# Acta Litteraria

ACADEMIAE SCIENTIARUM HUNGARICAE

ADIUVANTIBUS
I. BÁN, M. CZINE, E. HALÁSZ, L. KARDOS, I. KIRÁLY, P. NAGY,
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REDIGIT
G. TOLNAI

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## ACADEMIAE SCIENTIARUM HUNGARICAE

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# Prefatory Note

The decision to devote a special number of *Acta Litteraria* to American studies came from the realization that this branch of knowledge has outgrown its initial stages and has by now become a flourishing field of research in Hungary. In the last twenty years American literature and culture were introduced into the three existing English departments. Mature scholars and former students taking their places in the academic world began to publish essays, articles and books, partly with the help of Ford, IREX and ACLS research fellowships, on varied themes of American studies.

For the first time in the history of our English departments a national conference was organized at Budapest University (March, 1977) and the Modern Philology Section of the Hungarian Literary Society held a meeting on American literature in the same year, in October. An international Seminar on English and American Studies was held in Debrecen in September, 1978, organized by the English Department of Kossuth University.

The present volume, the papers of which were collected and edited by Gyula Kodolányi and Charlotte Kretzoi, does not aim at giving a complete survey of the state of American studies in Hungary. It is, rather, a cross-section of the work going on: its scope and variety. The eleven volumes of *Hungarian Studies in English* (Debrecen University, 1963—1977) and the four volumes of *Studies in English and American* (Budapest University, 1971—1978) published so far, carry many more of the first fruits of research.

The editors of *Acta Litteraria* have the pleasure of offering this volume to readers interested in the work of Hungarian scholars specializing in American literature and culture.

*Acta Litteraria Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae Tomus 20 (1–2), pp. 3–28 (1978)*

# The Short Story in the Drama: Chekhov and O'Neill

By

PÉTER EGRI

(Budapest)

The connection between the short story and the drama is both generic and genetic. It is generic in the sense that both genres constitute a story; concentrate the narrative; seek out contradictory phenomena in life; and display the dialectic of contingency and necessity, phenomenon and essence, appearance and truth with a dynamic turn.

Although the short story represents a minor epic focussing particular or even accidental traits, whereas the drama presents a literary genre traditionally juxtaposed with the epic and throwing into relief what is general and necessary, the generic relationship is unmistakably there. The short story is anything but a story that is short. If it could be defined that way, the term long short story would be an absurdity, in fact, a contradiction in terms. Although the short story is usually restricted in length, it is not identical with a short narrative. The aesthetic difference is derived precisely from the presence and genre-constituting role of a dramatic element which usually comes to the surface by means of a conspicuous change in the course and direction of the action.

This generic connection has its genetic aspect as well. Every genre category can be considered a formal crystallization of historically conditioned recurring life contents and attitudes, and every generic relationship embodies correlations of such human contents in the historical process. The relationship between the short story and the drama changes from age to age, from author to author, and even from work to work; indeed it has no less modifications than examples. Yet three especially significant types can be isolated.

1. The elementary dramatic impulse of the short story grows energetically into an elemental dramatic pattern. The result of the process is a change in kind, i.e. genre: the short story develops into the drama (Boccaccio, Cinthio, Bandello and Shakespeare).

2. This course of development would seem to have been reversed at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Whereas in the Renaissance the short story was expanding into the drama, in the naturalistic and symbolistic trends

the drama was moving towards the short story (Hauptmann, Hofmannsthal, Maeterlinck).

3. The short story becomes organically integrated into the dramatic pattern (Chekhov, O'Neill).

Out of the numerous ways of this integration some uses of the short story in Chekhov's and O'Neill's plays seem to deserve special attention.

a. In both playwrights' oeuvres the short story and the one-acter are closely related in that the turning point of the short story and the culminating point of the short play converge or coincide. This is especially clear in cases when there is a thematic link between the short story and the one-act play as in Chekhov's *In Autumn → On the High Road; Kalchas → Swan Song; One Among Many → A Tragic Role; The Wedding Season, Marrying for Money, A Wedding with a General → The Wedding; A Defenceless Creature → The Anniversary; The Night Before the Trial → The Night Before the Trial.* A similar relationship can be observed in Chekhov's other playlets which are not dramatizations of actual short stories but also show short story-like traits (*The Bear, The Proposal, Tatyana Repina,* and all the six versions of *Smoking Is Bad for You,* also translated as *On the Harmfulness of Tobacco*).[1]

The generic affinity between the epic turn of a short story and the dramatic zenith of a short play is also characteristic of O'Neill's work. It appears very clearly in the complex relationship between Conrad's story *The End of the Tether,* O'Neill's one-acter *Warnings* and his short story *S. O. S.* A number of other one-acters by O'Neill have a narrative origin. *Bound East for Cardiff* goes back to Conrad's novel *The Nigger of the Narcissus* which O'Neill read in 1911.[2] *Fog* shows parallels with Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.* In *The Prioress's Tale* the crying of a dead child leads the rescuers to their destination. "That O'Neill had read Chaucer is doubtful; nevertheless a source tale may be suspected for his story."[3] O'Neill's later destroyed one-act comedy *The Dear Doctor* was based on a short story which in its turn had been pirated from a vaudeville sketch.[4] *In the Zone* is strongly related to Conan Doyle's short story *That Little Square Box.*[5] *The Dreamy Kid* was started as a short story. O'Neill completed about a page in this form feeling it would throw into greater relief the psychological split in the young Negro. Later, however, he was showing visible signs of dramatic concentration. Agnes Boulton remembers having seen his eyes darken, then become intense; he began "to pace the floor as the dramatist in him took over. . . . And as Gene talked, something else in him began to overcome the psychological aspect of the story."[6] In the summer of 1918 O'Neill modified and elaborated on Agnes Boulton's narrative *The Captain's Walk,* adding the idea of treasure, gold and a map showing where the treasure was hidden. The result was the one-acter *Where the Cross Is Made* later expanded into the four-act play *Gold.*[7] *The Hairy Ape* was also first composed as a short story in 1917.

The generic proximity of the short story and the one-acter is also striking in O'Neill's other playlets which are not demonstrably connected with actual short stories, i.e. in *A Wife for a Life*, *The Web*, *Thirst*, *Recklessness*, *Abortion*, *The Movie Man*, *The Sniper*, *Before Breakfast*, *The Long Voyage Home*, *The Moon of the Caribbees*, *Ile*, *Shell-Shock*, *The Rope*, and partly *The Emperor Jones*, and *Hughie*.

b. Another form of synthesis is represented by the cascade-connection of short story-oriented dramatic units in multiple-act plays (Chekhov's *Platonov* and *Ivanov* and O'Neill's *Servitude* and *A Moon for the Misbegotten*). This variety is the topic proper of the present paper.

c. A third type is constituted by building up the conflict of a multiple--act play with a short story-like turn at the dramatic zenith (Chekhov: *The Sea-Gull* and *Uncle Vanya;* O'Neill: *A Touch of the Poet*).

d. Total integration in a mosaic structure (Chekhov: *Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard;* O'Neill: *The Iceman Cometh* and its connection with the early short story *Tomorrow, — Long Day's Journey Into Night*).

As the above scheme shows, neither Chekhov, nor O'Neill were content with projecting their view of the world in one-act plays, even when they continued adopting and adapting the model of the short story. With the natural gesture of the playwright who wishes to give a comprehensive picture of life, they made an effort to extend their dramatic form into a multiple-act design. This enlarged form, however, did not sever the intimate ties between the short story and the drama. On the contrary, it made it more complex, and multiplied its possibilities. The relatively simplest way in which these could be realized was a kind of artistic multiplication: following an additive principle based on the elementary unit already known and always at hand, linking short story-like dramatic cells into a living dramatic organism.

In Chekhov's letters the simultaneous awareness of the allurement and difficulty of the expanded dramatic form is most obvious. His attraction to the great form led him to a slighting of his short story-like short vaudevilles. He called *The Bear* "an unimportant affair, in the French manner",[8] and referred to his vaudevilles as "empty stage-pieces".[9] On the other hand, his fear from a possible failure in grappling with the sheer bulk of an enlarged play made him see the short farces in a favourable light. He boasted of having written *Kalchas*, the one-acter derived from the short story of the same title, in an hour and five minutes on four sheets of paper, and remarked: "It will take from fifteen to twenty minutes to act . . . It is much better to write small things than big ones; they are unpretentious and successful . . . What more would you have?"[10] And as late as 1894 he still maintained that "I do not consider the writing of one-act plays a frivolous occupation."[11] What lay behind the praise of the short story-like short drama surfaced in an open admission of Chekhov's finding the story a more congenial form than the (long) drama:

> As far as my dramaturgy is concerned, it seems to me that I was not destined to be a dramatist. I have ill luck. But I am not discouraged and continue to write stories — I feel at home in this field, but while writing plays I am ill at ease, as if something were pressing against the back of my neck.[12]

Chekhov, however, broke out from this deadlock. He solved the problem of the evil alternative of condemning and praising his short story-inspired vaudevilles, of striving to write in a spacious dramatic form or being satisfied with his short stories by building up a multi-dimensional dramatic structure in which the short story found a natural place and assumed a dramatic function.

It was as early as 1881 that — anticipating, as it were, his later direction of development with youthful audacity and ambition — Chekhov took a few tentative and stumbling steps towards linking short story units into a dramatic chain in his four-act play *Platonov*. Before the experience of his short story-oriented one-acters, however, such an experiment proved anything but a success.

The short story-like oscillation of the dramatic action in *Platonov* is fundamentally due to the unheroic vacillation and indecision of the title hero. Once, in his university years a well-to-do landowner and a talented young man, at the beginning of the plot Platonov is no more than a provincial schoolmaster who, having squandered his material and intellectual treasures, seeks and loses himself in a wavering series of love-affairs.

He is attracted to Sasha, his wife by her loving care and homeliness, her purity and honesty; and is driven to Anna, the coquettish widow of a colonel by her sensuality and emotional saturation. Maria, a young science student surprises him by her romp blend of sensibility and aggressivity: he finds it imposing that the girl revenges herself for his insults and crude kiss by having him summoned before the Justice of Peace. He fell in love with Sofia as a university student, but she married Platonov's friend Voynitsev. The revitalization of the one-time liaison does not only satisfy Platonov's vanity, it also projects the illusion of his moral regeneration: Sofia wants to stand him on his feet again, lead him back to a valuable life, work with and for him; and objectively she represents moral force and judgement even when — jealous of and disillusioned with Platonov, who has driven his wife to suicide, betrayed his very lovers with one another, ruined his environment and himself — she brings him down with two pistol shots.

Thus Platonov searches in each of his love relations an aspect of his disintegrated ego, a possibility of existence of his decomposed personality, but he cannot find the longed-for totality and self-consummation in any of the fragments. It is not with real passion but rather with bored impassibility that he tries to find fullness or a momentary substitute. He is rather a drifting than preying Don Juan. That is why his agony tends to have a tragicomic hue, and his hesitation takes on short story-prompted turns when it is translated into dramatic action.

Accordingly, in Act II, Scene 2 we see Platonov vacillating whether to give way to Anna's sexual magnetism or remain faithful to his naively pure wife. When he feels he cannot help visiting Anna, he receives a letter from Sofia telling him she is waiting for him.

In Act III Sofia persuades Platonov to begin a new life, to leave and work with her. Platonov agrees, but the promise of the new life is given the lie by a beadle delivering him the summons of the Justice of Peace "in the case of an assault committed upon the person of Maria Grekov",[13] and even more by Anna cajoling and nearly winning him back in a scene which is almost the negative mirror image of Act II, Scene 2.

Listless, will-less and willing, Platonov thinks it is Anna who is knocking at his door to take him with her, but it turns out to be Osip, the local gangster who has come to kill him out of jealousy and a feeling of betrayal for Anna.

Osip all but thrusts his knife into Platonov, when Sasha is coming pat to save her husband — and to learn that he has betrayed her not only with Anna but also and chiefly with Sofia, a married woman.

Sasha leaves — as she ominously says — for good, and Platonov draws the inevitable conclusion in a rhetorical question explaining as well as summarizing all the incidents that have taken place: "And is this the man for whom new life begins? . . . Is this the epilogue or is the comedy still continuing?"[14]

Apparently it is, because Voynitsev appears to challenge Platonov to a duel, but all he can do is crying and begging his stolen wife back from his friend the thief in vain.

The act ends on a note of deliberate bathos: one of Anna's suitors, Glagolyev Sr., muffled up and leaning on a crutch pays Platonov a short visit to ask him whether Anna (who refused Glagolyev's offer to become his mistress) is an honest, marriageable woman. Platonov's cryptic answer ("Everything in this world is vile, contemptible, filthy"[15]) sends Glagolyev Sr. to Paris "to wallow in filth"[16] amidst the congratulations of his admiring son who had also been rejected by her and then was boasting of having bought her at a reasonable discount price.

It is fairly obvious that the farce technique of the "well-made play" is also responsible for these short story-suggested turns. But the general tone of *Platonov* is not that of farce but that of a tentative tragicomedy, and the turns — crude and awkward as they often appear, especially when they involve Sasha — are not merely artificial "points" but much rather searching insights into character, sudden changes of meaning, shifts of emphasis and evaluation characteristic of the short story.[17]

It is noteworthy that such short story-prompted turns mainly occur in Act II, Scene 2 and Act III, i.e. in what may be considered the intrigue section of the dramatic structure. They are not typical of Act I which is an extended exposition, not unlike many of O'Neill's, nor of Act IV in whose critical crisis

and denoument the action becomes — as it does in a number of early plays by O'Neill — hectically melodramatic. This would seem to suggest that it is chiefly the middle phase of the dramatic plot which needs the accumulated energy of the short story-like units to channel and advance the dramatic action. There is too little of it in Act I, and too much of it in Act IV to invite a similar pattern. It is also mainly at this middle stage that Platonov's indecision is shown in action; the phase preceding it is but preparation, and the stage proceeding from it and following it is basically the tragicomic crisis and consequence.

It came later, after the experience of a number of short stories and short story-inspired one-acters that Chekhov developed the technique of linking short story-like dramatic units in a more balanced and orderly sequence. This was the achievement of his next long play *Ivanov* (1887—89). Chekhov himself was perfectly conscious of this character of his drama. In his letter of Oct. 1887 to Alex. Chekhov he wrote:

> "The plot is complicated and not silly. I finish up each as if it were a story: the action goes on quietly and peacefully, and at the end I give the audience a sock-dologer. All my energy was spent on a few really brisk, forceful climaxes; but the bridges joining these are insignificant, loose, and not startling."[18]

It is remarkable that Chekhov has realized: a measure of pointing and sharpening the ends of the acts (a technique related to, though not identical with, that of the "well-made play") in this drama painting an epic milieu and providing genre-tableaux has resulted in closures typical of stories.

Ivanov is in many respects the social and literary descendent of Platonov. He is an impoverished landowner with a university education who after the enthusiastic endeavours of his youth sinks into apathy, boredom and loneliness and is afflicted by nervous excitability. How his psychological plight hangs together with the "historical vacuum" between the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 and the bourgeois democratic revolution of 1905 can be deciphered from Chekhov's characterization of Ivanov's predicament.

> Disappointment, apathy, nervous limpness, and exhaustion are the inevitable consequences of extreme excitability, and such excitability is extremely characteristic of our young people. Take literature. Take the present time . . . Socialism is one of the forms of this excitement . . . But where is Socialism? You see it in Tikhomirov's letter to the Tsar. The socialists are married and they criticise the Zemstvo. Where is Liberalism? Mikhailovsky himself says that all the labels have been mixed up now. And what are all the Russian enthusiasms worth? The war has wearied us, Bulgaria has wearied us till we can only be ironical about it. Zucchi has wearied us and so has the comic opera.[19]

The ruthless oppression under Alexander III, following the assassination of the previous Tsar, Alexander II in March 1, 1881 also caused disintegration and disorientation which made themselves felt in the most various fields of life. both public and private.

Chekhov emphasizes that the life of an over-tired man cannot be represented by a level wavy line; it rather shows an unequal descending graph broken by sudden falls of periods of excitement followed by still greater apathy.[20] This broken pattern would seem to correspond to the story-like dramatic climaxes at (or towards) the ends of acts.

In Act I the love and tuberculosis of his wife Anna Petrovna, who has left her Jewish faith for his sake and has subsequently been disinherited by her parents on his account, proves insufficient to keep Ivanov at home. He visits Sasha Lebedev, his rich neighbour's daughter who is in passionate love with him and is determined to make a man of him again. Act II takes place at Lebedev's home and ends with Ivanov embracing Sasha and Anna seeing them kiss. In Act III Sasha pays Ivanov a visit, Anna reproaches her husband for deceiving her, for having only been interested in her money, for courting Sasha to snatch her money. Excited and aroused beyond endurance, Ivanov calls Anna a Jewess and tells her she is going to die. At the end of Act IV Ivanov, now a widower, is supposed to marry Sasha, but feeling guilty, old (at 35) and weak, he suffers a psychological collapse and shoots himself dead denying, as it were, the charges of acquisitiveness with his very suicide.

There are incidents reminding one of a dramatized short story in mid-act as well. In Act III, Scene 5 e.g. Lebedev offers to lend Ivanov 1100 roubles, his secret inheritance, to be given back to his stingy wife as Ivanov's debt. The idea bears some resemblance to Erie Smith's gesture of lending Charlie the money he is going to win from him at the end of O'Neill's *Hughie*.

This cascade-connection of short story-slanted one-act units repeats the structural attempt of *Platonov* in a more orderly fashion and in a more lucidly arranged design. Ivanov's and Lebedev's home, Anna and Sasha define clearer poles between which an undecided and disoriented figure can vacillate than did the four women Platonov felt attracted to or repelled by. The greater clarity and transparency of the structure also make it more conspicuous in *Ivanov* what already appeared in *Platonov:* that the linking of short story-founded dramatic units is not a mere act of addition but is also a gesture of creation, bringing about a new artistic quality. The sweeping drive of outer action becomes substituted by the inner undulation of changing moods. The drama expresses states of mind both dynamic and static. A fine naturalistic stratum is spread over its material. This is attested by Anna's consumption whose dangerous symptoms the writer could not help diagnosing upon himself with a doctor's acumen; it is indicated by the epic expansion of the dramatic milieu; is shown by the soul-murdering effect of the environment which may be denied by Ivanov but is certainly exposed by Lebedev and experienced by Ivanov himself; and it is marked by the complexity of the plot (Lvov's indictment, Zinayda's kopeck-pinching, her guests' vulgar utterances, Count Shabelsky's abandoned attempt to marry the rich widow Babakina, Borkin's uninhibited

business ventures, etc.). The same is expressed by a certain restrained quality in building up the plot: the outer dynamic peaks of an action, which are usually presented with great gusto and emphasis in the one-acters, are sometimes not even put on the stage in *Ivanov*, and are only represented as a tendency or referred to in the form of a subsequent narrative hint (Anna's death).

The layer of fine naturalism is enveloped by an impressionistically hovering sphere, the genre pictures of an epic milieu become gently transformed into the projections of lyric moods of contemplation, the scenes get loosened into spots, the dialogues are broken and open-ended, sometimes cut short in mid-sentence, the mood of the first scene in the garden is rendered intimate by the slowly falling night and the sounds of a piano and a cello.

Nevertheless, the manner of representation in the play points beyond naturalism and impressionism. The state of tranquillity and passivity is dramatically disturbed by the upset equilibrium of the dynamic network of tense human relationships, Ivanov's inability to act is proved not by a rejection or absence but an attempt and failure of action; he is tossed to the Lebedevs by the boredom of his home, is driven home by the barrenness of the party; he runs from Anna to Sasha, from Sasha to Anna; and he atones for the sin he has committed against his wife by committing suicide. His agony and inner collapse are in the last resort motivated as an inner reflex of social disorientation, i.e. in a realistic manner.

It is remarkable that Chekhov used a dramatic texture of this kind already in *Platonov*, i.e. before drafting his one-acters, and in *Ivanov*, i.e. before finishing creating his set of one-act plays. It is also noteworthy that he continued writing his short plays in the old pattern of French farce, "well-made play", or in the somewhat modified mould of Gogol and Ostrovsky well after Ivanov, too. This generic dichotomy seems to prove that it was really the task and performance of giving a comprehensive picture of the main trends of contemporary Russian society which compelled Chekhov to adopt a new method in his long plays. He rendered the ripples of the surface in his "well-made" farces, but represented the slow streams of the deep in his more quiet, more balanced and highly complex long plays which ultimately got the upper hand in his oeuvre. A part of their complexity was the outcome of the technique of series-connection of short story-guided short dramatic units into a new, meaningful whole.

Ambitious as the plan of *Ivanov* is, there remains something unsolved about the play. Chekhov seems to have shown an element of his central figure's indecision in moulding Ivanov. Is Ivanov a scoundrel or a victim of outer and inner circumstances? His treatment of Anna would suggest the first premise, his suicide and Chekhov's letter of December 30, 1888 to A. S. Suvorin about Ivanov would support the latter judgement. The undecided nature of the issue is partly responsible for the melodramatic playing up of the figure.

Two years after finishing the play, Chekhov rewrote and rewrought the drama in the form of a long short story, *The Duel* (1891) in which he found the appropriate framework for an artistic solution. Ivanov is resurrected in the figure of Laevsky, no less educated, neurotic, gloomy, philandering and undecided than his predecessor. When he lived in the north (St. Petersburg), he seduced a married woman Nadezhda and flew with her to the south (the Caucasus); when he was staying in the south, and Nadezhda's husband died, he wanted to leave her and escape to the north — the way Ivanov was oscillating between his own home and Lebedev's. Doctor Lvov is also raised from the dead in the person of von Koren, the dogmatically severe, truth-seeking and vice-punishing zoologist, who, when taunted and challenged to a duel, would be ready to kill Laevsky in cold blood and hatred, — if his good-hearted friend the deacon did not pop out from his hiding place in a field of maize shouting von Koren is going to kill Laevsky and thus making the zoologist miss his target. The story ends with a general reconciliation: Laevsky marries Nadezhda whose unfaithfulness he overlooks, forgives and forgets; and von Koren says goodbye to both of them before leaving for St. Petersburg . . . Laevsky has proved just too weak and insignificant to develop into a full-fledged scoundrel or victim, though he has combined ingredients of both. Even so, his diminished but more real stature fully fills the dimensions of the long short story.

A miscarried attempt at a fatal shooting instead of a suicidal shot; a healthy anticlimax instead of a hysterical climax; bathos instead of pathos; humour instead of melodrama; a soberly plebeian slighting and relativization (in Chapter 18) of the two gentlemen's opposition by the deacon who knows greater and grosser human suffering; and a long short story instead of a complex play: this is, for the moment, Chekhov's condensed and concise answer for the creative problem of how to give a homogeneous and adequate treatment to an ambiguous figure, an unheroic hero, and a characterless character. It is worth noting that the long short story, like the play, also consists of a set of pointed episodes, linked series of miniature short stories.[21]

O'Neill's dramaturgy is also characterized by the cascade-connection of relatively independent short story-like dramatic units. In his early output dominated by one-acters, he not infrequently found this pattern a convenient means to construct a multiple-act play. A case in point is *Servitude* (1914), a three-act drama which strikes the onlooker or reader as a combination of three one-act plays with three different types of conflict.

Type one in Act One in this "ludicrous melodrama",[22] as one of its central figures, playwright and novelist David Roylston calls it,[23] is the contradiction between the humdrum life of a lawyer (Ethel's father) or a broker (Ethel's husband, George Frazer) and the ideal of asserting the right of the individual to achieve a full development (Ethel breaking off relations with her husband, and idealizing, idolizing David Roylston).

The second type of conflict evolving in the second act of the play concerns the collision between appearance and reality in Roylston's life (for all his avowed and professed idealism, his accepting the sacrifice of his wife Alice, disregarding her personality, being an egoist).

The third kind of conflict coming to the fore in the third act of the drama takes the form of an opposition between individualism and self-sacrificing servitude (Alice toiling for David out of love and admiration; David, first determined to leave Alice and to choose Ethel, changing his mind and returning to Alice; Ethel rejoining George Frazer).

Elaborated with equal earnestness, emphasis and passion, these three types of conflict would seem to ruin the effect of each other: type three, using the (false) evidence of type two, involves a return to a situation which led to type one. The fact that David Roylston did not live up to his own principles does not prove that asserting the right of the individual, attempting to break out from the framework of a commonplace sort of living is wrong. Roylston's ambiguous attitude does not substantiate the claim that individualism is egotism.

The play starts with a real dramatic drive, but then its energy lessens, its dynamism decreases. The circumstance that David Roylston spent the crucial night in an inn rather than with Ethel blunts the conflict and paves the way for a reconciliation. Even if the possibility for David's and Alice's reunion is — at this price — created, the necessity for Ethel's return to her husband is not sufficiently established. It seems to be partly the outcome of the afore-mentioned mistake of equalizing individualism with egotism (on the basis of the egotistical behaviour of Roylston, the prophet of individualism), partly the consequence of a rather unconvincing analogy between the relationship of Mr. and Mrs. Roylston and that of Mr. and Mrs. Frazer.

The theme of the play suggests a number of parallels with Ibsen, Shaw and Chekhov. In the first kind of conflict presenting Ethel's awakening, there is a touch of the rebellious gesture of Ibsen's Nora (*A Doll's House*). In the second sort of conflict, the frustrating confrontation between appearance and reality, illusion and truth, one of Ibsen's and Chekhov's central concerns are restated. The fact that, unlike Nora, Ethel does not only make a decision to change her way of life, but actually starts working as a stenographer and typist in various offices, establishes a point of contact between her attitude and that of Vivie Warren in Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession.*

At first O'Neill seems to take a step further than Ibsen and Shaw did by showing that the emancipated woman is confronted with new contradictions outside the family. But then he leads his heroine (Ethel) back to her initial predicament by giving servitude, a germ of a leitmotif, a double sense. In the eyes of Ethel, Alice's self-sacrifice first appears to be mere slavery. Later Alice convinces her it is happy service, and Ethel undertakes the same for her own

husband. There can, of course, be and, in fact, there is a real moral value in such a voluntary service, as O'Neill is very successful in showing in Nora Melody's devotion to her husband in *A Touch of the Poet* or in Sara Melody's return to simplicity and the loving care of Simon at the end of *More Stately Mansions*. But the identification of service with servitude in the reinterpretation of servitude as service is hardly a convincing way of making the point; and one drama cannot include so many divergent approaches without falling into separate entities.

This is what, in fact, happens in *Servitude* as a consequence of the author's ambiguous attitude: he sympathizes with individual revolt but represents it with an awareness of the crisis of individualism. The simultaneity of showing the compulsion of self-realization and of casting the veil of doubt upon the effectiveness of individual rebellion constitutes a further link between O'Neill and Chekhov even if with Chekhov the dimension of future casts a redeeming light on the plight of the present. An additional contact appears in the confrontation of the highfaluting sham genius with those less pompous but more true characters to whose servitude, sacrifice and devotion he owes his success (cf. Serebryakov versus Voynicky and Sonya in Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya)*.

The act-by-act changes in the direction and meaning of the action are also brought close to the epic technique of the short story by a detailed description of the milieu. David Roylston, as the introductory stage direction specifies, "wears a white shirt with soft collar and black bow tie, gray trousers and low tan shoes with rubber soles",[24] and Ethel, when giving David a minutely painted and dramatically not absolutely necessary picture of her family circumstances, explains:

> My father was a prominent lawyer with a wide practice. He died five years ago leaving a large estate to my mother, who is still alive but in very feeble health. They had only two children, my brother, five years older than I am, and myself. I tell you all this because you lay such stress in all your books and plays on the influence of environment, and I want you to understand thoroughly what mine was.[25]

Apparently, Ethel knew David no less than O'Neill knew himself.[26]

One might suppose, and not without reason, that the detachment of the acts in *Servitude* can be attributed to a beginner's incipient and not yet successful effort to join one-act playlets conceived in the "well-made" fashion but executed in a less successful manner. However, "the influence of environment" Ethel refers to betrays an interest in naturalistic concepts and methods, and naturalism (Hauptmann) was also responsible for the loosening of the dramatic structure. Symbolism (Hofmannsthal, Maeterlinck, Yeats), though opposing and even attacking naturalism for its unimaginative factual elaborateness, continued the disintegration of what its proponents considered a too tightly-knit and therefore artificial dramatic structure by composing the play

as a series of states of mind. The dramatists paving the way from naturalism to expressionism (Wedekind and especially Strindberg) were working in the direction of building up their plays in the form of chained scenes. This is especially obvious in thep lays of Strindberg whom O'Neill is so thoroughly indebted to (cf. the structure of *Lucky Peter's Journey*, 1882; *The Keys of Heaven*, 1892; *To Damascus III*, 1901; *A Dream Play*, 1901; *Storm Weather*, 1907; *The Burned House*, 1907; *The Ghost Sonata*, 1907; *The Pelican*, 1907; *The Great Highway*, 1909). The expressionist playwrights (Kaiser, Toller, etc.) elaborated on this technique and triggered off a veritable dramatic chain reaction of explosive scenes. Behind the disintegration of the dramatic structure there lurk the fragmentation of the artistic worldview and an experimenting attempt to find a way of artistic creation in the period of social and psychological alienation. The disjoining of the traditional dramatic framework did not automatically bring about an approach towards the model of a short story or a set of short stories in the dramatic skeleton, nevertheless it did create a cultural climate favourable for such a development.

Influenced by both naturalism, symbolism and expressionism but also asserting his own native realism, the young O'Neill was boldly experimenting with new techniques and was waging an *ultimately* successful fight for a modern realistic dramatic mould which incorporated the lasting results of the great contemporary artistic trends — hence its modernity — without giving up the fundamental principles of a realistic outlook and method.[27]

Apart from significant early achievements such as *Desire Under the Elms* (1924), it was chiefly in his late period of great masterpieces that O'Neill was most successful in attaining a total synthesis of realistic groundwork and stylistic experimentation. George Lukács has this to say about O'Neill's development and his relation to the Ibsenian and Chekhovian tradition:

> The best work of O'Neill, an experimentalist from his expressionist period onward, was done under the influence of nineteenth-century, Ibsenite drama. I am not implying that O'Neill, either philosophically or artistically, was an imitator of Ibsen. On the contrary, he does away with Ibsen's moralizing and his weakness for romantic symbolism. The tragicomedy of Ibsen's stern imperatives, too, is foreign to O'Neill's drama. O'Neill's tragicomedy has been through the school of Chekov. The ethical-dramatic dialectic is no longer that between absolute imperatives and the impossibility of their realization. We are now concerned with the scope and possibilities of human action as such; O'Neill's subject is man himself, his subjectively tragic and yet objectively comic situation. Again, to say that O'Neill drew inspiration from Chekhov is not to accuse him of imitation. The America he portrays is, sociologically, that described by his contemporaries — though he often, to win dramatic distance, sets the scene in the America of the past . . . O'Neill wishes to know whether a man is in the last analysis responsible for his own actions or is the plaything of psychological and social forces over which he has no control. His American Electra acknowledges responsibility for her actions with tragic pride; the integrity of human personality is preserved, though at a great cost. But such a situation is unusual in O'Neill. More often, the authentic and inauthentic are inextricably interwoven in his characters — the accent falling more and more frequently on the latter. That is O'Neill's originality. Seeing the situation as he does, he is yet able to affirm, with his own brand of tragicomic

> defiance, a basic integrity in human personality. For all the apparent gloom, this is the message of later dramas like *A Moon for the Misbegotten* or *A Touch of the Poet*. In other words, O'Neill's return to Ibsen and Chekhov is at the same time a protest against the dominance of modernism and a confession of faith in the future of humanity.[28]

One might feel like laying a greater stress on the indirectnature of O'Neill's faith in mankind's future, which often took the form of adhering to past values and the dramatic examination of their relevance for the present and the future. A greater emphasis might also be given to the modern aspect in O'Neill's late realism which was able to synthesize even the elements of "romantic symbolism" and the permanent and valuable achievements of his early expressionistic dramatic schooling. But the realistic nature of his modern synthesis, based on an artistic search for the possibilities of human integrity under the extremely difficult social, historical and psychological circumstances of modern alienation, may explain why his increased advance towards the comprehensive Chekhovian cast of the drama was not a movement backwards but a real and authentic development in O'Neill's own line, and this may also account for the fact that the Chekhovian technique of constructing the play by incorporating the elementary explosions of a sequence of short story-like dramatic units reached an organic perfection and was complemented by an unmistak able Chekhovian atmosphere in late plays like *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (1941—43).

The meaning and message of the drama can best be defined by determining its central conflict. This is all the more important since O'Neill leads his audience to the truth through several layers of appearance. Throughout as many as two and a half acts (Acts I, II, and partly III) O'Neill builds up the impression that the fundamental conflict of the play concerns the cheating of the cheater, the turning of the trick against the trickster, i.e. punishing Jim Tyrone for his intention to sell the farm to T. S. Harder, the Standard Oil millionaire rather than to Phil Hogan, his tenant, as he promised he would, by trapping Jim, and making him either marry Josie Hogan or pay $10,000 to her and sell the farm to Phil at $2000.

There are many references to make the audience believe this is the main course of events in the play. We learn about Josie's threatening anger at the very idea that Jim might double-cross them. The scheme to catch Jim evolves through several stages. First Mike Hogan raises the idea and Josie rejects it. Then Phil relishes Mike's proposition talking it over with Josie, who again rejects it. Finally Phil Hogan brings the news that Jim has, in fact, given his consent to Simpson, Harder's superintendent to sell the farm to Harder first thing in the morning, and then Josie immediately contrives an elaborate plot in order to play a sly trick on her perfidious double-dealer of an unreliabe wooer. So strong is the reader's impression of the inevitability of cheating the cheater that he is inclined to consider this as the major conflict in the play.

Then in Act III we learn that Phil Hogan lied when he asserted that Jim was going to sell the farm to Harder. Josie is exasperated, changes allegiances, gets over from the side of Phil to that of Jim, and now the main conflict seems to be the opposition between the unscrupulous greediness of Phil and the essential unselfishness of the lovers. This supposition is borne out by the evidence of the fierce quarrel between Josie and Phil ending in a break and Josie's heated, embittered and furious statement about leaving her father.

But in spite of all this, a reconciliation follows between Phil and Josie, and the revelation that Phil also had nobler motives for his deeds finally places him beside rather than against Josie and Jim.

This denouement once more places the conflict in a new light; ultimately it can be described as a fateful opposition between the alienated and the human self of the personality shown in a desperate attempt to establish a genuine and truthful human relationship.

Such kind of a conflict is in close correlation with the inner duality of the characters. Jim Tyrone seems to have two basically different layers settled in his personality. Far the thickest and thoroughly hardened layer is that of cynicism. His practically incessant drinking to the point of passing out; his obsession with the bare and waste pleasures of sex taking the place of love; his drinking to near-oblivion and taking a whore while accompanying his mother's coffin; his constant gloating sneer at human ideals; the shallowness of his desires to gamble on horses, following races all the year round from the north to the south of the country, and to appear a Broadway gambler "who would like to be mistaken for Wall Street brokers"[29] are indicative of his dominant attitude.

But under this thick layer of cynicism there is a thin stratum of a sensitive, even emotional personality who developed the cynical veneer to defend his weakness from the constant threat of disillusioning experience. "*When he smiles without sneering, he still has the ghost of a former youthful, irresponsible Irish charm — that of the beguiling ne'er-do-well, sentimental and romantic.*"[30] After his disappointment over his father's stinginess, the death of his beloved mother meant for him the loss of the last truthful human relationship. His heavy drinking and whoring while taking her corpse to the funeral was an expression of his despair over what life proved to him and of his desperate plunging into the morally worst to take revenge over the bad done to him by life. It was also a provisional attempt at a temporary escape.

His mother fixation and his finding a mother-substitute in Josie, whose beauty in soul reminded him of his mother, and brazen, tartish speech recalled to him the blonde whore on the train, put much at stake: will he treat Josie as a whore, as he did the blonde tart, and as in a lustful moment during the moonlight night he feels like treating Josie, too, or will he love her purely, confessing to her what he did on the train and obtaining an absolution from his

sin? By keeping his pledge not to betray Josie and Phil, and by essentially seeking and ultimately finding a meaningful, emotionally charged and true love-relationship with Josie, it is his submerged and suppressed self which wells up to reach spiritual peace and consolation. To escape cheap sentimentalism and a shallow happy ending, O'Neill clearly shows that such moments of genuine purity and self-disclosing sincerety can be but exceptional and fleeting manifestations with a person so thoroughly soaked with cynicism as Jim. This is why a moment of this kind can find a natural expression in a short story-oriented dramatic turn, and this explains why scenes of true intimacy are followed by scenes of brazen talk. But the very fact that Jim has found in Josie someone who had the natural intelligence and passion to break through to the hidden and valuable part of his personality helped him to let it come up to the surface during an extraordinary night of unusual purity, and the success of this achievement, the memory of having at least once been capable of true love will be a living and fostering force for the rest of his short and doomed life.

Josie Hogan is also characterized by having two contradictory though connected layers in her personality. On the surface she also appears to be cynical, she uses a smutty language, speaks like and pretends to be a tart. In trifle matters she is her scheming father's true daughter, whether it is a scheme in which she is his partner, as when they played a trick on Harder, or it is a plot against her father, like in the case of helping Mike to escape from the farm. When her great pride is outraged by Jim's alleged breach of pledge concerning the selling of the farm, she is even prepared to do scheming on a larger scale making preparations for alluring home, sousing, seducing, putting to bed, and leaving finally unsatisfied Jim so that when his father's witnesses catch him, he should be compelled to sell the farm to Hogan at cheap price and to sign a paper acknowledging he owes $10,000 to her.

But she also has a valuable layer underlying her surface-personality. She is a basically sensitive person who conceals her vulnerability by fake-cynicism. She is ashamed of her over-sized body and needs the repeated assurance of ever new men, whom she starts enticing but cuts short when they want to seduce her, to prove that she does appeal to men. A virgin in the disguise of a whore, she fails to play her trick on Jim, and does not even want to do so any more when she realizes that the story of his wishing to sell the farm to Harder was playfully made up by Jim and deliberately made much of by the contriving Phil. Her suggesting physical love to Jim is not a tartish trick to trap him, but, on the contrary, the consummation of her love, an endeavour to prove to him how much she loves him irrespective of the consequences.

At this point, however, a new collision emerges in their relationship. For Jim, physical love means hugging a tart, particularly embracing the blonde streetwalker he defiled himself with on the train. What Jim asks for is that Josie should be herself ("How about your not talking the old smut stuff to me?

You promised you'd be yourself"[31]), and by turning towards him with her true, unpretending self she should redeem Jim from the burden of alienation. Lying in her coffin, Jim's mother "looked young and pretty like someone I remembered meeting long ago. Practically a stranger. To whom I was a stranger. Cold and indifferent"[32]; and what Jim's emotional starvation needed most badly was an emotionally charged, genuine human relationship: Josie to mother him, to replace his mother for him ("because she was all I had, all I cared about"[33]), and to forgive him. This precluded the total, spiritual and physical fulfilment of Josie's desire. When Jim finds his peace resting his head on Josie's consoling motherly breast, *"he has closed his eyes and his haggard, dissipated face looks like a pale mask in the moonlight — at peace as a death mask is at peace"*:[34] too great a part of his personality is dead for being capable of an all-consuming real love. Thus what happened during the night is but a spiritual act, a miracle, as Josie calls it.[35]

Because although in possessing the two layers of outer cynicism and inner value Jim and Josie resemble one another (and this explains their mutual attraction), they are essentially different, too: whereas with Jim crude cynicism dominates the personality, making it dead, with Josie human warmth is the leading feature which is only disguised by her sham-cynicism. This is why their love cannot be lasting (and can only be presented in a short story-related dramatic structure), and this goes to explain why Phil Hogan speaks for the author when he is cursing life, i.e. Fate.

Phil Hogan also shows a kind a dichotomy. On the one hand, he is a scheming, sly, shrewd Irish farmer whom his position has taught how to double--cross people. (This is most evident in his trick on Harder who threatens his very existence by wishing to buy the farm Phil is a tenant on to drive him off and to add the farm to his own estate.) Phil shows an interest in, and sympathy for, Mike's views about trapping Jim, catching a well-to-do husband with a superior social position for Josie.

On the other hand, he also wants what he thinks is best for Josie. He realizes that Jim and Josie love one another, and conducts his scheme in such a manner that it should end up in a happy marriage rather than in holding up for ridicule, humiliating and blackmailing Jim. At the end, he does prove he has a heart and tender feelings for his daughter. This accounts for the fact that Josie finally forgives him and remains with him in spite of her having told him she was leaving him. Both aspects of Phil Hogan's character appear in his self-defending and self-justifying explanation and apology to Josie:

> Listen, darlin'. All you said about my lying and scheming, and what I hoped would happen, is true. But it wasn't his money, Josie. I did see it was the last chance — the only one left to bring the two of you to stop your damned pretending, and face the truth that you loved each other. I wanted you to find happiness — by hook or crook, one way or another, what did I care how? I wanted to save him, and I hoped he'd see that only your love could — It was his talk of the beauty

> he saw in you that made me hope — And I knew he'd never go to bed with you even if you'd let him unless he married you. And if I gave a thought to his money at all, that was the least of it, and why shouldn't I want to have you live in ease and comfort for a change, like you deserve, instead of in this shanty on a lousy farm, slaving for me?[36]

Even Mike Hogan betrays a Janus-faced personality; he preaches morality but suggests immorality to Josie; the bed-trick is originally his idea in the play. He, however, is a hypocrite.

If in *Platonov* and *Ivanov* it was the essential indecision of the unheroic title hero that resulted in a short story-like additive sequence in the dramatic plot; and in *Servitude* it was the indecision of the author about which of the three presented conflicts to consider decisive that made the play a series of more or less short story-oriented one-acters; in *A Moon for the Misbegotten* it is fundamentally the inner antithesis of the personality, the conflict between the alienated and the unalienated selves that bring about a structure consisting of a set of organically linked narrative-dramatic units. Platonov and Ivanov are in two minds about doing things, and their deeds betray growing disintegration; Jim, Josie and Phil display (in varying degrees and ways) a split personality in their actions, and reach at least a momentary integration of the ego. The cascade-connection of short story-tinged dramatic units in the Chekhovian plays is mainly a translation into dramatic action of the protagonists' vacillations and oscillations, in *A Moon for the Misbegotten* a similar chain can be interpreted chiefly as the actional outcome of the appearance of one self in the other, the manifestation of one self getting the upper hand over the other within the same personality. (Preparatory stages leading to such a disclosure of human substantiality, such a revelation or insight may, of course, also constitute a short story-slanted dramatic phase in the overall action.)

Accordingly, on the basis of their Janus-faced, middle stature figures, story-tellers, relative independence, narrative aspect, not infrequent past orientation, epic milieu, occasional descriptive nature, transparent plot, thin, almost slim action, anecdotal flavour or short story-rooted turns, the following narrative-dramatic units can be isolated in the structure of the play:

1. Assisted by Josie, Mike Hogan leaves his father and the farm.[37] A number of turns crop up during the incident:

a. the hypocritical brother, so ready to deliver a religiously tinged moral sermon, becomes thoroughly materialistic suggesting to Josie "to skin Jim out of his last nickel."[38]

b. Phil is coming, Mike, terrified, is leaving.

c. Keeping her eyes on Phil's moves, Josie advises Mike to run for his life — only to realize that he has already left.

Since he never returns, he also sneaks out of the play (like Simeon and Peter Cabot walk out of the drama in Part One, Scene Four of *Desire Under the Elms*), and lends an initial scene a somewhat self-contained autonomy. The

youngest son following in the wake of his two elder brothers, helped by his sister, carrying a satchel, escaping home, and setting out to try his fortune in the world evokes narrative — even fable-like — associations.

Nevertheless the scene does have its dramatic function: it introduces Josie, intones the motif and motive of playing a spiteful and greedy trick on Jim, and conveniently leads on to presenting Phil as a furious man easily excited and calmed.

2. A reminiscent Josie tells the story of how Phil once swindled James Tyrone Sr. using her, an innocent young girl, as his means.[39] The story certainly has its anecdotal points with

a. Josie removing the fierce expression James Tyrone put on for Phil being a year behind in the rent;

b. Tyrone suspecting and Josie admitting Phil put her up to it;

c. Phil having the impudence of telling Tyrone he will vacate the premises unless Tyrone lowers the rent and has the house painted;

d. Tyrone damning Phil — with admiration, and the two of them starting drinking, telling stories, singing songs and cursing England in a patriarchal Irish reunion precluding any discussion of the rent.

e. Nevertheless Tyrone always saw through Phil's tricks, Josie remarks,

f. and Phil invariably knew he would, or at least so Phil says. But Phil's real trick was to give Tyrone the fun of seeing through his tenant's tricks and to kid him into lenient forgiveness.

g. Josie draws a generalizing conclusion seeing the bearing of Phil's attitude on her own case: "You old divil, you've always a trick hidden behind your tricks, so no one can tell at times what you're after."[40]

The story appears in a dramatic role: it recalls an instance when Phil exploited Josie's innocence to achieve his material aims and prepares the audience for a similar scheme at the early stage of the dramatic exposition; it shows the way in which Josie's honesty defeats the trick; and it points out the force of convivial Irish companionship as well as the sly ambiguity of a trickster's attitude which touches upon Josie's fate and the oncoming dramatic conflict.[41]

3. Jim tells Phil Hogan the story of how he introduced Dutch Maisie, a tart from the Haymarket to the Jebs as his sister, and how she improved on his joke in the halls of learning by saying good-bye to Father Fuller using a streetwalker's language and providing a point to the anecdote[42] whose dramatic use is fairly evident in characterizing the nature of Jim's jokes and through it Jim's nature, and in creating an atmosphere of companionship between Phil and Jim acting "*like players at an old familiar game.*"[43]

4. T. Stedman Harder, Phil's neighbour, "a leading aristocrat in our Land of the Free and Get-Rich-Quick, whose boots are licked by one and all — one of the kings of our Republic by Divine Right of Inherited Swag, . . . Standard

Oil's sappiest child", as Jim Tyrone characterizes him,[44] comes to complain to Phil for breaking down his fence a dozen times and allowing his hogs to wallow freely along the shores of his ice pond Harder cherishes so dearly. Phil, however, by way of an ingenious turn, retort and counter-attack, cuts him short, and accuses him of breaking down the fence himself to entice his poor pigs to take their death in the ice pond. He even charges Harder $4000 as the price of ten pigs that caught cold and died of pneumonia, and another ten that died of cholera after drinking the dirty water in Harder's ice pond.[45]

This hilariously humorous scene sounds like a dramatized anecdote. Its epic aspect is also supported by its episodic isolation as well as by the quality of some of its stage directions which are as unactable as they provide excellent reading. Harder's description might serve as a fine introductory passage in an ironical short story:

> *No matter how long he lives, his four undergraduate years will always be for him the most significant in his life, and the moment of his highest achievement the time he was tapped for an exclusive Senior Society at the Ivy university to which his father had given millions. Since that day he has felt no need for further aspiring, no urge to do anything except settle down on his estate and live the life of a country gentleman, mildly interested in saddle horses and sport models of foreign automobiles. He is not the blatantly silly, playboy heir to millions whose antics make newspaper headlines. He doesn't drink much except when he attends his class reunion every spring — the most exciting episode of each year for him. He doesn't give wild parties, doesn't chase after musical-comedy cuties, is a mildly contented husband and father of three children.*[46]

What happened to Harder in the past, and what he does *not* do in the present are certainly relevant pieces of information and do contribute to the total picture about him even for the actor, but such sort of a characterization highlights traits not immediately playable, and thus it has more an epic than a dramatic character constituting a narrative indirection rather than a dramatic direction or directive. This is all the more conspicuous since other passages in the same description introduce Harder in dramatically "presentable" terms. Some sentences in his characterization throw into relief, in an actable way, the same aristocratic qualities as the unplayable ones refer to: "*Coddled from birth, everything arranged and made easy for him, deferred to because of his wealth, he usually has the self-confident attitude of acknowledged superiority, but assumes a supercilious, insecure air when dealing with people beyond his ken.*"[47]

The narrative character of the scene is even greater in *Long Day's Journey into Night*, where the story is not shown as it is in *A Moon for the Misbegotten* but told by Edmund Tyrone.[48]

The total impact of the story is, however, fully dramatic in both plays. Not only does it express the momentary victory of a shrewd Irish farmer over a Standard Oil millionaire, but it also gives a chance to Phil, Josie and Jim in *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, and to Shaughnessy and Edmund, and later, more importantly, to Edmund, Jamie and — in spite of themselves — even to Mary and James in *Long Day's Journey Into Night* to laugh at the expense of the rich

neighbour. While they are laughing together, they are not against each other, they are not alone. In the nest-warmth of solidarity and human intimacy they are not alienated people. It is dramatically significant that immediately after laughing heartily with Phil and Josie, Jim refers with "*sardonic amusement*"[49] to the possibility of selling the farm to Harder at a greatly increased price knowing that he would give practically any price now to get rid of Phil. With this, Jim would break his promise made to Phil to sell the farm to him on easy time payments at a small price. Hogan's suspicion and Josie's bitterness are awakened (and, in a similar fashion, tragic dissonances in the family are immediately heard in *Long Day's Journey*, too, after Edmund's telling the ice pond story), even if both Phil and Josie are temporarily relieved and the act ends on a note of love, maternal solicitude and the expectation of a date.

It is noteworthy that in a number of other plays by O'Neill, too, a comparable dichotomy can be perceived between the comprehensible human world of an early narrative and the unforeseen or incalculable dangers, inhuman threat of later dramatic developments. *The Hairy Ape* was originally written as a short story. Although its text seems to have been destroyed, we know from a letter dated August 13, 1918 by Carl Hovey, managing editor of the magazine *Metropolitan*, to O'Neill, giving his opinion and criticism about the story, that it ended with the chief protagonist's joining the organization of the Industrial Workers of the World.[50] This plot covers the first six scenes and part of the seventh of the later play, moves within a tangible and palpable social sphere, and draws a militant social conclusion expressing a belief in the possibilities of organized labour. The expressionistic play goes much beyond the circle of security and collective solution; the secretary of the local of the I. W. W. first suggests to Yank, who can hardly read and write, to sit down and read pamphlets, and when Yank, to prove his radical zeal, undertakes to blow up anything, the secretary suspects he is an agent provocator, and throws him out. The action takes a metaphysical turn, and Yank's lonely middle position and parabolically generalized predicament are expressed in his words: "I ain't on oith and I ain't in heaven, get me? I'm in the middle tryin' to separate 'em takin' all de woist punches from bot' of 'em. Maybe dat's what dey call hell, huh?"[51]

Act I of *Dynamo* reads like a realistic and partly humorous short story based on an anecdote (the newspaper story Ramsay Fife, an atheist superintendent of a hydroelectric plant plays off as his own story to pull the leg of Reuben, the son of Reverend Hutchins Light). The rest of the play, however, shows, in rather a confused manner, and using expressionistic effects, the hopeless disintegration of a tormented man (Reuben) seeking a homogeneous explanation of the world, and being tossed between religion and science.

Even in *The Iceman Cometh* Hickey's wisecrack about his wife and the iceman first appears as an anecdotal joke, but later takes on a grimly tragic and symbolic significance.

It is this larger framework the human and humorous story of Phil Hogan's pigs and the ensuing dramatic crisis fit in. By giving Jim the idea of telling Phil he might sell the farm to Harder, the incident finishes the phase of exposition and prepares the intrigue section of the dramatic structure. The dramatic function of the narrative blocks in Act I is also manifested in the fact that although there is no explicit scene division in the play, the four narrative units examined correspond to (and, in fact, constitute) four dramatic scenes.

5. Phil tells Josie that Jim has, in fact, agreed to sell the farm to Harder. This is the chief reason why he has not kept his date with Josie. Besides, he thinks she is a virgin whose modesty he does not wish to outrage. He betrays signs of being in love with her. Phil succeeds in making Josie furious, and — by way of a total revaluation of their relationship and out of hurt pride — she makes up her mind to take revenge and follow Mike's advice on the bed trick trapping Jim.[52]

6. In Act III Jim discloses to Josie that he played a joke on Harder and Phil by making the promise he was going to sell the estate to Harder for ten grand. His plan was to make a fool of him the following morning by refusing to sign the contract. Phil may have guessed there was a joke in the making since Jim informed him he had assured his brother's support for selling the farm to Phil who even thanked Jim for his kindness. Josie is greatly relieved, realizes Jim is a faithful friend and a good sport after all, and her anger rises against her scheming father. This is even stepped up when she learns that Phil admitted to Jim Josie was a virgin, a fact Jim had found out himself and Josie cannot help admitting.[53]

Jim's revelation brings about a total dramatic realignment of personal and emotional relationships; Josie is now clearly on the side of Jim against her scheming father.

7. Sexually aroused by Josie's love, Jim attempts "to hit the hay" with her, mistaking her for a "blonde pig" he lay with.[54] Josie is taken aback, Jim feels humiliated; he is about to leave for good, but Josie's love and maternal care make him stay and confess. His confession admittedly takes the form of a story ("Listen, and I'll tell you a story, Josie"[55]) about how he had always dreamed of following the horse-race, and still did not feel any satisfaction when he ultimately realized his plan; and — as if to explain one story by another — how he relapsed into drinking when his mother had become fatally ill; and — the most painful part of the confession — how he was drinking and whoring with a blonde tart, by way of taking revenge on life, on the very train which was carrying his mother's coffin in the baggage car. Already unable and only pretending to cry when his mother had been laid out in her coffin, Jim found himself repeating "a lousy tear-jerker song"[56] on the train, and ultimately became too drunk to go to his mother's funeral.

First shocked, then understanding and sympathetic, Josie forgives Jim as if she were what Jim now takes her to be: his mother. Her tone is so heavily charged with emotion that she herself perceives she is using a poetic language ("I must be a poet . . . Sure, love is a wonderful mad inspiration!").[57] Yet the act ends on her realizing that her love — if it could relieve him — cannot resurrect Jim, and the last sentence in the act is spoken with "*a defensive, self-derisive smile*": "God forgive me, it's a fine end to all my scheming, to sit here with the dead hugged to my breast, and the silly mug of the moon grinning down, enjoying the joke!"[58]

Jim's confessional story leads to the culmination of the dramatic action evoking a lyrically saturated true dramatic catharsis in which a mean and revengeful scheming trap is turned into the redeeming clasp of spiritual love.

Act IV is rather a dramatic denouement, solution and epilogue than a continuation of dramatized short stories. All the same, it comprises some significant turning points in the plot.

a. The "miracle": a poetic summary of the changed relationship between Jim and Josie.[59]

b. Josie reinterprets Phil's scheme in purely monetary terms and decides to leave him like his three sons have left him.[60]

c. Josie and the symbolic power of the sunrise (evoking reminiscences of *Beyond the Horizon* and *Desire Under the Elms*) make Jim remember Josie's love and the peace of her consolation, and he, too, intimates to her he loves her. By this the purification of his soul becomes conscious, and he can leave Josie for good with a pure kiss of farewell.[61]

d. The final revaluation of Phil's plot: he did it, he says, primarily out of paternal love and solicitude for Josie, and only secondarily for material considerations; he did not mind if he made her rich, but his chief aim was to make her happy.[62] Josie believes his argument, changes her mind, stays on the farm, exchanges a few teasing smiles and intimate insults with her father forcing the old familiar tone with an undercurrent of sad resignation, and follows with her eyes the disappearing figure of Jim Tyrone wishing him forgiveness and peace in a tender and pitying tone.[63]

These turns, however, would seem to be remarkably rapid, directly dramatic, emphatically (though not exclusively) concerned with present attitudes or actual consequences and interpretations of past events; they tend to embody rather than contain, present rather than represent, constitute rather than tell a narrative; they are fairly closely-knit and not loosely independent, and so work on the consciousness of the audience with an increased sense of dramatic necessity rather than project the pattern of a chain of dramatized short stories even if the tentative outlines of such a pattern can also be recognized.

Apart from its last (and far the shortest) act, the bulk of the narrative structure of *A Moon for the Misbegotten* can be looked upon as a series of short

story-related dramatic units, and in this it resembles the matrix of a number of plays by Chekhov.

The inner stratification of the characters, which becomes manifest in the above delineated Chekhovian structure, also finds expression in some other traits betraying Chekhovian affinities: the moon-bathed fine lyricism of the play which in the cathartic moment of exceptional, indeed miraculous fulfilment couples a pietà image whith a poetic paradox and the crystal-like, incantatory, magic regularity of a three-unit verse beat ("A / virgin who / bears a dead / child in the / night, and the / dawn / finds her / still a / virgin").[64] The Chekhovian quality is also witnessed in the lyricism of evocative, yearning symbols which illuminate the text and texture of the play with the consciousness of a level of values spread over everyday routine. They are not merely the signs of the things they are the pictures of, but are also the pictures of the things they are the signs of, i.e. they present the simultaneity and interpenetration of image and symbol suggesting the possibility of elevating the actual to the level of the valuable (the young birch forest planted by Doctor Astrov in *Uncle Vanya*, the silvery moon, the rising sun or the pietà image in *A Moon for the Misbegotten*). The Chekhovian manner of composition is met with in the not infrequent open-endedness of the acts merging with the former and subsequent ones in an impressionistically loosened and softened genre-picutre (Acts I and II in *Three Sisters*, Acts II, III and IV in *A Moon for the Misbegotten*);[65] and, last but not least, a fine Chekhovian balance is established in keeping the truly lyrical passages from becoming sentimental by counterpointing them with a sense of tragicomic grotesqueness which tempers, undercuts and paradoxically sometimes even enhances them (the end of Act III in *Uncle Vanya*, Chebutykin's role in Act IV of *Three Sisters*, the closure of Acts III and IV in *A Moon for the Misbegotten*).

The controlling power of these instances of tragicomedy serves the same purpose and sets up the same limits as the short story-oriented nature of the dramatic structure: it indicates the boundaries within which the vindication of human autonomy is both possible and realistic, and outside which it is illusory and unfeasible.

## NOTES

[1] It is remarkable that in his letter of September 8, 1891 to A. S. Suvorin, Chekhov summarizes the synopsis of a play which reads like the summary of a short story: "Death gathers men little by little, he knows what he is about. One might write a play: an old chemist invents the elixir of life — take fifteen drops and you live forever; but he breaks the phial from terror lest such carrion as himself and his wife might live forever". Chekhov, A., *Letters on the Short Story, the Drama and Other Literary Topics*, selected and edited by Louis Friedland. New York, 1966, 118. — Chekhov's insistence on the essentially nonsensical nature of one-act vaudevilles also betrays a point of contact with the gratuitous turn of a short story. Cf. his letter to A. S. Suvorin, Jan. 6, 1889 in *Letters on the Short Story . . .*, 174. Cf. op. cit., VIII. — Bentley, E., Apologia, Preface to *The Brute and Other Stories* by Anton Chekhov, edited by Eric Bentley and Theodore Hoffmann. New

York, 1958, IV–V. — Paperny, Z., *A. P. Chekhov*. Moscow, 1960, Chapter 3. — Hingley, R., (ed, trans.), Introduction to *The Oxford Chekhov*. London, New York, Toronto, 1968, Vol. I, 2–3, 7. — Valency, M., *The Breaking String: The Plays of Anton Chekhov*. New York, 1969, VII. — Melchinger, S., *Anton Chekhov*, translated from the German by Edith Tarcov. New York, 1972, 155.

[2] Bogard, T., *Contour in Time: The Plays of Eugene O'Neill*. New York, 1972, 38–9, cf. 34–42.

[3] Op. cit., 27.

[4] Op. cit., 52.

[5] Godhurst, W., *A Literary Source for O'Neill's 'In the Zone'*. *American Literature*, XXXV (Jan. 1964), 530–34.

[6] Boulton, A., *Part of a Long Story*. Garden City, 1958, 176.

[7] Op. cit., 192.

[8] Letter to Y. P. Polonsky, Feb. 22, 1888. Chekhov, A., *Letters on the Short Story . . .*, 115.

[9] Letter to I. L. Shcheglov, Nov. 2, 1888. Op. cit., 116.

[10] Letter to M. V. Kiselev, Jan. 14, 1887, op. cit., 115.

[11] Letter to A. S. Suvorin, Jan. 2, 1894, op. cit., 195.

[12] Letter to A. S. Suvorin, Dec. 13, 1895, op. cit., 118–19, cf. 146.

[13] Chekhov, A., *Platonov*, translated by David Magarshack. London, 1964, 141.

[14] Op. cit., 160.

[15] Op. cit., 163.

[16] Ibidem.

[17] This can also be well illustrated with the case of Vengerovich Jr. in Act II, Scene 2. He has a sentimental fit and finds personal happiness the manifestation of egoism. Talking to Platonov on a cutting in a forest at night, amorously indulging in the sounds of nature and perceptibly intoxicated, he harps on the fate of "the millions of unhappy, hungry and drunken people beneath the moon" (op. cit., 115), on the predicament of "those who sow so much and have nothing to eat" (ibid.). When, however, Platonov suggests that if Vengerovich gives his heavy gold chain, rhetorically thrown away, to a really poor person, he might feed the poor man and his family for years, he quickly picks up the chain and swiftly remembers it is a souvenir he must keep.

With this the short story-related scene seems to be rounded off. But there comes another turn which affords a glimpse on Platonov's character and situation in terms of a sudden insight and revelation. Platonov recognizes in Vengerovich's case his own predicament: "The vulgarity of it! To be young and at the same time not to be a man of high principles. What utter depravity! . . . How we loathe people when we detect in them something that reminds us of our own impure past. Once I, too, was a little like him. Oh dear!" (Op. cit., 116.).

[18] *Letters on the Short Story . . .*, 129.

[19] Letter to A. S. Suvorin, Dec. 30, 1888, op. cit., 137. In his last years, in the preparatory period of the coming storm of the 1905 bourgeois democratic revolution, Chekhov's social interest, consciousness and conscience were increasingly awakening. Cf. the last chapters of V. Yermilov's *Anton Pavlovich Chekhov* (Moscow, 1949) and Z. Paperny's A. P. Chekhov (Moscow, 1960).

[20] *Letters on the Short Story . . .*, 137–38.

[21] Cf. Valency, M., *The Breaking String: The Plays of Anton Chekhov*, 54, 69, 99–100. Valency also points out (123–24) how the conflict between Ivanov and Doctor Lvov, Laevsky and von Koren was recreated in the opposition of Ragin and Ivan Dmitrich in Chekhov's masterful long short story *Ward No. 6* (1892). Valency calls the two sets of characters "the two poles of" Chekhov's "inner dialectic" (124) which he also traces (126–27) in the dichotomy between the resigned Semyon and the rebellious Tatar in the short story *In Exile* (1892). Echoes of these two types of voices are caught (233–34, 273–74) in the opposed utterances of Chebutykin and Vershinin as well as in those of Tusenbach and Vershinin in *Three Sisters* (1900), and — even more distantly and with significant modifications — in the speeches and attitudes of the sober Lopakhin and dreamy Trofimov in *The Cherry Orchard* (1903–4). Pole 1 is largely determined by the present, pole 2 is chiefly oriented to the future.

How much Chekhov was aware of his tendency to break up a story into smaller short stories is evident from his letter of Jan. 9, 1888 to V. G. Korolenko. He remarked about *The Steppe* (1888): ". . . owing to lack of practice in writing long things, and from fear of crowding in too many details, I go to the opposite extreme: each page comes out compact, like a short story . . ." *Letters on the Short Story . . .*, 3. — A. Skaftymov points

out a thematic similarity (the presence of involuntary guilt) between *Ivanov* and Chekhov's short story *Verochka* (1887): "Principles of Structure in Chekhov's Plays", in Jackson R. L. (ed.), *Chekhov: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs, 1967, 81.

[22] O'Neill, E., *Servitude, Ten 'Lost' Plays*, with a Foreword by Bennett Cerf. London 1965, 297.

[23] One aspect of O'Neill's epic interest is that he repeatedly chose short story writers or novelists as protagonists such as Art, the narrator, and by implication, the writer of the short story *Tomorrow* (1916—17); David Roylston, the novelist and playwright in *Servitude* (1914); Ted Nelson, who takes pride in having sold a short story in *Bread and Butter* (1914); Stephen Murray, the main character, journalist and short story writer in *The Straw* (1918); Charles Marsden, the novelist in *Strange Interlude* (1926—27), who sees in the dramatic action an excellent plot for a novel; or John Loving, the novelist hero of *Days Without End* (1927—33).

[24] *Ten 'Lost' Plays*, 227.

[25] Op. cit., 234.

[26] David Roylston, when Ethel calls at him late in the evening, finds a striking similarity between her and someone else whom he cannot, for the moment, identify. Later, however, he recognizes the person: it is Mrs. Harding, the heroine of his play *Sacrifice*, who leaves her husband with the words "I have awakened". (Op. cit., 240). Seeing the play for the tenth time gave Ethel the final impetus to leave her husband. This incident offers a point of contact with the plot of Chekhov's one-acter *Tatyana Repina*, and shows some parallelity with Pirandello's propensity to merge dramatic fiction and outer reality.

[27] O'Neill's experimentation with melodramatically "well-made", naturalistic, symbolistic and expressionistic effects also resulted in a series of more or less self-reliant dramatic units. On the one hand, he linked one-acts into a larger unit. This happened in the case of the *S. S. Glencairn* series (1914—17) in which, as O'Neill remarked, "the individual plays are complete in themselves, yet the identity of the crew goes through the scenes and welds the four one-acts into a long play." He refers to Schnitzler's *Anatol* as an earlier example of the procedure. "O'Neill Talks About his Plays", in Cargill, O., et alii, *O'Neill and His Plays*, New York, 1970, 110. — On the other hand, in his multiple-act plays structural units not infrequently tend to become relatively independent. In *Bread and Butter* (1914) Acts I, II and IV seem to have separate expositions. In *The Personal Equation* (1915) Act II reads like a dramatized early short story, and Act III, Scene 1 is also partly self-contained. *Beyond the Horizon* (1918), combining naturalism, symbolism and realism, has a short story-oriented, almost tale-like exposition (Act I). The play prompted the critic of the *Dramatic Mirror* into acknowledging a fine sense of the theatre with much promise in the mood of Synge and Chekhov. "Beyond the Horizon", *Dramatic Mirror* 82 (14 Feb., 1920), 258. In the appreciative critical echo of the play "the names of Ibsen, Synge and Chekhov were used to describe this unusual new writer" as Jordan Y. Miller observes in his *Eugene O'Neill and the American Critic: A Summary and Bibliographical Checklist*, Hamden and London, 1962, 32. *Chris Christophersen* (1919) was conceived in a set of epically drawn-out scenes and acts some of which make the impression of a dramatized anecdotal short story (Act III, Scene 1). It was deleted in *Anna Christie* (1919—20) — along with as many as ten subsidiary figures — with good reason. Even so in Act I of the latter play some figures and traits appear to be a more organic part of the epic milieu than of the drama. In *Diff'rent* (1920) Acts I and II are fairly different to form a satisfying dramatic unity. In *The First Man* (1920—21) the satirical scenes concerning the hypocritical, money-grabbing, gossip-mongering branch of the Jayson family show a tendency to split off. *The Emperor Jones* (1920) and *The Hairy Ape* (1921) give up a division to acts and follow the expressionistic model using a mounting scale of separate scenes, but the scenes fall into natural groups denoting stages in the action. More or less the same applies to the actless scene division of *The Fountain* (1921), except this time the governing trend which dissolves the traditional scheme of the drama is more romantic and symbolic than expressionistic. On the other hand, in expressionistic plays adopting a structural plan of acts like *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (1923), *The Great God Brown* (1925) or *Lazarus Laughed* (1925—26), the additive activity of explosive scenes can still be felt. Again the same is true, if in a less violent measure, of the chain of scenes in the romantic-symbolic play *Marco Millions* (1923—25), which also groups its scenes into acts. In the thoroughly realistic and partly symbolistic *Desire Under the Elms* (1924) the initial scenes in Part One showing Simeon and Peter leaving for California never to return are rounded off into a short story-like anecdotal epic block, and Act I of *Dynamo* (1924—28) precedes later and expressionistic developments by a realistic scenic anecdote which reads like a humorous short story. In *Strange Interlude*

(1926—27) the total impression of a novelistic drama is rendered through a number of joined scenes which gain a measure of short story-prompted roundness by constituting individual variations on the theme of a revelation carefully prepared and finally forsaken. Although the play "is not Chekhovian", its author "has sought deliberately to control his tendency toward melodrama to write in a more Chekhovian vein of a life pattern that does not end climactically, but simply wears away, decays in 'smokeless burning'". Bogard, T., *Contour in Time*, 314.

[28] Lukács, G., *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, translated from the German by John and Necke Mander. London, 1969, 83—84.

[29] O'Neill, E., *A Moon for the Misbegotten, The Later Plays of Eugene O'Neill*, edited and introduced by Travis Bogard. New York, 967, 323.

[30] Op. cit., 322—23.

[31] Op. cit., 378.

[32] Op. cit., 391.

[33] Op. cit., 390.

[34] Op. cit., 387, cf. 395, 396.

[35] Op. cit., 398.

[36] Op. cit., 407—8.

[37] Op. cit., 301—6.

[38] Op. cit., 306.

[39] Op. cit., 315—16.

[40] Op. cit., 316.

[41] Op. cit., 311, 313, 326: stage directions relating to Phil Hogan.

[42] Op. cit., 324.

[43] Op. cit., 323.

[44] Op. cit., 328—29.

[45] Op. cit., 333—40.

[46] Op. cit., 333.

[47] Op. cit., 334.

[48] O'Neill, E., *Long Day's Journey into Night*. New Haven and London, 1969, 22—26. In the earlier autobiographical play the names are partly different: Phil Hogan's predecessor is Shaughnessy, and Harder's is Harker.

[49] O'Neill, E., *A Moon for the Misbegotten, The Later Plays of Eugene O'Neill*, 340.

[50] Sheaffer, L., *O'Neill: Son and Playwrigh*. Boston, 1968, 389.

[51] O'Neill, E., *The Hairy Ape, The Plays of Eugene O'Neill*. New York, 1955, Vol. III, 253, cf. 254.

[52] O'Neill, E., *A Moon for the Misbegotten, The Later Plays of Eugene O'Neill*, 351—61.

[53] Op. cit., 380—83.

[54] Op. cit., 384, 385.

[55] Op. cit., 387, cf. 404.

[56] Op. cit., 393.

[57] Op. cit., 395.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Op. cit., 398.

[60] Op. cit., 400—1.

[61] Op. cit., 407.

[62] There are certainly a number of hints in this direction in the play: Josie remarks about Phil he always has a trick hidden behind his tricks (op. cit., 316); Phil says about his own scheme that it is bitter medicine but it is the only way he can see that has a chance now (op. cit., 360); Jim is of the opinion that Phil does care for Josie (op. cit., 383); Phil does not bring any witnesses after all to blackmail Jim with, and spent the night in the hayloft (op. cit., 397).

[63] Op. cit., 407—9.

[64] Op. cit., 398.

[65] O'Neill wittily counterpoints his own symbolistically-impressionistically tinged modern realism with David Belasco's pointed "grand scenes" in his last acts by making Jim watch an exceptionally beautiful sunrise and then remark to conceal his being profoundly moved: "I like Belasco better. Rise of curtain, Act-Four stuff . . . God damn it! Why have I to pull that lousy stuff? (*With genuine deep feeling*) God, it's beautiful, Josie! I—I'll never forget it — here with you." Op. cit., 405.

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# The Circle and the Labyrinth

## Vision and Speech in the "hardly accomplished revolution" of Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter"

By

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> Weave a circle round him thrice
> And close your eyes with holy dread,
> For he on honey-dew hath fed,
> And drunk the milk of Paradise.[1]

> Hadn't she fairly got into the labyrinth with him? — wasn't she indeed in the very act of placing herself there, for him, at its centre and core, whence, on that definite orientation and by an instinct all her own, she might securely guide him out of it? She offered him thus, assuredly, a kind of support that was not to have been imagined in advance, and that, moreover required — ah most truly! — some close looking at before it could be believed in and pronounced void of treachery.[2]

The labyrinth, symbolically representing the space of the self dissolving away from the space of the real world, is the landscape of the gothic novel. The story of the journey in its dark and endless pathways is permitted utterance by the magic circle of the demonic teller. The wandering Jew, the mariner, the branded and exiled Cain "cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand,"[3] as typical characters in the hands of the romantic artist, provide terms for defining a profound psychology of human behaviour in intolerable conditions. From Byron's *Childe Harold* to Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*, from Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* to Melville's *Moby-Dick*, the wanderer weaves a circle of fiction into which he entices his victim from the realities of commonsense life, and in which he delivers himself of the compulsions of his experience. Philosophically considered, the gothic story casts a shadow over the clarity of objects uncovered in the "objective" perceptions of empiricism, and exposes the darkness of the labyrinth situated between the ego's totalitarian seizure of the world in idealism and the ego's own neutralization in the crude objectivities of sense philosophy.

In the gothic tale, the mode of address, what the new critics would have called tone, and what we, with more sophistication have come to see as the proposed yet secret intent of the author, acts as a kind of epistemological fulcrum whereby a strictly dualistic world of self-balancing moments discloses itself. Actual oppression dissolves the boundaries between inside and outside.

The self in a protective gesture, internalizes social taboo as the eternal (because incapable of dissolution from outside) labyrinth of guilt, anxiety and neurosis. Outer dissolves into inner across the threshold of consciousness in never-ending ambiguity. In empiricism the self is obliterated in a consensus of the natural, in idealism by the complete absorption of the natural world into its vision.

It is, however, the extent to which the utterance (literally "outering") of the author is not a tautology enacted between description and the world that the secret inner meaning of the process of "squaring the circle" comes to light. The romantics asked themselves the question whether or not it was possible that utterance itself might be a way of turning oppression experienced as anxiety into a means of partial freedom from interiorized compulsions.

For speech itself is a magical attempt to seize the world. The romantic author dares us to enter his world. His tale simultaneously hides and reveals. It swings between a desire to imprison, which is always the intention of confession, and a genuine offering of freedom through the gift of new insight. Typically the gothic tale offers the dangerous amalgam of confession as instruction. The result is a kind of narrative cypher. In the more complex gothic stories this process is ironically incorporated into the narrative design itself. When Captain Walton, in the most famous of all gothic tales, writes to his sister of the "halo" around the head of Frankenstein "within whose circle no grief or folly ventures,"[4] the assertion, in the resultant irony which the tale itself exposes, reveals a series of discontinuities between author and narrator, and between teller and tale. Here there is absolutely a discontinuity between what is perceived and what is uttered. In the silence between them is a strange space where the "intimate" relation of Walton and Frankenstein is translated into the "private world" of brother and sister.

A brief examination of the introduction to *Frankenstein* (1818) will help to assess the potentialities of the terms of address in preparation for examining Hawthorne's tale, and help to define terms of criticism more rigorously.[5] The gothic tale primarily concerns itself with "family" conflicts. Its accompanying archetypal narrative exposes the dark threat of the *ménage à trois* to the necessity of the permanent couple. Hannah Arendt's definition of the "social" world as against the "private" and "public" world of the political domain helps us to make these "psychological" truths more political.[6] The gothic landscape, the landscape of the labyrinth, is a terrain which exposes the contradictions of normal, *social*, life where private love and public action are equally denied.

Among many other things Mary Shelley's tale shows private and public values dissolved in a labyrinthine world where communication ceases in the obliteration of the distinction between them.[7] It is the world of the voyeur, of dreams of revenge, of paralysing guilt, of the invasion of ambition into private life, of the intrusion of the family's demands into a creativity which, always rising above necessity should be, but which cannot be, placed at the public

service. The social world is the personal experience of *necessities* dictated by economic stricture. The greatest gothic tales reval this world. They do not *express* it. The work of art, as opposed to the cry of the neurotic ("where there is a work of art there is no madness"[8]) announces the deliverance of the artist from social madness. Nowhere is this truer than in the gothic tale. The tale itself is a kind of continually shifting boundary, a rhythm of definition, poised between the public nihilism of materialistic objectivity and the private nihilism of idealism. Between seeing and utterance lies the *work* of the artist pushing madness to its limits. Frankenstein, the madman, himself stands on the boundary between reason and unreason. The temptations of the artist are exposed in the fact that the terms of the story show him a madman merely in the disguise of an artist or scientist. Walton is very ambiguously "right" to describe him to his sister as one "gifted with a penetration into the causes of things, unequalled by clearness and precision . . . a facility of expression and voice whose varied intonations are soul-subduing music."[9] Between the "penetrating gaze" and "facility of expression and voice", between the gifts of empirical clarity and intuitive utterance with its power to "subdue" lies an epistemological field with profound psychological and political implications.

The epistemological space between sight and speech with its potential for creation and destruction, is a political space where men who are equal might interact. Where equality is absent, as in the strictly social domain, where speech and vision are tied to necessity, the most basic of distinctions are blurred. In a philosophical mood at the end of *The Scarlet Letter* Hawthorne, almost unconsciously perhaps, reflects on the impotence of meaning in such circumstances: "It is a curious subject of observation and inquiry, [that is, sight and speech] whether hatred and love be not the same thing at bottom."[10] Hawthorne's novel is an attempt to restore the distinction, but not in the terms offered by philosophy. For the meanings lie deeper, in a secret narrative which lies precisely between vision and speech. Frankenstein's preparatory speech gives some clues:

> Prepare to hear of occurrences which are usually deemed marvelous. Were we among the tamer scenes of nature, I might fear to encounter your unbelief, perhaps your ridicule; but many things will appear possible in these wild and mysterious regions, which would provoke the laughter of those unacquainted with the ever-varied powers of nature: — nor can I doubt but that my tale conveys in its series internal evidence of the truth of events of which it is composed.[11]

Secret truth is revealed to be internal to a process (series) of finite and particular results (events). Such a declaration gives us an idealist proposition couched in empiricist terms and presented as a dramatic interaction between teller and listener. The very activity mirrors a process which the tale itself taboos. The ironies are obvious. The reader investigates the secret process of the tale only to find that his investigation is already accounted for in a series of analogies and fictional devices. The narrator's assertion that he is acting in our moral interests

and kindling our love of the marvelous arouses the suspicion that just the reverse is happening. That is to say, our love of the marvelous is being turned into the aesthetic frisson of vicarious emotional response and moral stricture itself is being turned into a monomaniac vision. The opportunities for vampiric invasion and enlightenment seem about equal in the "socialized" eroticism of this teacher–pupil relation. It is Captain Walton's sister who, in a romantic convention which mirrored actual social fact,[12] combines that pure "fraternal" disinterest of a confidant with socially approved and guarded incestuous intensity. Walton writes to woo his sister with the tale:

> This manuscript will doubtless afford you the greatest pleasure; but to me, who know him and who hear it from his own lips — with what interest and sympathy shall I read it in some future day! Even now, as I commence my task, his full-toned voice swells in my ears; his lustrous eyes dwell on me with all their melancholy sweetness; I see his thin hand raised in animation, while the lineaments of his face are irradiated by the soul within. Strange and harrowing must be his story; frightful the storm which embraced the gallant vessel on its course, and wrecked it — thus![13]

Of supreme importance for Hawthorne's own tale will be that dislocation between manuscript and voice. There will be a more American emphasis on the ambiguous correspondence between voice and the silent speech of the written word. But here already are many of the problems which were to occupy Hawthorne also. The space between sight and utterance is shown to have significance in a landscape of inner epistemological process. Here many traditional oppositions dissolve their normal boundaries. Secret relations are hinted at between the dynamics of creativity and the politico-cultural implications of what is *said* to be *seen;* between the new love of those most Keatsian "lustrous eyes" and brute requirements of time itself;[14] between "normal" and homosexual love,[15] and between the contradictory evidences of the senses. The eye and skinny hand of the mariner, together with the "lineaments of his face irradiated by the soul within" compel our attention as the body itself is contorted with the weight of repressed desire.

The story which follows Mary Shelley's epistolatory introduction is the most famous of all gothic tales, describing as it does the failure of the Promethean vision in then current revolutionary philosophy. Implicit also is the failure of the bourgeois revolution in France, of Jacobin natural virtue and of scientific disinterest overthrown in terror (The Terror). In the private domain it depicts the inevitable failure of sexual peace in the dawn of thinking about how women might extend their roles from the social to the public realm, and thus counteract that slow movement from the *polis* to the *societas* which needed the totalitarian atmosphere of the twentieth century in which fully to develop.

If *Frankenstein* is the most brilliant exposition of the English gothic tale, *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), much more complex and far more highly artistically

developed, is the most brilliant American foray into the genre. Hawthorne's own introduction is most famous perhaps for its definition of "romance", the fictional space of which is shown to be charted by the illusions of moon-light (the enchantment of empirical clarity) and fire (the blind claims of the heart's intuition). It recalls Coleridge's poem "Frost at Midnight" where similar images link a quietness of isolation inside the family circle (and in which the past may be dreamt about) with a foretaste of greater freedom for the sleeping child in a future which poetic imagination can only prophesy.[16] Like Walton's own tale, the poem offers us "a point of view to the imagination for the delineating of human passions more comprehensive and commanding than any which the ordinary relations of existing events can yield."[17]

The American author is, however, more intimate with us. The passionate, publically articulate revolutionary gestures of the Shelleyan circle have given way to sly dissent from bourgeois, transcendentalist and utiopian visions. Free love, atheism and revolution is replaced in Victorian New England with social fraternity (the eternal Americal picnic), a vaguely secularized Unitarianism, and communal living which, as Hawthorne showed in *The Blithedale Romance*, destroyed the integrity of women and competed directly with local markets for the sale and purchase of produce.[18]

In Hawthorne's own preface, the authorial voice declares itself as an "I" which again conceals as much as it reveals, betokening, perhaps, as well as the usual gothic ambiguities, a nervousness with a public hostile in its indifference to native literature. Hawthorne's "search for intimacy", in the words of recent critics,[19] is not as they half seem to suppose, a psychological quest, a permanent character trait which bears the whole referential weight of their structuralist abstractions, but a desperate reflex in a world in which "intimacy" and "society" have replaced the political domain of "privacy" and "public praxis". Hawthorne knew that "intimacy" was the last refuge of one who had lost faith in public speech. If anything Hawthorne's novels can be seen as a gradually lessening effort to deny intimacy as anything other than psychosis. It is political failure which reasserts the connection between survival and intimacy. After his own dismissal from public office Hawthorne depicts himself "careering through the *public prints*, in my decapitated state like Irving's Headless Horseman; ghastly and grim, and longing to be buried."[20] Between the "public print" and the defiant resumption of role as "literary man", between "character" as publically spoken and privately defined, lies the guillotine of the interpretive gaze, a metaphor as applicable to heads as paper in the bureaucratic world of American politics. It is the world of the letter at variance with the spirit, the literary man at variance with public newsprint. The only utterance permitted the politically dead is a silent manuscript in a public void.

There is, indeed, the smell of the guillotine in the air, and the gloom of what Hawthorne describes as "hardly accomplished revolution". (43) The inti-

mate revelations of autobiography, that truly American art, are distanced, in Hawthorne's rich irony, as "THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS OF A DECAPITATED SURVEYOR." (43) In an ancient mythical tradition the "speaking head" propounds a riddle of the past, present and future[21] The riddle is the cypher, the clue in the labyrinth to be followed on the basis of having made the pact with the dead inside the circle.

The author's decapitated head figuratively presides over the split self of the schizophrenic. The aim as Norman O. Brown points out is to be "self-sufficient".[22] Like the nation itself originally, the literary man declares his own, a second, independence. The pattern and consequences of the "revolt" are "social" with an appropriate symbolism: "The self is formed like a nation, but a declaration of independence, a split from mother or the mother country and a split into both mother and child, so as to be self-sufficient."[23] Hester and Pearl will articulate the problems of being one's own author, and of fantasy revolt in the name of the letter. For the vernacular of protestant literalism articulates the nationalist revolution.[24] D. H. Lawrence saw Hawthorne's mother and child as a subversive challenge to male independence,[25] without seeing that Hawthorne depicts her "social benevolence", at least in part, as the miserable result of a broken heart. The two outrages reflect and sustain each other: the self-sufficiency of the "head" and the self-sufficiency of the "heart". The author and his book, the mother and her child float midway between the "alternatives" representing a very ambiguous challenge to the status quo.

At a deeper level, however, the prologue to the fiction pushes us towards the threshold of the tale. We are already caught. Our gaze is directed. The hint of the exposure of inner secrets is as much a ploy as a promise: "Strange and harrowing must be his story, frightful the storm which embraced the gallant vessel on its course and wrecked it — thus !"[26] The silence between the pointing to the threshold of the story, between the upraised finger, and the utterance itself indicates a radical dislocation between the description of the creative threshold and the created object. It is here that the leap in the dark occurs over an unknowable space in which the new emerges. The silence itself declares that the causes of the fiction have nothing to do with the fiction itself, that the "child" has nothing to do with its "author", that social order is dissolved in the accomplishments of desire, and that madness itself is defeated in art. Society, which declares all secrets be known, and that the State itself exists in its service, is challenged. The ancient mariner plucks the guest from the wedding feast, and Frankenstein's monster murders the bride on her wedding night. In *The Scarlet Letter*, revenge is taken on a publically undeclared consummation which is defiant in its fruits and unwilling to disclose its "authors".

The book, the tale, the manuscript is, then, an attempt to seize the world. The author poses ironically as the self-sufficient begetter of himself. In romantic terms his strengths may "echo" the power of God.[27] In post-Puritan America,

the legacy of the word and the letter is strongly emphasized. Puritan literalism was a revolutionary concept which obliterated the "tradition" of the Church. Like all revolutionary gestures it simplified as it transformed, leaving, in this instance, a yawning void between the richness of hieroglyphic thinking and the linearity of prosaic logic: "The literal sense of Scripture alone is the whole essence of faith and of Christian theology. Sola fide, sola litera: faith is faith in the letter."[28]

"Faith in the letter" is shown by Hawthorne, however, to be an incomplete guide to human perception and judgement. It may corrupt true utterance. When Dimmesdale prepares for his election sermon, Hawthorne describes his manuscript as a "vast, immeasurable tract of written space" (225), a highly compressed metaphor to describe the diseased vision of one who has betrayed the trust of the people with a vision of a false empire and whose *voice* accompanies the "*script*ure" like a "foul organ-pipe". (225). In Dimmesdale the letter and the spirit have ceased to have true correspondence, and, indeed it is precisely the space between them that occupies every character in the book, not excluding the crowd itself, who, like a Greek chorus, witnesses events with a whole range of responses from speech to silent gaze.

Hawthorne's ambiguous attack on literalism is also a way of selfconsciously reflecting on the very mode by which he delivers his own content. In fact he gives us alternating choices between two ways of representing the world; the literal and the symbolic. At times the symbol, or hieroglyph dissolves the cold literalism of the Puritan letter. By embroidering the letter Hester attempts symbolically to reinvent meaning, to subvert the rigid determinisms of the "A" whose accompanying doggerel in the *New England Primer* asserted the ahistorical necessity of original sin: "In Adam's Fall/We sinned All". At other times her attempts to become her own author, to claim the public language as absolutely her own, leads her to solipsistic pride. Carlyle reminds us that "In symbol there is concealment and yet revelation: here therefore by Silence and Speech acting together, comes a double significance."[29] Hester's attitude to symbolism is Puritan. To explain this paradox we need only recall that she appropriates *herself* as a symbol. She makes herself into "madonna and child", thus committing the sin of self-sufficiency at the silent unconscious level as well as insisting on the claims of natural affection before the Puritanical gaze of the crowd. If the price of literalism is the determinism of rigid law, the price of symbolism is that "concealment and revelation" may lead to a moral labyrinth of the self in which truly political communication has ceased. Nonetheless the space between silence and speech offers potential freedoms. In inexplicitness itself there is more room for human sympathy than in prosaic literalness.

Prose has always been associated with the law. Chaytor tells how French prose, for example, developed with vernacular translations of the Bible, and the *Corpus Juris* and *Codex of Justinian*. The nationalist seizure of the word and

the law increased theological controversy as such and, by implication, also developed commentary as such. Prose aligned itself with "scientific fact" and poetry with "fancy": "it became clear that a family chronicle, written in verse, would vastly gain, in authority and dignity, if it were rewritten in prose; it would, in fact, become real history."[30] In the illusions of prose therefore the family situates itself in history, turning a private concern into a social one. Hester and, by implication Hawthorne himself, are poets in a prosaic world. The form of Hawthorne's "romance", half-way between poetry and prose, and half-way between the real world and a dream world, a world of impure symbolism and impure literalism, investigates the epistemology of the novel's claim to represent reality at the same time as it investigates "society's" claim to assert its reality over a strictly political and a strictly private world. In the very mode by which the fiction is delivered Hawthorne challenges the traditional right of the novel to replace the *polis* with the *societas*.

The social world of the novel produced characters, however, who negatively confirmed its power, or rather, in the best novels, who did "not quite" confirm its power. Lowenthal recounts how in the parallel development of printing and prose romance new "characters" developed. They were people who looked at "society" from the outside, and who displayed "highly individual characteristics." There was a "not quite tautology" between their removal from society and their social failure. The development of what Lowenthal calls marginal types (a phrase from printing if ever there was one) included the mad, the outcast, the beggar, petty crooks and gypsies, and, above all, women: "Not accidently does Cervantes use Dulcinea as a symbol of human creativity."[31]

In Hawthorne's tale, the pen of the author, and the needle of Hester invade the "tautological" reality of "individual-and-society" (a phrase so carelessly used by critics) and expose the quality of social reality in an attempt to regain "political" identities. For these is also a threat in the silence of the text itself: a double opportunity for vampirism and enlightenment. One may recall St. Augustine's observation of St. Ambrose who "when he was reading his *eye* glided over the pages and his heart searched out the meaning but his voice and tongue were at rest." St. Augustine's conjectures show some nervousness: "but with whatever intent soever he did it, certainly in such a man it was good."[32]

The dislocation between private understanding (the heart) and public evidence (the eye) are like infinitely receeding axes of a grid between which the "plot" of utterance is developed. Between seeing and utterance lie a number of interlinked issues. There are the contradictions inherent in "society's" mediation of public and private needs. There is the fact that the authorial tone already compromises our response to those contradictions in order to upset the self-balancing dualisms of the social tautology; the endlessly frustrated dream of individual self-sufficiency and of a vicariously stable social order. The private

inner space and the public outer space are shown to be imperfect negative reflections of each other. In the space between seeing and uttering Hawthorne offers a covert narrative in which the epistemology of creative idealism untidily reflects the world traditionally offered to it in opposition; the world of empiricist order. Cypher or metaphor illumines the darkened path of linear fatalism. The author's presence as a living cypher reveals and conceals itself, offering an approach to the content of the book itself, as Hester's "A" ambiguously offers a comment to the strict necessities of the linear plot of social order. In its very inexplicitness and untidiness the interaction of social tautological perspective and symbol inserts author and characters into their different publics. The gesture is an attempt to recover a more private and a more public knowledge in a social world.

As for Melville's black preacher the "text was about the blackness of darkness;"[33] a "not quite" tautology which implied that the content of darkness might be known in its quality and thereby delimit its logical absoluteness. By exposing the quality of the process between seeing and utterance in order to undermine the text of philosophical logic, Hawthorne is able to show that "internal evidence of the truth of events" occurs between what McLuhan calls the "hedonistic calculus" of the State's gaze,[34] and the inner vision of enforced intimacy.

The images of the *circle* (or *sphere*) and the *labyrinth* (or *maze*) take us quickly into some of the deeper levels of Hawthorne's masterpiece. In the process between the apparent contraries of circle and labyrinth Hawthorne offers us a fiction which describes the politics of the silence between what is seen and what is said. The prevalence of these images[35] indicates two of the major themes of the work; the relation of the "alternative" world of witchcraft to "normal" social life and the psychological implications of the myth of heroic wandering.

In witchcraft the magic circle is the condition of utterance itself. The utterance is, however, the speech of the dead which begins the wandering of the hero. Historically, the circle becomes important in witchcraft in sixteenth-century meditations on the *Odyssey:* "we must believe that all the necromancy practised by Odysseus had its origin in the circle."[36] It was thought that the pit Odysseus dug in which to pour the libations to the dead was shaped like a circle, a circle in which the dead might speak. Surely enough, in the introduction to *The Scarlet Letter,* Hawthorne first uses the image of the circle to articulate the means whereby the "dead" author re-unites with the world in the silent utterance of the printed page: "as if the printed book, thrown at large on the wide world, were certain to find out the divided segment of the writer's own nature, and complete his *circle* of existence by bringing him into communion with it." (3—4)

The circle simultaneously isolates the author. Stepping aside "out of the narrow *circle* in which his claims are recognized", he finds "how utterly devoid

of significance, beyond that *circle*, is all that he achieves, and all he aims at." (27) The book itself then exists as a cypher, a silent inexplicit language, between the socialized self and a potentially political self, the self that has recaptured its public.

For Hawthorne the sacred circle is the boundary of the dream world into which he withdraws to redefine the relations between private and public spheres. It is also a potentially monomaniac self-enclosure which is "socially" aggressive. Everyone in *The Scarlet Letter* seems outside trying to get in, or inside trying to get out. Everywhere the circle creates a precarious boundary between freedom and isolation. Furthermore every character is involved in this process. Hester's cottage is "shut out from that *sphere* of social activity which already marked the habits of the emmigrants." (81) Hester herself is banished, "and as much alone as if she inhabited another *sphere*, or communicated with the common nature by other organs and senses than the rest of human kind." (84) Speech and vision, the senses common to all, are deprived of their ability to authenticate common-sense reality. Hester's child, Pearl, who visually describes the silence of secret adultery, is encompassed by circles of contradictory value. As the child of nature she has around her "an absolute *circle* of radiance," (90) but only at the price of a destiny "that had drawn an inviolable *circle* round about her." (93)

The circle both isolates and promises ambiguous escape. For Chillingworth there is a "*circle* of ominous shadow moving along with his deformity." (175) Pearl gazes into the water, "seeking a passage for herself into its *sphere* of impalpable earth and unattainable sky." (177) But against these visual separations are also the invisible circles of touch. As the hands of Hester and Dimmesdale meet, they *feel* themselves "inhabitants of the same *sphere*." (190) With touch comes that prophetic freedom which suspends time in the magic circle. As Hester unbinds her hair she experiences a "happiness before unknown, within the magic *circle* of this hour." (202)

Ranged against that happiness however, is the domain of necessity, the claims of family life. Hawthorne's unholy family exposes the tensions of social living in mutually repelling circles. The child in the forest "strays out of her *sphere*," in which she and her mother live together, " . . . another inmate had been admitted within the *circle* of the mother's feelings." (208) Hester herself, by being a mother outside society, incurs the wrath of the public gaze. Under their eyes she stands in a "small vacant area — a sort of magic *circle*," which Hawthorne describes as "a forcible type of moral solitude." (234)

The circle calls up the labyrinth. The labyrinth itself becomes for the romantics a psychological landscape of inner wandering. Hester wanders in what Hawthorne calls the "dark *labyrinth* of mind," (166) of which the pathless forest is the symbolic correlative. Dimmesdale, cut off from society by his inner secret, is continually in a "maze". Indeed, one of the basic rhythms of psycho-

logical description in *The Scarlet Letter* is that of endlessly frustrated gestures of opening pathways. As with the image of the circle, all the characters are involved. Hester says to Chillingworth, after having resigned responsibility for what he might do to Dimmesdale: "Do with him as thou wilt! . . . There is no path to guide us out of this dismal *maze!*" (73) Hester and Chillingworth wander together in a "gloomy *maze* of evil." (174) Even Pearl pursues a "zig-zag course across the market place," (245) communicating the message which is to close all paths to Hester and Dimmesdale, from, inevitably, the mariner, who, from the medieval ship of fools — as Foucault so intensely describes it,[37] to Coleridge's great poem, has mediated society's madnesses in the "pathless" ocean. What Pearl conveys to Hester from the mariner is a message of "inevitable doom — at the moment when a passage seemed to open for the minister and herself out of their *labyrinth* of misery — showed itself, with an unrelenting smile, right in the midst of their path." (245)

In Hawthorne's fiction, then, the circle and the labyrinth become epistemological metaphors for describing the dance of life performed under the conditions of the politically enforced balance of intimacy-and-society. Death and guilt inform the stasis of what we have symbolically described as the endless task of squaring the circle. At Versailles and Hampton Court, kings constructed labyrinths to play games with their subjects. At Chartres the penitent crawled along a labyrinth marked in front of the high altar, struggling to obtain unattainable earthly grace. In contemporary laboratories behavioural scientists run rats along similar pathways. The way out of the maze is promised in return for being a hero. It is an endlessly receding ideal, a propaganda of control.

Under the terms of Puritan psychology, the internalizing of public law as personal taboo creates out of the body a symbolic intestinal space in which the psyche is doomed to wander eternally. Self is made into space and person. In romantic ideology these are the terms of solipsism; the dark pathway of the self. The dark pathway is the experience of the individual denied the public gaze. In Hawthorne's fiction, actual speech, protected by the circle, and silent speech protected by cypher (the attempt to re-invent the labyrinth by turning its own terms against it) becomes an attempt to break down the absolute tautology of self-and-society, that either-or world of human oppressors in which the witch, that "victim of society's constant pressure towards intellectual conformity,"[38] negatively reinforces static social dualism.

The circle permits the dead to speak at the price of the curse of wandering in the labyrinth. The labyrinth becomes the oppressive landscape of utterance denied. It defines the space of heroic and diabolic spectacle offered as vicarious public experience and vicarious inner wandering. Utterance and vision in a world so defined can but partially reflect each others' truth. The incomplete revelations of encircled intimate speech and the disguise of speech and silence

in cypher articulate Hawthorne's dark world of "hardly accomplished revolution."

It has not been sufficiently noticed that the stately progress of the book's major pictorial images is rhythmically interrupted by a play of reticent silence between an act of seeing and an act of speech. The very boundaries between the chapters offer a significant silence between seeing and utterance.[39]

A few examples only must suffice. At the end of the chapter, *The Procession*, Hester stands in the "magic circle of ignominy"[40] held in the "bodily eyes" of a far-flung rural populace, with sailors thrusting their "desperado looking faces" into "the ring", Indians "fastening their snake-black eyes on Hester's bosom"[41] and the more familiar town crowd contemplating her with "their cool well-acquainted gaze". There is a cinematic cut to the minister "looking down from the sacred pulpit upon an audience whose inmost spirits had yielded to his control." Here is an extraordinarily complex fictional *seeing*. Hester, turned into spectacle by the public gaze, is linked with that same public under the control of Dimmesdale in the fact that the seeing between the lovers is witheld from the public itself. For the authorial gaze providing irony for the reader: "the same scorching stigma was on them both!" The chapter ends like a Victorian *tableau vivant*, silent, deprived of movement, representing life as a frozen visual arrangement.

The next chapter, *The Revelation of the Scarlet Letter*, begins: "The eloquent voice on which the souls of the listening audience had been borne aloft as on the swelling waves of the sea, at length came to a pause."[42] In the space between the chapters spectacle translates into sound. The rhythmic movement of the prose pauses in double silence after Dimmesdale's speech dies away. It is followed by a "murmur and half-hushed tumult" from the crowd, who overborne, rush through the doors of the church to the market place where they "break into speech". "His hearers could not rest until they had told one another of what each knew better than he could tell or heard." The pauses and the boundaries between spectacle and speech are instinct with irony. In reticent and inexplicit silence between spectacle and speech are exposed the moral blindness of a society, secret links between market place and church, public hypocrisies and cruelties and the inner psychology of vicarious action. The crowd is as transfixed as Melville's sea-gazers at the beginning of *Moby Dick*.[43] "The swelling waves of the sea" of Dimmesdale's speech is no mere romantic cliché. The image articulates the silent anxiety of the congregation as they listen to the election sermon. Dimmesdale's "vast immeasurable tract of written space" (225) evokes a response like the effect of the sea. In terms of romantic image the one cannot be an escape from the other. It can only provide, as here, the irony of impure tautology. Each member of the crowd becomes his own ancient mariner, and his own transfixed listener, a democratization of the damned,

speaking what is beyond speech to articulate the deep psychology of social contradiction.

Perhaps the most striking example of significant silence between speech and seeing occurs at the point where the "magic circle of this hour" (202) becomes briefly possible, between *The Pastor and His Parishioner* and *The Flood of Sunshine*. Hester tells Dimmesdale that he must leave the Puritan community:

> "Alone Hester !"
> "Thou shalt not go alone !" answered she, in a deep whisper.
> "Then, all was *spoken* !"

The next chapter begins:

> Arthur Dimmesdale gazed into Hester's face with a *look* in which hope and joy shone out, indeed, but with fear betwixt them, and a kind of horror at her boldness, who had *spoken* what he *vaguely hinted* at, but *dared not speak*. (198—9)

The space between utterance and gaze conceals as much as it reveals. Speech and looking tremble but momentarily and reticently together. In the phrase "all was spoken" is the suggestion that, although the limit of speech has been reached, depths of unrealized hope and anxiety, perhaps the very possibility of acting publically, remain inevitably unsounded. But speech, in this moment, in its radical correspondence with the gaze of the lovers, counters secretly the dehumanizing prurience of doctor, priest and judge. Just as Odysseus drew the circle to let the dead speak, so figuratively does the author here. The two dead souls communicate across a threshold of magic silence.

But as we have seen in the previous quotation from Carlyle, as well as significant silence, there is the half-silence of cypher. Hester's "A" centres the gaze of the crowd. It turns her body into a fetish. The breast becomes substituted for the whole body, permitting Hester an identity only as a lawless mother: "a thousand unrelenting eyes, all fastened upon her, and concentrate at her bosom." (57) The description intimates that the isolation of the breast is parallel with the isolation of the head in the pillory, and that the isolation of the head in the pillory is parallel with the guillotine "in the promotion of good citizenship." (55) The hanging of the letter on the penitent was the one thing New England added to the 1604 Jacobean witchcraft statute. Hester has infringed the Victorian ideal of sacred motherhood which underlay the official sexual attitudes. Hester's capacity for erotic life is reduced to mere reproduction. The sinning mother challenged every preconception of sexuality in the domain of necessity. The crowd's eyes are prurient. By placing the Puritan letter on the sacred mother's breast Hawthorne seems to say that these "alternative" terms for religious social order have an equal potential for alienation and cruelty.[44]

In Pearl, however, we have not the enforced cypher of the relation between criminal and public, but a living cypher. Her very clothes, in Carlylean

terms, define her relation to society and her mother's defiance of it. But between the child and the mother, as between author and book, there must be a profound discontinuity. The child cannot reaffirm the mother's fantasies. It is yet another instance of the rhythm of impure tautology in the book. Pearl is herself a cypher to be decoded, and not exactly in the terms Hester permits. From the authorial point of view she is inserted between the gaze of Hester and the minister as a permanent description of their bond. But as well as being seen she also sees, and silently speaks:

> Now she fixed her bright, wild eyes on her mother, now on the minister, and now included them both in the same glance; as if to detect and explain to herself the relation which they bore to one another. For some unaccountable reason, as Arthur Dimmesdale felt the child's eyes upon himself, his hand — with that gesture so habitual as to have become involuntary — stole over his heart. At length, assuming a singular air of authority, Pearl stretched out her hand, with the small forefinger extended, and pointing evidently towards her mother's breast. And beneath, in the mirror of the brook, there was the flower-girdled and sunny image of little Pearl, pointing her small forefinger too.

The eye and the forefinger take us back to the ancient mariner. The eye searches out the heart. The confirmation of her gesture in the water (Pearl is constantly water gazing) introduces authorial perspective as if the water were the author's own mirror, or magic circle, and adds further depth to the multiplicity of criss-crossing gazes. In witchcraft water-gazing was a device to recover stolen goods.[45] Pearl is the incarnation of stolen pleasure. But the child's eye is also an evil eye. Dimmesdale hides his heart in what is paradoxically a gesture of sincerity, and his hand serves the same function as Hester's letter. Pearl, too, therefore, is an embodiment of dark necessity, and as such, hers is also an evil eye. Is not her right to judge also questioned? Does not her gaze repeat the fetishism of the crowd? She can only be induced to come back into the "circle" of her mother when the letter is restored. It is under the eye of the child that Hester binds back her hair.

Where there is a bond of two there is always an undeclared three. Hawthorne's intensely dualistic style gives us a world always moving towards synthesis but staying just this side of it. In such a system everyone is a seeing eye, a cypher, and armed and protected by the circle. The *ménage à trois* reflects incapacity for courage and incapacity for cruelty. The "socially" approved couple finds its stability in the repressiveness of the propaganda of necessity. In Hawthorne's tale this extends beyond the bond between men and women. The congregation approve, in default of marriage, Dimmesdale and Chillingworth setting up house together. The professional couple, however, like the social couple, experience certain tension: the leech and his patient balance the pastor and his parishioner.

Chillingworth's gaze which would penetrate Dimmesdale's heart is also that of a witch. He haunts graves, knows the potency of herbs, secretly creates disease, and manipulates human passion. The inquisitors who wrote (1486—7)

the *Malleus Maleficarum* employed "natural disease to establish the reality of demonically induced sickness."[46] Given the physico-spiritual correspondences of the theocracy Dimmesdale is particularly prone. As inquisitor Chillingworth is searching for the confession that will tautologically confirm the psychological expectations of his gaze. The Leech is out for blood.

In sixteenth and seventeenth century philosophico-physiological theory, blood and sight had a peculiar relation in psychology. Love was described as a reciprocal mingling of the blood in the projection of spirits living in the blood through beams transmitted from the eye. The most famous example in literature of this concept is, of course, Donne's "The Ecstasie." The animal spirits were means of overcoming the absolute dualism of mind and body in Cartesian speculation. Hawthorne is very dependent upon these richly suggestive seventeenth-century terms. The gaze of the investigator, the gaze of hatred rather than love, becomes in these terms literally vampiric. Yet Dimmesdale refuses to become "the ideal and perfect correlative", in Foucault's words, of the presient and divining doctor who increasingly takes on the the power of the thaumaturge; "the authority he has borrowed from order, morality, and the family now seems to derive from himself."[47]

The two most famous moments in the book of the revelations of hatred and love may be taken to illustrate Hawthorne's treament of the deep psychology of society's "natural" dualisms whose incomplete tautologies depend on the mystification of connection between sight and speech, and between circle and labyrinth. The first is where Chillingworth penetrates Dimmesdale's own protective circle:

> The physician advanced directly in front of his patient, laid his hand on his bosom, and thrust aside the vestment, that, hitherto, had always covered it even from the professional eye.
> Then, indeed, Mr. Dimmesdale shuddered, and slightly stirred.
> After a brief pause, the physician turned away.
> But with what a wild look of wonder, joy, and horror ! With what a ghastly rapture, as it were, too mighty to be expressed only by the eye and features, and therefore bursting forth through the whole ugliness of his figure, and making itself even riotously manifest by the extravagant gestures with which he threw up his arms towards the ceiling, and stamped his foot upon the floor ! Had a man seen old Roger Chilingworth, at that moment of his ecstasy, he would have had need to ask how Satan comports himself, when a precious human soul is lost to heaven, and won into his kingdom.
> But what distinguished the physician's ecstasy from Satan's was the trait of wonder in it. (138)

The tearing of the veil, the vestment, the Carlylean terms of social order, is an act of possession by Chillingworth. The *eye* has overreached itself; the black blood transfusion distorts the body in orgasmic convulsion. At this moment Chillingworth's art is abolished in madness. The revelation is not Foucault's ideal and perfect correlative. There is a dislocation between vampiric intent and the discovery of wonder. Chillingworth has penetrated the secret circle of the damned. His ensuing revenge becomes a parody of heroic quest in the labyrinth.

In the vampiric coupling is also exposed the immorality of the social expectation of revenge, and the immorality of relations between men based on different styles of possession of the woman. Both men are victims of society's refusal to acknowledge the dissolving changes of passion in a world where the symbolic mother and child is the symbol of the socializing of history. To deny the madness of the couple in its true changes is to reinforce the couple socially with its cruelties of half-response, revenge, and, above all, the perpetually vicarious investigation of those who break its hypocritical laws.

In our second example, this time of the revelation of love, there is a different movement of the eye and blood. Hester voluntarily takes off her cap and lets down her hair:

> . . . down it fell upon her shoulders, dark and rich, with at once a shadow and a light in its abundance, and imparting the charm of softness to her features. There played around her mouth, and beamed out of her eyes, a radiant and tender smile, that seemed gushing from the very heart of womanhood. A crimson flush was glowing on her cheek, that had been so long pale. Her sex, her youth, and the whole richness of her beauty came back from what men call the irrecoverable past, and clustered themselves, with her maiden hope, and a happiness before unknown, within the magic circle of this hour. (202)

It is against this moment that we measure the dark necessity of the rest of the tale. In the magic circle there is silent speech; gushing from the *heart* through to the *mouth* and the *eyes*. And yet the sovereignty given to Hester in this moment is secretly damned. For this picture of Hester is but a portrait of head and shoulders, symbolizing the movement of blood from the heart, only in her face. The present, live woman is made into a representative of the "heart of womanhood," and must be, therefore, lost between the recovery of the past, the function in this moment of the magic circle, and a prophecy of the future. The moment does not alter the term: of which it is the reflex. The portrait of the radiant head in the wilderness is as much an image of revolution denied as a criticism of the appalling repressions of which it is the negative expression. The philosophy of the passionate moment is subtly criticized. Here is no Tolstoyan transcendence. There is no trace of redemption. In the structure of the fact that what we see is a *portrait*, a moment stolen from history, an exposure of essentialist soul in the depiction of the heart-in-the-head, Hawthorne is demonstrating a moment of incomplete revolution. There is a sense in which Hester, like Hawthorne, is a decapitated surveyor. The flush in Hester's face is a representative one and represents future freedom by recalling the socially tabooed past. Neil Harris reminds us that the old American portrait limner also designed "family crests, engraved calling cards and incised tombstones."[48] Thus he demonstrated the connections between portraiture and the family's social reality by devising the tokens of its relations (calling cards) and its vicarious desire for immortality (crests and engraved tombstones).

