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*This volume is dedicated to the memory of  
Professor Lajos Szőke (1947–2006)*

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## Putting English Verb + *out* Constructions into Perspective

Éva Kovács

### 1 Introduction

Verb + particle constructions (also called 'multi-word verbs' or 'phrasal verbs') represent a very interesting and challenging group of lexical items in English as most of them are non-compositional in their meaning. This may be the reason why the traditional grammatical (morphological and compositional semantic) approaches (cf. for example, Bolinger 1971, Fraser 1976) proved to be inappropriate for their description, and their usage was generally regarded to be arbitrary. Even modern theoretical linguists and lexicographers started to deal with them intensively only from the beginning of the 80s.

It was cognitive grammarians such as Lindner (1982), Lakoff (1987) and Rudzka-Ostyn (2003) who took up the challenge of the alleged arbitrariness of prepositional/particle usage. They demonstrated that the meaning of most prepositions/particles is highly structured and motivated by metaphors in our conceptual system. Thus in this view, English verb + particle constructions are also analysable, at least to some degree.

To justify the above claim, I set out to examine English verb + *out* constructions. My primary aim is on the one hand, to demonstrate that the meanings of *out*, one of the most common particles in English multi-word verbs, form a network of related senses; and on the other hand, to explore what metaphors are involved in the conceptualisation of their abstract meanings.

### 2 The role of metaphors in conceptualisation

First of all, it seems to be appropriate to highlight what role metaphors play in cognitive semantic analyses and thus in the analysis of the meanings of English verb + particle constructions. As stated by cognitive linguists (cf. Lakoff 1987, Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Kövecses 2005), metaphors are not just superfluous, though pleasant rhetorical devices, but an indispensable

property of our thinking and conceptualisation. They assume that our language is highly metaphorical, which uses thousands of expressions based on concrete, physical entities in order to express high-level abstractions. In this view, we structure abstract concepts (*love, happiness, anger, fear, time, wealth, and desire, etc.*) on concrete, physical bases (*human body, buildings, machines, animals, and plants, etc.*). In other words, conceptual metaphors always combine two domains: a concrete, well bounded, ‘source domain’ and an abstract, ‘target domain’. To illustrate what kind of correspondences or mappings there are between a source domain and a target domain, let us have a closer look at one of our basic feelings: *love* (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Kövecses 2005). We often conceptualise love via the following metaphors:

LOVE IS A PHYSICAL FORCE

There is incredible *energy* in their relationship.  
I could feel the *electricity* between them.

LOVE IS A PATIENT

This is a *sick* relationship.  
Their relationship is *in really good shape*.

LOVE IS MADNESS

I’m *crazy* about her.  
She *drives me out of my mind*.

LOVE IS MAGIC

She *cast her spell* over me.  
The *magic* is gone.

LOVE IS WAR

He is known for his many rapid *conquests*.  
She is *besieged* by suitors.

As far as English multi-word verbs are concerned, the meaning of their majority is also abstract, which is one of the basic reasons why it is difficult to understand and master them. If we, however, understand the metaphors underlying these abstract meanings, it will make it easier for us to understand and use them properly.

### 3 The semantic properties of verb + *out* constructions

Before examining what role metaphors play in the semantic analysis of verb + *out* constructions, let us look at some syntactic and semantic properties of these multi-word verbs.

As mentioned above, English multi-word verbs are the combination of a verb and a particle, in which the latter functions either as a preposition or an adverb. What is more, the majority of verb + particle constructions are polysemous in their meaning. For example, *come out* can mean *leave a place*, but in most cases its meaning is figurative or more or less figurative, as illustrated by the following examples: *become known (the truth)*, *stop being fixed somewhere (baby tooth)*, *be removed from something such as clothing or cloth by washing or rubbing (dirt)*, *be spoken, heard or understood in a particular way (as a criticism)*, *become available to buy or see (a book or a film)*, *start to appear in the sky (the sun, moon, stars)*, *become easy to notice (difference)*, *open (flower)*, etc. As evident from the above examples, the verb can also have a literal, physical meaning, i.e. motion, but abstract meaning as well. When the verb in the construction is used metaphorically, it is usually clear. The particle can, however, have abstract meanings as well, i.e. their literal meanings are extended to abstract non-visible domains such as thoughts, intentions, feelings, attitudes, relations, social and economic interactions, etc. and is not so easy to perceive. In fact, we can, however, often discover a clear link between the concrete and the abstract meanings of the particles as well. The prototypical meanings of the particle usually denote place or direction while their abstract meanings are based on these concrete, literal meanings.

Let us take the concrete meaning of *out*: 'getting out of a closed, well-bounded area', for example *fly out*, *fall out*. Besides, it often refers to growth, i.e. something becomes wider spreading on a bigger area or lasting longer, such as *stretch out (his hand)*, *string out the debate*.

Furthermore, *out* can also mean that something gradually reaches its final state, e.g. *die out (become extinct)*, *wipe out (destroy something, kill a lot of people)*. *Out* can also refer to communication between two people, i.e. the information leaves one of them and reaches the other, e.g. *sob out his grief* or it can also denote that a secret, an unknown piece of information becomes known, like in *worm the secret out of sy*.

It might seem that these meanings form a network of unrelated senses but if we examine the meanings of *out* in the above examples more closely, we can discover a systematic relationship between these meanings (cf. *Macmillan Phrasal Verbs Plus* 2005: 298–300).

#### 4 Metaphors in the analysis of the semantics of verb + *out* constructions

As mentioned in the introduction, Lindner (1981) was one of the first linguists who provided a cognitive analysis of the particles *out* and *up* using the relation of *trajector-landmark*. In cognitive linguistics, the *landmark* is understood as a reference point, whereas the *trajector* as a moving entity. Lindner analysed the meanings of these particles with the help of the so-called prototype theory, and demonstrated what kind of extensions they have into the abstract domain. She, however, failed to show the interactions of what kind of metaphors their meanings are motivated by.

After this, using Lindner's analysis as a starting point and the diagram for the meaning network of *out* in the *Macmillan Phrasal verbs Plus* (2005), let us see what kind of metaphors are involved in the conceptualisation of the meanings of some English verb + *out* constructions. In the view of Lakoff and Johnson's metaphor theory (1980), we conceptualise the phenomena of our world as objects, materials or containers with boundaries and an in-out orientation. A wide range of domains, objects, sets, activities, even states, are metaphorically conceived as containers.

The conceptualisation of abstract categories as containers can provide an explanation for the different meanings of *out* in the English verb + *out* constructions. Thinking of the spatial, prototypical meaning of the particle *out*, we have the image of a closed, well-bounded container, from which an entity, an object or a person moves out, as illustrated by the following common examples: *go out*, *break out*, *fall out*, the meaning of which is based on the metaphor PHYSICAL OBJECTS WITH BOUNDARIES ARE CONTAINERS.

The metaphor OUR HOME/AN INSTITUTION IS A CONTAINER FOR ITS MEMBERS can be recognised in the examples such as *eat out*, *dine out*, *go out*, *stay out*, *sleep out*, *camp out* *invite out*, *take out*, or *drop out*, *boot out*, *kick out*, *throw out*, *turf out*, *chuck out*, and *freeze out* etc. where it means leaving a place, i.e. eating somewhere other than at our house, usually in a restaurant or removing somebody from a place, i.e. causing somebody to lose his home/club membership/job.

Sets, groups of objects and people can also be viewed as containers in which there are members or elements. In some cases, members can be rearranged or given a new position, in others the member does not remain inside the set or group but it or part of it is removed out of it, with sometimes nothing left, for example *pick out* (a shirt), *empty out* (your bags), *sort out* (your papers), *cut out* (a picture, several paragraphs), *strip out* (information from a financial or statistical calculation), *cross out* (some words), and *score out* (some paragraphs), etc. Beyond denoting physical removal of an

object from a group, *out* can also refer to the cognitive process of distinguishing, choosing objects for special purposes (praise or criticism) or rejecting objects from among others as they are useless or unwanted or have not reached a high enough standard as illustrated by the following examples: *pick out (the best candidate)*, *single out (somebody for special attention)*, *weed out (corrupt police officers)*, and *cut out (a person out of your will)*, etc. These expressions can be generalised with the help of the following metaphors: GROUPS ARE CONTAINERS, CHOOSING IS REMOVING AN OBJECT FROM A CONTAINER.

In several verb + *out* constructions the metaphor BODIES/PARTS OF BODIES ARE CONTAINERS can be discovered, such as in *pull out his tooth*, *spit out (food)*, *reach out (stretch out your arm)*, *stick out your tongue*, *cry out in pain*, *take money out of your pocket*, and *hand out the test papers*, etc.

The metaphor BODIES/PARTS OF BODIES (E.G. YOUR HEART) ARE CONTAINERS, FEELINGS ARE OBJECTS is evoked in the expressions, such as *cry out his grief*, and *pour out his heart* where expressing your feelings is very much like taking an object out of your body. In both cases, the object which is inside the container moves out of it, and can therefore be linked to one and the same image.

Our image of our mind and human communication can be characterised by the following ontological metaphors: MINDS ARE CONTAINERS, IDEAS ARE OBJECTS WHICH FILL THEM. Accordingly, our thoughts, ideas are objects that fill our mind i.e. they are inside. When we communicate, they come out of our mind in the form of words. Thus our language serves as a means that passes our ideas. The meanings of the following verb + *out* constructions are conceptualised via the above metaphors: *stammer out a few words*, *speak out (state your opinion firmly and publicly about something)*, *slip out (a piece of information)*, *blurt out his name*, *fling out a remark (say it quickly in a rather aggressive way)*, and *spit out words (say them in an angry way)*, etc.

In the cognitive view, states of existence, accessibility, and visibility, etc. are also seen as entities with boundaries around them, i.e. containers. Interestingly, the abstract states of non-existence or of being unknown can also be conceptualised as containers and the particle *out* refers to the fact that an object moves out of these states. Thus several verb + *out* constructions are based on metaphors such as STATES OF NON-EXISTENCE, IGNORANCE ARE CONTAINERS and PRIVATE IS IN/PUBLIC IS OUT. When we learn a secret or when a piece of information becomes known, or when we discover or find out a piece of information, they move out of the states of non-existence or of being unknown into the state of being known,



as illustrated by the following verb + *out* constructions: *ferret out*, *nose out*, *sound out*, *find out*, *leak out*, and *come out*, etc. When you look for and find something, it also becomes known, examples for which include: *dig out*, *hunt out*, and *root out*, etc.

Similarly, when a book is published or a new product or service is introduced, it becomes available for the public. In other words, it gets out of the state of inaccessibility into the state of accessibility. In this sense, change of state (inaccessible to accessible) is viewed as change of location via STATES OF NON-EXISTENCE ARE CONTAINERS, and ACCESSIBLE/PUBLIC IS OUT, such as in the following examples: *bring out a book*, *come out (book)*, *rush out (produce a product quickly in a very short time)*, and *roll out (a new vehicle)*, etc.

In some multi-word verbs, *out* refers to the fact that something ceases to exist, disappears completely or is caused to stop existing, which is justified by the examples below: *run out*, *peter out*, *sell out*, *give out*, *burn out*, *conk out*, *die out*, *peg out* and *wipe out*, *stamp out*, *root out*, *blow out*, and *phase out*, etc. The metaphor underlying these constructions is as follows: STATES OF EXISTENCE/ACCESSIBILITY ARE CONTAINERS and the particle *out* refers to the cessation of this state.

Physically viewed, a moving entity can reach its maximum boundaries. ENTITIES WITH BOUNDARIES ARE CONTAINERS, ENTITIES REACH THEIR MAXIMUM BOUNDARIES are involved in the meanings of some verb + *out* constructions, such as in: *spread out/lay out the map*, *spread out their branches (trees)*, *fan out their feathers (birds)*, and *roll out the dough*, etc. Some abstract expressions also reflect the metaphor AN ACTIVITY/SERVICE REACHES ITS MAXIMUM BOUNDARIES. Let us just think of phrasal verbs with *out*, the meaning of which is that a new product or service is introduced and spread by a company, for example *branch out (a company)*. In some verb + *out* constructions like *lay out your ideas*, *set out your plans*, the expression of ideas and a clear and thorough explanation of plans are referred to while in *pad out his report*, *flesh out* and *broaden out/open out a debate* the implication is that more things or topics are included in the discussion.

In some cases, the temporal extension of an activity can be observed. The concept of time is often conceptualised by the way of motion and space. Accordingly, the following mappings emerge in the case of some verb + particle constructions: TIMES ARE OBJECTS, EXTENSIONS OF TIMES ARE EXTENSIONS OF OBJECTS. To justify this, consider the following examples: *drag out (a debate)*, *hold out (his money, strength)*, *last out the night*, *sit out the bad weather*, and *wait out the storm*, etc.

## 5 Conclusion

Summing up, the following results have emerged from the above analysis. In the light of Lakoff and Johnson's metaphor theory (1980), I have tentatively suggested that the conceptualisation of abstract categories as objects, containers with boundaries can provide an explanation for the different meanings of *out* in English verb + *out* constructions. Analysing the meanings of some verb + *out* constructions in this view, I have found the following mappings between a source and target domain: OUR HOME/AN INSTITUTION IS A CONTAINER FOR ITS MEMBERS (e.g. *go out*), GROUPS ARE CONTAINERS (e.g. *pick out*), BODIES/PARTS OF BODIES ARE CONTAINERS (e.g. *pull out*), MINDS ARE CONTAINERS (e.g. *slip out*), STATES OF NON-EXISTENCE ARE CONTAINERS (e.g. *bring out*), STATES OF EXISTENCE ARE CONTAINERS (e.g. *wipe out*), ENTITIES WITH BOUNDARIES ARE CONTAINERS (e.g. *spread out*) and TIMES ARE OBJECTS (e.g. *drag out*).

As might be evident from the above analysis, the meanings of English verb + *out* constructions also form a network of related senses and they are analysable, at least to some degree. Thus English multi-word verbs are not just an arbitrary combination of a verb + a particle but their meaning is structured and motivated by metaphors in our conceptual system. It is also justified by the fact that in the case of novel verb + *out* constructions, some senses of *out* mentioned above can be discovered even if it is combined with a new verb or with an existing verb in a new construction. As evidence for this observation, consider the following relatively new multi-word verbs used in informal language (McCarthy & O'Dell 2004: 164):

*be partied out* (tired of going to parties because you have been to too many)

After a whole week of birthday celebrations, I feel totally *partied out*.

*bliss out* (become or make someone become totally happy and relaxed)

They *blissed out* on music.

*chill out* (relax completely, or not allow things to upset you)

*Chill out!* Life's too short to get so stressed.

*veg out* (relax by doing nothing)

I wish I had loads of money – I'd go and *veg out* in the Caribbean.

*pig out* (eat an extremely large amount of food, much more than you need)

She felt like *pigging out* for once.

*google out* (discover information by means of a thorough research)

I had *googled out* a relevant website.

The reason why we understand their meaning easily is that these new expressions remind us of existing verb + *out* constructions in which the particle *out* contributes one special meaning to the verb.

In my paper I hope to have proved how significantly cognitive linguistics has been and will be able to contribute to a better understanding and a more effective mastering of multi-word verbs, a notoriously difficult aspect of the English language.

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## **Exploring Teachers' Pedagogical Beliefs as a Way to Help Teachers Develop a Critical Reflective Attitude**

Adrienn Károly

### **Introduction**

Recent pedagogical research findings seem to confirm the view that investigating the issues of language teaching and learning only on the basis of observable features of teacher behaviour leaves a lot of questions unanswered. As a result of the apparent limitations of such an approach, recent research focuses not only on what teachers do but also on the cognitive processes that underlie teachers' classroom behaviour. How teachers behave in the classroom is always in relation to what they think and believe, so there's no point in separating the two. According to Clark and Peterson, "the process of teaching will be fully understood only when these two domains are brought together and examined in relation to one another" (1986:256). The judgements and decisions that teachers make in and out of the classroom are always influenced by cognitive theories that teachers construct for themselves.

István Nahalka (1997) argues that there is no practice without inner theoretical models. The cognitive dimension was not so important for behaviorists, but by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a new approach has emerged in educational research. This new constructivist approach emphasizes the construction of knowledge as the basis of the learning process, and views learning as an active, dynamic process in which learners actively construct their knowledge by integrating it in an already existing mental system, which helps them understand and interpret new information. In case of dissonance, learners might even reformulate their inner cognitive structures. These active processes occur not only in learners' but also in teachers' minds: they construct their own theories and beliefs that consciously or subconsciously control their behaviour. Teachers are all participants of a lifelong learning process. Williams and Burden – based on von Glaserfeld's (1995) approach to learning – say that teachers should present learners with

problems to be explored rather than facts to be accepted without thinking (1997:48)

In ELT the concept of pedagogical 'belief' – a key idea in constructivist learning theory – has come into favour in recent years. Calderhead (1996) identifies the types of teacher beliefs which are most commonly explored. These are beliefs about teaching, learning and learners, subject matter, self as a teacher or the role of the teacher. A lot of educational research has revealed that teacher training courses do not prepare students to be able to cope with all the problems arising in real-world teaching situations. In constructivist theories of teacher development the keyword is construction and re-construction of personal theories related to teaching. In fact, the real learning process for teachers starts when they leave formal teacher training institutions. According to Nahalka (1997) the real learning process means that as a result of several factors, all the conscious or subconscious constructions and beliefs which teachers operate from undergo a change.

It is easy to see the importance of research concerned with the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practice. It would be ideal if teachers were aware of these constructs and had the ability of self-reflection, which could establish a basis for professional development. Bartlett argues that instead of 'how to' questions teachers should move to 'what' and 'why' questions. He says:

Asking 'what' and 'why' questions gives us a certain power over our teaching. We could claim that the degree of autonomy and responsibility we have in our work as teachers is determined by the level of control that we can exercise over our actions. In reflecting on 'what' and 'why' questions, we begin to exercise control and open up the possibility of transforming our everyday classroom life. The process of control is called *critical reflective teaching*. (1990:205)

It is also important for teachers to consider the historical, social and cultural context in which their teaching is embedded. Willams and Burden later argue that a key element of the constructivist approach is that 'teachers become aware of what their own beliefs and views of the world are, which leads us into the notion of the reflective practitioner (1997:53). In the first part of this paper I will examine the concept of 'belief', then I will try to identify the possible sources of teacher beliefs, and finally I will present some models which can be used to elicit teachers' pedagogical beliefs.

### **The concept of teachers' beliefs**

People's behaviour is always influenced by their beliefs. If we think someone is lying to us, we will act accordingly, irrespective of whether this

belief is true or not. Before considering the sources of beliefs I think it is important to clarify what this concept really means. In spite of the increasing popularity of the concept of belief, there are many definitions of it, and researchers often use different terms interchangeably, which results in a terminological ambiguity. For example, Pajares (1992) collects more than twenty terms defining the same concept. Therefore, it is very important to clear the meaning of the underlying notion. According to Borg there are four common features of the definitions of 'belief'. First, as opposed to 'knowledge' – which is true in an external sense – 'belief' is a mental state, a proposition accepted as true by the individual holding the belief. Second, beliefs guide people's thinking and behaviour. Next, some beliefs are conscious although individuals are more often unconscious of their beliefs. Finally, beliefs are value commitments and therefore have an emotional aspect (2001:186).

Nespor also mentions four main features which distinguish beliefs from knowledge. He says that beliefs are existential presumptions, which means that they are 'propositions or assumptions about the existence or non-existence of entities'. For example, a teacher might assume that a student is lazy. The danger in that is that a temporary feature might be considered as absolute, which has serious pedagogical consequences. The second feature, alternativity means that beliefs often represent an ideal reality for the teacher. In this respect beliefs help teachers define pedagogical goals and tasks. Perhaps the most important criterion identifying beliefs is the affective aspect. Beliefs are personal evaluations and feelings about something or somebody. Finally, whereas knowledge is stored semantically, beliefs are 'composed mainly of episodically stored material derived from personal experience or from cultural or institutional sources of knowledge transmission' (1987:318–320).

However, it is not always easy to distinguish between knowledge and belief. It may happen that someone believes he knows something, or says he believes something but does not act accordingly. Pajares (1992) tries to clear up the ambiguity surrounding this term, and concludes that the difference between knowledge and beliefs is more in degree than in kind. Woods comes to the same conclusion and introduces a more general concept: 'BAK', which stands for 'beliefs, assumptions and knowledge (1996:195).

Before examining the sources of beliefs, it is important to mention their functions. What are these mental constructions used for? Nespor (1987:320) claims that teachers fall back on their beliefs in case of ambiguous or difficult situations, when their knowledge is not available or not sufficient to understand and deal with a situation. According to Pajares, in teaching there are no complete beginners since everyone has some preconceptions (beliefs

or knowledge) about the teaching and learning process. These preconceptions can help teachers establish their identity and form social relationships. Pajares sees beliefs as the most important tools to interpret, plan and make decisions regarding new approaches, techniques or activities used in the classroom (1992:325).

### **Sources of teachers' beliefs**

In his book *Socialization of teachers* (1977) Lacey investigates the process of how teachers' beliefs develop, and he sees this process as a process of socialization, which refers to "the development of sets of behaviours and perspectives by an individual as he confronts social situations" (1977:30). This process of socialization has many stages, from which teachers' beliefs and knowledge originate. Pajares points out that it is crucial when beliefs are formed because early experiences have a very strong influence on the formation of beliefs later. He writes that "the earlier a belief is incorporated into the belief structure, the more difficult it is to alter, for these beliefs subsequently affect perception and strongly influence the processing of new information" (1992:317). The first beliefs develop from personal experiences at primary school or to use Lortie's term "apprenticeship of observation". These early childhood memories are connected to a person or a significant situation. Even very young students can tell the difference between good and bad teachers who serve as models for the child. Lortie remarks that young students are not guided by pedagogic principles; their learning is intuitive and affected by the students' individual personalities (1975:62). Johnson says that early experiences sometimes have a controversial effect on students. He reports that students who are exposed to a certain approach or method in early childhood find it very hard not to use at least some elements of it no matter how critical of it they are. After the actual teaching experience, one student even admits: "It's like I just fall into the trap of teaching like I was taught and I don't know how to get myself out of that mode" (1994:450). This is a very interesting statement confirming the powerful influence of early school memories; a process which often happens subconsciously.

Teachers' beliefs can derive not only from early school experiences but also from outside the school. The role of family, friends, their values, or significant events cannot be overlooked. After reviewing earlier research Zeichner és Gore (1990:335) comes to the conclusion that in the classroom teachers often relate to students in a way that mirrors their early parent-child relationships. Beliefs formed in early childhood are very deep-rooted and are difficult to change.

The third stage in the development of teachers' beliefs is connected to formal teacher training. Some early researchers such as Lortie (1975) or Lacey (1977) mention that very often there is no continuity between what students learn about teaching and how they actually teach. He found that teacher training courses have little influence on the development of prospective teachers' beliefs as they usually reinforce already existing theories. One explanation could be the strong effect of early school experiences mentioned previously. Zeichner and Gore write that most teacher training courses are segmented, with a confusing message to prospective teachers. The authors claim that in many teacher training institutions there is a 'hidden curriculum' which contradicts the message of the actual methodology courses (1990:344). Therefore, it is of utmost importance to coordinate all courses in formal teacher training so that they are based on the same or similar principles. Peacock (2001:193) suggests that a reflective element incorporated into the syllabus will lead to changes in prospective teachers' beliefs. Deep-rooted beliefs need to be brought to the surface and critically examined if the aim of teacher training is real professional development, which is a key concept in constructivist pedagogy.

Certainly, the last stage of teachers' socialization is when they start working as a teacher and have first-hand experiences. According to Lortie (1975), this is the period when beginning teachers can test their implicit or explicit theories and beliefs in a real environment when dealing with everyday problems. In this stage, there are two factors that can contribute to changes in beginning teachers' theories: experienced colleagues and the students themselves. As many researchers claim, by becoming critically reflective teachers can achieve an improvement of teaching. Bartlett writes that the idea of reflection means that there is constant interaction between the teacher and the context in which teaching is embedded (1990:204). Beginning teachers form their identity and adopt a certain approach as a result of this dynamic process. They try to meet the expectations of society, the school, the colleagues and the students. However, this can only be achieved if they constantly challenge, evaluate and test their beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning.

### **Instruments to elicit teachers' beliefs**

As I have previously mentioned, it is not easy to explore beliefs, as some of them may be unconscious. Donaghue points to another factor: the issue of self-image. Consciously or unconsciously, teachers project a certain image of themselves, so they may not always be honest if they have to speak about their own beliefs (2003:345). Furthermore, theory and practice, that is what



teachers think and what they do is not always congruent. To elicit beliefs Doff suggests an activity in which teachers have to give five important characteristics of good and bad teaching (1988:122). However, Donaghue (2003) argues that these questions are too general and familiar to teachers, so the answers may not be sincere. According to Edge (1992), the key word in professional development is co-operation between teachers. Roberts suggests a visualization activity, in which participants have to give a metaphor to discuss the roles of teachers and learners (1998:310-311). Again, the responses do not necessarily mirror what participants think. The technique that I would like to discuss now is based on Kelly's personal construct theory (1955). George Kelly was a humanistic psychologist who attached importance to the cognitive elements in human personality. He viewed individuals as intuitive scientists trying to make sense of the world around them. People have anticipations and expectations, just like scientists have hypotheses. People constantly formulate and test their hypotheses, and then form their own personal constructs. With the help of these constructs people try to understand and control events and situations. Personal constructs are continuously tested against reality and will change or be adapted with experience (Szakács and Kulcsár, 2001). Kelly says that personal constructs can be viewed as attributes which are always bipolar – we can never believe in something without denying something else. For example, if we claim that someone is clever, we implicitly deny that this person is unintelligent. Constructs are formed by recognizing a pattern in the events – similarities or differences – happening to the person. Therefore, at least three situations or things are necessary to the formation of a personal construct: two of these are perceived as similar and the third one is different from them (Carver and Scheirer, 2003). Kelly's theory seems to mirror the idea of reflection in the teaching process as teachers have to be aware of their beliefs and consciously reflect on them if they want to develop. As Pope and Keen say:

...individuals, students and teachers alike, [have] to be adaptive, personally viable and self-directive. Such self-direction or self-organization can only come about if the individual makes an effort to explore his viewpoints, purposes, means for obtaining ends and keeps these under constant review (1981:118).

In order to elicit personal constructs, Kelly devised a special technique called the Repertory Grid Technique (RGT), which can be used not only in clinical psychology, but also in pedagogy. It is not a traditional test, it is a scientific, self-discovery research tool. Pope and Keen write that RGT is a 'psychological mirror, which should help the individual, rather than the investigator, to understand his world' (1981:155). It is important to

emphasize that using the RGT, the investigator cannot influence a teacher's thinking by naming his own constructs. When using the RGT, the subjects have to compare three elements (for example, three people known to the subject). They have to decide which two elements are similar and which one is different and how. The result is the subjects' personal constructs, which is recorded on a grid, and they can analyze the next triad. The result is a grid showing the subjects' personal constructs. In 2000 the RGT technique was piloted with English teachers coming to the UK from different European countries for a development course in teaching methodology. 83% of the people answering an end-of-course questionnaire about the repertory grid instrument found that the RGT activity helped them reflect on their beliefs about teaching. Trainers reported that the activity generated discussion and provided an insight into participants' beliefs (Donaghue 2003:350). Therefore, I believe this activity can prove to be useful not only on in-service teacher development courses but also in teacher training.

### **Conclusion**

In this paper I have given an overview of the current research trends concerned with teachers' beliefs. The practical aim of research is to raise teachers' self awareness and to encourage them to adopt a critical and reflective attitude to teaching, which is a key to real learning and professional development. In the first part of my paper I have examined the definition of the term 'belief', then I have discussed the possible sources of pedagogical beliefs. Finally, I have outlined a theory and a practical device, which can be used in teacher training courses to achieve the goal of independent, conscious self-reflection.

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# On the Translation of Neologisms

Albert Vermes

## 1 Introduction

This paper is concerned with the solution of a not at all trivial translation problem, which is how neologisms in Chapter Nine of Douglas Adams's *Life, the Universe and Everything*, such as *flollop* or *globber*, which are instruments of verbal humour so characteristic of this novel, are rendered in the Hungarian translation. The analysis is made in a relevance-theoretic framework with the help of a conceptual apparatus worked out formerly for the study of proper names and other culturally bound expressions (see, for instance, Vermes 2003).

## 2 Theoretical background

In ostensive-inferential linguistic communication, communicators produce a stimulus that points to their communicative intention, and the audience of the communication, by combining this stimulus with a context, tries to infer the communicator's informative intention, that is, the **message**.

According to Sperber and Wilson (1986), all ostensive-inferential communication is based on the **principle of relevance**, which states that every act of ostensive communication communicates the assumption of its own optimal relevance as well (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 158), where optimal relevance means that the processing of the stimulus results in such **contextual effects** (that is, assumptions) that will prove worthwhile for the audience's attention and working out these assumptions will not require the audience to invest unnecessarily great **processing effort**.

An **assumption** is defined as a structured set of concepts. The meaning of a **concept** is constituted by two elements: a truth-functional **logical entry** and an **encyclopaedic entry**, which contains various (propositional and non-propositional) representations linked with the concept (e.g. personal or cultural beliefs). The concept may also have a **lexical entry**, containing phonological, morphological, syntactic and categorical information about the natural language item associated with it (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 83-93). These lexical, logical and encyclopaedic pieces of information are stored in memory.

The content of an assumption is a function of the logical entries of the concepts it contains, and the context of its processing, at least in part, is provided by the encyclopaedic entries of these concepts (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 89). The context may also contain assumptions resulting from the processing of earlier utterances during the given act of communication as well as assumptions which are activated in the audience's cognitive environment by the linguistic or other sensory stimuli. A **cognitive environment** is a set of assumptions which an individual is capable of representing at a given time and can thus be seen largely as a function of the individual's background assumptions and physical environment (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 39).

Translation in this framework can be considered as a communicative act which in a secondary context communicates such an informative intention that has the closest possible interpretive resemblance with the original under the given circumstances. The principle of relevance is manifested in translation as a presumption of **optimal resemblance**: the translation is presumed to interpretively resemble the original and the degree of this resemblance is in accord with the presumption of optimal relevance (Gutt 1991: 101). In other words, the translation must resemble the original in such a way that it provides for contextual effects which are comparable to those provided for by the original and it is formulated in such a way that it will not require an unjustified amount of processing effort from the audience to work out the intended interpretation. The task of the translator, then, is to decide which assumptions of the original can be preserved in the translation in accordance with the principle of optimal resemblance and how they can be rendered.

### 3 Translation operations

I distinguish four translation operations, which were introduced in some earlier studies on the translation of proper names and culture-specific expressions under the names of transference, translation proper, substitution and modification. Leaving behind the area of culture-specific expressions as such, it seems more appropriate to use the terms **total transfer** (TT), **logical transfer** (LT), **encyclopaedic transfer** (ET), and **zero transfer** (ZT) since these seem better suited to reflect the nature of these operations in a more general range of linguistic utterances. The operations are defined by the four possible configurations of the logical (L) and encyclopaedic (E) entries associated with lexical items, depending on which of them is/are preserved in the translation. Thus the operations can be described in the following way: TT [+L, +E]: The target text item has the same relevant logical and

encyclopaedic content as the original. LT [+L, -E]: The target text item has the same relevant logical content as the original but the encyclopaedic content is different or irrelevant. ET [-L, +E]: The target text item has the same relevant encyclopaedic content as the original but the logical content is different or irrelevant. And ZT [-L, -E]: The target text item has logical and encyclopaedic contents different from those of the original. It is easy to notice that what I call operations here are in fact semantic relationships between source and target text items, which can be realised by different techniques in different situations, as we will see in the discussion of the findings.

#### 4 The translatability of neologisms

If the notion of untranslatability is taken in the narrow sense, applying Catford's category of linguistic untranslatability (Catford 1965: 94), then neologisms must be considered as untranslatable elements. In a sense, any linguistic sign is untranslatable into another linguistic system, even into other signs of the same linguistic system. However, Catford himself notes that the borderline between translatability and untransatability is not clear-cut: we rather need to talk about easier or more difficult cases of translatability (Catford 1965: 93). According to Albert (2005: 43), "untranslatability is a *theoretical* [...] category, an inherent characteristic of the code, *la langue*, while its counterpart, translatability is a *practical* category, an inherent characteristic of the text, of the *discourse*." In a given context, then, everything can be regarded as translatable, and translatable in different ways: "untranslatability in a certain respect is equal to *manifold* translatability" (Albert 2005: 38, my translation, italics as in original).

Thus the question is not why a neologism is not translatable but how it is translatable in the given context. This obviously depends on several factors, such as the type of the text, the aim of the translation, the intended target reader, the function of the neologism etc. In the literary text analysed here it can be observed that the primary function of neologisms is to enhance the humorous effect of the text: they serve as instruments of verbal humour (VH). According to Lendvai (1999: 34), "the role of VH is the breaching of norms, which causes a humorous effect (laughter in most cases). VH, at the same time, can be considered as a linguistic experiment in which the speaker 'tests' the semantic effects elicited from the audience by this divergence from the norm. With the help of such 'experimental results' an experienced communicator uses VH to achieve certain, basically pragmatic, aims (informal relationship, irony, sarcasm, parody, satire etc.)" (my translation). What a translator needs to do, then, is to establish the pragmatic purpose of



VH, that is, to find out what assumptions the communicator wanted to convey through it, and then to decide whether in the given communication situation it is possible to convey these assumptions to the target reader and, if yes, in what way.

Now we need to clarify in what way the use of neologisms may be a breaching of norms, or in other words, what is the real nature of neologisms. According to Newmark (1988: 140), non-existing or, rather, non-established lexical items, **neologisms**, may be defined as items newly produced or associated with new meanings. These latter are mostly not culture-bound and are not technical terms, and can be translated by an existing target language word or a brief functional or descriptive expression. Newly coined words, writes Newmark, according to a well-known hypothesis, are never completely new: they are either formed by morphological means or are phonaesthetic or synaesthetic. Most of these today are brand names and, as such, can be carried over into the target text in their original form. Generally speaking, in imaginative literature any neologism needs to be re-created: derived forms from the equivalent morphemes of the target language, phonaesthetic forms from phonemes of the target language which afford an analogous effect (Newmark 1980: 142-143).

Thus, Newmark distinguishes four major groups of neologisms: (a) new proper names, (b) existing lexical items with new meanings, (c) morphologically formed new lexical items, and (d) new phonaesthetic lexical items. The translational solutions offered by Newmark: (a) transference, (b) translation by an existing target language word or paraphrasing, (c) morphemic translation, and (d) phonemic translation.

## 5 The findings

The list below is a “dictionary” of *Squornshellous Swamptalk*, an imagined language in the novel, containing items related to the swamp-dwelling “mattresses” living on the planet Squornshellus Zeta ([http://everything2.com/index.pl?node\\_id=952470](http://everything2.com/index.pl?node_id=952470)):

**flollop** (v.) Jump around, in an excited kind of way.

**flur** (v.) To display astonishment and awe.

**flurble** (n.) A sympathetic gesture, sigh or comment.

**floopily** (adv.) In the manner of something which is floopy.

**floopy** (adj.) Something along the lines of being jumpy and/or enthusiastic.

**globber** (v.) This is the noise made by a live, swamp-dwelling mattress that is deeply moved by a story of personal tragedy. It could be an equivalent to a gasp.

**glurry** (v.) The equivalent of getting goosebumps or a shiver when getting excited or thrilled by something.

**gup** (v.) Mattresses gup when they are excited. Could be related to glurry and willomy.

**lurgle** (v.) Could be the equivalent of “pissing ones pants”, or other display of fear and loathing.

**quirrule** (v.) To ask or question in a mattresslike manner.

**vollue** (v.) Its usage appears to be equivalent to “say”.

**voon** (v.) Something mattresses say (or wurf) when they are emotionally moved by something, in both a positive and negative manner. In some contexts it can be compared to our “Wow”.

