

The papers in this volume emerged from the conference *Philosophy, Psychology, Education*, held on November 29-30, 2002 in Budapest. The conference was organized within the framework of the interdisciplinary research program “Communications in the 21st Century”. This program, which was launched in January 2001, is conducted in collaboration with Westel Mobile Telecommunications (Hungary) by the Institute for Philosophical Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.<sup>1</sup> The results of our work so far have been published in three Hungarian volumes,<sup>2</sup> as well as one German<sup>3</sup> and one English volume.<sup>4</sup> The present volume is the second in the English-language series.

The changing conditions for the accumulation and transmission of knowledge in the age of multimedia networks make it inevitable that old philosophical problems become formulated in a new light. Above all, the problem of the unity of knowledge becomes once again a topical issue. The situation-dependent acquisition of knowledge that is made possible by mobile learning transcends the boundaries of traditional disciplines, linking the domains of text, diagram, and picture. Database integration and multimedia search become central problems in the epistemology of the twentyfirst century, while handheld devices are emerging as vital technologies for supporting collaborative learning.

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<sup>1</sup> For a regularly updated overview of the project see the website <http://21st.century.phil-inst.hu>.

<sup>2</sup> Kristóf Nyíri (ed.), *Mobil információs társadalom: Tanulmányok* [The Mobile Information Society: Essays], Budapest: MTA Filozófiai Kutatóintézete, 2001; Kristóf Nyíri (ed.), *A 21. századi kommunikáció új útjai: Tanulmányok* [New Perspectives on 21st-Century Communications: Essays], Budapest: MTA Filozófiai Kutatóintézete, 2001; and Kristóf Nyíri (ed.), *Mobilközösség – mobilmegismerés: Tanulmányok* [Mobile Communities – Mobile Cognition: Essays], Budapest: MTA Filozófiai Kutatóintézete, 2002.

<sup>3</sup> Kristóf Nyíri (ed.), *Allzeit zuhanden: Gemeinschaft und Erkenntnis im Mobilzeitalter*, Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Kristóf Nyíri (ed.), *Mobile Communication: Essays on Cognition and Community*, Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 2003.

The studies included here move from the general to the particular, beginning with issues in philosophy and the history of philosophy, then turning to educational theory and cognitive science, and concluding with the description of a number of experimental projects in the realm of mobile learning. The first chapter, by Barry Smith, discusses the perspectives of an epistemology attuned to the realities of our new world of ubiquitous networks. In the studies by Dániel Schmal and Gábor Forrai epistemology is seen in the historical context of scholarly and scientific publishing, of the printed journals and books which served as the medium in which our modern thinking about knowledge and knowledge processes emerged. Kristóf Nyíri analyzes certain effects which the transition from a predominantly text-based culture to an increasingly multimedia culture can have upon epistemology. Zsuzsanna Kondor describes some basic tendencies in the history of metaphysics from the vantage point of media history. The chapters by Ahti-Veikko Pietarinen and Roberto Frega, on Peirce and Dewey, are re-evaluations of two late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century philosophers whose thinking enjoys a hitherto unanticipated contemporary relevance. Donald Peterson's analysis of the "e-condition" felicitously sets the stage for the subsequent philosophical and pedagogical discussions on knowledge and learning in a network society. Viktor Bedő addresses the problem of orientation in the virtual space of the network. Pithamber R. Polsani provides a profound elucidation of the notion of n-learning (network learning); Marcelo Milrad offers a masterly survey of the issues surrounding m-learning. Louise Mifsud explores the specific resistances m-learning is bound to provoke in schools; Andrea Kárpáti conducts a survey of the Hungarian e-learning and m-learning scene from the point of view of educational theory. The study by Andy Stone, Graham Alsop and Chris Tompsett describe a specific methodology that seems to be especially promising for analyzing mobile learning systems. Attila Krajcsi contrasts the glory of computer technology with the misery of cognitive science when it comes to the design of truly intelligent learning software. The volume closes with descriptions of four pilot projects. Hanne Turunen, Antti Syvanän and Mikko Ahonen present, and draw conclusions from, a primary school experiment; Anju Relan and Susan Baillie describe a system employing PDAs in medical education at UCLA; Eleni Malliou et al. introduce the AD-HOC Project, a venture that aims at m-teaching a foreign language on-site; Karin Drda-Kühn describes a German internet portal, now in its first experimental phase and with plans to serve also mobile devices, a portal designed to help build up a flexible employment market in the field of cultural work.

Mobile communications have already transformed, and will go on profoundly transforming, the world of knowledge production and knowledge acquisition. Philosophy and educational theory face a paramount challenge in attempting to understand, and indeed to influence, such changes. The present volume is designed to contribute to the meeting of that challenge. I would like to thank the authors for their commitment and for their most interesting contributions. Also, let me here express on behalf of all participants in the ongoing interdisciplinary research program “Communications in the 21st Century” our indebtedness to András Sugár, CEO of Westel Mobile Telecommunications, for his unfailing interest and indispensable support.