Hawthorne is brilliantly aware of the "social" implications of the portraitist's art. There is a price to be paid for the soul-like essentialism of the "heart of womanhood." Brown helps to explain its deep psychology. In the seventeenth century for William Harvey the blood is "the genital part whence the soul primarily results." In seventeenth-century psychology the fission which produces this abstract substance is ejaculation. Brown comments, "this discharge can be nothing else than the desire, in the sense of an autonomy, to cast off the organ under tension, a kind of self castration."[49] Thus Hawthorne's refusal to let this moment in the forest be a redeeming one depicts an honesty which lies in his conviction (complexly expressed in the paralleling of authorial concern with fictional event) that the flushed headless surveyor is but a negative image which primarily exposes the force of public damnation: "She had not known the weight until she felt the freedom." (202) Hawthorne refuses to immortalize Hester in his portrait, unlike the New England limner, because to do so would be to destroy the live woman. It would turn her into a social object, an icon of the *societas* with its death-like importation of necessity into the public arena. "Ejaculation", — the flush in Hester's head, and the utterance of the author are but partial successes in the attempt to marry profound feeling and insight with a responsive audience. It is once again an image of "hardly accomplished revolution." The true revolution remains but a dream. The true revolution of the blood, which was Harvey's great discovery, is the image of the dynamic pulse of real life. It is travestied in the symbolism of the blood offered to the dead in the witche's circle of which the eternal labyrinthine wandering is the result. To keep the terms of Hawthorne's symbolism, that movement of the blood must flow in a reunited body untrammeled by the gaze of the Puritans in the public square.[50]

Where bodies are not open to each other (and the minute overlapping and interweaving of images which the critics, in this most famous of American novels, have hardly begun to unravel, must reflect an obliqueness necessary to this kind of subject in mid-Victorian America), and where the blood does not circulate freely, where the "revolutions" are Emerson's "currents of the Universal Being,"[51] rather than Whitman's joyous marriage of the blood with the very freedom of the movement of the earth,[52] the revelation of the heart will enact a perpetual tragedy: what Hawthorne calls "triumphant ignominy" (257). Hawthorne deliberately links the final scene on the scaffold with the scene in the forest and with the scene of Chillingworth's discovery:

> With a compulsive motion, he tore away the ministerial band from before his breast. It was revealed! But it were irreverent to describe that revelation. For an instant, the gaze of the the horror-stricken multitude was concentered on the ghastly miracle; while the minister stood with a flush of triumph in his face, as one who, in the crisis of acutest pain, had won a victory. Then, down he sank upon the scaffold! Hester partly raised him, and supported his head against her bosom. Old Roger Chillingworth knelt down beside him, with a blank, dull countenance, out of which the life seemed to have departed. (255)

There is the same kind of wonder in the crowd's gaze as it looks directly towards the minister's heart as there was in Chillingworth's. The flush of triumph in Dimmesdale's face recalls Hester's in the forest. Private love and public action are reduced to the social terms of symbolic intimate moment and symbolic social sacrifice. The double western tradition of profane and sacred love (*Arthur* Dimmesdale is after all the Knight wandering in the Darkening Glade) are, however, ambiguously and negatively challenged. It is in the loveless gaze of the crowd that society emerges with its "naturalized" symbolism of crucifixion, pieta and Judas-like remorse which this scnene so obviously captures.[53] In such terms heart and head come together only in death, the lover is reduced to child-like impotence on the lap of the woman who should have been his mistress, both men of the *ménage à trois* are equally blinded, and the social vision of the self-sufficiency of mother and child is based on the state's deification of its pale lusts and vampiric hypocrisies, and its insistence that nature should define nurture. Love which demands its own rhythm and waywardness, true as opposed to labyrinthine wandering, is lost in the eternal truths of state necessity which insists on the equation of "mother and child" with "mother and the lover's corpse." It is under the aegis of this kind of symbolism that the magic moment (the circle) and the life of frustrated wandering (the labyrinth) articulate the psychology of the self in the terms of "social necessity."

Between vision and utterance Hawthorne, in the closing pages of the book, continues to maintain his silences. Traditionally the speech of the dying man promises vision. Danton mounts the guillotine to complete the supreme moment of his life. Sacrifice is always for the "next generation." Pearl kisses her father's *lips* to break the spell. Tears flow from her *eyes*, and are a "pledge that she would grow up amid human joy and sorrow, nor forever do battle with the world, but be a woman in it." (256) Lips and eyes sign this silent pledge. Pearl, to sustain for a moment in poetic play an imaginative response to Hawthorne's text, becomes the "pearls that were his eyes",[54] and Hawthorne plays with us as much as ever Ariel did with another shipwrecked crew and its parentless children in the New World. The ambiguous vision that Pearl represents at this moment defines that space between intention and act, act and consequences, seeing and utterance and supremely between what she has cost and what she is worth. Only in discontinuity between these concepts is there life.

The whole play of the book is summed up in Hester's last question to Dimmesdale: "Thou lookest far into eternity, with those bright dying eyes! Then *tell me* what *thou seest?*" (256) It is Dimmesdale, now in the full authority of having recaptured his public, who repudiates the question, crushing the justification of eternity and the potential pride in the magic moment of privileged insight. Dimmesdale's final word is *farewell*, absolute and concrete, symbolically denying mid-nineteenth-century America its Christian comforts.

But there is hope. In a most American impulse Hawthorne gives the last word to the people. Most significantly it is "not quite" a word:

> The multitude, silent till then, broke out in a strange, deep voice of awe and wonder, *which would not as yet find utterance*, save in this murmur that rolled so heavily after the departed spirit. (257)

The shock of recognition is the pre-condition, at least, of revolution. That "deep voice of awe and wonder" is the supremely American moment of the book. It shows the innocence and complicity of the American public in its capacity to be shocked, to be coerced by spectacles, and yet, perhaps, also a dawning recognition of its real self in its representatives.

It remains for the decapitated surveyor to rejoin the circle, rather like Fellini in the closing sequences of $8\frac{1}{2}$. Like the romantic poet he truly is Hawthorne pulls us back from faery land to the autobiographical level. As in Keats, time lapses: "ay, ages long ago | These lovers fled away into the storm."[55] The author feels the same imprint of the burden of his tale as the adulteress her secret crime and he would now "erase its deep print out of our own brain; where long meditation has fixed it in very undesirable distinctness." (259) The inner revelation of the tale is now unfolded. It is a prophecy that "new truth would be revealed, in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness." (263) But the terms of that revolution are the Coleridgean ones which link joy and imagination. Hester, gazing at the letter, knows it to be impossible for her. That "green light that lingered in the west"[56] for Coleridge has flickered out, as it was to for Fitzgerald, writing in the very tradition Hawthorne established, some seventy years later. The "wedding garment" and the "shroud", to keep Coleridge's terms, will be replaced in the child's garment Hester will send back to Europe. The condition of new birth is the past acknowledged and used, not ignored.

The image of that deep print of the past is not, in the end, a manuscript, but a tombstone with its dusky red-lit legend: "ON A FIELD, SABLE, THE LETTER, A, GULES." (264) The manuscript, Harold Innis reminds us, is a mode of communication for those empires interested in the domination of space, stone writing was for those interested in the domination of time.[57] Hawthorne has already exposed the psycho-pathology of those "vast written tracts of space" in a trusted representative of public order. By stamping the letter on stone Hawthorne calls the eternal American fantasy of endless space, and of endless beginning, back to history and to time.

But in the same image the mediating narrative voice aligns itself with Hester's own story. Hawthorne comes back to haunt, witch-like, the ancestral tomb, as Hester comes back to take up the letter. The story itself pushes back the limits of madness. In craft alone is "society's" equation of love and hate, under the conditions of need, exposed for what it is. It is in the "warmth" only of the light, not in the isolating logic of static contradiction that humanness is

to be found. If he began with Coleridge to help define "romance", and concludes with the Coleridgean equation of imagination and joy as the basis of craft and revolution, there is also here, in the book's last image, a dark hope that the coldness of history, linear time and the lover's revolutionary view of the world might mingle in the artist's craft. And surely there is an echo, picking up the Coleridgean terms of *Frost At Midnight* which Hawthorne used to define his own "romance", of Keats's own historical romance: "Full on this casement shone the wintry moon, / And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast."[58] It is through such a gothic casement that Hawthorne explores that silent space between the cold memory of social oppression and love, between the miracle of a new birth and the repressive hypocrisies of powerful men. The terms of the gothic story, like Keats's "panes of quaint device" or Coleridge's "miracle of rare device"[59] explore the possibilities of upsetting briefly the tautological dialectic of circle and labyrinth.

In a century which foreshadows our own Hawthorne describes the darkest of visions: the lost chances of freedom under, not a European-like imperialist state, but one which foreshadows the twentieth century in its totalitarian investigations. It is a state where even privacy is driven to the political impotence of mere intimacy with the self. The landscape revealed is one where the space between what is seen and what is uttered is mediated by political power and where deepest epistemological contemplation is shown to be determined by what men are permitted to speak. For author and characters the message is very clear. Liberty is of value only in the public space. As an inner value it is impotent against that gothic landscape whose labyrinthine passages spiral endlessly in darkness, full of whispering and peerings, like the voices and gazes of those who followed Hester's dim red light into the prison of "hardly accomplished revolution."

## NOTES

[1] Coleridge, S. T., "Kubla Khan" in *Poetical Works* (London: Oxford University Press, 1912), pp. 297—8.

[2] James, H., *The Golden Bowl, The Novels of Henry James*, New York Edition (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1909), XXIV, p. 187.

[3] Genesis, V, 2.

[4] Shelley, M. W., *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 29.

[5] This article is written partially in response to two recent American works on Hawthorne by two professors at the State University of New York at Buffalo: Kenneth Dauber, *Rediscovering Hawthorne* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977) and Edgar A. Dryden, *Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Poetics of Enchantment* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1977). The first relies on Barthes, Saussure and Brown among others to examine the problem of "intimacy" in Hawthorne's career. Dauber is interested in the problems of terms of address, and in attacking the established New Critical school. He provides an interesting commentary on the former though with the latter he skirts dangerously near to remystifying the text in a kind of very American approach of "radical empiricism" which has the effect of blurring his own position on the major issues of content in Hawthorne's novels and of an occasional arrogance of judgement

which seems unconnected with the complex theoretical schema — the typical disjunction of radical empiricism. Dryden's work relies more on the radical post-Freudian psychologists, which, while having greater sensitivity to the text, cannot quite play them into the argument. It is interesting that both authors give the palm to *The House of the Seven Gables*. With this judgement I radically disagree. The most "Hawthornian" of the novels is not necessarily the best. There seems still to be an unwillingness on the part of American critics to play *all* aspects of critical response together. It is in the interaction of political and psychological content in the different degrees of freedom permitted or seized in history that any author determines what he will do with inherited forms. Nonetheless no reader of Hawthorne can fail to be stimulated by these two books which are the liveliest and most ambitious we have seen for some time.

[6] I rely throughout this essay on Hannah Arendt's discussion of the public and private realms, and on her distinction between man as a "social" and man as a "political" animal. See especially chapter 2 of *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

[7] A close examination of the actual life of the Shelleys, at the period at which Frankenstein was written, in relation to the novel itself would prove rewarding. The examination has partially been begun in Richard Holmes's excellent *Shelley, The Pursuit* (London: Quartet Books, 1976) See especially pages 330—4.

[8] Foucault, H., *Madness and Civilization*, trans. from French by Richard Howard (London: Tavistock Publications Ltd, 1967) originally, *Histoire de la Folie* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1961).

[9] *Frankenstein*, p. 29.

[10] Hawthorne, N., *The Scarlet Letter, A Romance, The Centenary Edition of the Works of Nathaniel Hawthorne* (The Ohio State University Press, 1962) vol. I, p. 260.

[11] *Frankenstein*, p. 30.

[12] See: Lefebvre, M., *Samuel Taylor Coleridge: A Bondage of Opium* (London, Melbourne, New York: Quartet Books, 1977), p. 220: "It is an interesting reflection that, while maiden aunts living with a married brother or sister (and the resultant nephew and nieces) were almost universally regarded as laughable (the spinster aunt in *Pickwick Papers* is a perfect example), maiden ladies who were life-partners of batchelor brothers found themselves in a different light. Such fraternal couples were sentimentalized over; the Romantics saw special virtues of devotion and purity in what were fundamentally relationships of convenience."

[13] *Frankenstein*, p. 31.

[14] See Keats, "Ode to a Nightingale", line 29 in ed. H. W. Garrod, *The Poetical Works of John Keats* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 258.

[15] The most extensive exploration of homosexual themes in the American gothic novel is Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* (Montana: University of Montana Press, 1959).

[16] See: Coleridge, S. T., *Poetical Works*, pp. 240—242. The relevant passages in Hawthorne are on pages 35—36. It has of course been long known that the American romantic novel owes a great deal to the forms and subject matter of the English romantic poem.

[17] *Frankenstein*, p. 13.

[18] See Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance* (1852) for his treatment of these subjects.

[19] See Dauber, op. cit. n. 5.

[20] *The Scarlet Letter*, pp. 42—3. Subsequent page refences to this work will be found in brackets following the quotation.

[21] Every age seems to have its own version of the prophetic head. It is widespread in folk-lore, and English literature has its *Sir Gawain and Green Knight* (late 14th century) and Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1594). There is a remarkable recent use of it in Dusan Makavejev's film *W. R. the mysteries of the Organism* (1971) in which the decapacitated head of the heroine makes a reflective and prophetic summary of the film's issues.

[22] Brown, N. O., *Love's Body* (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 130.

[23] Ibid.

[24] See McLuhan, Marshall *The Gutenberg Galaxy: the making of typographic man* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 216—239.

[25] Lawrence, D. H., *Studies in Classic American literature* (1924: rpt London, Melbourne, Toronto, Capetown, Auckland: William Heineman Ltd, 1964), p. 86—7. "She has had her triumph over the individual man, so she quite loves subscribing to the whole spiritual life of society."

[26] *Frankenstein*, p. 31.

[27] See Coleridge's famous definition in the *Biographia Literaria* of the creative imagination, where the "secondary imagination" is held to be an "echo" of the "Infinite I AM". *The Biographia Literaria* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1904), ch. XIII, p. 144.

[28] Brown, *Love's Body*, p. 192.

[29] Quoted by Brown, p. 190, from Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, bk. III, ch. iii, "Symbols."

[30] Chaytor, H. S., *From Script to Print: an introduction to Medieval Vernacular Literature* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, 1945), p. 85.

[31] Lowenthal, L., *Literature and the Image of Man: Studies of the European Drama and Novel* (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1957), p. 42. See McLuhan, p. 211.

[32] St. Augustine, *Confessions: with an English translation by W. Watts*, VI, 2 (London: Heinemann, 1912), I, p. 273.

[33] Melville, H., *Moby-Dick, or, the White Whale, Works* (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1963), VII, p. 10.

[34] The phrase is McLuhan's, p. 211 where he is discussing Lowenthal's *Literature and the Image of Man*, op. cit.

[35] I am indebted here to Ms Cathy Strickland-Taylor whose undergraduate essay on the "circle" in *The Scarlet Letter* first drew my attention to the possibilities of this subject.

[36] ed. Anglo, Sidney, *The Damned Art: Essays in the Literature of Witchcraft* (London, Henley and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 37.

[37] See Foucault on the *Narrenschiff* ("a literary composition probably borrowed from the old Argonaut cycle"), pp. 7—37.

[38] Anglo, p. 3. He is quoting from K. V. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (1971; rev. ed. London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1973), p. 774.

[39] This almost needs a separate study. Examples mainly occur in the latter half of the book; eg XIII/XIV; XVII/XVIII; XIX/XX; XXI/XXII; XXII/XXIII.

[40] *The Scarlet Letter*, pp. 246—7. Individual references not given.

[41] It is interesting that according to one recent commentator on scientific and witch-craft like properties of the eye in seventeenth-century culture, "rattlesnake fascination offers a very rare example of the interaction of European and Indian beliefs in forming a new colonial belief." See Leventhal, H., *In the Shadow of the Enlightenment: Occultism* and *Renaissance Science in Eighteenth-Century America* (New York: New York University Press, 1976), p. 165.

[42] *The Scarlet Letter*, pp. 248—9. Individual references not given.

[43] *Moby-Dick*, VII, p. 2.

[44] Comments on different types of behaviour and psychology of protestant and catholic societies proliferate in contemporary travellers' accounts. Viz. Michel Chevalier, *Society, Manners and Politics in the United States* (1839).

[45] Kittredge, George Lyman, *Witchcraft in Old and New England* (1929; rpt Russell & Russell, New York, 1956), ch. XI "Mirrors and Thieves", pp. 184—203.

[46] Anglo, p. 16.

[47] Foucault, pp. 275—6.

[48] Harris, Neil, *The Artist in American Society, the formative years 1790—1860* (New York: George Braziller, 1966), p. 56.

[49] Brown, p. 140. Note that this association of the evil eye with ejaculation is discussed at some length by Leventhal, op. cit., pp. 137—167. Eighteenth-century ideas of "effluvia" and the transmission of lightbeams go back to Neo-Platonic theories of the interaction of spiritual and physical worlds. These spirits of the blood, and Leventhal cites Gian Francesco Pico and Montaigne, were thought to have "ejaculative virtue." Hawthorne's point is that Hester's eye is "softened" here by the long forgotten warmth called up by her lover. It is in, short, good magic. But it is still magic in a world of "either-or" constraints emphasizing negatively, not positively the possibilities of freedom.

[50] I am indebted here to two recent poems by Mr. Eric Mottram which draw on similar materials to those discussed here: "Local Movement" and "Towards the Heart" in *Local Movement* (London: Writers Forum, 1974).

[51] "Nature", in *The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, intro. Robert E. Spiller, text by Alfred R. Ferguson (Cam., Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), I, p. 10.

[52] See eds. H. W. Blodgett and Scully Bradley, Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (New York: New York University Press, 1965), p. 29: "My respiration and inspiration,

the beating of my heart, the passing of blood and air through my lungs." From "Song of Myself."

[53] The subject of Christian iconography in this work is beyond the scope of this essay. Increasingly from the mid-century, however, from the first edition of Mrs Jameson's *Sacred and Legendary Art* (1848), aided no doubt by Carlyle's deflection of myth from history to psychology, up to Wilde's *Salome* (1894) and the early work of Freud, myth (which includes Christian) is increasingly used to describe the farther reaches of psychopathology.

[54] Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Act I, Sc., II, 1. 398.

[55] Keats, "The Eve of St. Agnes" in *Works*, p. 256.

[56] Coleridge, "Dejection: an Ode" in *Poetical Works*, p. 265. The green light for Fitzgerald is, of course, the light that Gatsby sees at the end of Daisy's dock *in The Great Gatsby* (1925).

[57] Innis, H. A., *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951), pp. 33—4.

[58] Keats, "The Eve of St. Agnes, "*Works*, p. 246.

[59] Keats, "The Eve of St. Agnes," *Works*, p. 246 and Colerdige, "Kubla Khan", *Works*, p. 298.

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# Melville's Use of Mythology*

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Believing ultimate truth to be out of reach, Melville would accept no one's contrary assumption. In this respect he seems to act in a similar way to Babbalanja, the philosopher, in *Mardi*. When challenged by King Media, who tells him: "You say all is a lie; then out with the truth", Babbalanja answers: "Ah! My lord, . . . I but fight against the armed and crested Lies of Mardi, that like a host, assail me. I am stuck full of darts; but tearing them from out me, gasping, I discharge them whence they come."[1] Heated with the same passion in creating *Pierre*, Melville wrote in that book:

> . . . the enthusiast youth . . . unless he can find the talismanic secret, to reconcile this world with his own soul, then there is no peace for him . . . in this life. Now without doubt this Talismanic Secret has never yet been found; and in the nature of human things it seems as though it never can be. Certain philosophers have time and again pretended to have found it; but if they do not in the end discover their own delusion, other people soon discover it for themselves, and so those philosophers and their vain philosophy are let glide away into practical oblivion. Plato, and Spinoza, and Goethe, and many more belong to this guild of self-impostors, with a preposterous rabble of Muggletonian[2] Scots and Yankees, whose vile brouge still the more bestreaks the stripedness of their Greek or German Neo-platonical originals. That profound Silence, that only Voice of our God, . . . from that divine thing without a name, those impostor philosophers pretend somehow to have got an answer; which is as absurd, as though they should say they had got water out of stone; for how can a man get a Voice out of Silence?[3]

In *Moby-Dick*, with ample evidence of "that profound Silence", the "speechless . . . power" of the "clear spirit of clear fire"[4] and the "pyramidical silence"[5] of the whale, Melville also exposes the fallacy of all allegorical interpretations. The scene in front of the South American doubloon riveted on the mainmast, a prize for the man who first raises Moby Dick, only too well proves the wisdom of St. Augustine with which he faced up to the consequence of the "figurative" interpretation of the Bible:

> I know that a truth which the mind understands in one way only can be materially expressed by many different means and I also know that there are many different ways in which the mind can understand an idea that is outwardly expressed in one way[6]

a statement gloriously borne out by Melville's critic-exegetes.

* A chapter from the author's book on Melville to be published in 1979.

In the doubloon scene, the "many different means" by which the same carvings on the doubloon are being interpreted, cast not much light on the meaning of the carving, but certainly illuminate the interpreting characters. Pip in his wise insanity pertinently remarks:

> I look, you look, he looks; we look, ye look, they look . . .
> And I, you, and he; and we, ye and they, are all bats.[7]

In Melville's view the same applies to all creeds that claim to interpret the world. No one has a "warrant, with Oro's sign-manual".[8] With all its inaccuracies, self-contradictions and the highly questionable morality it purports, Melville rejects the belief in the divine inspiration of the Bible, and treats the Bible, and the religions based on it, on equal footing with all other religions and mythologies of the world, regarding them all as equally fallacious and misleading.

In the chapter on *The Honor and Glory of Whaling*, meant to heighten the respectability of whalemen, Melville traces their genealogy back to "demi-gods and heroes, prophets of all sorts".[9] Having identified all aquatic monsters of the Bible as leviathans or whales, and then, on basis of *Ezekiel* XXXII,2, Leviathan with the Dragon, Melville lumps together biblical, legendary and mythical heroes:

> Akin to the adventure of Perseus and Andromeda — indeed, by some supposed to be indirectly derived from it — is that famous story of St. George and the Dragon; which dragon I maintain to have been a whale; for in many old chronicles whales and dragons are strangely jumbled together, and often stand for each other. Thou art as a lion of the waters, and as a dragon of the sea, saith Ezekiel; hereby, plainly meaning a whale; in truth, some versions of the Bible use that word itself.[10]

In truth, *Ezekiel* XXXII, 2 in the King James Version says

> . . . Thou art like a young lion of the nations, and thou art as a whale in the seas

with a footnote to "whale", that reads "Or, dragon." "Thou" of course refers to Pharaoh.

In ancient Hebrew no specific names seem to have been used to distinguish between the different huge and dangerous animals people might have come across in sea or river and the terms used in the Old Testament refer to a long, serpent-like animal. In the King James Version of the Bible, used by Melville, these terms were variously translated as: whale, Leviathan, dragon and serpent. (The New English Bible tends to prefer the vague "sea-monster", and only uses "whale" in *Job* XLI, 1, with "Leviathan" in footnote as an alternative.)

In *Moby-Dick* Melville first identifies all the variants of the translation as whales. Then, with a sly twist, he identifies the dragon with the whale, only to use the whale as common denominator of various biblical, mythical and legendary heroes and hail them all as equally authentic ancestors of the whaling fraternity:

> Perseus, St. George, Hercules, Jonah, and Vishnoo ! there's a member-roll for you ! What club but the whaleman's can head off like that?[11]

And if the heroes are equally authentic, so ought the creeds be that celebrate them. However, as each creed vindicates divine and exclusive revelation, they must be equally unauthentic.

For obvious reasons, the Jonah story had a special fascination for Melville:

> by the best contradictory authorities, this Grecian story of Hercules and the whale is considered to be derived from the still more ancient Hebrew story of Jonah and the whale; and vice versa; certainly they are very similar. If I claim the demi-god then, why not the prophet?[12]

And he certainly did, all the more so, as Pierre Bayle, the 17th century sceptic philosopher, who had greatly influenced Melville, had a special entry on Jonah in his *Dictionary Historical and Critical.* This Melville in parts took over almost verbatim in his chapter entitled *Jonah Historically Regarded.*

Both Pierre Bayle and Melville dwell on the obvious absurdities of *Jonah* I, 17; II,10 and III,3 and their similarities with the Greek mythological stories of Hercules and of Arion, implying that the biblical story is no more authentic or divinely revealed than its heathen opposite numbers. Both Bayle and Melville use the same device of refuting apologetic exegesis whilst pretending to advocate it (refutation by justification).

In his entry on "Jonas", Pierre Bayle is quite explicit in emphasizing the organic relationship between the Jonah story, the Bible and Christology, so that once the authenticity of the Jonah story is exploded, so is that of the Bible and of the divinity of Jesus.

As is his custom, Bayle argues by alternating his own reflections with well-tailored quotations from and indirect reports of orthodox authorities, mixing the three, until his own heretical opinions assume the respectability of the authorities whose views he refutes. It is in this way that he refers to Saint Augustine's letter to a pagan friend:

> Either, says he, we must deny all the miracles of God, or acknowledge we have no reason to reject this.[a] Should we believe the resurrection of Jesus Christ, if we were afraid of the railleries of the infidels? And since our friend has not supposed any doubts about our admitting the resurrection of Lazarus and that of Jesus Christ, I very much wonder he should look upon the adventure of Jonas as incredible. Is it easier to raise a dead man from the grave, than to preserve a man alive in the belly of a great fish? Will it be said that the digestive faculty of the stomach cannot be suspended?
>
> [a]) i.e. the story of Jonah.

Here Bayle expounds the basic idea of his argument:

> either believe or reject in general all the facts of the same nature, even those that appear still more incredible.[13]

Bayle in fact sets up a tripodal equation, the elimination of either leg of which will topple the whole erection: pagans, who believe their own legendary miracles, must, by the same token, also give credit to the miracles recorded in the Bible. Those who give credit to some Scriptural miracles (like the resurrection of Lazarus and of Jesus Christ), must believe all. Conversely: disbelief in either the pagan miracles or any of the biblical ones, should raise doubts regarding all others: pagan ones, or those narrated in the Old, or the New Testament alike. All the more so, as the miracles of the Old Testament are supposed to adumbrate those in the New, and Jonah's delivery from the whale's belly is regarded e.g. as an adumbrating type of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Whilst Pierre Bayle in his *Jonas* entry refers to St. Augustine, Melville's chief authority on whaling mythology is "one old Sag-Harbor whaleman", who questions "the Hebrew story" on three accounts: the whale swallowing Jonah without choking; Jonah resisting "the whale's gastric juices"; and being "vomited up somewhere within three days' journey of Nineveh".[14] As regards the last of these three, the relevant passage in Pierre Bayle's *Dictionary* reads as follows:

> Note, that Nineveh was built upon the river Tigris, which has no immediate communication with the Mediterranean sea. Besides, there is not water enough for such a fish in this river at the port of Nineveh. This reason, together with the surprising miracle, we must suppose, . . . that the whale went into the ocean, and doubled the cape of Good Hope, and entered into the mouth of the Tigris, and made that prodigious compass in three days.[15]

This is Melville's version:

> Jonah was swallowed by the whale in the Mediterranean Sea, and after three days he was vomited up somewhere within three days' journey of Nineveh, a city of the Tigris, very much more than three days's journey across from the nearest point of the Mediterranean coast. How is that?
> . . . the whale . . . might have carried him round by the way of the Cape of Good Hope. But not to speak of the passage through the whole length of the Mediterranean, and another passage up the Persian Gulf and Red Sea, such a supposition would involve the complete circumnavigation of all Africa in three days, not to speak of the Tigris waters, near the site of Nineveh, being too shallow for any whale to swim in.

Tongue in cheek, Melville concludes the chapter in the following Baylesque manner:

> But all these foolish arguments of old Sag-Harbor only evinced his foolish pride of reason — a thing still more reprehensible in him, seeing that he had but little learning except what he had picked up from the sun and the sea. I say it only shows his foolish, impious pride, and abominable, devilish rebellion against the reverend clergy. For by a Portuguese Catholic priest, this very idea of Jonah's going to Nineveh via the Cape of Good Hope was advanced as a signal magnification of the general miracle. And so it was. Besides, to this day, the highly enlightened Turcs devoutly believe in the historical story of Jonah. And some three centuries ago, an English traveller in old Harris's Voyages, speaks of a Turkish Mosque built in honor of Jonah, in which mosque was a miraculous lamp that burnt without any oil.[16]

It is interesting to mark how, "with a view to popular conservatism",[17] careful Melville was to keep sceptical Bayle out of the picture. For although John Harris's *Navigantium atque Itinerantium Bibliotheca* (London, 1705) does refer to "a Mosque, in the place where, they say, Jonas is buried" and remarks that "the Turks have a mighty Veneration for it"[18], it makes no mention whatever of the "miraculous lamp", the source of which reads thus:

> the Turks have built a very fine mosque to the honour of Jonas, in which there is a miraculous lamp, that burns continually without any oil or other liquor,

and can be found on p. 579, Vol. III. of Pierre Bayle's *Dictionary*.

In his drive to explode the myth of the divine authenticity of the Scriptural religions, Melville draws a parallel between them and primitive religious beliefs and practices and points out that in all cases men make their own gods and therefore no religion can claim any authenticity whatsoever.

On one of the Arsacide Islands in the Pacific near the southern tip of the Solomon Islands, Ishmael visits a temple, where the skeleton of a great sperm whale is worshipped.

> The ribs were hung with trophies; the vertebrae were carved with Arsacidean annals, in strange hieroglyphics; in the skull, the priests kept up an unextinguished aromatic flame, so that the mystic head again sent forth its vapory spout; while, suspended from a bough, the terrific lower jaw vibrated over all the devotees, like the hair-hung sword that so affrighted Damocles.

Then follows a passage that graphically brings home the irrelevance of the lifeless object of worship in the midst of the unceasing activity of the natural environment:

> It was a wondrous sight. The wood was green as mosses of the Icy Glen; the trees stood high and haughty, feeling their living sap; the industrious earth beneath was as a weaver's loom, with a gorgeous carpet on it, whereof the ground-vine tendrils formed the warp and woof, and the living flowers the figures. All the trees, with all their laden branches; all the shrubs, and ferns, and grasses; the message-carrying air; all these unceasingly were active. Through the lacings of the leaves, the great sun seemed a flying shuttle weaving the unwearied verdure. Oh, busy weaver! unseen weaver! — pause! — one word! — whither flows the fabric? what palace may it deck? wherefore all these ceaseless toilings? Speak, weaver! — stay thy hand! — but one single word with thee! Nay — the shuttle flies — the figures float from the loom; the freshet-rushing carpet for ever slides away. The weaver-god, he weaves; and by that weaving is he deafened, that he hears no mortal voice; and by that humming, we, too, who look on the loom are deafened; and only when we escape it shall we hear the thousand voices that speak through it. . . .
>
> Now, amid the green, life-restless loom of that Arsacidean wood, the great, white, worshipped skeleton lay lounging — a gigantic idler! Yet, as the ever-woven verdant warp and woof intermixed and hummed around him, the mighty idler seemed the cunning weaver; himself all woven over with the vines; every month assuming greener, fresher verdure; but himself a skeleton. Life folded Death; Death trellised Life; the grim god wived with youthful Life, and begat him curly-headed glories.[19]

This passage also shows how Melville's religious scepticism would at times mix with some of Plato's thoughts.

The model of the deafened weaver-god is the ambiguous demiourgos (artificer) of Plato's *Timaeus*, who, in a continuous and eternal process is constructing the physical body of the universe and "weaving" the soul into it. We mortals too are deafened by the humming of the loom. A few years after *Moby-Dick*, the personal impression that might have lain in the background of Melvill's deafening loom symbol, inspired one of his short stories: *The Tartarus of Maids*. In a New England paper mill he visited

> Not a syllable was breathed. Nothing was heard but the low, steady overruling hum of the iron animals. The human voice was banished from the spot.[20]

In *Moby-Dick* the mortals deafened by the humming loom can expect, as Socrates does in Plato's *Phaedo*, their souls, distinct from the body, to survive bodily death and, freed from the body and thus released from its evils, to enter into a better state and attain a fuller and richer life. "Oh, God ! that man should be a thing for immortal souls to sieve through !"[21] — Ahab exclaims contemplating deranged Pip. And Ishmael reassures himself before signing on for the expedition in a similar Platonic vein:

> Methinks my body is but the lees of my better being. In fact take my body who will, take it I say, it is not me . . . And therefore three cheers for Nantucket; and come a stove boat and stove body when they will, for stave my soul, Jove himself cannot.[22]

Although Christianity in its formative centuries absorbed much of Platonism and Greek philosophy, the pagan chaff had carefully been sorted out from the Christian grain. The cosmogony referred to in the passages quoted above belongs to the chaff. It lacks the concept of instant creation out of nothing, which was Jewish folklore. The Demiourgos constructs out of eternally existing material and does not create that material at a certain instant, as the Judaeo-Christian God does. Nor is he certainly the supreme or only divine principle, being limited in his power by the imperfections of eternally existing matter. Nor does Plato's system of thought attempt to explain away the imperfections of the world with the theory of original sin committed by the first man and woman in eating the fruit of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil",[23] which God had planted but forbidden man to eat from. With no feelings of inherent guilt deliberately inspired, Platonism implies no expectation of a redemption either. The Christian concept of a divine redeemer was based on the Jewish historical expectation of a Messiah, or "anointed one", who would deliver his people from captivity and restore them to their patrimony.

The indifferent and deaf weaver-god also appears to Pip, when the sea drowns "the infinite of his soul".

> Carried down alive to wondrous depths, . . . among the joyous, heartless, ever-juvenile eternities, Pip saw . . . God's foot upon the treadle of the loom[24]

The whale skeleton god had no relation whatsoever to life and however Ishmael "paced" "to and fro . . . before this skeleton — brushed the vines aside — broke through the ribs", he "saw no living thing within; naught was there but bones."

But it was all the more closely related to the priests, who swore that "the artificial smoke ascending from where the real jet issues, . . . was genuine." And they were adamant when they saw that Ishmael intended to take the measurements of the skeleton:

> 'How now!' they shouted; 'Dar'st thou measure this our god! That's for us.'

At which Ishmael retorted with a marvellous pun:

> 'Aye, priests — well, how long do ye make him, then?'

Without going into the ambiguity of the predicate, the priests instantly fell out with each other and

> a fierce contest rose among them, concerning feet and inches; they cracked each other's sconces with their yard-sticks — the great skull echoed — and seizing that lucky chance, I quickly concluded my own admeasurements.[25]

"The great skull echoed" and all institutionalized religions claiming unique and exclusive divine revelation, might have just as well reverberated. It was in the context of this paradox of men variously worshipping and extolling their self-made gods that in an earlier chapter Ishmael referred to "the infallible Presbyterian Church".[26]

This was when Queequeg, a South-Sea islander, his heathen room-mate in the New Bedford inn, invited Ishmael to join him in the worship of Yojo. Yojo was Queequeg's little black idol which he had carved out of wood and was improving all the time, "with a jack-knife gently whittling away at its nose"[27] — a pertinent symbol of the origin and history of all religions. When Queequeg motioned Ishmael to join him in his prayers, Ishmael made his decision after some deliberation:

> I was a good Christian; born and bred in the bosom of the infallible Presbyterian Church. How then could I unite with this wild idolator in worshipping his piece of wood?

The paradox of the infallibility of any particular church is here followed by a correspondingly paradoxical logical sequence, to end with an absurd conclusion:

> But what is worship? thought I. Do you suppose now, Ishmael, that the magnanimous God of heaven and earth — pagans and all included — can possibly be jealous of an insignificant bit of black wood? Impossible! But what is worship? — to do the will of God — *that* is worship. And what is the will of God? — to do to my fellow man what I would have my fellow man to do to me — *that* is the will of God. Now, Queequeg is my fellow man. And what do I wish that this Queequeg would do to me? Why, unite with me in my particular Presbyterian form of worship. Consequently, I must then unite with him in his; ergo, I must turn ido-

> lator. So I kindled the shavings; helped prop up the innocent little idol; offered him burnt biscuit with Queequeg; salamed before him twice and thrice; kissed his nose; and that done, we undressed and went to bed, at peace with our own consciences and all the world.[28]

Queequeg's outlandish habits are held up to ridicule whilst reflecting Euro-American conventions, a device common to social travesty. Queequeg puts on his boots in private and his pantaloons in public view,[29] which, for all its oddity, is not presented as any more absurd, than our choice of things to be done privately or in public. The same applies to Queequeg's religious practices.

In one of these religious exercises Ishmael refused to co-operate. This was when Queequeg shut himself up for a whole day and night and was "squatting on his hams" in the middle of the room "and holding Yojo on top of his head" and "going too without his regular meals",[30] as if it was "some sort of Lent or Ramadan" (periods of fasting prescribed by the Christian and Mohammedan religions respectively). To bring the point even closer home, Ishmael heaps likeness upon likeness:

> *how* it was I never could find out, for, though I applied myself to it several times I never could master his liturgies and XXXIX Articles[31]

a clear hint at the Forty-Two Articles on which the authoritative creed of the Anglican Church and of all Episcopal churches has been based since 1563.[32]

Yet however he disagreed with this practice, Ishmael would not disturb Queequeg, for:

> I cherish the greatest respect towards everybody's religious obligations, never mind how comical, and could not find it in my heart to undervalue even a congregation of ants worshipping a toad-stool.[33]

But there is a point where Ishmael would raise an objection:

> as I before hinted, I have no objection to any person's religion, be it what it may, so long as that person does not kill or insult any other person, because that other person don't believe it also. But when a man's religion becomes really frantic; when it is a positive torment to him; and, in fine, makes this earth of ours an uncomfortable inn to lodge in; then I think it high time to take that individual aside and argue the point with him.

Which is what Ishmael did with Queequeg, when he:

> beginning with the rise and progress of the primitive religions, and coming down to the various religions of the present time, ... labored to show Queequeg that all these Lents, Ramadans, and prolonged ham-squattings in cold, cheerless rooms were stark nonsense; bad for the health; useless for the soul; opposed, in short, to the obvious laws of Hygiene and common sense.

Ishmael's next argument was bowdlerized from the first English edition in 1851:

> I told him, too, that he being in other things such an extremely sensible and sagacious savage, it pained me, ... to see him now so deplorably foolish about this ridiculous Ramadan of his. Besides, argued I, fasting makes the body cave in; hence the spirit caves in; and all thoughts born of a fast must necessarily be half-starved.[a] This is the reason why most dyspeptic religionists cherish such melancholy notions about their hereafters. In one word, Queequeg, said I, rather

> digressively; hell is an idea first born on an undigested apple-dumpling; and since then perpetuated through the hereditary dyspepsias nurtured by Ramadans.[34]

[a]) Cf. "Alma forbid ! We never fast; our aspirations are our prayers, our lives are worship." (*Mardi*, p. 628.)

This irreverent and satirical reference to Chapter III of *Genesis* strangely compares with the identical metaphor Carlyle uses in the opening chapter of *Sartor Resartus*. As in the case of Ahab's "pasteboard masks" and Professor Teufelsdröckh's "emblematic clothes", the two writers use identical or similar metaphors in contexts that carry contrary implications. Whilst in the passage quoted above, Melville's "apple-dumpling" connotes the human origin and the fallacy of the *Genesis* story, Carlyle's satirical remarks and his reference to "dumplings" and "apples" are meant to denigrate the achievements of science and confirm the credibility of divine creation as imparted in *Genesis:*

> Of Geology and Geognosy we know enough: what with the labours of our Werners and Huttons, what with the ardent genius of their disciples, it has come about that now, to many a Royal Society, the Creation of the World is little more mysterious than the cooking of a dumpling; concerning which last, indeed, there have been minds to whom the question, *How the apples were got in*, presented difficulties.[35]

Melville borrowed Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* from Evert Duyckinck in June or July, 1850.[36]

But argue as he will, Ishmael would gain no other response from Queequeg than what he would from anyone else holding particular religious views:

> he somehow seemed dull of hearing on that important subject, . . . and . . . no doubt thought he knew a good deal more about the true religion than I did. He looked at me with a sort of condescending concern and compassion, as though he thought it a great pity that such a sensible young man should be so hopelessly lost to evangelical pagan piety.[37]

Yet with all the affinity between his and other religions, Queequeg does not wish to become a Christian, or be "converted",[38] as Captain Bildad, the sanctimonious part owner of the Pequod expects him to be.

Son of "a High Chief, a King" and "actuated by a profound desire to learn among the Christians, the arts whereby to make his people still happier than they were; and more than that, still better than they were", Queequeg had "sought a passage to Christian lands" by enlisting on board a whaler as a harpooner.

> But, alas ! the practices of whalemen soon convinced him that even Christians could be both miserable and wicked; infinitely more so, than all his father's heathens. Arrived at last in old Sag Harbor; and seeing what the sailors did there; and then going on to Nantucket, and seeing how they spent their wages in *that* place also, poor Queequeg gave it up for lost. Thought he, it's a wicked world in all meridians; I'll die a pagan.

Nevertheless he would not yet dare go back to his native island, for

> he was fearful Christianity, or rather Christians, had unfitted him for ascending the pure and undefiled throne of thirty pagan Kings before him. But by and by . . . he would return, — as soon as he felt himself baptized again.[39]

But he was never to be baptized or re-baptized. Nor would that have made any difference in the final catastrophe, when the crew, Christians and non-Christians alike, were drowned and sunk below "the great shroud of the sea" that "rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago".[40] With the single exception of the narrator, who survives, they all perished in a universe devoid of providence and blankly indifferent to human affairs.

Discarding all mythologies as equally fallacious, Melville in *Moby-Dick* presents a demythicized world. He calls it a "whaling world",[41] where "possession is half . . ., often . . . the whole of the law"[42] and where there is no other saving force but the forecastle companionship of "Isolatoes".[43]

NOTES

[1] *Mardi* (Evanston and Chicago: The Northwestern—Newberry Edition, 1970), pp. 428, 430.

[2] The Muggletonians were followers of Lodowicke Muggleton (1609—98) and John Reeve, who called themselves the two witnesses of Revelation ("And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." *The Revelation of St. John*, XI, 3.) They declared their ideas to be divine in origin. In the passage quoted Melville's definition of "Muggletonian Scots and Yankees" refers to the followers of Carlyle and Emerson. See Henry Murray's explanatory note in the Hendricks House edition of *Pierre*, New York, 1949, p. 439.

[3] *Pierre* (Evanston and Chicago: The Northwestern—Newberry Edition, 1971), p. 208.

[4] *Moby-Dick* (New York: Hendricks House, 1962), p. 500.

[5] *ibid.*, p. 345.

[6] Saint Augustine: *Confessions* (Penguin Classics, 1970), p. 335.

[7] *Moby-Dick*, p. 432.

[8] *Mardi*, p. 428.

[9] *Moby-Dick*, p. 359.

[10] *ibid.*, p. 360.

[11] *ibid.*, p. 362.

[12] *ibid.*, p. 361.

[13] *The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Mr. Peter Bayle* (London: D. Midwinter, 1737), Vol. III. p. 578.

[14] *Moby-Dick*, pp. 363—4.

[15] Bayle, P., op. cit., p. 579.

[16] *Moby-Dick*, p. 364.

[17] In a letter to Hawthorne, written in June, 1851, Melville referred to the biblical Solomon, as "the truest man who ever spoke", adding his suspicion "that he a little *managed* the truth with a view to popular conservatism; or else there have been many corruptions and interpolations of the text." (A remarkable anticipation of the later established evidence that interpolations *had* been made.) Merrell R. Davis and William H. Gilman eds: *The Letters of Herman Melville* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), p. 130.

[18] See Explanatory Notes, *Moby-Dick*, p. 782.

[19] *Moby-Dick*, pp. 446—7.

[20] *Complete Stories of Herman Melville*. Edited by Jay Leyda. (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1951), p. 202.

[21] *Moby-Dick*, p. 514.

[22] *ibid.*, p. 36.

[23] *Genesis*, II, 17.

[24] *Moby-Dick*, p. 413.

[25] *ibid.*, pp. 447—8.

[26] *ibid.*, p. 51.

[27] *ibid.*, p. 48.

[28] *ibid.*, pp. 51—2.

[29] *ibid.*, p. 28.
[30] *Moby-Dick*, pp. 83–4.
[31] *ibid.*, pp. 67–8.
[32] See *ibid.*, p. 630, Explanatory Notes.
[33] *ibid.*, p. 81.
[34] *ibid.*, p. 85.
[35] Carlyle, Th., *Sartor Resartus* (London: Dent, 1967), p. 1.
[36] Merton M. Sealts: *Melville's Readings* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), p. 48.
[37] *Moby-Dick*, p. 86.
[38] *ibid.*, p. 87.
[39] *ibid.*, pp. 54–6.
[40] *ibid.*, p. 566.
[41] *ibid.*, p. 320.
[42] *ibid.*, p. 395.
[43] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 118: "They were nearly all Islanders on the Pequod, *Isolatoes* too, I call such, not acknowledging the common continent of men, but each *Isolato* living on a separate continent of his own."

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# Dimensions of Space and Time: Late Nineteenth Century American Utopias

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In recent years a great many books have been published on utopias with widely differing definitions of utopistic fiction. It is the genre, especially the aesthetics of the genre, which came to the centre of attention.[1] In the present survey utopias are considered in a fairly broad sense: both utopian novels and occasional short stories, even if they are of a rather discursive nature with a minimum of fictional frame. Pure tracts or plans for "practical" utopian experiments are excluded.

Utopian writers seek a happier existence for mankind and define its conditions wholly or in part. The fact that some of them do this in an indirect way, depicting the nightmare outcome of certain contemporary trends, does not change the basic intention, only the mode of approach.

Archetypal utopias can be found in many religions which formulated a world beyond with heaven as *eutopia*, hell as *anti-eutopia*. Though the longing for a more harmonious existence has inspired men through the ages, at times of acute crisis there was a sharp increase in the number of utopias. During the Middle Ages the Christian and Moslim religions provided sufficient outlet for the imagination about future rewards and punishments. The first flourishing of utopias came with the age of geographic discoveries and the Renaissance. The Enlightenment, with its belief in progress, produced a great number of tracts and plans for utopian experiments. The first half of the 19th century is the period of practical experimentations and spectacular failures, accompanied by treatises and pamphlets. Fictional treatment was relatively rare. It was a sign of optimism that people tried out model settlements instead of escaping into fantasies about new social and economic forms.

The next phase of utopian literature is the last third of the 19th century and the turn of the century, when we see an unprecedented outburst of utopian fiction, especially in the US. (Of these, "technological" and scientific utopias, first treated by Jules Verne and H. G. Wells, grew into science fiction in our century.)

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Americans have always been susceptible to utopistic thinking. The "American Dream", which emerged in several stages and in different forms, always contained a certain element of utopianism. With the Pilgrim Fathers and the Puritans, it took the form of creating a "New Zion" in the New World. Lesser sects repeated similar experiments in the 17th and 18th centuries on a religious basis.[2] In the Early Republic the actual task of organizing the new country made utopianism superfluous, though some of Jefferson's theories were utilized by late 19th century American utopists. The primarily humanitarian experiments (Transcendentalists, etc.) were influenced by Rousseau's ideas, the Enlightenment and Fourierism, but again, being busy with practical tasks, the utopists deemed fictional treatment unnecessary.[3]

The "explosion" of utopian fiction was brought about by several factors: the post-Civil War accumulation of capital; stock exchange and land speculations; recurring economic crises and slumps; the mechanization of industry and agriculture, and in their wake labor unrest, strikes, socialist and anarchist propaganda, populism, the muckrakers, and the single tax movement. By the 1880's and 1890's trusts and monopolies posed a serious threat. The technological revolution and the accumulation of wealth was a slower process covering several decades, but the disappearance of the frontier, the lack of further free lands to settle, came as a shock with the 1890 census. The atmosphere changed from critical optimism into one of despair, and with it came the realization that something had to be done. The 1890's inspired many utopian books for the traditional ,chiliastic reason as well: the Millennium was just around the corner.

American utopists followed various professions. The authors of the best-known utopias were writers, or at least, men of letters: Edward Bellamy, W.D. Howells and Ignatius Donnelly. The majority of the authors, however, were not professional writers, but priests, doctors, lawyers, journalists, businessmen, politicians, with even a soldier among them, and several of them made only one attempt at writing a book. Indeed, most of these American utopias would have been completely forgotten by now, had not the recent vogue made it a profitable business to reprint them.[4] Obviously, they are not valuable for their literary qualities; only about half a dozen of them are good as fiction or make interesting adventure stories. Nevertheless, they reflect contemporary problems and the groping attempts of committed men to cope with them. Relatively few utopias try to provide a complete social, political, economic, moral, educational, etc. system; most of them concentrate on a few of these aspects according to the author's bias and interests.

The awareness of a deep crisis is revealed in that the majority of authors sought a radical change in the social system, in the mode of production and distribution, although they hoped that these changes could be achieved through reforms, not through revolutions and bloodshed. A few of the utopists found the existing social and economic system basically sound and suggested only some

improvements. In one way or another, both varieties were concerned with socialism, or what they considered socialism, either praising it or warning against it.

The great battle of utopist writers began with Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888), whose doctrinaire and anti-individualistic utopia was repulsive even to people inclined toward socialism. Thus, Bellamy had very few supporters either at home or abroad. His influence was, however, great, and there were numerous thinly disguised imitations of his book.[5] It is paradoxical, how few utopian writers could create an attractive make-believe world, a trap that even Howells was unable to avoid. As long as he points to the contradictions and hypocrisy in contemporary American life through the deceptively innocent questions of the Altrurian visitor, Mr. Homos, Howells is witty and amusing. His solution of evolution into state capitalism bringing equal opportunities and equal distribution of goods (instead of revolution) expressed the wishful thinking of the American middle classes. But when he describes life in Altruria, Howells cannot convince even himself that it can be pure pleasure in the land of so much perfection.

After the debate over Bellamy's book there was no looking backward. The issue of socialism was something utopists were now forced to face. Most of them suggested a modified version of Christian socialism. Many authors — whether calling their system socialist or not — accepted state ownership of land, the basic industries, transportation and communication, a communitarian mode of production and equal distribution, a welfare state with equal rights and opportunities (beginning with education), and the abolition of money or metal currency as an answer to the struggles between gold, silver and "greenback" interests.

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A reading of a score of utopias provides us with the most important issues of the time; to the historian and sociologist they offer either valid generalizations if there was a consensus of opinion or show the range of differing views.

In the utopias, the form of the *state* organization is always a republic. The function of the president is sometimes modified; he is the head of the industrial army (Bellamy, 1888) or the co-operative corporate system (Smith, 1895). Noto (1903), a New Orleans doctor, predicts a socialist president, Comrade Jones, for 1916. John Smith, a typical man-of-the-street president in another book, leads the US through a peaceful "legal revolution" of reforms (Adams, 1897). In Taylor's Intermere, described as a "pure democracy", the president is elected for one year as a temporary "first citizen" (1901). In the utopias the suggested period of administration varies from one to five years, emphasizing that offices must not be held more than once.

Utopists were fed up with political corruption. They also insisted that the executive and administrative branches of the government must be improved. They found too many outdated laws, too much bureaucracy. Parry's utopia

(1906) describes a totalitarian state where one-fourth of the whole population, the so-called "inspectors", watch the rest, and in their overgrown bureaucracy, there is even a Department of Inspectors of Inspectors of Inspectors.

Politics must not become professionalized. Bellamy and the Californian Army officer, Fuller (1890), are daring enough to do away with a second party in favor of a one-party system. Fuller does not approve of a split nation. Bellamy's National Party was often misunderstood by his critics. It is not expressive of his nationalism (which appears in other contexts); he clearly explains that the name refers to the task of the party to nationalize industry and property.

Utopias with strong, centralized governments are, however, exceptional. The majority of writers demand, in a true Jeffersonian spirit, as little governmental interference as possible, granting freedom and independence for the individual. In their view, institutions only bind people (Henry, 1914); legal codes and laws are not necessary (Devinne, 1902), or, at the very least, should be reduced to a minimum that can be easily understood by the masses. Utopian writers had an unlimited trust in the individual's sense of responsibility and moral consciousness. Their opinion that people would be able to behave in a reasonable and moral way in changed circumstances calls to mind the best hopes of 18th century Enlightenment. While the authors took pains to deduce the logical processes of social, technological and economic development, this sudden perfection of mankind, the prerequisite for the realization of a utopia, is not motivated. Daniel (1892) thinks that people will become members of a pious brotherhood. "Do good and fear no one" is Devinne's only rule (1902), and in his utopia there is no need for restrictions and laws.

To counter-balance Donnelly's anti-anarchistic (1891) and Parry's anti-socialist romances there is only one explicitly socialist utopia written by Cosimo Noto (1903). He even takes the trouble to argue with Kant's and Hegel's philosophies and says that "thought must coincide with reality and not reality with thought. We cannot prevent ourselves from being governed by our surroundings."[6] Besides great scientists and artists, in Noto's Ideal City the streets are named after Saint-Simon, Washington, Liebknecht, Kautsky and Engels. Marx's name is not mentioned by any of the utopists.

These utopias are characterized by an ideological muddle of contradictory ideas. For example, under the pronounced influence of 18th century Enlightenment the tenets of the Declaration of Independence are taken literally and held in great respect and this goes hand in hand with something like deism. But these ideas are mingled with socialism or Christian socialism and native American issues like "single-taxism". The authors, in general, seem to have missed the whole development of 19th century political economy. That a contradiction is inherent between enlightened individualism and 19th century *laissez-faire*, and the proposed altruistic and socialist attitudes, is not even noticed.

*Religion* plays a major rôle in the thinking of Pereira Mendes, a pastor in New York City, who wanted to see world leadership passed on to the churches (1899). Most of the utopias exhibit absolute tolerance and eclecticism in religion; they accept the moral (non-dogmatic) teachings of Buddhism, the Moslim, the Jewish and the Christian religions. They believe in a benevolent Governing Principle and insist that the task of the clergy is to serve their fellow brethren and the community. God is an "Altruist" (Smith), and the leading virtue, in practically all utopias, is love. There are two deviations from this general tendency. In Parry's ironic anti-socialist utopia pagan Sun-worshipping is practiced, while Thiusen (1883) can be considered an agnostic. In his book, children receive a moral education and study the theology of nature. Death is not feared (this is stressed in many other books as well); there is no complete annihilation of consciousness after death, since people retain vague memories of their previous existences.

Besides love, other traditional *moral* qualities in the utopias are altruism, charity, justice, lack of greed, while the emphasis on temperance is characteristic of post-Civil War America. That this could be exaggerated is seen in Smith's Altruria, where temperance is desirable in all things: in eating, drinking, even *thinking*. Anti-intellectualism appears in Donnelly's book, too, where kindness is more important than intellect. In a more roundabout way the same view is often implied when the training of the body and physical skills are advocated. In this company of optimists, Michaelis's pessimism concerning human nature is conspicuous. In his view, selfishness, envy, hate, jealousy, the desire to rule and competing are basic human qualities.

The need for change in the *economic* system seemed imperative after the Haymarket riot and other incidents of labour unrest. Although the American workers' standard of living was relatively high, over-production and unemployment were made graver by the growing number of unskilled immigrants, and now there was no escaping to the once free lands of the West. It is not accidental that naturalistic-deterministic fiction also made its first appearance in the 1890's.

Americans were the inheritors of Jeffersonian democracy, the dream of a physiocratic agrarian economy with its unfettered individualism. But in reality it was Hamilton's mercantilism that had shaped American economy and finance. Jefferson's ideal, however, survived as an undercurrent, a deeply rooted longing for a pastoral-agrarian way of life. The conflict late 19th century utopists sought to solve was between individualism plus free competition on the one hand and the common weal on the other. The latter could not be achieved without a certain degree of adjustment and sacrifice on the part of individuals. The utopists hoped that these sacrifices would be voluntary.

Another group of authors thought that the best way out of the economic and social troubles was to go to the logical extreme of the existing trend, that

is, to have bigger and bigger trusts and monopolies which would turn int syndicates, finally becoming identical with state monopolies, state capitalism, followed by some degree of nationalization. In this utopia people would work happily, shedding greed and laziness. The main exponents of this view were Bellamy, Devinne, the Rev. McGrady, Smith and Thiusen. Michaelis, in attacking Bellamy, admitted the necessity of a planned economy to avoid stagnation and overproduction, but maintained that the labourers did have parliamentary means at their disposal to improve their lot.

Henry George's single tax theory and its modified versions found many supporters. Land was the basis of wealth, it was owned by the state with a limited acreage rented out to families. The importance of agriculture — tilling the land — is stressed even in utopias with an urban scene where the products are kept in storehouses and are distributed according to the needs of the families, thus making currency unnecessary. Bellamy hardly touched upon this question, but some of the key utopias (Howells, Donnelly, Brinsmade, Smith, Taylor et al.) have agriculture-centered economies. They do not take into consideration that the mechanization of agriculture and the growing industries would inevitably change the proportion of the agricultural and industrial workers, although the trend must have been obvious.[7] They did not foresee the accelerating development of industrial technology: neither the assembly line, nor the next huge step, computerized automation. Instead, they took some steps back: they were thinking in terms of smaller, decentralized workshops on the model of the old manufactures.

Although there were many staunch supporters of Henry George among the utopists, the details of a land-based single-tax economy were never worked out. The only thorough book on the topic was written by two anonymous authors, an Englishman and a Hungarian, both living at the time in Australia.[8] Whereas we learn a great deal from utopias about the dignity of manual labour in agriculture, those few authors who discuss industrial workers' jobs speak only about their living and working conditions, not the nature of their work (Hale, 1888; Donnelly).

The hoarding of wealth is made impossible in the utopias. A more just share in the profits is proposed; not necessarily an equal share, but a *just* wage. Some of the utopists were either great diplomats or sound businessmen, but not necessarily great humanitarians. The pious Philadelphian, Daniel, argues in this way: "it is not a sound business policy to pinch the workers, when they might do better work if they were more easy in their circumstances."[9] In order to avoid accumulation of great fortunes, several authors suggest moderately or steeply progressive taxation.

There are surprisingly few disagreements about ownership and property. The utopists favour state or communal ownership of the land and transportation (with special emphasis on uniform rates for railways). None of them excludes

individual ownership of houses, furniture and other, personal belongings, which can even be inherited. As Noto formulated it: socialism abolishes private capital, not private wealth.[10]

American utopists turned against the monetary system with a vengeance: some, like Bellamy, Devinne, Parry and Howells, proposed abolishing money altogether. Others were for a more varied monetary system, including paper money. The return to the direct exchange of goods in commerce is an archaic feature of these backward-looking utopias, though Bellamy's card-system is comparable with today's credit cards. The moneyless economy was planned to make bankers, merchants and other middlemen superfluous, thus raising the standard of living.

Rosewater alone (1887) offers the value of *labour* against land and capital as the basis of wealth, in spite of the fact that in no American utopia is there a leisure class. Everybody works. It is a privilege, and also a necessity, to keep in health. Work helps build human dignity and makes life more meaningful. The utopists' ideas of the meaning of work are attractive. They realized that working must not be a life-long slaving away in the same routine, that people should become versatile, have several skills, and at the same time train their minds in intellectual pursuits. They envisioned workers alternating manual and intellectual jobs or complementing their work with hobbies. A person might do pottery and write poetry, or work in the field and teach mathematics; there is no contradiction between art and technology in the utopias.

The writers knew that all jobs are not equally pleasant, and coped with the problem in different ways. For instance, a man must undergo a brief compulsory service in the "unpleasant jobs" before settling down in his chosen profession. The only undemocratic exception occurs in Dr. Noto's book. He thinks that in a utopia criminals and Blacks — people with a "low intellect' who cannot pass higher examinations — will be almost automatically selected or contra-selected for hard and "degrading" labour. Howells, on the other hand, is greatly troubled by the inherent contradiction between equality and the existence of a servant class in America. In his Altruria, personal service is based on love and a wish to help, and it is mutual.

Utopists are very daring in the reduction of worktime, though, strangely enough, this reduction is not combined with labour-saving inventions. Instead, the writers feel that better management, incentives and general well-being will radically increase production. In the utopias the incentives range from religion and pride in work well-done to the knowledge that work is healthy and there is profit-sharing. The working day is usually between 3 to 6 hours; in one case it is 4 hours and the work-week is 4 days long. E. E. Hale, being more realistic, proposed an 8-hour workday in the Hampton woollen industry which he examined. According to the authors the brief workday eliminates unemployment and leaves plenty of time for individual studies and pleasures. People

feel eternally young, for they have the time and the chance to continue their education. Since they work from about the age of 20 to 45—60, they are young enough to enjoy life after retirement. They can travel or voluntarily undertake unpaid public offices.

In "communistic" utopias, where there is no money and no wages, people receive from the public stores whatever they want, the basis for which is usually not the amount of their production, but personal or family need. The authors are rather modest in deciding the needs of the utopian citizens. They are satisfied with moderate prosperity; at times they are downright puritanical at the expense of their heroes. On the other hand, the utopists have harsh words for unlimited profit-grabbing. As Smith pointed out, in 1893 the average worker's labour was worth $ 7.00 in production, but he received only $ 1.50. Smith proposed a ratio of 16 : 15 for his Altruria.

Utopian writers dealt with *patriotism* and *foreign relations* as well. Although in some of the utopias the ideal state is achieved after internal or international wars, there are no armies, no conscription. Peace is global, except in the few cases where the utopian community remains an isolated model. Imagination runs amok with some authors when they describe war: there are terrible holocausts in Donnelly, Adams, Noto and Devinne.

Patriotic feeling, including local patriotism, was rampant in the utopias. According to Taylor who lived in Ohio, his hero was especially suited to grasp the lofty ideals of Intermere, because he, too, was an Ohio boy like his creator. Noto could not deny his Italian, nor McGrady his Irish origins. Bellamy, Adams and Smith are "all-Americans". "The American stands on the globe pre-eminent", says Smith.[11] The majority of the utopias start out with an American model, but the next step is to spread the improved system around the world. Utopian-American citizens feel this is their patriotic duty, but the introduction of utopianism to other parts of the world is not always a peaceful business. Isolationalism is not characteristic of American utopias in general, though it is certainly true of Donnelly and Howells.

After the territorial expansion of 19th century America through purchases, annexions and the Spanish–American war, it is not surprising to find that Canada is ofter annexed to the USA (sometimes through her own free will) by the authors, and that Lieutenant Fuller's USA will comprise 68 states and 9 territories by the year 2000. Separate confederations of American and European states are created by Noto's socialist president after a European war, and he brings over the former European monarchs to earn their living in America. Smith's American Altruria is the model for a world-wide republic of all civilized nations, where Altrurization will speedily follow. Donnelly's USA, condemned to become a waste-land, is replaced by a colony in the United African Republic where the State of Uganda is inhabited by American and Swiss utopians. America points the new way to the rest of the world, says Brinsmade (1912).

An early, pacifistic utopia (Moore, 1856) proposes a Congress of Nations to settle international problems and an International Constitution by A.D. 3000.

Many utopists voice their anxiety about immigration, though they are not very explicit. "Undesirable" and/or "objectionable" immigrants, the ignorant and the immoral should be denied entry, immigration ought to be properly controlled and evenly distributed throughout the country.

Utopias insist on total, literal equality in American-utopian *society*, and the Declaration of Independence is often quoted to support them. In spite of this, a classless society is rarely anticipated. Equality means mainly equal opportunities in education and the choice of profession, but in most of the utopias adult society has several layers with different income. Devinne claims special distinction for outstanding intellectuals who are excused from manual labor. (Some echoes of Plato and Jefferson can be found here.) In Devinne's utopia high officials have state coaches at their disposal, and *simpler* carriages take doctors in urgent cases, while the rest of the population walk or use the public transportation system.

Minorities do not fare well with the utopists. Bellamy's black servant, Sawyer, is a loyal Uncle Tom, who is treated with sympathy. Daniel in a somewhat condescending way lets the Philadelphia Blacks have their separate church and bishop. The only daring views are expressed by the elusive Devinne (1902). He predicts the elimination of all racial hatred and the intermarrying of all religions and colours. Moore, in 1856, is not an abolitionist, but seeks a solution. In his utopia the American president ends slavery in 1920 by buying the Blacks from their masters. They may then go to Mexico, an American colony, which would one day become an independent Black state. (Mexico's original population had conveniently died out in internal wars.) Dr. Noto's case is even stranger. He dislikes Shakespeare's Desdemona for marrying a coloured man. The Blacks, in Noto's view, are "low types". Socialism, he says, has settled the Negro problem with absolute justice: Blacks live in separate quarters by their own choice. Thus separated, they may become even professors and doctors among their own people. If they are hopelessly "low" (criminals, etc.) they are sent back to Africa where they are free to do whatever they like.[12]

Militant feminists would be even less satisfied with the treatment of women in the utopias. They are allowed to have jobs from 20 to 45 or 60, and possibly do the easier kind of jobs, but their primary field is the home, of which they are the queens. Sometimes the education of the children is taken off their hands. They earn their living in their jobs, or else their husbands pay them for housekeeping, which gives them some independence. The conservative Henry (1914) does not even approve of working women. In the home, he says, women can enjoy the supreme delight of motherhood, whereas men can't get jobs if they have to compete with women. Female workers, Henry argues,

also reduce wages, since women get less for the same work. Men shall be home-makers, women home-keepers. Suffrage? In some utopias girls and widows vote, married women don't; in others, no women vote, since they must not meddle in public affairs. They may inherit, though in Intermere it is the last unmarried child who inherits the property; the mother may stay on, in the capacity of "Preferred Guest", until she dies. But the picture is not entirely dark. Women receive an education, though not entirely in the same subjects as men. They are free to express their true feelings. They are courted out of love and they marry out of love. Occasionally, they may have special women's councils and clubs. On the lighter side, several authors find turn-of-the-century ladies' fashions terribly uncomfortable; it is often mentioned that in utopia women will wear reasonable and comfortable dresses and shoes.

The lives of women are much less isolated in the utopias than in the traditional homes. There is communal work, cooking, taking care of the children and teaching. Women no longer slave over a hot kitchen stove, for in most utopias meals are povided by restaurants. In Intermere, women need not remain single: men must marry soon, otherwise they have to return the free house given to them when they come of age.

These utopias did not foresee the isolation and loneliness, the alienation of modern man. There is a continual friendly mingling in work and entertainment, but the possibility for necessary privacy is not denied to utopians either. Warmth, tenderness and love in human relationships are especially endearing features of the American utopias.

Interest in *health* and physical fitness is universal. Utopians are all handsome: good-looking men, athletic, healthy women. Several utopias imply a tendency for natural selection: we can see the influence of evolutionary theories in them. Life expectancy is between 85 and 100 years. Medical science concentrates on prevention, and illnesses are gradually eliminated. National Health Bureaus are introduced to provide advice on healthy living. Suggested diets reflect the authors' inclinations; there are vegetarians and teetotalers among them. The problem of artificial concoctions and unnatural foods is mentioned at a relatively early date, and natural food, scientifically prepared dishes and planned diets are suggested. Henry (1914), feeling the approach of the Prohibition Act, points out that it is unconstitutional, a curtailment of freedom. Extreme individualism appears in a strange form in Donnelly's book: if people decide to commit suicide, they are helped to do it in pleasant circumstances.

*Crime* is usually considered an illness. Bellamy calles it "atavism", while the inhabitants of Intermere think of it as a form of hereditary illness. Consequently, special emphasis is placed on the prevention of crime. Jails and death sentences are abolished; those who break the few basic moral laws often go unpunished to struggle with their own consciences. In some utopias, first

offenders are publicly rebuked and admonished; multiple offenders are exiled to penal colonies in Alaska or Hawaii. Incorrigibles and wilful murderers are kept in the colonies for life and are not allowed to propagate.

The two important aspects of utopian *education* are the balance in the training of body and intellect and the continuation of such training into old age on a voluntary basis. Children are sent to kindergarten at the age of 4 and to school when they reach 7. In high school, beside the usual subjects, they all learn one or more trades, different for boys and girls. Only one author is for coeducation (Thiusen). The clergyman Pereira Mendes insists on compulsory secular education. Higher education (college, university) is not even mentioned in the utopias.[13]

*Art* in education as well as daily life is neglected by the utopians. The only thing we learn about utopian belles-lettres is that it must be pure and refined. The bibliophile Thiusen feels that the literary past being rich in perfect works it would be a waste of time to write poetry. Architecture is developed for practical reasons, and sculpture to decorate public buildings. From among the arts, music plays the most prominent rôle. It is taught in school, cultivated at home, and propagated through public performances of symphonic music and operas. The lack of interest, mentioned above, in creative art, is shown by the fact that live music is usually replaced by mechanical music produced by phonographs, "orchestrion", or piano-like machines.

The treatment of *technological inventions* is one of the most fascinating aspects of the utopias, exhibiting a rare riches of imagination. The reality which surrounded 19th-century utopists was the outcome of a rapidly developing technical civilization. As early as the 1890's they began to pay attention to phenomena which we consider modern problems: pollution, noise, the perishing of the natural, unspoilt environment, the necessity for new sources of energy. The authors were starved for beautiful surroundings and a quiet life. In fact, all their aesthetic sense seems to be centered on neat and clean urban, and beautiful natural environments. In Bellamy's Boston there are no chimneys, in Noto's New Orleans and Howells' New York soft asphalt pavements replace the clatter of noisy macadam, and all sorts of cars are electric-powered.

Private houses are pretty, communal apartment hotels and public buildings magnificent; the streets spotless, lined with trees, or interspersed with parks and gardens. Traffic moves above or below the ground to leave the walking and shopping streets quiet and clean. The roofs have been converted to terraces and gardens — if they don't happen to be landing places for aerocars. 19th century slums are eliminated. Wires and cables are under the ground. The difference between villages and towns begins to disappear; they are equally well lighted with electricity and have good transportation systems. Villages have purified sewage and artesian wells. Horses and other animals disappear from the streets.

Opinions are divided on the ideal future development of settlements. Some writers think that big towns should spread like garden districts (e.g. New York merging with Philadelphia, creating a megalopolis), others want skyscrapers of 50 stories high. According to one view, an ideal village will have 3 thousand inhabitants. The size of the big hotels and living units often coincides with Fourier's plans for similar units. Some examples for utopistic demography: Bellamy's Boston will have 500 thousand inhabitants in the year 2000, and New York 5 million in the same year in another utopia. There are several estimates for mid-20th century New York: 10 and 20 million inhabitants respectively. At the same time, the estimated population of the USA is put at 200 million people. Two authors expect 500 million Americans by 2000.

There are daring plans for changing the environment. The course of the Gulf Stream, being changed in the future, will be utilized to warm the climate of the Atlantic shore of America, and Niagara Falls is used for producing electricity.

Not all the utopias are interested in inventions and technical developments. A few, however, are ingenious. Steam (coal) as a source of energy is not even mentioned. Electricity is used for everything: transportation, heating, lighting, cooking, washing, drying, dish-washing, shoe-shining, haircutting and shaving. Natural gas is also utilized. In one book there is a cyclic use of earth magnetism: it is used, re-fed into the earth, then regained again. It is interesting that two books consider radium as the exclusive source of energy (Noto, 1903 and Parry, 1906). "Radicity", says Noto, "will be a substitute to electricity".[14]

There is hardly any technical invention in our everyday lives that had not been anticipated: radio, television, talking film, xerox, wireless telephone, new explosives (for peaceful use), cooling systems in houses, fast elevators, malleable glass and artificial, inflammable silk. The building material is glass or "Edison" cement, the latter pumped into moulds, so that the houses are built in one day. But strangely enough, practically no labour-saving machines in agriculture or industry are mentioned.

Aerocars fly above Syracuse, N. Y., as early as 1856. The electric car revolution on the roads, flying machines of all types and sizes in the air, and submarines under the ocean reflect modern development. The road system is also modernized. The fastest car, driven by radium, travels 200 miles per hour. The fastest electric and pneumatic trains go up to 150 miles per hour. The names given tentatively by the authors to these technical marvels sometimes survived (monorail), others were replaced when they were actually invented (e.g. electric drag).

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Most of the utopias use the present territory of the US for their first experiment. Some describe the new life in one or two towns only: Boston, New

York City, Philadelphia, Washington, D. C., New Orleans, or San Francisco. A few are divided between the US and other existing lands, while some of the localities are vague or nonexistent. Howells gives an approximate locality for Altruria in the Southern Hemisphere, in the neighborhood of Australia or New Zealand.[15] The place of Taylor's Intermere is indeterminate, somewhere close to the Equator, the classical utopian island. Parry's Scarlet Empire is right off the shores of Coney Island, deep in the Atlantic ocean (the former Atlantis). Rosewater's Lukka lies in some enchanted valleys of Africa. On the whole, Americans liked to stay close to home; they would have liked their utopias realized in their country. They are not too mobile in time either: some utopists don't even step out of their temporality. The most frequent time span covered by the books reaches into the 20th century, less often to A.D. 2000. Rosewater's A.D. 2883 is unusual, so is Moore's A.D. 3000. The record is held by Thiusen; his utopians live in the 96th century.

John Macnie, who used the pen-name "Ismar Thiusen" was an unusual thinker, less concerned with social and economic systems than the working of human mind and character. He believed in the scientific values and power of psychology, though his utopians' ability to retain memories of a former existence and to penetrate the future is supernatural and mystical. Bellamy's mind-reading islanders (*To Whom This May Come*, 1889) are more impressive and thought-provoking. Since they are aware that their own minds can also be read by the other utopians, they refrain even from thinking an unkind thought; it follows that all their deeds are gentle and noble. Although Thiusen's psychology was far from scientific, he may have known post-Euclidean geometry, even anticipating the theory of relativity: "In any given region of space, any number of worlds can co-exist . . . Impenetrability, resistance . . . are but relative properties, effective only among the correlated set of phenomena that constitutes a given world."[16]

The paradox of American utopists is that their future-forecasts reflect past ideologies — the Enlightenment, Rousseauism, Jeffersonian democracy, physiocratism — even more than contemporary views, and are much too limited in their capacity to foresee our actual 20th century conditions and ways of thought.

These prophets of the future had dreams of fantastic technological and scientific discoveries and inventions, and these came true. They dreamed of social upheavals, the uprising of the exploited, and of certain improvements through parliamentary reforms; these, too, have been realized. But they could not foresee modern alienation, nor modern economy with its strange combination of "stagflation". In their case, limited imagination was a blessing in disguise.

*A selection from American utopian literature*

1790 Anon. An Allegorical Description of a Certain Island and Its Inhabitants.
1798 Brown, C. C. Alcuin.
1802 Reynolds, J. Equality. A Political Romance
1826 Paulding,J. K. The Man Machine, or the Pupil of "Circumstances".
1836 Griffith, M. Three Hundred Years Hence.
1840 Brisbane, A., The Social Destiny of Man.
1845 Judd, S., Margaret, A Tale of the Real and Ideal.
1847 Cooper, J. F., The Crater, or, Vulcan's Peak.
1848 Kent, E., A Vision of Bangor in the Twentieth Century.
1848 Appleton, Mrs. Jane S.: Sequel to A Vision of Bangor in the Twentieth Century.
1852 Hawthorne, N.: The Blithedale Romance.
1856 Moore, D., The Age of Progress; or, A Panorama in Four Visions.
1864 Blanchard, C., The Art of Real Pleasure: That New Pleasure for Which an Imperial Reward Was Offered.
1868 "Radical Freelance, Esq.": The Philosopher of Foufouville.
1869 Hale, E. E., Sybaris & Other Homes.
1871 Hale, E. E., Ten Times One is Ten.
1872 (Butler, S., Erewhon: or, Over the Range. — English)
1872 (Jókai, M., "The Novel of the Twentieth Century". — Hungarian)
1872 Elder, C., Dream of a Free-Trade Paradise.
1875 Mark Twain, The Curious Republic of Gondour.
1876 Collens, T. W., Eden of Labor: A Christian Utopia.
1883 "Ismar Thiusen", The Diothas; or A Far Look Ahead. (John Macnie)
1884 Ward, Elizabeth S. P., Beyond the Gates.
1886 Allen, Henry F., The Key to Industrial Cooperative Government.
1887 Dodd, A. B., The Republic of the Future, or Socialism a Reality.
1887 Ward, Elizabeth S. P., The Gates Between.
1887 Rosewater, Fr., Utopia. (2nd ed.: 96. A Romance of Utopia. Presenting a Solution to the Labor Problem. A New God and a New Religion.)
1887 (Hudson, W. H., A Crystal Age. — English).
1888 (Besant, W., The Inner House. — English).
1888 Hale, E. E., How They Lived in Hampton. A Study of Practical Christianity Applied in the Manufacture of Woollens.
1888 Bellamy, E., Looking Backward: 2000—1887.
1889 Bellamy, E., To Whom This May Come.
1889 Haywood, D. H., The Twentieth Century.
1890 (Morris, W., News from Nowhere. — English).
1890 Worley, F. U., A. D. 2050.
1890 Satterlee, W. W., Looking Backward and What I Saw. (2nd ed.)
1890 Michaelis, R., Lookind Further Forward: An Answer to Looking Backward by Edward Bellamy.
1890 Vinton, A. D., Looking Further Backward. Being a Series of Lectures Delivered to the Freshman Class at Shawmut College by Prof. Won Lung Li (Successor to Prof. Julian West).
1890 Fuller, Alvarado, A. D. 2000.
1891 Geissler, L. A., Looking Beyond.
1891 Thomas, C., The Crystal Button.
1891 "Edmund Boisgilbert, M. D.", Caesar's Column (Ignatius Donnelly).
1891 McDougall, W. H., The Hidden City.
1891 (Wilbrandt, C., Mr. East's Experiences in Dr. Bellamy's World. — Tr. fr. German).
1892 Everett, H. L., The People's Program.
1892 Daniel, Ch. S., AI: A Social Vision.
1892 Moore, M. L., Al-Modad.
1892 Chavannes, A., The Future Commonwealth, or What Samuel Belcom Saw in Socioland.
1893 Roberts, J. W., Looking Within: The Misleading Tendencies of "Looking Backward" Made Manifest.
1893 Anon., The Beginning.
1893 Miller, J., The Building of the City Beautiful.
1893 Niswonger, C. E., The Isle of the Feminine.
1893 Olerich, H., A Cityless and Countryless World: An Outline of Political Individualism.

1894 Schindler, S., Young West: A Sequel to Edward Bellamy's Celebrated Novel "Looking Backward".
1894 Harben, W., N., The Land of the Changing Sun.
1894 Welcome, S. B., From Earth's Center.
1894 Gillette, K. C., The Human Drift.
1894 Howells, W. D., A Traveler from Alturia.
1894 Howells, W. D., Letters from an Altrurian Traveler.
1894 (Anon.: The Story of My Dictatorship. — By an English and a Hungarian author.)
1895 Smith, T. K., Altruria.
1895 "Auburré-Hovorré, M", The Milltillionaire. (A. W. Howard).
1895 Chavannes, A., In Brighter Climes.
1895 Holford, C. N., Aristopia.
1896 Cowan, J., Daybreak. A Romance of the Old World. (2nd ed.)
1897 Caryl, C. W., New Era.
1897 Adams, F. U., President John Smith: The Story of a Peaceful Revolution.
1897 Bellamy, E., Equality.
1898 Craig, A., Ionia; Land of Wise Men and Fair Woman.
1898 (Child, William Stanley): The Legal Revolution of 1902.
1898 Sullivan, J. W., So the World Goes.
1898 Rehm, Warren S., The Practical City.
1899 Merrill, A., The Great Awakening.
1899 Pereira Mendes, H.: Looking Ahead: Twentieth Century Happenings.
1899 Bird, A., Looking Forward: A Dream of the United States of the Americas in 1999.
1900 Peck, Bradford: The World a Department Store: A Story of Life Under a Cooperative System.
1900 Caswell, E. A., Toil and Self.
1900 Grigsby, A. O., Nequa, or the Problem of Ages.
1900 Mason, C. A., A Woman of Yesterday.
1900 Edson, M. S., Solaris Farm: A Story of the Twentieth Century.
1901 Taylor, W. A., Intermere.
1901 McGrady, Th., Beyond the Black Ocean. A Story of the Social Revolution.
1902 Wooldridge, C. W., Perfecting the Earth: A Piece of Possible History.
1902 Devinne, P., The Day of Prosperity: A Vision of the Century to Come.
1903 Noto, C., The Ideal City.
1905 (Wells, H. G., A Modern Utopia. — English).
1905 Harris, W. S., Life in a Thousand Worlds.
1906 Parry, D. M., The Scarlet Empire.
1907 Howells, W. D., Through the Eye of the Needle.
1908 Sedgwick, H. D., The Coup d'Etat of 1961.
1908 Steere, C. A., When Things Were Doing.
1908 London, J., The Iron Heel.
1912 Brinsmade, H. H., Utopia Achieved: A Novel of the Future.
1914 Henry, W. O., Equitania, or The Land of Equity.

## NOTES

[1] After the publication of some classic surveys (Voigt, A., *Die sozialen Utopien*, Leipzig, 1906; Mumford, L., *The Story of Utopias*, New York, 1922; Hetzler, J. O., *History of Utopian Thought*, New York, 1922; Mannheim, K., *Ideologie and Utopie*, Bonn, 1929; Russell, F. T., *Touring Utopia*, New York, 1932), an interesting history of utopias was published by M. Grünsfeld (*Az utópia*. Budapest, 1937). Though new comprehensive histories, containing individual estimations, are being published almost every year (e.g. Servier, S. *Histoire de l'utopie*. Paris, 1967), in the last 15 years or so, more and more specialized studies have also appeared (Elliott, R. C., *The Shape of Utopia*. Chicago, 1970; Eurich, N., *Science in Utopia*. Cambridge, Mass., 1970; Flechtheim, O. K., *His ory and Futurology*. Meisenheim am Glan, 1966; Hillegas, M. R., *The Future as Nightmare*. New York, 1967; Mucchielli, R., *Le Mythe de la Cité Idéale*. Paris, 1960; Walsh, C., *From Utopia to Nightmare*. London, 1962, to name only a few). An early book on American utopias was written by R. L. Shurtcz (*The Utopian Novel in America*, 1907). More recent ones both on utopian literature and experimental settlements are by M. Holloway, *Heavens on Earth* (New York, 1966) and W. A. Hinds, *American Utopias* (Gloucester,

Mass., 1963). The level of these books is uneven, but the interest in utopias is growing, as attested by the numerous anthologies of either utopian writing or of writings on utopias (Johnson, I. W., *Utopian Literature*. New York, 1968; Lewis, A. O., *American Utopias*. New York, 1971; Manuel, F. E., *Utopias and Utopian Thought*. Boston, 1967; Negley, G.-Patrick, I. M., *The Quest for Utopia*, New York, 1952; Plath, D. W., *Aware of Utopia*. Urbana, 1971; Villgradter R., Krey, F., *Der Utopische Roman*. Darmstadt, 1973 etc.)

[2] A recent survey of these utopian settlements can be found in M. Holloway's above mentioned book.

[3] The only significant retrospective, fictional treatment, N. Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance*, shows his doubt and disillusionment with the Brook Farm experiment.

[4] Arno Press and *The New York Times* reprinted about 35—40 of the rare American utopias, an anthology of short stories edited by A. O. Lewis, and some more recent books.

[5] Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backwards 2000—1887* was published in Hungarian in 1892. The paperback edition appeared in a popular pocketbook series. (Bellamy, E., *Visszapillantás 2000-ből az 1887-dik évre*. Tr. Dániel Radványi. Budapest, Franklin-Társulat, Olcsó Könyvtár, 796—800.)

[6] C. Noto, *The Ideal City* (New York, 1903), p. 229.

[7] The two great English utopists, Samuel Butler and William Morris also ignored the possibility of an overpowering industrial development. Mór Jókai, whose utopia, *A jövő század regénye* (The Novel of the Twentieth Century) was published in the same year when Butler's *Erewhon*, makes much shrewder guesses about future industrial production, raw materials and world trade.

[8] We don't know the authors of *The Story of My Dictatorship*, which was published in Australia as well. The London edition (Bliss & Co.) came out in 1894. The translator of the Hungarian edition, Róbert Braun, met the English author — then a famous chemist in Yorkshire — in London, and he spent the weeks of translating the book with the Hungarian co-author who then lived in Bedford, Mass. (*Kormányzóságom története. Utópia Henry George gazdasági rendszere alapján*. Budapest, 1912. Athenaeum, Modern Könyvtár 164—166.)

[9] Daniel C., *Ai. A Social Vision*. Philadelphia, 1892, p. 183.

[10] Noto, C., op. cit., p. 320.

[11] Smith, T. K., *Altruria*. New York, 1895, p. 108.

[12] Noto, C., op. cit., pp. 322—323.

[13] In Daniel's book a Harvard graduate becomes a very successful ladies' shoemaker in Philadelphia. Shall we consider this single reference to a university graduate as an insult or as a compliment to late 19th century American higher education?

[14] Noto, C., op. cit., p. 242.

[15] The location of Altruria may show the influence of S. Butler's *Erewhon*, although the attitude of the two utopists is entirely different. Butler's bitter irony is entirely absent from Howells' happy and harmonious Altruria.

[16] "Ismar Thiusen" (John Macnie), *The Diothas; or A Far Look Ahead*. New York, 1883, p. 351.

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# Immigrant Experience in Hungarian—American Poetry before 1945

## (A Preliminary Assessment)

By

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### 1. *Factors working behind Hungarian—American writing before 1945*

Trickling emigration from Hungary to the United States started in the early 1870s, gradually gathering speed in the 1880's and 1890's and reaching its climax between 1905 and 1907. Although the barely resistable kinetic energy of the migration process was to generate relatively intensive movements in the subsequent years, the outbreak of World War I caused it to fall back to nothing.[1] The inclination to emigrate remained, however, substantial,[2] but the American campaign for immigration restriction and the subsequent quotas imposed on Hungarian as well as other national groups constituting the "new immigration" kept the inflow of Hungarians at a low rate.[3] Remarkably narrower than before the war, the channels of Hungarian emigration were directed towards Canada, Latin America, Australia and Western Europe.

As in practically all emigrations of the period under consideration, the agricultural population represented the overwhelming majority of Hungarian immigrants to the United States alongside with craftsmen and industrial labourers. Professionals were hardly represented, let alone *literati*. As the authoritarian regime in Hungary between the two world wars gradually drifted towards an alliance with fascism, liberal intellectuals, mostly of Jewish descent, left the country and a good part of them joined Hungarian—American groups of intellectuals. Important as it was, this addition of intellectuals to the Hungarian immigrants in America did not basically modify this ill-proportioned representation of society in Hungary. Nor were these newcomers always able to enter completely the social life of the Hungarian ethnic communities.

Hungarian immigrants settled in the industrial areas of the North-Eastern states: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan and the Chicago metropolitan area. Although the years of the Great Depression showed a remarkable geographical redistribution[4] of Hungarian–Americans, the traditional immigrant communities in the North-East remained the foci of Hungarian–American ethno-cultural life. The immigration of Hungarians into these mostly urban localities with heavy industry doubled the anguish of the immigrants'

separation from their traditional cultural environment. The transition from a semi-feudal agricultural way of life in traditional village communities in Hungary to an alien and mostly industrial as well as urban way of life was, of necessity, a shocking experience to all migrants. On top of it, some 60 per cent of Hungarian immigrants were Roman Catholics, representing an ethos that was still looked upon as un-American.

Leaving behind their rural past of strong communal ties as well as time-honoured customs and ways represented, for the Hungarian immigrants, the overcoming of their reluctance to move to industrial areas, the passage of the so-called psychological "rural-industrial barrier".[5] Consequently, a good part of the Hungarian immigrants' acculturation or Americanization took place inside the factory gates.[6] Due to the immigrant's virtual inability to find his bearings in a drastically different civilization, he had to draw upon the local communities of the same ethnic origin in the host country which acted as intensive catalysts in shaping migration processes, as "bridgeheads" of particular European cultures. These more or less temporary shelters made the transition from the old social environment and ways of life to the new gradual and thus bearable.[7]

Ethnic institutions provided the cement to Hungarian ethnic cohesion.[8] Of these institutions the Church and the press were foremost from the viewpoint of cultural and intellectual activities among Hungarian immigrants. The Hungarian Churches in America — far from being monolithic denominationally or organizationally — constituted a relatively stable factor in maintaining Hungarian linguistic and cultural traditions as well as ethnic consciousness. Except for a few publications claiming national circulation, the overwhelming majority of the output of the Hungarian–American press was to satisfy the needs of local ethnic communities. Most of the Hungarian-language papers were short-lived, but the number of various newspapers was relatively high.[9]

The formation of centres of ethnic density in Hungarian settlement in the United States was a necessity (random dispersion would have contradicted the laws of any migration process), which induced the establishment of ethno-cultural institutions. The process of acculturation among Hungarian immigrants was, however, relatively quick and smooth. This was due, among other things, to the moderate size of the Hungarian–American population, especially the relatively small size of the individual communities and the relative heterogeneity of religious life in them. That is why stereotypes, functioning as "a fashioning instrument working on the eccentricities of a polymorphous people in an attempt to achieve a common type",[10] though strong, were rarely in the extremes in number and to the degree of humiliation, concerning Hungarians. The moderate visibility of ethno-cultural affiliation of Hungarian immigrants and their ability to conform to the American work-ethic often won appreciation in America.[11]

## 2. *Some general features of Hungarian–American poetry*

Since the Hungarian–American community was virtually short of its traditional intellectual elements, Hungarian literature took a course of development drastically different from that in the Old Country. One such difference is the popular nature of Hungarian–American writing. Those who felt they had some talent for writing gathered mainly around Hungarian–American newspapers. Besides their news coverage these newspapers served as vehicles of popular education, thus their need for literary pieces, mostly poetry and short stories, was insatiable. Working to orders, so to speak, the majority of Hungarian immigrant writers daily satisfied the needs of humble, hard-working people for literature. Thus the immigrant men of letters were, even if talent was granted, not in the position to place quality before quantity.[12]

Forms of literary expression, apart from a few instances, were very conservative. On the one hand there were no outstanding literary talents among the immigrants or else they lacked the intellectual polish and the fertile literary environment in which their art could flourish. Some of the people writing poetry were educated clergymen with the strong literary background of religious education in Hungary, or they were journalists with enough literary skill to meet the needs and taste of the Hungarian immigrant reading public. There being practically no bourgeoisie among the migrants and the number intellectuals being also very limited, some of the writers came from the order of labourers, junior clerks, etc., to fulfil the *literary vacuum* among Hungarian-Americans with writings reflecting their own experiences.[13] There is no sign of their having been influenced by contemporary trends in American poetry or literature in general. A good number of them wrote in imitation of the Hungarian classics, János Arany, Sándor Petőfi, Mihály Vörösmarty, and, not infrequently, in imitation of Mihály Szabolcska, a conservative though popular, poet of the "idyllic" rural life vanishing in Hungary.

On the other hand, the predominance of the traditional Hungarian accentual versification in Hungarian–American poetry was the concomitant partly of the immigrants' drive to conserve the cultural traits of the Old Country, partly because of the fact that only the different varieties of this poetic form were familiar to the Hungarian-American reading public.

As to the content of Hungarian–American literature, conservativism was far from being general or even common. Both the writer and the reading public had roots in the same immigrant communities, both were thrown into the laborious, hum-drum life of immigrant workers. Thus the experience of the foreign-born working class people in America permeated the whole of Hungarian immigrant writing. Socialistic tendencies can be found even in the works of poets and writers who themselves hardly ever regarded socialism as a viable future. The everyday life of working class or common people is the dominant

subject matter of immigrant literature. This interest in the daily toils and sufferings of the labouring classes is conspicuous in Hungarian-American poetry while in Hungary socialistic literature was only developing at the turn of the century[14] and became one of the major literary trends only between the two world wars.

Hungarian immigrant literature also betrays a strong feeling of alienation.[15] The feeling of loneliness and helplessness, their being caught up in the ruthless order of an acquisitive society is another central subject matter. What Hungarian immigrant writings mainly lament is the lack of warmth and intimacy of human relationships. The immigrants had little experience of belonging to the new socio-cultural milieu although numerous writings indicate the strong wish to belong without fully denying the past. Cultural dualism (i.e., identity with the Hungarian past and the American present) appears as uprootedness: loosening ties with the old without striking strong roots in the new. The resulting feeling of being lonely or being an outcast enhances the immigrant's yearning for community, comeradeship.

The Hungarian immigrant literary scene was characterized by the relative over-representation of poetry, especially lyrics, compared with prose genres. The most neglected departments were the novel and the drama. Apart from the few Hungarian–American plays of melodramatic character by Pál Berák and some other playwrights as well as some proletcult plays staged in the 1920's and 30's, plays and musicals imported from Hungary dominated the Hungarian–American stage. A good part of them, however, conquered the theatrical world in New York.[16] Owing to their societal nature, theatrical events among Hungarian immigrants were, nevertheless, significant means of maintaining ethnic identity and cohesion.

Within the confines of this paper only the major topics pertaining to the shock of immigration in Hungarian immigrant poetry will be analysed briefly. Discussion is limited to poetic works published in collected form by Ádám Abet, György Kemény, György Szécskay, Gyula Rudnyánszky, László Szabó, Mihály Baja, József Reményi, Ilona Fülöp.

### 3. *Between the Old Country and the new*

The most frequent and all-pervasive theme in Hungarian immigrant writing — not unlike other immigrant groups — was an unquenchable longing for their homeland, especially the exact locality of birth and upbringing. Ádám Abet, who was virtually the first Hungarian-American poet to publish his poems in a volume, *Magyar Levelek Amerikából* (Hungarian Letters from America, cca. 1894), confesses his emotional loyalty towards his birthplace:

Akár merre üldöz sorsom,
Hazámat szívemben hordom,

Bár világ polgára lettem,
Az a hely, ahol születtem
S fürödtem a délibábban
Oltár, keblem templomában ![17]

Before and some time after his emigration, Abet was a popular socialist poet in Hungary, frequently publishing his poems in the Hungarian Social Democratic organ *Népszava*, and he was also the founder of the Cleveland-based *Amerikai Magyar Népszava*. The gnawing feeling of longing for the homeland left behind is almost invariably coupled by accusing the social wrongs and inequities at home which had forced the individual to leave the land of his ancestors. Abet writes:

Tapostak, üldöztek, száz sebből vérzettem.
Habár csak hogy élek, minden, mit vétettem;
Ápoló karjaid nem nyújtád érettem,
Mely erő vonz hozzád, magam sem érthetem ![18]

Mihály Baja, a Reformed-Church minister and poet, writes the following in his poem *Üzenet* (Message) written to his poet ideal, Mihály Szabolcska, who had urged him to return to Hungary:

Majd ha végső számadásra
Összeforr az akarat
S tudja minden ész, erő, hogy
Diadalt csak így arat;
S inkább veszni kíván, semhogy
Szolganép legyen megint:
Akkor hívjatok hazámba,
Ne haljak meg idekint.[19]

Social criticism is quite unexpected with Baja, but in his bitterness he blames the unjust social order in Hungary for having forced so many to leave and he is not willing to return even to die in the Old Country until the wrongs are rectified. György Kemény, the Hungarian-American "poet laureate", also blames the unjust social conditions, the extreme hunger for land among the peasants at home which drives rural people away. In his great epic work, *Vas András*, written in traditional rhythmic pattern and form, he accuses the upper classes for not providing bread for millions of labourers while preaching patriotism:

Bár az anyaföldet hitvallón imádja;
Eltiport földnépnek még sincsen hazája.
Tátogva tanítják a haza fogalmát,
Kik a föld javát mind önzőn elfoglalták
S míg lármás parádén büszke zászlók lógnak:
A kenyérből sem jut munkás millióknak.[20]

A frequent theme with immigrant Hungarians is that their wealth, knowledge and especially their political experience acquired in America should be

exploited to improve social conditions at home and to create a new Hungary. Also in Kemény's *András Vas:*

Még csak iskolát se juttatott sokunknak
A szegény szülőföld, bennünk mégse rúgnak
Átok paripák az elhagyott országba;
Inkább arra sarkall minket lelkünk vágya:
Ittkerült tudásunk, gyűjtött pénzünk árán
Szebb jövő derüljön magyarok hazáján.[21]

Hungarian immigrant poets continue to have a keen interest in the political life of the Old Country. This interest is partly due to the fact that to many of them to leave the country was not a final decision, but, even if their departure proved to be permanent, they preserved their Hungarian identity regarding the body of the Hungarian–American immigrant group as an integral part of Hungarian society and culture. Many of their poems commemorate Hungarian historical events, especially those connected with the March 15, 1848 Revolution and the subsequent War of Independence. Especially frequent is the topic of the execution of the 13 leaders of the revolutionary war on October 6, 1849. An intense anti-Austrian feeling — exceedingly strong with Gyula Rudnyánszky and György Szécskay — pervades practically all Hungarian–American poetry. Almost all the poets under consideration confess their spiritual fellowship with Hungarian historical personalities who had fought for the independence of Hungary and for the rights of humble people: György Dózsa, the leader of the peasant uprising of 1514, especially Prince Ferenc Rákóczi II who, after the years of fighting with the Hapsburgs (1703—1711), was exiled, and Lajos Kossuth, who met the same fate after the fall of the 1848—49 War of Independence. Szécskay, for example, refuses to acknowledge Ferenc Deák, the architect of the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867, as a person worthy of esteem. Because of the similarity of the fate of the exiled Rákóczi and his "kuruc" heroes, Hungarian immigrant poets, cut off from their indigenous culture, identify themselves, by extension, with the "kuruc" fate of loneliness, exile and hopelessness. The "kuruc" mentality is especially pervasive in L. Szabó's poetry: *Bujdosó a vártán* (Exile on the Watch) *Szétszórt tárogatók* (Scattered Pipes) could serve as best examples.[22]

Hungarian immigrant writing strongly reacts to the news about the events of World War I. The war itself is condemned by many of the poets. Again, strangely, M. Baja is the most articulate in dissuading (as early as 1912) Hungarian–American youth from joining the Hungarian army. We quote the 3rd and 5th verse of his *A háború ellen* (1912) (Against War)

Amerikát járó
Jó magyar legények
Egykönnyen a munka végét
Nehogy letegyétek.

Más itt most a jelszó:
'Nagyhatalmi érdek'
Ezért kell a magyar vitéz
Ágyutölteléknek.[23]

During the war Hungary is often depicted as an open grave and the poets often pray to the Lord to save the Hungarian people from final destruction and peril (Szécskay, Szabó, Kemény). Anxiety for the survival of the Hungarian people as a nation — a subject long present in Hungarian literature itself — is an especially direct experience for Hungarian-Americans. For the immigrant poet identifies himself with the whole of his race and extends his own experience of total dissolution to all of the Hungarian nation. After the unjust partition of Hungary, many of the Hungarian immigrant poets and men of letters in general turned to irredentism. But, paradoxically, this irredentism — as is evidenced by the poetic works under consideration — rarely meant their giving any support to the authoritarian, fascistoid regime in Hungary between the two world wars. Even Gy. Szécskay, one of the most irredentist Hungarian immigrants, says in his *A magyar kommunistákhoz* (To the Hungarian Communists)[24] that he would be pleased to see them in power in Hungary if they save the thousand-year-old country. The shock of Hungary's having lost large territories was enhanced by the fact that the majority of Hungarian immigrants had come from the regions that were allotted to the new national states created after World War I.

Apart from wishing to set the Hungarian people to its due rights, Hungarian immigrant poets in America assume the task of working towards the maintenance and intensification of ethnic unity among Hungarian immigrants. This, as a rule, takes the form of castigations for the Hungarians' disunity, for giving priority to their own businesses. L. Szabó is especially bitter in reproaching the Hungarian—American community for lack of interest in the work of its poets who ought to be recognized as intellectual leaders.

The New World has also left her impression on Hungarian immigrant poetry. With the passage of time, American subjects tend to increase remarkably. Hungarian immigrant poets start singing about the sublimity of the American natural scene which enthrals them with its vastness and wildness while hardly ever being able to compete with the domestic beauties of the landscape at home and with the intimacy the poet feels towards the locality he had come from. G. Rudnyánszky, who actually returned to Hungary after a few years, did not develop any liking to the alien land because of this patriotism and lack of adaptability due to old age. He writes in his *A tékozló fiú* (The Prodigal Son, 1912):

Te [a haza] csak vele voltál, bármerre bolyongott:
Míg nézte a zúgó nagy Niagarát,
Csendes honi völgyek halk csermelye zsongott
Bölcsődal ütemre emlékein át.[25]

Along with the gradual formation of an American identity a strain of affinity towards the American scenery appears in the poetic works by Hungarians in

America. The Hudson and the Mississippi rivers are often praised and Szécskay confesses that he likes the Hudson because it bears resemblance to Hungary, for the latter is also confined by steep cliffs and high mountaiss (*Dal a Hudson folyóról* = Song about the Hudson River), that is, the Old Country serves as a frame of reference. His *A Minnehaha* also praises the American landscape, but he laments that

Longfellownak zeng itt lantja . . .
Magyar dalt . . . itt ki hallgatna ![26]

L. Szabó wrote poems about Florida and California (*Floridai holdak* = Moons in Florida, *Csapodár hold* = Fickle Moon) in which the Hungarian past is abandoned as a frame of reference. In his poem *Lelkilátás* (Spiritual Vision), however, he confesses that he gives priority to the river close to his birthplace, which he visualizes with his heart:

Koránt se szebb a Mississippi,
Csak nagyobb, mint a Sajó,
Ez szűk hazám aszúbora,
Amaz mellette savó.

Természetet nem az tesz széppé,
Milyen gigász a méret?
Az dönti el: szemeddel-e
Vagy lelkeddel nézed ![27]

George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, F. D. Roosevelt, Mark Twain, Edgar A. Poe and other historical, political or cultural heroes of America are frequently addressed in Hungarian immigrant poems. In his poem *Edison*, Rudnyánszky compares himself to the great inventor, saying that they are the respective representatives of the heart and the mind, the Old Country and the New. Gy. Kemény, in his poem *George Washington* (written on the bicentennial of the first President's birth), underscores Washington's heroic deed of liberating his country. He, however, invokes the spirit of Washington to wrench this nation free from her new lords:

Hősi Washington ! Ünnepet ül most
Százmilliósra nőtt csudanéped;
Völgyön, a halmon s lelki tanyákon
Ünnepi zaj kél, őrtüzek égnek.
Ámde az Észme akkori napja
Bús ködön át néz gazdag határra;
Róma megújult és a tiport nép
Bábelek alját éhesen állja.
Vére pirul bár bábeli tornyon,
Terhet egészért bár maga hordott:
Büszke hazáját, emberi jussát
Elszedik itt az újkori lordok.[28]

The immigrant poet depicts himself and the immigrant in general as standing alone between two wordls, already cut off from his Old World ties,

but not yet integrated into the new. "We live in two countries and / we are not at home in either", wrote Szécskay in *Az én sorsom* (My lot).[29] Kemény bursts out in bitter words in his *Hát ki vagyok én?* (Who am I?) when pondering over his identity:

Hát ki vagyok én, hát mi vagyok én,
hogy kitagadnak magyar kevélyek;
itt még: örökké letipor engem
kenyérgondoknál a magyar bélyeg?
Ott: már idegen; itt: még idegen
vagyok mindenkor azok szemében,
kiknél a külső, üres parádé
lett a legnagyobb, nemzeti érdem
s kik aranyistent imádnak térden.[30]

The migrant spirit revolts against all forcible means of Americanization. L. Szabó, in his *Cinkbányászok* (Zinc Miners) cries out in his fury when he sees a noticeboard at a zinc mine saying that only naturalized citizens are employed:

Te olvasztó üst szája tátongj!
Kevés a test kell már a lélek,
Szedett-vedett ország, a roncsot
Átadhatom, de hagyd a lelkem!
Mit irigyled, már úgyse élek!

Megőrölhetted nyers erőmet,
Vége . . . Arany rudakba haltak;
De hogy kilopd lelkem tüzét is,
Ember-pokol, hogy eltaposhasd,
Arra nincsen s nem lesz hatalmad![31]

A most subtle expression of the divided soul of the immigrant can be found in the free-verse poetry of Ilona Fülöp in her volume *Tulipános láda* (The Chest with Tulip Motif). The tulip chest — like Beret's immigrant chest in Ole E. Rölvaag's *Giants in the Earth* — is a symbol of the past, a safe and peaceful refuge from the bustle of daily life in America. When the chest is opened, a long series of recollections of the Old Country home town, her family, her adolescent love and so on, start emanating from it.[32]

### 4. *The rural-industrial barrier*

The settlement of the overwhelming majority of Hungarian immigrants of peasant or at least rural origins in industrial areas in the United States meant that they had to face the psychological shock of the passage from agriculture to industry, from the traditional village to the urban form of settlement and way of life. To acculturate to industrial environment and adopt the daily routine of industrial jobs was as problematic as the adjustment to the strange social, linguistic and cultural milieu of which it was part. Sometimes it seems to have been harsher and more painful, for the social capsule of the Hungarian com-

munities exercised a cushioning effect on the immigrant's adjustment to spheres of daily life like communication in English, patterns of behaviour, social symbols, etc. In the depth of mines and the heat of steel mills, however, the community was not so effective a palliative. This assumption is partly borne out by the fact that return migrants with industrial skills acquired in America that were in demand in the Old Country returned, almost invariably, to agricultural areas to pursue their original rural way of life.[33] András Vas in Kemény's epic, for example, keeps on estimating the value of the money he has saved by the size of land he could buy with back home.

Hungarian-American poems describe the mine and the factory in gloomy colours, where the workers are pale, in weak physical condition, fearing accidents that cripple and impoverish them. These conditions are always compared with the shiny, healthy, natural agricultural conditions in the Old Country: the clean brooks, the grazing herds of cattle, the beautiful woodnote, etc., in an idyllic natural condition.[34] Kemény writes in his *South Bendi köszörűsök* (Grinders of South Bend):

> A fehér halálnak országa ez itten,
> hol a magyar ember csak szótalan préda.[35]

In his epic, *András Vas*, devoted a full canto to the mine, where

> Nincs éjjel, vagy nappal ásító üregben;
> Orgonavirágos tavasz ott nem lebben,
> Nincs fehér hó télen, napsütés a nyárban;
> Mint a sírgödörben: csak egyformaság van.
> Nem nyílnak virágok; bájos csillagoknak
> Fénye nem rezdül, hol csákányok suttognak.[36]

The mine is looked upon as a "dark prison cell" or an "open grave" and the miners are "human moles".

The immigrant peasants, coming from the village-dominated semi-feudal Hungary, found urban life disconcerting, almost unbearable and altogether senseless. Gyula Rudnyánszky points out in his *Hazajáró levél* (Letter Home) that "This America is a single large city" full of wonders though meaningless to him "If there is no village to be found". By "village" he means the European rural community dominated by primary human relations. In his *Amerikai bordal* (American Drinking Song) he praises some aspects of the life of Hungarian immigrants (for example, good income, social justice compared with what they had experienced in Hungary), still, work in the factories is "half blessing" "half curse".

> Itt a füstben megesik, hogy
> Az orromon túl nem látok;
> Gyári munka, bányamunka:
> Csak félig áldás, félig átok.
> Hej, álmomban szántok-vetek,

Rendet vágok a mezőn;
Már messziről látom, mikor
Ételt hoz a szeretőm.
Tudja Isten, más világ az ! . . .
. . . . . .

The urban ways, customs or fashion in a modern sense took a long time for the immigrant to get accustomed to and to regard as natural. Baja complains that girls in America cannot make him forget the Old Country because their beauties are artificial (*Magyar szívvel* = With a Hungarian Heart).

### 5. *Criticism of American society*

Poetic works by Hungarian immigrants frequently deal with the experience of social inequities the immigrant workers encountered. Working-class life is invariably painted in dark tones: e.g. the dirt in and around the factories, the long working hours, the permanent uncertainty of employment, the unjust distribution of wealth and property. Two verses of Szécskay's poem *A papagáj* (The Parrot) will illustrate the atmosphere conveyed by poems about the life of humble workers:

A behemót-nagy gyár tövében, ott,
Hol éjjel-nappal száll a füst, korom,
Mogorván ül munkástanyák sora
S piszok lapul meg uccán, udvaron.

A kedv riadtan ténfereg s vegyül
Munkásverejték sós szagával el . . .
Üdítő napsugár helyett csupán
A gondnak fojtó fellege ölel.[38]

Not infrequent is the expression of sympathy for the completely lost, propertyless immigrant. In his *A napszámos halálára* (On the Death of the Day-Labourer), Szécskay says that the deceased factory-hand had brought his only property, his shovel, to the morgue.

The number of poems dealing with the squalor inflicting many workers increases at the time of the Great Depression. Even L. Szabó, who was, in fact, only moderately interested in social issues, says that, although you are esteemed for your work in America, you are facing peril when the "shrewd" business is slack:

Hát amikor vesztegel a sanda üzlet,
Vagy orgiáz és greftel a munkaszünet.
Ki kérdi tőled, elcsigázott 'hunki':
Éhes vagy-e? S falatod honnan jut ki?[39]

A very common topic is the human cost of the contribution to American industrial growth. Remarkably large is the number of poems which deal with instances of the immigrants' becoming maimed or instances of deaths and irremediable diseases caused by accidents for which the indifferent employers are to blame. The ideas that this human sacrifice is needed or demanded by

America to grow big and strong sometimes reach mythic depth. Andrew Carnegie, whose furnaces burn out the "blood" and the "heart" of the immigrant workers to temper his steel, is often mentioned both in poems and Hungarian-American folksongs.

In a way, a deep respect for the manual worker pervades the bulk of Hungarian immigrant writing in the United States before 1945. "Love the proletarian, this should be your dignity" writes József Reményi,[40] whose prose works also manifest a strong interest in the lower classes both in Europe and America.

The power of capital or capitalist exploitation is not commonly held responsible for the state of the working man. It is, however, not without lesson that M. Baja is again the most articulate on this subject among the poets under consideration. He writes in his poem *Magyar keserűség Amerikában* (Hungarian Bitterness in America) subtitled *Labor Day ünnepén* (On Labor Day), that, believing in the gold mountains of the Promised Land, he came to America only to find that it was the power of capital that ruled over slaves.[41]

Worshipping the "golden calf" in America elicited the criticism of Hungarian immigrant poets mainly because they had never experienced anomie and cash-nexus relations in human interaction in their semi-feudal village communities of face-to-face relations. Reményi complains about the difficulty of finding his own place in a world where "the knees are trembling before the golden calf."[42] People are spiritual slaves to money and wealth from the chains of which a new Lincoln must come to free them — wrote Kemény in his poem *Lincoln születésnapján* (On Lincoln's Birthday).[43]

### 6. *The expression of alienation and loneliness*

Virtually all the Hungarian immigrants shared the experience of Ábel, the hero of Áron Tamási's novel *Ábel Amerikában* (Abel in America, 1934), which is expressed by what Ábel, arriving in New York from the Transylvanian wilderness, says to himself: "Abel, here you'll also be in the wilderness!" But this is a different wilderness; an urban wilderness of swarming people of diverse national origins and occupations; a wilderness of factories, stores, streets and a web of social and ethic expectations where it is incomparably more difficult to find one's bearings than in the forests of the Old Country. It is also a spiritual wilderness — as Reményi wrote — where you cannot rest your soul:

> . . . te vándor, tudd meg vadonban jársz,
> ahol a lelkeddel tisztást hiába vársz.[44]

It is not by chance that their commonly used symbol for America is Babylon. M. Baja titles a poem and also his volume containing his America-poems *By the Waters of Babylon*. This symbol implies both the idea of temporary

exile and captivity in an alien land. It also expresses the enormous size of things around the immigrants, the drastically different morality of the social environment as well as the diversity of cultures, languages and human traits.