**willomy** (v.) See glurry.

**wurf** (v.) To say or utter. Mattresses are known to wurf “Voon” when commenting on something profound.

Contrasting these with their equivalents in the Hungarian translation and complementing the list with new proper names in the novel, we can compile the following “Squornshellous Swamp-talk – Hungarian dictionary”:

flodge: toccsan	mattress: matrac
flollop: zsuppog	mattresslike: matracos
floopily: csullogva	Maximegalon (University):
floopy: csullogó	Maximegalon (Egyetem)
flurble: gurgulázás	quirrul: hüledszik
flurble : gurgulázik	Sanvalwag: Sanvalwag
flur: csöp	Squornshellous Zeta:
globber: megnyeccsen, nyeccsen	Squornshellus Zéta
glurry: 1. borzong 2. nyeccsen	vollue: kartyog
gup: felcuppan	voon: fúú, uff
Hollop: Hollop	willomy: 1. remeg 2. micsong
hyperbridge: hiperhíd	wurf: mond
ion-buggy: ionbricska	Zem: Zem
lurgle: szörccsög	

Table 1: Translation operations applied to neologisms in the translation of the novel

	TT	LT	ET	ZT
PROPER NAMES			Hollop: Hollop	
			Sanvalvwag: Sanvalvwag	
			Zem: Zem	
			Squornshellous: Squornshellus	
	Maximegalon: Maximegalon			
EXISTING LEXICAL ITEMS WITH NEW MEANINGS		mattress: matrac		
MORPHOLOGICALLY FORMED LEXICAL ITEMS		hyperbridge: hiperhíd		
		ion-buggy: ionbricska		
		mattresslike: matracos		
NEW LEXICAL ITEMS			flollop: zsuppog	
			floopily: csullogva	
			floopy: csullogó	
			flur: csöp	
			globber: nyeccsen	
			glurry: nyeccsen	
			vollue: kartyog	
			willomy: micsong	
				flodge: toccsan
				flurble: gurgulázás
				glurry: borzong
				gup: felcuppán
				lurgle: szörcsög
				quirrul: hüledszik
				voon: fúú, uff
				willomy: remeg
			wurf: mond	

The translation operations applied in the translation of the different types of neologisms are summarised in Table 1. We can observe that proper

names are rendered by encyclopaedic or total transfer, lexical items with new meanings and morphologically formed items by logical transfer, and newly coined lexical items partly by encyclopaedic and partly by zero transfer. These findings are discussed in detail in the next section.

## 6 Discussion

Examining the semantic structure of neologisms in the source text, we find the following. Items in category (a) are relevant primarily through their encyclopaedic content, although there is one (*Maximegalon*) which has logical content of a descriptive nature. The only item in category (b) conveys new logical content in the text. The complex or derived items in category (c) preserve the logical content of their component parts because they are all non-idiomatic. Finally, although items in category (d) may obtain some logical content within the context of the text, this is incidental, and they communicate primarily through the encyclopaedic content provided by their sound symbolism.

### 6.1 Proper names

These belong to three subgroups. The first one contains the names *Hollop*, *Sanvalvwag* and *Zem*, which have no identifiable logical content ( $L = \emptyset$ ), but do have encyclopaedic content or, to be more precise, this content arises during the processing of the item:  $E = \{(1)\}$ , where (1) *This name only exists in this novel*. Here the translator's task was to preserve (1), which was achieved by simply transliterating the names.

In the second subgroup there is one name: *Squornshellous*. Here  $L = \emptyset$  and  $E = \{(1), (2)\}$ , where (2) *This is the name of a planet*. In order to preserve (2), the ending of the name was changed into '-us' because this Latin ending often occurs in astronomical names and thus its use makes (2) more easily recoverable for the target reader. This reduces the necessary amount of processing effort and thus increases the relevance of the expression.

The third subgroup contains the word *Maximegalon*, which is the name of a university and also of the gigantic dictionary compiled at this university. It has logical content:  $L = \{\text{MAXI, MEGA}\}$  as well as encyclopaedic content:  $E = \{(1), (3), (4)\}$ , where (3) *The combination of the morphemes maxi and mega produces a rather excessive form* and (4) *The ending -on normally occurs in learned terms like photon, epigon, pentagon, phenomenon etc.* As the three component morphemes of the name are also used in Hungarian, total transfer was made possible by a simple transliteration of the name.

### 6.2 Existing lexical items with new meanings

Here we have only one element, the word *mattress*, which obtains new logical content in the context of the novel: it is the name of a swamp-dwelling animal living on a remote planet and used for making beds for people. This is obviously a metaphorical extension of the original meaning of the word and since this kind of extension is also possible in Hungarian, all that the translator needed to do was transfer the logical content.

### 6.3 Morphologically formed new lexical items

In this category we have the words *hyperbridge*, *ion-buggy* and *mattresslike*. The first two are compounds, the third one is a derivative form. As the meanings of all three are compositional, the translator, again, needed simply to convey the logical content of the component morphemes.

### 6.4 New lexical items

These items divide into two subgroups. The first one contains the words *flollop*, *floopily*, *floopy*, *flur*, *globber*, *glurry*, *vollue* and *willomy*, which were rendered by encyclopaedic transfer. These forms have no logical content (or if they do, it only arises within the context of the novel, as a by-product of their processing):  $L = \emptyset$ . Their encyclopaedic entries contain the following assumptions:  $E = \{(1), (5)\}$ , where (5) *This is an onomatopoeic form*. In my opinion, (5) arises mainly as a result of the fact that these words all contain the sound *l* which, being a liquid phoneme, gives rise to associations to water, or movement in water or some other similar medium, or some similar kind of movement. Furthermore, word-initial *fl* and *gl* combinations in English can be found in several words with a similar semantic content: e.g. *float*, *fly*, *glue*, *glide* etc. Consequently, here encyclopaedic transfer was possible if the translator substituted a similarly onomatopoeic form devoid of any logical content in Hungarian: *zsuppog*, *csullogva*, *csullogó*, *csöp*, *nyeccsen*, *nyeccsen*, *kartyog*, *micsonog*.

In the other subgroup we find the words *flodge*, *flurble*, *glurry*, *gup*, *lurgle*, *quirrul*, *voon*, *willomy* and *wurf*, which have the same relevant content as the items in the first subgroup. However, these were substituted in the target text by existing Hungarian words. What this means is that, on the one hand, they have filled-in logical entries and, parallel with this, their encyclopaedic content was also modified, since an important assumption, (1), was lost. As a result, this treatment is to be regarded as a case of zero transfer. The fact that (1) is really a relevant assumption in this context is made clear by the last sentence of the chapter: “He listened, but there was no sound on the wind beyond the now familiar sound of half-crazed *etymologists* calling distantly to each other across the sullen mire” (p. 48, my

italics). In the target text: “Fülelt egy kicsit, de a szél csak a már ismert hangokat sodorta tova: félőrült *nyelvészek* kiáltoztak egymásnak a komor sártengeren át” (p. 57, my italics), where instead of the Hungarian equivalent of *etymologist*, the word *nyelvész* (linguist) occurs. The relevance of this sentence obviously rests on the repeated activation of (1) in the text, as a result of which (1) becomes a relatively stable element of the context, a premise. Thus the fact that in the target text (1) is activated fewer times will lessen the relevance of the last sentence and will thus reduce the humorous effect.

## 7 Summary

Evidently, the optimal case of translation is when all the relevant logical and encyclopaedic contents of the source text are preserved in the target text (total transfer). An obvious way to achieve this is when the target text item is a **transliteration** of the original (see, e.g., Tarnóczy 1966: 363). Under normal circumstances, however, this will greatly decrease the relevance of the target text, since translations are needed exactly because the target reader is not familiar with the source code, and often does not have access to the contextual assumptions required for the processing either, and in the short run the necessity of acquiring these would significantly increase the amount of effort needed in the processing. This extreme method thus cannot be regarded as the default case of translation but, as we have seen, certain parts of the source text can sometimes be rendered this way. Transliteration as a translation technique, however, is not only a means of implementing total transfer but, in some cases, also of encyclopaedic transfer, as in the case of names devoid of logical content. The same technique, then, can be employed to execute different operations in translation.

In the case of other neologisms, even if they have no logical content in the usual sense, within the context of the source text some new logical content may arise. This fact itself can be relevant in as much as it can figure as a necessary premise in the context of processing. In such cases, therefore, the translator's primary aim may exactly be to preserve this assumption, since this is what will ensure the optimal resemblance of the translation with the original.

In this light, the neologisms that occur in the novel can be regarded as a special kind of realia expressions, existing only in the universe of the source text. The translation of realia expressions, to use the words of Valló (2000: 45), is not primarily a linguistic problem but a problem of creating a context. In other words, the translator's most important task is to activate certain contextual assumptions, which are needed in working out the relevance of

the given part of the text. In the translation analysed here we have seen that if the translator fails to realise the significance of some contextual assumption and does not ensure that it is preserved in the translation, then the relevance of the target text will decrease which, in this particular case, meant that the intended humorous effect was weakened.

In order to ensure optimal relevance, the translator also needs to be aware of what assumptions are available for the target reader. Consequently, the translator needs to make decisions in consideration not only of the given micro-context and the macro-context of the text as a whole, but also of the target reader's cognitive environment.

Eventually, however, the final form of these decisions cannot be deduced from any sort of communication or translation theory, because they are determined by the translator's cognitive environment. And since different translators will approach the same source text with different cognitive environments, it makes perfect sense to say that the target text is just one among the potential variants (Lendvai 1999: 42).

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### Appendix: The data

The moment passed as it regularly did on **Squornshellous** Zeta, without incident. (42)

Ez a pillanat most is eseménytelenül telt el, mint a **Squornshellus** Zétán mindig. (50)

‘My name,’ said the **mattress**, ‘is **Zem**.’ (44)

– A nevem **Zem** – folytatta a **matrac**. (52)

The mattress **floloped around**. This is a thing that only live mattresses in swamps are able to do, which is why the word is not in more common usage. It **floloped** in a sympathetic sort of way, moving a fairish body of water as it did so. (44)

A matrac **körbezsuppogta**. Ezt csakis a mocsári matracok képesek csinálni, ezért a szó nem valami elterjedt. Együttérzőn **zsuppogott**, ily módon tetszetős méretű víztömeget mozgatva meg. (52)

The mattress **globbered**. This is the noise made by a live, swamp-dwelling mattress that is deeply moved by a story of personal tragedy. The word can also, according to *The Ultra-Complete Maximegalon Dictionary of Every Language Ever*, mean the noise made by the Lord High **Sanvalwag** of **Hollop** on discovering that he has forgotten his wife’s birthday for the second year running. (44)

A matrac **megnyeccsent**. Ezt a hangot a mocsárlakó matracoknál valami személyes tragédia szokta kiváltani. *Az Összes Létező és Valaha Létezett Nyelv Ultrakomplett Maximegalon Szótára* szerint ezt a hangot adta ki a **hollopi** Nagy **Sanvalwag** Ófelsége is, amikor rájött, hogy már két éve rendszeresen elfeledkezik az asszony születésnapjáról. (52)

Strangely enough, the dictionary omits the word ‘**floopily**’, which simply means ‘in the manner of something which is **floopy**’. (45)

Különös módon kihagyták a szótárból a „**csullogva**” szót, melynek jelentése a következő: „valami **csullogó** dologhoz hasonló módon”. (53)

‘I sense a deep dejection in your diodes,’ it **vollued** (for the meaning of the word ‘**vollue**’, buy a copy of **Squornshellous** Swamptalk at any remaindered bookshop, or alternatively buy The Ultra-Complete



**Maximegalon** Dictionary, as the University will be very glad to get it off their hands and regain some valuable parking lots), ‘and it saddens me. You should be more **mattresslike**. We live quiet retired lives in the swamp, where we are content **to flollop** and **vollue** and regard the wetness in a fairly **floopy** manner. Some of us are killed, but all of us are called **Zem**, so we never know which and **globbering** is thus kept to a minimum. Why are you walking in circles?’ (45)

– Mély levertséget észlelek a diódáidban – **kartyogott** (hogy a „**kartyog**” szó jelentését megértsd, végy egy *Squornshellusi Mocsárnyelv* c. könyvet bármelyik eladhatatlan könyvek raktárában, vagy akár egy *Ultra-komplett Maximegalon Szótárt*; az Univerzum (sic!) nagyon hálás lesz, hogy megszabadulnak tőle és értékes parkolóhelyeket nyernek ezáltal), és ez mélységesen elszomorít. Sokkal **matracosabbnak** kéne lenned. Mi nyugodtan és visszavonultan élünk mocsarainban, ahol boldogan **zsuppogunk** és **kartyogunk**, és **csullogva** elviseljük a nedvességet. Néhányunkat megölik, de mivel mindnyájunkat **Zemnek** hívják, hát nem tudjuk, melyikönket, és így a legritkább esetben **nyeccsenünk** meg. De miért körözl folyton? (53)

‘**Voon,**’ said the mattress. (45)

– **Fúú** – jegyezte meg a matrac. (53)

‘Consider it made, my dear friend,’ **flurbled** the mattress, ‘consider it made.’ (45)

– Vedd úgy, hogy már bebizonyítottad, kedves barátom – **gurgulázott** a matrac. (53)

The mattress could feel deep in his innermost spring pockets that the robot dearly wished to be asked how long he had been trudging in this futile and fruitless manner, and with another quiet **flurble** he did so. (46)

A matrac rugói legmélyén érezte, hogy jólesne a robotnak, ha megkérdezné, mióta vánszorog ilyen hiábavalóan és eredménytelenül, s ezt egy újabb **gurgulázás** kíséretében meg is tette. (54)

The mattress was much impressed by this and realized that it was in the presence of a not unremarkable mind. It **willomied along** its entire length, sending excited little ripples through its shallow algae-covered pool. (46)

A matrac le volt nyugözve, és rádöbrent, hogy nem akármilyen lánegész társaságában van. Egész hosszában **végigremegett**, izgalmas kis fodrokat keltve ezzel sekély, algás tavacskájában. (54)

It **gupped**. (46)

**Felcuppant**: (54)

Excitement gripped the mattress. It had never heard of speeches being delivered on **Squornshellous** Zeta, and certainly not by celebrities. Water spattered off it as a thrill **glurried across** its back. (46)

A matracot elfogta az izgalom. Sohasem hallott még beszédeket a **Squornshellus** Zétán, pláne nem hírességek szájából. Fröcskölt a víz, ahogy háta **végigborzongott**. (55)

Summoning every bit of its strength, it reared its oblong body, heaved it up into the air and held it quivering there for a few seconds whilst it peered through the mist over the reeds at the part of the marsh which Marvin had indicated, observing, without disappointment, that it was exactly the same as every other part of the marsh. The effort was too much, and it **flodged back** into its pool, deluging Marvin with smelly mud, moss and weeds. (47)

Minden erejét beleadva felemelte téglalap alakú testét, felszökött a levegőbe, és néhány percig lebegett, amíg a ködön és a nádason túli lápot szemlélte, és csalódottság nélkül megállapította, hogy ugyanúgy fest, mint a láp bármely más része. Aztán kimerülten **visszatoccsant** a mocsárba, tetőtől talpig beborítva Marvint bűdös latyakkal, moszattal és gizgazzal... (55)

‘There was a bridge built across the marshes. A cyberstructured **hyperbridge**, hundreds of miles in length, to carry **ion-buggies** and freighters over the swamp.’ (47)

– A láp fölé egy hidat építettek. Egy kiberszerkezetű, több száz mérföld hosszú **hiperhidat**, hogy **ionbricskák** és tehervagonok közlekedhessenek rajta a mocsár fölött. (55)

‘A bridge?’ **quirruled** the mattress. (47)

– Hidat? – **hüledezett** a matrac. (55)

The mattress **flurred** and **glurried**. It **floloped**, **gupped** and **willomied**, doing this last in a particularly **floopy** way. (48)

A matrac **csöpött** és **nyeccsent** egyet. **Zsuppogott**, **cuppant** és **micson-gott**, ez utóbbit meglehetősen **csullogva tette**. (56)

‘**Voon**,’ it **wurfed** at last. ‘And it was a magnificent occasion?’ (48)

– **Ufff** – **mondta** végül. Emlékezetes esemény volt? (56)

Suddenly, a moment later, the robots were back again for another violent incident, and this time when they left, the mattress was alone in the swamp. He **floloped** around in astonishment and alarm. He almost **lurgled** in fear. He reared himself to see over the reeds, but there was nothing to see, just more reeds. He listened, but there was no sound on the wind beyond the now familiar sound of half-crazed etymologists calling distantly to each other across the sullen mire. (48)

Egy pillanat múlva a robotok hirtelen újból megjelentek, s mikor távoztak, a matrac egyedül maradt a mocsárban. Döbbenten és riadtan **zsuppogott**, és valósággal szörcsögött a félelemtől. Kinyújtózott, hogy a nádason túlra nézzen, de ott semmi látnivaló nem volt: se robot, se csillogó híd, se úrhajó, csak nád nád hátán. Fülelt egy kicsit, de a szél csak a már ismert hangokat sodorta tova: félőrült nyelvészek kiáltoztak egymásnak a komor sártengeren át. (57)

## Winning with Words

### An Argumentative and Rhetoric Approach to Persuasion in Mass Communication

Petra Aczél

As Ernie Kovacs put it, “television is undoubtedly a medium, as it is not rare but not yet well done, either” (Briggs and Burke 2004: 235). Mass media and communication is of this species, something not rare but not yet well done. The consumer has to chew, digest the message and then feel relaxed, fulfilled and renewed, that is: perceive, understand, accept and finally – following the traces – move into the direction of the hinted and suggested opinion and behaviour.

According to H. Lasswell and Charles Wright, functions of mass communication are surveillance, correlation, cultural transmission, entertainment and mobilization. Among the tasks of mass media and the phenomena attached to it we should list the following ones:

- It is an arena, a virtual place where things happen. We may wonder whether things could happen outside this place, or this place is the reason for, stimulus for why things, events really occur.
- It is the creator, founder, and adjuster of norms, definitions and images of reality, values, virtues and desires.
- It is the source of meanings for the publicity.
- It is the owner of public speech.
- It is the area of social life and significant issues.
- It is the very source of social and personal power, a device of persuasion and manipulation, the mover of mind and soul.


Moving the soul and mind, creating an atmosphere where the ‘meeting of minds’ (Perelman 1982: 11) is successfully (virtually) done, is the topic of persuasion.

Persuasion is originally a notion of rational argumentation and emotional style. It is the effect of *logos*, *ethos* and *pathos*: that of the *ratio*,

the character of the speaker and the aesthetics of style. Persuasion is an intention of the transmitting to produce a common spirit and mind in the audience. It is a detected fact of social psychology and it is to be defined as the restructuring of mind with rational and emotional elements. It is significant to point at the word ‘restructuring’ for it is not the news that moves the audience to feel a common whole, persuasion offers a new order, a new structure of information and thus orients but is not newsworthy.

The third core notion of ours now is the text: a functional unit into which the persuasive effect was coded; the process made up of logical, ethical and pathetical elements.

All these notions above, mass communication, persuasion and text, can be rooted back to the classical science of rhetoric. The science that has been handled narrowly in Hungarian linguistics for decades has enabled the offering of theory and method to generate and code persuasion into texts in order to gain power, and to move the souls and minds of the public. According to this, the three facets of rhetoric are text as the corpus, persuasion as function and effect and mass communication as its appearance.

How is persuasive strength encoded into the text, and how is it performed acceptably through media appearance? Persuasion is built up by the classical structure and order of the text. We are usually taught to view texts as forms of differentiated contents, to see parts of texts forming and reforming the same global and linear meaning. Nevertheless, texts as functional units, even pieces of news, are structured upon intention offering  e-context and a post-context to our understanding. In the case of news, “news organising”, “news structure”, “order of importance” devices, can be mentioned (Antal, Gázsó and Kubínyi 2005).

Classical text organisation as a scheme, agenda was established in the classic Greek and made definite in the Roman silver age and no other structure has proved to be more effective since then. The structure is made up of seven parts, resolving the archetypical frame of introduction–discussion–ending into a more detailed form. The first three parts (*printipium*, *narratio*, *digressio*) serve as motivation, the second three parts (*propositio*, *argumentatio*, *refutatio*) function as presentation and the final passage (peroration) is there to end up with the suggestion of application to the receiver.

Persuasion research has long focused on the paradigm of attitude change. According to the models of these theories, attitude consists of beliefs about the attitude objects, each belief having some associated evaluation representing the perceived desirability of the attribute. The strategy to change one’s attitude has to take several important elements of the

circumstances, the context, the receiver's self esteem, the sender's authenticity and, naturally, the message, the text itself into account.

The text, however, has a significant role in the process of attitude change. It is the element that activates all elements in order to sum them up to move into the desired direction, the targeted attitude object. The message itself is built up to stimulate and reflect the stages of attitude change. Perception is changed by the very beginning and the short narration of a text (1); affiliation is modified by the digression, the telling of a personal narrative, a story (2); opinion is altered by argumentation and the logical forms of premises in it (3); and, finally, action is changed through the elevated end of a well structured text (4).

Numerous other theories (voluntary action, persuasion theories, variable oriented research) were born and are existent beside and together with the research of attitude change. Petty and Cacioppo's ELM (elaboration likelihood model) is a model of dual process in persuasion. One route to persuasion depends upon issue-relevant thinking, the degree of elaboration; thus on the sequence of arguments. The other is called peripheral route being dependant upon the communicator's credibility, likeability and the others' reaction to the same message. The former, central route is identified by the structure of argumentation, the core of the rhetorical text.

Argumentation or confirmation provides texts with a message of strength. We may argue with examples, signs and arguments in the narrow sense. When defining the latter, we all may face the difficulty to say what an argument really is and what the *differentia specificas* are. To put it simply, an argument is the strong statement of a text. In different genres of mass communication information is presented in a frame and it inevitably orientates at the same time. Facts and data as cores of information are presented as parts of reality, their credibility is gained not from what they really are, but from the pragmatic context of presentation. Therefore the 'fact' of the persuasive text is the argument. An argument can be a verbal unit, either a sentence, utterance, or a coherent sequence of them which does not need any further verification.

On what basis are arguments built? Aristotle stated that statements of common truth (*gnome*), signs necessarily pointing at a certain meaning (*tekmerion*), probabilities (*eikon*) and allusions (*semeion*) can be basic units of arguments and argument structures. These elements resemble certain phenomena in mass communication such as stereotype reduction and heuristics.

Where does the argument, the verified statement gain its truth from? Some theories emerged endeavouring to give a relevant answer to this question.

- The **foundationalist** approach presumes that in each verified argument there is an aggregation of primary statements that serves as the basis of the argument built upon it. These primary statements are axiomatic, acquired from experience. The founding statements assign a tautological point over which no explanation can reach: “Just because”. These are the foundational claims. In mass media we often here commercial slogans of this foundational type, which seem to be sensible but turn out to be tautological: “*Because you deserve it*”, “*Very-very*”, “*Just because*” (Alston, 1993).
- The theory of **verification** introduces the practice of argument validation that is based upon the structure of the argument itself. An argument is confirmed when it does not contradict anything assumed and is known to be true and it is faultless structurally, too (Brown, 1998).
- **Instrumentalists** reckon that a statement is true when it accomplishes the outlined aim attached to it, and it is false if it does not. The aim, the target of the statement has to be identified and has to be of sufficient value to validate and justify the attention directed towards the statement, the argument (Toulmin, 1953). Verifiers to support the argument can be explicit (citational, common knowledge, personal background, procedural and demonstrative verifiers), and implicit cues (sincerity, emphasis, credibility, accuracy, confirmation cues) (Adamik, Jászó and Aczél, 2004: 330–332).
- The approach of **conventionalism** supposes that valid statements are designated by commonly established features of proprieties, such as simplicity, elegance, reliability, clarity, and digression.
- **Social relativism** and **determinism**, however, think that a statement is true as the operating element of society.

According to foundationalists, the statement can be true in and about itself. Instrumentalists claim that an argument is true if it offers an effective instruction on how to act. Conventionalism, social relativism and determinism presume that there is a common background knowledge of society upon which a statement functions as a true argument (Anderson 2005: 123–143). This latter approach brings us closer to the ancient theory of common places (*topoi*, *common loci*) that has functioned as basis to argument formation. Common places in this sense are branches of contents, meanings connected to either the person, the circumstances, or the reasons. Commonplaces are collections of shared knowledge, prejudice, and experience, from which statements can be formed into true arguments.

Commonly shared social knowledge that lets us understand jokes, and enables us to predict easily offers a basis to the truth of arguments, too.

On the other hand, the truth of an argument can be the result of the placing of the statement in a logical form. Formal logic offers the structure of a syllogism with three premises, one functioning as conclusion. Any statement that turns out to be a concluding element of a causal verbal process can be thought to be true just because of its finalising role, or place. That is why enthymemes are so effective in persuasion.

An enthymeme (*en thumos* = in the brain) is a truncated form, a syllogism. "Rhetorical demonstration is an enthymeme which, generally speaking, is the strongest of rhetorical proofs" (Aristotle 1355a). One premise is missing, so that the receiver, the audience has to work out the missing element. The hypothetical statement we the audience conclude and state is hidden in the logical form, it is implied. An enthymeme is a heuristic tool for both communicator and audience. When a renowned weekly magazine writes the following enthymeme about a man (formerly chairman of a bank) accused of misappropriation: "*In Hungary, embezzlers of billions are sent and kept in prison. XY has not been treated like this,*" we may think, and definitely not by accident, that XY has had no part in any embezzlement. The enthymeme always implies a premise, a statement that is to be thought and articulated by the receiver. It is outstandingly successful in persuasion and manipulation because implicit messages are often thought by the receiver as his or her own ideas and thus it flatters his/her vanity.

Enthymemes are the very units of planned communication, campaigns and the whole of mass communication. The underlying, shared knowledge behind, form the enthymemes into rhetorical schemes in several cases. Acumen is a less known but often used "surface" form of argumentative speech. Contradictory harmony, harmonious contradiction: paradox and thus enjoyable: "*Who should adopt the child? The parent who throws or the drag queen who grows?*" says the headline of a news program. The underlying parallelism shows us how manipulation works through enjoyable verbal forms: it suggests that notions of parent and drag queen can be socially seen as equal roles and equal chances. In the spontaneous answer we may give to this acumen, we do fulfil the intention of the communicator, and validate the presuppositions of statement prior to the question made.

The argument and its manipulating logical form, the enthymeme, can also work as devices to 'switch on' interest, inclination of understanding, and acceptance from the receiver's side. Clyde Miller has identified four types of device:



- Virtue device – with which words of originally positive meanings are attached to the image (person, product, notion) to be built up: democracy, justice, beauty, etc.: “*Life is Good*” (Suzuki ad), “*The Colour of Justice*” (campaign of the Hungarian Socialist Party).
- Poison device – when words with negative meanings join the mass media product: catastrophe, war, murder. “*Make love not war.*” (Anti-war slogan), “*Stealing is sin. Illegal copying of a DVD is stealing. Do not steal*” (home DVD propaganda).
- Testimonial device – when the text refers to an authentic source of truth. Commercials and newspaper articles use this device very often: a reputed sportsman stands for a new vitamin pill, or a famous scientist protests against a social issue, a reality show participant takes part in a political campaign (‘everyday life politics’). According to Lionel Bellenger, the sender’s authority is laid upon the receiver to make the message alluring and desirable.
- Together device – to show we are not alone in thinking or doing something (see *argumentum ad populum*): “*Strength is in oneness*” (political slogan), “*Further together in coming and going*” (commercial of a bank), “*Our car*” (Suzuki commercial).

Persuasive text develops personal motivation, as it:

- arouses goodwill and attention. Classical rhetorical introduction has three traditional functions at the beginning of a text: *captatio benevolentiae* (the capturing of goodwill), *attentio* (to raise attention) and *docilitas* (the promise of the topic). As we may see, this part of the text serves as arousal of personal motivation.
- offers opportunity to personal identification. Digression is there in the structure (third part of speech – given to the structure by Quintilian) to help emotional identification with the speaker through a personal story loosely attached to the topic of speech.
- brings forward advantages or disadvantages and excludes or includes opinions. Argumentation as part of the text proves by demonstration of advantage and disadvantage. However, as Hugh Rank’s model suggests, the persuader either intensifies his/her own strong arguments, the advantages, by intensifying the weak points, i.e. the disadvantages of the adverse party; or downplays his/her own weak arguments, the disadvantages of the standpoint, and downplays the strong elements, the advantages of the adverse standpoint.

- proves that the offered object (subject or topic) is applicable in one's life. The ending part, the peroration of the rhetorical text functions this way. The elevated style, the aesthetically figured exclamations and the interrogations force the audience to apply the instructions of the speaker, writer.

In shaping up personal motivation, repetition of the message, dramatizing, and the introduction of the case as a public and common issue play important roles. Pragmatic figures of speech and commonplaces provide this arousal textually.

Media and mass communication is ready to offer solutions to the audience members and is successful in persuasion if:

- the receiver does not have time to think,
- a huge amount of information flows onto him/her, which is impossible to process,
- the issue is not treated as significant by the receiver,
- he/she is not well informed.

Mass communication theories have attempted to describe the effect of media on the audience, or society. Following the traces of agenda setting, framing and priming could model the reasons for the success of mass media in persuasion when the above conditions exist (and at least some of them usually do exist). Much attention in the research of agenda-setting has focused on the concept of priming. Priming is a cognitive psychological concept which refers to the enhancing effects of media by offering the audience a prior context. It is a concept that will be used to interpret subsequent messages of communication. It offers a frame of reference; and priming, as a phenomenon of mass communication, tells the audience what is good or bad, what an authentic personality or a news program is like. Priming is definitely based upon two rhetoric text features. One is order (deduction or induction, natural or artificial), the other is common knowledge as the source of truth and level of acceptance. As agenda setting theorists had formerly stated, the press and the media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it. The theory of priming drew our attention to the shaping of reality by virtues and values. This also refers to the characteristic of the persuasive text; it never depicts the real but belongs to what is probable (*doxa*).

Framing is defined as a quality of communication that leads others to accept one meaning over another. The frame in which something is presented to the audience is chosen also by journalists. The created context,

the frame, organizes and structures social meaning. It affects and influences perception: the way we see, hear or experience events and patterns of behaviour. Framing places events within a field of meaning and thus narrates reality in an intentional way. Stories are frames. To explain the concept of framing, Fairhurst and Sarr give a comparison to the craft of the photographer: “consider how gifted photographers show us their view of the world through their photographs. They capture a viewpoint for others to understand and appreciate. They focus their cameras and frame their subjects so that by seeing their photographs, others can know what each photographer intended” (1996: 3). From a semiotic perspective, framing is indexical to the content and to the perception of the receiver of the message.

Narration in the classical rhetorical text is of this function; it mixes real facts with fictitious motives, highlights certain elements while downplaying others in order to create a frame of perception or understanding. According to Fairhurst and Sarr, framing has three elements to consider: language, thought and forethought. To act somehow (even spontaneously) needs forethought, language helps to remember information and acts, it is a symbolic tool to transform how we view situations and thought is necessary to use language.

To frame situations we shall use the following verbal means:

- Metaphor. “Language is vitally metaphoric,” as Shelley had put it, and we may add that the procedures of human cognition and recognition are originally metaphoric, too. A. Danto compared the metaphor, the unique trope of immutation, to enthymeme. As the *tertium comparationis*, the field of comparison is implied in the metaphor, and it is we who find out why two things, notions, emotions events could be moulded, and on what basis, it is also we who conclude the deliberately missing premise of the truncated syllogism. Metaphor in cognition is analogous with enthymeme in dialectic thinking and both frame a new idea by logical or cognitive comparison.
- Stories (anecdotes, myths and legends). When using a personal story, or a vivid anecdote, we fix certain elements in the audience’s mind, as narratives offer memorable structures and thus persuade.
- Slogans. The gaelic ‘sluagh-ghairm’, cry for battle has become the instant form of messages in the modern ages. Slogans using alliteration, ambiguity, pun, rhyme and rythm imprint their contents, meanings into our memory and mind. Similarly to instant coffee that dissolves in hot water these short sentences, texts dissolve in our brains. They wrap up a feeling, and we are to receive it as a gift. It is

not understanding but remembering and repeating that keep slogans alive.

- Contrast. To describe something in terms of what it is not is an old and well-known method of definition. It is also a technique on a slippery slope and of irrelevant syllogisms. “If you do not want to earn more and do not want to live a happier life, do not click to visit our website,” says an internet banner and we get a more forceful message frame to click than in the case of a positive, direct hypothetical syllogism (see peripheral route of persuasion). However, contrasts using negative premises are usually not relevant logically but persuasive rhetorically.

Fairhurst and Sarr also enlist non-verbal possibilities of framing, such as traditions, rituals, ceremonies and artefacts.

In his *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776), George Campbell defined rhetoric as “art or talent by which discourse is adapted to its end. The four ends of discourse are to enlighten the understanding, please the imagination, move the passion, and influence the will” (I.1., xii). Persuasive functions of text in mass communication highlight the usefulness of rhetorical methods and elements and turn our attention to the classical discipline that enables us make any medium well-done.

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## **The Formation of Roman Catholic (Arch)Dioceses in Medieval England and Hungary**

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Cathedrals and parish churches surviving from the Middle Ages are among the greatest achievements of architecture attracting a lot of tourists today, but not many visitors are aware of their origin, rank, and function. When studying English arts most students show a lack of knowledge of fundamental ecclesiastical terms, historical background and art terminology not only in connection with England, but, in my experience, with their native country as well. Though the structure of the Church was basically similar in the two countries, there were fundamental differences in the size and number of (arch)dioceses and parishes. In this paper I will concentrate mainly on the territorial formation of the hierarchy of the Roman (Latin) Church in the eleventh century, which was a decisive period in both England and Hungary, and will conclude with a short description of the present situation.

### **1 Why Should We Teach about the Hierarchy of the Church?**

In the Middle Ages the dominant religion was Roman Catholicism in both England and Hungary. During the Reformation various Protestant denominations won many converts in both countries. In England the kind of Protestantism represented by the Anglican Church (the Church of England) became the state religion, but Roman Catholicism has also survived until the present day. In Hungary, although some Protestant churches (Calvinist, Lutheran, Unitarian) were and are important, the Roman Catholic Church has remained dominant until the present day. In both countries the new denominations took over many buildings of the Roman Catholic Church and transformed them according to their liturgy and taste. Medieval Roman Catholic churches were richly decorated as they served as ‘the poor people’s bible’, most of whom were illiterate, and the frescoes, painted altarpieces, sculptures helped them to understand the stories in the Bible. Protestantism was against such rich decoration, and Protestants whitewashed or destroyed



the earlier frescoes, dismantled the Medieval winged altars, and also destroyed many sculptures. We should make it clear, however, that in England the destruction of many churches was not only the result of Protestant zeal, but many of them were damaged during the Civil War, or fell prey to neglect in later centuries. Today you cannot find a single Medieval winged altar in an English cathedral, and there are only a few fragments of frescoes, which have survived under the whitewashed surface. In the territory of historical Hungary archaeologists are still uncovering frescoes from their Medieval Pre-Reformation period in Protestant churches. Unlike England many Medieval altarpieces have survived in those parts of historical Hungary that were not occupied by the Turks. In some churches there are more than ten winged altars, e.g. in Bártfa – Bardejov, Lőcse – Levoča in Upper Hungary, today's Slovakia. In contrast, if you enter one of the famous Medieval English cathedrals today, you will find blank walls, no Medieval panel paintings and relatively few sculptures. Most tourists do not realize that these great achievements of architecture did not look so austere in their heyday; they used to be Roman Catholic churches and were richly decorated. This is one of the reasons why we have to make our students realize that these churches have undergone dramatic changes since the Middle Ages.

