

ERUDITIO – EDUCATIO

Research Journal of the Faculty of Education of J. Selye University
A Selye János Egyetem Tanárképző Kara tudományos folyóirata
Vedecký časopis Pedagogickej fakulty Univerzity J. Selyeho v Komárne

3/2018
(Volume 13.)

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Realizované s finančnou podporou Fondu na podporu program kultúry národnostných menšín

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The Transformation and Complexity of the Curriculum

The curriculum as a product and/or a process?

Vilmos Vass

Abstract

The paper focuses on the transformation and complexity of the curriculum and analyses the vertical and horizontal transformation of the curriculum. The vertical transformation of the curriculum introduces the major curricular philosophies and ideologies. The horizontal transformation compares the product- and process-based approach of the curriculum. On the basis of the analysis of the vertical and horizontal transformation of curriculum, the paper draws conclusions raising some dilemmas and possible solution.

Key words: curriculum; curriculum theory; transformation; complexity; product-based approach; process-based approach

Subject-Affiliation in New CEEOL: Social Sciences – Education – School education

“Curriculum theory, then, is a field of scholarly inquiry within the broad academic field of education that endeavors to understand curriculum as educational experience.”
(William F. Pinar)

1. Introduction

I remember the first curriculum I developed. It was in the early eighties. I went to my head of department and borrowed her document in order to copy it. I shortly checked the main parts of the curriculum: aims, time allocation, content, objectives, teaching methods, tools and assessment. It was a comfortable, fast and short process with formal legitimation. I started to teach under the umbrella of this signed and stamped curriculum. Frankly, after this procedure I forgot my document and put it into my drawer. One day, an inspector visited my class. She observed my lesson and checked my curriculum. I never forgot her question: Why did my curriculum not have any coherency with the lesson? My (brave) answer was: I do not teach the curriculum, I focus on my pupils. Ten years later, I became a curriculum expert, so I studied the scientific background of my subconscious answer.

In fact, the concept of the curriculum is used with several definitions, but the

general meaning equates with a syllabus, which contains the knowledge-content and the list of the subjects to be taught. (Kelly, 1999) This paper focuses on the broader meaning of the curriculum avoiding the trap of this simplified, narrowing definition. *This is the first level of the simplification of the curriculum.* An important point to note is that curriculum planning is not a simple technical listing or bureaucratic activity, it is a conscious developmental process, where the key element is the transformation of – on the one hand – aims, objectives, knowledge and skills. On the other hand, it is the transformation of the learning and the teaching process. As Kelly claims: “curriculum planning is not merely what knowledge our curriculum should be concerned to transmit, but how that knowledge relates to other aspects of curriculum planning”. (Kelly, 1999, 25) The differentiation between the narrow and the broad definition of the curriculum is only one side of the coin. The other side is to emphasize the dilemma between the traditional meaning of the curriculum as a noun and the reconceptualising view of the curriculum as a verb. As Pinar points out: “We have reconceived the curriculum; it is no longer only a noun. It is also a verb: *currere*.” (Pinar, 2012, 29)

Basically, touching the above-mentioned important points, Ornstein and Hunkins specify five basic definitions of the curriculum: (1) “as a plan for achieving goals”, (2) “as the learner’s experiences”, (3) “as a field of study”, (4) “as a subject matter” and (5) “as content in terms of grade levels”. (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2018, 26-27) On the basis of these definitions, a key question has been raised: *Is the curriculum a product and/or a process?* Traditionally, the basic meaning of the curriculum equates with a product: the national core curriculum, national standards, curriculum framework, local curriculum, lesson plans etc. This is *product-based approach of the curriculum* has resulted in simplification, especially at the level of declared curriculum. In this case, the main components of the curriculum are aims, objectives and knowledge/content. My point is that *this is the second level of the simplification of the curriculum.* Understanding the *process-based approach of the curriculum* needs looking at our scientific topic via transformative and complex lenses related to the broader meaning of the curriculum. One final point needs to be made: This paper prefers the broader concept of the curriculum and raises the following questions:

- How can transformation and complexity change the vision of the curriculum from theory to practice?
- What are the differences between the product-based and the process-based approach to the curriculum?

In order to answer these thought-provoking questions, our aims are:

- To introduce the vertical and horizontal transformations of the curriculum proving the complexity of the concept.
- To compare the product-based and the process-based approach of the curriculum analysing the main trends and dilemmas of curriculum development.

In summary, one purpose of this paper is to provide readers with a colourful perspective on these questions based on a comprehensive understanding of curricular approaches over the last hundred years. Another purpose of this paper is

to give readers reflective opportunities on their own curricular vision, conception and practice.

2. The transformation and complexity of the curriculum

2.1. The vertical transformation of the curriculum

The vertical transformation of the curriculum, *from the first perspective*, is based on some philosophical foundations of education and the curriculum. Our decision-making process of curriculum development is based on philosophy. In fact, this is a central guide and criterion of beliefs, values and vision of education as well as the curriculum, especially about knowledge, learning, teaching and assessment. Goodlad states: “philosophy is the beginning point in curriculum decision making and the basis for all subsequent decision”. (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2018, 47) Ornstein and Hunkins determine four major philosophies of the curriculum, namely idealism, realism, pragmatism and existentialism. They state that the “first two philosophies are traditional; the last two are contemporary”. (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2018, 49) Plato formulated idealism, Aristotle related to realism. These two traditional philosophies have a value-oriented vision, where the values are absolute and eternal, but in realism values are based on nature’s law. Idealistic and realistic philosophy-based curricula are hierarchical, they emphasise subject-matter and knowledge, and separate content areas. Abstract thinking is the highest form of the cognitive process; teachers are moral and spiritual leaders. The differences between these two traditional philosophies have different visions of learning, education, knowledge and hierarchy of subjects. As Ornstein and Hunkins point out: “To idealists, learning is a primarily intellectual process that involves recalling and working with ideas; education is properly concerned with conceptual matters.” (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2018, 49) Idealists prefer the classics or liberal arts, philosophy, theology and mathematics. Realism stresses logical and abstract thinking, exercising the mind, curricular knowledge is based on sensation and abstraction. Hierarchical subjects with separate content prefer humanistic and scientific subjects. The unchanging world is a key concept from the point of these two traditional philosophies, which determines the vision of the curriculum.

In contrast with traditional philosophies, pragmatism and existentialism are based on change and process. From the point of pragmatism, reality focuses on the interaction of the individual with the changing social environment. From the point of existentialism, reality is absolutely subjective. Accordingly, the concept of knowledge and the basic values of pragmatism emphasise the usage of a scientific method under the set of situational values. Not surprisingly, pragmatic learning is based on scientific explanations under the umbrella of the changing environment stressing problem solving and critical thinking competences and activities. There is no permanent knowledge or subject in the curriculum. How? is more important than What? In details, planning teaching and learning methods play a fundamental role in the curriculum. The vision is curriculum for thinking, which emphasizes critical thinking, Problem-Based Learning and pupils’ questioning. It requires interdisciplinary knowledge in order to understand processes and connections among

the integrated fields. From the existentialist point of view, knowledge and values are based on personal choice. As Ornstein and Hunkins point out: “Existentialists advocate that students should be free to choose how and what they study.” (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2018, 50) It resulted in responsible, conscious decision-making and the process of creative self-expression. (Ornstein and Hunkins, 2018) However, there are some significant differences between the first two traditional philosophies and the last two types of the curriculum. In particular, idealism and realism have resulted in a rigid, knowledge and subject based curriculum. On the contrary, pragmatism and existentialism prefer a flexible competence-based, personalized curriculum.

The vertical transformation of the curriculum, *from the second perspective*, is based on curricular ideologies: (i) Scholar Academic, (ii) Social Efficiency, (iii) Learner Centred and (iv) Social Reconstruction Ideologies. Basically, these categories are “practical ideological viewpoints” avoiding the trap of theorization. These ideologies have four different visions and types of knowledge of “what school curriculum should look like”. No doubt, that “these four ideologies can influence people’s ways of thinking about the curriculum”. (Schiro, 2013, 2) The Scholar Academic Ideology emphasizes academic disciplines, which are based on accumulated knowledge for centuries. A important point to note is that this vision of knowledge: “over the centuries our culture has accumulated important knowledge” has determined curricular content, concepts, teaching methods and assessment. As Schiro explains: “Teachers should be mini-scholars who have a deep understanding of their discipline and can clearly and accurately present it to children.” (Schiro, 2013, 4) It is not surprising that the priority of education from the point of this ideology is the extension of their disciplines via the process of transmission at two different levels: knowledge and the way of thinking. Social Efficiency Ideology is based on the needs of society and workplaces. Accordingly, skills play an important role in the curriculum. The expected outcome of this curriculum is social productivity. From the perspective of teaching, Schiro stresses: “Instruction is guided by clearly defined behavioural objectives, and learners may require a lot of practice to gain and maintain mastery of skills.” (Schiro, 2013, 5) It is evident that the focus of the curriculum has changed from knowledge to skills. Consequently, the concept of learning is based on “the relationships between cause and effect, action and reaction and stimulus and response”. Learner Centred Ideology has a different vision of learning and the learner. In brief, in spite of stressing academic, social or economic needs, this curriculum emphasizes the affective dimension of learning, namely attitudes, enjoyment, success and flow aiming the balance between “intellectual, social, emotional, and physical attributes”. Basically, Learner Centred Ideology prefers the broader meaning of learning, which means harmony among cognitive, affective and psychomotor dimensions. In addition, the narrow meaning of learning stresses the role of concentration and memory in the learning process. The curriculum reflects on the interaction between the learner and the environment, thus it results in the construction of meaning. As Schiro summarises: “Learner Centred curricula are thus thought of as contents, environments, or units of work in which students can make meaning for themselves by interacting with

other students, teachers, ideas, and things.” (Schiro, 2013, 6) Social Reconstruction Ideology focuses on social problems, for instance “racial, gender, social and economic inequalities”. In fact, the social dimension is the foundation stone of the curriculum determining knowledge, skills, the teaching and the learning process, and last, but not least, assessment. More broadly, “education is the social process, through which society is reconstructed”. (Schiro, 2013, 6) Cultural factors play an important role in knowledge, skills and attitudes.

2.2. The horizontal transformation of the curriculum

After the vertical transformation of the curriculum, equal attention should be paid to horizontal transformation. Turning back to the question in the introduction, the horizontal transformation of the curriculum focuses on the differences between the *product-based and the process-based approach* to the curriculum. Theoretical and conceptual discussions on these two approaches were going on for a century. Under the umbrella of the second part of the scientific-industrial revolution, in the early years of the 20th century, professional, scientific-based curriculum development plays an important role in education. In particular, Franklin Bobbitt conceptualized the algorithm of “the science of curriculum making”. “Education,” Bobbitt writes, “is primarily for adult life, not for child life. Its fundamental responsibility is to prepare for the fifty years of adulthood, not for the twenty years of childhood and youth.” (Bobbitt, 1924, 8) No doubt, Bobbitt was “one of the earliest proponents”, the early pioneer who fostered meaningful, operationalized curriculum. His followers were Ralph Tyler and Benjamin Bloom. Turning back to Bobbitt’s vision of the curriculum, it is based on – on the one hand – algorithmized educational objectives, – on the other hand – the expected outcome of successful adults.

For instance, his famous book: *How to Make a Curriculum* contained 160 educational objectives. Admittedly, Bobbitt introduced “the kind of precise, scientific methods that had begun to yield dividends in other spheres of human activity and especially in industry” into educational practice (Kelly, 1999, 58) This rational notion of the curriculum is based on the scientific construction of knowledge and skills of successful adults. But this phenomenon is only one side of the coin. The other side, in the context of operationalized educational objectives, is the testing of pupils’ performance. In this sense, the above-mentioned science of curriculum planning is based on the industrial model, which is the foundation stone of standardization. This vision of the curriculum, “the objective approach to curriculum design” fits in very well indeed with Ralph Tyler’s instructional and curricular foundations. In Tyler’s curriculum rationale, he raised four questions:

- “What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
- What educational experiences can be provided which are likely to attain these purposes?
- How can these educational experiences be organized?
- How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?” (Tyler, 1949, 1)

These four basic questions are concerned with the purposes, the content, the

organization and the evaluation of the curriculum. (Tyler, 1949; Kelly, 1999) In parallel, Benjamin Bloom divides objectives into three domains (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) and six categories (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation). This classification, known as Bloom's taxonomy, influenced the notion of the curriculum and the curriculum planning process as well.

Knowledge "involves the recall of specifics and universals, the recall of methods and processes, or the recall of a pattern, structure, or setting."

Comprehension "refers to a type of understanding or apprehension such that the individual knows what is being communicated and can make use of the material or idea being communicated without necessarily relating it to other material or seeing its fullest implications."

Application refers to the "use of abstractions in particular and concrete situations."

Analysis represents the "breakdown of a communication into its constituent elements or parts such that the relative hierarchy of ideas is made clear and/or the relations between ideas expressed are made explicit."

Synthesis involves the "putting together of elements and parts so as to form a whole."¹

A group of cognitive psychologists, curriculum theorists and instructional researchers, and testing and assessment specialists published a revision of Bloom's Taxonomy in 2001. This revised taxonomy draws attention away from the somewhat static notion of "educational objectives" (in Bloom's original title) and points to a more dynamic conception of classification.

The authors of the revised taxonomy underscore this dynamism, using verbs to label their categories and subcategories (rather than the nouns of the original taxonomy). These "action words" describe the cognitive processes by which thinkers encounter and work with knowledge: Remember (recognizing, recalling); Understand (interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, explaining); Apply (executing, implementing); Analyse (differentiating, organizing, attributing); Evaluate (checking, critiquing); Create (generating, planning, producing). In the revised taxonomy, knowledge is at the basis of these six cognitive processes, but its authors created a separate taxonomy of the types of knowledge used in cognition: Factual Knowledge (knowledge of terminology, knowledge of specific details and elements); Conceptual Knowledge (knowledge of classifications and categories, knowledge of principles and generalizations, knowledge of theories, models, and structures); Procedural Knowledge (knowledge of subject-specific skills and algorithms, knowledge of subject-specific techniques and methods, knowledge of criteria for determining when to use appropriate procedures); Metacognitive Knowledge (strategic knowledge, knowledge about cognitive tasks, including appropriate contextual and conditional knowledge, self-know-

1 Evaluation engenders "judgments about the value of material and methods for given purposes." (the appendix of Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Handbook One, 201-207) <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>)

ledge)² As Kelly stated: “This approach to curriculum planning, however, requires more careful analysis than most teachers were able to give it, and it is to that kind of examination that we must proceed.” (Kelly, 1999, 59)

In fact, there are some similarities among the above mentioned milestones (Bobbitt, Tyler, Bloom) and the centre of these visions of the curriculum is a reproduction of adult life and education as a scientific activity. In this sense, this approach is the adoption of the industrial model of education. (Tyler, 1949) Kelly states: “The important thing to recognize, therefore, is that the notion of behaviour modification is essential to this model of curriculum planning.” (Kelly, 1999, 60) Popham calls this notification *product*, which is the consequence of learner behaviour. Basically, this is the fundamental stone of the product-based approach to curriculum. Otherwise, behaviour modification results in “intended learning outcomes”, which is based on behaviourist psychological theory and “passive model of humans”. “In fact, most of its theoretical components have been psychologists rather than educationists or teachers.” (Kelly, 1999, 61)

On the contrary, the process-based approach to the curriculum emphasizes the “active model of the individual”. (Kelly, 1999) Indeed, this is a learner-centred vision of the curriculum, where the developmental process has focused on practical educational factors, autonomy and human development. Thus, the curriculum stresses competences: critical thinking and problem solving, cooperation, communication and creativity. (Jacobs, 2010)

Conclusion

It can be seen from both the vertical and the horizontal transformation of the curriculum that the curriculum is a complex concept, and curriculum development has some overlapping phenomena. The product-based approach to the curriculum prefers traditional philosophies (idealism and realism) and Scholar Academic and Social Efficiency Ideology are concerned with the linear concept of learning. The process-based approach to the curriculum is based on progressive curricular philosophies (pragmatism, existentialism) and Learner Centred and Social Reconstruction Ideology. In fact, there are a lot of combinations and different types of relationships between the product- and process-based approach. The curricular picture is colourful, but product-based approach, because of the step-by-step linear, operationalized planning process, does not fit the pupils’ interests and needs related to their multiple, complex and unique personalities. In fact, real learning is developmental rather than linear. On the basis of the vertical and horizontal transformation of the curriculum, it is clear that balancing the product- and process-based approach, knowledge and competences, cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains is an important task for curriculum development in order to promote flexibility, autonomy and complex personality.

2 Anderson, L.W., Krathwohl, D.R., Airasian, P.W., Cruikshank, K.A., Mayer, R.E., Pintrich, P.R., Raths, J., Wittrock, M.C. (2001). *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A revision of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. New York: Pearson, Allyn & Bacon. <https://s3.amazonaws.com/vu-wp0/wp-content/uploads/sites/59/2010/06/12092513/BloomsTaxonomy-mary-forehand.pdf>

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Spring Water or Cocktail?

Postmodern challenges in arts education

László Trencsényi

Abstract

The author writes about the necessary changes in the aims and methods of arts education (understanding arts in the widest sense, including all creative arts, literature and music) that are brought about by the changes of the role and function of art in contemporary society. In a postmodern environment, the significance of certain values increases. Trencsényi refers to these values as the five C's: Creativity, Complexity, Community, Communication and Canonlessness (i.e.: instead of one prevailing canon, having multiple canons alongside each other).

Key words: arts education; multiculturalism; postmodern society; primary and secondary school public education

Subject-Affiliation in New CEEOL: Social Sciences – Education – Higher education

When trying to make sense of certain historical conflicts, we Hungarians often quote a line by the modern Hungarian poet, Attila József: *“The great battle which our ancestors once fought resolves into peace through the memories...”*¹

In our ‘postmodern’ world what is important to me is not the battles that our ancestors fought but the cultural ‘battles’ we are involved in now; that they resolve into peace, that they mustn’t develop into a war. This is the most important message of the postmodern era: that the fight for pure culture against opposing forces whether of kitsch or pop culture etc. is appeased in postmodernism.

A big question for art theory has always been whether art can give meaningful answers to existential questions. In his poem *On “Archaic Torso of Apollo”* Rilke describes an antique statue whose beauty demands of the viewer that he must change his life. Does art still retain this function today?

According to Antal Bókay, Hungarian literary theorist it does not. It is very interesting that he almost repeats Rilke’s words but in reverse. He says that the aim of art is to teach humankind to answer the world’s questions.

The difference is enormous. Does art answer, or does art teach us to answer? If the latter is true this will affect the way we perceive and value art.

So how does this impact on art pedagogy? It is interesting that we find the same question in teaching theory only phrased differently: is the aim of teaching to impart knowledge or to develop the skills with which to acquire it?

I am going to mention a few familiar cultural dichotomies; however, in my opinion they only *appear* to be dichotomies. When I mention them, I would like to empha-

¹ Attila József (1905-1937) *By the Danube*, translated by John Székely.

size that it is not their remembrance that resolves them into peace but their peaceful existence alongside each other here and now.

- *Popular culture vs. elite culture.* How do we most commonly consume art today? Is it by going to exhibitions or noticing bill posters on the way to school?
- *Media vs. inter-personal relations.* How should the aesthetic experience reach us? BBC Proms live or on television?
- *Traditional vs. modern.* What is the function of art? To be the memory of human kind or to be a vehicle for exploration and innovation?
- *National identity vs. multiculturalism.* How relevant is an artist's national identity when operating in a global culture?
- *Freedom vs. commitment.* What is art for today? To help us find our freedom, or to find where we belong? It is not easy to answer this. If we look at the history of any art form, we'll find examples of both.
- Finally, a longstanding dilemma in arts education is whether we are training students to appreciate art or make art? To be *receivers* or *creators*?

Although I have presented these notions as oppositions, our job as teachers, and art pedagogues is not to kindle these oppositions but rather establish how we can integrate them in a coherent pedagogical process. Maybe in earlier times they were seen as opposites, but nowadays they all have an equal place in our world. The question is: *how* to integrate them?

My answers to this art pedagogical question are the five C-s:

- Creativity – through the creative process of making art we also learn how to appreciate art.

By the principle of Creativity I mean that in order to help develop understanding and a perceptive audience for art, it is important that the relationship with art is developed through the creation of art as well (especially in childhood). The child should be encouraged to create aesthetic objects: pictures, performances etc. and should be encouraged to experience various creative processes. This way his/her empathy can develop towards appreciating and enjoying other people's (including professional artists') work and expression.

Throughout these creative processes, as well helping his/her empathy grow, the necessary skills and competences that are essential for the child's appreciation of art develop.

- Complexity – the intermingling of different art forms. The presentation of various art forms together, especially in today's artistic climate where it is sometimes difficult even to say what art form a given piece of work belongs to.

By the principal of Complexity I mean that in modern arts education the significance of those complex aesthetic experiences (the creation as well as the reception of art) grows which can only be connected solely to one separate art form with

difficulty. This complexity can remind us of the complexity of the 'primeval', archaic art forms as well as a child's aesthetic experience. (It is well documented and researched that children do not divide their aesthetic experience into various genres and components – say, literal, visual or musical – but receive it in its complexity.) The realisation of various projects and events that are similar to those festive celebrations or rituals that address several senses at the same time, in the curricula of arts education can be very effective, especially at the early stages of arts education.

The principal of Complexity is also in effect when we recognise that our pupils are susceptible to the language of different art forms at various levels. Why shouldn't we accept and embrace these differences? In a complex art experience every child can find a message best suited to him/her.

László Vidovszky, a contemporary Hungarian composer has an interesting piece. It comprises of a large installation on the stage where two poles are erected with many strings stretched between them. On these strings are various metal and glass objects hanging.

The production comprises of an artist entering the stage and cutting the string at what appears to be a random point. As the string unravels, the sounds and harmonies created by those falling metal and glass objects constitute the piece.

In fact it is not random. It has been meticulously planned beforehand. The sounds happen exactly when the composer wants them to, yet it is happening here and now in front of us. Is it a piece of fine art? Is it object puppetry? Or music? This is what I mean by complexity.

- Community – With due respect to our personal freedom it is in the community where an aesthetic experience can successfully happen. This is especially true when it comes to the aesthetic experience of children and young people.

By the principal of Community I mean that those art-related events and projects become significantly important where children take part together, in groups. During these projects they learn to cooperate with each other, appreciate each other, and interpret together the artwork they have created or experienced together.

- Communication

When it comes to communicating art to young people I don't mean it only in the sense of an educated adult sharing his culture with an uneducated young person; this is only one type of cultural transmission. I think that successful art-mediation is about creating a dialogue between the different cultures and backgrounds of the children. The art pedagogue is not the speaker at one end of the 'telephone of art' but he/she is the wire of the telephone itself. This is what our profession is about! To help and facilitate the exchange of cultures between two people, "from soul to soul".

- Canonlessness – In our multi-faceted world we can only feel at home if we

understand that there isn't only one valid artistic canon. But there are several co-existing canons. The task of our art pedagogy is to accept this and help children to understand this.

The principal of Canonlessness (I just call it this to keep the alliterating 'c'; what I mean is the principal of having a Multitude of Canons) is that one cannot and should not interfere with the normal functioning of a pluralist, multicultural society through using pedagogical or (artistic)political means to try to establish one sole canon.

There are several canons living next to each other, peacefully influencing each other and having dialogues with each other. Each single one of them carries values. To be precise, each canon's value system belongs to a social group that accepts and acknowledges those values as values.

The school's role is to be the place of the dialogues between these various cultures (ethnic, class, generational, gender-related, 'sub-cultural'/alternative etc.). The school's role cannot be other.

It is worth paying attention to the exchange of cultures and being present there. I repeat that the key is that there is no canon any more.

This is happening now in the Hungarian culture, the difficult and complex history of Central Europe created this multiculturalism. We have many artworks that display these multiple cultural layers. In a way it is following Béla Bartók's model. What I have in mind is the Bartók who composed his *Contrasts* featuring a jazz musician alongside a symphonic orchestra, or who weaved a hit from an operetta into his *Concerto*. I would like to put these sorts of artworks at the centre; the sort that in the beliefs of the artist and the sources of the work can address and present several cultural layers at the same time.

Bartók was once asked from where an artist should draw his inspiration. He replied: "only from a pure spring". I would modify it to a "cocktail", but not a poisonous one.

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Reforming the Literature Curriculum from the Perspective of Future Literary Educators

Afrodita Manxhuka

Abstract

The issue of the literary canon taught in Hungarian elementary and secondary schools has been a hotly debated topic for years in the public eye as well as among teaching experts, parents, and students. More and more people deem it inevitable to rewrite the list of required school readings in order to create an atmosphere of literature teaching that resonates more aptly with the challenges of the modern world. Despite the above view, however, most Hungarian literature classes continue to discuss the same literary works that have been irremovably part of the canon for decades. This tenacious clinging to the “well-tried” reading lists is strongly based on the concept of the literary canon itself, the idea of steadiness and that of solid values, which have become, however, rather doubtful in today’s postmodern era. For a significant change to happen in this field, a major shift of views would be indispensable among Hungarian literary educators. What can we expect from the next generation of teachers? How do prospective teachers of literature in Hungary think about the above issue?

Key words: literary canon; literature teaching; literary educator; future literary educator; reading list; popular culture

Subject-Affiliation in New CEEOL: Social Sciences – Education – School education

In recent years, literary educators, parents, and students have expressed a growing demand for the renewal of the elementary and high school literary canon in order to create an up-to-date atmosphere of literature teaching, which is more in synch with the challenges of today’s postmodern world. Despite the above powerful efforts, however, year to year most Hungarian literature classes still discuss the same literary works that have constituted a deeply anchored part of the canon for decades. The teaching of literature in Hungary currently follows the so-called “pre-modern model of literature teaching” (Bókay 1998), characterized by a chronological approach, with an elevated role for presenting the individual literary epochs, including the relevant authors, their biographies, list of works, etc. This level of perfectionism is unprecedented in comparison to other European literary curricula. The method of teaching literature today overwhelmingly practiced in Hungary is strongly dominated by a 19th-century teaching concept that hardly shares any connecting points with today’s postmodern way of thinking. The major problem with this approach to literature is the very fact that is completely ignores the students’

age-specific characteristics (Kerber 2002).

Among the various school subjects, literature is gradually losing its popularity among students. The results of the national surveys of attitude reveal that while earlier literature used to be one of the most popular school subjects, by the millennium it experienced a major setback, with Hungarian language arts becoming outright one of the least preferred school subjects (Csapó 2000). In order for a notable change to occur, there is an indispensable need for a major shift in teachers' attitude, value preferences as well as methodological practice. Literary educators should be familiar with the classical, the modern, and the popular culture and they need to be able to endear their students with reading and educate them to a functional usage of literature.

The National Public Education Institute's Center for Program and Curriculum Design (Országos Közoktatási Intézet Program- és Tantervfejlesztési Központja) carried out a research on the situation of various school subjects in 2002 on elementary school level and in 2003 in secondary education. Both surveys were part of a greater observational research examining the effects of the changes in the 1990s in the field of content regulation and curriculum modernization on the actual teaching methods of the individual subjects as well as the question what further development was necessary concerning the overall system of school subjects in Hungary. The primary goal of the study was to map how literary educators in Hungary evaluate the current situation of teaching and to identify the major difficulties, the potential fields where changes were still needed and the tools helping them possibly the most.

The most important problem turned out to be the fact that students do not read much and in general, do not even like reading. Their spelling leaves much to be desired, their basic reading skills are insufficient, and they lag seriously behind in the field of reading comprehension. At the same time, teachers have to transmit too much knowledge without having the necessary amount of time for it. Nevertheless, when it comes to the issue of narrowing down or extending the curriculum, there are very modest suggestions concerning the topics to be left out, yet very specific ideas as to in which dimensions to expand the existing reading lists. Literature teachers in Hungary would strongly prefer teaching modern literature to the dominance of the literature of earlier eras.

The survey confirmed that the subject of Hungarian language and literature needs modernization. According to the participating teachers, the students are gradually losing interest in the subject. The list of compulsory readings should contain to a greater extent youth literature, which students are genuinely interested in, thus having a chance to bring the understanding and the love of literature closer to them. Teachers and education experts both sense the effects of the changed circumstances, yet could not come up with effective solutions to these problems (Kerber 2004).

These research results were further underpinned by the observational survey that was carried out in 2005, following the studies on the general situation of the various school subjects. The main aim of this survey was to offer insight into the pedagogical practice of Hungarian literary educators, to explore their general value

preferences, methodological patterns as well as their own approach to the subject they were transmitting. The results of the research revealed the slow pace of modernization in present-day teaching practice, which continuously increases the distance between children and their own school's culture. The long-term consequences of this state go beyond the conflicting realm of the school and the world outside the school; these may contribute to the growth of a similarly negative attitude to the concepts of knowledge, work, and culture in general (Gordon Győri 2006).