The poets often feel that they are isolated from the public (ethnic public in the case of works published in Hungarian), because avarice, greed, preoccupation with work divert the immigrants' attention from enjoyning life, beauty and art. L. Szabó's disappointment is so great that, in his *Ne jőjjetek Amerikába* (Don't come to America) he dissuades potential emigrants from setting out, saying that the spirit is of secondary importance and "Even art is hollow-chested" in America.[45] Reményi also complains of the lack of beauty, the deceptive lustre and poor quality of everything artistic in America and in New York in particular. There should, however, be a great deal of beauty, says Reményi, since the huge metropolis has imbued all ancient cultural streams through immigration:

A Milliós Város mindenféle népnek
erőit szítta fel, miért nem látni szépnek?
Olaszok, norvégek, németek s annyi nép,
Magyarok, angolok csak tudják mi a szép?
De minden oly silány, máza a külsőnek,
létámító arca a sors-temetőnek, . . .[46]

The immigrant poets' feeling of loneliness is rooted in the experience that they are no longer an organic part of a culture, a social milieu. They feel that they had been uprooted and would never strike roots in the new soil. Their homes are "transitory shelters" in Gy. Szécskay's words. The immigrant does not feel that he is part of a continuous line of progress. They are unable to see themselves in their offspring because of the latter's alien, American ways.

### 7. *Concluding remarks*

A further re-occurring phenomenon in Hungarian immigrant poetry is the apparent reorganization of mental contents, memories in the immigrant minds. The most frequent pictures and visions of the Old Country are not identical with those of the actual regions in Hungary where the immigrant had come from although they play an important rôle. The most frequently mentioned geographical and cultural area is the Great Hungarian Plains from where emigration was practically nil. This area is, however, heavily loaded with elements of Hungarian cultural myth. Gy. Kemény's András Vas used to be a *csikós* (horseman) of the *puszta* (plain) and the clash between the oppressed people and the cruel and irresponsible landowners takes the form of a romantic duel *à la Hortobágy*. The herd and the mirage (délibáb) are commonly referred to as objects of their nostalgic feelings.

Common is the reference to the importance of correspondence between the immigrant and his beloved home. In the first years of the immigrant's stay

in America, the poems seem to substantiate an acute interest in the minutest details of life back home in the Old Country: certain trees are cut down, the death of a pig, storms, drought, etc. As time passes, immigrant poems seem to gradually shift from mere longing and thinking in terms of the Old Country to a more or less active participation and interest in American matters. Correspondence is also referred to as the generator of further emigration which is invariably condemned. Stories of both success and failure occur in the letters referred to in the poems (e.g. Rudnyánszky's *Amerikai levelek* = Letters from America), but many a poem was written to point out that failure was not always admitted. Thus feedback was distorted towards positive information adding up to the excessive magnetism of America.

Mention must be made of a rather different brand of Hungarian–American immigrant literature that has been called *proletcult* writing produced mostly by political emigrés after the fall of the 1919 Hungarian Soviet Republic. These emigrés, gathering around some leftist papers, especially the *Új Előre*, regarded their stay in the United States as temporary. At the same time, they looked upon themselves as internationalists and strove for the success of a world revolution. In their judgement, national or ethnic identities were of minor significance or even fetters to the revolutionary process. Except for a few instances, immigrant experience as such was not an important emotional source for their writing. There are instances of their preaching assimilation in order to unify the American proletariat. Expression of bitter longing for the Old Country is scarce in their works as J. Kovács wrote in the introduction of his comprehensive anthology of Hungarian–American socialist literature.[47] These pre-1945 political emigrés were far from intending to adopt American ideals and ways of life and did not actually experience the agony of changing identities, the pain of cultural suspension, the shift in values and way of life and the estrangement from their children. It is true, however, that they had a deeper insight into the social wrongs of the immigrant workers though this was only a segment of the total experience of immigrants.

The majority of Hungarian–American literature regarded the immigrant's "progress" as part of "the Hungarian lot" of being outcast by the homeland thus barring these literary pieces from attaining universal validity and appeal.[48] Hungarian–American immigrant writing in general and poetry in particular reveals, however, significant factors of the American experience in the sphere of literature and directs attention to some subtle aspects of the rôle of immigration in American growth.

Further and more comprehensive study of Hungarian literature in the United States before World War II would — as L. Bóka reminded us — contribute remarkably to gaining valuable insight into the populistic and socialistic tradition in Hungarian literature as well as into the true nature of immigrant experience among Hungarian–Americans.

## NOTES

[1] Rácz, I., "Parasztok elvándorlása a faluból" (Peasant migration from the village) in: Szabó, I., *A parasztság Magyarországon a kapitalizmus korában, 1848—1914* (Budapest, 1965) Vol. 2, 433—483; J. Puskás, "Emigration from Hungary to the United States before 1914" *Studia Historica* No. 113, (Budapest, 1975).

[2] Kovács, I., *A kivándorlás* (Emigration) (Budapest, 1938) 89—90.

[3] Handlin, O., *Race and Nationality in American Life* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co. 1957).

[4] The receiving areas of this redistribution were some Mid-Western states and California.

[5] Akerman, S., "The Psychology of Migration" *American Studies in Scandinavia* No. 8 (Winter 1972) 46—52.

[6] Gutman, H. G., "Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America 1815—1919" *American Historical Review* Vol. 75, (June 1973).

[7] Gellén, J., "Migrációs modellek" (Models of Migration) *Egyetemes Történeti Tanulmányok: Acta Historica Debrecina* 1978 (forthcoming).

[8] Breton, R., "Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigratns" *American Journal of Sociology* (September 1964).

[9] Fishman, J. A., *Hungarian Language Maintenance in the United States* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966) 20—41.

[10] Rourke, C., *American Humor* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co. 1953) 232.

[11] Cf. Wittke, C., *We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1939).

[12] Csorba, Z., *Adalékok az amerikai magyar irodalom történetéhez* (On the History of Hungarian—American Literature) (Pécs 1930); Konnyu, L., *A history of American Hungarian Literature* (New York; Trio Newspapers, Inc., 1962).

[13] Rickert, E., (ed.), *Amerikai magyar költők* (Hungarian—American Poets) (Budapest, 1920); J., Kovács, *A szocialista magyar irodalom dokumentumai az amerikai magyar sajtóban, 1920—1945* (Documents of the Hungarian Socialist Literature in the Hungarian Press in America) (Budapest, 1977).

[14] Komlós, A., "A magyar szocialisztikus líra előzményei és kezdetei" (The Antecedents and Beginnings of Hungarian Socialistic Lyrical Poetry) *A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Nyelv- és Irodalomtudományi Osztályának Közleményei* Vol. 10, Nos 3—4, 263—319.

[15] Cf. Chapter X of Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1951).

[16] Gergely, E. J., *Hungarian Drama in New York; American Adaptations 1908—1940* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1947).

[17] "Wherever I am fated to go, / I carry my country in my heart; / Although I've become a citizen of the world, / The place where I was born / And where I bathed in the mirage / Is the altar in the temple of my bosom!" Ádám Abet, *Magyar levelek Amerikából* (New York: Jonas Spiegel Printer, n.d.) Poem No. 4., 8.

[18] "They crushed me and hounded me, I was bleeding from a hundred wounds, / Though all my crime is that I exist; / You [the homeland] did not hold out your nourishing arms to me, / What force attracts me to you passes my comprehension." Á. Abet, op. cit. Poem No. 8., 12.

[19] "When for a final reckoning / Will is united / And every mind and force knows that / Victory is only thus gained; / And would rather perish, than / Be a people of serfs again; / Then call me back to my country, / So that I should not die out here." Mihály Baja, *Babiloni vizek mellett* (By the Waters of Babylon) (Debrecen, 1918), 20—21.

[20] "Though professing adoration for the country: / The downtrodden people of the soil have no homeland. / They teach the idea of motherland with gaping mouths / who greedily occupied the bulk of the land / And while proud banners are waving at noisy parades; / There is not enough bread for millions of workingmen." Kemény, Gy., *Vas András; Verses mese a vándormadarakról tizenkét részben* (András Vas; A Poetic Tale about Migratory Birds in Twelve Parts) 1922 (Place of publication is not indicated though the book was copyrighted in the Unites States in 1923.), 166.

[21] "Not even schooling was allotted to many of us / By the poor motherland, still stallions of courses in us / Don't kick the country left behind; / Rather, the wishes of our souls urge us: / By the knowledge acquired here and saved money / The land of the Magyars should see a brighter future." Kemény, Gy., op. cit., 168.

[22] Szabó, L., *Vándor sirály, Amerika* (Wandering Seagull, America) (Budapest: Genius, n. d.), 12, 26—27.

[23] "Good Hungarian lads / Going about America / Don't put down work / So rashly. / / The slogan is different now: / "Big power interest" / That's why the Hungarian warrior is needed / For cannon-fodder." M. Baja, op. cit., 38—39.

[24] Szécskay, Gy., *Vándordalok* (Wanderer's Songs) (New York, 1920), 121.

[25] "But you [the homeland] were with him, wherever he rambled: / While he was looking at the enormous, roaring Niagara, / The quiet brook in silent old-country dales murmured / To the rhythm of a lullaby through his memories." Gyula Rudnyánszky, *Napszállat felé* (Towards Sunset) (Budapest, 1913) 11—12.

[26] "Longfellow's lyre is resounding here . . . / Who would here listen to . . . Hungarian songs!" Gy. Szécskay, *Baltimorei rapszódia és más amerikai maggar versek* (Rhapsody of Baltimore and Other American Hungarian Poems) (Pittsburgh, 1938), 28.

[27] "By no means is the Mississippi more beautiful, / Than the Sajó, only bigger, / This latter one is the "aszu" wine of my homeland, / Whereas the former is whey. // Nature is rendered beautiful / not by how gigantic the size is! / What decides: whether you look at it / with your eyes or your soul!" Szabó, L., op. cit., 38.

[28] "Heroic Washington! A feast is held by your / Prodigious people grown to a hundred million; / Over hill and dale and at spiritual firesides / Festive sounds rise, bonfires flare, / But the Sun of the Idea of those days / Peeps through a sad mist upon the rich land; / Rome has revived and the downtrodden people / Hungrily braves the base of Babel. / Its blood shines red on Babel's tower, / Though it bore the brunt for all: / Its proud country, its personal rights / Are taken away by latter-day lords." Kemény, Gy., *Élet könyve* (Book of life) (Detroit, 1944), 213—215.

[29] Szécskay, Gy., *Baltimorei rapszódia*, 59.

[30] "Who am I and what am I / that I am disowned by the haughty in Hungary; / here, however, I am always crushed / by the Hungarian stigma at times of bread-and-butter worries? / There: alerady alien; here: still alien / am I in the eyes of those / with whom outward, empty appearance / has become the greates patriotic merit / and who worship the god of gold on their knees" Gy. Kemény. op. cit., 173—174.

[31] "You, mouth of the melting pot, gape wide! / The body is not enough, it is now the soul you want, / Srappy country, I can give you / the wreck, but keep away from my soul! / Why grudge it, I'm not alive anyhow! // You could grind my raw strength, / It is finished . . .Having died into gold bullions; / But to filch the fire of my soul, / To tread on it, human-hell, / You don't and won't have might!" Szabó, L., op. cit., 39—40.

[32] Fülöp, I., *Tulipános láda* (New York, n.d.).

[33] Akerman, S., op. cit.; Saloutos, Th. *They Remember America: The Story of the Repatriated Greek-Americans* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1956).

[34] Cf. Magocsy, P. R., "Subcarpathian Immigrant Literature" *Queens Slavic Papers* II (New York, 1975).

[35] "It is the country of white death here / where the Hungarian is a wordless prey." Kemény, Gy., *Élet könyve*., 157—158.

[36] "There is no night or daylight in the yawning hollow; / Lilac-scented spring never flit there, / No white snow in winter or sunshine in summer; / Like in a grave: there is only sameness. / No flower blooms, and the light of / charming stars does not quiver, where pickaxes whisper." Kemény, Gy., *András Vas*, 121.

[37] "It happens here in the smoke, that / I see no further than my nose; / Factory work, mine work: / Is only half blessing, half curse. / But in my dream I plough and sow, / Scything in the field; / I see from afar, when / My love is bringing the meal. / God knows, it's a different world! . . ." Rudnyánszky, Gy., op. cit., 201—202.

[38] "By the wall of the big factory, where / smoke and soot rise day and night, / The rows of workers' abodes perch / And dirt is hiding in the streets and yards. // A frightened mood is hanging about and mingling / With the acid smell of workers'sweat . . . / Instead of refreshing sunshine / The suffocating cloud of care embraces." Szésckay, Gy., *Baltimorei rapszódia*, 102.

[39] "And when the shrewd business is idle, / Or unemployment is having orgies. / Who asks you, weary 'hunki': / If you are hungry? And where you get your food from?" L. Szabó, *Kútmérgezők* (Well-poiseners) op. cit., 48—51.

[40] Reményi, J., *Idegenben* (In an Alien Land) (Budapest; Genius, 1934) Poem No. 5., 7.

[41] Baja, M., op. cit., 61—63.

[42] Reményi, J., op. cit. Poem No. 9., 11.

[43] Kemény, Gy., *Élet könyve*. 128.

[44] ". . . hear, wanderer, you are in the wilderness, / where in vain do you expect to find a clearing with your soul." J. Reményi, op. cit., Poem No. 9., 11.

[45] Szabó, L., op. cit. 58—59.

[46] "The City of Millions has imbued the strength / of all kinds of people, why doesn't it look beautiful? / Italians, Noerwegians, Germans and so many peoples, / Hungarians, English must surely know what beauty is? / But everything is so mediocre, outer varnish, / deceptive face of the grave-yard of human fates . . ." J. Reményi, op. cit. Poem No. 10., 12—13.

[47] Kovács, J., op. cit. 76.

[48] Ibid., 64.

[49] Bóka, L., "Egy megjegyzés, egy jegyzet, és egy javaslat Abet Ádám körül" (A Remark, a Note and a suggestion concerning Á. Abet) *Filológiai Közlöny* 1958, 489—495.

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# New Prosodies in 20th Century American Free Verse*

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## 1.1. *Imagism on free verse*

*Vers libre* as a radical programme — yet as only one of the many modes of poetry[1] — was first introduced in the Imagist Credo: "We believe that the individuality of a poet may often be better expressed in free verse than in conventional forms." In justification of this form F. S. Flint thus wrote in 1917: "much poetic emotion is lost in the attempt to thrust it into the strait jacket of regular metre and rhyme, and there is no intrinsic merit in metre."[2] The most important part of this statement lies modestly in the footnote: "Much so-called poetry is merely a more or less clever and successful fitting of this jacket, i.e. the jacket often makes the poem." T. E. Hulme wrote in the same vein already in 1914: "my objection to metre [is] that it enables people to write verse with no poetic inspiration, and whose mind is not stored with new images."[3]

We may see that Imagism attempted to distinguish between metrical verse, the realization of a formal principle, and nonmetrical, yet still: poetic, rhythms. Poets were proving what is for us already a commonplace, viz. that the technique of metre alone could not make poetry, that metrics was not an inherent feature of verse, but only a conventional use to which language might be put.

## 1.2. *Free verse as organic poetry*

Free verse thus denied the basic importance of metre in poetry. No one rhythm, no consistent metrical scheme was accepted as a basic pattern for any given poem. The Imagists rejected what Coleridge called "shape superinduced" and elevated the opposing conception that had pre-figured avant-garde writing: "form as proceeding". In modern art there must be no formal conception anterior to the work. Accordingly, T. S. Eliot wrote in 1942, in retrospect: free

* I owe a debt of gratitude to Gyula Kodolányi. He has discussed with me practically every point in the paper (and also in the doctoral thesis whose part the present paper is) and considerably improved it.

verse "was an insistence upon the inner unity which is unique to every poem against the outer unity which is typical. The poem comes before the form, in the sense that a form grows out of the attempt of somebody to say something."[4] Free verse thus elevated the inner organic unity — as opposed to the typical outer unity of metre — to a position of central importance.

The norm of regular metre, the Imagists claimed, proved to be a potential hindrance for the expression of the poet's personality. Accordingly, in a free verse poem, there was no "fixed metre or rhyme — but a rhythm organic to the image itself . . . and no form but the poem itself. It . . . [was] not forced to take upon itself a fixed shape."[5] Similarly, in the projective verse of the 1950s[6] "form is never more than the extension of content" or "the revelation of content".[7] This kind of poetry refuses metre and "the monotonous rapture of persistent regular stresses and waves of lines breaking rhyme after rhyme".[8] It is built upon what Pound called the absolute rhythm[9] which is in relation to its content ("the emotion or shade of emotion expressed") organic: "a man's rhythms must be interpretative", Pound claimed.[10] Thus, *vers libre* represents the organic principle at its purest. Herbert Read refers to the Imagists as the final completors of the Wordsworthian tradition of the organic theory: "It was with the school which . . . Pound established that the revolution begun by Wordsworth was finally completed."[11] Free verse could thus become the fit medium for organic poetry: a flexible form capable, in the creative process, of the constant changes demanded by the content (or "emotion").

### 1.2. *Free verse as context-sensitive absolute rhythm vs. metrical verse as context-free language*

Ezra Pound spoke of another characteristic of absolute rhythm: how, within a larger context, the original features of the linguistic units are modified. He thus wrote: " . . . syllables have differing weights and durations —

A. original weights and durations

B. weights and durations that seem naturally imposed on them by the other syllable groups around them."[12]

Pound's statement refers, primarily, to phonological units, but we can generalize this observation: linguistically speaking, absolute rhythm is a context-sensitive language, while rhythm in metrical verse is context-free.

We have adopted the terms 'context-free' and 'context-sensitive' from general linguistics because they best describe the opposition emphasized by Pound and other theorists of organic *vers libre*. Thus, in context-sensitive language (any natural language and, above all, literary language) the semantic, syntactic and phonological features individual words originally possessed in the lexicon of the language become altered when entering a larger linguistic (and

poetic) context, while they remain unaltered in context-free (artificial) languages.

Organic poetry and free verse claim to be context-sensitive language because here "form is the total interactive functioning of content and language, including every contributing element", and "the peculiar rhythms of the parts are in some degree modified in order to discover the rhythm of the whole."[13]

T. S. Eliot claims this rhythmic and semantic allusiveness to be the peculiarity of what he calls the musical poem: "The music of a word is, so to speak, at a point of intersection: it arises from its relation first to the words immediately preceding and following it, and indefinitely to the rest of its context; and from another relation, that of its immediate meaning in that context to all the other meanings which it has had in other contexts, to its greater or less wealth of association."[14] Thus, on the whole, the context-sensitive poem must be made to insinuate the whole structure of language and the whole history of a nation's literature.

We must naturally accept that in general this context-sensitive musical poem corresponds to all good verse, while our notion of context-free poetry refers to bad verse. Yet if we consider the bulk of late 19th century poetry, we shall understand that context-free poetry has the special meaning of metrical verse in the early years of our century.

Imagist free verse, as is generally assumed, was born as a reaction against the stultified form of late Victorian versification, which bore all the marks of context-free languages. Here the metrical scheme superimposed upon the linguistic structure was a mechanical framework, which ignored the interaction of words in the context, and thus created an artificially regulated context-free language. It became too mechanical in that it lost its connections with ordinary language without yet producing a high artifice in the field of metrics. It was not surprising, then, that the reaction against the late Victorian modes of poetry meant primarily a reaction against the mechanics of versification: metre. According to this line of thought, context-free late Victorian verse minus metre had to give context-sensitive poetry: free verse.

### 1.4. '*The prose tradition in verse*'

The dissatisfaction with language that gave rise to poetic experiments in the first decades of the century criticized the language of poetry from the ground of everyday language.

The relationship of poetry to ordinary language has ever been a changing one. In ages of poetic invention, everyday speech was subjected to a maximal alteration and poetic language deviated from its accepted norms. Free verse was literally, to use the definition of the Russian formalists, "organized vio-

lence'' committed on everyday language. At other times the tendency in poetry was exactly the opposite: its language was again that of common speech. Yet here, too, poetry remained organized violence in the sense that it consciously deviated from the accepted norms of the 'poetical language' which had been constructed by earlier generations. For all that, language in poetry is always more organized than ordinary language, although it can draw on the resources of everyday speech for its own revitalization.[15]

This century has witnessed a growing preoccupation with ordinary language both in linguistics and in poetry. Two of the most important trends in the philosophy of language — the Oxford and the Cambridge schools — were philosophies of ordinary language. This philosophical interest in ordinary language coincided with the poetic interest: "Every revolution in poetry is apt to be a return to common speech", T. S. Eliot wrote.[16] Thus, ordinary language was not only accepted as correct language, but also as the basis of all languages of which poetic language was only an adjunct. As such, ordinary language was considered the paragon of any other use of language.

For the Imagists, too, to revitalize the language of poetry meant not only organic poetry and absolute rhythm, but also to draw on the resources of contemporary language. "As a critical 'movement', the Imagism of 1912 to '14 set out 'to bring poetry up to the level of prose'."[17] — Robert Duncan, in his *H. D. Book*, says: "the main drive of the Imagists [was] away from the specially 'poetic' diction of the nineteenth century toward the syntax and rhythms of common daily speech."[18]

In his 1914 essay 'The Prose Tradition in Verse', Ezra Pound demanded of the poet a basic prose training, because the first step to build poetry out of prose was to bring verse up to the level of prose. "Poetry should be at least as well written as prose," Pound claimed.[19] Yet the poet cannot stop here. The Imagists accepted a departure from speech by a heightened intensity which again led to *vers libre*.[20]

After demanding in the "first manifesto" (the Imagist principles Pound had announced to Aldington and H. D.) to "use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation", Pound in his essay 'The Serious Artist', elaborated the Imagist belief that concentration, the very essence of poetfy, produced a maximum efficiency of expression. "The touchstone of an art is precision. . . . Good writing is perfect control. . . . Good writing is writing that is perfectly controlled, the writer says what he means. He says it with complete clarity and simplicity. He uses the smallest possible number of words."[21] Thus, free verse differs from prose in that its cadence is more marked, more definite and closer knit than that of prose, but more clear-cut than regular verse (for: DICHTEN = CONDENSARE[22]). In metrical verse, words of purely prosodic function — ornamental words filling the metrical pattern and completing the rhyme scheme — prevented that a concentrated diction should develop. And

the simplest test of an author is, Pound claims, words that do not function: "Incompetence will show in the use of too many words."[23] — "There can be no part [in a poem] that is redundant."[24]

It is through this alteration of prose toward concentration that the occasional rhythms of normal speech can be made persistent in the cadences of Imagist free verse. This verse stands somewhere on the borderline between prose and verse. Wallace Rice in a 1913 article in the *Dial* suggested that the Imagists were "aiding in the fixation of a third form of literary expression, prose in form, poetic in content."[25] Yet we cannot accept this too 'pacific' position: free verse is not prose in form, but, rather, it takes on some characteristics from prose and some from verse.

We should say that free verse is *persistently rhythmical without being metrical*. And this is the crux of the question. It resembles prose in its rhythm, approaches verse in its consistency, but unlike verse it does not insist on any single rhythm — it is nonmetrical. Free verse is not metrical but it is certainly rhythmical; it establishes a pattern distinct from that of metre, but one which is still a rhythmic pattern. For 'all metre is rhythm but not all rhythm is metre', goes St. Augustine's witty remark.[26] The new rhythmic pattern in free verse may be, as we shall see, strong prose rhythm, grammatical rhythm, visual rhythm, rhythm of images and tropes, or some combination of these rhythms.

Thus the triple demand for

(i) organic poetry,

(ii) a context-sensitive absolute rhythm, and

(iii) clarity and precision

has led away from metrical regularity and has given rise to such a vogue of nonmetrical rhythms that free verse has become an acknowledged alternative mode of writing during the century.

## 2. *Polyphonic prose*

Imagism made use of various 'voices' of poetic expression — rhyme, alliteration, assonance, consonance, refrain, itto punctuate the rhythms of free verse, and called it polyphonic prose.

"Polyphonic prose is a kind of free verse, except that it is still freer. . . . According to its inventor [Amy Lowell], polyphonic prose is the most elastic of all poetic forms. It makes full use of all the 'voices' . . . — cadence, rime, alliteration, assonance, return, and so on — hence the name 'polyphonic', which means 'many-voiced'."[27] — The new form Amy Lowell introduced was, thus, an extension of *vers libre*. Fletcher and Lowell were not satisfied with the neutral prose style or the ideogrammatic method: " . . . the ear instinctively demands that this bare skeleton be clothed fittingly with all the beautiful and subtle orchestral qualities of assonance, alliteration, rhyme, and return."[28]

John Lotz in his 'Metric Typology' qualls these orchestral qualities, *additive-variative* factors as opposed to *basic-constitutive* factors, which create metre in themselves.[29] Additive-variative factors have no metric relevancy: as added phonological and grammatical features, they underline and emphasize the linguistic structure and may function independently as well.

Polyphonic prose finds its organizing principle in the additive-variative factors, which, without creating metre, introduce extra regularities into the linguistic structure. The many voices make the text cohere through what Lotz calls *response*, the relation among comparable elements in the poetic structure; the voices make it 'context-sensitive'.

(i) *Assonance, alliteration and rhyme* function as indicators of cohesion on the level of *phonology*.

We have observed that in the opening paragraph of Fletcher's *Clipper Ships* the phonological correspondences are concealed in an interesting manner: their effect is reduced by the *counterpointing syntax*. It is thus prevented from being too 'poetical'.

> Beautiful as a tiered cloud, skysails set and
> shrouds twanging, she emerges from the surges
> that keep running away before day on the low
> Pacific shore. With the roar of the wind blowing
> half a gale after, she heels and lunges and
> buries her bows in the smother, lifting them swiftly.

It is important to note that the corresponding words belong to different grammatical categories each. Thus here phonological likeness is contrasted not only to semantic difference (which is a usual practice), but also to syntactic unlikeness. In the only instance where the rhyming units are both nouns, *shore* and *roar* are separated by the sentence boundary.

We found *concealed* poetic devices within a prose text: assonance, alliteration, rhyme were concealed in the sense that they did not occur, as in poetry composed according to traditional principles, at *syntactically relevant points*. This peculiarity of polyphonic prose again refers to its transitory nature. Where, to our view, rhyming poetry ceases and rhyming prose begins is of course difficult to mark out; yet the occurrence of additive-variative factors within prose texts is a clear sign of the conscious transition between poetry and prose.

(ii) *Parallelism* shows correspondences in the syntactic structure of the responsive lines. In Amy Lowell's *Spring Day*, for example, each elliptical sentence consists of, or at least starts with, a genitive noun phrase.

> Swirls of crowded streets. — Shock and recoil of
> traffic. — The stock-still brick facade of an old
> church . . . Flare of sunshine down side-streets. —
> Eddies of light in the windows of chemists' shops . . .

whirling of machine belts, blurring of horses and
motors. — A quick spin and shudder of breaks on an
electric car, and the jar of a church bell knocking
against the metal blue of the sky.

Amy Lowell, master of this "many-voiced form" indicates a higher (hypersyntactic) order of construction through refrain (return) in the opening movement of *In a Castle.*

Over the yawning chimney hangs the fog. Drip — hiss —
drip — hiss — fall the raindrops on the oaken log
which burns, and steams, and smokes the ceiling
beams. Drip — hiss — the rain never stops.
. . .
He enters on a sob of wind, which gutters the candles
almost to swaling. The fire flutters and drops.
Drip — hiss — the rain never stops.

Thus, polyphonic prose adopts the devices of partial correspondence (phonological and syntactic parallelism) and free repetition (refrain) to create through rhythmic coherence a more structured text in free verse.

### 3. *Grammatical rhythm: parallelism as a principle of organization*

As the parallelistic composition of polyphonic prose suggests, free verse may be constructed according to sets of rules provided by the grammatical structure. By elaborating the technique of parallelism, free versifiers could achieve a prosodic norm whose rules correspond to those of the language: grammar itself became the principle of organization. Since it operates with linguistic rules, this technique can be analysed in purely linguistic terms.

It is a technique specific to modern poetry, yet the epithet 'modern' has no chronological implication. In American versification it began with the prosodic revolution of Walt Whitman, which consisted in "the substitution of syntax for meter as the controlling prosodic element",[30] as Harvey Gross rightly observes. The structural units of his prosody, viz. the various syntactic parallelisms, were later identified by Gerald Manley Hopkins as "the Figure of Grammar" to which he assigned verse-making significance (verse = "speech wholly or partially repeating the same figure of sound"). The artifice of poetry, he wrote, "reduces itself to the principle of parallelism".[31] French *vers libre* theorists before World War I, Duhamel and Vildrac, examined how the various figures of grammar — the *constante rythmique*, the *équilibre rythmique*, and the *symétrie rythmique* —, when functioning as prosody, created an organized rhythmic structure.

With many refinements and even alterations on the original Whitmanic technique, Whitman has, in fact, fathered the nonmetrical prosodies of the

century. Ezra Pound made a "pact" with Walt Whitman; the poetry of the Black Mountain College and of San Francisco equally descend prosodically from Whitman. We can observe that collections anthologizing this new poetry all start with Whitman as the poet of the new America. Theirs is an acknowledged debt.

Parallelism, the opposite of deviation yet also a type of foregrounding, consists in the introduction of extra regularities into the verbal material. In deviation and parallelism alike, there must be an element of identity and an element of contrast, but while it is the latter that creates deviation, in parallelism the invariant part is important.

The types of parallelisms have, since the Vedic texts, been distinguished on semantic grounds. Bishop Lowth's and later Steinitz' classification of the Old Testament thought rhythms have all been based on the meaning of the thought expressed.

In our examination of parallelisms appearing in modern American free verse, we did not work with *a priori* concepts, but rather with those which we have developed in the course of the analysis.

Having examined a great bulk of poetry from the point of parallelisms, too, we may say that there exist three basic types to be distinguished on formal-linguistic grounds. We shall call them 'lexical parallelism', 'syntactical parallelism' and 'lexical-syntactical parallelism'. In defining them we shall use the framework of generative-transformational grammar.

In *lexical parallelism* the invariant part is one or more lexical item, while in the more refined, more intricate *syntactical parallelism* an abstract syntactic pattern functions as the constant element. Lexical constants refer to *surface-structure identities*, while syntactical constants imply *deep-structure similarities*. The third, the most common type represents a transition between lexical and syntactical parallelisms: here the lexical constant — as one fulfilling the same syntactic function in each parallelistic pattern — creates syntactic correspondences among the patterns, but only in the restricted area in which the lexical constant may function syntactically. If, for example, the lexical constant is a Wh-question word like *who, where, when*, then syntactically the parallelistic patterns shall be Wh-questions. But since the lexical functional units only defined the type of question, the inner syntactic structure of each question in the parallelistic series is not defined by the lexical constant, thus they show no particular structural resemblances.

### 3.1. *Lexical parallelism*

Lexical constants, as we have noted, operate in the surface structure of the language. They mark out equivalent pieces of verse without yet determining their inner structure. Certain surface-structure rules direct their placing

within the utterance, but these rules operate independently after the surface structuring of the linguistic unit to which they are finally added.

Address, for example, is independent of the structure of the whole discourse, although its recurrence may delimit stanzaic or other units. With the ironic intensification in the attributive part of his address, using synthetical and analytic comparison, Robert Creeley creates a fine parallelistic pattern in his *Ballad of the Despairing Husband.*

> Oh lovely lady, morning or evening or afternoon.
> Oh lovely lady, eating with or without a spoon.
> Oh most lovely lady, whether dressed or undressed or partly.
> Oh most lovely lady, getting up or going to bed or sitting only.
> Oh loveliest of ladies, than whom none is more fair, more gracious,
> more beautiful.
> . . .
> Oh most loveliest of ladies, in rain, in shine, in any wheather.

As verbal repetitions, lexical parallelisms have the function to delimit units of verse and thus to create rhythmic patterns. The repeated pattern of question and answer in the 'Song' of Robert Duncan's *An Owl is an Only Bird of Poetry* marks out each stanza and serves as the constant element of the parallel stanzaic forms.

> What do you see, my little one?
> I see an owl hung in a tree.

The repetition of the adverbial phrase "When I drive cab" divides Lew Welch's *After Anachreon* into units smaller than stanzas without yet determining the inner structure of each unit.

> When I drive cab
> I am moved by strange whistles and wear a hat.
> When I drive cab
> I am the hunter. My prey leaps out from where it hid,
> beguiling me with gestures.
> When I drive cab
> All may command me, yet I am in command of all who do.

The lexical constant "These are the trees" marks the beginning of larger units of enumeration in Vachel Lindsay's *Celestial Trees of Glacier Park* and, with this stanzaic grouping, gives some structuredness to the otherwise monotonous catalogue. The origins of this technique certainly go back to Whitman's *An American Primer.*

> These are the trees: The Stable for the Deer,
> The Bee's Skyscraper, The Angel's Spear,
> The Daisy's Tower, The Storm Wave of the Land,
> The Old Clock's Tower, The Manitou's Hand,
> The Mountain's Giant Flower, The Dreamer from the Seas,
> These are the trees.
> . . .

As we may well observe, this passage is very rhythmical, which can be explained by an intricate inner structure. The sentence "These are the trees" enframes the catalogue symmetric in its grammatical structure: the series of [1 Prepositional Phrase + 3 Inflectional Genitive Noun Phrases] is mirrored on the axis of the central Of-Genitive Noun Phrase as the enumeration proceeds.

"These are the trees" 1 PrepP + 3 InflGen + Of. Gen + 3 Infl Gen + 1 PreP + "These are the trees"

These fine parallelistic constructions already lead us to our second type of parallelism.

### 3.2. *Lexical-syntactic parallelism*

Our second type of parallelism, marked as 'transitional', consists in the repetition of individual words and the repetition of an overall syntactic structure. We have observed that the lexical constant, which serves as the invariable part of the parallelism, is usually a function word, which marks out the overall structure of the variable part in virtue of its being capable to govern — as a function word — syntactic constructions.

Ezra Pound in the *Lustra* volume often used this technique. In the second stanza of *Commission* only those noun phrases vary that are governed by the prepositions *against* and *to*.

> Speak against unconscious oppression,
> Speak against the tyranny of the unimaginative,
> Speak against bonds.
> Go to the bourgeoisie who is dying of her ennuis,
> Go to the women in suburbs,
> Go to the hideously wedded,
> Go to them whose failure is concealed.
> Go to the unluckily mated,
> Go to the bought wife,
> Go to the woman entailed.

Charles Olson, too, was a master of those parallel techniques which give prosodic shape through both lexical and syntactical constants. Already in the first item of his *Maximus Poems* he used a complex — horizontally and vertically equally stratified — parallel structure. Characteristically, the constant elements are grammatical function words — *that*, *which*, *where*, *how*, *when* —, while the variable parts are those phrases of which the function words are constituents, and whose overall grammatical structures coincide through the governing of these function words.

> But that which matters, that which insists, that which will last
> where shall you find it, my people, how, where shall you listen
> when all is become billboards, when all, even silence is
> when even the gulls,
> my roofs,
> when even you, when sound itself . . .

The whole stanza is one complex sentence with parallel constituents in the lines split into two or three: it can thus be read in both ways — from left to right and from top to bottom. Later within the same poem we find parallel prepositional phrases whose invariant part is again a function word: the preposition *of*.

Born of yourself, born
of hay and cotton struts
of street-pickings, wharves, wheeds
you carry in, my bird

of a bone of a fish
of a straw or will
of a colour, of a bell
of yourself, torn

The preposition *despite* is the lexical constant in Philip Lamintia's *The Diabolic Condition*.

...
despite my body flying away
despite the lizards who crawl into the altars
where the potents are being prepared
despite the intrusion of doctor's maids and
egyptologists
despite the old Doric temple carried in by
the art lovers
despite the nest of mad beggars
the chant is heard
...

### 3.3. *Syntactical parallelism*

Syntactical parallelism operates in the linguistic deep structure by setting up identical logico-semantic patterns. Thus it does not create overt regularities in the surface structure like the phonological correspondences of metre or the lexical identities of verbal parallelism. It organizes the inner structure of language.

Donald Davie in his *Articulate Energy* describes the use of these deep grammatical correspondences as "syntax like music".[32] Here the function of syntax is "to please us by the fidelity with which it follows a 'form of thought' through the poet's mind but without defining that thought." In other words, the corresponding linguistic units have identical abstract deep structures, but differ in their surface-structure representations.

Ezra Pound in his *Religio, or the Child's Guide to Knowledge* follows a form of thought larger than the sentence: the hypersyntactic pattern of a catechism-like sequence of questions and answers.

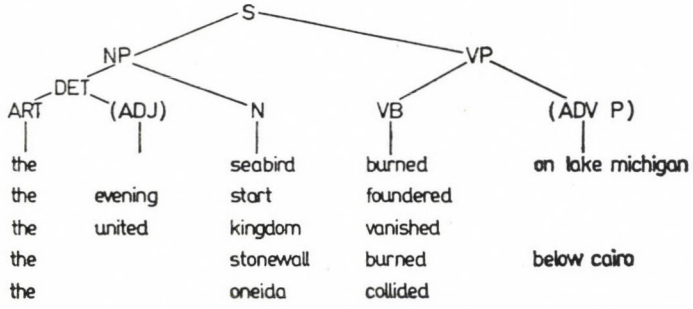
What is god?
God is an eternal state of mind.
What is a faun?
A faun is an elemental creature.

What is a nymph?
A nymph is an elemental creature.
When is a god manifest?
When the states of mind take form.

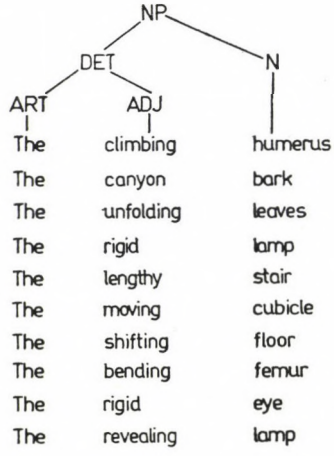
The recurrence of the same sentence in Harry Crosby' Vision (subject + transitive verb + object) creates a rhythm of thought characteristic of "syntax like music".

I annihilate museums.
I demolish libraries.
I oblivionize skyscrapers.
...

David Antin in his *history* uses the deep-structure pattern of $S[(Art+Noun)_{NP}+(Verb)_{VP}]_S$ with the optional elements of Adjective before the Subject Noun and the Adverbial Phrase following the Verb. This grammatical regularity, Antin suggests, has some implication to the laws of history.

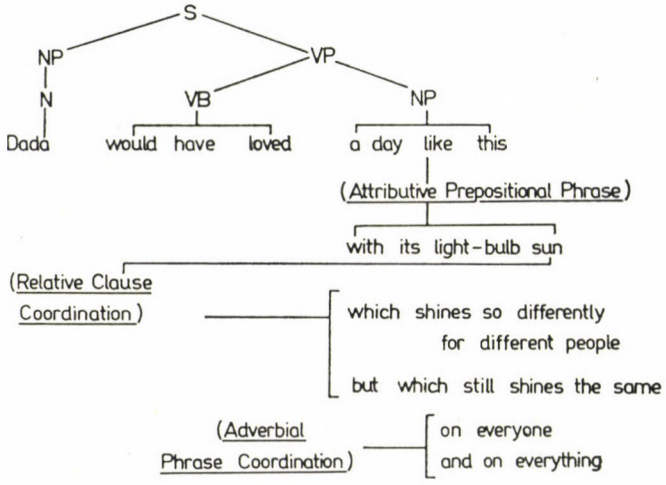



The use of noun phrases with identical deep structures throughout a long section of Kenneth Rexroth's *Prolegomena to Theodicity* goes certainly back to the Imagist technique of presenting separate images. The poem is a fine example of how the rhythmical recurrence of the same abstract grammatical pattern can give a clear prosody to free verse.



Olson's line "what you are, // what you must be, // what you can" in *I, Maximus of Gloucester to You* plays an interesting variation on the modality of the constant pattern *what you* [*BE*] by using the modal auxiliaries *must* and *can*.

Lawrence Ferlinghetti is a master of organizing verse according to grammar. His typography clearly marks the linguistic constituents — noun phrases, verb phrases, adverbial phrases, etc. — as if he composed after modern structural analysis! The visual arrangement in his 'phrasal poetry' ('phrasal' because the phrase is both the grammatical and the prosodic unit in his verse) clearly reflects grammatical relationships. Phrases of equal syntactic value receive equal typographic emphasis, while grammatically subordinated elements are also spatially subordinated to the respective constituents.




(from: *Pictures of the Gone World*)

This 'stanza' of the poem *A Coney Island of the Mind*

and a masked bird fishing
in a golden stream
and an ibis feeding
'on its own breast'

is constructed on identical deep-structure pattern:

*and* + [Art + (Adj) + N]$_{NP}$ + [VB + PrepP]$_{RelCL}$

We find identical sentence structures of the pattern S[AdvP(S embedding) + (NP) + VP]$_S$ in the same poem, with the typographical analysis of the inner structure of the grammatical units themselves too.

Constantly risking absurdity
and death
whenever he performs
above the heads
of his audience
the poet like an acrobat
climbs on rime
to a high wire of his own making
and balancing on eyebeams
above the sea of faces
paces his way
to the other side of day

Typography has to reflect the grammatical structure of the poem for Denise Levertov, too.

$$S \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} ADV\ P & \text{At the touch} \\ & \text{of the sea wind} \\ NP & \text{the palms} \\ VP & \text{shake } OBJ\ NP \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{their green breasts} \\ \text{their rustling fingers} \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right.$$

$$S \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} NP & \text{the sea wind that} \\ REL\ CL & \text{moves like a panther} \\ VP & \text{blows the spray inland} \end{array} \right.$$

(from: *Tomatlan)*

We have seen that in Ferlinghetti's and Levertov's poems deep grammatical identities are emphasized by visuality: grammatical rhythm and typographical rhythm harmonize in such a way that typography follows the inner rhythms of language.

The body of poetry built on the principle of syntactical parallelism proves: free verse has found in poetic syntax a structural principle that gives a high organization to the linguistic material. While giving up metre and strict rhyme patterns, free verse brought with it the rejuvenation of the ancient forms of syntactic patterning, of interest in rhetorical figures.

### 4. *Visual rhythm*

Modern free verse, as we have seen, attributes verse-making significance to techniques which in the English practice of the last 600 years had only marginal importance in creating the regularity of the poem. They acquire this verse-making significance not because they have not been used earlier, but — quite the contrary — because they are devices that always survived poetic

revolution, and exactly by their survival these devices proved that, as principles organic to the verbal material, they correspond to inherent features of poetry.

Formal patterning, although not organic in this sense to the language itself, seems also to be among the first characteristics of poetry. We have learned to accord some kind of meaning and value to form; we have learned to accept that in printing the rhythmic intention is marked, and that typographical arrangement has the function to indicate rhythms specific to poetry.

Blank verse was 'verse to the eye'; this means that already in the middle of the eighteenth century the distinction between the audible and the graphically metrical was taken for granted. Metrical structure was conditioned and modified by contextual pressures.

With the disappearance of the metrical superstructure, the role of these visual contextual pressures became only more important. Imagist poetry introduced a new prosodic principle, shape: "A rhythm is shape", Pound declared.[33] The division into lines became an organizing nonmetrical principle.

With the prosodic unit, the line, and the grammatical unit, the sentence, taken as *interactive forces* within a poem, there could develop a new 'measure' in free verse: the relationship of sentence to line and its visual, typographic indication.

In *The River Merchant's Wife: A Letter*, for example, Pound's norm is one sentence to a line.

> ...
> At forteen I married My Lord you.
> I never laughed, being bashful
> Lowering my head, I looked at the wall.
> Called to, a thousand times, I never looked back.
> At fifteen I stopped scowling.
> ...

In *The Song of the Bowmen of Shu* Pound established the norm of not one but two sentences to a line.

> ...
> We have no rest. Three battles a month.
> By heaven, his horses are tired.
> The generals are on them, the soliders are by them
> ...
> The enemy is swift, we must be careful.
> ...

The rather limited variation of this newly established measure (whether one or two or three sentences make up a line) could not create too refined a prosody. Yet this was the first step to be taken: "only when the line was isolated as a rhythmical unit did it become possible for the line to be rhythmically dismembered from within."[34] Visuality in interaction with grammar, the dismembered lineation of grammatical segmentation, may thus become a subtly variable prosody.

William Carlos Williams elaborated this technique of rhythmic patterning. In his later works prose rhythm and grammatical rhythm combine with visual rhythm in a fine synthesis. His *American idiom* and *variable foot* were the results of his constant effort to elevate free-verse techniques to the rank of prosody, and, consequently, the structuredness of free verse to the rank of metrical regularity.

Let us approach Williams' new synthesis, the variable foot. How can we define this new unit?

## 5. *Synthesis: grammatical rhythm in visual interpretation: Williams' variable foot*

"It took me several years to get the concept clear. I had the feeling that there was somewhere an exact way to define it; the task was to find the word to describe it, to give it an epitaph, and I finally hit upon it. The foot not being fixed is only to be described as variable. If the foot itself is variable it allows order in so-called free verse. Thus the verse becomes not free at all but just simply variable."[35] — Except for such an honest description of the act of the precise naming of it, nowhere in his theoretical writings does the poet give an analysis of the concept, which was born to provide "a way of escaping the formlessness of free verse".[36] But if we do not have a theory, we certainly have his life work — his *Asphodel* and other poems like the *Yellow Flower* from which we quote below.

What shall I say, because talk I must?
That I have found a cure
for the sick?
I have found no cure
for the sick
but this crooked flower
which only to look upon
all men
are cured.

### 5.1. *Variable foot limited by deep- and surface-structure rules*

To start with, the variable foot differs from the corresponding metrical foot in *length*. Metre operates on the phonological level: it counts syllables. The longest metrical foot consists of three, the most common one consists of only two syllables, but the monosyllabic foot is also recognized.

"A pedantic insistence upon detail tends to drive out 'major form'. A firm hold on major form makes for a freedom of detail," Pound wrote.[37] Thus to preserve the sense of the *whole* in free verse, poets abandoned the minor unit of the metrical foot and searched for a new unit on a higher level of language: the morphological, syntactic or semantic.

The superimposed regularity of metre ignores the semantic and syntactic segmentation of the linguistic material and thus creates a regulation only in the surface structure.

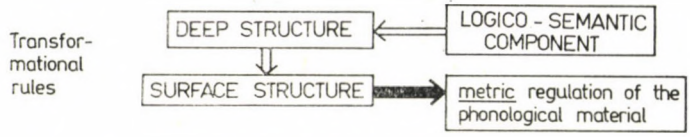



*Fig. 1.* Metrical verse

Figure 1 illustrates the operation of metrical rules within the system of language transformationally conceived. On the other hand, for the variable foot to express syntactic relations, foot boundary must coincide not only with word boundary, but also with phrase boundary. Thus the variable foot — "variable" because it corresponds to semantic and syntactic units (which in turn correspond to deep- and surface-structure representations) — constitutes a unit *organic to grammar*. When typography serves grammar by interpreting its constituent structure, there develops a grammatical rhythm comparable — in regularity — to metrical rhythms, except that grammatical rhythm creates a higher (or, linguistically, "deeper") structuredness than was possible with the "artificial strait jacket" of metre. As Figure 2 illustrates, in free verse visuality interprets both deep structure and surface structure, while metre could "regulate" only surface structure constituents.

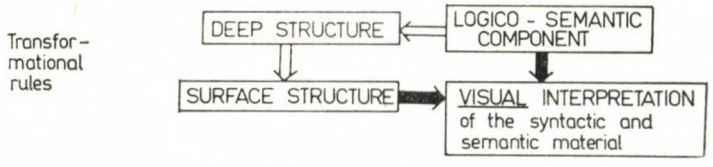



*Fig. 2.* Nonmetrical verse

It is thus in this way, through its correspondence to syntactical groups, that the nonmetrical rhythmic unit of the variable foot may be isolated. Let us now turn to its internal stress construction through which it coheres.

### 5.2. *The variable foot defined by the stresses*

The variable foot allows a maximum of four sense stresses: a phrase of more than four stresses cannot be kept as a single unit. The foot consisting of one word gives one sense stress, but here this number is determined by the lexical unit itself and not by syntactical rules. The most common stress distribution

is that of *two* sense stresses per foot (line). This is not surprising if we consider the inherent feature of language that came to light only with structural analysis, viz. the *binary* division of the sentence constituent structure. The sentence divides into the subject noun phrase and the verb phrase; usually some determiner and a noun constitute both the subject and the object noun phrases; the werb phrase falls into the object noun phrase and the verbal, which in turn is made up of the copula or some auxiliary and the verb. This is an extremely simplified illustration of the binary division of the language, but still serves our purpose. Naturally, we can extend this abstract scheme to complex sentences with many embeddings: the overall binary structure remains the same. Thus, if the variable foot is in fact isolated on phrasal grounds and thus contains syntactic units on any level of the constituent structure, there is much probability of its binary structure and, accordingly, of two sense stresses.

Cúrious shápes
awáke
to plágue me
Is dáy néar
shíning gírl?
Yés, dáy!

(from: *Full Moon*)

Líft your flówers
on bítter stéms
chícory!
Líft them úp
out of the scórched gróund!
Béar no fóliage
but give yoursélf
whólly to thát!

(from: *Chicory and Daisies*)

Many, many more examples might illustrate the two-stress line variable foot of Williams; they all prove that it developed under the influence of binary syntactic structures.

### 5.3. *Prosody and grammar*

The prosodic structure of a Williams poem, we may observe, is either grammatical or anti-grammatical, but it is never without grammar: the variable foot is distinguished on syntactic-semantic grounds, which explains its dependence on grammar.

(i) Most of Williams' poetry written in the variable foot is *grammatical*. Being grammatical implies certain typographic arrangement reinforcing or perhaps substituting punctuation.

Oh
the sumanc died
it's

the first time
I
noticed it

(from: *Some Simple Measures in the American Idiom and the Variable Foot)*

Or, the other way round, the unpunctuated poem presupposes a *cohesion* of grammar.

When you shall arrive
as deep
as you will need go
to catch the blackfish
the hook
has been featly baited
by the art you have
and you catch them

(from: *Paul*)

(ii) *Pictures form Brueghel* is the series of poems most conspicuously *anti-grammatical.* Each poem describes a picture; grammar, a prosodic device, underlines this description in an interesting way: the linguistic structure imitates the visual structure. End-stopped lines and one to one correspondence between line and phrase would give the sense of rigid order and would certainly not harmonize with the buoyant pictures of Brueghel. Run-on lines, on the other hand, give the impression of rich teeming and movement. Attributive phrases are split.

In a red winter hat blue
eyes smiling . . .

from(: *Self-Portrait*)

about a young
reaper enjoying his
noonday rest

(from: *The Corn Harvest*)

Articles are separated from the corresponding head nouns even by stanzaic break.

blindman's-buff follow the
leader stilts
. . .
roll the hoop or a
construction

(from: *Children's Games*)

he does not share the
resting
center of
their workday world

(from: *Corn Harvest*)

There is no one phrase or line to receive separate weight: in Brueghel's compositions no central figure claims more attention.

where the picture
and the composition ends back
of which no seeing man

is represented the unshaven
features of the des-
titute with their few

pitiful possessions a basin
to wash in a peasant
cottage is seen
. . .
there is no detail extraneous
to the composition one
follows the others stick in
hand triumphant to disaster

(from: *The Parable of the Blind*)

Sentences follow without a break or pause: no typography or punctuation marks where a sentence begins or ends. It seems we have to read the whole poem at one breath — one cannot rest his eyes on a single figure or group on Brueghel's pictures either.

before you
the bridge is enthroned her hair
loose at her temples a head
of ripe wheat is on
the wall beside her the
guests seated at long tables
. . .
there is a hound under
the table the bearded Mayor
is present women in their
starched headgear . . .

(from: *Peasant Wedding*)

Seldom is prosody even in Williams' poetry so consciously anti-grammatical. More usual is the clear grammatical and visual arrangement producing a balanced stress system.

Let us now see the relationship of grammar to stress.

Our analysis has shown that in the variable foot lineation corresponds to phrasal groupings: a line constitutes a noun phrase or verb phrase but seldom a whole sentence. The number of stresses per line, then, is determined by the complexity of grammar.

Poems with short simple sentences are written in lines of one or two stresses. We have observed — and also explained — that the most common sense distribution is that of two sense stresses per line.

The poem
is a discipline
What you need
to sober you
is what you have
. . .
the poem
laid crudely
delicately
before you.

(From: *The Self*)

Yet, if the grammatical structure of the poem is more complex, three or four sense stresses constitute a variable foot. This is the style of the later poems.

Shadows cast by the street light
under the stars,
the head is tilted back,
the long shadows of the legs
presumes a world
taken for granted
on which the cricket trills.
. . .
Ripped from the concept of our lives
and from all concept
somehow, and plainly,
the sun will come up
each morning
and sink again.

(From: *Shadows*)

The levelling of stress differences and the correlation of syllable distances between the stresses belong to the nature of language. Creating an equal number of stresses in each line, they may become tools of rhythmic expression in free verse, as the above example shows. Semantic and syntactic structure creates a natural rhythm which can be reinforced by such tools.

The smell of heat is boxwood
when rousing us
a movement of the air
Stirs our thoughts
that had no life in them
to a life, a life in which
two women agonize:
to live and to breathe is no less.

(From: *To Daphne and Virginia*)

In this poem the reader is forced to project a three-stress pattern to the lines. Thus under the influence of grammar — be it simple or complex, but always *clear* — the distribution of stresses tends to a relative order and regularity.

Summing up our observations of the variable foot:

(i) it is constituted by *grammatical* (logico-semantic and syntactic; deep- and surface-structure) units;

(ii) these units correspond to the *phrase level* of linguistic analysis: noun phrases and verb phrases of varying length constitute them;

(iii) consequently, the stresses through which the new measures cohere shall be *sense stresses*, determined by *syntactic rules*, and not phonological ones as in the case of metrical verse;

(iv) these units, deriving from the inner, organic nature of language, receive *visual interpretation* through typography.

*

"Libertate perit", had once been thought of *vers libre*. Yet already in the first decades of the century there developed, as we have seen, a variety of well-defined techniques to give, instead of metre, prosodic shape to the metrically unstructured linguistic material. Free verse is thus free only in its name. Yet since here no one prosodic rule dominates, free verse well escapes the "artificial strait jacket" — the "typical outer unity" — of the metrical principle too. Thus we may say that free verse denies boundless freedom and artificial limitation at the same time.

NOTES

[1] We have to state it right here that the Imagists did not claim that free verse was the only mode of writing: "I have never claimed that vers libre was the only path of salvation. I felt that it was right and that it had its place with the other modes." — Ezra Pound, *Literary Essays*, London, Faber, 1974. p. 440.

[2] Letter from F. S. Flint to J. C. Squire, as quoted in *Imagist Poetry*, ed. Peter Jones, London, Penguin Books, 1972. pp. 145—146.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[4] Eliot, T. S., *On Poetry and Poets*, London, Faber, 1969. p. 37.

[5] Jones, P., *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[6] From the point of view of free verse the present paper considers poetry from Anglo-American Imagism to the Black Mountain College as one line of descent: 'Pound's generation' and 'Olson's generation' as one unified movement.

[7] Olson, Ch., 'Projective Verse', in *The Poetics of the New American Poetry*, ed. Donald M. Allen and Warren Tallman, New York, Grove Press, 1973. p. 148; Denise Levertov, 'An Admonition', *ibid.*, p. 310.

[8] Duncan, R., 'Towards an Open Universe', *ibid.*, p. 213.

[9] Ezra Pound, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] As quoted by N. Cristoph de Nagy, *Ezra Pound's Poetics and Literary Tradition*, The Cooper Monographs II, Bern, Francke Verlag, 1966. p. 84.

[12] Ezra Pound, *ABC of Reading*, London, Faber, 1973. p. 199.

[13] Levertov, D., *op. cit.*, p. 310.

[14] Eliot, T. S., *op. cit.*, pp. 32—33.

[15] Cf. "No poetry is, of course, ever exactly the same speech that the poet talks and hears, but it has to be in such a relation to the speech of his time that the listener or reader can say 'that is how I should talk if I could talk poetry'." — Eliot, T. S., *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] Ezra Pound in *The Fortnightly Review* (London), September 1914, p. 462. As quoted in Peter Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[18] As quoted in Peter Jones, *ibid.*, p. 28.

[19] Ezra Pound, *Literary Essays*, p. 372.

[20] Cf. "Poetry must be as well written as prose. Its language must be a fine language departing in no way from speech save by a heightened intensity." — Letter from Ezra Pound to Harriet Monroe 1915. As quoted in Peter Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

[21] Ezra Pound, *Literary Essays*, pp. 48—49.

[22] Ezra Pound, *ABC of Reading*, p. 92.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 63.

[24] Williams, W. C., 'Introduction to *The Wedge*', in Donald M. Allen and Warren Tallman, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

[25] Wallace Rice, 'Pound and Poetry', *Dial*, May 1913. As quoted by Eric Homberger, *Ezra Pound. The Critical Heritage*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972. p. 103.

[26] As quoted by John Lotz ,'Metric Typology', in Thomas A. Sebeok, *Style in Language*, Cambridge, Mass., The M. I. T. Press, 1975. p. 373.

[27] Hughes, G., *Imagism and the Imagists. A Study in Modern Poetry*, London, Bowes and Bowes, 1960, p. 145.

[28] Fletcher, J. G., 'Miss Lowell's Discovery', as quoted in Peter Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[29] Lotz, J., *op. cit.*, p. 137.

[30] Gross, H., *Sound and Form in Modern Poetry*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1964. p. 84.

[31] *Gerald Manley Hopkins, The Journals and Papers of*, ed. H. House and G. Storey, London, Penguin Books, 1959. p. 84.

[32] See: Davie, D., *Articulate Energy*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971. pp. 85—91.

[33] Ezra Pound, 'Antheil and the Treatise on Harmony', as quoted in Harvey Gross, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

[34] Davie, D., *Ezra Pound. Poet as Sculptur*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965. p. 45.

[35] Villiams, W. C., *I Wanted to Write a Poem*, London, Jonathan Cape, 1967. p. 86.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

[37] Ezra Pound, as quoted in T. S. Eliot, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

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# Ideas of the New in Modern Poetry: Notes on the Anglo—American Tradition

By

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The manifestos and the theoretical statements of the Continental modernist movements rarely offer useful starting points for an examination of poetic method. In the spirit of their millennial calling, they are concerned before all with defining the function of the new art in society, with the relationship of art and its public, often of art and science, art and technology, art and psychology.

Therefore, when speaking about the moving forces behind their achievements, their references are social, psychological, or technological. Thus, interpreting constructivism in 1925, the Hungarian painter-poet, Lajos Kassák claims: "as the world view of Gothic, the yearning of man towards God, expressed itself in art in the pointed arch and in the laced ornamentation made with infinite patience, in the same way, the collective world view has found its artistic expression in the square, which suggests equilibrium, implies no hierarchy, and tends to spread out as wide as possible; and no less in pure, united colours and in unornamented planes".[1] Or there is André Breton, saying hardly a year earlier, in the First Manifesto of Surrealism: "I am confident that the time will come when dream and reality, these two states apparently so much opposed, will fuse in some perfect super-reality, if I may call it so."[2] Or, to proceed ever farther from questions of form and craft, there is the German poet Hugo Ball, one of the founders of Dadaism, writing in his diary on May 5, 1917: "It is true that for us art is not an end in itself; we have lost too many of our illusions for that. Art is for us an occasion for social criticism, and for real understanding of the age we live in. These are essential for the creation of a characteristic style."[3]

The long revolution of European art that took at last an unmistakable shape with the modernist movements is certainly too vast in its scope to be understood purely in terms of the immanent development of art forms. This revolution is an essential part, and an important manifestation, of that historical process within our civilization which is generally held to have started with the Renaissance and the Reformation. The three poets quoted, Kassák, Breton and Ball each must have hoped that in the new phase the artist will again resume his original role as shaman, as spokesman and healer, for his community.

It is interesting to observe that none of these three poets is English or American. The names may have been chosen arbitrarily, yet looking for representative modernist statements in a similar vein we will find that they come, with few exceptions, from Continental or Latin American artists. On turning to Anglo-American modernism, we will find the emphasis elsewhere. Not on symbols of absolute validity, not on the dream, not on social criticism. Pound's Imagist Credo revolves around these four terms: *rhythm*, the natural object as the proper *symbol, technique, form.*[4]

His central concept is the Image as "as intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time." Indeed, it is not difficult to see an irony, probably intentional, in the juxtaposition of faith and the four subtitles in italics. It may have been meant by Pound as a defiant demonstration of his dislike for the substitution of ideology or metaphysics for matters of craft in discussions about verse, as the futurists were wont to do. He makes no prescriptions as to the ingredients of the Image, as to its relationship to the contemporary world — the word "contemporary" does not occur at all in "A Retrospect", his basic summary of Imagism. And there is Pound's quarreling friend Williams, so much more susceptible to the biological and the social, yet claiming that "the poem is a machine made of words."[5] Or there is Eliot, whose chief concern, already before 1920, is the recapturing of the true tradition, and who, at the furthest end of the scale from Breton's efforts at the liberation of the creative consciousness, asserts in 1917 that "*vers libre* does not exist."[6] Such a statement makes a curious impression indeed in the contexts of the time, even allowing for Eliot's worries that the dilettantes swarming about modernism by that time will discredit the serious practice of free verse. But Eliot always ignored, with apparent contempt, the "avantgarde," as he ignored the important references his works shared with theirs, preferring to pay his tributes to the sensibility and technique of the Metaphysicals.

This curious contrast between the Continental approach on the one hand, and the Anglo–American on the other, has been pointed out and examined brilliantly at length by the Mexican poet Octavio Paz, in his Charles Eliot Norton lectures for 1971—72.[7] It would be an unfair and probably futile attempt to give a summary of Paz's rich exposition here. Elaborating the case through a series of antitheses which embrace many aspects of modernist theory, he contends, without making censures, that American modernism as represented by Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot "is an attempt at restoration rather than a revolution", an attempt to restore in English "the religious and aesthetic tradition of Europe" after centuries of Protestantism.[8] It is a "radical formalism";[9] "for the Anglo-American poetry is technique, control, mastery, consciousness, lucidity".[10] The observations made by Paz, though certainly outside the mainstream of American and English critical opinion, should not seem eccentric. They are likely to remain unchallenged or even unnoticed, it seems, because

few critics command the same breadth of knowledge in the matter of modern poetry as an international phenomenon or in the history of ideas. Yet American poets who translate from the Continental and Latin American Moderns and their followers have come to conclusions similar to Paz's with regard to Pound or Eliot versus the avantgarde, even though they stated them in slightly different terms. In a recent interview, after comparing Pound and Garcia Lorca, Robert Bly complains, "We've never cared for surrealism in this country".[11] Surrealism here, I assume, may be taken to have a broader meaning than just the historical movement so called. It includes all the shades of the "other", non-Poundian, modernism which receives such a distinguished treatment in another recent book, Kenneth Rexroth's *American Poetry in the Twentieth Century*.[12] Rexroth's uniqueness is indeed due, in part, to his lively account of the many modernist trends of the 'twenties' in America, now forgotten or neglected beside what is regarded in retrospect by literary critics and historians as the mainstream. As a firsthand witness (see his *Autobiographical Novel*), he reminds us that in the Chicago and Greenwich Village of the times there did teem that peculiar cosmopolitan growth which everywhere in the world bred the most radical modernist literature and art, along with anarchism and the varieties of socialism in politics. There was the whole non-Eliotian, non-Poundian scale — represented by practitioners of Cubism, Futurism, the Dada, Surrealism, by social revolutionaries and rebels against authority of any sort, by pioneers of the absurd. Rexroth shows that Laforgue and Corbière were not after all the only French poets who mattered for Anglo-American modernism, or even for Eliot.

The reader of Rexroth's book grows, thus, particularly aware of a feeling that lurked in the back of his mind while following Paz's antithetical arguments. For the sake of a clear-cut argument, it seems, Paz chooses to lean too exclusively in his demonstration on the poetics and ideas of Eliot and Pound. He must have been well aware of the nature of this operation and he tried to make up for it by his mention of Williams, Cummings, and Stevens, summing up their achievements in a few admirably phrased sentences on page 135. Elsewhere, he also comments on Apollinaire's possible influence on Cummings, on Williams' contacts with surrealism, on his Americanism. Yet the latter three poets do not play as they could a significant part in Paz's argument. They were not, let us recall, expatriates, but faced at home the fate, good or evil, America offered to her poets; they had no belief in the relevance of Medieval, Renaissance or Classical Chinese cultural traditions for the present age, to mention only a few of their serious disagreements with Eliot or Pound. Likewise no mention whatever is made in Children of the Mire of Rexroth's forgotten poets: Mina Loy and Alfred Kreymbourg, who like Williams had close contacts with the New York group of Dada painters; or the author of *Tender Buttons*, Gertrude Stein; and many others.

These neglects whether from Paz or from academic critics of modern American poetry are nevertheless justified in one respect. There is in Eliot and Pound "a critical and Programmatic facet which does not appear in other poets",[13] Paz explains. The main concern of Paz was, that is to say, with the dominant national trends in the poetics of the moderns and not with individual careers of distinction. And to be sure, the history of a national poetry from the point of view of scholarship is the history of its continuing trends as well as of the poets who have lasted. Whatever the upheavals of literary taste, it is unlikely that Alfred Kreymborg or Robert McAlmon will be once resurrected as the important writers of the 'twenties. The neglect of Stevens, Williams, Cummings or Sandburg would be more difficult to justify. Yet it is true that beginning with F. R. Leavis and ending with R. P. Blackmur, from the late 'twenties up till ten years ago, Anglo-American modernism had been appropriated to the ideas and work of Eliot and Pound by the academic establishment.[14] Wallace Stevens always received some attention and so did Marianne Moore, but Cummings was slighted by the spokesmen and fellow-travellers of the New Criticism,[15] while Williams scholarship is only a recent development.

Paz must have had good reasons, other than an overestimation of this critical tradition, to accept the distorted image entertained of the modern movement in England and America between 1930 and 1960, before its recent revaluations. We have to suspect a profound force in the background, behind the "critical and programmatic facet" of Eliot and Pound, a force more important though not independent of the interests and tastes of the academic establishment, a force which marked Eliot and Pound for Paz as the representative modern poets of America, rather than Williams or Cummings or Stevens who as a matter of fact had far more in common with his own ideas and poetic practice. The reason, I would venture to submit, must be the strong dependence of Eliot and Pound on an important intellectual tradition, a tradition unmistakably English and American.

A glimpse of what this intellectual tradition is and how it shapes the reactions even of a poet in some respects consciously outside it, can be gained from the short account W. C. Williams gave of one of his encounters with Lajos Kassák. It may seem as if I were trying to stage a dramatic constellation about modern intellectual history in the manner of Tom Stoppard, yet this encounter did actually take place, in a Vienna café, in 1924. Also, perhaps, as another proof of the mobility and the earnest curiosity of that first modernist generation. Williams, on his "year off" from the duties of the busy pediatrician and father of two sons, was trying to resume his contacts with his expatriate friends and with the modernism of the Continent in that year. Kassák, exiled after the fall of the 1919 Republic of Councils in Hungary, lived in Vienna, busy with editing his international modernist magazine MA (TODAY) and taking his part in the incessant ideological debates among the various fractions of the

political emigrés. Here is Williams' account, from a letter to Marianne Moore, dated April 14, 1924:

"I have just met a Hungarian modernist painter Kassak. He seems Russian in his beady-eyed, white-browed seriousness about things political. He and his friends take me for a boy — and I suppose I am. It is hard to talk American politics to a serious Hungarian through a translator who speaks poor English — especially if one has long since forgotten that laws are made and kill people and the Great United States is a democracy.

Kassák frowned, and I just caught the word — "passivist". Good Heavens, I suppose I am just that. It all seems so odd to an American that anybody takes these things seriously".[16] And in another letter written on the same day, to Kenneth Burke, Williams makes the following comment: "my excuse for this ignorance is that they had never heard of James Joyce".[17] I am not familiar with a record of this encounter by Kassák, yet we do not need one to prove the authenticity of Williams' description. Hungarians will easily recognise from it the austere and somewhat pompous attitude that Kassák is known to have adopted in the matters of modernism. In these years he reserved his detachment and wit for his poems and for the first volumes of his autobiography as in the following passage, the last lines of the long poem *The Horse Dies the Birds Fly Away* (1922):

one thing's certain the poet either builds himself something
that pleases him
or he can just bravely go on the bum
or
or
birds have swallowed the sound
but the trees go on singing
already a sign of old age
but it means nothing
I am LAJOS KASSÁK
and over our head flies the nickel samovar.[18]

(Translation by Steve Batki)

Kassák, as it also appears from the passage quoted earlier, was characteristic of the first Modernist generation of the Continent: of artists who were not inclined to see modern art in any context narrower than that of the incipient world revolution of politics, morals, and technology. To Kassák, the passionate seeker of a New World in place of the old one, Williams appeared an American schoolboy of perhaps good instincts but insufficient knowledge. Williams must have felt grudgingly, that like Eliot with the scholarly comments and erudite allusions of The Waste Land, Kassák would have sent him "back to the schoolroom," even though to a different one from Eliot's. Thus we may

conclude that the Vienna encounters of Williams and Kassák ended in mutual dissatisfaction. But it may well have happened otherwise. There was much on which, in the course of a more leisurely exchange, with the communication barriers eliminated, these two poets could have agreed. Kassák among the Hungarians, like Williams among the Americans, came closest to adopting the Surrealist practice, if not Surrealist theory, in its original Bretonian form in the early 'twenties. Both of them were plebeian in temper, not only in a superficial political sense. Both of them had great appreciation for the modern movements in painting, Kassák being a painter himself, and Williams an intimate friend of Charles Sheeler, Charles Demuth, and Marsden Hartley. This seems significant because painters were the real avantgarde of modernism, and among the poets it was always those who associated with painters who were the most radical in their search of the "new". It is only natural therefore that Williams did share with Kassák the essential modernist belief that the modern age had brought a radically new historical situation, a new challenge for the artist and for every man.

Yet it is the differences that we are concerned with here. These differences, as I suggested earlier, and as they appear from the two letters of Williams, must be rooted in the respective national traditions, or at least in the differences between the Anglo-American and the Continental approach. Kassák, though a rational constructivist, was hardly interested in poetics at all. In his essays, one does not find the preoccupation, so characteristic of Pound and Williams, with the theory of the image, of free verse, of the colloquial idiom. In his poetics, Kassák was less dogmatic than the Americans, but in his practical criticism more so. Thus, lacking a genuine interest and understanding of Hungarian prosody, as distinct from French or English or German, he regarded it as an unaccountable heresy when, about 1930, his one-time followers, Gyula Illyés, Attila József, and István Vas, adopted accented lines from folk poetry as well as readopting metric stanza patterns. Williams, despite his Americanism, his pronounced Populist sympathies,[19] did not attempt to support his poetics by references to social doctrine or to a new consciousness in a systematic way. He talked instead of "contact", a phrase that may have broad social and moral implications, implications of a Franciscan attitude to life,[20] of human relationships ruled by the anima, or of profound sympathy with the underdog, the New Jersey immigrant.[21] Nevertheless these implications were never formulated in systematic generalizations by Williams himself. Despite his brief though morally often admirable sallies into ideology and politics, Williams held an equal distrust for the abstract disciplines of the scholar and for the generalizing approach of the man of social or political action. This distrust, besides being a recurring attitude in artists since Romanticism, must have had strong temperamental roots in Williams. Profound as his interest was in history and politics, his approach was usually the opposite of Kassák's. He started from the "grass

roots" indeed, and tried to proceed from these to more general spheres with much caution. He always returned to the "American idiom", to the "variable foot", to "contact", to the roots of poetic technique and to the roots of human communication, as he understood them.

"Make it new". Saying so, Ezra Pound meant the making new of the poem first of all. With the Cantos he wanted to create an imaginary order to set the patterns for reality, a world of real values.[22] Kassák, as we have seen, started with the affirmation that it was the world that had to be made new — and the poem, built not from the fragments but on the debris of the old poetry, will be made new as a matter of course. It was not to be disputed, apparently, at a time when social norms and forms were disrupted that the poem could not but be written in "free" verse, and in the colloquial idiom. André Breton, to recall a similar case, aimed at a union of the states of dream and reality through the poem, ultimately to convert everyday life. The poem, he seems to have held with Kassák or with Hugo Ball, would take care of its being new in form and technique too.

Or, to infer from the implicit evidence of his manifestoes, its form will be made new as the medium of the envisaged union. The poem, we might say, will be made new through analogy and identity. The analogy of world and poem and the analogy or identity of content and form, it seems, are the basic assumptions of the modern movement. They are the only assumptions shared by all the variety of the adherents of modernism, regardless of where they put the emphasis in their poetics and thought. As Williams writes in Book III, Part I of *Paterson*:[23]

> The province of the poem is the world.
> When the sun rises, it rises in the poem
> and when it sets darkness come down
> and the poem is dark.

As to the identity of content and form, Kassák writes in the essay "On the New Poem": "Form is the adequate expression of emotional and intellectual elements, that is the poem itself." The idea of the analogical relationship of the poem and the world on the one hand, and of form and content on the other, re-emerged with especial force as an essential element of aesthetics with Romanticism.[24] In America, ever since Emerson, it has been one of the dominant ideas of intellectual history. It came to fruition in an extreme form in Dewey's aesthetics as well as in the theory and practice of action painting. In contemporary poetry, it has been one of the essential tenets of the Black Mountain group, permeating the whole thought of Charles Olson, and exposed in inspired and brilliant essays by Robert Duncan.[25]

Moreover, this idea of organic or expressive form often emerges in social and political thought. It serves as the foundation of the arguments of Whit-

man's *Democratic Vistas:* "America has yet morally and artistically originated nothing. She seems singularly unaware that the models of persons, books, manners, etc., appropriate for former conditions and for European lands, are but exiles and exotics here."[26] Here the organic metaphor, the analogy of form and content, is applied in a social and historical theory of art, and no doubt the Williams of *In the American Grain* carries on this same approach. As suggested, this principle of expressive form was a basic assumption in the thought of the first generation of moderns, of artists born, approximately, between 1880 and 1900, and its effect was seen by many of them to work outside art too, in any type of individual expression or social formation. It became, moreover, the aesthetic criterion of whether being a "modern" or only a "contemporary", to use Stephen Spender's distinction.[27] Thus, Marianne Moore, a modern in this sense of the word, expands the analogy to include the whole mind of the poet: "I feel that form is the outward equivalent of a determining inner convinction, and that the rhythm is the person."[28] On the other hand, poets like Robert Frost and Robert Graves, who both ignored or deliberately opposed the modern movement, are distinguished by a refusal of this radical formalism, Frost claiming that writing free verse is like playing tennis with the nets down.

In Marianne Moore's statement form is an "equivalent", that is, a mirror, perhaps a model. The relationship of form and "inner conviction" is thus analogical. But "rhythm is the person", she says: they are identical. Poet and rhythm are, for her, congruent parts of the same reality. There is a subtle difference here that we have deliberately ignored so far while analysing representative modernist pronouncements. In fact, there spreads out a wide range of degrees of opinion, between extremes of analogy and identity, ever since Romanticism. Analogy, at its furthest extreme, may emphasize not similiarity but the ultimate standing apart of things or even the void. For Mallarmé, according to Paz, "At the heart of analogy lies emptiness: the multiplicity of texts implies that there is no original text."[29] Yet the organic metaphor is a cause for joy for Emerson, and Whitman happily refuses to seperate soul and flesh in "I sing the body electric". Even further, at the other extreme of the scale, Charles Olson claims that reality is "without interruption", there is "congruence" in the "real".[30] These differences are, I believe, those of degree. They do not deny the fact that there is a striking similarity in the structure of modernist beliefs about the world, the poem, and man. There is a conspicuous denial of dualism in their thought. They believe that change in the sphere of art begets change in the sphere of society or in the individual psyche. Making new cannot remain partial in the world.

Of course we cannot resolve the individuality of major poets in a category of intellectual history. A shared principle, even though essential to the structure of thought in a period, does not explain personal idiosyncrasies, in fact it projects them out in larger contrast, giving poetry its due as the ultimate creation

in language, finally resisting reduction. Similarly, it cannot be our intention to reconcile in a beautiful ultimate embrace the significant differences between the two approaches discussed earlier, the one, let us say, predominantly Anglo–American, the other predominantly Continental and Latin American. The intellectual traditions behind these differences will emerge in view of our tentative reconciliation as parties to a long dialogue who assume an independent existence yet never quite lose each other from sight. In describing them, our approach has to be summary here, with even less regard to individual achievements than heretofore.[31]

The intellectual tradition behind the English and American approaches, it seems, has drawn on science, especially on experimental psychology, on linguistics and on anthropology for its ideas, its analogies, its metaphors. It is empirical, it favours the inductive method. The Continental approach, on the other hand, has drawn on metaphysics, on ideology, on sociology. The one is positivist, sceptical, and matter-of-fact. The other has seen the human situation, art, and society in terms defined by Kant, Hegel, Fourier, Kierkegaard, Marx, Kropotkin, Nietzsche. The listis, of course, incomplete, it only in tends to indicate a range of thought in modern history. The split, as historians of science and thought could point out, may go back as far as the Renaissance and the Reformation, to Francis Bacon at least on the side of the Anglo–Saxon tradition. Yet, exactly at the beginning of the Romantic movement, there was a moment when English poetry theory received a strong infusion from Continental thought, to add it to the achievements of its own national tradition. The gifts and the education of Wordsworth and Coleridge, it may seem to us, brought the possibility of a synthesis of general significance for contemporary poetic theory. Early on in the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth seemed to promise an examination of the possibilities of poetry, of the relationship of poetry to society, to language and to the mind, wide enough in scope to employ critically all the best ideas of the age. "... the state of public taste," he claimed, "could not be determined, without pointing out in what manner language and the human mind act and re-act on each other, and without retracing the revolutions, not of literature alone, but likewise of society itself."[32] This sentence may be read with justice as the promise of a theory to be supported by the English empirical tradition, by psychology and linguistics, as well as by contemporary studies of society, whether of the British school of economists or of the French Enlightenment and Revolution. However mild aspect we lend to the word "revolutions", Wordsworth's statement is a striking proof of his and Coleridge's awareness of the essential function of poetry in society. Yet, as we know, the Preface shifted its attention in the following entirely, in a language circumscribed and almost scientifically precise, toward an examination of "how language and the human mind act and react on each other," while the second object of the statement was left in neglect.

This departure, in a way, pointed the direction for the brilliant aesthetic work of Coleridge as well. One of Coleridge's merits was the transmission of central ideas from German aesthetic thought, among them the idea of the organic metaphor, to England.[33] Moreover, as René Wellek tells us, Coleridge immediately adopted these ideas to epistemology, to empirical psychology, to "an analysis of the human mind,"[34] that is, to the great English tradition in philosophy and thought. But the French intellect, which produced the most advanced social thought of the time, was a blind spot in Coleridge's mind. This weakness in Coleridge is explained, or rather motivated, by a passionate personal prejudice against all things French, a prejudice that only grew as bigotry and chauvinism seized his mind in old age.[35] Yet we have to suspect that the political climate of Britain during the Napoleonic years also strongly asserted itself, beyond reason, against any "imports" of the French intellect. Fear of moral and political suppression have to be counted with — it is enough to remember the harassments suffered by William Blake. An obscure man who was even reputed to be mad, he still seemed dangerous enough to power, to the state, to be kept under vigilant eyes. His work bears a strong awareness that the nature of power is a problem of the first order for the age, the age of the industrial revolution and of the arising modern state. Coleridge and Wordsworth, unfortunately, bypassed this problem, and so did Keats, leaving it for Shelley and Byron, poets of probably lesser sensitivity toward the specific situation of poetry, to face it as the unavoidable theme and to suffer it in their lives.

We do not mention the peculiar concerns and peculiar neglects of the main English tradition in order to give support to value judgements on behalf of French or German poetry as against the English, or *vice versa*. It would be impossible to claim that the impact of the ideas of, for instance, Hegel or Fourier, was the criterion of great poetry in the 1840's, or equally, that the work of Sir James Frazer had to make its influence on any work that aspired to greatness in the 1920's, as it did on the Waste Land. While it is true that a system or the fundamental doctrines and beliefs of a representative philosophy or religion are the indispensable framework in terms of which the poet can express himself and the age adequately, no such system enjoyed absolute priority to fulfill this function in poetry in the last 180 years.

What we witness, instead, is a curious "distribution of labour" in the consciousness of modern poetry, and it was exactly the striking national traits arising out of this long-founded division that served as our starting point. Thus it seems that English and American poets have concentrated their efforts more on introducing into the current the new scientific vision of man, the theories of knowledge, communication, and language than the forms of radical social consciousness, of the exploration of the subjective, of the structure of the psyche. Though the work of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris was a strong corrective to the empirical tradition in the later 19th century, Coleridge's choice reasserted itself

when T. S. Eliot, the philosophically best schooled poet in his generation, adopted the ideas of F. H. Bradley, the author of *Appearance and Reality*. Hugh Kenner pointed out how deeply Bradley's epistemological position imbued Eliot's work.[36] It is natural, then, that in his essays, the stuff that Eliot's metaphors are made of is usually the "objective" disciplines, and rarely history or the curiosities of human behaviour. It is through them that his essays assumed their characteristic semblance of objective argument. His famous extended metaphor about artistic creation is one from chemistry, even though not the most recent chemistry.[37] Ezra Pound carried on the tradition in his aesthetic speculations through his concentration on what is all but palpable, on "craft". He based the structure of his Cantos on the studies of a linguist, and his works are rich with anthropological references, again in the Anglo–Saxon tradition. The tradition asserts itself as a selective principle in the case of W. C. Williams. After the unfavourable reception of *Kora in Hell*, his ambitious attempt to weld painful personal experience with surrealist invention,[38] he was compelled to depart along the other possible course that had been given in his make-up, and concentrated his attention on the "thing" as objective in the extreme. For some years he even maintained a keen interest in a unifying structural approach to all the phnomena of the world, as expounded by an inventor friend in the city of Paterson.[39] This interest found its way, among other scientific facts, into the poem *Paterson*, which remains the greatest modern attempt in English to fuse in poetry the "trite" historical documents of an industrial city, and our essential emotions, love and hate of each other and of the four primordial elements, that is to say, to fuse extremes of the objective and the subjective, of universal and particular.

This fascination with the concrete and with sciences of the concrete continues with the American poets of our days. Charles Olson depended on geography and on the history of science. Gary Snyder fuses Indian lore and the new ecological consciousness. And it cannot be an accident that poets as different as Elizabeth Bishop and Edward Dorn both have published books of verse with the title *Geography*.[40] It would be easy to continue this list almost without an end; and it would be just as difficult to recall important poets in England and America, with the exception of W. H. Auden, whose approach to the world is imbued to such a degree with Marxism, or existential thought, or the structure (and not the popularized terminology) of psychoanalytical thought.

With this, it seems, our sketch arrived back to its departure point. Our purpose was to describe some aspects of an apparent discrepancy well known to everyone who has compared modern poetry in various European languages. We also tried to show that however different ideas the first generation of modern poets confessed about the "new", these are complementary rather than opposed. Modern poetry, though difficult to bring under a common definition, does exhibit a distinct consciousness of its own.

## REFERENCES AND NOTES

[1] Kassák, L., "A korszerű művészet él". 1926. In: *Az izmusok története*. Magvető, Budapest, 1972. p. 26.

[2] Breton, A., *The First Surrealist Manifesto*. The quotation is in my translation.

[3] In: Richter, H., *Dadaism*. Thames and Hudson, London, 1965. p. 48.

[4] "A Retrospect". *The Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*. Faber, London, 1965.

[5] Williams, W. C., *Selected Essays*. New Directions, New York, 1969, p. 256.

[6] "Reflection on Vers Libre". 1917. In: *To Criticize the Critic*. Faber, London, 1965, p. 189.

[7] *Children of the Mire: Modern Poetry from Romanticism to the Avantgarde*. Harvard U. P., Cambridge, 1974.

[8] Ibid. p. 134.

[9] Ibid. p. 135.

[10] Ibid. p. 133.

[11] Interview with Robert Bly. *San Francisco Book Review*, special issue, No. 19. No date (1972?).

[12] *American Poetry in the Twentieth Century*. Herder and Herder, New York, 1971.

[13] Paz, op. cit. p. 135.

[14] Though it is, in a way, inaccurate to mention Pound along with Eliot as an establishment poet of the Anglo—American academy, it is at least true for the Pound of the London years. The critical ideas he formulated at the time were canonized together with the work of Eliot, while his poetic achievement starting with the Cantos was left in neglect by academics until the 50's.

[15] Blackmur, R. P., *Form and Value in Modern Poetry*. Anchor Books, Doubleday, New York. — G. S. Fraser, *Vision and Rhetoric*. Faber, London, 1959, etc.

[16] *The Selected Letters of William Carlos Williams*. Ed. John Thirlwall. Random House, New York, No. 45. This was probably not the first encounter of the two men, but the first one recorded in the published correspondence. Cf. Weaver, M., *William Carlos Williams: The American Background*. Cambridge, 1971. p. 44 n.

[17] Williams, *The Selected Letters*, No. 46.

[18] Critics interpret this last line as a reference to the Russian Revolution, which is in fact denying fancy to Kassák and putting him more narrowly into the category of politically committed avantgarde poetry.

[19] As in the whole of *In the American Grain*, or in the long essay "The American Background", reprinted in *Selected Essays*.

[20] Levertov, D., "Williams and the Duende". In: *The Poet in the World*. New Directions, New York, 1974, p. 257.

[21] Coles, R., *Williams Carlos Williams: The Knack of Survial in America*. Rutgers U. P., New Burnswick, 1975.

[22] As I am concerned not with the failures but the lasting and influential achievements of modern poetry here, I regard the Cantos only as an important method and as a means of analogy for the moment. The ideology of the Cantos and the ideas concerning society, economy etc. in *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* do not concern me here, though indirectly they seem relevant for my basic proposition, as proofs of the weakness of ideological thought in the Anglo—American tradition. It may be due to this traditional weakness that sallies into the ideological like Pound's prove fatally wrong.

[23] *Paterson*. New Direction, New York, 1963. p. 99.

[24] Wellek R. I., *History of Modern Criticism*. Jonathan Cape, London, 1955, Vol. I., p. 2. ff.

[25] In: *The Poetics of the New American Poetry*, Ed. Donald Allen and Warren Tallman. Grove Press, New York, 1974.

[26] *Complete Poems and Selected Prose*, Ed. Emory Holloway, Nonesuch Press, London, p. 690.

[27] *The Struggle of the Modern*. Hamish Hamilton, London, 1963.

[28] "A Note on Poetry". In: *The Oxford Anthology of American Literature*, Ed. Norman Pearson and W. R. Benét. Oxford U. P., New York, 1938, p. 1319.

[29] Paz, Op. cit., p. 71.

[30] Olson, Ch., "Equal, That Is to the Real Itself". In: *Selected Writings*, ed. Robert Creeley. New Directions, New York, 1969, p. 48. The important differences between romantics like Emerson or, to some extent, Whitman, and a modern like Charles Olson are neglected here; they would deserve special attention.

[31] As examples of this dialogue, sometimes actual and sometimes latent, Adams and Comte, Fourier and the Transcendetalists, William James and Bergson come to our mind immediately.

[32] William Wordsworth. "Preface to the Lyrical Ballads".

[33] Wellek, op. cit. III, p. 171.

[34] Wellek, op. cit. III, p. 158.

[35] Wellek, op. cit. III, p. 185.

[36] Kenner, H., *T. S. Eliot: The Invisible Poet.* Ivan Obolensky, New York, 1959.

[37] In: Tradition and the Individual Talent". *Selected Essays,* Faber, London, pp. 17—18.

[38] In later recollections Williams always speaks with great affection, yet always in a tone of apology, about *Kora in Hell.* In his Prologue to the 1955 edition (City Lights, San Francisco) he calls it "intensely private". Also cf. *I Wanted to Write a Poem* (Cape Edition, London, 1967), pp. 38—43.

[39] See: Weaver, H., ibid. pp. 122—7. The inventor friend was David Joseph Lyle, called Faitoute in *Paterson.*

[40] Dorn, E., *Geography.* Fulcrum Press, London; Bishop, E., *Geography III.* Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York, 1976.

# Mary McCarthy

Mary McCarthy's name became familiar to the Hungarian reading public in 1964, the year that the PEN Club round table conference was held in Budapest. A well-known, appreciated novelist and essayist at home and in Western Europe generally, she visited Hungary and delivered a talk. We have come to know her better since; she has been introduced to wider cultural circles throughout the world by two thin books, *Viet-Nam Report* and *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood*, a few shorter pieces, and the frequent appearance of her name in the news among progressive American authors protesting against agressive American politics.

We know the name — but do we known enough about the person, and above all, the artist? A few of us had the opportunity to meet her during her stay in Budapest. We were all impressed by her sharp logic, her genuine interest, and her questions which revealed an inquisitive journalist's trained and keen intellect. In *Viet-Nam Report* the progressive American intellectual's outrage at the material and moral devastation inflicted by her countrymen on that unfortunate country always lurks behind the wry and detached tone of the reporter, though it is rarely made explicit. *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood* tells of the emergence of a spirit and a character — her own — without sacrificing the general significance of particular events. The author relentlessly subjects the workings of memory and imagination to the test of fact and witnesses in order to portray reality as truthfully as possible.

Though these works acquaint us with outstanding literary merits like McCarthy's gift as an observer, her evocative power, her wit, her sense of the tragic and the grotesque, the picture they paint is incomplete and they are not quite true-to-life. The title of *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood* recalls far too directly Simone de Beauvoir's famous autobiography, *Memories of a Dutiful Daughter (Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée); Viet-Nam Report* is too similar in method to *America Day by Day (L'Amérique au jour le jour)* for the Hungarian reader to be able to resist the conclusion that Mary McCarthy is the American Beauvoir. We are not, however, accusing the slightly younger American author of plagiarism. Though drawing the parallel may not be wholly unjustified, the charge of imitation is wholly unfounded. The two attitudes differ fundamentally, while the similarities are accidental. In the first place, Beauvoir has always approached both literature and life in the manner of a philosopher; in her personal experiences and her rare works of fiction alike, she is in search of practical proofs and illustrations of her theoretical convinction. Mary McCarthy, on the other hand, however influenced by her university years, her teaching and the years she spent among Paris intellectuals, is by no means the propagator of a "Seattle branch of existentialism". She is deeply rooted in America in her concerns, her passions, her methods and world view. Particularly those of her works not yet translated into Hungarian show how strongly she is attached to the one really American-conceived philosophical school, that of pragmatism, rather than to any Euro-

pean branch of existentialism. Pragmatism, however, did not lead her towards irrationalism as it did so many contemporary American philosophers, it merely prompted her to a clear presentation of reality, be it subjective or objective. At first in her choice of subject matter and approach she was closest to Edmund Wilson. The world of artists in *A Charmed Life* and the emotions and intrigues of *The Groves of Academe* show a debt to Wilson's world of *belles lettres* and his special ironic objectivity.

It was with the help of skills developed in her previous two novels that Mary McCarthy wrote the book which is generally regarded as her masterpiece and which has been by far the best received piece in her oeuvre, *The Group*. This novel is more than an authentic autobiography with some elements of general and universal relevance; here the entire labyrinth of lives and events is, though personally conceived, wholly objectivized and centred around an unambiguous message.

*The Group* is about eight girls who once lived together in the south tower of Vassar College and graduated in 1933. As everybody knows, Vassar is the most elegant and exclusive women's college in the U.S. — or, at least, *one* of the most elegant and exclusive.

The eight girls start their adult lives with many hopes and ideals — and almost without exception with progressive sympathies. Their first, almost childhood experiences were to a large extent shaped by the vast economic crisis, which was slowly easing in their school years. We follow the eight lives which cross, diverge and occasionally meet during the seven years from 1933 to 1940, the year before the U.S. entered World War II. The frame of the novel is provided by the life of one girl, which ends in tragedy: Kay Strong's wedding and what may be termed her quasi-accident and suicide. Kay's story is a structuring device: it is not a key to the author's system of values, and no catalyst in what happens. In its extremes, it is nevertheless a symbolic representation of the loss of ideals and the acceptance of the petty and harassing realities of life in which all the eight girls finally share.

Eight girls from the American middle- and upper-middle class is not a wide spectrum but how could it be possibly otherwise — the meeting place was a decisive factor here. Vassar has never been a school for the exploited. But out of this spectrum quite a wide panorama opens up; there is a self-made man and his bluestocking wife, a multimillionaire and his family with its aristocratic pretensions and an English butler who, being more of an aristocrat than his masters, condescends to them, and actors, writers, tradesmen, a Swedish ski-trainer and a Baltic aristocrat.

From among all the figures, Polly emerges as the least well-to-do and most lovable. She represents human warmth, devotion and kindness in an increasinly indifferent world, where everyone chases the dollar, career and fame, a world, in short, where Polly barely avoids disaster. As her counterpart we have Libby almost a case-study of everything that is repulsive in this society. She readily takes in all self-indulgent lies, she is the untalented yet ever-successful career girl who achieves her goals by being a parasite.

Next to Polly and Libby, the figure and life story I personally find the saddest may seem less important and colorful. I am talking about Priss, the well-meaning, pure, progressive minded girl. She is not openly opposed in her progressive activities by her husband (in America even wives are accorded liberty of thought), she is simply confined to the "Doll's House" by her children, and this destroys the best in her more efficiently than any kind of compulsion.

On Libby's side we must mention Norine too, the "outsider", who perhaps plays a greater role in what happens than any of the others and who carries in her person and life story the main message of the book. Norine's progress is as extreme ideologically and intellectually as Kay's is emotionally. From Trotskyist ultra-Communism she turns to obscurantist piety, from participation in wage fights, to sympathizing with Hitler

despite her Jewish origins, from orthodox Freudism to ultra-Jungism. This career, in which Norine finds contentedness, is just as depressing with its disillusioned moral outlook as Kay's life, which ends with a fall from the skyscraper: in both cases we see the perishing of ideals and values. But the way Norine finds herself is finally more bleak, in fact, than personal disaster.

As we can see, the story Mary McCarthy tells us is intricate, heterogeneous, and yet a uniform whole. She is a born storyteller who does not hide her gifts, a most pleasant phenomenon in an age when it seems almost improper to show them. The seemingly narrow social class defined by her choice of characters finally encompasses the whole of society. The girls live within the social and historical realities of the age; the extremist political movements appear just as vividly as Roosevelt's politics or the passionate disputes it evoked.

If McCarthy's earlier works could be traced to Edmund Wilson's intellectual realism, her *The Group* can be said to bring the novelist closer to the slightly naturalistic trend of realism in American fiction, the course Steinbeck and Caldwell adopted. Or perhaps we should relate her to the "Chicago school", James T. Farrell's or Nelson Algren's circle, and link her views on man and society and her mode of presentation to theirs. What is all her own she derived from her coexistence with French existentialists, that is, her extraordinary intellectualism, her responsiveness to intellectual and philosophical trends, systems and currents of ideas, her capacity to portray them, and to emphasize their presence in the life of the individual (which was alien to the practice of previous periods and masters of American fiction). Another distinctive mark of the novelist is her abhorrence of the bombastic, her alert awareness of the comic, the grotesque, the unnatural constellations in human relations and in people, her ability to portray the psychology of someone who attempts to deny or regard as positive something that is obviously negative or even shameful. This special sense of the comic in life is, in my mind, the most original feature of Mary McCarthy's works. We can not explain in any other way why her pervasively sad and serious book is such pleasant reading or why this otherwise basically pessimistic novel inspires hope.

*The Group* was first published in 1963. It was an overnight success in the U.S. and the English-speaking world and everywhere else where it was translated; it was also a successful film. This novel made Mary McCarthys' name universally known, and she is usually thought of as the author of *The Group*. This popularity is obviously due to the traits I have attempted to sketch above, but there may well be another factor that greatly contributes to the merits of the book. We feel it immediately: it is a still not universally accepted phenomenon: a woman writing about women in all sincerity. The book presents as many authentic versions of women thinking, acting and daydreaming as there are female characters in the book, and all the versions are deeply touching and utterly believable.

Such reception is extremely fortunate and extremely dangerous. We know of far too many American authors who could never get over their premature success. Mary McCarthy also faced this crisis, but her great talent and her commitment to the cause of human progress saved her from the trap. Her latest novel, *Birds of America* portrays a characteristic (characteristically American) mother—son relationship with depth and subtlety, and reveals truths of poetic intensity not only about the central theme but also about the relationship of man to nature, and the relationship of the human soul to the material world. The description of the son's student years in Paris is not only a refutation of an American bias towards a "gay Paree", but it also makes the Paris image and *Weltanschauung* of the idol of the previous American generation, Henry Miller, appear both questionable and false when set in an ironic and tragic light.

I hope that even such a short essay will suggest that Mary McCarthy is unique, even within the literary spectrum of her own country. Furthermore, she is a writer who deserves her world-wide reputation on the grounds of her courageous attitude, her persuasive talent, her literary achievements, and values, which will last beyond the present moment of success.

*Péter Nagy*

# The Open Boat: Twelve Masters of the Classical American Short Story; an Introduction

What does the reader of classics look for in an introduction? Presumably nothing less than words of gold. If so, the reader is welcome to three golden rules.

*1.* The distinctive feature and the index of standard in a short story is the plus value of ineffable perspective and depth it conjures up with the power of allusion. The presence of larger scale unity within the small frame. In bulk a short story is less than a novel but not so in ambition. Tools differ but not the aim to create the illusion of totality. It is as if we tried to condense a whole volume into a single chapter. All won't go in of course, only the essence: the focus, the basic situation. There will be no richness in detail but, instead, a dramatic density of plot and character backed up by the radiance of symbols, the highly charged intensity of the atmosphere, and the poetic suggestiveness of the narrative style. The short story as a form is inherently dynamic, its guidelines are not rules but tendencies which easily transcend the traditional triple division of genres. A combination of epic, dramatic and poetic qualities, the short story is limited in scope not by the number of pages allotted to it, but by the imagination of its author and reader.

*2.* The national hallmark and the most striking peculiarity of American literature is its calculated passion for bigness, a heroic insatiability. In this country of unlimited possibilities the work of art seems to overreach itself as a rule and deliberately aim farther than the chosen form implies. Shall we say that American culture, newly and purposefully man-made as the USA itself, is not past her pioneer days? Each literary work is a literature in evolution. All set out to begin at the beginning and all finish in the hope of consummation. They attempt to stand on their own, and in their own right, to provide from their own inner resources the extra richness readily endowed elsewhere on a work by a literary context that claims it for its own. This automatically accepted challenge explains why poetry, prose, and drama — when influenced by the size and the vision of the new continent — without exception and without delay burst to the magnitude of "American tragedy" and "American epic". Self-aggrandizement is compulsory, as giving shape and voice to a genuine American experience: the spell of greatness and the call of the Infinite.

*3.* The criteria of the short story as a form coincide sharply with the principles of evolution in American literature. No wonder that American authors fell upon the short

story almost instinctively when everywhere else the novel was the leading epic form. American fiction was introduced to the world by two masters of the short story, Washington Irving and Edgar Allan Poe, thus preceding and possibly inspiring the European flowering (half a century later, on the hands of a Maupassant a Mikszáth or a Chekhov) of the short-cut, modern narrative mode. A late development in the Old World, the short story is primeval tradition in the New.

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Roots, of course, can be traced back to Europe, to romanticism — whence sprang the whole of American literature. Romantic taste was greatly drawn to the archaic, the vernacular, the exotic, the nationally specific; to particular *couleur locale*. These attractions gave impulse to the authors and readers of the new and self-conscious republic to find out about their identity as a nation. Though they had to do without a favourite theme of European romanticism, the glorious days of old, they could more than console themselves for the absence of historic past with no meaner fare for the imagination: infinite space, the mysterious wilderness, distance waiting to be conquered. Besides, there was the joint heritage of Puritan doctrine and pioneer solitude: the scope of introspection and the awareness of the murky depths and the prehistoric sediment of the human psyche. The Americans certainly had plenty to discover. This plenty overfills the very first American short stories or rather, it is this extra tension that makes short stories (at times perhaps even without the author's intention) out of second-hand romantic forms imported from the Continent — the sketch, the tale, and the romance.

*Rip Van Winkle*

Washington Irving probably wanted nothing more than to amuse his "enlightened" readers with quaint, Old Worldish anecdotes of their superstitious grandsires (immigrant Dutchmen, not yet Americans) and possibly was not aware of what was to make his merits positively American and lastingly modern; the genuine shudder coming through the playful, fictious frame. Rip Van Winkle slumbers on the coastline of a hostile undiscovered continent, at the very centre of a fearful maelstrom of change. His wondrous dream and awakening are given impact by the apparition of nature and history, both as unfathomable. The fairy tale hero at odds with the world and with himself may well be an early case of the loss of identity, a soul driven out to a sea of threats in an "open boat".

*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*

And is there any deeper meaning to be discerned in those full-blooded scenes from bucolic life set in a mock ghost-story? Nothing much, until the narrative leaves Sleepy Hollow. When, however, the comic figure of the cast-off village schoolmaster goes under in society and re-emerges, a new personality in a new role, as a listener to his own story and a public excellency, his grave silence is definitely meaningful and carries eery implications.

Irving's reader need not bother too much about the shudder of understanding, unlike Edgar Allan Poe's who is possessed by its omnipresence. This author, namely, treats us with calculated overdoses of a deadly stimulant, icy horror. His narrative mode is the grotesque "scene from death"; his devices are all disproportionate unnatural romantic excesses; his medium, however, is defined not by the haze of mad blood, but by the matter-of-fact analysis of cool reason. In his

*The Murders in the Rue Morgue; The Black Cat*

studies of situations or of the human psyche, in a professionally managed thriller or in a superbly construed "gothic" vision of horror, we get the same experience, and in each case we ourselves have to dig it out from under the surface. Beneath outdated criminology and individual psychologizing, both impeccable to the point of mild ridicule, there is a "poetic" layer, and here lies the real secret of Poe's stories: the surmise of cardinal sins — the archetypes of brutality, of schizophrenia, and of the destructive drive which haunt the uneasy "collective unconscious" of self-complacent America.

This is the depth where Nathaniel Hawthorne sets off his investigations. He is interested not in the preliminaries of crime but its aftermath; he does not want to show off with psychology, he wants to show conscience. His short stories are preparatory exercises for his novels-to-come and foreshadow the prospective themes in the form of allegorical phantasies. Allegory, unfortunately, has become an easy prey for the critic. Nowa-

*Young Goodman Brown; My Kinsman Major Molyneux*

days the Hawthornian parables — an innocent young man's soul corrupted during a walk in the woods when his companion happens to be the devil, or another (likewise innocent) young man's vision on a night (equally instructive) of the mutinied town marching off in a savage carnival procession — may easily seem too bizarre to be real and too blunt to be symbolic. At any rate, for the reader who sets interpretation above experience. Very different thoughts will come, on the other hand, to those who choose to delve into the authentic and puzzling Hawthornian atmosphere. They will notice for instance that, unlike Rousseau's gardens, the veritable hostile American wilderness holds up a mirror to human nature in which it appears less than ideal, in fact dark and wicked. Furthermore, they will realize that the lonely human can lose his path not only in the vast woods but also in another jungle, society, as he errs among fearful apparitions and yet more fearful realities; when history seems a nightmare, a vast panorama of futility and anarchy. Are we justified to vindicate Hawthorne in terms of twentieth century notions? But can we react in any other way to the irresolute excitement he provokes, not so much as a classic but as our contemporary?

*Bartleby the Scrivener*

And in what terms, then, can we discuss Herman Melville's scrivener? How can we account in nineteenth century America for Bartleby, fascinating and inconceivable, an essence of pure absurdity distilled from the substance of Gogol, Chekhov and Kafka? The evanescent clerk who by the sheer intensity of his non-existence blots out the apparently meaningful order and system of a well-furnished office: can there be a parable more modern? Especially on the hands of a retired sailor whose real element was not the monotony of the metropolis but the exotic diversity of distant lands. These faraway lands inspired his popular adventure stories and his *Moby Dick*, ontological in depth and perspective to the extent of being unpopular and doomed to be appreciated only by later generations. In his late short stories Melville again sounds the moral of his novels. Again a sea-adventure, with the difference that this time the author's concern is not the scene and the action but their interpretation.

*Benito Cereno*

Or, better, their misinterpretation. An American captain confronts his Spanish counterpart, and the antagonism of two civilizations, the old and the new, are intensified — and put out — by a set of multiple trans-

positions. The confrontation is not what it appears to be, illusion and reality again play hide and seek. Again we are driven into a typically American situation of peril, in an "open boat".

"Typically American", we use the term as if we knew what it stands for. As if we did not know that what Hawthorne and Melville write about is not the definition but the idefiniteness of that notion, its mystery and enigma. Does anything like the "American character" exist at all? To answer the question is desperately urging and increasingly difficult at the period in question. Difficult, because from the second half of the nineteenth century there isn't a single homogeneous America any longer. New territories are incorporated into the Union and the number of variant Americas the national consciousness is expected to systematize ever increases. New England comes to appear smaller and smaller as cultural interest together with the frontier shifts more and more westward. The great era of local colorists begins; though "greatness" really applies to the quantity of their output, not the quality. The reports from the Backwood Kingdom are primitive and second-class in artistic treatment, but their raw material is always appealing and original. Pioneer authors with their primitive tools open up literary goldmines.

*Mliss; A Gentleman of La Porte*

A farfetched metaphor, maybe, but it applies precisely to Bret Harte's miner stories. Their attraction is not the sentimental plot but the homely filling of the "refined" stereotypes: life-size figures, vivid flashes of the environment, uncouth manners, powerful language, and crude comedy.

*The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*

Humorous Picaresque rediscovered: once the surface layers of civilization are disturbed, there appears an outcrop of inexhaustible folklore. From Mark Twain's early short stories (the ones he wrote before his novels) the author is almost absent; any man of the people he interviews is popular imagination personified, bursting with stories, one better than the other. A handy generalization imposes itself: to set up the frontier heritage as the popular realistic trend in American fiction, as a counterparty to "gothic" literary and introverted pathological romanticism. Let us be wary, though: the American appellation of this inborn genre is *tale; tall tale* — which implies invention, exaggeration; a romanticism from the reverse. Mark Twain's success is a civilized phenomenon. His homespun yarns, just like Irving's elegant sketches or Poe's horror stories, appear in widely circulated magazines.

*The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*

And then, as they gradually grow beyond the scope of the magazine feature, the reader may witness, with some bewilderment, what happens to the realistic short story (after a succession of novesl) on Mark Twain's hands. The crossing of broad humour and light-hearted optimism ripens into bitter satire. The history of the haunting money-bag is not a joke, it is a piece of social criticism. The meek little prairie town of Hadleyburg is literally corrupted. The moral tissue of the community is disfigured beyond recognition by the radioactive emanation of the invisible treasure. The uproarious point (that the Amrican idol proves fake) does not bring comic relief: on the contrary, it adds a viciously calculated final touch of the repulsive and the outrageous to the basically grotesque tale. The parable of the "gilded" calf encircled by the whining and shaking depersonifications of Greed is modern enough to be medieval.

The smell of brimstone is in the air. Yet again we approach an inexorcible primary experience in American literature. Sin and damnation: several variations of the theme exist from E. A. Poe's to Truman Capote's, but nowhere has it the seething intensity of Ambrose Bierce's rendering. A satanic aesthete and a devilish critic, he is unequalled as to the concentration of disgust in his satire. It is all the more admirable that a man so overwhelmed with misathropy was given to the close investigation of the human soul. His fame rests as much on his delicately elaborated psychological analyses as his pamphlets (gross instances of un-American activity) of Swiftian swerve. A master of the viciously unemotional war report, he took a trite occurrence at the Alabama front and then built into it a minutely developed psychoanalytical prize-piece. Bitter Briece would deny himself, however, if his hero treated with warm interest were other than a hanged man in the moment of getting his neck broken. The writer and his work are on the whole as disturbingly enigmatic as if he were himself the invention of some American author. His *oeuvre* is an extraordinary mysterious interlude in the history of American letters. He is the odd man out, and thus all too convincingly manifests "the complex fate of being an American".

*Oil of Dog*

*An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*

A frequently quoted phrase. It is from Henry James who regarded as his sole task the psychological follow-up of this complexity. As Mark Twain's counterpart, he represents the normal course of evolution, the transition from romanticism into realism, which latter for him was the exclusive practice of psychological dissection. A pure artist, he amazes the reader already in his early stories with the impeccable portrayal, untainted by any cheap effect, of characters and setting. Also with the fact that he obviously does not class ghosts among cheap effects. He does not omit the "gothic" element; no, with classical craftsmanship he weaves it into the very last sentence. He seems to have liked such delicate confrontations as juxtaposing opposite currents of taste, incongruous certainties of cultural heritage, and diverging concepts of value. He measured America by Europe and experience by innocence. Advanced in age and art, he could even bring himself to smile at overcomplication and hypersensitivity. In one of his late stories knowledge attained with hardship and kept from others with pain turns out to be utterly worthless. The sensitive heroes hide open secrets from one another and though they are aware that their benevolent dissembling is pointless, for fault of anything better they still set it up as the goal of their lives. Their comedy of manners, like all American jokes, is somewhat unnerving.

