

Reviews

O večková, O. – Vozár, J. et al: A Centenary of Právny obzor (1917 – 2017).
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When the lawyer Emil Stodola put into effect his plan to give the Slovak law community the first law magazine in Slovak language and published the historically first issue of *Právny obzor* in 1917, his decision was not only brave and self-sacrificing, but also full of hope and trust in Slovak lawyers. He could not have succeeded if he had not believed that his Slovak colleagues would respond to this challenge in a sufficient number and with the same enthusiasm, become contributors and subscribers of the new magazine and thus keep it alive. Although the first years of its existence were very difficult, the magazine finally managed to attract and put together lawyers, judges, law scientists, notaries public and representatives of other law professions. It appears without break since its foundation.

The centenary of *Právny obzor* has become an appeal to remember the circumstances of its foundation as well as to evaluate its importance and the content of its published issues. The magazine celebrated the one hundred years of its existence with dignity by publishing a jubilee monograph of the team of authors led by Oľga Ovečková and Jozef Vozár, called “A Centenary of *Právny obzor* 1917 – 2017”. Beside of the team leaders, Eduard Bárány, Peter Colotka, Barbora Králičková, Lukáš Lapšanský, Marián Kropaj, Peter Kukliš, Tatiana Weissová and Katarína Závacká contributed to this monograph as co-authors. This joint effort gave rise to a work that deserves attention, not only of the legal scientists, but of the whole cultivated law community.

The authors attractively and suitably divided the monograph into five chapters: I. The first years of the existence of *Právny obzor*, II. Personalities behind the foundation of

Právny obzor, III. Reflections of the development of law in the 100-year history of *Právny obzor*, IV. Documentation of publishing *Právny obzor*, V. Selected articles published in *Právny obzor*.

This structure allowed them to tell the gripping story of the magazine, from its foundation in Budapest during the First World War till the present days. The collective monograph has become a view of the oldest Slovak law magazine and of the contemporary law reality as seen by the editors of *Právny obzor*.

The importance of the monograph is signalled by the importance of the magazine itself for Slovak lawyers and Slovak legal science. *Právny obzor* was and is a magazine, in which elements of continuity of a progressive legal thinking had always manifested themselves, as highlighted by the authors.

The value of the monograph is increased by the thorough examination of the position of the magazine in life of lawyers in the respective period, and of interactions and merits of individual personalities who created, maintained and cultivated the magazine. The monograph thus represents a symbolic thank-you to all who contributed to the magazine in the first hundred years of its existence.

In the preface Oľga Ovečková, editor-in-chief, rightly refers to the fact that *Právny obzor* as a 100-year old specialized magazine has become a phenomenon of our culture, kept a general character (has not specialised in any particular branch of law) and accent of theoretical focus, become a precious historical document of development of Slovak and Central European legal thinking and not once lost contact with progressive European legal thinking. She further recalls that the Institute of

State and Law of the Slovak Academy of Sciences has managed the magazine as its publisher since 1955, i.e. for more than a half of its existence.

The first chapter describes the first years of the existence of the magazine and presents its objectives, as defined by its founder Emil Stodola. Emil Stodola saw the objectives of the magazine in building of Slovak legal terminology, in providing information about valid law, in publishing of case-law and in cultivation of the legal science. The first chapter also contains contemporary “appeals” of the editors to the readers that were published in the magazine in the first years of its existence.