Students' learning difficulties are often not rooted in their lack of certain basic (learning) skills, but in the immense distance between the knowledge transferred at school and the literacy of those not educated in the mainstream culture (Morrell 2002). Therefore, teachers should take into consideration students' special literacy acquired outside the realm of the school, and find the potential to connect that material with the school curriculum. One such link could be built between the popular culture beloved by the students and the compulsory literature in class. By means of the popular culture it is easier to create a bridge between students' everyday experiences and the school curriculum/literacy. Incorporating popular culture into school literacy offers the possibility to effectively develop critical thinking skills, improve verbal and written analytical skills, to create a real dialog between educators and students as well as to discuss relevant cultural, social, or political questions connected to the texts. Popular culture has the potential to bridge the literacy and cultural gap between students, which may be of especially great importance in a multiethnic school context. Despite the wide range of convincing arguments for the integration of pop culture into the school literacy, the majority of teachers are reluctant to do so as they feel professionally unprepared in this field (Morrell 2002).

Domestic research monitoring Hungarian teachers of literature revealed that the methodological preparedness, the attitude, and the value preference of educators who have been teaching for years change at a slow pace and to a very little extent. A real transition in the field of teaching practice can only be expected from the next generation of teachers, which makes it worthwhile to take a closer look at how prospective teachers of literature think about the above issues. Therefore, I conducted interviews in focus groups with junior-year students majoring in Hungarian language and literature at the Faculty of Humanities of the Eötvös Loránd University Budapest concerning the current situation of teaching literature, the question of compulsory reading lists, and the goals and pursuits for their future work. The survey had fifteen participants of the same age group; eleven female and four male students.

The major point all interviewees agreed on was that literature teaching in Hungary is currently facing serious problems that mainly stem from the school literary canon. The distance between the compulsory reading lists, which have been nearly unchanged for decades, and the students' own everyday reality keeps growing alarmingly, and instead of aiding students in learning to love reading and literature, we rather discourage them. According to one participant, one of the greatest challenges these days is how to get students to choose books as a present for themselves, how to bring them into visiting the library regularly, and to read the

designated works of literature from the reading list. On the other hand, as another interviewee pointed out, the currently prescribed curriculum and the amount of fixed texts to be read and analyzed, completed with embedding the works into a biographical and a (literature and art) historical context set such an extreme pace that makes it nearly impossible to create a teaching context that provides students with hands-on experiences with literature.

A further prospective teacher sees the source of the problem as follows:

In public education, we teach children. We teach the youth. Isn't it ironic that we hardly really teach them actual children and youth literature? This is a definite problem as we leave out the very core of education which is really about them, their own vivid world, thus further widening the gap between the students and literature. We are not building bridges, which is missing most of the time. Therefore, the strategy the current system is operating with is never going to be successful.

Many shared the view that from year to year, generations of literary educators insist on the same fixed reading lists, although today's children are in many respects different from those living in an era decades ago. Based on their own childhood experiences, the interviewees could sense themselves that their generation also grew up amid different circumstances and with different interests, and these changes have been continuing ever since. They asked the rightful question what makes educators think then that the same literary works meant for their parents and grandparents would raise the interest of today's generation of students. They are well aware that they are the educators of the future generations, but also that they need to change themselves and enforce changes in the system in order to reach their aim of successfully transmitting literature to the younger generations.

The participants of the interview could clearly see the difficulties connected to their subject and they supported very articulately the demand for change. There were varying opinions, however, on how to and to what extent they could approve the existing situation. Some reckoned that although the concept of the compulsory curriculum is very dense and most teachers of literature have a hard time transmitting this set amount of knowledge, yet it is crucial to create room for works outside the literary canon, with special attention to popular literature. In the words of one interviewee who stressed the personal responsibility and freedom of literary educators:

Once I start teaching, I definitely plan to integrate popular literature into my curriculum. Children's and youth novels as well as poetry. All kinds of contemporary materials covering the present day and reflecting on all the things students currently see and experience. Also phenomena I see and experience. I want to teach the present, so I will not have any other choice but to extend the possibilities offered by the Hungarian framework curricula. This is my freedom, my time as well as that of the students I teach.

In fact, many of the participants considered the idea of teaching contemporary literature in the school context as the subject matter of these works along with the topicality of their language offers potentials for a more intense connection between the students and the text itself; being involved as a recipient may not simply lead to a greater approach to the given work of literature, topic, or author, but to literature

and reading itself (Szakács 2010). They unanimously reckoned that contemporary literature should also be present in the school curriculum of each grade. They would not implement this practice, however, by the complete exchange of earlier reading lists, but along intertextual linking points between the traditional “textbook” literature and the newer, originally “non-curricular” texts.

There were, however, voices against the above suggestions stating that expanding the current reading lists was not a successful strategy simply out of lack of the necessary time. “I don’t think I am doing any good if I complete the already immense corpus of texts with additional items,” said one of the participants.

On the other hand, a further difficulty arose with regard to processing the newly canonized works of literature as, unlike items on the traditional school literary canon, the teaching of these newer pieces is hardly supported at this point with textbooks and further methodological teaching aids. As one of the prospective teachers explained:

There is not much point in bringing a new literary text into the classroom context if it cannot be thoroughly processed and placed in the students’ system of knowledge. If students had to read a popular youth novel as part of their set reading list, they would certainly be happy about it and read it (though they would read it anyways). But then is there time and room for discussing it in literature class? About which topics? How? Answering these questions is not impossible; yet doing so requires tremendous efforts in today’s teaching context from educators in order to prepare with appropriate lesson plans and worksheets, while at the same time making a not-too-large detour from the original syllabus.

Furthermore, a few participants also emphasized the necessity of a change on system-level. Breaking away from the chronological teaching of literature and the option to discuss the literary texts in topical units instead could be one possible solution. This would make it easier to fit literary works into the curriculum that are closer to the students’ taste. Some of the prospective teachers suggested that the practice of assigning fixed reading lists according to school grades should be done away with; what is more, there should not be a clear-cut dividing line between literary works to be taught in the elementary and secondary school either, thus providing flexibility and an easier transition between the readings (e.g. the novel “*A kőszívű ember fiai*” [*The Heartless Man’s Sons*] by Mór Jókai, which is currently part of the elementary school curriculum, could be transferred to secondary school level).

There was a general agreement among the participants that modifications on this level would necessitate the transformation of the current base and framework curriculum. As one of the interviewees summed up:

For a really effective solution, education policy decision makers should not turn a deaf ear to educators and show more openness toward suggestions to revise the old reading lists. They should make up their mind and decide what the main goal is: to help students learn to love reading or force the traditional old reading lists upon them, even at the price of students’ learning to hate literature.

There also came up, however, the issue of what measures educators can take in order to renew the contents of literature teaching within the frame of the current

system; what is the range of their personal freedom in the field of modifications. Beside the concept of expanding the current reading lists in use with works of contemporary and popular literature, another possibility was to experiment with various different literature teaching models. One of the participants highlighted the advantages of the reader-centered approach to literature teaching, which places the reader into the focus of the interpretation, with the endeavor to turn the text into a personal matter and thus create through diverse connecting points the potential of a deeper involvement and identification for the recipient (Pethőné Nagy 2007). According to the interviewee:

As teachers, we cannot ignore the fact that the students sitting in front of us are adolescents, not adult readers. We have to take the psychological characteristics of adolescents into consideration (e.g. their desire to get to know themselves, their self-centeredness, as well as their enhanced interest for their inner world) and choose texts for them that offer the potential to identify themselves with. We need to feel at home in the realm of contemporary youth literature.

Most participants agreed that the paramount reason for expanding the school literary canon with popular works standing closer to the students is to help them learn to love reading:

Before overwhelming the students with texts that caused difficulties even for us to read back then at school, we should keep in mind to make them learn to enjoy reading. The prerequisite for literary intelligence is the joy of reading. Without vivid reading experiences of their own, all we are trying to teach them is just a bunch of dry facts, which they will most probably forget right away, once they leave school. Literature teaches you about life. And the teacher's job is to help them find the literary works that address them and provide them something special.

As a response to the question about the specific texts they are planning to include in their personal reading list in class, the interviewees came up with multiple literary works from contemporary pop culture. These were characteristically popular books, mainly novels, published in recent years. There was a conspicuously high ratio of science-fiction books (e.g. J. R. R. Tolkien: *The Lord of the Rings*-series, C. S. Lewis: *The Chronicles of Narnia*-series, J. K. Rowling: *Harry Potter*-series, Lois Lowry: *The Giver*, Suzanne Collins: *The Hunger Games*-series), which was justified by the fact that the participants consider this genre as missing from the school literature classes. There are a number of works in the literary canon where the plot takes place in the past; yet, one can hardly find any texts about the imaginary world of the future. They generally agreed on the point that science-fiction literature would definitely deserve a spot in literature teaching. As one explanation goes:

In the current literary canon, there is hardly any room for texts about imaginary worlds. Students have very few opportunities to encounter literary pieces in which the fictional elements are not part of a fairy tale frame. Speaking from experience, the fantasy world of science fiction books can offer a shelter, breaking you away from everyday life a little bit and providing entertainment. These works may also have a similar moral message as the generally accepted, traditional literary texts on the school reading list.

The second group of works in question is rather from the circle of present-day youth literature dealing with everyday experiences of the students (e.g. Leiner Laura: *Szent Johanna Gimi [The St. Joan High School]*, James Lecesne: *Trevor*, Vámos Miklós: *Kisfiúk és Nagyfiúk [Little Boys and Big Boys]*, Kalapos Éva: *Masza [The Dollop]*, Jeanne Teller: *Intet [Nothing]*). In the case of these works, the prospective teachers of literature highlighted the processing of topics that happen to the children on an everyday basis; issues the young readers experience themselves, are excited or scared about. This feature of the works makes it easier for them to empathize with the characters and awakens the impression that the story is also for them and about them.

Based on the above-mentioned works, it becomes obvious that what is mostly missing from the public school education is literary pieces standing close to the students. They undoubtedly sense a continuously growing gap between the world inside and outside the school, and a strong urge to change this above practice in their future careers in the field of Pedagogy. The interviewees had, however, differing views on how to carry out these changes. The majority represented the opinion that they would be able to individually make an effort out of their own strengths in bringing their class closer to literature and to the love of reading. A few reckoned, though, that a real shift can take place only as a consequence of modifications on the system-level, as the current amount and fixed nature of the literature curriculum make individual innovation over the course of the pedagogical work nearly impossible. As prospective teachers, they are aware of their own personal responsibility; concerning their professional opportunities and freedom, however, they represent differing views. As a further confirmation for research results from earlier years, we can conclude that the future literary educators in Hungary also acknowledge the potential problems concerning their subject, emphasize the need for change, and already have plans and ideas for turning these efforts for change into reality; yet, they are unsure about its exact implementation.

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Reactions of Czechoslovakia to the Hungarian Uprising 1956

Barnabás Vajda

Abstract

The present study sums up the overall reaction of the Czechoslovak Communist Party establishment on the Hungarian uprising in 1956. As we can see from the sources, the Czechoslovak political elites pursued to prevent any kind of “harmful ideological infiltration” from Hungary by immediate and intensive military manoeuvres. As we look at the depth of the events: at the aims, strategy, and extent of the reactions on the side of the Czechoslovak political leadership, we can discover that Czechoslovakia regarded the situation so grave that it not only mobilised heavy forces (including State Police, State Security, Peoples Militia and military forces units) but it would have been ready to move in to Hungary if there had been such a need.

Key words: Czechoslovak Communist Party; Hungarian uprising 1956; ideological infiltration; State Police; State Security; Peoples Militia; military

Subject-Affiliation in New CEEOL: History – Recent History – Post-War period (1950-1989)

How did the Czechoslovak state, geographically a direct neighbour of Hungary, and a political and military ally of the Socialist-bloc-countries, react to the 1956 uprising? As an introduction into the topic, the present study focuses on two distinguished levels of events, namely the immediate reactions of the official Czechoslovak political leadership, and the reactions of Hungarians living in Czechoslovakia to the 1956 Hungarian uprising.

The Czechoslovak Politburo held an emergency meeting right on October 24, 1956, explicitly as a reaction onto the Hungarian events. They did so in the absence of their First Secretary, Antonín Novotný who was on an official visit to Moscow. On October 27, a meeting of the Central Committee of the National Front took place and here again the Hungarian events were at the centre of the agenda. („Zasedání rozšířeného předsednictva ÚV Národního fronty jednal o přípravě III. sjezdu JZD a o situaci v Maďarsku.” See Buchvaldek, Miroslav (ed.): *Československé dějiny v datech*. Nakladatelství Svoboda, 1986, 515.) As a result of these meetings, one of Czechoslovakia’s first *official reactions* was an immediate and careful clampdown on civil liberties. During the autumn of 1956, the Czechoslovak communist government was very effective to suspend and/or control all civil liberties, among them curtailing the rights to assembly and to privacy, as well as limiting the freedom of speech.

The Czechoslovak State Security (*Štátna bezpečnosť, ŠtB*), which had already been in full scale operation since the early 1950s, was able to accelerate its pre-emptive operations in the troubled days of October 1956. Let us share just one numerical item which reflects the scale of the control of the Czechoslovak state over its citizens, including tapping private telephone conversations and the censorship of private letters. According to Karel Kaplan, in the period from October 23 to 29, 1956, the officers of the Czechoslovak State Security surveyed some 26.493 private letters out of the total 290.000 – which works out a manual check of almost 10% of all surface post sent in the country within a time span of a week. (Kaplan 2005, 448, 449, 471, 467)

As another pre-emptive measure, the Czechoslovak government rigorously required from all state employees a pledge of affiliation, and surveyed the general mood at the workplaces through communist party members. This process was carefully scheduled at the highest political level, at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (*Ústredný výbor Komunistickej strany Československa, ÚV KSČ*), and was operationally implemented through the Ministry of Interior by the State Police and the State Security. (Kaplan 2005, 476-477)

The Czechoslovak communist party establishment tried to prevent any kind of “harmful ideological infiltration” from Hungary by *immediate* and *intensive military manoeuvres*. The extent of these actions seemed substantial enough to prevent any unwanted activities. On October 24, the Minister of Interior ordered a partial mobilization of homeland military units, which order was upgraded to *full mobilization* on October 28 at all units of the State Police and the State Security. Deputy Minister of Interior, Jindřich Kotál was ordered to travel to Bratislava where he became an operative coordinator of all military events. At the same time, members of the Peoples Militia, equipped with handguns and live ammunition, were ordered to patrol the streets of the main cities Prague, Bratislava, Košice etc. (Kaplan 2005, 440, 441) According to Karel Kaplan, during the peak times of the events “in the last week of October, there were 12.540 people along the Hungarian border, 8.759 of whom were military personnel”, as well as there were “280 tanks and a considerable number of howitzers ready for combat”. (Kaplan 2005, 457)

The government also introduced a completely centralised filtering of press reporting, right from the very first day of the revolution. The first thing the Czechoslovak communist party leadership introduced was stopping the influx of the Hungarian newspapers to Czechoslovakia. Until October 1956, Hungarian newspapers such as the *Szabad Nép* and the *Irodalmi Újság* (both political dailies), and the *Lúdas Matyi* (a politico-satirical weekly) were imported into Czechoslovakia in relatively large numbers – their import, however, was stopped right after October 23, 1956. This kind of a restriction of the press was typical for a country which was involved in an ideological warfare, and this step hit badly especially the intelligentsia who was interested in international events. From this term on, in Czechoslovakia it was impossible to follow the details of the Hungarian events. And if we add to this the intensity of the rapidly changing set of events in Hungary (in Budapest and in the countryside), as a result we have to conclude that people in Czechoslovakia were simply unable to get a clear and nuanced picture of what exactly was happen-

ing in Hungary.

For the Czechoslovak communist party leadership, however, neither preventive military restrictions, nor strict control of the press were enough. The ÚV KSČ used some proactive measures, too, in the manner of “dezinformatsia”. This means that the Czechoslovak communist establishment started to use deliberately falsified information, as well as fake or intentionally distorted news. Personally, it was Bruno Köhler, one of the most devoted Stalinist at the Prague Politburo, who was sent to Bratislava in order to “lead the propaganda warfare against the Hungarian uprising”, and also in order to prevent any political rebellion in Slovak Communist Party circles. (Kiss 2002, 148)

We have hundreds of *ŠtB* reports as evidence on the true nature of the centrally directed propaganda campaign against the Hungarian uprising. According to these sources, for instance, someone in Bratislava talked in the presence of others of “Hungary currently trying to re-establish Saint Stephens’s Hungary that is the rule of the clergy led by Archbishop József Mindszenty. Their main goal with this is to spread the revolt to Slovakia, after which Hungary and Slovakia would unify as one country”. (Kaplan 2005, 512) Needless to say that no such unification plan had ever existed – but being afraid of the re-activation of the Roman Catholic Church structures, Czechoslovak authorities resorted to the state-organised anti-Mindszenty campaign. (József Mindszenty was a Hungarian Roman Catholic dignitary who was quite outspoken on several international issues.) Among the *ŠtB* files from the Autumn of 1956 there is a striking large number of reports in which secret agents are writing about people “being afraid of the return of the old system” and “of Horthy marches being sung again” and of “the return of Horthy’s clericalism” etc. (Kaplan 2005, 544, 577 etc.) In such a desinformative mood, it is perhaps not surprising that on November 3, 1956, the Czechoslovak President Antonín Zápotocký joined in; when he was speaking in the Prague broadcast on that day, he referred to the Hungarian events as “fascist white terror”. (Kaplan 2005, 455)

Considering that Czech and Slovak society had already been living under a rigid Stalinist-type state system since 1948, the description above seems to describe a rather intimidated society. Even though there are some reports that certain layers of Czech and Slovak society were indeed in favour of the Hungarian events in the autumn of 1956 (including the members of the Czech and Slovak intelligentsia, priests, etc.), it is fair to conclude that in general terms, Hungarian events in 1956 meant a *deep and fearful stress for Czechoslovak society*. It is safe to say that the majority of Slovaks and Czechs showed unswerving loyalty to the current Czechoslovak establishment. During the Hungarian crisis in 1956, most Czechs and Slovaks reacted with suppressed fear – which fear, however, does not seem genuine. In Karel Kaplan’s words, in 1956 “*party alertness, ideological warfare, and the preventive repressive interventions created such a political atmosphere that it was very difficult to form one’s own public opinion or to express any kind of solidarity with the Hungarian revolution, and the circumstances were especially unripe for starting a similar revolution*”. (Kaplan 2005, 445)

In fact, many people, typically communist party members, were involved in intensive co-operation between the Czechoslovak and the Hungarian communist party

organs in late 1956 and early 1957. This cooperation was partly made possible by certain communist functionaries that had fled from Hungary and found temporary shelter in Czechoslovakia. Karel Kaplan estimates that the number of these “refugee” communists was considerable amounting to 1367. They were provided for by a commission of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Czechoslovakia, within the operation “Akcia E” framework, and were placed under the protection of three different ministries. (Kaplan 2005, 471)

A special layer of Slovak society were ethnic Hungarians living in Slovakia as Czechoslovak citizens, whose number is estimated to some 600.000 in 1956 thus working out some 10% of the whole population of Slovakia. How did these Hungarians living in Czechoslovakia react during the 1956 revolution?

Hungarians living in Czechoslovakia were able to read Hungarian newspapers, at least until the Czechoslovak government introduced a ban on the press from Hungary; after that they were still able to listen directly to the Hungarian broadcast stations – thus were able to directly gather some news, which meant direct knowledge for them, at least in comparison with those Czechs and Slovaks who relied on centrally directed and manipulated Czechoslovak communist press.

Many Hungarians living in Czechoslovakia, who were politically in favour of the revolution, felt very proud of the events. Their sincere feelings of pride and joy and sympathy sprung from their national identity, and was based on the fact that both Hungary and Hungarians, as a brave country and brave people standing up against the mighty Soviet Union, were attributed a very positive picture in the 1956 international press.

A huge outburst of Hungarian national feelings among the Hungarians living in Slovakia was recorded in almost an endless number of secret service reports. In most cases these nationalistic feelings manifested and materialized in symbolic solidarity with the Hungarian revolutionary spirit. This pro-Hungarian enthusiasm also led many men and women to give help to armed insurgents who were fighting against communists. We certainly do not know the exact number of Hungarians living in Slovakia who were keen on supporting the spirit and the idea of the 1956 Hungarian revolution – but it is no doubt that they were the overwhelming majority.

On the other side, there were those Hungarians living in Slovakia who resolutely refused the aims and tendencies of the 1956 Hungarian revolution. Some of these people were involved in specific secret operations in order to support János Kádár’s groups.

Many Czechoslovak citizens, including some ethnic Hungarians, faithful Communist Party members, were involved in this cross-border cooperation. The more complete content of this comrade-to-comrade cooperation is still unknown, however, at least one activity of theirs is clear: they smuggled Hungarian language propaganda materials into Hungary, supporting János Kádár’s “consolidation efforts”. (See on this Popély 2016, 73-96)

There were many incidents, as reactions or reflections on the Hungarian events, on a religious basis. Both in the personal recollections as well as in the State Security reports, there are quite a lot of data about incidents where the religious streak is overwritten by national feelings. An almost trivial topos is a group of *incidents*

about singing the Hungarian national anthem (if we think of Ferenc Kőlcsey's poem as a sacred text). Many dozens of reports read like the following: "After divine service on November 4, a lady started to sing the Hungarian anthem in the church, after which all the others around her joined in. [M.G. a worker woman, Šárovce/Sáró, Levice District, under surveillance.]" (Kaplan 2005, 546)

From various recorded incidents, one taken from János Sándor's 1956 in Koliňany/Kolon, is particularly complex. We can find here the recollection of Béla Balkó from the village of Koliňany/Kolon next to Nitra. In his recollections he says that in the evening of October 29, 1956, a group of about 10 or 20 people, Slovaks among them, sang the Hungarian anthem in the village inn. As a result, almost all of them were rounded up by the State Security a few days later, four of them were even put on trial and sentenced to many months in jail.

The religious underpinning is indeed unquestionable in many documented incidents; however, it is clear in most cases that it was the singers' national enthusiasm that prevailed (and not the religion as a factor). The evidence for this is not only that the bulk of the anthem-singing incidents took place at secular locations (e.g. at inns) but also that in many cases the non-religious peoples' reactions were dominant even at sacred locations. The two most typical examples we can cite for this are the following: In one case, the State Security stated that "*the miller's wife placed a wreath with a 4-metre-long Hungarian tricolour at the main gate of the cemetery [P.L. Šahy/Ipolytság]*". (Kaplan 2005, 535) Another example is from an oral history collection from Dlhá nad Váhom/Vághosszúfalú in the Galanta District, where "someone wrote on the wall of the parochy [the first line of Sándor Petőfi's National Song]: On your feet, Magyar, the homeland calls..., because of which the wall was not whitewashed for a long time".

According to the State Security reports (*agentúrní správa*) of the time, the Hungarians in Czechoslovakia were more concerned with socio-economic problems (e.g. a possible dissolving of the co-operatives) rather than with Hungarian political matters. Even in relation to the latter, more mention is made of the 1938 re-annexation and matters concerning the displacement of the population than either the topic of religion or of nationality. Contrary to this, we know unfortunately very little about the religious connections of the revolution among ordinary people, such as the Slovakian Catholic Church reacted to Pope Pius XII's related encyclicals. (See Vajda 2007) The question of the free church was a major issue since "Slovakian bishops, as a result of October 23, filed a petition at the end of October 1956 in which they required changing the laws concerning the Church and settling the relationship between the state and the Church, while the bishops referred throughout the petition to the events in Poland and Hungary" (Pešek-Letz 2004, 207).

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The History of Hungarian Foreign Policy under the Kádár-era

Róbert Győri Szabó

Abstract

Modern Hungarian foreign policy, especially that of the 20th century can hardly be called a success story, since – with minor interruptions – it is characterised by constant position loss together with a decrease in Hungary's political and economic weight. The after effect of 1956 besides its internal consequences was one of the main foreign affair issues of the early Kádár era. After the years of reprisal, the more open and more pragmatic Hungarian foreign policy was evident from 1963 and tried to use and widen its elbow room besides being a faithful ally to the Soviets.

Key words: Hungary; foreign policy; communism; kádárism; transition; bilateral relations; soviet bloc

Subject-Affiliation in New CEEOL: History – Recent History – Post-War period (1950-1989)

1. Starting point

The analytical aspects of the history of Hungarian foreign policy

A millennial heritage affecting the character of Hungarian foreign policy is the country's being nipped between the West and the East, which means dual determination due to the two kinds of orientation and civilizational directions. Like in neighbouring nations, this situation created a special Intermediate Region character, a kind of 'Central-Europeanisation', a kind of special entity which stands to the West by its own resources, but in most cases is forced to drift to the East.¹

From a Hungarian viewpoint, the basic dilemma is the lack of joint realisation of national unity and sovereignty; it is one of the tragedies of modern Hungarian history that either one of them or the other one is missing. National unity was realised with the lack of sovereignty (within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy), and when the country became sovereign, national unity disappeared. The independent Hungary could never be a real nation state containing all Hungarians.

Another determining phenomenon of the past two centuries is the constant conflict between the national majority and the minority. In times of national unity, the large number of nationalities, while in times of independent statehood, the Hungarian nation parts living in the neighbouring countries reproduced the majority-minority problem.

¹ The region between the lands lived by Germans and Russians has different names, the present paper consistently uses the term 'Intermediate Region'.

A cardinal source of conflict of Hungarian (foreign) policy, especially of the political conditions of the Carpathian Basin is the border issue that is constantly on the agenda. The border between Western and orthodox Christian civilisations goes through this area, what is more, political and ethnic borders have never ever overlapped, thus state boundaries have caused constant political conflicts.

Modern Hungarian foreign policy, especially that of the 20th century can hardly be called a success story, since – with minor interruptions – it is characterised by constant position loss together with a decrease in Hungary's political and economic weight. The importance of Hungary in Europe is far more modest than it was at the beginning of the 20th century.

Since the peace treaty ending World War I, a determining characteristic of 20th century Hungarian foreign policy has been the so-called Trianon-syndrome, which has more meanings. It mainly means the separation of the terms 'state policy' and 'nation policy' and the clash of the aims of these two. The previous means the policy serving Hungarian citizens and the latter means the policy serving all Hungarians including those ones in minorities. It is still an unsolved problem how a good relationship with both the neighbouring countries and the Hungarians beyond the borders could be established. However, Trianon also means separation, ecological dependence, more unfavourable economic endowments, and 'small state' misery.

Peace treaties after World War I had determined the fate of Hungary and that of the Intermediate Region, as they contributed to the destabilisation of the area and to the aggravation of the relations among the nations and states found here, what's more, the headway of Nazi Germany in the region, World War II as well as the decades of Soviet regime originated from the consequences of peace treaties. (Jeszenszky 1993, Kiss 2004)

The Communist Hungary before Kádár

Communist takeover was attained everywhere in the Soviet sphere of influence in Central Europe until summer 1948. This happened in Hungary, too.

Hungarian foreign politics had a very narrow scope of action already between 1945-48 and these possibilities came to an end after the process of "sovietisation" which means that in reality Hungarian foreign politics did not exist. An unambiguous and absolute pro-Soviet orientation commenced in foreign affairs so Hungary became a subjugated nation and a satellite state of the Soviet Union. Soviet interests were predominating within the bloc.

The line of the Hungarian foreign politics unconditionally adjusted itself to the Soviet Union. The goals of the new political system in foreign affairs were the followings: fight against the imperialist powers and their global system, "policy of peace", tight alliance with the SU and people's democracies.

With certain exaggeration, Hungary sank to the level of a member republic of the SU; decisions were practically made by the Soviets. Stalin decided in all crucial questions and the SU was directly supervising these countries. The secretary-generals of the Communist Parties in every single country became the local decision makers. It was Mátyás Rákosi in the Hungarian politics and foreign affairs who did not take independent steps in the foreign politics of the country but he fulfilled

the expectations of the Soviets and he often turned to them for advice as well. (Békés 2004, Romsics 1999)

In the mid-50s, due to the promising international events (the Yugoslavian, Polish and Austrian development, the success of the non-aligned movement) hinted that satellite countries might have elbow room within the bloc. As a result of Eisenhower's liberation policy many hoped for substantial help from the West.

The revolution breaking out on October 23rd took everyone abroad by surprise. The elbow room of the revolution was defined by internal developments, the foreign environment and the reaction of the Great Powers, primarily the actions of the Soviet Union and secondarily America and its western allies.

1956 did not have a chance - neither from the Soviet Union nor from the West - just like so many times before, Hungary did not decide on its own fate. The Soviets protected their invaded territories under all circumstances and the West could only change this by serious military confrontation which they did not want to take on. (The two super powers never took the risk of an armed conflict during the Cold War) A stronger presence from the West might have changed the Soviet attitude and the Hungarian events, but most probably this would not have forced Moscow to retreat. (Békés 2006, Gati 2006)

The Revolution and its suppression did not influence the relationship between the East and the West because the Soviets made order in their own bloc and did not endanger the Status Quo. 1956 caused a World Crisis for a couple of months, but did not result in a permanent tension between the two blocs and the "thawing" continued. The liberation policy of the USA however came to an end and they turned to a gradual, step-by-step "softening" policy of the Sovietised countries. For Hungary, the Revolution had one very important impact, which still has its effect today; Hungary's foreign judgement became very positive. (Békés 2007)

In 1956 it became evident that the people and societies in this region did not want a Soviet type system but could not liberate themselves on their own and the West did not help so they had to resign themselves to the circumstances. Overthrowing the system and leaving the bloc was only possible if the Soviet Union was weakened. 1989 showed that this is the actual and only possible way.