*The Romance of Certain Old Clothes*

*The Tree of Knowledge*

Again we get that old vertigo of floating in the void. A little more refinement and the narrative universe reverts to airy nothing. Luckily, we are led back into the realm of the natural by the spontaneous force of literary progress. Hamlin Garland, held to be a forerunner of the naturalists, writes about the American countryside. His subject matter is not the colourful turmoil of the frontier but the uniform expanse of virgin land that simple people break and cultivate, and by which they are themselves "broken in". Garland's stories are not much of a pleasure to those who expect tumultuous events, complex characters, or intricate situations. Why should we call these barren scenes from rural life short stories at all? The private returns from the Civil War, to his home and

to his toil; Granny, after twenty years of hard labour, can visit her distant homeland, only to return and continue where she had left off. Little or no trace of the plus and the perspective. And yet they are there. The laconic narration makes it clear that this frugal and hard way of life is a basic level of human existence setting the sole measure to any ambition; it is the heavy pedestal upon which a world power rests. *The Return of a Private; Mrs Ripley's Trip*

For in the meantine America has become a world power, and the intellectual capital, New York, is a metropolis. Development is speedy. Together with the express rifle, high speed printing and the "rapid read" are invented. The newest invention at the turn of the century is the magazine story; anything a reader may desire is to be found in it, and it stops short exactly where the reader wants it to. It presents sentiment, sensation and comedy, and at the end there is a great point. The inventor is O. Henry. Important: what we get is not inferior quality but a mass product of the very first order, a masterpiece from the assembly line. O. Henry's rare genius is his ability to sell real literary values to the average reader. The editors wanted mystery and they got a wonderful parable on futile sacrifice; they asked for a western, and it was duly sent — only in the form of redeeming parody. *The Gift of the Magi; The Ransom of Red Chief*

The laughing Wild West, in a magazine, was good business and, for a writer, a good opportunity to excel. The greatest talent of the age, Stephen Crane, also tried his hand at it, and he outdid even O. Henry in giving the product a de-luxe finish. A promising title bursting into a fantastic story, sentimental and funny, impossible and yet real: none but a born naturalist could get it on paper, in one of his rare moods of serenity. Crane in fact is not a humorist of profession, he is a poet, the first after E. A. Poe in American prose. The change that has taken place in the meanwhile is interestingly manifest in how the two poets' stories differ in their approaches to the "poetic". There is nothing "gothic" about Crane, his imagination does not distort, it rather restores, preserves, and nevertheless enriches the texture of reality. The life-boat in the open sea is one of the classic parables in American literature, it brings to mind Melville and Hemingway. The four shipwrecked men as they fight the tangible, killing element represent human endeavour at the limit; we feel their heavy fatigue in our own sinews and their heroic greatness overwhelms us almost like physical strain. It is here that the American character is at its most magnificent, in a crisis: in the open boat. *The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky* *The Open Boat*

The escape is granted but not unconditionally. On the shores of a strictly limited social reality, the survivors of the dangerous aspiration (the "American dream") are put to less grand tests. Far from ascending the height of epic grandeur, they find themselves involved in a new-type American tragedy. It is not too edifying a spectacle, more a melodrama of the cheap, gaudy and dismal sort. We may console ourselves, however, that even the gutter could give rise to lasting values: those of American naturalism. Let us take for example a typical Jack London scene. In a filthy garret room two underworld figures, murderers in fact, while sharing their booty, poison each other and die convulsing on the floor. A romance of crime with virtue triumphant, that's all we could say for the story if naked truth presented with exemplary cruelty did not re- *Just Meat*

*Like Argus of the Ancient Times*

duce us to silence. The victim of the murder had stolen his diamonds. There is no exception to the rule in the struggle for life, man becomes beast and is abased to "just meat". The jewels left lying near the two corpses are the cheap idol of a cowardly New World, dehumanized pseudo-values, glittering trash. Jack London is as American an author as can be; while raking in physical and spiritual squalor, he also glorifies body and soul beyond defeat. Even for a naturalist, there is a necessary complement to the gangster in the make-up of the national character: the pioneer. As so many times before, yet again the Argonaut appears with his testimony: his age declines, his equipment is faulty but even so he is up to the mark: he dares, endures, and prevails.

In the first story of this selection an old man emerged from the wilderness with a treasure of a fable; in the closing piece, a hundred years later, he (or perhaps his better, more dynamic self) leaves this selfsame wilderness with fabulous treasure. A mere coincidence, yet the reader of American fiction ought to be susceptible to an unexpected revelation of symbolic coincidences.

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What does the reader look for in a book of short stories? Not, in the first place, an introduction printed as an afterword. And least of all the introductory extra-bonus of an unasked-for historical survey. People read stories for fun, not for instruction; and a good read, whatever its age, is always contemporary.

What can the author of the introduction say to this? Nothing that is not an *after*-word. The reader has already laid his hands on the book and thumbed his way through as he tought best.

And what if now he loses self-confidence? He should not; he might as well forget the introduction. If he has read and enjoyed any one of the twenty four masterpieces in his reach, he has found all "connections" to be found in the book and has not missed a single bit of the lesson taught by the *Twelve Masters of the Classical American Short Story*.

*István Geher*

# The Ironic Treatment of Conformism in Recent American Fiction*

In her clarifying book on conformism and nonconformism Sarolta Kistamásné—Varga concludes that "*conformism means compliance with some prescribed or enforced pattern, the individual's yielding to group pressure through relinquishing his autonomy.*

* Works by recent American novelists mentioned in this study: 1952: *Player Piano* (K. Vonnegut); 1955: *The Recognitions* (W. Gaddis), *The Revelations of Dr. Modesto* (A. Harrington); 1958: *The End of the Road* (J. Barth); 1959: *The Magic Christian* (T. Southern), *Life in a Crystal Palace* (A. Harrington); 1961: *Mother Night* (K. Vonnegut), *Catch-22* (J. Heller), *The Nephew* (J. Purdy), *The Moviegoer* (W. Percy), *Fairy Tales of New York* (J. P. Donleavy); 1962: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (K. Kesey), *The Blood of the Lamb* (P. De Vries), *Reinhart in Love* (T. Berger); 1963: *V.* (T. Pynchon); 1964: *Cabot Wright Begins* (J. Purdy), *A Confederate General from Big Sur* (R. Brautigan), *A Fine Madness* (E. Baker), *Looking for the General* (W. Miller); 1965: *God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater* (K. Vonnegut); 1966: *Giles Goat-Boy* (J. Barth), *The Crying of Lot 49* (T.

Hence it is negative conduct invariably incurring losses upon the person whose opinions will be abandoned, his personality submerged, the conscious element in adjustment to conditions reduced, his independence encroached on, and, as a result of relinquishment of autonomy, his chances to exert a formative and persuasive influence on the group whose pressure and impact made him banished his own convictions, will be forfeited."[1]

Thus conformism is unprincipled assimilation, man's negative motion in society. It is entropic as a disintegration of the individual's social energies resulting in an inertia of society's homogeneity. Entropy, as the term (fusing the senses used in thermodynamics and information theory) was elaborated by Norbert Wiener in *The Human Use of Human Beings* (1954) and applied to the contemporary novel by Tony Tanner in *City* of *Words* (1971) is the death of energy, order and information. We regard the homogeneity of conformism as one such entropic state since loss of energy (the relinquishment of the individual's independent and creative energies) is at its core. The resulting uniform social motion of the individual is negative homogeneity as it is a mechanical "order" concealing an advanced degree of disorder, i.e. increasing entropy.

The negative homogeneity of conformism, a theme American critical sociology has a great propensity for handling (N. A. Chomsky's "new mandarin", D. Riesman's "other-directed man", H. Marcuse's "one-dimensional man", C. W. Mills' "white collar", W. H. Whyte's "organization man") is abundantly dramatized in recent American fiction (of the past two decades) where the average citizen's disposition to uniformity, the standardizing pressure in ideology, technology and culture as well as the overt and covert strategies of conforming manipulation are relentlessly exposed through satire. Space allows us to high-light only two aspects of the complex subject, namely, the satirical treatment of standardized existence and that of the process of standardization (strategies of manipulation). The quantity of illustrations is similarly limited (to novelists of the sixties and after).

Modern American "standardized" man comes on the stage as early as 1922: Sinclair Lewis' Babbit supports the state, defends "the evangelical churches and domestic brightness and sound business, "[2] — a loyalty (not exactly unwavering) inspired by material and social success as in the case of many of his recent offspring. Standardized man not only retains possession of the stage but comes gradually into the limelight of American literature as we reach Salinger's "phonies" *(The Catcher in the Rye)*;[3] Nabokov's second Mrs. Humbert who dotes upon conventions and rules whose "falsity" she never realizes *(Lolita)*;[4] Albee's Mommy and Daddy who live in "a false sense of security" although they rebuke Grandma for it *(The American Dream)*.[5] By the sixties conforming pressure is so excessive, manipulative strategies so cunning and the average citizen so manipulable that conformism becomes one of the dominating themes in fiction. Huck Finn's dilemma (to conform or not to conform) is an old one except that it poses itself in radically changed circumstances (the horns of the dilemma on which our protagonists find themselves impaled, come in deceitful modern guises) provoking artistic reactions different and more violent than ever.

A correct diagnosis of entropic conformism is formed by Binx Bolling in Walker Percy's *The Moviegoer*. Binx, himself "a model citizen" managing an office of his uncle's brokerage firm and taking pleasure "in doing all that is expected" of him[6] so as to become

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Pynchon), *The Wig* (C. Wright); 1967: *Trout Fishing in America* (R. Brautigan), *Snow White* (D. Barthelme), *A Bad Man* (S. Elkin); 1968: *Expensive People* (J. C. Oates); 1971: *Love in the Ruins* (W. Percy), *Being There* (J. Kosinski); 1974: *Something Happened* (J. Heller).

worthy of the admission into the suburban paradise of Garden City, is not a standardized end-product yet and he views middle-class New Orleans conformity (Kate excepted) as entropic. It is a world of monotonous comfort, of paradise-dwellers become lifeless automata, of "friendly and likeable people" who "seem dead", a world where "only hates seem alive".[7] His satirical diagnosis is exact and typical of the American novel of the sixties but Binx is a searcher seeking ways out and resisting being turned into an automaton. As opposed to his case, Kesey's Bromden *(One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest)* conveys the chilling impression of a nonconformist domesticated into a robot. But the paranoid, isolated, shrunk giant is saved by McMurphy. If in the case of Binx and Bromden failure is predestined but eventually averted, in other cases — take Harrington's hapless Hal Hingham — it is ultimate, the victim is hopeless.

Alan Harrington's *The Revelations of Dr. Modesto* is a total satire of conformity. Hal adheres to Modesto's insane gospel — "BELIEVE and THINK CENTRALLY, which is to say believe in nothing, but give your loyalty to any popular cause in the vicinity"[8] — and by doing so he walks the parabolic path of sheding his individuality and becoming a mass-man exactly in the manner it is professionally expounded by C. W. Mills a year after Harrington's novel (*The Power Elite*, 1956). As the "extasy of mediocrity" by definition, centralism is, for Hal, the hair of the dog that bit him. He is to become a man of trivialities in order to be welcome by everybody; to "step out" of the self, to lose the self in the mass in order to become a "happy nothing" thus joining the "massive nothing in the heart of the United States of America".[9] The novel ends with the ironic vision of America collapsing into the entropy of homogeneity as she is infested with Hingham-like depersonalized happy nothings, mass nobodies with vacant eyes and slanted hats. The point of the author's final revelation of the doctor (another meaning to the ambiguous title) that the creator of centralism is a raving lunatic isolated in a cell of the MacIlwain System is an ironic reminder of how crazy Harrington believes the apostles of conformism to be.

Standardized existence means standardized environment. In *The Devil in the Fire* John W. Aldridge complains: "We have created from coast to coast a physical culture so uniform and monotonous, composed of such interchangeably identical parts, that if a man were blindfolded and set down in Dallas or Cleveland or Los Angeles or Detroit, he would not only not know where he was when the blindfold was taken off. He would not need to know. It would make absolutely no difference whatever."[10] The most identical and interchangeable parts are the suburbs. Whether it is simply called Garden City (Percy: *The Moviegoer*) or more invitingly Paradise Estates (Percy: *Love in the Ruins*), Brookfield, Fernwood, Cedar Grove (Oates: *Expensive People*), one is the exact replica of the other, one is as pleasant and comfortable as the other. "If God remakes Paradise it will be in the image of Fernwood", Oates' narrator meditates in *Expensive People*, "for Fernwood is Paradise constructed to answer all desires before they are even felt."[11]

The homogeneity of middle-class comfort and affluence that life in Suburbia represents, the American novel shows to be trebly entropic. Firstly, the physical features of the luxurious environment, the external marks of suburban life-style affect no suprise, conceal no elements of the unexpected and the new — in terms of information theory: what they disclose is an entropic lack of information. Secondly, life in Suburbia is entropic from the point of view of the internal nature of the community living there: the "order" of general affluence is only an appearance concealing the reality (the disorder) of social and historical disaccords and antagonisms. (For all appearances to the contrary, W. H. Whyte maintains, a keen-eyed observation even of physical uniformity is enough to comprehend social ranks and class backgrounds of "classless" organization people living

in Suburbia.[12]) Thirdly, comfort and affluence *are* basic to meaningful modern existence, but *not identical* with in. The charmers of consumer ideology, however, mesmerize the standardized prestige consumer into believing that the two are identical, that to satisfy our material necessities is the sole purpose of life. The result is entropic in effect: "life becomes empty and routinized."[13]

To a comprehending reader the first aspect of what is here called the threefold entropy of standardized existence in standardized Suburbia, is obvious: the ironic treatment of the sameness of physical features and external marks is indicative of how life in uniform Suburbia is overcome with deadening monotony. (Joyce Carol Oates, to cite one example, rehearses in detail all that one knows beforehand when entering a suburb.[14] His Fernwood existence contributed not a little to Richard Everett's entropic disintegration as a character.) It is the less obvious second (Suburbia as an entropic community) and third (routinized life) entropic tendencies — we prefer "tendency" to "aspect" in these cases — that deserve to be traced here.

In *Love in the Ruins* Walker Percy is scathingly satirical about the force motivating the community of Paradise Estates in becoming "an oasis of concord in a troubled land."[15] The motivation of agreement is the view conservatives and liberals cherish: "Negroes are trifling and no-account or else mean as yard dogs."[16] In short, the fact that Paradise Estates is held together by a historical and social unity of discriminating interests, turns the community into a closed system keeping aloof from the rest of society.

Donald Barthelme's Mr. Quistgaard *(Snow White)* is even worse. Paradise Estates is the isolated closed system of a whole suburb, whereas Mr. Quistgaard — a representative of the same "comfortable American scene"[17] — is an individual encased in a private universe of his own, constituting a closed system by himself. He is a system more hermetically closed than Paradise Estates, however loud with social negativism the latter may be, as his is the state of total passiveness and non-communication, the entropic death of American collective consciousness. This isolated existence, his "fat self-satisfied complacency" is threatened by Jane's letters. (Barthelme's ironic creation, Jane, is reminiscent of the wicked stepmother figure in the fairy tale.) Americans, she believes, suffer from "a lack of connection," the country is "underconnected", crumbling into "different universes of discourse". The caste of the Mr. Quistgaards sit in their house on Neat Street surrounded with fine dogs, handsome wives, tall brown sons; their opinions are limited to "whether the Grange should build a new meeting hall or not, whether the children should become Thomists or not, whether the pump needs more cup grease or not."[18] Since there is no punishment "for not listening, for having a closed heart,"[19] Jane decides to vex Mr. Quistgaard with the poisoned apples of her sarcastic letters that are to pierce his complacency and to demonstrate the necessity of communication between "different universes of discourse." ("Different universes of discourse" seems to be Barthelme's vague hint at existing non-communicating American communities of discriminating class interests.)

The entropic negativity of Paradise Estates lies in the community being an alliance to observe unjust discrimination; in the case of Mr. Quistgaard's caste it lies in a notorious abandonment of socially cooperative activity and a withdrawal into selfish isolation. In both types of conformity "pleased consciousness"[20] is to blame: the individual is isolated into separate universes of material satisfaction. Both are variations on the same effect mechanism.

Ken Kesey views the same in a different context and from another perspective and establishes a third variation on the theme of entropic collective negativity. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* is a deadly satire of the price paid for comformity by those with a historically and socially reduced capacity for assimilation. Big Nurse's ward has

become a closed system (indicating that the Combine behind it *is* an entropic community) because it is based on the obliteration of the very energies normally requisite to establishing a wholesome social community. Instead of a humane social resolution of real tensions (the Indian question) ,the method is to conceal them artificially by forceful integration of the Indian into WASP America, that is by conformism under duress. The Indian's hiding in the isolating fog of deaf and dumbness indicates that these tensions cannot be relieved through power pressure.

In an entropic closed society like that of the Paradise Estates, the Quistgaards and the Combine, the idea of an open community is at best a rainbow now worth chasing. As in James Purdy's Rainbow *(The Nephew)* whose suffocating monotony Cliff escapes and whose ironic name suggests the inaccessibility of a stimulating, vitalizing community in which personality could evolve.

The discussion of the second entropic tendency of standardized Paradise Estates, Fernhill, Neat Street and Rainbow existence almost inextricably involves the third — perhaps the most loud-sounding — part of the satirical consonance. The message that the American author communicates in this regard is that conformism condemns to empty, routinized life irrespective of what social stratum the integrated individual belongs to: whether he is an intellectual like George Wilson, Warren Miller's technocrat *(Looking for the General)*, Joe Morgan, Barth's teacher *(The End of the Road)* and Kesey's Dr. Spivy *(One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest)*; an administrative employee like Alan Harrington's Hal Hingham *(The Revelations of Dr. Modesto)*, Percy's Binx Bolling *(The Moviegoer)*, Heller's Bob Slocum *(Something Happened)*; whether he is higher middle-class like Barthelme's Mr. Quistgaard *(Snow White)*, or petty bourgeois like the parents of Thomas Berger's Carlo Reinhart *(Reinhart in Love)* and Purdy's Alma and Boyd Mason *(The Nephew)* or lower class like Peter De Vries' Newt Wandehope *(The Blood of the Lamb)* and Charles Wright's Lester Jefferson *(The Wig)*. Again, the victim is reduced to soul-killing routinized existence irrespective of whether he is conforming of his own accord (Bob Slocum) or covertly or overtly manipulated like Binx Bolling and Big Nurse's victims respectively; whether it is whole-hearted (Hal Hingham) or pretended (H. W. Campbell in Vonnegut's *Mother Night*).

"It's *meaning* we've lost", Doris complains to her husband, Dr. More in Percy's *Love in the Ruins*. She deserts her husband in the (soon frustrated) hope of leaving the "treadmill" of "rules and habit" behind.[21] She is sustained by her resistance to surrender utterly. Unconditional surrender is like that of Barthelme's Mrs. Davis ("At the End of the Mechanical Age") or Barth's Peter Green *(Giles Goat-Boy)*. People like Mrs. Davis whose type is the strong, simple-minded man, and Green, the eternal time-server who is never capable of a more intelligent response than his usual phrase, "I'm okay", often find each other in these ironical novels. When two vacuous lives are joined, a dreary vacuum is obtained in which remaining, diminished energies scatter and wholly vanish.

The institution of marriage is convenient for the writer when he wants to lash out at conformity since — from time immemorial — marriage has always been a social act of "settling" in life, of consolidation, of compliance with prescribed social norms and patterns (which, to a reasonable degree, is a necessity far from negative conformism). A comic couple whose marriage is effectively devised to satirize routinized life, is Warren Miller's in *Looking for the General*. The youthful energies of George and Beatrice Wilson have deteriorated long ago and what remained is like death: "the daily repetition of trivial rituals without structure, drama, or meaning."[22] George, a monument to the love of comfort, has a "vegetable embrace"[23] and Beatrice is one of those birds "who have difficulty flying."[24] Her unprincipled goodness is trivializing, it is a counterforce to energy. This makes their house — narrating Billy Brown suggests with a keen sense of entropy —

"a mausoleum"[25] overwhelmed with "odor of decay".[26] Marriage turns out to be a trap of conformity for Elliott Baker's Samson Shillitoe *(A Fine Madness)* who is allowed to unwrap "cellophane wrapped Beverly"[27] only after going through the formality of marriage; with the unwrapping devastating disillusionment settles over him (swelling veins, dandruff etc.) and what is worse, his adored Beverly, this female epitome of petty bourgeois conformism, sets a pack of psychiatrists at poor non-conformable Shillitoe. Peter De Vries' Newt Wanderhope *(The Blood of the Lamb)* unwraps the object of his love (Greta) in time but at the worst possible moment, and this is how he accidentally manipulates himself into marriage and consequently into his father-in-law's "bourgeois paradise".[28] As he contemplates the prospect of marriage, he is wretchedly aware of the horrors of "standardized culture" and routinized life awaiting him in Mr. Wigbaldy's dream houses (under the shingle of one of those Model Homes he reads, "The American Dream"): "What one saw was fifty years of stupefaction flat as the plains of Illinois, with its bore — dom at mealtimes and children to perpetuate it all."[29] Another parody of eventless routinized and therefore entropic existence is the life Thomas Berger's Carlo Reinhart maps out for himself in *Reinhart in Love:* "he would go back to college in June, when the next term started, in a year or so get a crash-program BA majoring in Vagueness, be instantly hired for young-executive training by Whirlpool Inc., the great detergents empire of southern Ohio, and issued a wife, sedan, and six-room cottage from their stockroom and whatever the quota in kids."[30]

When the American writer considers conformism, a characteristic and disturbing phenomenon of the past two decades, standardized existence and standardizing manipulation catch his attention most. So far we have attempted an assessment of what is accomplished in recent American fiction when the *conformist* is satirized. Let us now trace the ironies surrounding the conformist's *manipulation.* Of the manipulating strategies that rouse the most violent satirical indignation, we wish to concentrate on consumer-charming, corporative manipulation and mass media. (A short study can make no claim of completeness.)

The commercialization of life in America, as viewed by the novelist, is entropic. Commercial advertisements are more often than not deceptively manipulative, they misinform under the pretext of information; blatant or camouflaged consumer charming creates confusion, plunges into chaos. The activity of publicity departments, J. P. Donleavy vividly indicates in *Fairy Tales of New York* (we are using the play as an earlier and more successful version than the novel) is not "construction from confusion"[31] as Mr. Mott erratically believes. The comic circumstances of how Christian is engaged for the "idea department" of Mott's business empire suggest that sales promotion is built out of chaos and produces chaos. Mr. Mott's is pseudo-construction: when he "constructs", he acts most inconsistently, i.e. he hires Christian as a farcical conclusion to the sharp clash they had a moment before. His conduct is a philosophy in action, one that evolved from his experience attained in publicity campaigns. If we infer from this conduct to its antecedents, advertising appears to be a construction no better than Christian's employment, Donleavy's dramatic irony suggests. Besides, since "past facts forecast future facts",[32] the Mott empire may be run "like a morgue"[33] in the future now that Christian — a liar and a cheater at school and an undertaker by profession — is hired. That an undertaker is employed is ironically symbolic of Donleavy's view that advertising is a force producing a loss of information and an entropic decay since it creates a deadly state of disorder.

The ideas of such "idea departments" are vulnerable and often exposed to ridicule in American fiction. Heller's Milo Minderbinder *(Catch-22)* feeds chocolate-covered cotton to the soldiers. Brautigan's Elaine *(A Confederate General from Big Sur)* buys

baby alligators because if you bought one at the regular price, you got another for a penny. It was "an alligator one cent sale," and — Brautigan adds tongue-in-the-cheek — "in its own way it made sense".[34] Warren Miller's housewife *(Looking for the General)* is driven over the edge of the precipice by incessantly pestering pollsters of publicity bureaus. "Madam, before you leap, please tell us, which pile of laundry is whiter? — Why, this one of course. — Then over the edge, voom, whiter than white, falling softer and sudsier than her favorite detergent, from her bowels unwinding sheets and pillowcases, absolute miracles of whiteness; dying, uttering her final words: 'It's Spic 'n Span for me, for clothes and dishes too. Was Duz good to me? Was Duz ever!"[35] This is the total satire of a human being's total decay as a result of consumer manipulation: her flesh-and-blood human essence has been replaced by the lifeless rubbish of commercial propaganda. Terry Southern is not less enraged than Warren Miller. One of Guy Grand's retaliating hobbies in *The Magic Christian* is to buy a Madison Avenue advertising agency only to reorganize it into its own caricature. A pigmy is hired to be new president, "to scurvy about offices like a squirrel and to chatter raucously in his native tongue," to shriek "pure gibberish".[36] And one of Mr. Warburton's Sermons — "Swear it, swear it, U. S. A." in Purdy's *Cabot Wright Begins* reads like Vance Packard or any of the sociologists: "The great thing about the American consumer is that it is filled before it is ever empty, glutted without knowing the feeling of either hungry or satiety."[37] Ads like the one from the window display of "a private ladies' Swedish massage parlour" may have contributed to Warburton's suicide: "A BEAUTIFUL POTENTIAL SCREEN STAR WHOSE NAME CANNOT BE REVEALED UNTIL THE HOUSE LIGHTS GO ON, NOT YET 20, WILL PERFORM THE ENTIRE OPERATION OF SCIENTIFICALLY CLEANING HER ANUS WITH OUR NEW LOVEPETAL FACIAL TISSUE ON OUR PRIVATE TV-FOR-LADIES SCREEN. LIVE. SHE WILL DEMONSTRATE THAT ONLY WITH LOVE BLOOM TISSUE CAN ONE'S FUNDAMENT BE SCIENTIFICALLY CLEANSED BUT NOT STIMULATED OR CHAFED."[38] William Gaddis' *The Recognitions* is one of the novels testifying that besides the consumer, the producer, tha maker is deftly manipulated, too. Wyatt Gwyon's genius for painting becomes the prey of such artful management and control. Bigot Aunt May stifles, the fiendish Recktall Brown perverts Gwyon's brilliant talent (he makes him paint forgeries). The death of his artistic genuineness and the relentless disintegration of his personality ensue. "I don't live, I'm . . . I'am lived," he says to Valentine.[39]

Milo Minderbinder, Heller's mess officer in *Catch-22*, is the manipulator incarnate with a horrifying lack of ethical inhibitions. The head of "M & M Enterprises" puts the war "on a businesslike basis"[40] and soon controls not only the syndicate, Colonels Cathcart and Korn included, but the black market of the whole world with the result that he becomes the mayor of Malta, the Vice-Shah of Oran, the Caliph of Baghdad, the Imam of Damascus, the Sheik of Araby plus the corn god, the rain god and the rice god of various tribes. But it also means that his squadron consumes chocolate-covered cotton, is bombed by Milo and his manoeuvres ecompassing the world cost lives in great number.

But Milo's story is that of private enterprise. An excellent example of what we called corporative manipulation can be found in Heller's second novel, *Something Happened*. Bob Slocum, who aspires to a career at the corporation and is successful, is Babbitt's descendant, except that he is (not unwillingly) caught in the mechanism of a gigantic company and his private frustrations are immeasurably greater. Life at the corporation where all are seemingly smiling and happy, kind and helpful, kills with prosperity and pseudo-sweet insincerity. The almost unbearably detailed Slocum-syndrome can be detected two decades before Slocum in Alan Harrington's Fred Purdy *(The Revelations of Dr. Modesto)*, Arcadia Life's (life insurance) agency director who — a shade

or two more humane than the careerist Slocum — has no passion for life left, cowers in his office and escapes from bustling "office city"[41] whenever he can. The manipulator of the novel is not Fred Purdy (who is a victim like Hal Hingham only a different type) but Jack Swan, the Public Relations Counsel for Arcadia. Swan's aggressive strategies make Hal Hingham's story of conformity also the tragi-comic story of a career manipulated as company interests dictate. It is Harrington's unsparing satire of "the age of public relations."[42] The author, who has considerable experience of public relations, produced an ironical sociography of life at a corporation in *Life in a Crystal Palace*. Had Bob Slocum read it (the book preceded Heller's novel by a decade and a half), he could have learned in time what a "boring Paradise"[43] a corporation was.

Mass communication is one of the most effective means at the disposal of those whom the bitterly critical Herbert I. Schiller calls "the mind managers" in his book of the same title. Mass media are anti-homeostatic in Norbert Wiener's view, too. The means of communication, he maintains, are used by "merchants of lies", "exploiters of gullibility" — by "the knaves" to shape the opinions of "the fools".[44] The knave pays serious attention to the psychology of the fool whose reactions are calculable and manipulable as "the fool operates in a manner which, by and large, is as predictable as the struggles of a rat in a maze."[45]

The novelist discerns a contradiction in all this, one that is irresistibly comic and distressingly painful at the same time: every minute of the day a formidable technical and human apparatus and an unprecedented quantity of information go to war to invade and control the American citizen's mind — a mind, which, ironically, is more and more confused as a result and its desperate struggle for authentic and solid information is more and more hopeless. One of the fools, of the knaves' victims is good old Mr. Pivner (Gaddis: *The Recognitions*) whose fate is defined by the same contradiction. He is flooded with information by the media daily, "and he did try, with all the attention he could muster under the attrition of the sameness of their words, to maintain his responsibility as a citizen."[46] But the effort exhausts him and the never waning "aggressive vitality" of the mind managers levels Mr. Pivner's weariness "to chronic decrepitude".[47] Advertising and consequently the knaves of mass communication must have had a share in the suicides mentioned above, those of Warren Miller's housewife and James Purdy's Mr. Warburton.

Mr. Pivner's life precipitates into premature decrepitude and the other two commit suicide because deep down they are *not* conformists, they are unable to relinquish their autonomy. But a man who — like Jerzy Kosinski's Chance in *Being There* — never passes through the gate of the house and never knows the world as it really is, who knows only life's fraudulent copy flashed on the tv screen, such a character never becomes aware of his defencelessness to manipulation (and can never become a "character" for that matter). Such a creature is created by the one-eyed monster (television) in its own image. Manipulation means, J. W. Aldridge says, that you are as they see you and they are as *they* wish you to see them. So the characters in *Being There* "perceive life wholly in terms of the images offered them on the television screen."[48] Other-directedness is tv-directedness in Kosinski's novel, we can say. It is a starting point for him (with an element of truth carried to absurdity) so absurd that the steps that follow may be (as they *are*) governed by ordinary, consistent logic, the perspective becomes increasingly warped until the conclusion is more absurd than the premise: television becomes the standard to measure reality by it. Thus tv becomes a shaper of reality and not the other (normal) way around. If you are like someone on the screen, you are real, authentic, you exist. If you happen to have the chance to appear on the screen (Chance happened to), then *you* are a standard for others, a shaper of reality.

By way of summing up it can be concluded that conformism is ironically diagnosed to be entropic in recent American fiction. In "The White Negro" Norman Mailer voices his view that conformity is "slow death" "with every creative and rebellious instinct stifled."[49] But the American writer — merciless as his horrifying yet comic diagnosis is — never surrenders to the "slow death of conformity". We base this statement not merely on indirect evidence (that the diagnosis is satirical). It seems to be confirmed by the fact that the satire of energy-draining conformity does itself display energy which is unyielding and untamable. Such negentropic energy is represented by Vonnegut's Ghost Shirt Society in *Player Piano*, his Kilgore Trout in several novels and Eliot Rosewater in *God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater;* Heller's Yossarian in *Catch-22;* Baker's Shillitoe in *A Fine Madness;* Kesey's McMurphy in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest;* Brautigan's narrator in *Trout Fishing in America;* Pynchon's Oedipa Maas in *The Crying of Lot 49;* Elkin's Feldman in *A Bad Man;* and others. But these form another chapter of conformism in recent American fiction. Our concern in the present study was only the ironic treatment of conformism as an entropic force, as "the Dance of Death brought up to date."[50]

*Zoltán Abádi-Nagy*

## NOTES

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# Ralph Ellison and the Dilemma of Artistic Synthesis

Much critical ink has been spilt in attempting to make predictions or expressing doubt about Ellison's much-awaited second novel, which is claimed to have been in the works for over two decades now. Writing a first novel, it seems, is usually easier than coming up with a second one. But this appears to be only part of the truth.

If viewed superficially, one may even be tempted to accept, in Ellison's case, George Steiner's pronouncement about the instant glory and almost equally rapid oblivion of many writers in the American literary industry: "The notion of a slowly unfolding oeuvre . . . is alien to the American climate. Hence the number of writers who have written *one* really major work and then produced various types of kitsch and self-destruction."[1] Obviously, in Ellison's case both the rapid oblivion and the "kitsch and self-destruction" syndrome has to be ruled out. Since the publication of his novel, Ellison has repeatedly made his presence felt, particularly as an essayist, in which department he compares favourably with even James Baldwin in objectivity, critical acumen, and the profundity of understanding the American social and literary scene.

Moreover, the real explanation for the delay of the second novel may lie not so much in Ellison's painstakingly careful and conscientious, almost Hemingway-like, devotion to the craft of writing and not even in the fact that black writing appears to have been at a relative stalemate for the past ten years or so. The actual reason might easily be the very work that almost overnight made Ellison a literary celebrity and has kept him in the limelight ever since. For *Invisible Man* is not only an outstanding product of fiction, but a very special novel too. An achievement that is hardly likely to be repeated or surpassed, unless perhaps Ellison decides to turn to a totally different kind of fiction.

In spite of Ellison's apprehension that the novel might turn out to be a failure in the literary market ("I thought that I would be lucky if I sold between 500 and 1,000 copies."),[2] it was, as indicated by the National Book Award in 1953, an immediate

success. In 1965, in a Book Week poll of 200 writers, critics and editors, it was voted the most distinguished American novel published in twenty years. It has been celebrated as a *Negro* (then *black)* novel, as an *American* novel, and critical reception has, on the whole, been favourable. It has been invariably labelled as "the seminal novel" in post-war American fiction,[3] a "major American novel" and "very nearly a great book",[4] "quite possibly the best American novel since World War II", [5] etc.

On the other hand, while the novel has been repeatedly praised for "going beyond race", for vaulting "the parochial limitations of most Negro fiction",[6] i.e. transcending the ethnic bounds of his primary subject matter and depicting the predicament of alienation of Western man without regard to skin colour and immediate cultural particularity, it has brought frequent attacks as well. The well-publicized Stanley E. Hyman—Ellison exchange aside, some of the accusations are very harsh indeed and range from the surprising statement that "the novel is profoundly anti-Negro"[7] to allegations of faddish authorial gimmicks, overblown symbolism, etc. A more recent negative appraisal came from one of the advocates of the rather uncertain and inward-turning concept of black aesthetic. The black author, contends Addison Gayle, "must forgo the assimilationist tradition and redirect his art to the strivings within the race"; Ellison is condemned for remaining attached "to the concept of assimilation at a time when such concept has ceased to be the preoccupation of the black writer".[8] In his most recent study of the black novel in America, Gayle is even more explicit: "He [Ellison] has bought the propaganda of the academic critics, accepted the image of the faceless, universal man, trapped in the narrow world of his own ego. He has accepted, as well, the modern idea of a raceless world . . . "[9]

It can be safely stated, however, that for the past quarter-century, *Invisible Man* has successfully endured the erosions of time. Against the present background of "innovative" and inward-turning modes in American prose-writing — superfiction, metafiction, antistory, New Journalism, the cult of the so-called post-realistic novel and planned incongruity, the various manifestations of the myth in (or as) literature formula, literary entropy, etc. — Ellison's novel continues to hold its appeal.

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Ellison's conscious attempt to "fabricate that artifact which we call a novel"[10] was very ambitious indeed. In writing the book he was totally aware not only of the complexities inherent in both the tradition of the novel on an international scale and his particular subject matter, but also of the necessity of innovation through a conscious evaluative screening of a kind of "usable past" and "usable present", and the creative incorporation of relevant components into an artistically heightened whole. It was with this in view and its consequent successful realization that he managed to avoid the simplistic and reductive approach of even the most celebrated contemporaries in black writing.[11]

With regard to the novel's amazingly comprehensive technical, thematic and general cultural range, one is even tempted, within certain limits, to draw a parallel between the yet-to-be-written "Great American Novel" and Ellison's single fictional product. Though there seems to be no evidence of Ellison's ever having made a statement about that hypothetical, all-inclusive encyclopedia of a novel, there seems to be a curious harmony between that and Ellison's almost unprecedented synthesizing concern. What did the term The Great American Novel imply at the time of its conception? According to J. Epstein's mercifully brief explanation: "a book that would contain within its pages all the rhythm and beat of American life, its dramas and conflicts, its tone and contour, the novel that would do for America what *War and Peace* did for Russia, or

Balzac's *Human Comedy* did for France — capture the spirit, and hence the essence, of an entire nation".[12] Within still manageable proportions something of this sort has been achieved in Ellison's novel. Of course it does not mean that *Invisible Man* will ever be able to compete with the encyclopedia. But neither does it have to. What Ellison has attained with such perfect mastery is to have rendered, through the depth of the book's informing intelligence, the complexity and richness of an essentially American segment of a composite national culture: the rhythm and beat, the dramas and conflicts, the tone and spirit, the historically and culturally relevant shaping factors of the past and present of black America in such a way that not only has he managed to give the black novel room in a wider reality, but much of the (often painful) truth about the nation as a whole likewise constitutes an organic part of the broad canvas.

In fact, a later (1969) formulation by Ellison of the above need for totality shows a conscious awareness of exactly this ambitious attempt: " . . . as I began working seriously on the novel, I had to . . . learn that in such a large and diverse country, with such a complex social structure, a writer was called upon to conceive some sort of model which would represent that great diversity — account for all these people and for the various types of social manners found within various levels of the social hierarchy, a structure of symbolic actions which could depict the various relationships between groups and classes of people. He was called upon to conceive some way of getting that complexity into his work in the form of symbolic action and metaphor. In other words, I discovered, for myself at least, that it was neccessary to work out some imaginative integration of the total American experience . . . "[13]

In the history of black American literature, therefore, Ellison's achievement is unique: incorporated in his novel there is more that matters in black American experience than in a dozen burning novels of protest. *Invisible Man* is not only a comprehensive and complete story of Negro life in America, told with objective and exquisite detachment and one of the most awesomely fertile living imaginations in American writing, but also an eloquent assertion that there is considerably more to the black man's story in America than oppression, suffering and hate. While doing so, he disrupts the myth of the *unity* of black experience. For Ellison's nameless hero, "the American Negroes' Joseph K.," the world is nothing so simple as it was for Wright's Bigger Thomas. While the world of *Native Son*, the product of Wright's angry and frustrated mind, is entirely devoid of the infinitely rich texture of Negro life, it is, in fact, almost entirely devoid of tenderness, love, communality, loyalty, music, religious faith and hope, the solace, the joy, and the *soul*, Ellison's masterpiece is anchored firmly in the Negro heritage; he replaced Wright's bleak universe with a world rich in tradition, complex ambiguities and the subtle paradoxes of the chaos of modern living.

Therefore the picaresque journey of the nameless hero, a series of very special "fool's errands", owing to the aesthetic consequences of Ellison's generally optimistic conception of American pluralism, turns out to be the discovery of America — not just Negro America.

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It seems justified to view Ellison as a pre-eminently "synthetic" artist, who shows an almost scholarly interest in reducing culture-bearing particulars to an inclusive artistic whole. He is interested in *composition* in terms of its actual primary function and meaning, i.e. "putting together". This concern is clearly reflected in *Invisible Man*, and it cannot be mere accident either that in his subsequently published essays and interviews he repeatedly refers to the technique and nature of the process: "Years later . . . I began to try to understand T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound and others and see how they worked

putting these things together . . . "[14] Also: "The imagination is integrative. That's how you make the new – by putting something else with what you've got." [15] Studying the sources and the montage technique of *The Waste Land*, Ellison says, "made me as conscious of the elements, the traditions, which went into the creation of literature as I had long been taught to be conscious of the various elements which went into musical styles and traditions."[16] At least on one occasion he speaks about "building" his fiction.[17]

The study of the phenomenon of artistic synthesis is a typically *post festa* activity. This, in turn, is bound up with the following relevant factors: (1) no prior literary quality can (or should) normally be attributed to the components that are to enter into a literary work; (2) the actual value of the incorporated elements can only be judged from the work's total effect; and, (3) there is no direct relationship between and artifact's so-called intensive totality[18] (which is practically inexhaustible; cannot be "measured") and the externally introduced culture-bound elements (which, in principle, can be listed, "counted", as it were). All these together lead to the important deduction that the abundance or the relative scarcity of these elements alone is not necessarily related to a given work's ultimate success or failure. This again leads to two conclusions. One, artistic synthesis as such does not, by its nature, yield itself to prior regulations, prescriptions or antecedent normative mediation. Two, the communicated information of a given artifact, no matter how complex or all-inclusive, can, within the inner "chemistry" of the work, point towards both negative or positive aesthetic consequences. In fact, cultural baggage of this kind can become functionally empty, a merely neutral artistic ballast.

One of the many significant questions that are likely to arise in a study of Ellison's novel is bound up with the almost too lavish, almost wastefully communicated information. The sprawling, episodic, picaresque structure of the novel is not only an appropriate testing device for the hero's frustrating quest for a meaningful human identity, but also a suitable medium for a novelist who is in the act of discovering the rich complexities of a heterogeneous culture. Ellison makes his hero run almost the whole gamut of class and transition in American society, from Jim Trueblood's farm to a Harlem race riot, from the slave past and living Jim Crow to a highly industrialized urban existence. The book is gradually filled with a lifetime of events as the picaresque hero moves through a journey of exploration of what is roughly some one hundred years of American history for the Negro. Slavery (referred to through the images of Trueblood, the grandfather, Brother Tarp, and by some of the relics presented in the Harlem eviction scene), the Reconstruction (the college campus: the fictional projection of Tuskegee), assimilationism, Northern philantropy (Norton), the Great Migration, World War I (the veterans of the Golden Day), the Northern industrial scene, the labour movement, the Depression, Negro nationalism (Marcus Garvey, Ras the Exhorter-Destroyer), organized Negro movement (the Brotherhood section), etc. There can be very little that the book has left out. Superimposed on this, there is a series of recurring thematic threads, extended patterns like the "beating of Negro by Negro" theme (as exemplified in the battle royal scene, the urban riot episode, and in the consecutive confrontations of the nameless hero with Bledsoe, Brockway, Ras, etc.; this pattern is also reinforced by folklore prefigurations), or the grandfather's curse-like dying words, which keep haunting the hero throughout the novel. Besides, as one critic puts it, the nameless hero in action "is an image collector or symbolist, gathering up into his briefcase all the concrete emblems and reminders of his experience that can serve as clues to finding his real name and identity".[19] Moreover, the book itself as a whole becomes a similar container or depository of images and clues, some expanded into actions and events, some constituting a body of "hidden patterns" and correspondences, which can serve either as a pleasurable excitement for the clue-hunter, or a frustrating game of hide-and-seek that Ellison deliberately indulges in. And while it is indubitable that the

novel, as a documentary black experience, "gives us such a sense of social fact as can be come by nowhere in the stiffly pedantic manuals of academic sociology",[20] it is sometimes too obvious that Ellison wanted to cater for all: the mythophile of various persuasions, the depth psychologist, Jungians, Freudians, "deep readers" and symbol-hunters of all kinds. There is a liberal dose of every possible motif and incident: actual (Trueblood) and spiritual (Norton) incest; rites of passage; scapegoat, trickster, and mother-earth archetypes; a cavalcade of American symbols (often arranged in distorted juxtapositions); a bit of Lord Raglan; clusterings of mythological aspects; puns and in-group humour; allegorical extensions; symbolic animals; etc. Perhaps one is not wide of the mark in suspecting that this burden of implication, the enigmatic and "to-be-chewed-and-digested" quality that the novel emanates has not only been a lasting challenge for reader and critic alike, but — perhaps paradoxically so — one of the reasons for its sustained popularity. For obvious reasons.

A further twist is added to Ellison's close-packed prose by his use of "various masking devices, including understatement, irony, *double-entendre* and calculated ambiguity. There is something deliberately elusive in his style, something secret and taunting, some instinctive avoidance of explicit statement . . . "[21] This chameleon-like flexibility is explicit in nearly every episode of the book. Nothing is simple or unequivocal in Ellison's world. The grandfather's advice turns out to be both a curse and a consolation, both a simple message and an eternal enigma; in the battle royal episode the coloured boys are threatened equally if they look and if they avert their eyes from the nude blonde; on the bronze statue of the Founder "the cold Father symbol" seems to be both lifting the veil from the face of a kneeling slave and lowering it more firmly in place; owing to a series of identity shifts and mask changes the invisible man can be the deceived and the deceiver at the same time; comic hilarity suddenly turns into nightmarish hallucination through implication, etc. In fact, often we cannot even be sure whether the book should be read as a tragic story of lost identity, as extended *humour noir*, or as the parody of a quest romance. The cleverly manipulated conglomerate of naturalistic descriptions, verbal play, speaking names, fantasy, distortion, burlesque, joke, irony, grotesque laughter, slapstic and absurdity lends the novel a hard-to-define, hauntingly hypnotic, surrealistic quality.

In spite of the book's obvious unevenness, this densely symbolic novel is, on the whole, surprisingly effective. This is mainly due to the fact that the symbols seldom intrude; they are both original and functionally adequate. Sometimes, however, Ellison obviously cannot resist letting things go on past their maximum effectiveness. A few times the richness of implication tends to lead to elusiveness rather than subtlety of meaning, and he is likely to assign arbitrary content to certain images and signs. When we are told, for instance, — years after the book's publication — that B. P. Rinehart's initials are supposed to mean "something" (the P. is for "Proteus", the B. for "Bliss"),[22] the supplementary meaning-as-reinforcement seems to be externally imposed and not really functional. (But at least the reader's mind is put at ease that B. P. does not stand for British Petroleum.) In some other cases the symbolism is either fictionally unnecessary or too obvious. One possible explanation of the hypothetical colour symbolism inherent in the "diabolic" hero's favourite dessert of vanilla ice cream and sloe gin ("white, presumably, seeping blood", suggests Marcus Klein),[23] or overdoing the idea of infusing ten drops of black liquid into each bucket of "Optic White", etc., would, to me at least, belong in the above categories. A rather tiresome business, to be sure. In spite of Ellison's occasional indulgences in faddish symbolism and authorial gimmick, however, Lloyd L. Brown's harsh judgement can hardly be accepted: "His [Ellison's] whole book conforms exactly to the formula for literary success in today's market. Despite the murkiness

of his *avant-garde* symbolism, the pattern is clear and may be charted as precisely as a publisher's quarterly sales report".[24]

An excellent example of Ellison's ability to create rich implications through concentration and economy without being intrusive is the Harlem eviction scene. The fictional role of the emotionally charged episode is that, as a result of his direct involvement in it, the hero is 'catapulted into history'. At the same time, however, in the closely focused review of somewhat more than sixty lines Ellison manages to suggest the specific black history which ultimately placed the elderly couple on the dreary Harlem sidewalk. A brief list of the tattered, pathetic clutter of household objects lining the curb is offered. Among them are an oval frame portrait of the old couple when young, with a kind of "sad, stiff dignity" on the faces; a pair of "knocking bones" and other minstrel instruments; a picture of a banjo-strumming, black faced white man; a straightening comb; a small Ethiopian flag; a faded tintype of Abraham Lincoln; some void insurance policies; the smiling image of a Hollywood star; a rabbit's foot; "a yellowing newspaper portrait of a huge black man with the caption: MARCUS GARVEY DEPORTED". Then: "I turned away, bending and searching the dirty snow for anything missed by my eyes, and my fingers closed upon something resting in a frozen footstep: a fragile paper, coming apart with age, written in black ink grown yellow. I read: FREE PAPERS. *Be it known to all men that my negro, Primus Provo, has been freed by me the sixth day of August, 1859. Signed: John Samuels. Macon* . . . My hands were trembling . . . "[25] Through this bare cataloguing of the artifacts and mementoes from every stage of the American Negro past, Ellison has managed, with the deftest concision, to write a shorthand history and sociology of a painful and at the same time mythical past. Almost everything that matters in the black past is here: the dark ages of slavery, the practice of blackface minstrelsy, the ironic reference to the myth surrounding the Great Emancipator, the Africa-interest, black chauvinism and the image of the "black Moses", assimilationist tendencies, the Great Migration from the South (it is very likely that by *Macon* Ellison means Macon, Ga., rather than Macon, Miss.; one of the writer's parents was originally from Georgia); the unattainable (presumably Anglo-Saxon) ideal of beauty, relics of Southern folk superstition, the obvious failure of economic promise, the Depression. The free papers also indicate that in the 87-year-old Uncle Provo's youth something exceptional happened: he was manumitted about three and a half years *before* the Emancipation Proclamation. This abrupt extension into the past also lends depth and perspective to the brief scene, and provides a telling picture of the failure of the success formula of the American dream with respect to the country's largest minority. The brief scene, assimilated from an ostensibly haphazard potpourri of seemingly heterogeneous culture fragments, suddenly comes to life (for the initiated reader) and tells more about the race issue than chapters of more explicit commentary or drama could.

Negro folk art occupies a position of central importance in Ellison's concern with artistic synthesis. In fact, Ellison's contribution to the theory of black American folk culture is very significant. The most sustained network of functionally valid cultural elements in the novel is the direct result of Ellison's conscious attempt to tap the deep well of Negro folklore and music. Ellison interprets and reinterprets, extends, defines and elaborates upon the folk culture of the American Negro and, at the same time, assimilates the most advanced techniques of modern fiction. In this way the problem of black cultural identity and its place in a pluralistic society was solved by Ellison through the medium of aesthetic assimilation. To do so, it was necessary for him to reverse the limitations of the black writer's cultural dualism, to place the role of black culture in proper perspective, and to explore the "Americanness" of Negro folk art. "When I began writing in earnest", Ellison says in the Introduction to *Shadow and Act*, "I was forced . . .

to relate myself consciously and imaginatively to my mixed background as American, as Negro American, and as a Negro . . . More important and inseparable from this particular effort, was the necessity of determining my true relationship to that body of American literature to which I was most attracted and through which, aided by what I could learn from the literatures of Europe, I would find my own voice, and to which I was challenged, by way of achieving myself, to make some small contribution, and to whose composite picture of reality I was obligated to offer some necessary modification."[26] Elsewhere, he rejects the idea of the theoretical or practical separation of Negro folk expressiveness from the rest of American culture, hereby also dismissing the widely held prevalent contentions that Negro folklore existed in self-contained isolation and was exempt from the general give-and-take in the nation's pluralistic culture: "There's never been a time when we — our expression, our symbols, our turns of face — were not finding our way into the products of other Americans who were consciously or unconsciously creating."[27] Ellison has thus shortcircuited both the assimilationist's and the Negro nationalist's evaluations of black culture, who tend to regard it as in some sense un-American. In fact, assimilating folk sources into literature is not only possible and desirable, but a way of preserving them: "I'd like to feel that all my fiction has themes, motives and images from folklore. That's my way of keeping it alive."[28] Besides being consciously immersed in the folkways and mores of the black South and the rich underground world of Harlem, it is primarily through the folk expressiveness of his people that *Invisible Man* succeeds in rendering a genuine sense of that almost nonverbal experience that very few American writers — primarily Langston Hughes and Jean Toomer — could or cared to render: *soul*. It is exactly this hard-to-define quality that emanates from the hero's brief dialogue-as-identification with the old man in the Charlie Chaplin pants in Chapter 9, the rhetorical excesses of the black preacher, and the racy idiom of a whole series of masterfully captured facsimiles of down-to-earth black men and women.

It is noteworthy that in the hospital episode, where the hero undergoes a forced lobotomy, i.e. a kind of mental castration, the doctors are unable to erase the deep structure of his racial memory. He is capable of recalling the images of Buckeye the Rabbit and Brer Rabbit. And it is exactly this persistence of his cultural heritage that makes him capable of meeting the challenge of the ensuing episodes in black Harlem.

In the novel, the most extended system of folklore prefigurations is established by the recurring references to the rabbit—bear parallel of the Negro folktales. In the traditional cast of the two figures the shrewd, often insolent and cruel Brer Rabbit is faster, in both running and thinking, than his honest, inflexible, and physically stronger opponent. Whenever they match their wits, the bear must be tricked. It is obvious which animal figure the invisible man would like to identify with. However, throughout the novel, he is doomed to the bear's role, and he cannot win. Playing the bear, the hero is outwitted by a whole series of rabbit figures. Interestingly, most of them are black characters: Trueblood makes him lose his scholarship, Bledsoe treacherously deceives him, Lucius Brockway tricks him into exploding the steam furnace ("and I seemed to hear Brockway laugh as I looked around to see him scrambling for the stairs"),[29] Brother Jack also sends him on a fool's errand. In a sense even the grandfather joins in the not too comic bear-baiting episodes. After the humiliating expulsion from the college by Bledsoe, the hero has this vision: "And now to drive me wild I felt suddenly that my grandfather was hovering over me, grinning triumphantly out of the dark."[30] On one occasion a rabbit man (Peter the Rabbit), the old clown in the baggy pants, only reminds the hero of his bear identity and offers him the secret of survival and adaptibility: " 'Man, this Harlem ain't nothing but a bear's den. But I tell you one thing', he said with swiftly sobering

face, 'it's the best place in the world for you and me, and if times don't get better soon I'm going to grab that bear and turn him every way but loose!' . . . 'All it takes to get along in this here man's town is a little shit, grit and mother-wit. And man, I was bawn with all three.' "[31] At the end of the novel, when pursued, the invisible man has no choice but to hide in an underground cavern: a kind of bear's den. That is where we meet him as the book begins. That our hero is aware of his defeat as a bear is partly substantiated by his own admission ("Call me Jack-the-Bear . . . ")[32] and the pun in the final sentence of the Prologue: "But what did *I* do to be so blue? Bear with me."[33]

The mastery of these subtle references in the novel lies in the fact that they add an organically thematic reinforcement to the book's multiple message while unobtrusively blending into the total design of the suggestive apparatus. On the other hand, motifs of this kind are both a challenge to and a frustrating obstacle for the recipient not initiated into Negro lore and culture (cf. a sizeable portion of American and the overwhelming majority of non-American readers), for much information of this nature is bound to be sidetracked in the receptive process. (Of course, this does not necessarily mean that this portion of the book's meaningful forms is hopelessly lost, for the reader—artifact confrontation can rightly be conceived as a *repeatable* process, with the chance, at least theoretically so, of making the culture-bound signs somehow meaningful.)

Perhaps the most celebrated extrafictional source of the novel is music, particularly jazz and blues. Ellison himself has repeatedly and willingly elaborated on the nature and inherent philosophy of jazz, as well as on the aesthetic possibilities of the potentially organic interpenetration of music with literary art.[34] In fact jazz and the blues can be regarded as the aesthetic mainspring of his stylistic, ritualistic, philosophical concerns with prose writing in general. For Ellison jazz is, from an ontological aspect, a convergence of gradual accumulation in which a minority culture maintained its separate identity without isolating itself from other influences. He is especially interested in the qualities that, in his estimation, both literature and jazz share: they are ritualistic means of structuring experience, both represent a kind of affirmation of life, and what is especially important for our analysis here, they draw upon and incorporate a wide range of disparate elements and patterns to be structured into a larger meaningful whole. In one of his recent statements Ellison asserts that "the jazz musician, the jazz soloist, is anything if not eclectic. He knows his rhythms; he knows the tradition of his form, so to speak; and he can draw upon an endless pattern of sounds which he recombines on the spur of the moment into a meaningful musical experience . . . "[35] It is interesting to see how Ellison extends this attribute, when discussing T. S. Eliot's similarly eclectic sensibility, to literature itself: " . . . . I had a sense that all these references of Eliot's, all this snatching of phrases from the German, from the French, from the Sanskrit, and so on, were attuned to that type of American cultural expressiveness which one got in jazz and which one still gets in good jazz." Then: "they [T. S. Eliot's footnotes to *The Waste Land*] made me as conscious of the elements, the traditions, which went into the creation of literature as I had long been taught to be conscious of the various elements which went into musical styles and traditions."[36] Ellison seems to perform the imaginative leap, by analogical extension, between the structure of jazz performance, the philosophy of the blues, and the particular kind of duality confronting the writer on the in-group and the less particular levels. The common denominator of these quite disparate elements seems to be a *tension of cross-purposes*, as well as *diversity within unity*. "For true jazz is an art of individual assertion within and against the group. Each true jazz moment . . . springs from a contest in which each artist challenges all the rest; each solo flight, or improvisation, represents (like the successive canvases of a painter) a definition of his identity: as individual, as member of the collectivity and as a link in the chain of tradition. Thus,

because jazz finds very life in an endless improvisation upon traditional materials, the jazzman must lose his identity even as he finds it . . . "[37] Similarly to the jazz musician's divided loyalty, Ellison the writer has a double obligation: obligation to a native folk tradition and a wider literary culture.

From the blues Ellison appropriated another medium of structuring his material and his attitude. In blues the tension of cross-purposes is present in the form of a tension between circumstance and possibility on the one hand, tears and saving laughter on the other. This results in a kind of tragicomic sensibility, a special kind of coming to terms with reality after a personal disaster. In the novel, Ellison pulls, as it were, his protagonist through a series of episodes, each resulting in some kind of accident, but the book or the hero never lapse into sheer tragedy or sentimentality; the complex interplay of tragic and comic elements keeps restoring the invisible hero his inner individuality. The influence of the blues, therefore, in the novel, can be felt in an indirect way, not necessarily through the presence of blues notes or occasional snatches of blues lyrics.

Ellison's consciously guided method of selective derivation and creative recombination, as well as his attempt to increase complexity through symbolic action and metaphor, make *Invisible Man* one of the most successful products of artistic synthesis in recent American fiction. The multiplicity of the possible perspectives and the vast spectrum of references, afforded by the wealth of a mostly successfully assimilated eclecticism, certainly enrich both the texture and the depth of the novel's dominant and minor themes. On the other hand, however, the novel amply illustrates some of the artistic risks inherent in such an ambitious attempt. Most of these have been referred to.

A few remarks in conclusion. The most obvious inference is that quantitatively suggestive density is not indicative of or contributory to a given work's aesthetic value. Also, such works are especially vulnerable to the partial loss of the overall message intended by the author, which inevitably decreases the potential artistic effectiveness. Furthermore, the symbiosis of a multiplicity of implied meanings may, instead of intended reinforcement, lead to mutual cancellation or nonsensical confusion. (For instance, the reader's understanding of Trueblood's actual role in the novel is certainly blurred, if not disrupted, by the juxtaposition of several incongruous functions, i.e. considering him as a scapegoat figure, a rabbit figure, incest figure apart from the the other roles in the novel that he clearly fulfills.) The mere introduction of culture fragments into a work will not automatically render them functionally organic components. It is perhaps not merely accidental that Ellison, for the past quarter-century, has repeatedly felt obliged to "explain" his book.

*Zsolt Virágos*

## NOTES

[1] "American Writers: Who's Up, Who's Down?", *Esquire* (August 1977), pp. 77–81.

[2] Moore, R. H., ed., "On Initiation Rites and Power: Ralph Ellison Speaks at West Point", *Contemporary Literature*, (Spring 1974), p. 178.

[3] Allen, W., *Tradition and Dream: The English and American Novel From the Twenties to Our Time*. London, 1964. p. 317.

[4] Margolies, E., *Native Sons: A Critical Study of Twentieth-Century Negro American Authors*. Philadephia and New York, 1968. pp. 129, 148.

[5] Bone, R., *The Negro Novel in America*. New Haven and London, 1958 (rev. ed. 1965), p. 212.

[6] Ellison, R., *Shadow and Act*. New York: Signet, 1966. p. 23.

[7] Brown, L. L., "The Deep Pit", *Masses & Mainstream* (June 1952), p. 63.

[8] Addison Gayle, Jr., *Black Aesthetic*. New York, 1972. pp. 392–393.

[9] Addison Gayle, Jr., *The Way of the New World: The Black Novel in America.* Garden City, New York, 1976. p. 258.
[10] Moore, R. H., ed., op. cit., p. 178.
[11] Cf., for instance, Baldwin's rather consistently rigid "We—They" antithesis.
[12] Joseph Epstein, "The American Scene in Contemporary Writing", *Focus on the Writer and Society,* U. S. Information Service, 1975. p. 3.
[13] Moore, R. H., ed., op. cit., p. 171.
[14] West, H. I., "Travels With Ralph Ellison Through Time and Thought" (an interview), *The Washington Post* (August 10, 1973), p. B3.
[15] West, H. I. "Ellison: Exploring the Life of a Not So Invisible Man" (an interview), *The Washington Post* (August 19, 1973), p. G1.
[16] Moore, R. H., ed., p. 167.
[17] Ibid., 173.
[18] An imaginatively imposed network of internal relationships and interconnected inherences that supply a concentrated frame of reference for reconstructing the world of actuality from the artifact.
[19] Vogler, Th. A., "Invisible Man: Somebody's Protest Novel", In: Ronald Gottesman, ed., *The Merril Studies in Invisible Man.* Colombus, Ohio, 1971. p. 67.
[20] Scott, N. A., Jr., "The Dark and Haunted Tower of Richard Wright", In: Addison Gayle, Jr., ed., *Black Expression.* New York, 1969. p. 298.
[21] Bone, R., "Ralph Ellison and the Uses of Imagination". In: Herbert Hill, ed., *Anger and Beyond: The Negro Writer in the United States.* New York, 1966. p. 98.
[22] Ellison, R., *Shadow and Act,* p. 71.
[23] Klein, M., *After Alienation: American Novels in Mid-Century.* Cleveland and New York, 1962. p. 144.
[24] Brown, L. L. op. cit. 62.
[25] Ellison, R., *Invisible Man.* New York: Signet, 1952. pp. 235—237.
[26] *Shadow and Act,* pp. xvi—xvii.
[27] West, H. I., "Travels With Ralph Ellison Through Time and Thought", p. B1.
[28] Ibid., p. B3.
[29] *Invisible Man,* p. 200.
[30] Ibid., p. 131.
[31] Ibid., pp. 154—155.
[32] Ibid., p. 9.
[33] Ibid., p. 17.
[34] Seven of the essays in *Shadow and Act,* written principally in the late fifties, are on jazz and the blues. Moreover, his later interviews and lectures have repeatedly touched upon this topic.
[35] Moore, R. H., ed., op. cit., p. 166.
[36] Ibid., pp. 166—167.
[37] *Shadow and Act,* p. 228.

# Some Themes of Unification in T. S. Eliot's Criticism

The strategy of thought underlying most of T. S. Eliot's critical tenets and formulations is informed by certain assumptions about a value-charged opposition of unity and disunity where, in a variety of critical topics, things are seen as being in an unwelcome state of disunity and a remedial plea is made for their positive unification or re-unification. The most conspicuous instance where this strategy can be seen working is, of course, Eliot's theory of a "dissociation of sensibility" in the English poetry of the seventeenth century (and, by extension, of later periods); here an original unity of certain poetic and epistemological faculties is posited, their "dissociation" is described as a loss

of value while the necessity of their re-unification is proposed as a positive ideal. The same strategy, though perhaps in less obvious ways, accounts for the shape and contents of Eliot's treatment of various other critical topics as well. In this paper I choose to comment on two of such topics; the first of them — Eliot's pronouncements on the way language functions in prose and poetry — is a critical concern in the strict sense of the word, while the second one — his life-long preoccupation with the idea of a "popular" literature — is more sociological. My attempt will be to indicate the shaping presence of the above-mentioned strategy of unities and disunities in Eliot's consideration of these two fields.

## *I.*

As a starting point, we must recall the grist of Eliot's objections to Milton's use of language: it is deficient since it shows affinities with a "rigid", logical and scientific, type of discourse. At first sight, the tenor of this condemnation seems to imply a radically "fluid" discourse, devoid of whatever referential content and working solely with overtones, connotations, word music, etc. as a positive ideal and may sound, by association, very "romantic".[1] But the case is somewhat more complicated than that. Eliot's ideal, as expressed in a variety of other writings, is rather a sensible mediation between extreme "rigidity" and "fluidity" of discourse in poetry. He states the ideal in the following form:

"[I]n the poetry of Johnson and Goldsmith, as in the poetry of Dryden and Pope before them [ . . . ] every word and epithet goes straight to its mark. In comparison, much of later poetry has employed words rather for the sake of overtones, associations and indefinite suggestiveness. The greatest poets have done this too; we must admit that we can err by exclusive attention to the one kind of use of words or to the other."[2]

From this ideal of a mediation between "over-poetic" and "over-prosaic" ("Romantic" and "Classicist") uses of language there arises a very complex strategy of polemics in Eliot's criticism of various poets of the English language. Against Milton and the eighteenth century certain "Romantic" assumptions are called to action, while in the criticism of English Romanticism some of the "Classicist" ideals are made to serve as points of departure. The latter aspect is quite evident in Eliot's treatment of Swinburne, for example. In his view Dryden "bears a curious antithetical resemblance to Swinburne. Swinburne was also a master of words, but Swinburne's words are all suggestions and no denotations; if they suggest nothing, it is because they suggest too much. Dryden's words, on the other hand, are precise, they state immensely, but their suggestiveness is often nothing."[3]

A mediation is necessary because poetic language, in this Swinburnean use, loses its grasp on meanings and the world of objects underlying these meanings: "Language in a healthy state presents the object, is so close to the object that the two are identified. They are identified in the verse of Swinburne solely because the object has ceased to exist, because the meaning is merely the hallucination of meaning, because language, uprooted, has adapted itself to an independent life of atmospheric nourishment"; and the only quality which makes Swinburne nevertheless a very good poet is that while "the bad poet dwells partly in a world of objects and partly in a world of words, and he never can get them fit", "only a man of genius could dwell so exclusively and consistently among words as Swinburne".[4]

A similar line of strategy is at work in Eliot's comparison of Crashaw and Shelley. "Crashaw's images, even when entirely preposterous [ . . . ] give a kind of intellectual pleasure. . . . There is brain work in it. But in "The Skylark" there is no brain work. For

the first time perhaps in verse of such eminence, sound exists without sense."[5] To be sure, Shelley has more than once an intellectual message as well. But the split between verse-music and hard truth is so severe that "when Shelley has some definite statement to make, he simply says it; keeps his images on one side and his meanings on the other."[6] The same inability to grasp definite meanings and objects through the proper poetic medium accounts for "an interesting fact about [Swinburne's] vocabulary: he uses the most general word, because his emotion is never particular, never in direct line of vision, never focused".[7]

(Incidentally, the criticism of the generality and mere suggestiveness of much of English Romantic poetry is an implicit denial, on Eliot's part, of the famous Romantic ideal of *ut musica poesis*. Romanticism, in its abhorrence of referential factuality, tends, in its practice and theory, to become what S. K. Langer calls a "purely connotational semantics", that is, music.[8] This tendency is shown in Walter Pater's famous dictum: "All art aspires to the condition of music." For Eliot, this ideal clearly will not do.)

The root of the trouble is obviously that in Eliot's view in our modern age a separation has taken place between the intellect and the emotions. "What can be reduced to a science, in its narrow conception of "science", whatever can be handled by sharpness of wit mastering a limited and technical material, [the modern world] respects; the rest may be a waste of uncontrolled behaviour and immature emotion."[9] This process has its concomittant in the "dissociation" of language into separate discourses (into scientific and poetic ones), or, in other words, into the all too rigorously separated forms of "prose" and "verse".

This is what Eliot cannot accept; for him there are no "two distinct faculties, one of imagination and one of reason, one of poetry, and one of prose, [ . . . ] "feeling", in a work of art, is [no] less an intellectual product than is "thought".[10] To substantiate this assertion, the Elizabethans and Metaphysicals (and this time the Augustans as well) are called to bear testimony. Following Grierson,[11] he sees the poetic achievements of both Donne and Dryden in "their finding a way of saying in verse what no one else had been able to say except in prose written or spoken". Here, in this period, the separation between prose and verse is only a relative one, easily bridgeable: "Donne makes poetry out of learned and colloquial dialogue speech, Dryden out of the prose of political oratory; and Pope out of the most polished drawing room manner. And of Goldsmith and Johnson we can say the same; their verse is poetry partly because it has the virtues of good prose."[12] Dryden is a "great poet" because he "appeared to cleanse the language of verse and once more bring it back to the prose order";[13] "one of [his] good offices in his satires" is "to show us that if verse should not stray too far from the customs of speech, so also it should not abandon too much the uses of prose".[14]

On the other hand, our modern distinction between the two modes is a relatively late development: "poetry lovers" [of the present time] do not recognize [ . . . ] that their limitation of poetry to the "poetical" is a modern restriction of the romantic age".[15] Romantic poetry, in this respect, belongs to those periods "in which verse was bad because it was too poetic, too artificial";[16] bad, because being "over-poetic", in the sense Swinburne's poetry is, it tends to lose *all* connections with what its readers recognize as the sphere of the real and the factual. What is needed is the blurring of the boundaries which separate the two modes; and this can be done not only through the concession "that prose is allowed to be "poetic" "[17] (this would be the Romantic extreme), but also by an acknowledgement of "the right of poetry to be "prosaic" "[18] (which is the Classicist alternative). It may be stated, as a general rule, that "prose which has *nothing* in common with verse is dead; verse which has nothing in common with prose is probably artificial, diffuse, and syntactically weak".[19]

That the problem of poetry and prose had a powerful hold on Eliot's critical faculties is testified by one of his latest pronouncements on the issue. In his "Introduction" to a volume of Paul Valéry's theoretical writings (1958), he takes the French poet to task on account of a "direction in which Valéry's theory and practice take him, which seems to [Eliot] not without its dangers. This direction is indicated, even imposed, by the sharp distinction which he draws between poetry and prose".[20] This is the well-known distinction of Valéry's, based on an analogous differentiation between "Dancing" and "Walking", where the self-sufficient value of the former is contrasted with the instrumental character of the latter. Now this difference, for Eliot, simply does not obtain: in his view "dancing is sometimes purposive" as in the case of a tribal ritual,[21] and his conviction, in general, is "that much poetry will be found to have the instrumental value that Valéry reserves to prose, and that much prose gives us the kind of delight that Valéry holds to be solely within the province of poetry".[22] Valéry's direction, if thoroughly pursued, would involve a further dissocitation of discourses: "the words set free by Valery from the restrictions of prose may tend to form a separate language".[23]

All through his critical activity (or, since the problem of prose and poetry is hardly posed in his writings before 1920, at least throughout a considerable part of it), Eliot was not only an advocate of a sensible mediation between poetry and prose, but, now and then, he went as far as to attempt a rather systematic definition of some art-form serving as a "middle term" between the two modes. This is called, by Eliot's critics, his theory of "verse".

To be sure, the variety of the definitions he offered of "verse" makes for a certain amount of inconsistency. Sometimes "verse", together with the term "prose" is simply a technical term, while "poetry" means some other quality which may embrace either "verse" or "prose"; for instance, in the following definition from 1938: "Poetry may occur [ . . . ] at any point along the line of which the formal limits are "verse" and "prose".[24] On the other hand, "verse" appears as a third, mediating, term between poetry and prose in an introductory piece from 1928: "No one is competent to judge poetry until he recognizes that poetry is nearer to "verse" than it is to prose poetry";[25] and the introduction to Valéry we have just commented on contains this tripartite division in an explicit form: "We can distinguish between prose and verse, and between prose and poetry; but the moment the intermediate term *verse* is suppressed, I do not believe that any distinction between prose and poetry is meaningful."[26] For his definition of "verse", in this latter form, Eliot has found a wide range of application: those poets whose poetry is not just prose in metre and rhyme, but, at the same time, avoids being "too poetical" in the wrong sense of the word, belong, accordingly, to the class of "masters of verse". This is the province where Eliot finds a high-ranking place for Rudyard Kipling, for instance.[27]

This concern with a sound mediation between prose and poetry bears the stamp of a very important insight; the health of the language — Eliot's life-long concern — depends, to a very great extent, on the preservation of the balance of its "fixity", which, in W. Nowottny's words, "makes it in many respect incommensurate with the phenomena with which it has to deal (in proportion to its success in reducing them to standard terms)", and its "shiftiness' which "makes it indeterminate and slippery to handle (in proportion to its success in preserving its ability to meet new situations without continual revision and supplementation of its apparatus)".[28]

But this emphasis on prose as a necessary antidote to Romantic "over-poeticality" needs some qualification. Eliot is interested in a prosaic quality which is different from the "prosiness" of Milton. While Miltons' "prose" was the wrong kind of prose (language tending to be technical and rigid), prose deserves attention on an other account; it is

that "the language of prose is ordinarily nearer to that of speech than is the language of poetry".[29]

Living speech, or ordinary language, is the basis for both poetic and scientific discourses. Their connections with ordinary discourse are, on the other hand,qualitatively different: while, in I. C. Hungerland's words, "science tends to specialize linguistically, by excluding certain everyday forms and functions and inventing its own vocabulary", "literature has no tendency toward a clearly technical diction. It specializes, one might say, by making common forms of language function more effectively than they do in ordinary discourse, but in ways that are not at all foreign to ordinary life".[30] For Eliot it is clearly harmful if poetry, in some of its historical manifestations, comes dangerously close to developing its "clearly technical diction", whether in the form of Miltonian "rhetoric" or Romantic (Late Romantic) "poetic diction", since in this use of language the touch with the germinal unity of "scientific" and "poetic" modes of cognition in ordinary speech may get lost. Or, as Eliot's thesis runs, "there is one law of nature [ . . . ]: the law that poetry must not stray too far from the ordinary everyday language which we use and hear" because it "cannot afford to lose its contact with the changing language of common intercourse."[31] The language of poetry is, or should be, "one's language as it is spoken at one's own time";[32] "the *norm* for a poet's language is the way his contemporaries talk".[33]

The actual state of affairs was remarkably close to what this norm would require "in the living English which was Shakespeare's", but this "became split into two components one of which was exploited by Milton and the other by Dryden". Eliot considers Dryden's development "the healthier, because it was Dryden who preserved, so far as it was preserved at all, the tradition of conversational language in poetry".[34] The same quality is shared by Donne; "the merit of both [Dryden and Donne] is to have established a natural conversational diction instead of a conventional one".[35]

Also, this idea of a return to those elements which mark a however relative "union of discourses" in common speech underlies much of the poetic endeavours of Eliot and his contemporary avant-garde poets. As he speaks of this in retrospect, their conviction was that "verse should have the virtues of prose, [ . . . ] diction should become assimilated to cultivated contemporary speech, before aspiring to the elevation of poetry";[36] consequently, "if the work of the last twenty years is worthy of being classified at all, it is as belonging to a period of search for a proper modern colloquial idiom".[37] This is, on the whole, a salutary endeavour; poetry if it is to overcome its dissociation, must needs come nearer to the way language is used by the people it wishes to influence.

## *II.*

For the same purpose, but on a more general level, a kind of art is required which is effective in a way Romantic poetry was not; an art which is able to establish meaningful contacts with a larger audience. For Eliot, much of traditional art was something of this sort, its prime example being Elizabethan drama.[38] But, as a result of modern developments, "poetry ceases to be the expression of the mind of a whole people";[39] "the possibilities of writing in the mode of Shakespeare were [soon] exhausted"; when we reach Dryden, he is no longer "writing plays for the whole people", his audience is only "a small society".[40]

On the other hand, there is a sort of art, surviving even in modern times, where we cannot find this split between the isolated artist and his unheeding or restricted "audience". This is what is commonly called *popular art.*

No wonder Eliot has been interested in it all through his career as a critic and a poet. His creed — that good art is "the refinement, not the antithesis, of popular art"[41] — is reflected in many of his critical pronouncements.

He is sensitive enough to discern some of the popular aspects of Elizabethan drama. For him Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* is not so much a tragedy as the embodiment of a popular mediaeval form of drama: "it is the farce of the old English humour, the terribly serious, even savage comic humour, the humour which spent its last breath in the decadent genius of Dickens".[42] Also, if Marlowe had not died so early, his verse could have come nearer to the kind of poetry which "attains its effects by something not unlike caricature".[43] When he speakes of Ben Jonson, Eliot remarks that his dramatic output "is not satire in the way in which the work of Swift or the work of Molière may be called satire", it is "satire as the work of Rabelais is satire".[44] This has something to do with the way Ben Jonson creates his characters; in them there is at work "the same kind of power which vivifies Trimalchio, and Panurge, and some but not all of the 'comic' characters of Dickens", and "it is not exactly the kind of life which informs the characters of Molière or that which informs the characters of Marivaux".[45] This is again a highly perceptive critical insight; the quality Eliot is trying, however vaguely, to describe is what recent scholarship has called "festive comedy" (C. K. Barber) or "exuberant grotesque" (M. Bakhtin).[46] Both views of the issue derive this quality from strong popular traditions.

While this exuberant comic spirit has waned in "high" literature, some of the subliterary forms of art have retained its force up till now. Reviewing a performance of *Volpone*, Eliot notes that "the appetite for poetic drama, and for a peculiarly English comedy or farce, has never disappeared" because it has survived in Music Hall and Revue.[47] In a series of articles, devoted to the "directness, frankness, and ferocious humour"[48] that survives in contemporary representatives of the Music Hall stage, Eliot laments over the fact that these qualities "should be odious to the British public in precisely those forms of art in which they are most needed, and in which, in fact, they used to flourish".[49] For Eliot, the characteristically working-class institution of the music hall is made to serve, in many ways, as an example of what modern high art should be like. Here there is an authentic relationship between art and audience: "In the music-hall comedians they [= the lower classes] find the expression and dignity of their own lives".[50] Also, the relationship is an active and creative one: "the working man who went to the music hall and saw Mary Lloyd and joined in the chorus was himself performing part of the act; he was engaged in that collaboration of audience with the artist which in necessary in all art and most obviously in dramatic art".[51]

If our concern is to make art more effective than it is in the form it has come down to us from the nineteenth century, this intimate connection of artist and audience is certainly instructive. Since "the poet naturally prefers to write for as large and miscellaneous an audience as possible",[52] "from one point of view, the poet aspires to the condition of the music-hall comedian" and "he naturally desires a state of society in which [his poetry] may become popular, and in which his own talents will be put to the best use".[53] The poet "would like to convey the pleasure of poetry, not only to a larger audience, but to larger groups of people collectively" since in this way "he would have at least the satisfaction of having a part to play in society as worthy as that of the music-hall comedian".[54]

Also, this interest in modern popular art makes it intelligible why "esoteric" and "highbrow" Eliot shows a curious admiration for the poetry of such a much-detested "lowbrow" artist as Rudyard Kipling. Though he was jingoistic and commonplace, "he had at least the inspiration and refreshment of the living music-hall"[55] and his versifica-

tion is understandable only if placed in the framework provided by the traditional popular ballad-maker's art.[56] He is, of course, a master of "verse" — the representative of that speech-verse which, as we have seen, is best, in Eliot's view, when it is "devised out of colloquial speech".[57]

Here one cannot help yielding to the temptation and discern an almost "Brechtian" strain in Eliot's critical thinking. Not only on account of this admiration for the popular quality in Kipling which Brecht shares with Eliot,[58] but also in their common concern for various popular art-forms which, in Brecht's case, include the world of the *Brettl* (a kindred German form of the music hall) and the *Bänkelsang* (street ballad).[59] Also, Eliot's active interest, in the later phases of his life, in the theatre and in the creation of a new type of poetic drama originates from motives not entirely dissimilar to those of Brecht. For Eliot, "the most useful poetry, socially, would be one which could cut across all the present stratifications of public taste — stratifications which are perhaps a sign of social disintegration. The ideal medium for poetry, to my mind, and the most direct means of social 'usefulness' for poetry, is the theatre".[60] To create a viable dramatic form, we must take the lesson of Elizabethan drama into account: it "was aimed at a public which wanted *entertainment* of a crude sort, but would *stand* a good deal of poetry; our problem should be to take a form of entertainment, and subject it to the process which would leave it a form of art. Perhaps the music-hall comedian is the best material".[61] For the actual shape of this new type of drama, Eliot proposed a detailed blueprint which is, in fact, something very much like what Brecht was after putting into practice; "we have to make use of suggestions from remote drama, too remote for there to be any danger of imitation, such as *Everyman*, and the late medieval morality and mystery plays, and the great Greek dramatists."[62]

Of course, it would be unwise to overplay this similarity between the two men; Eliot's blueprint has remained, on the whole, a blueprint. Nevertheless, his interest in popular dramatic forms has left its stamp on some of his exercises in poetic drama: H. Kenner detects, in the final scene of *The Confidential Clerk*, the influence of French farce;[63] so does N. Frye, who considers *Sweeney Agonistes* a farce, and, in accordance with F. O. Matthiessen, calls attention to the fact that in this fragmentary play Eliot has attempted to employ the "heavy beat" rhythms of American jazz and vaudeville (the latter being an American variant of the music hall).[64] Also, in some of the critical norms Eliot devised and put to use we find at least an echo of the same preoccupation. When expostulating on the importance of rhythm which is "so utterly absent from modern drama, either verse or prose, and which interpreters of Shakespeare do their best to suppress", he explains that it is the very presence of rhythm which "makes Massine and Charlie Chaplin the great actors they are, and which makes the juggling of Rastelli more cathartic than a performance of *A Doll's House*".[65] Similarly, when as a part of his "Classicist" program, he advocates a "return to set, even elaborate patterns" in art and poetry, he substantiates his case by calling attention to the fact that this return is, in fact, a daily practice in certain forms of art; it is "as permanent as the need for a refrain or a chorus to a popular song."[66]

This survey of a "popular" strain in Eliot's critical output shows that his characteristic strategy of thought confronts certain important sociological implications of his critical theorizing as well; his plea for a re-unification of "high" and "popular" art also testifies to the coherence of assumptions informing his thinking.

*Ferenc Takács*

## NOTES

[1] For Eliot's views on Milton's use of language see especially his "Milton II" in *On Poetry and Poets*, Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy, New York, 1957. pp. 156–164; for a theory of "rigid" vs "fluid" discourse: I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, (1936), Oxford University Press, New York, 1971.

[2] "Johnson as Critic and Poet", *On Poetry and Poets*, p. 217.

[3] "John Dryden", *Selected Essays*, Faber and Faber, London, 1958, pp. 314–315.

[4] "Swinburne as Poet", *Selected Essays*, p. 327.

[5] "A Note on Richard Crashaw", *For Lancelot Andrewes*, Faber and Gwyer, London, 1928, pp. 122–123.

[6] *ibid.*, p. 124.

[7] "Swinburne as Poet", *op. cit.*, p. 325.

[8] Langer, S. K., *Philosophy in a New Key*, (1942), Mentor Books, New York, 1959, p. 93.

[9] "Catholicism and International Order", *Essays Ancient and Modern*, Faber and Faber, London, 1936, p. 117.

[10] "Prose and Verse", *Chapbook*, XXII (1921), p. 9.

[11] "The Metaphysical Poets", *Selected Essays*, pp. 122–3 and p. 144.

[12] "Johnson's *London* and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*", (1930), in P. M. Jones (ed.), *English Critical Essays: Twentieth Century*, Oxford University Press, London, 1961, p. 304.

[13] *John Dryden, the Poet, the Dramatist, the Critic: Three Essays*, (1932), Haskell House, New York, 1966, p. 15.

[14] "Johnson's *London* . . .", *op. cit.*, pp. 305–6.

[15] "Introduction" to Ezra Pound, *Selected Poems*, (1928) Faber and Faber, London, 1933, p. XIX.

[16] "Johnson's *London* . . .", *op. cit.*, p. 305.

[17] "Prose and Verse", *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[18] *ibid.*

[19] *John Dryden, the Poet* . . ., p. 44.

[20] "Introduction" to *Paul Valéry's The Art of Poetry, The Collected Works of Paul Valéry* (ed. by J. Mathews), Pantheon Books, New York, 1958, Vol. 7, p. XV.

[21] *ibid.*, p. XV.

[22] *ibid.*, p. XV–XVI.

[23] *ibid.*, p. XVI.

[24] "Preface" to *Anabasis: A Poem by St. J. Perse*, New York, 1938, p. 9.

[25] "Introduction" to Ezra Pound, *Selected Poems*, p. XIX.

[26] "Introduction" to Valéry, p. XVI.

[27] "Rudyard Kipling", *On Poetry and Poets*, pp. 265–294.

[28] Nowottny, W., *The Language Poets Use*, University of London, The Athlone Press, London, 1962, pp. 100–101.

[29] "Introduction" to Valéry, p. XVI.

[30] Hungerland, I. C., *Poetic Discourse*, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1958 (University of California Publications in Philosophy, Vol. 33), p. 46.

[31] "The Music of Poetry", *On Poetry and Poets*, p. 21.

[32] Quoted by R. Wellek, "The Criticism of T. S. Eliot", *The Sewanee Review*, July 1956, p. 420.

[33] "Introduction" to Valéry, p. XVI.

[34] "Milton I", *On Poetry and Poets*, p. 161.

[35] "Donne in Our Time", Th. Spencer (ed.), *A Garland for John Donne*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1931, pp. 13–4.

[36] "Milton II", *op. cit.*, p. 182.

[37] "The Music of Poetry", *op. cit.*, p. 32.

[38] "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama", *The Sacred Wood*, (1920), Methuen and Co., London, 1964. p. 69.

[39] "Introduction", *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, (1933), Faber and Faber, London, 1950, p. 22.

[40] *ibid.*

[41] Quoted by H. Kenner, *The Invisible Poet*, W. H. Allen, London, 1960, p. 175.

[42] "Christopher Marlowe", Selected Essays, p. 123.

[43] *ibid.*, p. 125.

[44] "Ben Jonson", *Selected Essays*, p. 151.
[45] *ibid.*, p. 157.
[46] Cf. Barber, C. L., *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1959 and M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, transl. form the Russian by H. Iswolsky, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1968.
[47] Kenner, H., *op. cit.*, p. 174. (Here and in the following I use Kenner's extensive quotations from the otherwise unavailable articles.).
[48] *ibid.*, pp. 174–5.
[49] *ibid.*,
[50] "Marie Lloyd", Selected Essays, p. 458.
[51] *ibid.*,
[52] "Conclusion", *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, p. 152.
[53] "Introduction", *The Use of Poetry . . .*, p. 32.
[54] "Conclusion", *op. cit.*, p. 161.
[55] "Rudyard Kipling", *op. cit.*, p. 269.
[56] *ibid.*, p. 266.
[57] "Introduction" to (his mother's play) *Savanarola* (1926). Quoted by F. O. Matthiessen, *The Achievement of T. S. Eliot*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1959, p. 158.
[58] Cf. Esslin, M., *Brecht, A Choice of Evils* (1959), Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1970, p. 34, pp. 96–8, p. 252.
[59] McLean, S. K., *The Bänkelsang and the Work of Bertolt Brecht*, Mouton, The Hague–Paris, 1972.
[60] "Conclusion", *The Use of Poetry . . .*, pp. 152–153.
[61] "The Possibility of a Poetic Drama", *op. cit.*, p. 69.
[62] From a radio talk in *The Listener*, 25, November 1936. Quoted by F. O. Matthiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 158.
[63] Kenner, H., *op. cit.*, p. 182.
[64] Frye, N., *T. S. Eliot*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh and London, 1963, pp. 95–96 and F. O. Matthiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
[65] "The Beating of a Drum", *The Nation and Atheneum*, 6, October 1933, Quoted by F. O. Matthiessen, *op. cit.*, p. 156.
[66] "The Music of Poetry", *op. cit.*, p. 30.

# Reflections of T. S. Eliot's Imagery in the Novels of W. Golding

Analyses and interpretations of William Golding's art have frequently searched for and, indeed, found parallelisms with and influences of other writers on his novels. The list of these names would stretch over a rather long period of world literature, from Euripid and Milton to A. Camus and J. P. Sartre. The field of investigation, however, has been restricted to one aspect or two of Golding's novels; chiefly, if not exclusively, to similarities of plot, or certain ideas. Thus, an important feature of the novels seems to have been overlooked, namely, the imagery that is so essentially central to the art of Golding.[1]

In this paper I attempt to point out some similarities of images in the novels of Golding and T. S. Eliot's poetry. The similarities do not necessarily root in an identity of views; the writing of W. Golding does not exhibit T. S. Eliot's modernist classicism, which, however, does not exclude possible and occasional convergence of some of their views. Thus, for instance, the "ethical integration" of Golding is, in a way, identical with the Christian concept of love; it is human compassion, the means by which man might break down the prison walls of the solitary self. The same idea is central to the earlier

Eliot; it is this love (compassion) that would hold the promise of redemption of *The Waste Land*, if only its inhabitants would understand the message coming in a language truly foreign to them, in the language of another world.

DA

*Dayadhvam:* I have heard the key
Turn in the door once and once only
We think of the key, each in his prison
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison
Only at nightfall, aethereal rumours
Revive for a moment a broken Coriolanus.[2]

But more important than this more or less occasional similarity, the influence of Eliot on Golding must be seen in images used by both writers to express an identical meaning or a meaning that is identical in similar situations. In fact, some of these images seem to be central motifs in the art of both Eliot and Golding. The following is a list of some such parallelisms; the detailed interpretation of their meaning in the poetry and the novels respectively, is not attempted below for reasons of space, as such interpretations would necessitate the textual analyses of the works concerned.

*1.* The motif of the claws (of the lobsters) to which Pincher Martin feels his existence to be reduced is traced back to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* by Baker.[3] A more probable identity can be found in *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock:*

I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

J. Alfred Prufrock appears in the quoted passage as a very likely prefigure of Pincher Martin as the claws of Martin are an emblem of his universal desire to "eat up" everything and everybody, and Eliot stresses the claws for the same reason, though a difference has to be noted; the tone of *The Love Song* is ironical, which is emphasized by the use of the synecdoche, whereas irony is absent from relevant passages in *Pincher Martin.*[4]

*2.* The third sentence of the opening paragraph in Golding's *Free Fall* has its "pair" in Eliot's "Burnt Norton" of the *Four Quartets.* "I have understood how the scar becomes a star."[5]

The trilling in the blood
Sings below inveterate scars
Appeasing long forgotten wars.
The dance along the artery
The circulation of the lymph
Are figured in the drift of stars.[6]

Eliot's rhyme (scars — stars) refers to a process of identification of the human microcosm with the macrocosm of the Universe, in a perhaps more pointed way than the same words in Golding's nearly ecstatic prose.

*3.* The *rat* appears as a symbol of man's fallen state in *Pincher Martin, Free Fall,* and *The Spire.* Sammy (of *Free Fall*) discovers the kinship of the rat and his self in the terror of his cell;[7] and Jocelin's vision of man combines both the rat of *Free Fall* and Martin's childhood memory of the darkness in the cellar. "Also I think — I'm building with a vast cellarage where the rats live."[8]

The motif of the rat also appears in Eliot's poetry, especially in his earlier period.

> A rat crept softly through the vegetation
> Dragging its slimy belly on the bank
> While I was fishing in the dull canal."[9] and:
>
> "Our dry voices when
> We whisper together
> Are quiet and meaningless
> As wind in dry grass
> Or rats' feet over broken glass
> In our dry cellar."[10] Also:
>
> "Let me also wear
> Such deliberate disguises
> Rat's coat[11]

*4.* Hodson[12] finds the seeds of a scene in *The Inheritors* in a childbood memory of Golding which the writer narrates in his essay "The Ladder and the Tree". In the novel we have Fa and Lok squatting up in a tree and becoming witnesses to the wholly alien way of life of the "Other people", and above all, to the drunken love-making of Vivani and Tuami. In his essay Golding tells us how he happened to see a pair of lovers, while sitting on a branch of a tree. It seems that, besides the childhood experience, T. S. Eliot's poetry may again have influenced Golding, since the surprising similarity of both the meaning and the function of these images indicates the possible influence even if the image of a child sitting up a tree is rather commonplace and so these motifs could as well be mere coincidences.

The child watching through the branches of the tree acts as the representative of an innocent and an alien state of existence, with both Golding and Eliot; it is this child who can experience the harmony of the Universe, and at the same time it is he who mediates the existence that has preserved the harmony with Nature or at least its possibility to the reader. This is how Golding has Lok and Fa in the branches of the tree function. The excursion of Sammy and Johnny in the colonel's garden has the same role;[13] and the dean's vision of the apple-tree epitomizes not only Jocelin's knowledge (that is, his recognition and acceptance of an existence on a different level), but the essence of almost all Golding's novels. The biblical reference of the apple-tree makes it only more manifest that the children (and Lok and Fa as well) are the representatives of an unfallen (prelapsarian) condition.

In addition, the memory of the child peeping through the branches has faded for neither the adult Golding or his heroes, nor Eliot.

> Go, said the bird, for the leaves were full of children,
> Hidden excitedly, containing laughter."[14]
> "There rises the hidden laughter
> Of children in the foliage"[15];
> "At the source of the longest river
> The voice of the hidden waterfall
> And the children in the apple-tree
> Not known, because not looked for
> But heard, half-heard, in the stillness
> Between two waves of the sea."[16] And:
>
> "Children's voices in the orchard
> Between the blossom- and the fruit-time:
> Golden head, crimson head,
> Between the green tip and the root.

Black wing, brown wing, hover over;
Twenty years and the spring is over;
To-day grieves, to-morrow grieves,
Cover me over, light-in-leaves;
Golden head, black wing,
Cling, swing,
Spring, sing,
Swing up into the apple-tree.[17]

*5.* Eliot's Gerontion declares, "I was neither at the hot gates" (l. 3). The name of the memorable place was chosen by Golding as the title of his essay about his travel experiences in Greece, and as the title of his volume of miscellanies.[18] Golding considers Thermopylae as a symbol of the conflict between civilization and barbarism. It is not wholly impossible that, though referring to it geographically, Golding does not even once mention the Greek place name (only its English equivalent) in the essay as a remembrance of Eliot's line. It is the more probable since the first version of the essay's title was, "Thermopylae — A Walk through History".[19]

*Bálint Rozsnyai*

NOTES

[1] For the function and importance of imagaes in Golding's novels cf. Rozsnyai, B., *Szemlélet és alkotói módszer összefüggései W. G. regényeiben* (dissertation, Bp. 1977, MS), Chs. 3 and 6. Also Trócsányi, M., *William Golding regényeinek képi valósága*, Bp., 1977, Akadémiai Kiadó.
[2] "What the Thunder Said", 11. 410—416.
[3] Baker, J. R., *W. Golding: A Critical Study*, New York, 1965.
[4] London, 1956, Faber. pp. 300 and ff.
[5] London, 1959, Faber. p. 7.
[6] 11. 3—8.
[7] p. 184.
[8] *The Spire*, London, 1964, Faber, p. 210.
[9] *The Waste Land*, "Fire Sermon", 11. 187—189.
[10] "The Hollow Men", Pt. 1, 11. 5—10.
[11] op. cit. Pt. 2, 11. 13—15.
[12] Hodson, L., *William Golding*, Edinburgh, 1969.
[13] *Free Fall*, pp. 45—46; Sammy experiences an apocalypse in the cedar.
[14] "Burnt Norton", Pt. 1, 11. 43—44.
[15] op. cit. Pt. 5, 11. 35—36.
[16] "Little Gidding", Pt. 5, 33—38.
[17] "New Hampshire", *Landscapes*.
[18] *The Hot Gates and Other Occasional Pieces*, London, 1965.
[19] In: *Holiday*, September 1962, pp. 50—51.

# American Studies in Hungary: A Survey

When surveying the state of American Studies in Hungary, we must examine the achievements and the debts of this discipline in the light of Professor László Országh's statement of 1965, that "We have to start virtually from scratch and therefore have to plan with the greatest care if we want to give American Studies in Hungary a secure foundation that will meet the high scholarly objectives." The sentence is from his Programme for American Studies in Hungary,[1] which, in retrospect, seems to have been a milestone in the rather short history of the discipline in this country. The Programme set down the future aims and tasks of the just nascent American studies, as there had been no previous systematic work carried out in this field in Hungary. L. Országh mapped out the situation in a social and historical perspective, and in his objective description of the state of American studies, he pointed out the initiatives which resulted in a growing interest in studies on American culture: two-term lecture courses and compulsor examinations in this subject at the University Departments of English Language and Literature, two American Readers published in Hungary (functioning as university handbooks), several scholarly papers on diverse aspects of American culture in learned journals, as well as publications intended for the general reading public (a volume of essays by scholars and critics on the major 20th century American writers, an increasing number of Hungarian translations of American short stories, novels, dramas, etc.). The seemingly modest list of desiderata in which L. Országh summed up the most urgent tasks included no more than five items.

1. "A Hungarian publication of some length — possibly two or three volumes — carefully compiled and with a wealth of facts based on the extensive relevant source materials";

2. a systematic, autochtonous account of the development of American literature;

3. numerous studies by specialists on particular periods, trends, and their major exponents in American literature;

4. the study of the mutual relations of the two cultures; and,

5. "Before anything else, and the sooner the better, an American chair or at least professorship would have to be established at one of our Universities".

The present paper is a survey of the results that have been produced during the fourteen years since the publication of the Programme, a summary of what has been fulfilled of the tasks L. Országh outlined there.

Professor Országh contributed two major works in this field, *Az amerikai irodalom története* (A History of American Literature), 1967, Gondolat, and *Bevezetés az amerikanisztikába* (Introduction to American Studies), 1972, Tankönyvkiadó. The former presented the first attempt at a concise literary history of the US in one single volume. Besides providing a historical study of all the literary forms, the book also examined the cultural, historical and social aspects of American civilization. It achieved a happy balance of being both comprehensive and full of valuable insight into its subject. It is no wonder,

[1] "Az amerikanisztika feladatai Magyarországon", in: *Angol Filológiai Tanulmányok* – Hungarian Studies in English, 1965: II, pp. 121–126, and "A Programme for American Studies in Hungary", in: *New Hungarian Quarterly*, 1966: VII/23, pp. 163–167. – For an earlier survey cf. József Szili: "Az angol és az amerikai irodalom hazai kutatásának 25 éve" ("Twenty-five Years of Hungarian Studies in English and American Literature"), in: *Filológiai Közlöny*, 1970: XVI 3–4, pp. 292–298.

then, that the book has proved to be a useful handbook on the subject ever since its publication, and owing to its enjoyable, highly readable character, it is a success with the general reading public as well.

*Introduction to American Studies* is a reference work and a most welcome comprehensive guide to the discipline for university students and scholars of American studies alike. One cannot but agree with the reviewer of the book, who summed up its merits in the following words: "As a reference guide for research and encyclopedic classification, it is undoubtedly not only a 'must' for the cultivation of American studies in this country, but the treasure house of a wealth of welcome information".[2]

These two fundamental books have been followed by several book-length monographs on particular aspects of American literature, history and society; together, they have significantly enlarged the scope of American studies in Hungary.

*Futószalag és kultúra. Esszék a mai amerikai kulturális életről* ("Assembly Line and Culture. Essays on the American Cultural Life Today", ed. by István Bart and Miklós Hernádi, Bp., 1972, Gondolat) offered to a wider reading public the first introduction to the civilization (in the broader sense) of the US in the post-war period, containing studies, among others, on the ideological, political and cultural role of the New Left in the 60's (by Mihály Sükösd), the Black movements (by István Bart), post-war poetry (by Gyula Kodolányi) and novel (by István Bart and Ernő Taxner). The novelty of the book does not only consist in its concern with the then contemporary situation and problems of American culture but also in that it was the first to draw attention to American mass culture as a source of influence on American civilization as a whole.

Zsolt Virágos's *A négerség és az amerikai irodalom* (Blacks and American Literature), 1975, Akadémiai, examines the historical, social, economic, legal and cultural conditions in which black American literature was born, and the main trends of this literature. The book also contains analyses of the outstanding authors and representative works of Black literature. Though *Blacks and American Literature* was a pioneering work of its kind in Hungary, it succeeded in being many-sided, objective, and at the same time original, in its findings.

*Az amerikai irodalom kezdetei, 1607—1750* (The Beginnings of American Literature), 1976, Akadémiai, by Charlotte M. Kretzoi also explores a new field of the discipline in as much as the book deals with the place and function of literature in colonial America. Professor Kretzoi analyzes the literary consciousness of the period from various view-points: the ideological and the sociological background, as well as the genres of literature that were favoured. She also provides an exhaustive "Who Was Who" of over ninety authors of the age. The book is not only novel in its scope, but its interdisciplinary method has set an example for future studies in American civilization.

Olga Rózsa's *T. S. Eliot fogadtatása Magyarországon* (T. S. Eliot's Reception in Hungary), 1977, Akadémiai, examines the reception of the poet in our country in a historical perspective and scrutinizes the Hungarian translations of Eliot's poetry, relying on textual analyses of the poems in question.

Mention must also be made of works on the historical, economic, political and social aspects of American civilization in a broader sense. *Amerika hőskora* (America's Heroic Age), 1969, Gondolat, by Ervin Szuhay-Havas treats the history of the colonial period and the revolution. Tamás Zala's *Az Újvilág próbatétele* (The New World on Trial), 1975, Kossuth, attempts to find the causes of the failure of the working class movements in the period between 1880—1910, while Mihály Simai provides a systematic analysis of the social, economic and political conditions of the US, especially in the last three decades (*Az Egyesült Államok a 200. évforduló előtt*, [The US Before the Bicentenary], 1974, Kossuth).

Bálint Magyar devoted a sizable monograph to the history of the American cinema, which he examines against a broader social background (*Az amerikai film*, The American Cinema) 1974, Gondolat, and Zoltán Kósa produced a fairly well illustrated book on American architecture in the 20th century (*Modern amerikai építészet*, Modern American Architecture, 1973, Műszaki Könyvkiadó).

Apart from the monographs, a number of scholarly papers have also been published on various aspects of American civilization, and *Angol Filológiai Tanulmányok — Hungarian Studies in English* (Department of English Language and Literature,

[2] Zs. Virágos: Review of *Introduction . . .*, in: *Angol Filológiai Tanulmányok — Hungarian Studies in English*, 1974: VIII, p. 102.

Debrecen) has firmly established itself as a forum on American studies in Hungary. For lack of space, only some subjects discussed at length in the journal can be mentioned here e.g. recent American fiction and cultural relations between Hungary and the United States.

But the establishment of American studies in Hungary is also reflected by the fact that several other journals publish papers on similar themes (*Studies in English and American* by the Department of English Language and Literature, Eötvös University, Budapest; *Filológiai Közlöny* — Bulletin of Philology, *Helikon* — Review of World Literature, *Acta Litteraria*, etc.). Signs of the growing scholarly interest can be seen in the number of entries on American literature in the eight-volume *Világirodalmi Lexikon* (Encyclopaedia of World Literature), 1970, Akadémiai, five volumes of which have been published so far.

The conditions of giving "a secure foundation that will meet the high scholarly objectives" of American studies have significantly improved; all the three University Departments of English Language and Literature (Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged) have incorporated in their syllabuses not only lectures and examinations but advanced seminars on American literature, and survey courses on various aspects of American civilization as well. The students have handbooks and textbooks of high scholarly standard at their disposal.[3] And other results have also come forth in this field: Ph. D. dissertations on American subjects are annually presented at the three Departments concerned.

The growing scholarly interest in American studies has also increased the popularity of American literature in Hungary, which in its own turn influences scholarship. The Hungarian translations of American literature include annotated anthologies and volumes of poetry;[4] furthermore, the majority of the translations are presented with expert introductory essays. An example is Professor Országh's thorough historical, thematical and theoretical analysis of the American form of the essay in *Az el nem képzelt Amerika. Az amerikai esszé mesterei* (The Unimagined America. Masters of the American Essay), 1974, Európa.

It seems then, that the fourteen years since the proposal for a "Programme for American Studies in Hungary", have produced some important results. Furthermore, there are positive harbingers for the future as well, the most remarkable being a series of annual conferences on American studies launched in 1977 (the Department of English Language and Literature, Eötvös University), which was followed in 1978 at Kossuth University, Debrecen. The papers of the two conferences are being published in *Studies in English and American* and *Angol Filológiai Tanulmányok — Hungarian Studies in English*, respectively.

*Bálint Rozsnyai*

## Hungarian Essays on American Literature (1945—1977)

The bibliography which appears here is a selection from a broad field of American Studies in Hungary between 1945 and 1976/77. It does not cover essays, criticism and studies published in periodicals (dailies, weeklies and literary magazines or philological annals and quarterlies).[1] It contains essays that were published either as introductions or explanatory postscripts to Hungarians translations of

a) individual works by American authors

b) complete works or selections from the works of one author

c) anthologies of various American writers,

or Hungarian essays published independently

e) in a volume of critical essays on American writers, and

d) individual books on American authors by Hungarian critics.

[3] *An American Reader* and *Second American Reader*, ed. by Professor Országh; *A Sketch of the History of American Literature* by L. Országh and C. Kretzoi; *A Casebook on the United States*, ed. by A. Katona.

[4] E.g.: Whitman, Poe, Corso, Jarrell, Smith et al.

[1] At Kossuth Lajos University in Debrecen the systematic collecting of criticism published in non-philological periodicals was going on in the 1960's. Unfortunately, most of the material remained in manuscript. So far only one bibliographical paper was published, covering the period between 1961 and 1965. (Lehel Vadon and Gabriella Zsuffa, *Bibliography of Hungarian Writings on English Literature, 1961—1965. Hungarian Studies in English*, Vol. III. pp. 123—146. Debrecen, 1967. — It contains criticism on American writers as well.)

The bibliography concentrates on belles-lettres, though some important essays on the non-literary aspects of American Studies are mentioned as well.[2]

The material is arranged according to the American authors in alphabetical order; the individual works or collections of the author's works are given in chronological order. If reprints or new editions were introduced by a different Hungarian critic, this fact is also recorded. Anthologies selected by Hungarian editors are included into the alphabetical order according to their Hungarian title. Translations of titles are given whenever it was possible to trace them or where they are expressive of the character of the collection.

The essays are different in length, though their value is not necessarily in direct proportion with their size. The number of pages for an introduction was decided by the publishers as the function of the writing varied: sometimes mere information on the author in question was required, at other times there was a claim — and enough space — for an original critical appreciation.

The number of essays and the authors in this list are not representative of the whole of American belles-lettres in Hungarian translation. It does not, cannot, reflect the variety of writers and the riches of works which reached the reading public of Hungary during the last 32 years. A complete list of the American works translated into Hungarian must be published soon.[3] The same task is before us concerning critical literature on American belles-lettres and culture. The following bibliography is one more step toward this goal.

ALBEE, Edward

*Kényes egyensúly* (A Delicate Balance). 1969, Európa. Levente Osztovits, 111—115.

*Drámák* (Plays — sel. Levente Osztovits). 1971, Európa. Levente Osztovits, 545—571.

ANDERSON, Sherwood

*Winesburg, Ohio*. 1962, Európa. Miklós Vajda, 271—273.

GYURKÓ, László: *Sherwood Anderson*. In: *Az amerikai irodalom a XX. században* (Twentieth Century American Literature). 1962, 1965, Gondolat. 89—105 and 95—111 resp.

ASIMOV, Isaac

*A halhatatlanság halála* (The End of Eternity). 1969, Móra, "Kozmosz" series. Frigyes Károlyházi and Péter Kuczka, 240—243.

*Alapítvány* (Foundation). 1971, Egyetemi Nyomda. László Makkai, 323—330.

*Alapítvány és birodalom* (Foundation and Empire). 1972, Egyetemi Nyomda. László Makkai, 277—283.

*Második alapítvány* (Second Foundation). 1973, Egyetemi Nyomda, László Makkai, 277—283.

BARTH, John

*Az út vége* (The End of the Road). 1970, Európa. Ernő Taxner-Tóth, 271—281.

*Bolyongás az elvarázsolt kastélyban* (Lost in the Funhouse). 1977, Európa. Zoltán Abádi Nagy, 273—283.

BARTHELME, Donald

*Jöjj vissza, doktor Caligari* (Come Back, Dr. Caligari). 1975, Európa. István Bart, 165—167.

BELLOW, Saul

*Herzog*. 1967. Európa. Klára Szöllősy, 579—590.

BIERCE, Ambrose

*Bagoly folyó* (An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge — sel. short stories). 1968, Európa. Tamás Ungvári, 365—376.

BRADBURY, Ray

*Kaleidoszkóp* (Kaleidoscope — sel. short stories). 1974, Zrínyi. Ferenc Szakács, 327—335.

BRADFORD, Richard

*Lángoló hajnali ég* (Red Sky at Morning). 1972, Európa. Csaba Sz. Kiss, 283—286.

BULLINS, Ed

*Irány Buffalo* (Goin' a Buffalo — sel. plays). 1974, Európa. Judit Szántó, 211—220.

CALDWELL, Erskine

ELBERT, János: *Erskine Caldwell*. In: *Az amerikai irodalom a XX. században* (Twentieth Century American Literature). 1962, 1965, Gondolat. 379—395 and 403—418. resp.

CAPOTE, Truman

*A fűhárfa — Álom luxuskivitelben* (The Grass Harp — Breakfast at Tiffany's). 1977, Szépirodalmi. Anna Szalai, 225—228.

CATHER, Willa

THURZÓ, Gábor: *Willa Cather*. In:

[2] For additional data see B. Rozsnyai's survey, *American Studies in Hungary*, in this volume, pp. 177—179

[3] Some preliminary studies on the subject can be found in *Hungarian Studies in English*, Vol. I, II, III, IV, V. — A valuable survey on post-World War II. translations was published by Professor Kent Bales (University of Minnesota), but a complete bibliography still belongs to our *desiderata*.

*Az amerikai irodalom a XX. században* (Twentieth Century American Literature). 1962, 1965, Gondolat. 231—248 and 245—262 resp.
*Chicago ostroma* (The Siege of Chicago — modern American short stories, sel. Mihály Sükösd). 1977, Szépirodalmi. Mihály Sükösd, 277—280.

COOPER, James Fenimore
*Bőrharisnya* (The Pioneers). 1973, 1976, Móra. Ádám Réz, 287—288 and 265—266. resp.
*Nyomkereső* (The Pathfinder). 1973, Móra. Ádám Réz, 253—254.
*A préri* (The Prairie). 1973, 1976, Móra. Ádám Réz, 285—286 and 265—266 resp.
*Az utolsó mohikán* (The Last of the Mohicans). 1973, 1976, Móra. Ádám Réz, 293—294 and 269 resp. (Abridged editions).
*Vadölő* (The Deerslayer). 1973, 1976, Móra. Ádám Réz, 237—238. and 221—222. resp. (Abridged editions).

CORSO, Gregory
*Az utolsó gengszter* (poems, sel. István Eörsi). 1976, Európa. István Eörsi, 93—98.

COWLEY, Malcolm
*Az amerikai író természetrajza* (critical essays, sel. István Geher). 1976, Európa. Levente Osztovits, 369—379.

CRICHTON, Michael
*Az Andromeda-törzs* (The Andromeda Strain). 1972, Kossuth. Péter Kuczka, 291—296.
*Az átprogramozott ember* (The Terminal Man). 1974, Kossuth. Péter Kuczka, 208—214.

CUMMINGS, E. E.
*99 verse* (poems, sel. István Geher). 1975, Európa. István Geher, 141—150.

DOS PASSOS, John
*Manhattani kalauz* (Manhattan Transfer). 1973, Európa. Péter Nagy, 421—432.
VALKAY, Sarolta: *John Dos Passos*. In: *Az amerikai irodalom a XX. században* (Twentieth Century American Literature). 1962, 1965, Gondolat, 209—229 and 223—242 resp.