The second chapter introduces the founder of the magazine Emil Stodola and presents the first articles published in it, which all bear witness to contemporary legal battles for the use of Slovak language in official intercourse and creation of legal terminology. In relation to Emil Stodola and Vladimír Fajnor – restorer of the magazine, the chapter describes their known and less known activities in their full multiplicity and contains a very interesting subchapter devoted to the foundation and activity of *Právnická jednota na Slovensku* (Slovak Lawyers’ Association) as one of the most important interwar lawyers’ associations, which took over the magazine. The authors present the activity of this association in the mirror of the news and texts published in *Právny obzor*. The following part of the chapter is devoted to Cyril Bařinka and brings a wider view of the position of the magazine in the context of development of legal science in Slovakia in 1918 – 1939. The personality of Cyril Bařinka during his stay and work in Slovakia (1918-38) had been undeservedly ignored so far. The subchapter devoted in this context to the Slovak legal science maps not only meetings of Slovak and Slavonic lawyers, which significantly contributed to the development of legal science in Slovakia, but also the foundation of the Faculty of Law of Comenius University, activity of lawyers’ societies and Slovak specialized and scientific law literature in the period of CSR (including the Publication of the Ministry for Unification of

Laws and Organizations of Administration) and mentions a large number of personalities who created it, including their contribution to the progress of legal science (from judges through legal theorists to lawyers). Parts devoted to Cyril Bařinka and to the development of legal science are very valuable in terms of legal history.

The third chapter analyzes reflections of the development of law in the magazine. It pays special attention to the importance of the magazine for creation and development of Slovak legal terminology (Oľga Ovečková), for the theory of state and law (Eduard Bárány – Peter Colotka), constitutional and administrative law (Peter Kukliš), private law (Oľga Ovečková), intellectual property law (Marián Kropaj) and anti-monopoly law (Lukáš Lapšanský). In this chapter the authors identify and highlight a number of important texts that had been published in *Právny obzor* since its foundation, bring their recapitulation and evaluation and examine their importance for individual branches of law. The chapter is thus not only a reflection of the content of the magazine, but also a small guide through the history of individual branches of law and their most important personalities who published their works in the magazine in individual periods.

Thanks to their high professional standard, these two core chapters are most valuable parts of the work. It is necessary to highlight in particular analytical approaches used by the authors for reflection of the content of the magazine for individual branches of law.

The fourth chapter contains the list of publishers and editors-in-chief (as well as senior and executive editors) of the magazine in the form of a transparent table, and in subchapter Gallery of the Editors-in-Chief biographical data of all editors-in-chief of the magazine, from Emil Stodola to Oľga Ovečková (together 13 editors-in-chief). The chapter is supplemented by graphic material – not only portrait photographs of the editors-in-chief, but also title pages of the magazine in all existing forms. The chapter is completed by information about awards won by the magazine in its modern history.

The last chapter describes the content of the magazine by re-editing ten carefully selected articles from different periods and branches of law, written by important authors – contributors of *Právny obzor*, e.g. Bohuš Tomsa, Karol Kizlink, Václav Chytil, Vojtech Hatala, Ján Švidroň, known articles of Vladimír Fajnor (Work of Slovak lawyers before the revolution and in the first decade of the republic - 1928, A Judge and a Lawyer - 1932), or no less known text of Ivan Dérer “A Judge and Law” (1946). The now classic text of Štefan Luby “Civil Protection of Personality” (1968) is also included there.

The monograph is supplemented by a brief summary in English language (including the table of contents in English) and short CVs of its co-authors.

The importance of the work is highlighted also by the fact that history of law magazines has been rather neglected so far. The monograph is thus a deserving contribution to the expert and scientific discussion; also this makes their monograph remarkable.

The scientific quality of the monograph is based in particular on the historical method,

analysis and synthesis of sources to poignant conclusions. The text is supplemented by a rich note apparatus. The monograph as a whole thus contributes to the acquisition of new scientific knowledge in the process of examination of work of the personalities of legal science and practice in the area of publication of law magazines, and brings new knowledge and valuable information.

The monograph goes beyond the topic of processing of the past of *Právny obzor* thanks to the wide historical context that it covers and reveals, but also thanks to the scientific analysis of its content and contribution as universal magazine for individual branches of law, legal theory and legal terminology. It presents the magazine as an opinion-forming forum, not only of the legal science, but also of the legal practice. The monograph thus ranks among important works of general legal historical character and contributes to the research of development of individual branches of law.

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