2. The early years (1956–1964)²

The years of reprisal (1956–1958)

After the Soviets agreed with Kádár on the wide spread reprisal, the Revolution was declared a Counter-Revolution the outbreak of which was reduced to four reasons: the sins of Rákosi-Gerő clique, Imre Nagy and his betraying circles, the national reactionaries and the intervention of the imperialists. Summary jurisdiction, mass reprisal began, 20 thousand prison sentences, 230 death penalties were handed over. In the surrounding socialist countries there were several manifestations of sympathy, sanctions followed, but not in Poland, mainly in Romania. (Békés 2007)

² First of all Békés 2004, Békés 2006, Békés 2007, Huszár 2003, Huszár 2006, Romsics 1999, Herczeg-Arday-Johancsik 2001, Kalmár 1998, Baráth 2003.

The national freedom fight was logically followed by condemnation of nationalism and the neglect of national identity. Such pure internationalist approach within the bloc was only found in the DDR. The country did not care about Hungarians outside its own borders for decades.

On May 27, 1957 the Hungarian-Soviet agreement was signed on the temporary stationing of Soviet troops in Hungary. Both parties agreed that the sustainability of the illegitimate new communist power, rejected by society can only be ensured this way.

The abduction and assassination of Imre Nagy – international relations

Imre Nagy's fate was decided partly by the Soviet leadership, partly by other communist brother parties and last by János Kádár – in the name of scapegoating.

There was a deadlock situation in case of Nagy who fled to the Yugoslavian Embassy. They could not leave the country because of the Soviet intervention but they were not extradited to the Soviets either. Tito was in a trap as well, he simultaneously supported Kádár, the intervention and Imre Nagy by granting him asylum. Nagy refused to resign and acknowledge the rival government while the Soviets and Kádár wanted to call him the leader of the opposition.

Tito finally managed to escape from this situation without losing face. He received a written guarantee from the Soviets and Kádár that Nagy and his associates will not be harmed after leaving the Embassy so formally Yugoslavia was innocent. Breaching its promise, the Soviet Union captured and took Nagy and his associates to Romania where they were put under house arrest. Partly because of this, once more a gap appeared between the Soviet Bloc and Yugoslavia. A more profound reason for this gap was that Yugoslavia did not return to the Bloc.

Kádár and the Soviet Leadership both wanted to sentence the Prime Minister to death, since he symbolised the 56 resistance. In the spring of 1957 Nagy and his associates were arrested. In the summer the Soviets approved the indictment and so decided on the future verdict.

Khrushchev did not want to disturb the process of "thawing" so from 1957 onwards the trial was put off several times. Kádár and the Soviet Leadership continuously misinformed Tito and Gomulka, who were against the death sentence; they had been promised that there would be no reprisal against Nagy.

When Khrushchev visited Hungary in the spring of 1958, he did not mention Imre Nagy in front of the public and pretended that the case was simply the internal affairs of the country. Kádár received the green light in the beginning of the summer and the trial was immediately held in July. Straight after announcing the verdict as a result of summary proceedings, executions were held.

The last vast show-trial of the Soviet Bloc received great international reaction. All Western countries vehemently protested but by autumn things were quite. In the Socialist Camp, Gomulka was indignant but did not criticise the decision in public and met Kádár in the Crimea in August and closed the case forever. Polish-Hungarian relations did not suffer. The relationship with Yugoslavia worsened for half a year after the Soviet Union repeatedly came into conflict with the Southern Slav state. However, the tension did not prevail, Khrushchev continued the policy of

thawing and opening towards neutral countries, meanwhile Kádár followed close behind. Tito did not want to increase tensions with a more flexible Soviet Leadership and its Hungarian representative. (Békés 2007, Huszár 2006)

Isolation and attempts to break out, 1957–1963

After November 1956, only the countries of the Warsaw Pact, China and Yugoslavia were on speaking terms with Hungary, the new regime was put in international quarantine, the Western states and the UN practically excluded Hungary from the international system. Although Western countries did not break off all formal diplomatic relations with Hungary, they did not speak to the Kádár government which they considered illegitimate. For this reason the after effect of 1956 besides its internal consequences was one of the main foreign affair issues of the early Kádár era.

The new leadership had to obtain the trust of the socialist countries as well, so the Kádár leadership travelled round the region on introductory visits. For example, in 1958 they went to Romania and Czechoslovakia, where they made it clear that they regard the situation of the Hungarians living in these countries as their own internal affair. This resulted in worsening conditions for the Hungarians in both countries (for example in 1959 the independent Hungarian University in Romania was closed). Towards the end of the 50s, two Hungarian Government delegations visited China and signed the Chinese-Hungarian cooperation agreement.

The first breaking out point was contacting developing and neutral countries. In 1957, the Hungarian Minister of Foreign affairs made a round trip to the Middle East and Far East visiting India, Burma, Nepal, Indonesia, Syria, Egypt and Sudan. Between 1958 and 1960, the Egyptian President Nasser, the Indian President Nehru and the Indonesian President Sukarno returned this visit. In 1960, the diplomatic relation between Hungary and Japan was restored. The relation between the European neutral and EFTA countries was also back to normal which mostly meant trade relations. The scope of diplomatic relations was enlarged, mainly including the newly independent former colonies (in 1958, Hungary maintained diplomatic relations with 39 countries, in 1962 this number was 57). (Békés 2007)

The “Hungarian issue” in front of the UN General Assembly (1957–1962)

From November 1956, the so called “Hungarian issue” stayed on the agenda of the UN General Assembly. At the end of the year, the Assembly repeatedly condemned the Soviet Union, and demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops and the acceptance of UN observers. Then the Special Committee of Five investigated the events of the revolution, and based on this the General Assembly once more demanded the Soviet Union leave Hungary.

The Soviet Union and Hungary did not adhere to the decisions so until 1962 the General Assembly every year condemned the Kádár system and the aggressor, the Soviet Union. The USA used this as a tool to undermine their international reputation of the Soviet Union.

Hungary could not participate and contribute to the work of the UN because the mandate of the Hungarian delegation was withheld and not accepted for years.

The country however was not excluded from the UN and diplomatic relations between Hungary and the USA were not terminated though almost all contacts were stopped between the two countries.

The case in front of the UN could only be settled if the Hungarian-American relations were resolved and Hungary could only step out of international isolation through this. Normalisation meant very strict conditions for Hungary so the Hungarian regime from 1958 could not try to find their way with America to restore relations. In the autumn of 1960, Kádár participated in the UN General Assembly in New York but during his speech the representatives of the West left the room and the committee kept the "Hungarian issue" on the agenda.

The Kennedy-administration that took office in 1961 was more open to settle relations, but this also depended on the relationship of the two super powers, which was fluctuating to say the least and the erection of the Berlin Wall and the Cuban crisis delayed the solution of the Hungarian problem. The conditions of the USA in 1962 for restoring relations were total political amnesty. Khrushchev supported this solution so Kádár agreed to the deal. The UN Assembly moved the Hungarian issue from its agenda and accepted the mandate of the Hungarian delegation. The Kádár regime granted general and political amnesty. As the closure of the issue the General-Secretary of the UN, U Thant, visited Budapest. The only problem with the agreement was its delay. (Békés 2006)

Khrushchevism and Kádár

Between 1957 and 1964, the Soviet Union under Khrushchev pursued a dynamic and initiative foreign policy, he was looking for thawing and at the same time he tried to gain a foothold in the Third World.

He was more cooperative and more flexible with his allies, the subordination of the satellite states was loosened and instead of hand controlling, issues were discussed during the meetings of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon (The Council of Mutual Economic Assistance). The bilateral economic relations were driven by mutual benefits. Members of the bloc had to follow the Soviets in more significant issues but there was already place for more "independence" in minor questions. This meant bigger elbow room, the possibility for more flexible internal and external policies as well as the opportunity for reforms but naturally only within the boundaries of the communist allied system.

Kádár had Khrushchev to thank for his political career, he was Khrushchev's "best student", Kádár regarded him as his paternal friend and Hungary became one of Khrushchev's favourite places in the bloc.

In April 1958, Khrushchev made an eight day long visit to Hungary (returned two more times in 1959 and also had a visit in 1964). The first opportunity for independence arrived then: Khrushchev offered Hungary and Romania to withdraw the troops. Kádár, however, rejected the offer; he did not consider his political power strong and consolidated enough. Nevertheless, the withdrawal of the troops would have served best the interest of the country, it would have meant a lot to society and also would have strengthened the legitimacy of Kádár. (Romania took the offer and the troops were withdrawn from there) Anyhow, in the summer of 1958, one

division left Hungary and Soviet advisors went home as well.

During 8 years, they only had one disagreement, which was during the Cuban crisis in 1962. Kádár was unhappy that Khrushchev did not inform his allies about his plans. It became evident that in case of highly important matters or crisis Moscow does not consult with them, and they are at the mercy of Soviet foreign policy. Romania, concerning its foreign policy started to be more independent. Poland and Hungary tried to achieve that Moscow would always consult with socialist countries in advance. Khrushchev did not guarantee this but it still became the practice. (Békés 1998, Békés 2003, Békés 2004)

In 1963, Kádár stood by Moscow in the acrimonious Soviet-Chinese conflict so Hungary's relation with China became tense and the previously highly developed relations were minimised.

With Khrushchev's sudden dismissal, Kádár lost his patron. The news shocked him (he was scared for his own position as well, their closeness was widely known), he openly believed in Khrushchev and deeply disagreed with the mode of his dismissal. He did what he had never done before; he publicly disagreed with the Leadership of the Soviet Communist Party. It became a huge sensation "the Brave Kádár" is not a puppet but a sovereign politician.

In autumn, the Soviet and the Hungarian leadership settled their differences concerning the dismissal and from then on Kádár tried to win Brezhnev over, who had not forgotten Kádár's first reaction, nevertheless they managed to achieve a good work relationship throughout the years. (Baráth 2003, Békés 1998)

3. The pragmatic Kádár diplomacy after 1964³

All foreign policy and international matters were decided by the leadership of MSZMP (Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party) the Politburo or János Kádár, the First Secretary of the Party, personally. Decisions regarding foreign affairs were prepared by the Foreign Affairs Department of the Politburo. The role of the Foreign Ministry was merely execution though compared to the Rákosi era, it had a bigger elbow room. The most significant Minister of Foreign Affairs of this era was János Péter (1961–1973), during his time the ministry became more professional. Training in foreign affairs was only possible in the Soviet Union until 1963, from then on it was possible in Hungary as well. (Sík 1970)

The more open and more pragmatic Hungarian foreign policy was evident from 1963 and tried to use and widen its elbow room besides being a faithful ally to the Soviets. Kádár was given by the Soviets a relative internal economic independency in return to his loyal allied behaviour. Concerning the main questions, he always went by the Soviet demand but in bilateral Hungarian-Soviet relations he always strived for enforcing his own interest, he bargained continuously. The main principle of the internationalist Kádár towards the Eastern Bloc was to syncretise all ideas to demonstrate unity. (Földes 2002)

³ First of all Romsics 1999, Johancsik 2010, Békés 2004, Fülöp-Sipos 1998, Gazdag-Kiss 2004, Huszár 2003, Huszár 2006, Herczeg-Arday-Johancsik 2001.

Relations with the West: Kádár chose the road of co-operation and building contacts on the basic principle of peaceful coexistence. He strived to achieve good relations with the neutral western countries (Sweden, Finland, Austria). Western relations were important due to their economic aspects: for a policy that aims to calm down the public and raise the living standard a more efficient economic performance is required and this can only happen by strengthening the economic relations with the West (besides the safe Eastern markets and cheap Soviet energy and source of raw materials). (Johancsik 2010)

The regime introduced new travel regulations instead of the old rigid ones. Travelling out: it was possible to travel to socialist countries using a red passport without a visa (a visa remained necessary to the Soviet Union). To the West, a blue passport was necessary, a visa was required and was made possible every third year. On the Western borders the mine blockade was removed in the second half of the 1960s and the iron curtain lived on in the form of an electronic alarm system. Travelling in: the strict practice of issuing visas was lifted, the Hungarian Embassy judged the applications within three days. (Oplatka 2008)

Foreign economic relations during the introduction of the new economic mechanism

In 1968, regarding its foreign policy, Hungary, in return for the permission of a new economic mechanism allowing economic liberalisation and partial marketization, showed total loyalty to the Soviet Union. This way Brezhnev gave permission to the new programme, though he had reservations due to its market elements. The mechanism was a success and contributed to the stabilisation of the system, and Kádár's living standard policy resulted in the bloc's most bearable soft dictatorship.

Hungary tried to establish more intensive economic relations with the West. Opening towards the West was done very carefully. They knew that the West would use this to loosen the Bloc (the more the public is attracted to capitalism, the less it accepts socialism). The Soviet Union drew Hungary's attention several times to this danger of intrusion. As part of the opening, in 1967, Hungary started negotiations to enter IMF and the World Bank but gave up because of resistance from the Soviet Union. This try is an evidence of a pragmatic foreign policy that followed the Soviet demand. (Honvári 2006, Tőkés 1998)

The loyal but somewhat reluctant ally

From the end of the 60s, three elements characterised Hungarian foreign policy: dependency on the Soviet Union, competition within the bloc to enforce interest and dependency on Western economic relations, technology and loans to raise the living standard.

The country used its elbow room in its economy and foreign economic relations and from among the members of the bloc, positioned itself the furthest from the Soviet model. In return, in foreign policy the country stayed a loyal follower of the Soviet Union but this alignment was sometimes reluctant, disputative and not always instant. This way Hungary in the bloc was between two end points. The other countries in the bloc followed the Soviet line without objection, while Romania

had a maverick foreign policy. The reactions to the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and the Prague Spring give a good example of this policy.

Following the Soviet viewpoint since 1949, Hungary always took an Arab-friendly standpoint in the consecutive Israeli conflicts. After the 1967 six-day war, the Soviet Union immediately broke off all relations with Israel. The intermediate European allies all followed suit but Hungary waited and finally did the same among the last ones (still maintaining economic relations with Israel), while Romania was not willing to follow the others and take this step.

The suppression of the Prague Spring – the 2nd opportunity for independence

At the beginning of 1968 the leadership of the Czechoslovak party and state was renewed. After the election of Alexander Dubček, for half a year, Kádár was a careful protector of the Czechoslovak reforms. He met the new leadership several times and despite the growing criticism of other socialist countries he defended them. When in April Dubček proclaimed his humanized and democratic program called “socialism with a human face”, the Soviet leaders and their European allies believed that Czechoslovakia is heading towards a counter-revolution and were considering the option of military intervention.

Until July, Kádár was against the intervention (as well as the “maverick” Ceaușescu and Tito) and he tried to mediate. He wanted the same screenplay as the 1956 peaceful Polish settlement. He also supported Czechoslovakia because they could be supporters of Hungarian reforms. In July, Kádár accepted the Soviet viewpoint urging the intervention and also agreed to participate in the intervention (he agreed to send one division to Czechoslovakia). Kádár could have said no to participation, there would have been no retortion for Hungary but concerning Kádár, Moscow probably would have started procedures to replace him.

On Augustus 21, 1968, with the modest participation of East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary (which was to prove the collectiveness of the action), the Soviet army overrun the non-resisting Czechoslovakia. Kádár subsequently did not agree with the intervention but kept his doubts to himself and on the surface he pretended to agree.

The suppression of the Prague Spring in the West meant the laying down of the basic principles called Brezhnev-doctrine: the only way to Socialism is the Soviet way, socialist countries are jointly responsible for the bloc, and the Soviet Union has the right to intervene in the internal affairs of the “brother” countries if socialism is in danger. The manner of the intervention also indicated that things were changing: Contrary to 1956, the Soviets in the frame of the Warsaw Pact held discussions with their allies prior to the intervention not informing them afterwards. (Vida 1993, Huszár 1998, Huszár 2006, Békés 2004, Tőkés 1998)

Due to the Prague Spring, directions changed in the Soviet Union to a tougher and anti-reform trend and this affected Hungary as well, which was the only reform country besides Yugoslavia. The new economic mechanism was slowed down by the orders of Moscow. Kádár received harsh critics from the Soviets and had to remove the main reformers from the leadership. Stagnation set in while the Soviet Union insisted on having Kádár.

The icy atmosphere after the 1968 intervention resulted in the secret stationing of nuclear weapons in Hungary. The agreement on this was signed by Kádár and very few people were aware of it.

Relations with the intermediate European socialist brother countries

Romanian–Hungarian relations. The foreign policy of Nicolai Ceaușescu, who came to power in 1965, was known for its separatism and demonstration of independence which was favoured by the West but regarding his internal policy, he introduced a tough Stalinist, nationalist dictatorship. He started his “national homogenisation” program which was mainly against the Transylvanian Hungarian nationals. Hungary did not criticise the Romanian nationality policy but relations got tenser and tenser and Budapest with not too much zeal, tried to take steps to protect the Hungarian nationals. The zenith of this was the meeting of the two party leaders in 1977 in Debrecen/Nagyvárad. On this summit the Romanians accepted the proposal and objections of the Hungarians and made several promises. However, Ceaușescu betrayed Kádár and sabotaged most of the agreements and the anti-Hungarian attitude strengthened. After this, Kádár did not want to meet Ceaușescu, unfortunately he never actually stood up for the Transylvanian Hungarian nationals. He did not want to increase tension. (Borsi 1999, Földes 2007)

Polish–Hungarian relations. After Kádár’s visit to Warsaw in 1960, relations were good but there were issues in which opposite viewpoints were taken. Such an issue was the judgement of West Germany, where Central European States fell into two groups. East Germany (DDR), Poland and Czechoslovakia were only willing to talk to West Germany if their borders were accepted. Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania did not have any conflict with West Germany and would have wanted to develop economic relations through establishing diplomatic contact but they could not take these initiatives because they had to remain solidary to their allies.

East German–Hungarian relations. Relations were good from the start of the Kádár regime. East Germany had the most developed economy within the bloc so it was important for its economic aspects and East Germany remained an outstanding economic partner until the end. In 1967 a bilateral agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance was signed. Regarding ideology and political issues there was a lot of friction. The Ulbricht–Honecker regime followed the rigid, orthodox line so besides the Soviet Union, Hungary as a reformer got the most and toughest criticism from East Germany. (Békés 2009)

Hungarian – Czechoslovakian relations. The relation was burdened with two unsolved problems that were treated as taboo: the Hungarian participation in the 1968 intervention and the position of the Czechoslovakian Hungarian nationals. In 1977 the two countries signed a contract that has serious political and environmental effect up to this present day. The agreement about the Gabčíkovo–Nagyymaros waterworks was signed. The planned investment was to be realised around 1986–1990 but preparation works were delayed due to the financial difficulties in both countries and the Hungarians did not start the construction for years.

Hungarian – Yugoslavian relations. Hungary nurtured good relations with the socialist but neutral Yugoslavia and the situation of the Hungarians living there was

good. Kádár was careful not to make this relationship too strong as the Soviet Union would have taken a dim view of it. In 1966 the obligatory visa system was stopped between the two countries.

Contacts with the West

After 1963 the relations with Western countries continuously improved despite the ups and downs of the cold war. Political, economic and cultural relations improved as a trend. By the end of the 70s Hungary, compared to other socialist countries, was respected and widely accepted by the West.

American – Hungarian relations until the end of the 1970s

The relation depended on and followed the course of Soviet-American relations; it got better and worsened depending on Soviet interests. When the Soviets fell out with the USA (what they did quite often, for example concerning the Vietnam War), then Hungary's relationship with the USA worsened as well.

The USA started differentiating between the Soviet satellite states, the more independent their foreign policy was, the better treatment they received. After the Hungarian issue was resolved in the UN there was room for reconciliation and “normalising” the relations between the two countries but it soon turned out that opinions and standpoints were very far apart and agreeing would not be easy. For Hungary a good relationship would have been beneficial because of economic interests, more advantages in trade, long-term loans and claiming back the crown jewels were all on the agenda. America had compensation claims and financial demands (partly because of the losses from nationalisation); they also wanted to settle the Mindszenty case.

The relationship between the two countries until the end of the 1960s fell behind compared to US relationship with other socialist countries. Diplomatic relations only reached the ambassador level in 1966. From the start of the next decade due to cold war thawing the relationship became smooth and improved significantly.

The first official meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries took place in 1970 during a session of the UN General Assembly. The American Foreign Secretary visited Budapest in 1972 – as the first American Minister in history – after which the Hungarian Chief Consulate in New York was opened.

The case of Cardinal Mindszenty who was granted political asylum and was staying at the American Embassy in Budapest since the autumn of 1956 was also resolved in 1971 (with the help of the Vatican).

After ten years of negotiations in 1973 the Hungarian-American agreement on Finances and Property Rights was signed which settled financial disputes. Hungary paid 19 million dollars (for debt and nationalisation) to settle the claims towards each other once and for all. This amount did not even reach one tenth of the original demand from the US. Hungary did not get the “most favoured nation” status. After the closing meeting in Helsinki in 1975, the settlement of all pending issues was accelerated. In 1976 a cultural, educational and scientific agreement was signed (but Hungarians tried to slow down cultural contacts because of their destructive effects), in 1978 the US returned the Crown Jewels and granted Hungary the MFN

status. (Borhi 2009, Gazdag-Kiss 2004)

The return of the Crown Jewels took a long time because of its symbolic nature. The Crown was reclaimed as the property of the Hungarian Government but America regarded it as the property of the Hungarian people and did not want to legitimise the communist system by returning it. Negotiations only started in 1970 and finally the Carter administration focusing on human rights was ready for an agreement. An agreement was reached rewarding Hungary for the “relatively free atmosphere” and for being “the happiest barrack.” America had several conditions for handing over the Crown. The US emphasized that they were returning the Crown to the Hungarian people and not the communist system so the Party Leaders and even Kádár were not invited to the ceremony. (Glant 1997)

By 1978, all disputes were settled and “normalisation” was finished. By then, Hungary had become the third most important partner of the US from the Bloc besides Yugoslavia, and Poland, not counting with Romania because of its maverick ways. America began to view Hungary as a mediatory partner and Hungarian leaders were regarded the most suitable for getting things through to Moscow.

Relations with the Vatican

From 1957, bishops were nominated by the State Office for Church Affairs, state representatives were put in charge of church offices just like in the Rákosi era.

Tension decreased between the two parties from the beginning of the 1960s. Negotiations began between Hungary and the Vatican, a compromise was reached concerning the nomination of bishops and the state representatives left the church.

Relations were tense because of the Mindszenty case as well. Starting points differed greatly. Hungary tried to achieve the removal of the Cardinal insisting that the high ranking clergyman is a criminal sentenced validly by the Hungarian court. The Vatican refused.

Ideas started moving towards each other from the mid-60s. The Hungarians would have been satisfied if the Pope inhibited the Cardinal, the Cardinal would ask for clemency and he would be allowed to leave the country. The Pope also believed that the Cardinal should be taken out of the country and the US as a mediator tried to reach a compromise.

In 1971 a deal was made, which was also accepted by Cardinal Mindszenty. After 15 years, the Cardinal left the American Embassy and went abroad. He did not resign and he was not rehabilitated, he only received pardon. Four years after Mindszenty's death, Esztergom got a new Archbishop.

Relations afterwards were back to normal. The Vatican and Hungary accepted each other's existence. In 1975, Prime Minister György Lázár and in 1977 Kádár himself paid a visit to Paul VI, but diplomatic relations were not encouraged. (Zombori 2001)

Relations with West Germany

From the autumn of 1956 until 1963, West Germany boycotted the Kádár regime. From then on the Hallstein-doctrine hindered the normalisation process:

West Germany did not maintain diplomatic relations with a country accepting the existence of East Germany. (While East Germany wanted them to accept their statehood and the change of borders after WWII affecting the once territory of Germany.)

The unsettled German issue was also a source of permanent disagreement between the countries of the Eastern Bloc. Among them several ones wanted to take up diplomatic contact with West Germany and improve economic and political relations. It was Hungary's particular interest being trade-wise the most open among these countries.

West Germany did make some minor concessions from the beginning of the 1960s towards Central European States. In 1963, a trade agreement (this was the first contract between the two countries) was signed with Hungary, furthermore, they agreed on the mutual setting up of trade missions and strengthening economic ties with Poland Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary. Establishing diplomatic relations would also have served the interest of Hungary.

In 1967, West Germany started secret negotiations with four socialist countries about establishing diplomatic relations (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary). Kádár did not want to go ahead without the agreement of the allies, East Germany and Poland did not give their permission. Three out of the four countries accepted the fact that they would only establish diplomatic relations with West Germany if Bonn accepts the conditions of the Bloc. Romania, however, made an individual move and took up diplomatic contact with West Germany.

Budapest had to wait until the German issue was generally resolved and East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland settled their disputes with West Germany.

In 1970 Bonn and Budapest signed a five-year agreement so that trade representation would quasi function as an embassy. From 1970 to 1973, commerce tripled between the two countries.

The change came with the Ostpolitik (Eastern Policy) of the Social Democrat Willy Brandt. His breakthrough was the signing of the West German – Soviet and the West German – Polish contracts in 1970, in which West Germany accepted the western borders of the other two countries. After this, Poland was given permission by the Soviet Union to establish diplomatic contacts with West Germany. All the other allies had to wait until the two German States settle their dispute (which happened in 1972 when a comprehensive agreement settling the German-German relationship was signed) and the German – Czechoslovakian agreement resolved the problems. Only after that, at the end of 1973, as the last ones from the Bloc, could Hungary establish diplomatic relations with West Germany even though ten years before they wanted to be the first ones to do so. There was an immediate intensification in bilateral political, economic and culture relationship. In 1977, János Kádár paid an official visit to West Germany for the first time and in 1979 Helmut Schmidt West German Chancellor held negotiations in Hungary. Out of the Western countries, West Germany became far the most significant partner regarding economic and other aspects as well. (Horvath-Németh 1999, Békés 2009)

English and French relations

At the end of the 1960s, England did not pay much attention to Central Europe, concerning the East – West relations, London followed the direction defined by the USA. England did not have political or economic interest in the region (only 3% of their trade was with the Soviet Bloc) so their policy stayed cool and reserved towards Hungary. (Magyarics 2007)

From 1963, Hungary wanted to have closer commercial ties with France so the countries made steps towards each other, however the economic activity of Paris lagged behind that of other Western countries. Relations intensified in the mid-1970s when the Prime Minister as well as Kádár visited Paris and their visit was returned by the French Prime Minister. (Garadnai 2001, M. Szebeni 2008)

Hungary's relation with neutral Western states (Austria, Finland)

Hungary established excellent relationship with both of these special status Western democracies. The breakthrough in Austrian-Hungarian relations came with the visit of Bruno Kreisky Foreign Minister to Budapest in 1964. (He was the first Western leader to visit Kádár.) The two countries signed the long awaited agreement on property rights and Hungary removed the mine blockade on the Austrian border. Economic and cultural relations were quickly developing and frequent meetings were held. Outside the Socialist Bloc, Hungary had the closest relationship with Austria and from 1979 they abolished the visa system - as part of the second such agreement – after Finland. (Pritz 2002)

Hungary had excellent contacts with the uniquely positioned, neutral Finland as well. As an independent, democratic country, the Finns followed a neutral, somewhat Soviet friendly Realpolitik called Finlandisation, for example they were associated members of the Comecon. They had a stronger relationship with all the countries of the Bloc compared to any other Western country, especially with Hungary being a language relative.

Hungarian attempts of mediation between the West and the East

Hungary in the Vietnam War

After the American military intervention, for a whole decade the Vietnam War was one of the main topics of international relations and Hungarian foreign policy. In the war, in accordance with the ally loyalty Hungary supported North Vietnam but at the same time its aim was to improve Hungarian-American relations.

An attempt of mediation 1965–1966. Upon the request of the Soviet Union, Hungary as a mediator tried to end the war around the negotiating table. The Soviet Union was in a trap. It was its “internationalist duty” to support the people of Vietnam but wanted to avoid direct conflict with the United States. During the mediation, the US seemed willing to settle things via negotiations but the Chinese led Vietnamese communists rejected all negotiations. The Hungarian mission was unsuccessful, and the war continued.

Ceasefire monitoring, 1973–1975. Hungary once again got an important role in resolving the conflict: the international monitoring of the Vietnam ceasefire was carried out by four countries, two of which were socialist countries, Poland and

Hungary. Instead of neutrality all four countries were biased. Two of them, Hungary and Poland, supported North Vietnam and the other two backed South Vietnam. This partiality was not the independent decision of Hungary, the two socialist states followed and carried out the foreign policy of the Bloc (that is the Soviets). Hungary achieved significant diplomatic experience during these two years and had contact with many other nations. The Hungarian leadership's conclusion from the Vietnamese lesson was that as a small country it is worth acting as a mediator. (Szőke 2010)

The Hungarian role in preparing the Helsinki Accords

In 1966 the Soviets came up with the idea of organising a pan-European security conference with the following conditions: the West should accept the existence of the two German states and West Germany should accept the borders formed after the Second World War.