DREISER, Theodore
*A dollár uralma alatt* (Tragic America). 1951, Szépirodalmi. Iván Boldizsár, 5—9.
*A csapda — Szabadulás* (Will you Walk into My Parlor — Free). 1956, Új Magyar. László Báti, 97—98.
*Amerikai tragédia* (An American Tragedy). 1956, Új Magyar. György Pálóczi-Horváth, 907—926. — 1961, Európa. Imre Szász, vol. 2. 371—375. — 1964, Magyar Helikon. Sarolta Valkay, 851—856.
*Író lettem Amerikában* (How I Became a Writer in America — autobiogr. writings and letters, sel. Sarolta Valkay). 1966, Gondolat. Lenke Bizám, I—XVI.
BÓKA, László: *Theodore Dreiser*. In: *Az amerikai irodalom a XX. században* (Twentieth Century American Literature). 1962, 1965, Gondolat. 45—68 and 47—70 resp.
BIZÁM, Lenke: *Theodore Dreiser*. 1963, Gondolat, 1—164. ("Little Library of Criticism" series).

EASTLAKE, William
*A művész arcképe Huszonhat Lóval* (Portrait of an Artist with Twenty-Six Horses). 1976, Európa. Árpád Göncz, 204—205.

ELLISON, Ralph
*A láthatatlan* (Invisible Man). 1970, Európa. Ernő Taxner-Tóth, 524—533.
*Az el nem képzelt Amerika* (The Unimagined America — American essays, sel. László Országh). 1974, Európa. László Országh, 637—657.
*Embertelen világ. 14 amerikai elbeszélés* (Inhuman World — sel. American short stories). 1950, Atheneum. Lajos Barta, Jr., 5—9.

ERSKINE, John
*Pénelopé férje* (Penelope's Man). 1957, Magvető. Tibor Szobotka, 3—18.
*Észak-amerikai költők antológiája* (an anthology of American poetry, sel. Miklós Vajda). 1966, Móra, "Kozmosz" series. Miklós Vajda, 9—18.

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FAULKNER, William
*A medve* (The Bear). 1959, Európa. János Viktor, 197—201.
*Megszületik augusztusban* (Light in August). 1961, Európa, 1964, Európa, 1965, Szépirodalmi. Mihály Sükösd, 395—404, 437—440, and vol. 2. 315—320. resp.
*Sírgyalázók* (Intruder in the Dust). 1964, Magvető. István Kristó Nagy, 5—13.
*Hajnali hajtóvadászat* (Race at Morning — sel. short stories). 1968, Magyar Helikon — Európa. Péter Nagy, 661—679.
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SÜKÖSD, Mihály: *William Faulkner*. In: *Az amerikai irodalom a XX. században* (Twentieth Century American Liter-

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DÉRY, György—KRISTÓ NAGY, István: *Faulkner*. 1966, Gondolat, 1—131. ("Little Library of Criticism" series.)
FERLINGHETTI, Lawrence
*Egyes szám negyedik személy* (Her). 1970, Európa. István Bart, 142—149.
*Versei* (poems, sel. István Eörsi). 1977, Európa. István Eörsi, 47—51.
FITZGERALD, F. Scott
*Újra Babilonban* (Babylon Revisited — The Great Gatsby and sel. short stories). 1962, Magvető. Mihály Sükösd, 5—15.
*Emlékek a jazzkorszakról* (Echoes of the Jazz Age — autobiogr. writings and letters, sel. Sarolta Valkay). 1970, Gondolat. Sarolta Valkay, 5—13, 65—69, 149—152, 247—249, 309—311.
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KRETZOI, Charlotte: *F. Scott Fitzgerald*. In: *Az amerikai irodalom a XX. században* (Twentieth Century American Literature). 1962, 1965, Gondolat, 265—284 and 283—302 resp.
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GALBRAITH, John Kenneth
*Győzelem* (The Triumph). 1974, Európa. Gábor Vályi, 5—9.
GARSON, Barbara
*MacBird*. 1968, Európa. Ottó Orbán, 83—86.
GINSBERG, Allen
*Nagyáruház Kaliforniában* (poems, sel. István Eörsi). 1973, Európa. István Eörsi, 99—105.
GRIFFIN, John Howard
*Néger voltam Amerikában* (Black Like Me). 1966, Zrínyi. Marcell Forgács, 160—165.
*Harlemi árnyak* (Shadows in Harlem — Black American poetry, sel. Aladár Komlós). 1959, Magvető. Aladár Komlós, 5—10.
HARTE, Bret
*Egy bánya története* (The Story of a Mine — sel. short stories). 1957, Európa. Lóránd Lőrincz, 169—170.
HAWTHORNE, Nathaniel
*A skarlát betű* (The Scarlet Letter). 1955, Új Magyar, 1961, Európa. Tamás Ungvári, I—IX and 241—245. resp
*Derűvölgy románca* (The Blithedale Romance). 1973, Európa. Sarolta Valkay, 357—386.
HELLER, Joseph
*A 22-es csapdája* (Catch-22). 1969, 1972, Európa. Péter Rubin, 559—565.
*Megbombáztuk New Havent* (We bombed in New Haven). 1971, Európa. Judit Szántó, 145—155.
HEMINGWAY, Ernest
*A folyón át, a fák közé* (Across the River and Into the Trees). 1958, Magvető. Mihály Sükösd, 5—40.
*A Kilimandzsáró hava* (The Snows of Kilimanjaro — sel. short stories). 1960, Szépirodalmi. Mihály Sükösd, 313—318.
*Az öreg halász és a tenger* (The Old Man and the Sea). 1961, 1965, Szépirodalmi. Imre Szász, 157—161 and 156—159 resp.
*Búcsú a fegyverektől* (A Farewell to Arms). 1963, Európa. Imre Szász, 341—343.
*Novellák* (sel. short stories). 1963, Európa. Imre Szász, I—XXII.
*Akiért a harang szól* (For Whom the Bell Tolls). 1964, Szépirodalmi. Miklós Vajda, vol. 3. 237—240. — 1977, Móra, "Kozmosz" series, István Kristó Nagy, 446—458.
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*Művei*, 5. Szegények és gazdagok — A folyón át a fák közé — Az öreg halász és a tenger (Collected Works, vol. 5. To Have and Have Not — Across the River and Into the Trees — The Old Man and the Sea). 1971, Magyar Helikon — Európa. Mihály Sükösd, 561—568.
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## *Zsolt Virágos:* A négerség és az amerikai irodalom

Blacks and American Literature

Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1975, 392 pp.

During the last two decades momentous changes have occurred in the relation of the Negro to American society as well as American culture, and Black Studies have become one of the fastest developing disciplines in the US. In Hungary, however, the subject of Afro-American history and literature has been treated very perfunctorily and only in periodicals.

Thus both the great merits and the few shortcomings of Zsolt Virágos's work are due to the magnitude of his undertaking: he has written a book that supplies a great want.

As he points out in the Introduction, the book was intended primarily for academics engaged in American Studies, but it is also addressed to the layman interested in literary history. It is not easy to satisfy both needs. Experts are familiar with the material in question and have read most of the monographs, studies and novels that Mr. Virágos has to summarize for his less well-versed readers. In fact, he gives synopses even of those books which are available in Hungarian translation.

The author sketches the social, economic, legal and cultural conditions in which the rise of the Negro writer took place and Negro literature came of age. He also discusses the stereotypes and manipulated myths of the Negro in novels and devotes some attention to the cultural dualism of the Negro in America. He denies the validity of the term "race", preferring to regard Negroes as an ethnic unit. His essential premise is the following: "The social and cultural peculiarities of the Blacks had always to be referred to universal American problems and thus they have always been an organic component of American reality." (p. 9.) He analyzes not only Negro writers but also white authors who contributed to the portrayal of Black people ranging from H. Beecher Stowe to Faulkner and McCullers.

Emphasising the interdependence of society and art, social and literary history, Chapter I (The Progress of Blacks in the New World) gives a thorough survey, in twelve sub-chapters, of the social history of the American Negro up to the late

sixties. Mr. Virágos points out that slavery had primarily economic reasons and throws light on the great number of the vicious circles in which the Negro is imprisoned.

Chapter II (American Literature and American Negro Literature) summarizes all the problems that crop up when we speak of Negroes as a minority group, their culture, their literature, their place in the U.S. and the relation of their literature to American literature. The author is interested mainly in the following:

*1. Does the Black lethnic group have a specific rôle and a specific position in the American melting-pot?*

Here the author might well have devoted more attention to the Negroes' relation to other minorities, the similarities and differences relating them to the American Jews, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Chinese etc. Due to their being a "highly-pigmented" race, their integration and assimilation is more difficult than that of any minorities. "For years we watch the timid faces of poor white peasants — Turks, Czechs, Croats, Finns and Greeks pass through this curtain of smoke and emerge with the sensitive features of modern man. But our faces do not change. Our cheekbones remain as unaltered as the stony countenance of the sphinx." (R. Wright: *Twelve Million Black Voices*, p. 102.)

*2. What is Negro literature and how does it relate to American literature?*

Mr. Virágos maintains that "Though negro literature is part of American literature as a whole, it naturally and necessarily is an autonomous part." (p. 121.) Racism, together with the anti-racist movements, is part and parcel of American culture. Black experience is rooted in cultural slavery with its eternal genres (blues, spirituals, folk-songs, jazz) being the basis of Negro literature. The Black artist is conscious of his cultural autonomy as well as his cultural dualism, (which is, for instance, brilliantly presented in J. Baldwin's *Autobiographical Notes*). The US is *his* country, he is inseparable from the complete fabric of American life, Africa is no longer his homeland. He is deeply rooted in American and Western culture (see the interview with R. Ellison in his "Shadow and Act" and also J. Baldwin's "The Discovery: What it means to be an American"). This is why the "Back to Africa"-movement is bound to fail. On the other hand there *are* some problems particular to Negro literature, especially in the 20th century (for instance the strong insistence on the how-to-live question and the struggle for freedom). There is even an advantage Negro art has over white American art, namely that it is much less bound up with and possessed by western civilization, with all its prejudices and bourgeois ideals, its alienation and individualism, its cosmic loneliness. Yet Mr. Virágos argues that the course of development of Negro Literature is the course of Western development, and he reserves his highest praise for those Negro writers who produced works meaningful also to a public outside the sphere of Negro experience and who attained the creative maturity of writing about general problems of *human* (not only Negro) existence (J. Baldwin's opinion seems to be very similar. See his essays).

*3. What is the relation of the Negro writer to his reading public?*

This subject is treated only marginally in this book. The reviewer would have welcomed a survey of the rapid development that has taken place in this area. In the early days of Negro literature the reading public consisted mainly of whites (as most of the blacks were illiterate) and this, of course, influenced Negro literature very deeply in terms of subject matter and style. The first Negro poets (beginning with Phillis Wheatley) did not write anything original or typical of Negro daily life. Negroes gradually entered the middle classes, and now it seems to be a very complicated sociological problem to find out about the readership of Negro literature at the time.

Chapter III (Negritude and Soul) is a survey of the history of the term "negritude". The reader is given various definitions of negritude among which the most impressive is the joint definition by the African thinkers (Aimé Césaire, L. S. Senghor and Léon Damas) who embark on a nostalgic search for ancient Negro characteristics and in the course of their journey examine the so-called "negritude of the poem". By this they mean inherent surrealism, vitality of rhythm and a particular type of stylization as exclusive and permanent Negro features. But — as we have pointed out before — the American Negro's concern with his African heritage is much more complex a problem and cannot be compared with the peoples of the developing African countries. However,

it is just as difficult for them to identify themselves with Western culture, as J. Baldwin points out: "I was a kind of bastard of the West. . . . I was an interloper, this was not my heritage (Shakespeare, Bach, Rembrandt . . .). At the same time I had no other heritage which I could possibly use — I had certainly been unfitted for the jungle or the tribe." (*Autobiographical Notes* p. 18.) On the other hand, LeRoi Jones and others who share his strong anti-white sentiments place great emphasis on their African heritage. The author denies the strong division between soul and mind and does not believe in the mystically superior soul of the Negro.

Chapter IV (Blacks in American Literature) is a brief survey of the history of Negro literature and includes the above mentioned white writers who use Negro themes. The author combines observations on the economic, legal, political, psychological and sexual oppression of the Negro which goes along with the artistic (mainly literary) falsification of his figure in terms of two factors: on the one hand there are the *Negro stereotypes* (natural slave, blackface minstrel, wretched freed man, brute Negro, tragic mulatto, exotic primitive, etc.); on the other hand the *creativity* of the Negro is regarded either mystical or quite inferior.

He shows the counter-movement as well: the emergence of protest literature dating from the 1852 publication of Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Mr. Virágos seems to be more objective about Mrs. Stowe than the native Black writers are (for instance, Baldwin). He maintains that though the book is aesthetically faulty, it still carries tremendous moral values.

He describes the oeuvre of Mark Twain as "The end of the American Dream", agreeing with Faulkner: "Mark Twain was the first truly American writer, and all of us since are his heirs, we descended from him" (p. 182).

The author appraises the beginnings of Negro high art (the spirituals, the blues) and mentions C. W. Chesnutt and P. L. Dunbar, while admitting that their works lacked real artistic values.

In his survey of the 20th century he discusses the New Negro-movement in which the outstanding figures of the "Negro Renaissance" W. E. B. DuBois and Langston Hughes took part.

In the 7th sub-chapter, which bears the title "This here is a hard world" (quoting C. McCullers) his main interest lies in the Southern Renaissance. Unfortunately he is rather insensitive to the art of Faulkner, maintaining for instance that in Faulkner's world there are basically 3 groups of people: the Snopeses, the Sartorises and the Negroes, and he also oversimplifies Faulkner's outlook.

The last four sub-chapters are the least satisfactory in the book. They are neither literary history nor criticism. They fail adequetely to describe Negro poetry, they do not really *analyze* the novels mentioned, there are merely quotations from the dramas. The essays of James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison and their importance in Negro literature is not emphasised enough. The author does not enter into a discussion on the rôle of European and Western tradition in Negro literature, though in fact it was one of his set and professed aims. He is also mistaken when he states that class struggle did not even come into Baldwin's mind as a means of solving the Negro problem. See e.g. Baldwin's *Everybody's Protest Novel:* "Within this society . . . it is impossible to change" and also his essay on Wright's *Native Son:* ". . . Their aims are one . . . (i.e. the poor white's and Negro's) but only in so far as they unite their strength as workers to achieve their ends."

The final pages of the book thus touch on matters that lie outside the bounds of literary history. In this section the author states that the most rational apprehension of the "racial atmosphere" can be connected with the works and ideas of Eldridge Cleaver whose role in American society is treated by the author mainly as that of a political thinker's. Mr. Virágos is of course right when he considers the racial problem and the problems of Negro literature inseparable.

*Blacks and American Literature* compels the reader to engage in discussion with its author and to think its argument over and over again, not only to learn about literature and culture so far almost unknown for the Hungarian reader, but also in order to look for and find the somewhat analogous lines of the problems of the minorities of his own country.

*Katalin Lánczi*

# *Ferenc Takács:* T. S. Eliot a költői nyelvhasználatról

T. S. Eliot on the Poetic Use of Language

Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1978, 130 pp.

In his book Ferenc Takács set out to undertake an exhaustive investigation of certain parts of T. S. Eliot's critical output, those parts in particular which, in one way or another, reveal something of Eliot's views on the poetic use of language.

Mr. Takács starts his study by presenting Eliot's main critical concern, namely, the famous "dissociation of sensibility" theory, which concerns the changes poetic sensation had undergone since the 17th century, from a relative unity towards a kind of imbalance. Having introduced the theory Dr. Takács goes on to point out how much Eliot's theory was rooted in both the English and the American tradition. The revival of Metaphysical Poetry began in America, as early as the 19th century, and by the time Eliot arrived in England it had long taken place there too. In fact, some critics of the day were aware of the very same phenomenon which Eliot was to name the "dissociation of sensibility".

Eliot's novelty lay in the elaboration of how this "sensibility", unified or dissociated, manifested itself "in the language and poetry of particular historical periods", and even more in "stressing the value-charged character" of the change, hereby making the Metaphysical unification of sensibility both "a norm of orientation for a 'revised history' of English poetry and an ideal to be strived at in the future.

If we compare them with former theories, Eliot's reformulations brought considerable change, but — as Dr. Takács points out — he did not stand alone with his ideas. We can easily find some close contempoaries who shared them: such were T. E. Hulme, E. Pound, and — though only to a certain degree — W. B. Yeats.

From corresponding continental trends of thought Dr. Takács picks out just one, namely the Hungarian case. In doing so he draws attention to the so far unnoticed analogies in the ideas of Eliot on the one hand, and Endre Ady and László Németh on the other, concerning the degeneration the language of poetry has undergone since the 17th century in England and the 18th in Hungary.

There are also a number of major 20th century writers — T. Mann, J. Joyce, B. Brecht, just to mention a few — whose artistic practice "implies a concern which can be correlated to Eliot's ideas". Apparently all of them agree that modern writers should search for linguistic ideals not among the stereotypes of the recent past, but in the language of 17th century poetry.

Having thus defined the "dissociation of sensibility" theory and also its place in the wider context of 20th century thought, Dr. Takács goes on to present its immediate reception and the subsequent influence on the critical views of F. R. Leavis, Cleanth Brooks, L. C. Knights, E. M. W. Tillyard, R. P. Blackmur, H. Kenner, N. Frye, F. Kermode and of some other less well-known literary critics as well. Though here and there they provide important clues to the interpretation of Eliot's theory, according to Mr. Takács, most of these critics cannot be taken as authorities to decide on its validity.

Therefore, to obtain a clearer picture, in the next chapter the author undertakes to find out what the 17th century thought of itself; of language and poetic usage in particular. Having read through the works of Bacon, Hobbes, and Locke, he finds that 17th century English philosophy began to differentiate between the various uses of language setting up three major categories: scientific, everyday and poetic usage.

Scientific language representing referential or, as the 17th century called it, "right" usage, came to be regarded as the only acknowledged way to make true statements. Clear and distinct expression became therefore a sanctified norm while the phatic, emotive or conative, that is *poetic* usage was sharply rejected as "wrong" usage or abuse. Ordinary speech, regarded as a mixture of the two, was generously "excused".

If now we turn to the rhetorics and stylistics of the age, there we can find a similar division between poetic expression and truth. Since the 17th century restricted the model of valuable poetry to a piece of verifiable truth delightfully dressed with the help of rhetoric, poetry had to become positively unpoetic if it wanted to be appreciated.

This is the point of the book where the author introduces his argument: the "gradual splitting-up of language into different

functions . . ., the sharp distinctions which have been made between ordinary . . ., scientific, or logical . . . and poetical language and their result in what we may call the modern *veritas duplex* of science and poetry . . ."; and also those processes in the poetic use of language which Eliot witnessed in the history of English poetry ". . . constitute the linguistic and poetic aspects of what K. Marx called alienation."

The process in which the "earlier, relatively undifferentiated mode of mankind's *praxis* gradually separated into three specialized modes . . ., the objectivations of everyday life, science and art . . . started somewhat earlier in human history, but its rigidification — that is, when the dividing-lines between the three respective modes became more and more inpenetrable — . . . was completed about and after the Renaissance".

This Marxian description and dating of the process coincide with those in Eliot's theory of "dissociation". That of course, as Mr. Takács distinctively points out, still does not make Eliot a Marxist. Though himself a severe opponent of modern bourgeois society, Eliot's ideological background is that of the *Kulturkritik*, which regards alienation as mere decline and — unlike Marxism — does not accept it also as a necessary stage in development towards an unalienated existence. Supporters of culture criticism therefore "advocate a return to the earlier . . . states of society, or at least, indulge in nostalgic feelings for "organic communities" of the past.." — This, however, does not diminish the value of their critical judgement in individual cases.

Having established his own theory, in the second part of the book Mr. Takács goes on to give a detailed analysis of certain important features of poetic language such as the handling of metaphor, versification, and poetic — as opposed to referential — expression. Here as well as in the last chapter where some more general poetic and aesthetic questions (the rôle of imagination, tradition, the need for a popular idiom, etc.) are touched upon, the reader is presented with the historical development of each of these features in term of 20th century criticism. Mr. Takács of course devotes particular attention to the views of T. S. Eliot, with special regard to his proposals concerning how the modern writer should find his way among the downright contrary answers classicism *vs* romanticism offered to the very same problems.

This study of Ferenc Takács accomplishes on the whole a fairly important task. Should it do nothing but outline Eliot's criticism to the Hungarian reader, it would already be a work of supreme value; since most of the essays in question have not yet been translated into Hungarian — thus only a limited number of those interested have had the possibility to read them.

The book of course does much more than that, it also provides subtle explanations based on two different kinds of approach combining social–philosophical and linguistic–stylistic aspects, which (at least in literary criticism) are rarely to be found in such a successful combination.

The one weakness of the book however also comes from its very versatility: not that the analyses of the problems are not elaborate enough, but after a while the reader may get lost among the multitude of names and ideas introduced. Also, behind the texture of criticism, poetry itself somewhat gets lost from sight. By the end of the book the reader may want to check on the diverging observations about poetry and analyse poetry itself, to see e.g. whether the metaphysical metaphor is really so "dense"; or whether Eliot's poetry is really so much embedded in tradition. And it is a need which, partly at least might have also been satisfied even without the framework of this study. If — besides frequently quoting authorities concerning the nature of certain phenomena, — here and there Mr. Takács had also added and analysed a few specimens of poetry, he could easily have settled all of his readers' doubts.

*Veronika Csillag*

# *József Kovács:* A szocialista magyar irodalom dokumentumai az amerikai magyar sajtóban 1920—1945

Documents of Socialist Hungarian Literature in the American Press 1920—1945

Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1977, 438 pp.

The history of a nation, the history of its culture above all, comprises the history of its diaspora too. In this sense the reports about the life of groups of people, once having moved to the New World and now forming there smaller or bigger communities, are constituent parts of several European nations. Hungary is also among these nations, since — leaving some earlier and less important cases out of consideration — after the fall of the revolution of 1848/49 a great number of people moved overseas from Hungary to find new homes in the United States. This is the starting point for the study of József Kovács, based on careful search for materials: he follows the cultural, political and safeguarding activity of the Hungarian workers settled in the United States; mainly relying on literature of local origins, mediated by the workers' theatre and press. The spectrum is not complete however, because on the one hand the organizations and cultural life of the agricultural population of Hungarian origin are out of the author's field of interest, on the other hand the cultural and organizational activity of the working class is treated only for the limited period of twenty five years in detail. The author — on the staff of the Institute of Science of Literature of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences — in spite of the difficulties during the research work, completed his task successfully.

In his initial sentence he writes: "The Hungarian nationality in America, a significant national minority even nowadays, has been formed by political and economical emigrations following each other." The speciality of the period under discussion is that these people left for the United States with one economical emigration and with two emigrations of political motivation. The first is the part of the great emigration movement of the turn of the 19/20th centuries from East Europe, the other two are in connection partly with the defeat of the Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919, partly with the consolidation of fascism in Europe during the thirties of the century. This is why this emigration, in spite of a lot of common characteristics, cannot be treated as a homogeneous phenomenon: it was impossible to reconcile the different groups even during the time of the "Antifascist Popular Front" movement.

The author, while working on his synthesis, could not use previous studies, this is why after the first chapters (The Emigration and the Hungarian Nationality in America, The First Newspapers and Societies) he had to go back to the year 1895, the foundation of the *Amerikai Népszava* (American Voice of the People), in the chapter "Hungarian Workers' Press in America". Later, dealing with the American labour movement, he points out that in the struggle between the Socialist Workers' Party and the Socialist Party a smaller part of the Hungarian workers joined the first, while the majority the second Party. The majority started its paper under the title *Népakarat* (People's Will) in 1903, the smaller group in 1905, under the title *Előre* (Forward). In the year 1911 it was possible to form the United Hungarian Socialist Coalition of America; its newspaper, started in 1912, had also the title *Előre*. "Since the time of its first appearance the *Előre* became one of the most respected and — considering the number of copies (10,000) — the third biggest newspaper of Hungarian America."

The organizatory work of the communist movement in America from 1919 has influenced the Hungarian labour movement of America too. The front organization of the illegal party, as the author points out, was the American Hungarian Workingmen's Federation, which existed on the platform of the *Előre*, though officially it had no connection with any party, *Előre* "was the representative of the politics of the illegal Communist Party." In 1921 the communist movement became unified in the US, and in October of the same year the *Előre* ceased publication. Its activity was followed by the *Új Előre* (New Forward), which — owing to the enthusiastic organizatory work of its editors and to the network of worker correspondents — remained one of the three most respected newspapers of the Hungarian minority in the United States. Its power to sway the masses, however, was restrained partly by the *Amerikai Népszava*, aided by the Hungarian

government, partly by the newspaper *Az Ember* (The Man); this one moved to the United States from Vienna and originally was the forum of the Károlyi emigration. The *Új Előre* worked for the exposing of the Horthy administration, so this newspaper — in fact the Hungarian communist emigration — became the organizator of the "League against Horthyism", as a member of the American Antifascist Federation. In 1931 the Kultúrszövetség (Cultural Union) has been formed, which published a paper under the title *Kultúrharc* (Cultural Struggle); it was dealing primarily with theoretical-social questions and with the social and cultural life of the Hungarian emigration. Between 1931 and 1937 the *Új Előre* was issued in Cleveland instead of New York, the center of the Hungarian labour movement — and this fact considerably diminished its effectiveness. Though in the year 1937 the newspaper returned to New York, having been influenced by the Browder line, it had to cease publication in October of the same year.

The new paper of the communist movement, the *Amerikai Magyar Világ* (American Hungarian World) lived hardly a year and in 1938 was followed by the *Amerikai Magyar Jövő* (American Hungarian Future). This period is a rather confused part of the American Hungarian labour and antifascist movement: the new and gradually spreading emigration formed an independent society, mainly from bourgeois-radicals and members of the intelligentsia, the American Society of Democratic Magyars. At the same time the old emigration, the American Hungarian labour movement and the sympathizing intellectuals organized the American Hungarian Democratic Council. So on the eve of World War II the American Magyars had two similarly antifascist and democratic organizations and these worked parallel with each other.

This chapter of József Kovács gives the reader all the most important knowledge about the organizations of the American Hungarian labour movement and press that is necessary to understand the following chapters: "Hungarian Nationality and Workers' Culture in America", or "The Előre Amateur Circle" etc. The previous chapters are interesting for historians and for those who specialized in the history of the press, the latter are important for the experts of literature and cultural history. The author steps out from the limited ethnic questions he treats the cultural—political aims and activity of the communist parties (the so called "proletcult"-movement); in this way he can estimate the efforts of the American party as well as the activity of the Hungarian emigration. He gives a survey of the programme of the communist-directed Amateur Circle, the authors of the plays produced and of the dispute which emerged on communist drama and generally on communist literature. These facts can convince the reader that this press and this organizational life existed in the same circle of problems as the international communist movement.

Since the author is the first research worker in this field, in his introductory study of monographic depth he could reach the center of his object only now, with the chapter "The American Hungarian Labour Movement and the Literature". After a short treatise on the beginnings of the workers' literature the author gives a survey about the literary works having been published in the *Új Előre*, grouping them by their themes. The main points of view were "description of the 'other America' ", "homesickness", "alignment of the authors" and finally the work of the newspaper publishing international socialist literature. Concerning the authors of the *Új Előre*, in connection with their original writings József Kovács states: "Though the level of realization was not always in harmony with the requirements of the intention . . . the phrasing of their aims had a significant literary effect in its time, because . . . it prepared the way before the revolutionary socialist literature."

Following the introductory study of about 100 pages long there come the different literary documents collected by the author; poems, reportage, short stories, studies, excerpts from novels and plays, critiques and book reviews. The author divided the material according to themes. The titles are as follows: We've arrived in America; Magyars in the New Home; At Home; The Revolution is still Ours; Literary and Artistic Approach; Writers; Books; etc. In the Appendix, for the sake of completeness, there can be found a "Selected Bibliography of the *Új Előre* and Hungarian Literature between 1921—1937" and a collection under the title "Performances of the Előre Theatrical Circle 1913—1934".

It can be said that József Kovács's work gives a wide panorama not only of the theoretic-cultural activity of the American Hungarian communist movement, but contains very important data necessary to get acquainted with the organizational and cultural life of the significant Hungarian national minority; with the workers above

all, and more precisely with their relations to the American communist movement. This work — on the basis of very careful research — shows a part of the many coloured American life and it is should be an interesting reading for Hungarian-speaking people on either shores of the Atlantic. It is worth considering to publish the introductory study and the appendices in English.

*Aladár Urbán*

## *László Országh:* Angol eredetű elemek a magyar szókészletben

English Elements in the Hungarian Vocabulary

Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 1977, 175 pp.

The incorporation of loanwords into a language does not necessarily go hand in hand with their linguistic registration and description. The few Hungarian words and localisms ever to have entered English have been fully described, but hundreds of English words, although often disguised, had been infiltrating into the language on Hungary for centuries unnoticed, or, at least, undescribed. After publishing scores of studies on the linguistic markers of English and American cultural impact on Hungarian life, Professor Országh has now written a magnificent monograph on Anglo—Hungarian language contacts.

*Angol eredetű elemek* . . . has been written with the aim of giving a systematic survey, documentation and analysis of over 1000 words of English origin or mediation that entered Hungarian printed texts between 1612 and 1975 and stayed there for some time or are still in use. Professor Országh's pioneering work successfully attempts to show how and why these English words penetrated Hungarian, ascribes them to various conceptual categories and assesses their significance as regards cultural history.

The book consists of the following parts: Introduction (Chapter 1, pp. 5—17), The Appearance and Disappearance of English Words in Hungarian (Ch. 2, pp. 18—133), The Various Aspects of Assimilation (Ch. 3, pp. 134—151), Conclusions (Ch. 4, pp. 152—154) and the Appendix (pp. 155—175) comprising a list of abbreviations, a index of names and of conceptual categories.

Professor Országh chose to investigate the core of the English lexical impact made on the Magyar language as spoken in today's Hungary. The term "English words" is given a broad definition including principally words born on British and USA-American soil, plus French and Latin loanwords that acquired new meanings in English, pseudo-Latin and pseudo-Greek words, if coined by British or American persons, and a few exotic Asian, African and Amerindian words that were given European currency as British imports. Excluded are English and American localisms and highly specialized technical terms if unknown to the average Hungarian newspaper reader.

The way the loan material is presented is perhaps somewhat unusual: the author treats his loanwords seriatim, using an essentially narrative mode of presentation. Thus it has become possible to attach due importance to the historico-cultural aspects and social implications of borrowing English words into Hungarian, which makes Professor Országh's monograph as much an engaging chapter of the history of Hungarian civilization as it is an indispensable reference work for all linguists wishing to study the expansion of the English vocabulary on the Continent of Europe and in Hungary in particular.

In the historical part of the book (Ch. 2), about a thousand English words are treated, presented in their assimilated Hungarian spelling in heavy print. Their first occurrence is given as far as it could be ascertained and their later history in Hungarian very briefly sketched. Of the English loans relatively frequently used in everyday Hungarian, about 90 were borrowed between 1612 and 1820, the first two being *parlament* and *puritán*. Roughly 150 loans were taken over in the Hungarian Reform Era (1820—1849) and some 400 during the next seven decades. These English imports reached Hungarian mainly through German and/or French mediation, on the pages of predominantly political, technical and economic publications. In the inter-war years an additional 180 English words were adopted, with the intermediary rôle of Viennese Austro-German becoming less important and a

beginning of the shift from borrowing through the eye to borrowing through the ear. The post-1945 years saw a de-Anglicized two decades in the history of the Hungarian vocabulary only to give way to the newest influx of English words (such as *Algol, Fortran, go-kart, happening, hardware, hippy, input, sci-fi, telex, unisex*), which constitute the prime foreign contribution to the Hungarian vocabulary of the 1970s.

In the concluding chapter Professor Országh points out that the place and frequency of English loans in Hungarian still cannot be decided correctly and calls for more research to be done along various suggested lines. Would-be researchers cannot be grateful enough for the provision of this solid basis on which such research will hopefully be carried out.

*Miklós Kontra*

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# „WIR KÄMPFTEN TREU FÜR DIE REVOLUTION"

## Studien zur Geschichte der ungarischen sozialistischen Literatur

*Herausgegeben von M. Szabolcsi, L. Illés und F. József*

Im Zuge der vergleichenden literaturhistorischen Forschungen unserer Tage nehmen das Interesse und die Bedeutung ständig zu, die Literatur sozialistischen Ideengehalte innerhalb der modernen Weltliteratur zu erschliessen. Der vorliegende Band ist eine Fortsetzung des 1977 erschienenen Titels WIR STÜRMEN IN DIE REVOLUTION. Wurden dem ausländischen Leser in diesem wichtige Forschungsergebnisse über historische und prinzipielle Fragen der ungarischen sozialistischen Literatur zugänglich gemacht, so erhält er nun mehr durch zahlreiche Porträts ein erweitertes Bild dieses Themas.

Namhafte ungarische Literaturwissenschaftler beleuchten den Weg Endre Adys, des Dichters der revolutionären Ideenwelt zu Beginn unseres Jahrhunderts; die Leistungen Lajos Kassáks, des Bahnbrechers der ungarischen Avantgarde, das Schaffen des grössten proletarischen Dichters in Ungarn, Attila József, sowie die Gedankenwelt des unsterblichen antifaschistischen Lyrikers, Miklós Radnóti. Überdies werden weitere Persönlichkeiten der inländischen Literatur und auch Vertreter der ungarischen Emigrantenliteratur vorgestellt, darunter solche bedeutenden marxistischer Kritiker und Ästheten wie György Lukács und József Révai. Zudem werden in den Studien auch andere Richtungen der ungarischen Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts sowie die sozialistische Weltliteratur mit berücksichtigt.

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# In Quest of Unity and Balance

## (On Tolstoy)

By

ENDRE TÖRÖK

(Budapest)

On 19th January, 1901, Tolstoy wrote in his Diary as follows: "All of us — and this is not a simile but the veritable truth — grow up and are brought up in a robber's den, and only as adults do we realize where we are and why we live. And then different attitudes evolve in response to this situation; some join forces with the bandits and plunder, while others are convinced that they are not guilty, since they are merely exploiting the plunder, but do not endorse it, in fact, they strive to put and end to it; and there is another group who are scandalized by it, and want to destroy the robber's den, but they are weak and too few for that. What, then, are we to do?"[1]

Tolstoy wrote his short story, *It is You*, about this time. In it, the wise man and the tyrant are holding a conversation. The tyrant had sent for the wise man to ask him how he could best take revenge on his enemies. Tolstoy applies the Socratic method; the wise man gradually makes the tyrant realize that everything he had considered certain so far was false certainty. On the inspiration of the wise man, he becomes aware of his *human* essence. Finally, understanding the difference between good and evil, he himself comes to the conclusion, which is, in fact, Tolstoy's: "As through a veil, I came to see the truth and got to know that behind this veil all mankind is one. . . He who offends humanity offends each of us as well",[2] for every man is one and the same man, the offender and the offended are essentially the same.

Separated by more than two-thousand years of history, the teachings on good and evil of Socrates and Tolstoy are similar in many ways. In Socrates' as well as in Tolstoy's opinion, *good is itself happiness*, so people must be taught to follow the good, that sin is not reasonable, that virtue alone is reasonable. This thought led the aging Tolstoy at the end of the last century to suppose that both in the East and the West — in *Asian-type barbarism* and *civilized barbarism*, to use his own words — the world may yet be changed by instruction. Man is created for good, and just as he himself is responsible if his life is ill-organized, he can mend it by recognizing that life's purpose is an eternal striving for distant perfection. In other words man's task is to bring about

God's kingdom on earth, what is more, as Tolstoy had in mind, by raising moral perfection to the status of universal law.

In the last thirty years of his life, which may be considered the period of teaching in Tolstoy's career, he became convinced that in critical times man acts properly only if he listens to nothing but his conscience. He refused all forms of *ownership*: man's expropriation of his fellow men, a whole people's expropriation by the state, and God's expropriation by the churches. He regarded his age as the period of *institutionalized sinfulness* which rests on the tyranny of power, and *tyranny itself is evil*, in Tolstoy's opinion. Violence alienates man from his soul, annihilating the consciousness that mankind is one, and that every man is one and the same man. This sinfulness in the West, in the situation of civilized barbarism, is till more treacherous than in Russia, where due to the nature of Asian despotism, consciousness of man's freedom and dignity are missing. On the other hand, civilized barbarism, with the illusion of being committed to the individual, brings about an ironic commitment. This way, disguised sinfulness, motivated by the craving for material interest, is an attack against the common human essence in every man. Tolstoy turned against all forms of authority: his state, his church, his class, nor did he endorse revolutionary violence, though after the 1905 revolution had been put down with ruthless force, in his pamphlet, *I Cannot Keep Silent*, he accused the government of terrible crimes and a series of massacres which were committed, as he wrote, at dawn, in secret, so that no one could see them, and so the responsibility for the crime could be shared among the criminals, each of whom could think and say that he had not sinned.[3]

It was the presentiment of a perilous history which pushed the aging Tolstoy towards teaching. Seeing a threat in a world divided, he preached the unification of the world. He believed that man could be saved from evil only by non-violent resistance.

In fact, the unification of the world is the *primary organizing principle* not only of Tolstoy's teaching, but of his art as well. He made use of this organizing principle even before his period of teaching. The form of Tolstoy's novels, from *War and Peace* through *Anna Karenina* up to *Resurrection*, is the form of the quest for unity and balance, the manifestation of the fact that the world is a common concern, that beyond individual interest, there is a common human interest. This is the intellectual direction of all three novels, though in a different sense in each case.

Tolstoy's first novel chronologically, *War and Peace*, affirms the individual by the affirmation of history. Only by being involved in history do Andrew Bolkonsky and Pierre Bezukhov come to know themselves. They attain full and genuine selfhood in a critical national situation: i.e., they are men who formulate the question of national existence as a question of the existence of mankind as a whole. One of them, Andrew, will complete himself *in death*;

the other, Pierre, mainly through the influence of the Russian peasant, Karatayev, completes himself *in life*, by the grace of nature. Andrew comes to understand the meaning of life by gradually distancing himself from the world, while Pierre comes to the same realization by approaching it.

In his last great novel, *Resurrection*, the relation between man and history is exactly the reverse. By the affirmation of the individual, Tolstoy affirms history: that is, according to the aging Tolstoy, man must change first before he can change the world. His main character, Nekhludoff, becomes an authentic man not through the impact of history, but through his guilty conscience, which at first is merely a "guilty" guilty conscience, insofar as he wants to raise Katusha, for whose ruin he is responsible, to a priviledged position; in short Nekhludoff is still thinking like a priviledged man. He is permeated by a truely guilty conscience only when he is able to throw away his priviledges entirely. Reaching the level of a *purifying guilty conscience*, he feels guilty for everyone's sin and takes upon himself the fate of the victims of the machinery of power, and with it, the responsibility of his class for the Russian national situation.

*War and Peace* is the novel of innocence and homecoming, the novel of *epic unity and balance*, of naive, patriarchal Russia; it is not only like the *Iliad*, as Tolstoy called it, but also like the *Odyssey*. Pierre Bezukhov finds his way home by experiencing a universal adventure, the adventure of recognition, as he experiences the great adventure of history; and in Tolstoy's representation Russia finds her way home as well, insofar as a possible national unity begins to take shape in response to a felt historical threat. In contrast, *Resurrection* is the novel of emergence from sin, the revolt of the individual against institutionalized sinfulness. From the moment the attempts to represent the interest of humanity at large, Nekhludoff gets rid of everything that does not suit him. The balance of the novel is a *dramatic balance*, which throughout the tragic meeting of Nekhludoff and Katusha leads to a common resurrection. It is a common *moral resurrection*, which comes about without annihilating the gradually narrowing split between the sinner and his victim. Though the sinner's closest ties are always to his victim and Katusha, the peasant girl, may absolve Nekhludoff while the latter may renounce his aristocratic position, no true unity can come about between the nobility and the peasantry. This is why no *absolute* unity and no *unconditional* balance can be established. Among Tolstoy's great novels, the conclusion of *Resurrection* has achieved the most successful balance between artistic closure and openness. By making amends, one task had ended for Nekhludoff, but only to give way to another, to which Tolstoy meant to devote a new novel, since (as he wrote), the new task meant a new life for his hero.

Nekhludoff is a man growing up to moral perfection, just like the other heroes of Tolstoy's contemporary stories. Even *The Kreutzer Sonata* deals

with this problem, and not only with the preaching of sexual ascetism, as it is so often supposed. It suggests, however extremely, that in order to achieve authentic selfhood, man must be stronger than his body, must be able to control it along with his passions. On the other hand, another story, *Father Sergei*, is the story of winning dominance over the passions of the soul. Its hero arrives at the conclusion that he can do good only by mingling with the people, by withdrawing from worldly and saintly vanities alike. Among the stories of perfection, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* is the story of achieving perfection in death. The judge begins to live a genuine life, to judge himself, as the end of his biological existence draws to a close. He had lived before as was expected of him, ignoring the dictates of his soul. Now he first frees himself of envy toward those normal, healthy people who live around him. Then he passes through the stage of loneliness, recollecting his life, which he cannot share with anybody, since it is his alone; it is his own irrevocable history. From here he proceeds to the third spiritual step, that of moral suffering due to the recognition of the irrevocable sin of having lived wrongly without being aware of it. In his journey towards death, the nadir is fear and darkness, the feeling of being squeezed into a dark hole. But having once fallen through, he sees the light and understands that everything could still be set right. This is the moment of death, the moment of redress, of realizing that everybody should be sent off with love, and that it should not cause pain. And with this, his pain comes to an end. Someone said over him that the end had come, but Ivan Ilyich, who heard the word and repeated it in his soul, already knew that not life but death was coming to an end, and that the bank beyond had ceased to be death's.

Between the novels of innocence and emergence from a state of sinfulness, *Anna Karenina* is the true crisis-novel, where there is neither homecoming, nor liberation from sin. There is only punishment and pardon. Punishment in the case of Anna, but pardon for Levin, who is an auto-biographical hero like Pierre Bezukhov and Nekhludoff. In his character Tolstoy posed mainly his personal questions, but in a way which turned them into the universal problems of his age. Anna and Levin are related in character insofar as both are the heroes of unconditional attitudes. In the case of Anna, unconditional emotions lead to unconditional loneliness, to the feeling of being excluded, which in turn leads to suicide. Anna's error is that of an extraordinary personality; her perfect dependence on emotion is the kind of slough and risk which finally leads to a loss of self. This loss of self manifests itself as punishment, and Anna, being a consequent woman, accepts her lot by jumping under the wheels of a train. Levin, on the contrary, is the hero of the unconditional intellect. He also reaches the nadir; sometimes he comes so near to suicide that he has to hide the rope so as not to hang himself. But in contrast to Anna, he does not take the fatal step because he realizes that *intellect as such* will not offer

a solution to his doubts, and he listens to the *answer*, not of his inner self, but of the outside world. He learns from a peasant that a man's purpose in life is not merely to fulfill his material needs, but to live according to the dictates of his soul. Anna, on the other hand, does not accept the warning when, meeting Vronsky for the first time, she is touched on the platform by the presentiment of an irrevocable event in connection with a railway accident.

*Anna Karenina* is a novel of destiny; the heroes are only partially self-determined. *War and Peace* and *Resurrection* are the *novels of meeting*, where every departure which follows on a meeting leads towards a meeting of higher value. Anna Karenina is the *novel of messages*. Anna acts in spite of the message, while in Levin the message finds a receptor. He becomes aware of what he had not known previously, namely, that he had lived as he should, but that he had thought wrongly. He lived according to spiritual truths, but did not acknowledge them; he had even carefully avoided them, his intellectual pride having prevented him from accepting the leading law of his life.

Tolstoy's œuvre can be regarded as an enormous diary, an uninterrupted self-examination, a conversation with himself and the world. Since he could not transform the world, he proceeded to transform himself. The heroes at the centre of his greatest novels always stand on the same spiritual plane as Tolstoy himself. Pierre Bezukhov proceeds towards Levin, Levin towards Nekhludoff. So in the three novels a certain continuity prevails, which preserves the process-like representation so typical of Tolstoy. *War and Peace* portrays a historical process, *Anna Karenina* the process of destiny, *Resurrection* the process of consciousness, and in this respect we can differentiate three periods within the writer's more than fifty years of activity: the artistic period, the period of crisis, and that of teaching. Tolstoy proceeded from *War and Peace* the poetic novel, up to *Resurrection*, the novel of teaching, and he did this without *totally* excluding teaching in his artistic period or excluding the aesthetic criteria in his teaching period. In the first case, poetry absorbs teaching, in the second, teaching embraces poetry. And so Tolstoy completed himself as an artist by creating a symmetry in his lifework, unique in world literature. He first created an epic harmony out of history of the *past*, then, seeing the impossibility of this harmony in the *present*, he expressed the disintegration of the balance of the patriarchal nobility; and eventually he went in quest of the man of the *future*, and tried to create him in the name of a supreme harmony, by supposing universal moral laws which would turn the man of the future into universal man. Nekhludoff and *Resurrection* itself were born on the inspiration of a utopian, supra-historical ethic, a utopia without which there is neither life, nor art, nor history. This utopia is an artistic outcome of a *moral theology*, of the supposition that it depends on man's moral insight what he makes out of the world. Tolstoy was motivated by a *sacred misunderstanding* when he considered perfection as irresistible, because he saw it not as the demand of

reason but as man's inborn capacity which everyone always strives for, consciously or unconsciously. Tolstoy himself had consciously created a piece of art out of life in his old age; he placed human value above all other values; he thought that the world's fate depended on cultivating human values, and that man is capable of following the truth he had recognized as such, and to unceasingly transcend himself according to the logic of this higher truth. In a continuous struggle with his proud, rhapsodic and sensual self, he first put himself to the test of transcending himself, and according to his principles, he proceeded to the maximum of man's capacity of dominating his own personality.

When Tolstoy left Yasnaya Polyana at the age of 82, he ran away not only because he was misunderstood by his family and because his position became intolerable in the luxurious surroundings, but also because he wanted to die according to his own truth, *without the sin of property*, being aware that man's essence is immortal in nature. He wished to meet the challenge set by himself and his teaching, though the process of history happened to contradict the latter. But this *historical error* carries a special truth, namely, that man is not a completed being; he must continually recreate himself in order to do justice to the world entrusted to his care. Otherwise he is unable to liberate himself from a constant threat and will end up destroying himself. In Tolstoy's view, making the world a better place to live in is not impossible if we can find the proper balance between man's increasing material knowledge and declining spiritual life.

Tolstoy the artist and Tolstoy the teacher arrived both in answer to, and inspite of, the will of the world. — Despite the will of the world, because Tolstoy's word is *not the word of history*; but also in answer to the call of the world, because on the threshold of the 20th century, there was urgent need of someone who could address man about his predicament in his own language. Pascal wrote that man endlessly transcends himself.[4] There is no writer among the giants of world literature to whom this statement is more applicable than Tolstoy, in whom mankind, as measured by its own values, transcends itself incessantly.

## NOTES

[1] «Мы все — и это не сравнение, а почти описание действительности — вырастаем воспитываемся в разбойничьем гнезде, и только когда вырастем и оглядимся, то понимаем, где мы и чем мы пользуемся. И вот тут-то начинаются различные отношения к этому положению; одни пристают к разбойникам и грабят, другие думают, что они не виновать, если только пользуются грабежом, не одобряя его и даже стараясь прекратить его, третьи возмущаются и хотят разрушить гнездо, но они слабы, и их мало. Что же надо делать?» Толстой, Л. Н., *Собрание сочинений в 20-и томах*. Том 20. стр. 145.

[2] «Я увидел истину, как бы через покрывало и узнал, что за этим покрывалом всё человечество составляет одно существо. . . Тот, кто оскорбляет человечность, оскорбляет и нас и всё человечество.» *Полное собрание сочинений в 90-и томах*. Том 34. стр. 140.

[3] «Придумано то, чтобы делать эти дела тайно, на заре, так, чтобы никто не видал их придумано то, чтобы ответственность за эти злодейства так бы распределялась между со веряющими их людьми, чтобы каждый мог думать и сказать: не он виновник их.» Ibid. Том 37—84.

[4] Pascal, B., *Pensées*, Paris, 1973. 98.

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# Специфика психологического раскрытия переживания личности

## (Л. Толстой и Стендаль)

МАРИЯ РЕВ

(Будапешт)

Для Льва Толстого после Руссо Стендаль был одним из самых привлекательных писателей Западной Европы. Героев Толстого занимают жгучие вопросы общественной жизни, оба писателя ишут нормы поведения своих героев в переходную эпоху в заостренных ситуациях. Поиски выхода из конфликтов никогда не проходят оторванно от окружения, в котором для Толстого основную роль играет морально-этическое чувство героя, которое в конце концов побеждает и у героев Стендаля.

В литературоведении принято, сопоставляя творчество Л. Толстого и Стендаля, сравнивать их как превосходных мастеров батальных полотен. Действительно, ощутим параллелизм в размышлениях и поведении Фабрицио дель Донго из *Пармской обители* и Пьера Безухова из *Войны и мира:* герой Стендаля по конца сомневается в том, учавствовалли он в большой битве, Пьер Безухов также не осознает свое положение на Бородинском поле.

М Горький 8 мая 1928 года, в письме к А. Виноградову, вспоминает разговор Л. Толстого с Чеховым в Крыму. Толстой с большим признанием говорил о французских писателях как о крупных мастерах формы: «Свободно и легко пишут. . . после этого он и сказал, что, если б не читал описание Ватерлоо в «Шартрезе» Стендаля, ему, наверное, не так бы удались военные сцены «Войны и мира». И — подумав: «Да, у него я многому научился, прекрасный сочинитель он».[1] Пожалуй не лишне напомнить и то, что незабываемое изображение Ватерлоо дал Стендаль — очевидец Бородинского сражения, побывавший с Наполеоном в Москве в 1812 году. А спустя несколько десятилетий, после тщательного изучения исторических документов, учитывая и опыт Стендаля, Лев Толстой нарисовал панораму Бородинской битвы.

Однако очень был бы сужен и упрощен круг исследуемой темы, если бы мы ограничились новыми пополнениями к не раз изученным фактам.[2] К произведениям Л. Толстого и Стендаля интересно подойти и с другой точки зрения, тем более, если учесть, что Стендаль в 20-ые годы XIX века глубоко интересовался русской культурой. Он познакомился с Александром Ивановичем Тургеневым, братом декабриста Н. И. Тургенева и другом Пушкина. Знал о

восстании декабристов, с симпатией наблюдал исторические события, которые позднее, может быть, и побудили его создать образ русской женщины в романе *Арманс*. *Красное и черное* в России завоевало признание Пушкина и Вяземского, и, по данным советских исследователей,[3] П. Вяземский еще в рукописи читал *Пармскую обитель*, что безусловно подтверждает доверие и дружбу Стендаля. Стендаль возбудил интерес Гоголя, и Л. Толстой также рано, еще в молодости, познакомился с его книгами.

В 1883 году Л. Толстой снова перечитал *Красное и черное* и после этого писал жене, Софье Андреевне: «Читаю Stendhal «Rouge et Noir». Лет 40 тому назад я читал это, и ничего не помню, кроме моего отношения к автору — симпатия за смелость, родственность, но неудовлетворенность: то же самое чувство теперь, но с ясным сознанием отчего и почему.»[4] Очень жаль, что Толстой сжато выразил причины своей симпатии и совершенно не разъясняет факторы, вызывающие его «неудовлетворенность». Попытку решения этой задачи и ставит себе целью эта статья, на основе нового прочтения произведений Толстого и Стендаля, раскрыть мотивацию противоречивого восприятия и его корни со стороны Толстого.

Стендаль был видным представителем своего времени, в его лучших романах отражаются идеи, тенденции и волнения, определяющие духовный мир французской общественности того времени. Через формирование судьбы и поведения своих героев он показал воздействие общественных связей и столкновений. Это легче понять в свете философии рационализма и сенсуализма, характерных для начала подъема буржуазии. Каждый из главных действующих лиц Стендаля ищет счастья — сознательно, или менее сознательно, борясь с низменными расчетами и инстинктами, чтобы пробиться в более высокие духовные и чувственные сферы. В этом смысле Стендаль изображал подъем буржуазии, одновременно и превосходя буржуазию. Ведь его герой олицетворяет в автономной личности *талант и ум, энергию и страстность*, направленные на достижение цели, но более высокой, не эгоистической, а только себялюбивой цели.

Жюльен Сорель очень предприимчив в стремлении добиться симпатии и любви госпожи де Реналь, попасть в духовную семинарию, а затем оттуда в Париж. В его горячих суждениях всегда ощущается его плебейское сознание, отрицание провинциального дворянства эпохи реставрации, и избалованных, изнеженных вельмож столицы. Когда он в погоне за успехами, считает себя чуть ли не революционером, охотясь за собственной славой он желает благосостояния и других, представителем которых он считает самого себя. В этой двойственности и корениться неуравновешенность Жюльена; критические порывы и выступления против самого себя.

Стендаль исключительное внимание обращает на внутренние переживания человека, на показ духовной жизни героев, поэтому и не случайна роль внутренних монологов в его романах. Такой внутренний монолог обобщает

противоречивые чувства Жюльена Сореля к кюре Шелану, который уловил, что он избрал профессию священника ради карьеры: «Что со мной делается? — спрашивал он себя. — Я чувствую, что мог бы сто раз жизнь свою отдать за этого добрейшего старика, а ведь как раз он-то мне и доказал, что я дурак. Именно его-то мне важнее всего обойти, а он меня видит насквозь. Этот тайный пыл, о котором он говорит, ведь это моя жажда выйти в люди. Он считает, что я недостоин стать священником, а я-то воображал, что этот мой добровольный отказ от пятисот луидоров ренты внушит ему самое высокое представление о моей святости и о моем призвании.»

«Отныне, — внушал самому себе Жюльен, — я буду полагаться только на те черты моего характера, которые я уже испытал на деле. Кто бы мог сказать, что я с таким наслаждением буду обливаться слезами? Что я способен любить человека, который доказал мне, что я дурак?»[5]

Также искренно признается он о своих сложных отношениях с госпожей де Реналь в начале их связи: «А что я знаю об этой женщине? — спрашивал себя Жюльен. — Я знаю только одно: до моей отлучки я брал ее за руку, а она отнимала у меня руку; теперь я отнимаю руку, а она сама берет меня за руку и пожимает ее. Прекрасный случай отплатить ей с лихвой за все то презрение, которое она мне выказывала. Бог ее знает, сколько у нее было любовников!»[6] Потом он обобщает свои мысли в следующем выводе: «Я еще потому должен добиваться успеха у этой женщины, — продолжало нашептывать Жюльену его мелкое тщеславие, — что если потом кому-нибудь вздумается попрекнуть меня жалким званием гувернера, я смогу намекнуть, что меня на это толкнула любовь.»[7]

Эти цитаты проливают свет на специфику психологического метода Стендаля. Жюльен Сорель прекрасно осознает свое отношение к кюре Шелану и госпоже де Реналь. Писатель заставляет своего героя осмыслить и логически свои привязанности, дружбу, подытожить рассуждения рационалистической оценкой, взвешивая даже оттенки своих переживаний и чувств, и соответственно этому решать рационально о своих будущих поступках. Поэтому-то и очень силен интеллектуальный накал внутреннего монолога такого типа. Такое же разумное, логическое суждение и сила обдуманного разоблачения в нем здучат из уст Жюльена, когда он решает своим выступлением, по праву последнего слова свою собственную судьбу: «. . . Преступление мое чудовищно, и оно было *предумышленно*. Итак, я заслужил смерть, господа присяжные. Но будь я и менее виновен, я вижу здесь людей, которые, не задумываясь над тем, что молодость моя заслуживает некоторого сострадания, пожелают наказать и раз навсегда сломить в моем лице эту породу молодых людей низкого происхождения, задавленных нищетой, коим посчастливилось получить хорошее образование, в силу чего они осмелились затесаться в среду, которую высокомерие богачей именует хорошим обществом.»[8] Потом в тюрьме, в каземате, предназначенном для приговоренных к

смертной казни Жюльен настолько трезво и систематизированно осмысливает положение общества, как если бы не он ожидал исполнения приговора:

«Никакого *естественного права* не существует. Это словечко — просто устаревшая чепуха, вполне достойная генерального прокурора, который на днях так домогался моей головы, а между тем прадед его разбогател на конфискациях при Людовике XIV. *Право* возникает только тогда, когда объявляется закон, воспрещающий делать то или иное под страхом кары. А до того, как появится закон, только и есть *естественного*, что львиная сила или потребность живого существа, испытывающего голод или холод, — словом, *потребность* . . . Нет, люди, пользующиеся всеобщим почетом, — это только жулики, которым посчастливилось, что их не поймали на месте преступления. Обвинитель, которого общество науськивает на меня, нажил свое богатство подлостью . . . Я совершил прступления, и я осужден справедливо, но если не считать этого единственного моего преступления, Вально, осудивший меня, приносит вреда обществу во сто раз больше моего.»[9]

В этом внутреннем монологе покоряет предельная ясность формулировок, сила логики, холодность чуть ли не постороннего, пожалуй, даже бесчувственность. Возникает такое ощущение, что чувства Жюльена уже умерли, а он последений раз в жизни с невероятным спокойствием и поражающим хладнокровием взвешивает прожитую им жизнь, и конечные выводы, мысли и дальновидность созерцания обеспечивают спокойный конец. Следует отметить, что в русской литературе Л. Толстой и Достоевский пользовались курсивом и во внутреннем монологе, и в характеристике героя или идеи, для выделения специфики, нагрузки данного выражения.[10] Быть может, в дальнейшем глубже будет исследован этот примечательный прием, до определенной степени намекающий на авторскую позицию, сокращающий дистанционированность повествования в сюжетно-фабульной линии и, таким образом, становяшийся компонентом архитектоники произведения.

Пожалуй, дальновидность сказывается в способности Жюльена Сореля даже в погоне за славой, за удовлетворением собственного тщеславия (в смысле осознания собственного достоинства и ценности) не терять из виду благополучие тех, представителем которых он является. Он пленяет женщин, которых не любит, но которых использует для достижения успеха, для своей карьеры, и долг его перед народом не возникает в конкретной форме. — Потом его тщеславное устремление исчезает, и он любит по-настоящему, разочаровывается в богатстве, в высокой общественной должности и отказывается от всего, что до этого было важно для него. Сорель ищет и находит успокоение в своем героизме, и находит самого себя и счастье на пороге смерти, в заточении.

Описание этого процесса, представляющееся открытием Стендаля, как будто идет в разрез с утилитаризмом героя. Автор объясняет все, мотивирует искренность его слов, их беспощадную справедливость и делает его

мысли неоспоримо глубокими, наполняя особенным смыслом. Таким образом, слова Жюльена Сореля не противоречат его поступкам, он пересматривает, корректирует свои прежние соображения о том, что нужно пользоваться такими же средствами, какими пользуется и противник. То, что он выбирает смерть, подтверждает созревание гуманизма; в этическом отношении он становится более строгим к самому себе, и в этом заключается залог его морально-этического роста, герой становится более непосредственным. — Пожалуй, в этих моментах — ключ к симпатии Толстого из-за «смелости и родственности» чувства. Однако нельзя забыть о «неудовлетворенности» русского писателя. У Жюльена Сореля героизм играет доминирующую роль даже перед смертью, он не отказывается от своей индивидуальности, не желает растворяться в народе, он остается до конца имманентной личностью, индивидуумом, но не в смысле капиталистических, буржуазных правил, и потому-то он не эгоист. Жюльен Сорель — символ человека, верного своему классу, добившегося большего, чем позволяли законы буржуазного мира, поднявшегося выше, чем это было предусмотрено правящими кругами. Однако именно поэтому возрождение героя происходит под давлением общества, которому он легко поддается, но не по внутреннему велению необходимости переоценить свою деятельность, не по философским-этическим принципам. Может быть, «неудовлетворенность» Толстого вытекает из мотивации Стендаля, несмотря на то, что нет перелома в изображении героя; в итоге внутренних сдвигов побеждают первоначальные принципы, и в конце романа Жюльен обретает свое настоящее «я». Герои Стендаля, такие, как Фабрицио дель Донго, Люсьен Левен, не меньше размышляют об «общих интересах», чем о своей судьбе и счастье. Но их внутренние побуждения не свободны от элементов учения французских сенсуалистов, механических материалистов, Кондильяка и Гельвеция, но одновременно они означают шаг вперед в современном видении мира, в освещении сложной проблемы личности и общества.

Стендаль — один из самых зрелых и смелых психологов мировой литературы. Он изображает героев с недюжинными способностями и страстями. Однако строгость и рационализм их собственного анализа доказывает, что он рисует не безусловно чистых людей, а лиц, имеющих хорошие и плохие свойства, внутренне борющихся и не снисходительных к себе. Их затаенные мысли, монологи без слов подтверждают именно это и делают их привлекательными и для сегодняшего читателя.

Героев Толстого, как и его самого, занимают также жгучие проблемы своего времени, их поиски направлены на обнаружение путей исхода в переходное время и собственного места в данном общественном устройстве. Стендаль больше пользовался, если можно так сказать, техникой монтажа для показа духовных и душевных переживаний своих героев, Толстой предпочитает изображать длительные, сложные процессы внутренних сдвигов. Отображение человеческих чувств в их изменении и глубокая социальная

мотивация характеров, подробное описание мыслей героя о себе и о своем окружении в разных формах существовали в литературе и до Толстого. Толстой использовал опыт Руссо, Стендаля, Гюго,[11] учился у Пушкина и Лермонтова. И уже первыми своими произведениями производил большой эффект. В раннем рассказе *Севастополь в мае* Толстой с необыкновенной свежестью, непосредственностью, многоплановостью и текучестью раскрывает мысли и чувства Михайлова и Проскухина, которые за секунду пережили, передумали и перечувствовали свое прошлое и настоящее и с боязнью, смешанной с ужасом, размышляют о возможности не остаться в живых. А после почти пятидесятилетнего писательского опыта Толстой все еще думает о том, «как бы хорошо написать художественное произведение, в котором бы ясно высказать текучесть человека, то, что он один и тот же, то злодей, то ангел, то мудрец, то идиот, то силач, то бессильнейшее существо. . .»[12]

Много общего между Л. Толстым и Стендалем: сопоставление их произведений аргументируется использованием внутренних монологов, ролью характеристик и истолкований повествователя, которые всегда сопутствуют самораскрытию героя.[13]

Стендаль в *Пармском монастыре* пишет о том, что Анетта Марини заказала у известного живописца Хайеза портрет Фабрицио дель Донго и о том, как это подействовало на дальнейшее развертывание событий; Л. Толстой также показывает, что Константин Левин увидел портрет Анны Карениной, написанный живописцем Михайловым до того, как он познакомился с ней, и потом освещает чувства, пробужденные в нем картиной, и мысленное сопоставление при встрече.

Стендаль так же знает причины поступков своих героев, как и Л. Толстой, даже объясняет их, но при этом сознательно подчеркивает, что это авторское видение.

Несмотря на сходства отдельных моментов в изображении героя Л. Толстым, в целом оно отличается от почерка Стендаля. Например, внутренний монолог у Толстого не заключает ряд мыслей, как интеллекутальные обобщения стендалевских героев, которые отличаются своей логикой, ясностью, поразительной последовательностью и коротко указывают на направление и цель дальнейшего действия. Толстой раскрывает длинные процессы, в которых обнажается душевный и духовный мир его героя с множеством оттенков взаимосвязей. Не случайно напоминает он: «Главное — работа внутренняя, душевная, и чтобы показана была не оконченная работа, а процесс работы на самом деле.»[14] В таких моментах раскрыты широким потоком не только мысли героев, но и самые затаенные сдвиги духовного мира, свидетельствующие и о рождении чувств, превращении их в страсти, потом утихание, пульсирование интеллектуальных и эмоциональных переживаний личности, и их изменение, выраженное в «невысказанных словах». В них и охарактеризован герой полностью, но одно точно, что богатый духовный и душевный мир имеют только

ищущие герои. Например, Берг, Долохов, Борис Друбецкой и другие не наделены способностью раздумывать, и прежде всего не могут руководствоваться морально-этическими побуждениями и в их свете анализировать свои собственные поступки и мысли, соображения и поведение.

В произведениях Л. Толстого оценка пережитого этической меркой осуществляется не в конце жизни героев, как у Жюльена Сореля, или у Фабрицио дель Донго в тюрьме (вообще тут необходимо отметить роль тюрьмы в книгах Стендаля). У Толстого герои, ищущие смысл жизни, ставят для самих себя высокую мерку, они хотят согласовать интересы личности и общества (народа), руководствуясь принципами добра и любви, взаимного уважения в их поступках. Именно это и осознает на поле Аустерлица Андрей Болконский, обнаружив, что в погоне за славой он не находил смысла жизни, самое важное и определяющее начало. «Как тихо, спокойно и торжественно, совсем не так, как я бежал, — подумал князь Андрей, — не так, как мы бежали, кричали и дрались; совсем не так, как с озлобленными и испуганными лицами тащили друг у друга банник француз и артиллерист, — совсем не так ползут облака по этому высокому, бесконечному небу. Как же я не видал прежде этого высокого неба? И как я счастлив, что узнал его на конец. Да! все пустое, все обман, кроме этого бесконечного неба. Ничего, ничего нет, кроме его. Но и того даже нет, ничего нет, кроме тишины, успокоения. И слава богу!. . .»[15] Раз найденная идея может быть забытой в жизненных перипетиях; она может отодвинуться на задний план, но не исчезнет, не покинет больше человека, с трудом приобревшего ее: «Князь Андрей вздохнул и лучистым, детским, нежным вазглядом взглянул в раскрасневшееся восторженное, но все робкое перед первенствующим другом, лицо Пьера.

— Да, коли бы это так было! — сказал он. — Однако пойдем садиться, — прибавил князь Андрей, и, выходя с парома, он поглядел на небо, на которое указал ему Пьер, и первый раз после Аустерлица он увидал то высокое, вечное небо, которое он видел, лежа на Аустерлицком поле, и что-то давно заснувшее, что-то лучшее, что было в нем, вдруг радостно и молодо проснулось в его душе. Чувство это исчезло, как скоро князь Андрей вступил опять в привычные условия жизни, но он знал, что это чуство, которое он не умел развить, жило в нем. Свидание с Пьером было для князя Андрея эпохой, с которой началась хотя во внешности и та же самая, но во внутреннем мире его новая жизнь.»[16] То, что Толстой делает это, — отнюдь не количественное наращивание аналитичности. Первый цитированный абзац — по форме внутренний монолог, второй — высказывание повествователя. И все-таки при первом прочтении это почти не ощущается. Как будто перед нами развитие первой идеи, во всем ее многообразии, что оттеняется сложно-сочиненными и подчиненными предложениями, ссылкой на временные и причиные связи, нарушенным порядком слов, повторениями и т. д. По меткой формулировке А. Скафтымова, «происходит смена состояний, мыслей, чувств, желаний и пр.

Но чем вызвана эта смена? Что движет этим миром? Что побуждает спящую потенцию, которая до времени молчит и не знает себя? Вот здесь и рождела та неслыханная актуализация бытовых мелочей, какую не знал до Толстого ни один из художников.»[17] К этому можно еще добавить, что такое построение предложения, сюжетно-фабульной линии, всей архитектоники произведения и создает ту своеобразную динамику повествования, которая кажется то медленной, то ведет к ускоренной развязке, то излишне мелочна — то крупномасштабна, широкого размаха. Этим способом изображения Толстой отличается от Стендаля, рисующего явления более однолинейно и прямо, даже если это явления общественного и политического порядка. Толстой стремится уйти от давления политических проблем но, показывая поиски своих героев, он волей-неволей возвращается к исследованию и истолкованию морального воздействия проблем его времени. Таким образом, конфликты Андрея Болконского, но прежде всего Пьера Безухова больше характерны для людей шестидесятых годов, чем — начала XIX-го века. С связи с этим, пожалуй, уместно напомнить слова Горького: «Лев Толстой был самым сложным человеком среди всех крупнейших людей XIX столетия.»[18]

Имеется сходство и в названии произведений Л. Толстого и Стендаля: оба выдвигают в них противоположные понятия. Однако это только внешнее сходство, ибо *Красное и черное* символизируют только понятия, между которыми должен выбирать главный герой романа. А *Война и мир* — это органический охват бытия во всей его сложности, это характеризует жизнь, то есть побуждения, стремления, порывы, определяющие человеческое поведение, бесчисленный хаос импульсов и прозрений, что еще усугубляется богатством понятия «мир».[19] Поэтому-то структура романа адекватна названию, показывая «сцепление всего со всем», он строится контрапунктным способом, в нем используется возможность противопоставления исторических событий, людей в водовороте событий, воздействия истории на судьбу людей и людей, формирующих ход истории, строя свою собственную жизнь или поддаваясь инстинктивным прихотям.

Контрапунктная архитектоника свойственна и роману *Анна Каренина*, где Константин Левин через мытарства находит успокоение и Анна, все больше страдая, кончает жизнь самоубийством. К. Левин еще более сознательно работает над осуществлением своих идеалов, одновременно постоянно анализирует правильность своих соображений, этическую ценность поступков. Он не может успокоиться на достигнутом и с точки зрения самоусовершенствования, самовоспитания рассматривает свою жизнь. Старается преодолеть общественные преграды, отделяющие его от других людей. Поэтому часто Левин попадает в такую ситуацию, когда он должен выбирать из разных возможностей, поэтому взвешивает разные возможности и вытекающие из них условия. Что бы он ни предпринял — его это не удовлетворяет, и так как он ставит перед собой неисчерпаемые и полностью не осуществимые цели, —

периодически попадает в кризисное состояние, которое он должен преодолеть, должен выбраться из кризиса с помощью новых соображений и стремлений. Как писала Лидия Гинзбург, «текучесть толстовского персонажа — это не отсутствие характера, а особое отношение между свойствами этого характера, мотивами поступков и самими поступками. . . Персонажи Толстого бывают умными, храбрыми, добрыми, но это не значит, что все побуждения, возникающие в их сознании, соответствуют этим качествам. Характер с его постоянными свойствами — только один из элементов многослойной ситуации, всякий раз определяющей поведение. Исследуемые Толстым процессы — это и есть непрерывная смена взаимосвязанных ситуаций.»[20]

Множество оттенков этой текучести и делает психологический анализ Толстого бесконечно многогранным. И этим отличается внутренний монолог толстовского героя, от стендалевского с их упорядоченными словами, отточенным стилем. У толстовского героя высказывания с заминкой, неоконченные полупредложения, неохиданные экскурсы и отклонения от главной мысли призваны показать достоверность отражения человеческой психики с ее невероятными порой ассоциациями. В этом смысле Толстой предвосхитил изображение «потока мыслей» в европейском романе XX века. Внутренний монолог Анны перед смертью как нельзя лучше подтверждает эти свойства почерка Толстого.

«Да, о чем я последнем так хорошо думала? — старалась вспомнить она. — Тютькин, coiffeur? Нет, не то. Да, про то, что говорит Яшвин: борьба за существование и ненависть — одно, что связывает людей. Нет, вы напрасно едете, — мысленно обратилась она к компании в коляске четверней, которая, очевидно, ехала веселиться за город. — И собака, которую вы везете с собой, не поможет вам. От себя не уйдете». Кинув взгляд в ту сторону, куда оборочивался Петр, она увидала полумертво-пьяного фабричного с качающеюся головой, которого вез куда-то городовой. «Вот этот — скорее, — подумала она. — Мы с графом Вронским также не нашли этого удовольствия, хотя и много ожидали от него». И Анна обратила теперь в первый раз тот яркий свет, при котором она видела все, на свои отношения с ним, о которых прежде она избегала думать. «Чего он искал во мне? Любви не столько, сколько удовлетворения тщеславия». Она вспомнила его слова, выражение лица его, напоминающее покорную лягавую собаку, в первое время их связи. И все теперь подтверждало это. «Да, в нем было торжество тщесловного успеха. Разумеется была и любовь, но большая доля была гордость успеха. Он хвастался мной. Теперь это прошло. Гордиться нечем. Не гордиться, а стыдиться. Он взял от меня все, что мог, и теперь я не нужна ему. Он тяготится мною и старается не быть в отношении меня бесчестным. Он проговорился вчера — он хочет развода и женитьбы, чтобы сжечь свои корабли. Он любит меня — но как? The zest is gone. Этот хочет всех удивить и очень доволен собой, — подумала она, глядя на румяного приказчика, ехавшего на манежной

лошади. — Да, того вкуса уж нет для него во мне. Если я уеду от него, он в глубине души будет рад».[21]

Это было не предположение, — она ясно видела это в том пронзительном свете, который открывал ей теперь смысл жизни и людских отношений.

«Моя любовь все делается страстнее и себялюбивее, а его все гаснет и гаснет, и вот отчего мы расходимся, — продолжала она думать. — И помочь этому нельзя. У меня все в нем одном, и я требую, чтоб он весь больше и больше отдавался мне. А он все больше и больше хочет уйти от меня. Мы именно шли навстречу до связи, а потом неудержимо расходимся в разные стороны. И изменить этого нельзя. Он говорит мне, что я бессмысленно ревнива, и я сама говорила себе, что я бессмысленно ревнива; но это неправда. Я не ревнива, а я недовольна. Но. . . — она открыла рот и переместилась в коляске от волнения, возбужденного в ней пришедшею ей вдруг мыслью. — Если б я могла быть чем-нибудь, кроме любовницы, страстно дюбящей одни его ласки; но я не могу и не хочу быть ничем другим. И я этим желанием возбуждаю в нем отвращение, а он во мне злобу, и это не может быть иначе. Разве я не знаю, что он не стал бы обманывать меня, что он не имеет видов на Сорокину, что он не влюблен в Кити, что он не изменит мне? Я все это знаю, но мне от этого не легче. Если он, не любя меня, из *долга* будет добр, нежен ко мне, а того не будет, чего я хочу, — да это хуже в тысячу раз даже, чем злоба! Это — ад! А это-то и есть. Он уж давно не любит меня. А где кончается любовь, там начинается ненависть. Этих улиц я совсем не знаю. Горы какие-то, и все дома, дома. . . И в домах все люди, люди. . . Сколько их, конца нет, и все ненавидят друг друга. Ну, пусть я придумаю себе то, чего я хочу, чтобы быть счастливой. Ну? Я получаю развод, Алексей Александрович отдает мне Сережу, и я выхожу замуж за Вронского». Вспомнив об Алексее Александровиче, она тотчас с небыкновенною живостью представила себе его, как живого, пред собой, с его кроткими, безжизненными, потухшими глазами, синими жилами на белых руках, интонациями и треском пальцев, и, вспомнив то чувство, которое было между ними и которое тоже называлось любовью, вздрогнула от отвращения. «Ну, я получу развод и буду женой Вронского. Что же, Кити перестанет так смотреть на меня, как она смотрела нынче? Нет. А Сережа перестанет спрашивать или думать о моих двух мужьях? А между мною и Вронским какое же я придумаю новое чувство? Возможно ли какое-нибудь не счастье уже, а только не мученье? Нет и нет! — ответила она себе теперь без малейшего колебания. — Невозможно! Мы жизнью расходимся, и я делаю его нечастье, он мое, и переделать ни его, ни меня нельзя. Все попытки были сделаны, винт свинтился. Да, нищая с ребенком. Она думает, что жалко ее. Разве все мы не брошены на свет затем только, чтобы ненавидеть друг друга и потому мучать себя и других? Гимназисты идут, смеются. Сережа? — вспомнила она. — Я тоже думала, что дюбила его, и умилялась над своею нежностью. А жила же я без него, променяла же его на другую

любовь и не жаловалась на этот промен, пока удовлетворялась той любовью». И она с отвращением вспомнила про то, что называла той любовью. И ясность, с которою она видела теперь свою и всех людей жизнь, радовала ее.»[22]

В этой длинной цитате с предельной отчетливостью видны трезвость и логичность суждений Анны, ее строгость в оценке собственных поступков и полное осознание своего безвыходного положения. Трезвость и логичность ее мыслей даже напоминают внутренние монологи Жюльена Сореля, но на первый взгляд лишние экскурсы, даже мешающие прямому ходу размышления, подчеркивают, дополняют, углубляют ее по-новому увиденную и осознанную жизнь. «Румяный приказчик» как будто напоминает о самодовольном Вронском, дома и люди — о всеобщей нелюбви, даже ненависти, царящих в мире, студенты — о любимом сыне — Сереже, нищая — о самой себе. И в конце концов, она новым взглядом рассматривает свое положение, безвыходность его. Это ассоциативное мышление уже далеко ушло от стендалевского прямого изложения и обобщения переживаний. Вопрос личный здесь — одновременно и человеческий, то есть самый важный, но вместе с тем Анна, желая любви ради только любви, становится эгоистичной, и поэтому ее кризис не несет в себе преодоление его, как у Левина. Она тоже осмысливает свое действие, подвергает себя самоанализу, но направленность на самовоспитание, когда она выясняет смысл и значение своего действия, у нее отсутствует, и ей остается только одно: покончить жизнью. В ищущих героях Толстого постижение целей и ценностей жизни никогда не было отвлеченным занятием духовной деятельности. Оно было практическим отражением поисков самого Толстого в художественном творчестве. Вель он сам каждодневно работал над осознанием своего собственного опыта. И для него создание романов и повестей, писание дневников было проявлением этой неустанной переработки самого себя и всей жизни.

Касаясь одного аспекта сходства и различия творческого метода двух писателей, мы попытались очертить, как воздействие может пробудить симпатию другого оригинального таланта, его заинтересованность. И как одновременно с этим возникает чувство необходимости дополнить писательский прием, утверждения личности у Стендаля и слияние с народным "взглядом на вещи" у Толстого. Стремление к исчеопывающей правде психологического анализа сближает Стендаля и Л. Толстого. Нравственный суд над своими героями, обязательность этой этической оценки — вот путь по которому Толстой прошел дальше Стендаля.

## NOTES

[1] Письмо М. Горького А. К. Виноградову. 8 мая 1928, Сорренто. Горький М.: *Собрание сочинений в тридцати томах.* Том 30, стр. 92. Москва,1956.

[2] Самую новую и полную трактовку этого вопроса на основе опыта всей мировой литературы осветила Т. Л. Мотылева в своей новейшей книге «*Война и мир» за рубежом. Переводы. Критика. Влияние.* Москва, 1978.

[3] Кочеткова Т. В.:*Стендаль и русские писатели.* Проблемы лингвистики и зарубежной литературы, Рига, 1968. Реизов Б. Г.: *Стендаль (1783—1842).* Стендаль: Собрание сочинений в пятнадцати томах. Москва, 1959. т. I, стр. 3, 17. *Стендаль.* Библиография русских переводов и критической литературы на русском языке. Составитель Т. В. Кочеткова. Москва, 1961. стр. 6, 19.

[4] Письмо к С. А. Толстой от 13 ноября 1883. *Лев Толстой об исскустве и литературе.* I—II. Москва, 1958. Т. II, стр. 201.

[5] Стендаль *Красное и черное.* Перевод С. Боброва и М. Богословской. Собрание сочинений в пятнадцати томах. Москва, 1959. Т. I, стр. 95.

[6] Там же, стр. 132—133.

[7] Там же, стр. 133.

[8] Там же, стр. 592. В русском переводе меньше курсива, чем во французском оригинале, например, в настоящем абзаце слово «предумышленно» теряется в потоке речи Жюльена Сореля.

[9] Там же, стр. 610.

[10] Например, с такой точки зрения очень интересно исследовать *Севастополь в мае* Л. Толстого. Здесь хочется только отметить выделение слова *долг*, которое для Толстого имеет принципиальное значение.

[11] 12 октября 1903 года в письме к Октаву Мирбо вспоминает: «Я думаю,что каждый народ употребляет различные приемы для выражения в искусстве общего идеала и что благодаря именно этому мы испытываем особое наслаждение, вновь находя наш идеал выраженным новым неожиданным образом. Французское искусство произвело на меня в свое время это самое впечатление открытия, когда я впервые прочел Альфреда де Виньи, Стендаля, Виктора Гюго и особенно Руссо. Думаю, что этому же чувству следует приписать чрезмерное значение, которое вы придаете писаниям Достоевского и, в особенности, моим.» (Лев Толстой об искусстве. Москва, 1958. Т. II. стр. 256.) А еще до этого в письме к жене С. А. Толстой 11 апреля 1887 года он сообщает: «Читаю для отдыха прекрасный роман Stendhal «Chartreuse de Parme», и хочется поскорее переменить работу. Хочется художественной.» (Там же, стр. 205.) Интересно сопоставить строки из писем Л. Толстого со словами Роже Мартен дю Гара из письма 1923 года к Андре Жиду: «Неверное, я так дурно пишу по вине плохих переводчиков Толстого. Возьму «Пармский монастырь» и буду учить стрывки наизусть.» (André Gide, Roger Martin du Gard: *Correspondance.* 1913—1934. Paris, 1968. 207.)

[12] Л. Толстой. Дневник 1898 года. Интересно сравнить эти мысли со словами — очень известными — из концовки *Севастополя в мае:* «. . . не могут быть ни злодеями, ни героями повести.» «Герой же моей повести, которого я люблю всеми силами души, которого старался воспроизвести во всей красоте его и который всегда был, есть и будет прекрасен, — правда.» (Л. Н. Толстой: Собрание сочинений в четырнадцати томах. Москва, 1951. т. II, стр. 167.)

[13] О сопоставлении психологического метода Л. Толстого и Стендаля самые интересные наблюдения А. П. Скафтымова: *Идеи и формы в творчестве Л. Толстого, О психологизме в творчестве Стендаля и Л. Толстого* (Статьи о русской литературе, Саратов, 1958) и исследование Лидии Гинзбург: *О психологической прозе* (Ленинград, 1971). *Т. Л. Мотылева* в книге *О мировом значении Л. Н. Толстого* также пишет об этой теме. Москва, 1957. 141—143. Этой же темы касается моя статья, Rév M., Stendhal et Léon Tolstoï (Europe, Paris, 1972, № 519—520—521).

[14] Толстой Л. Н., *Полное (юбилейное) собрание сочинений.* Том 65, стр. 197.

[15] Толстой Л. Н., *Война и мир. Собрание сочинений в четырнадцати томах.* Москва, 1951. Т. IV, стр. 346

[16] Там же, т. V, стр. 120.

[17] Скафтымов А. П., *Идеи и формы в творчестве Л. Толстого.* Статьи о русской литературе. Саратов, 1958. стр. 269.

[18] Горький М., *Собрание сочинений в тридцати томах.* Москва, 1951. Т. 14, стр. 307.

[19] Бочаров С., *Роман Л. Толстого «Война и мир».* Москва, 1968. Бочаров С., *Мир в «Войне и мире».* Вопросы литературы. 1970, № 8.

[20] Гинзбург Л., *О психологической прозе.* Ленинград, 1971. стр. 321.

[21] В связи с этой оценкой, данной Анной — Вронскому, не лишне вспомнить характеристику Лидии Гинзбург. Там же, стр. 339.

[22] Толстой Л. Н., *Анна Каренина. Собрание сочинений в четырнадцати томах.* Москва, 1952. Т. IX. стр. 347—349.

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# К вопросу о толстовских традициях в русской прозе начала XX. века

ЛЕНА СИЛАРД

(Будапешт)

«Учителем своим признаю Толстого. Толстой прошел надо мной и остался во мне. Выше Толстого я никого не знаю, каждое его произведение считаю образцом искусства и мерилом художественности». Эти слова Л. Андреева, высказанные в канун 80-летия Л. Толстого[1], могли бы повторить многие писатели его поколения, и, может быть, с большим правом. Воздействие Л. Толстого на русскую литературу начала XX в. было настолько решающим,что некоторых явлений ее вне толстовской традиции просто невозможно с достаточной глубиной осмыслить. И несмотря на это литературоведение, изучающее художественные процессы первых десятилетий XX в., все еще не выходит за пределы обнаружения отдельных связей с толстовским наследием творчества отдельных художников этого времени, хотя настало уже, кажется, время для обобщений и сопоставления разных, иногда противоположных по направлению трансформаций толстовской традиции. Ведь воздействие Л. Толстого сказывалось не только в тех случаях, когда ему преданно следовали, как, например, И. Куприн, но и когда от него отталкивались, как, например, Л. Андреев, и проследить последнее, может быть, еще интереснее.

Среди многих толстовских тем особенный и своеобразный отклик в литературе начала XX в. нашло изображение человека в «пограничной ситуации», лицом к лицу со смертью, концептуально оформленное в *Трех смертях* и *Смерти Ивана Ильича*. Повышенный интерес к этой теме в русской литературе первых лет нашего века можно объяснить и непосредственно общественными причинами (не случайно особенно активизируется она после поражения революции 1905 г.), но, кажется, еще действеннее ускоренные этой новой социальной ситуацией философско-мировоззренческие переакцентировки во взгляде на закономерности бытия. Ведь пока в общественном сознании господствовала идея прогресса, которая воспринимает мир как движение к лучшему будущему (материалистически или идеалистически — с точки зрения данной темы безразлично), трагизм смерти снимался мыслью о том, что жизнь, добросовестно выполнившая свое назначение в телеологической цепи, сохраняется, несмотря на смерть индивидуума, поскольку сохраняется цепь. Оставалось лишь проверять, насколько индивидуальная

жизнь-звено соответствовала своему назначению в цепи. Но с кризисом идеи прогресса к концу XIX в. остро встала проблема поисков смысла жизни в пределах индивидуального существования; «порвалась цепь времен», и абсурд смерти, подстерегающий каждое индивидуально-вычлененное бытие, потребовал иных противоядий. На фоне многих решений, среди которых особенно действенным было "amor fati" Ницше, толстовское отличалось тем, что вполне отвечало комплексу народолюбия и пантеистским устремлениям писательской интеллигенции начала века. Не принимая непременности прогресса, Л. Толстой должен был закономерно отказаться и от временно́й цепи, но он нашел другие связующие силы — исходя из своего общего представления о бессознательно-роевой жизни как основе истинного существования. В его изображении смерть становится пограничной ситуацией, в которой жизнь освобождается от наносных, суетных целей, и в этот свободный от всего неистинного момент происходит переоценка прошедшей жизни (*Смерть Ивана Ильича*). Это различение «подлинного» и «неподлинного» существования,[2] обнаруживающееся перед лицом смерти, можно было бы считать признаком близости Л. Толстого с Шелером и Хайдеггером в оценке «пограничной ситуации»,[3] если бы не главный толстовский критерий этого разграничения, а именно: степень слиянности индивидуума с бессознательным роевым бытием (ср. смерть барыни, мужика и дерева в *Трех смертях*).[4] Таким образом, Л. Толстой заставляет решение вопроса о «смысле смерти» ставить в зависимость от соотношения индивидуально-личностного и универсально-космического начал, наиболее истинным оформлением которого является для него бессознательная роевая жизнь народа; проблема «смысла смерти» оборачивается вопросом об отношении индивидуума к жизни природы, космоса и к естественной жизни народа.

Хотя в литературе классического реализма XIX в. природа уже выступала как носительница вечных ценностей, при встрече с которыми проверялся герой (ср: *Отцы и дети* И. Тургенева), — только XX в. внес акцент мучительного переживания отделенности от природы как неестественного, конфликтного состояния (ср: *Проклятие зверя* Л. Андреева). Хотя уже у Ф. Тютчева настойчиво возвращается мысль, что по сравнению с вечностью бытия природы жизнь человека всего лишь мгновение, — пожалуй, только XX в. внес в эти идеи момент катастрофизма. XX в. с болезненной остротой утверждает, что человек должен отказаться от своего мнимого превосходства и через возвращение к природе обрести утерянную гармонию: наиболее определенно оформляется это ощущение в *Олесе* и *Листригонах* И. Куприна. Генетическое родство купринской идеи естественного человека с руссоизмом автора *Казаков* очевидно. Куприн указывал на него и сам, например, такими фактами, как посвящением рассказа *Изумруд*, где мир дается через призму «естественного» восприятия лошади, «памяти Холстомера» — героя одноименного рассказа Л. Толстого, построенного по сходному принципу.

Вслед за Л. Толстым, открывшим *Воскресение* мощной картиной противостояния природных начал социальным, Куприн тоже нередко стремится организовать сюжетно-композиционное строение своих произведений на противопоставлении естественных закономерностей природной жизни, носителем которых оказывается пейзаж, — социальной скверне (*Поединок*). Нечто подобное можно наблюдать и у Л. Андреева, хотя и в более усложненной, опосредованной форме. Андреев не верит в возможность возвратного движения к «природному раю», поскольку не верит в возможность и нужность того, чтобы человек, раз осознавший свою обособленность, свою индивидуальность, — отказался от этого осознания, противопоставляющего его природе. Поэтому у Андреева проблема природы и человека состоит в необходимости возвратиться не к бессознательному, «роевому» слиянию с природой, а к *своему* естественному, природному *я*. Противостояние же индивидуума и космоса как противостояние свободы воли и детерминации может быть снято лишь смертью. В этом пункте, — пожалуй, только в нем — Андреев сходится с И. Буниным, который занимает как бы промежуточную позицию между двумя своими собратьями по «Знанию». Подобно Куприну Бунин находит, что человек должен стремиться к воссоединению с природой: это необходимое условие гармонии. Но в отличие от Куприна и подобно Андрееву Бунин видит, что «воссоединение» с природой для человека, отпавшего от нее, невозможно: возможно приспособление к ней, но это не является гармоническим разрешением конфликта. И наконец, если у Андреева (как и в стихотворении Тютчева *Два голоса*) в антиномии человека и космоса противостояние свободы воли необходимости героически утверждается, — Бунин понимает это как волюнтаризм, как выражение ограниченной самонадеянности: по сравнению с Вечностью, с Возвышенным человек — всего лишь песчинка, ему остается только осознать тщету субъективных устремлений и добровольно включить себя в круг непреложного, куда он и так, независимо от его субъективного устремления включен; человек должен согласиться с тем, что все равно от него не зависит. Вытекающий из этого подхода фатализм сближал Бунина с Л. Толстым, в то время как волюнтаризм Андреева противопоставлял его автору *Трех смертей*, хотя отправным моментом для его размышлений была именно позиция Л. Толстого. Бунин и Андреев — это два противоположных пути трансформации толстовской идеи о мире и человеке в нем, и проследить эту разнонаправленность легче всего именно на изображении «пограничной ситуации».

На близость Бунина к Л. Толстому в его размышлениях «о тайнах жизни и смерти» обращали внимание многие критики, уже в первые десятилетия нашего века, ссылаясь на рассказы 10-х г. г. (*Весенний вечер*, *Братья*, *Господин из Сан-Франциско* и др.).[5] Исходя из наблюдений Ф. Батюшкова, А. Дермана, современный советский исследователь прозы Бунина О. Михайлов тоже приходит к выводу, что в бунинском творчестве «чем дальше, тем глубже и

значительнее было воздействие. . . Толстого, толстовских эстетических и нравственно-религиозных принципов.»[6] На самом деле, все было, думается, не так определенно, и процесс, в каком-то смысле, можно считать обратным. Наиболее близки концепции Л. Толстого ранние рассказы Бунина. *На хуторе* (1892), *Сосны* (1901), *Веселый двор* (1911) можно считать вариациями на заданную Л. Толстым тему. Но и в этих рассказах, написанных под знаком наибольшего увлечения толстовством, есть характерные отличия: у Бунина в крестьянском приятии смерти нет толстовской благостности — только терпеливая покорность. Сама дифференциация разных отношений к смерти и разных от этого кончин не так четко ориентирована на мировосприятие патриархального, общинного крестьянина как на норму (что принципально важно у Л. Толстого), хотя и у Бунина эта «точка отсчета» играет важную роль. В раннем рассказе *На хуторе* это выражено вполне декларативно через фигуру одинокого хуторянина Капитона Иваныча, который «живо чувствовал. . . свое кровное родство с. . . природой» и потому мысль о смерти должен был принимать умиротворенно: «Ну, так что же! Тихо прожил, тихо и умру, как в свое время высохнет и свалится лист вот с этого кустика.»[7] В рассказе *Веселый двор* смерть матери, старухи-крестьянки Анисьи, этого «первобытного», — по словам автора, — «человека» (3, 292), пртивопоставляется смерти-самоубийству ее сына, в судьбе которого находит отражение распад патриархальных форм деревенской жизни и ослабление внутренних связей с природным миром.

Однако серьезно принять толстовскую идеализацию патриархального крестьянства Бунин в конце концов не смог, поэтому и отмеченные, *чисто толстовские мотивы* шли у него на убыль, уступая место шопенгауэровско-буддистским. Это было движением к «первоисточникам»: в решении вопроса о смерти Л. Толстой, как известно, опирается на шопенгауэровско-буддистские представления, перерабатывая их соответственно своей ориентации на патриархальное крестянство и органически включая в систему своего учения.[8] Но это было и отступлением от собственно толстовского, от тех социальных акцентов, которые привнесены были Л. Толстым. Нелегко сказать, какую роль в этом процессе могло сыграть чтение Шопенгауэра: с основным трудом немецкого мыслителя Бунин познакомился, видимо, еще в 90-е г. г., общаясь с членами толстовских колоний, увлекавшихся Шопенгауэром в поэтичном переводе А. Фета. Какое-то значение могло иметь и чтение Мейстера Экхарта:[9] некоторые его категории, как мы увидим дальше, в тексте Бунина легко вплетаются в реминисценции из Шопенгауэра и буддистских книг.[10] Но все эти имена, кажется, — только опорные вехи собственного внутреннего развития Бунина, видимым переломным событием которого было путешествие 1910—11 г.г. на Ближний Восток и Цейлон: оно дало внешний материал и сюжетные основания для введения тех восточных религиозных идей, к которым писатель тянулся уже раньше. Интересно в этом отношении *Копье*

*господне* (1913), где ночь, пески, ветер и море, как и пейзажи многих других произведений Бунина этого десятилетия, создают ощущение всепоглощающей жизни мирового океана, в котором человеческие существа подобны слабому мерцанию пароходных огней. Чисто просветительскую аллегорию, с которой мы встречаемся в *Огоньках* В. Короленко, Бунин переключает в свой, «шопенгауэровский» план: «Вот опять среди темной равнины к востоку — медленно идущие огоньки встречного парохода. Мелькает и гаснет, мелькает, мелькает и гаснет огонек на нем: беззвучно, этими слабыми и бедными знаками, которыми дает весть крохотная человеческая жизнь другой такой же, окруженной морями, пустынями, безвестностью, смертью, ведем мы нашу морскую беседу, — с тревогой и надеждой спрашиваем о той родной точке земного шара, которая нам, скитающимся по всему свету, единственно дорога и нужна» (4, 123—4).

Еще более отчетливо возврат от Л. Толстого к буддийскому пониманию соотношения жизни — смерти проявляется в рассказе *Братья* (1914). Выбор эпиграфа, места действия и умело введенные в повествование контаминации из буддийских текстов подчеркивают этот возврат. Название рассказа, указывающее на родство нищего рикши и богатого англичанина перед грозными силами жизни и смерти, содержит элемент поправки к концепции *Трех смертей*, где для Л. Толстого важна градация, т. е. именно несходство. Любопытно, что слова «братья», оправдываемого эпиграфом, в том фрагменте «Сутта—Нипаты», на который ссылается Бунин, — нет. Нет его и в тексте бунинского рассказа.[11] Но идея родства богатого европейца и нищего азиата акцентируется концовкой произведения. Сначала мы слышим рассуждение англичанина о том, что значит жизнь личности в этом «мире бывания»: «Мы. . . возносим нашу Личность превыше небес, мы хотим сосредоточить в ней весь мир, что бы там ни говорили о грядущем всемирном братстве и равенстве, — и вот только в океане, под новыми и чуждыми нам звездами, среди величия тропических гроз, или в Индии, на Цейлоне, где в черные знойные ночи, в горячечном мраке чувствуешь, как тает, растворяется человек в этой черноте, в звуках, запахах, в этом страшном Всеедином, — только там понимаем в слабой мере, что значит эта наша Личность». (4, 278) Филиппика европейца против principio individuationis, перед лицом мирового океана осознавшего, что значит это единичное в бесконечности космического, звучит как парафраза известного изречения: «Каждый в безграничном мире совершенно исчезающий и до ничтожества умаленный индивидуум тем не менее соделывает себя средоточием мира, свое собственное существование и благополучие предпочитает всему другому».[12]

Истинность открытия англичанина поддерживается универсальной мудростью буддийской легенды о смерти ворона, движимого и погубленного «желанием», и эта легенда бросает налет притчеобразной общезначимости и на предшествующее размышление европейца с мертвым голосом, как бы не видя-

щими глазами, и на рассказ о смерти сначала старого, потом молодого рикши, «движимых земной любовью» (4, 257), «желание которой есть желание сыновей, равно как желание сыновей есть желание имущества, а желание имущества — желание благополучия» (4, 260). Это и есть те самые «тысячи нитей хотения, которые связывают нас с миром и в виде алчности, страха, зависти и гнева влекут нас, постоянно заставляя страдать».[13] «Стократно страдает имеющий стократно милое, все скорби, все жалобы — от любви, от привязанностей сердца — убей же их» (270). «Что мы вообще *хотим* — в этом наше несчастье; а *чего именно* мы хотим — это совершенно безразлично.»[14]

Я намеренно перемешала в предыдущем абзаце фрагменты из «Братьев» с сентенциями Шопенгауэра, чтобы показать, насколько «буддийская стилизация» Бунина пропитана духом европейского приверженца нирваны. Элемент стилизации позволяет Бунину сохранять мудрую дистанцию по отношению к событиям и комментирующим их сентенциям Возвышенного. Расстояние сохраняется даже в тот момент, когда притча о вороне проливает на все свет обобщенности, поскольку рассказывает ее англичанин. И лишь финал произведения выносит на поверхность авторский голос: образ темного океана с одиноким пароходом в нем, поединок «печальных звуков второй склянки» и «электрического рожка» с шумящей тьмой «водяных гор» оформляется как авторски обобщенная картина мира, представляющего собой извечное и тщетное противостояние единичного всеединому — всерождающему и всепоглощающему. Последние штрихи этой картины, когда рожок уже погашен, отчего «шум волн сразу стал как будто слышнее, и сразу раскрылись в окнах звездное небо, мачты, реи», а пароход — это крохотное воплощение жизни — «скрипел и лез с одной водяной горы на другую», «и в снастях широко носились, летая то в бездну кверху, то в бездну книзу, Канопус, Ворон, Южный Крест, по которым еще мелькали розовые сполохи» (279), — перекликаются по настроению с авторской ремаркой Л. Андреева к финальной сцене *Жизни Человека*. Слово «бездна», которое в концовке *Братьев* повторяется почти рефреном, но вводится в рассказ исподволь как атрибут океана (почти тютчевского «океана, объемлющего шар земной»), тоже роднит Бунина с Андреевым, который, можно сказать, даже злоупотреблял этой излюбленной и символистами категорией Мейстера Экхарта. Пожалуй, ни в одном другом произведении Бунина настолько не подчеркивалось — строением рассказа, подбором жизненных судеб, лейтмотивами пейзажа — понимание жизни как вычленения индивидуума из природного единства, непременно сопровождающегося страданием, и смерти как «пути освобождения», как возврата из «мира бывания» в лоно всеединого: «все живое страдает одними страданиями и в великом безличии и равенстве сливается воедино перед грозными силами жизни», — эти слова Л. Андреева,[15] используемые обычно как свидетельство его увлечения Шопенгауэром, могут быть соотносены, — как это ни странно, — не столько с творчеством автора *Рассказа о семи повешенных*, сколько с настроением

бунинских произведений 10-х г.г. И даже когда с 20-х г.г. Бунин все настойчивее выставляет свой «возврат» к главному учителю — Л. Толстому (ср. подчеркнуто толстовские сюжетные мотивы в *Митиной любви*, в *Жизни Арсеньева*), — этот процесс означает вместе с тем несколько педалированное сближение толстовства с буддизмом, Толстого — с Буддой. Особенно явственно это (и Бунин здесь осознанно явствен) в *Освобождении Толстого* (1937), «теоретические» разделы которого построены на перекличке искусно сопоставляемых поучений Будды и размышлений Л. Толстого. Известно, что Алданов в своей книге *Загадка Толстого* недоумевал, зачем собрал Толстой такой огромный художественный материал на тему смерти: «Если мыслимо создать философию смерти, ее должен был создать Толстой. Но он не воспользовался для этических обобщений богатствами своей сокровищницы».[16] Возражая автору, *Загадки Толстого*, Бунин живо воссоздает детали и сцены из *Записок сумасшедшего*, *Детства*, *Трех смертей*, *Холстомера* (который, по словам Бунина, можно было бы озаглавить и так: «Две жизни и две смерти»), картины смертей в *Войне и мире*, с особым вниманием к пути «освобождения» князя Андрея и знаменитому «небу над Аустерлицким полем» как «первому порогу исхода», — но особенно красноречивой в интерпретации Бунина оказывается не «картина смерти», а «картина жизни»: рассказ о чувствах «худого загорелого юнкера», жарким кавказским полднем оказавшегося среди «дикой, до безобразия богатой растительности» над Тереком, среди «бездны зверей и птиц», наполняющих эту растительность. «Ему вдруг с особенной ясностью пришло в голову, что вот я, Дмитрий Оленин, такое особенное ото всех существо, лежу теперь один, бог знает где, в том месте, где жил олень, старый олень, красивый, никогда, может быть, не видавший человека. . . Около меня, пролетая между листьями, которые кажутся им огромными островами, стоят в воздухе и жужжат комары: один, два, три, четыре, сто, тысяча, миллион комаров, и каждый из них такой же особенный от всех Дмитрий Оленин, как и я сам . . . И ему стало ясно, что он нисколько не русский дворянин, член московского общества, друг и родня того-то и того-то, а просто такой же комар или такой олень, которые живут теперь вокруг него. „Так же, как они, как дядя Ерошка, поживу и умру. И правду он говорит: только трава вырастет. . . Все равно, что бы я ни был: такой же зверь, как и все, на котором трава вырастет и больше ничего, или я рамка, в которой вставилась часть единого божества, *все-таки надо жить наилучшим образом*" »(9, 29—30, подчеркнуто мной — Л. С.). Мимо смысла последних, подчеркнутых мною слов Бунин проходит, хотя именно они, может быть, намекают на суть отличия толстовского понимания антиномии «особенного» и «всеобщего», индивидуального и космического от того, что предлагалось буддизмом, разве что кроме учения хинаяны, включающего элементы, возможно, вошедшие в толстовскую идею нравственного самоусовершенствования. Но ведь именно на нее Бунин нигде никак не откликается. Зато живейший отзвук в мире Бунина находит

тот акт, который Шопенгауэр, восприняв его, видимо, из *Упанишад*, назвал «самоотменением воли» и который Бунин считал «основной толстовской чертой», — «это стремление к потере 'особенности' и тайная радость потери ее». «. . . взять Наполеона, Пьера, князя Андрея и разоблачить мнимую высоту их положений и самооценок, лишить их 'особенности', показать на них, что сущность жизни вне временных и пространственных форм, смешать их с комарами и оленями», «взять человека на его высшей мирской ступени (или возвести его на такую ступень) и, поставив его перед лицом смерти или какого-либо великого несчастья, показать ему ничтожество всего земного, разоблачить его собственную мнимую высоту, его гордыню, самоуверенность... Почему так преклонялся он перед 'народом'? Потому, что видел его простоту, смирение; потому что миллионы его, этого простого, вечно работающего народа, жили и живут смиренной, нерассуждающей верой в Хозяина, пославшего их в мир с целью, недоступной нашему пониманию» (9, 31). Эта интерпретация — и проницательная, и односторонняя, и вполне бы «буддийская» — не означала, однако, полного согласия. Еще Шопенгауэр писал, что прекрасно осознает парадоксальность, какую должно иметь «самоотменение воли» «в глазах западных образованных людей»,[17] ведь в конце концов и оно — акт свободы воли. Именно над этим парадоксом, который Шопенгауэр «преодолевает» с помощью понятия «практической мистики», бьется мысль Бунина, не верящего, что возможно обретение «потерянного рая» первобытной невинности, что раз вычленившееся сознание, оформленное самосознание способно добровольно раствориться в бесконечном. Самосознание — истина роковая. «С ней нельзя быть оленем или дядей Ерошкой . . . И олень, и дядя Ерошка тоже «рамки», но думают ли они об этом! . . . И поэтому сугубо роковой путь жизни был уготован тому, кто был рожден и оленем и дядей Ерошкой, а вместе с тем — Дмитрием Олениным, который никак не мог умереть так, чтобы только трава выросла. . . И нельзя было ему умереть, как оленю» (9, 32—33). Бунин не верит утопии, рисуемой Л. Толстым-художником в бесконечной веренице образов и ситуаций, но он верит поступку и главному, с его точки зрения, событию в жизни Л. Толстого — его уходу и смерти. Уход и смерть Л. Толстого предстает в книге о его «освобождении» как последний акт творческого сознания — творчество жизни — и вырисовывается событием, проливающим новый свет, свет жизненной истины, на искания героев. Описание этого события в ассоциациях с джатакой и евангельскими притчами придает ему универсальное значение. Л. Толстой был «богом» Бунина, единственным непререкаемым авторитетом, но воспринимался этот «бог» не столько по своим собственным законам, сколько через призму буддизма, уясненного, в свою очередь, в объеме основных формул Шопенгауэра, близких экхартовой метафизике «бездны», порождающей и поглощающей все сущее, т. е. тех формул, которые не вступали в прямой конфликт с христианским сознанием.

О влиянии Шопенгауэра на Л. Андреева, — может быть, с легкой руки

самого писателя — упоминалось не раз.[18] О связи же его с Л. Толстым долгое время не задумывались, т. к. таланты их считались слишком разными по типу; Андреев ходил сначала в учениках М. Горького, потом — Достоевского, что заведомо как бы исключало возможность тяготения к Л. Толстому. Фактически только с 60-х г.г., после появления статьи В. Беззубова *Лев Толстой и Леонид Андреев*,[19] которая ввела в литературоведческий оборот множество неизвестных или полузабытых материалов, проливающих свет на истинное отношение автора *Рассказа о семи повешенных* к своему великому предшественнику, стало возможным более углубленное рассмотрение этой темы.[20] Сейчас уже не вызывает сомнений, что интерес Андреева к анализу состояния человека в пограничной ситуации, как и попытка наметить градацию этих состояний в зависимости от характера прожитой жизни тоже восходит к Л. Толстому, хотя критерии, которыми обуславливается эта градация, скорее противоположны, чем сходны. В раннем рассказе *Жили-были* (1901), написанном под большим влиянием повествовательной манеры позднего Толстого, это еще не очень заметно. Рассказ представляет собой попытку освоить всего лишь толстовскую интонацию «остранения» и обнажения существа таких основных событий человеческой жизни, как болезнь, смерть, из-под слоя наносных и привычных представлений о важности таких неважных вещей, как чины, богатство и т. п. Сведя в больничную палату — зону пограничной ситуации — купца, дьякона и студента, — людей, разных по возрасту, социальному кругу, психическому складу и представлениям о мире, писатель множеством деталей подчеркивает, что в этом царстве иных пространственно-временных измерений старые понятия приобретают иной смысл, прежние различия стираются, остается лишь общность и равенство перед грозными силами смерти. Здесь Андреев — несмотря на несомненное отличие его художественного мира от бунинского — встречается с автором *Братьев:* название этого рассказа Бунина вполне могло бы быть названием *Жили-были*, подобно тому как перефразированные выше слова Андреева «о безличии и равенстве. . . перед грозными силами жизни» вполне могли бы вписаться в мир повести Бунина о том, что жили-были рикша и англичанин. . . Что же касается Л. Толстого: хотя именно он приковал внимание своих младших современников к пограничной ситуации как тому временному полю, где подлинное существование высвобождается из-под груза суетных пут повседневности и тем самым противопоставляется предшествующему времени экзистенции, — у него это разграничение не превращает зоны пограничной ситуации в однородное поле. Напротив, для Л. Толстого именно в ней — поскольку здесь впервые выявляется подлинное существование — выявляется, — может быть, тоже впервые, — истинное распределение ценностей. Конфронтация ценностей в пограничной ситуации осуществляется то в зоне сознания героя (ср: князь Андрей под Аустерлицким небом), то в рамках авторской компетенции (ср. конфронтирующую структуру *Трех смертей*, *Хозяина и работника*),

то как бы поверх нее, словно некий надличный закон, о котором повествователю остается лишь сообщить. Последний прием искусно реализован в *Холстомере* (1863), где видимый параллелизм судеб коня и его хозяина, усложненный контрапунктирующим мотивом несходства этих судеб, завершается решительным противопоставлением того, что в завязке обещало быть подобием, причем видимость высшей, «надписательской» объективности такой развязки Л. Толстой создает благодаря вынесению ценностной конфронтации в постэкзистенциальное сюжетное время, где субъектного сознания с его тем или иным отношением к бытию уже нет: пространство повествования заполняет мир, деловито определяющий место состоявшейся или не состоявшейся экзистенции. Шопенгауэровская тема родства перед лицом смерти перерастает в любимый толстовский парадокс смерти — жизни, который в интерпретации старшей дочери писателя приобрел упрощенную, но характерную формулировку: «Смерти нет.»[21] С этой формулой мы встретимся и в *Рассказе о семи повешенных* Л. Андреева при его новой попытке диалога с Л. Толстым. Но это будет 7 лет спустя. А пока, в *Жили-были*, Л. Андреев — хотя и он, подобно Бунину, спровоцирован автором *Трех смертей* — принципиальной толстовской поправки к Шопенгауэру[22] принять не может (в этом он тоже смыкается с Буниным). И когда он предпосылает концовке *Жили-были* сцену, в которой верующий дьякон и неверующий купец уравниваются в предсмертной тоске, — в этом можно видеть робкую полемику с Л. Толстым, у которого оппозиция веры/неверия в пограничной ситуации играет решающую роль, поскольку выступает атрибутом невычленного из потока жизни, роевого, или — соответственно — эготического сознания. Примечательно, что в произведении, которое нравилось Л. Толстому, может быть, больше всего, — именно эта сцена показалась ему «неестественной и ненужной».[23]

Очередной попыткой Л. Андреева примериться к толстовскому освещению проблемы явился рассказ *Губернатор* (1905). Мощное влияние автора *Смерти Ивана Ильича* вместе со стремлением внести свои акценты, подсказанные, впрочем, эпохой, здесь еще ощутимее: сановник, превращенный особым временем пограничной ситуации[24] в «просто человека», описан в толстовских интонациях, хотя и не без характерных для Андреева экспрессионистских нагнетений, но построение самой ситуации вводит мотивы, чуждые Л. Толстому и настойчивые у Л. Андреева. То, что губернатора ждет скорая смерть не от болезни, а от руки террориста-мстителя, не только отвечает драматизму эпохи, но и выдвигает вопрос о правомерности человеческого отмщения, полемичный по отношению к эпиграфу *Анны Карениной*. Андреев далек от однозначно-решительного ответа (к чему были склонны его современники, полемизировавшие между собой во имя категоричного «да» или «нет»); сложность проблемы он подчеркивает множественностью точек зрения, представленных в рассказе в форме внутреннего монолога, диалогов и писем, замедленностью вызревания решающего события и контрапунктностью кон-

цовки, где утверждение Закона Мстителя и плач гимназистки о погибшем завершают ведение обеих тем в антиномичном единстве.[25]

*Рассказ о семи повешенных* отделен от *Губернатора* всего тремя годами, и тем не менее его отличает несравненно более углубленный, дифференцированный подход к теме. Отмеченные в отдельных произведениях мотивы складываются здесь в единую концепцию, еще более ощутимо включающую связь с Л. Толстым и, одновременно, — отталкивание от него. Характерна с этой точки зрения сама история возникновения рассказа и посвящения. Опубликованный 6 мая 1908 г. в альманахе *Шиповник* рассказ был вызван чувством протеста против смертных казней и всей обстановки кровавого террора эпохи реакции. Через неделю после появления рассказа Л. Андреева Л. Толстой начал работу над статьей *Не могу молчать*, в которой тоже, как известно, выступил против смертной казни. Это созвучие, видимо, прежде всего и побудило Л. Андреева просить у Л. Толстого позволения посвятить ему свое любимое детище.[26] Но посвящение объясняется, конечно, не только сходством взгляда на смертную казнь и общественную ситуацию в тогдашней России, т. е. не только характером конкретной социально-критической направленности произведения: вслед за Л. Толстым и в споре с Л. Толстым Андреев пытается наметить *свою* градацию переживаний пограничной ситуации. Восемь человек сопоставляются в рассказе: семь приговоренных к смертной казни, знающих о ее неизбежности, и министр, которого только коснулась тень смерти, который знает, что завтра он не умрет, а только мог бы умереть. Так проводит Андреев первое разграничение: 7 и 1. Министр переживает появление призрака смерти как барыня в *Трех смертях*, как Иван Ильич до просветления. Глава, посвященная ему, написана в толстовских интонациях скрытого разоблачения фальшиво прожитой, отчужденной от просто человеческого жизни. Министр не имеет имени и называется лишь по функции: министр, сановник, его превосходительство.