Another experience that led me to teach about Medieval church architecture and the hierarchy of the church was that I came to realize that when I took groups of students to England, they were not familiar with elementary art historical concepts and they also lacked the basic vocabulary both in English and in their native tongue in the field of church architecture. They often failed to understand the guide or missed the best parts of the cathedrals if they visited them on their own. Words like 'temple', 'cathedral', 'basilica', etc. can also cause problems for Hungarian students of English because of language interference. 'Temple' is often used incorrectly as Hungarian 'templom' means a Christian church, while in English it is used to refer only to pagan buildings. 'Basilica' denoted originally a secular building in ancient Rome. This building type was taken over by Christian architecture. In architectural sense it denotes a church that has a higher and wider central vessel (the 'nave') and two or four lower and narrower side vessels (the 'aisles'). But a church that has this architectural arrangement does not usually have the rank of a 'basilica'. In Christianity this term was originally applied to only the seven most important churches of Rome. Later the Pope had the right to give this title to exceptionally important churches anywhere. Officially they are the 'basilica minor' type. Consequently, using the word 'basilica' for a church is not a matter of size. We have a similar problem with 'cathedral'. When I ask my students to give examples of

English cathedrals, they often give Westminster Abbey in the first place, but, however important a church it is, it has not been a cathedral (except between 1540 and 1550). Students often suppose that any church that is big and important could be a cathedral. But again having the rank of a cathedral is not a matter of size or importance, but of its status in the hierarchy of the Church. To take the example of my own town, Eger cathedral, which was first built on the fortress hill and later on today's site, has been the centre of the Eger diocese at least since 1009. It was a bishop's church for many centuries, and was elevated to archbishopric only in 1804, but the church was given the title *basilica* only in 1970.

When I try to find out about language interference in connection with 'cathedral', and ask what they mean by 'katedra' in Hungarian, e.g. when the teacher asks a schoolchild to go to the 'katedra', it turns out that some students have the raised platform in mind, others think of the desk of the teacher, and only a few of the chair. But actually the word refers to the chair, and the chair in the case of a church is that of the bishop or archbishop. The presence of the Hungarian word *szék* in *székesegyház* or *Szentszék* is also puzzling for students, and they often do not know what the latter means, or that its English equivalent *Holy See* is, *see* meaning *diocese*, as the pope is also the bishop of Rome. Thus, only churches where a(n arch)bishop has his chair (or rather throne) can be called cathedrals, these churches are practically the seats of the district of the (arch)bishop, consequently they are normally important and huge buildings. These districts of the bishops are dioceses, the bigger units of the territory of the Church, which are divided into smaller units, called parishes. In the Middle Ages cathedrals were typically products of towns and many of them were big enough to house the population of a whole town, but as the towns grew, they had to be divided into districts with their own church, the parish church.

It would be difficult to speak about English art history, and within that the history of English architecture without clarifying such basic concepts. Besides this it is also interesting to compare the structure of the Roman Catholic Church in our countries because of the basic similarities: the dominant church was the Roman Catholic in both Medieval England and Hungary, and the size of the population was almost the same. Does it mean that the hierarchy was also the same as to the number of dioceses and archdioceses? This is what we are going to have a look at next.

But before that we have to make it clear what we mean by the *Middle Ages*. It is widely accepted that this period lasted approximately from the fall of the Roman Empire to the discovery of America. In an even more simplified way we can roughly consider the millennium between 500 and 1500 as the Middle Ages. The first half of this period is often described as

the Dark Ages, partly because of the constant wars and destructions during the Age of Migration, and partly because of our lack of knowledge about this age. It is, however, the second half of these thousand years, and within that especially the eleventh century that determined the future territorial and hierarchical system of the Catholic Church in both countries. In Hungary after the first efforts of converting Hungarians to Christianity in the tenth century, real change was brought about by the first Hungarian king, Saint Stephen, crowned at the beginning of the new millennium. In England, though Christianity has a longer history, however, the Norman Conquest of 1066 was a watershed in this history, not only because the whole upper clergy was replaced by a new Norman priesthood, but also by the renewed building activity. No truly great church is known from the pre-Norman period. From the Conquest onwards, however, about one hundred cathedrals and thousands of parish churches have been built in England. The ruling art styles in England and Hungary in the period between 1000 and 1500 were Romanesque (called Norman in England) and Gothic, but the Renaissance also began to spread in the 1470s in Hungary, mainly in the royal court, while the Gothic style still flourished in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, especially in the more remote parts of the country. Renaissance arrived in England with considerable delay as the 15<sup>th</sup> century was the age of the War of Roses.

## **2 The Establishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary**

The most widely accepted date of the settlement of Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin is 896. They were pagan at that time. Their conversion to Christianity began during the reign of Géza in 953 first by Greek missionaries in Transylvania, then by Western monks and priests from Sankt Gallen (founded by Celtic-Irish monks) and Passau in Western Hungary. Prince Géza himself was baptised in 972 or 973, but he was as much a pagan as a Christian during the rest of his life; he said he was rich and powerful enough to serve two gods. The first Benedictine monastery was also founded at the time of Géza in 997 in Pannonhalma, originally called St Martin's Hill, the present name dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is still the most important monastery in Hungary (and has the status of a diocese), and was named after St Martin, because he was born in Roman Pannonia, in the town of Savaria (Szombathely). The construction of the monastery was completed by Géza's son, Stephen, who became the first truly Christian king of Hungary. He was baptized by Adalbert, bishop of Prague, and married Gizella, who came from Bavaria with a retinue of Catholic priests and knights. She may have contributed to the foundation of the first bishopric in Veszprém. Stephen was crowned in 1000, or on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1001. He

realized that Hungarians could survive in their new homeland only if his country became a Christian state, and they adopted the existing political system of Western Europe. In the field of religion he had to choose between Roman and Byzantine Christianity, and he chose the former, while some other leaders like the *vajda* (voivod) of Transylvania adopted Greek Orthodoxy. It was also symbolic that he asked the pope and not the Byzantine emperor to send him a crown. The German emperor Otto III supported him in his efforts and Stephen must have used German forces in consolidating his power and establishing order. He established the archbishopric of Esztergom in 1001, which has remained the centre of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary ever since. Just as the pope is the bishop of Rome, the archbishop of the diocese of Rome, and the primate of Italy, the archbishop of Esztergom has these ranks in his town, diocese and Hungary but, of course, unlike the pope, he has never been a patriarch. Though the political and religious centre of the country was in Esztergom, from 1018 Fehérvár (today's Székesfehérvár) began to play a role which is similar to that of Westminster. The royal court began to reside here (just like the English one in Westminster), and though it was not the seat of an archbishop (similarly to Westminster Abbey), many Hungarian kings were crowned and buried at Székesfehérvár, and had their royal chapel and treasury (including crown jewels and relics) there for centuries until the Turks destroyed the place in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It is a sad thing that in this way, unlike most European royal houses, the tombs of the majority of Medieval Hungarian kings have not survived, or cannot be identified as the skeletons of kings buried at Fehérvár were mixed up during various excavations with few exceptions, like Béla III, who was reburied in Buda's Matthias Church. The remains of kings buried elsewhere had no better fate either. Though the royal residences were located in different towns during the rest of the Middle Ages (besides Esztergom and Fehérvár also in Visegrád and Buda), Fehérvár preserved its role as a sacral centre of Hungary, the population of which was around one million at the turn of the millennium. Stephen's Fehérvár was meant to play a similar role that was played by Aachen at the time of Charles the Great.

In the hierarchy of the Church the uppermost rank was held by the archbishop of Esztergom, who was primate of Hungary, though this latter title was mainly used after the Middle Ages. Saint Stephen founded ten bishoprics in Hungary: Esztergom, Eger, Kalocsa, Csanád, Várad, Erdély (Transylvania), Pécs, Veszprém, Vác, and Győr. There are very few data about the foundation of the dioceses. Sometimes we may draw conclusions from the choice of the patron saint and from other circumstances. (See Appendix I) The exact date of foundation has survived only in two cases:

Pécs – 1009 and Csanád – 1030-31. Eger is likely to have been founded between 1001 and 1009. According to the latest research Vác was founded by King Peter Orseolo (1038-1041), and Bihar (later Várad) by András I (1046-1060). The archbishopric of Transylvania had no permanent seat in the initial period, but by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century Gyulafehérvár (today's Alba Iulia) became its centre (Fedeleš, 6). Some of the bishoprics (Veszprém, Győr, Esztergom) may, however, have existed before St Stephen's coronation, and from among them he chose Esztergom as the future centre of the Hungarian Church. It became the first Hungarian archdiocese on the basis of the decision of the Synod of Ravenna in 1001. Kalocsa also became an archbishopric soon after, but the exact date is debated (1006, or 1009, even 1030) (Thoroczkay, 15). Esztergom and Kalocsa remained the two archdioceses in Hungary until the end of the Middle Ages, while further bishoprics became archbishoprics in later centuries: Eger – 1804, Veszprém – 1993. Veszprém was always strongly associated with the Hungarian queens. While the king was crowned by the archbishop of Esztergom, the queen by the bishop of Veszprém. Saint Stephen cared not only for the establishment of cathedrals and monasteries, but also of parishes. Every ten villages were obliged to build a church jointly and chapters were established not only in the centres of bishoprics (székeskáptalan), but also elsewhere (társaskáptalan). Fehérvár was the first of the latter. The members of the chapter were the canons; their head was the dean. With the growth of the number of parishes it became a practice that several neighbouring parishes joined into a bigger unit (esperesség).

The new foundations were also given land, and the peasants had to give one tenth of their harvest (a tithe) to the Church. Monasteries were founded either by the king – Stephen also founded several other Benedictine monasteries at Zalavár, Bakonybél, Pécsvárad, Zobor – or by clans. The latter kind was not approved by the Holy See, but remained practice in Hungary until the twelfth century. Monks and nuns lived their way of life according to certain regulations, often their own. The head of a monastery was usually an abbot. One of the best-known monasteries, Tihany Abbey was founded by András I in 1055, and the original foundation document still survives and contains the first written text in Hungarian.

The first king of Hungary, Stephen was canonized in 1083 at the initiative of King Ladislaus I (who was also canonized in 1192). Stephen I was the first ruler in the world who became a saint of the Roman Catholic Church. He was also canonized by the Orthodox Church in 2000, in this way Saint Stephen is respected uniquely in both parts of the Christian world. Another interesting fact is that perhaps no other royal family has given so many saints to the Catholic Church as the Árpád Dynasty (1000-1301).

The eleventh century was the time of the schism of the Church between the Greek Orthodox East and the Latin West. The Eastern and Southern borders of historical Hungary became the divide between the two great branches of Christianity - this divide line still exists. Transylvania, which had been rather under Greek influence in the tenth century, became part of the Latin West in the eleventh, though in later centuries Greek Orthodoxy played an important role in the communities of Romanians and Serbs.

The eleventh century, which was as decisive in Hungarian as in English history, was also the age when the Church attempted to reform itself in whole Europe. Until then priests, even bishops, had been allowed to get married. From the end of the eleventh century several synods declared that priests should live in celibacy. It was also the age of struggle about investiture between kings and popes. Just like in England, in Hungary kings did not always ask for permission from the pope when appointing new bishops or other leaders of the clergy. However, it seems, popes were often more tolerant in the case of Hungary. The agreement of the pope was rather formal, the real choice was in the Hungarian king's hands. Archbishops and bishops were real political factors; they also had secular power, they had lands, castles, and vassals. It was important for the king that they should be loyal to him through getting their power from him and becoming his vassal in this way.

At times of struggle for royal succession potential kings often turned to Byzantium for support. In one case Géza I got a crown from the Byzantine emperor in 1074, the acceptance of which normally meant the status of a vassal to the emperor, but he managed to avoid becoming a vassal. This Greek crown was combined with a Latin part at the end of the twelfth century according to the most widely accepted theory, and they formed together the crown of later Hungarian kings until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Ladislaus I (Saint Ladislaus) had the cathedrals of Várad (Oradea) and Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia) built. When Hungary annexed further territories at the end of the eleventh century, Croatia became a new diocese with Zagreb under Ladislaus I. Nyitra in Upper Hungary (today's Slovakia) also became the seat of a new bishopric created in a region of the former Esztergom diocese at the beginning of the twelfth century. In the following centuries further bishoprics were created in territories held by Hungarian kings for shorter or longer periods.

### **3 The Roman Catholic Church in Medieval Britain**

Christianity arrived in Roman Britannia in the third century and became more wide-spread in the fourth century, but only in that part of the British

Isles that was occupied by the Romans, i.e. the one practically corresponding to the territory of modern England. At the synod of Arles in 314 the bishops of York, Lincoln, and London attended, testifying to the existence of a church hierarchy at this time. However, when the Romans had to withdraw from Britain at the beginning of the fifth century, this development was broken, and the country was soon invaded by pagan Anglo-Saxons. In this respect, the history of the Christian faith on the soil of later Hungary was similar. Christianity was also present here in the Romanized Western part of later Hungary, called Pannonia, to which, among other things, the Early-Christian tombs in Pécs testify, which are a World Heritage Site today. As the Romans withdrew from Pannonia, waves of various pagan peoples arrived here as well. The difference between Britannia and Pannonia was that in the former Christianity did not stop being practised completely, but was driven into the Western parts of the Isles (Cornwall, Wales), and to Continental Britannia minor (Bretagne).

Ireland and Scotland were never invaded by the Romans. Christianity began to spread there in the fourth and fifth centuries through missionaries from Britannia and Gallia. But these missionaries were not very successful, and the real conversion of the Irish is rather due to the activity of St Patrick, who may have been born in Scotland around 389, then spent much of his youth as a slave in Ireland, and became a monk later in Gallia. In the end he was authorized by the pope in Rome to convert the Irish. He must have arrived in Ireland for this purpose around 432, where he managed to convert almost the whole country with the help of his disciples. The centre of his activity was Armagh, which became later an archbishopric. He not only converted the Irish, but also founded bishoprics and monasteries. Arts and sciences began to flourish in these institutions.

The organisation of the Celtic Church in Ireland and elsewhere in the British Isles was special as there were practically no towns in Ireland. By the sixth century the centres of church and spiritual life were monastic communities and bishops were just members of these monastic communities, subordinated to the abbot. The veneration of the Scripture is shown by the great number of richly decorated holy books in Irish-Celtic monasteries in Ireland and Northern Great Britain; the most famous ones being *The Book of Kells*, *The Book of Durrow*, and *The Lindisfarne Gospels*. The spirit of the Old Testament greatly influenced moral life and public confessions were substituted by private ones. This practice was spread throughout Western Europe by Irish missionaries who founded many monasteries in Gallia, Germania, and Italia.

The conversion of the pagan Anglo-Saxons began from two directions in the sixth century. Pope Gregory the Great (Gregory I) sent Augustine to

the Southern part of Britain, who arrived at the estuary of the Thames in 597. In 601 he managed to convert Aethelbert, King of Kent, whose wife, being the daughter of the Frankish king, had already been baptized. This was followed by the baptism of the whole population of Kent. In the meantime Augustine had been ordained a bishop in Arles and in 601 the king endowed him with Canterbury, which became the seat of his Church. Augustine began to organize the hierarchy of the church from Canterbury founding one more bishopric in Kent: Rochester. Kent was followed by Essex, where the centre of the diocese became St Paul's Cathedral in the Roman forum of London. Other parts of England were converted only after Saint Augustine's death. Another outstanding archbishop of Canterbury in the early period was the Greek Theodoros between 669 and 690. He established six new dioceses, so there were 16 of them on his death. Though the Church in England had very strong relations with Rome, it was after all a national church, over which the king had considerable influence.

While the missionaries of Rome started the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons from the South, the Irish-Celtic Church worked from the North. Columba founded a monastery on the island of Iona in 563, from where he began to convert the Picts of Scotland. Irish priests were monks, even the bishops lived in monasteries. As they lived a simpler way of life, Irish bishops were more readily accepted by ordinary people than the bishops of the South, who lived in royal courts. In the end the Roman and Celtic Churches had to agree about whose organisational forms and doctrines would prevail in England. 'Agreement' was reached at the Synod of Whitby in 663 in favour of the Roman Church and Rome extended its authority over all Christians in Britain.

The state of the English Church before the Norman Conquest is often described as inferior to the Church in Normandy; corruption and the ignorance of the lower clergy are mentioned as typical features. Edward the Confessor was, however, canonized and he had the same power in England as William in Normandy. He appointed bishops and abbots, and he had Westminster Abbey built. After the Norman invasion William reorganized the Church in England. Similarly to the way he appointed the archbishop of Rouen, the six bishops of Normandy and heads of the monasteries in his homeland from among his friends and relatives, he replaced almost the whole Saxon upper clergy with his own people. Lafranc, archbishop of Canterbury, who had come from Italy and studied Bede's history of the Church in England, was his faithful ally. He considered himself the primate of England, although the archbishops of York had never given up a similar aspiration. With the help of forged documents Lafranc managed to prove his claim to supervising most of the fifteen bishoprics of England and left only



Durham to York. Soon, with the exception of Worcester, Norman (or other foreign) bishops were appointed everywhere. He also moved the centres of several sees that had been in rural areas to urban ones. The abbots of the 35 Benedictine monasteries which existed in England in 1066 were also replaced with reliable Normans. William expected all bishops and abbots of England and Normandy to provide armed and mounted knights for his service.

Gregorian (Gregory VII's) reforms reached Ireland at the beginning of the twelfth century. Until then monastic settlements, rather than dioceses, had characterised the organisational structure of the Irish Church. The Synod of Cashel in 1101 forbade divorce, clerical marriage, and lay abbots among other things. The two ecclesiastical provinces of Armagh and Cashel were established on that occasion, and in 1152 Tuam and Dublin were also elevated to archbishoprics. Diocesan boundaries often coincided with former territorial boundaries of Irish dynasties (clans).

The right of appointing bishops belonged to the king in England until the twelfth century, just like in Hungary. In 1107 the king had to give up this right, but the upper clergy had to vow loyalty to the king. There were efforts in later centuries from time to time to get back this right, but when for example King John Lackland refused the candidate of the pope in 1213, his country was punished by interdictum, and the king had to give in finally.

Britain also had less dioceses and, as a result, less cathedrals than some other countries; for example, Italy had 275, while England had 'only' 100 during its whole history, seventeen built before the Reformation. Even so their quantity outnumbers that of Hungarian dioceses and cathedrals. Still, it is said, the English favoured fewer, but large dioceses, which resulted in the splendour of their cathedrals, while many such buildings were architecturally unimportant in France or Italy. While on the Continent monasteries and cathedrals represented different kinds of institutions in the Church, in England several cathedrals were also monasteries at the same time, with the bishop also serving as the abbot of the monastery and a prior being the effective head of the monastery (cathedral priory). In some cases, though the cathedral complex never housed monks, even though they may show architectural elements that are otherwise typical of monasteries (e.g. the beautiful cloisters of Salisbury); they were rather built for show. Out of the seventeen Medieval cathedrals eight were monastic (Winchester, Worcester, Canterbury, Rochester, Durham, Norwich, Ely, and Bath which replaced Wells). The other cathedrals were served either by Canons Regular (Carlisle) or Secular Canons (London, York, Lichfield, Hereford, Lincoln, Chichester, Sarum – Salisbury.) London, York, Lichfield, Hereford, Exeter, Wells were Saxon foundations, Lincoln, Chichester, Sarum were those of William I.

Henry VIII added six more sees in the 1540s, but then no more new dioceses were established between 1546 and 1836. This shows again how lasting the arrangements of the eleventh century proved to be.

#### **4 Developments in Hungary since the Middle Ages in the Field of the Territorial Organization of the Roman Catholic Church**

The central part of historical Hungary was occupied by the Turks for 150 years from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century. Some of the areas in the South that had been most densely populated before the Turkish invasion were left now without population. It is estimated that the population was reduced to three millions at that time. When the Turks were driven out of the country at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Austrian ruler invited new foreign settlers to the country. In this way the ethnic and religious composition of the country was changed dramatically in these two centuries.

During the Turkish occupation some of the church centres could not function at all, or they had to move provisionally to regions not occupied by the Turks. Eger could be a typical example of what hardships the Church had to go through at that time. As Eger was occupied by the Turks during a second siege in 1596, the bishop had to move to Upper Hungary, to other places of the Eger diocese. First it moved to Kassa (Košice), but that part of Northern Hungary was already dominated by Protestantism. As all churches were in the hands of the Protestants in Kassa, they managed to occupy the cathedral only with military force in 1604, but in 1606 Prince Bocskai took it back from the Catholics. Then the bishop had to move to other towns of Upper Hungary, namely to Nagyszombat (Trnava) and Jászó (Jasov). It was only in 1671 that Emperor Leopold I ordered that the Bishop and the Chapter of Eger should win back Kassa cathedral. They could return to Eger only at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century after Hungary was liberated from the Turks (Vaško ed., 14–15).

Another dramatic change occurred in the twentieth century. Hungary was reduced to less than one third of its former territory by the Treaty of Trianon, which strongly influenced the territories of the former dioceses as well. The territorial loss has been further increased through the creation of new dioceses in recent years. The Eger diocese, for example, comprised one seventh of the territory of Hungary in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and was almost as big as today's Hungary. It preserved its size until the nineteenth century, when it became an archdiocese in 1804 with the subordinated new dioceses of Rozsnyó (Rožnava), Kassa (Košice), Szepes (Spišská Kapitula) – all in today's Slovakia, and Szatmár (Satu Mare) – in today's Romania. All these territories became parts of Czechoslovakia and Romania, respectively, after

1920. But in an interesting way Kassa remained part of the Eger Province until 1977, when John Paul II raised Kassa's status to an archbishop's seat with the Rožňava and Spiš bishoprics suffragans of the new archdiocese (Vaško ed., 34). Further areas of the former Eger diocese were joined to the new Debrecen-Nyíregyháza diocese in 1993, so, today its territory is only 11500 km<sup>2</sup>. It is, however, still one of the biggest and most important dioceses of Hungary and it was given the rank of 'basilica minor' in 1970.

Though much reduced in territory, the number of dioceses and archdioceses has not decreased in Hungary. At the moment there are four archbishoprics, Budapest-Esztergom, Eger, Kalocsa-Kecskemét, Veszprém, which are divided into 13 dioceses (besides the archdioceses, which are automatically also dioceses, these are Vác, Miskolc, Hajdúdorog (Greek Catholic), Debrecen-Nyíregyháza, Szeged-Csanád, Pécs, Kaposvár, Szombathely, Győr), plus two special dioceses: the Diocese of Pannonhalma Abbey and the Military Bishopric, which are subordinated to the Holy See directly. The present borders of the dioceses were established by John Paul II in 1993. As some of the dioceses have seats in two towns, besides the usual centre of a diocese, the cathedral, there is a co-cathedral in some towns.

As to ethnic Hungarians living in neighbouring countries, in some countries the dominant denominations are the same as those of the Hungarians (in Slovakia, Austria, Croatia, Slovenia), while in other countries they are different (in Romania, the Ukraine, Serbia). There is no Hungarian bishop in Slovakia, though this has been demanded by ethnic Hungarians for decades. In Romania there has been a Hungarian Roman Catholic archbishop in Gyulaférvár (Alba Iulia) for a few years (earlier it was a bishopric), but in an interesting way the other Transylvanian and Western dioceses (Szatmár - Satu Mare, Nagyvárad - Oradea, Temesvár - Timișoara) do not belong to Gyulaférvár (Alba Iulia), but to București, though Nagyvárad and Szatmár have a Hungarian archbishop. There is also a Hungarian Roman Catholic bishop in the Ukraine. In other neighbouring countries the number of Hungarian Roman Catholics is much smaller, so the diocese they belong to is subordinated to the religious authorities of the capital of the given country.

## **5 The Present Number of (Arch)Dioceses in the Roman Catholic and the Anglican Church on the British Isles**

The Church of England, which is the dominant church, has 43 dioceses, and correspondingly 43 cathedrals, in England and Wales. Two of these, Canterbury and York have been archdioceses from the very beginning, with the archbishop of Canterbury being the supreme head within the Church though formally it is the Queen. The dioceses are divided into 13000

parishes. Many of the cathedrals and parish churches are the oldest and architecturally the most valuable buildings in their town or village - as a result they are the most visited buildings for tourists as well.

The Roman Catholic Church has almost 3000 parishes in England and Wales, which make up 22 territorial dioceses, plus there are two special dioceses: those of the Forces and the Ukrainian Apostolic Exarchate. As the buildings of the Roman Catholic Church were usually transformed into Anglican churches during the Reformation, their present churches are often more recent foundations. As mentioned above, Westminster Abbey, though not a cathedral, is one of the most important churches of the Church of England, which was, however, a Roman Catholic abbey in the Middle Ages. On the other hand, Westminster Cathedral is a Roman Catholic church today, but it was built only in the nineteenth century.

The Anglican Church of Ireland has two provinces similarly to the Church of England, with archbishops in Armagh and Dublin. The Roman Catholic Church has four archdioceses: Armagh, Cashel & Emly, Dublin, and Tuam, with 26 dioceses. The Catholic Church has two archdioceses in Scotland: St Andrews & Edinburgh and Glasgow which are divided into 9 dioceses (Western Isles, Argyll, Aberdeen, Dunkeld, Galloway, Motherwell, Paisley).

## **6 Conclusion**

However great the distance between our countries may seem, there are still striking similarities between the history of the Roman Catholic faith and the institutions of the Church in Britain and Hungary. Christianity was present on the soil of later England and Hungary at least as early as in the third century. The ancestors of much of the present population of our countries lived elsewhere at that time, so the Anglo-Saxons were still in their ancient homeland in today's North Germany and Denmark, and the Hungarians in Asia, but large areas of their future countries were parts of the Roman Empire. When Constantine the Great's edict in 313 turned Christianity into an accepted religion, it spread rapidly, and also the hierarchy of the Church must have been set up quickly. We know not only about the presence of bishops from Britannia at the synod of Arles, as mentioned above, but also about the existence of bishoprics in Pannonia, e.g. Siscia, Iovia, Sirmium, Mursa, Cibalae (Glatz ed., 24). It is also interesting that Constantine was helped to power by legions from Britannia, and some of his successors had to defend the empire against Germanic tribes from Pannonia.

With the withdrawal of the Romans both Britannia and Pannonia fell into the hands of pagan invaders. These invaders were, however, often

converted to Christianity in a relatively short period of time. In the British Isles, thanks to the activity of Celtic-Irish monks, Christianity was practised almost continuously unlike in the territory of later Hungary, though in Pannonia some churches from Roman times, e.g. those in Sopianae (Pécs) were still in use in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. This means that in spite of the various pagan waves of the Migration Period Christianity continued to be practised to a certain extent in Pannonia as well, and church life in certain periods was even organized. For instance, after the time of the Frankish occupation Transdanubia belonged to the archdiocese of Salzburg, while South Pannonia's religious centre was the diocese of Sirmium, the bishop of which supported the pope against Salzburg, which represented Bavarian interests (Glatz ed., 36).

The real breakthrough came, however, in the eleventh century. The Migration Period with all the destructions was over, and people also saw that the superstitious fears of the predicted end of the world in 1000 had been groundless. All over Europe a sudden growth in the construction of churches followed, and the hierarchy of the church was also (re)organized. In England it was William the Conqueror, who replaced almost all former Saxon bishops with his reliable Norman subjects. In Hungary, after the tentative attempts of Prince Géza in the tenth century, it was his son, the first Hungarian king, Saint Stephen, who really organized the structure of the Hungarian Roman Catholic Church, founding ten bishoprics and obliging every ten villages to build a parish church. These steps proved to have a lasting effect in both countries. Though some further bishoprics were founded by later rulers, basically the territorial structure of the Church did not change until the end of the Middle Ages. Canterbury and Esztergom, respectively, remained centres of the hierarchy of the Church for a long period. Besides them there was only one more archbishopric in both countries (York and Kalocsa), but there has always been a difference in the number of bishoprics. Though, in relation to France or Italy, England had relatively few dioceses, Hungary had even fewer, while the size of the population in both countries was similar throughout the Middle Ages.

After the Middle Ages, at the time of the Reformation the change in England was far more drastic than in Hungary. Though the Reformation of Henry VIII was not started for doctrinal, but personal and political reasons, the Roman Church was suppressed in Great Britain and Ireland. But, fortunately, the majority of the buildings were taken over by the Church of England and the Church of Ireland, and although they were deprived of their paintings and sculptures, at least the buildings survive today. In Hungary it was not the Reformation that caused a lot of destruction, but the occupation of the central part of Hungary by the Turks for 150 years. In other parts of

Historical Hungary much of Medieval Hungarian art has survived. Unfortunately, most of these relics of Hungarian art history are beyond our present borders.

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- [www.catholic-ew.org.uk](http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk)
- [www.catholiccommunications.ie](http://www.catholiccommunications.ie)
- [www.cofe.anglican.org](http://www.cofe.anglican.org)
- [www.rootsweb.com/~irlik/kdioocese.htm](http://www.rootsweb.com/~irlik/kdioocese.htm)
- [www.scmo.org.uk](http://www.scmo.org.uk)
- [www.katolikus.hu](http://www.katolikus.hu)
- [www.ca-catholics.net](http://www.ca-catholics.net)

<b>The dioceses of Saint Stephen (István)</b>			
diocese/centre	foundation	patron saint	possible circumstances of and reasons for the choice of the patron saint
Veszprém	before 1002	St Michael	Refers to Orthodox origin. István's mother, Sarolt, who came from Transylvania and first settled here, was an Orthodox.
Győr	before 1002	Virgin Mary	The choice indicates István's dedication to Virgin Mary
Esztergom	1001	St Adalbert	Adalbert, bishop of Prague, may have baptised and educated István, and suffered martyrdom in 997.
Transylvania/ Gyulafehérvár	after 1004	St Michael	Transylvania was converted to Christianity by Orthodox missionaries before 1004. (The bishop of 'Turkia' was their leader.)
Kalocsa	app. 1002	St Paul	Apostle St Paul served as an example for this important mission centre.
Eger	between 1001 and 1009	St John	The use of the name of the youngest apostle is unclear. This Northern area used to be the territory of the Kabar-Jewish tribal chief Sámuel Aba, who married István's youngest sister, and became king later.
Pécs	1009	St Peter	The help of Rome was needed to convert the mysterious Black Hungarians, who lived south of Pécs and may have been Muslims.
Csanád	1030-31	St George	Legend has it that they defeated the local tribal chief Ajtony, who was an Orthodox, with the intervention of the soldier saint.
Vác	? the end of István's reign or Peter Orseolo	Virgin Mary	The creation of the last two dioceses at the time of Saint Stephen is dubious. His dedication to Virgin Mary became stronger and stronger towards the end of his life. Before his death he offered his country to Virgin Mary, whose cult became popular in Hungary earlier than in the rest of Europe. However, Vác may have been founded by King Peter, and Bihar by András I.
Bihar → Várad	? the end of István's reign or András I	Virgin Mary	

Figure 1

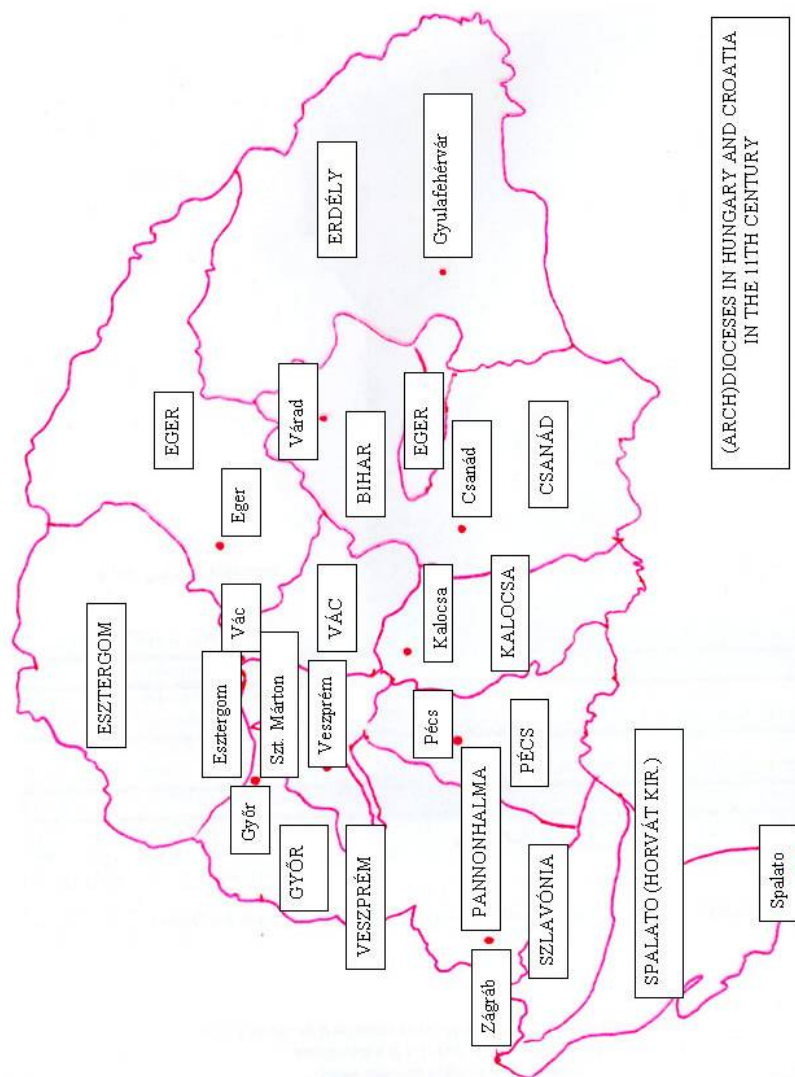


Figure 2



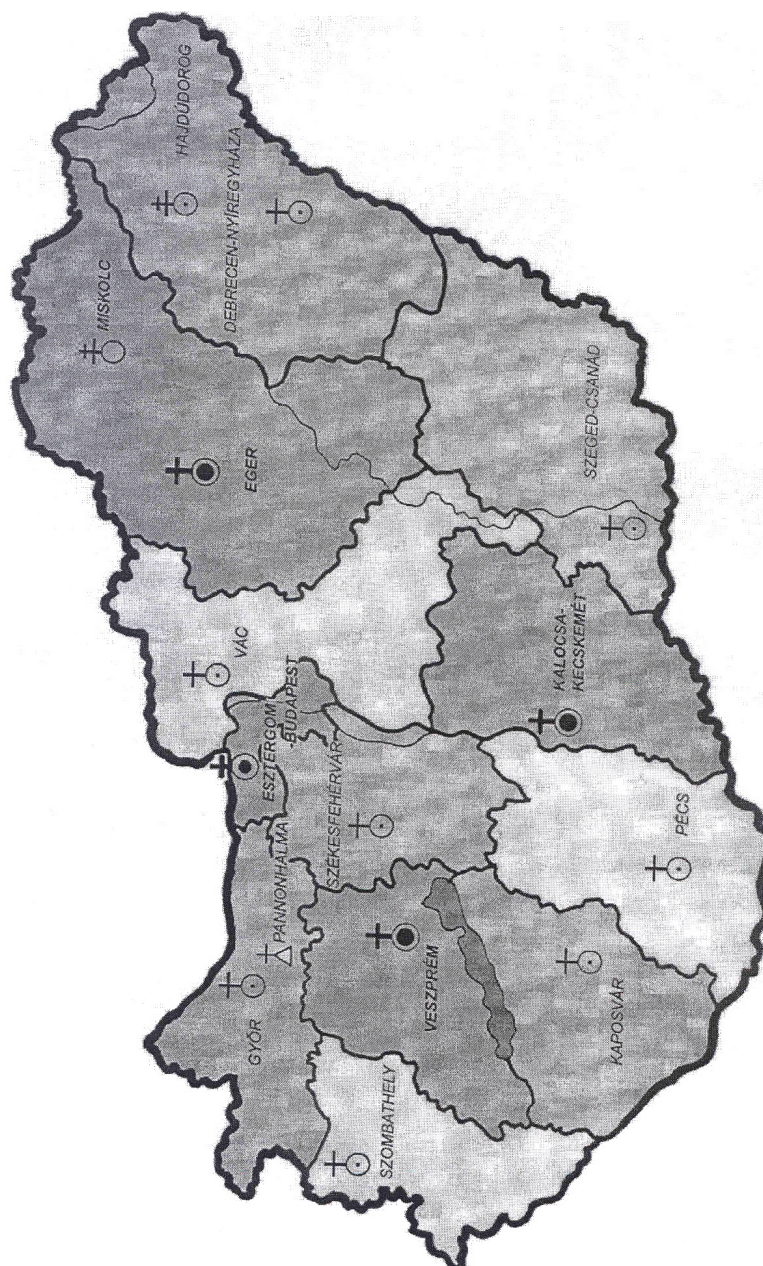


Figure 3. Dioceses in Today's Hungary  
([www.uj.katolikus.hu](http://www.uj.katolikus.hu))



Figure 4. The Anglo-Norman Realm (1066–1154)  
(The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain)



Figure 5. The Pre-Reformation Dioceses of England and Wales (13<sup>th</sup> century)  
(The Oxford Illustrated History of Britain)

## György Kepes and Modernism: Towards a Course and Successful Visual Centre<sup>1</sup>

M. R. Palmer

**ABSTRACT:** The Hungarian-born American György Kepes (1906–2001) may not have been the most influential, or indeed most original, of artists and theorists, but the fact that a centre dedicated to his life and work is based in Eger makes him an ideal starting point from which to embark upon a survey and analysis of the Modern Movement.<sup>2</sup> While this is an opportunity that has yet to be exploited in the 15 years since the György Kepes Visual Center opened at Vitkovics House, it is one that should be taken soon, before the Kepes family finally carries out its threat to take the collection to a more appreciative home.<sup>3</sup> In this paper we would like to suggest that the students of English at the Károly Eszterházy College could play a significant part in restoring the Kepes family's faith in Eger as a worthy custodian of the György Kepes Visual Center by making the collection an active part of their undergraduate studies.

