

to Eliza Draper, a twenty-two-year-old woman, the wife of a servant of the East India Company. After their short acquaintance in London she had to return to Bombay to her husband. She received the first part of Sterne's journal while her ship lay at anchor off the Downs. Sterne continued his diary in her absence, of which only the final part was found more than half a century later in an attic in Bath by an eleven year old boy whose much later account of it brought the *Journal* to light as late as 1878, the text being published by Wilbur Cross only in 1904, in a collection of Sterne's works (xxvi).

One may perhaps rightly wonder why the editors, if they decided to present the two texts in a single edition, left out Yorick's ten letters which were also addressed to Mrs. Draper and written in the same period. Although they claim that the "*Journey cannot be sufficiently understood without the context supplied by *Bramine's Journal*" (xxvii), the reader would happily see the *Letters from Yorick to Eliza* in this context, too, a procedure that Perry Curtis, the editor of Sterne's letters pursued, when he published the *Journal* among other letters by Sterne from the same period. The *Letters*, which were posthumously published in 1773 also bring to light aspects of Sterne's relationship with Mrs. Draper, therefore the three surviving texts would perhaps be even more demonstrative of the last year of his life when read together. Having the *Letters* also presented in this volume would have filled Hungarian Shandean with special joy because this collection of Sterne's most sentimental feelings, together with the spurious answers of Eliza Draper, known as *Letters Written Between Yorick and Eliza*, was the earliest work by Sterne to be translated by Ferenc Kazinczy and Gábor Döbrentei, and so it enjoyed a greater reputation than his other works in the period of Hungarian sentimentalism. Nevertheless, let us hope that the admirers of Yorick will not have to wait too long for the publication of the seventh volume of the Florida Edition, *The Correspondence*, to be edited by Peter de Voogd. As for the present: those interested in the philological and textual aspects of Sterne's sentimental works can hold this precious volume in their hands with the conviction that it is hardly believable that this edition will ever be bettered. Melvyn New and Geoffrey Day have completed an enormous archival work demanding many years of painstaking research and prepared the volume with an expertise and carefulness that no one was better qualified to undertake. Although it is hardback and maybe somewhat expensive, Hungarian readers would be very grateful if at least one Hungarian library could afford to acquire the Florida Edition series of Laurence Sterne's works.*

**Hartvig, Gabriella.** *Laurence Sterne Magyarországon 1790-1860.* [Laurence Sterne in Hungary 1790-1860.] Budapest: Argumentum, 2000. 198 pp.

**Mária Kurdi**

Gabriella Hartvig's book has a very modest title, revealing little about the fact that the author uses a variety of contexts to widen the scope of her study of Sterne's early reception in Hungary. Since knowledge about and response to foreign literature during the decades indicated was much entrenched in the country's semi-colonial situation, international relations and intranational cultural concepts and endeavours, this complex approach is both justifiable and laudable. The chapters of the book register the interplay of a great number of relevant factors and processes, incorporating data, referential

details, and thoughtful conclusions that emerge from a vast amount of informed research as proven by the extensive notes.

While introducing her subject from a twentieth-century vantage point, Hartvig revisits one-time views and opinions about Sterne's work, especially how its technical novelty was received by the contemporary English critics. At this point the author's main focus is on *Tristram Shandy*, and referring to the early, favourable reviews, that of the philosopher Edmund Burke is mentioned as one which maintained a keen interest in aspects of form and the values of the satirical mode as prevailing in the novel. Like Burke, Sterne himself had Anglo-Irish roots, and spent his early childhood in colonial Ireland. This circumstance was long neglected, but from the benefit of hindsight today's assessments of the development of the Irish novel underscore the manifestations of certain metadiscursive capacities which can be traced back to Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*. Hartvig pays attention to Sterne's contemporary German and French reception as well, demonstrating the extent to which the English author was evaluated through the prism of those respective literatures. The parallels between Rabelais and Sterne are viewed, aided by quotations from Mikhail Bakhtin's comments, yet too briefly to throw light on the French reception in greater detail.