Хотя по отношению к министру 7 приговоренных противопоставляются в единстве, обусловленном общностью судьбы — насильственной смерти, Андреев и здесь проводит разграничения: 5 террористов — те, кто, согласно этике народовольцев, заранее *избрали* смерть, и 2 «уголовников», один из которых всей своей разбойной жизнью тоже избрал риск смерти, хотя и подсознательно (Цыганок), другой же (Янсон) попал в эту ситуацию почти случайно, смутно влекомый стихией[27]. 5 террористов, объединенных взятой на себя готовностью умереть, перед лицом решающего испытания оказываются тоже не одинаковы, и автор выносит существо различия в названия глав: для Тани, живущей материнской любовью и самоотречением, как и для жаждущей подвига мученичества Муси — смерти не существует (см. гл. 7: «Смерти нет»), для здорового рационалиста Сергея Головина существует и жизнь, и смерть, и преодоление безвременного пространства между жизнью и смертью требует от него немалых усилий (см. гл. 8: «Есть и смерть, есть и жизнь»).

«. . . не в том было мучение, что видна смерть, а в том, что сразу видны и жизнь, и смерть» (2, 110), — в немудреном сознании Василия Каширина эта проблема Сергея Головина чудовищно осложнилась отменением свободы воли: «Пока он сам, своею волею, шел на опасность и смерть, пока свою смерть, хотя бы и страшную по виду, он держал в собственных руках, ему было легко и весело даже: в чувстве безбрежной свободы, смелого и твердого утверждения своей дерзкой и бесстрашной воли бесследно утопал маленький, сморщенный, словно старушечий страшок. . . И вдруг сразу резкая, дикая, ошеломляющая перемена. Он уже не идет, куда хочет, а его везут, — куда хотят. Он уже не выбирает места, а его сажают в каменную клетку и запирают на ключ, как вещь. Он уже не может выбрать свободно: жизнь или смерть, как все люди, а его непременно и неизбежно умертвят. За мгновение бывший воплощением воли, жизни и силы, он становится жалким образом единственного в мире бессилия, превращается в животное, ожидающее бойни, в глухую и безгласную вещь» (2, 112, гл. «Ужасное одиночество»). Дифференциация 7 типов переживания пограничной ситуации определяется у Андреева совместным воздействием разных социально-характерологических и врожденных психических факторов, но полюса намечаемой градации — в конечном итоге — обусловлены критериями, противоположными толстовским. Если у Толстого наиболее естественно принимает смерть мужик, который жил бессознательно-природной, подобной жизни дерева жизнью, то у Андреева наиболее беспомощным перед лицом казни оказывается Янсон, в существовании которого — со свойственной Андрееву преувеличенностью — акцентируется именно бессознательное и настойчиво обыгрывается урезанность его языковой связи с людьми.[28] Напротив, Вернер, имя которого отсылает к лермонтовскому воплощению мощного личностного волевого начала, т. е. того, что видимо противостоит этике Толстого, — возводится на вершину градации. Почему? Потому, что он имеет что противопоставить смерти: «свой просвещенный ум и закаленную волю» (2, 417). Неимоверно заостряя роль интеллекта, Л. Андреев дает Вернеру возможность мысленно пройти *множество состояний* в пограничной ситуации, и увенчивает этот путь торжеством рефлексии сверхчеловека по методу Шопенгауэра.[29] То, что от Василия Каширина или Сергея Головина требовало огромных волевых и мыслительных усилий,[30] — то для Вернера было элементарной логической операцией, проведенной так же спокойно, как и разыгрываемая им мысленно шахматная партия. И именно ему, в жизни так остро чувствовавшему одиночество сверхчеловека, дано было автором благо познать в пограничной ситуации чувство любви к людям и самопожертвования (естественно присущие Тане и Мусе) и ощутить «падение стен»: «С тем удивительным просветлением духа, которое в редкие минуты осеняет человека и поднимает его на высочайшие вершины созерцания, Вернер вдруг увидел и жизнь и смерть и поразился великолепием невиданного зрелища. Словно шел по узкому, как лезвие ножа, высочайшему горному

хребту и на одну сторону видел жизнь, а на другую видел смерть, как два сверкающих, глубоких, прекрасных моря... И, уничтожая стены, пространство и время стремительностью всепроникающего взора, он широко взглянул куда-то в глубь покидаемой жизни» (2, 118). Парадокс здесь в том, что это описание «падения стен» в сознании Вернера представляет собой как бы парафразу Шопенгауэровского по духу и лексике размышления Л. Толстого о «редких *настоящих* (подчеркнуто Л. Т.) людях», которые, «несмотря на здравое отношение к жизни, всегда стоят на самом краюшке и ясно видят жизнь только от того, что глядят то в нирвану, в беспредельность, неизвестность, то в сансару, и этот взгляд в нирвану укрепляет зрение».[31] Самого Л. Толстого Андреев воспринимал тоже в этом ключе. Если для Бунина конец Л. Толстого — буддистское освобождение, то для Л. Андреева это — *Смерть Гулливера*, как назван его первый отклик на кончину великого писателя, «великое сражение жизни и смерти», в котором гигант «победил и жизнь и смерть».[32] Упрямая ставка на личность роднила Л. Андреева с парадоксальным персоналистом Л. Шестовым, который тоже усматривал в системах Шопенгауэра, Л. Толстого мощное личностное, персоналистское начало и даже смысл знаменитых изречений индуизма tat twam asi, aham braman asmi (брамин есть, ты и я есть брамин) видел «именно в том, чтобы оправдать, возвысить и осмыслить личность».[33]

При всем очевидном несходстве, даже противоположности восприятия мира Л. Толстого Буниным и Андреевым, — в этом процессе просматриваются общие черты: от Л. Толстого, истолкованного каждым по-своему, и Бунин, и Андреев движутся к Шопенгауэру. Внутреннее противоречие концепции Шопенгауэра позволяет обоим писателям выбрать из нее элементы, служащие основанием в принципе противоположных систем: Бунин апеллирует к той мысли немецкого философа, что перед лицом мировой воли индивидуум есть видимость, «греза природы» (говоря словами Тютчева), и тем самым прочитывает Шопенгауэра в аранжировке *Сутты-Нипаты*, Андреев же, передоверяя своему Человеку известный афоризм Эпикура, тоже опирается на Шопенгауэра,[34] но уже того Шопенгауэра, который, утверждая победу *личностного познания* над слепой волей, закладывал основы героического пессимизма Ницше и Камю, а в Л. Толстом поддерживал воплощенную в освобождении князя Андрея мысль о «редких настоящих людях», способных «глядеть то в нирвану, то в сансару».

## ПРИМЕЧАНИЯ

[1] *Петербургская газета*, 1908 г., 27 августа, № 235.

[2] Ср. характерную для этой дифференциации подлинного и неподлинного существования дневниковую запись Л. Толстого о человеке: «Если мы наблюдаем его извне, мы не видим среди движений, зависящих от среды, его главного движения жизни» (Толстой, Л.,

*Полное собрание сочинений*, Юбилейное издание, т. 54, Москва 1935, 146. Дальнейшие ссылки на это издание даются в основном тексте статьи с указанием тома и страницы в скобках).

[3] Ср.: Scheler, M., *Schriften aus dem Nachlass*, Bd. 10. Bern, 1957. 12; Heidegger, M. *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen, 1957.

[4] Автор новейшего экспозе данной темы Монье, А., *Смерть в толстовской этике после «Исповеди»:* VIII Med'unarodni Slavistički Kongres, Knjiga referata, Zagreb, 1978. II, 610. отмечает подобную мысль лишь в позднем творчестве Л. Толстого, связывая это с известным увлечением автора *Исповеди* восточной мыслью начиная с 70-х г. г. Ср.: Бесарович, Г., *Тема смерти в рассказах Л. Н. Толстого* (там же, 1, 74), Хейм, М. *Хозяин и работник, Три смерти* (там же, 1, 321), Ло Гатто, А. М. *"I cannot keep silent" and "The Death of Ivan Il'ych": two ways in which Tolstoy approaches the problems of death* (там же, 11, 558). См. также: Hajnády Zoltán, *A halál ábrázolása Lev Tolsztoj műveiben:* Filológiai közlöny, Budapest, 1977. N 2—3.

[5] Батюшков, Ф., *Русская литература XX века*, ч. 1, т. 11, Москва 1915; Дерман, А. *Победа художника:* «Русская мысль», Москва — Петроград 1916.

[6] Михайлов, О., *Комментарий к 9 тому собрания сочинений И. Бунина*, Москва, 1967, 555. См. также: Михайлов, О., *Путь Бунина-художника; Литературное наследство*, т. 84, кн. 1, Москва, 1973; Гейдеко, В., *Толстовство в творчестве Бунина; Бунинский сборник*, Орел, 1974. Несколько иначе подходит к этой проблеме И. Ильин, который видит в связи Бунина с Толстым не влияние, заимствование, а исходное сходство строения эстетического акта: «Художественный акт Бунина есть исконно и органически акт внешнего опыта, акт чувственного восприятия, созерцания и воображения и, соответственно этому, акт инстинктивного художника, раскрывающий ему жизнь человеческого инстинкта. В этом он близок Толстому, но этим его близость и ограничивается. Толстой очень хорошо знает стихию человеческой материальности, телесности, чувственности, инстинктуозности; он умеет пребывать в ней и вещать *из нее;* но сам он, как художник, почти никогда не уходит в нее целиком, не становится ее покорным медиумом. . . Бунин же обычно уходит в эту стихию целиком и нередко становится ее чистым и простым *художественным медиумом*. . . (Ильин, И., *О тьме и просветлении*, Мюнхен, 1959, 33.)

[7] Бунин, И., *Собрание сочинений в 9 томах*, т. 2, Москва 1965, 34. Дальнейшие ссылки на произведения И. Бунина даются по этому изданию, с указанием тома и страницы в основном тексте статьи, в скобках.

[8] О том, как Л. Толстой «пользуется Шопенгауэром, но 'разрывает' его систему в тех случаях, когда она не совпадает с его взглядами или 'правилами'», немало ценных замечаний можно найти в книге Эйхенбаума, Б. *Лев Толстой, семидесятые годы* (Ленинград, 1974, ч. II, III), цитируемые слова — со стр. 119; наиболее полный документальный материал касательно отношения Л. Толстого к индуизму собран в монографии А. *Шифмана: Лев Толстой и Восток* (Москва, 1960). См. также статьи: Sklanchenko, T., *The Legend of Buddha's Life in Works of Russian Writers; Slavonic and East European Studies*, Montreal, 1959—1960, vol. 4.; Kirk, I., *Buddhistic Elements in "The Idiot"; Studia Slavica*, 1972, N 18.

[9] Избранные проповеди Мейстера Экхарта появились в русском переводе как раз в 1912 г. Думается, здесь уместно напомнить мнение Р. Отто о глубоком внутреннем родстве идей Экхарта с мистикой Шанкары.

[10] О возможном круге чтения И. Бунина из индийской религиозно-философской литературы см. данные в статье О. Сливицкой: *Бунин и Восток* (К постановке вопроса); *Известия Воронежского педагогического института*, т. 114, Воронеж, 1971.

[11] В русском издании *Сутта—Нипаты*, которым мог воспользоваться И. Бунин, этот фрагмент звучит так: «Взгляни на людей, избивающих друг друга, я хочу говорить о печали, как я изведал ее» (*Сутта—Нипата. Сборник бесед и поучений*, Москва, 1899, 136). На этот факт обратил внимание Н. Кучеровский: *Рассказы И. А. Бунина «Сны Чанга» и «Братья»* (сб. *Русская литература XX века*, Тула, 1975, 168.). Следует, однако, отметить, что у Бунина есть слово «братство», употребляемое в несколько ироническом контексте (см. цитату со стр. 278, следующую ниже).

[12] Шопенгауэр, А., *Мир как воля и представление*, перевод А. Фета, предисловие Н. Страхова, СПб 1880, 346.

[13] Там же, 409.

[14] Шопенгауэр, А., *Полное собрание сочинений*, Москва, 1900—1910, т. V, 442.

[15] Из письма Л. Андреева К. Чуковскому. Цитируется в статье К. Чуковского о Л. Андрееве в его сб. *Современники*, Москва, 1962, 308.

[16] Цитирую по И. Бунину: 9, 149.

[17] Шопенгауэр, А., *Полное собрание сочинений*, т. 5, IV, 255.

[18] Как писал Л. Афонин, («Орловская правда», 1974, № 223, 22 сентября), в библиотеке Л. Андреева «были трактаты этого немецкого мыслителя, который, по свидетельству самого Андреева, заставил его много и хорошо поработать головой и многое сделать более ясным.» См: *Алфавитный каталог библиотеки Л. Н. Андреева*, ЦГАЛИ, фонд 11, опись 1, отд. хр. 22.

[19] Беззубов, В., *Лев Толстой и Леонид Андреев; Ученые записки Тартуского университета*, вып. 104, Тарту, 1961; ср: Улыбышев, В., *Творчество Л. Андреева в оценке Л. Толстого; Яснополянский сборник*, Тула, 1960.

[20] Келдыш, В., *О реалистических течениях предреволюционных лет: Русская литература конца XIX — начала XX века (1901—1907)*, Москва, 1971.; его же: *Русский реализм начала XX века*, Москва, 1975, стр. 217 и далее. См. также: Силард Л., «*Мои записки*» *Л. Андреева;* Studia Slavica, 1972 № XVIII, 322—331.

[21] В воспоминаниях Т. Сухотиной-Толстой раннее название трактата Л. Толстого «О жизни и смерти» прокомментировано так: «Это первоначальное заглавие. Развивая свою мысль, отец увидел, что смерти нет. И заглавие стало: 'О жизни'»: Сухотина-Толстая, Т., *Воспоминания*, Москва, 1976, 395.

[22] С точки зрения нашей темы важно, что корректив Л. Толстого к буддизму имеет сходное содержание: «Неправ буддизм в том, что он не признает цели и смысла *этой* жизни. . . Мы не видим его, но он есть, и поэтому *эта* жизнь так же реальна, как и всякая другая» (Запись от 17 ноября 1906 г.: 55, 274)

[23] См. письмо Л. Толстого Л. Андрееву от 30 декабря 1901 г.: *Л. Толстой о литературе*, Москва, 1955, 505.

[24] Размышление об особом времени пограничной ситуации у Л. Андреева лейтмотивно, ср: «Жили-были», «Из рассказа, который никогда не будет окончен, «Губернатор», «Рассказ о семи повешенных» и др.

[25] В свете этого суждение С. Ильева (Проза Л. Андреева, проблематика рассказов «Губернатор» и «Так было»: сб. *Русская литература XX века*, Тула, 1975) в споре с Дж. Вудвардом (Woodward, J. B., *Leonid Andreyev*. A Study. Oxford, 1969, p. 133.) представляется односторонним. С. Ильев прав, когда критикует однозначную интерпретацию рассказа Вудвардом в духе шопенгауэровской концепции воли, но ошибается, выдвигая не менее одностороннее противопоставление: «. . . в рассказе объективная воля реализуется не как нравственное наказание, а как социальная, классовая месть рабочих за кровь товарищей» (стр. 103). Своеобразие позиции Л. Андреева — в частности, в сравнении с толстовской — именно в том, что у него нравственное наказание и социальная месть встречаются: мотив губернатора — «мертвеца, церемониальным маршем *ищущего* (подчеркнуто мной- Л. С.) могилы» (1, 579, 580, 582) сопровождает приближение социальной мести, а тема оплакивающей губернатора гимназисточки придает встрече нравственного наказания и социальной мести дополнительную эмоциональную окраску — грустное признание необходимости насильственной смерти губернатора.

[26] См. письмо Л. Андреева Л. Толстому от 13 августа 1908 г. с просьбой разрешить посвящение ему рассказа *(Реквием, Сборник памяти Л. Андреева*, Москва, 1930, 64—65) и ответ Л. Толстого от 2 сентября *(Л. Н. Толстой*, о *литературе*, 596—597).

[27] Во всяком случае на это намекают строки рассказывающие о том, как Янсон прислушивался к голосам снежного поля, телеграфных гудящих столбов и т. п. См: Андреев Л., *Повести и рассказы в двух томах*, Москва, 1971, т. 11, стр. 79. Дальнейшие ссылки на рассказ делаются по этому изданию с указанием страницы в основном тексте статьи, в скобках.

[28] Характерная для многих произведений Л. Андреева постановка проблемы языка как интерсубъектного поля, близкая по духу Хайдеггеровской, требовала бы специального рассмотрения.

[29] Ср. размышление Шопенгауэра в главе «Смерть и ее отношение к неразрушимости нашего существа в себе»: «Та же самая рефлексия, которая дает нам знание смерти, помогает нам справиться с этим знанием, — помогает именно в тех *метафизических* воззрениях, которые утешают нас в этом и которые так же не нужны животному, как и недоступны для него. . . они — прежде всего то противоядие, которое мыслящий выносит из своих собственных недр, чтобы противодействовать этой уверенности в неизбежности смерти» (Шопенгауер, А., *Мир как воля и представление*, т. 11, в переводе Н. Соколова, СПб, 1893, 563). См. также дальнейшие рассуждения на стр. 566—569, 578 и др.

[30] Напомним, что Василий Каширин потрясен открывшимся перед ним различием между добровольной и насильственной смертью, в то время как Вернер с самого начала знает, что казнь — это нечто другое; Сергей Головин не сразу овладевает пониманием того, что жить нужно до последней минуты так, как будто ничего не случится, для Вернера эта мысль Эпикура — само собой разумеющееся, «общее место».

[31] Толстой Л., *Полное собрание сочинений*, 62, 272.

[32] Андреев Л., *Речь о Толстом.* Публикация В. Беззубова: *Ученые записки Тартуского университета,* 1961, т. 4, вып. 104, 170.

[33] Шестов Л., *Умозрение и откровение,* Paris, 1964, 273.

[34] Ср. монолог «Проклятье Человека» в пьесе Л. Андреева *Жизнь Человека* с медитацией Шопенгауэра по поводу упоминавшейся уже мысли Эпикура о том, что смерть до нас не касается: пока мы существуем, смерти нет, а когда наступает смерть, нет нас (Шопенгауэр А., *Мир как воля и представление,* т. 11, 569.)

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# Konflikt der rationalen und der empirischen Einstellung in Anna Kareninas Tragödie

Von

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(Szeged)

Die Aufklärung vertrat — indem sich kein positiver Beweis für eine Notwendigkeit jener Schicksalsschläge finden ließ, welche die Menschen zu erleiden haben — die Ansicht, daß die Menschheit imstande ist, sich von den Hemmnissen ihrer Wohlfahrt zu befreien, und bezeichnete die menschliche Natur — im Gegensatz zu den theologischen Dogmen — als ‚gut'. Gemäß der Auffassung der Aufklärer bewegt die Menschen die Güte ihrer Natur zum Dienst des Gemeininteresses, zur Förderung des *Gemeinwohls*, denn diese Güte besteht darin, daß die Menschen aus freien Stücken, aus eigenem Antrieb auf Ziele hinarbeiten, deren Verwirklichung auch im persönlichen Interesse des Einzelmenschen liegt. Das naive Vertrauen auf die Vernunft erwies sich allerdings als unbegründet, dahingegen der Bezicht, daß der Rationalismus der Aufklärung in dem Kampfe gegen die Dogmen selbst dogmatisch war, als durchweg begründet; auch hat man berechtigterweise den Einwand gemacht, daß der *Beziehungsbegriff* ‚Güte' des Gegenstückes ‚Böse' beraubt seinen Sinn einbüßt, zur puren Deklaration wird; dessenungeachtet hielten die Ideen der Aufklärung selbst bei ihrer kritischen Prüfung in ihrem Bann den Geist, und gerade die gegen sie angewandte Kritik bezeugte die Lebendigkeit des kritischen Geistes der Aufklärung.

Die Ideen der Aufklärung erlitten in Rußland — zufolge der Eigenart des geistigen Rezeptivmediums — eine Umdeutung, die Lehnwörter füllten sich mit neuen, von ihrer ursprünglichen Bedeutung weitentfernten Inhalten, also führte die Kritik der Aufklärung in Rußland zu anderen Ergebnissen wie im Westen Europas. Gemäß seiner positiven, materiellen Einstellung erfaßte das französische Denken den Menschen als eine Summe gegenständlicher Gegebenheiten, und es herrschte die Ansicht vor, daß seine Wohlfahrt durch eine möglichst vollkommene Entfaltung seiner Fähigkeiten zu fördern sei. Selbst Rousseau machte diese Konzeption über den Dienst des Gemeinwohls nicht zum Wanken, hat er doch — auf die Einseitigkeit des Menschenbildes der Philosophen hindeutend und den Anspruch auf die zum Wesen des Menschen hingehörenden Subjektivität betonend — die quälende Isoliertheit seiner pietistischen Betrachtungen festgestellt, ihr feindliches Entgegentreten

der menschlichen Gemeinschaften jeder Art. Dahingegen erachtete die russische Aufklärung den Menschen für reine Subjektivität, faßte die Lebensgemeinschaft als eine seelische auf, und vertrat die Ansicht: man diene durch eine ungestörte gefühlsmäßige Identifizierung mit allen Mitmenschen den Interessen des öffentlichen Wohls.

Allein die normative Behandlung der Phänomene der westlichen Richtung, die eigenmächtige Behandlung derselben als Maßstab für die einheitliche ideengeschichtliche Problematik vermag als Erklärung zu dienen, wenn man die Stellungnahme der russischen Aufklärer als eine ‚christliche Utopie' bezeichnet, gleichsam als Manifestation einer der Aufklärung entgegengesetzten, mittelalterlichen Mentalität. Denn der Rationalismus der französischen Denker des XVIII. Jahrhunderts ist offensichtlich nicht weniger utopistisch, und ihr Glauben an die Omnipotenz der Vernunft ist in gewissem Sinne nicht weniger christlich als die optimistische Liebesethik des im Ideenkreis der Aufklärung lebenden jungen Tolstojs. Zugleich steht Tolstojs Radikalismus, die Folgerichtigkeit seiner kritischen Betrachtung, kaum hinter jenen der Aufklärer zurück, wo er doch mit dem Dogma des Hangs der menschlichen Natur zum Bösen abrechnet.

Anna Kareninas Gestalt verkörpert die Ideen der russischen Aufklärung. Anna hält die eigene Persönlichkeit für reine Subjektivität, sie kennt die positiven, materiellen Interessen ihres Wesens nicht. Folglich hebt sie überhaupt keine Ansprüche gegenüber die eigene Umgebung; ihr alleiniges Verlangen ist, daß jedermann sie liebe, wie sie ja auch selbst — vermöge durchweg erlebter Identifizierung mit ihrer Umgebung, innerhalb derselben alles und ohne Unterscheidung billigend — jedermann zu lieben wünschte. Sie hält am Ideal absoluter Subjektivität, ungegliederter Totalität fest, sieht kein Hindernis auf dem Weg zur Erfüllung ihres Verlangens, es kann ja im widerstandslosen, ätherischen Medium der Subjektivität kein Hindernis eintreten. Es dünkt ihr, daß der Mensch durch seine Gefühle geleitet, sich den Gefühlen überlassend, das eigene Glück und das der anderen zu erschaffen vermag. Die Illusion der russischen Aufklärung, das unbedingte Vertrauen aufs Gefühl verursacht Annas Tragödie, und also tut sich in ihrem mit einer Katastrophe endenden Geschick die Kritik der Ideen der russischen Aufklärung dar.

Da der Mensch gleichzeitig subjektiver und objektiver Natur ist, infolgedessen kann keine menschliche Manifestation ausschließlich subjektiv oder ausschließlich objektiven Charakters sein. Somit versucht Anna vergeblich, sich auf die Gefühle zu beschränken, um die Widersprüchlichkeit ihres Wesens abzuschaffen, umso weniger gelingt es ihr die aus ihrem individuellen Sein folgende natürliche Eingenommenheit zu kompensieren. Keiner vermag seine Zuneigungen unter den Faktoren seiner Umwelt gleichmäßig zu verteilen: hält man die Urteile vorsätzlich nieder, dann werden sich die Ansichten umso mehr, mit elementarer Kraft eine Bahn brechen, und die Ansprüche —

durch spontane Richtungsänderung, selbst gegen die eigene Absicht — sich Befriedigung zu verschaffen. In der unerwartet entflammenden Liebe Annas offenbart sich die Objektivität ihres Wesens, als sie — ihre Ansprüche heftig bezeigend, im Gegensatz zu allen Erwartungen von Sohn, Gatten, Gesellschaft — Wronskij folgen wird. Ihr aufgeklärter Optimismus, ihre affektive Arglosigkeit bewegen sie, dem Ruf der Leidenschaft *nachzugeben*; doch ist sie, in der Gewalt ihrer Illusionen, nicht imstande, ihre Ansprüche, welche in der Leidenschaft erscheinen, auch auf ihr Liebesprogramm beharrend *zu vertreten*, mit anderen Worten: die Widersprüchlichkeit der eigenen Persönlichkeit *zur Kenntnis zu nehmen*. Es gibt für sie keine Möglichkeit zur Anerkennung jener Objektivität, die — neben dem Subjektiven — zum Wesen des Menschen hingehört; infolgedessen empfindet sie die Leidenschaft, die sie überwältigt, als eine ihrer Menschlichkeit fremde, böse Macht, und an einem bestimmten Punkt wird sie nicht mehr fähig, die eigene Persönlichkeit zusammenzuhalten. Der Zustand solcher qualvollen Verdoppelung kann dauernd keineswegs aufrechterhalten bleiben, indem sie aber nicht imstande ist ihre Leidenschaft zu meistern, also bleibt für sie bloß eine Möglichkeit zur Liquidierung desselben: der Verzicht auf das Liebesprogramm, das Aufgeben der eigenen Menschheit. Danach werden Annas Lebensmöglichkeiten durch die maßlose Leidenschaft rasch aufgezehrt, und als sie — bereits von der ganzen Welt entfremdet — in sich selbst hineinschaut, dann gibt es keine Entschuldigung mehr, sie hat das Urteil über sich selbst zu fällen.

Anna, die den Menschen als pure Subjektivität erfaßt, erlernte nicht mit einer Umwelt zu rechnen, die gegen ihre Absichten Widerstand leistet; es mangelt ihr an der Fähigkeit wahrnehmen zu können, daß ihre Menschheit inmitten des Systems der Gegebenheiten, im Gefängnis der Umstände eingekerkert ist. Zufolge des Mangels an Realitätsgefühl erblickt sie keinerlei Zwischenmoment im Abstand der aufgetauchten Absicht und der durchgeführten Tat: ein Aufeinanderstoßen der diversen Motive, ein Erwägen der Folgen — es sind fremde Begriffe für ihre Persönlichkeit. Die Unterschätzung der Blickpunkte der Realität, die Illusion eines ungehinderten Durchbruchs der Absicht — all das führt zu einer Identifizierung von Absicht und Tat: zum Voluntarismus. Ein Voluntarist sieht in seinem Willen den Maßstab der Dinge, er kennt kein anderes Gesetz, als den eigenen Willen, mißt jedoch zugleich — und zwar als unmittelbare Folge des Voluntarismus — die Absicht an der Tat ab, nimmt die Geburt seiner Absicht allein vermöge der Tat wahr, erkennt einzig und allein diejenige Absicht an, welche zur Tat führt. Also ergibt sich die paradoxe Situation, in welcher Anna, die den Menschen für pure Subjektivität erachtet, nachgerade die Subjektivität des eigenen Wesens nicht in Anschlag bringt: sie vermag die Absicht, die sich am Widerstand der Realität bricht und auch fürderhin Absicht bleibt, den nicht-realisierten guten Willen nicht wahrzunehmen, ersieht im eigenen Selbst bloß die Nichtaus-

führerin des guten Willens, nicht aber die Persönlichkeit, welche die Trägerin jenes guten Willens ist und von der Undurchführbarkeit desselben leidet; das heißt: sie objektiviert sich, während sie den Standpunkt reiner Subjektivität vertritt, in ganz extremer Weise. Zufolge ihres Unvermögens, subjektive Qualitäten wahrzunehmen, erkennt Anna auch die Möglichkeit der Sühne nicht, der allmählich erfolgenden Katharsis in jenem Leidensweg, den sie ob der Aussichtslosigkeit ihrer Lage, ob der Unlösbarkeit ihrer moralischen Probleme zu gehen hat. Sie empfindet sich selbst gegenüber Abscheu und Haß, weil sie ihren Sohn verlassen hat, und begreift nicht, daß des Abscheues und des Hasses Wogen gerade durch den leidenschaftlichen Hang zum Sohne aufgepeitscht werden; sie merkt nicht, daß sich auch in der heftigen Selbstanklage, auch in der Bedrängnis der Umstände ihre lebendige Menschheit offenbart.

Anna glaubt: der Mensch sei voller Subjektivität, und erfährt inmitten ihrer Heimsuchungen, daß der Mensch voller Objektivität ist. Sie ist jedoch nicht imstande, den Menschen gleichzeitig als Subjektivität und Objektivität zu erfassen, denn wer im Menschen gleichzeitig den Subjektiven und den Objektiven erblickt, der gerät in Konflikt mit den Gesetzen des Denkens. Anna vermag also die Essenz der Menschheit nicht zu begreifen, könnte jedoch die Existenz des menschlichen Phänomens noch immer annehmen als Erfahrungswesen, dessen Erklärung sie vermittelst der zu ihrer Verfügung stehenden rationalen Möglichkeiten nicht unternehmen kann. Der aber mangels eines entsprechenden Realitätsgefühls an der Anerkennung jederlei Phänomens verhindert wird, der wollte kaum die eigene Persönlichkeit als ein eigengesetzliches Phänomen betrachten. Ihr Volutarismus gewöhnte Anna ein, die Dinge gemäß ihrer Absicht auszumessen, infolgedessen ist für sie auch die Existenz der eigenen Persönlichkeit unvorstellbar, wenn keine bewußte Absicht für die Betätigung derselben Sorge trägt. Darum empfindet sie — ihrer voluntaristischen Innervation durchweg entsprechend — als ihre gute Absicht am hartnäckigen Widerstand der Fakten scheitert, daß sie ihre Menschheit verloren hat; und diese Empfindung macht die vom Katastrophenbewußtsein verstörte, sich selbst ohne Grund beschuldigende Frau tatsächlich unfähig, ihre Persönlichkeit zusammenzuhalten.

Am Ende des Weges trifft Anna auf ein absurdes Ergebnis und kann das vor ihr sich erschließende Absurde nicht akzeptieren, da sie darin die Vernichtung ihrer Menschheit sieht. Auch die westeuropäische Romantik läßt den Menschen absurd erscheinen, man faßt jedoch im Westen die Kenntnisnahme der Absurdität als die Bedingung menschlicher Existenz auf. Nach Lamartine's *L'homme* — Der Mensch — betiteltem Poem ist die Paradoxie der menschlichen Existenz für jenen höheren Sinn, welcher den Menschen erschafft, auflösbar, und diese Paradoxie ist nachgerade zufolge ihres göttlichen Charakters, im Bewußtsein der sich in ihr offenbarenden, unerforschlichen göttlichen Absicht akzeptabel. Es versteht sich von selbst, daß der französische Romanti-

ker bei der Kritik des Vernunftkultus der Aufklärung keinen theologischen Standpunkt einnimmt, er nennt den Menschen nicht aus dem Dogma der Existenz Gottes herangehend paradox: er findet den Beweis für die Existenz Gottes im Erfahrungswesen der Widersprüchlichkeit menschlicher Natur. Der vom Menschen deduzierte Gottesgedanke ist nichts anderes, als das Symbol der erfahrenen, unverstandenen, begrifflich unerfaßten Menschheit, in ihm bezeugt die Persönlichkeit ihre Unabhängigkeit von dem eigenen subjektiven Willen und von dem ihn objektivierenden fremden Willen. Auch im Mittelpunkt von Byrons *Kain* steht der das menschliche Phänomen aus dem unauflösbaren Gegensatz von Subjektivität und Objektivität hervorhebende Blickpunkt, das Prinzip der Persönlichkeit. Kain lehnt sich gegen die ‚Tyrannei des Guten' auf: er stellt dem sein Wesen objektivierenden Moralgesetz seinen subjektiven Willen gegenüber. Es wirkt jedoch die Zuspitzung der Gegensätze nachgerade auf ihre Auflösung fördernd: nach Begehung der Sünde erwacht im Inneren des Empörers das Verlangen nach dem Guten, und in der Sühne, im unzertrennlichen Ensemble von Schuldbewußtsein und Buße, trifft er Gott an: ‚Gott geleitet' Osten vom Eden fahrenden Mörder.

Das westeuropäische Denken hebt aus der Krise, die zufolge des Scheiterns der Aufklärung entstand, die Sicherheit der Erfahrung des menschlichen Phänomens hervor. Es gelang sowohl der englischen, wie auch der französischen Romantik Erfahrungsmaterial zu sammeln, welches — wenn auch fürs analytische Denken unerklärlich — die Einheit des Antagonismus von Subjektivität und Objektivität, von Rationalismus und Empirismus zu beobachten vermochte. Lamartine perzipiert in der Selbstbetrachtung die ‚göttliche' Einheit des Anspruchs der beiden, einander ausschließenden Bestrebungen: Freiheit und Glück; Byron deutet indessen in der Sphäre menschlicher Beziehungen auf die gleicherweise persönlichkeiterschaffende Rolle von zwei moralischen Polen, wie Gut und Böse, Schuld und Tugend hin. Dahingegen konnte der Versager der russischen Aufklärung, die den Menschen als pure Subjektivität erfaßte, mittelst Empirie nicht bemeistert werden. In Ermangelung des Realitätsgefühls konnte der Wahrnehmung der Gegensätze keine Kenntnisnahme der Gegensätze folgen. Der Voluntarismus, der das ätherische Schweben der Subjektivität abgelöst hatte, ließ keine antithetische Betrachtung der Fakten des Selbstbewußtseins und der menschlichen Beziehungen zu, keinerlei Anerkennung der Unausführbarkeit von Ideen, keinerlei Unversöhnlichkeit von Interessen. Auf diese Weise schnitt die russische Aufklärung dem Wahrnehmen der Existenz der Menschheit den Weg ab, auf daß man in der einen oder in der anderen Sphäre die praktische Einheit der theoretisch unauflösbar dünkenden Gegensätze erfahren könne.

Die westeuropäische Romantik verschafft sich Gewißheit über die Existenz der Menschheit, indem sie aber den Menschen als etwas Absurdes hinstellt, somit gibt sie gleichzeitig zu, daß sie nicht imstande sei das Wesen des menschli-

chen Phänomens etwa zu erklären. Ihre kontemplative Einstellung erlaubte die antithetische Betrachtung der Fakten des Selbstbewußtseins und der menschlichen Beziehungen, vermochte jedoch die Einheit der Gegensätze nur in dieser, oder aber nur in jener Sphäre nachzuweisen. Die westeuropäische Romantik konnte das Umfassen des ganzen Phänomens in seinem Gesamtumfang, das subjektive Willensäußerung erfordernde Verknüpfen der beiden empirischen Einheiten — Gemeinschafts- und Privatsphäre — nicht übernehmen. Dahingegen schritt die russische Kritik der Aufklärung, deren Versuche, den Gegensatz von Subjektivität und Objektivität zu bekämpfen, scheiterten, von ihrem Voluntarismus geleitet gerade in dieser Richtung fort, sie hielt just das Verknüpfen der Interessen des Einzelnen und der menschlichen Lebensgemeinschaft für ihre Aufgabe.

Das russische Denken konnte wegen seiner eigenartigen Richtung die westeuropäischen Lehren der Kritik der Aufklärung nicht nutzbar machen, zugleich durfte sie — wie oben ersichtlich — aus gleichen Gründen nicht absehen von denjenigen Problemen, welche das westeuropäische Denken — zufolge der eigenen Einstellung — außer acht ließ. Also formte sich im historischen Augenblick der russischen Kritik der Aufklärung eine geistige Situation, in welcher sich die Fragen der europäischen Ideengeschichte auftürmten, und — da sie für das Denken des XIX. Jahrhunderts einen Haufen von unlösbaren Problemen dargestellt hatten — zu einem unerträglichen Katastrophenbewußtsein führen mußten. Als die arglose Anna, die im Menschen pure Subjektivität sieht, das dissonante Element des Rationalismus in ihrem Inneren entdeckt, dann kann sie die Widersprüchlichkeit ihrer Persönlichkeit darum nicht akzeptieren, die absurde Einheit der Widersprüche ihres Wesens darum nicht erfahren, weil sie, im Zeichen ihres Liebesprogramms kein individuelles Ziel, das ihre Persönlichkeit zusammenhielte, keine Bestimmung vor sich zu erblicken vermag. Nein, im Gegenteil: Anna wollte als ununterscheidbares Teilchen der menschlichen Lebensgemeinschaft gelten, und eben deswegen mißt sie den Wert des Rationalismus nicht an den Ansprüchen ihrer autonomen Persönlichkeit ab, vielmehr an jenem Leid, das sie durch Geltendmachung der eigenen Ansprüche ihrer Umwelt zufügt. Anna, die zugleich gegen die Widersprüche des Rationalismus und des Empirismus, des privaten und des öffentlichen Interesses zu kämpfen hat, kann sich ja in die Unlösbarkeit der Gegensätze nicht ergeben, da ihr — ob dem Zusammenstoß der einander gegenseitig zerstörenden zweierlei Wertordnungen — die Erfüllung der in ihnen zum Ausdruck gelangenden Forderungen nicht allein unmöglich, sondern auch unzulässig dünkt: die Freiheit wird als Sünde, die Tugend als Selbstmord qualifiziert. Die westeuropäische Kritik der Aufklärung erkennt die Unerklärlichkeit der Geltung von Werten an, dagegen beweist Annas Schicksal die theoretische Unmöglichkeit der Wirkung von Werten; mit anderen Worten: bei ihr ersetzen

die Andacht der Absurdität das Erlebnis der Ambivalenz und der Greuel der Wertkrise.

Die westeuropäische Romantik führte das Persönlichkeitsprinzip ein, sie hat aber, zufolge der Einschränkungen ihrer Möglichkeiten, den Begriff ‚Persönlichkeit' nicht durchgearbeitet. Die westeuropäische Kritik der Aufklärung ließ den antithetischen Charakter des Menschen anerkennen, indem sie jedoch die Einheit des Gegensatzes der Subjektivität und der Objektivität nur in dem intimen, spirituellen Erlebnis konstatierte, demzufolge hatte das Persönlichkeitsprinzip das ganze XIX. Jahrhundert hindurch eine subjektive Gültigkeit. Das auf den Kreis der Subjektivität beschränkte Wertbewußtsein maß seinen Urteilen eine absolute Geltung bei, forderte also allerseits unbedingte Identifizierung, ansonsten hätte das andere Bewußtsein nicht als Träger eines Wertes gelten können. Die Schranken der Wertung macht in der zweiten Hälfte des Jahrhunderts das Programm der Impassibilité bewußt, das, die Voreingenommenheit der romantischen Betrachtungsweise korrigierend, ‚Gerechtigkeit' widerfahren läßt, und zwar in der Weise, daß es durch den Künstler den wertenden Blickpunkt ausschalten läßt, und alle reell Seienden — auch das empirische Wesen des Künstlers, des Trägers vom Gesichtspunkt der Darstellung — mit gleichmütiger Objektivität betrachtet. Zugleich beweist die das Programm der Impassibilité ergänzende Attitüde der Wertbewahrung, der Einzug in den Elfenbeinturm, daß das Persönlichkeitsprinzip subjektiver Gültigkeit auch der die Romantik kritisierenden Betrachtung nicht eigenmächtig, nicht subjektiven Charakters zu sein dünkt.

Es bietet sich aber in jenem Rußland, wo die Kritik der Aufklärung selbst Mitte des Jahrhunderst auf sich warten läßt, keine Attitüde der Wertbewahrung für den Romanschriftsteller, kein Elfenbeinturm, um sich zu verziehen. Der russische Autor muß den wertenden Blickpunkt in den Kreis der Darstellung einbeziehen, er muß das Wertbewußtsein seinem Helden überlassen, Held und Autor haben zusammen ein hoffnungsloses Unternehmen durchzudulden: das Bestätigen der eigenen Menschheit, des Persönlichkeitsprinzips subjektiver Gültigkeit. Die Katastrophe wäre nur dann zu vermeiden, wenn irgendwie möglich wäre die Werte mit objektiver Geltung zu versehen, wenn es gelänge — das spirituelle Erlebnis greifbar machend — den Begriff der Persönlichkeit zu erschaffen. Die Dinge sind blind und unerbittlich, und Teilnahme und Hilfsbereitschaft können die Grenzen des Subjektes nicht überschreiten. Dahingegen kann der an der Grenze von Subjektivität und Objektivität stehende Mensch, der — um die Einheit seiner Gegensätze unausgesetzt Sorge tragend — sich ohne Unterlaß reproduziert, jederzeit die Anerkennung seiner Leistungen von anderen erhalten, vermag sich der Anerkennung von Werten jederzeit zu vergewissern, solange sich auch die anderen im Bewußtsein ihrer menschlichen Aufgaben befinden und geneigt sind, diese zu bewältigen. Nicht die subjektive Identifizierung und auch nicht die objek-

tive Individuation stellt jenes Verhalten dar, welches die Bekämpfung der Wertkrise verspricht, sondern die persönliche Anknüpfung, die gegenseitige Würdigung der menschlichen Leistungen. Die interpersonale Beziehung setzt das Anerkennen der Berufsfreude des anderen Menschen voraus, mit anderen Worten: die Kenntnisnahme der Relativität der eigenen Wahrheit; sie verpflichtet aber auch dazu, daß ein jeder seine für relativ erachtete Wahrheit aus vollen Kräften vertreten soll, denn es gelingt die Unerschütterlichkeit von Werten über den aneinanderparallenden Prinzipien und Interessen nur dann zu erfahren, wenn man nicht im Bewußtsein der Ausschließlichkeit der eigenen Wahrheit handelt, sondern im Bewußtsein der persönlichen Verpflichtung für die eigene Sache. Ähnlicherweise: die interpersonale Beziehung ist mit Liebesbezeigung verbunden, und das Maß der Liebesbezeigung ist unabhängig von den Verdiensten des anderen Menschen; dessenungeachtet kann eine Liebe nicht persönlich werden, wenn sie — trotz Verdienste — unter Bedauern über den der Verdienste beraubten Zustand, zufolge extrem-affektiver Identifizierung mit dem anderen Menschen maßlos emporschnellt. Ich stehe ausschließlich zu jenem in persönlicher Beziehung, den ich in dem Maße seiner Offenbarung für mich und seiner Empfindlichkeit für meine Offenbarungen lieb habe. Anna hat hinwiederum keinen Begriff vom Persönlichkeitsprinzip, ist also unfähig, eine interpersonale Beziehung herzustellen. Sie liebte, bevor sie mit Wronskij ein Verhältnis einging, jedermann ohne Unterschied, identifizierte sich bedingungslos mit jedermann; als sie aber nach Bezeigung der individuellen Ansprüche in das Querfeuer von feindlichen Interessen genommen wurde, dann begann sie sich nach und nach von jedermann zu entfremden. Sie hegt Zorn und Haß denen gegenüber, die, gemäß den eigenen Blickpunkten, das Recht zum Durchsetzen ihrer Leidenschaft in Abrede stellen, entfernt sich aber auch von Wronskij immer mehr, denn sie hofft auf unbedingte Identifizierung, und ist nicht imstande, die individuelle Richtung der Interessen des anderen, die individuellen Interessen der anderen Persönlichkeit zu akzeptieren. Anna vertraut dem anderen nicht, von Argwohn geplagt enthält sie jenem alle Bewegungsfreiheit vor, und da sie zum Glauben unfähig ist, und auch nicht imstande, jeden Augenblick mit absoluter Sicherheit Erfahrungen zu machen, also wollte sie die bedingungslose Hingabe des anderen haben. Die durch den Traum von idealen Werten ganz aufgepulverte Frau macht den anderen zum Spielzeug ihres subjektiven Willens, sie erstrebt die extreme Objektivierung des anderen, und zerstört in ihrem sinnlosen Maximalismus die interpersonale Beziehung, welche zur Entfaltung ihrer beiden Liebe führen sollte.

Die analytische Darstellung des Greuels der Wertkrise ließ sich allein im sicheren Bewußtsein der Lösung des Wertproblems konsequent verwirklichen. Die Lösung erbringt die Kritik der russischen Aufklärung, die Tolstoj durch die Erschaffung der Figur Lewins verrichtet. Lewin ist der Widersprüche

seiner Persönlichkeit bewußt, folglich setzt er, um mit der Umwelt im Enklang zu stehen, sich selbst Schranken, und lehnt am Endpunkt seiner intellektuellen Suchereien im Zeichen des Liebesprogramms die Möglichkeiten des Rationalismus ab. Lewin weiß wohl, daß die aus freien Stücken akzeptierte empirische Gemeinschaft niemals ungestört werden kann, es wird sich jederzeit zwischen ihm und selbst denjenigen, die ihm zunächst stehen eine ‚Mauer' erheben; dessenungeachtet bewegt ihn die Sicherheit des spirituellen Erlebnisses innerhalb des Kreises der unmittelbaren Erfahrung, die Ebenung von eigenen und fremden Interessen einzig und allein der Vernunft überlassend, die Bestimmung des Menschen zu erforschen. Paradoxerweise erschafft Lewin nach endgültigem Verzicht auf seine individuelle Selbständigkeit die Autonomie seiner Persönlichkeit. Und während er sich — die erhaltende Kraft der Gemeinschaft genießend — mehr und mehr in das Leben einbettet, indessen wohnt ‚in dem Heiligtum seiner Seele', durch eine ‚Mauer' geschützt vor der Welt ‚das Gute', dessen bedingungsloser Dienst einen Sinn dem Leben verleiht.

In seiner Lösung verdoppelt Lewin das Sein: der das moralische Ideal nur partiell rezipierenden kausalen Welt stellt er die transzendentale ‚reine Empfindung' gegenüber, wie ja auch das System Kants gegenüber der das Durchdringen der Ideen hindernden empirischen Welt die ‚reine Vernunft', die freie geistige Welt annimt. Lewin erachtet für notwendig, auf seine rationalen Möglichkeiten zu verzichten, dahingegen verpflichtet die Kant'sche Ethik den Befehlen der Vernunft unbedingt zu gehorchen, und vergißt in ihrem versteiften Rigorismus auf die sinnliche Seite. Die osteuropäischen Kritiker der Aufklärung — Kant und Tolstoj — setzten gleichergestalt Schranken der Persönlichkeit, indem die Aufmerksamkeit der beiden durch die Ebenung der Gegensätze des privaten und des allgemeinen Interesses festgehalten wurde. Die Auflösung solcher Gegensätze erwartet Kant vom rational organisierten idealen Staat, der schon deshalb einen jeden zu beglücken vermöchte, da doch die Bürger der freien geistigen Republik keine individuellen Ansprüche erheben würden; dahingegen denkt Tolstoj die Lösung im ‚christlichen Anarchismus' zu finden, in einer auf der persönlichen Beziehung beruhenden, primären Gemeinschaft, deren Fortbestand dadurch gesichert wird, daß ihre Mitglieder Abstand vom rationalen Veranlassen nehmen.

Die utopischen Vorstellungen Kants und Tolstojs in bezug auf die Abschaffung der Gegensätze des privaten und des allgemeinen Interesses hat die Wirklichkeit keineswegs bestätigt, ähnlicherweise, wie auch die spirituellen Erlebnisse der westeuropäischen Romantiker gar nichts an der widersprüchlichen Beschaffenheit der Persönlichkeit ändern konnten. Lewins Lösung hat eine subjektive Gültigkeit, wie ja auch die Lösung der westeuropäischen Romantiker eine subjektive Geltung gehabt hat; aber — gleich jener — war auch diese keineswegs eigenmächtigen, subjektiven Charakters: ihre Bedeutung

bestand darin, daß sie — diesmal gegenüber dem Gegensatz von privatem und allgemeinem Interesse — die unerschütterliche Geltung der Persönlichkeit, des menschlichen Blickpunktes wahrnehmbar gemacht hat. Die Lehren der west- und osteuropäischen Kritik der Aufklärung ergaben sich unabhängig voneinander, und es bot sich somit keine theoretische Möglichkeit zu einem Vergleich beider Lehren. Die ideengeschichtliche Bedeutung von Tolstojs *Anna Karenina* folgt aus dem Fakt, daß sie, die Partikularität der beiden Lösungen bewußt machend, den Anspruch auf die — neue geistige Perspektiven versprechende — Verknüpfung der zweierlei Kritiken repräsentiert.

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# Духовное родство Льва Толстого и Ласло Немета

РОЖА КОЧИШ

(Будапешт)

По мнению академика Иштвана Шётера, самым выдающимся произведением венгерской литературы о Льве Толстом является эссе Ласло Немета «В подмастерьях у Толстого», *(Tolsztoj inasaként)*, написанное в 1956 году. Это статья из мастерской переводчика, в которой не только содержатся связанные с Толстым наблюдения Ласло Немета — литературоведа и романиста, но которая свидетельствует также о «приверженности, сочетающейся с критикой». Как полагает Шётер, образ Льва Толстого, изображенный Неметом, чрезвычайно достоверен в силу того, что жизненный конфликт и идейный мир обоих писателей был во многих отношениях родственным. Лев Толстой был примером для Немета как в жизни, так и в творчестве, из «приверженности» к мастеру он брал на себя роль ученика и, намекая на свою переводческую деятельность, называл себя «подмастерьем» Толстого. (См. «Толстой в Венгрии» — *Tolsztoj Magyarországon)*.

Переводы Льва Толстого в 40 — 50-е годы и две большие статьи о нём (уже упомянутая «В подмастерьях у Толстого» *(Tolsztoj inasaként)* и «Речь, посвященная памяти Толстого» *(Tolsztoj emlékbeszéd)* лишь углубили и сделали еще более сознательным их духовное родство, хотя они мало что изменили в сознании самого Немета, развернувшемся в период работы над его «Свидетелем» *(Tanú)*. Потому что Ласло Немет, взявшийся навести мост к восточно-европейской культуре, не как переводчик, а как мыслитель, учился русскому языку, углубляясь в круг идей Льва Толстого. По собственному признанию Немета, Левин из романа «Анна Каренина» оказал на него такое жизне-формирующее влияние, что его дети (которых он между прочим заставил прочитать автобиографическую трилогию Толстого) могут считать его своим «идеологическим отцом».

Хотя критическая работа Л. Немета 30-х годов «Две книги о Толстом» *(Két könyv Tolsztojról)* не достигает уровня его более поздних статей, но из неё четко явствует, что уже в это время Лев Толстой был для Немета больше, чем просто любимый и всемирно признанный художник Восточной Европы. Именно на это обращает наше внимание Ференц Киш, говоря о том, что когда

мы исследуем влияние Льва Толстого на Ласло Немета с позиции крупных статей этой эпохи, литературоведов-исследователей Пруста или Гёте, мы часто сталкиваемся с сопоставлением с идеями Толстого. (См.: «Немет Ласло и русская литература» — *Németh László és az orosz irodalom*).

Всё это свидетельствует о том, что Л. Немет любил в Толстом родственника своей души и собственных идеалов, мир идей которого он чувствовал настолько близким своему, что мог почти отождествляться с ним. Каковы же были те общие проблемы и идеалы, которые соединили венгра Ласло Немета и русского Льва Толстого, принадлежавшего к более раннему поколению?

Оба они искали выхода из общественного и духовного кризиса, проявляющегося и в мировом масштабе, но усугубленного к тому же восточным европеизмом. Они выступили со своими идеями в последний период европейского феодализма, в царской России конца прошлого века и в Венгрии первой половины текущего столетия, где в социальном и духовном отношении люди прозябали на самой низкой ступени человеческого бытия. Толстой считал «аморальным» и чуждым человеку современный ему социальный и правящий строй, как западную, так и восточную его форму. Он чувствовал виновность за свое привилегированное положение. До самой смерти он боролся за то, чтобы оторваться от своего класса и выйти из общественного строя, который он считал нетерпимым. Его писательский труд питали требования мыслителя и учителя, стремления к избавлению, а поиски спасения переплетались с национальными целями. В восточной Европе эти стремления зачастую проявлялись одновременно. Творчество Ласло Немета также свидетельствует о том, что восточно-европейские писатели являются в то же время учителями, революционерами общества и нравственности или, если угодно, «мессиями». Литература существует не сама для себя, ибо она пытается представлять и то, на что общественные и политические условия не дают возможности.

Толстой посредством поисков решения кризиса в России изыскивал средство исцеления от бед всего человечества и считал, что нашел его в своих нравственных идеалах. Взамен догматической религии он создал из учений Евангелия, Руссо и китайской философии свободную от догмы, рациональную философию жизни, в центр которой ставил любовь к ближнему. Круг его идей строился на самоусовершенствовании человека и на программе непротивления злу насилием. Согласно этому развитие общества зависит от нравственного развития индивидуума. Интеллигенция должна выйти из рамок потерявшего гуманистическое содержание государственного строя, церкви и т. д., чтобы найти обратный путь к естественной жизни, которую представляет крестьянство. В противоположность народникам Толстой учит, что интеллигенция должна идти в народ не для того, чтобы поднять его до своего уровня и наставлять, а для того, чтобы слиться с ним. В круге идей Толстого крестьянство наделено правильным жизнепониманием. Деформированное цивили-

зацией человечество лишь среди народа может найти обратную дорогу к «естественному» образу жизни и трудиться над самоусовершенствованием с помощью мировоззрения, основанного на коллективной нравственности. Власть, утратившая гуманистическое содержание, начинает разрушаться сама по себе, как только всё более широкий коллектив стоящих на высоте нравственности крестьян и интеллигентов отстранится от нее.

В. И. Ленин считает, что совокупность идей Толстого «отражает» состояние России перед революцией 1905 года, служит «зеркалом» своеобразной проблематики и поисков пути «крестьянской буржуазной революции».

Полвека спустя вслед за Толстым Ласло Немет также в аналогичных условиях, в обстановке, требовавшей социальных перемен, изыскивал путь к решению накануне исторического поворота. «Однако он оценивает обстановку не как историк-философ или реформист, а — соответственно своей натуре — как моралист; нагнетает в ней не политические страсти, а повышенное чувство ответственности (главным образом по отношению к крестьянам, которые служили источником общего благосостояния)», — писал Немет о Льве Толстом в своей памятной речи в 1960 году, говоря в то же время и о самом себе.

На специфические проблемы Венгрии 30-х годов, ожидавшие своего коренного решения на мировом уровне, он искал и нашал ответ как «моралист». Основные идеи его «идеала качества», созданного взамен религии, — нравственно «образцовое человечество», выход из чуждого ему общества и утопия об «острове качества», вызванного к жизни сплочением усилий лучших представителей крестьянства и интеллигенции, — в основном напоминают вышеприведенные учения Толстого. В центре круга идей Немета 30-х годов стоит пробуждение самосознания венгров и формирование культуры, которая служит сохранению нации. Из великих интеллектуальных завоеваний Запада и ценностей культуры восточной и центральной Европы он разработал «идею качества», соединенную с социализмом. Своей работой по воспитанию сознания нации в таком направлении он дал программу и народному движению в области социально-политической.

Выброшенные за борт нации массы восточной Европы уже тогда смотрели на социализм как на учение о спасении, соединяя «идею качества» с социализмом. «Малым нациям (полунациям), состоящим из колеблющихся интеллигентов и обездоленных крестьян», Немет не только отводил историческую роль, но и считал, что с помощью высвобожденных их духовных ценностей можно будет обновить перезрелую культуру Запада. Как мыслитель-моралист Немет придавал культуре решающее значение в формировании жизни и судьбы народа. Подытоживая на страницах своего «Свидетеля» (Tanu) рекордные достижения западной культуры, он указал также на ставшие чуждыми человеку, природе черты новейшей цивилизации. Миссию восточных европейцев Немет видел и в том, что они должны привести цивилизацию к живительным, свежим источникам жизни. Так как на «Востоке есть

из чего, нужно лишь вскрыть и использовать то, что эти душевные автономии сохранили в музыке, фольклоре, мышлении» *(Most, Punte, Silta)*.

В критической работе «Две книги о Толстом» *(Két könyv Tolsztojról)* Ласло Немет подходил к анализу творчества Толстого с позиции собственного жизненного конфликта, рассматривая произведения русского писателя в ракурсе родственных ему целеустремлений. Критика, написанная в связи с публикациями типа Рене Фюлёп—Миллера, по существу лишь предлог, чтобы высказаться о Толстом. По его мнению, Толстой — в первую очередь «правдоискатель и учитель», скорее мыслитель, чем писатель, «хотя в силу своих способностей и творчества относится и к самым крупным художникам мира». Его чуткая совесть считала грехом имущественное неравенство, привилегированное классовое положение. Спасение угнетенного народа и вместе с тем всего человечества Толстой представлял за счет преобразующей идеи, применять которую он стал прежде всего на самом себе: «Нет более последовательно построенной человечеством пирамиды, чем его дух». Традиционный вопрос о том, что моральное и религиозное учение Толстого было «мизерным» по сравнению с «художественной высотой» его романов, Немет выдвигает лишь затем, чтобы единозначно выразить намерение улучшить мир. Для моралиста Немета «спасение» мира значит больше, чем само искусство, и, исходя из этого, такого характера «принципиальная» позиция» Толстого «. . . важнее в жизни человека, чем его художественные произведения».

Немет считает, что подобного рода человеческое и художественное кредо уже отсутствует в духовной культуре буржуазного Запада, в «величии» Гёте, Пруста и других. Как показывают также сборники характера Рене Фюлеп—Миллер, идея Толстого о спасении мира и его образ жизни, сходный с крестьянским, квалифицируются как чудачество. Однако очутившееся в положении кризиса человечество как на Востоке, так и на Западе нуждается в утопии, в такой заменяющей религию моральной точке опоры, которая, по выражению Немета, в предложенном «бездушным разумом» и иррационализмом положении подчиненности слепой воле и случаю послужит поддержкой к действию, к тому, чтобы устоять в исторической общественной жизни. Поэтому искания терзающегося морально-философскими проблемами Толстого, по мнению Немета, «не сальтомортале разума, а признание духовной тенденции, стоящей над жизнью».

В настоящей статье мы не ставим целью дать анализ взглядов Толстого на религию и «идеи качества» Ласло Немета, наша цель — обратить внимание на общие черты круга их идей. Как это явствует и из более ранней работы Немета о Толстом, оба они проповедовали такую философию жизни, которая основывалась на сознательным самоформировании человека и его моральном совершенстве. «Воскресение» души и «образцовая гуманность» включали в себя также и квалифицированное отношение к обществу и человечеству.По мысли Толстого, моральное развитие личности и спасение мира взаимо-

обусловлены. А в системе идей Немета самоформирование нации и создание культуры в процессе истории превращается в возможность. Хотя они понимали, что их идеалы не могут быть претворены в жизнь при общественном строе, который они так сильно критиковали и считали нетерпимым, но они твердо верили, что возможные решения и изменения, ведущие к спасению, немыслимы без морального очищения личности.

Их обоих жгло требование нравственности, лелеявшее мечту дать всеобъемлющий ответ на историко-социальные проблемы и одновременно указать путь к их решению. Их «идея качества» служила будущему всех времен, давала моральную программу человечеству, стремившемуся формировать самого себя. Выражаясь словами Иштвана Кирая, вечно прекрасное недостижимое стремление великих моралистов: «жить по-другому. . . взирать на более высокие вершины. . . рецепт жизни. . . поиски спасения. . . удовлетворение предъявляемых к качеству требований человека». (Литература и Общество. Вместо предисловия. — *Irodalom és Társadalom. Előszó helyett*).

Не случайно, что особый интерес к обоим мыслителям-моралистам в наши дни проявляет социалистический мир, когда он уже прошел трудный этап количественного распределения и более эффективно может заниматься проблемами качества. В первую очередь, мы обращаемся к таким моралистам, которым близки цели социализма и которые связывают качество общественного развития с моральным развитием личности. С этой точки зрения Иштван Кирай оценивает «идею качества» «моралиста» Ласло Немета как «гуманное требование, видевшее потребности человека в качестве». (Цит. произведение). А Эндрэ Тёрёк подчеркивает мессианский гуманизм Льва Толстого, который «своей силой этического концентрирования изыскивал третьего человека между человеком природы и человеком цивилизации». Человека рождающегося нового мира, сила которого формирующая общество и самого человека питается из нравственной идеи «сознания общей человеческой судьбы». («Третий человек» — *A harmadik ember*).

Уже в 30-х годах восхищали Немета в Толстом этот идеал, возможность «человека-примера». Поэтому противопоставлял он его отошедшим от буржуазного мира и замкнувшимся в себе мастерам слова Запада, чтобы в наше время высказаться в поддержку вспыхнувшему на Востоке исканию спасения и улучшения мира. Он считает, что Европа может выйти из кризиса, если моральные требования, питающиеся такого рода ценностями человеческой культуры, соединит с социально-историческими целями социализма.

По существу эту мысль он развивал и в период своей переводческой деятельности, а также в написанных позже критических статьях о Толстом: в эссе 50-х годов «В подмастерьях у Толстого» (*Tolsztoj inasaként*), в «Речи в память Толстого» (*Tolsztoj emlékbeszéd*), написанной в 1960-х годах и в работе «За что мы любим Толстого?» (*Miért szeretjük Tolsztojt?*). Несмотря на это он считал устаревшими и зашедшими в «тупик» попытки Толстого воскре-

сить религию, даже если они и выходили за пределы догматической «церковной оболочки». Но само требование, из которого всё это брало исток, Немет считал жизнеформирующей и конструктивной возможностью, изыскивающей гармонии с миром, человечеством. Так как в противоположность миропониманию поздней буржуазной культуры, Толстой верил в смысл жизни, в предназначение человека и в силы природы и потому изыскивал возможность их реформации. В этом аспекте он так же придерживался рационалистических взглядов на жизнь, как и Ласло Немет, который в своей «памятной речи» охарактеризовал своеобразный рационализм Толстого. Хотя его метод привел в «тупик», так же, как мыслители и моралисты нового времени, Толстой взамен религии хотел ввести «философию, регулирующую жизнь», основанную на этике и всемирном чувстве человеколюбия. И «его желание» философии жизни, «торжествующего рецепта жизни, воплощенного в образцовом человеке, . . . есть во всех нас», — говорит Немет, указывая на собственную идею качества, которую как в прошлом, так в настоящем и будущем он соединяет с развитием социализма. Ибо потребность в качестве «будет тем сильнее, чем более будем мы выходить за пределы воинствующей эпохи лихорадочного строительства социализма, и чем скорее станет целью создание большего уюта в новом здании, более возвышенная жизнь приумноживших свои ряды просвещенных умов, на чем будет сосредоточены лучшие силы» (Речь в память Толстого. — *Tolsztoj emlékbeszéd*).

Наряду с «идеей качества социализма» второй основной мыслью «Свидетеля» *(Tanú)* было «наведение духовного моста» между обманутыми в ходе истории и натравливавшимися друг на друга народами центральной и восточной Европы. Несмотря на то, что Немет жил и творил под «чарующим» воздействием западной культуры, ибо во времена, которые диктовали программу, качество создавалось и питалось на Западе, во многих своих статьях публицист боролся против односторонней переработки венгерской культуры на западный манер. По его мнению, причиной культурной заинтересованности ориентированной в основном на немцев, была политика правящих кругов Венгрии, связанных с Габсбургами; эта политика высушила исторические и культурные связи венгров, установленные в средних веках на Востоке и в Центральной Европе: «Венгерский народ пришел с Востока; рядом живут ближайшие братья по судьбе, они могут согревать», — развертывает он свою концепцию о народах Придунайского бассейна в Европе в своей работе *Most, Punte, Silta*. Малая нация, вклиненная между Востоком и Западом, должна найти место и смысл своей жизни в братском содружестве окружающих её народов, родственных ей по своей судьбе, духу и имеющих с ней общее будущее, чтобы она вместе с другими могла выстоять и проложить себе дорогу в истории и в культуре человечества. Задача нации — не односторонняя изоляция, а создание «духовного моста» в нескольких направлениях, синтезирование ценностей Востока и Запада.

Мысль о сполочении народов Центральной и Восточной Европы не являлась открытием Ласло Немета или писателей-«народников», но в 30-х годах именно они пытались использовать её как возможность протеста против политики правящих кругов и как своего рода моральный спасательный круг для Венгрии, втянутой в катастрофу второй мировой войны на стороне гитлеровской Германии. В силу того, что эта концепция представляла политические и культурные стремления всего народного движения, программа относительно Центральной и Восточной Европы имела и свой политический и культурный аспект. В упоминавшейся ранее статье 1940 года Немет пишет об исторической общности судьбы народов Восточной и Центральной Европы, об общем «устройстве», с которым так или иначе придется осваиваться «вместе». Возможно, что в историческом плане он имел в виду объединение придунайских малых народов, его мысленный взор озаряла идея некоего «Придунайско-европейского интернационала», как он писал в одной из своих воинствующих статей по вопросам социализма, однако «духовный мост» он хотел бы проложить ко всей Восточной Европе.

На рубеже критических 30—40-х годов, когда у него возникла отчаянная мысль уйти из Европы, удерживающей силой ему служила его привязанность к Востоку. Наряду с греческим идеалом, — в котором он восхищался моделью стремления от варварства к качеству, — он всё более настаивал на сближении с русской, славянской, финской, польской, румынской, сербской, чешской культурами («Уход из Европы» — *Kivonulás Európából)*. Однако он знал, что литература и искусство народа могут быть значимыми лишь в том случае, если через свои жизненные впечатления этот народ может представлять и общечеловеческие переживания.

Воплощение этих идей, а именно (по выражению Эндрэ Тёрёка) - «возвышение национальных проблем до общечеловеческих», во-первых, и согласование в мировом масштабе ценностей Востока и Запада, во-вторых, Немет видел, в первую очередь, в творчестве двух гигантов мысли Восточной Европы — Толстого и Достоевского. Формирование национальной культуры, по мнению Немета, также не имело целью, чтобы венгерский народ копировал культуру Европы и служил её проводником; напротив, ассимилированием собственных ценностей венгры должны творческим образом вмешаться в «великий разговор народов». («Уход из Европы» — *Kivonulás Európából)*. Аналогично и в своей критике «Две книги о Толстом» *(Két könyv Tolsztojról)* он выдвигает мысль о том, что, «пожалуй, именно русское влияние могло бы возвести над венгерской литературой то синее небо бессмертных проблем, без которого национальная литература может быть лишь литературой племени народов».

Эту мысль, выдвинутую в «Свидетеле» *(Tanú)*, Немет развивает далее в написанной в 50-х годах работе «В подмастерьях у Толстого». В центр внимания он ставит теперь не мыслителя, а писателя-романиста, с тем, чтобы, урав-

новешивая оба плана, дать в созданной позднее «Памятной речи» *(Tolsztoj emlékbeszéd)* портрет Толстого — «моралиста». Представители марксистской публицистики 50-х годов, в первую очередь Дьёрдь Лукач, подчеркивали значение Толстого как «предшественника» революции; наряду с его реализмом, ставшим «зеркалом» действительности, они отмечали «крестьянский, плебейский гуманизм» его эстетики и «утопическую» сущность его идей этического плана («Толстой и развитие реализма» — *Tolsztoj és a realizmus fejlődése*). В соответствии с этим требованием и опытом, накопленным в ходе своей переводческой работы, Немет развивал свою позицию в отношении Толстого, изложенную в «Свидетеле» *(Tanú)*.

Он дал анализ метода и эволюции Льва Толстого как писателя-раелиста, показав при этом, как согласовывались в его творчестве в мировом масштабе ценности Востока и Запада: Толстой методом французского аналитического романа изображал «не только русского, но незападного человека, не прошедшего до конца исторического развития Запада, и между тем расширил этот метод, приспосабливая его и для изображения более первобытной, более общей человечности». Благодаря этому он сумел выполнить одну из задач восточно-европейского искусства XX века, запечатлев в мировой литературе «душу народа», первородную человечность, не искалеченную цивилизацией, которая «несмотря на свою отсталость, . . . более велика и более совершенна, чем западная». Важное значение этого в будущем Немет пояснил на примере Бартока. Именно Бартока, синтезировавшего народную музыку народов Центральной и Восточной Европы эпохи переселения народов с традициями западной классической музыки, и осуществившего в музыке то, что Толстой — в литературе. По мнению Немета, высвобожденные народные ценности могут послужить фундаментом новой мировой цивилизации, универсальной культуры человечества в будущем. Таким путем может найти искусство «желаемую базу новой цивилизации: то общечеловеческое, что живет в каждом» («Барток и музыка XIX века» *Bartók és a tizenkilencedik századi zene*).

Немет чувствовал родственным для себя не только идейный мир Льва Толстого, но и его писательский метод. Он подчеркивал в нем те черты, которые определили его собственный творческий метод и направление. Новаторство реалистического изобразительного метода Толстого, предначертавшего направление нашей эпохи, он видел в том, что тот «мог быть основоположником физиологических школ современной литературы», так как свои персонажи, как и Немет, запечатлевал в их «биологических ядрах», продвигаясь из глубины личности к внешности, ко всё более широкому изображению окружающего мира.

В силу своей «физиологической» заинтересованности оба писателя создали бессмертные шедевры в области психологического романа, показав субъектное во взаимосвязи с объективным миром. Их психологические романы являются одновременно и историческими. Одну сторону своего двойного писатель-

ского зеркала они направляли на глубину души, а другую — обращали в сторону внешнего мира. Таким образом, они не только как мыслители, но и как художники стремились к гармонии, возможной между субъектом и объективным миром. Поэтому наряду с глубоким изучением человеческой души они интересовались формами объективной действительности, процессами, происходящими в семье, обществе, в истории. Мастерство психологического анализа они соединяли с искусством отражения социальных проблем, исторической действительности.

Такого рода требовательность независимо ни от какого воздействия была характерна воззрению Немета Ласло, но что касается писательского примера, которому он следовал, то наряду с Прустом мы назовем Толстого, бывшего наиболее близким ему. Влияние Льва Толстого лишь возросло в ходе перевода «Анны Карениной» и других произведений Толстого и фактически слилось с делом всей жизни и творчества Ласло Немета. Не случайно, что свой писательский путь Немет завершил романом, в котором, как и Толстой, изложил тезисы своей идеологии, обобщил результаты всей своей жизни как мыслителя и художника. Среди произведений Немета мы можем найти вариант современного интеллектуального романа, изображающего духовную и нравственную эволюцию человека, начиная с «Человеческой комедии» *(Emberi színjáték)*, через «Последнюю попытку» *(Utolsó kísérlet)*, но его романы «Жгучая Эстер» *(Égető Eszter)* и «Милосердие» *(Irgalom)* уже явно свидетельствуют о влиянии Льва Толстого. Героиня романа «Милосердие» *(Irgalom)* Кертес Агнеш, как и граф Нехлюдов в романе «Воскерсение», — носительница идеологических, педагогических и этических взглядов автора, история её жизни всего лишь предлог, но сама героиня — рупор, через который писатель-мыслитель шлёт свое последнее послание человечеству: Возродитесь морально и будьте милосердны друг к другу!

«Толстой был правдоискателем и учителем», — говорил в неоднократно упоминавшейся ранней его работе Немет Ласло, избравший эпиграфом своей жизни слова папы Григория VII, предназначая их и своей эпитафией: «я любил правду...», подобно умиравшему на стации Астапово Льву Толстому, который, прощаясь с жизнью и как бы характеризуя себя, говорил: «Я люблю правду... правду люблю». ;

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# Die Aufklärung in Osteuropa*

Von

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(Budapest)

## Verspätung, Gedehntheit, Stilvermischung

Was bedeutet die Aufklärung in Osteuropa, welche Zeitspanne umfaßt sie?

In einem Sinne bedeutet sie jenen geistigen Prozeß, dessen wesentlicher Gehalt die Entwicklung der modernen, von mittelalterlich-feudalistischen Gebundenheiten freien Persönlichkeit ist.

Über diesen Prozeß, über seine Ausgedehntheit in der russischen Literatur schreibt der Literarhistoriker Juri Lotman wie folgt: »Im Falle Rußlands müssen wir von einer Aufklärung des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts sprechen, ihre Traditionen haben sich für Herzen, für Tschernyschewski, für Tolstoi und für die Narodniki als lebendig erwiesen; Dostojewski kämpfte gegen sie als zeitgenössischen Gegner; ein Schriftsteller, der weder Anhänger noch Gegner der Aufklärung war, sondern jenseits ihrer stand, war Tschechow.«[1] In anderen, kleineren Literaturen sind die Grenzen der Aufklärung noch weiter. Vincas Mykolaitis-Putinas stellt in seinem Buch »Im Schatten der Altäre«, das 1933 erschien (es ist der erste wirkliche litauische Roman!), im Schicksal eines seine Berufung später aufgebenden Priesters gerade diesen Befreiungsprozeß dar. Die stürmische Aufnahme des Romans zeugt davon, daß der Schriftsteller sogar in den 30er Jahren unseres Jahrhunderts noch aktuelle, schmerzende Fragen berührte.

Die Aufklärung begleitete in diesem Sinne, indem sie zwar immer abweichende Formen annahm, die Richtungen, Tendenzen des Klassizismus, des Sentimentalismus, der Romantik, des Realismus, des Naturalismus und des Symbolismus bis zum Ende. Als Benennung, als Terminus wird sie jedoch nur in der russischen Literatur auf die gesamte Epoche ausgedehnt, anderswo wird der Begriff ‚(nationale) Wiedergeburt' verwendet, und die Aufklärung tritt als deren erste, bis zur Romantik währende Phase auf. Dieser Unterschied ist auch verständlich, war doch die russische Nation die einzige in Osteuropa, die über einen selbständigen Staat verfügte, während die anderen 16 hierher gehörenden Völker (Tschechen, Slowaken, Polen, Esten, Letten, Litauer,

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Belorussen, Ukrainer, Rumänen, Ungarn, Slowenen, Kroaten, Serben, Bulgaren, Albanier, Griechen) um ihre nationale Existenz kämpfen und immer wieder ihr Recht auf das Leben unter Beweis stellen mußten. Natürlich war die Entstehung der modernen bürgerlichen Nation ein nicht weniger ausgedehnter Prozeß wie die Geburt der modernen, freien Persönlichkeit, und mit Recht kann ihr Endpunkt auf die Zeit nach dem ersten Weltkrieg angesetzt werden.

Dies sind die aufregendsten 150 Jahre der sowieso schon unruhigen osteuropäischen Geschichte, sowohl was die nationalen als auch was die individuellen Schicksale betrifft.

Von nationalem Gesichtspunkt aus verändern sich in diesem Gebiet gerade zu jener Zeit die Kräfteverhältnisse: nach der dritten Teilung des größten Staates Europas im 18. Jahrhundert, Polens — eigentlich des gemeinsamen polnisch-litauischen Staates — im Jahre 1795 wurde immer mehr das Russische Reich, auch unterstützt von der Idee der slawischen Gemeinschaft, zur führenden Macht dieses Raumes, mit der die Monarchie der Habsburger und das seine Position nur mehr in Südosteuropa haltende Türkische Reich es erfolglos aufzunehmen versuchen. Diese große Wacheablösung, die die hierher gehörenden Völker »östlicher« machte, brachte die Kräftelinien durcheinander, strahlte Wirkungen von neuer Richtung aus.[2] Es lohnt sich zu untersuchen, in wieviele Teile die nach einheitlicher Sprache und einheitlichem selbständigem Staatswesen strebenden Völker gegliedert waren, und mit welchen anderen Sprachen sie es aufzunehmen hatten.

Die Menschen mit tschechischer Muttersprache lebten in drei über eine ständische Eigenständigkeit verfügenden Provinzen des Habsburgerreiches, in Böhmen, Mähren und Schlesien, und mußten ihr Sprache gegenüber der deutschen Sprache durchsetzen (Karel Hynek Mácha, der große Romantiker, schrieb seine ersten Gedichte noch deutsch). Daß wirklich von Sein oder Nicht-Sein die Rede ist, davon zeugen auch die Worte von Josef Jungmann aus dem Jahre 1810: »Das Tschechisch sprechende Volk zählt noch immer mehr als 6 Millionen, und diese Nation ist älter als Napoleon und Kaiser Franz, und wir hoffen, daß sie beide überleben wird.« (Natürlich ist auch charakteristisch, mit welchem Ziel dieser fanatische Fürsprecher der tschechischen Sprache dem Zeugnis eines Briefes nach im gleichen Jahr die Kultivierung der tschechischen Sprache betreibt: »Ich glaube fest, daß die russische Macht die französische schlägt, und das muß uns Slawen zur Freude gereichen, denn so werden sämtliche slawischen Dialekte vereinheitlicht werden. Wir übernehmen die Vervollkomnung der Sprache von den Russen, die Russen übernehmen sie von uns. Was wir also jetzt tschechisch schreiben, das schreiben wir bereits für jene große slawische Literatur.«)

Die Slowaken lebten zwar innerhalb eines Staates, doch bedeutete dies nur, daß sie in Ermanglung jeder politischen (ständischen, provinziellen) Selbständigkeit nur die Sprache von der ungarischen Bevölke-

rung unterschied. Bis zum Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts existierte die slowakische Sprache nicht, sie galt nur als Dialekt des Tschechischen. Als am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts die Schaffung der selbständigen slowakischen Literatursprache auf die Tagesordnung gesetzt wurde, damit nach dem Adel nicht auch noch das Volk vollständig magyarisiert wurde, wurde die Lösung der Frage durch religiöse Ursachen erschwert: den überwiegend katholischen Slowaken entsprach die evangelisch-lutherische tschechische Sprache nicht, und deshalb schrieb der die tschechisch-slowakische, die slawische Einheit im allgemeinen verkündende, leidenschaftlich ungarnfeindliche in Pest lebende slowakische Geistliche Ján Kollár vergebens tschechisch. Andererseits scheiterte jedoch der Versuch des katholischen Priesters Anton Bernolák, seine eigene Mundart der Umgebung von Trnava (Nagyszombat) auf den Rang einer Literatursprache zu erheben, am Widerstand der ungarnfeindlichen Lutheraner, und lange Zeit hindurch war der Dichter Jan Holly sein einziger Anhänger. Einen Ausweg aus dieser verzwickten Situation fand Ľudovit Štúr mit klugen Kompromissen erst nach 1840. Die Polen lebten nach der ersten Teilung ihres Landes im Jahre 1772, der zweiten im Jahre 1793 und der dritten im Jahre 1795 in Rußland, Preußen und Österreich. Dennoch befanden sie sich von sprachlichem Gesichtspunkt aus vielleicht in der glücklichsten Lage. Das »goldene Zeitalter« existierte bei ihnen wirklich, und nicht nur in der Phantasie der sich für die nationale Blüte Begeisternden wie bei vielen anderen Völkern. Dieses goldene Zeitalter des 16. Jahrhunderts hatte unter anderem auch eine kodifizierte und normierte Literatursprache hervorgebracht (mit einer reichen Literatur von Weltniveau) und das geistige Leben, das unter der Herrschaft des Königs Stanislaw August Poniatowski einen Aufschwung nahm, vermochte sich auf diese reichen Traditionen zu stützen. Die Rechte der polnischen Sprache zog niemand in Zweifel, und auch nach dem Aufstand des Jahres 1863 versuchten die russischen Behörden die polnische Sprache nur in der Verwaltung zu Gunsten der russischen Sprache in den Hintergrund zu drängen. (Natürlich ging das lange Nebeneinanderleben der beiden verwandten Sprachen nicht spurlos an ihnen vorüber: einer der größten polnischen Magier des Wortes des 20. Jahrhunderts, der Symbolist Boleslaw Leśmian, begann in seiner Jugend seine Laufbahn in Kiew mit Gedichten in russischer Sprache.) Im Falle der drei baltischen Völker ist am charakteristischsten, daß die Entwicklung der Epoche der Aufklärung zweimal sozusagen im Keim erstickte: zum ersten Mal im Jahre 1795, zum zweiten Mal jedoch (und das gilt vor allem für die vielverheißende litauische Literatur) schon »im Gefängnis der Völker«, im Russischen Reich. Als Zeitpunkt dieses zweiten Absterbens könnte das Jahr 1825, die Niederschlagung des Dekabristenaufstandes, aufgefaßt werden, doch ist es vielleicht noch begründeter, das Jahr 1831, die Niederschlagung des Polenaufstandes, zu nehmen. Die zaristische Reaktion war bis zu jenem Zeitpunkt so stark geworden, daß sie jede polnische, baltische, belorussische, ukrainische aufklärerische

Bestrebung (sowohl von nationalem als auch von gesellschaftlichem Standpunkt aus) für weitere 20 bis 30 Jahre unmöglich machte. Vor allem die protestantischen Esten und Letten, die nie über einen selbständigen Staat und über damit zusammenhängende Traditionen verfügt hatten, gerieten in eine ausgelieferte Situation, trotz der Tatsache, daß der Zar den baltischen Feudalherren, den sogenannten schwarzen Baronen, besondere Vorrechte gesichert hatte (die Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft z.B. war hier in manchen Gebieten schon zwischen 1816 und 1819 erfolgt). In der estnischen und der lettischen Literatur mußte anfangs der deutsche Einfluß bekämpft werden. Dies ist verständlich, denn auch an den Anfängen im 16. Jahrhundert standen Bücher über religiöse Themen von deutschen Geistlichen, und genau so sind auch die ersten Betreiber der weltlichen Literatur in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts Priester. Die von ihnen geschaffene Literatur didaktischen Charakters wurde von der zugegebenen Absicht geleitet, daß sie auch auf diese Art und Weise den Einfluß auf ihre Gläubigen, die estnischen und lettischen Bauern, behalten und ein Gegengewicht zur reichen Folkloreliteratur schaffen können. Zu Beginn bedeutete hier also die Russifizierung, daß der Zar die zur Schaffung einer selbständigen Kultur nicht geeigneten Bauernvölker den deutschen Feudalherren überließ. Charakteristisch für die verworrene Situation ist, daß ganz bis zum Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts statt der deutschgesinnten Universität in Riga die 1802 im estnischen Tartu (Dorpat) gegründete Universität das Zentrum der Reformbestrebungen war. Vor hier nahm 1856 die sogenannte Bewegung der Jungletten ihren Ausgang, und die erste lettische Zeitung, die von 1862 an erscheinende »Peterburgas Avizes«, war gezwungen, nach Petersburg zu fliehen, um sich der deutschen Zensur in Riga entziehen zu können. (Um so mehr, weil der Zensor der lettischen Bücher in Petersburg jener Krišjanis Valdemars war, der mit seiner Tätigkeit als Autor von Wörterbüchern und als Übersetzer mit dem Ungarn Ferenc Kazinczy verglichen werden kann, der während seiner Studienzeit in Tartu mit dem ergreifend lächerlichen Hochmut der Unterdrückten nach seinen Namen geschrieben hatte: »der Lette«.) Es ist also kein Wunder, daß auch der erste bedeutendere lettische Dichter, Juris Alūnans, sogar in einem 1869(!) erschienen Gedicht nur auf die Anfänge in der Zukunft vertrauen kann:

> Letten, auch Euer harrt ein Morgen,
> Es wird die Mode der Sänger kommen,
> Und gelehrte Weise traten in Euren Reihen auf.
>
> (*Rits* — Morgen)

Es sei hinzugefügt, daß die Hoffnung auf die unmittelbare Zukunft vergebens war: 1877 wurde die Selbständigkeit jener Gouvernements — des eigentlichen Estlands, Livlands und Kurlands (Kurzeme) —, abgeschafft, in denen die Esten und Letten verstreut lebten, und von 1881 an, von der Thronbesteigung Alexanders III. an, begann eine erbarmungslose Russifizierung. Damals wurde

z.B. das Russische Amtssprache. In einer einigermaßen abweichenden Situation befand sich die litauische Literatur. Bis 1795 war die in Ostpreußen (auch Klein-Litauen oder Preußisch Litauen genannt) entstehende und deutschen Einfluß aufweisende literarische Produktion am bedeutendsten, denn in dem zu Polen gehörenden eigentlichen Litauen war der die Kultur hervorbringende litauische Adel vollkommen polnisch geworden. Nach 1795 jedoch wurde die in Preußen entstehende litauische Literatur immer ärmer, ihr Schwerpunkt verlagerte sich nach Litauen. Die Ideen der Aufklärung verbreiteten sich unter dem Einfluß der Napoleonischen Kriege immer mehr, trotz der von den zaristischen Behörden schon Anfang 1795 eingeführten strengen Zensur. Im Jahre 1807 wurde auch ein von Preußen erlangtes litauisches Gebiet Bestandteil des unter der Oberhoheit Napoleons stehenden Großherzogtums Warschau, ja während seines Rußlandfeldzugs von 1810 schuf Napoleon in Vilnius auch die provisorische Regierung des selbständigen Großherzogtums Litauen. Die Hochschule in Vilnius erhielt 1803 den Rang einer Universität, sie wurde ein Zentrum der sehr starken Freimaurerbewegung und der verschiedenen radikalen Gesellschaften, deren Mitglieder in erster Linie polnische Schriftsteller waren, u.a. Mickiewicz, Słowacki. Sie übte aber auch einen anregenden Einfluß auf die sich herausbildende litauische und belorussische Intelligenz aus. Das Zentrum der Universität Vilnius konnte am Anfang der 1820er Jahre noch bestanden haben, als die zaristischen Behörden auf die verschiedenen Gesellschaften niederschlugen, ihre Mitglieder einkerkerten, in die Verbannung schickten, und schließlich im Jahre 1832 auch die Universität schlossen. Auf diese Art und Weise half den Litauern in einem gewissen Sinne ihre Verbundenheit mit der polnischen Kultur, förderte sie, obzwar sie auch für ihre eigene sprachliche und literarische Selbständigkeit auftreten mußten, manchmal auch gegen das Polnische. Natürlich mußten sie auch die gegen die Polen gerichteten Unterdrückungsmaßnahmen erleiden, sowohl nach der Niederschlagung des Aufstandes von 1831 als auch nach der von 1863. So konnten z.B. von 1864 ganz bis 1904 Bücher in litauischer Sprache nur in kyrillischen Lettern gedruckt werden. Die erste litauische Zeitschrift, die zwischen 1883 und 1886(!) erscheinende »Aušra«, wurde in Ostpreußen gedruckt und von da nach Litauen geschmuggelt. Der »Buchträger« war damals eine besondere Beschäftigung, ein besonderes Wort. Die litauische Kultur wurde damals sogar aus der Volksschule verdrängt und verbreitete sich wiederum durch mündliche Traditionen. Am besten charakterisiert diese Situation die aus dem Jahre 1906 stammende berühmte Figur von Petras Rimša, die eine Bäuerin am Webstuhl darstellt, die ihr Kind Schreiben lehrt. Der Titel der Figur lautet: »Die litauische Schule. 1864—1904«. Um die Jahrhundertwende bot Riga der litauischen Intelligenz eine Heimstätte, es wurde weder von den katholischen Polen noch von den prawoslawischen Russen bedrängt. . . Die belorussische Sprache und Literatur existierte bis zur Mitte des vergangenen

Jahrhunderts. Zar Nikolaus I. verbot 1840 in einer Verordnung ganz einfach den Gebrauch des Wortes »Belorußland«! Wie die Litauer, so mußten auch die Belorussen nicht nur gegen den russischen, sondern auch gegen den polnischen, ja sogar gegen den litauischen Einfluß kämpfen. Von einigen wurde die belorussische Sprache sogar um die Mitte des Jahrhunderts noch für eine polnische Mundart gehalten, während zugleich ein großer Teil der belorussischen Gebiete als Litauen bezeichnet wurde. Die Russifizierung nahm erst nach 1830 vernichtende Ausmaße an, von dieser Zeit an löste das Russische auch in den Gymnasien das Polnische ab. Die Kämpfe der belorussischen Literatur und Aufklärung blieben jedoch bis zum Ende immer ziemlich unbedeutend, aus dem einfachen Grund, da der allgemeine kulturelle Stand dieses Gebietes verzweifelt rückständig war. Hierfür nur eine einzige Angabe: im Jahre 1860 hatten von 10 000 belorussischen Bauern nur 19 überhaupt eine Schulbank gesehen. Lange Zeit galt die ukrainische Sprache als Kleinrussisch, als russischer Dialekt. Die erste ukrainische Grammatik, ein Werk von Osip Pawlowski, erschien im Jahre 1818 in St. Petersburg unter dem Titel *Grammatik des kleinrussischen Dialekts*. Von den 30er Jahren des Jahrhunderts an wurde der eigenständige Charakter der ukrainischen Sprache immer offensichtlicher, besonders nach der Erscheinung des Gedichtsbandes *Der Kobsar* von Taras Schewtschenko im Jahre 1840. Doch war Iwan Franko sogar noch im Jahre 1907 in einem Artikel gezwungen, sich über die Schwächen der Literatursprache zu beklagen. Damals waren die Schriftsteller nicht selten zur Zweisprachigkeit gezwungen, sie mußten sich des gut entwickelten Russischen bedienen. Schewtschenko hatte alle neun, nach seinem Tode erschienen Erzählungen in russischer Sprache geschrieben, doch gab es außer ihm von der alten Vergangenheit ganz bis zu unseren Tagen viele, die sich von Zeit zu Zeit in der Sprache des benachbarten Verwandten ausdrückten, von Hrihori Kwitka-Osnowjanenko ganz bis zu Leonid Perwomajski. Besonders schwierig wurde die Lage nach dem Gesetz von Ems im Jahre 1876, das untersagte, in der kleinrussischen Mundart zu schreiben und in diese zu übersetzen. Franko konnte in seiner später in Galizien veröffentlichten ukrainischen Literaturgeschichte mit Recht feststellen, daß von diesem Zeitpunkt an zwanzig Jahre hindurch »Genf das Zentrum des ukrainischen geistigen Lebens war«. Die Ukrainer hatten außer gegen das Russische in zwei Provinzen des Habsburgerreiches, in Galizien und in der Bukowina, auch gegen die polnische bzw. rumänische, in der Karpatenukraine jedoch gegen die ungarische kulturelle Unterdrückung zu kämpfen. Die Rumänen lebten in vier Staaten: in den unter türkischer Oberhoheit stehenden zwei Fürstentümern, in der Walachei und in der Moldau, sowie in Siebenbürgen und zu einem kleinen Teil in Ungarn. In den beiden rumänischen Fürstentümern war die neugriechische Kultur so vorherrschend (die Elementarschule ausgenommen war die Unterrichtssprache z.B. das Griechische), daß die Aufklärung ihre Wirkung erst später verspüren ließ als

in Siebenbürgen, wo das sog. Siebenbürger Trias von europäischer Kultur (Samuel Micu-Klein, Georghe Sincai, Petru Maior), das gegen die ungarische Bewegung auftrat, doch auch von ihr lernte, seine Tätigkeit bereits am Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts aufnahm. Im eigentlichen Ungarn, sowie in Siebenbürgen und in Kroatien wurde Ungarisch gesprochen. Dennoch faßte die damalige öffentliche Meinung das ungarische Sprachgebiet als einheitlich auf. Der ungarische Sprachkampf gegen die deutsche Sprache war vielleicht nicht so dramatisch wie z.B. bei den Tschechen, und ging in erster Linie um die Frage der Staatssprache. Der größte Teil der Slowenen lebte in den südöstlichen Ländern Österreichs, außerdem in zwei Komitaten Ungarns, ein kleiner Teil jedoch sogar in der Republik Venedig. Dementsprechend mußten sie sich in erster Linie von dem vorherrschenden deutschen sprachlichen Einfluß frei machen. Dieser Prozeß brachte auch seltsame Erscheinungen hervor. So schrieb z.B. Matija Čop, der begeisterte Teilnehmer an den Diskussionen über die Sprachpflege in den Jahren 1830—34, der Kampfgefährte des genialen France Preseren, keine einzige Zeile in slowenischer Sprache nieder. Gerade durch ihren Kampf gegen die deutsche Sprache gelangte die slowenische Spracherneuerung außerhalb der einen einheitlichen südslawischen Staat fordernden illyrischen Bewegung, und schlug einen anderen Weg zur Selbständigkeit ein. Kroaten siedelten in dem zur ungarischen Krone gehörenden Kroatien und Slawonien, in dem zu Österreich gehörenden Dalmatien und Istrien. Zur Zeit der Napoleonischen Kriege unterstanden sie genauso wie die Slowenen einige Jahre in den sog. Illyrischen Provinzen der französischen Oberhoheit. Außer gegen die ungarische und deutsche sprachliche Vorherrschaft mußte von den 40er Jahren an der unermüdliche Organisator Ljudevit Gaj, der Apostel des Illyrismus, auch gegen die eigene Gliederung in Dialekte kämpfen. Die Serben lebten zum Großteil unter türkischer Herrschaft, außerdem im südlichen Teile Ungarns bzw. in einzelnen ungarischen Städten. Das wichtigste geistige Zentrum auch der Bewegung ihrer nationalen Erneuerung war Pest und Buda. In sprachlicher Hinsicht mußte in erster Linie das noch im 18. Jahrhundert vorherrschende Kirchenslawische auf russischer Grundlage durch die gesprochene Sprache ersetzt werden. Diese Arbeit führte von 1810 an der großartige Vuk Karadžić durch. Die Krönung der serbischen Spracherneuerung war einerseits die dramatische Dichtung *Kranz der Berge* des ersten wirklich großen Dichters Petar Njegoš im Jahre 1847, andererseits das Wiener Abkommen von 1850, in dem sich die serbischen und die kroatischen Schriftsteller in der mundartlichen Zugehörigkeit der Literatursprache einigten und damit die Grundlagen der gemeinsamen serbokroatischen Literatursprache schufen. Wie schwer dies war, davon zeugt, daß es dem Kroaten Tomo Maretić erst 1899 gelang, die endgültige Grammatik von wissenschaftlicher Anforderung auszuarbeiten. Die Bulgaren gehörten ganz bis 1878 zum Türkischen Reich, bis sie wie Rumänien und Serbien durch den Frieden von San Stefano nach dem

russisch—türkischen Krieg die nationale Unabhängigkeit erlangten. Die erst in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts stärker werdende Bewegung hatte das Neugriechische und das veraltete Kirchenslawische zu verdrängen. Unter den rückständigsten Verhältnissen in Osteuropa lebten die Albaner. Die nationale Bewegung der Erneuerung, die vor allem die gemeinsame Literatursprache der mohammedanischen, katholischen und prawoslawischen Albaner schaffen wollte, tat ihre ersten Schritte erst im letzten Drittel des 19. Jahrhunderts. Auch die Griechen waren ausgelieferte Untertanen des Türkischen Reiches. Von kulturellem Standpunkt aus war ihre Situation jedoch durch die reichen Traditionen günstig. Die wichtigste Frage ihrer schon am Ende des 18. Jahrhundersts beginnenden Spracherneuerung war die Vereinheitlichung des klassischen Griechischen und der gesprochenen Sprache, bzw. des Verhältnis ihrer Vermischung.

Das hier skizzierte, fast unüberschaubare Bild wird durch zwei tote Sprachen, durch das Lateinische bei den Katholiken und das Kirchenslawische bei den Prawoslawen, noch unübersichtlicher. Es trifft zwar zu, daß hinter keiner von beiden eine wirkliche politische Macht stand (obzwar ihre Anwendung auch von Machtinteressen gelenkt wurde), dennoch bedeuteten sie in mehreren Fällen ein ernstes Hindernis bei der Entwicklung der Sprache und der Literatur, ein Hindernis, das erst die Romantiker überwinden konnten, indem sie die toten Sprachen bzw. ihre Elemente zu einer Stilschicht der neu entstandenen modernen Literatursprache degradierten.

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Sieht man diese Geteiltheit, Gespaltenheit, ist der Spruch von István Széchenyi verständlich: »In ihrer Sprache lebt die Nation«. Auch der tschechische Aufklärer Jan Nejedlý identifiziert die Sprache, die Kultur und die Heimat miteinander: »Es ist die Pflicht eines jeden, seine Heimat, d.h. seine Muttersprache und die nationale Moral ehrlich, heiß zu lieben.« Gerade das war die Ursache für den großen Wandel des Begriffs der Nation. Der an juristisch-politische und in erster Linie an Institutionen gebundene Begriff der französische Enzyklopädisten wurde nach den Lehren von Herder, Schelling und den Brüdern Schlegel in Osteuropa abgelehnt; es wurde erklärt, daß die Nation eine ältere Formation als die politischen Formen ist, und entgegen deren Veränderlichkeit ihr Charakter von stabileren Faktoren bestimmt wird wie z.B. von Sprache, Boden, Landschaft und Klima. Der vollständige Mangel an Institutionen hatte vielerorts dazu geführt, daß das einzige Kriterium der nationalen Zusammengehörigkeit die gemeinsame Sprache geblieben war. Das einzige Kriterium und lange Zeit hindurch ein unerreichbarer Traum.

Miroslav Krleža konnte in einer Novelle diese Sehnsucht sogar schon parodisieren. Auf einem Empfang im kroatischen Theresienstadt zu Ehren des

japanischen Feldmarschalleutnants konnte im Jahre 1906 das einstige Wiener Zimmermädchen, gegenwärtig Generalsgattin, dem hohen japanischen Gast folgende verblüffende Zusammenhänge zwischen der sprachlichen Einheit und der Revolution präsentieren: »Natürlich gibt es keine Revolution, selbstverständlich nicht, um Gotteswillen, Exzellenz, nur daß es bei Ihnen, Japanern, auch keine Ungarn gibt, bei Ihnen wird nicht Ungarisch gesprochen, dort bei Ihnen spricht ja die ganze Welt japanisch! Ihr seid's ja alle Japaner! Aber bei uns? Wenn das Zimmermädchen eine Wienerin ist, dann kann es kein Wort Ungarisch. (. . .) Leicht ist es den Japanern, dort sprechen ja alle Japanisch, hat man eben wenigstens in Sachen der Sprache nicht so viele Sorgen mit den Zimmermädchen!«

*(Begräbnis in Theresienstadt)*

Für die im sprachlichen Chaos Osteuropas Lebenden war Japan also in erster Linie mit seiner sprachlichen Einheitlichkeit anziehend. . .

Auch aus dem bisher Gesagten geht hervor, daß die nationale Wiedergeburt in Osteuropa kein geradliniger, gleichmäßiger Prozeß war, sondern daß je nach den politischen Ereignissen ihr Elan immer wieder nachließ, daß manchmal direkt von vorn angefangen werden mußte. Die Aufklärung, bzw. die nationale Wiedergeburt ging auf kulturellem und belletristischem Gebiet in ungefähr identischen Phasen vor sich, auch dann, wenn hier und da manche dieser Phasen auch fehlte, bzw. zu einem anderen Zeitpunkt vor sich ging. Die politischen Ereignisse der drei großen Reiche des Raumes, die sich zu verschiedenen Zeitpunkten abspielten, die selbst ziemlich heterogen waren von dem Standpunkt aus, daß sie auf die nationale Unabhängigkeit oder auf die bürgerliche Umgestaltung, eventuell auf beide abzielten, erklären es, daß innerhalb der osteuropäischen Aufklärung, die im Vergleich zur westeuropäischen verspätet und schleppend eintrat, zwischen den einzelnen Literaturen noch besondere Phasenverschiebungen, Phasenunterschiede bestehen. Von welchen Ereignissen ist hier die Rede? Bei den zum Habsburgerreich gehörenden von folgenden: von den Aufständen in Verbindung mit den Choleraepidemien von 1830 und 1831; vom Aufstand von 1846 in Galizien; von den Revolutionen des Jahres 1848. Im Russischen Reich sind folgende gemeint: der polnische Aufstand von 1794; der Sieg über Napoleon im Jahre 1812; der Wiener Kongreß von 1815, und im Sinne seiner Beschlüsse die »vierte Teilung« Polens, die Schaffung des der Herrschaft des Zaren unterstellten Polnischen Königreiches (Kongreßpolens); der Dekabristenaufstand 1825; der polnische Aufstand von 1830; die Jahre 1848—49 (man darf nicht vergessen, daß russische Truppen nicht nur den ungarischen Freiheitskampf, sondern auch den Aufstand der Rumänen in der Walachei gegen die Türken niedergeschlagen haben); die Aufhebung der Leibeigenschaft im Jahre 1861; der polnisch—litauisch—belorussische Aufstand von 1863; der Krimkrieg

gegen die Türkei. Im Türkischen Reich: die serbischen Aufstände von 1804 und 1814; der rumänische und griechische Freiheitskampf von 1821; der bulgarische Aufstand von 1876 sowie der albanische Freiheitskampf des Jahres 1911.

Nichts ist charakteristischer für die Phasenverschiebung als die Tatsache, wann die Befruchtung der modernen Literatursprache ungefähr beendet und wann danach der erste wirklich bedeutende Schriftsteller aufgetreten ist, d.h. wann die Aufklärung im engeren Sinne des Wortes zu Ende ist. Das Russische nicht in Betracht gezogen, wo Wassili Shukowski bereits im ersten Jahrzehnt des Jahrhunderts seine nach deutschen Vorbildern gedichteten romantischen Balladen herausgab, und bei den Polen, wo Adam Mickiewicz im Vorwort zu seinen *Gedichten* im Jahre 1822 zum ersten Mal das Programm der Romantik formuliert hat. Ungefähr in dieselbe Zeit fällt auch das Auftreten des Ungarn Mihály Vörösmarty. Im Jahre 1836 erschien das Gedicht »Der Mai« von Karel Hynek Mácha, das das erste große Werk der tschechischen Lyrik ist. Das Erscheinungsjahr des Werkes *Der Kobsar* von Taras Schewtschenko ist 1840. Bei den Slowaken, lassen wir den in tschechischer Sprache dichtenden Ján Kollár aus, geben die Großen der Schule von Štúr, Andrej Sládkovič, Samo Chalupka, Ján Botto und Janko Král', ihre Werke von der zweiten Hälfte der 40er Jahre an heraus. Die Kroaten Ivan Mazuranič und Petar Preradović treten in den 40er Jahren auf, und im Jahre 1847 erscheinen die wichtigsten Werke der serbischen und der slowenischen Romantik, die dramatische Dichtung *Kranz der Berge* von Petar Njegoš und ein dünner Gedichtband von Branko Radičević bzw. die »Gedichte« von France Prešeren. Ungefähr zu dieser Zeit schrieb auch der Rumäne Vasile Alecsandri seine romantischen Erzählungen und Gedichte. Der einzige zu Lebzeiten des Letten Juris Alūnans erschienene Gedichtband *Kleine Lieder* (1856) ist erst der Übergang zur Romantik, die vollständige Blüte dieser Tendenz fällt mit dem Schaffen von Auseklis auf die 70er und 80er Jahre des 19. Jahrhunderts, das lettische Nationalepos *Lačplesis* (Bärentöter) schrieb Andrejs Pumpurs erst 1888. Das erste umfangreiche Werk der estnischen Romantik, das spätere Dichter inspirierte, das Nationalepos »Kalevipoeg« veröffentlichte Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald zwischen 1857 und 1861, wodurch er die Arbeit Friedrich RobertFaehlmanns, des anderen großen »Erweckers«, fortsetzte.

Eine andere bedeutende Jahreszahl der estnischen Literatur ist das Jahr 1886, als unter dem Titel *Vaino-lilled* (Feldblumen) der erste Gedichtband von Lydia Koidula erschien. In diesem fast ein Jahr späteren Buch ist die romantische »patriotische« Lyrik auf eigenartige, anregende Weise mit der ätherischen, schwebenden Landschafts- und Liebesdichtung des Sentimentalismus verflochten. Das erste romantische Werk der litauischen Literatur, die lyrische epische Dichtung *Der Wald von Anikschtschaj* von Antanas Baranauskas, erschien im Jahre 1859, doch gelangte die Romantik auch hier erst viel

später, um die Jahrhundertwende, im Schaffen von Maironis zu voller Blüte. In der bulgarischen Literatur trat in der Person von Petko Slawejkow das erste größere Talent in den 60er und 70er Jahren des 19. Jahrhunderts auf. Der bedeutendste romantische Dichter der Belorussen, Franzischak Baguschewitsch, veröffentlichte seinen Band *Die belorussische Schalmei* im Jahre 1891 in Krakau unter einem Pseudonym, während sich die albanische Romantik noch später, erst im Jahre 1898 meldete, als das Epos »Die Geschichte Skanderbegs« von Naim Frashëri erschien. Mit welchen Stockungen sich die Aufklärung durchsetzte, welche Folgen diese Verspätung hatte, davon zeugt vielleicht am besten die Entwicklung der neugriechischen Literatur. Hier erscheint die Romantik in den Bruchstücken gebliebenen Werken von Dionysios Solomos bereits um 1850, also ungefähr zur gleichen Zeit mit den großen europäischen Zeitgenossen, mit dem Griechenfreund Byron, mit den Italienern. Da aber der nach dem Freiheitskrieg entstehende kleine griechische Staat die Zweisprachigkeit auch offiziell bestätigt, die gesprochene Sprache aus der Literatur ausschließt, und zur Sprache der Literatur die archaisierende, sog. katharevusa (geläuterte) Sprache macht, fällt die Entwicklung der Literatur für weitere fünfzig Jahre zurück. Deshalb ist das wirkliche Auftreten der Romantik das Jahr 1892, als Kostas Palamas seinen Gedichtband »Augen meiner Seele« herausgab. Palamas und seine Anhänger verhalfen der Volkssprache, der Diomitiki, zu ihrem Recht. Ihr Schaffen jedoch, das bis weit in das 20. Jahrhundert hineinreicht (Palamas selbst verstarb im Jahre 1943), vermischte die Romantik jedoch schon mit der neuen weltliterarischen Strömung, mit dem Symbolismus. Derartige Stilvermischungen, die sich aus der Verspätung ergeben, sind für sämtliche osteuropäische Literaturen charakteristisch.

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Die osteuropäischen Literaturen können aufgrund des Vorhandenseins oder des Fehlens der drei literarischen Tendenzen, des Klassizismus, des Sentimentalismus und der Romantik, aufgrund des Zeitpunkts ihres Auftretens und aufgrund des Charakters ihrer Vermischung in drei Gruppen eingeteilt werden.

*1.* Eine »vollständige« Literatur war nur die polnische, die russische und bis zu einem gewissen Grade die ungarische Literatur (hier seien nur die bedeutenderen Autoren erwähnt: Franciszek Bohomolec, Adam Naruszewicz, Ignacy Krasicki, Stanisław Trembecki, Tomasz Kajetan Węgierski, die Dramatiker Franciszek Zablocki, Julian Niemcewicz und Wojciech Boguslawski, alle von einer sehr starken poetischen-theoretischen Literatur, von einer Publizistik und einer politischen Prosa unterstützt; Gawrila Dershawin; Dániel Berzsenyi.) Hier hatte das Vorhandensein der nationalen Unabhängigkeit auch den Klassizismus ermöglicht, andererseits war der Literatur die vollständige

innere Gliederung ermöglicht worden, das soll bedeuten, daß in diesen Literaturen sämtliche damaligen Genres vorhanden waren, während es in allen anderen nur die Gattungen »niedrigeren Ranges« gab, jene nämlich, in denen die klassizistischen Vorschriften den Gebrauch des gemeinen, des groben Stils, der Volkssprache zuließen.

In welchem Grade der Klassizismus grundlegend mit der nationalen Idee, mit der zentralen Staatsgewalt verbunden war, davon zeugt auch, daß in vielen Ländern unter dem Einfluß der politischen Ereignisse, wenn die Frage der nationalen Unabhängigkeit wieder intensiver auf die Tagesordnung kommen konnte, sogar im Schaffen von so großen Romantikern wie Vörösmarty, Puschkin und Mickiewicz gewisse unterdrückte klassizistische Tendenzen an Kraft gewannen.

*2.* Eine Zwischenstellung nimmt die tschechische, slowenische, serbische, kroatische, ukrainische und neugriechische Literatur ein, in der es kaum einen Klassizismus gab, und in der die Aufklärung um die Jahrhundertwende begann.

*3.* Die »unvollständigen« Literaturen zeigen eine Verspätung von weiteren 20 bis 30 Jahren (die slowakische, estnische, lettische, litauische, belorussische, bulgarische und albanische Literatur). Hier fehlt der Klassizismus sozusagen ganz, auch der Sentimentalismus ist kaum vertreten, und die nationale Wiedergeburt erfolgt in erster Linie im Zeichen der Romantik.