There is no doubt that the György Kepes Visual Center in Eger has been a massive disappointment to its supporters.<sup>4</sup> Although the exact reasons for such a failure are complex, we would like to suggest that it can be explained, at least in part, by Kepes's own writings.

That the Kepes Collection can be found in Eger at all is due to the fact that Eger is the county town of Heves, the county of the artist's place of birth, Selyp. The bequest was made, therefore, to a town, which, while

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<sup>1</sup> This is an abridged and adapted version of a lecture entitled "György Kepes and Modernism" given by the author at Vitkovics House on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2005, as part of the Kepes celebrations marking the one hundredth year of his birth. A Hungarian summary of the lecture with an accompanying suggested bibliography can also be found on the Kepes Visual Center website: [www.muveszetekhaza.hu](http://www.muveszetekhaza.hu).

<sup>2</sup> György Kepes's name often appears in the American literature as Gyorgy.

<sup>3</sup> The institution is officially named Center rather than Centre.

<sup>4</sup> The artist's great-nephew, András Kepes, was forced to admit recently, in the March 2005 Internet edition of *Premier* magazine: "In 1991 the temporary Kepes Collection opened in Eger, in the Vitkovics House. Since then nothing has happened."

having no direct Kepes links, had considerable cultural pretensions and a ready supply of potential visitors. The fact that those visitors have thusfar decided not to visit the Kepes Collection led the local government to make an issue of the Center by including it in its bid to become EU Town of Culture in 2010. It was then that the proposal was made to move the exhibition into the Orthodox Synagogue at 21, Kossuth utca, with one of Kepes's works installed in the courtyard behind it.<sup>5</sup> Although press coverage prior, during, and indeed after the failed bid made a great deal of György Kepes's perceived status as a "world-famous" artist,<sup>6</sup> experience suggests that even the relocation of a permanent exhibition dedicated to the artist's life-work will not improve the fortunes of the collection. This is particularly the case when one bears in mind what Kepes himself wrote on the subject of exhibitions:

Art is outgrowing its traditional limitations. The artistic forms have increased in size and acquired explosive dimensions. The isolated, sheltered, limited space of a room at home or in the galleries or museums has proven claustrophobic for many dynamic, explosive explorations. Today, the strain is no longer limited to the physical, spatial dimension but includes the conceptual realm as well. Thus, the exhibition, the traditional medium used to create communication between the work of art and the public has had to be questioned. It has been questioned in all its implication [sic!]. An exhibition, as an anthology of individual work and personal achievements, no longer seems a force in the new sense of life that motivates creative expression.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The official reason given for choosing the synagogue was that it lies on one of the thoroughfares most commonly used by tourists when visiting the town's most famous landmarks.

<sup>6</sup> Typical examples of rather exuberant press coverage include: S. J., "Képgyűjtemény a zsinagógában" (Picture Collection in the Synagogue), *Népszabadság*, 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2002; Doros Judit, "Eger a fény városa lehet" (Eger could be the Town of Light), *Népszabadság*, 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2005; Sz. R., "Kepes, a fény művésze" (Kepes the Light Artist), *Heves Megyei Hírlap*, 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2006. The lack of references to György Kepes in popular accounts of modern art means that Herbert Read's reference to Kepes in his *A Concise History of Modern Painting* (new and augmented edition) (London, Thames and Hudson, 1974, p. 214), is a notable exception. Here Kepes appears in a list of leaders and disciples of the Modern Movement, which includes László Moholy-Nagy, Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Hans Richter, Lyonel Feininger, Herbert Meyer, and Marcel Breuer. It is interesting to note that while György Kepes has a premises dedicated to his work in Hungary, László Moholy-Nagy and Marcel Breuer do not. Although Pécs, the town of Marcel Breuer's (1902-1981) birth has a room named after him in its arts centre, his name did not feature in Pécs's successful EU City of Culture bid.

<sup>7</sup> Kepes, Gyorgy, "Toward Civic Art", *Arts in Society*, University of Wisconsin, 1972, p. 84.

### The Wall-less Museum and Modernism

Such calls for the “wall-less museum” go back to the years immediately following the Russian Revolution of 1917 when Futurist-Constructivist poets such as Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893–1930) demanded: “We do not need a dead mausoleum of art where dead works are worshipped, but a living factory of the human spirit – in the streets, in the tramways, in the factories, workshops and workers’ homes.”<sup>8</sup>

György Kepes was, like his Russian constructivist forebears, challenging the traditional boundaries of art and society in keeping with what he calls a “new sense of life”. Although he does not tell us in the above-mentioned quotation what that sense was, it was something new and at odds with what people were used to. In suggesting that the modern era had brought with it a new sense of life Kepes was not alone. Indeed, he was subscribing to one of the key tenets of the Modern Movement.

For an understanding of what these tenets were one should turn to Nikolaus Pevsner’s *Pioneers of the Modern Movement*, first published in 1936, the year Kepes moved from Berlin to London, having left Hungary in the first instance in 1930.<sup>9</sup> It is a work which remains perhaps the standard account of the early development of the Modern Movement.<sup>10</sup>

For Nikolaus Pevsner (1902–83) the industrial (or what Reyner Banham was later to call “the first machine”) age required a new art.<sup>11</sup> The developments seen within the fields of technology, science and industry had left art and design struggling in its wake. As Pevsner points out, whereas the

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<sup>8</sup> Similar sentiments were expressed by those active within the Surrealist movement like Georges Bataille, who proclaimed in his article “The Oldest Museum: Ashmolean Museum”, *Documents* 5, 1930: “The museum is the colossal mirror in which man, finally contemplating himself from all sides, and finding himself literally an object of wonder, abandons himself to the ecstasy of art journalism” (trans. Annette Morrison, taken from the exhibition: *Undercover Surrealism*, held at the Hayward Gallery, London in 2006). When referring to the post-modernist architect Robert Venturi, Charles Jencks, in his *Modern Movements in Architecture* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1985, p. 222), notes a reemergence of the idea of the wall-less museum when suggesting that “the age of travel and tourism” is in itself “the age of the ‘museum without walls’”, an idea therefore contemporary with Kepes’s, but given an altogether different meaning.

<sup>9</sup> Subsequent revised and partly rewritten editions were published under the fuller title of *Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius*.

<sup>10</sup> The account is almost replicated, albeit in a shorter form in the relevant sections of Pevsner, *An Outline of European History* (Harmondsworth, Pelican, 1940), and Richards J.M., *An Introduction to Modern Architecture* (Pelican, Harmondsworth, 1940). Both give an impression of the state of modern architecture at about the time Kepes left England for America in the late 1930s.

<sup>11</sup> See Banham, Reyner, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (London, The Architectural Press, London, 1960).

Great Exhibition, held in London in 1851, had been held in a “Crystal Palace” made of iron, glass and laminated wood, which made the very most of the latest industrial processes, what was to be found exhibited inside, alongside “the most cunning inventions to facilitate the production of almost any object”, were mass-produced products “bulging with tasteless decoration, vulgar and lacking in taste”.<sup>12</sup>

What was of greatest concern for Pevsner, however, was not the lack of taste, but the immorality of it all. Not only had the standards of previous ages slipped, but the work going on in the factories was “bleaker than ever before in European history”.<sup>13</sup> In making this link between the plight of the worker and the quality of design Pevsner singled out William Morris for selection as the first of his pioneers, as much for his views on the plight of the industrial labourer as his “clear and sober” designs.<sup>14</sup> It is interesting to note that Kepes also quotes Morris when discussing the social role of artists and the state of design, although it is the damage industry has caused to the townscape, rather than on the workforce, which is stressed:

Cut down the pleasant trees, among the houses, pull down ancient and venerable buildings for the money that a few square yards of London dirt will fetch; blacken rivers, hide the sun and poison the air with smoke and worse, and it’s nobody’s business to see to it or mend it: that is all that modern commerce, the counting house forgetful of the workshop, will do for us herein.<sup>15</sup>

Where Pevsner and Kepes depart from Morris, however, is in the belief that all good design is dependent on manual labour. Pevsner and many of his subsequent pioneers, while not necessarily rejecting the idea that the arts and crafts produce high quality objects, question whether manual labour of the creative kind Morris prescribes is in fact preferable on moral grounds, pointing to the laboriousness and drudgery of the handicrafts, and the liberating effect of the machine.

Once Pevsner has clarified this, his account becomes a description of how technology has been embraced in the creation of a new art. Kepes was equally captivated by the possibilities of technology and its possibilities nearly 40 years later:

<sup>12</sup> Quoted passages from: Pevsner, Nikolaus, *Pioneers of Modern Design: From William Morris to Walter Gropius* (reprinted with additions, Harmondsworth, Pelican, 1975) p. 41 and p. 43.

<sup>13</sup> Op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>14</sup> Watkin, David, *Morality and Architecture* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1977). pp. 83–84.

<sup>15</sup> Morris, William, Speech delivered before the Trades’ Guild of Learning, December 4., 1877, quoted by György Kepes in op. cit., p. 86.

The sculptural possibilities of reinforced concrete, prestressed concrete forms, plastic, stainless steel, aluminium, new techniques of welding; and the potentials of prefabricated units, pictorial use of baked enamel on steel, luminescent walls, photosensitive glass, spraying techniques ranging from metal spraying to color spraying, and new adhesives are only a few suggestions of the technology waiting to be explored.<sup>16</sup>

### **Kepes and Moholy-Nagy**

To its practitioners, the machine-made modern aesthetic was expressed architecturally in horizontal lines, table-like roofs, great simplicity, and the energetic exhibition of construction and materials,<sup>17</sup> perhaps best summed up by the work of the Bauhaus.<sup>18</sup>

The Bauhaus was to have a great influence on György Kepes, and perhaps more importantly on Kepes's mentor László Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946).<sup>19</sup> In many respects Moholy-Nagy's arrival in Berlin in 1921, resembled Kepes's nearly ten years later. Both were young unknowns from Hungary who soon enjoyed the help and support of leading members of the avant-garde. In Moholy-Nagy's case this had been Walter Gropius, director of the Bauhaus, who invited Moholy-Nagy to join his staff shortly after his arrival in Germany.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Kepes, Gyorgy, "The Visual Arts and Sciences: A Proposal for Collaboration" *Architectural Record*, 1965/5, p. 156.

<sup>17</sup> Watkin, David, *Morality and Architecture* quoting Pevsner, op. cit., p. 85.

<sup>18</sup> The Bauhaus school of art and design had three directors from the time the Grossherzogliche Sächsische Kunstgewerbeschule merged with the Grossherzogliche Sächsische Hochschule für Bildende Kunst to form the Staatliches Bauhaus Weimar: Walter Gropius (1883-1969), who directed it from 1919 to 1928, during which time the school moved from Weimar to Dessau; Hannes Meyer (1889-1954), director from 1928 to 1930 and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969), director from 1930 to 1933, when it was finally closed down by the Nazis.

<sup>19</sup> Born in Bácsborsód near Szeged in 1895, he left Hungary shortly after the fall of the Republic of Councils having studied law in Budapest and completed his military service in 1918. He arrived in Berlin, after a brief six-month sojourn in Vienna, an untrained artist producing portraits somewhat in the manner of Oskar Kokoschka and Egon Schiele. Within a matter of months, after overcoming a certain scepticism towards the Berlin art scene, he embraced those artistic endeavours bent on celebrating technology and modern forms of urban living, including elements of Dada, Futurism, the Suprematism of Malevich and finally Constructivism, at which point he abandoned painting altogether as an out-dated and irrelevant undertaking.

<sup>20</sup> For an account of Gropius's initial interest in Moholy-Nagy's work see Banham, op. cit., p. 313; Frampton, Kenneth, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London, Thames & Hudson, 1980), p. 126; Passuth Krisztina, *Moholy-Nagy László* (Budapest, Corvina, 1982), p. 34.



Shortly after arriving in Berlin in 1921, Moholy-Nagy took his first steps in the direction of purely non-objective painting, when he combined Dada elements such as collage, montage and the use of typography, initially with a Constructivist interest in urban forms (bridges, railways, cables), ultimately creating what he called “Glass Architecture” (Glasarchitektur), when his paintings, prints and drawings were stripped of all reference to the visual world, in their attempt to reach perfection on their own purely formal terms.<sup>21</sup> As he stated himself: “my belief is that mathematically harmonious shapes, executed precisely, are filled with emotional quality, and they represent the perfect balance between feeling and intellect.”<sup>22</sup> It was in this spirit that Moholy-Nagy led both the Bauhaus’s preliminary course (Vorkurs), which he shared with Joseph Albers, and its metal workshop.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless. It was Moholy-Nagy’s contribution as brain-child and co-editor (with Gropius) of the *Bauhausbücher* (fourteen of these books were published between 1925 and 1930) that brought Bauhaus ideas and the importance of new technologies in art and design to the attention of people like the young Kepes.<sup>24</sup>

Moholy-Nagy, however, along with fellow-Hungarian Marcel Breuer and other *Bauhäusler* of a similar artistic and less politically committed persuasion, was to leave the Bauhaus following Gropius’s resignation in 1928, at a time when the Bauhaus was becoming more strictly aligned to the Marxist cause as espoused by Gropius’s successor, Hannes Meyer.<sup>25</sup> Moholy-Nagy subsequently earned his keep partly by publishing articles in the Hungarian journals Kepes read in Budapest.<sup>26</sup>

It was therefore as somewhat of an outcast that Moholy-Nagy received Kepes in Berlin in 1930 following a brief written correspondence. It was there that Kepes organised exhibitions, did graphics, took photographs and helped design stage sets. He also participated in the shooting of Moholy-

<sup>21</sup> For an account of Moholy-Nagy’s formal development see Passuth, op. cit., pp. 11–78.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Banham, op. cit., p. 313.

<sup>23</sup> For an account of Moholy-Nagy’s years at the Bauhaus see Frampton, op. cit., pp. 126–128; Passuth, op. cit., pp. 41–55.

<sup>24</sup> Banham, op. cit., pp. 285–286.

<sup>25</sup> For the so-called “Battle of the Bauhaus” see Saint, Andrew, *The Image of the Architect* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1983), pp. 115–137.

<sup>26</sup> For example *Korunk* (for whom Moholy-Nagy wrote regularly from 1928), *Dokumentum*, *Munka*, both of which were published by László Kassák, who was a major influence on Moholy-Nagy before he left Hungary. For more on these journals see Passuth, op. cit., pp. 63–67; Csaplár Ferenc, *Kassák in the European Avantgarde Movements 1916–1928 / Kassák Lajos as európai avantgárd mozgalmakban* (bi-lingual) (Budapest, Kassák Múzeum és Archívum, 1994); Passuth Krisztina, *Avantgarde kapcsolatok Prágától Bukarestig: 1907–1930* (Budapest, Balassi, 1998). Kepes may indeed have seen Moholy-Nagy in person in Budapest in 1930, when the latter gave a lecture at the Ernst Museum.

Nagy's five-minute film *Black, White and Grey* showing his kinetic sculpture, the Light-Space Modulator, in action.<sup>27</sup>

### Kepes in England

For many like Moholy-Nagy and Kepes the flight from fascism took them to the United States via England, where, between 1935 and 1937, they enjoyed the hospitality of Herbert Read, utopian socialist and chief apologist of the Modern Movement in England.<sup>28</sup> Like many of those who chose the west rather than the Soviet Union, Read believed that Utopia could be aesthetically generated.<sup>29</sup> Kepes worked in Moholy-Nagy's studio at a time when Moholy-Nagy was working on the sets for Alexander Korda's film version of H.G Wells's *The Shape of Things to Come*.<sup>30</sup>

England, like Germany, had its critics of Modernism. Architect Sir Reginald Blomfield, in his 1934 essay *Modernismus*, was among the more outspoken:

It is forgotten that unlike those countries in which the new movement is most popular, ours is a very old civilisation, with a character of its own, unique in its way, and we are not to abandon lightly instincts and traditions which are ingrained in our people even if not consciously realised. It is significant that the wildest efforts of the New Architecture are being perpetrated today in Finland, and of course in Russia. At Moscow there is a 'House of Labour', deliberately designed by M. Golosov on the model of a dynamo; and largest and most dominant part of this building is designed as an enormous cog-wheel. Then there is that notorious observatory in

<sup>27</sup> Lengyel László, *The Permanent Exhibition of the Visual Center: The Art of Gyorgy Kepes / A vizuális központ állandó kiállítása: Kepes György művészete* (Eger, Gyorgy Kepes Visual Center, 1992), p. 8. The silent film is occasionally on display at the Tate Modern, as it was during the summer of 2005. The combined effect of the modulator, the camera shots and the editing is that of a rhythmically dynamic three-dimensional abstract painting, where the play of light on the shiny metal and glass surfaces creates a twinkling, dappled effect not dissimilar to a rippling water surface or sunlight shining through wind-buffed leaves. A reconstruction of the modulator, positioned along side the film, formed one of the highlights of the *Albers and Moholy-Nagy: From Bauhaus to the New World* exhibition held at London's Tate Modern from 9<sup>th</sup> March to June 4<sup>th</sup> 2006.

<sup>28</sup> Herbert Read describes this period, when the likes of Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, Eric Mendelsohn, Naum Gabo, and Piet Mondrian found sanctuary in Hampstead in "A Nest of Gentle Artists". Nikolaus Pevsner, also left Berlin at this time, deciding instead to stay in England rather than moving on to the States.

<sup>29</sup> Hannes Mayer was one of those who left Germany for the USSR in the early thirties. Gropius also visited Russia in 1932 to return bitterly disillusioned. See Saint, op. cit., pp. 128–137.

<sup>30</sup> Passuth, op. cit., p. 62 tells us that although Moholy-Nagy's services were called for, the sets he designed were not actually used in the final version of the film.

Potsdam, by Herr Eric Mendelssohn, which looks like a gun turret of some nightmare battleship, with the lower part of it shaped like a ram, and windows designed to resemble the embrasures of eight-inch guns [...].<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps the most savage critique of Modernism in England, however, can be found in Evelyn Waugh's 1926 novel *Decline and Fall*. His creation, Professor-Architect Otto Friedrich Silenus, was a harbinger of those modernist architects who were to arrive later:

Professor Silenus – for that was the title by which this extraordinary young man chose to be called – was a ‘find’ of Mrs. Beste-Chetwynde’s. He was not yet very famous anywhere, though all who met him carried away deep and diverse impressions of his genius. He had first attracted Mrs. Beste-Chetwynde’s attention with the rejected design for a chewing-gum factory which had been reproduced in a progressive Hungarian quarterly. His only other completed work was the décor for a cinema-film of great length and complexity of plot – a complexity rendered the more inextricable by the producer’s austere elimination of all human characters, a fact which proved fatal to its commercial success.<sup>32</sup>

The inexperience of the young genius and his involvement in a difficult film mean that Professor Silenus appears to incorporate elements of both Kepes and Moholy-Nagy, although the intended model is more likely to have been Walter Gropius, whose striking presence had already been noted when Waugh wrote his novel.<sup>33</sup>

### **Kepes’s Arrival in the United States**

When the great masters of the Modern Movement arrived in the United States in 1937, they were greeted with an enthusiasm not dissimilar to that of Mrs. Beste-Chetwynde. Within no time they were either occupying senior

<sup>31</sup> Blomfield, Sir Reginald: “Modernismus” (1934), quoted in Benton, Tim and Charlotte, with Sharp, Dennis, eds., *Form and Function: A Source Book for the History of Architecture and Design 1890–1939* (London, Granada, 1975). In its lowest form, such criticism suggested that Modernism was not only alien and intellectual, but Jewish.

<sup>32</sup> Waugh, Evelyn: *Decline and Fall* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1937), pp. 143–144.

<sup>33</sup> Saint, op. cit., pp. 115–6. describes Gropius’s “lifelong charisma”, quoting Lyonel Feininger’s observation: “He works till three in the morning, hardly sleeps, and when he looks at you, his eyes are like stars. I’m sorry for anyone who can’t gather strength from them”. Waugh’s spiritual heir Tom Wolfe, chooses to lay into Gropius himself rather than resorting to a fictional creation in his *From Bauhaus to Our House* (London, Cardinal, 1981). The particularly soulful image of Gropius Wolfe selects (p. 11), chin resting on deliberately set wrist, is accompanied by the words, “Walter Gropius, the Silver Prince. White God No. 1. Young architects went to study at his feet. Some, like Philip Johnson didn’t get up until decades later”.

positions within America's foremost higher educational establishments, or running institutions they themselves had been instrumental in founding. Walter Gropius was made head of the school of architecture at Harvard, where he was joined by Marcel Breuer. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, the final director of the Bauhaus before it was closed down by the Nazis, was appointed dean of architecture at the Armour Institute in Chicago.<sup>34</sup> László Moholy-Nagy opened the New Bauhaus in Chicago, where he invited Kepes to run his own department, and Joseph Albers started a rural Bauhaus, Black Mountain College, in the hills of North Carolina.<sup>35</sup>

It was on such campuses that the European emigrés were given free rein to carry out their work. While Walter Gropius singularly failed to produce anything approaching his early work, Mies van der Rohe designed arguably America's three greatest post-war buildings: The Farnsworth House, Fox River, Plano, Illinois (1946–51); 860 Lake Shore Drive, Chicago (1948–51); and The Seagram Building, New York (with Philip Johnson) in 1958.<sup>36</sup>

### Kepes and Abstract Expressionism

Kepes was a particular admirer of Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building, describing it as "a beautiful crystalline structure in America's greatest city

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<sup>34</sup> Mies van der Rohe had succeeded Hannes Meyer as director of the Bauhaus in 1930, and remained in the post until the Bauhaus closed in 1933, leaving Germany belatedly in 1937 before making his way to America. So late in fact that Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, wife of László, was forced to admit in 1965 that: "When he (Mies) accepted in July 1933, after the coming to power of Hitler, the Commission for the Reichsbank he was a traitor to all of us and a traitor to everything we had fought for. He signed at that time a patriotic appeal which Schultze-Naumburg had made as Commissar to the artists, writers, and architects of Germany to put their forces behind National Socialism" (Watkin, *op. cit.*, p. 97, fn.).

<sup>35</sup> Wolfe, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>36</sup> This is not to say that Mies did not have his critics. The case against him is rigorously put by Jencks (*op. cit.*) in his chapter entitled: "The Problem of Mies", where he quotes from Lewis Mumford's 1964 "The Case against Modern Architecture": "Mies van der Rohe used the facilities offered by steel and glass to create elegant monuments of nothingness. They had the dry style of machine forms without the contents. His own chaste taste gave these hollow glass shells a crystalline purity of form; but they existed alone in the Platonic world of his imagination and had no relation to site, climate, insulation, function, or internal activity" (p. 96). Not surprisingly Wolfe (*op. cit.*) is even less sparing in his criticisms. His illustration of Mies, puffing on a cigar, is accompanied by the words: "Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. White God No. 2. He put half of America inside German worker-housing cubes" (p. 47). Critics like Charles Jencks and Tom Wolfe also point to the catastrophic effects imitators of Mies and the other modernists had on the urban environment, while noting the irony of the fact that it was the world's leading corporations who often commissioned a modern architecture which had in the meantime become "stripped of its social idealism".

(itself a symbol of the finest thinking in contemporary architecture and at the same time, like the Torre of medieval Tuscany, a boastful symbol of wealth and power) displaying, in surroundings that state an absolute control of contemporary materials and techniques and perfect mastery of the new beauty of architectural space”.<sup>37</sup>

To his consternation, however, inside the walls were covered with “images of torn and broken man. In its offices and corridors are paintings and sculptures shaped with the idioms in tune with the twilight spirit that created them: surfaces that are moldy, broken, corroded, ragged, dripping; brush strokes executed with the sloppy brutality of cornered men.”<sup>38</sup>

For Kepes such unnamed, yet clearly recognisable, abstract expressionist works were not only ugly and indisciplined, but lacking the necessary optimism and social commitment (ills. 1 and 2). He continues:

Rather than accept the creative challenges within the range of the visual arts, rather than learn to see a broader world, most of us, our artists included, divorce ourselves from common obligations, turn our backs on the rational, and separate man from himself, from his fellow men, and from his environment.<sup>39</sup>

Interestingly, such attacks on Abstract Expressionism and talk of common obligations would have found sympathy east of the Iron Curtain where Abstract Expressionism was considered a manifestation of an anti-social degenerate capitalist art.<sup>40</sup> This was something Kepes himself was keenly aware of, stating that striking a moral stance could have catastrophic consequences on the creative process:

It is unfashionable today, if not taboo, for artists to think and act on the broad terms of cultural and social ideas. No doubt moralizing on art can lead to creative suicide, just as market-policed and state-policed art can lead

<sup>37</sup> Kepes, Gyorgy, “Introduction to the Issue The Visual Arts Today”, *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Winter 1960 (Cambridge, Massachusetts) 1960, p. 10.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. Interestingly Clement Greenberg, the great apologist of the abstract expressionist movement partly agrees, calling Rothko’s Seagram murals “disastrous” (in “After Abstract Expressionism”, first published in *Art International*, VI, no. 8, Lugano, October 1962, pp. 24–32, quoted at length in: Harrison Charles and Paul Wood, *Art in Theory 1900–1990: An Anthology of Ideas* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1992), pp. 766–769.

<sup>40</sup> It is interesting that Kepes appears unaware of the CIA’s role in promoting Abstract Expressionism as a manifestation of free artistic expression abroad. For more on American post-war cultural imperialism see Cockcroft, Eva, “Abstract Expressionism, Weapon of the Cold War” in *Artforum*, vol. 15, no. 10, June 1974, pp. 39–41, republished in Francis Frascina & Harris, Jonathan, *Art in Modern Culture: An Anthology of Critical Texts* (London, Phaidon, 1992), pp. 82–90.

to the murder of artistic honesty. But the other extreme – lack of intellectual curiosity and rejection of commitment – leads to emaciation of artistic values.<sup>41</sup>

Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried, however, while rejecting overdramatic existentialist interpretations of abstract expressionist works, were at pains to stress the movement's intellectual curiosity and commitment. They saw the likes of Jackson Pollock as being the legitimate heirs of an artistic tradition going back to Courbet and Manet.<sup>42</sup> As for Pollock himself, he claimed that the way he handled paint was the expression of the contemporary aims of the age he was living in:

My opinion is that new needs need new techniques. And the modern artists have found new ways and new means of making their statements. It seems to me that the modern painter cannot express this age, the airplane, the atom bomb, the radio, in the old forms of the Renaissance or of any other past culture. Each age finds its own technique.<sup>43</sup>

While rejecting the results Kepes would no doubt have agreed with Pollock's sentiments. Interestingly, looking at Kepes's late paintings, it would be difficult to deny, however, that Kepes was not left untouched by Abstract Expressionism.<sup>44</sup>

### **Kepes and Pop**

But everyone was caught unawares by the arrival of Pop Art, another new art arrival which Kepes greeted with scorn. In fact he had very firm views on popular culture in general. Prior to Pop Art's arrival on the New York art scene in 1962, Kepes writes: "For the tragedy of democracy is the chaos of communication: the three-hundred-ring commercial circus of advertising, public relations, slick magazines and fatuous entertainment. To

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<sup>41</sup> Kepes, Gyorgy: "The Visual Arts and the Sciences: A Proposal for Collaboration," p. 148.

<sup>42</sup> See for example, Greenberg, Clement, "Modern Painting" first published in *Arts Yearbook*, 1, New York, 1961. Reprinted with slight revisions in *Art & Literature*, no. 4, Spring 1965, pp. 193-201 additions in which form it was republished in Harrison and Wood, op. cit., pp. 754-760.

<sup>43</sup> Paraphrased from Jackson Pollock's interview with William Wright (1950), transcript published in F.V. O'Connor, *Jackson Pollock* (New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1967), pp. 79-81, republished in Harrison and Wood, op. cit., pp. 574-578.

<sup>44</sup> The way Kepes often flicked paint onto the surface of the canvas in a tachist manner can be inspected at the top gallery of the Gyorgy Kepes Visual Center at Eger's Vitkovics House (Széchenyi u. 55.).

most people, ideas and values are imparted by middlemen whose objectives are crassly narrow and nonsocial”<sup>45</sup>

Following Pop’s arrival Kepes was to add:

A most recent group of artists has returned from abstract images to concrete objects in their environment. They have become fascinated by vulgar features of everyday life, and they have chosen them as their emblems. [...] Their unresolved mixture of private attachment and public critical social commentary takes no account of the revolutionary artistic achievements of the earlier part of the century. [...] Most of the mushrooming art movements seem to have forgotten the essential role of artistic creation. By and large, the art world has become the scene of a popularity contest manipulated by appraisers and impresarios who are blind to the fundamental role of the artistic image.<sup>46</sup>

While we are not told here what the fundamental role of the artistic image is, there were many artists pursuing their formal and technical pursuits in the spirit of truth and integrity who were similarly perplexed at this recent development. One of them was Clement Greenberg the propagandist of the abstract expressionist movement, who was alienated by its use of representation, conceptual wit, and sources from “low”, commercial, popular culture. Indeed, he went so far as to call Pop Art a fashion, a school, a degenerate mannerism.<sup>47</sup> This was a view that differed significantly from the views of Lawrence Alloway, who, like his fellow pop artists and theorists, was interested in “a vernacular culture that persisted beyond any special interest in skills in art, architecture, design or art criticism that any of us might possess”. He continues, “[t]he area of contact was mass-produced urban culture: movies, advertisement, science fiction, Pop music. We felt none of the dislike of commercial culture standard among most intellectuals,

<sup>45</sup> Kepes, op. cit., 1960, p. 8. Pop Art was invented in London in the mid-1950s under the aegis of the Independent Group at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London. Its great formative event was the “This is Tomorrow” exhibition of 1956, held at the Whitechapel Art Gallery. As Edward Lucie-Smith describes in his: *Movements in Art since 1945* (revised ed., London, Thames & Hudson, 1975): “[...] probably the most significant part of “This is Tomorrow” was an entrance display provided by Richard Hamilton – a collage picture entitled *Just What is it that Makes Today’s Homes so Different, so Appealing?* In the picture are a muscle-man from a physique magazine and a stripper with sequined breasts. The muscle-man carries a gigantic lollipop, with the word POP on it in large letters. With this work, many of the conventions of pop art were created, including the use of borrowed imagery” (p. 135).

<sup>46</sup> Kepes, op. cit., 1965, p. 148.

<sup>47</sup> Reise, Barbara M., “Greenberg and The Group: A Retrospective View” *Studio International* vol. Nos. 901 & 902, May & June 1968, republished in Harrison and Wood (eds.), op. cit., p. 255.

but accepted it as a fact, discussed it in detail, and consumed it enthusiastically [...]”<sup>48</sup>

What is surprising, or perhaps not considering his age, was that Kepes failed to see Pop’s debt to Dada, which had been an important stepping stone in both Moholy-Nagy’s and Kepes’s artistic development. Moholy-Nagy had used the collage and the montage in his early work, and looking at the insertion of the *objet trouvées* in his later paintings it appears that Kepes was once again prepared to accept that he had been wrongly dismissive.<sup>49</sup>

The English artist Keith Vaughan puts the dilemmas facing the artists of the earlier generations, accustomed to other ways of seeing and expressing the worlds in which they live, in the following terms:

After all one has thought and dreamed and longed for it turns out that toffee paper, cereal packages and mass media wrappings and publicity are the vital, significant and fertile aspects of the age we live in. I live in it too. And I just don’t feel that way. I feel like a stranded dinosaur – fat, lethargic, frightened and slow-witted. I look at my work – the result of some forty years’ effort and hope – and theirs – the result of 5 or 6 years at the most. And it’s I who feel defeated. Because all the values I’ve lived by now count for nothing. If this is what it was all going to lead to one need not have bothered. Oh I wouldn’t mind handing on to someone who saw further, had more talent, more youth, energy and time before him. But this. Liquorice allsorts and ton-up motorbikes bursting out of the canvas.<sup>50</sup>

### The Modernist Tradition Today

Pop had an off-the-wallness, a youthful exuberance which left Kepes and many of his generation cold, and in doing so they failed to appreciate the next turn the Modern Movement was about to take. Whereas Kepes’s technology was aloof, cold and moralistic, Pop’s was people-centred, hot and sexy, as were the architectural ideas it was to unleash.

A group of designers formed by Peter Cook and others in 1960, known as Archgram, were just some of those who yearned for the likes of “a miniaturised, mobile, cooking, refrigerating, sewage disposing, VHF and three-channel-televiwing, dry-cleaning and martini-dispensing services robot with fitted ash-trays and book rest, that will follow us around the house riding on a cushion of art, like an interplanetary Hoover.”<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Lippard, Lucy, *Pop Art* (London, 1966), p.32, and quoted by Jencks, op. cit., pp. 271–2.

<sup>49</sup> Once again the evidence is there to see at the Vitkovics House in Eger.

<sup>50</sup> From Vaughan’s Journal 45–40, 7 April 1964, quoted in Yorke, Michael, *Vaughan Keith: His Life and Work* (London, Constable, 1990), p. 221.

<sup>51</sup> Cook, Peter in *The Architect’s Journal*, 1960, p. 415 quoted in Jencks, op. cit., p. 294.