In the best chapters of the book Hartvig presents a ramifying picture of the social and cultural conditions underpinning the arrival of Sterne in Hungary. She claims that the Hungarian public became familiarized with Sterne's works at a time, from the late 1790s onwards, when Hungarian literary life was still very protean and characterized by a profound German and French orientation. Admittedly, to counter this force leading literary figures like Ferenc Kazinczy, Ferenc Kölcsey, and Gábor Döbrentei advocated the cultivation of the national language and encouraged writers to translate and adapt the best of foreign literature to chisel their style and acquire new patterns and forms of expression. This was part of the movement which, in our modern terminology, can be defined as a kind of cultural nationalism; in which the art of translation assumed a public role, political as well as educational, to help broaden the concept of the aesthetic potential of literary discourses at the same time. Interestingly, the "nationalized" versions of foreign masterpieces were often thought of as originals, and imitations tended to be valued and respected as products of native creativity. The author makes it clear why Hungary was unique in this respect, explaining the differences from the cultural situations of Germany and France.

In analyzing early Hungarian imitations and versions of Sterne's work the book offers one engaging philological feat after another. Ferenc Verseghy's brief writing, "The Life and Opinions of My Dear Uncle, Gabriel Shandy," which mimics the manner of Sterne, and the same author's later epistolary novel inspired, among other comic models, by *Tristram Shandy* and titled *The Merriful Life and Ridiculous Opinions of Gergely Kolomposi Szarvas, Esq.* (1804) are cases in point, to be followed by Kazinczy's respective translations of *The Letters Written Between Yorick and Eliza* and *Sentimental Journeys Through France and Italy*. Sterne proved to be a catalytic force on the Hungarian literary scene as the reception of his work generated debates, most importantly about the strategies of translation itself, among Hungarian writers and critics. The book charts these in terms of how they changed over the decades, emphasizing competing theories of humour in the context of native literary developments, the influence of various cults and tastes, and the response to the masterpieces of foreign literatures.

In spite of its obvious attraction for many, Sterne's awesome major work, *Tristram Shandy* did not find a translator to render it into Hungarian in full before the middle of the twentieth century. There was some sweeping around it though, as Döbrentei's *Life of Sterne* (1817) focussed on *Tristram Shandy*, giving a romanticized view of the author as the creative genius whose work enabled its readers to see the beauties of his digressions and capture the deeper meanings as well. Further on, Hartvig discusses an 1824 extract from *Tristram Shandy*, with the title "A Letter of Instruction on Courtship Meant for Bachelors," which rendered into Hungarian Walter Shandy's letter of advice to his brother on how he might conquer the heart of the Widow Wadman. It was published anonymously, and it is a special value of Hartvig's research of the subject that, having found the actual source of the extract, she managed to identify the translation as the work of Edvi Illés, an ambitious contributor to the periodical where the letter appeared. In the middle of the nineteenth century, however, interest in Sterne slackened, due to a strange coincidence of facts: by the time the institution of criticism had reached the state of being able to communicate the aesthetic values of foreign literature to Hungarian readers, eighteenth-century novel writers had fallen out of fashion. The book, thus, tells a narrative of many strands, digressions and varying fortunes, but Sterne-loving readers will hardly be puzzled by the phenomenon.

Finally, two problems need to be mentioned. In spite of its formidable philological apparatus, the book perhaps cites from secondary sources slightly overmuch. On the other hand, given the abundance of names, titles, and contextual references, an index from the end of the volume is gravely missing. All in all, however, Gabriella Hartvig's study of Laurence Sterne in Hungary in context and in perspective—to complete her modest title—qualifies as an intriguing scholarly achievement that well deserves being added to the critical library of those interested in the English and Anglo-Irish novel, English-Hungarian literary relations, and the cultural history of the reception and translation of foreign literatures in Hungary.

*From Brooke to Black Pastoral: Six Studies in Irish Literature and Culture. Litteraria Pragensia* 10.20 (2000). 101 pp.

Zsuzsa Csikai

The editors of this special issue of *Litteraria Pragensia*, the publication of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, Prague, hope to illuminate certain issues of the current debate in Irish literary and cultural studies. They perceive that contemporary writing in and on Ireland demonstrates a strong intention of writers to advocate a "plurality of perspectives on the general cultural issues" (1), and to reflect this phenomenon in their publication the editors selected essays that are not unified in terms of either a specified theme or a critical approach.

In his essay "Charlotte Brooke and James Macpherson," Micheal MacCraith shows how Charlotte Brooke's *Reliques of Irish Poetry* contrasts with and subtly discredits Macpherson's plagiarisms. By including genuine Gaelic Irish versions of the plagiarist's alleged Scottish originals when compiling her own translations for the anthology, Brooks seems to implicitly argue her scepticism concerning the authenticity and provenance of Macpherson's Ossianic poems. McCraith also claims that the