Dementsprechend sind auch die literarischen Wirkungen des Auslands zweierlei. Auf die ersten, vollständigeren Literaturen wirken die westlichen Literaturen ein (auf die russische, polnische und zum Teil auf die ungarische Literatur durch den Klassizismus die französische Literatur, auf sämtliche andere Literaturen die deutsche), auf die unvollständigen wirkten die schon entwickelten, vollständigen osteuropäischen Literaturen ein (der große Einfluß der russischen Literatur auf die serbische, die bulgarische, ukrainische, die belorussische, der der polnischen Literatur auf die litauische, die ukrainische, der der ungarischen Literatur auf die slowakische, die kroatische usw.)

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Die anderthalb Jahrhunderte zwischen 1772 und 1918 hatten nicht nur auf das Leben der osteuropäischen Nationen einen entscheidenden Einfluß. Auch die individuellen Schicksalstypen, die »klassischen« Verhaltensweisen bildeten sich damals heraus. Lebenswege, die — manchmal mit begeisterndem, manchmal mit pessimistischem Einfluß — in unser Fleisch und Blut übergegangen sind, von denen auch seitdem immer neuere und neuere Varianten entstehen. Einige Beispiele sollen für viele stehen:

Der »Vater« der lettischen Literatur, Gothards Fridrihs Stenders (1714—1796), war ein Priester, der aus den Niederlanden stammte, deutsche Universi-

täten besuchte und erst später Lettisch erlernte, und der im Laufe seiner fünfzigjährigen Laufbahn mit einer Reihe von Büchern in deutscher und lettischer Sprache (Grammatiken und Wörterbücher, sentimentale Kunstlieder, die bei weitem nicht frei von Germanismen sind), allein die Arbeit einer ganzen Generation durchführte (und von wie vielen kann dies in jener Epoche gesagt werden!), und der sich auf seiner Grabinschrift schon als Lette bezeichnete...

Der jakobinische ungarische Franziskanermönch Ignác Martinovics (1755—1795), der mit einer Hand einen Aufstand gegen Wien organisierte, mit der anderen Hand dem österreichischen Hof Denunziationen schrieb, der ihn natürlich hinrichten ließ...

L'udovit Štúr (1815—1865), der romantische Revolutionär, der Schöpfer der Literatursprache, der Széchenyi und Kossuth der Slowaken in einer Person, der nach der Niederschlagung der Revolution und des Freiheitskampfes von 1849 sich in die dörfliche Einsamkeit zurückzog. Auf der Jagd ereilte ihn der Tod, seine zufällig losgegangene Flinte bereitete seinem Leben ein Ende, doch wurde lange gemunkelt, daß der Unfall von der Wiener Geheimpolizei organisiert war...

Der 1814 geborene Taras Schewtschenko mußte 1838 von seinen Freunden, von Malern, für 2500 Rubel aus der Leibeigenschaft erlöst, eigentlich freigekauft werden. Der Maler und Dichter, mit dessen Genius sich vielleicht nur der des Ungarn Petőfi messen läßt, verbrachte von den 47 Jahren seines Lebens weitere zehn wegen seiner revolutionären Tätigkeit in der Verbannung, im Gefängnis...

Ljudevit Gaj (1809—1872) war eine der größten Gestalten nicht nur der kroatischen, sondern der ganzen südslawischen nationalen Erneuerung. Gaj, der deutsche Schulen besuchte, seine ersten Werke in deutscher Sprache schrieb, opferte sein Leben für seinen großen Traum, für die südslawische illyrische Heimat. Er gab die erste Zeitung in kroatischer Sprache heraus, schuf die kroatische Literatursprache, erbettelte für die Bewegung Geld und Unterstützung von den russischen Politikern ganz bis zum Günstling des Wiener Hofs, bis zum Banus Jellaćić. Nach 1848 jedoch wurde er vergessen, und während die öffentliche Meinung ihn für einen Lakaien des Bach-Systems hielt, strengte dasselbe Bach-System einen Hochverratsprozeß gegen ihn an. Verarmt und verlassen starb er, doch kaum zehn Jahre nach seinem Tod wurde er bereits rehabilitiert, wurde seine Asche in das nationale Pantheon überführt...

Die osteuropäischen Möglichkeiten der Aktivität zeigten sich sehr plastisch am Beispiel der Geschichte des sog. Königreiches Polen. Dieses Staatsgebilde, das vom Wiener Kongreß geschaffen wurde, war nominell nur durch eine Personalunion mit Rußland verbunden. Ansonsten jedoch hatte es ein aus zwei Kammern bestehendes Parlament, eine Verfassung, eine eigene Regierung, Rechtssprechung, das Recht des ausschließlichen Gebrauchs der polni-

schen Sprache, ja sogar eine eigene Armee. Nach dem Chaos, den Zerstörungen der beiden vorherigen Jahrzehnte begann eine sich in den Institutionen verkörpernde Ordnung herauszubilden; das verhieß, daß sich das Land endlich europäisiert. Der beharrliche politische Kampf für die Einhaltung der verfassungsmäßig gesicherten Rechte und die relativ ruhige geistige Atmosphäre, von der zeugte, daß in der polnischen Geschichte ausnahmsweise einmal die größeren intellektuellen Kräfte nicht ins Ausland emigrierten, wurde zweifelsohne von einem materiellen Aufschwung, von einer Verbürgerlichung des Reichtums begleitet. Warschau z.B., das innerhalb von kaum 15 Jahren die Zahl seiner Einwohner verdoppelte, wurde damals zu einem einer wirklichen Hauptstadt würdigen Zentrum. In der anderen Waagschale lag, daß all das — Selbständigkeit, Unabhängigkeit, nationale Besonderheit — nur Schein war. Der Zar, der also zugleich polnischer König war, hatte gegen die Beschlüsse des Parlaments ein Vetorecht, das Parlament durfte nur zu Vorschlägen Stellung nehmen, die ihm der Zar vorlegte, die Mitglieder des Parlaments selbst durften keine Vorschläge einbringen. Die Selbständigkeit der Armee war genau so nominell wie die der Außenpolitik. Die in der Verfassung verankerten nationalen Rechte wurden von Großherzog Konstantin, Bruder und Statthalter des Zaren, sowie unter der Leitung des berüchtigten Polenfressers Nowosylzow gerade von jenem zaristischen System mit den Füßen getreten, das — in Worten — ihr Garant war. Nicht zuletzt deshalb, weil es nicht zulässig war, daß sich bei den Polen ein »Liberalismus« ausbreitet, der dann bei den Reformanhängern im »Mutterland« als verlockendes und realisiertes Vorbild hätte auftreten können. Die Lüge durchdrang das ganze Leben: man mußte eine gute Miene machen zu jeder Ohrfeige, den erstickend umarmenden großen Bruder mußte man auch lieben. Mit erschreckender Glaubwürdigkeit schilderte Mickiewicz diesen rosafarben gemalten Terror in den »Ahnen«, als Nowosylzow einen Ball veranstaltete und die mit Zwang »geladenen« polnischen Gäste gezwungen sind, sich liebenswürdig zu unterhalten, während in den Kasematten ihre angeblich verschwörerischen Söhne gefoltert werden. Kann die polnische Nation in die Reihe der modernen europäischen Nationen treten, während sie so schauspielern, sich herumschlagen muß, und im relativen Wohlstand von scheinbarer Freiheit — wirklicher Unabhängigkeit lebt? Diese Frage beschäftigt auch heute noch nicht nur die Historiker. Sie nahm sehr praktische Formen an in den Augen jener heißköpfigen Jugendlichen, die zwar über kein noch so kurzfristiges Programm verfügten, doch des langsamen Fortschrittes überdrüssig waren, frei sein wollten, und als sich die Nachricht verbreitete, daß der Zar polnische Truppen zur Niederschlagung der französischen revolutionären Bewegung entsenden will, sich selbst und die Nation nicht schonten und im November 1830 einen Aufstand auslösten. Der Aufstand, der auf das ganze Land übergriff und eine richtige nationale Regierung ernannte, wurde kaum zehn Monate später von der zaristischen Armee nieder-

geschlagen. Ein Großteil der Führer mußte entweder emigrieren oder fiel der Vergeltung zum Opfer. Allmählich wurde der offene Terror vorherrschend, von dem Zygmunt Krasiński in einem Brief aus dem Jahre 1848 folgendes Bild entwirft: »Norwid schilderte mir gestern die verschiedenen Details des Lebens in Warschau: Gefängnis, Prozesse, Ketten, Verbannung nach Sibirien, unerhörter Mut, Märtyrertum. Und all das im Finstern, all das von irgendeinem Instinkt, von irgendeinem polnischen Instinkt geleitet, der, was den Weg betrifft, unsicher ist, und der ganz bis zum Kommunismus vordringt, um einen Lichtblick erkennen zu können. Stell dir vor: seitdem er die Schule beendet hat, seit sechs Jahren, zählte er 200 Schulkameraden dem Namen nach auf, fast alle, die er kannte, mit denen er zusammen lernte, die nach Sibirien verschleppt wurden, die in der Zitadelle oder unterwegs gestorben sind, oder dort angekommen sind und jetzt dort leiden. Ein einziger Mensch zählte 200 auf, die fast alle noch Kinder sind ! ! !« Die Aufbauarbeit von anderthalb Jahrzehnten ist in kurzer Zeit zunichte geworden. Wirklich zunichte? Ich glaube, es gibt keine eindeutige Antwort, wie auch dieses doppelte Handlungsmodell sich nur selten so streng trennt wie im obigen Falle.

## Aufklärung oder nationale Wiedergeburt

Was ist die Ursache für ein derartiges Durcheinander von nationalen und individuellen Schicksalen, für ein derartiges Nebeneinanderleben von Fortschritt und Reaktion, für so viele Unterbrechungen, Unentwickeltheiten, Bruchstückhaftigkeiten?

Die Antwort auf diese Frage ist kurz formuliert die, daß in Osteuropa sich Nation und Persönlichkeit nicht einander fördernd, harmonisch entwickelten, sondern daß dies häufig gegeneinander vor sich ging, während nicht selten die eine der anderen mit der Vernichtung drohte.

Die Aufklärung ist ihrer wesentlichsten Lehre nach — wie sie in der ausgearbeitetsten Form in den Werken der französischen Enzyklopädisten, vor allem Jean Jacques Rousseaus erschien und wirkte — die Konzeption von der bürgerlichen Persönlichkeit. Gegenüber der mittelalterlichen Welt des göttlichen Wortes, der Zeichen suchte sie eine neue Norm, auf die sie sich bei der Umreißung dieser Konzeption stützen konnte. *Diese Norm fand sie im Begriff des Natürlichen.* Für die Anhänger der Aufklärung ist die Welt der Dinge die reale, die existierende, während die Welt der Zeichen, der sozialen Relationen das Geschöpf der lügnerischen Zivilisation ist. Wie der ungarische Dichter György Bessenyei schrieb:

> Sprich zur Natur, richtig sprichst du,
> Denke nach der Wirklichkeit, richtig urteilst du.
> Zu welchem Zweck formulieren wir so viele Regeln,
> Wir zerstören mit ihnen nur die süßen Dinge.
> *(Der Neidische geht unter)*

Nur das existiert, was es selbst ist, und alles, was etwas anderes vertritt, ist eine Fiktion. Deshalb sind nur die unmittelbaren Realien wertvoll und wirklich: der Mensch in seinem anthropologischen Wesen, das physische Glück, die Arbeit, die Nahrung, das als biologischer Prozeß aufgefaßte Leben.[3] Wie Rousseau in *Émile*, einem Grundwerk der Aufklärung, schreibt: »Das Glück des natürlichen Menschen ist genau so einfach wie sein Leben; es besteht darin, daß er nicht leidet, es besteht aus Gesundheit, Freiheit, aus dem Vorhandensein der notwendigen Dinge.« Und an einer anderen Stelle schreibt er: »Der Mensch und der Bürger, wie er auch sein mag, vermag in die Gesellschaft keinen anderen Wert als nur sich selbst zu bringen«. Es ist verständlich, daß sich »die Kinder des Lichts« gegen das kirchliche Dogma wendeten, für das das ganze irdische Leben nur die Wiederspiegelung des göttlichen Willens ist. Der ungarische Dichter Ferenc Kazinczy gibt auf charakteristische Weise dem Gedicht, in dem er dies mit neuartigem Selbstbewußtsein niederzuschreiben wagt, den Titel »Der Glaubenlose«:

Ich habe keinen Auftrag; habe ich doch einen, so ist es mein Wille;
Meine Heimat, mein Freund, mein Gott bin ich selbst...

Das Kriterium der Natürlichkeit hat innerhalb des Ideenbereichs der Aufklärung eine gewisse Veränderung durchgemacht. Für die Enzyklopädisten (und dies entspricht der ersten, klassizistischen Phase der osteuropäischen Aufklärung) sprach in der Beurteilung, was natürlich ist, der Verstand, die Ratio das entscheidende Wort: *Was sinnvoll ist, ist natürlich.*

Von der durch die Normen gefesselten Natürlichkeit spricht auch Mickiewicz:

Mein Freund, sprach der Graf, die herrliche Natur
ist Form, Hintergrund, Stoff, doch die Seele ist die Inspiration,
nur diese kann die Phantasie in die Höhe schwingen;
wenn der Geschmack nicht verbessert und die Regel nicht bremst,
werden Natur und Begeisterung allein zu wenig sein.
(*Pan Tadeusz.* 611—615.)

Der Glaube an die Ratio blieb auf wunderbare Weise das ganze 19. Jahrhundert hindurch bewahrt. Zwei Beispiele sollen hierfür stehen. Der Bulgare Christo Botew fleht in einem Gedicht aus dem Jahre 1873 wie folgt:

Sondern du, du: Gott der Vernunft,
Du, Schutz des Armen!
Dein Reich wird auch hierher kommen
Bald zu allen Völkern.
Gib uns, uns allen, die
heilige Liebe der Freiheit!
*(Mein Gebet)*

Die »klassizistische« Zuversicht des Belorussen Janka Kupala stammt aus einem noch späteren Zeitpunkt, aus dem Jahr 1905:

Mit Wissenschaft, mit Willen bezwingen wir das viele Schlechte,
Wir säen Zuversicht in unseren Heimatboden
Und so glücklich werden wir leben,
Wie einst nicht einmal unsere Vorväter lebten.
(*Pakinyma napusta na ljos swoj narakac*
Beklagen wir uns nicht über unser böses
Schicksal)

Später, ausgehend von den Anregungen Lockes und Humes, wurde für Rousseau, für die Sentimentalisten *das Gefühl zu einem derartigen Maßstab*, während die Romantiker die umfassende, freie Persönlichkeit, dann von hier aus die *abstrakte Freiheit* zu ihrem Ideal machten. Die Vermischung des Klassizismus, des Sentimentalismus und der Romantik in Osteuropa wurde außer der vorstehend skizzierten Verspätung auch dadurch verursacht, welchen von diesen drei Relativierungspunkten der Natürlichkeit — zwischen denen nur Unterschiede in der Betonung bestanden — sie wählten, welchen sie im gegebenen Moment gerade für wichtiger hielten.

Diese Grundkonzeption der Aufklärung galt jedoch nicht nur für das Individuum, war nicht nur individualistisch, sondern wurde, verbunden mit dem Entwicklungsschema der Weltgeschichte, zu einer ganzen Kulturlehre abgerundet, die auch eine gewisse gemeinschaftsfeindliche Spitze hatte. (Voltaire stellt in einem Brief verwundert folgende Frage: »Ich weiß nicht, was die Ursache sein kann, daß ganze Gesellschaften viel größere Dummheiten sagen und tun als einzelne Menschen; vielleicht deshalb, weil sich ein Mensch vor allem fürchten kann, die Gesellschaften sich jedoch vor nichts fürchten. Jedes Mitglied kann die Schande auf seinen Gefährten abwälzen.«) Diesem Schema nach hat die verfremdende Wirkung der Kultur, der Gesellschaft das natürliche menschliche Wesen, das, was in jedem Menschen gemeinsam ist, und was dem einstigen goldenen Zeitalter den paradiesischen Zeiten, der Urgemeinschaft angehörte, verdunkelt und ausgelaugt. Wie Rousseau im *Emil* schreibt: »Alles ist gut, wenn es die Hand seines Schöpfers verläßt, alles wird aber in den Händen des Menschen zerstört.« Das gegenwärtige Sein des Menschen und seine Natürlichkeit in der Vergangenheit, »der Mensch der Menschen« und »der Mensch der Natur« sind in Widerspruch zueinander geraten. Das verzerrte Gesellschaftlich-Werden des natürlich Menschlichen ist jetzt, in der Periode der Krise, an einem Wendepunkt angelangt. Denn — wie Rousseau im Grundwerk dieser Kulturlehre, im »Gesellschaftsvertrag«, schreibt — der Mensch wird frei geboren und dennoch lebt er überall in Fesseln. Der Endpunkt des Prozesses liegt in der Zukunft. Nach dieser Utopie werden sich dort wiederum die einstigen Möglichkeiten realisieren, werden sich dort die Widersprüche der Gegenwart auflösen: der Mensch findet wiederum zu sich zurück, sowohl als Individuum als auch als Mitglied der Gemeinschaft, der authentische Mensch kommt wieder mit sich und mit der Gesellschaft in eine Harmonie.

Die Dreiheit »altes, patriarchalisches goldenes Zeitalter — verdorbene Gegenwart — freie Zukunft« — hatte in Westeuropa eine eindeutig fortschritt-

liche, gesellschaftskritische Rolle. In Osteuropa war jedoch die Situation komplizierter. Hier wäre der Lehrsatz Rousseaus, »parallel zum Anwachsen des Staates nimmt die Freiheit ab«, an sich vergebens als wahr akzeptiert worden. Es war zu sehen, daß das wichtigste Bestreben dieser Völker in der Erringung des selbständigen Staates bestand. Wenn der Genfer Weise erklärt: »In den menschlichen Institutionen ist alles Unsinn und Widerspruch«, kritisiert er schon vorhandene Institutionen, während in Osteuropa damals noch harte Kämpfe ausgetragen werden mußten für die ersten Institutionen: für die erste Zeitung, für das erste Gymnasium, die erste Universität, die erste gelehrte Gesellschaft, das erste Theater, für das erste Ministerium usw. (Sehr gut läßt sich der Unterschied zwischen der Entwicklung der russischen Kultur und der übrigen osteuropäischen Kulturen am Beispiel einer der wichtigsten Institutionen, die häufig auch eine symbolische Bedeutung erhielt, am Beispiel des Nationaltheaters beobachten. Die Nationaltheater spielten bei den Ungarn, Tschechen, Polen u.a. eine wesentliche Rolle bei der Wachhaltung des Nationalbewußtseins, bei der Pflege der Muttersprache, während es bis zum heutigen Tag kein russisches Nationaltheater gibt, weil auch keines gebraucht wurde. Die russische Theaterkultur hatte sich — ähnlich der westeuropäischen Entwicklung — durch die Theater der Magnaten, des Hofes herausgebildet.) Oder was hätte der für die Herausbildung der Nationalliteratur kämpfende osteuropäische Aufklärer mit folgendem Satz anfangen können: »Ich hasse die Bücher, sie lehren uns nichts anderes, als darüber zu sprechen, was wir nicht wissen.« Ungefähr zur gleichen Zeit mit diesem Satz Rousseaus feuert Dávid Baróti Szabó die ungarische Jugend wie folgt an:

> Greif zur Feder; fang an zu schreiben; fang an, dich mit Apoll
> Zu unterhalten in der Sprache deiner Nation.
> *(An die ungarische Jugend)*

Selbst unter den deutschen Verhältnissen, die denen in Osteuropa näher standen, träumt Friedrich Schiller vom ästhetischen Staat der Zukunft: »der ästhetische Staat allein kann sie (= die Gesellschaft) wirklich machen, weil er den Willen des Ganzen durch die Natur des Individuums vollzieht.« In Osteuropa konnte man sich kein so hehres Ziel setzen. Statt mit einem ästhetischen Staat hätte man sich ganz einfach mit einem nationalen Staat begnügt. . .

Der Gegensatz zwischen Individuum und Gemeinschaft gipfelte letzten Endes in der romantischen Konfrontation von Natur und Geschichte: die natürliche, ursprüngliche Gleichheit der Menschen wurde von der Unterdrückung, Ungleichheit abgelöst, die ausschließlich von der historischen Überlieferung sanktioniert wurde; und Verkörperer letzterer war die Nation.

Es ist also kein Wunder, wenn die große Idee der Aufklärung, die natürliche Freiheit des Menschen, der Persönlichkeit in Osteuropa zumeist dann

einen Nährboden gefunden hatte, wenn infolge der momentanen politischen Lage die nationalen Bestrebungen unmöglich geworden waren und die Reaktion stärker geworden war. Zur individuellen Freiheit hatte man Zeit gerade dann, wenn die nationale Freiheit unmöglich zu sein schien. Ungefähr so wie Mihály Vitéz Csokonai im Jahre 1804 schrieb: »Ich brauche keine politische Freiheit, ich habe sie auch nicht nötig. . . Ich wünsche nichts anderes, als daß mein Körper nicht verletzt wird, daß man mich nicht behindert in der Befriedigung meiner Bedürfnisse. Meine Seele steht über und jenseits ihrer Sphäre, sie gehört ausschließlich mir.«

Eine derartige Konfrontation von Individuum und Gesellschaft, von menschlicher und nationaler Freiheit, wie sie einander tragisch schwächten, war in Osteuropa allgemein verbreitet.

Man muß auch klar erkennen, daß hier immer die nationale Idee dominierend geblieben ist. Diese war es, die die Persönlichkeit unterdrückt hatte. Die Schriftsteller selbst hatten Angst davor, daß sie eventuell dem Dienst an der nationalen Sache nicht nachkommen. Karel Hynek Mácha z.B. schrieb zur Dichtung »Mai«, in der er die Weltfremdheit, das Sich-Hinwegsehnen des Individuums beschreibt, und in der überhaupt nichts Nationales ist, eine Widmung in »nationalem Geist«, die fast als Parodie wirkt, da sie überhaupt nichts mit der folgenden Dichtung zu tun hat:

> Der Unglückliche, der im Elend wehklagt,
> wende sich nur an die Tschechen,
> die ihm dann rasch zur Hilfe eilen werden.

Auch dem ungarischen Dichter Sándor Petőfi entgleitet die Feder, wenn er die privaten und gesellschaftlichen Gefühle mechanisch nebeneinander zu stellen versucht. Denken wir nur an folgende Zeilen:

> Umschlungen halte ich mit einem Arm
> die leichtbewegte Brust der Schläferin;
> die andre Hand hält mein Gebetbuch fest:
> das Buch von Freiheitskampf und Heldensinn!
> *(Trübselig raunt der Herbstwind)*

Die Furcht vor der Vernachlässigung des »Dienstes« war begründet, denn jene romantischen Dichter, die zum ersten Mal ein — sehr labiles — Gleichgewicht zwischen dem Individuum und der Gemeinschaft herzustellen versuchten, wurden fast überall stark angegriffen. Dem serbischen Dichter Radičević wird — im Namen der slawischen Ortientation — die persönliche Lyrik untersagt, Prešeren wird als Vaterlandsverräter gebrandmarkt, und auch an Sándor Petőfi erinnert sich János Arany wie folgt: »Er gehört eigentlich nicht zu uns!« (Erinnerungen) Josef Kajetán Tyl veröffentlichte im Jahre 1840 die Novelle *Rozervanec*, deren Held Mácha ist (es ist nicht möglich, den tschechischen Titel wiederzugeben, das Wort bedeutet den mit der Welt ent-

zweiten Menschen, also den romantischen Dichter). In dieser Novelle schrieb Tyl: »Wenn er kein Tscheche wäre! Englische, französische oder deutsche Dichter — was für ein Unterschied besteht zwischen diesen und zwischen jenem Dichter, den wir brauchen! Ich würde mit Freude meinen Blick auf Hynek als auf einen leuchtenden großen Stern richten, wenn ich ihn von meiner Wiege an über den irischen Felsen hätte blinken sehen; doch so mußte ich meine Augen abwenden, wenn ich nicht seine Verirrung und den Verlust unserer Literatur beklagen wollte.« Die dem Autor aufgezwungene gesellschaftliche Rolle wurde nach einer Zeit zu einer inneren Zensur, wie das die Worte von Narcyza Zmichowska aus dem Jahre 1871 bezeugen: »Im allgemeinen stöhnen wir in gewisser Hinsicht unter einem Joch, das drückender ist als die Zensur. Und dies ist die gewisse Notwendigkeit unserer Situation, jene entschiedene Forderung der öffentlichen Meinung, daß wir Gedichte, Romanzen, ja sogar Komödien und Opern ausschließlich mit hohen moralischen Bestrebungen schreiben sollen. Niemand, auch wenn er es noch so sehr wollte, könnte im Original schon aus verlegerischem Interesse überhaupt etwas »Nicht-Moralisches« publizieren (in Übersetzungen ist es erlaubt, das ist ein anderer Fall). Von hierher rührt jede Knechtschaft, jede Beschränkung, jede die menschliche Persönlichkeit umgebende Sackgasse, jede Entstellung. Da alle in einer und derselben Tonart singen *müssen*, singen jene, die dazu keine Lust haben, falsch, jene aber, die dazu Lust haben, können diese nicht frei entfalten. Entweder aus dem Grund, weil sie die falschen Töne korrigieren wollen, oder weil sie diese vermeiden wolten. Mit einem Wort, sie verirren sich in Banalitäten. Und das gilt für unsere gesamte gegenwärtige Literatur.«

Dies ist übrigens jenes charakteristische Merkmal, das die russische Literatur und die anderen osteuropäischen Literaturen am deutlichsten voneinander unterscheidet. Nur in der russischen Literatur konnte sich der Gegensatz von Individuum und Gemeinschaft so klar polarisieren. Nach dem Sieg im Vaterländischen Krieg von 1812 zerrannen die Illusionen rasch. Nur zu bald stellte sich heraus, daß nach dem Sieg die Heilige Allianz folgt, daß diese nicht mit der Schaffung der Freiheitsrechte verbunden ist, daß der Tschinownik-Staat, der den Begriff der Nation mit Beschlag belegt hatte, seine Bürger, das Individuum erstickt und unterdrückt, und daß jener Lagebericht, den der Europäer und Rousseau-Anhänger Herzog Schtscherbakow gab, in vollem Maße authentisch ist, als er schrieb, daß das Leben seiner Landsleute »in keiner größeren Sicherheit ist als das steuerlose Boot auf dem wild wogenden Meer. Es gibt keinen Kurs, den man steuern könnte, keinen Hafen, in den man sich retten könnte.« (Die Ironie der russischen Verhältnisse ist, daß jenes System von Militärdörfern, die der aufgeklärte Schtscherbakow im Werk *Die Reise des schwedischen Adligen, Herrn S., nach Ophiria* (1786), im ersten russischen utopischen Roman, sozusagen als Abschreckung beschrieb, einige Jahrzehnte später vom berüchtigten tyrannischen Minister Araktschejew aus diesem Buch

in die Praxis umgesetzt und dadurch ein verblüffendes Beispiel für die enge Beziehung zwischen Leben und Literatur gegeben wurde. . .)

Die nationale Idee ist durch die Existenz des selbständigen russischen Staates auf selbstverständliche Art und Weise unproblematisch und dadurch vernachlässigbar geworden. Alle Energien konnten nun zur Ermessung der Möglichkeiten der Freiheit des Individuums — jetzt schon der an die Stelle der nationalen Idee getretenen, eindeutig durch die unterdrückende Staatsraison zurückgedrängten Möglichkeiten —, eingesetzt werden. Das verleiht der russischen Literatur, in erster Linie im Schaffen der beiden Riesen Dostojewski und Tolstoi, weltliterarischen Rang. Beide erkennen die Ursache für die tragische Situation der Welt in der Auflösung der Einheit von Individuum und Gemeinschaft, nur mit unterschiedlichem Vorzeichen. (Die Annahme der einstigen »Einheit der Welt« zeigt, daß sich beide im Rahmen des Gedankenkreises der Aufklärung bewegen!) Dostojewski bemerkte auf geniale Weise die Gefahren der ohne gemeinschaftliche Schranken (bei ihm die der Religion) zu großen und leeren Freiheit. (Auch Baudelaire, der an der Revolution von 1848 teilnahm, spricht mit Verachtung von der »steigenden Flut der alles nivellierenden Demokratie«). Demgegenüber erkannte Tolstoi die Möglichkeiten der Wiederherstellung des Gleichgewichts der Welt — aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach illusorisch — in der individuellen Blüte der Aufklärung.

## Die Spracherneuerung

Ein Gebiet aber gab es, wo sich die aufklärerischen und nationalen Interessen trafen, und das war die Spracherneuerung. Rousseau war zwar z.B. gegen die Sprache, er verurteilte auch die lügnerischen Worte, die sprachlichen Zeichen: »Von welcher Abhandlung auch die Rede sein mag, die Ausdruckszeichen sind ohne die Ideen der auszudrückenden Dinge nichts wert«, und diese Auffassung widerspiegeln auch die Worte des Russen Wassili Puschkin (des Onkels des »großen« Puschkin):

> Viele Worte zu gebrauchen, ist noch keine Wissenschaft,
> Wir brauchen keine Worte, wir brauchen die Aufklärung.
> *(An W. A. Shukowski)*

Doch hatte in Osteuropa das Hingezogensein zu den natürlich »auszudrückenden Dingen« nur die Folge, daß die Spracherneuerung sich im Zeichen der Natürlichkeit vollzog.

Die Spracherneuerung war jedoch nicht auf die ganze Sprache, sondern nur auf eine Variante, auf die moderne, auch heute gebräuchliche Literatursprache gerichtet. Bei manchen Völkern bedeutet dies wirklich nur die Erneuerung der Literatursprache des 16. Jahrhunderts (bei den Polen, Tsche-

chen, bis zu einem gewissen Grade bei den Russen, Ungarn, Kroaten, Slowenen), bei den meisten Völkern jedoch kann man nicht von einer Spracherneuerung sondern von der Herausbildung der Literatursprache sprechen (bei den Rumänen, Serben, Bulgaren, Esten, Letten, Litauern, Ukrainern, Belorussen, Slowaken, Albanern und Neugriechen).

Die Schaffung der Literatursprache bedeutete, daß entschieden werden mußte, welcher Dialekt zu ihrer Grundlage gewählt wird; in Grammatiken mußten die Regeln ihrer formalen Seite, das heißt ihres Lautbestandes, ihrer Morphologie und ihrer Orthographie fixiert und festgelegt (d.h. kodifiziert und normiert) werden. Danach konnte es zur Ausarbeitung der Elemente der inhaltlichen Seite, der Elemente der Morphologie, der Stilistik, der Phraseologie und des Wortschatzes kommen. Diese Aufgabe wurde in der Zeit des Klassizismus und des Sentimentalismus durchgeführt. Ferenc Kazinczy konnte mit Recht die so aufgefaßte ungarische Spracherneuerung für beendet halten: »Der Urwald ist gerodet, ihr, Jungen, braucht nichts mehr zu roden, ihr könnt schon Blumen züchten.« Das so beendete Instrument wurde dann von den Romantikern zum Klingen gebracht, sie brachten die gattungsmäßigen, stilistischen Varianten der Literatursprache hervor. Damals begann auch die langsame Herausbildung der gesprochenen Variante der Literatursprache, der Umgangssprache.

Natürlich darf man sich nicht vorstellen, daß all dies sich in so idyllischer Eindeutigkeit abgespielt hat. Wie alles Neue war anfangs auch die neue Literatursprache formlos, oft sinnlos, und die Übertreibungen der eifrigen Spracherneuerer mußten später mit mühevoller Arbeit, nicht selten in harten Diskussionen korrigiert werden.

*I.* Die Angehörigen der ersten Generationen der Spracherneuerung waren also im Geiste des Klassizismus tätig. Das hatte zur Folge, daß sie die Existenz der verschiedenen Stile anerkannten. (Kazinczy unterschied sogar noch im Jahre 1819 die »vornehmen Gattungen« und »jene Gattungen, in denen der Schriftsteller zu allen spricht«.) Doch in den großen Grammatiken wurde die Literatursprache überall mit dem Usus, mit dem zeitgenössischen Sprachgebrauch konfrontiert. Diese Sprachbetrachtung ist gut in den Worten Ferenc Kazinczys zusammengefaßt: »Und was darf der Schriftsteller? Im vornehmeren Stil alles, was das Ideal aller Sprachen verlangt, was die Natur (ewiger Brauch und ewiges Gesetz) der ungarischen Sprache nicht verbietet, was der durch alte und neuere Klassiker erzogene Geschmack noch vorschlägt, und was der Bedarf unumgänglich befiehlt. In jenen Stilen, Gattungen, in denen der Schriftsteller zu allen spricht, ist erlaubt, was jeder Leser vorschlagen kann.« Bei der Trennung, Unterscheidung der Stile, doch in beiden »Gattungen«, ist die Natürlichkeit, der Usus der Maßstab.

Auch Michail Lomonossow unterschied dreierlei Stile (und degradierte damit das bis dahin in der Literatur vorherrschende Kirchenslawische zu

einem Stil). In seiner *Russischen Grammatik* des Jahres 1757 normierte er den mittleren Stil, d.h. die eigentliche zeitgenössische russische Sprache. Genau so korrigierte der Tscheche Josef Dobrovský in seiner Arbeit *Ausführliches Lehrgebäude der böhmischen Sprache* 1809 die Literatursprache des 16. Jahrhunderts aufgrund des Sprachgebrauchs. Diese Rolle spielte bei den Polen die in mehreren Auflagen erschienene Grammatik von Onufry Kopczyński (obzwar die Polen am wenigsten auf die Korrektion der Grammatik angewiesen waren, hatte doch die Sprache ihres goldenen Zeitalters am wenigsten von dem im Laufe des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts normierten Charakter verloren, andererseits dagegen war am Hofe des Königs Stanisław August die neue Literatursprache entstanden, zwar auf interessante Weise zuerst die umgangssprachliche Variante). In Ungarn hatte das Werk *Elaboratior grammatica Hungarica* (1803—1806) diese Funktion, bei den Slowenen die *Grammatik der slavischen Sprache in Krain, Kärnten und Steyermark* (1809) des Dobrovský-Anhängers Jernej Kopitar; bei den Serben die 1814 erschienene kleine Grammatik von Vuk Karadžić, bei den Ukrainern die 1818 in russischer Sprache erschienene ukrainische Grammatik von Ossip Pawlowski und bei den Rumänen die *Rumänische Grammatik* (1828) von Ion Eliade Rădulescu. Die Formulierung der Regeln der hier nicht erwähnten Literatursprachen erfolgte erst viel später, nicht selten am Ende des Jahrhunderts.

Obzwar diese erste, die Form schaffende Phase der Spracherneuerung zugleich eine Befreiung von der kirchenslawischen, der lateinischen und der deutschen Norm war (im Falle der polnischen, der russischen und der rumänischen Literatursprache mußte sogar gegen einen starken französischen, im Falle des Rumänischen, Griechischen und Albanischen gegen einen bedeutenden italienischen Einfluß gekämpft werden), fühlte die folgende »sentimentale« Generation die für die Sprache geschaffenen Regeln schon zu eng, als Fesseln. Die Angehörigen der vorherigen Generation hielten es häufig nicht einmal für wichtig, in ihrer Muttersprache zu schreiben (natürlich sind hier nicht die aus einer Person bestehenden »Bewegungen« vom Typ Vuk Karadžić oder Ferenc Kazinczy gemeint). Ihrer klassizistischen Auffassung entsprechend, mit der Norm in Mittelpunkt, waren sie Kosmopoliten; die Nachahmung, die Befolgung von fremden Vorbildern hielten sie nicht für eine Sünde, sondern direkt für erwünscht. (Und im Aufholen des Rückstands, im Einholen Europas hatte dies natürlich auch ein sehr glückliches Ergebnis.) Der charakteristischste Vertreter dieser Generation, der auch die größte Wirkung ausübte, Josef Dobrovský, betrachtete z.B. ziemlich skeptisch die Frage der Kultivierbarkeit der tschechischen Literatursprache. Deshalb traten die Vertreter der klassischen und der sentimentalen Generation gegeneinander an und kämpften den Kampf der Spracherneuerung. Die strittigen Fragen waren vielerlei: Fragen der Orthographie, die Möglichkeiten der Dichtung in der Nationalsprache, die Unentschiedenheit der mundartlichen Grundlage, die Reinheit der Sprache,

das Problem des Anteils der Fremdwörter und fremden Ausdrücke usw. (die später entstandenen Literatursprachen mußten nicht den deutschen, den französischen und den lateinischen Einfluß überwinden, sondern den der früher entstandenen osteuropäischen Literatursprachen. So wandte sich z.B. der Purismus der Slowaken gegen die tschechischen und die ungarischen Wörter, der der Bulgaren gegen die Elemente aus dem Russischen).

*II.* Was die inhaltliche Seite der Literatursprache anbelangt, war man bemüht, diese durch drei Methoden zu entwickeln: durch die Anfertigung von Wörterbüchern, durch die Sammlung von Werken der Folklore und durch Übersetzungen.

Mit dem heutigen Auge gesehen ist die riesige Rolle der Wörterbücher im damaligen literarischen Leben kaum mehr verständlich. Doch z.B. das polnische Wörterbuch von Samuel Linde (1807—1814), das auf diesem Gebiet eine genau so große Wirkung hatte wie früher die Grammatik von Dobrovský, der 1818 erschienene erste Band des umfassenden serbischen Wörterbuches von Vuk Karadžić, das 1825 erschienene, von Samuil Micu und Gheorghe Sincai redigierte rumänisch—lateinisch—ungarisch—deutsche Wörterbuch, das Budaer Lexikon sowie das von Josef Jungmann 1800 in Angriff genommene tschechisch—deutsche Wörterbuch in sechs Bänden haben nicht nur den nationalen Wortschatz zusammengefaßt, haben ihn nicht nur gewaltig um neue oder übersetzte Wörter erweitert, sondern z.B. Vuk bringt in den einzelnen Wortartikeln Erläuterungen zu Volksbräuchen, Aberglauben und Sprichwörtern, das Budaer Lexikon versucht, zwar manchmal auf laienhafte Art und Weise, einen Einblick in die Geschichte der Wörter und damit zusammen in die Geschichte des rumänischen Volkes zu vermitteln.

Die Wörterbücher hatten also auch die Rolle von Erziehern des Volkes, indem sie eine Betrachtungsweise suggerierten, daß der gesunde Kern der Nation jetzt schon das einfache Volk ist.

In diese Richtung verwiesen auch die zu jener Zeit wie die Pilze aus dem Boden schießenden Folklore-Sammlungen. Das Vorbild dieser, die Sammlung Johann Gottfried Herders, war in Osteuropa zustande gekommen, war doch Herder Pfarrer am Dom in Riga, und er hatte in seinen weltberühmten Band »Stimmen der Völker in Liedern« auch elf lettische Volkslieder aufgenommen. Von den zahlreichen Sammlungen sei das *Kleine slavjano-serbische Volksliederbuch* von Vuk Karadžić aus dem Jahre 1814 erwähnt, durch welches sich die »serbische Mode« nicht nur in der ungarischen Literatur verbreitete, sondern aus dem fast ganz Europa den Zehnervers der serbischen Heldenlieder, den Desaterác, kennenlernte. Außerdem seien noch angeführt die *Dainos oder Litauischen Volkslieder* von Ludvikas Rėza (1825), aus denen unter anderem Goethe auf die Schönheit der litauischen Dainos aufmerksam wurde, die tschechischen und russischen Volksliednachahmungen, sogenannte »ohlas«, Echos enthaltenden Sammlungen von Ladislav Čelakovský; der Band *Nationale Lieder* von

Ján Kollár aus dem Jahre 1834, der auch seine frühere Sammlung verwendete, die sechsbändige ukrainische Folkloresammlung des hervorragenden russischen Ethnographen Ismail Stresnewski, die »Altertümer von Saporoshe«, in die der Zusammensteller der Sammlung auch mehrere eigene Werke als Folklorematerial aufnahm, so nach dem Vorbild der Lieder Ossians die Zahl der auch in Osteuropa zunehmenden Fälschungen ansteigen ließ sowie das größte Meisterwerk der derartigen Literatur, den 1857 erschienenen estnischen *Kalevipoeg*. Gesondert müssen jene Bände hervorgehoben werden, die für das heutige Auge auf ungewohnte Art und Weise, was damals jedoch gang und gäbe war, nicht ausschließlich Werke der Volksdichtung enthielten sondern auch volksliedhafte Übersetzungen (meistens sentimentale Idylle und Balladen) und eigene Werke der Herausgeber. Ein derartiges Werk waren die zwischen 1846 und 1848 erschienenen *Volkslieder und Sagen* in drei Bänden von János Erdélyi, in dem auch die Gedichte von Gergely Czuczor publiziert sind, der Band von Juris Alūnans (im Jahre 1856 erschienen), der nicht nur mit den Gedichten von Alūnans, sondern auch mit seinen Volksliednachahmungen und seinen Übersetzungen aus dem Russischen und Deutschen zum Pionier der lettischen Kunstdichtung geworden ist. Derartige Werke waren die von 1837 an erscheinenden Bände *Dorflieder vom Ufer des Nieman* des Belorussen Jan Tschatschot, in die der Dichter seine eigenen Verse hineinschmuggelte (das waren die ersten im Druck erschienen belorussischen Gedichte!), und in denen die belorussischen Volkslieder zum ersten Mal in polnischer Übersetzung erschienen sind.

Auch die derartige Vermengung von Kunstdichtung und Volksdichtung verweist auf die große Neuigkeit der Betrachtungsweise des Sentimentalismus: Kern und Ursprung der Nation sind im einfachen Menschen, im Volk des Dorfes zu suchen. Gegenüber dem Sprachverderb, gegenüber den ausländischen Einflüssen kann und muß man zur Gesundheit der Volkssprache, zu ihrer Reinheit fliehen. In dieser Entwicklung der osteuropäischen Literatursprachen liegt eine der Ursachen der osteuropäischen volkstümlichen Literatur, die in den westlichen Literaturen (z.B. in der französischen und englischen Literatur) ganz unbekannt ist.

Das dritte wichtige Mittel der Ausarbeitung, der inhaltlichen Bereicherung der Literatursprache waren die Übersetzungen. Sie entstanden in unerhört großer Zahl und zeugten davon, daß die betreffende Sprache zur Betreibung der hohen Literatur geeignet war. Anfangs waren sie in der Form nicht immer treu (Kazinczy z.B. übersetzt den *Hamlet* in ungarische Prosa), doch allmählich gestalteten sie überall in Osteuropa das bis heute lebende allgemeine Bewußtsein heraus, nach welchem die sprachlich-stilarischen, mit einem Wort die formalen Neuerungen vom Ausland erwartet und übernommen werden müssen. Diese Übernahme, dieses Nachholen des Rückstands erfolgt jedoch außerordentlich rasch und vollkommen.

Auf zwei wichtigen Gebieten der Verslehre brachte die Übersetzung übrigens eine entscheidende Wende. Das eine Gebiet war das Verssystem der slawischen und baltischen Sprachen. Bis dahin herrschte in diesen Sprachen das sogenannte syllabische (die Silben zählende) System vor, das auf der gleichen Silbenzahl innerhalb des Verses beruhte. Dieses monotone Dichten wurde allmählich vom sogenannten syllabotonischen (silbenzählend-betonten) Dichtungssystem abgelöst, das — zum größten Teil unter dem zwingenden Einfluß der Übersetzungen — durch die Tätigkeit der Romantiker vorherrschend wurde.

Ein anderes wichtiges Ergebnis der reichen Übersetzungsliteratur war, daß sich neben den nationalen Versformen während der Übernahme der Werke der antiken Autoren überall das »latinisierende« Dichten, der zur Nachahmung der antiken Kunstgattungen geeignete Formenschatz herausbildete.

## Die Literatur vor der Sprache

Weshalb muß, während über die Geschichte der Literatur gesprochen wird, in dieser Zeit an erster Stelle und immer die Sprache behandelt werden?

Deshalb, weil die Literatur nur im Medium der Sprache entstehen und leben kann. In Ermanglung einer Literatursprache vermochte die osteuropäische Aufklärung nur eine »Vorliteratur« zustande zu bringen, von kulturgeschichtlichem und ideengeschichtlichem, oder gerade vom Standpunkt der nationalen Gesellschaft aus unermeßlich wertvolle Werke, die sich jedoch im Stadium des »vorliterarischen Zustands« befinden, wenn wir unter Literatur die auch heute noch ein ästhetisches Erlebnis vermittelnde Lektüre verstehen. Ihre Wirkung ist wie die Absicht, aus der sie entstanden ist: die Erziehung der Nation, die Bereicherung der Sprache. Und als solche — häufig durch spätere Vermittlung — sind sie in unser Denken, in unsere alltäglichen sprachlichen Wendungen übergegangen, doch — abgesehen von festlichen Anlässen — gelesen werden sie meistens nur von den Historikern.

Karel Sabina entwirft in seinen Erinnerungen ein genaues Bild von dieser Lage: »Unsere nationalen und sozialen Verhältnisse boten Möglichkeiten nur zu bescheidener, sagen wir es offen, sehr beschränkter Aktivität, und das konnte auch nicht anders sein. Wir kämpften noch mit dem tschechischen Abc, die meisten von uns kämpften mit der Grammatik, und es stand uns auch noch kein vollständiges tschechisches Wörterbuch zur Verfügung. Zu all dem trug noch bei, daß die tschechische Jugend ausschließlich von der germanisierenden Schuldressur erzogen worden war. Oben saß Metternich, unter ihm die schwarze und weiße Armee, neben ihm jedoch die Zensur, die immer bereit war, Unerwünschtes zu streichen.« Sogar die Größten dieser Epoche, der in-

folge des Mangels der Sprache nur genial stottern könnende Dániel Berzsenyi, der genau so begabte Gawrila Dershawin, oder der Pole Ignacy Krasicki, der großartige Beobachter, der serbische Prosaschriftsteller Dositej Obradović; aus der nachfolgenden Generation die beiden Urtalente mit ähnlichem Schicksal, der Litauer Antanas Strazdas und der Ungar Csokonai — auch sie haben nur großartige Torsos geschaffen, eine vollkommene Zeile, im besten Falle ein vollkommenes Gedicht, aber keiner von ihnen hinterließ ein Lebenswerk. Sie sind die wirklich »unübersetzbaren« Autoren: wir Ungarn z.B. sind fest davon überzeugt, daß Csokonai ein »gigantischer« Dichter ist (und genau so überzeugt sind es auch die Landsleute der oben aufgezählten Autoren), doch beweisen können wir es nicht, denn wer könnte die rauhe Anmut der Kindheit der ungarischen Sprache wiedergeben, wer könnte die Stärke, die Kraft, den altertümlichen Geschmack der ersten Werke der ungarischen Literatursprache übersetzen. Das Distichon von Ján Kollár drückt mit vollkommener Kürze, Prägnanz die Tragödie der Schriftsteller dieser Epoche aus:

> Unsere Gedichte: Stimme des Rufenden in der Wüste,
> Wir spielen auf einem Klavier, das vielleicht noch keine Saiten hat.
> (*Slávy dcera* — Tochter des Ruhms)

## Der Klassizismus

Die Poetik des Klassizismus teilte die Kunstgattungen in drei Gruppen ein. Ihren Regeln nach sind die zwischen ihnen liegenden Grenzen unüberschreitbar, denn die wichtigste ästhetische Anforderung jener Epoche, die harmonische Schönheit, konnte nur durch die Reinheit der Kunstgattungen gesichert werden, ein aus einer anderen »Art« kommender Klang hätte gerade diese homogene Harmonie gestört.

Der »Ernst« der nach dem antiken Vorbild als hohe Gattung geltenden Genres Ode, Elegie Hymne, Epos und Tragödie mußte gleich auch dem Thema den Ernst sichern. Und gibt es ein höheres Thema als das nationale Schicksal? Deshalb untersuchen die führenden Gattungen, die den Charakter des osteuropäischen Klassizismus bestimmen, die Fragen des nationalen Seins. In diese Richtung wirkte auch, daß die Natürlichkeit des Klassizismus eine gekünstelte, metaphysische Natürlichkeit ist. Während in der Wirklichkeit, im Leben die Erscheinungen dialektisch ineinander übergehen, miteinander verbunden sind, strebte die klassizistische Kunst nach der Trennung von allem, des Niedrigen vom Hehren, des Komischen vom Tragischen, des Bösen vom Guten, und sah die Welt nach Normen aufgegliedert. Dementsprechend suchte sie das Wesentliche der Wirklichkeit nicht im Individuellen sondern im Allgemeinen. Deshalb konnte das »Gemeinwohl«, das »Heil der Nation« zu einem zentralen Begriff werden. Dies formuliert auch Michail Lomonossow wie folgt:

»Für den Nutzen der Öffentlichkeit, doch vor allem für die Blüte der Wissenschaft in der Heimat sich gegen den Vater aufzulehnen, halte ich nicht für ein Vergehen.« Noch auffallender ist die Mißachtung des Individuums im »Pan Tadeusz«, wo der unbewaffnete, verwundete russische Offizier von einem polnischen Adligen, von Gervazi, einfach ermordet wird. Sogar der russische Kamerad des Offiziers akzeptiert die Begründung: »pro bono publico«, es geschah im Interesse des Gemeinwohls, und den Mörder läßt man ungestraft entkommen! Und da der Klassizismus von der Dreiheit der bereits erwähnten Natürlichkeit die alte Vergangenheit ins Auge faßt, ist seine charakteristische Besonderheit gerade die Heraufbeschwörung dieser Vergangenheit, die Sehnsucht nach dem »alten Ruhm«. Dabei schreckten diese Autoren nicht vor einer starken Verschönerung, ja nicht einmal vor der Verfälschung dieser Vergangenheit zurück. Von letzteren sind vielleicht die zwei Sammlungen mit gefälschten nationalen Liedern des Tschechen Václav Hanka die bedeutendsten (die sogenannte *Handschrift aus dem königlichen Hof* aus dem Jahre 1817 und die ein Jahr später entstandene *Handschrift vom Grünen Berg*). Ein beredtes Beispiel für die Verschönerung der nationalen Vergangenheit bietet der Este Carl Robert Jakobson, der sogar noch 1870(!) gezwungen war, idyllisch aufgeklärte Zustände vom estnischen Altertum zu zeichnen: »So war es bei uns vor fast tausend Jahren, als Wald die meisten europäischen Länder bedeckte, und ihre Einwohner fast wie die Tiere des Waldes lebten. Wenn wir daran denken und uns erinnern, was danach folgte, dann können wir ausrufen: Diese Zeit war wahrlich die Glanzperiode des estnischen Volkes!« Dazu muß man aber wissen, daß von den Völkern Europas die Esten als letzte zum Christentum übergetreten waren, und in der glücklichen Zeit, von der Jakobson spricht, noch nicht einmal den Ackerbau kannten.

Auch Miczkiewicz ließ sich von der Leidenschaft hinreißen, als er ausrief: »Polnischer Kaffee: es gibt auf der Welt keinen aromatischeren!« (*Pan Tadeusz*). In der Fügung »polnischer Kaffee« steckt etwas Komisches...

Doch genauso übertrieb — mit verständlicher Voreingenommenheit — auch der ausgezeichnete republikanische Historiker Joachim Lelewel, als er bei der Schilderung der Geschichte Polens auch darüber schrieb, daß die Losung der französischen Revolution »Freiheit, Gleichheit, Brüderlichkeit« von den Polen schon im 9. Jahrhundert verwirklicht wurde.[4]

Im ersten Moment mag es seltsam klingen, doch gehört in diese Reihe auch der *Pan Tadeusz* von Mickiewicz. Er war ursprünglich als nationales Epos gedacht, und nur dem genialen Kunstgriff von Mickiewicz ist es zu verdanken, daß aus ihm die »Enzyklopädie der polnischen Wirklichkeit« wurde. Worin besteht dieser Kunstgriff? In nichts anderem, als daß der Dichter die Geschichte persönlich gestaltet, indem er nicht auf die (nie dagewesene) alte Vergangenheit, sondern auf seine eigene Kindheit zurückblickt. Was er vorträgt, ist eine »adlige Geschichte aus den Jahren 1811—1812, die letzte Besitz-

ergreifung in Litauen«. Nicht das Historische verleiht der Schönheit, der Unwiederbringlichkeit der Vergangenheit Authentizität, sondern der Umstand, daß wir alle im allgemeinen zurückblickend unsere Kindheit als »goldenes Zeitalter« auffassen. Der heitere Realismus, die Liebe zum Leben, die idyllische Färbung des *Pan Tadeusz* ergibt sich hieraus.

Dieser von der nationalen Idee durchdrungene Teil der Literatur des Klassizismus ist ästhetisch ziemlich kraftlos. Ob wir nun an die das barocke Erbe fortsetzenden nationalen Epen denken, in denen der »Athleta Christi« ganz einfach vom »Athleta nationis« abgelöst wird, oder an die zahlreichen lobpreisenden Oden, die wegen ihrer Weitschweifigkeit, ihrer Überladenheit mit mythologischen Namen und ihrer umständlichen Sprache nicht lange nach ihrer Entstehung schon unverständlich und ungenießbar geworden sind. Die Heraufbeschwörung der Vergangenheit hat jedoch interessanterweise auf dem Gebiet der persönlichen Lyrik (vor allem in der Gattung der Elegie) Meisterwerke hervorgebracht. Die Dichtung von Dershawin oder Berzsenyi stellt die Vergänglichkeit des individuellen Schicksals in das tragische Vergehen der Nation und der Natur hinein, und so gibt sie in der osteuropäischen Lyrik zum ersten Mal, zwar keine einheitliche und zusammenhängende, von Gott unabhängige weltliche Deutung des Seins. Mit deren Hilfe konnte sie frei bleiben von dem übrigens für den Klassizismus charakteristischen allegorischen und didaktischen Charakter und konnte die auf der Einheit von Darstellung und erläuternder Mitteilung, der »pictura« und »sententia« beruhende gedankliche Lyrik zustandebringen, wie vollkommene Zeilen z.B. bei Berzsenyi:

> Oh, die geflügelte Zeit fliegt plötzlich davon,
> und jedes Werk schwebt um ihre verschwindenden Flügel!
> *(Der nahende Winter)*

In der Heraufbeschwörung der Vergangenheit vermengt sich der Verweis auf die antike Tradition (fast überall tauchen Theorien auf, die den Ursprung des betreffenden Volkes von den Römern, Griechen, Juden, Sumerern und anderen biblischen Völker ableiten) mit der Zeitlosigkeit des Märchens. Wie z.B. auch vor dem rumänischen Dichter Vasile Alecsandri das Bild der Heimat auftritt:

> Der Felsgipfel der Karpaten winkt,
> der Greif der Märchen hält Ausschau,
> und im Männerherzen lebt wiederum
> der römische Heldenmut.
> *(Meine Heimat)*

Die Regeln der mittleren (erzählende Prosa, Idylle, Kunstlied, Satire und Epistel) und der niedrigen Gattungen (Lustspiel, Lehrfabel und Tierfabel) waren weniger gebunden, doch bestand gerade deshalb ihre Bedeutung darin, daß sie — vor allem in der Zeit des Sentimentalismus — sich mit den hohen

Gattungen vermischten und so das Demokratisch-Werden der Literatur unterstützten. Sie können eher als Fingerübungen aufgefaßt werden, ihre Bedeutung ist eher historisch: damals sind sie in der Nationalsprache entstanden bzw. heimisch geworden.

Nur eine einzige Ausnahme gibt es hier: das bedeutendste Meisterwerk der gesamten osteuropäischen Aufklärung die Idylle des preußischen Litauers Kristijonas Donelaitis (1714—1780) *Jahreszeiten* (Metai). Auch das Leben von Doneleitis sagt viel, ist ein typisch osteuropäisches Leben ! Er wurde als Sohn eines Freibauern mit sieben Kinder auf einem auf keiner Landkarte zu findenden kleinen Gut in Ostpreußen (Preußisch Litauen) geboren. Sein Mutter wurde früh Witwe, dennoch ließ sie ihren begabten Sohn lernen, der — zwar hart arbeitend, in Not lebend, häufig hungernd — die theologische Fakultät der Universität Königsberg absolvierte. Nach einem kurzen Zwischenspiel wurde er zum protestantischen Pfarrer einer kleinen Gemeinde ernannt, wo er bis zu seinem Tode 37 Jahre hindurch Geistlicher war. Er heiratete die Witwe seines ehemaligen Vorgesetzten, eine Deutsche, hielt Predigten (deutsch und litauisch), erledigt die Angelegenheiten der Pfarrei und prozessiert in seinen letzten fünf Lebensjahren mit dem örtlichen Großgrundbesitzer wegen der Gemeindeflur.

Ein friedliches, fast eintöniges Leben war dies, doch was für Ambitionen stecken in seiner Tiefe. Der Pfarrer von Tolminkiemis hatte in Königsberg Lateinisch, Griechisch, Hebräisch und Französisch erlernt, und kannte außer den antiken Autoren auch die Kunst des zeitgenössischen französischen und deutschen Klassizismus. Bis zur Zeit zwischen 1765 und 1775, als er die *Jahreszeiten* schrieb, hatte er wahrscheinlich schon die Werke *The seasons* von James Thomson, *Den Frühling* von Heinrich Kleist gelesen, ganz zu schweigen von ähnlichen Dichtungen Hesiods und Vergils. Und all dieses Wissen, diese Bildung übergab er der dankbaren oder undankbaren Nachwelt: nicht nur die »Jahreszeiten«, sondern auch sechs ebenfalls in Hexametern geschriebene äsopische Fabeln, die von seinem literarischen Schaffen erhalten blieben, keine einzige Zeile von Donelaitis erschien zu seinen Lebzeiten im Druck. Die *Jahreszeiten* wurden zum ersten Mal im Jahre 1818 von L. Reza veröffentlicht, der auch sofort eine deutsche Übersetzung hinzufügte und dem Werk auch diesen Titel gab. Donelaitis hatte ursprünglich vier Idylle über die vier Jahreszeiten geschrieben, die er als literarische Episteln an seine Freunde schickte und von denen er Details in seine Sonntagspredigten einbaute.

Was für Tragödien unter der Oberfläche die Entwicklung des Lebenswerkes und das Schicksal dieses Werkes ahnen lassen, genau so eigenartig ist die Stellung der »Jahreszeiten« in der Entwicklung der litauischen Literatur. Im 18. Jahrhundert hatten die Litauer zwei Heimaten: den polnisch—litauischen Staat, das eigentliche Litauen, sowie Preußisch Litauen (Ostpreußen), wo auch Donelaitis lebte, das Königreich Preußen also. Die ausgestorbene bzw.

germanisierte Urbevölkerung, die Preußen, hatten diesem Gebiet nur den Namen vermacht, doch war die hiesige Bevölkerung zum überwiegenden Teil auch am Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts litauisch. Die Choleraepidemie des Jahres 1701 raffte jedoch mehr als die Hälfte der Einwohner von Ostpreußen hinweg und an ihre Stelle kamen deutsche Ansiedler, die die verschiedensten Vergünstigungen erhielten, die Junker, die die alten Rahmen des patriarchalischen litauischen Lebens unbarmherzig zerschlugen. Die Leibeigenen, die Dorfbewohner blieben natürlich meistens Litauer, und deshalb nahm in der Ausbildung der Dorfpfarrer das Studium der litauischen Sprache eine bedeutende Stelle ein. Ja, von der Mitte des Jahrhunderts an unterstützte die Regierung im Interesse der Erneuerung eines modernen preußischen Nationalbewußtseins mit Vorliebe sogar die Kultur der mit den Preußen verwandten Litauer. So ließ der König von Preußen sich z.B. bewußt nicht in Berlin sondern in Königsberg krönen, außerdem waren an der Universität in Halle und und Königsberg litauische Seminare tätig, wo auch Donelaitis studiert hatte. Dieser Umstand ist eine wichtige Tatsache zum Verständnis der Entstehung der *Jahreszeiten*. Ungestört konnte eine Art von litauischem Selbstbewußtsein existieren. Den Regeln des Klassizismus nach sehnte sich auch Donelaitis nach der alten Einfachheit zurück:

> Oh, Litauen, wo sind deine schönen Zeiten verschwunden?
> Da sang der Preuße noch nicht deutsch
> und kannte keine Stiefel, Hausschuhe, doch wie es sich
> dem Bauern schickt, trug er Schnürschuhe und — Friede in seinem Herzen.

Die Sehnsucht nach einem selbständigen Staat konnte aber nicht auftreten. So störte auf einzigartige Weise hier in Osteuropa die nationale Idee — wegen ihres vollständigen Fehlens — die andersgearteten Absichten des Schriftstellers nicht, kreuzte sie nicht. In dieser Situation war das Meisterwerk von Donelaitis zustande gekommen. Der Dichter hatte bewußt die Form der Idylle gewählt, die in der Genrehierarchie des Klassizismus als beinahe hohe Literatur galt, seinem Schaffen also dadurch einen Rang verlieht, zugleich konnte er aber auch gewisse didaktische Gesichtspunkte zur Geltung bringen.

Doch sind die scharfen Gegensätze nicht nur für das Schicksal von Donelaitis und die Umstände der Entstehung der *Jahreszeiten* bezeichnend: Am Trennpunkt zwischen Osten und Westen, heimatlos und zweisprachig, in den verheerenden Wirren von Kriegen und Epidemien das einsame Verkünden des Wortes eines ganzen Lebens — auch das Werk selbst wird von zahlreichen Widersprüchen durchwoben. Donelaitis hatte die Idylle nach antikem sowie französischem und deutschem Vorbild geschrieben. Den einfachen, harmonischen Menschen vor dem Hintergrund der ruhigen Vollkommenheit der Natur darzustellen, der seine Tage in einem Hirtenglück, in Zufriedenheit verbringt, das war die Schablone der klassizistischen Idylle. Was wurde daraus in den *Jahreszeiten*? Die Beschreibung des Elend eines ganzen Jahres in einem

Leibeigenendorf. Unter der Hand von Donelaitis verwandelte die Idylle sich: die ursprünglich heiteren Farben der Gattung werden immer wieder finster, nach zwei Zeilen Sonnenschein kommt immer wieder eine umfangreiche schreckliche Geschichte: Hungersnot, Trunksucht, baufällige Häuser, die Willkür der Herren, Gefängnis. Das übliche osteuropäische Stilleben. Das übliche? Ja, nur daß die osteuropäischen Literaturen ihre Leser erst fast ein Jahrhundert später an all das zu gewöhnen beginnen. Es ist furchterregend, wie Donelaitis die Spielregeln der Idylle einhalten will, und wie ihm das nicht gelingt. Wie die Wirklichkeit die bühnenhafte, maskierte Dichtung hinwegfegt. Auch das Grundthema selbst verändert sich, denn die vier Idyllen handeln nicht in erster Linie vom Wechsel der Jahreszeiten, folgen nicht dem Rhythmus der Natur, nicht das Frühjahr ist der Gipfel und der Winter der Tiefpunkt. Denn im Frühjahr hungern die Bauern, da sie nichts zu essen haben, während der Herbst und der Winter die Zeit der lustigen Gastlichkeiten, der Hochzeiten sind:

> Oh, wenn du nur länger gedauert hättest, Winter! Ewig
> Könnten wir schlafen! Wenn das Schicksal doch dies der Welt bringen würde!
> Doch das Frühjahr beginnt, mein Gott, die Arbeiten kommen,
> Die Lasten liegen uns wieder ein Jahr auf den Schultern.

Die Dichtung schildert die Welt vom Gesichtspunkt der Arbeit der Bauern aus, und auch in dieser Beziehung ist dies das erste typische, doch in seiner Konsequentheit vielleicht das erste Produkte der osteuropäischen Bauerngesellschaften.

Donelaitis kannte die Ideen der Aufklärung gut und bekannte sich zu ihnen. Z.B. zur Gleichheit der Herkunft:

> Das ist wahr, wiederholte lispelnd Buzas, denn
> Wir wissen, alle werden wir nackt geboren,
> Die prachtvollsten Herren genau so wie wir, arme Leute,
> Zwischen dem Kaiser und dem zerlumpten Leibeigenen
> gibt es hier keinen Unterschied.

Er glaubte auch daran, daß die Gegenwart deshalb so schlecht ist, weil die Moral so schlecht geworden ist:

> Oh, sprach Šelmas, in dieser Epoche wird die Moral zu Schmutz,
> Jeder wird bis zum Kern von der Sünde, der Niedertracht
> schlecht gemacht.

Das allein hätte aber die »Jahreszeiten« noch nicht über die Masse der zeitgenössischen Werke gehoben.

Es liegt auf der Hand, daß der Autor seine Figuren eindeutig in gute und schlechte einteilen wollte. Das Ergebnis stimmte jedoch nicht mit seiner Absicht überein. Die »Sprachrohre« des Dichters parodisieren mit ihren didaktischen Predigten sich beinahe selbst, so schwach, so nichtssagend ist es, sich dieser Wirklichkeit gegenüber auf die Weisheit des Schöpfers bzw. auf die

Prädestiniertheit des menschlichen Schicksals zu berufen. Der Stil des Autors verfügt nicht über die Ausgewogenheit und Abgeklärtheit des Klassizismus. Häufig wendet der Autor die romantische Übertreibung an: vom Rufen fallen Vögel tot vom Baum, von schlechten menschlichen Taten dröhnt die Erde gleich.

Auch die heutige ästhetische Wirkung des Werkes ergibt sich zum größten Teil hieraus: aus einem derartigen pointierten Zusammenstoßen von Absicht und Ergebnis, von Literatur und Leben.

## Der Sentimentalismus

Doch sind nicht nur »Die Jahreszeiten« keine »reine Formel«. Die meisten klassizistischen Gattungen haben in Osteuropa dann eine Bedeutung erlangt, als die folgende Tendenz, der Sentimentalismus, sie aufzulösen begann. Dies konnte umso mehr zutreffend sein, weil der Sentimentalismus nicht die Negierung, sondern vielmehr die Fortsetzung des Klassizismus ist. In demselben gedanklichen und poetischen System verlagerte der Sentimentalis nur die Akzente (von vielen werden deshalb auch mit gewissem Recht die beiden Tendenzen für eine Richtung gehalten). So war z.B. auch weiterhin die Genrehierarchie des Klassizismus gültig, nur bevorzugte der Sentimentalismus gerade die mittleren und niedrigeren Kunstgattungen und verwendete die hohen Gattungen als Stoff der erniedrigenden Travestie oder Parodie. Der wichtigste Grund für diese Erscheinung war der, daß — wie bereits erwähnt — die neue, gelöstere Literatursprache nur so, durch diese Gattungen in die Literatur einzuziehen vermochte.

Diese Tatsache hatte auf zwei Gebieten ernstere Folgen. Das eine war das Schauspiel. Das sich damals allmählich herausbildende osteuropäische Theater war im Zeichen des Lustspiels, einer niedrigen Gattung, entstanden. Stücke wie *Der Flegel* des Russen Denis Fonsiwin, Alexander Gribojedows *Geist bringt Kummer*, *Das Schöntun des Firczyk* von Zabłocki, das Stück *Die Krakauer und die Góralen* von Bogusławski, die erste polnische Oper, und Werke von späteren Autoren *Damen und Husaren* von Aleksander Fredro, die komische Oper des Ukrainers Iwan Kotljarewski *Natascha Potlawka*, die Posse des Ungarn Mihály Vitéz Csokonai *Die Witwe Karnyó*, das Lustspiel des Slowenen Anton Linhart *Jener lustige Tag*, das eine Bearbeitung von *Figaros Hochzeit* ist, das Lustspiel des Serben Jovan Sterija-Popović *Kir Janja*, die Posse *Das Schusterfest* des Tschechen Josef Kajetán Tyl usw. usf. stehen in bearbeiteter und modernisierter Form bis heute auf dem Spielplan der Theater in Osteuropa. Das gilt auch für die Werke ihrer Nachfolger im letzten Dritten des 19. Jahrhunderts, die auch schon von diesen Autoren gelernt hatten, wie z.B. der Lette Adolfs Alūnans, die Estin Lydia Koidula, Begründerin des ersten

estnischen Theaters, oder die polnische »sielanka«, eine dem österreichischen Volksstück ähnliche Gattung, die von dem Belorussen Wikentij Dunin-Marzinkewitsch, umgeformt und bearbeitet wurden. Diese Stücke widerspiegelten nicht nur in ihrer Sprache, sondern in ihrem ganzen Geist eine demokratischere, volkstümlichere Betrachtungsweise. Sie waren aber dennoch Lustspiele, und die Tatsache, daß sie im osteuropäischen Drama das ganze 19. Jahrhundert beherrschten, bedeutete, daß sie die blutige Wahrheit verniedlichten, bagatellisierten. Für die »hohe« Tragödie war aber die Sprache und vor allem das Publikum nicht vorhanden. (Ein Beweis hierfür ist das Fiasko der Jugendtragödien von Sterija-Popović oder die stiefmütterliche Aufnahme der Tragödie *Banus Bánk* des Ungarn József Katona.) Die Tragödie schufen die romantischen Dichter später mit ihren dramatischen Dichtungen, denken wir hier nur an Puschkin, Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Vörösmarty oder Njegos, und diese hemmende Wirkung, dieses Undramatische des Zustandes ohne Bühne verspürt des osteuropäische Theater vielleicht bis zur Gegenwart. (Zygmunt Krasiński gibt in seiner »Ungöttlichen Komödie« z.B. folgende Autorenanweisungen: »Finstere Nacht. Der Böse Geist huscht über dem Mädchen davon. Über den Garten. Über den Friedhof. Schlafzimmer. Ein Nachtlicht steht auf dem Tisch und hüllt den neben der Frau schlafenden Mann in ein blasses Licht.« Wenn man auch den über der Welt davonhuschenden bösen Geist auch irgendwie auf die Bühne stellen könnte, wäre das im Falle des Inneren des Zimmers überhaupt nicht mehr möglich. Diesen plötzlichen Schnitt des Schauplatzes könnte höchstens die Filmkamera wiedergeben, oder die Phantasie des Lesers. Und wirklich, wie das auch derartige Autorenanweisungen beweisen, sind gerade die besten der osteuropäischen Dramen des 19. Jahrhunderts als Buchdramen entstanden. Die Autoren selbst konnten sie nur als Buchdramen schreiben, denn nur in den seltensten Fällen hatten sie eine Vorstellung von der Aufführung ihrer Werke. Slowacki z.B., der Autor mehrerer genialer Dramen, hat nie eine einzige Zeile seiner Stücke auf der Bühne gesehen. Es ist also kein Wunder, wenn in seinem Drama *Kordian* z.B. eine bühnentechnisch nicht realisierbare Szene zu finden ist, in der die Titelfigur »mit über der Brust verschränkten Armen allein auf dem höchsten Eisgipfel des Montblancs steht«, und wir nach dem berühmten Monolog lesen können: »Eine Wolke fegt ihn vom Eisgipfel«.

*Wolke* Setze dich auf den Nebel — ich lasse dich fliegen . . . Siehe, Polen — beginne zu arbeiten! . . .
*Kordian* (fällt mit ausgebreiteten Armen auf den heimatlichen Boden und ruft aus) Polen!!!

Das andere bedeutende Gebiet der Demokratisierung war jene gewaltige, an der Grenzlinie von Klassizismus und Sentimentalismus entstehende und das einstige Hehre und das gegenwärtige Kleinliche, das alte Natürliche und das gegenwärtige Schlechte miteinander konfrontierende heroi-komische Litera-

tur, die in zwei Zweige, in den gehoberenen Boileauschen und in den der Burleske näherstehenden Scarronschen Zweig zerfallen war. Die kleineren heroisch-komischen Gattungen, die Märchen, Gleichnisse und Satiren wurden angefangen von Krasicki, Adam Naruszewicz, von Kajetan Węgierski, auch polnischher Voltaire genannt, und Dositej Obradović noch im 18. Jahrhundert von vielen Autoren betrieben. Und sie hatten auch am Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts, zur Zeit der vorübergehenden Auferstehung des Klassizismus, schon zur Zeit der Romantik, bedeutende Erfolge aufzuweisen (der ungarische Autor Mihály Fazekas, der Russe Iwan Krylow, der Litauer Simonas Stanvičius, um nur die bedeutendsten zu erwähnen).

Die ersten Vertreter der größeren Kunstgattungen finden wir ebenfalls in der russischen und der polnischen Literatur im Schaffen von Wassili Majkow und Michail Tschulkow, dann gibt Nikolaj Osipow am Ende des Jahrhunderts eine freie Nachdichtung des Werkes des Österreichers Blumauer unter dem Titel *Die umgekehrte Aeneis von Vergil* heraus, die einen Einfluß nicht nur auf die russische, sondern auch auf die ukrainische und die belorussische Literatur hatte. Wie auch die beiden komischen Epen von Ignacy Krasicki, Fürstbischof von Warmia, die Ariosto nachahmende *Mäuseade* (1775), deren Verwandter später der *Krieg der Frösche und Mäuse* des Ungarn Mihály Vitéz Csokonai wurde, und der die Priester verhöhnende *Monachomachia oder Der Möchskrieg* (1778). Für das heroisch-komische Epos sind Beispiele auch in der slowakischen (Bohuslav Tablič) und der tschechischen Literatur (Sebastian Hněvkovský) zu finden. Am seltsamsten ist, daß auch die moderne Geschichte von drei »nicht vollständigen« Literaturen, der ukrainischen, der rumänischen und der belorussischen Literatur, mit einem heroisch-komischen Epos beginnt. Die *Aeneis* von Iwan Kotlarewski war schon vor ihrer vollständigen Publikation im Jahre 1842 von der Jahrhundertwende an in verschiedenen handschriftlichen Kopien und in ohne Wissen des Autors gedruckten Ausgaben populär geworden. In der Gestalt des Aeneas und seiner Kampfgefährten konnten sich die Kosaken von Saporoshje wiedererkennen, während sie in den Zerrbildern der Götter und der Herrscher die Feudalherren und die Tschinowniks erkennen konnten.

Die *Zigeuneriade* des Rumänen Ion Budai-Deleanu, die 1812 fertiggestellt war, aber erst 1877 erschien, war die Verspottung der mittelalterlichen abergläubischen Moral und außerdem eine Stellungnahme für die Ideen der Aufklärung, und dies in der rumänischen Literatur zum ersten Mal auf hohem künstlerischem Niveau.

Die belorussische Literatur beginnt mit zwei komischen Epen, deren Verfasser bis heute nicht feststehen. Über die nach Osipow und Kotlarewski geschriebene *Umgekehrte Aeneis* ist nur bekannt, daß der aufgrund der Betrachtungsweise vermutlich kleinadlige Autor das Werk nach dem Napoleonischen Krieg von 1812 geschrieben hatte, weil er dieses Ereignis erwähnt (Teile des

Werkes sind 1845 zum ersten Mal gedruckt erschienen). Das Epos *Taras auf dem Parnaß* ist in den 40er oder 50er Jahren des 19. Jahrhunderts entstanden (gedruckt wurde es erst 1889). Von seinem Inhalt hat man schon aufgrund des Titels eine Vorstellung, wenn man weiß, daß Taras, der auf den Parnaß gelangt, ein einfacher belorussischer Förster ist, der nicht nur die alte überholte polnische und russische literarische Mode verhöhnt (die der Autor nebenbei bemerkt sehr gut kennt), sondern auch eine aufgeklärt eingestellte Gesellschaftskritik praktiziert.

Ein gemeinsames Merkmal der heroisch-komischen Epen, erzählenden Dichtungen, Märchen und Satiren war, daß sie ihre westeuropäischen Vorbilder nicht einfach parodisierend übersetzt bzw. nachgeahmt, sondern diese auch auf die heimischen Verhältnisse angewendet haben. In der Reihe ihrer Figuren traten einfache Menschen mit schöner Sprache auf, ist die zeitgenössische Wirklichkeit nicht in einem Zerrspiegel zu sehen. Letzten Endes entwickelte sich aus dieser Art von heroisch-komischer Literatur das heroisch-komische Epos, die komische erzählende Dichtung. Und über die Stationen von Romanen in Gedichten wie über den *Onegin*, den *Pan Tadeusz* oder den *Toldi* des Ungarn János Arany entwickelte sich die Haupttendenz der osteuropäischen Prosa, wie sich diese in der Tendenz des Realismus entfaltet hat. Man muß aber sehen, wie hoch vom Gesichtspunkt der Entwicklung aus auch das Heroisch-Komische eingeschätzt werden muß, so sehr kann man auch diesen Weg der Entstehung der realistischen schönen Prosa bedauern. Dieser Weg setzte nämlich nicht die anfängliche (und primitive) Prosatradition fort. Deshalb wurden zahlreiche Vorläufer mehr oder weniger in den Hintergrund gedrängt. Hier müssen unbedingt erwähnt werden der dem Vorbild von Fénelons *Télémaque* und Rousseaus *Émile* folgende erste polnische Roman, das Buch *Des Mikołaj Doświadczyński Erlebnisse* von Krasicki (1776), der autobiographische Bildungsroman von Obradović *Mein Leben und meine Abenteuer*, der 1783 in Leipzig erschien, die Autobiographie des Bulgaren Sofronij Wratschanski, die er nach diesem Vorbild um 1805 auf rumänischem Boden unter dem Titel *Leben und Leiden des sündigen Sofronij* schrieb, die dann jedoch erst 1861 in Druck erschien. Hierher gehört auch das Werk *Reise von Petersburg nach Moskau* (1790) des Russen Alexander Radischtschew, das Lawrence Sternes »Yoricks empfindsame Reise« zu einer revolutionären und revoltierenden Reise umgestaltete, und das wegen seines radikalen Gehalts zwar im gesamten 19. Jahrhundert lebendig blieb (obwohl der Autor in seiner kleinen Druckerei nur insgesamt 650 Exemplare druckte und diese auch gleich verboten wurden. Dieses Verbot blieb ganz bis 1905 bestehen, doch sind mehr als 70 handschriftliche Kopien des Buches erhalten). Es blieb aber als Prosagattung ohne Nachfolger, wie auch die heute schon ungenießbaren und unlesbar sentimentalen Erzählungen und Romane, die zu ihrer Zeit eine wichtige Funktion bei der Steigerung der Leserzahl hatten. Hier kann man an die ersten ungarischen Romane denken,

an *Etelka* von András Dugonics (1788), an die *Überlieferungen Fannys* von József Kármán (1794) (in der Form von einem Tagebuch und von Briefen geschrieben), oder an die Erzählungen des Russen Nikolaj Karamsin. Der Umstand, daß die osteuropäische Prosa so auf einem Seitenpfad der Epik in Versen entstand, ist eine der wichtigsten Ursache für ihre auch heute noch registrierbaren Schwächen.

Es ist kein Zufall, daß die meisten erwähnenswerten Ereignisse dieser Literaturen aus dem Grenzgebiet von Klassizismus und Sentimentalismus stammen. Der reine Sentimentalismus ist nämlich eine des sterilsten Tendenzen der Weltliteratur (das unter seiner Schirmherrschaft eintretende wichtigste Ereignis, die Entdeckung der Folklore, gehört nur äußerlich hierher, denn die entdeckte Volksdichtung selbst hat nichts mit dem Sentimentalismus zu tun). Obzwar seine Thesen doch vielverheißend sind: von der Zweiheit »Welt — Mensch« lenkt er nach dem Klassizismus die Aufmerksamkeit wiederum auf den Menschen, nach der Heraufbeschwörung der Vergangenheit will er die Verbesserung der Gegenwart, nach der Herrschaft der Ratio faßt er den Menschen in erster Linie als Gefühlswesen auf. (Aus der Anforderung der Gefühlsmäßigkeit und der Einfachheit wurde die beliebte lyrische Gattung des Sentimentalismus das Lied, musikalischer als bisher, und nach der mittelalterlichen melodischen Dichtung mit musikalischer Begleitung begann jetzt wiederum das Musikalische eine Rolle zu spielen, die sich dann später im Symbolismus vollständig entfaltete.) Doch wurde die Ästhetik des Sentimentalismus von einem grundlegenden Paradoxon in Fesseln geschlagen. Kann der Klassizismus für den konventionellen Ausdruck der gesellschaftlichen Gefühle gehalten werden, dann ist für den Sentimentalismus der konventionelle Ausdruck der individuellen Gefühle charakteristisch. Seine Vertreter interessierte nämlich vom Individuum, vom Menschen nur, was im Individuum gemeinsam ist. Das Prinzip des Individuellen, der schöpferischen Einmaligkeit fehlt bei ihnen zur Gänze. Sowohl der zentrale Begriff der die Gegensätze ausgleichenden, harmonischen Weltsicht, als auch das Glück, die »Freude des Herzens« und die »dunkle Blume der (klassizistischen »alten Zeiten« sowie der »Schleier der (romantischen) Zukunft im Mondschein« werden im Namen der Gegenwart zurückgewiesen. Nach der nationalen Freiheit des Klassizismus wird der historische Raum auf das individuelle Glück eingeengt. Wie dies z.B. der Ungar Mihály Vörösmarty in einem auch als Programm aufzufassenden Gedicht schrieb:

> Wer in seinem Herzen gut, in der Seele edel war,
> Wer den Lebensdurst nicht aufbrauchte,
> Wen Eingebildetheit, Begierde und Licht nicht verzauberte,
> Nur der kann auf Erden seine Heimat finden.
> Blicke nicht, blicke nicht in die Ferne deiner Wünsche:
> Die Ganze Welt ist nicht unser Eigentum,
> Wieviel das Herz in sich aufnehmen kann,
> Nur soviel können wir als unser eigen bezeichnen.
> *(An die Sinnende)*

Es ist also kein Wunder, daß auf dieser Grundlage außer einer Vielzahl von überschwenglichen Gemeinplätzen auch nichts anderes zustande kam. Und das war noch dazu auch in der Gestaltung einförmig, denn das Streben nach Einfachheit (oder eher seine sentimentale Deutung) machte im vorhinein die Grundlage jeder großen Dichtung, die transponierte Ausdrucksweise, die Mehrdeutigkeit der künstlerisch gestalteten Aussage unmöglich. Und noch dazu kam diese primitive Persönlichkeitsauffassung nicht direkt zur Geltung, sondern durch die »zweite Absicht« der Sprach- und Stilschöpfung, wie dies z.B. auch von dem Ukrainer Petro Hulak-Artemowski formuliert wird: »Angeregt von meiner Neugierde wollte ich ausprobieren, ob es nicht auch in der kleinrussischen Sprache möglich wäre, die zarten, edlen und gehobenen Gefühle wiederzugeben.«

Die Geschichtsphilosophie des Klassizismus war zu sich vor der Zukunft fürchtenden, über die Schrecknisse der Gegenwart klagenden Stimmungssplittern geworden. Der Rumäne Vasile Cîrlova rief aus, als er die Ruinen des ehemaligen fürstlichen Palasts erblickte:

> Mein Wunsch ist es, vor Schmerz um meine Heimat zu weinen!
> *(Die Ruinen von Tîrgovište)*

Wie anders ist dieser Ton als später der der Romantiker! Wieviel Glauben, wieviel Trotz inspiriert dem ungarischen Dichter Ferenc Kölcsey die Burgruine von Huszt oder dem Litauer Maironis die Ruine des Palasts von Trakai! Die Sentimentalisten jedoch fürchteten sich vor der Zukunft. Wie der Rumäne Ianco Vacarescu es der unerbittlichen Uhr klagt:

> Denn in dir ist kein Erbarmen,
> Du störst unsere Augen und Ohren;
> Du zeigst immer die vergehende Zeit an,
> Du drohst mit Unheil und Tod.
> *(Die reparierte Uhr)*

Ihr Menschenbild, das Bild des naiven, nur den leisen Freuden des Herzens lebenden und über die Klagen weinenden, von den die Vergangenheit und die Zukunft nicht kennenden Gefühlen regierten Menschen wird später von den Romantikern abgelöst. Sie sind jedoch am häufigsten gezwungen, ihre Idee, den freien Menschen mit vollständiger Persönlichkeit, in die Utopie der Zukunft zu verpflanzen.

Natürlich lebte — ähnlich dem Klassizismus — auch der Sentimentalismus weiter. Nicht nur in der Musikalität der Lyrik, von der bereits die Rede war (und die im Gegensatz zur allgemeinen Auffassung nicht das Erbe der disharmonischen Romantik ist), sondern auch in der weniger beweglichen Prosa. Die Persönlichkeitsauffassung des Sentimentalismus läßt sich z.B. im Roman *Die Großmutter* (1855) von Božena Němcová nachweisen, dessen letzer Satz, der das größte Lob über die Großmutter, die ein vollkommenes

Leben gelebt hatte, enthält, folgendermaßen lautet: »Sie war eine glückliche Frau!« Die liebe alte Frau des Dorfes spricht in Sprichwörtern, die den Weg der goldenen Mitte verkünden. Sie hebt das auf der Erde liegende Stück Brot auf und küßt es ehrfurchtsvoll; sie kann sich mit der neuen Mode nicht befreunden (macht mit Feuerstein, Stahl und Zunder Feuer, verwendet keine Zündhölzer), achtet Gott usw.

Doch sind ähnliche idyllische Einflüsse auch in dem historischen Roman *Unter dem Joch* des Bulgaren Iwan Wasow zu finden (1888). Vielleicht ist jene Szene am komischsten, als der junge Freiheitsheld Iwan sozusagen über den Zaun in das Haus des reichen Bauern Marko stürzt. (Der Bauer Marko ist ein nationales Ideal Wasows. Darüber hinaus, daß er wohlhabend ist und eine schöne Familie hat, in patriarchalischem Glück lebt, ist er auch aufgeklärt: »Er glaubte genau so vorbehaltlos an die Wissenschaften wie an Gott«. Der junge Iwan, der aus dem Kerker geflohen ist, der von den türkischen Gendarmen verfolgt wird, der hungrig, in Lumpen gehüllt und erschöpft ist, kaum auf den Füßen stehen kann, wird von Marko gefragt, ob ihn jemand beobachtet hat. »Nein, als ich hereinkam, glaube ich, war niemand auf der Straße.« Der Bauer Marko antwortet hierauf: »Hereingekommen bist du! Darf man denn so ein Haus betreten, mein Sohn?« Wie zu sehen ist, muß unter allen Umständen jeder der Erziehung zu zarten Gefühlen, diesem für die Bulgaren charakteristischen Anstandsgefühl entsprechen... Die idyllische Auffassung durchzieht alle Details des Werkes, ganz bis zu dem primitiven, einfachen Stil, nach welchem der Bach »kristallklar, eiskalt ist, Tag und Nacht zwitschert wie der Vogel«. Oder ein Bild vom Mittagessen der Familie: »Der Vater blickte hin und wieder zärtlich zu den Kindern hin, die pustend mit ihren kleinen, scharfen Zähnen kauten, und sich ihren gesunden, unverwüstlichen Magen stopften«.

Zu dieser Richtung gehören auch die Novellen des Rumänen Ioan Slavici. In der Novelle *Die Freude des alten Mannes* (1881) faßt am Ende der Schriftsteller die Lehren der sentimentalen Geschichte wie folgt zusammen: »Herr, wie groß ist deine Weisheit, und wie schön hast du die Welt geschaffen, auf das wir eine Wohnstätte haben!« Unweigerlich fällt einem hier Voltaire ein, der in seinem »Candide« schon hundert Jahre früher jene Auffassung, daß »diese Welt die beste ist, die es gibt«, verhöhnt hatte.

Es ist kein Zufall, daß hier Beispiele aus der Prosa angeführt werden, denn die Schwächen der Poetik des Sentimentalismus sind hier am auffallendsten. Die weitschweifige Beschreibung der durch die Gefühle betrachteten Welt hat zur Folge, daß nicht-komponierte Werke entstanden, in denen die Charaktere primitiv und süßlich und die Fäden der Handlung nicht miteinander verknüpft sind. Der Mangel an Komponiertheit ist vielleicht am deutlichsten im Roman *Der ewige Bräutigam* (1878) des serbischen Autors Jakov Ignjatović zu sehen. Der dünne Roman besteht fast zur Hälfte aus der langweiligen, uninteressanten Beschreibung einer Reise nach Krakau, von der sich heraus-

stellt, daß sie überhaupt nichts mit dem eigentlichen Gegenstand des Romans zu tun hat. Der Leser versteht einfach nicht, weshalb der Autor sie beschreibt.

Auch das ist kein Zufall, daß dies in Osteuropa jene Epoche ist, in der in größerer Zahl auch Schriftstellerinnen auftreten, und vor allem gerade auf dem Gebiet der Prosa. Die Tschechinnen Božena Němcová und Karolina Světlá, die Polinnen Elizabeta Orzeszkowa und Maria Konopnicka, die Ukrainerin Olga Kobiljanska, die Estin Lydia Koidula, die Litauerinnen Julija Žemaitė sowie die unter dem gemeinsamen Pseudonym Lazdynu Peleda bekannt gewordenen Schwestern Sofije Pšibiliauskienė und Marija Laskauskenė, die Belorussin Cjotka, die Ungarin Margit Kaffka und viele andere ihrer Gefährtinnen, die alle Hochachtung verdienen, verspürten alle an der eigenen Haut, was für ein schwerer Prozeß die Entfaltung der freien Persönlichkeit ist. Fast alle haben sie eine unerhört kampfreiche Lebensbahn zurückgelegt. Am dramatischsten ist vielleicht das Leben von Julija Žemaité. Die Tochter des verarmten Kleinadligen konnte keine Schulen besuchen, als Zimmermädchen bei reicheren Verwandten hatte sie ganz bis zum Alter von 20 Jahren sogar nur zur polnischen Sprache und Kultur Kontakt, als sie dann einen litauischen Förster heiratete. Während sie bald hier, bald da Grund und Boden pachteten und von einem Dorf ins andere zogen, leistete die Frau die schwere Arbeit der Bäuerin, gebar Kinder und sehnte sich unter den Entbehrungen nach der unerreichbar scheinenden Kultur. Später berichtete sie in ihrer Autobiographie über diese Etappe ihres Lebens wie folgt: ». . . Obwohl mein Mann schön ist, blaue Augen und lockiges Haar hat, und ich ihn sehr liebe, habe ich manchmal von allem genug, daß ich keine Lust habe, ihn auch nur anzusehen. Dazu kommt noch die Traurigkeit: ich weiß nichts, überhaupt nichts darüber, was in der weiten Welt geschieht! Nur das Geschwätz, die Streitereien der alten Frauen, der Zank und der Klatsch. Nur die Nachricht von den kleinen Ereignissen in der Heimat dringt bis zu uns. Wir sehen weder Zeitungen, noch etwas anderes aus der weiten Welt. Mich ekelt dieses Leben an, doch binden mich die Kinder. Tagtäglich die Arbeit, ohne einen Lichtschimmer, immer nur dasselbe — ich möchte mich davon befreien, mich in die Höhe schwingen und fliegen, fliegen, schweben, wohin das Auge nur blickt.« Der glückliche Zufall brachte es, daß ein begeisterter Student sie mit der in Preußen erscheinenden und illegal nach Litauen geschmuggelten primitiven litauischen Kunstprosa bekannt machte. Daraus schöpfte sie Mut, und die fast fünfzigjährige Bäuerin, die ihre Kinder schon groß gezogen hatte, schrieb ihre erste Novelle. So begann sie zu schreiben, noch immer müde von der Arbeit des ganzen Tages, nachts. Oft hatte sie kaum Papier und Tinte, mußte sie gegen die Auffassung der Verwandten und Bekannten kämpfen und sich vor den zaristischen Gendarmen fürchten.

Es ist also kein Wunder, wenn die für eine mehrfache Emanzipation kämpfenden Frauen in der künstlerischen Darstellung dieses Prozesses eine

bedeutende Rolle zu spielen beginnen, aber auch das ist kein Zufall, daß gerade deshalb bei ihnen — und durch sie auch in der osteuropäischen Prosa — der Akzent in erster Linie auf den ethischen Momenten der Emanzipation lag: vor der gesellschaftlich-beruflichen Befreiung trat die gefühlsmäßige Befreiung in der Liebe, in der Familie auf, und so spielen sich die Werke der osteuropäischen Schriftstellerinnen zum großen Teil in kleineren Gemeinschaften ab, haben sie einen gewissen »privaten« Charakter.

## ANMERKUNGEN

[1] Lotman, J., *Statji po tipologii kultury*. Tartu, 1970. 12.

[2] Macůrek, J., *Dějepisectví evropského východu* [Die Geschichtsschreibung des europäischen Ostens]. Praha, 1946. Nakl. Historického Klubu. 214.

[3] Lotman, J., *K probleme tipologii kultury*. In: *Trudi po znakovym systyemam*. III. Tartu, 1970. 35—36.

[4] Josef Macůrek op. cit. 229.

[5] Krejči, K., *Heroikomika v básnictví Slovanů*. Praha, 1964. ČSAV. 195.

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# János Horváth und das 19. Jahrhundert

Von

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Es verbargen sich diesmal, als mir die Aufgabe, sub titulo ‚János Horváth* und das 19. Jahrhundert' über den Gefeierten unserer Zusammenkunft zu sprechen zuteil wurde, in den Tiefen der Bestimmung dieser Aufgabe von vornherein Ungewißheit und Doppelheit. Habe ich darüber zu sprechen, wie er über das 19. Jahrhundert dachte? — oder aber darüber, was er von diesem Jahrhundert gelernt und weiter fortbewegt hat? Und es gibt auch ein drittes Moment der Ungewißheit, das sich den beiden anschließt. Gleich uns, Jetztzeitlichen, war auch er nicht der Ansicht, daß es vom Anfang eines Jahrhunderts bis zu seinem Abschluß währende geschichtliche Einheiten gibt. Aber auch er — gleich uns, Jetztzeitlichen (und allen Jeweiligen) — gebrauchte recht häufig die Benennung ‚Jahrhundert', und gerade diese: ‚19. Jahrhundert', und in bezug auf dieses letztere die Formulierung: ‚. . . des 19. Jahrhunderts'.

Es birgt jedoch diesmal die Ungewißheit des Titels der Aufgabe zugleich eine Art förderlicher Aneiferung. Die Beseitigung seiner Ungewißheit nötigt zum Konfrontieren von Kernfragen. Die Literatur-, Kunst-, Geschichtsauffassung Horváths, und ganz allgemein: seine Weltauffassung wurde durch die

* János Horváth (1878—1961) war im Zeitabschnitt zwischen beiden Weltkriegen die hervorragendste Persönlichkeit der ungarischen Literaturwissenschaft. Hat er auch recht wichtige zusammenfassende Bücher über die Fragen der ungarischen Literatur von den frühen (XII—XVI) Jahrhunderten veröffentlicht, und auch zu den Entwicklungsproblemen der Literatur des 20. Jahrhunderts Beiträge geleistet, so wurde dessenungeachtet die Summe seiner Literaturauffassung und des über die Gesamtheit der Literatur geformten Bildes in seinen die ungarische Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts behandelnden Studien dargelegt. Auch entwickelte er eine großzügige Tätigkeit auf dem Gebiet der Poetik und der Prosodie, und war auch in der Sprachwissenschaft bewandert. — Die Hochschulstudien absolvierte János Horváth in Budapest und auch in Paris, wo er Schüler Lausons wurde. Es machte sich aber von Beginn an eine Bestrebung bei ihm merkbar, einerseits zum Entwickeln einer eher elastischen Geschichts- und Gattungsauffassung als jene von Lauson eine war; andererseits zum Erschaffen einer Methode, welche zum Erfassen und Vorzeigen der Spezifika der nationalen Literatur zu dienen hat. Die Dilthey'sche Betrachtung hat sich kräftig auf ihn ausgewirkt — neben der französischen war auch die deutsche literaturwissenschaftliche Bildung János Horváths ganz hervorragend — dennoch wurde er kein wahrer Anhänger der Schule der Geistesgeschichte. — Die Ungarische Akademie der Wissenschaften beging die hundertste Jahresfeier seiner Geburt. Bei dieser Gelegenheit wird der vorliegende Vortrag veröffentlicht.

Belehrungen des 19. Jahrhunderts ausschlaggebend beeinflußt, sowohl durch die europäische, wie auch durch die heimische Belehrung. Andererseits: nie und nirgends hat er das *Wesen* seiner Weltauffassung, das Wesen von allen Teilen derselben in einer so feinen Formulierung, in einer typischeren Manier, mit mehr persönlicher Interessiertheit dargelegt, als bei Gelegenheiten, wo er über das ungarische 19. Jahrhundert meditierte und sprach.

Wir wollen aber — bevor wir mit der Erwägung der verzweigten Frage: was er gelernt und was er gemeint hat beginnen — kurz, in aller Kürze aussagen, wie er dachte, wenn er über jenes Jahrhundert als ein Entwicklungsprodukt, als geschichtliche Einheit sprach. Es geht leicht, denn kurz, in aller Kürze erklärte er selbst: »Die von Bessenyeis Auftritt bis zum Tode von Arany währenden mehr als hundert Jahre können als eine einzige Epoche großen Aufschwungs erfaßt werden: als die große Epoche der spezifisch nationalen Literatur.«

Wenn wir uns nun erstens einmal der Frage der Belehrung des 19. Jahrhunderts zukehren, treffen wir dieselben Zeitgrenzen an, nicht in heimischer, auch in europäischer Relation. Denn der angeführte Satz wird folgenderweise fortgesetzt: ». . . die große Epoche der spezifisch nationalen Literatur, deren Geschmackscharakter durchschnittlich romantisch ist. Ihre anfänglichen Bestrebungen treiben sie auf die Romantik zu, und selbst ihre in Arany erreichte Läuterung sagt dieser nicht endgültig Adieu.« Soweit er die Zeitgrenzen vor 1800 verschiebt, in gleichem, fast gleichem Maße geht auch die europäische Romantik diesem Jahr voran. Die schottisch-englischen intuitiven und die deutschen spekulativ anmutenden Romantik-Anlässe betraten um jene Jahrhundertwende bereits ihre untersten Stufen. So ist es auch beim Abschluß: er kennt die gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts sich verbreitende Marx'sche- und Nietzsche'sche-Wirkung, hält sie in Evidenz, die erste weniger, die zweitgenannte etwas eingehender, lehnt aber die inspirierende Bedeutung beider ab.

Finden wir dessenungeachtet Anhaltspunkte? In seiner Komparatistik, in der Deszendenzlehre nennt Horváth selten einen Namen; auch solche von Schriftstellern, Dichtern werden selten genannt. Namen von Gelehrten, von Theoretikern — kaum; und als Autoritäten, zur Unterstützung eigener Behauptungen nennt er fast niemals Namen. Nicht etwa, als wollte er eine selbstbeweglich, autochton-nationale Entwicklung eingeben, nicht etwa, als wollte er seinen reichen Gedankenschatz als ganz und gar eigenes Geschöpf hinstellen. Vielmehr, weil er die Ansicht vertritt: ». . . insgeheim oder unumwunden lenken weltanschauliche Systeme, große geistige Strömungen« bringen zuwege die Richtungen »von einer Grenze der Menschheit bis zur anderen«, während Werthöhe und Authentizität ihrer konkreten Erscheinung vom Grade der Assimilierbarkeit zum geistig-seelischen Eigentum abhängen. Wenn wir nun dennoch Namen erwähnen, so tun wir das nicht, als wären wir gewiß dessen, daß er auf diese oder jene Idee beim Lesen des einen oder des anderen Autors

gekommen war; wir tun es vielmehr zwecks Versinnbildlichung von Richtungen, oder aber zwecks Vergleichs.

Horváth nahm die Wirkungen der drei großen bürgerlich-wissenschaftlichen Richtungen des 19. Jahrhunderts auf, diese der geschichtsphilosophischen Romantik, die des an Naturgesetzen haftenden Positivismus, wie auch die der auf die ‚großen geistigen Strömungen' folgenden Geistesgeschichte. Nicht alle drei in gleichem Maße, und auch nicht für jeden Abschnitt seiner Betrachtung. Es ist schon bezeichnend, daß er die Begriffe letzgenannter Richtung, welche gerade im Schwange ist, unter Anführungszeichen setzt, um dadurch seine Abstandnahme zu veranschaulichen. Geschichtsauffassung lernte er jedenfalls überwiegend von der erstgenannten, Psychologie von der zweiten, und eine Art geschichtlicher Kunstsoziologie von der drittgenannten Richtung. Herders Auffassung bezüglich nationaler Individualität und innennationaler Entwicklung, die Romantik begründende Weltliteratur-Nationalliteratur Relation Friedrich Schlegels — nach welcher im Orchester der ersterwähnten die zweiterwähnten eigenberechtigte Musikinstrumente eigenen Charakters sind —, Hegels Romantik und Klassizismus ineinanderfügenden ‚Zeitgeist' Begriff, ferner die Bestrebung des Gervinus, des romantischen Fundators der europäischen Literaturgeschichtsschreibung, den Weg bis ans Ende zu verfolgen, auf welchem nationales Bewußtsein und nationale Kultur auf ihre klassische Höhe gelangen — nahm er gleichergestalt auf. Er nahm jedoch genauso Begriffe von Taine, dem Litteraten-Papst des Positivismus auf, wie etwa die individuelle Grundeigenschaft, den Einfluß vom Milieu, und nicht allein, und auch *nicht an erster Stelle* den Begriff der Rassen- und Blutsverwandtschaft, oder aber Diltheys fürs Wechseln der Zeiten typische, Wechsel der Zeiten indizierende Erlebnisanhäufung, Ideenreife, Formkonzentration. Und diese dreifache Wirkung manifestiert sich nicht allein in seiner Auffassung, auch für und für in seinen Metaphern; bald treffen wir auf Variationen von Herders Urbaum-Vorstellung, bald auf Darstellungsvarianten von Taines nationalen Charakterkeimlingen, dann wiederum auf eine neue Umgestaltung der in alle Teilchen eindringenden Erlebnisatmosphäre Diltheys.

Er aber bringt all das — mitsamt unzähligen anderen — nicht vereinzelt zur Geltung, benützt sie nicht einzelweise, sondern im Zeichen des bereits erwähnten Assimilierens zum *eigenen* geistig-seelischen Besitz. Und *das typische Hauptmerkmal, der repräsentative Charakterzug* der Belehrung des 19. Jahrhunderts ist nachgerade *in der Art und Weise* dieses Assimilierens gegeben, und zwar in Art und Weise des Assimilierens der ausländischen und der heimischen Belehrung. In dieser Beziehung, in bezug auf die *Art und Weise*, ist letztere, die hemische Belehrung — sowohl geschichtlich, wie auch weltanschaulich und auch psychologisch betrachtet — von größerer Wichtigkeit. Vor allen Dingen jedoch — vom Blickpunkt literaturgeschichtlich-ästhetischer Beurteilung gesehen — prinzipieller.

Horváth ist einer derjenigen Autoren, bei welchen das Suchen nach sogenannten Schlüsselbegriffen (oder aber, wie er selbst es formuliert: nach ‚leitenden Ideen') und das Staffeln derselben der Rangordnung nach eine überaus erfolgreiche Methode ergeben kann. Und das beweist, daß seine Betrachtung, sein Begriffssystem stark kohärent, reflektiert, und auch auf Wert bezogen zu nennen sei. Die ungewöhnliche Kohärenz seines Begriffssystems hat man auch bisher wahrgenommen, wenn sie auch nicht als Charakterzug erwähnt und, vor allem, der Rangordnung nach nicht eingestuft worden war. Man erwähnte einstweilen Geschmacksgemeinschaft und nationale Existenzsicherheit, Eingliederung in die Tradition und Weisheit weltanschaulichen Wertes, Maßhalten geschichtlichen Sinnes und seelisches Gemeingut, und noch so manches. Dafür aber ist der zentrale Begriff, welchem all das kohärent unterstellt ist, die *Vereinbarung*, das *Vereinbaren von Werten*, das — ich zitiere seine Worte: »all die ideellen und moralischen Werte zu vereinbaren vermag, und für unzulässig erachtet, daß der eine auf dem Gebiet des anderen Kränkung erfahre.« So schrieb er das eine Mal. Ein anderes Mal, als er unter den möglichen Wertblickpunkten beim Urteilen den eigenen definierte, so: »Es gibt letzten Endes einen, der beim Beurteilen eines beliebigen Wertes die Auslese mit entsprechender Urteilskraft (Verstand, Gewissen, Geschmack) bewerkstelligen läßt, aber den Schaden der beiden anderen (des Guten und des Wahren) nicht erduldet; ‚Harmonie' erschaffender, ‚vereinbarender' Geschmack; dieser Art ist unser klassischer Geschmack.« Und das wiederholt er auch ein drittes Mal und unzählige Male, sozusagen in sämtlichen wesentlichen Studien über das 19. Jahrhundert.

Dieses letzte Zitat (mitsamt zahllosen anzuführenden anderen) beweist, daß er diese Auffassung aus den Werken jener namhaften literarischen Denker der Jahrhundertmitte zu folgern dachte, in welchen diese literarische, das öffentliche Leben betreffende und sonstige Werte miteinander konfrontiert hatten. Er sagt ja wiederholt: »Auf dem Gebiet der Literatur haben Csengery, *vorzüglich* aber Kemény, Arany und Gyulai diese klassische Weisheit bearbeitet. In jener Literatur, welche ihrer Auffassung entspricht, sind vereinbart« sämtliche Werte. »Auch die Poesie ist kein exklusiver, kein Höchstwert; sie ist Herrin im eigenen Bereich, aber selbst dort darf sie ihren großen Wert-Gefährten keine Kränkung zufügen; dem Guten, dem Wahren, wenn auch ihre Verfassung nicht von diesen abhängt.«

Es ist klar ersichtlich, daß sowohl diese Wertdreiheit, wie auch die relative Abhängigkeit und die harmonische Autonomie dieser Dreiheit auf Kants Ästhetik zurückweist. Und wir können getrost behaupten: seine Geschichtsauffassung wurde in erster Linie durch die geschichtsphilosophische Romantik, seine Psychologie durch den naturwissenschaftlich organisierten Positivismus, seine geschichtliche Kultur-Soziologie durch die geistesgeschichtliche Schule beträchtlich beeinflußt; währenddessen seine Ästhetik vor allen Dingen von

Kant herrührt. Dennoch nicht unmittelbar — sondern *in der Art und Weise der Verwendung*, durch Vermittlungen. Und zwar durch Vermittlung der erwähnten Autoren. Wir wissen wohl, daß diese Generation — zufolge der Waffenstreckung bei Világos, nach der Selbstsicherheit der Hegel'schen Evolution und vor der Plattheit der Spencer'schen Evolution — sich, zwecks harmonischer Schlichtung der verwickelten Konflikte, der Ethik und Ästhetik Kants zugekehrt hat. Manche von ihnen infolge ihrer Erziehung, wie auch Kemény, die Mehrheit etwa auf Einwirkung von Vorbildern, wie Csengery oder Gyulai. Man hat nicht zu vergessen: es war nicht allein der späte Mill, der zu Kant zurückkehrte, das tat (mit einer Art kindlicher, praktischer Natürlichkeit) bereits früher Macauley, aber auch Gustave Planche, ferner, reiflicher durchgedacht, vom sogenannten ‚politischen Realismus' veranlaßt, auch Tocqueville und auch Niebuhr.

Horváth wußte wohl, daß diese heimischen Autoren der Jahrhundertmitte keine Schöpfer von philosophisch-ästhetischen Systemen sind. Er selbst hat in bezug auf allgemeine Weltanschauung eine Abneigung gegen die geschlossenen Systeme ausschließenden Sinnes, obwohl er sie in seiner ästhetischen Deutung für unentbehrliche Verfahrungsprinzipien, Verfahrungsmittel erachtet. Er spricht im Zusammenhang mit den heimischen Ideen des 19. Jahrhunderts wiederholt über »nationale Lebensweisheit weltanschaulichen Wertes«, die »auf Geheiß der Zeit« alle Werte, selbst die ästhetischen Werte »eigener Verfassung« dem zentralen Wert, dem Urteil der Bewahrung »des nationalen Interesses, des nationalen Glaubens« unterstellt.

Und damit können wir bereits den Schritt zum zweiten Fragenkreis unsrer Aufgabe tun: Wie dachte er über die Literatur des ungarischen 19. Jahrhunderts?

Für Horváth ist bestimmend jenes historische Fakt, daß eine Katastrophe, die Niederwerfung des Freiheitskampfes 1848-49 eintraf; es ist bestimmend der Wunsch, daß sich diese Katastrophe nie mehr wiederhole, und es ist bestimmend die Fiktion, daß diese Katastrophe nicht eingetroffen wäre, wären wir im Besitz »jener Lebensweisheit weltanschaulichen Wertes« gewesen, die »ein nüchternes Rechnen mit unseren Kräften und Verhältnissen kennzeichnet«, und die Fortschritt empfiehlt, »jedoch mit Maß und bedächtig, auf daß die nationale Existenz nicht aufs Spiel gesetzt werde«. Und wenn sie in unserem Besitz bleibt und wir uns nach ihr richten, dann wird die Katastrophe auch künftig nicht mehr eintreffen. Inwieweit hat bei der Entwicklung dieses Gesichtswinkels der Weltkrieg und sein Ausgang, die Landeszerteilung in Trianon mitgespielt? — es fehlen uns zur Entscheidung die hinreichenden Anhaltspunkte; man muß aber all das als Motivation unbedingt in Betracht ziehen. Man bedenke, daß sein rein ungarischer Geburtsort Margita, obwohl er auf ethnisch einheitlichem Boden liegt, unter die Botmäßigkeit eines ethnisch fremden Staates gelangte.