This latter vision spurned equally wild conceptual architectural projects, where the services almost became more important than the building itself, as in Archigram's: Computer City, Walking City, Blow-Out City, Plug-In City. The modernists of the previous generation were horrified. Sigfried Giedion, Kepes's one-time boss at the Chicago Institute of Design wrote:

The worst example of all (dystopias), however, appeared at a London 1963 exhibition where a walking city was shown, with all buildings conceived as steel tanks moving mechanically and certainly crushing, as tanks do, nature and any person outside them. The example is appalling, not only because it represents an inhuman conception of the city of the future by a small group of people, but because it received wide publicity without, as far as I know, any corresponding protest.<sup>52</sup>

For young architects like Richard Rogers (b. 1933) and Norman Foster (b. 1935), however, Archigram's theoretic exercises in "populist technophilia" were both exciting and thought-provoking.<sup>53</sup> As Bryan Appleyard states in his biography of Richard Rogers, it "represented a profound and genuine reassessment of the modernist movement in the light of experience and of emerging technologies. They were reconceiving architecture from the ground up, having discarded much of the burden of ideology which had become attached to modernism."<sup>54</sup>

It is within such a context, therefore, that Kepes belongs to the tail end of the Modernism of the First Machine Age, with its interest in exploiting the developments of the industrial revolution (glass, steel, concrete, electricity etc), rather than the beginnings of the Second Machine Age ushered in by the first industrial robots and related developments in science and technology.<sup>55</sup> Whereas the conventional machines of the First Machine

<sup>52</sup> Quoted in Jencks, op. cit., p. 291. Sigfried Giedion (1888-1968) was the powerful advocate of the Modern Movement, and the author of the highly influential tract *Space, Time and Architecture* (1941). Space and time were concepts often incorporated into the work and theories of both Moholy-Nagy and Kepes.

<sup>53</sup> For an account of their architectural development see Sudjic, Deyan, *Norman Foster, Richard Rogers, James Stirling: New Directions in British Architecture* (London, Thames & Hudson, 1986).

<sup>54</sup> Appleyard, Bryan, *Richard Rogers: A Biography* (London, Faber & Faber, 1986), p. 183

<sup>55</sup> Abel, Chris, "Modern Architecture in the Second Machine Age: The Work of Norman Foster", in *Norman Foster 1964-1987* (Tokyo, a+u Publishing, 1988), p. 13. On the subject of the ecological dimension of the new architecture Abel writes: "The transition from First to Second Machine Age came into full public focus with the Apollo programme that put man on the Moon. Looking back on the Earth from the alien landscape, a global TV public was made starkly aware that a new technological order was in effect. In the same way, Buckminster Fuller's phrase "Spaceship Earth" acquired new and urgent meaning. Though Fuller had long preached the need for a global approach to Earth's

Age which early Modernists tried to use were inflexible, working like clockwork to a fixed pattern to produce preconceived results, the driving force and symbolic machine of the Second Machine Age is the adaptable, general purpose computer.

This is not to say that architects such Richard Rogers (b. 1933), co-architect of the Pompidou Centre in Paris, and Norman Foster (b. 1935) turned their back entirely on the great pioneers. They had both been at Yale as students of Paul Rudolph, one of the first generation to have graduated from Walter Gropius's Harvard School of Architecture, and Rogers himself acknowledges the power of landmark structures like Mies's Seagram Building, albeit criticising their inability "to respond to the ebb and flow of contemporary life".<sup>56</sup>

Thus, one finds in Rogers' buildings flexible solutions based on concrete and potentially ever-changing solutions. Both the Pompidou Centre and the Lloyd's Building in London, have the appearance at least of being open to further development through the addition of units, while at the same time using technology skillfully, frequently exploiting the latest technological developments in both the aerospace and armaments industries. Indeed, such high-tech buildings are like Mies's in being beautifully crafted. Sometimes using standardised products, they were also to rely on new custom-made hand-crafted parts, made in the spirit of the Arts and Crafts movement from whence Pevsner began his account of the Modern Movement.

### Conclusion

Thus, by following the career of György Kepes, with the benefit of all the resources that are available to us here in Eger we have a context in which to trace the history of the Modern Movement from its origins right up to the present day. Kepes's controversial and forthright opinions, as well as the clarity and simplicity of the language in which he expressed them, not only make his theoretical writings ideal reading material for seminars, but a suitable starting point for discussions, course work and undergraduate theses. At a time when György Kepes's name is being banded about by local government officials and politicians who have little understanding of what György Kepes was trying to achieve, it would be to the common good if Eger finally had a group of individuals who were actually familiar with Kepes's writings and the movement to which they belong, and who may

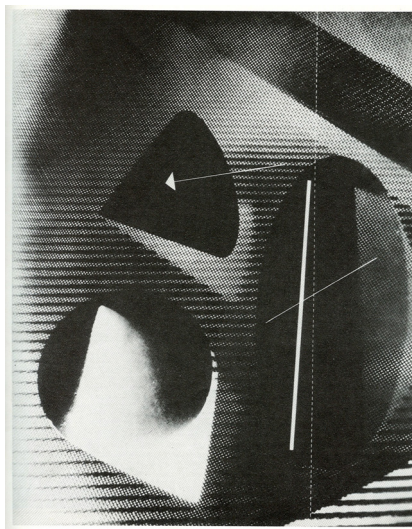
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human and natural resources, the vision of a small and frail-looking planet brought home to its passengers the dangers of not caring after their life-support system".

<sup>56</sup> Sudjic, *op. cit.*, p. 45

also, one day, be in a position to give concrete reasons for why the György Kepes Visual Center is worth keeping.

**Illustrations:**



1. György Kepes. *Light Graphic*, 1965 (The Kepes Center, Eger)



2. Jackson Pollock. *Untitled*, c. 1950 (The Museum of Modern Art, New York)

## **“[T]he umpteenth city of confusion” – Representations of Dublin in Contemporary Irish Poetry**

Péter Dolmányos

The capital of Ireland plays a more than emblematic role in the poetry discussing Irish experience. The only metropolitan centre of the republic has about one quarter of the population of the country and is therefore a city of its own category in the hierarchy of settlements. Capitals always function as major political, administrative, economic and cultural centres and Dublin is no exception to this rule either. As a significant port it is easily accessible, as the leading population concentration it provides a diverse enough work force for various economic activities, which has considerably altered the image of the city in the last couple of decades. The one time backward colonial seat has become a bustling metropolis with all the implied changes of the process. The economic growth of the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, has proved to be something far from exclusively positive. The demands for housing of an increasing population have led to reconstruction projects in the city – the spectacular springing up of housing estates is one certain sign of economic growth and the spread of suburbs proves the concurrent improvement of living standards in the process, at least for a certain segment of the population; such alterations necessarily lead to cultural consequences as well. Dublin has turned into a typical modern city, with all the ingredients of modern city life, involving not only the glamour of this but the less desirable elements as well – ample illustration of this is found in all fields of literary activity in the country, especially in such recent novels as those of Roddy Doyle.

Naturally Dublin has carved out a place for itself in the recent poetry of Ireland – though interestingly enough, the city is only addressed by those who count as inhabitants of it, as if visitors were forbidden, or at least reluctant, to access the experience of the modern city. The city definitely demands a reaction from those living in it, springing from the daily necessity of confrontation with and survival in it. As cities are human constructs, they tend to take on human faces and human attributes, often with the aim of charming and captivating people – and as such, they tend to escape human

control, living a life of their own, leaving the poet with the task of penetrating the immediately visible face of the city for an understanding of its underlying essence. Dublin fosters such creative energies in the poets, though perhaps paradoxically or ironically, for scorning it rather than embracing the city. This is indicative of the critical spirit towards those processes and energies which have turned the city into what it is: the criticism of the city is at once the criticism of ideologies and of the historical processes initiated by the ideologies.

Thomas Kinsella is *the* Dublin poet – by birth and upbringing, by residence and, most important of all, by imaginatively locating himself in the city and of the city in a number of poems. Kinsella's earlier occupation as a civil servant offers him an insight into the dynamism of the transformation of the country and its capital city, therefore his poems provide an excellent guide to Dublin as it appears from the inside for a person with a grasp of what is actually happening to it. As a resident in the city his attachment is strong, yet this does not equal an uncritical stance, especially with his involvement in the economic resurgence of his place. With the passing of time the fallibility of the agents of change becomes manifest, leaving behind much bitterness and even more deprivation, yet Kinsella's confession that Dublin is his place (cf. CP 283) marks his unchangeable rootedness in the city.

Kinsella's most comprehensive treatment of Dublin is contained in "Nightwalker", a poem composed in the 1960s, the decade of the opening of the Republic towards the global economy. The poem is the account of a late night walk in Dublin, offering a rather sinister view of the city as it is transfigured by moonlight yet remaining essentially the same place: the modernising metropolis of a country desperate to attract foreign investment for growth, and thus slowly but surely growing alien to its inhabitants. The shadows of daylight items may grow threateningly bizarre at this time of the day but these shadows are still unable to make the speaker, a civil servant employed in the Department of Finance, forget about the administrative and economic function of the city. Interestingly enough what is depicted is not Dublin as a residence, a city translated into a web of streets with houses, but rather the city as an economic and a political unit: the abstract dimension dominates and the occasional cataloguing of detail comprises only familiar and typical items. Still, the many faces of the capital city are perhaps most vividly caught in this of all Kinsella's poems, with a strong element of criticism directed against contemporary politics as well, which is partly self-reflexive if Kinsella's status as a civil servant is considered and thus offers a perspective on *his* participation in the process of modernisation too.

The unnumbered opening lines prepare the reader for an excursion into a rather awkward world. An emphasis is placed on the speaker's awareness of the elements shaping human vision, the will groping for structure, the combat between “madness” and “reason”, the alternation of moments of insight with moments of blindness – the speaker thus comments on the poem that follows and this passage serves as partly an explanation and partly perhaps an excuse for the structural logic governing the process of composition, a logic which is rather unusual in the poetic tradition in which the poet is generally located. The first sentence of the first numbered section, “I only know things seem and are not good” (CP 76) takes this self-reflexive introductory passage one step further into a world where traditional ideas of order are not only suspended but replaced by a more distressing set of assumptions about the world. The beginning of the walk thus unfolds in a darkness that is not purely literal. Windows hiding “pale entities” (ibid) and people working in the underground laboratory are associated with “Near Necropolis” (CP 77), rendering the sleeping people even more passive and attributing the personnel in the laboratory magic powers, as they are “Embalmers” (ibid), preparing their clients for the Otherworld – yet the word “near” immediately introduces the tentativeness of these intentions.

The persona is reminded of his ties to the citizens and indicates the temporariness of his walk. The daily routine of middle-class city-dwellers is arrested through the least attractive details: the early morning scratching while going downstairs for tea, leaving the house, waiting at the station, all performed with the sole purpose of doing useful work for “our businesses and government” (ibid). The brief summing up of the economic principles of the Republic culminates in the image of the Dublin statue of liberty – “Robed in spattered iron she stands / At the harbour mouth, Productive Investment” (ibid), then memories of the civil servant follow, “Spirit shapes” (CP 78) with a real dimension behind them – officials, ministers, people of power, most of them with a past, a role in turning Ireland into an independent country, now engaged in the labour of turning her into a prosperous one or perhaps in reflecting on their own images, of what they have become. The allegorical story of the “Wedding Group” of “The Groom, the Best Man, the Fox” (ibid) concludes this section – apart from the actual references (cf. TWM 46, footnote 2) the story functions perfectly as a general tale of betrayal of friends for power.

The second section of the poem opens with casual images of lamp, light and shadow, and thus returns speaker and reader to the point of departure, the walk at night as an actual exercise. A page of the day's paper is glimpsed in the gutter, with the picture of a “new young minister” in “his hunting suit” (CP 79). The obvious metaphoric evocation of the perishable nature of

things is not yet played out by the speaker as he continues his walk and presents other details observed on his way – Victorian houses and “the tower” (CP 80). The mysterious dark realm beyond the reach of the lamplight, however, is not lifeless – darkness, at least in that domain, does not equal the absence of life.

“Watcher in the tower, / Be with me now” (ibid) is the invocation to the spirit of the place and the ghost of Joyce now becomes a real and active participant of the poem. So far it has been implied by the method Kinsella takes in composing his poem, now there is an explicit calling upon Joyce to assist the poet in his attempt to grasp his vision. The subsequent details would not look out of place in “Circe” either as the mysterious creatures are evoked by the persona’s consciousness; the hauntingly Joycean description of a phantom horseman is followed by the excited exclamation of the speaker, “Father of Authors!” (ibid), to fully realise a dense pastiche-like paragraph with a cunning self-referential comment inserted towards the end of the passage: “Subjects will find the going hard but rewarding” (CP 81). The phantom vision recedes as “The soiled paper settles back in the gutter” (ibid), with its heading, “The New Ireland”, more than ironically suggestive. The thoughts of the speaker centre on the minister in his hunting suit, declaring him no worse than the former old ones in the position. The picture comes alive in the mind of the persona, the hunt begins, and the metaphoric transfer of the scene onto the level of politics offers a link with the first part of the poem.

The foot of the tower is seen as a special place “where the darkness / Is complete” (CP 81). The peaceful harbour allows the speaker to become conscious of his physical state and the smell of his body plunges him into a memory of school years – Brother Burke and his harping on about the usual anguish of the Irish, the consequences of being subjected to a strong colonising power. The speaker cannot share the nationalist zeal of his former instructor as it is shown by his comparison of the statue of the Blessed Virgin to “young Victoria” (CP 82) and by the ironic comment on the sole achievement of the school, the abundance of civil servants for the country. The evocation of the legendary figure of Amargin provides a more elevated dimension yet this involves a more profound sense of loss as well: the persona’s quiet remark, “A dying language / Echoes across a century’s silence” (CP 83), achieves more sympathy than the bombast rhetoric of the recalled Brother Burke. The quotidian, however, intrudes again as the speaker contemplates shadows of domestic life thrown against curtains in the Dublin night.

Finding the night-time Dublin short of further inspiration, the speaker fixes his gaze upon the Moon in the fourth section. The second stanza of this

section offers a recollection with near-epic overtones (with an eye on Kinsella’s later poetry it foreshadows the technique of later sequences – his frequent reliance on early Irish myths and stories can be arrested in allusions and quotations of such narrative material) – the picture, though, is general enough to lead to a somewhat out-of-place didacticism in the third stanza. There is a teleological vision of history shining through these lines:

There are times it is all part of a meaningful drama  
Beginning in the grey mists of antiquity  
And reaching through the years to unknown goals  
In the consciousness of man, which makes it less gloomy. (ibid)

The picture once again dissolves into images of the night scene but the items are no longer man-made ones – natural elements existing independently of humans (with the exception of the “odour of lamplight” (ibid), heavily dependent on human ingenuity) are registered, but it is still the Moon which is the principal agent of creativity: there is even an apostrophe and an invocation addressed to it.

The transformation of the speaker seems complete in the last section; the short tercets of the passage support what the persona asserts in a figure: “I am an arrow / Piercing the void” (CP 84). The journey ends in an embarrassing recognition, not significantly different from the conclusion of Joyce in his Dublin short stories and this section also echoes T. S. Eliot’s postwar doom. Modernisation brings about similar conditions of sterility as conflict does, and the rise of living standards and comforts do not automatically produce a culturally vibrant world. The last stanza of the poem forges a picture the ambiguous nature of which shows the feeling of the persona’s being totally lost – the casually naïve “I think” introduces a metaphor which in turn is explained in a language compressing conversational and a kind of discursive style, crowning the night-walk in the proper fashion:

I think this is the Sea of Disappointment.  
If I stoop down, and touch the edge, it has  
A human taste, of massed human wills. (ibid)

Kinsella’s night time Dublin is strangely devoid of people apart from the mysterious laboratory personnel and the recollected characters of daily civil life. The city thus comes into its own, waking to a “life” beyond life, with occasionally bizarre details – of which the most bizarre is perhaps the lack of life itself. Kinsella’s persona basically becomes an alternative to



Joyce's wished-for reader as he is an ideal walker with an ideal insomnia, and the partially conditioned eyesight of a day-time civil servant is modified by the effects of fatigue in the wake of his sleeplessness. The city is regarded with suspicion, the persona does not subscribe to a belief in the benevolent direction of the growth of the place; rather, he (and Kinsella principally) assumes an antagonistic position to the official ideology of economic growth yielding a better life.

'Phoenix Park' deals with the story of moving from one place to another, and its fourth section provides a short assessment of the city of Dublin similar to that of 'Nightwalker'. Dublin is "the umpteenth city of confusion" (CP 92), with "Pale light" (ibid) over it, and out of the "faint multitudes" (ibid) "A murmur of soft, wicked laughter rises." (ibid) The picture turns even darker as the city is seen as "A theatre for the quick articulate / The agonized genteel, their artful watchers" (CP 93), with the speaker perhaps belonging to this last group. There is nothing elevating about Dublin; on the contrary, it is a place where "dead men, / Half-hindered by dead men, tear down dead beauty." (ibid) If this is what greets the speaker on arrival, he needs to forge his own approach to be able to handle all this: "Return by the mental ways we have ourselves / Established." (ibid) This recalls "Nightwalker" with its aloof speaker, contemplating and describing but not engaging, remaining always careful to keep enough distance between himself and what is observed, with commentaries reserved for an antagonistic position rather than a supporting one.

In the much later poem "One Fond Embrace" the meditative speaker involves also the city of Dublin in his reflection. The city has moved along the course of 'development' indicated in the earlier poems and it is now shown as a background to a resulting rigid social division into two groups of the rich and the poor where development occurs solely for the sake of profit for a small group:

Invisible speculators, urinal architects,  
and the Corporation flourishing their documents  
in potent compliant dance

– planners of the wiped slate  
labouring painstaking over a bungled city  
to turn it into a zoo. (CP 284)

The contrast is made explicit in the juxtaposition of residential districts, with a "twinned experimental / concrete piss-tower for the underprivileged" (ibid) in one of them. The centre of the city does not fare any better: plans exist

and function until the money runs out, what is left is an unfinished ‘memorial’, inducing the speaker to an angry wish: “May their sewers blast under them!” (CP 285) In spite of all its repulsive features the place is still one with a profound importance for the speaker: “I never want to be anywhere else” (CP 283).

Kinsella’s renderings of Dublin reflect the stereoscopic vision of a person connected to the city by various ties yet retaining his critical faculties in spite of all attachment. In Kinsella’s voice the former civil servant, the poet, the translator of Gaelic poetry and the Dublin citizen meet and negotiate their different claims, thus the vision is a complex and challenging one. Limitations and shortcomings are not generously forgotten but the final verdict is a return to emotional categories and life-long attachment – that Kinsella considers Dublin his place is the confession of a rooted person.

Though a poet of rural origins in County Kerry, Brendan Kennelly has long been a Dublin resident. His keen eyes for perception grant him a familiarity with the details of modern metropolitan life and his “Dublin: A Portrait” gives a vision of the city in which the least sympathetic aspects of modern Dublin are foregrounded and the finished picture is one that perfectly undermines any idealising attempt of the city. His attempt is radically different from that of Kinsella and his account does not involve self-reflexive or introspective elements but the city of his vision is also one dominated by the less attractive consequences of economic development and the concurrent rise of living standards. Though Kennelly is never explicit about his belonging to the city as a resident, there is a moment which approximates the confessional: the early Sunday morning walk of another poem opens up a city which he appears willing to embrace, yet not without a strain of ambiguity.

Kennelly’s principal vision of Dublin is provided in the poem “Dublin: A Portrait.” A comfortably distant perspective is immediately established by the first word of the poem, “there”, which indicates the position of the persona as an observer detached from the scene. The deficient syntactic structure of the first sentence supports a panoramic technique of registering catalogue items – items which are supposed to be people of the city:

There the herds of eloquent phonies,  
Dark realities kept in the dark,  
Squalor stinking at many a corner,  
Poverty showing an iron hand;  
There the tinker sprawls on the pavement. (ATFV 123)

Proper syntactic order appears from the second sentence on and the comments on the various catalogued items become more elaborate. The whole city becomes a hotbed of gossip and rumour, church towers serve to block out the light rather than guide the human glance skywards and religious ritual is reduced to bargaining with God for getting on, indicating the complete conquest of the spiritual by economic forces. The only real effort is reserved for the sea which is engaged in the next to impossible struggle of cleansing the city of its human load and filth.

The “items” of Kennelly’s catalogue are people of different social positions yet the ironic distance reduces them to little more than vegetative beings. The listing begins with “the herds of eloquent phonies”, accompanied by the tinker, the typical Irish element, and the lunatic, then a brief glance at the suburban world introduces the prosperous “dead men”, just to return to the other extreme, the “defeated”, who “Makes a drunken myth of deprivation” (ibid). None of the registered representatives of Dublin life acquires any sort of dignity, all of them merit only the contempt of the observer, pointing to the repulsive and impersonal nature of city life. “Communal value” is dependent on social consensus which is not shared by the persona – the “eloquent phonies” are presumably fashionable in terms of city life, the “dead men” or “corpses” of the suburbs certainly are such creatures.

The unfavourable portraits of typical characters give way to more general and at once more impersonal elements: gossips and “Rumours of rumours” fill the city, further reducing the personal dimension of the picture, just to come to a nadir in the oxymoron of the “Holy frauds” who “Bargain with God that they may get on” (ibid). The all-conquering merchant mentality noted by Kinsella is made manifest without any sense of shame. The poem closes with the image of the sea in its never-ceasing conflict with the shore. Though the sea is engaged in the activity of “Washing the feet of the stricken city, / Trying to purge its human filth” (ibid), the religious associations of the words do not create the corresponding atmosphere, and the progressive aspect clearly marks the futility and impossibility of ever completing the otherwise noble enterprise.

The second part of the title of the poem, “A Portrait” indicates distance, the idea of recording details from an objective perspective – yet Kennelly’s persona cannot remain unengaged, even if it involves a rather obsessive exhortation of what he sees around himself. The repeated “There” points to a panoramic viewpoint but the picture is informed by the experience of the keen-eyed observer in close relation with what he is dealing with, a person with intimate and perhaps even immediate knowledge of these details. The technique of the poem reflects the ambivalence of the point of view of the

persona – the imposition of rhymes on the material suggests the apparent order of life but it does not guarantee anything below the surface, as the lack of stanza patterns or further division of the poem into sections also indicates this.

Another Kennelly poem bears the emblematic title “The Celtic Twilight” – yet this title is followed by a demythologisation and desecration of a phrase with many literary resonances. Kennelly’s “Celtic Twilight” is what it primarily is, the late phase of the day in a “Celtic” location, Dublin, the modern city. The usual associations of the phrase in the title are immediately blocked as the first line of the poem opens the description of the twilight scene with “decrepit whores” (ATFV 119) and continues with corpses floating on the water of the Grand Canal. The corpses turn out to have been a dog and a cat, and the animal imagery is carried on as the women and men are seen as mutually intent on preying on one another. The prostitutes are “scavengers” (ibid) yet the not-so-muted sympathy of the speaker sees them as victims or preys as well, with “Dublin’s Casanovas” to blame, without question, for their misery.

The second stanza focuses on one of these decrepit women and her desperation is portrayed. Demythologisation continues as echoes of Yeats haunt the poem – the shrill voice this time belongs to a prostitute who, having been cheated by a client, is “Preparing once again to cast an eye / On passing prospects” (ibid). The image of the “infested waters” (ibid) returns with the floating carcasses, to provide a fitting scenery for these “lurid women and predatory men / Who must inflict but cannot share / Each other’s pain” (ibid). The closing image of strangers locked into the same situation yet unable to recognise it casts a shadow over Dublin life and perpetuates the twilight – desecration is complete, the Celtic twilight returns to the common language to repossess its literal meaning and shed the old metaphorical, just to take on new figurative ones which are this time less noble than the previous one.

“Clearing a Space” is a poem placed in the collection *A Time for Voices* right after the other two Dublin poems. The juxtaposition is certainly not unintentional as the poem contrasts with the former ones: it offers a somewhat Wordsworthian approach to the city as it is devoid of people, and by virtue of this the city is not itself, on the unusual occasion of a Sunday morning “about six o’clock” (ATFV 124) which is sleeping time for most people. At the unusual time of observation the city takes on a different image, it wakes to a life of its own, an existence independent of and indifferent to its human population. “The river is talking to itself”, “The city turns to the mountains / And takes time to listen to the sea”, there is a

“relaxed sky” (ibid) above. The buildings equally keep to their own counsel, the parks are allowed their due privacy.

Yet the city, however empty of people it is, does not lose its human dimension – as an endless reservoir of nurturing and sustaining energies it is a “friend” (ibid) of the observer. The ambiguity of the first line of the last stanza, “I make through that nakedness to stumble on my own” (ATVF 125), suggests that the common feature of city and human being is that enigmatic “nakedness” which is discovered only when observed on a special occasion (and perhaps by an unusual observer too). The persona’s embracing of Dublin can occur only at such an hour, the true resemblance of the city to a man can, paradoxically, be understood only when the people are removed from it.

Though Paul Durcan’s poem “Going Home to Mayo, Winter 1949” is concerned primarily with the West of Ireland, the starting point of the indicated journey is Dublin. By virtue of functioning as the place to escape from, Dublin is commented upon in a number of lines in the poem – “the alien, foreign city of Dublin” (ASIMP 34) is left behind in the first line, just to be addressed on return as “the daylight nightmare of Dublin City” (ibid). The city indeed casts a sobering sight to the returning travellers as suburban detached houses are quickly replaced by “blocks after blocks of so-called ‘new’ tenements” (ibid) and all these houses remind the speaker of the damnation of modern city life: the houses and blocks of flats are “crosses of loneliness” (ASIMP 35) and gates solemnly parade as bells tolling the “mutual doom” (ASIMP 34) of the inhabitants – of whom the speaker and his father happen to be two representatives. Durcan’s Dublin is thus closely related to the versions of Kinsella and Kennelly in terms of its generally unfavourable atmosphere, yet Durcan goes one step further than Kennelly and Kinsella as his version of the city becomes a reminder of the transitoriness of human life, of its inevitable progress forward in time towards a closure without any reference to redemption, and it also expresses the failure of the city to provide some sort of shelter, let alone home, in the temporary world of human existence.

Eavan Boland’s poem “The Huguenot Graveyard at the Heart of the City” introduces another, and comparably friendlier, aspect of Dublin City proper: apropos of the cemetery of refugees of religious persecution the city takes on the image of a safe harbour of tolerance. The abstract notion of religious persecution becomes a tangible practical term in the moment it receives a body in the form of an actual location. The sight of the cemetery “in the alcove of twilight” (IATOV 31) is set against the backdrop of busy urban life, “Car exhausts and sirens” (ibid) and buses passing. The names on the graves often ring familiar, they “have eased into ours” (ibid) and their

exile is modulated into something less explicitly alien as the persona acknowledges that “There is a flattery in being a destination. / There is a vanity in being the last resort” (ibid). The story of the refugees follows: they fled from France to complete their course of life in Ireland, following their faith which banished them from their homes and now this “faith lies low with the lives it /dispossessed” (ibid). They begin to appear strange and even exotic, the speaker considers them as these refugees might have thought about Ireland, contemplating also their addition of sounds to Dublin speech, thus becoming a part of the spirit of the place. There are haunting images of the moment before their departure from their native land, which then lead the speaker to look at Dublin in a different light: the city “which is dear to as and particular” (IATOV 32) was for these people “merely / the one witty step ahead of hate // which is all that they could keep. Or stay” (ibid). The conclusion somewhat undermines the otherwise generous-looking image of Dublin in the context of receiving such victims of religious persecution: its status is not particular, it is not in fact a destination but a next step which in time proves to be the only one, so the city acquires its privileged function only with hindsight, viewed from a later perspective. This notion perhaps explains why the title of the poem employs the preposition “at” instead of the more usual “in”.

Boland’s Dublin, however, is not exclusively the busy urban world which still offers such places and instances of silent meditation as the Huguenot graveyard. Dublin also has suburbs, already noted by Kennelly, and such places require their representation too, especially if the point of view is a less usual one. “Suburban Woman” is set in such a modern frontier zone as the world of the suburbs, located at the meeting of city and country. The title immediately focuses on a rather unusual topic in Irish poetry, a suburban woman, representing a voice muted for several reasons. Partly in accordance with this sounding out of repression the poem is dominated by an imagery of conflict and fight: spousal disagreements become guerrilla fights, everyday routines are described as struggles, the evening moment of letting the blind down is the putting out of the white flag – all these create the image of a militant figure, the suburban woman of the title thus is one who is absorbed in a hard and long-lasting fight with the circumstances, as the frontier demands it. In the closing section the speaker explicitly allies herself to this woman figure, acknowledging the filter of writing between them.

The urban frontier is further explored in “Ode to Suburbia”. Despite the claims of the title, the elevated style and subject matter are absent from the poem; this is one way of indicating the quotidian and undignified world of the suburbs. “No magic here” (SP 31) concludes the poem, after the often nerve-racking routines are enumerated in an environment which is

constricted and claustrophobic. Uniformity and physical proximity foster curiosity; this is also fuelled by the unexciting routines of one's own life which leads them to seek something interesting or at least unusual or different in someone else's life.

What would normally be considered a sign of prosperity comes to be subverted, just as it happens in Kennelly's world: the suburb, instead of signalling rising standards of living, is an "ugly sister" (SP 30), a place where life is seen as a "blister" (ibid) on the general dark, back gardens are claustrophobic and "varicose / With shrubs" (ibid), and windows have turned into "mirrors which again / And again show the same woman / Shriek at a child" and which "multiply" (ibid) the household chores among which not much difference is indicated between washing up and rearing a child. This is a world which destroys its inhabitants, principally the addressed female ones – women come to be distorted into shapeless masses of human flesh, in which state "human" is only felt and understood through the physical pain experienced by them. This disillusioned and unmagical place, however, is still capable of working miraculous transformations: this monotonous and self-annihilating routine yields changes and knowledge, a daily re-enactment of the general pattern of fall and salvation, of death and resurrection with something new added to it. The suburb thus recovers something of dignity, though not particularly because of its nature as location but by the fact that it is 'home', and home involves family, with the woman as its central force and source. This also implies, by a juxtaposition with the poem dealing with the Huguenot graveyard, that the source of regeneration and growth is the suburb rather than the centre of the city.

Dublin's old image as a city of beggars and poverty thus slowly changes yet what comes in the wake of the old is not enchanting for most of the poets either. Economic changes bring a general rise in the standards of living but they do not eliminate deprivation – in fact, they bring about new forms of it, proving that the idea of 'general' is a deceptive one. The inhabitants of Dublin may worry for a change as part of the internationalisation of the capital, which leads to a predictable decline in its 'Irish' character and to the flourishing of criminal activities but at the same time it turns Dublin into a favourite destination for international tourism, which in turn means further income and prosperity. Change is never unequivocal, especially not in the world of modern cities, yet this is perhaps to the benefit of Dublin's poets since it provides rich material for contemplation and at the same time assigns them the task of formulating their own relation to the city, which in all cases involves the element of belonging.

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## In Love with the Abject – John Cowper Powys’s *Weymouth Sands*<sup>1</sup>

Angelika Reichmann

“the man who hung there, like a cadaver in a straight waistcoat, was analysing Lucinda as if he were embracing a vivisected, half-anaesthetized, snarling panther”<sup>2</sup>

Jeremy Robinson in his introduction to a relatively new collection of articles on Powys’s novels, while enlarging on how much his oeuvre is neglected by major characters of literary criticism, casually remarks that “[o]ne could imagine essays on the Kristevan abject in Powys’s use of vivisection in *Weymouth Sands*” (“Introduction,” iv). His comment seems to be rather provocative and fanciful at first sight: vivisection, though a recurrent motif in the novel, is apparently located at its periphery. One of the major characters, Magnus Muir, is deeply concerned with the inhumanity of the vivisection of dogs going on in the local asylum called the Brush Home, and later on Sylvanus Cobbold, who is forced to become an inhabitant of the same institution, launches a heroic fight to stop it. However, the novel is far from being centred on the issue of vivisection – in fact, the notion of any centre seems to be hardly applicable to either its plot or the perspectives filtered through the narrative consciousness implied by the apparently non-intrusive third person narrative voice. No wonder that Janina Nordius, an excellent expert of Powys’s novels, pushes aside the whole issue of vivisection with one passing remark, which relegates it to other images of “universal suffering” (Nordius 52–53) in Powys’s works: “But the more specific images of suffering seem to have been replaced by the frequent but fairly general references to vivisection said to go on in the Brush asylum” (132). On closer inspection, however, vivisection in *Weymouth Sands* proves

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<sup>2</sup> Powys, *Weymouth Sands*, 448–449. From now on all quotes from *Weymouth Sands* are indicated only by *WS* and the page numbers.

to be a highly significant metaphor for psychoanalysis and, by analogy, science, which underlies Powys's vision of humanity in the novel. This, in turn, reveals a curious – perverted? – fascination with the abject, which might be regarded as the dominant shaping factor of Powys's choice of characters, structuring of plot and narrative technique in *Weymouth Sands*.

### **Vivisection and Psychoanalysis – Images of the Abject**

Though locating vivisection in an asylum might seem arbitrary today, it serves as a starting point for the gradually evolving identification of vivisection and psychoanalysis, which finally becomes a firmly established metaphor in *Weymouth Sands*. The originally – questionably – metonymical relationship of the two concepts acquires its metaphorical quality through the repeated comparison of the vivisected animals with the human patients of the institution, while the vivisector and the analyst are actually the same person, Dr. Brush. The association of the vivisected dogs with Dr. Brush's mental patients is introduced by Magnus Muir:

[...] he suddenly began telling himself a story about the spirits of the old tribes who had raised this huge earth-fortress [of Maiden Castle], and how the captive souls from the Brush Home might at least in the liberation of sleep come flocking out through the night to Maiden Castle and be there protected and safe, along with a great ghostly pack of crouching, whimpering, fawning, cringing, torture-released dogs, all crowding close behind these phantom-warriors, as wave after wave of their enemies poured up the slope, trying in vain to repossess themselves of them. (*WS* 115)

This association is further underlined by Marret, who relates the impressions of an eye-witness of vivisection, and points out that the dog “screamed like a human being” (*WS* 401). The metaphor gains an almost authoritative power when the “vivisector”, Dr. Brush himself establishes the same analogy. He admits to himself that in the name of hunting for scientific truth he is a torturer, keeping dogs in utter pain on the verge of life and death, and figuratively doing the same to human beings like Lucinda Cobbold:

“I don't know which is the most exciting: cutting truth out of dogs or coaxing it out of men. But this I know: that I would help every dog in the world to die howling and reduce every woman in the world to a cold sepulchral pulp, like Mrs. Cobbold, if I could add only a page to the great Folio of *verified and verifiable truth!* How lovely, how exquisite are this man's self-deceptions! God! I could watch him and experiment on him for a hundred years! Oh, how I wish I could buy a cartload of healthy Dogberries as easily as Murphy can buy healthy Dogs! And Murphy himself. How beautifully complicated his sadism is, with its delicate feelers

and its subtle arts of self-protective concealment! Murphy was drawn to the vivisection-laboratory as inevitably as [...] those holy torturers to their castle-prisons." (WS 440)

In the same scene one of the narrator's comments on Dr. Brush also underpins the metaphor:

[...] that ghastly Lemur hanging there opposite him, that corpse-man, sweating the wise sweat of the cunning of corpses [...] sat up so erect in his new over-coat, just as if he had a rope under his expressionless face [...] the man who hung there, like a cadaver in a straight waistcoat, was analysing Lucinda as if he were embracing a vivisected, half-anaesthetized, snarling panther. (WS 448–449)

Finally, at the very end of the novel, the metaphor is literally given by Dr. Brush himself, though he only poses it as the question of "whether in delving into [Lucinda Cobbold's] secret life and humouring her morbidities, he was not practising vivisection upon her rather than psychiatry" (WS 566).