As part of the Soviet strategy, the Soviet allies tried to convince Western countries during bilateral negotiations. Hungary's diplomacy intensified. They wanted to play a key role in improving the relationship between the two blocs. Hungarian interests lay in the economic co-operations, which were the country's main motivation. In the autumn of 1967, Hungary became a temporary member of the UN Security Council for two years, its international position and its possibilities were better.

In 1969 the proclamation of the Warsaw Pact in Budapest started the Helsinki process, where they were invited to a security conference without any conditions. In 1970, the Warsaw Pact accepted the two conditions of the West: the USA and Canada can participate in the conference, and besides the economic and security issues the so called third basket, which covers that cultural and human right issues will also be on the agenda. The road to a direct dialogue between the East and the West was opened. The Hungarian government zealously took part in the preparatory negotiations which proved to be a milestone in the development of the country's relations with the West. Hungarian diplomacy played an initiating and mediating role from the start, mediating between the two sides. Hungary represented the viewpoints of the Warsaw Pact to the West while it tried to convince their own Bloc about acceptable Western suggestions.

The Helsinki Accord was signed in 1975, with this closing the formation phase of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. One of the most notable one out of the speeches held at the conference was Kádár's, he was talking the most about the third basket. (Békés 2004, Gazdag-Kiss 2004)

Foreign relations after Helsinki

The main beneficiary of the East-West thawing was Hungary, Budapest managed to develop its political and foreign contacts the most with the West (concerning human rights included in the third basket, Hungary was in the best position) Independent aspirations in Hungary's foreign policy became more and more pronounced but in issues important to the Soviet Union Hungary followed the direction dictated by Moscow.

There was a long line of mutual visits with leaders of western countries. The number of diplomatic relations grew significantly. In 1970, Hungary was in diplomatic contact with 89 countries while in 1980 this number was already 127. (Also with the states of the Iberian Peninsula, after the fall of dictatorship there.)

The number of trips in and out of the country also grew rapidly. In 1980, 14 million visitors arrived to the country (in 1969 this number was 6 million) and five million trips abroad were registered (10 years prior they registered one million). Westerners were keen to visit the country of Gulyás communism.

Foreign economic relations

After Helsinki the possibility for dynamic trade and economic relations between the East and the West was open. Opening to the West was looking for a way out of economic difficulties (the effect of the oil crisis, the freezing of the new economic mechanism all caused serious economic problems).

The country continuously tried to strengthen economic relations with the West and find new markets for Hungarian products. In 1973, Hungary joined GATT. The proportion of Hungarian import and export between 1960 and 1980 with the West grew from 22-24% to 35-40%.

It was in Hungary's interest to establish a relationship with the EEC but the Soviet bloc prevented this because the Comecon wanted to do this instead, However the EEC only established bilateral contacts with separate countries which Moscow rejected.

After Helsinki, borrowing from the West became possible for the Eastern Bloc, mainly Budapest and Warsaw used this opportunity. Foreign loans delayed the problems but indebtedness began. The Soviet Union was not too keen on the rapidly expanding Western economic relations of Budapest. In 1978, Brezhnev warned Hungarian leaders not to give political concessions for the West in return to economic subsidies.

Until the 1970s, Hungarian-Soviet relations were good because of the large and stable Soviet potential market. The safe market of the underdeveloped Soviet economy did not encourage development and non-competitiveness increased.

Concerning foreign economic relations, Hungary got into a two-way dependency: from the Soviet Union which delivered raw materials and energy resources and purchased all out of date and insufficient quality products (one third of foreign economic trade was done with the Soviets), and from the West borrowing loans and in possession of modern technology.

Due to economic problems the new economic mechanism was re-launched in its modified form in 1978 but in vain. Planned economy building on state property

was basically false and non-reformable. The productivity of Hungarian economy even in the Kádár era was far behind from the Western level. (Honvári 2006)

Hungary and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan – December 1979

The Afghan military intervention, with which they saved the formerly established communist puppet state, was an unexpected step. Since the Cuban crisis, this was the first case when the Soviet Union faced its allies with a ready situation. Hungary did not have other option than accept the Soviet step and follow the Bloc's propaganda whilst trying to defend economic and trade relations with the West.

The USA supported this; they would have maintained thawed relations with small Soviet allies. But at the beginning of 1980, an emphatic "request" arrived to Hungary from the Soviet Union to freeze all its main Western contacts because Western countries reacted harshly to the intervention.

(It is understandable, this is the first time since 1945 that the Soviet Union had occupied a country outside its sphere of interest accepted by the West.) The majority of the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party's Politburo did not want to obey the Soviets, only after Kádár's passionate interference did they decide to support Soviet demands.

Luckily, the decision was short-lived and Hungary's Western contacts did not suffer because of the breakout of this so called "little cold war". As a result of Hungarian mediation, the Soviet Union held multilateral negotiations with its allies about the effect of the Afghan issue, and the countries of the bloc were given free hand to maintain their Western relations. They managed to convince them that by keeping up relations with the West side of the continent, American influence will decrease.

Hungary played a positive role during the crisis. It managed to avoid the general deterioration of the East-West relation; in Europe the cold war did not increase (while the Soviet-American relation was at its lowest). Hungarian-American contacts were also unharmed even though until now the Hungarian-American relation always depended on Soviet-American relations. The role of the mediator became even more important as Washington and Moscow hardly talked to each other. (Békés 2004)

The Polish crisis (August 1980 – December 1981)

Poland was in an economic crisis and this sternly Catholic country was deeply shaken when in 1978 a Polish prelate was elected Pope, who then visited his home country next year (this was the first time in history for a Pope to visit a Socialist country).

In 1980, there were nationwide strikes, protests and demonstrations and the workers of the shipyard in Gdańsk formed Solidarity, an independent trade union under the leadership of Lech Wałęsa. It grew to be a mass movement with millions involved and the Communist system seemed to be crumbling in Poland. The crisis was ended by General Jaruzelski who under the pressure of the Soviets in 1981 introduced and military dictatorship to restore order. (Otherwise the Soviet Union would have used military intervention. In the given situation, this was the least bad solution; Kádár thought it was a better solution, too.)

The Kádár leadership was scared of the event's social effects in Hungary and a nationwide solidarity. This resulted in strong propaganda against Solidarity which was said to have endangered the living standard and socialist accomplishment. The worry was unnecessary, the Hungarian public affected by the living standard policy of Kádár remained indifferent to Solidarity. (Tischler 2003)

IMF and World Bank Membership in 1982

The long lasting illness of Brezhnev and the aging leadership weakened the effectiveness of controlling Bloc members. In 1982 Brezhnev died but the situation did not change since two elderly, ill leaders followed until 1985 (Andropov, Chernenko), so Hungary had more room for independent initiations.

The outbreak of debt crisis in the beginning of the 1980s had its effect on Eastern European countries as well and many of them became insolvent. This was almost the case in Hungary as well and only by entering the IMF and the World Bank did it manage to avoid bankruptcy. Kádár was reluctant to enter but the economic reasons made it necessary. The entry was supported by the USA and the Western-European countries but the Soviets were not informed. Hungary – referring to the serious economic situation – simply announced its intent to the Soviets. The Soviet leadership submitted to it as they themselves could not provide any economic help. (Honvári 2006)

Joining these two international monetary organisations was the first real independent foreign policy move of Hungary for decades. It indicated that the economic troubles force the countries to deviate from the Soviet line not only from the economic aspect but politically as well. It became a habit that the Soviet leadership was only informed about the minor foreign policy issues later.

Developing of the Western Relations

Until 1985 Hungary's relation with the West developed dynamically. Kádár visited Bonn, Paris, London and the first time in history the French President Mitterrand, the West German Chancellor, the British and Italian prime ministers came to Hungary.

However the elbow room was still restricted. In 1984 on Soviet command Hungary boycotted the Los Angeles Olympic Games (only Romania participated from the Bloc gaining the sympathy of the West for a few more years)

The Hungarian-American relations. The countries of the Bloc knew they can only expect concessions from the Reagan administration if they show more independence in foreign politics and lessen the dictatorship. George Bush Vice President in 1983 visited Yugoslavia, Romania and Hungary for a reason. Hungary strived to get the biggest concession permanently, narrow the CoCom list and have access to more American and Western technology. Neither of these issues brought success. (America knew that Budapest will hand over part of the Western technology to the Soviet Union) At the beginning of the 1980's four American companies and three American-Hungarian joint ventures started operating in Hungary (for example Tungstam joined up with its former owner General Electric) and three Hungarian companies were set up in the USA.

Hungary gradually became in the eyes of the West the most presentable country from the Bloc overtaking Romania and Poland (their reputation was tarred because of the strong dictatorships). Hungary was the keeper of the dialogue between the two sides until this role was overtaken by the Soviet Union in 1985.

4. Hungarian foreign policy and transition (1988–1989)⁴

In March 1985, the 54 year old Mihail Gorbachev came to power and a new era started in the Soviet foreign and internal policy. Gorbachev wanted to end the Brezhnev stagnation, the real turn happened in the spring of 1986 after the Chernobyl catastrophe and the reform of the entire political system took place in 1987.

The Soviet Union was full of internal problems. Gorbachev believed in the reformability of the system, he believed in democratic socialism. His aim was to modernise the economic system, make it more effective (perestroika) and somewhat democratise the political system with bigger publicity and self-management. His reforms in reality were ineffective and could not overcome the crisis.

In his foreign policy he strived for thawing towards the USA and wanted to slow down the pace of armament and achieve disarmament. He realised that he has no economic power to continue with imperial politics. Intensive Soviet-American dialogues were started concerning the partial disarmament.

The years before the turn in foreign policy, 1985–1988

Unable to achieve real change, the elderly Kádár was suspicious towards Gorbachev, saw his reforms dangerous from the aspect of the Soviet Empire and political system.

The visits of Western politicians continued (for example, the American Foreign Secretary, monarchs like the Dutch Queen and the Spanish King)

In 1986, the Western counties of Hungary joined the Alps-Adriatic Working Group which was brought to live by German, Italian, Austrian, Yugoslavian regional units which were under state level. This heterogeneous combination made it unique because its members belonged to different political, military and economic blocs. (NATO, WP, EC, Comecon). The aim of the group was to start the political, economic and cultural co-operation of the regions in this area.

From 1985, the seeds of national politics started to appear. Mátyás Szűrös, the foreign secretary of the Central Committee was the first to publicly declare. The Hungarian state now strongly objected to the minority policy of Romania.

In the autumn of 1985, as the first from the Socialist Bloc, Hungary got the right to organise the cultural post event of the CSCE. The event had two important consequences: everybody who wanted to come into the country could do so, and during the event anybody could organise a press conference. The Hungarian leadership was worried about letting migrants in and the counter-event organised by the opposition. The counter-event could not be openly banned by the official bodies as

⁴ First of all Romsics 2003, Ripp 2006, Johancsik 2010, Herczeg-Arday-Johancsik 2001, Békés 2004, Tőkés 1998, Braun-Barany 1999.

it would cause an international scandal but they tried to prevent it. (Romsics 2003)

In 1987 Károly Grósz became Prime Minister and was given a freer hand in economics. The foreign economic and political activity of the government grew. Hungary received a loan of one billion German Marks from West Germany for modernisation. Never before did Hungary get such an amount of loan with such good conditions from a Western country before.

Even the opposition did not hope for a significant foreign and internal turn in the short run. The effect of opposition groups was irrelevant. In 1987, the programme of the so called democratic opposition, the Social Contract realistically suggested a change in leadership but not a change in the system. In foreign policy they were considering the reform of the Comecon and neutrality in the long run but at that moment they did not think it would be realistic. In 1987, the group of populist writers founded the Hungarian Democratic Forum but they did not attempt to break foreign political taboos.

The year of opening in foreign policy: 1988

The quality change in Hungarian foreign policy took place in 1988. Hungary by then could form its foreign contacts freely and could establish diplomatic relations driven by economic interests with the European Economic Community, South and after 20 years with Israel. From this year the role of the Foreign Ministry was much more significant in the formation of the foreign policy.

From January 1, 1988 the passport was introduced which allowed free travel to the West and meant the start of the shopping tourism.

Hungary signed a trade and co-operation agreement with the EEC. The EEC has not signed such an agreement with a socialist country before and later the other countries with changing systems followed and signed similar agreements. Building contacts with the NATO also began.

The re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel happened gradually in several phases as Gorbachev asked for caution and patience in this issue. Diplomatic relations on ambassadorial level were only established in 1989.

Gorbachev tried to keep the Bloc together using political means; he did not force his reforms onto the members and did not directly intervene in their internal affairs. In 1988–1989 the three reformer countries established an informal Moscow-Budapest – Warsaw triangle and tried to harmonise their political and economic reforms.

The fall of Kádár – without Soviet intervention

The Soviet Union did not interfere in the emergency conference of the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party held in the spring of 1988 even though there were anticipated personal and political changes. The party conference replaced Kádár after 32 years with Károly Grósz who became president. They also replaced several members of the Politburo. Gorbachev did not hinder or support the action. (Tőkés 1998)

During the next period Grósz led the Party and the government as well. While he was in power it turned out that he is only willing to initiate economic reforms and

not political ones. The political reformer trend represented by Imre Pozsgay began to turn against him more and more.

Grósz visited the USA in his dual capacity in the summer of 1988. He was the highest ranking official to visit since 1946. The visit did not bring any results. America did not provide actual economic help or loan. The USA tried to facilitate peaceful reforms in the Eastern bloc without inciting tension with the Soviet Union. Nevertheless the American-Hungarian co-operation got stronger and stronger despite of the spy scandal in the autumn of 1988 as the last cold war incident between the two countries.

Nagymaros-Gabcikovo power plant – The first failure of Grósz

In spite of the fact that the Hungarian Academy of Sciences proposed the stopping of the construction because of prospective environmental damages, Hungary started construction in the middle of the decade. The handover of the Gabčíkovo water system was 1990 and Nagymaros was postponed to 1993.

In 1984, the first civil movement called the Danube Circle (Duna Kör), which openly opposed the construction of the dam, was founded. After this the start of the construction of the Nagymaros part brought about wide social resistance. 35–40 thousand people protested against the dam in Budapest in the autumn of 1988, the police did not intervene. It was evident that Hungarian society opposes the construction of the dam and is ready to take steps against the state's decision if necessary. (Romsics 2003)

Romanian village demolition plans – the second foreign policy failure of Grósz

The plan was introduced in the spring of 1988 by Ceaușescu according to which in 10 years only half of the Romanian villages would remain. The plan served the Romanian national homogeneity, a large proportion of the chosen villages were Transylvanian Hungarian villages the inhabitants of which were planned to be moved into apartment buildings where their assimilation would have been easier.

The announcement was received with a general outcry from Hungarian society at the peak of which 100 thousand people protested against the demolition in June 1988. The protest was granted permission by the Politburo – since 1956, this was the first time a protest not organised by the state was not banned

Romania accused Hungary of nationalism and interference into its internal affairs. It closed the Hungarian consulate in Cluj and the Hungarian Cultural Centre in Bucharest. As an answer to this the Hungarian Parliament issued a declaration opposing the demolition of villages.

On the advice of Gorbachev, who remained unbiased in the dispute but unofficially agreed with the Hungarians, Grósz met Ceaușescu but the Arad meeting in the late summer proved to be unsuccessful, Ceaușescu rejected all Hungarian proposals and suggestions. No matter how keen Grósz was to agree with Romania it was a total failure. The public took it as diplomatic defeat or to go even further as a betrayal of national interest.

The failure in Arad evidently showed that Hungary has reached the crossroads. Either it surrenders the Hungarian minority to the dictator or it eventually steps up

effectively representing their interest and protecting their existence and identity. (Borsi 1999, Földes 2007)

The plan if the Romanian “settlement organisation” died out next year, probably not because of the Hungarian presence but the protest of the West and the lack of financial resources.

There was unprecedented and vehement protest from the Hungarian against the Nagymaros-Gabcikovo dam and the Romanian plan for settlement demolition. These two issues made Grósz unpopular.

Foreign policy opening in challenging areas: contact building with South Korea

In connection with the Seoul Olympics the two countries agreed to take up contact. On the request of Hungary this happened in two phases, as Hungary needed time to let the other socialist countries accept the decision. From South Korea’s point of view this was an event of historic importance, Hungary was the first from the socialist countries which established an official interstate contact with them. In return they gave a 600 million dollar loan to Hungary. The Western states openly welcomed it, the socialist countries starting reforms themselves silently accepted it, the countries having strong contacts with North Korea like Bulgaria, Romania and East Germany protested, and Kim Ir Sen ordered their Ambassador to return home from Hungary. The situation was settled on February 1, 1989 when a full diplomatic contact was established and the permanent representations were elevated to ambassadorial level. (Békés 2004)

The year of wonders: 1989

The first half of the year: the Soviet “flotation” of the Brezhnev doctrine

At the beginning of 1989 Imre Pozsgay announced in the radio that 1956 was not a counter-revolution but a popular uprising. This was the first anti-Soviet step of the Hungarian leadership: based on this evaluation their military intervention was unlawful. A strong letter of reply was drafted in the Soviet Communist Party, but Gorbachev ordered the letter not to be sent. The Soviet Union accepted this development as well.

Gorbachev had probably already decided at the end of 1988 that no matter what happened he would not intervene in the Central European region. He did not and could not hold onto the outer imperial ring by power. He did not obstruct the Polish semi-transition (in the beginning of the year the state party made a deal with the Solidarity and they held a partially free multi-party election) or the Hungarian reformation of its internal affairs. In February 1989 the Soviets left Afghanistan as well.

Gorbachev did not give up on Central Europe. He thought that going back to the democratic coalition situation present after 1945, the communist party would remain hegemonic and a renewed version of socialism would prevail in the region.

To assert his influence he “floated” the Brezhnev-doctrine and did not call it invalid. Nobody knew for certain whether he would intervene militarily or would he accept the fall of socialism in the ally countries. Based on this Gyula Horn the

Minister of Foreign Affairs believed that it would be a fatal blow to the allied system if the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (MSZMP) lost political power and then a soviet military action could be possible. (Békés 2004)

The Warsaw Pact and the issue of neutrality

By the spring of 1989, Hungary had a new concept of foreign policy: once again the role of being a bridge between the East and the West was put on the agenda. The leadership of the disintegrating state party presumed that the Bloc, the Warsaw Pact and the Comecon would remain and they strived to reform and democratise the operation of these organisations and the co-operation of the countries in the Bloc.

Budapest subdued the participation in the Warsaw Pact (for political and economic reasons as well), the military costs were cut by one fifth and from 1989 the troops of the member countries could not hold military training in Hungary. However they saw exiting from the Pact, having a non-aligned status like Yugoslavia, let alone neutrality as unrealistic. (Kiss 2004)

Meanwhile in 1989 all the opposition parties assumed neutrality as their point of view based on 1956 namely ensured by the guarantee of the Great Powers. However there were indications from the Soviet Union and the West as well that this effort would not be backed and supported. Gorbachev in the spring of 1989 warned that claiming neutrality is not realistic (he regarded the allied system as a taboo and wanted to modernise the Warsaw Pact). In the West they regarded the proposition untimely not to be harped on by the countries of the Eastern Bloc. The USA and the West European powers believed that the stability of the continent can only be maintained if NATO and the Warsaw Pact stay on.

Foreign economic development

By 1988, the country was in a catastrophic economic situation, the growth of economy stopped, the state had accumulated a 20 billion dollar debt stock, the Kádár economic policy had failed. Realignment started in foreign economy as well. State leadership fled from bankruptcy towards marketization and total world economic opening. Western countries became increasingly important trade partners. It was evident that the Intermediate European Countries traded with each other only because of Comecon pressure and the crisis of the system resulted in the immediate fall of foreign economic relations. In 1989 Czechoslovakia and Romania together was accountable for only 5% of the Hungarian export. This was even less than the period of Little Entente.

The separation of the Németh government from the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

Focusing on party leadership with actual power, Grósz handed over the Prime Ministership to Miklós Németh in the autumn of 1988, whose government was renewed within half a year and many reform politicians became members (e.g. Imre Pozsgay). From then on the government separated from the state party and became an independent player of foreign economics representing the national inte-

rest. The control over foreign policies was focused in the hands of the government, within that in the hands of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The head of the ministry was Gyula Horn.

The plan to organise the World Exhibition together with Austria was the government's own initiative. In the spring of 1995 the two countries won the right to organise the 1995 Vienna-Budapest EXPO.

Acceptance of Romanian refugees and accession to the Refugee Convention

Fearing the demolition of villages many Romanians fled to Hungary through the "green" border. Hungary took them in but because they did not have refugee status the fact that they were not sent back to Romania was not justifiable. For this reason, the government decided to join the Geneva Refugee Convention which banned the return of political refugees. Hungary and six other countries asked the United Nations to investigate the situation of human rights in Romania, the West supported Hungary in the Hungarian-Romanian conflict.

In the summer of 1989, negotiations between Romania and Hungary were re-started. Ceauşescu found himself against a Hungarian government protecting the rights of Hungarians living in Romania. The condition for settling the conflict put forward by the Hungarians was the protection of minorities. No agreement was made. (Földes 2007)

The USA and the changes in 1989

A non-written agreement was made between the USA and the Soviet Union: the Soviets do not interfere with violence in Central Europe and the USA remains neutral and does not accelerate the course of events. America had two reasons to accept self-restraint: first of all after the arms race it did not or could not offer substantial help and second of all the crisis and fall of the Soviet Bloc took America by surprise, even at the beginning of 1989 they still thought that the Soviet regime and its allied system will last at least for 20 more years so their policy in the region did not change much until 1989.

Change in the American foreign politics came when President Bush took office in the spring of 1989. The USA from here on supported a total but peaceful political and economic change of system. It remained careful and non-provocative wanting to keep the stability of the region and waiting for the countries to liberate themselves without any force or intervention from the Soviets.

In July President Bush visited Hungary and Poland. It was a courtesy visit in the two reformer countries but did not result in any significant financial support or clear promise. The USA did not want to offer another Marshall support and handed the task of providing economic help down to Western Europe (as a gesture it gave the status of most favoured nation for unlimited time). Bush's visit however was still a milestone: the leader of the biggest enemy of the Eastern Bloc came to Budapest (the first President to visit) and for the first time since 1947 a visiting foreign politician was officially allowed to negotiate with the opposition as well. (Borhi 2009)

The participation of the Hungarian opposition in the Velvet Revolution of Czechoslovakia

In the freer atmosphere the silenced problems (the situation of the Hungarians living in Czechoslovakia, Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros dam, Hungary's participation in the 1968 intervention) of the Czechoslovakian – Hungarian relation surfaced in 1989. Concerning the dam, the Hungarian government suspended the construction in May 1989 and suggested mutual supervision. This step was strongly motivated by economic reasons and social demands. Czechoslovakia protested and was willing to finalise the construction unilaterally. Regarding the participation of Hungary in the 1968 intervention the Hungarian Social Worker's Party (MSZMP) pressured by the opposition declared in the summer of 1989 that it does not agree with the 1968 intervention.

During this time several members of the opposition tried to go to Prague to join the demonstrations in Vencel Square. Only few managed to get through the border who then apologised for the intervention and the Czechoslovakian police arrested them. With the mediation of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry the Czechoslovakian court expelled them and banished them for life from the country. (Romsics 2003)

The Rubicon of foreign policy: handling of the East German refugee issue

When the electric barrier on the Austrian border was dismantled in May 1989, 65 thousand East German citizens travelled to Hungary hoping to leave the country through the “green” border. East Germany demanded the return of its citizens but Budapest referring to the Geneva Convention rejected the demand and de facto declared the East Germans refugees. The Hungarian government started secret negotiations with West Germany about the possibility to let these people out of the country. At the end of August the Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of the two countries signed a secret agreement according to which Budapest will let East German citizens leave free from the country. They also agreed that they will not inform the Soviet Union but out of precaution Kohl told Gorbachev who promised not to use violence and stop the course of events. (Oplatka 2008, Horváth-Németh 1999)

On 11 September, Hungary opened its borders to Austria for East German refugees. This event significantly contributed to the fall of the Berlin Wall and East Germany, the uniting of the two German states for which Germany's political leadership is grateful to this day.

This decision had been the most independent Hungarian foreign policy decision in the last 40 years in which they agreed with the enemy camp on the expenses of their ally not informing the Soviet Union.

The issue of withdrawing Soviet troops and nuclear weapons

At the end of 1988, Gorbachev announced a unilateral disarmament programme and cut the number of the Soviet army by half a million. The partial withdrawal of Soviet troops began in April. Németh Prime Minister then proposed the total withdrawal of the Soviet Troops stationing temporarily in the country and also requested the removal of nuclear weapons. In May the Soviets expressed their willingness and

in the summer of 1989 negotiations began concerning the total withdrawal of the Soviet Troops. The situation still being sensitive at the reburial of Imre Nagy on 16 June, even the West found it risky and premature when one of the FIDESZ opposition leaders Viktor Orbán demanded the total withdrawal of the Soviet Troops. At the end of the year, the nuclear war heads were secretly removed from the country. They signed the agreement concerning the withdrawal of the Soviet Troops on 10 March 1990, according to which the Soviets would leave the country by June 30, 1991. The Soviets demanded compensation but no agreement was made in this issue. (Romsics 2003)

From the autumn of 1989 Hungary is only a formal member of the Soviet Bloc

Socialism in Hungary fell because of several foreign and internal factors (the weakening of the Soviet Union, the economic crisis in Hungary, the loss of the legitimacy of the leading power, tension within the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party [MSZMP] and the activity of the democratic opposition).

In the autumn of 1989, Hungary applied to be a member of the European Council assembling European democratic countries.

In the autumn of 1989, Italy, Austria, Hungary and Yugoslavia established the Quadrangone with which they overstepped the logic of a bipolar world. The initiative had very strong symbolic relevance and meant the regional cooperation of a NATO member, a Warsaw Pact member and two neutral (one socialist and one capitalist) states.

At the end of 1989, Bush and Gorbachev met in Malta and agreed that the Soviet Union would withdraw its troops from Central Europe and would not obstruct democratic change in the region - but the allied system, the Warsaw Pact and Comecon would stay - in return the USA would not interfere in the events of the region. By then, the socialist system of almost all Central European countries had collapsed and the Soviet Bloc was on the verge of disintegration. Gorbachev hoped that despite the free elections in the allied countries the communist party would stay in power and the special relationship of these countries with the Soviet Union would continue. Only the Romanian Ceaușescu dictatorship was holding out but not for long. The collapse began with the resistance of László Tőkés, a clergyman from the Reform Church which led to mass demonstrations against the existing power and finally to the collapse of dictatorship. The Hungarian government was very active from the beginning of the conflict and taking care of the Hungarians living in the successor states became an official state political matter. By the end of 1989, Hungary and Poland had the best reputation from the Eastern Bloc and were regarded as good examples in the West and in Central Europe. Hungarian foreign policy scored excellently in the year of wonders (*annus mirabilis*), used its opportunities and the growing elbow room.

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The Socio-Cultural Values of Hungarian V Forms of Address¹

Ágnes Domonkosi

Abstract

The goal of this paper is to present and interpret the sociocultural value of Hungarian V pronouns and related devices on the basis of speakers' metapragmatic evaluations. In addition to the binary division between T and V forms, V is further differentiated in Hungarian: there is a choice of pronoun (*maga* (V₁) vs. *ön* (V₂) – each co-occurring with 3rd person possessives and verbs), as well as a choice of these vs. zero pronoun (with 3rd person) (V₃) vs. the structure involving *tetszik* (V₄). Each of these variants has its characteristic sphere of use, social deictic role and stylistic value.

Metapragmatic reflections suggest that according to informants, V forms are also well-suited to signalling degree of formality; the speaker's evaluative attitude to her addressee, including respect; super- or subordinate status; degree of social proximity; processes of involvement with the increase or decrease of emotional distance; gender, age and social status of interlocutors.

Key words: address forms; T and V forms; sociocultural value; metapragmatic evaluation

Subject-Affiliation in New CEEOL: Language and Literature – Applied Linguistics – Sociolinguistics

1. Introduction. T and V forms of address

Forms of address, i.e. linguistic markers of the addressee (nominal or pronominal forms as well as inflectional morphemes, cf. Domonkosi 2002, 4) are the most direct linguistic means available for indicating the relationship between discourse participants. Thus, they make a key contribution to the linguistic construal of social reality.

By default, languages use second person singular forms to refer to the addressee of a message. However, some languages allow shifts in the use of grammatical person and number, with the discourse partner possibly referred to by second person plural, third person singular or plural, or even first person plural (cf. Head 1978, Helmbrecht 2003). Early studies in sociolinguistics, based primarily on the bipartite system of European languages, attributed specific social value to this grammatical differentiation. In their classical analysis, Brown and Gilman (1960, 253–276) interpreted the differentiation of forms of address as reflecting the semantics of power and solidarity. Under the proposal, primary second person forms

¹ The research reported here was supported by the Bolyai János Research Scholarship.

(T-forms) generally indicate proximity, solidarity, equality and intimacy, whereas chronologically secondary V-forms signal distance, power, an asymmetrical relationship and respect.

