Knowledge and Dedication: The Academic and Cultural Contributions of Professor Mihály Bencze

Florentin Smarandache [1],* iD

[1] University of New Mexico, Mathematics, Physics and Natural Sciences Division 705 Gurley Ave., Gallup, NM 87301, USA; smarand@unm.edu.

Abstract

This study explores the contributions and influence of Mihály Bencze, born on November 20, 1954, in Săcele (Braşov County, Romania), on education and culture in Romania. Bencze is a prominent figure in the fields of mathematics, pedagogy, and literature, dedicating his life to promoting excellence in mathematics education and preserving Hungarian culture in Romania. This research provides an analysis of Bencze's efforts and achievements within the academic and cultural spheres, highlighting his lasting impact on these domains.

Keywords: Mihály Bencze; Braşov County; Romanian Educational and Cultural Landscape.

1 | Introduction

Mihály Bencze, born on November 20, 1954, in Săcele (Braşov County, Romania), is a prominent figure in the Romanian educational and cultural landscape, distinguished by his significant contributions to mathematics, pedagogy, and literature. Bencze has dedicated much of his life to promoting excellence in mathematics education and preserving Hungarian culture in Romania, leaving a lasting impact on the academic and cultural community.

A graduate of the Faculty of Mathematics at Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca in 1978, he earned a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Craiova under the guidance of Professor Constantin P. Niculescu, with a dissertation titled "New Inequalities Based on Convexity."

His teaching career began at the "Steagul Roşu" High School in Braşov (1978–1990) and continued at the "Áprily Lajos" National College in Braşov from 1990 to the present. This continuity in teaching demonstrates his deep commitment to shaping new generations of mathematicians.

His contributions to the field of mathematics are remarkable in both scope and diversity. In addition to publishing several specialized books and over 100 academic articles, Bencze has proposed more than 3,000 mathematical problems in various professional journals, both in Romania and abroad. This impressive body of work reflects his passion for mathematics and his dedication to sharing his knowledge with the scientific community.

An important aspect of his work is his involvement in founding and organizing mathematics competitions in the Hungarian language. It all began in 1990 with the initiation and organization of a mathematics competition dedicated to Hungarian students in Transylvania. Over time, this competition gained international recognition, expanding to Hungarian communities worldwide, with editions held in Rév-Komárom (1992), Vác (1993), Ungvár (1994), Paks (1995), Székelyudvarhely (1996). These initiatives played a crucial role in identifying and nurturing mathematical talent, promoting excellence in education, and fostering a community of young mathematics enthusiasts.

He also organized Romania's first Rubik's Cube competition in 1980, proving a broad interest in the "recreational" aspects of mathematics and logic.

Mihály Bencze has also had a remarkable editorial and organizational career in the field of mathematics. Between 1978 and 1989, he led the editorial team of the mathematics journal *Gamma*, and from 1985 to 1988, he served as a mentor for the magazine *Hipstern*. Since 1990, he has owned and managed *Fulgur Publishing House* and has been the editor of *Octogon Mathematical Magazine*, an English-language mathematics journal that, in recent years, has transitioned entirely to an online format.

Bencze is or has been a member of the editorial boards of prestigious journals such as *Caiet de informare matematică* (Câmpina), *Smarandache Function Journal* (USA), and *Matematikai Lapok* (Cluj-Napoca). He has also held significant positions within mathematical societies, serving as president of the *Zsidó László Mathematical Society* from 1990 to 1995 and, since 1996, as president of the *Wildt József Scientific Society*.

Between 1974 and 2010, he participated in over 250 National and International Conferences.

Recognition of his achievements has come through numerous awards and distinctions, including the Kun Kocsárd and Ex Libris Prize in 2013, Pro Cultura Hungarica, the Order of Merit – Knight's Cross of Hungary, and the European Citizen's Prize (awarded by the European Parliament in 2017). These honors attest to his significant impact on education, culture, and society.

Another facet of his personality is his literary side. Mihály Bencze is also a poet, having published volumes such as *Lélekvándorlás* (Metempsychosis) in 1996 and *Pogány Madonna* (Pagan Madonna) in 1998, as well as contributing to anthologies and publishing poetry in various literary journals in both Romania and Hungary. This artistic dimension completes the portrait of a man dedicated to knowledge and human expression in various forms.

Mihály Bencze is a living example of academic and cultural devotion, inspiring generations and strengthening connections between communities. With an impressive career, he remains an emblematic figure in both Romanian and Hungarian education and culture.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in the research.

Ethical Approval

This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.

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