To indicate the proper weight of the implications of this metaphor in terms of the Kristevan abject, first let me contextualise vivisection and psychoanalysis in Powysian art and highlight their relationship with thematic and narrative concerns in his texts. Vivisection is an obsessively recurring image of "Powys's worst evil – scientific cruelty" (Knight 99–100), against which he launches an obstinate fight and formulates his Rabelaisian philosophy. It features as a more or less emphatic motif in three of his other novels (*Morwyn* – Knight 63; *The Inmates* – Knight 82; *Up and Out* – Knight 108) apart from *Weymouth Sands* as a form of the sadistic and thus the physically repellent in mankind (Knight 21). "Vivisectional" is almost an "epitheton ornans" of contemporary science, seen as fundamentally "inhuman" in his essay on Dostoevsky (Powys, *Dostoevsky* 189). Notably, vivisection also appears in his lengthy essayistic work on Rabelais, first published in 1948, fourteen years after *Weymouth Sands*: it is in Rabelais's attitude to nature, including the most excremental aspects of human existence, that Powys detects an approach "diametrically opposed to the unphilosophical inhumanity of Vivisection" (Powys, *Rabelais* 42). In Powys's reading of Rabelais this is the basis of "Pantagrulism", the philosophy formulated in the books of *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, which he rather likes to read as a new "Gospel". Though his treatment of the French writer, with special reference to such chapters as "Rabelais as a Prophet", must be taken with certain reservations, his understanding of the Renaissance text, though far from being so academic, bears comparison with Bakhtin's interpretation. Powys identifies roughly nine major components of Rabelaisian philosophy, namely "the ataraxia of the Stoics", parody,

“farcical and sardonic humour”, “considerate humanity and pity”, “shameless realism and gross bawdiness”, a “Christian element”, a “magical and *almost occult* hero-worship”, “endurance, enjoyment, and unlimited toleration” and “a *metaphysical* element” (Powys, *Rabelais* 368-369). It must be noted that Powys, totally independently from Bakhtin’s train of thought<sup>3</sup>, emphasises some of the poetic dimensions of Rabelais’ works – parody (Bahtyin, *François Rabelais* 16, 19–22, Bahtyin, *Dosztojevszkij* 159–160, 239–240), realism/materialism, sardonic humour and bawdiness/comic treatment of the excremental and sexual, carnivalesque laughter (Bahtyin, *François Rabelais* 27–34), tolerance/suspension of official hierarchy (Bahtyin, *François Rabelais* 30–37, 12, 18, 15–16) – which Bakhtin, on the one hand, brought in the foreground of analysis, on the other hand, used as points of reference for his concept of polyphony formulated in his interpretation of Dostoevsky’s poetics (Bahtyin, *Dosztojevszkij* 10–11, 159–160, 239–240). Translated into Bakhtinian terms, Powys, expressing a distrust in science so typical of mythologically orientated Modernists, poses against the monological “truth” of reason a dialogic or polyphonic vision of his Rabelaisian “Multiverse” (Powys, *Rabelais* 370). Powys’s personal Rabelaisian philosophy, aiming at a “mastery of the repellent” which is “a step [...] to a mastery of the horror of death” (Knight 85-86), on the one hand, is formulated in opposition to a crudely scientific approach manifested in such horrors as vivisection, on the other hand, it results in a pluralistic vision of the world (Knight 85)<sup>4</sup>.

Just like the image of vivisection in his art, Powys’s idea of psychoanalysis, most directly elaborated in his essay *Psychoanalysis and Morality*, is also inseparably intertwined with his notions of ethics and his personal philosophy. The short text, traditionally published as a separate booklet since its first edition in 1923, preceded the publication of *Weymouth Sands* by eleven years, but – as its title itself also suggests – it gives a direct and actually often didactic elaboration of several issues related to psychoanalysis in the novel. In the essay Powys, who is conversant with the theories of Freud, Jung and Adler (9), hails psychoanalysis as the new

<sup>3</sup> Jacqueline Peltier in her comprehensive study comparing Powys’s different interpretations of Rabelais, also emphasises that Bakhtin’s and Powys’s works were written approximately at the same time and that Powys would probably have been highly interested in the Russian critic’s interpretation, finding a kindred spirit in him. Though she follows the developments of Powys’s interpretation only in his non-belletristic works, she also takes it for granted that Rabelais’ extremely deep influence on Powys’s personal philosophy also surfaces in his novels (<http://www.powys-lannion.net/Powys/LettrePowysienne/number7.htm>).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. also Joe Boulter’s two comprehensive studies on pluralism in Powys’s *Porius* in his volume *Postmodern Powys – New Essays on John Cowper Powys* (Kidderminster, Crescent Moon, 2000).

science which is to liberate mankind from the burden of having to think of socially stigmatised sexual practices, such as homosexuality and incest, in terms of sin (10–11). Powys's viewpoint is partly anti-Christian, partly feminist: he locates the source of the traditional attitude to sexuality in Western Christianity, more concretely the Christian notion of sin (13) and considers it a basically masculine innovation (20–22), a part of “man-made customs” (36). He even arrives at the point of criticising psychoanalysis itself for being a part of the establishment in a sense, since it remains within the boundaries of “man-made language” by relegating women exclusively to the role of the mother and not “articulating [...] the real nature of woman's un-hypnotised reaction to the mystery of life” (38). As it can be expected from Powys's rejection of Christian morality, there is a strong metaphysical strain in his argument: with a rather Blakean turn he connects “ethical austerity in the matter of sex” with “philosophical austerity in the matter of the cosmic mystery” – with a restriction on the freedom of individual thought in the domain of the sacred (23). Psychoanalysis, by opening up the unfathomable depths of the human soul, seems to be liberating in this respect, as well: it facilitates pluralism, ironic criticism and “humorous indulgence” (23–32). Powys even comes to define art and literature in psychoanalytic terms when he claims that not only the creation of texts and their reception are erotic in nature (31), but also the individual's attitude to the world, since he “possesses, devours, and aesthetically digests, as much of the unfathomable universe as he is able to appropriate to his desire” (33). The eroticism of this “aesthetic digestion”, however, is fundamentally Narcissistic, because everybody “seeks [...] a diffused reproduction in the objective world of what they are subjectively in themselves” (33). In fact, *Psychoanalysis and Morality* suggests that psychoanalysis – and literature, being both its forerunner and the user of its achievements – facilitates an intrusion of the pluralistic (Rabelaisian?) vision of the world into such most hostile territories as science, Christian ethics and metaphysics.

Far from intending to simplify the analysis of *Weymouth Sands* into its reading as a direct realisation of Powys's sometimes vague and heuristic theoretical notions, let me use the two texts mentioned above as prioritised intertexts which throw into relief the subtleties of the metaphorical identification of vivisection and psychoanalysis. The first, most surprising and obvious superficial conclusion can be that the very identification of the two terms in *Weymouth Sands* is in fundamental opposition with Powys's notions expressed in his essays. The fact that the metaphor evolves into a network of motifs which finely interlace the whole texture of the novel, encourages a reading which strives to go behind the passionate and suspect gospel of the two essayistic texts partly containing Powys's own

interpretation of his writing practice via his personal philosophy. In *Weymouth Sands* both vivisection and psychoanalysis are instances of the abject, metaphorically linked to most characters in the novel and thus drawing into their field of force almost the entire text. Let me explore this network of images and characters to demonstrate how Powys's "multiverse" is built on a simultaneous repulsion from and fascination with several aspects of human existence depicted as abject, not by any chance restricted to such particular phenomena as vivisection – or psychoanalysis, for that matter. Going beyond the platitude of repeating the Kristevan claims that the analyst "drawing perverse jouissance" from "displaying the abject" can easily confuse himself for it (210) and that if not all literature (207) than at least "[g]reat modern literature unfolds over [the] terrain [of the abject]" (18), one can claim that Powys's position turns out to be a very special one in Modernist literature. His constant fight with "the repellent", culminating in his Rabelaisian philosophy, in fact means consciously posing the carnivalesque spirit against abjection – two notions which are hardly separable, as Kristeva's exposition of Céline's oeuvre also indicates<sup>5</sup>. How far such a division is practicable remains one of the major dilemmas of *Weymouth Sands*.

To demonstrate how the abject seems to be appropriate the whole texture of the novel, let me start with the core of the metaphorical network related to it, that is, with the metaphorical identification of vivisection and psychoanalysis revealing that both belong to the domain of the Kristevan abject in *Weymouth Sands*. For the sake of clarity two aspects of these phenomena can be differentiated and treated separately: the representation of the analyst as a vivisector and the analysand as a vivisected animal, with interwoven remarks on the relationship of the two. The related metaphors feature some of the motifs prioritised by Kristeva as appearances of the abject, such as the corpse (Kristeva 3–4), the living dead, the ghost<sup>6</sup>, the

<sup>5</sup> Carnival and its related terms, such as the grotesque, ambiguity and the apocalyptic make repeated appearances in Kristeva's analysis of Céline's texts (especially 138-195), let alone the fact that most of the thematic elements she analyses in terms of the abject could be as handily interpreted within the scope of the carnivalesque. Unfortunately, she does not clarify the relationship of the two notions – carnival seems to be a facet of abjection in literature at best – though her theory draws on Bakhtinian notions quite obviously. Such an incorporation of the carnivalesque under the umbrella term of the abject deprives it of the liberating optimism not only Bakhtin's more professional and Powys's lay reading, but also Kristeva's own early interpretations ascribe to it (Томсон 125). The clarification of the relationship of the two terms, however, is beyond the scope of the present paper.

<sup>6</sup> For an analysis of abject bodies, among them ghosts in fantastic, more specifically in Gothic stories cf. Réka Mónika Cristian's "The Fantastic Abject as Bodies in Mirrors"

ambiguous border (Kristeva 4) and lead on to more general issues, such as abjection of the self (Kristeva 5–6), the ambiguous feelings attached to the object (9–10), the ethics of psychoanalysis, the location of the speaking subject (Kristeva 11–12), the structuring of plot and the specific aspects of narrative consciousness in the novel.

Dr. Brush, the analyst and vivisector, who is repeatedly described as a corpse, who despises himself, his own science and the whole of humanity, who feels unsurpassable pleasure while interminably experimenting with his patients without the faintest hope of cure, readily lends himself to interpretation as the psychoanalyst who not only “confuses himself for the object” but in fact is object. The first aspect of this complex phenomenon to be mentioned is that Daniel Brush is apostrophised as a corpse in various ways: he is a “corpse-man”, “a cadaver” and he is compared to a hanged man making love to a half-dead panther (*WS* 448–449)<sup>7</sup>. Julia Kristeva assigns a definitive role to the corpse (cadaver) as the embodiment of the border (death) against which the subject defines itself and to which all other forms of waste are related:

The corpse (or cadaver: *cadere*, to fall), that which has irremediably come a cropper, a cesspool, and death; it upsets even more violently the one who confronts it as fragile and fallacious chance. [...] If dung signifies the other side of the border, the place where I am not and which permits me to be, the corpse, the most sickening of wastes, is a border that has encroached upon everything. [...] the corpse, seen without God and outside of science, is the utmost of abjection. It is death infecting life. Object. It is something rejected from which one does not part. Imaginary uncanniness and real threat, it beckons to us and ends up engulfing us. (Kristeva 3–4)

Powys assigns to vivisection and the psychologist the role of the very border mentioned here that defines not only the individual human being, but, in the case of *Weymouth Sands*, humanity as such. It gains force partly through the spatial symbolism of the novel, partly through the more than questionable ethical stance embodied by Dr. Brush.

While the location of the institution clearly situates it as a metaphorical border, the characters' emotional reaction to the building, a metonymy for

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(*Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tempus Mini-Conference – English Studies and the Curriculum*, Debrecen, Kossuth University, 1997), 94–107.

<sup>7</sup> The metaphor of the “ghastly Lemur” (*WS* 448) complicates the image by almost tautologically introducing the notion of the living dead: lemurs are actually ghosts, evil spirits in Roman mythology (Hamilton 48), and the etymologically related “ghastly” (Neufeldt 568) partly repeats and thereby emphasises the same information. Since the ghost is a common metaphor of both analyst and analysand in *Weymouth Sands*, let me return to it in the analysis of the latter.



vivisection and psychological treatment, interprets it more specifically as a psychological border – of horror, madness and death – against which the subject defines himself. Since “[w]hat was now the Brush Home was hidden away in so out of the world spot, that very few among what Homer calls ‘articulately-speaking men’ who lived in Weymouth had ever been near it, though most people had heard of it” (*WS* 109–110), the institution is figuratively placed at the border of the (known) human world – in a horizontal dimension, it is like a terra incognita, in a vertical one, more specifically, it is like the underworld. Later the Brush Home is actually compared to Hades (*WS* 518). This is the psychological Hell’s Museum (*WS* 86) against which characters in the novel, by rejecting vivisection and madness, can define themselves as live, sane and moral, thereby establishing their own identity and humanity. This is the case with such relatively less complicated minor characters as Marret (*WS* 401), Chant (*WS* 111–112) or even the neurotic child Benny Cattistock, who makes his first appearance in the novel with a dog in his arms just rescued from vivisection (*WS* 100). In fact, it is popular wisdom that has given the place the name “Hell’s Museum” (*WS* 111–112), which thus expresses the self-definition of the community of the people living in its vicinity through rejecting it and placing it beyond, or rather below the limits of the human world. It is only Dogberry Cattistock, “the man of action” (Knight 46), a representative of a spirit totally alien from Weymouth, who appreciates the scientific practices of Dr. Brush to the extent that he finances his “experimental laboratory”. Even he finds vivisection “devilish queer” (*WS* 437), though, when on his wedding day he ends up watching the doctor the whole day instead of making his appearance at church.

However, in the exemplary cases of Magnus Muir and Sylvanus Cobbold vivisection, though clearly forming a border, also exposes something unbearable *within* the human psyche that actually threatens identity. Magnus Muir’s impressions play a definitive role in establishing the function of vivisection as border. Just like he finds it difficult even to look at Daniel Brush “without an obscure horror” (*WS* 102), and at the thought that “[t]his man is a vivisector [...] a sickening sensation of anger and disgust [takes] possession of him” (*WS* 101), the sight of the very building provokes “sick aversion and distaste” (*WS* 110) in him. His emphatically bodily reaction is a perfect example of the “loathing” and “repugnance” one feels for the abject (Kristeva 2). His aversion soon takes on the form of the fear of death – he senses “an atmosphere of such horror that he fidgeted in his seat and felt sick in his stomach as if he were going to see an execution” (*WS* 110) – and the fear of losing his sanity. The latter, however, becomes

intertwined with his desire for Curly, so that the two affects are intermixed in the same bodily sensation:

“How can any one of us have a single moment of happiness [...] when there's such a thing as vivisection in the world? And yet would I, to stop it once and for all, and to burn all their operating tables and all their straps and all their instruments, be prepared to sacrifice Curly?”

The coming together of these two electrified nerves in Magnus' nature, his erotic passion and his sickening twinge over vivisection, threw him [...] into a series of jumpy contortions. He kept experiencing a twitching in his long legs, and every now and then with a muscular contraction that corresponded to what he visioned was happening under Mr. Murphy's devotion to science he would draw up one of his heels along the floor of the car.

“I suppose,” he thought, “the only thing to do is to *assume* that life contains cruelties so unspeakable that if you think about them you go mad! That's what it is! To think about Murphy and Dr. Brush's dogs brings you into the care of Dr. Brush!” (*WS* 306)

It is in combination with sexuality and unavowable pleasure that vivisection – and psychoanalysis – really play the threatening role of the object, which is “[o]n the edge of non-existence and hallucination, of a reality that, if I acknowledge it, annihilates me” (Kristeva 2). Sylvanus Cobbold undergoes a much more amplified version of a similar experience during his “analysis” in the asylum. When forcibly hospitalised in the Brush Home for the alleged seduction of young girls – a crude simplification of his mystical and physically asexual relationship with women – he undertakes something like a crusade against vivisection and to stop it he figuratively loses his life and becomes a Christ-like figure. Grotesquely, his reaching out to the Absolute via an embodiment of the feminine is replaced by the perverted eroticism of the analytical situation: the impersonalised, passive personality of the analyst makes the impression of his ideal listener, a woman on Sylvanus and he is “seized with a mysterious spasm of turbulent erotic emotion” (*WS* 537), which he consciously rejects as perverted. Desire, the need to fill in a lack, whether physical or metaphysical, and rejection are mixed in the characters' attitude to vivisection and psychoanalysis, in their “fascinated start that leads them toward it and separates them from it” (Kristeva 2); it becomes an ambiguous, ever-moving border that forces the subject to keep “straying” (Kristeva 8).

The intrapersonal tensions of such a “straying” subject reach a culmination in Dr. Brush's abjection of the self generalised as misanthropy in *Weymouth Sands*: fully aware of the fact that his medical practices – both vivisectional and psychoanalytic – are morally unacceptable, he also admits

to finding his only pleasure in them, that is, he finds the abject, “the impossible within” (Kristeva 5), as the core of his very integrity. His notion of psychoanalysis – actually a crude version of Freudism – is briefly outlined at the moment of its dramatic change during his “treatment” of Sylvanus Cobbold:

The grand difference between his old system and his new one lay in the hypotheses they respectively assumed with regard to the *locality* of all those dark, disturbing impulses, manias, shock-bruises, neuroses, complexes that he regarded as both the causes and the symptoms of human derangement. In his old system these volcanic neuroses were resident in an entirely subliminal region, a permanent underworld of the human ego from which they broke forth to cause unhappiness and anguish. This region was out of reach, and possessed locked, adamant gates, as far as our ordinary processes of mental introspection went. To isolate and analyse these peculiarities as *aberrations* it was necessary to assume some kind of well-balanced norm, some measure of well-constituted functioning, from which all such “complexes” could be regarded as lapses. (*WS* 513–514)

In this concept of psychoanalysis the analyst identifies with the “norm”, the “measure” which “isolates” the abnormal from the normal. The full ironies of this stance can be realised through the representation of the self-same norm-giver as a corpse, quoted above. In the openly sexualised game of analysis with the doctor sitting as if he was wearing a “straight waistcoat” and indulging himself in his perversion of “embracing a vivisected, half-anaesthetized, snarling panther” (*WS* 448-449), the erotic desire of the analyst is satisfied by an object kept constantly on the verge of life and death and the analyst is totally interchangeable with the analysand, whom he defines as aberrant. In Dr. Brush’s fundamental revision of his earlier scientific theories under the impact of Sylvanus Cobbold’s analysis he actually comes to redefine the conscious and the unconscious along a continuum (*WS* 514). What he does – in fact, still adhering to his role as a “norm-giver” – is a redefinition of the human norm based on the analysis of a “borderline patient”, whose speech “constitute[s] propitious ground for a sublimating discourse” - in this case rather “mystic” than “aesthetic”-, since he “make[s] the conscious/unconscious distinction irrelevant” (Kristeva 7). However, the only result is that the vivisection of dogs becomes redundant (he actually gives it up for financial reasons) when he has found a human being to “vivisect” in the person of Sylvanus, the ideal analysand, who seems to be in constant communication with his unconscious:

Sylvanus had been in Hell’s Museum now for over three months and the diagnosing of his “case” had proved the most interesting piece of analysis that Daniel Brush, in all his long experience as a psychiatrist, had ever

undertaken. For one thing, Sylvanus turned out to be a well-nigh perfect patient. He became so interested in Dr. Brush's de-personalised personality that he was ready to humour it to the utmost. And since the essence of this man's identity was to eliminate his identity and to become a pure, unblurred mirror in which reality could reflect itself, what Sylvanus constantly aimed at was to furnish the doctor with an increasing series of new layers, new levels, new strata of his precious objective truth. As a result of this, Daniel Brush had never known such persistent, unalloyed mental excitement as he experienced during these autumn months. The more he analysed Sylvanus the more he found to analyse. And what was so extremely satisfactory about it, from Brush's point of view, was that *the question of cure* never emerged at all. The Doctor could in fact drop the "doctor" and give himself up to experiment with Sylvanus as he had never dared to experiment with anyone, no, not even with Mrs. Cobbold! (*WS* 512)

The effect of the doctor's analysis is rather similar to that of vivisection, since under the figurative knife of the doctor's cold-blooded irony Sylvanus stops being human: it "made him howl like a famished wolf" (*WS* 540) and he "gave vent to a cry that seemed hardly human" (*WS* 540). His "analysis" produces similar results as Mrs. Cobbold's, whom, in Dr. Brush's own words, he has "reduce[d] [...] to a cold sepulchral pulp" (*WS* 440). The metaphor applied to her emphasises the condition of being at a limbo, stuck between life and death, but belonging more to the latter, like ghosts. The condition of these patients – metaphorically vivisected animals and living dead – is abject in itself because it represents an ambiguous, in-between situation, which "disturbs identity, system, order" (Kristeva 4) and "does not respect borders, positions, rules" (Kristeva 4). Their cases imply that if the psychoanalyst represents a border or measure, it is rather in the sense that like death, he "has encroached upon everything" (Kristeva 4) and assimilates his patients – his objects – to himself to make them abject.

If there is one person in the novel who faces vivisection and psychoanalysis as abject in the novel, it is Dr. Brush himself:

"When I hear my sweet hypocritical colleagues," he thought, "like so many clever politicians, defending experimentation as a humane duty for the curing of disease, I feel that the human race is so contemptible that the sooner some totally different creation takes its place, the better for the universe! Man is a loathsome animal, prodigious in his capacity for a particular kind of disgusting cruelty, covered up with ideal excuses. If I were allowed – as no doubt we *shall* be in half-a-century – to vivisect *men*, I'd gladly let the dogs alone. Comical, comical! It's comical but it's also a little ghastly! I wonder if our sentimental devotees comprehend what we real scientists are like. Mad! That's what we're like. It's a vice. *I know what*

*it is. And I know what I am. I am a madman with a vice for which I'd vivisect Jesus Christ."* (WS 444–445)

Dr. Brush's clear-sighted and disillusioned vision of himself also widens the scope of abjection in the novel: psychoanalysis becomes generalised as science, and the vivisector-analyst becomes an exemplary representative of the human species which is abject exactly because of its ability to carry out such practices. He also emphasises the ambiguous nature of this practice, since, as an excellent example of the abject, it cunningly covers its inhumanity with the interests of the human kind (Kristeva 4). It questions the Enlightenment vision of the man of Reason, of which late 19<sup>th</sup>-century positivism generating outstanding scientific results and defining the basic approach of even such sciences as psychoanalysis was a logical continuation. Dr. Brush's vision of psychoanalysis, thriving on the abject, and of mankind, loathsome for sanctioning it, is at the same time apocalyptic: full of pessimism, he predicts the well-deserved and unavoidable end of such a race.

What offers an obvious but apparently weak counterpoint to this vision is the promise of a new kind of science – and morality – heralded by the arrival of the new physician at the end of the novel. The tentative indication of a new approach to science and life represented by Dr. Mabon is related in terms of the myth of the Golden Fleece and a retrieval of the Golden Age of mankind, though apart from Magnus's intuitive attraction to the man there is not much else to support it. After the narrator's introduction claiming that "this day there did happen to be a sort of oracle delivered, though its utterer [...] was a complete stranger to the town" (WS 499) it is the Latin tutor who, on their first meeting – and the new doctor's last appearance in the novel – attaches outstanding importance to Dr. Mabon: "I'd like to know this chap's philosophy. He's in advance of all of us. He sees far. He's like the Pilot of the Argo. God! I hope he stays here!" (WS 503) The doctor, the writer of a "purely *biological*" (WS 504) book on ethics, of which he thinks that it is "barbarous" (WS 502), is also a conchologist, who looks "as if he would willingly have exchanged his present incarnation for the life of a Solen [a species of shells]" (WS 502). He "seemed to have a special look for everyone, with its own humorous commentary upon the world, but a *different* commentary for each separate person in a group" (WS 503). It is his short dialogue with Magnus which gives the promise of a new science beyond psychoanalysis:

'[...] how do you go to work with your neurotic cases, now that you've dropped psychoanalysis?'  
[...]

'I do nothing but listen ... and ... move ... perhaps ... a few things that have got in the way!'

Having been persecuted till he uttered this oracle, Dr. Mabon did not retire into sulky silence the moment he had spoken. (*WS* 504-505)

It is the slightly modified repetition of the expression "to utter an oracle" on the narrator's part that underpins the exceptional importance of Dr. Mabon's rather general comment. His whole personality and approach poses a sharp contrast to Dr. Brush's: a lover and admirer of nature, he is an advocate of non-intrusion and benevolent, humorous, tolerant passivity. His "dropping" of psychoanalysis together with the representation of its practice in *Weymouth Sands* as vivisection marks Powys's disappointment in his extremely optimistic expectations concerning psychoanalysis. What he presents here seems to be nothing else but the Rabelaisian alternative – in the Powysian sense outlined in his *Rabelais* – to the experimental cruelty and jouissance of psychoanalysis as object.

### **In the Lure of the Object – the Speaking Subject, Characters and Plot**

If going beyond psychoanalysis as vivisection is represented directly in *Weymouth Sands* only as a passing glimpse of a Rabelaisian Golden Age, indirectly it permeates practically all the levels of the text, though inseparably tied to the object. The tracking down of another facet of the original metaphor, the image of the ghost for the analysand reappearing throughout the text of the novel in a more generalised sense reveals that the fascination with the object in the whole of *Weymouth Sands* is far from being restricted to Dr. Brush. In fact, abjection is the position from which the speaking subject seems to formulate an enunciation of being – the only proper location worth writing about at all. The novel is teeming with object characters and scenes – psychic health seems to be the exception that proves the rule. Their treatment, however, is dominated by light-hearted indulgence and non-critical tolerance on the narrator's part, resulting in a polyphonic multiverse of several colliding perspectives filtered through the narrative voice with equal power and "truth-value". Last but not least, Powys's fascination with the object, this "'something' that I do not recognize as a thing", but which is "not nothing, either" (Kristeva 2) might shed light on the fundamentally bathetic nature of the plot of *Weymouth Sands*, the conspicuously empty centre of the novel.

The metaphor of the ghost for the analysand mentioned above is merged in the text of the novel with the leitmotif of the "Homeric dead" applied to all the inhabitants of Weymouth – in fact, to the whole of mankind. While the patients of the Brush Home are, as mentioned above, associated with the

vivisectioned dogs from the very beginning, the metaphorical parallel for the condition of the suffering animals, neither dead nor living, is that of the ghost. Ghosts, as an extension of the notion of the corpse, are by definition abject. The patients of the asylum, the “brain-tortured unresting ghosts who could neither realise their dolorous identities nor forget them” (*WS* 518) become more specifically associated with the inhabitants of the Homeric underworld when they are compared to Sylvanus Cobbold: “And like Teiresias in Hades it seemed to be the destiny of Sylvanus to find rational articulation, if nothing else, for the blind gibberings of these poor ghosts” (*WS* 518). The context implies a connection of the unconscious, language and identity exemplified by the image of the Homeric dead, which, though the idea allegedly comes from Magnus Muir, is elaborated on by Sylvanus Cobbold<sup>8</sup>:

“That tragic half-life of the dead in Homer, that I heard Mr. Muir talk about once at High House, lies behind everything. [...] If you,” he went on, “take that half-life as if it were the bottom of the sea you give the sweet light of the sun its true meaning. Unhappiness comes from not realising that life is two-sided. The other side of life is always death. The dead in Homer are tragic and pitiful, but they are not *nothing*. Their muted half-life is like the watery light at the bottom of the sea. [...] That Homeric death-life is tragically sad, but it has a beauty like the dying away of music when instead of becoming *nothing* music carries us in its ebb-flow down to this sea-bottom of the world – [...] – where it’s all echo and reflection, where it’s all memory and mirrors of memory and brooding upon what is and is not.” (*WS* 258–259)

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<sup>8</sup> It is at this point that the acknowledged autobiographical nature of these two characters (*WS* “Note by Author”) becomes rather obvious. Powys himself was fascinated with the motif of the descent to the underworld represented in “Book XI” of *The Odyssey*. His conclusions about the “pessimistic” Homeric attitude to death, which is “a pitiful half-life”, are strikingly similar to the more mystically elaborated notions of Sylvanus Cobbold:

Some would say, “Why should we try to realise and to appropriate to our imaginations this Homeric view, if it be so dark and tragic?” Because it is not the tragedy of the general human fate that debases our spirit and lowers the temper of our lives; it is the burden of our private griefs, our private wrongs, and the weight of ills “that flesh is heir to”. [...]

Granting that the Homeric view of the fate of the dead is the darkest [...] it remains that it saves a man from that irrational fear of vengeance of the Creator, which, while it has kept few cruel ones from their cruelty, has driven insane so many sensitive and gentle natures.

And what most of us suffer from is our absorption in our own cares and worries and afflictions, not any indignant spiritual protest against the general fate of the human race. (Powys, *The Pleasures of Literature* 73–74)

At this point the image of vivisection becomes related to the metaphysical dimensions of the novel: life and identity are defined and only definable against death, against nothing, while the Homeric dead become the image of the human condition of being at a limbo. It is not by chance that Sylvanus's face becomes comparable to that of the Homeric dead, "who, while they can remember and forget, are completely deprived of all the creative energy of the power of thought", as a "result of his metaphysical struggles" (*WS* 408). The rational language of science – the approach of the analyst comparable only to vivisection – is helpless in the face of the "ocean of human experience" (*WS* 514). Since the ocean, another leitmotif of the novel (Robinson, *Sensualism* 28), among other things, is also a metaphor for the psyche, Sylvanus's mystical preaching can also be read as his definition of being – based on the constant awareness of nothing, of a lack, of death *within*. Thus the metaphor of the ghost for the analysand, on the one hand, is a perfect embodiment of the abject, since "all abjection is in fact recognition of the *want* on which any being, meaning, language, or desire is founded" (Kristeva 5). On the other hand, it is also an attempt to resolve the irresolvable dichotomy of life and death, being and nothing, and as such, it is positively opposed to the solution offered by psychoanalysis and science – the image of the vivisected animal. It is not Dr. Brush who can facilitate his patients' (re)entrance into the Symbolic and self-definition but Sylvanus Cobbold, their "Teiresias", "the ghost of the blind Theban prophet [...] whose reason is still unshaken" (Homer). Sylvanus is different from the other patients, "the other ghosts [who] flit about aimlessly" (Homer), "the sad troops of the enfeebled Dead, who were sub-conscious, sub-sensitive, sub-normal, sub-substantial" (*WS* 479), exactly because of his ability to verbalise much deeper layers of his psyche and thereby to establish an identity of his own. In *Weymouth Sands* the hyper-consciousness of Sylvanus Cobbold – the "'mystical' sublimating discourse" of the "borderline subject" (Kristeva 7) – embodies the most extreme potentials of the ghostly/ghastly human condition, a self-analysis and self-definition opposed to psychoanalysis represented as vivisection while carrying on the implications of the same metaphor.

While the motif of vivisection, as outlined above, leads to a fundamentally misanthropic approach to mankind seen as abject, *Weymouth Sands* actually abounds in "ghosts" and in "improper/unclean" characters (Kristeva 2) who transgress officially accepted social norms usually because of their more or less serious psychic disturbances and/or unusual sexual inclinations and who are treated neutrally, in a lightsome manner or even with fascination. Let me give only a few examples in a rather sketchy



manner – relevant features are so abundant in *Weymouth Sands* that to do otherwise would amount to retelling the whole novel.

Adam Skald is obsessed with killing Dog Cattistock, which he also sees as the only way to keep his personal integrity, as the core of his identity (*WS* 360–361). This is exactly the reason for which his newly found love, Perdita, leaves him – she finds him abject. By the end of the novel the forsaken man is so devastated, both spiritually and bodily, that he becomes physically repulsive, looking as if “he had already joined the ranks of those Homeric [...] Dead” (*WS* 479). When the lovers are reunited at the end of the novel, after Perdita’s long absence, presumable mental breakdown and physical illness – her own special descent to hell –, both of them are described as “skeletons”, his face is “positively ghastly in its disfigurement” and hers is “the face of the dead come to life” (*WS* 577).

Magnus Muir is haunted by the ghost of his dead father to such an extent that he sometimes ceases to have a separate identity of his own. During the lifetime of the elder Muir it was Magnus’s “fear of his father [...] that made his love-affairs come to nothing” (*WS* 19). *Weymouth Sands* is partly about the forty-five-year-old tutor’s attempt to wrestle himself free from this fear five years after his father’s death. The interiorised prohibition on bonding with women reappears in a slightly veiled form as his fear that his marriage with Curly will force him to leave the security of the maternal lap/womb associated with Miss Le Fleau’s house [with its atmosphere dominated by the elder Muir’s furniture (*WS* 95)] and push him into the horrors of a life described in terms of a (vivisectional) industrial torture-chamber:

He felt it now as a menacing engine-house that he was entering – a place full of cogs and pistons and wheels and screws and prodding spikes – and full of people with bleeding limbs. A vague horror, like that of extreme physical pain, oppressed him. He felt as if all the hidden places where sensitive life was tortured had opened their back-doors to him, and the moans from within were groping at his vitals. (*WS* 95)

Curly, standing for sexual relationship and the feminine, becomes the luring but also horrifying object of his desire. This contradiction surfaces in Magnus’s inability to consummate his desire and counteract Curly’s manoeuvres to postpone their wedding, and is sublimated in his positioning Curly against vivisection, as the sacrifice he could – or should? – make in the name of humanity to stop this unbearable cruelty (cf. the quote from *WS* 306 above). Ironically, this is what literally happens at the end of the novel: Curly, cheating on both her lovers, leaves with the laughing third, Dog Cattistock for Italy, the expenses of which make the miser stop financing Dr. Brush’s laboratory and thereby bring vivisection to its end. Magnus goes on

heartbroken, but not without a sense of relief. His narrative lends itself up to interpretation most easily as a story of the feminine and sexuality treated as abject under the influence of the Law of the Father (Kristeva 2). His sacred horror of the feminine, based on the incest taboo, the prohibition on the maternal (Kristeva 71) might shed light on the conspicuous absence of mothers from the novel: *Weymouth Sands* is teeming with orphans (both infant and adult), childless mother-aged women and careless, malfunctioning mothers. Powys's rejection of Christian morality is almost literally translated here into fictional terms, since his view of the punishing God with His ban on sexuality – “to each superego its abject” (Kristeva 2) – predestines the feminine as abject. It also explains to a certain extent why he finds the Christian notion of sin totally unsatisfactory in coping with the abject (Kristeva 90-112) and tries to come up with alternative solutions represented as the philosophies of the individual characters in the novel.

Among the other characters, Dog Cattistock is a miser to a pathological extent, which makes him unable to bond with women (*WS* 446–448). Captain Poxwell and his daughter Lucinda play out a scenario of incest which drives the father practically mad (*WS* 302) and leaves the daughter not much saner, either. James Loder perversely theatricalises his physical pain and tortures his children with his illness (*WS* 297). Rodney Loder consciously wishes his father's death and is afraid of going mad like his uncle (178). Daniel Brush is probably a latent homosexual (*WS* 537) and definitely an overt misanthrope. Larry Zed is a charming fugitive from the Brush Home and not without a good cause. The sisters Tissty and Tossty have a most curious Lesbian and incestuous relationship with each other (*WS* 472). Peg Frampton has nymphomaniac inclinations (*WS* 476). The only proper mother in the novel, Ellen Gadget, is reputed to live in an incestuous relationship with her husband, who is also her half-brother (*WS* 249). Last but not least, almost every old family in Weymouth has had some member who was, is, or could have been a patient in the Brush Home (*WS* 487), among them the Loders (*WS* 178) and the Cobbolds (*WS* 270).

The most conspicuous examples of abjection are the brothers Jerry and Sylvanus Cobbold. “The world-famous clown” (*WS* 8) of a thousand masks and the “born prophet” (*WS* 6) function as a pair of – sometimes interchangeable – carnivalesque doubles whose identity is defined along the lines of forming two seemingly diametrically opposed versions of coping with the abject. What they share, though, is their obsession with the excremental aspects of life and a more or less morbid femininity – the abject.