The present paper discusses ways of maintaining social contact by 3rd person forms, and the social or sociocultural value of V in Hungarian. Despite the dichotomies inherent in grammatical number and the corresponding separation between T and V,² the repertoire of Hungarian forms of address cannot be interpreted as a simple binary system. Rather, it involves a dynamic model encompassing a variety of devices with subtly different social meanings, whose functioning is shaped by a range of social, relational and situational factors. Therefore, variability and change in Hungarian addressing conventions can only receive a thorough analysis when the varieties are not merely situated with respect to T and V, but rather described in conjunction with the associated pronominal and nominal devices (or lack thereof), at the level of schemas underlying the speaker's choice of construal.

2. The goals and methods of analysis

The goal of this paper is to explore what typical social deictic values are attached to particular varieties of V, and how the various forms of address are related to each other. The analysis is based on the assumption that the use of V forms depends on a highly complex system of relationships, with certain forms of address characterized by conflicting social value attributions. I will argue that the sociocultural value of particular devices necessitates the use of a range of criteria, and that speakers' metapragmatic reflections may aid the modelling of social meanings, schematic sociocultural values.

The data informing my interpretations, giving rise to a comprehensive model, are supplied by earlier empirical investigations (Domonkosi 2002, 2010, 2016, Domonkosi–Kuna 2015, 2016). In addition, I also rely on more recent research results; specifically, the material of nine interviews and three focus group conversations. Moreover, non-systematic surveys of opinion have also contributed to the proposed interpretation of social meaning. In particular, I have collected and analysed speakers' metapragmatic reflections on address forms shared on social media sites and internet forums. Of the results gained by various data collecting methods, I have focused on those which report on speakers' beliefs and value attributions. The answers received to closed questions of the questionnaires were usefully supplemented by data gained by open questions, interviews, conversations and spontaneous expressions of opinion. Collectively, these data support a comprehensive account of speaker attitudes to the forms of address under study.

In sociolinguistic interpretations of the social meanings of forms of address, traditional accounts focused on the dimensions of power and solidarity (Brown–Gilman 1960). However, more recent analyses have foregrounded novel criteria as well. Exploring the functioning of forms of address, Clyne, Norby and Warren

² Markers of a binary differentiation in references to the addressee, based on the French personal pronouns *tu* and *vous*, following the classical study of Brown and Gilman (1960). In terms of value attributions, T forms are typically considered more intimate, whereas V forms are more detached or more official.

(2009, 29–30) also rely on Svennevig's model of the dimensions of social distance. The latter approach interprets social distance as a multi-dimensional phenomenon shaped jointly by the dimensions of solidarity, familiarity and affect (Svennevig 1999, 33–35). The utility of this model for interpreting forms of address derives primarily from the fact that while all three factors have a scalar structure, their relevance in construing particular situations may vary (Clyne–Norby–Warren 2009, 28). In this interpretation of the varied functions and socio-cultural roles of Hungarian forms of address, I therefore take into account the multi-dimensional character of social distance. In previous research, this multidimensional approach was applied to the modelling of social values associated with *tetszik* as a V construction of Hungarian (cf. Domonkosi –Kuna 2015, 2016; Kuna 2016).

The usage distribution of T and V forms is typically traced back to the informal/formal parameter, which yields a distinction between formal and informal pronominal forms of address (Brown–Gilman 1960). However, the variability and use of Hungarian V forms of address suggest that this parameter alone cannot account for the social functions involved, and consequently that models of social meaning must incorporate additional factors as well. At the same time, explorations of the usage and functions of V forms of address may contribute to a better understanding of the socio-cultural factors underlying social meanings.

Besides the concept of formality vs. informality, the relationship between speakers and the way that the speech situation is construed have also been studied with regard to the parameters of familiarity, distance, deference, camaraderie and involvement (Tannen 1984). Bartha-Hámori (2010), for example, conduct their analysis along the axes of involvement vs. distance, solidarity vs. power, convergence vs. divergence, and directness vs. indirectness.

Speakers' metapragmatic reflections on forms of address point to the fact that the choice of particular forms may be motivated by a variety of factors. Based on style attributions, interpretations and explanations collected by researchers of this topic, solidary/hierarchy, degree of intimacy/strangeness, emotional attitudes (attraction / indifference/ rejection), degree of formality, respect and evaluative attitudes may all receive expression in this way, with geographical or social background and gender also having an impact on speakers' choices of construal (Figure 1).

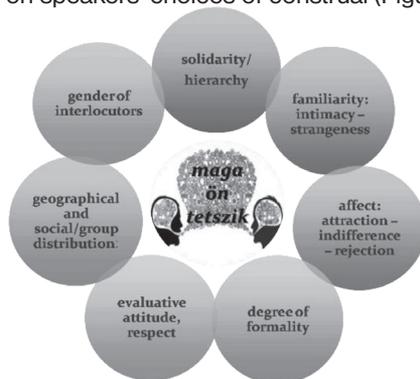


Figure 1: A model of sociocultural factors at work in choices of forms of address

The dimensions identified on the basis of the speakers' reflections contribute to varying degrees to the use of particular variants, thus constituting a complex, dynamic system for the linguistic construal of social relations.

3. V forms of address

In present-day Hungarian, variability in the construal of social relations is manifested among V forms by the use of personal pronouns *maga* (V_1) and *ön* (V_2), third-person verb forms used without such pronominal dependents (V_3), and constructions with the auxiliary *tetszik* (V_4) (Figure 2). Due to the existence of distinct pronominal forms, the variability of V is relatively salient. At least by one group of speakers, the patterns involving *maga*, *ön* and *tetszik* are registered as distinct ways of managing social relations in reports on metapragmatic reflections.

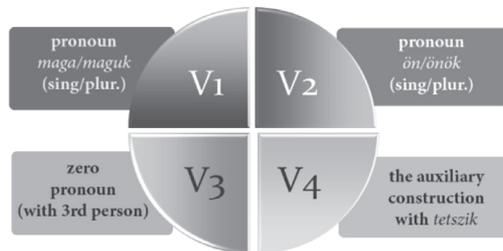


Figure 2: Forms of V

The adoption of various V forms is subject to a high degree of variation in almost every sphere of direct communication. The prevalence of distinct forms in particular situation types suggests that none of the forms is domain-specific; rather, each is associated with a well-circumscribed social meaning.

3.1. The sociocultural value of *maga* – V_1

Patterns with *maga* are subject to the highest degree of variation when it comes to their stereotypical social deictic value. Perceptions and attitudes vary with generations, communities of practice and geographically alike. From this it follows that these patterns may contribute to the construal of a range of different social relations.

Despite its ubiquity, the pronoun *maga* was linked to a negative, offensive role by nearly 60 percent of informants in my comprehensive questionnaire-based study, with those under 35 producing a significantly higher proportion. The majority of people in this group only expect *maga* to occur in particularly offensive situations, even rejecting its occurrence when combined with given names and other nominal elements; moreover, 76 percent report that they never use it (Domonkosi 2002, 152). The ongoing decline of this pronoun's use can be partly explained by

the fact that it was previously licensed in intimate relationships between equals, and in asymmetrical relations on behalf of the person with higher status. Since by now, the mutual use of T forms has become the norm for younger generations in informal situations, *maga* no longer has an intimate social deictic value in their value attributions. As a result, the pronoun is now mostly perceived as characteristic of top-down communication in asymmetrical social relations.

In the younger generation, even those speakers tend to avoid *maga* whose dialect only has this V pronoun as a form of address. They use it only in their immediate environment (in the home village) but not in urban or unfamiliar contexts, since they are aware of the multiplicity of social roles associated with the device in question (Domonkosi 2002, 154). It seems to be the case, however, that informants reject this form more when replying to active-method surveys than in their actual linguistic practice. In formal but not honorific or official situations, the pronoun has a relatively high frequency.

Combined with a given name, *maga* may be used reciprocally in intimate situations and in relations of equals; furthermore, the superior person may adopt it in asymmetrical relations. This pattern of use is less present in the language of younger generations under the age of 35, since T forms have come to predominate in most intimate and/or symmetric relations.

Geographically, the use of *maga* as honorific, in official situations, combined with role nominals marking social rank also displays significant variation. In the comprehensive questionnaire study, 41 percent of informants living in the countryside produced such data, compared with only 9 percent of urban speakers. Such discrepancies in the perceptions and usage patterns associated with *maga* reflect fundamental differences in attitudes to rural vernaculars and urban language use, and thus cannot be put down to questions of formality/informality or politeness.

Within the use *maga*, two schematized social deictic values can be discerned, stemming from a variety of factors including the interactional markers the pronoun combines with, *maga*'s discourse position (separate vocative, part of a vocative construction, argument of a verb) and community practices.

One characteristic social, sociocultural value is linked to informal situations where T forms are dispreferred. In this use, *maga* is frequently combined with a given name, and may be partly motivated by dialectal tendencies. This deictic value can be recognized in the following informant reports:

- *ha nem tegeződünk, de nem is hivatalos helyzetről van szó*; 'when we are not in T terms but the situation isn't official either'
- *népies; a faluban általában ezt használják; póriasabb, de engem nem zavar, mert sokkal bizalmasabb, mint az ön*; 'rural; this is in general use in my village; it is more rural but I don't mind this because it is much more intimate than the use of *ön*'
- *csak a közvetlen környezetemben használom, falusi stílus, de abban a környezetben ez van rendben* 'I only use it in my immediate environment, this is rural style but in that environment this is fine'.

In the proposed multi-dimensional model of sociocultural values, the pronoun's

schematized social deictic role is shaped by such factors as a symmetric discursive relation, informality, intimacy, and rural style. In addition, especially when used with given names and nicknames, its jovial, distance-reducing character can be noticed (Figure 3).

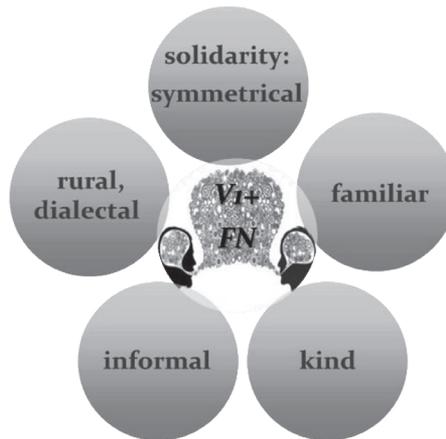


Figure 3: A model of the sociocultural value of *maga* expressing solidarity

The second discernible social deictic value of *maga* is the result of schematization from the practice of using the pronoun from a superior position. This schematic value is highlighted by the following speaker beliefs and reflections, which were produced in answer to questions about the use of *maga* in a questionnaire study and in interviews.

- *ha felháborodom valamin;* 'when I'm appalled at something'
- *ha valaki udvariatlan velem;* 'when somebody is impolite to me'
- *ha valakit meg akarok sérteni;* 'when I want to offend someone'
- *ha dühös vagyok az illető ismeretlen személyre, és lekezelő akarok lenni;* 'when I'm angry with an unfamiliar person and I want to be patronizing'
- *nem rajongok érte, veszekedésnél annál inkább használom;* 'It's not my favourite, I use it in quarrels mostly'
- *vitatkozás során;* 'in disputes'
- *elmarasztaláskor vagy nemtetszés kifejezésekor.* 'in expressions of reproach or disapproval'

Hence, one characteristic social function of *maga* concerns the construal of patronizing, offensive attitudes in social relations. This schematized function is mostly linked to occurrences of the pronoun as a separate vocative, or in some highly prominent position. The sociocultural model of using *maga* in asymmetric, hierarchical relations, often expressing an impolite, offensive or patronizing attitude, is shown in Figure 4 below.



Figure 4: A model of the sociocultural value of *maga* expressing a patronizing attitude

The data suggest that in communities where the *tetszik* construction is in currency, and where the pronoun *ön* is less likely to be perceived as distancing, the use of *maga* is rejected to a greater extent. In other words, when *maga* is part of a multivariate inventory for expressing V, its schematic social meaning shifts toward the expression of offence.

In addition to the two social deictic values just described, *maga* also appears to function as a neutral V form in several, especially rural communities of practice. This pattern of use may have a broader scope than what speakers' metapragmatic reflections suggest.

3.2. The sociocultural value of using *ön* – V₂

The *ön* pronoun was created by back formation from the words *önmaga* 'one-self', *önként* 'by one's own will' during the language reform period. It first appeared in the work *Elaboratior Grammatica Hungarica* written by Miklós Révai, its original meaning is 'he/she' (TESz.). Since it was introduced into the inventory of interactional elements in a top-down, artificial manner, it is understandable that it is primarily linked to official, impersonal relations.

Informants' evaluations of *ön* indicate a complex social value, with its role in expressing politeness supplemented by perceptions of coldness, stiffness, or distance.

- *hivatalos, kifejezetten formális* 'official, highly formal'
- *távolságtartó* 'distancing'
- *illedelmes* 'decent'
- *nagyfokú tiszteletet fejez ki* 'it expresses great respect'
- *udvarias, de távolságtartó* 'polite but distancing'

- *udvariasabb, mint a maga, de nekem hűvösebb is* 'more polite than *maga* but to me it's colder too'
- *választékos* 'sophisticated'
- *szebb, kellemesebb, mint a maga* 'nicer, more pleasant than *maga*'
- *finomkodó* 'delicate'
- *felemelő* 'uplifting'
- *levelezésben és a nyilvánosságban szerintem csak ez a forma képzeltethető el* 'in correspondence and in the public sphere only this form is adequate'

Despite the high degree of variability found in Hungarian usage patterns of V, the role of *ön* as a form of address associated with formal communication seems to prevail in the entire speech community. This sociocultural role or social meaning can be modelled as seen in Figure 5 below.



Figure 5: A model of the sociocultural value of *ön*

Albeit to a smaller extent than with *maga*, the social value of *ön* as a form of address may be slightly modified by other forms of address it combines with, with the typical values of such co-occurrences also potentially undergoing schematization.

As an addressing pronoun, *ön* without nominal elements is particularly well-suited to communication with strangers. Its use is meant to convey not the social rank or position of the addressee but rather to the speaker's adaptation to the official speech situation (sphere of communication). This function also motivates its use in official documents and radio as well as television broadcasts directed at a larger audience.

Combined with forms of address foregrounding social rank or position, the use of *ön* is the most widespread addressing strategy in status-marked communicative domains. In such contexts, it is regarded by all age groups as a general form expressing a high degree of respect, formality and politeness.

When co-occurring with given names, the use of *ön* is linked to intimate situa-

tions where T forms would not be appropriate. This is primarily characteristic of the language of those under 35 years of age; many informants in this age group even regard this form as suitable for addressing colleagues who are not yet on T terms. The pattern may seem unusual, given the distancing value of *ön* and the high degree of personality implied by the use of given names. However, its use may have evolved precisely as a way of softening the stiffness conveyed by the pronoun. This variant corresponds to the *Sie* + given name pattern of present-day German, described by Hickey (2003, 415) as a device for manipulating formality. Moreover, a similar strategy has also been identified in French (Clyne et al. 2009, 43, 155).

3.3. The sociocultural value of pronoun avoidance – V₃

As described in the sections above, V pronouns have peculiar social functions and restricted spheres of use resulting from their specific sociocultural values. This may be the main reason behind pronoun avoidance, i.e. the often consciously adopted interactive practice in which 3rd person verbs co-occur only with given names and role nominals but not pronouns.

Especially in the younger generation, pronoun avoidance is part of a broader strategy. Namely, when the speaker knows the addressee, she uses her given name or a role nominal as a way of avoiding the use of pronouns, and when she does not know her, then she resorts to impersonal constructions in domains where status marking is not an issue. These constructions, including patterns with the auxiliary *tetszik*, allow the speaker to avoid verbally touching the other person. The conscious behaviour inherent in this strategy is demonstrated by the following self-report by one of the informants.

Én soha nem mondom senkinek azt, hogy maga, mert valahogy az a maga az olyan póriás, olyan közönségesebb. Valahogy olyan durvának tűnik. Az ön meg már nekem túl finom. Tehát a kettő között én szépen elevickélek mind a két szó használata nélkül.

'I never address anyone with maga, because maga is kind of plebeian, kind of coarse. Somehow it feels rough. And then ön feels too genteel to me. So I flounder along between the two, without using either word.'

The high degree of pronoun avoidance and the self-awareness demonstrated by informants suggest that the lack of V pronouns is endowed with social meaning, which consists in the expression of neutral attitude as an alternative to overly formal and possibly offensive options.

3.4. The sociocultural value of *tetszik* – V₄

The *tetszik* construction involves the auxiliary *tetszik*, literally meaning '[it] pleases [you]' and its infinitival complement, as in *Hogy tetszik lenni?* 'How are you?' (formal), lit. 'How does it please you to be?', evolved as a marker of politeness in conjunction with pronominal patterns of V. However, in certain types of social interaction, it has come to have an interactive role of its own. The use of *tetszik* may fulfil various social functions, perceived differently by particular age groups (cf. Domonkosi–Kuna 2016)

In the language use of children and young speakers, linguistic interactions with *tetszik* are neatly separated from other V variants. The results of a questionnaire study suggest that speakers under the age of 14 overwhelmingly adopt this form when addressing their teachers and adults they do not know. In fact, some of them completely do without using pronominal V forms of address (cf. Domonkosi 2002).

It is also employed in intimate, personal but not fully equal social relations, especially when there is a big age gap between the interlocutors. In speech directed at elderly people, the *tetszik* construction may be regarded as dominant in the overall sample as well (Domonkosi 2002).

In the service sector, it is common even among speakers of the same age as an expression of politeness or courtesy. Previous studies found this to be characteristic of the language of middle-aged and elderly people (Domonkosi 2002). More recently, however, it has also gained ground in the urban, pronoun-avoiding language use of younger speakers (Domonkosi–Kuna 2016).

To summarize, the *tetszik* + infinitive construction may indicate a variety of social relations. Firstly, it is employed in interactions between children and adults. Secondly, it is commonly used in non-equal but still intimate relations, especially in speech directed at the elderly or at women. Thirdly, as an impersonal construction, it is well-suited to the expression of politeness, especially in questions and requests, in a range of situations which are neither intimate nor status-marked.



Figure 6: A model of the sociocultural values of the *tetszik* construction

While these functions can be distinguished, the sociocultural values are closely intertwined, and they are to be modelled in an integrated manner. In all situations, the use of *tetszik* is typically respectful but at the same time also direct and warm. Overall, it facilitates the construal of a speech situation which reflects the relative status of interlocutors as well as their differences in age and gender (Figure 6).

Summary

Formal devices expressing V in Hungarian are associated with a variety of schematic social meanings, sociocultural values; therefore these forms of address deserve to be treated as specific variants within V-oriented communicative practices. Speakers' self-reports and explanations suggest that they are often well aware of the distinct variants and their specific social functions. This paper has shown that on the basis of speaker beliefs and value attributions, it is possible to elaborate a multi-dimensional model which successfully handles the complex social meanings of V variants. Factors in this model include solidarity/hierarchy, degree of intimacy, emotional attitude, degree of formality, evaluative attitude, geographical and social background, as well as the gender and age of interlocutors. The analysis of the speakers' reflections has shown that each variant has a specific meaning or range of social meanings. The pronoun *maga* has a neutral use, but also solidarity-oriented and offensive uses. The pronoun *ön* can be primarily linked to the domains of formality and official language. Finally, varied uses of the *tetszik* construction all have an underlying element of intimacy, of reducing distance as an expression of politeness.

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Topologische Interferenz zwischen jüdischer Trauerliturgie und persönlicher Gedächtnislyrik bei Paul Celan

Erläutert am Gedicht *Zu zweien*

Karl Vajda

Topological Interference Between Jewish Funeral Liturgy and Personal Memorial Poetry in Celan's Work. Exemplified by the Poem *Zu zweien*

Abstract

In this paper, exploring Paul Celan's poem *Zu zweien*, we are looking for answers to the following questions: 1. In what ways are the memory images of the home celebration of the Jewish liturgy experienced in childhood interwoven with the lyrical speech acts of the collective remembrance and commemoration of the Shoah victims (the occasions contributing to get over the traumata)? 2. How does the merger of these mental images and speech acts become the basis of a newer sort of literary tropology that substitutes the Jewish mourning liturgy paralysed by the Shoah experience?

Key words: "Gedächtnislyrik"; Shoah; Celan; trauma

Subject-Affiliation in New CEEOL: Language and Literature – Studies of Literature – German Literature

Im absoluten Mittelpunkt des Gravitationsfeldes der Celanschen Lyrik steht zweifelsohne das Trauma der Schoah. Damit gehört die Dichtung Celans zu jener kulturgeschichtlichen Schicht unseres literarischen Bewusstseins, die einerseits als Nachkriegsliteratur, andererseits als Traumaliteratur bezeichnet werden kann. Sie hat das literarische Sprechen der Gegenwart in Thematik, epigrammatischer Kraft, Gefühlsbreite und innovativer Sprachhaltung maßgeblich mitgeprägt, ja mitbestimmt, und zwar im ursprünglichsten Sinne des Wortes: Sie hat ihr eine unüberhörbare Stimme, Stimmlage verliehen.

Die Schoah markiert sowohl in der deutschen wie auch in der jüdischen Kulturgeschichte eine unverrückbare Scheidelinie. Aus jüdischer Sicht besteht das Traumatisierende der Schoah indessen weniger in der bloßen Tatsache der massenweise durchgeführten Judenvernichtung als vielmehr in deren besonderer Art und Weise.

Verfolgung und Vernichtung sind dem jüdischen Denken ja alles, nur nichts Neues. Das traditionelle Judentum fristete sein irdisches Dasein seit eh und je, im Wesentlichen durch das ganze Mittelalter hindurch, mancherorts sogar in der frühen Neuzeit noch von dem einem Pogrom bis zum nächsten. Der Judaismus

hat sich mit der ständigen existentiellen Bedrohung notgedrungen arrangiert und ein im Inneren befreiendes Narrativ, ein Bekenntnisnarrativ entworfen, das es in der täglich wiederholten Liturgie jedem Juden eingepägt wurde und ihm zu jener geistigen Verfassung verhalf, deren es zum Abfinden mit der ständigen Möglichkeit des Äußersten bedurfte. Diesem sowohl theologisch wie auch liturgisch sehr einprägsam überlieferten Schema nach starben die Opfer der jeweiligen, der soeben aktuellen, Judenfeindlichkeit als Bekenkende, als solche, die Gottes Namen geheiligt haben (משה ישודק).

Dieses Theologem der Gottesheiligung durch den eigenen Tod (משה שודיק, Vgl. bTalmud *Brachot* 20a und *Midrasch Tehilim*) bestand indessen in einem Umstand, der sich in der Geschichte der Jugendfeindlichkeit bis zur Nazizeit als ständig und gesichert erwies. Die Verfolgten hatten die Wahl zwischen Selbstaufgabe und Widerrede. Ihnen stand als angeborenes Anrecht die Möglichkeit des Widerstandes durch das Bekenntnis zum religiösen Judentum ebenso zu, wie die Möglichkeit des Glaubenswechsels als einziger Flucht aus der lebensbedrohenden Situation. Durch die Sünde der Schwäche bestätigte und bewährte sich die Tugend der Glaubenstreue und der damit einhergehenden Opferbereitschaft.

In der rassistischen Todesmaschinerie der Judenverfolgung und -vernichtung im Dritten Reich wurde die Möglichkeit der lebensrettenden Untreue gleichwohl unmöglich. In eins damit verfiel allerdings auch die Tugend der Treue und des Bekenntnisses. Ob der Jude gläubig war oder nicht, seinem Glauben, mithin seiner ›Jüdischkeit‹ treu blieb oder untreu wurde, war dem nationalsozialistischen Rassenwahn vollkommen gleichgültig. Damit nahm »die Endlösung der Judenfrage« jedem Juden das Recht, das eigene Leben für das Judentum zu opfern. Dies hat eine theologisch schwerwiegende Konsequenz. Theologisch gesehen, ist kein einziger Jude, der in der Schoah den Tod gefunden hat, ein Märtyrer. Dies ist auch der Grund dafür, warum sich der Jedermannsbegriff *Holocaust* weder im Hebräischen noch im Jiddischen einbürgern konnte. Der hebräische Ausdruck *Schoah* (האוש), der *Verheerung*, *Katastrophe* und *Untergang* gleichermaßen bedeutet, und auf prophetische Bibelstellen zurückgeht (siehe dazu vor allem Jes 10:3; 47:11), bzw. die jiddische Bezeichnung *Churban* (חורבן), die den theologischen Termin der Tempelzerstörung auf die Judenvernichtung im Zweiten Weltkrieg erweitert und damit die Assoziation mit der Vorstellung von Opfern geradezu ausschließt, sind sehr eindeutige Beweise für die aus jüdischer Sicht falschen Untertöne des im Englischen gängigen Holocaustbegriffs.

Das Trauma der Schoah besteht in jüdisch-theologischer Hinsicht gerade in den Folgen der Unmöglichkeit, während der Verfolgung durch die Nazis einen Bekenntnistod zu sterben. Wo gleichwohl die Worte des Bekenntnisses fahl und leer klingen, um schließlich im Todesgeschrei der Gaskammern und dem Getöse der Krematorien ganz unterzugehen, dort kann Gott ebenfalls nur als taub oder abwesend vorgestellt werden. Damit ist jedoch der ganze, Jahrtausende alte, theologisch überlieferte und liturgisch jedem eingepägte jüdische Verwindungsmechanismus der traumatischen Folgen von Judenverfolgung mit einem Schlag hinfällig geworden. Die Fragwürdigkeit der überlieferten Gedächtnisliturgie lässt sich also nicht auf einen allmählichen Verschleiß liturgischer Formen und konfes-

sioneller Ausdrucksweisen zurückführen. Im Gegenteil, häusliche Andacht und Religionsausübung, die kollektive Art jüdischer Trauerritualen halten die von altersher überlieferte synagogale Art und Weise der Verwindung von Traumata lebendig. Nur verlieren sie mit einem Schlag ihre ganze Authentizität, da sie auf dem Akt bewussten Bekenntnisses beruhen müssten, damit der notwendige innere Zusammenhang zwischen dem Tod durch Ermordung und der getilgten jüdischen Existenz als wahrer Grund des Mordes gelten kann. In dem nazistischen Rassenwahn geht indessen gerade diese rationale Kausalität unter. Der Jude wird nicht durch sein Bekenntnis zum Judentum, nicht durch seine jüdische Identität und Lebensweise verfolgt und vernichtet, sondern einzig und allein durch seine Geburt. Das große Paradox der Schoah besteht nachgerade darin, zu welcher Nebensächlichkeit dabei die eigentliche Jüdischkeit der Vernichteten verkommen ist. Die fehlende Möglichkeit, die vollkommene Irrelevanz eines Bekenntnisses zum Volk Israels und dessen einem Gott, brachte Vernichtete und Verfolgte gleichermaßen um ihre Jüdischkeit. Sie wurde nicht in Abrede gestellt, worauf ein noch lauterer Bekenntnis die angebrachte Antwort hätte sein können, sie wurde vielmehr für völlig irrelevant, ja für nichtig erklärt. Diese Nichtigkeit jedweder Jüdischkeit der Verfolgten außer der bloßen genetischen Abstammung stellt für Celan ein existenzielles Dilemma dar. Kann er als Überlebender das Trauma der nazistischen Judenverfolgung in lyrisch angemessener und zugleich jüdischer Weise nicht zum Erklingen bringen, so wird ihm seine Jüdischkeit abermals verwehrt bleiben, er bleibt, so sehr er auch immer der Todesgefahr entronnen ist, gerade als Jude vernichtet. Greift er jedoch auf die liturgischen Vorbilder der Traumaverwindung der jüdischen, mithin der religiösen Überlieferung zurück, so läuft er Gefahr, wegen der Nichtigkeit des Bekenntnismomentes an Authentizität einzubüßen.

Das soeben umrissene Dilemma drängt Celan zu einer sehr behutsamen Vorgehensweise. Er greift zwar bei der Thematisierung der Judenverfolgung auf überlieferte Theologeme des Judentums zurück, um sich seiner Jüdischkeit vergewissern zu können, er täuscht gleichwohl nie über die Hinfälligkeit und Nichtigkeit dieser Theologeme hinsichtlich dessen hinweg, was sich europaweit zugetragen hat.

Die synagogale Liturgie gedenkt der Heiligung von Gottes Namen als Martyrium bekennender Juden sowohl im Laufe des Jahreszyklus wie auch im Kreislauf des menschlichen Lebenszyklus mehrfach und mit entsprechendem Nachdruck. Gesonderte Erwähnung verdienen dabei diejenigen liturgischen Verwindungspraktiken traumatischer Erlebnisse, die ausgesprochen historischen Traumata kollektiver Art vorbehalten sind.

Besonders prägnantes Vorbild im Zusammenhang der Celanschen Gedächtnislyrik kann das Gebet *Barmherziger Vater* (מימרה בא) am Ende der öffentlichen Thoralessung in den Synagogen am Schabbat angesehen werden. In ihm werden die Verfolgungen während der Kreuzzüge typologisch nach Vernichtungsart aufgezählt und jene prophetischen Stellen kurz zitiert, die angesichts des vergossenen Blutes der sich zu Gott Bekennenden in heilsgeschichtlicher Perspektive göttliche Gerechtigkeit in Aussicht stellen. Die heilsgeschichtliche Hoffnung auf göttliche Gerechtigkeit am Ende aller Zeiten und die Verwindung der erlebten realhistorischen Traumata entspringt hier in der ausführlichen Aufzählung einerseits

der erlittenen Missetaten, andererseits der Stellen der eschatologisch verkündeten göttlichen Jurisdiktion. Der therapeutische Charakter des Gebets entspringt dabei ohne Zweifel der durchaus dichterischen Vorgehensweise der Aufzählung und Gegenüberstellung von geschichtlichem Leid und heilsgeschichtlichem Gottesvertrauen. Die innere Antwort der Betenden auf das erlittene Trauma ist ein aus Treue erwachsendes Vertrauen auf einen Ausgang der als Heilsgeschichte begriffenen Weltgeschichte, der das Erlittene aufwiegt und aufhebt.

