értelmezéséhez” [Arabic Sources for the Early History of the Magyars: Background and

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2016

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2017

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2018

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2019

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C. Lexicon entries

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“Etiópiai sémi nyelvek”. 371–373.

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D. Reviews and review articles

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