In Jerry's case this fascination is overtly connected to a Rabelaisian – carnivalesque? – attitude that is much more complicated than “subsuming Rabelais' sex/excrement reverence” (Robinson, *Sensualism* 18):

Jerry had indeed something in him that went beyond Rabelaisianism, in that he not only could get an ecstasy of curious satisfaction from the most drab, ordinary, homely, realistic aspects of what might be called the excremental under-tides of existence but he could slough off his loathing for humanity in this contemplation and grow gay, child-like, guileless. (*WS* 217)

His wife, Lucinda is one of Dr. Brush's out-patients, the "vivisected, half-anaesthetized, snarling panther" (*WS* 449), who has driven her father mad by making up a story – of course, with Powys one can never tell how fictitious – of their child born of incest. Jerry's lover, Tossty, is fatally attracted to her own sister, the beautiful Tissty. The narrator's comments place these relationships far beyond the limits of "normality": "normal sex-appeals had not the least effect upon [Jerry]. What had drawn him to Lucinda [...] was a queer pathological attraction; and the same was true [...] of his interest in Tossty" (*WS* 218). At the end of the novel he establishes an adulterous – and in a sense incestuous – relationship with his sister-in-law. The tainted nature of this love is already predicted half-way through the plot, much before Hortensia Lily is actually jilted on her wedding-day by Cattistock, when Jerry imagines that he would respond to her love for him only if "Cattistock ill-used her" and "if she were outraged and *abject*" (*WS* 219, italics mine).

Sylvanus Cobbold's fascination with excrement is part of his ritualistic, mystical adoration of every aspect of nature, and is probably best exemplified by his kissing the prongs of a fork freshly taken from a dung heap (*WS* 529). Though women are mysteriously attracted by his preaching, and he even shares his house (and bed) with two of them in the course of the novel, he does not have a sexual relationship with them. His "friends" (*WS* 489) are queer figures themselves: social outcasts (Gipsy May and Marret, the Punch-and-Judy girl); neurotics, Peg Frampton, and the hysterical Gipsy, who symbolically castrates (*WS* 412, 416–417) Sylvanus by cutting off his moustaches in his sleep out of jealousy; or somehow even not totally human (Marret is like a puppet, a long broomstick in black with the head of a china doll). But while Jerry's loathing is directed against others – he is a misanthrope – Sylvanus feels "spasmodic body-shame" (*WS* 385), he is repelled only by his own body and sees himself as abject.

Their abjection results in two different "sublimating discourses". Though Janina Nordius claims that "[Jerry Cobbold's] misanthropy is not there to shield some precious thought-world; it is only cynical and full of contempt, devoid, it seems, of any redeeming features" (124), in the novel his abjection is sublimated in his clowning, his "artistic discourse" (Kristeva 7) that is not bound by the limits of the stage:

[...] Jerry's loathing for humanity was even deeper than that of Mr. Witchit [...] and the only pleasure he got from his fellows was a monstrous

Rabelaisian gusto for their grossest animalities, excesses, lapses, shames! These things it was, the beast-necessity in human life, that he exploited in the humours of his stage-fooling; and because he loathed his fellow-men he was able to throw into his treatment of their slavery to material filth an irresistible hilarity as well as a convincing realism, a combination that always enchanted the crowd. (*WS* 218)

His “acting *sans cesse*” (*WS* 204), also continued in the conspicuously theatrical environment of his private life (*WS* 41), even seems to serve “humanitarian” purposes for example in Perdita’s eyes, who “saw the man as a sort of fragile Atlas, perpetually holding up the weight of other people’s destinies and aiming above all, as he did with Lucinda, at keeping people from going mad, by an everlasting process of distraction!” (*WS* 218) In contrast, Sylvanus Cobbold’s “mystical sublimating discourse” (Kristeva 7) is embodied in his rather vague philosophy of the Absolute. His efforts to come up with an acceptable version of the unbearable contradictions of the human condition demonstrate how death, cruelty and the repellent are just different facets of the object against which the individual tries to enunciate his identity in Powys’s art: “his mind gave up the struggle to reconcile his Absolute with the cruelty of things, for this began to seem beyond his power; and in place he wrestled with the Spirit in a frantic effort to make it include the Gross, the Repulsive, the Disgusting” (*WS* 384-385). His personal philosophy results in such grotesque phenomena, as his calling himself “Caput-anus” in his dialogues with the Absolute, while he carefully avoids any references to himself as “I” (*WS* 385). His idealisation of femininity – the sublimation of the object he cannot handle – brings his relationships with both Gipsy May and Marret to a crisis since he manages to ignore their personal feelings totally. As opposed to the professional jester, it is, however, Sylvanus who can produce “a fit of Gargantuan laughter” when facing such an ironic twist of fate as Cattistock’s risking his life to rescue a probably empty cask in a storm at sea and thus to become the local hero instead of Adam Skald (*WS* 285–286). At the end of the novel both Rabelaisianism without indulgence and the vision of a carnivalesque Absolute without a proper incorporation of femininity – sexuality – fail to prove satisfactory alternatives: Jerry’s scheming is unmasked in the face of “authentic passion” (*WS* 570) and Sylvanus, locked up permanently in Hell’s Museum, is brought to such a breakdown by Dr. Brush’s cold-blooded irony and his final loss of Marret that his Absolute has to struggle back to life in a phoenix-like manner (*WS* 542).

Even such a sketchy overview of the novel’s cast seems to justify A. N. Wilson’s ironic summary of the case of *Weymouth Sands*: the novel “had to be retitled *Jobber Skald* since the mayor and the good people of Weymouth

threatened legal action at [Powys's] depiction of the genteel seaside town as seething with evil, populated by brothel-keepers, vivisectionists and lunatics"(3)<sup>9</sup>. The new title is especially misleading because it veils one of the most important features of the novel: if it has a main character at all, it is definitely not the Jobber – however “impressive” he is (Knight 43) – but Weymouth itself, with all its symbolic dimensions. Though *Weymouth Sands* has, by necessity, more and less elaborated and complex characters, the major ones – Magnus Muir, the Jobber, Dog Cattistock, Perdita Wane, Jerry and Sylvanus Cobbold, Richard Gaul, Rodney Loder, Daniel Brush etc. – are so numerous, that it is hardly possible to identify one main plot with a restricted number of major characters. What *Weymouth Sands* provides instead, is a collection of snapshots – of personal philosophies and visions of the world, as if to demonstrate Powys's utterly subjectivist<sup>10</sup> standpoint that “the thing that conceives life and absorbs life, is nothing less than the mind itself; the mind and the imagination!” (*Psychoanalysis* 28) Though there is an omniscient third person narrator in the novel, his all-knowing reveals itself rather in an ability to enter all the characters' consciousness – and letting their different perspectives collide. It becomes most obvious in such instances when the same event is interpreted from two different characters' viewpoint, but always without the intrusion of the narrator's “final” judgment. For example, in the ominous case of Sylvanus Cobbold's kissing the fork out of a dung heap, the narrator's comments, dominated by Sylvanus' perspective and permeated by his ritualistic and pathetic nature-worship, are suddenly interrupted by the rather disillusioning remark that “it would have fatally lent itself to Perdita's impression of him, as one who, even when alone, was forever acting and showing off. Perdita's view of his character, and indeed the Jobber's view, too, would have been accentuated had they witnessed the sequel” (*WS* 529). The more complex characters are introduced through each other's perspectives, which often contrast each other – most notably in Sylvanus's case, but even the “villain” of the novel, Dog Cattistock is totally humanised through Magnus Muir's vision of him and through a glimpse into his self-reflections on his disastrous wedding day. The result is a typical Powysian “multiverse” of different consciousnesses, which are in dialogic<sup>11</sup> relationship with each other – a

<sup>9</sup> The novel has been released with the original title since its 1963 edition (Nordius 103).

<sup>10</sup> On subjectivist pluralism in Powys's *Porius* cf. Joe Boulter, *Postmodern Powys – New Essays on John Cowper Powys*, 8–9.

<sup>11</sup> In Joe Boulter's analysis of pluralism in *Porius*, whose many aspects and conclusions are also highly relevant in terms of *Weymouth Sands* – cf. the collision of different perspectives (32–33), the representation of different consciousnesses on equal footing as “many world versions” existing independently from each other (e.g. 28–30) - his

“dehierarchised” (Boulter 13), polyphonic, amoral multiverse, in which the repellent, the object is shown through an indulgent, humorous narrative voice, as if Dr. Mabon was listening with his own “humorous commentary upon the world” (*WS* 503) while his patients reveal themselves as object.

In comparison with this multiverse of subjective visions the relative insignificance of the plot is probably indicated by its bathetic nature, so characteristic of Powys (Robinson, “Introduction,” v). The focus on characters and symbolic locations is well-reflected in the chapter titles: out of the fifteen all but one are nominal, containing mostly either simply a character's name (5) or a place-name (4), as if nothing actually *happened* in the novel. The plot lines seem to converge in Dog Cattistock and Mrs. Lily's wedding day, the day when the Jobber intends to kill Cattistock. The description of the wedding, however, is substituted on the one hand by the stories of Sylvanus and Marret's breaking up and of the man's symbolic castration, on the other hand by the meeting of the old gossips of Weymouth, who try to puzzle together the story of Hortensia Lily's jilting – an event of which none of them were eye-witnesses. It is only casually related that the Jobber could not carry out his murderous intentions because Cattistock, to run away from his bride in time, left his house at daybreak and the Jobber was simply too late – ironically, jilting Hortensia Lily maybe saved Cattistock's life. The day, which Cattistock has spent watching vivisection instead of consummating his desire for Captain Poxwell's younger daughter, culminates in the horribly shaken father's “object confession”<sup>12</sup> of (fictitious?) incest with his other daughter and Lizzy Chant's passing out allegedly at the sight of the late Mrs Cattistock's ghost. The two chapters covering the day of the cancelled wedding thus actually abound in moments of castration in the epistemological sense of the word (Weber 1111–1112): moments, when not exactly *nothing* happens, but something which fundamentally undermines the subject's position by questioning the possibility of believing his eyes and revealing the gap between the signifier

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philosophical conception of pluralism adopted from postmodernist theory for the purposes of analysis (7) actually excludes the notion of any dialogue (25–30). Probably for this reason he does not incorporate in his studies the Bakhtinian approach, though he makes a reference to his *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* by applying the term “‘double-voiced’ style” to Powys's text (34) without any sense of running into a self-contradiction. He also discards “carnival” as a relevant term in his frame of reference relying on Juliet Mitchell – but not on Bakhtin – who associates it with simple inversion instead of dehierarchisation (13–14). My reading, rather moving in the frame of reference of Bakhtinian poetics than postmodernist philosophy, obviously diverges from Boulter's at this point.

<sup>12</sup> I have borrowed the expression from Peter Brooks, who uses it to describe Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov's “whole mode [...] of both calculated and uncontrollable self-abasement” (Brooks, *Troubling Confessions* 73).

and the signified, thereby shaking forever his trust in signification. Sylvanus Cobbold experiences his symbolic castration as a moment of utter shame, after which he needs to redefine his identity (*WS* 418–419). Captain Poxwell's madness is the result of his inability to decide whether his daughter really had a child fathered by him – a story that is tentatively represented through Lucinda's consciousness as a malicious attack against her father's masculinity (*WS* 144–145): castration. The Jobber's inability to carry out the intended murder, talk of which has already come to be the narrative of his identity, results in his rapid physical and spiritual disintegration and calls for a fundamental redefinition of his identity which only becomes possible after his reunion with Perdita. And last but not least, the experience of the uncanny, exemplified by the appearance of Mrs. Cattistock's ghost, is actually built on the moment of castration (Weber 1111–1114). The anticlimactic structure of the plot opens up the epistemological and ontological uncertainties behind the Powysian multiverse built on ironic twists of fate, uncertainties, which are just as directly related to the problematic nature of the speaking subject enunciating his being from the ambiguous position of abjection. If the dynamics of plot are really structured by desire<sup>13</sup>, a plot structured around the ambiguous affects surrounding the abject – a simultaneous fascination and repulsion – in fact, can hardly be anything else but bathetic: repeating the constant “placing and displacing [of] abjection” by laughter (Kristeva 8) it does not really proceed, but rather “strays” (Kristeva 8) in permanent fear of and constantly desiring the end of the journey, the abject.

In conclusion, in *Weymouth Sands* the fascination with the abject has proved to be a dominant shaping factor of the novel's extremely rich and complicated system of metaphors, its characters and themes, and its plot. It is not only Dr. Brush “embracing a vivisected, half-anaesthetized, snarling panther” (*WS* 448–449) who seems to be “in love with the abject”, but the whole text revolves around formulating sublimating discourses of the abject – the “artistic” sublimating discourse realised in the narrative of *Weymouth Sands* probably being the most successful one of them. Rabelaisianism and carnivalesque laughter – with or without the optimism both Bakhtin and Powys attach to them in their non-belletristic works – are unalienable elements in either the philosophical solutions or the narratological approach to the problem. Consequently, its representation in *Weymouth Sands*, though it ambitiously includes epistemological and ontological aspects sometimes beyond Powys's potentials, is both free from the sometimes didactic one-

<sup>13</sup> Cf. the chapter “Narrative Desire” in Peter Brooks' *Reading for the Plot* (37–61).

sidedness of Powys's critical essays, and is at least far from being tragic. Janina Nordius points out the "divided response" to *Weymouth Sands* in this respect: "While some critics are anxious to state that they find this a predominantly 'happy' book [among them Wilson Knight (47)], others, on the contrary, find it permeated with a sense of loss and failure" (105). Its ambiguities, however, can be easily linked with the fascination with the abject dominating the themes of the novel and Powys's bias for a Rabelaisian, carnivalesque approach to literature – and life.

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**“(T)he (Devil) who dwells in flaming fire” –  
Blake’s Apocalyptic Irony in *The Marriage of  
Heaven and Hell***

Éva Antal

*All Genius varies Thus.  
Devils are various.  
Angels are all alike.  
(Blake)*

*The mind is its own place, and in itself  
Can make a Heav’n of Hell, a Hell of Heav’n.  
(Milton, *Paradise Lost* I. 254–5)*

The title of my paper comes from Blake’s prophecy, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790–1793), and it refers to a ‘corrected’ mistake in the text. According to Geoffrey Keynes, Blake changed the expression as in its own context he had “found it redundant to name him again, the description, ‘he who dwells in flaming fire’, being all that was needed” (Keynes xxii). What’s more – as Keynes goes on - (t)his (whose?) error could easily be corrected on the copperplate by deleting the letter ‘t’ of the article, ‘the’, and the word, ‘Devil’. And later the gap is “filled with a flame touched with gold” (Ibid). Closely regarding the expression, with this deletion Blake eliminated half of this striking alliteration-complex destroying the sounds of ‘the devil who dwells’ while leaving (him) ‘in flaming fire’ (see Fig. 1). Otherwise, due to this alteration His/his living-space is emphatically damned to be fire and now the expression can be compared with the Biblical phrase when the Lord, our God, is named “consuming fire” (Deuteronomy 4:24 and Hebrews 12:29).

Actually, the broader context of the expression gives one of the most complicated argumentation in the ironical-satirical work as it contrasts Blake’s ideas on the Devil and Christ with the Miltonic conception – more exactly, with Blake’s interpretation on the Miltonic conception – of Satan

and the Son (Messiah). In these short paragraphs the points of view are suddenly shifted producing such difficult sentences as the one containing our expression (lines 3-6 on Plate 6) and the one before (starting at the bottom of Plate 5 and going on in the first two lines on the next Plate):

It indeed *appear'd to Reason* as if Desire was cast out; but the Devil's account is, that the Messiah fell, & formed a heaven of what he stole from the Abyss.

This is shewn in the Gospel, where he prays to the Father to send the comforter, or Desire, that *Reason may have Ideas to build on*; the Jehovah of the Bible being no other than [the Devil *del.*] he who dwells in flaming fire. (Blake 150, afterwards MHH. Italics are mine)

I cannot promise that by the end of my paper the Blakean-Miltonic conception can be totally understood but at least we can learn more about him 'dwelling in flaming fire' – *toning* with the Blakean irony. I suppose that being the only and quite spectacular correction in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell it reveals* (cf. *apokalupsis*) the truth of the tone of the work, the artist's way of thinking and also of his working process. This correction can be regarded as a visible – or, being engraved, a tactile - expression of Blake's irony, an ironic undercut *expressis verbis*. The present paper is concerned with the possible interpretations of the ironical-satirical context of the apocalyptic work and, while paying attention to the figures of the text, it will basically focus on three facets of the tone – which I call the apocalyptic, the ironic and the satirical.

### Apocalypse Here and Now

Derrida thematises the problem of the textual complexity of the apocalyptic tone relying on the original meaning of the Greek word *apokalupsis* as "disclosure, uncovering, unveiling" (Derrida 119).<sup>1</sup> Consequently, he basically tries to reveal the meaning, the truth of the tone, accepting the definition of the Greek *tonos* (viz. 'pitch', 'tension') as "first signified the tight ligament, cord, rope when it is woven or braided, cable, strap – briefly, the privileged figure of everything to strict-ure" (127). Moving away from the obvious musical associations of strict tonality, Derrida claims that the analysis of the tone in a writing should be done "in terms of contents, manners of speaking, connotations, rhetorical staging, and pose taken in

<sup>1</sup> Although Derrida's quoted essay "On a Newly Arisen Apocalyptic Tone in Philosophy" is supposed to be a "transformative critique" of Kant's enlightened writing on tone (see "On a Newly Arisen Superior Tone in Philosophy"), he deals with the question of tone and apocalypse in general and his ideas greatly influenced my analysis.

semantic, pragmatic, scenographic terms” (127). In the complex *truth-revealing* tone, the writer makes the voice of the other (in us) audible – and in Blake’s case also visible –, which inevitably results in *delirium*, that is derangement, or rather out-of-tune-ness (*désaccordement*) (132).

Although the Blakean vision operates with a disturbing multiplicity of voices – namely, Rintrah, the Devil, the *I* persona, Ezekiel, Isaiah, the Angel, and the illustrator – the first striking impression is the assured clear-sightedness which characterises all of them. On the one hand, while an apocalyptic writing always keeps some mystery in the core, the clear tone desired for revelation deconstructs the speculative and visionary discourse itself (Derrida 148). Edward J. Ahearn in his *Visionary Fictions* also calls the attention to the rhetorical confidence of such writings displayed “to make us experience what we think to be impossible” (11). On the other hand, this polytonality and the sudden change of tone seems to *reveal* “the disorder or the delirium of destination” (Derrida 150). In an apocalyptic discourse the destination, the end is (its) truth itself, and the text becomes – and actually every text is always already – apocalyptic:

And the genre of writings called ‘apocalyptic’ in the strict sense, then, would be only an example, an *exemplary* revelation of this transcendental structure. In that case, if the apocalypse reveals, it is first of all the revelation of the apocalypse, the self-presentation of the apocalyptic structure of language, of writing, of the experience of presence, in other words, of the text or the mark in general: *that is, of the divisible envoi for which there is no self-presentation nor assured destination.* (Derrida 157, italics in the original)

In his essay Derrida mainly discusses the characteristics of the ‘apocalyptic discourse’, not dealing with the problems of the genre, and he refers to such a work as a conservative and apocryphally coded mixed form of writing (159). He also claims that “among the numerous traits characterising an apocalyptic type of writing, let us provisionally isolate prediction and eschatological preaching, the fact of telling, foretelling, or preaching the end, the extreme limit, the imminence of the last” (144). Tracing the sources of apocalyptic literature, attention is paid to its links with eschatology, millenium and with a possible holy utopia (Paley 3), or the utopian myths of the lost Golden Age, Atlantis; moreover, with some gnostic, hermetic or esoteric ideas (Ahearn 2–7). Certainly, the prototype – and also the namegiver – of the genre is John’s Book of Revelation, but in the New Testament other descriptions of the so-called little apocalypse of Matthew, Peter, Daniel and Isaiah should also be mentioned (Paley 8).

In his book, *Apocalypse and Millenium in English Romantic Poetry*, Paley collects and analyses the possible apocalyptic writings in English

literature elaborating on their political, scientific and social connections. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the radical thinkers of the age were greatly influenced by the ideas of the Swedish visionary, Emanuel Swedenborg, and joined the Swedenborgian New Jerusalem Church. The Church was “a gathering-ground for a miscellany of seekers after mystic experiences” from Behmenists and Rosicrucians, through masons to enthusiasts for mesmerism and magnetism (Thompson 135). Blake and his wife were sympathisers of the New Church in 1790 when he started to compose *The Marriage* and Swedenborg’s figure, or rather ‘Swedenborgianism’, is presented in the work (on Plates 3 and 21–22). Blake did not only read but also annotated the English translations of Swedenborg’s apocalyptic and millennial prophecies titled “Wisdom of Angels concerning Divine Love and Divine Wisdom”, “The Wisdom of Angels concerning Divine Providence” and “Heaven and Hell” (Blake 89–96, 131–133 and 929), in which the mystic published his conversations with angels. In his remarks Blake welcomed the visionary’s expressive language and his way of differentiating between man’s natural, or rational understanding and spiritual understanding, or wisdom, which were originally joined by Love, or the Will (Blake 93–95).

As it is recorded, in 1790 the master first taught the doctrine of concubinage, namely that the Swedenborgian married man can engage in adulterous relationships in case of the wife’s disease, insanity, or difference of faith (Paley 36).<sup>2</sup> It cannot exactly be said that Blake rejected the idea of free love and sexual liberation but in his eyes such disputable doctrines made Swedenborg the figure “barring the way to the millennium by blocking the improvement of sensual enjoyment” (Paley 37). As Foster Damon summarises, Blake was inspired by his “divine teacher” but he found that “Swedenborg’s greatest error lay in his not understanding the real nature of ‘evil’, and therefore accepting conventional morality”.<sup>3</sup> Thus, opposed to Swedenborg’s *Heaven and Hell* prophesying the start of the New Heaven in 1757, Blake in his *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, due to his birth in the same year and now reaching the age of thirty-three, claims that new Hell has arrived pronouncing Swedenborg’s heaven to be his own hell (see Plate 3).

After this shockingly and negatively positive – let us say, ironic - introduction it becomes obvious that Blake represents the true (Christian) wisdom contrasted with the “old falshoods” (MHH 157) of Swedenborg’s

<sup>2</sup> See also Thompson about the doctrine in the chapter titled “The New Jerusalem Church” (129–145).

<sup>3</sup> Damon 392–394. Damon’s conclusion is also not without irony. In *The Marriage* with Blake’s re-interpretation of good and evil, as he says, “the dreadful dichotomy of official Christianity, which Swedenborg had accepted, was healed; the universe was one again; and a new period of human thought was inaugurated” (394).

New Church. Here referring to the apocalyptic prophecy of Isaiah about the fall of Babylon (Isaiah: 34–35), Blake – like John in ‘his’ Book of Revelation – reverses the pattern of the prophecy as *The Marriage* starts with the announcement of Swedenborg’s false new heaven and ends with the portrayal of Nebuchadnezzar displaying the logical consequence of false reasoning (Wittreich 192–193). The chosen ironic title of the work criticises not only Swedenborg’s inability of vision but also attacks his ideas on marriage as Blake’s *Marriage* displays a sexually active spiritual union. Moreover, he does it engraving and illustrating his work on his own, that is, protesting against the ‘mass produced’, printed doctrines of Swedenborgianism by refusing to have his work printed (Paley 34, Ahearn 13).

In the work the apocalyptic tone is introduced by Rintrah’s voice who “roars & shakes his fires in the burden’d air” (MHH 148). The very first voice introduces his apocalyptic vision of the topsy-turvy world where the true prophet, “the just man rages in the wilds” while the false prophet as “the sneaking serpent walks in mild humility” (Wittreich 194). “The Argument” can be taken as “a miniature emblem of human history” (Ahearn 27) showing up the continuous fight between the villain and the just; that is, right in the introduction the primary rhetorical force of the work is displayed in the dialectic of opposites. Here the villain as a mild Angel usurps the just man’s place, *so*,<sup>4</sup> Rintrah, “the wrathful spirit of prophecy” is forced to become the Devil (Bloom 75). Thus, the narrator uncovers the truth (of apocalypse) in an ironic mock-argument referring to the danger of reasoning, which also becomes a characteristic feature of *The Marriage*.

Consequently, the first voice after introducing the irony of mock-reasoning logically goes on heralding the ironic Eternal Hell instead of the promised new heaven on plate 3, where Swedenborg is the ‘mild villainous’ Angel and the speaker – together with Isaiah – takes the role of the ‘devilish’ just man. In his *Angel of Apocalypse*, Wittreich, who reads the work as a true prophecy and the formation of the prophetic character, claims that the real dialectic of *The Marriage* can be found “in the antagonism Blake establishes between it and its prospective audience” (195). It is true that the text wants to inspire its readers and wants their active response – whether its writer is a prophet or not. The dialectic of the text is “figured by Rintrah and the *I* persona, who identifies so closely with the voice of the Devil” (Wittreich

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<sup>4</sup> Consequently and obviously, but this time it is expressed without using the famous Blakean ‘so’, which mocks (false) reasoning in other places, for example, in the “Memorable Fancies” of *The Marriage*, or in his *Songs*.

196); that is, in “The Argument” besides the roaring true prophet, the devilish *I* persona is introduced – ‘he who dwells’ in irony.

### The Infernal Ironist

The introduction of the prophetic voice opens up its whirlwind and its “overlordly tone detones” (Derrida 133). As Wittreich remarks: “The voice of indignation (Rintrah’s voice) is a complement, a prologue, to the voice of the Devil, *critical* of Milton, and to the *I* persona, *derisive* of Swedenborg” (Wittreich 198, italics are mine). However, the first person singular speaker is really close to the Devil in his ideas, the two voices have different butts: the Devil’s voice ironises Milton while the *I* persona satirises Swedenborg (Wittreich 200) – and later the Devil’s voice. Opposed to this, according to Bloom, the overwhelming tone of *The Marriage* is ‘devilishly’ ironic as right from the very beginning, the Devil’s voice can be heard (78–79). Although the Devil’s voice is put in the centre, not much is known about his figure. In the work the names of the Devil and Satan are used together and regarded as synonymous on plate 5 (cf. “call’d the Devil or Satan”), but they are not identified. The word devil comes from the Greek *diabolos* (indirect derivation) meaning ‘accuser’ or ‘slanderer’, while the word *satan* is of Hebrew origin meaning ‘adversary’ (Frye 65). In Blake’s later prophetic works instead of the word, devil (or devils), Satan is used to name the selfish “Evil One” (*Milton*) and he is also called the God of Men, Jehovah, who arrives with flaming fire.<sup>5</sup>

But in this early prophecy it is emphasised that the two words, Devil and Satan, with their quite close meaning both signify that they differ, criticise or rebel against something. As negative power they cannot exist in themselves: their contrary force is needed. For Blake the devils – often in plural – present a more universal force, a principle of creative energy, which is related not only to the soul/spirit but also to the body: “Energy is [...] from the Body; and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy” (MHH 149). It is usually understood that the Devil stands for bodily and sexual energy, or the id, while the Angel represents the reasonable soul, or the superego. But it provocatively also means that the devil stands for the union of the body and the soul; more exactly, questioning and criticising the usual categories, the Devil wants the reader to re-define these contraries. That is, the Devil, re-valuating the conventionally accepted assumptions, deconstructs the apparent contradictions and reveals “their primordial unity

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, in *Milton* Plate 14 line 30: “I in my Selfhood am that Satan: I am that Evil One!” and Plate 38 lines 50-51: “Satan heard, Coming in a cloud, with trumpets & flaming fire,/ Saying: ‘I am God the judge of all, the living & the dead’” (Blake 496 and 530).

of the mind” (Cooper 47). Consequently, opposed to the usual meaning of the body, for the visionary “it is a portion of Soul discern’d by the five senses, the chief inlets of Soul in this age” (MHH 149). And it is not by chance that the Devil is introduced as a great rhetorician using here the argumentative tone of his voice and relying on the reader’s common sense. As on Plate 3 it is stated:

Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence.  
From these contraries spring what the religious call Good & Evil. Good is the passive that obeys Reason. Evil is the active springing from Energy.  
Good is Heaven. Evil is Hell. (MHH 149)

Although here the opposition of good and evil is given religious denotation, their sign(ification) is not obvious. In his *Annotations to Lavater’s “Aphorisms on Man”* Blake remarks on aphorism 409 that “Active Evil is better than Passive Good” (Blake 77). On the basis of the Blakean conception, hypothetically, the angelic restraining minus can be corrected by the devilish revolutionary minus – so, the double negation results in positivity.

But such a ‘reason-able’ reading of the Devil’s logic shows the Angel’s viewpoint and whereas the Devil’s voice is fully developed through his own statements, his antinomian proverbs and the *I* persona having been converted to his party, the Angel who stands for the reader’s ideas is less described. Blake putting on the Devil’s mask, aims at the devaluation of reason, where the reader is offered to “apprehend truth discursively, *reasonably*, like the Angel”, or “intuitively, *energetically*, like the Devil” (Wittreich 206, italics in the original). Actually, heaven vs. hell and angels vs. devils only exist separately from the angelic point of view. Let me mention a great example of the ‘black or white’ typed angelic thinking. In the fourth ‘apocalyptic’ “Memorable Fancy” the angel wants to show Blake his “eternal lot” saying that it is “between the black & white spiders” (MHH 156). It can refer to Blake’s and the Devil’s obsession with contraries and to the fact that the ‘normal’ way of thinking in black or white terms can obstruct the understanding of the work. This fancy ends in quite a postmodern fashion stating that all of us (readers, critics, angels or devils) impose upon each other our own ‘phantasy’ “owing to our metaphysics” (MHH 156–7). But the devils at least can reflect on it: they represent an intellectually higher level as they are able to see things in greater contexts and in more universal connections – due to their ironic ability of shifting points of view. As Derrida says about the apocalyptic tone, it “leaps and rises when the voice of the oracle, uncovering your ear, jumbling, covering, or parasitizing the voice



of reason equally speaking in each and using the same language with everyone, takes you aside, speaks to you in a private code, and whispers secrets to you” (Derrida 132). Nevertheless, I would like to emphasise that in *The Marriage* the devilish needs the angelic so as to function, and the truth is being formed in their (ironic) ‘mental fight’.

In the work, as Wittreich points out, the devilish-angelic contraries are historically represented by Milton, the true, and Swedenborg, the false prophet. Accordingly, in the argumentation the work operates with a double strategy in order “to expose the false prophets, eliminating the negation they represent; and to accomplish through prophecy the struggle of contraries by which the organs of perception are cleansed and the apocalypse finally achieved” (Wittreich 199). We should admit that Blake’s work was greatly influenced and liberated by Milton’s radical ideas. Searching for Miltonic sources, in his “The Reason of Church-Government” we can come across the idea of contraries, marriage and excess – the latter is one of the main topics in the “Proverbs of Hell” (Wittreich 206, Bloom 83). On the whole, the direction of Milton’s and Swedenborg’s thinking and *oeuvre* can be contrasted since in his writings Milton moved away from orthodoxy whereas Swedenborg starting from a radical view, reached orthodoxy (Wittreich 201). More exactly, referring to Bloom’s remark, in *The Marriage* Swedenborg is shown as the ex-prophet, a priest, but he originally was a reasoner (a scientist) who could become a visionary and sect-founder (Bloom 70); that is, in his career Swedenborg displays the rise and the fall of the visionary.

While the *I* persona mainly mocks Swedenborg’s ideas, the Devil ironises Milton as Blake puts his Milton-criticism into the Devil’s mouth. On the one hand, the Devil’s voice criticises *Paradise Lost* aesthetically, on the other hand, it ironically attacks his theology (Wittreich 211, Bloom 80). In *The Marriage* the Miltonic Satan, the unironic “hero of Romantic rebellion” (Rawson 112), is put in the centre and ironised by/in Blake’s Devil. But, as Wittreich calls the attention, the Devil being a ‘partisan spokesman’ “who never exhibits the same largeness of mind as the figure with whom he is identified [viz. Blake’s *I* persona, Blake, or Milton’s Satan, or Milton]”, misreads Milton (215). Likewise, the Devil’s idea that in Milton “the Father is Destiny, the Son a Ration [cf. Reason] of the five senses, & the Holy-ghost Vacuum” (MHH 150) is true only in an ironic sense. We cannot forget that besides criticising Milton, the Devil’s main task is to ironise reasoning by expressing distorted views and by the sudden changing of perspectives. The illustration of Plate 5 depicts a naked male figure and his horse falling into the flames of fire but turning the page upside down, as the Devil wants us to see the world, the figure is seen to be in exaltation with his stretched

arms (Keynes xxi). The ironic shifting of viewpoints culminates in the complicated sentence already quoted in my introduction, where the Devil’s name is deleted as in the work *his name* equals the evasive tone itself. Opening up the vortex of contraries, *he* would rather let the reader find out that the devilish Jehovah of imagination, or the Biblical creator “dwells in flaming fire” (MHH 150, Bloom 81). Finally, the Devil, or the ‘converted’ *I* persona in his ironic awareness notes on Plate 5 that

The *reason* Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels & God, and at *liberty* when of Devils & Hell, is because he was a *true* Poet and of the Devil’s party without knowing it. (MHH 150. Italics are mine)

In this statement we should pay attention to the opening word of ‘reason’ associated with the angelic principle which is opposed to the energy of the devilish irony expressed here; due to the ironic tone, reason is put in antinomy with freedom and truth in the rhetoric.<sup>6</sup>

On Plate 16 another “portion of being” and its (ironic) opposite is revealed: the Prolific and the Devouring. According to Bloom, “if ever Blake speaks straight, forgoing all irony, in *The Marriage*, it is here” (90). I think that without using the ironic tone, the statement - “to the devourer it *seems* as if the producer was in chains; but it is *not so*, he only takes portions of existence and *fancies* that the whole” (MHH 155, italics are mine) - cannot be uttered. More exactly, only from an evasive (betwixt and between) viewpoint and in an atonal/atoned voice can such a statement be uttered. These two classes – the imaginative, creative artists and the Reasoners, the ones of limited knowledge – should be enemies because on the basis of the main principle, their opposition and fight means the essence of human existence. As David Erdman sees: “Blake rejects [Swedenborg’s] ‘spiritual equilibrium’ between good and evil for a theory of spiralling ‘Contraries’ that will account for progress” (Erdman 178). Though the interaction of contraries regarded eternal, their unique ‘union’, their marriage – promised and illustrated in the work - can be achieved.

The interaction is figured by the dynamic vortex as in Blake’s visions it symbolises the essence of imaginative activity and “serves as an image of the gateway into a new level of perception” – quoting Professor Mitchell (73). Here this whirlwind is created by the devil and his attribute, his ironic

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<sup>6</sup> Wittreich remarks that the expression of ‘the devil’s party’ was used to signify the royalists in the Civil War and later they used it to refer to the revolutionaries, while the diabolical party meant the Whigs. “When Blake’s Devil adopts this vocabulary and introduces it into his critique of Milton, he is, in effect, transforming a rhetoric of abuse into a rhetoric of praise” (Wittreich 214).

attitude – his ‘flaming fire’. In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* fire is the main, the first principle: it is clearly associated with (devilish) desire, consummation and sexuality as “the word ‘consummation’ [...] refers both to the burning world and the sacred marriage” (Frye 196).<sup>7</sup> It is not only the means of the ‘devouring’ purification (apocalypse) and prohibition (the cherub’s flaming sword), but also of the ‘prolific’ creation and artistic imagination (see Plate 14). Moreover, fire symbolises inspiration as Northrop Frye says “imagination cannot be consumed by fire, for it is fire” (Frye 196). In the first “Memorable Fancy” a mighty devil writes the infernal “Proverbs of Hell” using “corroding fires” (MHH, 150) and later the ‘devilish artist’ calls his own working method infernal:

[...] I shall do by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid. (MHH 154)

Practically, with his ‘corrosive method’ Blake invented a new technique of engraving which Anthony Blunt describes as below: “Blake first took an ordinary copper etching plate. On this he drew the outlines of his decorative design in a varnish resistant to acid. The effect of this was that, when the plate was immersed in the acid, the unprotected parts were bitten away, leaving the parts painted out in a varnish in relief. This is roughly an inverted form of the ordinary process of etching, or a transference of the process of wood engraving to a copper plate” (Blunt 128). That is, this process does not only imply the use of the corrosive and purifying acid bath but also the working out of the design backwards while the text has to be written in black surrounded by a thin white line in the overall darkness of the space. It can be said that in this way Blake made darkness visible as the process of engraving produces such a visual paradox. It is another ironic game with the contrary-complementary points of view in our perception, meaning another challenge for our senses. As the apocalyptic and Platonic conclusion states on Plate 14:

If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.