Besonders wichtig scheint im Zusammenhang der Celanschen Lyrik und der liturgischen Überlieferung die durchaus poetische Gattung der Kinah (הניקה), des traditionellen Trauerliedes. Trauerlieder, Kinot (תוניקה) werden vor allem am Gedächtnistag der Tempelzerstörung (באב העשית) angestimmt. An diesem Tag, dem 9. des Monats Aw, gedenkt die jüdische Welt des wohl größten aller traumatischen Ereignisse des antiken Judentums. In diesen trauernden Gebetsgedichten werden die in verschiedenen historischen Epochen erlittenen Mißhandlungen mit besonderer Plastizität in Erinnerung gerufen und mit dem singulären Vorfall der Tempelzerstörung, des Churbans (חורבן) in Verbindung gesetzt. Dieser Umstand gewinnt im geschichtlichen Kontext der nazistischen Judenverfolgung und der Celanschen Gedächtnislyrik insofern eine besondere Bedeutung, weil das Trauma der Judenvernichtung im jiddischen Bewusstsein mit dem Begriff der Tempelzerstörung verschmolzen ist und ebenfalls als *Churban* (חורבן) bezeichnet wird.

Die zahlreichen Pogrome des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit regten manche der Überlebenden dazu an, ihre traumatischen Erlebnisse in der Form einer persönlichen Kinah (הניקה) festzuhalten. Eines der beredtesten Beispiele für diese dichterische Art der Verwindung persönlicher und zugleich historischer Traumata ist die Kinah des Isaak Schulhof. Er war aus Prag nach Buda (Ofen) gezogen und hatte hier erlebt, wie die christlichen Heere von den Türken die Stadt zurückeroberten. In und nach den Kämpfen mordeten die christlichen Soldaten sowohl unter den Muslimen wie auch unter den Juden. Isaak verlor auf diese Art seine Familie. Besonders schmerzhaft erlebte er dabei den Verlust des Sohnes, den er in einer Kinah besang. Dieses Beispiel erwähnen wir im Kontext der Celanschen Lyrik, weil die bloße Fähigkeit, den Verlust von Familienmitgliedern beklagen zu können, die persönliche Rettung impliziert. Die lyrische Ausgangssituation des jüdischen Trauerliedes als persönlicher Klage ist daher immer ein höchst komplexes Gefühl der Dankbarkeit dafür, der Todesgefahr selbst entkommen zu sein, und des Eindrucks, für die Rettung nicht der würdigste gewesen zu sein. Dankbarkeit, Bitterkeit, Schmerz und Gewissensbisse prägen daher die komplexe Tonalität solcher Trauerlieder.

Wie viele andere Überlebende auch bezeichnete die Familie des Isaak Schulhof die wundersame Rettung aus der Hölle der Rückeroberung von Ofen als „Schulhof Purim“. Der Purim (פּוּרִים, zu Deutsch etwa *Schicksalsfest*) ist bekanntlich ein öffentliches Fest, das die Errettung des jüdischen Volkes aus der Gefahr, in der persischen Zerstreung vernichtet zu werden, in vielfacher Weise, z. B. durch die Vorlesung der einschlägigen Stellen aus der Bibel und fröhliche Maskerade, vielfältig in die Szene setzt. Die Familie des Isaak Schulhof ist ein

Beispiel dafür, dass die im Buch Ester erzählten Ereignisse Überlebende späterer Vernichtungsversuche vielfach dazu inspirierten, ihre eigene Errettung aus ähnlicher Not im heilsgeschichtlichen Zusammenhang des ersten Purim zu sehen. Diese persönlichen oder „kleinen Purime“ arbeiten das Glück auf, selbst gerettet worden zu sein, verschweigen aber auch das Leid nicht, Angehörige dabei verloren zu haben. Diese Doppelnatur der „kleinen Purime“ ist kulturgenealogisch deshalb möglich, weil der im Buch Ester erzählte Archetyp des Purims die Offenheit des Ausgangs der Errettung ins Bewusstsein hebt und am Rüsttag des Purimfestes in dem sogenannten Fasten der Ester (רתסא תינעת) jedem nahebringt. Auch die „kleinen Purime“ beginnen mit einem Fasttag, an dem der Überlebende seiner verlorenen Angehörigen gedenken und seinen Wehklagen freien Lauf lassen kann, ohne zu verhindern, dass einen Tag darauf die Freude über die eigene Errettung das Erlittene aufwiegt und verwindet.

Die Celansche Lyrik als Traumaliteratur greift auf diese liturgischen Vorbilder zurück, um seine Jüdischkeit nicht einzubüßen, nicht aufzugeben, sich als Juden nicht nachträglich doch noch vernichten zu lassen. Damit aber die jüdische Stimme authentisch ertönt, bedarf es einer geschichtlich angemessenen Korrektur der heilsgeschichtlichen Konnotationen früherer liturgischer Vorbilder, die wegen des Atheismus der Naziideologie vollkommen fehl am Platz wären und jede mechanische Aktualisierung liturgischer Archetypen als unglaubwürdig erscheinen ließen.

Die Erklärung dafür, warum das Celansche Œuvre zum überwiegenden Teil der konfessionellen Gattung der Lyrik angehört und selbst die wenigen Prosastücke, allen voran das *Gespräch im Gebirg* durch den Grundzug des Geständnisses ausgezeichnet sind, ist ganz gewiss auch in dieser existentiellen Situation, in diesem Ringen um Glaubwürdigkeit zu suchen. Dabei steht nicht der jüdische Glaube, sondern die jüdische Glaubwürdigkeit der Überlebenden als solcher im Mittelpunkt Celans dichterischer Bemühungen.

In diesem Zusammenhang erweist sich also die Celansche Dichtung als eine betont existentielle Literatur, die Juden und nicht Juden dazu einlädt, an einem spezifisch jüdischen Neuanfang teilzunehmen. Die Fähigkeit der Literatur, in dem Identifikationsvorgang literarischer Rezeption den Unterschied von Herkunft und Zukunft in der absoluten Gegenwart des literarischen Geschehens aufzuheben, macht es zugleich möglich, das spezifisch-jüdische Dilemma dieses Neuanfangs als allgemeingültige Menschheitsfrage zu verdichten. Mehr noch, die zur literarischen Rezeption notwendige Authentizität Celanscher Dichtung ist nur dann erreicht, wenn sie der gesamten literarischen Öffentlichkeit gestehen kann, einer spezifisch-jüdischen existentiellen Krise entsprungen zu sein. Die Universalität der Celanschen Lyrik rührt paradoxerweise von der Partikularität ihrer Ausgangssituation her.

Die Scheidelinie der Schoah trennt indessen nicht nur die deutsche und die jüdische Kulturgeschichte in ein kontrastives Davor und ein Danach, sondern sie untergliedert auch die Lebensgeschichte der Überlebenden in zwei Phasen, die kein Kontinuum ergeben. Die Nachhaltigkeit des Traumas besteht nachgerade in dem Bruch, den die Schoah in die Geschichte riss. Der Abbruch der Lebensges-

chichte, die noch in der jüdisch-deutschen Kulturtradition begonnen hat, reißt einen Abgrund auf, der damit droht, alles Bisherige, Herkömmliche, Überlieferte zu verschlingen.

Die spezifisch jüdische Herausforderung, gestellt ausgerechnet an einen traumatisierten Überlebenden, besteht darin, das Erlebnis, besser gesagt, das Überleben der Schoah ins Überlieferungsgeschehen der Jüdischkeit, der jüdischen Existenz, einbinden zu müssen. Gelingt das nicht, so ist das spezifisch jüdische Sein des Überlebenden um seine existentielle Möglichkeit gebracht, der Überlebende ist als Jude jedwedem Überleben zum Trotz vernichtet.

Die Spuren des literarischen Versuches, gegen diese spirituelle Art der Vernichtung Widerspruch zu erheben, durchziehen wie ein roter Faden das gesamte lyrische Œuvre des überlebenden Paul Celan. Das lyrische, denn gefühlsmäßige Dilemma bezieht sich dabei nicht auf die Bindung an die jüdischen Wurzeln in Czernowitz, mithin nicht auf die Herkunft, sondern auf die Gegenwart, darauf, wie die überlieferten, von Geschlecht zu Geschlecht weitergereichten und dabei teils bewahrten, teils bewährten Worte des Bekenntnisses zur eigenen jüdischen Existenz nach dem Versagen der jüdischen Bekenntnistradition in der Schoah authentisch über die Lippen zu bringen sind.

Die lyrische Verwindung des Traumas der Schoah ist damit die denkbar verwickelteste und schwierigste Herausforderung, der jüdische Existenz je begegnet ist. Der literarische Widerspruch, den Celan gegen die Verheerung der Schoah vor aller Öffentlichkeit der Literatur dichterisch in der Sprache seiner verlorenen Kindheit und der Mörder seiner Familie erhebt, macht den persönlichen, jede jüdische Persönlichkeit als Existenz betreffenden Verlust bewusst. Dies impliziert einerseits, dass der sinnlos Verlorenen, der jedweder Möglichkeit von Bekenntnis und Sich-Behaupten Enthobenen gedacht, ihnen ein Denkmal aus Worten aufgestellt wird. Daraus erwächst die Dimension einer durchaus judaisierenden Gedächtnislyrik. Andererseits muss sich diese Lyrik auch der Tatsache eingedenk bleiben, dass in jedem Gedenken der Abbruch, mithin die Unmöglichkeit einer bloßen Fortsetzung der Aufeinanderfolge von Traditionen und Generationen mit anklingen muss. Oder um mit Begriffen der jüdischen Tradition zu sprechen, jede Gedächtnislyrik, die sich der Aufgabe stellt, das Trauma des Überlebens in der Schoah zu verwinden, ist gezwungen, sich der Unterbrechung der Kette der religiös-liturgischen Tradition, den Riss in der *Schalschelet haMassorah* (שְׁלֵשֶׁת יְיָ יִסְמְךָ תְּשַׁלְּשֶׁנִּי) bewusst zu bleiben. In die schmerzlindernde Trauer um die Toten mischt sich damit die immer wieder von neuem erschreckende Gefährdung des Überlebenden in seiner eigenen, ja eigensten Existenzmöglichkeit, und zwar die Frage, ob und wie er sich nach all dem zu einer lebendigen Jüdischkeit zu bekennen versteht. Und dies ist die denkbar schwierigste Herausforderung: Die Celansche Lyrik muss trotz der fehlenden Fortsetzbarkeit der prätraumatischen Jüdischkeit, also ohne die Möglichkeit der Fortführung häuslicher Vertrautheit mit der jüdischen Tradition aus Kindheit und Jugend, eine in ihren inneren spirituellen Dimensionen klare jüdische Existenz umreißen und der Sprache, diesem Haus des Seins, eine jüdische Identität jenseits jedweder melancholischen Nostalgie abtrotzen. Dies geschieht durch ein sorgsames Auswiegen von Erinnerung, Gedenken, Trauern

und durch einen sowohl vergangenheitsbewussten als auch zukunfts-offenen Trotz. Daraus ergibt sich ein lyrisches Muster.

Im Fortgang dieser kurzen Schrift unternehmen wir den Versuch, dieses Muster anhand eines einzigen Gedichts herauszuarbeiten. Es soll dabei zur hermeneutisch stringenten Erläuterung kommen, wie der Abgrund zwischen der Gegenwart diesseits und der Vergangenheit jenseits der Schoah durch die Celansche Lyrik überbrückt wird, welche Worte dem Traditionsbruch als lyrische Widerrede entgegengerufen werden, wie sich die jüdische Überlieferung in dieser Widerrede widerspiegelt und das Abgetötete wiederbelebt wird, ohne dass uns dabei eine falsche Kontinuität vorgegaukelt würde.

Im frühen Gedichtband *Von Schwelle zu Schwelle* findet sich das selten interpretierte Gedicht *Zu Zweien*, das selbst in der kommentierten Gesamtausgabe kaum erläutert wird und das sich uns deshalb als Beispiel geradezu aufdrängt. Das Gedicht hat folgenden Wortlaut:

ZU ZWEIEN schwimmen die Toten
zu zweien, umflossen von Wein.
Im Wein, den sie über dich gossen,
schwimmen die Toten zu zweien.

Sie flochten ihr Haar sich zu Matten,
sie wohnen einander bei.
Du wirf deinen Würfel noch einmal
und tauch in ein Auge der Zwei.

Wenn es in der Celan-Philologie überhaupt zur Besprechung dieses Gedichtes kommt, dann wird zumeist das Bizarre einer vermeintlichen Nekrophilie hervorgehoben (vgl. Bollack 2006, 419: „Noch die freieste Assoziation ist möglich, es kann zur Liebe mit den Toten kommen [Zu zweien, GW I, 101].“), oder die Rhythmik (Pennone-Autze 2007, 145), eventuell die morphologische Relevanz der rhetorischen Frequenz von Wortwiederholungen (Felstiner 2010, 120 f; Hurna 2011, 39). Das Dahinfließen von Toten im Wein, die Apostrophe in zweiter Person Singular bleibt dabei genauso unbedacht wie die Aufforderung zum Würfeln und zum Eintauchen in das Auge eines der zwei Toten. Es gilt nun, den philologischen Schuldenberg dieses Versäumnisses abzutragen.

Das Gedicht teilt sich in zwei Hälften, was der Doppelnatur der oben kurz beschriebenen sogenannten „kleinen Purime“ entspricht. Die erste Strophe gilt der schmerzhaften Erinnerung an den Verlust ermordeter Angehöriger. Die zweite stellt hingegen den Versuch dar, den sich Erinnernden, mithin den Überlebenden mit den Ermordeten zu verbinden und das Traumatische in dieser Verbindung zu verwinden. In dieser therapeutischen Vorgehensweise klingt die Tradition teils der Kinot, teils anderer synagogalen Gebete an, die dem Trauma der realhistorischen Gegenwart immer die Hoffnung der heilsgeschichtlichen Zukunft an die Seite stellen und so in fester Einheit begreifen.

Zum Gedenken an verlorene Vertraute bedarf es indessen stets einer festen

Verwurzelung im Vergangenen, ja einer Vertrautheit des Vergangenen. Wird die jüdische Lebenswirklichkeit von Kindheit und Jugend in der Celanschen Dichtung heraufbeschworen, so spielen daher im Vorgang der Erinnerung häusliche Sitten und Gebräuche, die die jüdischen Feiertage und den Schabbat begleiten, immer eine zentrale Rolle.

Im äußersten Urgrund dieser religiösen Gleichnishandlungen steht indessen stets das geoffenbarte Wort, das als Gottes Gebot an die Juden ergeht und sie insofern als Juden definiert, als sie sich an diese Worte halten, ihrem Sinn nachgehen, ihr Leben nach ihnen einrichten, sie ausführen und ausführlich auf die Lippen nehmen: besprechen, erörtern, kommentieren. Die Einhaltung des Ritualgesetzes ist nicht nur die tägliche Umsetzung der eigenen Frömmigkeit in die Realität des Alltags, sondern zugleich ein vollzogener Sprechakt, ausgeführt und zum Ausdruck gebracht mit dem ganzen Leib: die einzig mögliche fromme Antwort auf Gottes rufendes Wort, auf sein Geheiß, Gebot und Gesetz. Ein Bekenntnis zum Jude-sein mit Taten.

Die Erfüllung der Religionsgebote vollzieht sich indessen stets in der Gemeinschaft, zumeist in der häuslichen Lebensgemeinschaft der Familie. Einem Spruch des Talmuds zufolge übernimmt die häusliche Tafel mit dem Abendmahl die Funktion des einstigen Sühneopfers im zerstörten Heiligtum in Jerusalem (vgl. Chagiga 27a). Jüdisch gedacht und gesprochen, ist das häusliche Ritual die trotzige Antwort auf die Zerstörung des Tempels, also auf den Churban (חורבן), mithin und jiddisch gedacht: auch auf die Schoah.

In der Celanschen Dichtung ist diese jüdische Hausgemeinschaft stets die des alten Elternhauses und zugleich eine zerstörte, vernichtete Lebenswelt. Die existentielle Position des Gedenkens von einer posttraumatischen Gegenwart heraus wird unter anderem mehr dadurch ausgedrückt, dass dabei die Grundbegriffe des Judentums nicht mehr in der von zu Hause vertrauten aschkenasischen Aussprache fallen, sondern in der in Kindheit und Jugend vollkommen fremden, ja geradezu unvorstellbaren sephardischen Lesart, die zugleich auch die gängige Aussprache des nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg gegründeten Staates Israels ist (siehe die konsequente Schreibweise in dem Celanschen Œuvre: *Hawdalah* statt *Hawdohle*, *Schabbat* statt *Schabbos* oder *Schabbes*, *Schofar* statt *Schojfor* oder *Schojfer*, *Tekiah* statt *Tökiah*).

Das Gedicht *Zu Zweien* gehört noch zu jener Fröhschicht der Celanschen Lyrik, in der hebräische Worte beim Bekenntnis zur eigenen posttraumatischen Jüdischkeit noch weitgehend vermieden werden. Gleichwohl ist das Motiv des Weins im Gedicht genauso zentral wie in der jüdischen Hausliturgie. Der Wein umfließt im Gedicht die Toten, deren Haare zur Matte verflochten sind. Auch haben die nun Toten den Wein über denjenigen gegossen, der als *Du* angesprochen und dazu aufgefordert wird, den Würfel noch einmal zu werfen und in ein Auge der Toten einzutauchen.

Der Wein ist in der jüdischen Hausliturgie der unerlässliche Begleiter zweier wichtiger Zeremonien, ohne die keine jüdische Hausgemeinschaft denkbar ist. Über ihn spricht der Hausvater den Kiddusch (שודיק), die Benediktion, mit der der Schabbat und die Feiertage geheiligt werden und praktisch ihren Anfang nehmen. Der

Wein bekommt in der sogenannten Hawdalah-Zeremonie (הלדבה, Trennungsfeier) allerdings auch beim Ausgang der Feiertage und des Schabbat eine wichtige Rolle. Man spricht über einen Becher Wein wieder je eine Benediktion, eine in Form und Gestaltung sonderbare Kerze sowie über wohlduftende Gewürze, um schließlich die Kerze zu löschen, und zwar meist so, dass der Wein über den fackelartig lodernnden Docht gegossen wird. Bedenken wir noch, dass die dabei verwendete Kerze aus mehreren Dochten so geflochten ist, dass sie wie eine Fackel auflodert, so ist leicht einzusehen, wie bewusst Celans Gedicht *Zu Zweien* die häusliche Ritualzeremonie der Hawdalah heraufbeschwört, um sich dem Trauma der Schoah zuzuwenden, selbst wenn der hebräische Name nicht fällt.

Die ersten beiden Zeilen des Gedichts fassen das Trauma der Schoah in deutlichste Worte. Die Toten Israels schwimmen, treiben dahin. Und zwar paarweise. Die Toten Israels sind also nicht begraben, wie auch die verbrannten Leichen nach jüdischem Religionsgesetz als unbestattet gelten. Den verbrannten Leichen der in der Schoah Getöteten wurde die letzte Ehre für alle Ewigkeit verweigert. Diese Erfahrung der Entehrung der Leichen evoziert den von Pogromen her bekannten Topos der im Fluss treibenden Toten.

Das Gedicht bedient ich indessen durch syntaktische Ausklammerung und Zeilenumbruch der Retardation. Hinausgezögert wird die Erfahrung, dass die Toten von Wein umflossen sind. Das zum Hausritual verwendete Rotwein und das Blut der Opfer von Pogromen verschmilzt in einer Metapher, die das historische Trauma der Judenvernichtung mit vertrauten Erinnerungen an Hawdalahzeremonien in der Kindheit verknüpft. Aus dem vor Blut geröteten Fluss osteuropäischer Pogrome wird plötzlich ein Hawdalahsteller mit rituell vergossenem Rotwein. Aus der entweihenden Gewalt fremder Hassideologie das vertrauteste Bild häuslicher Ruhe und Geborgenheit.

Die Wiederholung der Behauptung, die Toten würden zu zweien dahintreiben, betont, dass die Toten je ein Paar bilden. Die Kraft dieser Formulierung besteht in der Prägnanz des Ausdrucks. Die Toten schwimmen vor unseren Augen zu zweien vorüber, weil sie in ihrem Leben ein Paar waren und diese Lebensgemeinschaft paradoxerweise selbst von Mord und Tod nicht aufgehoben werden kann. Die zweite Hälfte der zweiten Zeile ändert das Bild. Der geweihte Wein gewinnt an Bedeutung und bildet zur Entweihung durch den Tod einen Gegenpunkt.

Die unmittelbar anschließende dritte Zeile behauptet von diesem Wein, er sei derjenige, den die Toten in ihrem Leben über das angesprochene Du gegossen haben. Mit dem Hinweis auf die einstige Kulthandlung des Weingießens eröffnet das Gedicht eine präteriale Erinnerungsebene, die aus der posttraumatischen Gegenwart in die prätraumatische Vergangenheit zurückführt. Hat der Wein die Toten in der zweiten Zeile der ersten Strophe noch lediglich unmittelbar umgeben, sonst schwammen die Toten vermutlich einen Fluss herunter, wie wir diesen Anblick nach Pogromen und Massakern aus der langen Geschichte des Antijudaismus gewohnt sind, so sind die Toten nun ausschließlich von Wein umgeben, sie schwimmen darin. Zugleich ist dieser Wein derjenige heilige kultische Wein, den die Toten in ihrem Leben über das angesprochene Du gegossen haben, ein Meer, ein Fluss an vergossenem Ritualwein. Das Wasser, in dem vorhin noch die entweihenden Leichen

der Ermordeten trieben, weicht somit dem Hawdalahwein der Vergangenheit. Als würde das angesprochene Du eingreifen, verwandelt sich das Wasser, in dem die Toten schwimmen, in jenen Wein, der das angesprochene lyrische Du mit den Toten verbindet.

Die erste Zeile der zweiten Strophe bedient sich zwar des Präteritums, wenn sie bemerkt, dass die Toten ihre Haare zu Matten geflochten haben, sie versetzt uns indessen nicht mehr in jene Vergangenheit zurück, als die Toten noch gelebt und bei der Hawdalah-Zeremonie Wein über eine geflochtene Kerze gegossen haben. Einer solchen Rückblende würde ja das Präsens der zweiten Zeile (*sie wohnen einander bei*) sehr eindeutig widersprechen. Dennoch erfolgt das Eheglück in der Gegenwart. Die ersten zwei Zeilen der letzten Strophe erwecken somit den Anschein, als entstünde an dieser zeitlichen Nahtstelle zwischen Vergangenheit und Gegenwart eine anachronistische Zwitterzone, in der prätraumatische Vergangenheit und posttraumatische Gegenwart ineinander über- und aufgehen. Die Ähnlichkeit der Toten mit der Hawdalahkerze entspringt in der Vergangenheit, weil sie eine unmittelbare Folge häuslicher Frömmigkeit ist und somit mit dem Gießen jenes geweihten Weines aufs engste zusammenhängt, der nun in der posttraumatischen Gegenwart das treibende Wasser des Flusses verdrängt, um die Leichen der Toten zu umfließen und sie damit der Entweihung zu entheben. Die Toten wohnen einander jedoch in der Gegenwart bei, als würde sie nun der Hawdalahwein, den sie einst über die Dochte der Kerze gegossen haben und der nun das Wasser, indem die Toten schwimmen, verdrängt, auf das Ehebett der einstigen Schabbatnächte heben.

Das Motiv des Liebesaktes, der in dem Zusammenhang von Schoah und Tod recht sonderbar anmuten mag, gehört für das jüdische Denken in Wahrheit mit der größten Selbstverständlichkeit in die Intimität häuslicher Schabbatfrömmigkeit. Wie die rituelle Gleichnishandlung der Hawdalah zur Erfüllung eines religiösen Gebotes gehört, nämlich zum Einhalten der göttlichen Mahnung, den Schabbat von den Werktagen zu unterscheiden, so gehört auch das Motiv der ehelichen Verbindung und die Zeugung von Kindern zur Erfüllung eines göttlichen Gebotes. Das allererste Geheiß Gottes ist ja das der Vermehrung. Der dazu notwendige Liebesakt, sofern er in der Nacht des Schabbat oder eines Feiertages erfolgt, trägt nach jüdischer Auffassung sehr zur Steigerung der Geweihtheit des Tages bei. Die Tradition spricht von einer erhöhten Pracht des Gebots (הוצמ רודה).

Das Verflechten der Dochte hat nun dieselbe Funktion. Die Flamme, mit der man von dem heiligen Tag Abschied nimmt, wird auf diese Art vermehrt und trägt somit zur Heiligung des zu Ende gehenden Tages noch ein letztes Mal bei. Das Ritualgesetz schreibt für den Fall, dass einem keine geflochtene Kerze zur Verfügung stehen sollte, sogar vor, dass man dann zwei Kerzen nimmt und sie »zu zweien« verwendet, indem man beide anzündet und die Flammen zusammenhält. In den Regeln des Ritualgesetzes bilden also Geschlechtsakt am heiligen Tag und das Verflechten der Dochte der Hawdalahkerze eine Parallele, die sich auch im Gedicht *Zu Zweien* zu widerspiegeln scheint.

Dem Ineinanderfließen von Vergangenheit und Gegenwart zu Beginn der zweiten Strophe, ausgedrückt durch das Aufeinandertreffen von Präteritum und Präs-

ens, ist indessen ein anderes Überfließen, eine andere Verwandlung in aller Stille vorausgegangen. War das angesprochene Du in der ersten Strophe noch mit der Hawdalahkerze identisch, so scheinen nun die Toten mit ihrem Körper deutliche Züge der Abschiedskerze anzunehmen. Zum ehelichen Glück kommt es in dieser Ähnlichkeit der Hawdalahkerze. Das Gedenken und der einst über die Kerze gegossene geweihte Wein vermögen zwar die Toten wieder zu beleben, wie sie kurz davor imstande waren, die Toten dem entweihenden Wasser des Pogromflusses zu entreißen und das Wasser, das die Entehrung der Leichen versinnbildlicht, in geweihten Wein zu verwandeln. Die Toten werden jedoch ausschließlich zum Ritual des Abschieds zum Leben erweckt. Ihre Lebendigkeit speist aus ihrer Frömmigkeit, die für immer dahingeschwunden ist und nur mehr erinnert wird. Ihre Jüdischkeit hat genauso keine Zukunft, wie der Überlebende ohne die Möglichkeit, sich zu seinem Jude-sein zu bekennen, keine Gegenwart hat.

An diesem Punkt erfolgt die Aufforderung. Der sich lyrisch zu seiner Jüdischkeit Bekennende verlangt von dem vorhin angesprochenen Du, das einst in dem Docht der Hawdalahkerzen der Jugend und der Kindheit da war, dass er seinen Würfel noch einmal wirft und in ein Auge der Zwei eintaucht. Die Aufforderung ist eine nur zu deutliche Anspielung auf das Buch Ester und beschwört somit den schlechthinnigen Archetyp jüdischer Vernichtungstraumata herauf. In der Erzählung des Buches Ester wird über das Schicksal der Juden gewürfelt.¹ Was sichtbare menschliche Hände an Schicksal erwürfeln, wendet Gott schließlich zum Besseren. Die Aufforderung zum erneuten Würfeln greift gleichsam in das Urnarrativ der archetypischen Erzählung der Bibel ein und verteilt die Rollen neu. Gottes Allmacht, die selbst das magisch heraufbeschworene Verhängnis abzuwenden weiß, hat im Celanschen Gedicht der Bewegung eines wirklichen Glücksspiels zu weichen, wobei Gott als ein heilsgeschichtlicher Tollpatsch in Erscheinung tritt, dem nun extra die Gelegenheit geboten werden muss, es noch einmal zu versuchen und diesmal besser zu machen.

Wie in der ersten Purimerzählung von Ester und Mordechai ein göttlicher Eingriff das schwere Los von den Juden dadurch abwendet, dass die himmlischen Würfel anders fallen, denn die irdischen und als es die Feinde Israels wollen, so soll nun das lyrische Du, das einst in den geflochtenen Dochten der Hawdalahkerze da war, so dass die nun Toten geweihten Wein über ihn gegossen haben, seinen Würfel neu werfen, den Toten ein neues, ein besseres Schicksal bescheren. In dieser Aufforderung wird klar, dass das namenlose Du dieses Gedichts der Gott Abrahams, Isaaks und Jakobs ist. Dass Gott nicht beim Namen genannt wird, ist eine weitere Parallele mit dem Buch Ester. Es ist dies ja das einzige Buch der Bibel, in dem weder das Tetragramm noch auch nur einer der anderen gängigen Gottesnamen vorkommt.

Die Aufforderung neu zu würfeln, ihre Evokation der archetypischen Geschichte des allerersten Purims und die damit einhergehende Erkenntnis, das angesprochene Du sei von Anfang an Gott gewesen, ist wohl das riskanteste Moment jenes existentialen Geschehens, das in diesem Gedicht des überlebenden Paul Celan literarisch vor sich geht. Es steht nämlich die ganze posttraumatische Authentizität

¹ Vgl. 3:7; 9:24.

der Celanschen Dichtung auf dem Spiel. Sie darf ja weder den Abbruch der Bekenntnistradition noch den historischen Abgrund der Schoah eskamotieren. Der Gefahr, anstelle den Abgrund zu überbrücken, darüber hinwegzutäuschen, entgeht das Gedicht Celans durch die Komplexität der Aufforderung. Die erste Hälfte erweist sich als ironische Allusion, Gott habe sich verwürfelt, nun habe er allerdings die Möglichkeit, sich zu verbessern. In der bissigen Ironie dieser Formulierung wird nichts Geringeres behauptet, als dass die Schoah ein Purim gewesen sei, ein Purim, das missraten, missglückt, ja aus den Fugen geraten ist. Im jüdischen Geschichtstopos des Purim, in dem sich die Weltgeschichte der Menschheit mit der Heilsgeschichte Israels vermengt, bekennt sich der traumatisierte Überlebende, das lyrische Ich dieses Gedichts zu beidem. Zur biblisch-literarischen Heilsgeschichte, zur spirituellen Grundlage jedweder Jüdischkeit sowohl als auch zur Menschheitsgeschichte, in der sich die Schoah als solche zugetragen hat. In der zweiten Hälfte der Aufforderung würfelt das Gedicht allerdings selber. Gott soll ja nicht nur neu würfeln und seinen weltgeschichtlichen Fehler heilsgeschichtlich aufheben. Nach der ersehnten Schicksalswende für die Toten soll Gott auch noch in ein Auge der Zweien eintauchen. In das Auge der sich liebenden und durch das Gedenken an die Kindheitszeremonien nun wieder lebendig gewordenen Juden. Gott hat durch eine vor Liebesglück erweiterte Pupille in sie einzutauchen und in ihnen aufzugehen, wie er in den Dochten aufgegangen war, als sie den Wein über ihn gegossen hatten, sie, denen durch Gottes versäumtes Purim die Möglichkeit des Bekenntnisses genommen werden sollte. Damit spielt Celan auf einen rabbinischen Topos an, der den jüdischen Ruhetag Wonne nennt (תבש גנוע). Gott soll im Auge eines der Toten untertauchen, in seiner Perspektive aufgehen, und den Augenblick aus einem seiner Juden oder Jüdinnen heraus erleben. Den vorhin erwürfelten Vernichtungstod ebenso wie die neue, fiktive Schabbatfreude seines zweiten Purimwunders mit seinen häuslichen Freuden und seinem vertrauten Liebesglück, dem das lyrische Ich, das posttraumatisch zu seiner Jüdischkeit bekennt, nun sein wahres Leben nach einem bloßen Überleben verdankt.

Jüdischer Ursprung, jüdische Gegenwart und womöglich Zukunft sind somit lyrisch erwürfelt. Eine durchaus glückliche Lyrik.

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Alternative Canons in Popular Literature

Reading David Gemmell and Dan Simmons¹

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Abstract

The starting point of the study is the conflict between classical (academic) and alternative canon. Some prominent texts of speculative fiction can notably stage this conflict (as a possible textual strategy) by confronting us with the experience that mainstream literature and popular registers are inseparable. The reading of these texts can prove that the aesthetical canon is not equivalent to cultural elitism. In contemporary literature, some works of speculative fiction – works of science fiction and fantasy in particular – support this idea. The study – by reading of David Gemmell's *Troy Series* and Dan Simmons's *Hyperion Cantos* – exemplifies that the principle of innovation does not necessarily destruct the existing canon, but it integrates itself into the canon while rearranging it. The works of Gemmell and Simmons employ such poetical and rhetorical techniques that are able to modify the system of expectations created by the evoked genres (mythological fantasy and new space opera) and also lead us to reconsider the classical literary canon. They both indicate that the artificially created cultural hierarchy can be set in motion by rereading the works of popular literature.

Key words: classical canon; alternative canon; fantasy; space opera; innovation; re-reading the classics

Subject-Affiliation in New CEEOL: Language and Literature – Studies of Literature – Comparative Study of Literature

Introduction

Questions concerning the existence and functions of literary canons as well as their cultural importance and historical mission have been widely discussed in the past few decades. One reason of this might be that the interpretive communities, engaged in the identical preservation of various literary canons, have been confronted with the decanonization tendencies of postmodern theory, its ability to re-situate the hierarchical systems and open them up to the texts of minority literature. It is not our intention to summarize this extraordinarily complex process (that would be an impossible task), however, in the beginning of our study it is necessary to clarify which questions we are focusing on and what our main presuppositions are regarding the dynamics of canon formation.

¹ The paper is the extended version of the paper *The Interaction of Canons: Conflict or Symbiosis? Rereading and Relativity of Traditions in David Gemmell's Troy Series and Dan Simmons's Hyperion Cantos* published in *World Literature Studies* 3. vol. 7. (2015) (pp. 87–100).

One of the central roles of literary canons is their ability to institutionalize, which is well-proven by the observation that one cannot speak about reading without the act of canonization. The influence of canons on the formation of aesthetic experience is inevitable. As a certain form of presupposition, the canon always instructs the reader and impacts on the process of evaluation. Moreover, the canon not only selects and informs but it also restricts, thus showing its double nature. At the same time, the role and functions of canons disperse the supposedly coherent meaning of the term 'canon' so much that – even in the case of mapping the identical canon constructions – we can approach this phenomenon from several aspects (see Kulcsár-Szabó, 1998, 165–173).

For we are dealing with concrete literary texts and their metacanonial implications, it seems to be the most expedient to conceive literary canon as a meeting point of writing, reading, and interpretation. For us, the literary canon is a system of figures that is inseparable from the interpreter's perspective. Furthermore, we have to keep in mind that tracing of rhetorical strategies and the process of reconfiguration presupposes being aware of the meanings formed in the reception of the texts. According to Paul de Man:

The commentator should persist as long as possible in the canonical reading and should begin to swerve away from it only when he encounters difficulties which the methodological and substantial assertions of the system are no longer able to master. Whether or not such a point has been reached should be left open as part of an ongoing critical investigation. But it would be naive to believe that such an investigation could be avoided, even for the best of reasons. The necessity to revise the canon arises from resistances encountered in the text itself (extensively conceived) and not from preconceptions imported from elsewhere (de Man, 1996, 186).

Thus the canonical focal points of the texts are connected with ideology-critical aspects of the text itself and facing this is also the result of the rhetorical reading. On the other hand, if the text, in the sense of Paul de Man, is "unreadable", then the canonical position is not its inherent feature, but the result of unestablished readings (see Martyn, 1993).

If reading literary texts presupposes the presence of a canon, we should not neglect the way reading (or interpretation) resists to the authority of the canon. This double process is able to undo the hierarchy and the systematic organization of the canon in such a way that those components are kept in motion which also make it possible to build this network of relations. To put it very simply: the interpretation as the application of a canon is inseparable from the resistance to that canon. On the other hand, if we take interpretation as something concerned not in suspension and termination of the play but instead in opening up the possible 'ways' of reading and the borders of the text, then the supposed canon definitely starts to resemble a rhizome or polysemy: a tissue of divergencies and coordination, missing the notion of a centre. From this perspective a relevant question emerges: how can literary texts that are canonically dispersed inscribe through interpretation into various canons.

The starting point of our study is the conflict between classical (academic) can-

on and alternative canon.² Some prominent texts of speculative fiction can notably stage this conflict (as a possible textual strategy) by confronting us with the experience that mainstream literature and popular registers are inseparable. The reading of these texts can prove that the aesthetical canon is not equivalent to cultural elitism (e. g. the education system in the United States builds upon the modern popular culture and the canon of technicized theory). In contemporary literature some speculative fiction novels – works of science fiction and fantasy in particular – support the idea that: “The canonized repertoires of any system would very likely stagnate after a certain time if not for competition from non-canonized challengers, which often threaten to replace them” (Even-Zohar, 1990, 16).

It may occur, however (and in the last decades there have been a growing number of examples), that a novel applying diverse techniques of hybridization can simultaneously become a part of different canons, and so modify them. Just one example: according to Brian McHale the following poetical method enables an approach to Kurt Vonnegut’s novel (*Breakfast of Champions*) from two directions: from the perspective of the classical canon as well as from the perspective of the alternative canon.

The Kurt Vonnegut who projects himself into the world of his novel in order to interview – and liberate! – his own character is practicing romantic irony, and thereby aligning himself with the postmodernist revival of romantic irony. So Trout, archetypal science-fiction writer, alter ego of the ‘early’ Vonnegut, meets the ‘later’, postmodernist Vonnegut – what could be more symbolic? Particularly since the occurrence of such a meeting in itself exhibits the postmodernism of *Breakfast of Champions*. Spokesman of one of the genres of ontological poetics, Trout finds himself inside a text belonging to the other ontological genre – this is the relation the science fiction to postmodernist writing, in a nutshell. (McHale, 1987, 72)

Our study – by reading of David Gemmell’s *Troy Series* (*Lord of the Silver Bow* [2005]; *Shield of Thunder* [2006]; *Fall of Kings* [2007]) and Dan Simmons’s *Hyperion Cantos* (*Hyperion* [1989]; *The Fall of Hyperion* [1990]; *Endymion* [1996]; *The Rise of Endymion* [1997]) – exemplifies that the principle of innovation does not necessarily destruct the existing canon, but it integrates itself into the canon while restructures it. The works of Gemmell and Simmons employ such poetical and rhetorical techniques that are able to modify the system of expectations created by the evoked genres (mythological fantasy and new space opera), and also lead us to reconsider the classical literary canon. Through the narrative processes of fantasy, Gemmell’s novels open a new perspective to the world of Homeric epics. On the other hand, novels of Dan Simmons innovate our relation to the tradition of renaissance epic (Boccaccio, Chaucer) just as to the organic vision of romantic poetry (Keats, Hölderlin) by applying the rules of the genre called new space opera. They both indicate that the artificially created cultural hierarchy can be put in motion by rereading the works of popular literature.

This last aspect should not be ignored in a study dealing with the questions of literary canon, because the problem – in the light of the above – is far from being

² On different types of literary canons see L. Varga, 2014.

peripheral. In his essential book Harold Bloom, who has focused a large part of his oeuvre on the questions of western canon, pointed out that reading a literary classic, thanks to its popular elements, can suddenly become an estranged version of its own possibilities. The process of rereading Milton confronted him with the following experience: “Although the poem [Milton’s *Paradise Lost*] is a biblical epic, in classical form, the peculiar impression it gave me was what I generally ascribe to literary fantasy or science fiction, not to heroic epic. *Weirdness* was its overwhelming effect” (Bloom, 1994, 26).

Using the word weirdness to express the sudden strangeness of heroic epic taking shape, is very telling wherefore Bloom does not describe the aesthetic effects from the perspective of the classics. But it is even more important in this expression that the strangeness of the text appears to us as a feature that effaces something between the heroic epic and the genres of popular literature. This ‘something’ that Bloom associates with the ‘barbarism’ of the text, can become especially important for us in an inverse relation. (The barbarian always threatens the peace of the empire, the consensus, the canon etc.) At the same time, Saussure’s famous reflection that the letters of the word ‘barbaros’ do not signify the concept that remains nonetheless utterable (and this is truly barbarian) may suggest that the signifier and the signified cannot be detached (see Kulcsár-Szabó, 2009, 247–248). According to this, does a kind of latent dynamics exist in the canonized (or classical) texts that opens the way toward the non-identifiable, or to be more accurate, identically unrepeatably components of reception? Or conversely: Does the non-canonized reading procedure projected on the canonized lead to similar results at the meeting points of the texts? In other words, can reading of science fiction and fantasy books offer models to the reception and rereading of classical works? Owing to this interaction, can the given fantasy or science fiction novel pass the test of rereading? So we are looking for responses to these less self-evidently answerable questions with the help of the novels mentioned previously.

At first we analyze the *Troy Series* by David Gemmell, then Dan Simmons’s *Hyperion Cantos*. The order of these two parts is not fixed, the interpretations run side by side, they are interchangeable. Although they do not get their starting points from each other, they are connected by numerous points; they are neither subordinate nor dominant. Still – as seen below – neither the identical repetition of the same viewpoint, nor the thematic multiplication of problems follows from it. The propositions of reading the canon unfolded in these two analyses are only two of the probably many possible examples that can lead us to similar outcome in the spectre of fantasy and science fiction genres (and about which only a study of great volume can give an account). So let’s take a look at the chosen books.

Troy Series

The reading of David Gemmell's *Troy Series* gives us a good chance to catch the above-mentioned mechanisms of the dynamics of canon in progress, since Gemmell's work has an interesting relation not only to its own genre's tradition (and in that way it problematizes its role in the alternative canon), but it also steps into dialogue with some basic texts of classical canon in a productive way. The term dialogue is pertinent here because the effect is not one-sided but demonstrably mutual. Gemmell's *Troy Series* not only draws elements from Homeric and ancient (Roman, Judaic and Egyptian) narrative and mythological traditions, but more importantly, these novels relate back to the basic texts of classical canon as well.

At first we take a look at how Gemmell's *Troy Series* relates to the tradition of fantasy genre. After this, we observe how the elements of classical tradition are reinterpreted in these novels. Finally – by using the terms of *narrativity* and *performativity* – we try to point out the consequences of reading Gemmell's novels in regard to rereading the classics (particularly Homer).

The genre criticism classifies Gemmell's fantasy novels as heroic fantasies on well grounded reasons (Mendlesohn – James, 2009, 130). For the long series (*Drenai Series*, *Rigante Series*) as well as for the short ones (*Greek Series*, *Stones of Power*, *John Shannow*) the subtle characterization, presentation of heroic and warlike events, and detailed worldbuilding are typical. This also applies to the *Troy Series*, but at the same time one of its main features lies in exceeding the traditional heroic fantasy. By evoking historical and mythological narratives, the series allows the reading from the perspective of the historical novel and the mythological fantasy as well. From our point of view the latter is particularly important because refreshing the mythological narratives can contribute to the rereading of texts of classical literary canon.

Since we focus on the reading of the *Troy Series*, it can be helpful to recount some features and basic forms of fantasy. We recline upon Farah Mendlesohn's considerations and notions. In her book *Rhetorics of Fantasy*, Mendlesohn points out that it is difficult to define fantasy because genres and subgenres are often mixed within the same text. In other words, it frequently happens that a text brings into play various genre codes, and the recognition and activation of these codes in the process of reading depends on the prior knowledge and the expectations of the reader as well. Therefore, instead of the traditional genre classification (high fantasy, low fantasy, dark fantasy, urban fantasy etc.), Mendlesohn proposes a rhetorical classification based on the linguistic means by which the fantastic appears in the narrated world. Based on this we can differentiate four categories: the portal-quest, the intrusive, the liminal and the immersive fantasy: "In the portal-quest we are invited through into the fantastic; in the intrusion fantasy, the fantastic enters the fictional world; in the liminal fantasy the magic hovers in the corner of our eye; while in the immersive fantasy we are allowed no escape." (Mendlesohn, 2008, xiv)

The *Troy Series* is an excellent example of how several subgenres are mixed within a text. Except the intrusive fantasy, which is nearly related to horror stories, we can find traces of all Mendlesohnian categories in the trilogy. The most apparent of them is the immersive character. Since Tolkien, one of the most decisive features of fantasy has been the depiction of the depths of the narrated world. The *Troy Series* entirely satisfies the reader's expectation to submerge into the details of a fictional world which is elaborated with meticulous care. Beside the immersive character we can also notice the presence of the quest. The *Troy Series* does not dispose of a protagonist; the characters of the trilogy – often even those who appear only for a short period – have their own sovereign way of thinking and their own original and independent purposes and desires. Each one of them have their own missions that they accomplish according to their own talent.

A decisive feature of the trilogy is the liminality that can be grasped in the way the fantastic appears in the fictional world. It would be self-evident to depict the Olympian gods in the novels; however, Gemmell does not make use of this possibility. The world of the *Troy Series* is absolutely free from gods, yet it does not lack magic. The fate of the characters – like in the ancient Greek tragedies and epics – is formed by predictions. These predictions sneak the fantastic into the fictionized world and in addition they play an influential role in forming the story. We can state that the fantastic does not intrude into the narrated world all the time, rather it hides in the background and only occasionally – but always in crucial moments – is put into action.

As we have mentioned above, the determining feature of the *Troy Series* is its relation to the myths just as to the classical literary tradition (mainly to Homeric narratives). The importance of the first lies in the profound relation between fantasy and myths. On one hand, fantasy borrows narrative patterns, even certain stories or their elements (place names, names of characters etc.) from myths. On the other hand, fantasy novels frequently create their own mythology; respectively operate the characteristic mode of mythical thinking. We can easily recognize these relations in the most important fantasies of the 20th century (Lovecraft, Tolkien, Holdstock etc.). It is worth noting, however, that the relation between fantasy and mythology is not confined to servile imitation of mythic narratives, patterns, and archetypes. On the contrary, one of the main features of fantasy is its creative approach to any kind of tradition, thus to the mythological as well. As Brian Attebery points out in his book dealing with the connections of fantasy and myths: "Fantasy is fundamentally playful – which does not mean that it is not serious. Its way of playing with symbols encourages the reader to see meaning as something unstable and elusive, rather than single and self-evident." (Attebery, 2014, 2)

Consequently, is not the fact that a fantasy novel borrows elements of a certain myth, that is the most interesting, but, rather the ways it transforms, and parodies them according to its own demands. By putting elements of the ancient narratives into new context, fantasy accomplishes an important cultural mediatory work: it makes accessible – although not in identical form – the experiences of the ancient world, and satisfies those human demands that desacralized societies are no longer able to satisfy. The best fantasy novels recontextualize the myths so that at the

same time they direct our attention to their social, moral, and aesthetic potentials, while putting the readers to a level where they can face their own godlike, heroic or monstrous character.

Gemmell's *Troy Series* unequivocally supports this argument. The method how these novels trace back to myths and recontextualize their elements, confirms Attebery's remark on the playfulness of fantasy. Gemmell emphasized several times that he had never intended to imitate Homer, and he used the Homeric epic only as a source of inspiration to create his original fictional world. Therefore, while analysing the *Troy Series*, we focus on its creative feature, instead of comparing it with the Homeric narratives.

Creativity is not explainable only with genre differences, although a fantasy novel gives more freedom to the writer than an epos, which has very strict formal rules. At the same time, similarly to the epos, the novel is also able to depict grandiose events and show dynamic relations between characters. Thus the genre rules might provide a partial explanation of why Gemmell treats the Homeric inheritance without restraint. We can observe the playfulness of fantasy in the manner how Gemmell represents the characters and modifies the plot. In the *Troy Series* there are numerous characters who do not exist in ancient Greek mythology; some of them become central characters (like Kalliades and Banokles). Moreover, we encounter names that are familiar to us from elsewhere (e. g. Calliope, who is a daughter of Zeus and Mnemosyne, and also the muse of epic poetry in Greek mythology, but in Gemmell, she is a lesbian priestess). Last but not least, some well-known characters are given new attributes that they did not possess in Homer. Hector is impotent, Priamus is frivolous, Helene is casual etc. We can interpret this as a desacralization of the myth.

Furthermore, Gemmell does not draw only from Homer but he weaves some narrative threads of Roman, Egyptian and Jewish mythology into the story, and distinctly subordinates the borrowed elements to the narrative structure of the novels. This leads the reader to finding some elements familiar, in spite of which the story itself – thanks to the unexpected twists and turns – constantly captures the reader's attention.

To sum up, we conclude: Gemmell does not preserve the traditional elements in their identical form, but partly because of the genre's, partly because of the reader's expectations – modifies them, and this results in a completely innovative interpretation of the Trojan War. The process, however, does not end in demythization of the tradition. Gemmell – using the possibilities offered by the genre – does not simply destruct the original, rather he innovates and refreshes it. In the following, we try to describe this process with the help of two terms: narrativity and performativity.

Putting the question of narrativity forward is caused not only by the fact that Gemmell masterfully weaves the plot, but also that the act of storytelling itself often becomes the object of reflection. Besides the fact that the narrator – referring to different narrative genres, such as myth, tale, fable or legend – permanently reflects on the way of storytelling, sometimes the characters themselves become storytellers, usually being aware of its relevance. Stories appear in various forms

and functions on the pages of the trilogy. For example in the *Lord of the Silver Bow* Gershom recalls a well-known Egyptian myth, the story of Osiris and Seth, to confirm his argumentation. Elsewhere we can see that the characters themselves – first of all Odysseus and Hector – are obliged to face the fact that they have become legends in their lives. All these elements allude to the fact that in the *Troy Series* Gemmell does not simply retell the ancient story but also uncovers the process of legend formation.

In the *Shield of Thunder* we read that: “Close by, Banokles was regaling Odysseus and the crew of the *Penelope* with a ludicrously distorted version of the rescue of Piria and the fight with Arelos. He made it sound as if Arelos had been a demigod of battle. The truth was more prosaic.” (Gemmell, 2006, 59) Yet Odysseus replies as follows: “A good tale. [...] Though it lacks a truly powerful ending.” (Gemmell, 2006, 59) This continues with Odysseus telling the story using some claptrap elements (Arelos’s head was cut off from his body, and a plume of black smoke rose from his neck forming a figure of a man wearing a helmet). Then Bias goes on with the storytelling (explaining that the man with the helmet was a spirit of a warrior cursed long ago whose soul was trapped and imprisoned in the body of Arelos by a magic knife), when finally he confesses that his story is stolen, and it is nothing else than one of the stories of Odysseus.

The complexity of storytelling intensifies the immersive feature of the trilogy, but at the same time, we can observe different narrative strategies in the novels as well, e. g. when the characters reflect to the constructed and fictional feature of their own stories. From this point of view Odysseus, who can be thought of as a figure of self-reflection, deserves our utmost attention. One of the memorable features of Homeric *Odyssey* is a narrative trick that Odysseus provisionally (in four books) takes the position of the narrator and tells the so called ‘Cretan stories’ that differ from each other depending on the communication situations. In Gemmell, one of the most important features of Odysseus’ personality is his ability to tell lies in order to accommodate to a specific situation. As early as at his first appearance two main attributes are assigned to him: the ability of storytelling and the ability of lying. “Grandfather says you are the greatest liar in the entire world and tell the best stories”, little Xander turns to Odysseus (Gemmell, 2005, 123). Later Odysseus also describes himself in the following way: “I am Odysseus, the prince of lies, the lord of storytellers.” (Gemmell, 2005, 118)

In Plato’s early dialogue *Lesser Hippias*, the interlocutor of Socrates also calls Odysseus a liar, but the context of this statement is entirely different (Plato, 1926, 370e, 371e). In Gemmell’s novels Odysseus is not a mean figure who is despised by the others, quite the opposite. It is remarkable that Odysseus is the only one among the main characters who does not have enemies. It is interesting that he achieves this just by telling lies and stories. The lie in his case does not mean the distortion of the truth; instead it serves as a tool for illuminating the reality. Odysseus often appeases his enemies by telling them a story. Since everyone likes interesting and well-told stories, Odysseus achieves his honour with this activity.

Odysseus’s lies appear as truths on another level.³ Not only in a sense that

³ On the question of ‘Cretan lies’ see Haft 1984. On the relation between poetry and lie see Pratt 1993, 63–71.

wisdom lies behind them. Odysseus speaks about the truth of fictional stories in another way as well. According to him, stories are true as far as they are able to reshape reality. There are many examples of this in the novels: the story of the *Penelope's* crew, or the story of Bias, the spear thrower. In a story told by Odysseus a winged demon attacked the Penelope, and it was Bias who killed the demon with a spear and saved the boat and his comrades from their deadly end. Bias was so uplifted by the (apparently fictitious) story that he practiced throwing the javelin until he won a great prize at the king's games. Bias "had become the greatest [spear thrower] because I lied about it [said Odysseus]. And therefore it was no longer a lie." (Gemmell, 2006, 142) Something similar also happened to the crew: "The previous summer, when the Penelope had been attacked by pirates, the crew had fought like heroes in an effort to live up to the stories Odysseus told of them. After the victory they had gathered around him, bragging of their courage, anxious that he should include this latest adventure in his next performance." (Gemmell, 2005, 167) Odysseus thus not only tells stories, but he tries to reshape the world around him through his stories.

These relations of storytelling put forward the question of performativity. It means that when someone tells a story, he/she not only formulates statements, but by the act of storytelling, he/she also performs an action, and this action – as seen above – exceeds the storytelling itself. In these cases, the story does not only tie a previously existing and well-known truth, but it creates the truth. This can be well-seen in mythologies too, because the very nature of myths is that they enact reality. We can also discover similarities between Gemmell's novels and the ancient myths: they both assign importance to the audience. Gemmell's heroes tell their stories to the audience just like the ancient rhapsodists did. As we have referred to it previously, the modifications, the modernization, and the ways of demythization do not mean the refusal of the relationship to the classical tradition. On the contrary, as David Attebery has pointed out: "fantasy's main claim to cultural importance resides, I believe, in the work of redefining the relationship between contemporary readers and mythic texts" (Attebery, 2014, 3).

In Gemmell's Troy Series the context changes but the basic functions remain untouched. Thanks to the new context, the familiar elements get different aspects. Some episodes of Greek mythology (the Cyclops, the Gorgon, the story of Circe, the legend of the golden fleece etc.) are retold by the characters and unveiled as fiction. For example Odysseus retells some events of the *Odyssey* emphasizing its fictitious character. Due to this procedure, the tradition drawn on by the writer, does not appear as an authority (like it did over centuries), but primarily as a fiction to which rewriting does not cause a problem. This diverging strain can also refer to the multiformity of Homeric texts before the process of their canonization, i.e. to a non-hierarchizable corpus from which countless variants arise, and these serve as a basis to the later canonized version of Homeric texts (see Nagy, 2011).

In addition, Gemmell's Troy Series goes further in this field: by comprehending mythological stories as fictions, their originality is called into question. Perhaps the most memorable episode of the series from this point of view is the story of Circe. In the *Shield of Thunder* Odysseus and his company find themselves in an island

where they meet Circe who sells pigs. As a result of their business, the pigs come to the board of the Penelope, and so they initiate some humorous and moving events. Such a dramatic event takes place when Odysseus jumps into the sea to save a pig's life about which he told a story before. In the story the pig was none other than the 'reincarnation' of Porteus, Odysseus's lost friend. Odysseus's story is obviously a fiction, but the context where the events happen is less fabulous than Homer's. Odysseus makes up the story to ease his pain caused by the loss of his friend. Now the reader can hardly release the idea that he has just read the origin of the Homeric tale here.

This story can be read as an allegory of interchangeability of the origin. According to this, one cannot find the origin of Gemmell's Troy Series in Homeric epic, instead, the events told in the series become the origin itself of which the story retold by Homer is only a version. If we read the story of the Trojan War in the context of fantasy, some new, so far unheard meanings of the story may open. Gemmell's work makes us face the finding that the age of heroes is not separated from us only by the abyss of time, but also by the artificially established cultural hierarchy. But if the fantasy is able to achieve what the heroic epic does, then we must not decide in advance which genre is valuable and which is not. David Gemmell's legacy lies in here: he shows that the passage from myth to myth leads through the aesthetic non-differentiation, openness, and popular transfer.

Hyperion Cantos

Dan Simmons's *Hyperion* (the first book of his four volume series) is a network of interlocking and differing narrations embedded in a frame story. Amidst the threat of an intergalactic war, seven chosen pilgrims are travelling to the Time Tombs opening on the planet Hyperion to make a request of the Shrike, an enigmatic killing machine that integrates organic and inorganic features. One of the travellers suggests that their survival may depend on the mutual knowledge of their motives; therefore they decide they will share their tales with each other. There are six stories told during the trip (the seventh remains untold since one of the pilgrims, Het Masteen, the captain of the Templar Treeship disappears and we learn about his destiny later in *The Fall of Hyperion*) delineating six different sorts of speaking positions, style and subgenre. Simplified, these are as follows.

Part One, *The Priest's Tale* ("The Man who Cried God") is a diary and a travelogue about the functioning of the cross-shaped parasites called cruciforms and the Bikura, a degenerative people who live in the vicinity of the Shrike (the first "victims" of the cruciforms). The journey of the two priests (Hoyt and Duré) actually sheds light on the fact that the Church in the 29th century (the distant successor of the Vatican) upholds its power by means of an organism which, being able to reproduce the host, enables resurrections. (The two characters also bear each other's cruciforms, thus the parasite organism reincarnates, rebuilds once one of them anon the other of them. This mechanism, the parasite behaviour becomes the allegory of the Church's functioning throughout the series.)