For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro’ narrow chinks of his cavern. (MHH 154)

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<sup>7</sup> Frye also emphasises that the marriage of heaven and hell is given by “the union of heat and light” because heaven is taken as the eternal world of golden light, while hell is characterised by the eternal heat of passion or desire. Actually, Blake - quoting Henry Summerfield – borrows “the opposition between the Fire of the Father and the Light of the Son” from Jakob Boehme and also under Boehme’s influence he regards fire as the First Principle (70).

Blake thinks that the divine (or diabolical) imagination is locked in the Platonic cave of the human skull or body which is lit by the sensory organs: nostrils, ears, eyes, tongue, and skin, or genitals. The purifying and energetic flames of imagination used by Blake, metaphorically and literally, can free our perception and open the way towards infinity.<sup>8</sup> In *The Marriage*, the other prophetic figures, Isaiah and Ezekiel, also want to raise men into “a perception of the infinite” with their strange ‘corroding’ behaviour (MHH 154). Similarly, Blake tries to show the power of the “Poetic Genius” in his “fire of intellect and art, which must begin ‘by an improvement of sensual enjoyment’” (Bloom 88). According to Wittreich, “the true prophets must employ the devices of satire and irony” (207) – that is, following the devilish ironic logic, they can pretend to be false prophets. I would rather accept the Bloomian infernal, or poetic meaning of the work that the creative Devil is the artist Blake’s ironic mask and “the corroding fires refer metaphorically both to his engraving technique and the satiric function of the *Marriage*” (Bloom 83).

### The Acid Test of Satire

The Blakean ‘corrosive method’ with the Devil’s flaming fire as a metaphor works on another level referring to the “deeply acid bitten” tone of the work. As Northrop Frye remarks, “[s]atire is an acid that corrodes everything it touches” and he compares *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* to the great English satirical works created by Swift, Fielding, Sterne or the painter, Hogarth, calling the work “the epilogue to the golden age of English satire” (200–201). In his apocalyptic vision the Blakean *I* persona, as a great satirist, uses the Devil’s infernal irony. Moreover, the “visionary satirist” (Bloom 88) does not only verbalise and visualise the divine visions with the use of ‘hell’s fire’ but also promises the Bible of Hell based on its reading in the “diabolical sense” (MHH 158).

In the starting point of his analysis, Wittreich states that a critic should decide whether to regard *The Marriage* as a satire or a prophecy and he obviously reads it as a ‘true’ prophecy showing the formation of the prophetic character (189), while, in a lengthy endnote, he mentions other critics – mainly, Bloom and Frye – who read it as a Menippean satire (306–307). However, in the ending he admits that the work “like Milton’s pamphlet [cf. “The Reason of Church-Government”], has all the hallmarks

<sup>8</sup> It is remarkable that Blake frequently and deliberately uses the images of the human senses – e.g. eye-globes, vaults of nostrils, S-line of the tongue appear in his paintings, drawings and texts -, while the mysterious fifth sense of touch remains closely related to sexuality and imagination in his vision.

of reason and order, concepts reinforced by the theme of satire that pervades the work and by the strict organization evident on its surface. Its initial argument is developed by the voice of the Devil, by the proverbs of hell, and by the amplifications of each of the memorable fancies” (207). It shows that reading the work, Wittreich himself has realised that though the work *is* a prophecy, it cannot help using the ironic corrosives of satire. It rather means that while ironising logic and reasoning, Blake overcomes satire and displays its inadequacy. In my reading *The Marriage* is a satirical work where the *I* persona, similarly to Blake in his marginalia, uses not only the ironic tone of the Devil but also the satirical and doctrinal tone of opposition (Erdman 177).

The form of the work, following the structure of a prophecy and revelation with intertextual commentaries on Swedenborg’s *Heaven and Hell*, Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and Biblical prophets’, Isaiah’s and Ezekiel’s vision, shows up the characteristic feature of the Menippean satire being a mixture of forms, that is, it is ‘mixed’ or ‘medley’ – *satura* (Guilhamet 5, Relihan 13). Nevertheless, this vague definition of the Menippean, or Lucilian (or Varronian) satire is also questionable and the usual discussions of Bakhtin’s not necessarily satiric “menippia” or Frye’s “anatomy” are rather misleading in this sense (Griffin 32 and Relihan 4–5). For instance, in his *Satire and the Transformation of Genre*, Guilhamet does not regard this kind of satire as a form at all claiming that in a Menippean satire “the rhetorical structure or logical sequence of a satiric speech or discourse is excessively disrupted by fictive techniques, [...] Such techniques include irony, genre mixing, the use of a persona. An abundance of such strategies causes a malformation or deformation of the text” (12). Following this definition which is not without any reminiscent of Frye’s and Bakhtin’s ideas, Blake’s *Marriage* can definitely be read as a satire – definitely, but not convincingly.

In *Ancient Menippean Satire* Relihan, quoting Frye’s famous statement – namely, “the Menippean satire presents us with a vision of the world in terms of a single intellectual pattern” –, makes his own quite similar definition that “it seems that the [Bakhtinian] menippea can be viewed as an intellectual attitude adopted toward the value of truth and the possibility of meaning, a particular world view, that may show up in a number of different genres” (6).<sup>9</sup> Besides having the most important features of the Menippean

<sup>9</sup> Then he summarises the 14 features of the Bakhtinian menippea which – with the exception of the elements of a social utopia – are present in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. That is, regarding the Menippean features of the work, there is (1) the satirical *I* persona using exaggerated humour; (2) “freedom of plot”; (3) “extraordinary situations” with “journeys to heaven and hell” and apocalyptic visions in the “Memorable Fancies”; (4) “slum naturalism”

satire, *The Marriage* also displays the essence of generic satire: the freedom of individual fantasy in presenting a universal world view in mixed forms, tones and split personality. Relihan points out that “the genre is primarily a parody of philosophical thought and forms of writing, a parody of the habits of civilised discourse in general, and that it ultimately turns into the parody of the author who has dared to write in such an unorthodox way” (Relihan 10). Reading *The Marriage*, we can feel that Blake is exactly such an author who, in his satire, satirises reasoning and “opposes the word-centered view of the universe” and “denies the possibility of expressing the truth in words” (Relihan 11) – doing it not only in words, but also in pictures. According to Relihan, Menippean satire is a parody of traditional satire having ironic overtones and its basic features are: a mixture of disparate elements, fantastic settings of a topsy-turvy world, intertextuality, and a “self-parodying author/narrator” lacking a consistent authorial point of view (17–24). Blake’s *Marriage* with its central idea of the mixed contraries, puzzling commentaries on other texts and its own visions, with the figure of the ironic Devil, and its ‘devilish’ *I* persona is satirical. Thus, referring to Blake’s work, the name, *satura*, is its appropriate/proper label, of which “essence is the shocking juxtapositions of irreconcilable opposites” and in which “literary impropriety, self-parody, and the mockery of standards of judgment are all intertwined” (Relihan 15).

Following Relihan’s ideas, the Blakean Menippean satire parodies other genres, and literature making a joke on authorship, unity, genre, and style; it is an antigenre, or a burlesque, a burlesque of literature (34). Relihan also emphasises that in the work “fantasy serves not only to undermine other forms of cultural and literary authority, but also to undermine the importance of the particular Menippean satire itself” (Relihan 22). Moreover, what he adds, is particularly true with regards to *The Marriage*:

It is too modern to say that Menippean satire champions the eternal search for truth by a refusal to be limited by *straitjacket of reason* and propriety, though certainly the genre is refreshing for its indulgence in fantasy [...]. Menippean satire rises through time to philosophical formulations of the

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mixed with the elevated, or mystical elements especially in the fourth “Memorable Fancy” in the description of the seven houses of monkeys; (5) “ultimate questions” of good and evil and philosophical universalism; (6) three levelled structure in the division of hell – earth – heaven; (7) “experimental fantasticality” with flying and burning figures; (8) “representation of abnormal psychic states” exemplified with the duplicity of the Devil’s and the narrator’s split voice; (9) “violations of the established norms of behavior”, for instance, by the prophets, or the Devil calling Christ a murderer; (10) “love of sharp and oxymoronic contrast and abrupt transitions”, e.g. Angel vs. Devil, falling vs. rising; (11) a mixture of genres and forms; and (12) “a mixture of styles and tones” (quoting Bakhtin in Relihan 6–7).

inadequacy of human knowledge and the existence of a reality that *transcends reason* [...]. (Relihan 29, italics are mine)

Regarding the tone, Griffin argues that the Menippean satirists from Lucian to Blake “sustain complex ironies” (54). He mentions the early Blakean mock-symposium *An Island in the Moon* and analyses *The Marriage* as a Menippean satire which works largely by means of provocative paradox and wit (57). He sees that “[t]he satire in Blake’s *Marriage* lies primarily in its continuous irony [...]. If we consider the rhetoric of provocation and paradox, then Blake stands in a long line of satirists – from Lucian through Erasmus, Fontenelle, Swift, and others – whose satire works not by drawing a clear line between ‘Good’ and ‘Evil’ but by teasing readers with the play of ‘contraries’” (Griffin 59–60). Griffin discusses the problem of satiric irony which is unstable and does not operate as a binary switch with which the reader can simply reconstruct the author’s meaning (65). In a satiric complexity the degree of irony should also be taken into consideration and the danger that the irony of the satiric genius can run away with the satirist himself.

While the Devil’s irony seems to be controlled - as he is still a reasoner though a false one – the *I* persona is likely to be taken away by his irony. In the last “Memorable Fancy”, in the description of the parallel visions of the orthodox Angel and the heretic, with the abundance of figures the same story is told from two opposite viewpoints – with understanding shamefully “imposed upon” each other (MHH 157). First, the Angel shows his fantasy about eternity with the symbols of Christ’s life (the stable, the church, the vault), of the institutionalised Church (mill, cave), and finally with the apocalyptic pictures of the black tempest, the fiery cataract of blood and Leviathan in the black sea (Summerfield 382–3). Afterwards the *I* persona displays ‘his’ visionary story of Christianity flying with the Angel towards the Sun reversing Satan’s journey through chaos described in *Paradise Lost*. Then descending into the abyss of the Bible, they reach the seven houses of the Church where monkeys live quarelling, copulating and devouring each other “by plucking off first one limb and then the another, till the body was left a helpless trunk; [...] one savourily picking the flesh off his own tail” (MHH 157). In this section, as Bloom remarks: “Swift himself could not have done better here, in the repulsive projection of the incestuous warfare of rival doctrines, ground together in the reductive mill of scholastic priestcraft” (93). I think, toning with his most disgusting and animalistic criticism of the Church, Blake uses such a tonality that recalls Swift’s sarcasm.

In his analysis of the Swiftian irony, Leavis hints at the possible parallelism or connection between Swift’s and Blake’s satirical style stating

in his promising final sentence that “we shall not find Swift remarkable for intelligence if we think of Blake” (29). Comparing Swift’s and Blake’s satires, I can start with Bloom’s ironic remark, namely, in *The Marriage* Blake is like Swift as their satires survived its victims (71). But to give a serious *tone*, it is not by chance that the Swiftian irony is called negative, intellectual and instrumental (Leavis 16) as it is based on ‘cold’/angelic rationality. Contrasted with Blake, Swift could not escape from the ‘mind-forged manacles’ though in his great satires (in Gulliver’s voyages to Laputa and to the land of the clever horses) he was capable of highlighting the limits of reason. At his best his imagination starts with a parody and “takes *fire* from *mad* elaborations of metaphor” (Traugott 115, italics are mine) liberating himself from Augustan decorum. Traugott also remarks that Swift, unlike the visionary Blake, understood that “God and the devil are ordinarily reversed by the pretense of reason” (109). Whereas Blake’s works especially display a harsh criticism of reason written against Locke’s rationalist sensualism which “mock[s] Inspiration & Vision” (Damon 245).

However, on the basis of the strongly attacking tone and the satirical-ironical context, some parallels can be found between *The Marriage* and the Swiftian tone used in his prose writings, for example, in the one discussing religious problems titled “An Argument Against the Abolishing of Christianity” (1708). In this essay the false persona suggests that true Christianity should be annihilated while ‘nominal’ (false) Christianity should be maintained. With the usage of ironic betrayal and the emphasis of the false opinion it is revealed that the very opposite is meant, namely, only the ‘nominal’ and superficial religious ‘belief’ should be abolished, while true Christianity must definitely be defended. In Swift’s satire complex irony is used with a reformative intention and the tone itself is turned into a weapon.

In the opening paragraph it is stated: “I am very sensible what a Weakness and Presumption it is, to *reason against* the general Humour and Disposition of the World. [...] In like Manner, and for the very same Reasons, it may perhaps be neither safe nor prudent to *argue against* the Abolishing of Christianity, [...]” (Swift 225, italics are mine). Then the persona questions the necessary abolishing of Christianity, which sounds paradoxical “even for [the] wise and paradoxical Age” (226). From the beginning – from the long ironic title, “An Argument to prove, That the Abolishing of Christianity in England, May, as Things now Stand, be attended with some Inconveniencies, and perhaps, not produce those many good Effects proposed thereby” - the reader is trapped into following the logical though false reasoning of the work so as to realise that the displayed opinion of the persona is negatively emphasised; that is, its opposite is meant.



On the one hand, due to the ironic intensity aimed at the defence, quoting F. R. Leavis's expression, "the positive itself appears only negatively" (Leavis 17). Bullitt says about the technique based on enthymemes: "Swift frequently tended, then, to adopt indirect refutation as the most persuasive form of demonstrating the logical absurdity of his opponents. Instead of refuting directly the arguments of an antagonist, Swift's enthymemes were constructed in such a way as to *display* them, if possible, as ridiculous, and in the process of doing so, of course, to imply the affirmation of his own opposed premises. [...] It is only a short step from this method of introducing his arguments to that adopting those arguments as his own – in short, to using *irony*, as the vehicle for his refutative enthymeme" (96, italics in the original). One of the best examples is when the persona, realising that the nominal Christian will lose their truly Christian allies, suggests that they should "trust to an Alliance with the Turk", but he admits that the Turk, opposed to the nominal Christians, "believe a God" (237).

On the other hand, the persona's argumentation is shockingly logical operating with abstract rationality and the "position is defended ironically by a logic so patently false that we are almost laughed into agreement with Swift" (Bullitt 98). I think that similarly to Swift's conception it could also have been Blake's mission to lead men in such an indirect way *beyond reason* towards the experience of true Christianity – even if he had to use the destroying fire of irony in his satire. This central idea is not only expressed in the Devil's ironic statement and the proverbs, but also in the *I* persona's Swedenborg-critique. On Plate 21 the master is mentioned together with the Angels who "have the vanity to speak of themselves as the only wise; this they do with confident insolence sprouting from systematic reasoning" (MHH 157). In his satirical tone, the persona blames Swedenborg for only conversing with the religious Angels and "not with Devils who all hate religion" (Ibid) where religion – similarly, to Swift's attack – refers to the institution of the Church, nominal Christianity and the rational religion, Deism.

In his *Marriage* the rational 'either-or' typed point of view is attacked: if devils and angels separately exist in our world the persona deliberately acts for the devil's party. In this (ironic) sense he can be said to be the devil's advocate who puts not only the 'case of reason' but also the reasonable (Swiftian) satire to the acid test. As Relihan remarks, "the anatomy of folly can only be ironically performed" (30); that is, irony is used upon irony, or the technique of betrayal with a false persona. The ending is not satiric but ironic and can be taken as an imaginative poetic ending, not a reasonable one where the "fiery polemic uttered for its fire and

not its light” (Bloom 94). But after the promise of “The Bible of Hell” another shock awaits the reader: the warning of the ‘devilish’ illustrator who shows us the repressive and degenerate state of Nebuchadnezzar. That is, the final ‘word’ is uttered by the illustrator putting up the Devil’s/*his* complex ironic mask.

### The (An)ironic Vision

While the textual ending of *The Marriage* describes the Angel’s enlightened consummation, the last illustration on the same plate shows the biblical Nebuchadnezzar’s degenerated state which can be taken as “the ironic emblem of Reason *losing* his reason” (Erdman 194, italics in the original). In his essay “Irony and False Consciousness” Andrew Cooper emphasises the overwhelming ironic tonality of the work which he compares to the Romantic hovering of the Schlegelian irony. In his repetition of self-creation and self-destruction, due to his masks used in his works, the ironist is able to free himself from the limitations of self-consciousness (Cooper 37). Besides referring to the famous “doors of perception” as revolving doors, Cooper also claims that Blake’s irony is aimed at “[the] antinomian striving to transcend ‘the Body’ and identify the indeterminacy of rhetorical self-consciousness with the unshackled energies of a genuinely world-consuming apocalypse” (46).

Actually, regarding the different and intertwined voices of the work, the very first and very last voice – before and after Rinthrah, the *I* persona, the Devil and the Angel - is the voice of the illustrator.<sup>10</sup> From the starting plate of *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, from the title and its first ‘illumination’ of the title-page, the reader is contrasted with a Blakean twofold or more exactly ‘threefold vision’: the union of two contrary forces.<sup>11</sup> If we want to understand, or rather imagine its meaning, we should

<sup>10</sup> In his reading, Eaves introduces the central voice and character of God though he is mostly *deus absconditus*. Consequently, the missing or hidden centre is *displayed* in the multiplicity of voices as humanity, more exactly, human imagination which encloses Blake’s divinity (23).

<sup>11</sup> In Blake’s own mythology there is a place where the contraries are equally true and live in peace. This is the land of sexual harmony and dreams lighted by the Moon (the realm of the Subconscious) which Blake calls Beulah in his late prophecies, while it is named Innocence or the Vales of Har in the early works (e.g. in *The Book of Thel*). Its name means ‘married’ referring to the restored happy relationship, the reconciliation, between God and Palestine (See Damon 42–43). In his ‘cosmology’ Beulah is also the world of creative energy and poetic inspiration characterised by the imaginative ‘threefold vision’, where the contraries live side by side in harmony. See more about it in my paper “William Blake’s Visions of Vision,” in *Alternative Approaches to English—Speaking Cultures in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, ed. Séllei Nóra, Debrecen: Printing Press of KLTE, 1999, 206–215.

go beyond and accept the challenge of what the whirlwind of these apparent 'contraries' indicates. Having analysed the work, I should realise that even from the very beginning in the satirical-ironical context Blake acts as the devil's advocate, the *advocatus diaboli* representing a higher state of imaginative vision. If the reader can accept the illogical though imaginative marriage of good and evil, then (s)he can see the contraries already united – in its double negative, assertive way. We have an artist who works with 'flaming fire', what's more, uses its power in the creation of the "great synaesthesia" of his art. As Professor Mitchell sees, "Blake's pictorial style, like his poetic form and the total form of his composite art, is organised as a dramatic, dialectical interaction between contrary elements" (Mitchell 74). In his 'illuminated' works, in his artistic threefold vision, words and pictures – and the sculpture-like letters, motifs of the relief etchings – are composed to show the synaesthetic presentation of sensory elements, so as to open the dynamic vortex of imagination. In this sense his illustrated/illuminated prints do also function as windows, as sensory openings, and through his pictures the spectator's sensual enjoyment can be improved by "designing visual illusions which continually demand and imply [all] the other senses in their structures" (Mitchell 74).

I cannot agree with Erdman that the usage of the word 'marriage' in the title of the work – on the basis of Blake's aversion of this institution – can only be taken as a 'half-jest'. In Blake's poetic and prophetic works marriage has different meanings, from the burdensome bondage of loveless and forced marriages, through the happy sexual union, to the spiritual wedding between God and Man. According to Wittreich, "[i]f Milton thought that the marriage of truth would not occur until the Apocalypse, Blake thought the Apocalypse would not occur until such a marriage had been accomplished" (203). However, the argumentation of the work fails to show up the promised 'marriage' as the Devil's voice is fully developed through his utterances, proverbs and the *I* persona having been converted to his party, but the Angel's figure is less described. That is, the *text* of the Blakean *Marriage* presents the weak and unbalanced union between the fully described figure of the Devil and the flat reasoning character of the Angel – consequently, the true expression of marriage should be looked for in the illustrations.

The title of the prophecy – written to the experienced living in di-vision – clearly refers to the world of 'threefold vision' and sexual unity. In the work it is visualised in the titlepage, in its illustration and typography, and verbalised in the last "Memorable Fancy" (see Fig. 2). The title-page can be taken as an illustration to the section where all the voices are present: the *I* persona records the conversation between an Angel and a Devil which is finally/originally depicted by the illustrator on the title-page. In the textual

vision, the devil in flaming fire addresses an angel sitting on a cloud and questions the ancient traditions of orthodox Christianity, while putting emphasis on Christ’s humanity instead of his divinity. As the angel fails to defend his own ideas he “stretched out his arms, embracing the flame of fire, & he was consumed and arose as Elijah [viz. the prophet, or John the Baptist]” (MHH 158).

Although in the text the two figures are masculine (referred to as ‘he’) or can be taken as androgynous, in the title-page below the level of the ground or consciousness we can see an embracing love-couple: the devil is characterised with flames of fire and a nice feminine bottom, and the angel’s masculine nude is shown reclining on a bluish cloud. The harmonious moment of their kissing is made dynamic by the moving fiery flames and the other embracing couples flying above the central one. The whole picture shows the whirlwind of ecstasy rooted in and raised by the union of the two main principles. That is, the main schematic form dominating the entire space of the design is the vortex, which can be “the configuration of [the Blakean] ‘progression’” and “the focus of the encounter between conflicting forces” (Mitchell 70). Besides the vision of the whirlpool, there is another little vortex coiling around the uniting conjunction, ‘and’, which looks like going *into* the space of the drawing. Above the ground in accordance, or *toning*, with the visionary scene we can notice that the branches of the trees move towards each other in the wind (of passion) and as if the word, ‘marriage’, had united “the abstraction of typography [of HEAVEN and HELL] with the flowing, organic forms of Blake’s pictorial style” (Mitchell 75).

Finally, after regarding the ironic, satiric and apocalyptic tone of the other voices, we should pay attention to the illustrator’s attitude and the Blakean irony. In his *Horizons of Assent* Alan Wilde distinguishes *mediate*, or primitive; *disjunctive*, or modern; and *suspensive*, or postmodern ironies (9-10). He argues that all irony – or rather the mediate and disjunctive ones – “regarded as a perceptual encounter with the world, generate[s] in response to [its] vision of disparity (or in some cases is generated by) a complementary, more conceptual vision of wholeness or singleness”, which he calls the *anironic* (30). Being taken not as “anti-ironic” but a complementary countervision, this anironic vision accompanies irony and the absolute ironist is capable of the intertwining of the ironic and the anironic so as to hover “folding back on himself in the sanctuary of his art” (34). I think, opposed to the hovering of modern irony, in Blake’s ‘primitive’ irony the anironic apocalyptic vision about the realm of fantasy ironises the Devil’s ironic tone. It means that the Devil’s irony is “Blake’s vehicle for carrying reason to excess, making it undermine itself and become energy”

(Cooper 48), which is displayed in the illustrator's (an)irony. In this sense, marriage can refer to the intertwined unity of the different tones which are tensed then braided. Thus, *The Marriage* does not only mean the Devil's and the Angel's spiritual union but also the marriage of satire and irony in a prophetic/apocalyptic ending-beginning.

According to Wittreich, the work's final irony

[l]ies in the fact that what is true from the human perspective is not true from a demonic one, just as what the Devil says in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* may be true from the perspective of history, but it is not true from the perspective of eternity that the prophet enjoys. The irony [...] [of] Blake's Devil lies in the fact that Blake [is] in possession of a larger consciousness and thus aware of subtleties that his devil does not perceive [...]. (215)

I agree with Wittreich's calling Blake a "supreme ironist" but 'the irony lies in the fact' that while in the final irony he sees "the formation of the prophetic character" I would rather *see* the illustrator and the engraver's perspective here. I think, supreme irony is expressed in the annihilation of the tones in the fiery ending and also in the illustrations where the artist represents his anironic vision of prophecy. The illustrator's "spiritual eye" is truly meant to be "the eye through which the rest of the world might see" (Wittreich 218) and in this sense ironically the cover-page is rather an uncovering, *apocalyptic* page.

In his essay on the apocalyptic tone, Derrida refers to a flower of rhetoric, the eucalyptus, which, as the ironic flower of revelation, after flowering remains closed, "well hidden [cf. the Greek word, *eu-kaluptos*] under the avowed desire for revelation" (Derrida 149). In *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, besides the puzzling multitonality, the author's 'true' voice remains concealed – like the Derridean apocalyptic flower of rhetoric, the eucalyptus. Moreover, the eucalyptus is also remarkable for its cleansing and healing oil, which can be associated with the corroding acid of Blake's irony. In his writing Blake 'argues' against all restraints, limitations and bondage, and he is capable of loosening the strict tension of the *tonos*, due to the elasticity of his ironic tonality. In spite of my first satirical remark on Professor Keynes's explanation, I should accept that instead of 'the devil' this 'he' is "all that was needed". Regarding the conception, context and tonality of *The Marriage*, the 'pronoun' – with the Greek *anto-nymia* embracing its own opposite denomination – and, what's more, its hiatus/gap, is definitely enough. As He in his mask/incognito says in the "Proverbs of Hell": it is "more than enough", or "too much" (MHH 152). The ironically apocalyptic work marks not the ending but the beginning of Blake's

prophetic career where heaven and hell, angels and devils do not exist – there is *no reason* for their existence.

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Figure 1

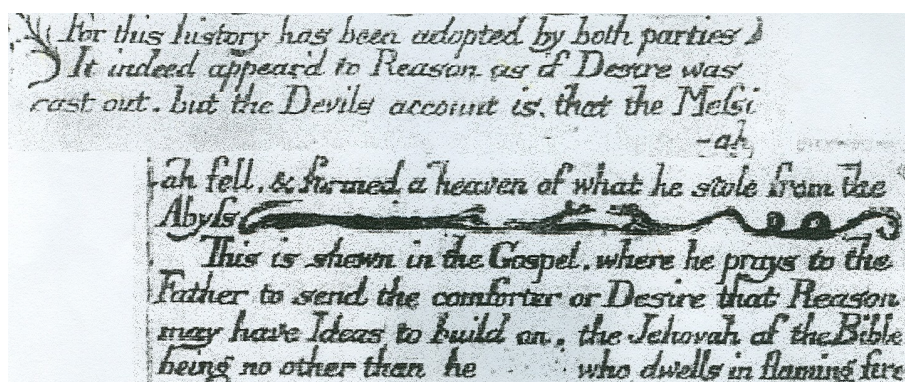
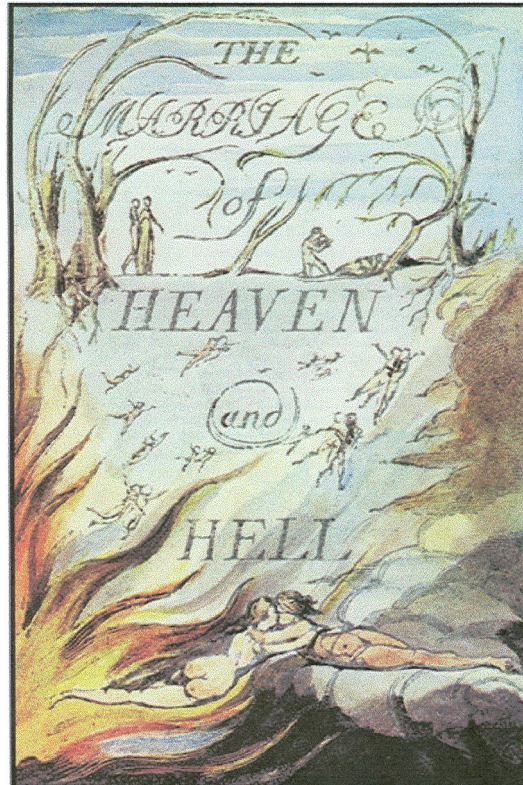


Figure 2







## **Book Reviews**



**Ronald Carter & Michael McCarthy. Cambridge Grammar of English. A Comprehensive Guide. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.**

Éva Kovács

- What is the difference between the following linking adjuncts often used in academic language: *on the contrary*, *by contrast*, *on the other hand*?
- What is meant by *hiya*, *wassup*, *tarra luv*, *sloooooooow dn* and; - in internet discourse?
- Is the prepositional phrase in *Just don't lose your belief in his talent* a modifier or a complement in the noun phrase?
- What do native speakers of English express with the interjection *tut-tut*?
- How can 'hedging' (expressing a viewpoint more assertively) and 'boosting' (making a proposition less assertive) be achieved in academic writing?
- How do you disagree politely in English?

The *Cambridge Grammar of English* (CGE) written by Ronald Carter and Michael McCarthy and published by one of the largest and most prestigious academic publishers gives you answers to these and hundreds of similar questions. This excellent book is a major new reference grammar which has been designed for anyone with a serious interest in the grammar of English.

While previous grammar books have given greater attention to the written language, CGE offers a more balanced approach, and devotes as much attention to the spoken language as to the written one. Many of their examples are taken from the 700 million-word corpus of spoken and written English called the Cambridge International corpus, which is composed of real texts taken from a great variety of sources.

As far as the arrangement of the material is concerned, GCE is organised differently from other contemporary grammar books. Its introductory chapter is concerned with the parts and basic principles of grammar in general, the peculiarities of CGE, the relation of grammar and corpus data and includes the organisation of the book. It is followed by a unique section called A-Z, in which the lexico-grammar properties of frequent words are described. Since these lexical items are often polysemous and individual in some way in their grammar, they are known to be difficult for learners and often lead to errors. Consider 'quite' in the following examples (cf. pp. 126–27):

Things began to get worse *quite* quickly. (rather, fairly)

It was *quite* impossible to have a conversation with him. (totally, completely)

You've got *quite* a garden here. (a noteworthy example of)

I thought he was *quite* a nice person. (a rather nice person)

The section A-Z is followed by the topic chapters which include the following: introduction to grammar and spoken English; from utterance to discourse; from discourse to social context; grammar across turns and sentences; grammar and academic English; introduction to word classes and phrase classes; the noun phrase; nouns and determiners; pronouns; verb phrase 1: structure of verb phrase; verb phrase 2: tense and aspect; types of verbs; adjectives and adjective phrases; adverbs and adverb phrases; prepositions and prepositional phrases; word structure and word formation; introduction to sentences and clauses; verb complementation; clause types; clause combination; adjuncts; present time; past time; future time; modality; speech acts; questions; negation; condition; comparison; word order and focus; the passive and speech representation. As evident from the above list, the second section, which makes up three-fifths of the book, covers the traditional categories most grammar books deal with.

The final section of the book consists of the appendices, which give detailed information on punctuation, spelling, irregular verbs, number, measurement, time, nationalities and countries, as well as important differences between British and North American grammatical usage. Besides the appendices, there is also a glossary which contains brief definitions of all the key grammatical terms used in the book.

R. Carter and M. McCarthy use familiar terminology, relying basically on the framework and categories of Quirk et. al. (1985). Overlapping between categories and gradedness are the major reasons why classification is not an easy issue, yet the authors manage to keep a delicate balance. They try to eliminate terms which were rather problematic and confusing in *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. As far as modality is

concerned, they avoid using terms like 'intrinsic' vs. 'extrinsic'. Instead, they provide clear explanations of the different meanings of modal verbs. In fact, the authors refer to 'deontic' vs. 'epistemic', but only in the glossary (cf. pp. 900, 902). It is pointed out that terms such as necessity, permission and obligation are used in preference to deontic, while terms, such as certainty, probability or possibility are used in preference to epistemic in their book. Unlike in Quirk et al.'s grammar (1985), *be*, *do* and *have* are not called primary verbs any more in this book, they are simply discussed among auxiliary verbs, which are followed by modal verbs under a different heading (cf. pp. 424–425).

In my experience, it is rather difficult for students to understand the distinction between finite and non-finite verb forms. CGE introduces new terms for them, i.e. tensed and non-tensed. It is argued that tensed verb forms indicate whether a verb is present or past tense. The *s*-form and the past form of the verb are tensed forms. The *-ing* participle and the *-ed* participle are non-tensed forms. The base-form may be tensed or non-tensed. When it has a subject, it is tensed (and it is called the present form), when it is used as the infinitive form (with or without *to*), it is non-tensed (cf. p. 198). I find it a more user-friendly explanation. The terms of finite and non-finite clauses are, however, kept in the chapter on clause types (cf. pp. 532–551). They are defined like this: A finite clause contains a verb which is inflected for tense (present or past), while non-finite clauses contain a lexical verb which does not indicate tense.

Unlike Quirk et al. (1985), the authors of CGE make a distinction between modifiers and complements in noun phrases. While modifiers indicate qualities and attributes of the noun head (e.g. subjective qualities, physical attributes, such as size, colour, material, location in space and time, restricted reference to a particular entity), complements complete the meaning of the noun head (cf. p. 323). Thus the prepositional phrase and the *that*-clause in *A rise **in interest rates** is inevitable* and *The claim **that he was innocently involved** was not accepted by the judge*, respectively are regarded as complements.

The classification of adverbials into adjunct, subjunct, disjunct and conjunct is also avoided. The term is carefully explained as follows: "The adjunct is the fifth major clause function, the other four being subject, verb object and complement. Adjuncts modify, comment on or expand in some way the meaning of the clause in terms of manner, place, time, frequency, reason, intensity, purpose, evaluative, viewpoint, linking, etc." (cf. p. 578). Thus Carter & McCarthy classify adjuncts on the basis of their semantics.

A unique feature of this grammar book is the chapter on grammar and academic English. Although academic writing and speaking, e.g. students'

essays, presentations, dissertations and theses, lectures, conference papers, books and articles, all have different conventions, they have a great deal in common in terms of grammar. This chapter (cf. pp. 268–294) focuses on items and structures which are common in academic language. The authors give us useful guidelines about how information is packaged (typically in rather dense noun phrases), how tense, aspect, voice and modality are used to structure and signpost text, how pronouns create an appropriate relationship with the listener/reader, how sentences are typically linked, and how specific conventions are used (e.g. citing and abbreviations). I am sure that this chapter will be of great help to both students and teachers at colleges and universities.

Another merit of CEG is that a special chapter is devoted to speech acts (cf. pp. 680–713), which also tend to be neglected in other grammar references. Speech acts, such as informing, directing, questioning, requesting, offering, apologising, complaining, suggesting, promising, permitting, forbidding, and predicting, etc. regularly occur in everyday written and spoken interactions, therefore they are an essential prerequisite of a good command of a language. Besides focussing particularly on directives and commissives, the authors also describe how clause structure contributes to different kinds of speech acts and the role of modal verbs and speech act verbs in constructing them.

It is also noteworthy that in the chapter ‘From discourse to social contexts’, the authors refer to swearing and taboo expressions and non-standard spoken and written grammar, which students often meet (cf. pp. 225, 235–36). They, however, warn learners that they should exercise great care concerning such usages. For these non-standard varieties of grammatical forms, five levels of acceptability are outlined: 1. wide-spread use in both spoken and written language 2. wide-spread use in both written and spoken language but not approved in more prescriptive grammar books 3. rare in writing but normal in spoken language (e.g. *I don't know how but **me** and my sister got lost in the market.*) 4. regionally or socially marked (*I know something. That **ain't** the answer.*) 5. non-occurring and unacceptable in all varieties of British English.

In summary, we can say that CGE is a valuable contribution to the description of the grammar of English, and therefore it is a ‘must-have’ for anyone who aims to acquire a thorough knowledge of the major areas of English grammar. The user-friendly lay-out, the wealth of examples taken from spoken and written English, the clear explanation of grammatical terms and concepts make it an excellent book. I am convinced that by this new grammar book Ronald Carter and Michael McCarthy have opened the door to success in English for millions of learners.

**Reference**

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