Part Two, *The Soldier's Tale* ("The War Lovers") is a military science fiction about an inter-temporal love affair, desire and a hero becoming a legend (Colonel Kas-sad), who in the faraway future will defeat the Shrike. During the narration it occurs that his lover and sexual partner turning up in various military simulations and training programmes may actually be the avatar of the Shrike. (At this point, the desperate fight against the Shrike – depicted as invincible in legends – turns into a positive process in time, the outcome of which is known all through the book. The Lord of Pain finds its vanquisher.)

Part Three, *The Poet's Tale* ("Hyperion Cantos") is an ironic portrait of an artist presented in a self-narration, respectively a philological commentary in which the Shrike is identified as the poet, Martin Silenus's muse. The megatext of the Cantos (an epic poem treated as reference) grows out from this context a part of which will be the pilgrimage itself and on the fate and canonical value of which the following parts will be continuously reflecting. (Silenus is a key figure of the whole series; his artificially prolonged life enables him to affect the events on the long run. Two books later he entrusts Endymion and his android accompanist with helping the messiah girl to survive. Silenus is an ironic figure; however, he is more than a poet.)

Part Four, *The Scholar's Tale* ("The River Lethe's Taste is Bitter") is a tragic narrative about a father (Sol Weintraub) whose daughter (Rachel) suffers from the so-called Merlin- sickness and whose mysterious disease (she ages backward) starts in the cave of the Shrike nearby the Time Tombs. Examining the nature of time, the enigma of the operation of anti-entropic forces on the Hyperion is a significant element of the story. According to this, in the physical space there may be such "islands" where the course of time turns backwards. (Rachel's disease gives a shared purpose to the pilgrims since Weintraub arrives at the ship taking to the Tombs with a baby who turns out to be his daughter thus her days are counted. The group collectively takes care of the child, who partly "recovers" in the second book.)

Part Five, *The Detective's Tale* ("The Long Good-bye") is a crime story taking place in a cyberpunk context. The AI named Johnny (a cybrid of Keats) hires Brawne Lamia, a private detective to investigate the circumstances of the assault against him. Besides the nature of the Shrike anomaly, the investigation discloses the purpose of the interest sphere of the artificial intelligence interweaving the Universe: the plan of creating the Ultimate Intelligence. At this point Keats's figure becomes part of the story metonymically as well. (It is an episode of key importance from the point of view of the entire series, since it provides an insight into the objectives of the AIs as well as the details of creating the Keats personality. The story of the cybrid becoming a human draws attention to the obliteration of boundaries between artificial and natural.)

Part Six, *The Consul's Tale* ("Remembering Siri") is a colonising-political narrative being contiguous with both love and spy story. At the same time, Merin's tale is a story of becoming a Consul and a double agent in which the Shrike is unveiled as a manmade device, an artificial machine. The story also refers to the direct fore-runners of the war identifying the Consul as a spy delegated amongst the pilgrims. (The Consul is also an important viewpoint character in the frame story who serves and is exposed to the games of the power structure. From the double badinage

one can conclude that the Ousters – human mutants – jeopardizing the Hegemony are not who they seem to be and might well be puppets in a game pointing much further. His private ship also plays an important role in the running of events.)

Szilárd Sánta in his book *Mesterséges horizontok* opens a horizon on the narrative construction of *Hyperion* as follows:

By the pilgrims' tales, pieces of a big jigsaw puzzle, are unfolded their walks of life revealing those possibilities that played a part in making them the chosen ones. The reader always learns about the functioning, structure as well as the fights among power blocks of the Hegemony from a certain angle. The tales of the pilgrims intersect at some points, complement each other or allow diverse interpretations elsewhere. 'Reading the stories of differing pace and narrative technique into one another' is the most exciting part of the novel's reception. (Sánta, 2012, 81)

Indeed, the six stories and the seventh (the frame) are in a complementary relationship with each other, however, they may not be regarded as continuations or mere variations of one another. The parallel threads make up a narrative including each one of them in a way that their fragmentary character may be preserved and they do not have to possess stable information on their truth value and credibility. Rather, they work as different media (language and culture technical intervening systems) that may be controlled from each other's aspects: one genre becomes partially controllable from the other's stance. Due to interferences and overlaps, contexts projected on one another can effectively evolve which despite the asymmetries may be prolonged in a "frameward" reading. (In the further parts this gets modified in a way that the conditions of the access to the frame story are also changed. In *The Fall of Hyperion*, Joseph Severn's dreams inform us of the pilgrims, and then in *Endymion* and its sequel, this function is taken over by the self-narration of the main protagonist.)

Accordingly, the six stories identify their narrators (narrative identity); in addition, they situate the Shrike legend (interpretative commentary) and referring to the others, they unravel the intergalactic background of space opera (subcreation or worldbuilding), respectively. At this point, one of the important principles of Simmons's novel series may already be apprehended: the *Hyperion* (the Time Tombs, the Shrike etc.) is "an unknown variable in a galaxy where every variable has been quantified" (Simmons, 1990, 70). (One of the narrators, Joseph Severn says so, who dreams about the experience of the Keats-personality in *The Fall of Hyperion*.) The series deals with this anomaly continuously re-entering itself (the signifier of which is the figure of Escher space or the labyrinth planet in the book), while offering numerous reading variants of the problem from a number of viewpoints. Henceforth, with the application of other parts of the series, we will focus only on those results and media loops that can be connected with the above-mentioned canonization questions.

Szilárd Sánta's book refers to the canon map of the *Hyperion* as follows:

The novel, by the tales of the pilgrims told at the stops of their journey echoes the structure of *The Canterbury Tales*. In a multiple sense, the novel can be read as a pastiche since besides Geoffrey Chaucer's collection of stories – being itself an intense variation

of genres – it is connected to Keats's epic poems by a dense textual web and the English poet's influence is noticeable in the name giving as well. The contours of another pretext, namely the tale of Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* are also palpable in the novel. Unlike Chaucer and Keats, Oz does not belong in the 'high' literature and if we add the 'pulp' tradition of science fiction from the classical era of space opera to all of this, we can see Simmons's genius method that has arrived in such an intercanonical space from where the reader may set out in multiple directions. The stratification and proliferation of this kind rhymes perfectly with the patched up world appearing in the novel. (Sánta, 2012, 79)

Therefore, this relevant statement assigns the intercanonical field in which the reading (as well as the interpretation) may begin along the classical canon marked by the names of Boccaccio/Chaucer and Keats on the one hand and Baum, respectively the inscription of science fiction genres (alternative canon) on the other. Let us look at it in more detail.

In the series, indeed, a strong reference network stands out, that leans on the repertoire of the western canon. In the first part, the Chaucerian structure and the Keats-paradigm (which also means the citation of Keats-texts here) launch the process, however, these intersect with other traditions on the one hand, and on the other hand they also include infiltrations of alternative canons. Besides, there is another system running which primarily consists of the elements of classical science fiction, new wave, and cyberpunk. The former sequence, beside the mentioned ones, integrates for example the works of Pascal, Hölderlin, Blake, Yeats, Frost (the list could be extended); the latter assimilates first and foremost the works of Wells, Asimov, Dick, Gibson (also with a list of many and more examples). Now, the relation of the two systems rather than the roll itself and the fact of intertextuality captivate our interest. If we try to follow this polysystemic pattern continuously, we will face the phenomenon of symbiosis and detachment at the same time. Multitudinously, since the recursive movement stretches to the point where the interpretation of the discussed works as classics has been completed all along both ranges. Its obvious sign is that beyond the denomination and word for word citation the borrowings get into such function in the series that informs us of their upheld command of language. As if the repertoire started from connecting of this kind then throwing the classics off their balance began their recutting.

Let us see a concrete example. Probably the greatest enigma (interpretation generating figure) of the book is the character of the Shrike. (The very first allusion opens up this question since the Consul refers to it as such a creature which "defied physical laws and which communicated only through death" [Simmons, 1989, 14].) This organic and inorganic, red-eyed, mute killing machine is brought in line with the figure of Grendel by many of the storytellers. This parallelism is made dynamic if the reader is able to mobilize the memory of *Beowulf*, one of the significant medieval texts of the western canon. The traditional interpretation may come to a conclusion that the Shrike (similarly to its fictive progenitor) is a potential source of threat that is able to destruct entire empires by itself. Although Grendel appears in one of the classic opuses of the Anglo-Saxon literature, it is a freak that makes its

career also in the pop culture. On the other hand, the Shrike is a part of the anti-entropic field that may be identified as an anomaly. Moreover, of such kind that is unpredictable from the future perspective of the galactic empire. This playground, however, can be sounded from (the direction of) Asimov's Foundation-trilogy, since the second volume (*Foundation and Empire*) deals exactly with a mutant, the Mule as a certain anomaly who turns over the prediction of psychohistory and as an only unpredictable component is able to rewrite the future of the empire. (The Time Tomb coming from the Asimov novel will be of such a pre-figurative image in Simmons.)

At first sight, the Shrike might be the hybrid of Grendel and the Mule (that may refer to the connection of canons as well as the power of mutation), however, in the sequels that give up on the continuation of the Chaucerian narrative technique, the figure of the Shrike – similarly to more characters for example Father de Soya – goes through a change of poles: in the *Endymion* and in *The Rise of Endymion* it appears as the bodyguard of the Keats-cybrid and Brawne Lamia's daughter (the galactic messiah). (Aeneia, again, is also a certain "unpredictable factor" only from a different perspective.) Summing up, if we make this solution an interpretative figure from the point of view of the entire opus, we can say that according to the treatment of the canonical patterns, Simmons's series does not strive to reproduce the reading experience but exploits the possibilities of the innovative game of on-ward- and over-writing. This also warns that in the kind of focal points such as the courses of meaning interlocking in the figure of the Shrike, we are unable to differentiate the original from the automatically plural, since it seems that the canons are not pure but heterogeneous systems from the outset. However, the loss of canonical purity is an asset, as recutting of the functions which confine reading also means that a perspective opens on a field beyond the classics that could be named as the challenge of interpretation since the subject cannot be deduced completely from any of the presuppositions. (Even the *Terminator* films offer relevant context to the "reading" of the figure.) Nonetheless, from this perspective, the Shrike literally is the anti-entropy and a legend that cannot be referencialized which twirls the unity of the text and diverts the directions of canonical interpretations regarded so steady. (Things that might be said about the Shrike beyond this are that it will be the allegory of admittance altering with each rereading a nice metaphor of which is the composite of shape shifting and muteness, respectively the subscription by the Poet which may be connected on the one hand to the tracing of identity, on the other hand, the interpretative urge of sounding.⁴)

Moreover, Simmons's series have a layer which can be a third track from the standpoint of canonical reading. That is, the series stages a canonical mechanism reflecting on its own operating rules. This mechanism naturally refers to the fictive "reception history" of the Hyperion Cantos by Silenus. The sequels (even in *The Fall of Hyperion*) also mention this opus very frequently: on the one hand, its readers can hardly say what is trustworthy in it and what the product of the poetic imagination is. (In this sense, the two parts repeat that "solution" of the similarly ti-

4 To the further interpretation of the figure of the Shrike see Beke 2014 – Beke interprets the mystical figure as an engraving of a new media environment coming from the future –, as well as Matolcsy 2006.

tled epic poems by Keats that the second announces the failure of the first.) On the other hand, – like the canons usually – it is exposed to “outer” invasion, since in the Hegemony, what is written in the Cantos circulate as a version of legends. On the third hand, the fact that Silenus’s version falls under the ecclesiastical restriction favours the latter, so the power censorship works producing counter-discourses against the Cantos. On the fourth hand, the frame story grown into a megatext (which is essentially continued by the sequels) contains the rebooted versions of the narrated tales from the first part, these summaries behave as self-commentaries inasmuch as they are inspired to call forth the “hidden meaning” of the first versions. These alterations bring the contents of the Hyperion into a peculiar levitation, interpreting them as multiform narrations the meaning of which depends on the canonization situation at all times. With this, Simmons quasi holds a mirror to the pragmatic reader as well who supposedly although knows the altered variants, they can only catch their courses of meaning if they count with the reading frame system of the canons. From this angle, the series behaves as such meta-canonical text corpus which returns to itself along the canon variations so that – just like an Escher space – the loop can reoriginate always giving up its place to another canonical (or recanonical) version. This play spreads the canonical and non-canonical variants as a fan by which – beyond presenting the adventure – it also contributes to the rewriting of the genre codes of space opera.

Thus, from the viewpoint of rejuvenation of space opera it may be crucial that intercanonical interest of reading supplements (or relativizes) the space adventure. Simmons’s series may turn out to be productive also from this angle since it does not separate phase shift, a phenomenon so important in the genre context, from the circulation of different textual instalments. Meaning by this that the differentiating play of the living traditions of different worlds (planets) enables their conflict on the level of relativism (this would be the story of the artwork, the stake of the war: a single human race vs. human variegation), while in front of the receptive sight this materializes as a hybridizing operation in which the synchrony of reading enabling traditions manifest itself (for example from an odyssey becomes a space odyssey in *Endymion* as well as in *The Rise of Endymion*). Such double treatment of time indices enables also that the communicative variants of the stories (immaterial occurrences) and their written variants (in the forms of techno media) mutually take part in the inner perception – identifiable with the characters’ viewpoint – of the events always already outrun by the given scenes. However, Simmons’s work also simulates respectively reflects these media standpoints since usually those variants turn out to be deceptive which were believed to be fixed (such as for example besides the *Cantos* the information mediated by the digital discourse networks that leads to misdirection of the Keats-cybrid). And of course in the end entering literally John Keats’s works into the heterogeneous language field of space opera also belongs here which is worth a couple of sentences as well.

In connection with the analysis of the artworks coming under the alternative canons of science fiction and fantasy, in more instances a question presented itself, namely whether the intertextual poems (and making their place of origin conscious) taking place in the works weakens or strengthens the construction (see Hegedűs,

2012, 93–97). This viewpoint's start-up is that if the place of origin of the guest texts cannot be written into the created world then this may be understood as a certain inconsistency inasmuch as the artificial world could not contain the quoted poems. That is to say, this method in fact discloses the writer thus terminating the autonomy of the set up world. Seemingly, Simmons resolves this problem at one go so long as he enables to import the romantic poet's certain works beside Silenus's fictive poems by mediating the conscience of the Keats-cybrid. Consequently, not the urge dictated by the inner logic of the created world, rather a construction of a tradition dipped into the distance of time, operation of another type of canon the so-called authorial canon will be made into a question.

According to Christopher Palmer:

Simmons's literary allusiveness is similar: the effect is one of overload. For instance, several of the names of characters in the *Hyperion* novels are drawn from names associated with Keats: Moneta, Joseph Severn (Keats's friend and deathbed companion), Brawne Lamia (a hybrid of the poet's beloved and a personage from one of his poems). There are quotations, casual references, passages of pastiched romantic poetry. The novels' details connect with a definable literary culture as well as with the common constituents of sf, to an effect of richness, even overload, along with some elements of jarring pastiche. But there is not a lot to be gained from tracing detailed parallels between Simmons's narrative and the Keats story (*Hyperion*, §5:402 makes a sketchy attempt at a link, justified in sf terms). How could a character possibly combine Fanny Brawne and Keats's Lamia, for instance? Simmons's Brawne Lamia is in fact a private detective, appropriately feisty and cynical; the subtitle of her story, »The Detective's Story«, alludes to Chandler's *The Long Goodbye*. Brawne's father was Senator Byron Lamia (*The Fall of Hyperion*, §18:181); *Hyperion* reenacts the killing of Mercutio (§6:464) and links the final moment in which the pilgrims advance to meet the Shrike with *The Wizard of Oz* (Epilogue 501). But the Shrike is later connected both with Grendel and with Peter Pan (*The Fall of Hyperion*, 8/81, 26/251). The allusiveness is a matter not of pattern but of proliferation. (Palmer, 1999, 78–79)

From the aspect of canon reading, the kind of context where the imported poems and instalments from other works fit and the reason why those very pieces occur in the given places are probably more telling than the function of the names. (Some of them could be analysed for some length for example the sonnet To Homer in the end of the series would be suitable for this [“The hour for myth has passed.” – is told in the fourth part], but now this is secondary.) From this angle the Keats oeuvre inevitably fragments but this makes it possible to become a start up for a new story. Thus the *Hyperion* Cantos built on transfers utilizes elements from Keats works and sometimes it even achieves that the reader treat the Keats-work as a commentary on some of the episodes of the Simmons-work. However, when this is – for example due to language differences – absolutely not self-evident, falters or the metaphoric associations break down, there the reader must remind themselves that Keats's accomplishment fits the science fiction at stake – pars pro toto – metonymically. As a kind of inspiration, it is imprinted into one of the characters' consciousness, digital memory. Accordingly, the oscillation among traditional

interpretation variations of the Keats-texts repositioned as parts of the active canon of the far future may give up its place to popular reading in which not the authority (anything can be uploaded into the brain) but its forgetting may function as a potential focal point. Interestingly – and this is not a paradox! – this very changed media background may strengthen the “eternity” of Keats-poems.

Conclusion

The analysis of Gemmell's *Troy Series* and Simmons's *Hyperion Cantos* in the light of the above mentioned may take us closer to that issue which arises in connection with the canonical questions and the canonical value of the read text assessed in the works. So using a separation, the canon reading viewpoints realising in the works leave the intracanonically localizability of the given work perfectly untouched. Seeing the increasing complexity, another question may be asked: which canon may include the given work of those it reflects on? The answer will probably depend on what we distinguish as the canonical tradition of value formation (differentiating the classical canon from the alternative canon presupposes such an authority as a matter of course), or in the name of which aesthetic ideology is the interpretation of the text performed.

However, it is more and more salient – having historical reasons – that the above interpreted works can take a peculiar, liminal position by their seemingly intercanonical trait between the mainstream and the popular. For instance, the category of slipstream serves for naming those works that bring both mainstream and non-mainstream (science fiction, fantasy) elements in play simultaneously. However, the way we understand it – either as passing the borders or redoubling the traditions – makes a difference. The former abolishes the stable canonical positions; the latter delivers the autonomy of the text to the discourses about it. All of this may be a warning that the issue of mutual passage or cooperation should not really be controlled by aesthetic ideology. But is a canon without an ideology that has founded it thinkable? Probably the understanding why all canons strive to stabilize their boundaries stands or falls at this point.

On the other hand, if we start from the principle that the rhetorical-poetical-material etc. reading may complete the work which might be considered as the prerequisite of canon cultivation then probably we will confront the dilemma that these procedures at least so much vindicate as substantiate different approaches. Let us think about Paul de Man's case, who had struggled for decades with the issue of incompatibility of canon and rhetorical reading hardly ever analysed else but canonical texts. If we add that literature is able to simulate all cultural techniques hence also the one where the functions assigning the canonical positions may be “played away” then the systems of criteria that created them also become a signifier. Apparently it is not easy to find the way out of this maze, however, it may be anticipated that intercanonical analysis of complex fantasy and science fiction novels, the sight which does not differentiate between canons *before* the actual reading starts may serve with surprises in the history of the divergence and convergence

of canons. Without Gemmell's and Simmons's productions this issue would seem much simpler. However, the aim of reading can hardly be a simplification embodied in canon reduction.

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John Storey: *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, 2015. (Seventh Edition) 290 p. ISBN 978-1-138-81103-4

Péter H. Nagy – Orsolya Hegedűs

Below we are going to say something about the current possibilities of the pop culture research after the 20th century media theories. Our starting point, the *post media theories research* compound, is a threshold situation, as according to Kittler, the methodological integration of language, music, film and poetry can begin. In addition, it refers to a doubling: it may be understood as a time parameter, according to which the division of the 20th century media theories – Frankfurt, Toronto, Birmingham School, Kittler's work with discourses built on it, etc. – constitutes a direct antecedent of the research methodology. On the other hand, it may be understood literally: the outline of a media theory could be the designated objective, so pop culture research should lead to new theoretical statements. There is no doubt, however, that case studies do not necessarily have to justify an explicit theory in a preliminary position; and if the research does not result in a new (partial) theory, merely touching upon a relationship or mood system, it cannot be considered a methodological mistake or a theoretical failure.

The faltering of the preliminary role of overall frameworks may lead us to the consideration of working with a *dynamic pop culture concept*. The book of John Storey's *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture* is probably one of the most usable introductions to pop culture studies. This is evidenced by the fact that since 1997 the text has seen seven editions on the one hand, and on the other hand – and more importantly – the concept has expanded spectacularly, and has been complemented by newer research findings. (For example, the seventh edition – compared to the sixth – has been enriched and has been made more up-to-date with the chapter on the materiality of pop culture.) Storey's work may also be exemplary from the point of view of approaching pop culture with contextual analysis, leading to a dynamic, polycentric concept of popular culture. In this framework, the explicit or implicit definition of pop culture unfolds in the contrast of folk culture, mass culture, high culture, dominant culture and the culture of working class (not merely as an opposite or as a synonym of one), and thus becomes interpretable in the dependence of the meaning variants flowing towards it by the context.

Today's approach to pop culture significantly affects the rearrangement of the canonical map in the 20th century. Since works not included in the long-traded canon types (e.g. classical canon, national canon, criterion canon, academic canon, educational canons) were additionally arranged in so-called alternative canons during the 20th century. In this sense, the canon of sci-fi, fantasy, horror, alternative history, crime, etc. may count as alternative canons, which are not only alternatives to the former but also to each other while there are quite many overlaps between them, and even they may contain works that can be found in criterion canons. (As a social and experience motivated phenomenon, canons of subcultures can be mentioned [e.g. cyberpunk, heavy metal, hip hop etc.], between which there is no or minimum overlap, but can also be arbitrarily chosen for anyone and

they do not exclude the fact to be “products” of several canons at the same time.) However, recently, due to the emergence of new media, the introduction of the so-called active canon has been urgently needed, in which there are phenomena that are “being written” in more than one medium at the same time and can be approached from a variety of platforms, that is, they are transmediate (e.g. Star Wars-, Assassin’s Creed-, Game of Thrones-, Matrix-universe etc.). This canon has no centre, it is noise-like, and consists of myriad of the phenomena of alternative canons as well as success list works (and their accessories).

Even from the point of view of production, determining these overlays also means that loads of works, objects, phenomena, etc. are resistant to dichotomous categorization. Storey lists some of them (Shakespeare’s 19th century rise in the civic theatre, Dickens’s novels, film noir, and the movies that started in the mass cinema and made up to the film clubs of the academic environs etc.), then brings Luciano Pavarotti’s popularity as an example, which is also a good example of the volatility of the so-called exclusive code. Pavarotti’s album, featuring *Nessun Dorma*, landed at the top of the British charts, the aria became part of popular culture, and its interpreter became a media star. This popularity, according to Storey, calls into question the demarcation of high and popular culture (Pavarotti and Puccini have not got out of the repertory of elite tastes); it is interesting, however, that the tabloids and news programmes partially maintained the duality. “The old certainties of the cultural landscape suddenly seemed in doubt.” (p. 7) Such situations, which are both overlaps and duplications at the same time, multiply in the third third of the 20th century, and should be mentioned together with the spread of postmodernism. Therefore, this period has become a prioritized terrain of pop culture research and the various trends in cultural studies have provided the necessary theoretical background (and the theoretical context for Storey’s book). This methodology can encourage pop culture researchers to constantly adjust their theories from the viewpoints of praxeological challenges.

Péter H. Nagy: *Alternatívák: A popkultúra kapcsolatrendszerei*. Budapest: PRAE.HU, 2016. 352 p. ISBN 978-615-5070-55-6

Orsolya Hegedűs

The book *Alternatívák [Alternatives]* written by Péter H. Nagy analyses the relationships of pop culture in six chapters. The first block reviews the possibilities-conditions of mass-marketed movies and popular literature from the point of view of education and scientific thinking, while also addressing the issue of celebrity cult. The second block examines some of the fundamental texts of popular literature from the aspect of canon formation and pays attention to the changed situation of alternative canons (sci-fi, fantasy, horror etc.). The third block deals with intertextual and intermedia strategies in popular literature, highlighting some issues of central significance (e.g. changes in the image of man). The fourth block is about Lady Gaga, probably the most important phenomenon of contemporary pop culture, including the media strategy of the artist, her activities inspiring literature and the structure of her shows, among others. The fifth block contains film and clip analyses using the works of H. R. Giger as context, respectively it approaches Star Wars franchise. The sixth block is based on critical reflection on popular culture according to two noteworthy monographs; finally, the publication is closed by a bibliography and filmography.

In the book, therefore, relationships with recurring protagonists, such as Darwin, Hawking, Gaga are being dynamized; or there are possible associations that may increase the complexity of a phenomenon or work. The given works and media configurations work well in professional-scientific discourses, but are clearly for the general public. Using the author's apposite example, the *Matrix* film could be so popular in its time because it had perfectly hit something from the empirical (techno media) tissue of the given period. While the film's spectacle set adds ordinary elements to the world of matrix and virtual elements to reality (the latter being a computer simulation), the pattern of transposition of reality and mediality within fiction became accessible for everyone through this reversal, whereas the world of the creators-recipients is determined by the same: the viewer recognizes their own technocultural environment again as a mediated world. Such patterns and pathways make the new chapter of pop culture research so actual after the 20th century media theories.

H. Nagy's book takes it as a prerequisite that literature is (also) intermediate because it is part of some kind of historically existing and temporary technomedia environment. If we are aware of the fact that reading literary texts reduced to linguistic codes ignores this media configuration, it becomes clear why literary history has become a part of media history and not the other way around. The shift from monomediality towards intermediality obviously favours the appearance of such works that amplify this dynamics. On the other hand, H. Nagy emphasizes that we live in a scientific age and we read in the horizon of science. Even recently, the belief that there is an insuperable intellectual division between liberal arts intellectuals and natural scientists has remained strong. Several generations have grown up in

the misconception that artistic and literary sensitivity is incompatible with the rigid discipline of science. Nowadays, it is an evident experience that scientific thinking may not necessarily exclude the sophistication of aesthetic perception, just like the results of science may define and carry away artistic activity as well. In this sense, more and more people speak about a so-called third culture, and at the same time, it became increasingly apparent that, reflecting on its own media, literature is undermining the separation of the two cultures.

It is evident that *Alternatívák* has triggered a lot of reflections in a short period of time; there have been many writings about it, and positive references to it in several places. In his study titled *A popkultúra-kutatás eredményei [The results of pop culture research]* published in *Prae* (2017/4), a literary journal, József Keserű considered H. Nagy's book a unique achievement in today's Hungarian literary and cultural discourse. According to Keserű, there is currently no book in Hungarian language that would reveal the potential of popular literature and culture in such a diverse context (and reflected all the way), while keeping in mind the main principle of scientific thinking: respect for facts against irresponsible speculation. It is a fact that, in this respect, *Alternatívák* is a relevant scientific achievement, but it is also a science-popularizing work, which sets an approach to follow for the dynamizing Hungarian pop culture research.

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Eruditio – Educatio • Research Journal of the Faculty of Education, J. Selye University in Komárno • Published 4 times a year • Published by the Faculty of Education, J. Selye University (Komárno) • Reg. no. 37 961 632 • Editorial adress: Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity J. Selyeho, Bratislavská 3322, SK-945 01 Komárno, P.O.Box 54 • Tel.: +421-35-3260-829 • E-mail: nagyp@ujs.sk • Editorial assistant: Mgr. Ing. Beáta Nagy • Cover design and preparation for printing: Attila Téglás – TAMM • Printed by Grafis Media, s.r.o. Gesztenyefa sor 4525/1A, 929 01 Dunaszerdahely • ISSN 1336-8893 • EV 2179/08 • September 2018; <http://e-eruditio.ujs.sk>

Number of copies: 100 • Periodical not for sale.

Eruditio – Educatio • A Selye János Egyetem Tanárképző Kara tudományos folyóirata • Megjelenik évente négy alkalommal • Kiadja a Selye János Egyetem Tanárképző Kara (Komárom) • IČO 37 961 632 • A szerkesztőség címe: Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity J. Selyeho, Bratislavská 3322, SK-945 01 Komárno, P.O.Box 54 • Tel.: +421-35-3260-829 • E-mail: nagyp@ujs.sk • Szerkesztőségi munkatárs: Mgr. Ing. Nagy Beáta • Borító és nyomdai előkészítés: Téglás Attila – TAMM • Nyomta: Grafis Media, s.r.o. Gesztenyefa sor 4525/1A, 929 01 Dunaszerdahely • ISSN 1336-8893 • EV 2179/08 • 2018. szeptember; <http://pf.ujs.sk/hu/tudomany/publikaciok/eruditio-educatio.html>

Példányszám: 100 • A kiadvány nem árusítható.

Eruditio – Educatio • Vedecký časopis Pedagogickej fakulty Univerzity J. Selyeho v Komárne • vychádza 4x ročne • Vydáva Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity J. Selyeho (Komárno) • IČO 37 961 632 • Adresa redakcie: Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity J. Selyeho, Bratislavská 3322, SK-945 01 Komárno, P.O.Box 54 • Tel.: +421-35-3260-829 • E-mail: nagyp@ujs.sk • Redakčná asistentka: Mgr. Ing. Beata Nagyova • Obal a tlačiarenská príprava: Attila Téglás – TAMM • Tlač: Grafis Media, s.r.o. Gaštanový rad 4525/1A, 92901 Dunajská Streda • ISSN 1336-8893 • EV 2179/08 • September 2018; <http://pf.ujs.sk/hu/tudomany/publikaciok/eruditio-educatio.html>

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