Für Horváth ist also die über das Ästhetische bis zur Klassizität reichende Literatur nationaler Bewußtwerdung im Herder'schen, Gervinus'schen Sinne gemeint, diejenige Literatur, welche zu der noch nicht revolutionären, oder noch nicht extrem radikalen Progression des Reformzeitalters geführt hat, beziehungsweise diejenige, welche nach Eintreffen der Katastrophe im Zeichen »der Insichgekehrtheit«, »der Selbstkritik«, »des die Belehrung zur Reife Bringens« »befestigt« »die prinzipiellen Grundlagen« »der nationalen Politik und Literatur«, deren »richtunggebender Blickpunkt: die Sicherstellung unsrer bedrohten nationalen Existenz« ist. Das erfüllt auch das Postulat der harmonischen Schlichtung des dreifachen Kant'schen Grundwertes. Auch das Postulat des Schlichtens von all den an sich partikularen, aber überaus wahrhaftigen Gegensätzen, welche die Epoche der Romantik daheim und in Europa emporgeworfen hat. Horváth nennt sie, wertet sie folgendergestalt: »national und europäisch, allgemein menschlich, traditionell und zeitgemäß«, »Kunst- und naive Dichtung«, »Achtung der Realität und Freiheit der Phantasie«, »Verstand und Gefühl«, »Gemeinschaft und Individuum, Materie und Geist, Recht des Körpers und Interesse der Seele.«

Es ist eine sich von allerlei Radikalismus hütende, nichtsdestoweniger die Unentbehrlichkeit der Progression tiefst achtende, national-liberale Auffassung, die in der Nation eine geschichtlich-gesellschaftliche Grundeinheit erblickt, und diejenigen Richtungen und Zeitalter als Wege betrachtet, die zu solcher Klassizität führen, in welchen die wirklichen Wertgegensätze, also auch die gesellschaftlichen Gegensätze, mehr und mehr in Harmonie aufgehen; und diejenigen Zeitalter und Richtungen für solche erachtet, die den Grad jener Klassizität bereits erreicht haben, in welchen diese harmonische Einheit auch tatsächlich zustandekommt. Es ist ein nationaler Liberalismus, indem er jedoch faktisch an die Möglichkeit einer vollkommenen Harmonie der Interessen- und Wertgegensätze im Rahmen der bürgerlichen Nation glaubt, folglich hat man ihn als einen typisch-romantischen Nationalliberalismus zu bezeichnen. Horváth bezeichnete den Grundcharakter solcher Literatur von der Seite der romantischen Geschichtsphilosophie, von der Seite des romantischen Dichtkunstideals gesehen als romantisch. Wir aber gebrauchen diese Bezeichnung von der Seite der Gesellschaftsgeschichte betrachtet, und auch von der Seite der ästhetischen Kriterien, wenn auch diese mit jenen Horváths bei weitem nicht durchweg identisch sind.

Aufgrund solcher Dichtungsauffassung, solcher literaturgeschichtlichen Betrachtung, gebührte in bezug auf die Vollkommenheit der Klassizität zweifellos János Arany die erste Stelle. Und Petőfi, der Revolutionär wurde, kann innerhalb der Richtung allein vermöge einer egeinartigen Deutung den gleichen Rang, den Rang nahezu gleicher Klassizität beibehalten. Das Hauptkriterium der Klassizisten des ungarischen neunzhenten Jahrhunderts ist das Sichern der relativen Autonomie der Grundwerte, ferner das ausgleichende

Schlichten des Widerspruchs, den ihre Geltung und ihre Rechte hervorrufen — sagt Horváth. Das wird — setzt er fort — unter anderen dadurch ermöglicht, was — zufolge unsrer Kultur und unsres nationalen Charakters — bei uns für die großen Dichter bezeichnend ist: »durch die studierende, reflektierende Neigung, die in der Form von gelehrten Aufsätzen und mit doktrinenartiger oder meditierender Abtönung selbst in unsrer lyrischen Dichtung sich durchzusetzen liebt und auch imstande ist«. »Es ist eine Lyrik komplexer Natur« — setzt Horváth fort — die »nicht selten aus widersprüchlichen Elementen zu bestehen dünkt«. Dahingegen hat Petőfi, der anderen Schlages war, mittelst seiner »homogenen«, »durchsichtigen«, »rein-gefühlsmäßigen« Lyrik »prächtiger Gesundheit« alle sonstigen wertvollen Züge des Ungartums ganz auf der Ebene der Greifbarkeit, der konkreten Anschaulichkeit emporgebracht, und brachte dieselben mit klassischer Reinheit nicht allein zum Ausdruck, er lenkte zugleich auf sie die reflektierende, die studierende, die vereinigende Neigung komplexer Natur, wodurch er Stoff dieser Neigung und — vermöge der Tätigkeit dieser Neigung — Bewußtsein der Nation anbot. »Also bahnte Petőfi den Weg für Arany. Und wenn wir die Bedeutung Petőfis unverschmälert anerkennen, denn er hat innerhalb der Formen traditionellen ungarischen Geschmacks unsren spezifischen Charakter mit neuartiger Lyrik bereichert (die übrigens auch er allein in der Gemeinschaft der ungarischen Kultur zu einer solchen zu entwickeln vermocht hat), ferner hat er — wenn ich mich richtig ausdrücke — die Reungarisierung unsrer Literatur, durch klassisch-nationale Fixierung des Geschmacks, vollendet, — dann muß man andererseits zugeben, daß dieses ungarische Spezifikum, welches er mit genialer Suszeptibilität anzufühlen, auszumalen und allgemein beliebt zu machen verstand, dieses hat derjenige in einer tiefgründigen, urwüchsigeren, körperlich und geistig eher arteigenen Weise verwirklicht, dessen zurückhaltende Hänge er befreit hat: János Arany.«

Es ist nach all dem natürlich, daß im Bereich der Richtung Reviczky keine Würdigung zuteil gelassen wird, genauso, wie sogar Ady kaum etwas davon — im Bereich der Richtung — erhält.

Aber Horváth ist nicht allein der Kunstkenner tiefer Intuition, sondern zugleich denkender Ästhet, der die Kant'sche Autonomie der Kunst ernst auffaßt; er ist nicht nur einer, der, in der Romantik gewandt, historisch-theoretisch urteilt, sondern auch an der Seelenkunde des Positivismus hervorragend geschult als Psychologe; er ist nicht nur der vielseitige Vertreter einer literarischen Richtung, sondern — als Kulturgeschichtler — zugleich Kenner und Empfänger der verschiedenen Richtungen. Und also erfaßt er schöpferische Geister, die man in jene Richtung, welche er sich zum Ideal gewählt hat, nicht einreihen kann, *in ihren Einzelwerken, in ihrer Begabung, in ihrer Psychologie*, deutet sie, und auch würdigt sie in diesem oder jenem Sinne. Er hat über Reviczky die bis dato meist authentische Charakterdarstellung ausgefer-

tigt, wenn er auch dessen Züge in der Mehrzahl mit negativem Vorzeichen versah; ist doch die wertende Beurteilung von Charakterzügen jederzeit untrennbar vom wertenden Urteil der *Richtung*. Dahingegen nahm er Komjáthy günstiger auf, nicht nur indem er dessen Begabung höher einschätze; auch deshalb, weil er ihm vermöge seiner tatendurstig ethischen und reflektiven Dichternatur leichter an die Tradition ungarischer Lyrik — an Vörösmarty und an Petőfi — anfügen zu können meinte.

Und wenn mann schon beim Summieren der Dinge beharren will: genauso verfährt Horváth im Grunde genommen auch bezüglich der wesentlichen Bereiche der Dichtkunst Petőfis; erfaßt, analysiert und würdigt sie als Manifestationen eines möglichen individuellen Seelenzustandes, einer möglichen individuellen Gefühlslage, einer möglichen individuellen Geistesbeschaffenheit, Manifestationen hervorragender Poetik und Kunstpsychologie. Ja — wirft man einen Blick in die Tiefen dieser Frage, dann muß man sogar merken, daß die spontan übernommene Abgegrenztheit seiner Betrachtung, das Postulat *des harmonischen Vereinbarens*, gelegentlich manche Gebiete selbst im Lebenswerk derjenigen vor ihm versperren, die er sich verwandt fühlt, die er sich zu Idealbildern gewählt hat; etwa die tragisch abgetönten, an der Grenze der Verzweiflung erklingenden Gedichte Aranys (Abfall, Der ewige Jude, Das Leben ist ein Gelage).

Man erfaßt die anschauliche Bedeutung dieser ungenötigt übernommenen Einschränkung am besten beim Vergleich mit derjenigen Persönlichkeit, welche ihm vielleicht zunächst gestanden hat unter den Repräsentanten des heimischen geistigen Lebens seiner Zeit: mit Babits.

Auch Babits wandte sich Arany, auch Babits wandte sich Kant zu. Aber sein kulturgeschichtlich-universaler bürgerlicher Liberalismus läßt auch *betreffs der Richtung* weitaus mehr des Akzeptablen zu als Horváths edel-konservativer, romantisch-nationaler Liberalismus. Es vermag gerade die würdigende Rezeption der verschiedenen Schichten des Lebenswerks von Arany das entsprechende Beispiel zu liefern. Es handelt sich selbstverständlich auch darum, daß Babits die universale Menschheit primär als die Gesamtheit von Individuen, Horváth wiederum als die Gesamtheit der nationalen Gemeinschaften erfaßt. Und in diesem Fall, im Falle des konservativ national-romantischen Nationalliberalismus, ist dieser von noch so hochstehenden moralischen Absichten erfüllt, verstellen der Geltung weit mehr Schranken, Grenzen den Weg, als im Falle des erwähnten kulturgeschichtlich-universalen, bürgerlich-individuellen Liberalismus von Babits.

Und damit gelangten wir zur abschließenden Summation unsres Gedankenflugs. Horváth interpretiert — sowohl innerhalb Richtungen, wie auch in individuellen Lebenswerken — in einer meisterhaften Weise, gleichergestalt in ästhetischer und in geschichtlicher Hinsicht, diejenigen Epochen und diejenigen Kunstschöpfungen, in welchen an erster Stelle nationaler Fortschritt

und nationale Einheit alle anderen Arten, Beziehungen, Werte der Progression zusammenfassen. Wo aber nicht die Nation, nicht die nationale Einheit als zusammenfassende *Spitzenkategorie* gilt, oder aber *nicht in jenem Sinne*, wie er es sich mittelst seiner romantischen nationalliberalen Fortschrittsformel vorstellt, dort erfaßt er die Werke und würdigt sie an erster Stelle in ihrer Individualität. In diesem Falle erhält jedoch ihre Wertung innerhalb einer Richtung ein negatives Vorzeichen, oder aber bleibt sie aus. Indem aber Horváth die Autonomie der Kunst — wie er sie nennt: die eigene Verfassung derselben — recht ernst nimmt, auch dann legt er einen ergreifenden Beweis der Kennerschaft an den Tag, auch dann bietet er das unvermeidlich zu beachtende Musterbeispiel des Interpretierens.

Nun aber müssen wir unumgängleich für einen kurzen Augenblick bei unsrer eigenen Epoche verweilen. *Die nationale Einheit* ist auch für uns das zum Ziele gesetzte Wunschbild. Allerdings nicht diejenige Einheit, welche die Gegensätze schlichten wollte, vielmehr eine andere, die mit dem gesellschaftlichen, geschichtlichen Ursprung derselben aufräumt. Und gerade dank dieser Verschiedenheit müssen wir wahrnehmen, wie sehr fehlleitend eine Tendenz werden kann, welche die harmonische Einheit ohne Abschaffung der Quellen der Gegensätze, im Namen der ‚gemeinschaftlichen' Ideale, durch Versöhnen zu erreichen wünschte, oder auch diese Einheit — aufgrund des puren Wunschbildes — sogar für bereits verwirklicht erachtet. Es gibt kaum andere Ideale und Tendenzen, bei welchen die Klarstellung von Komponenten, Kennzeichen und Kriterien wichtiger sein könnte als im Falle des Ideals, der Tendenz zu einer gemeinschaftlichen, etwa zu einer national-gemeinschaftlichen Einheit. Es ist aber in unsrem Zeitalter nicht weniger wichtig es zu bedenken — insbesondere wenn die Forderung unmittelbarer ideell-ideologischer Wirkung immer wieder in den Vordergrund tritt —, daß selbst die edelsten Ideen einzig und allein durch Beachtung der (relativen) ästhetischen Autonomie, durch die ästhetisch gewordene Idealität, durch Bewußtseinsinhalte wirkliche Wirksamkeit und bleibenden Wert erlangen können.

# Tolstoi in Ungarn

Großen Talenten wird es oft zum Verhängnis, daß sie nicht durch die wahren, sondern durch nebensächliche Fähigkeiten die Aufmerksamkeit erregen. Verhängnisvoller kann nur sein, wenn ein großes Talent selbst seine nebensächlichen Fähigkeiten höher schätzt als die wahren. Tolstoi, der Lehrmeister des Volkes, Glaubensstifter und Sucher der Lebensheiligkeit hat in seinen letzten Jahren *Krieg und Frieden* und *Anna Karenina* verleugnet, um für Dorfschulen Lehrbücher zu verfassen. Seine volle Aufmerksamkeit widmete er theologischen Werken, anstatt Romane zu schreiben. Er schuf übrigens »Krieg und Frieden« mit dem gleichen Enthusiasmus wie sein Lesebuch für die Volksschulen, es könnte nicht einmal gesagt werden, daß das letztere in seiner Naivität nichts von der Erzählkunst Tolstois aufweise. Tolstois verhängnisvoller Fehler besteht darin, daß er die Öffentlichkeit seiner Zeit mit der verblüffenden und leicht mißverständlichen Frage konfrontiert hat: steht nun schließlich und endlich der große Dichter oder der Sektenstifter, der Apostel des Urchristentums vor uns?

Das Bild, bzw. des Mißverständnis, das sich die Öffentlichkeit von dem großen Zeitgenossen schuf, ist vor allem für die Öffentlichkeit selbst bezeichnend, aber unmittelbar auch für den, der auf diese Weise verstanden wurde. Eine Zeitlang war die Rezeption, die Art und Weise der Aufnahme ein interessantes Thema für die Komparatistik, und es erweist sich auch heute noch als sehr interessant. Die Aufnahme Tolstois in Ungarn unterscheidet sich vom Tolstoi-Bild anderer Länder nicht wesentlich, und dieses Bild ist uns um so trostloser, je mehr wir uns der Zeit Tolstois, seinen letzten Jahrzehnten, seiner bekannten Flucht und seinem Tode nähern. Die Tolstoi-Legende hat den Dichter, dessen die Welt auch heute bedarf, längere Zeit verborgen, und daran ist auch Tolstoi selbst schuld.

Es genügt nicht, einen Menschen nur aufgrund seiner Haltung zu beurteilen, d.h. aufgrund seiner Vorhaben, mit der Zeit muß man auch entscheiden, ob die Haltung und die Vorhaben richtig waren. Wenn jemand sein ganzes Leben für eine Fehlidee opfert, bleibt die Idee auch weiterhin nur eine Fehlidee. Die Tragödie Tolstois muß darin gesehen werden, daß er aus eigener Kraft etwas unternahm, was nur von Massen unter der Führung einer politischen Bewegung durchgeführt werden kann. Er trug selbst dazu bei, daß er mißverstanden wurde, daß in ihm nur gesehen wurde, was eine Sensation verspricht, also nur Information oder Gerede ist, was einen unterhält und zum Staunen erregt. Von den Zeitgenossen wurden die Romane Tolstois meist wie die »Schulklassiker« behandelt, die zwei großen Romane waren als Meisterwerke anerkannt, eine tiefere Analyse wurde aber nicht unternommen. Seine Lektüre wurde eine Zeitlang als »schwer« empfunden, und tatsächlich findet jeder beim Lesen von Werken Tolstois Schwierigkeiten, dessen Geschmack falsch entwickelt ist oder dem die Aufnahmebereitschaft und Unbefangenheit fehlt. Gerade wegen der Schlichtheit und Geschlossenheit seiner Kunst schien Tolstoi

längere Zeit eine »schwere Lektüre« zu sein. Statt der *Anna Karenina* wurde also der Stiefelmacher Tolstoi im Bauernhemd der sich von einem Diener in Handschuh bedienen ließ und dessen Silberbesteck tagelang geputzt wurde umstritten. Wie oft kehren die Handschuhe des Dieners und das Silberbesteck in der ungarischen und der ausländischen Presse der Jahrhundertwende wieder. Tolstoi ist durch das selbstverursachte Mißverständnis zu einer Fremdenverkehrsattraktion, zum Spitzenthema der Journalisten und Bewunderungsobjekt für alle geworden. Die Kritik, die sein Schaffen und Leben von den 1880er Jahren an in der ungarischen Presse verfolgt, schenkt vor allem diesen kuriosen, für viele anstößigen Äußerlichkeiten Aufmerksamkeit und weiß vom wahren Tolstoi kaum etwas. Dieser Wahrhafte wird aber von Tolstoi selbst als Verirrter, Sündiger gebrandmarkt und verleugnet. Der Autor von *Krieg und Frieden* und *Anna Karenina* steht noch als Lehrmeister für das Leben vor uns, als Sucher nach dem wahren Leben, während der Tolstoi der letzten Jahre sogar in der »Auferstehung« nur mit einem exaltierten und unfruchtbaren Aposteltum den Leser irreführt. Was Dostojewski im *Idioten* menschlich und künstlerisch zu lösen vermag, gelang Tolstoi in der *Auferstehung* nicht mehr. Um die Jahrhundertwende fand doch dieser Roman den größten Anklang, was ja auch notwendigerweise so sein mußte, wenn man die übertriebenen Gewissensbisse der Zeit in Betracht zieht. Den richtigeren Weg haben aber noch immer die Entdecker der *Auferstehung* gefunden, und nicht diejenigen, die Tolstoi in das Urchristentum folgen wollten.

Niemand ist in der Weltliteratur den wunderbaren Erinnerungen Gorkis nahegekommen, sogar die Goethe—Tolstoi-Parallele von Thomas Mann zeigt ein bald ratloses Herumirren. Hoch über der gesamten Resonanz in Ungarn steht die Werkstattstudie von László Németh: richtig gekannt haben Tolstoi nur diejenigen, die solche innigen Stunden mit ihm verbrachten wie Gorki oder mit dem Fleiß des Schülers in seine Werkstatt Einblick zu gewinnen versuchten, wie der Übersetzer der *Anna Karenina*, László Németh. Nur sie, die den Meister gekannt und verstanden haben, können uns zum wahren Tolstoi führen, den aber lange Zeit Tolstoi selbst verhüllen wollte.

Pierre Besuchow möchte sich mit Platon Karatajew identifizieren, das gelingt ihm infolge der Besuchowschen Zügellosigkeit nicht. Er geht auf einem Wege, auf dem Karatajew nicht einmal bis zur Hälfte vordringen wollte, zu weit. Nach Schmähung und Schwärmerei der Schriftsteller und Phantasten hat endlich Lenin das wahre Wort klar und eindeutig gesagt: Tolstoi ist der Spiegel der Revolution in Rußland 1905, und zu gleicher Zeit zeigt der »heftige Protestant, enthusiastische Enthüller, große Kritiker in seinen Werken ein Unverständnis der Ursachen der drohenden Krise in Rußland und den Mitteln zur Überwindung dieser Ursachen gegenüber in einem solchem Maße, das nur dem patriarchalischen, naiven Bauern und nicht dem Dichter mit europäischer Bildung eigen ist. Folgt man den Schlußfolgerungen der Tolstoi-Analyse von Lenin, so war also Tolstoi in der letzten Schaffensperiode kein Repräsentant der russischen Wirklichkeit, vielmehr verkörpert er diese. Die Widersprüchlichkeit dieser Wirklichkeit wurde nicht aufgehoben, sondern sie erstarrte in völliger Unbeweglichkeit. Seine oft erwähnte Flucht hat auch dieses Erstarren und die daraus entspringende Unbeholfenheit als Ursache.

Eine intensivere und systematischere Rezension des Lebenswerks von Tolstoi beginnt verständlicherweise nach dem Erscheinen von *Krieg und Frieden* in ungarischer Übersetzung, u.zw. in den Schriften von Gyula Reviczky und Jenő Péterfy (*Magyar Salon* — Ungarischer Salon 1887; *Budapesti Szemle* — Budapester Revue 1888). Reviczky verfaßte eine dermaßen sensible und an Beobachtungen reiche Analyse, daß eine ähnliche auf sich lange hat warten lassen. Es ist eine unbefangene, sich auf den ersten Blick orientierende Schrift: einige harte, überraschende Beurteilungen sind damit zu erklären. Das z.B., daß er, wenn auch noch so höflich, Tolstoi einen »sehr vornehmen« zweiten

Platz hinter Turgenew einräumt. Nicht nur bei Reviczky, sondern auch bei späteren Kritikern (Aurél Kárpáti) kehrt die Fehlvorstellung wieder, daß *Krieg und Frieden* weder eine einheitliche Komposition, noch eine abgerundete Handlung habe, und daß dieses große Werk vielmehr in den Einzelheiten »ohnegleichen« sei. Reviczky hat aber vieles so originell und unter innerem Eindruck erfaßt, daß seine Studie auch im internationalen Maßstab zu den ersten, Tolstoi richtig verstehenden Kritiken gehört. All das bestätigt einen Gedanken im letzten Absatz der Studie: »Manchmal vermutet man in ihm den Vorläufer des Neuen, der Dichtung der Zukunft«.

Reviczky schreckt vor der beispiellosen und tiefen Neuartigkeit des Romans nicht zurück, die Fehlvorstellung von einer »losen Komposition« wird in ihm wahrscheinlich durch den monumentalen, ungewöhnlichen Bau des Romans erweckt. Ist ja doch auch die Kompositionskunst Tolstois fehlerlos, der historische Bogen umfaßt die einzelnen, mit der Prägnanz einer Novelle ausgearbeiteten, ja sogar pointeartigen Kapitel.

Interessant ist es, daß Reviczky gerade die Schlachtschilderungen schlaff und lückenhaft empfindet im Vergleich zu den Karthago-Schlachtszenen bei Flaubert. In Wirklichkeit zeigen die Schlachtszenen in *Krieg und Frieden*, auch mit dem bekannten Waterloo-Kapitel von Stendhal, mit dem sie so oft verglichen werden, keine Ähnlichkeit. Was für feine Beobachtungen verflechten sich im Artikel von Reviczky, wenn er z.B. die Alltäglichkeit der ruhigen Epik von Tolstoi und den Instinkt, der ihn davor bewahrt, bei der Schilderung der Leidenschaften über das Durchschnittliche, Mittelmäßige hinauszugehen, bemerkt. Die Darstellungskraft Tolstois zeigt sich vor allem, wenn er das alltägliche Leben beschreibt, und der Kritiker erfaßt vielleicht die wichtigste Eigenart dieser Kunst, wenn er erkennt, daß Tolstoi »die außerordentlichen Situationen konsequent meidet«. Die Dialoge sind so aufgebaut, daß »im entscheidenden Augenblick, wenn eine starke Wende zu befürchten ist, die gespannte Saite plötzlich aufgelockert wird«. Für diese Feststellung kann als Beweis vor allem die Figur von Natascha angeführt werden, andere Autoren hätten sie bestimmt mit einer objektiven Stellungnahme charakterisiert, also entweder positive oder negative Züge bei ihr betont. Tolstoi gibt aber mit unnachahmbarer Sachlichkeit die Natur selbst und zögert keinen Augenblick, Natascha zur glücklichen Mutter werden zu lassen. Reviczky entdeckt auch die symbolischen Elemente des Romans, d.h. die Elemente, die etwas anderes vorahnen lassen, als was sie zeigen (»eine ahnungsvolle Welt ist das, in der die Ereignisse, wenigstens die wichtigeren ihre Schatten geheimnisvoll vorauswerfen«). Die Sachlichkeit Tolstois nimmt Reviczky als eine Art der Homerschen Naivität auf und unterscheidet sie eindeutig von der gleichgültigen Darstellungsweise des französischen Romans: (»Nie habe ich einen naiveren Erzähler als Tolstoi erlebt!«).

Die knappe und elegante Rezension von Jenő Péterfy sagt auch viel Wesentliches aus: ihn befremdet auch die Komposition des Romans vor allem, verständlich übrigens; bezeichnet diese aber nicht als locker, sondern vielmehr als einen Zug von »Nebelbildern«, und mit seiner Bemerkung erfaßt er die Schaffensmethode Tolstois vorzüglich: »er häuft kleine Pinselstriche aufeinander, und so schafft er Kartons von Wandgröße«. Die späteren unfruchtbaren Diskussionen hat er bereits jetzt vorweggenommen, indem er feststellt, »in der ganzen evangelischen Tätigkeit von Tolstoi ist kaum ein Hundertstel an Gedanken dessen, was der vorliegende Roman mit den interessanten Figuren aufweist.« Anstelle der Idee interessiert auch Péterfy viel mehr die dichterische Schaffensmethode, und besonders interessant ist die Feststellung über die Charakterschilderung im Roman: die Figuren treten in ihrer Totalität nie vor uns, sondern bei jedem Auftreten erscheinen »auf jedem Gesicht neue Züge und in den Seelen neue Gefühle«.

Reviczky und Péterfy haben sich mit den wichtigen Elementen der Tolstoi-Problematik befaßt, d.h. mit konkreten Elementen, deshalb sind ihre Untersuchungen

bis heute aktuell geblieben. All das kann von der Tolstoi-Literatur, die um 1910 vor allem die Gier der Tageblätter nach Sensation und Gerüchten zu befriedigen versuchte, nicht behauptet werden.

Im Tolstoi-Bild in Ungarn am Ende des Jahrhunderts können nur die informierenden, Tatsachen ermittelnden Schriften als inhaltsreich bewertet werden, so vor allem die von László Csopey (*Nemzet* — Nation 1885). Seine Fakten — sehr wahrscheinlich aus zweiter Hand — bieten uns auch nützlichere Informationen als die schwulstigen geblümten Bekenntnisse, die nur im Rahmen eines Zeitungsartikels die Tolstoi-Problematik erläutern möchten. Diese sind recht trostlose Gedankengänge, wie z.B. die von János Pászthori (*Fővárosi Lapok* — Hauptstädtische Blätter 1896). Selbst der hervorragende Zoltán Thury (*Budapesti Napló* — Budapester Kurier 1896) der sich übrigens zu der Wahrheit der nach Sibirien Verbannten bekennt, ermutigt Tolstoi damit, daß dieser alte »Stiefelmacher, dieser brave alte Mann keine Angst vor dem Zaren haben soll, weil dieser auf solche guten Menschen nicht böse wird, seinen Ärger viel mehr dafür aufspart, wenn der Feind gefährlicher ist.« Sándor Tonelli, der die Religion bei Tolstoi untersucht, bringt dem Leser das Verständnis Tolstois auch nicht näher, wenn er behauptet: »Seine Ideen sind schön, groß, oft aber nur sehr hochklingend. Das gelobte Land konnte bisher nicht erreicht werden, denn es ist überall gesucht worden, nur nicht im Menschen selbst. Revolution, Gesetze, Wissenschaft sind nicht mächtig genug, Zustände zu verändern.« Überraschend ist es, daß sogar Ernő Osvát (unter dem Pseudonym Gedeon Török) aus dem Anlaß des 50jährigen dichterischen Jubiläums kaum mehr als eine Glückwunschphrase bietet. (Wie kann dieser Mensch vor 50 Jahren gewesen sein? Mit welchem königlichen Egoismus muß er die Welt betreten haben, die Welt von Frauen und Männern! Wie muß er seine Löwenklauen in ihr Ehrgefühl, in ihr Fleisch geschlagen haben!)

In der Auseinandersetzung dieser Zeit werden die Gedanken oft durch wohlklingende Phrasen ersetzt, und daran gemessen können die heftigen Worte von Jenő Schmitt in dem Blatt der idealistischen Anarchisten wenigsten echt empfunden werden, weil er dem »großen Kämpfer der Christus-Freiheitsidee« wenigstens Tatsachen mitteilt: über die gesetzwidrige Beschlagnahme der Namenlisten für sozialistische Zeitungen, über Geldbeschlagnahme von armen Arbeitern und Feldarbeitern, vom gewaltsamen Fotografieren von Menschen, an denen rechtlich nichts auszusetzen war, für ein »Album der Verbrecher«. Aus der Erzählung eines ungarischen Besuchers ist bekannt, daß sich auch Tolstoi nach Jenő Schmitt erkundigte, den seine Tochter während ihrer Durchreise in Budapest auch besuchte. Dem Zeitgeschmack ähnlich bleibt er beim Ton einer kirchlichen Predigt, indem er Tolstoi mit dem Propheten Daniel vergleicht, der »als Verwirklicher eines Versprechens die moralisch tote alte Welt, die alte Nacht begraben hatte, und den Sonnenaufgang, die Auferstehung einer neuen Welt des Geistes verkündigte.«

Nicht einmal die Verehrer bemerken, wie sehr sich ihr Ton von der objektiven Darstellungsweise ihres Ideals unterscheidet. Objektiv schreiben über ihn nur diejenigen, die ihn fachlich kennen und ihm durch seine Werke nahegekommen sind. So vor allem Endre Szabó, der die Philosophie Tolstoi zu verstehen versucht sowie seine Lebensauffassung, die den größen Unterschied zwischen den Menschen sieht, die ohne Ziel sind und die im Dienste eines Ziels leben. Wie aber Endre Szabó die Idee des vermeidbaren Verhängnisses in *Anna Karenina* erkennt, zeigt auch die moralische Auffassung in der ungarischen Literatur der Zeit. (*Pesti Hírlap* — Pester Tageblatt 1898.)

Mit besonderer Aufmerksamkeit können die ungarischen Rußlandfahrer rechnen, die Tolstoi in Jasnaja Poljana besucht haben und auf die Vermittlung des slowakischen, aber aus Ungarn stammenden Hausarztes Makovicky auch zum Tisch Tolstois eingeladen worden sind. Wenn man bedenkt, wie viele noch außer ihnen um die Möglichkeit der

Annäherung baten, wird es verständlich, warum sich Tolstoi in den letzten Jahren so kraß und abweisend verschlossen hat. Noch im Geiste der Grafen- und Bauerntradition fand aber István Waldhauser offene Türen, er besuchte Tolstoi während der Rückreise von einer Strafrechtskonferenz und berichtet über seine Erlebnisse im *Huszadik Század* (Zwanzigstes Jahrhundert 1902). Gusztáv Serényi beschrieb seine Erlebnisse in Jasnaja Poljana in *Vasárnapi Újság* (Sonntagszeitung 1906). Das Gerücht von der Bauernkleidung, dem französischen Koch(?) und dem Hausdiener in Handschuhen konnte sich auch dank solcher Besuche weiter verbreiten; die größte Sympathie erweckt vielleicht der Bericht von Árpád Pásztor. (*Az Est* — Der Abend). Ihm ist zwar nicht zuteil geworden, am Abendtisch Tolstois Platz zu nehmen, er mußte in einem Nebenzimmer warten, das aber Tolstoi schließlich und endlich doch betrat, und ihr Gespräch ist für den Gastgeber auf jeden Fall sehr charakteristisch: er versucht seinen Gast vom Dichten abzuraten. Árpád Pásztor besucht Tolstoi als tief beeindruckter Verehrer, es ist eher eine Wallfahrt als ein geselliges Beisammensein, und dadurch unterscheidet er sich wesentlich von der kritischen Haltung Gusztáv Serényis, der mit der ganzen Strenge eines »Moralisten und Seelenforschers« Tolstoi zu verstehen versucht, den Dichter, der für den Moralisten weniger interessant ist als dem Seelenforscher, weil der erstere nur kühn beurteilt, während der letztere erklären, verstehen, vielleicht sogar entschuldigen möchte. »Tolstoi zu beurteilen ist eigentlich sehr einfach. Die Inkonsequenz in seinem Leben kann ihm einfach vorgehalten werden; ihn in allen Einzelheiten zu verstehen ist schwer, und zu erklären fast unmöglich.« Der Besucher, der bald als Kritiker zu Tolstoi kommt, wagt das Unmögliche nicht, aus den Einzelheiten in seinem Artikel ergibt sich doch ein Bild, das im Vergleich zu dem früheren Besuch Waldhausers eine ungepflegtere, traurigere Situation zeigt.

Mit Ausnahme des einen Árpád Pásztor berichten über die intimere Welt Tolstois gerade diejenigen wenig, die ihn von Angesicht zu Angesicht sehen konnten — als wollten sie die alte Wahrheit beweisen, einen Schriftsteller soll man und kann man nur in seinen Werken kennenlernen. In den Berichten der Besucher aus Ungarn fällt noch etwas auf: eine Art Erkennung und Abneigung — sie finden ja in Jasnaja Poljana die Welt der »letzten Inhaber der alten Herrenhöfe« wieder, eine Welt, die bei uns zu Hause längst der Vergangenheit angehörte. Die Berichte über die prunkhafte Umgebung des Dichters lassen aber Zweifel aufkommen: jeder, der das Haus Tolstois in Moskau oder den Landsitz besucht hat, wird dieses schlichte, bürgerliche Milieu mit ihren Thonet-Möbeln und ihrer Sorgfalt — weniger im Stil als in den Heizmöglichkeiten z.B. an der wahrhaft eleganten Wohnung Puschkins gemessen beinahe ärmlich, und im Geschmack besonders anspruchslos finden. Die Schwierigkeiten Dollys mit dem Sommerurlaub, das Loch in der Dachrinne, das fehlende Bügelbrett, die Flucht der Kinder vor dem Stier: aus diesen Momenten in *Anna Karenina* kann man ein authentisches Bild über die »prunkhafte« Umgebung Tolstois gewinnen.

Bereits zu Lebzeiten des Meisters wurden die ersten Gerüchte, Dummheiten von ihm verbreitet, es meldete sich aber auch der Widerleger dieser Fehlvorstellungen u.zw. in der Person von Endre Ady. Der Erzbischof von Erlau János Samassa (ehemaliger Abteilungsleiter im Kultusministerium) nennt Tolstoi einfach »schelmischer Onkel in Muschikkleidung«, ja sogar »maskierter Schwindler«, dessen Sohn das Volk mit der Knute verprügeln läßt, weil dieses die »Launen der despotischen Oligarchie nicht wortlos erdulden will«. Samassa wirft Tolstoi bitter vor, daß er die Aufteilung seines Großgrundbesitzes nur versprochen hat, und als »ausgezeichneter Geschäftsmann« seinem Versprechen nicht treu blieb. (*Alkotmány* — 1907). In seinen Repliken ist Ady noch schonungsloser und treffender als Samassa: er erinnert den wegen Nichtaufteilung des Bodens empörten Samassa an die Aufteilung des Großgrundbesitzes in kirchlichen Händen. Er stellt die Frage, ob der Erzbischof als erster durchführen werde, was er Tolstoi vorwirft.

Eine solche Aufteilung gehöre ja viel mehr zu den Pflichten eines Erzbischofs als Tolstois. (*Budapesti Napló* — Budapester Kurier 1907.)

Der Leser von heute ist auch beim Lesen der *Hét* (Die Woche) überrascht: Jenő Wallesz (Lynkeusz) sieht in dem 50jährigen Tolstoi einen Poseur, der die abgefeimtesten Tricks verwendet, um sich dadurch Ansehen zu verschaffen und es ständig aufrecht erhalten zu können«. D'Annunzio kann mit seinen Krawatten Aufsehen erregen, Tolstoi, der »Geck der Troglodyten«, tut mit seinen plumpen Stiefeln dasselbe. Beide lassen sich von dem tragischen Holzpferd des Posierens in die inneren Bereiche der Weltliteratur ziehen. Die Dummheiten und Trivialitäten von Jenő Wallesz sind Anzeichen für die frühe Dekadenz in der ungarischen Presse. Das ist aber erst der Beginn, die Orgie der Gemeinheiten und Gerüchte erreicht ihren Höhepunkt erst nach dem Tode des Meisters. Ungebildete Gesellschaft, die gerade infolge ihrer Ungebildetheit verdummt und in Hochmut versinkt. Will man von den anspruchsvollen Kritiken über die Romane Tolstois absehen, so kann der Anklang des Lebenswerks, der Rolle Tolstois in der ungarischen Presse um die Jahrhundertwende als noch nicht dem großen Dichter gebührig angesehen werden, weil die Kritiken gerade das nicht widerspiegeln, was er mit seinem Schaffen, seinem Leben verkünden wollte. Unter ihnen findet sich hinter der Oberflächlichkeit, Verständnisfaulheit ab und zu mal doch eine ernstere, wenigstens verständnisvolle Stimme. Neben den anständig informierenden Schriften von Endre Szabó sind sogar die Bekenntnisse wie z.B. bei Pál Nádai (*A Hét* 1908) beachtsam. Er vermag von der Trivialität von Jenő Wallesz vieles wiedergutzumachen, und indem er die Helden Tolstois mit Aufmerksamkeit verfolgt, gesteht er, daß uns die »schönsten Lieben dieser alte Asket geschenkt hat«. Gyula Szini erkannte, daß Tolstoi einer der modernsten Denker und »größten Lyriker« der Menschheit ist, und er geht den Diskussionen über das Primat der Kunst oder des Gedanken bei Tolstoi voraus, er betont die Einheit der beiden und wünscht statt enthusiastischer Anhänger begeisterte Kritiker sowohl Tolstoi, als auch allen anderen Meistern (*Pesti Napló* 1907).

Die früheren Verleumdungen, Irrtümer werden in den Monaten nach dem Tode Tolstois von der oberflächlichen, schwankenden Presse, die immer wieder nach Sensationen forscht, zusammengefaßt, ja sogar gekrönt. Manche Denkschriften kehren zu der Analyse der philosophischen Thesen zurück und über die Romane, die die Aufmerksamkeit am meisten verdient hätten, findet man wiederum nur obligat, anerkennende Worte statt echter Analysen, Untersuchungen. Von dem zweiten Jahrzehnt des 20. Jahrhunderts an ist es immer auffallender, daß die anspruchsvollere gedankliche, ästhetische Untersuchung nicht von der Publizistik und auch nicht von der bürgerlichen Essayliteratur, also nicht vom *Nyugat* (Westen)-Kreis, sondern von den Linken, die dem historischen Materialismus mehr oder weniger nahegekommen sind, unternommen wird. Jetzt zeigt es sich das erste Mal, daß die marxistische Methode eine neue Form des Herangehens ermöglicht, auch wenn sie vorläufig keine vollständigen Ergebnisse bringt; sie entzieht die Literatur den Gemeinplätzen literarischer Trinksprüche und einfach durchführbarer Gedankengänge.

Selbstverständlich dürfen wir die Untersuchungen, die Tolstoi aufgrund der gesellschaftlichen Lage, der Tatsache des Klassenkampfes studieren, nicht als endgültig betrachten und von ihnen erhoffen, daß sie mit einem Schlag alles lösen werden. Die Autoren, die das unternehmen, stehen aber gerade darum, weil sie Fakten untersuchen, nicht mehr so ratlos vor dem Lebenswerk und dessen Rolle, wie diejenigen, deren Anschauungsweise noch von einer späten überholten Romantik bestimmt war.

Tolstois Lebenswerk und seine dem Sozialismus so sehr widersprechenden Lehren veranlassen sogar die Sozialisten, ihre eigenen Zielsetzungen und Ideen kritisch durchzusehen. Die Sozialisten dürfen sich mit der bequemen eindeutigen Ablehnung nicht begnü-

gen. Das beste Beispiel dafür ist die Schrift von Oszkár Jászi über die Flucht Tolstois (*Világ* — Die Welt 1910). Mit der Philosophie Tolstois haben sich auch vor ihm viele befaßt, Jászi stellt aber ganz konkret die Frage, was diese Philosophie im modernen Leben wert ist. Die Staatslosigkeit und der Kulturhaß Tolstois entspricht der Staatslosigkeit und dem Kulturhaß von Christus und wird so zur Weltanschauung einer längst überholten Zeit. Jászi sieht im Leben Tolstois ein Scheitern und vertritt auch weiterhin die Zielsetzungen des Sozialismus, nach denen das Ziel des Lebens nicht in dem Verzicht, sondern allein in der Arbeit und der schöpferischen Tätigkeit bestehen kann; die »letzte Kleinbahn«, die »bescheidenste Volksbücherei« sei mehr wert als alle Predigten des Evangeliums, denn die Massen können die Besserung ihrer Lage nicht von dem Urchristentum, sondern nur von der zunehmenden Kraft des freien Gedankens, der wirtschaftlichen Integration und des politischen Kampfes erhoffen.

Weiter als Jászi gelangen die späteren Linken. Bereits Jászi verteidigte das schriftstellerische Lebenswerk Tolstois, bei den Linken rücken anstatt der Diskussion über die Tolstoische Lehre die großen Romane immer mehr in den Vordergrund. Lukács betont in seinem Artikel, den er unter dem Decknamen »Sándor Vajda« in der Zeitschrift *100%* (1928) veröffentlichte, die spätere These der marxistischen Ästhetik: »Tolstoi lebt tatsächlich nicht in seinen Prophezeiungen und Predigten, sondern in den Kunstwerken, die er selbst an seinem Lebensabend am strengsten verurteilt hat.« Diese Werke widerlegen sogar die Lehre, die von dem Autor später verkündet wird. Die Bestrebung dieser Ästhetik, die Charaktere aus einem vielleicht instinktiven Materialismus abzuleiten, da auch Tolstoi nicht von den seelischen Problemen seiner Figuren, sondern den materiellen Lebensbedingungen ausgeht, bleibt nicht ohne Erfolg. (Er ist ein Grundbesitzer, *demzufolge* denkt er so, er aber ein Leibeigener, *demzufolge denkt* er so.) Zum Grundproblem wird also für Tolstoi die Bodenrente, »die Frucht des bearbeiteten Bodens für die Arbeitslosen«. Im Artikel wird eigentlich die Feststellung Lenins wiederholt: »Tolstoi hat die Ereignisse im Jahre 1905 in größtem Maße verurteilt, aber noch mehr hätte er 1917 verurteilt, er war aber einer ihrer wirkungsvollsten geistigen Vorbereiter.«

Das Bleibende in der Tolstoischen Lehre berührt in seinen zwei Artikeln Lajos Gró (*Szocializmus* — Socialismus 1925 und *Munka* — Die Arbeit 1936). In beiden betont er, daß das Lebenswerk Tolstois besonders bei der Entfaltung einer neuen Ethik aktuell sei, da es »zur ständigen Selbstbildung und Erziehung, zur Entfaltung der inneren Werte aufruft.« »Man muß in sich zurückkehren.« Das Wesen der Ttolstoischen Lehre soll darin, und nicht in den urchristlichen und bäuerlichen Träumen gesucht werden. Diese Lehre sei ebenso aktuell, wie sie von den Kritikern vernachlässigt wurde. Die Methode aber, die nach dem Wesen eines Werkes forscht, nimmt auch das ästhetische Wesen wahr, und so bietet Lajos Gró eine treffendere Analyse der Kunst Tolstois als die meisten Zeitgenossen. In der Vereinfachung der Formen sieht er die beste Methode, das Wesentliche hervorzuheben — was aber nur bei vollständiger Kenntnis des Dargestellten und mit einem tiefen Hineinversetzen in die menschlichen Situationen möglich sei. Tolstoi, der kein Interesse für die Vergangenheit und Zukunft hat, kann mit der Konzentration auf die Gegenwart beides heraufbeschwören.

Selten besaßen die Kritiker der Linken für die Frage des ästhetisch Bedeutsamen so viel Empfindsamkeit wie Lajos Gró, aber allein dadurch, daß sie ein kronkretes und analytisches Bild über Tolstoi bieten konnten, blieben ihre Untersuchungen bis heute aktuell; sie haben zu der Ausarbeitung des authentischen Tolstoi-Bildes beigetragen.

Es mag seltsam klingen, aber an diesen in Vergessenheit geratenen Schriften gemessen sind die Rezensionen der besten Autoren des *Nyugat* in den 20er Jahren deutlich schwächer, uninteressanter. Das gilt für Zoltán Ambrus, Ignotus, Osvát und sogar Aurél Kárpáti. Nicht als ob diese ausgezeichneten Autoren die Größe des Meisters nicht

besser als alle anderen gesehen hätten. Sie haben ihn nicht nur verehrt, sie waren auch begeistert und verteidigten ihn vor den Verleumdungen, wie z.B. Zoltán Ambrus. Als Stellungnahme für Tolstoi ist diese Haltung des Kreises vollwertig, mit den wichtigen Fragen des Lebenswerkes zurechtzukommen versuchen sie aber nicht.

Die kritische Praxis des *Nyugat* wird meist »impressionistisch« betrachtet, obwohl gerade Impressionen, wahre, tiefe Eindrücke bei diesen Kritikern selten zu finden sind und die Unmittelbarkeit ihrer Schreibweise, von der man erhofft, daß sie fesselnd wirkt, führte meistens zu einer oberflächlichen Behandlung des Objekts, denn hier steht die Persönlichkeit des Essayisten im Mittelpunkt, der Autor ist in erster Linie bestrebt, sich selbst zu zeigen und weniger sein Untersuchungsobjekt Tolstoi. Diesmal wäre aber der Beschriebene viel interessanter als dessen Beschreiber. In dem peinlich langschweifenden Essay von Mihály Földi steht der Essayist gleich in der ersten Zeile vor uns, Tolstoi lernen wir aber auch bis zum Ende der Studie nicht kennen. Dieses tiefere Kennenlernen kann auch der Fleiß eines Aladár Schöpflin nicht ersetzen, obwohl dieses in dem Durcheinander der Meinungen über den Meister von jedem Leser erwünscht wird. »Er ruft die tiefsten Gefühle, Instinkte und Leidenschaften unserer Seele mit den Romanen wach, unsere Innenwelt wird in Bestandteile zerlegt und wieder zusammengesetzt.« Eine solche Deutung kann auf viele und vieles bezogen werden. (*Vasárnapi Újság*, 1910.) Mit Recht identifiziert Ignotus Tolstoi mit den russischen Bauern, er hat aber die Bauern zu wenig gern, um auch Tolstoi gern haben zu können. »Der Denker Tolstoi ist viel beschränkter, minderwertiger als seine Kunst« — diese Aussage formuliert eine Wahrheit in milden Worten, Ignotus meint aber, der Bauer behandle alles, »was über ihn hinausgeht, mit Verdacht und Verachtung« — und Tolstoi übernehme in seiner kunstfeindlichen Auffassung diese Anschauungsweise, nach der Meinung Ignotus natürlich, obwohl auch er zugibt, daß Tolstoi doch ein »Mittel für die Seele« bieten kann. »Aber für wen? Nur für den Bauern, der, wenn er davon nicht stirbt, auch wieder gesund werden kann genauso wie in dem Falle, wenn er sich den Finger verletzt und dafür Spinngewebe aus dem Pferdestall nimmt — der Stadtbürger würde sich dadurch bestimmt eine Infektion holen, er aber nicht, es wird sogar die Blutung dadurch gestillt.« (*Nyugat* 1928.) Ignotus hat damit seine Meinung nicht über den Romanautor Tolstoi, sondern über den Tolstojanismus gesagt; stößt man aber nicht vielleicht auch in den Romanen auf solche »infektiösen Spinngewebe«? Es steht aber fest, daß Lenin auch in seinen strengsten Tolstoi-Kritiken den Dichter vielleicht ähnlich, das Bauerntum aber ganz anders beurteilt hat.

Die Tolstoi-Studie von Zoltán Ambrus in vier Nyugat-Fortsetzungen (1911) unternahm früher als Mihály Földi und Ignotus und mit einer besseren Absicht als sie die Verteidigung Tolstois, das muß kurz nach der Flucht und dem Tode auch notwendig gewesen sein. Die Heftigkeit des Artikels wurde durch die Vorträge des Wiener Journalisten »Maximilian« Harden mit ihren Indiskretionen das Privatleben Tolstois betreffend ausgelöst. Hier soll noch erwähnt werden, daß der Autor Paul Heyse, der »Träger« des Nobel-Preises die tragische Flucht Tolstois bereits ein Jahr zuvor als »Komödiantentrick« gebrandmarkt hatte. Die ungarische Presse berichtete darüber wie auch über die Unbeholfenheit des Dichters, womit er in der eigenen Umgebung nicht Ordnung zu halten vermochte. Auf seinen Reisen fuhr er immer dritte Klasse, und er hat sich infolge des ständigen Türöffnens erkältet. (*Világ*, 22. November 1910.) Die ungarische Presse berichtete über die Demonstrationen nach dem Tode Tolstois ebenfalls, und in der brutalen Auflösung sah sie die »Rücksichtslosigkeit« der russischen Regierung.

Nach solche Vorspielen entstand die wohlwollende Verteidigungsschrift von Zoltán Ambrus, in der er gegen »die Kritiker um den Leichnam« nicht nur den Dichter selbst, sondern seine Frau und die Familie verteidigen wollte. Und das so sehr, daß Tolstoi in seinen Grabschriften zum »allerbesten Mann« wird, der seiner Frau gegenüber nur Liebe

und Zärtlichkeit gezeigt habe. Aus der langschweifenden Beweisführung geht vor allem hervor, daß man die Ursache der Flucht nicht wissen kann, aber es kann sein, daß es »Tolstoi selbst (wenn er es wollte) nicht allen verständlich machen könnte.« »Es gibt ja Gemütsbewegungen, unter deren Auswirkungen die stürmenden Kräfte der Seele den Willen in dem erschütterten Organismus zu Taten verleiten, die wie die Resultante, von den Triebkräften sehr weit zu fallen scheinen.« Solche schön abgerundeten Erklärungen bieten uns den Schlüssel zu der Tragödie Tolstois genauso wenig, wie die anderen fesselnderzählenden, dem Eleganz-Ideal der Zeit folgenden Gedankengänge im *Nyugat*. Die Apologie von Zoltán Ambrus übertrifft aber den ungarischen und internationalen Anklang, ihm kann eigentlich nur vorgeworfen werden, daß er seine Argumente, mit denen er uns im ersten Sturm überzeugt hat, immer wieder anführt. Jeder, der offene Türen einrennt, gefährdet das eigene, noch so ehrliche Vorhaben.

Die Essayisten des *Nyugat* wehrten sich mit jugendhafter Frische vor allem vor der Ansicht der »Schulmeisterhaftigkeit« und verschmähten die Akademie und die Universität. So brachten sie viel Neues und Frisches, sie haben wie z.B. Babits von vielen Klassikern — von Vörösmarty oder dem Heiligen August — den Staub abgeblasen, gegen diese »Schulmeisterhaftigkeit« sträubte sich vor allem Dezső Szabó, selbst Lehrer, der übrigens seine besten Studien noch in seinem früheren, »schulmeisterhaften« Stil verfaßte. Mihály Földi und Ignotus hielten sich von der »Schulmeisterhaftigkeit« in dem Maße fern, daß zu ihren Gedankengängen gemessen heute der Akademismus der Budapester Revue inhaltsreicher zu sein scheint. Nicht die Essays von Babits, und nicht einmal die von Kosztolányi sind hier gemeint, wenn wir die Auffassung vertreten, daß das Essay und die Kritik im Nyugat mit ihrer unterhaltsamen Erzählweise das Leserpublikum — natürlich falscherweise — schonen und von der Literatur nicht abschrecken wollte. Jedem Leserpublikum gegenüber ist aber die beste Haltung, anspruchsvoll zu sein. Es gab Zeiten, in denen Redakteure der Volksbüchereien und Kalendarien meinten, mit dem Volk könnte man sich nur lallend verständigen. Diese Auffassung ist genauso falsch wie die in *Nyugat*, der das gebildete Publikum mit unterhaltsamer Eleganz vor der Mühsamkeit des Denkens schonen wollte.

Zu dem Tolstoi-Bild im *Nyugat* gehören auch die entsprechenden Kapitel in den Geschichten der Weltliteratur von Babits und Antal Szerb. Babits wiederholt mit der Unmittelbarkeit eines Lesetagebuches seine früheren Aussagen über *Krieg und Frieden*, an den ersten zwei Bänden gemessen sei der dritte »schwächer«. (Das stimmt übrigens mit der Auffassung Flauberts überein — Babits zitiert seine Meinung). Antal Szerb bietet ein zwar knappes, aber vollständiges Tolstoi-Portrait von einem Autor, dessen Bücher von uns erzählen — uns allen. Die Beurteilung ist treffend — und für den Verfasser sehr charakteristisch. Die Bücher Tolstois sind wie die Gemälde, die einem, egal wo man steht, ins Auge schauen. Der Nyugat gelangt also zu einer Klärung der Meinungen über die Bedeutung Tolstois nicht in den Essays, sondern in den Synthesen.

Die Tolstoi-Rezeption nach der Befreiung ist weniger publizistisch. Man wendet die volle Aufmerksamkeit dem Wichtigen, den Werken zu, man läßt alle Gerüchte und Prophezeiungen außer acht. Die Autoren untersuchen das Beispiel Tolstois und wollen beim Autor der großen Romane Erfahrungen für die moderne Literatur sammeln. Um die Jahrhundertwende fehlte gerade die Bestrebung nach einer Anwendung, und nicht nur bei uns, sondern auch anderswo haben die Zeitgenossen nicht erkannt, welche neuen Möglichkeiten Tolstoi vor der Charakterzeichnung oder der Schilderung der Zeit und der Gesellschaft eröffnet hat. Nicht nur in der ungarischen Literatur ist ein neues Interesse Tolstoi gegenüber zu beobachten — dazu haben übrigens die neuen Übertragungen seiner Werke beigetragen —, sondern auch in der amerikanischen und französischen Literatur, worüber uns die Aussage Camus vieles verrät: er sieht die ideale Schreibweise in einer

Synthese der Methoden Tolstois und Dostojewskis. Zu der Entfaltung des Tolstoi-Bildes trug auch die neubelebte ungarische Russistik, vor allem mit den Studien von Endre Török bei.

Als größtes Werk der ungarischen Tolstoi-Literatur kann die Schrift von László Németh angesehen werden. (*Tolsztoj inasaként, Nagyvilág*, 1956 — Im Dienste Tolstois, Weite Welt.) Sie ist eine Werkstattstudie des Übersetzers von *Anna Karenina*, bietet als solche Erfahrungen, die der Kritiker, der Leser kaum, sondern nur der Übersetzer erwerben kann, wenn er die Schaffensmethode des übertragenen Werkes miterlebt, und was am wichtigsten ist, sich in den Eigenheiten des Werkes so sehr auskennt, als hätte er bei ihrer Schaffung selbst eine Rolle gespielt. Das »Im Dienste Tolstois« ist eine prachtvolle Zusammenfassung von Beobachtungen und Erkenntnissen eines Übersetzers oder noch mehr: des Romanciers. László Németh baut dieses Werk auch in seine eigenen bildungsgeschichtlichen Gedankengänge ein, deren Wesen in einer Untersuchung der europäischen Errungenschaften als Folge einer gegenseitigen Wirkung der westlichen und östlichen Kulturen besteht. In dieses bildungsgeschichtliche System ist auch die ungarische Kultur eingebaut, und László Németh löst die Bewegungen und Erscheinungen bei Tolstoi auf eine für die ungarische Literatur positive Weise auf. In den Romanen kommen doch die Errungenschaften der westlichen Romane völlig neuartig zur Geltung, und damit sind sie auch für die Literaturen vorbildlich, in denen diese Errungenschaften entstanden. Von den Beobachtungen des Autors kann zur Entfaltung eines neuen Tolstoi-Bildes vor allem beitragen, daß er das wahre Künstlerproblem Tolstois in der Ausarbeitung sieht, denn Tolstoi soll nur dafür ein Interesse gezeigt haben, was er »mit seiner Willenskraft fassen konnte«. »Die große Realität glaube ich nicht bei dem zu finden, der die Realität untersucht, sondern aus dem die Realität strömt«. Mit diesem Gedanken macht auch László Németh darauf aufmerksam, daß ein bedeutender Teil der Leistungen Tolstois außerhalb der schriftstellerischen Schaffensmethode zu suchen ist als eine Art »Bereich im Nervensystem«, der dem Meister immer zur Verfügung stand, ohne dabei nachdenken zu müssen.

Wenn gelesen werden kann, daß bei Tolstoi »die Figuren tiefer als ihre Seele in ihrem biologischen Kern erfaßt sind« — und darauf folgen vielsagende Beispiele: »die strahlenden Zähne von Wronski und seine früh ausfallenden Haare; die Hand Annas, mit der sie die Tasse hält, der abstehende kleine Finger, der, sie fühlt es ganz genau, ihren Liebhaber reizt« — haben wir den Eindruck, daß der Autor, ohne es zu gestehen, seine eigene schriftstellerische Methode der Schaffensweise Tolstois gegenüberstellt, und es ist zu vermuten, daß die Übertragung von *Anna Karenina* auch die Vollendung des Romans *Irgalom* (Erbarmen) inspiriert hat. Zu gleicher Zeit konnte die Tolstoische Methode vieles auch bei László Németh bestätigen, so z.B. die »biologische Entartung« der Personen.

Eine wichtige Beobachtung der Ideengeschichte ist, daß sich bei Tolstoi und Dostojewski die Harmonie zwischen Kritik und Liebe, die bei Gogol und Turgenew noch eindeutig zu beobachten ist, verändert, und immer mehr die Liebe in den Vordergrund rückt, die Liebe zu einem Kranken, ja sogar zu der Krankheit selbst. Gewiß hat László Németh recht, wenn er meint, der gedankliche Fehler liege darin, daß »Tolstoi und einige Zeitgenossen das Wunder der russischen Literatur verkannten«. Dieses Wunder kam ja nicht auf eine mystische Weise zustande, die Aufgabe Tolstois hätte ja auch nicht darin bestanden, als Bauernprophet der Welt das »Idealbild« einer abgestorbenen »Kulturstufe« vorzuzeigen, sondern auch anderen Völkern, die dessen genauso bedurften, vorzuzeigen, daß die europäische Denkweise unausweichbar übernommen werden muß. Eine Kritik ist das, und eine klare Sicht, die man bei keinem der Tolstoi-Anhänger der Jahrhundertwende finden konnte. Gerade diese Kritik nebst Hingebung verleiht den Studien

von László Németh eine besondere Bedeutung. Fast nebenbei ist sogar eine Deutung der Flucht des Meisters in der Studie zu finden: Pater Sergi, der, um die Vollkommenheit zu erlangen, zum namenlosen Wanderer wird, ist schon ein Vorfahrer Tolstois; das Drama, aber auch die Tragödie der letzten Lebensperiode, erklärt der folgende Gedanke: »Die Familie ist für den Mann eine genauso starke Bindung wie seine Überzeugung, und wenn jemand um seiner Überzeugung willen diese Bindung zu leicht zu zerreißen vermag, so muß bei ihm die Tiefe der Überzeugung bezweifelt werden«. Vor uns steht das Drama, aber nicht nur Tolstois Drama, sondern auch das von László Németh — der Konflikt vieler seiner Dramen.

Im Gedankensystem und in den Studien von Georg Lukács spielte Tolstoi immer eine sehr wichtige Rolle, davon zeugt vor allem die Studie im Jahre 1935 über Tolstoi und über die Entwicklung des Realismus. Er stützt sich teils auf die Tolstoi-Deutung Tschernyschewskis und untersucht den Meister, der gegen den Verfall des »großen Realismus« kämpft, den Realisten, der die Gesellschaft vom Gesichtspunkt des ausgebeuteten Bauern beurteilt und seine Gestalten darum dem Durchschnitt annähert, da sie in einer »erstarrten, vollentfalteten« Welt leben und sich von der Lage der Helden Balzacs und Stendhals auch dadurch unterscheiden.

Der kleine Essay, der aus Anlaß des 130. Geburtstages verfaßt wurde (1948), gibt uns auch über die zeitliche Entwicklung des Lebenswerkes von Lukács wichtige Informationen. Das Verhältnis vom »Besonderen« und »Allgemeinen«, das Ganze, das in den Details zum Vorschein kommt, ein Moment, das weit über sich hinausweist, d.h. Ereignis oder Erscheinungen, die zum Symbol werden: das ist der Grundgedanke der letzten Phase der Werke, die eine neue Stufe des Lebenswerkes repräsentieren. Was hier Lukács als Ausgangspunkt seiner ästhetischen Synthese angenommen und umgestaltet hat, ist ein goethescher Gedanke, ein ständig wiederkehrendes Thema der Eckermann-Gespräche. Dieses Prinzip ist auch in dem kleinen Tolstoi-Essay gegenwärtig, es gibt wenig Autoren, die dieses Prinzip wie Tolstoi demonstrieren könnten. Aus den Werken geht es ganz klar hervor, daß das Allgemeine, das durch die Details repräsentiert wird, nicht die abgebrauchte Gewohnheitsphrase des »Allgemein-Menschlichen«, sondern die konkrete Wirklichkeit der Gesellschaft und der Geschichte bedeutet. Ein wichtiges Prinzip von Lukács, das »tua res agitur« gilt besonders für Tolstoi, denn bei ihm fühlt der Leser das ganze Werk hindurch, daß es »um seine eigenen, innigsten Probleme« geht. Das Dingliche hinter den Worten, die »Stimme der Dinge« erkennt Lukács in der auf die grundlegendsten Tatsachen des Lebens zurückgeführten Darstellung, das heißt in der Aufdeckung der Fakten, »deren allgemeine Umrisse in jeder uns bekannten Gesellschaft zu finden sind, in denen — durch das großartig hervorgehobene Besondere des individuellen und gesellschaftlichen Daseins — immer gezeigt wird, was in der Entwicklung des menschlichen Geschlechts gemeinsam und konstant ist, genauer: was die Geschichte des Menschengeschlechts in ständiger Veränderung begleitet.« Die Kunst, die uns auf das Niveau des menschlichen Geschlechts erhebt und damit vereint: das ist der Grundgedanke der letzten Phase, der im Tolstoi-Essay früh zum Ausdruck kommt. Das Wesentliche so darzustellen, daß dabei das Besondere, daß Individuelle nicht verblaßt: auch diese Forderung der Kunst gegenüber represäntiert Tolstoi am besten.

Dasselbe Thema, wenn man sich darin vertieft, kann zeitlich und in der Anschauungsweise voneinander entfernte Denker gedanklich doch annähern. Bereits Reviczky, der erste bedeutende ungarische Tolstoi-Kritiker ist auf die symbolische Rolle mancher Momente im *Krieg und Frieden* aufmerksam geworden, er sah aber darin lediglich ein Zeichen, das das Spätere ahnen läßt. Den wahren Sinn der Lehre Tolstois, die erlösende ethische Rolle der menschlichen Arbeit hat aber auch Reviczky erkannt, und damit hat er das Wesentliche besser erfaßt als manche späteren Kritiker, die den urchristlichen,

bäuerlichen Lehren Tolstois unterliegen. Lukács verliert über diese Lehren kein Wort, aber auch er betont das wichtigste Prinzip, von dem Tolstois vielleicht ahnen konnte, daß sich dieses Element seiner Lehren in die Zukunft hineinfügt: das Prinzip der Arbeit und den Glauben, der die einfachste und menschlichste Wahrheit verkündet: nur die Arbeit kann uns vor der Sinnlosigkeit retten, sinnvoll kann aber nur das Leben sein, das der Arbeit gewidmet wird.

*István Sőtér*

# Eugen Heinrich Schmitt als Theoretiker

»Und überhaupt, die Zeit der Philosophie ist vorbei. Auf andere, größere Ziele habe ich nunmehr losgesteuert, und daß just jene Menschen mich nicht verstanden haben, macht nichts. Bald werde ich, mit der Zeit freilich, von der Welt verstanden.«[1] Schmitt schrieb diese Zeilen 1891, als er 30 Jahre alt war an seinen Freund Géza Mirkovszky. Der erste Satz hat einen doppelten Sinn: einerseits ist er ein Zeichen dafür, daß sein Abschreiber seinen Lebensberuf zu ändern plant (Schmitt hatte 1884 mit seinem Aufsatz über die Geheimnisse der hegelschen Dialektik auf der Competition der Berliner Philosophischen Gesellschaft einen Preis gewonnen, doch nach einigen Jahren gibt er seine anarchistischen Zeitschriften heraus), anderseits, obwohl er eine subjektive Aussage ist, enthält er eine allgemeingültige Feststellung. »Die Zeit der Philosophie ist vorbei.« Was mochte Schmitt zu dieser Konstatierung veranlaßt haben?

Als Denker, richtete er schon in seiner Jugend einen Angriff gegen die klassische deutsche Philosophie (besonders gegen Kant und Hegel), und gegen die Vertreter des vulgären Materialismus des Jahrhunderts (Feuerbach, Bauer, Büchner, und gegen die von ihm zu ihnen gerechneten Darwin, Comte und Spencer). Den ersteren warf er ihre Lebensfremdheit und »Negativität«, den letzteren ihren Agnostizismus, der aus ihrer den Menschen entwürdigenden Auffassungen erwächst, vor. Die Folge dieser theoretischen Grundposition ist, daß Schmitt jede bürgerliche Philosophie seines Jahrhunderts ablehnt, und weil er auch den Marxismus zu der vulgären materialistischen Philosophie zählt, weist er auch ihn zurück. Die Ablehnung der Philosophie bedeutete aber nicht, daß Schmitt sich nun der Theologie zugewendet, oder genauer: daß er sich den Dogmen der christlichen Kirche genähert hat. Dies bezeugt auch einer seiner frühen Briefen: »Die Zeiten sind vorbei, als die Menschheit sich mit Märchen und bloßem Glauben begnügte. Ich will die Idee der Evangelien und die Idee der Wissenscharft so herstellen, daß diese beiden nicht in der Scheinbarkeit der zweien, sondern im durchsichtigen, unzweifelhaften Schein der Wahrheit glänzen... auf diese Weise will ich den Glauben in der Beleuchtung der Wissenschaft auflösen...«[2]

Diese Wissenschaft, die sowohl dem christlichen Dogma, als auch dem Materialismus der Zeit gegenübersteht, nennt Schmitt die »Religion des Geistes«. Unter demselben Titel veröffentlicht er 1894 eine Zeitschrift, für die es ihm gelingt Leo Tolstoi als Mitarbeiter zu gewinnen.

Wir sehen, daß beim Ausformen seiner eigenen Weltanschauung Schmitt auf die Philosophie seiner Zeit verzichtete. Dagegen ist es natürlich, daß er irgendwo Verbündete suchte, und zwar solche, deren Auffassung, menschliche Haltung, wenn auch nur deren künstlerisches Weltbild verwandt, oder wenigstens in Verwandschaft mit seinem zu

bringen ist. Er bat drei, das geistige Gesicht des damaligen Europas bestimmende Persönlichkeiten, ihm behilflich zu sein: Ibsen, Nietzsche und Tolstoi. Er schrieb über alle drei Bücher: Ibsen, 1889 und 1908, Nietzsche 1898, und Tolstoi 1901.

Was macht diese drei Repräsäntanten des europäischen Geistes verwandt? Schmitt selbst spricht so: »Tolstoi schenkte dem Menschen die Glorie der Heiligkeit; er versuchte, ihn mit der Andacht des Urchristentums zu durchglühen, und so den modernen Menschen aus dem Kot aufzuheben, ihn zum göttlichen Selbstbewußtsein zu erwecken. Nietzsche konfrontierte seine ganze Kraft auf die Individualität des Geistes. Mit seiner herrlichen künstlerischen Schöpfung versuchte er den Menschen möglichst in plastischer Gestalt, im Bild des Übermenschen, der von der Erde auszugehen scheint und sich jedoch ins Himmel erhöht, wie eine universale Gestalt, das All, die Menge der Objekte in sein eigenes Ich einschmelzend, in Form des Bewusstseins des Alls, des universalen Bewußtseins herzustellen. So wies er auf die neue Gattung hin, die anstelle von den Menschen zu treten berufen ist. Diese zwei Geistesgrößen wollten also die ideale Gestalt der Zukunft unmittelbar herstellen. Ibsen, der dritte große Prophet, als Künstler, . . . zeigt das Keimen der Zukunft in der Seele des modernen Menschen vor.«[3]

Schmitt sieht also die bedeutendsten gemeinsamen Züge der drei Schöpfer darin, daß sie alle sich um das Ausformen des Zukunftmenschen bemühen, daß alle drei die Propheten des Zukunftmenschen seien — genauso wie er selbst.

Als Schmitt in dem letzten Jahrzehnt des neunzehnten Jahrhundert seine Weltanschauung auszuarbeiten begann, lebte Nietzsche schon von Geistesnacht umgeben. Zu Ibsen suchte der ungarische Denker die Verbindung nicht. Mit Tolstoi aber stand er bis zu dessen Tode in Korrespondenz und ihr Verhältnis war in gewissem Sinne wie das der Mitarbeiter, ja, man kann sogar sagen, wie das des Meisters und des Schülers. Der Schüler war freilich nicht Tolstoi — wie dies ein übereifriger Anhänger Schmitts zu versichern versuchte —, sondern, obzwar in problematischer Form, Eugen Schmitt.

Über die praktische Seite von Schmitts Tätigkeit als Tolstoi-Schüler haben wir den Vortrag von Péter Milosevits gehört. Über dieses Thema soll jetzt nur das Buch, in dem Schmitt Tolstois »Weltmission« auslegt, und das als eigenes theoretisches Produkt von höchstem Interesse ist, herausgehoben werden. Über das Buch *Leo Tolstoi und seine Bedeutung für unsere Kultur* sagte Tolstoi selbst: »Ich habe es nur oberflächlich durchgesehen, mir scheint aber, daß es unmöglich ist besser, genauer und klarer meine Weltanschauung auszulegen.«[4]

Tolstois Gutachten wurde auch von dem heute vergessenen deutschen Schriftsteller, dem Autor der Pamphlets »Anti-Tolstoi«, Samson-Himmelstjerna bekräftigt. In der Tat, hier legt Schmitt in mehr als 400 Seiten Tolstois Auffassung über den Staat, die Kunst, den praktischen Teil seiner Lehre, sein Verhältnis zum westlichen Denken, zum Urchristentum, zur Kirche etc. dar. Der Titel des letzten Kapitels stimmt aber nachdenklich: »Tolstois Übergangssituation in der Geschichte«. An diesem Punkt vergleicht Schmitt Tolstoi mit Johannes dem Täufer, der »der größte Prophet der alten Welt ist, jedoch der geringste, der ins Himmelreich kommt, ist größer als er.«[5] Schmitts Meinung nach steht auch Tolstoi nur vor der Tür der neuen Weltepoche, da auch er noch kein Zukunftmensch ist. Aber warum? Die Antwort auf diese Frage lautet am klarsten in einem Vortrag, den Schmitt 1911, also ein Jahr nach Tolstois Tod hielt, so: »Tolstoi, wenn er den Menschen als ein himmlisches Prinzip betrachtete, das seine Individuation bloß in der Körperlichkeit findet, sieht das große Geheimnis des geistigen Individuums noch nicht klar; er sieht nicht, daß wir als Individuen universale Gestalten zugleich sind, die gleichermaßen universalen, unendlichen, eigenartig gefärbten Strahlen der himmlichen Strahlenkrone. Tolstoi selbst stimmte in einem schönen, langen Brief, den ich leider am Beginn der neunziger Jahre in einer Gesellschaft verlor, dieser Idee zu, aber dessenungeachtet sah er das

Unendliche auch später allein in Gott: in dem Menschen sah er nur den endlichen Teil. Und so verblaßt vor Tolstoi das Bild des Wesens des Menschen, sowie das Bild Gottes. . .«[6]

Laut Schmitt ist der größte Mangel bei Tolstoi, daß er »geneigt ist, beisammen mit der modernen Pseudowissenschaft auch die Wissenschaft überhaupt als solche zu verwerfen.«[7] Hier denkt also der Schüler seinen Meister überschritten zu haben — und hier stößt die tolstoische Auffassung mit der Weltanschauung Schmitts zusammen.

Schmitt erklärte nämlich in seiner Wissenschaftslehre, der *Gnosis*, daß der Mensch allein durch die Wissenschaft erlöst werden könne. Nur die Wissenschaft mache ihn fähig, sich selbst zu erkennen, nur durch sie könne er einsehen, daß das menschliche Denken imstande sei, mit Hilfe der Intuition das Unendliche sich vorzustellen. Das Unendliche kann sich aber nur der vorstellen, der selbst unendlich ist — der Mensch also, der zur Intuition fähig ist, sei unendlich. Die Aufgabe der Wissenschaft des Erkennens sei den Menschen zum unendlichen Bewußtsein zu erwecken. Obwohl die Fähigkeit zum unendlichen Bewußtsein in dem Menschen schlummere, hätte er aber keine Kenntnis darüber. Der Zukunftmenscht, der Gottmensch sei die Gestalt des unendlichen Bewußtseins.

Schmitt, wenn auch dies geschickt verhüllt, verurteilt Tolstoi für dasselbe, wofür er seine größten Gegner, den Materialismus und die Theologie verurteilt; namentlich dafür, daß Tolstoi den Menschen nicht als das größte, edelste Wesen sehen lasse, sondern einen irgendwelcher Obrigkeit untergeordneten, ausgelieferten, unselbstständigen Wurm. Und »den solchen kann man höchstens bedauern, aber keineswegs lieben. . . Das Maß der Liebe ist die Vollkommenheit des geliebten Wesens. Die Liebe wird von sich selbst eintreten, wenn der Mensch in himmlischem Licht, in himmlischer Vollkommenheit vor uns strahlt, und die Menschenliebe wird nicht mehr Lüge und Phrase sein, was sie auf dem Grund der bisherigen Weltanschauung war.«[8] »Wir können also sehen, daß nur die ideale Anschauung« — das heißt die Anschauung Schmitts —, »die wir über den Menschen und die Gottheit verschaffen, die Gottheit nach innen ziehend, im Lichte unsrer eigenen Innenwelt, den Gott als die Gestalt der unbestrittenen Vernunft, und nicht als Gegenstand irgendeines Glaubens anschauend, daß nur diese Weltanschauung der Grund einer adleren Moral und adleren Lebens sein kann.«[9]

Schmitt dachte also, daß die tolstoischen Prinzipien (mit diesen er ansonsten völlig einverstanden ist) nur mit richtigen theoretischen Unterstützungen in der Praxis durchgesetzt und dort verbreitet werden können. So schrieb er schon 1897: »Gewiß, verehrter Freund, hatten Sie recht, wenn Sie immer wieder betonten, daß die *Hauptsache das Leben* sei und das Leben selbst, *das der Mensch fühlt, die beste Lehre.* Doch ein solches Leben kann sich in der Masse der Menschen nur dann entfalten, wenn es sich mit dem lebendigen Beispiel auch die Lehre der entsprechenden, mit dieser Lehre harmonisierenden Welt*anschauung* verbindet.«[10] Der ungarische Denker erhielt diese Meinung, wie wir gesehen haben, sowohl in seinem Tolstoi-Buch von 1901, als auch in seinem Vortrag über Tolstoi 1911 und in ihrem Streit über die Wissenschaft, der kurz vor Tolstois Tode verlief, aufrecht.

Tolstoi nämlich, wie es anzunehmen ist, wies Schmitts Wissenschaftlichkeitsanspruch zurück. In seinen Briefen heißt es so: »Schmitts Gegenbehauptungen über die Wissenschaft erinnern mich auf die gleichen Gegenbehauptungen kirchlicher Personen über den Kirchenglauben.«[11] »Nicht nur, daß die Wissenschaftlichkeit für die reine religiöse Interpretation, über die Schmitt schreibt, nicht nötig ist, sondern umgekehrt: es gibt nichts, was dieser gesunden, nüchternen Interpretation schädlicher sein könnte, als wenn sie sich gerade gebildet und wissenschaftlich nennt.«[12]

Welcher von ihnen hatte recht?

Eugen Schmitt, der letzten Endes Philosoph wurde in einer Zeit, in der die Zeit der Philosophie schon vorbei war, bemerkte scharfsinnig, daß die Lehre Tolstois auch utopische Elemente enthält. Er kannte Tolstoi persönlich nicht, und konnte mit Recht erwähnen, daß es schwer ist, auf breite Menschenmengen ausschließlich mit persönlichem Beispiel einzuwirken. Er wußte, daß das Gefühl einen geistigen Anhalt braucht, denn einsam verirrt es sich. Tolstoi wußte aber, daß bloß der Intellekt, der geistige Anhalt nicht reicht. Er sah Schmitt den — vorwiegend praktischen — Verbündeten an, doch war er sich im klaren darüber, daß Schmitts Wissenschaftslehre für sein individuelles Weltbewusstsein nicht die richtige weltanschauliche Grundlegung ist. Tolstoi suchte keinen Gottmenschen, er bemühte sich nicht um dessen Herkommen. Schmitt tat dies. Aber den größten Anteil daran, daß die Gesichtszüge Schmitts Gottmenschen nicht den in seiner Unendlichkeit prassenden und schwelgenden, sondern den durch seine Unendlichkeit der Liebe gewürdigten Menschen zeigen, nimmt jedoch der Künstler, Denker und Prediger von Jasnaja Poljana.

*Gábor Miszoglád*

ANMERKUNGEN

[1] Schmitt an Géza Mirkovszky, den 1. Februar 1891. In Handschrift.
[2] Schmitt an Géza Mirkovszky, den 27. Dezember 1890. In Handschrift.
[3] Schmitt, E., *Tolsztoj, Nietzsche, Ibsen.* Budapest, 1911. S. 41—43.
[4] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 2. Juni 1901.
[5] Schmitt, E., Tolstoi, Nietsche, Ibsen, *Leo Tolstoi und seine Bedeutung für unsere Kultur*, Jena, 1901. S. 433.
[6] Schmitt, E., *Tolsztoj, Nietzsche, Ibsen*, S. 12.
[7] ebd. S. 4.
[8] ebd. S. 19.
[9] ebd.
[10] Schmitt an Tolstoi, 1897. In: Keuchel, E., *Die Rettung wird kommen. . .* Harder Verlag, Hamburg, 1926. S. 72.
[11] Tolstoi an Škarvan, den 6. Dezember 1909.
[12] Tolstoi an Škarvan, den 5. Januar 1910.

# Eugen Heinrich Schmitts praktische Tätigkeit

Die unauflösbare Einheit von Leben, Lebenswerk und Persönlichkeit zeigt vielleicht bei keinem anderen eine so repräsentative Bedeutung wie bei Tolstoi. Die Werke, die die Spitze der Weltliteratur vertreten, die Persönlichkeit, die aus der eines Künstlers zur Persönlichkeit einer weltgeschichtlichen Figur wächst, und der Lebenslauf, der als ein alltäglicher beginnt, und sich immer erhöhend, als ein menschliches Präzedens endet: sie weisen uns, in einem Fokus sammelnd, den Menschen, die Stellung des Menschen, und den Auftrag des Menschen vor. Belletristik und Lehre, Tolstoi und Tolstoianismus bilden zusammen die tolstoische Erscheinung. Um so mehr, denn die Lehre ist schon in den Jahrzehnten anwesend, in denen die Erzählungen und die Romane entstanden; im Keime sich formend ist sie auffindbar von den frühsten Notizen des Tagebuches an, und — von Fall zu Fall auf verschiedene Art und in verschiedenem Maße — determiniert sogar die großen Werke. Um die achtziger Jahre verschiebt sich aber der Akzent: die sich bisher hinter der Literatur verborgene Lehre tritt hervor, für sich selbstständige Existenz und Form fordernd.

Zu dieser Zeit hält Tolstoi die Literatur für unzureichend, um die Wahrheiten des Lebens auszudrücken. (Er will die *Auferstehung:* nicht einmal publizieren lassen.[1]) Als aktuelle Hauptaufgabe betrachtet er die Propagation der Lehre, in derem Interesse sollen, wie er schreibt, »die unbestrittenen, einfachen und unwiderlegbaren Wahrheiten des Lebens unaufhörlich wiederholt werden, damit die meisten Menschen sie erhören und verstehen.«[2]

Der Tolstoianismus wird durch die Organisierung der Verbreitung der Lehre ins Leben gerufen. So wird Jasnaja Poljana ein Gnadenort, eine Idee, ein organisierendes Zentrum; auf deren Spuren, der davon abgehenden Kraftlinien, immer neuere Herde entstehen, von denen Widerrufe ankommen, entweder als einfache Bestätigungen oder als Näherungen ursprünglich andersartiger Orientierungen.

Zu diesen letzteren, und zu einer der kräftigsten von ihnen gehört die ungarische Resonanz: Schmitts Auftreten. Er kommt von der Theorie, der deutschen Philosophie her; an der Berliner Universität wurde er für seine Studie über Hegel preisgekrönt, seine geistige Bahn beginnt bei Hegel, führt aber bis hin zu den Anarchisten — Stirner, Bakunin, Kropotkin — und endet bei den tolstoischen Ideen. Diese neue Orientierung spiegelt sich in seiner 1894 gestifteten Zeitschrift *Die Religion des Geistes:* seiner Korrespondenz mit Tolstoi, mit welchem er in demselben Jahr in Briefwechsel trat, und in seiner Publizistik — aus der kennzeichnende Titel die *Religion des Anarchismus* und *Ohne Staat* sind, wider

Tolstoi wird 1896 auf ihn aufmerksam, als Schmitt infolge eines Presseprozesses, der wegen eines seiner Artikel gegen ihn eingeleitet wurde, sein staatliches Amt niederlegt, und er in einem an den Justizminister gerichteten offenen Brief seinen Standpunkt über. die Unvereinbarkeit des Staatsdienstes und des Christentums erklärt. Auf dieses Geschehnis hin reagiert Tolstoi mit einem umfangreichen Brief,[3] in dem er sich über seine neue, sich zu dieser Zeit formende Idee über das Verhältnis zur Gewalt äußert. Bei ihm ist der Wahlspruch »Nimm an der Gewalt nicht teil« im Begriff die Formel »Du sollst dem Übel nicht mit Gewalt widerstreben« abzulösen, und deshalb stimmt er selbstverständlich Schmitts Schritten zu.

Deshalb kommt auch immer wieder die Frage der Verweigerung des Waffendienstes zwischen Tolstoi und Schmitt zur Sprache. Tolstoi schickt Berichte, Artikel über die Duchobory, den Niederländer Vanderveer, und bittet Schmitt sie in deutscher Sprache zu verbreiten.[4] Wegen des Vorwortes, welches Tolstoi zu dem Buch »*Droschins Leben und Tod*« von Popow schrieb, fällt F. Spielhagen ihn in einem offenen Brief, in dem er ihn einen Agitator gegen den Waffendienstes nennt und ihn am Tode Droschins verantwortlich macht. Es ist Schmitt, der vor der internationalen Öffentlichkeit neben Tolstoi steht, und im Namen Tolstois, oder statt dessen Spielhagen in den Spalten der: *Religion des Geistes* antwortet. Dies geschieht beinahe zur selben Zeit, als Škarvan in Ungarn den Waffendienst verweigert. Schmitt stellt einen Manifestentwurf zusammen, um den Protest gegen die Verfolgung Škarvans zu organisieren.[5] In diesem Zusammenhang schreibt Tolstoi an Schmitt: »Man kann diese großartige, aber ins Bewußtsein der Menschen nur schwerlich hineindringende Idee nicht oft genug wiederholen, daß das Ziel des Militärdienstes der Mord ist, ein Christ aber soll nicht morden. . . Ich sage es in Bezug auf Droschin, Sie in Bezug auf Škarvan. Und je mehr Stimmen für die Wahrheit reden werden, desto besser wird's sein. Ich mag Ihre Stimme hören, und bin überzeugt, daß sie auf die Menschen wirkt.«[6]

Wir können sehen, daß Tolstoi der Verweigerung des Waffendienstes große Bedeutung beimißt, denn er sieht die Ergebnisse der Verbreitung der Idee, das höhere Stadium der Ausführung der Lehre in diesen Taten, durch deren Fruchtbarkeit die Wirksamkeit der Idee und der Worte abgelöst wird. Die Demonstration dieser Vorstellung wird auch Tolstois berühmter Weggang gleich vor seinem Tode sein.

Zu dieser Zeit empfängt Tolstoi Schmitts Zusammenwirken — begreiflicherweise — mit Freude, denn er findet in ihn neben seinen russischen, englischen und niederländischen Anhängern jetzt auch im ungarischen, österreichischen und deutschen Gebiet einen geschickten Organisator und Redakteur, einen theoretisch vorbereiteten, fleißigen und verhältnismäßig wirksamen Propagandisten, einen Helfer und zugleich einen Widerbestätiger. Wie ernst er Schmitts Tätigkeit nimmt, zeigt sich in seinem Brief vom 27. September 1895, in dem er ausführlich seinen Plan über eine internationalen Publikation, zu deren Zustandebringung er auch mit Schmitts Unterstützung rechnet, darlegt. Mit dieser Veröffentlichung wollte Tolstoi die Kräfte zusammenfassen, und, wie er sagt, Schriften, »die zu dieser oder jener Richtung oder Religion gehören, bezeugen aber gleichermaßen die Unhaltbarkeit der herrschenden Ordnung und die Unvermeidlichkeit der Wandlung; und nicht die Änderung durch ein gewaltsames Niederreißen, sondern die innere, individuelle und religiöse Vervollkommnung,«[7] in vier Sprachen publizieren.

Tolstoi sieht das letzte Stadium dieser Vervollkommnung darin, daß wir »die Mittel, mit denen unser Leben mit unseren Erkenntnissen in Einklang zu bringen ist, erkennen sollen.«[8] Diese Abfassung zeigt schon das Bestreben, das in der letzten Etappe Tolstois Lebensbahn immer mehr in Vordergrund rückt: die Welt der Idee gegenüberzustellen, zu begreifen, und die Lehre zu verwirklichen.

Gewiß tritt unter der Einwirkung dieser tolstoischen Bestrebung Schmitts radikales Übergehen von der Theorie zur Praxis ein. Dieses zeigt auch schon der Titel seiner neuen, im Jahre 1897 erscheinenden Zeitschrift *Ohne Staat*. Sie ist, wie der Untertitel verkündet, das Mitteilungsblatt der »idealen Anarchisten« die die Gewaltlosigkeit verbreiten.[9] Die Mehrzahl der Artikel — die größtenteils aus Schmitts Feder stammen — behandeln diese Frage.

Das zentrale Problem ist der Staat als Gewaltmacht, und die Liquidierung dieser Macht ohne Gewalt, mit »idealistischer Anarchie«. Wie Schmitt schreibt: »Wir wollen die Welt durch Erziehung und Erwecken zum adleren Bewußtsein verändern.«[10] Eine großen Staub aufwirbelnde Schrift von ihm trägt den Titel: *Die Durchführbarkeit der Anarchie.*[11] Hier nennt Schmitt den Staat eine »gesetzlich genehmigte Räuberbande», und prophezeit ihren bevorstehenden Zusammenbruch: »Es ist die große Revolution der Denkweise im Entstehen, die in gewisser Hinsicht einen Kreislauf bildet, und in den anarchistischen Urzustand der Stammesgesellschaft der vorgeschichtlichen Welt zurückführt.« In diesem Zusammenhang faßt Schmitt seine Sendung ab: »Wir aber sind die Auferstehung des Menschen *ur-ursprünglicher* Würde und Freiheit auf einer unvergleichbar höheren Bildungsstufe.«

In Verbindung mit diesem Artikel klärt sich der grundlegende Unterschied zwischen Tolstois und Schmitts Weltanschauungen auf. Im großen und ganzen stimmt Tolstoi mit dem Inhalt des Artikels überein, möchte aber gern »weniger Stolz und mehr christliche Bescheidenheit, Demut«[12] sehen. Schmitt aber verteidigt den Stolz und die Würde auf theoretischem, weltanschaulichem Grund: ». . . die Materialisten« — schreibt er an Tolstoi — »betrachten den Menschen als bloßes elendes Atom der Gesellschaft und der Natur, so wie die Theologen ihn als bloßes elende Kreatur betrachten. Beide sind Weltanschauungen der *Entwürdigung des Menschen* und damit der Knechtung, der Unfreiheit . . . Im Gegensatz zu dieser Knechtweltanschauung tritt die *Welttanschauung Christi* (die ich nun im Lichte des Erkennens und der Wissenschaft entfalten will). . . daß dem Menschen seine ursprüngliche Unendlichkeit, die göttliche Natur seines geistigen Lebens, die unbeschreibliche Herrlichkeit und Majestät klargemacht werde, die in jeden Menschenseele schlummert.«[13]

Während Tolstoi den Prozess der Vervollkommnung in dem Sich-Überbieten des Menschen sieht, sieht Schmitt ihn in dem Zum-Bewußtsein-Erwachen des Menschen.

Dennoch ist ihr gemeinsames Bestreben das Ziel und den Weg für die bewußtlose menschliche Vegetation zu zeigen.

Deshalb melden sich die Meinungsverschidenheiten vorläufig nur am Rande, erscheinen sie nur formell. In der Tat ist der Kontakt zwischen Tolstoi und Schmitt zu dieser Zeit am engsten. Dies bestätigt auch eine Tatsache. Ihre Korrespondenz bestand von 1894 bis zum Tode Tolstois, also 16 Jahre lang. Diese Zeit hindurch schrieb Tolstoi 32 Briefe an Schmitt. Von diesen sind 22 zwischen 1894 und 1898 geschrieben wurden, und nur 10 im Laufe der letzten Jahre. Außer dem häufigen Briefwechsel schickt Schmitt auch seine Zeitschrift *Ohne Staat*, Bücher und Broschüren ständig an Tolstoi, der im allgemeinen auch auf sie eingeht, auch läßt er einige Artikel ins Russische übersetzen. Schmitt publiziert Tolstois Briefe, Artikel und Berichte. Ein immer wiederkehrendes Thema ist die Verfolgung der Duchobory. Die Zeitschrift: *Ohne Staat* veröffentlicht fortsetzungsweise Makoviczkys Berichte über dies Geschechen.[14] Schmitt stellt eine Sammlung die Gedanken von Tolstoi über Gott zusammen, übersetzt Aphorismen aus dem *Tagebuch*,[15] schreibt Vorworte zu Tolstois Werken, überhaupt: er organisiert Tolstois deutschsprachige Publikationen. Tolstoi seinerseits macht seine Besucher, Bekannten und Anhänger auf Schmitt aufmerksam, und schlägt ihnen vor, mit ihm in Verbindung zu treten.

Eine Brücke wird in der Mitte Europas gebaut, über die die Lehre von Osten nach Westen strömt, und sich zum Tolstoianismus, zu einem Weltphänomen entwickelt.

Die Richtung zu der Praxis, das Bestreben, die Lehre durchzuführen, und die Reaktionen der Macht (die Presseprozesse gegen Schmitt, die Auflösungen der anarchistischen Zusammenkünfte usw.) treiben Schmitt zu einer konkreten Einschätzung der Sachlage. Er richtet sein Augenmerk auf die ungarische Situation.

In seiner Schrift: *Ungarn und die Zukunft der Anarchie*[16] stellt er die kulturreiche Vergangenheit des Westens dem kulturellen Elend Ungarns gegenüber. Er sieht aber den Vorteil und die Perspektive gerade in diesem Nachteil, denn: ». . . wir besitzen noch die Reinheit, die Unberührtheit in den noch gesund gebliebenen Volksschichten. . . wir haben noch die Urkraft in dem Maße, wie ihn der Westen nicht mehr hat.« Schmitt empfindet die Ambivalenz der europäischen Zivilisation, den Entwicklungsstand der Kultur und das Verderben der Sitten, so wie es Tolstoi empfindet, als er 1906 in seinem Tagebuch aufzeichnet: »Die Völker des Westens gehen weit vor uns, aber auf einem Irrweg. Um den rechten Weg zu betreten, müssen sie weit zurückgehen. Wir aber müssen nur ein wenig von dem Abwege abkommen, auf den wir erst getreten sind. . .«[17]

Diese Erkenntnisse leiten Schmitt, als er sich im Jahre 1897 der ungarischen Agrarbewegungen anschließt. Der von ihm selbst vertretenen Idee setzt er voraus, daß sie über jeder Partei und Politik steht, deshalb sucht und findet er Kontakt mit der von der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Ungarns abfallenden und sich ihr entgegenkehrenden »unabhänglichen sozialistischen« Bewegung, deren Führer Várkonyi ist. Es ist bezeichnend für Schmitts Aktivität, daß er in Várkonyis Zeitschrift *Földmivelő* (Ackermann) im Jahre 1897 rund 10 Artikel veröffentlicht, unter diesen erschienen solche, die aus der Zeitschrift: *Ohne Staat* stammen, aber auch solche, die speziell für den *Földmivelő:* geschrieben wurden. Gleichzeitig tauchen auch Schriften in der Zeitschrift *Ohne Staat:* auf, die sich mit den Agrarbewegungen beschäftigen. Schmitt nimmt an dem bildenden Kongress der »Unabhängigen Sozialistischen Partei« (Cegléd, 8—10. September 1897) teil, und seine Rede, die er dort hält, wird in dem Blatt *Földmivelő* publiziert. In dieser Rede kritisiert er vom Standpunkt der Religion der Liebe die Sozialdemokratie, denn, so sagt er, schließen sich die Volksherrschaft und die Freiheit des Volkes einander aus, weil die Volksherrschaft nur so möglich ist, wenn Einzelne im Namen des Volkes herrschen. Dementgegen braucht das Volk eine echte Freiheit, die von jeglicher Gewalt befreit ist. »Demokratie ist der Name jenes Weltbetruges,« — sagt er —, »wenn Volksführer,

die eigentlichen Betrüger des Volkes, ihm schmeichelnd sagen, daß sie ausschließlich um seines Willen, zu seinen Gunsten, in seinem Namen die Herrschaft der Gewalt anwenden. . .«[18]

Schmitts Bedeutung ist für die »unabhängige sozialistische Bewegung« außerordentlich groß. Die »grundsätzliche Erklärung« des Kongresses[19] zu Cegléd enthält solche Ausdrücke, die zweifellos Schmitts ideelle Einwirkung spiegeln; z.B. der Erklärung nach wird »die Partei Herrschaftslosigkeit bestreben«, sich »bemühen, die Abrüstung des stehenden Heeres zu fördern«, und den Staat als die Urquelle alles Bösen betrachten.

Aber nicht nur die Führer der Bewegung werden von Schmitts Ideen berührt; diese gelangen auch in die anderen Schichten. Der Schriftsteller Péter Veres schreibt darüber, indem er eine tolstoianische »Brudergemeinschaft«, welche einfache Bauern schufen, und in welcher sie den Vegetarianismus selbst versuchten, darstellt.[20] — Schmitt bekommt auch noch nach vielen Jahren Briefe von einfachen Leuten aus der ungarischen Tiefebene, in welchen sie ihn bitten, zu ihnen zurückzukehren.[21]

Schmitts Einwirkung auf die Bewegung ist also augenscheinlich und unbestreitbar von Bedeutung. Von 1898 an, als infolge der Reaktion der Regierung die blutigen, viele Menschenleben fordernden Zusammenstöße mit der Gendarmerie aufeinander folgten, ist Schmitt der Meinung, daß die Wirkung seiner Tätigkeit, der Idee und seiner Zielsetzung völlig entgegensteht. Er propagiert die Notwendigkeit einer inneren Veränderung, die gewaltlos und von jedem materiallen Anlässen frei ist, und warnt vor allen Gewalttaten. Obendrein klagten die Regierungsorgane ihre Bewegung wegen Aufhetzerei der Bauernschaft an. Schmitts Artikel im *Földmívelö* lehnt die Anklage in leidenschaftlichem Ton ab, sich gegen die Ankläger erhebend: »Und was machen wir verglichen mit diesem empörenden System, dessen Unmenschlichkeit dasjenige der Negerschinder übertrifft, ja, verglichen mit diesen Sklavenhaltern, die unaufhörlich nach Mordwaffen brüllen, wie blutgierige Wildtiere . . . ja, was machen wir, daß wir den Namen »Aufrührer« verdienen?«[22]

Wegen diesen Artikel wird Schmitt zusammen mit Várkonyi vor Gericht geladen. Nach dem Prozeß, und nach einem Artikel in der Zeitschrift *Ohne Staat* darüber, hört Schmitt in der Agrarbewegungen weiter zu fungieren auf. Im Schlußteil dieses Artikels gesteht er sein Mißlingen ein, bekennt sich aber die Zukunft: »Blitze schleuderte ich, aber sie fielen in Sumpf. Auferstehen wird doch dises Wort, ja, das wird es, denn ich glaube an die große und heilige Berufung des ungarischen Volkes und der mit ihm kämpfenden südslawischen Brüdervölker. Die große Berufung des ungarischen Volkes ist . . . mit der Erhabenheit der göttlichen Milde, in der Majestät der ewigen Liebe . . . die neuen Kultur, die des Menschen allein würdig und vom göttlichen Bewußtsein durchdrungen ist, hier, in den Tälern der Donau und der Theiß zu erbauen.«[23]

Die Geschichte bestätigte aber die Idee nicht. Schmitt wurde gezwungen, sich zurückzuziehen. Er konnte seinen Entschluß gerechtfertigt in dem Brief sehen, den Tolstoi über die Verhältnisse Ungarns schrieb: »Was Neues könnte ich Ihnen über die Sachen in Ungarn und in Österreich sagen, außerdem, daß es sehr schmerzlich ist, zu sehen, wie die Menschen so dumm, und deshalb so grausam sein können?«[24]

Um seine geistige Grundstellung zu betonen, veröffentlicht Schmitt sein Blatt unter dem Titel »Gewaltlosigkeit«, aber nur ein Jahr lang, dann stellt er auch dieses ein. Das übriggebliebene anderthalbe Jahrzehnt seines Lebens widmet er der wissenschaftlichen Arbeit, von der Praxis zur Theorie zurückkehrend.

Dadurch läßt sein Kontakt zu Tolstoi nach, und bekommt einen anderen Charakter. Von nun an ist Schmitt nicht mehr der Organisator der praktischen Sache, sondern eher ein theoretischer Propagandist. Er schreibt in diesen Jahren drei Bücher über Tolstoi, in welchen er versucht, die Lehre auf wissenschaftlichen Grund darzulegen. Tolstoi stimmt

Schmitts Bestreben zu: »Sie haben völlig recht, wenn Sie sagen, daß die christliche Weltanschauung für die weltliche Wissenschaft auf all den Gebieten ganz neuen und unerwarteten Folgerungen dienet, deren alle Beziehungen ausgearbeitet werden sollen.«[25] In Wirklichkeit hat er aber keine wesentliche Bemerkung. Als Schmitt ihn auf einen theoretischen Teil seines Buches aufmerksam macht, hebt Tolstoi sogar ein anderes, für ihn wichtigeres Moment hervor: »Es hat mir nicht nur die Auslegung des Sinnes des Lebens gefallen, . . . sondern auch die letzten Seiten, wo Sie kühn mit der Aufgeblasenheit unserer Zivilisation abrechnend, über die Möglichkeit sprechend, daß die Mehrzahl der Leute zur agrikulturellen Lebensführung zurückkehren können.«[26]

Die Gegensätze, die in den Ansichten der zwei Denker von vornherein verborgen waren, die aber nur in der letzten Periode ihrer Verbindung sich zur Polemie verschärften, werden zum Schluß in dem Streit über die Wissenschaft, der sich in den Jahren 1909—1910 entfaltet, zum Vorschein gebracht.[27]

Zu dieser Zeit lebt Schmitt schon in Berlin. Wegen der Anziehungskraft seines neuen geistigen Kreises, des der Gnostiker, hat er Ungarn verlassen, wo er ohnehin immer in Übergangsposition zwischen dem russischen Sittenbewußtsein und dem deutschen Verstandbewußtsein, und in diesem Sinne keine typische Erscheinung war. Die Bedeutung seiner Tätigkeit, deren Gutsteher letzten Endes Tolstoi war, liegt aber gerade darin. Und nicht nur deswegen, weil vielleicht Schmitt der selbstständigste Tolstoianer ist, sondern gerade *deshalb*. So verbindet er sich nicht nur mit dem einfachen Widerhall der tolstoischen Gedanken, mit einer Tätigkeit, die unmittelbar sich an Tolstoi knüpft, sondern mit einem individuellen Gedankensystem und mit selbstständiger, einzigartiger Tätigkeit mit dem tolstoischen Phänomen. Darum hat er eine spezielle Rolle darin, daß Tolstoi auch im praktischen Sinne zum Weltphänomen wurde. Schmitt ist Teilnehmer an einem Prozeß, der vielleicht zum letzten Mal mit Tolstoi stattfand: eine weltliterarische Erscheinung wurde zu einer denkenhistorischen, und dann, obwohl sie die Geschichte nicht bestätigte, durch eine Affirmation in der Welt zu einem welthistorichem Phänomen.

*Péter Milosevits*

## ANMERKUNGEN

[1] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 2. März 1897.
[2] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 12. Oktober 1896.
[3] ebd.
[4] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 30. September 1896.
[5] Religion des Geistes, 1896. No. 1., bzw. Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 27. Februar 1896.
[6] Tolstoi an Schmitt, am Mitte September 1895.
[7] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 27. März 1895.
[8] ebd.
[9] *Ohne Staat*, 1897. No. 1., S. 3.
[10] a.a.O., S. 2.
[11] *Ohne Staat*, 1897. No. 4.
[12] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 2. März 1897.
[13] Schmitt an Tolstoi, 1897. In: Keuchel, E., *Die Rettung wird kommen. . .* Harder Verlag, Hamburg, 1926. S. 71.
[14] Im Jahre 1897, von No. 6. an.
[15] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 7. April 1898.
[16] *Ohne Staat*, 1897. No. 13. S. lf.
[17] Tolstoi, *Tagebuch*, den 2. September 1906.
[18] *Földmivelő*, den 22 u. 29 Oktober 1897. II. Jahrg. No. 43. u. 44.

[19] A magyar munkásmozgalom válogatott dokumentumai (Ausgewählte Dokumente der ungarischen Arbeiterbewegung). Szikra, Budapest, 1954. Bd. 2. S. 483.
[20] Veres, P., *Falusi krónika* (Dorfchronik), Bp. 1956. S. 238. u. 242—245.
[21] Kepes, F., *Schmitt Jenő Henrik élete és tanítása.* (Eugen Heinrich Schmitt. Sein Leben und seine Lehre). Bp. 1918. S. 78.
[22] *Földmívelő*, den 14. Januar 1898. Jahrg. No. 2.
[23] *Ohne Staat*, November 1898, S. 1—3.
[24] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 25. Februar 1898.
[25] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 1. Januar 1901.
[26] Tolstoi an Schmitt, den 22. Juli 1907.
[27] Schmitt, E., *Leo Tolstoi als Gegner der modernen Wissenschaft in Dokumenten der Fortschritts.* Reiner Verlag, Berlin, 1910., bzw. Tolstoi an Skarvan, den 6. Dezember 1909, den 5, 9, 11. Januar 1910.

# Joyce Versus Tolstoy — According to Virginia Woolf's Diary

The stern critic, Rebecca West, when reviewing Virginia Woolf's first significantly modern novel, *Jacob's Room*, has arrived to the following conclusion: ". . . Mrs Woolf has again provided us with a demonstration that she is at once a negligible novelist and a supremely important writer."[1]

At first the reader is taken aback by the categorically formulated statement, since readers, who are well-versed in the world of modern English literature, being asked about Woolf, would mention first most certainly Woolf, the novelist, and only second time — if they are aware of the fact — Woolf, the critic. Whereas the belletristic achievement of the Woolf-oeuvre, undergoing a slow process of reassessment during the last two or three decades, fell more into the background, thus — simultaneously — this very same process gave a greater emphasis, created new openings to the appreciation of Woolf's critical activity.[2]

Rebecca West's oddly ambiguous praise indicates and evaluates, within the scope of the Woolf-oeuvre, the specific correlations and antagonisms of the belletrist and critic, indicating and evaluating the fact that alongside more or less successful novels — and in case of West the accent falls on the less successful — in Woolf's essays we get acquainted with the personality of a critic, who displays a highly refined aesthetic, stylistic sensibility, whose firm judgements, critical observations are almost in all cases more relevant, more helpful to the understanding of the new generation of English avant-guard writers, than all her novels. We get acquainted with the personality of a critic, who through the gift of her specific sensibility approached the problems of literary creation with such a fervent excitement, who lived through the eclipse of modern fiction with such an intensity as none among her contemporaries, whose critical essays summed up in a manifesto-like program the relation of the novel's past and present, its factual, temporary position and its task in the near future.[3]

In the development of Woolf's career two, diametrically opposed artistic experiences proved to be decisive, formative forces. Recognising the basic and complex "otherness" of modern reality and modern life, parallelly with this realization, she looked for and tried to forge the modern epic means towards the collateral artistic expression of this reality. *Mrs Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse* and *The Waves* were the best results of this artistic search.

Her new endeavours and modern art poetique inevitably set her against the group of contemporary novelists working along the principles of traditional realism. During this process of confrontation and segregation the second and perhaps more unsettling artistic experience has taken a crystallized form in Woolf's mind, the constant reoccurence of the painful certainty that neither her own activity nor that of her fellow-writers of similar principles could live up to the task set, their significance having but a temporary character, and all their merits or tasks being limited merely to experimenting: "It is an age of fragments. A few stanzas, a few pages, a chapter here and there, the beginning of this novel, the end of that, are equal to the best of any age or author. But can we go to posterity with a sheaf of loose pages, or ask the readers of those days, with the whole of literature before them, to sift our enormous rubbish heaps for our tiny pearls? . . . Our century has not lacked industry; but if we ask for masterpieces it appears on the face of it, that the pessimists are right. It seems as if an age of genius must be succeeded by an age of endeavour. . ."[4] The age of genius is the past and the age of endeavour is the present, Woolf's and her contemporaries' present, an age "of promise unachieved, of intellectual poverty, of brilliance which has been snatched from life but not transmuted into literature."[5] A painful confession it is, so much the more as the juxtaposition of the ingenious past and the erratic, rambling modern literary ventures will be one of the reoccuring, constant themes of Woolf's critical essays. She never stops looking for ancestors among the masters of literary past. Mme de la Fayette, Sterne, Jane Austen, George Eliot are those, whom she feels related to her passionate research of life, but first and foremost she envies their sense of security, the power of their belief in man and life.

Tolstoy's name has an exceptional position in this register. We meet his name at almost all the significant points of Woolf's career. In the moments of her illness Tolstoy's novels brought consolation, were felt to be a sort of intellectual and emotional stronghold — in the moments of heated creative work Tolstoy represented the final and absolute ethical and aesthetical level to be measured to.

*Jacob's Room* had already been published and Woolf was engaged in writing *Mrs Dalloway*, when *Ulysses* came out in 1922. Besides its literary importance the book meant also a social event and it is but natural that Woolf and her friends had read and discussed it immediately. Woolf gives an account of her first impressions in her *Diary* with an almost naturalistic crudeness: "I should be reading *Ulysses*, and fabricating my case for and against. I have read 200 pages so far — not a third; and have been amused, stimulated, charmed, interested by the first 2 or 3 chapters — to the end of the cemetery scene; and then puzzled, bored, irritated and disillusioned by a queasy undergraduate scratching his pimples. And Tom,[6] great Tom, thinks this on a par with *War and Peace*!"[7] And some weeks later she continues: "I finished Ulysses and think it a misfire. Genius it has I think; but of the inferior water. The book is diffuse. It is brackish. It is pretentious. It is underbred, not only in the obvious sense, but in the literary sense. A first rate writer, I mean, respects writing too much to be tricky; startling; doing stunts. I'm reminded all the time of some callow board-school boy, full of wits and powers, but so self-conscious and egotistical that he looses his head, becomes extravagant, mannered, uproarious, ill at ease. . . I have not read it carefully; and only once; and it is very obscure; so no doubt I have scamped the virtue of it more than is fair. I feel that myriads of tiny bullets pepper one and spatter one; but one does not get one deadly wound straight in the face — as from Tolstoy for instance; but it is entirely absurd to compare him with Tolstoy."[8] These remarks of the *Diary* put the master of 19th century realism and the protagonist of 20th century modernism side by side, but in a sharp juxtaposition. The chief attraction of these remarks is hidden exactly in the fact that Woolf's most personal writing, with a confession-like intimacy, accomplishes the comparison of two contrasted literary

methods, but here with the primacy of traditional realism. She gave voice to these sharply anti-Ulysses feelings only in her *Diary*. In the previously mentioned declarative essays — most obviously in *Modern Fiction* — she presented Joyce and his works, and rightly too, as the most characteristic representative of the endeavours and results of the new generation.

But at the end of this essay, quite suddenly, Woolf starts to talk about the significance and influence of the Russian novel: "... and if the Russians are mentioned, one runs the risk of feeling that to write of any fiction save theirs is waste of time."[9]

This categoric remark near to the analysis and evaluation of modern English novels evokes in the reader ambiguous impressions. We feel that even Woolf, when hailing in Joyce the fellow-artist, who "destroyed the whole of the 19th Century",[10] approves only his method and technique, while the Joycean presentation of life she could not really accept. On the other hand Tolstoy, "the greatest of all novelists",[11] embodied a singular and unparalleled artistic completeness, whose perfection represented for the new generation at once also the unsurpassable.

*Gizella Kocztur*

NOTES

[1] Rebecca West's review of *Jacob's Room* was first published in the 4. Nov. 1922 number of New Statesman. Republ.: *Virginia Woolf, the Critical Heritage;* ed.: M. Robin and A. McLaurie; London, 1975, Routledge and Kegan.

[2] Some years ago all the critical works of Woolf were published, as an other significant result of this revaluation process. See: *Collected Essays by Virginia Woolf.* I—IV vols. ed.: Leonard Woolf. London, 1971, The Hogarth Press.

[3] Here we are thinking first and foremost of five essays: *Modern Fiction Phases of Fiction, Mr. Bennett and Mrs Brown, The Russian Point of View, How it Strikes a Contemporary.*

[4] Woolf, V., *How it Strikes a Contemporary,* Common Reader, 1st Series, London, 1925, The Hogarth Press, pp. 296—297.

[5] Ibid., p. 299.

[6] Eliot, T. S.

[7] *A Writer's Diary* — being extracts from the diary of Virginia Woolf. ed.: Leonard Woolf; London, 1959, The Hogarth Press, p. 47. Aug. 16. 1922.

[8] Ibid. pp. 49—50. Sept. 6. 1922.

[9] Woolf, V., *Modern Fiction* Common Reader, 1st Series, London, 1925, The Hogarth Press, p. 118.

[10] *A Writer's Diary,* op. cit. p. 50. In this case Woolf quoted T. S. Eliot's opinion on the significance of Ulysses.

[11] Woolf, V., *The Russian Point of View.* Common Reader, 1st Series, London, 1925, The Hogarth Press, p. 187.

# L'esthétique du Parnasse: l'art et l'artiste dans la conception de Leconte de Lisle

Nous avons pour but d'examiner les changements des notions d'*art*, d'*artiste*, de *poète*, survenus par suite de l'ébranlement de la conception libérale de l'histoire qui avait son pendant esthétique dans la poésie romantique française des années 1830. Il faut tenir compte des éléments que Leconte de Lisle (et le Parnasse avec lui) héritait du romantisme, donc, outre que de la rupture, de la continuité également. D'autant plus

que non seulement le Parnasse gardait quelques aspects de la conception romantique de l'art, de l'artiste, mais aussi il avait ses prédécesseurs à l'âge même des romantiques.

Pour approfondir les idées littéraires de Leconte de Lisle, on commencera par passer en revue les critiques qu'il a formulées sur les poètes contemporains, ainsi que sa préface aux Poèmes antiques. A son idéal poétique, on rapprochera quelques idées répandues de l'époque, et pour éclairer ses méthodes poétiques en œuvre, on définira quelques types de poésies. Finalement, à l'aide d'analyses comparées, on l'affrontera à deux poètes ayant des vues rapprochées des siennes: à Vigny et à Baudelaire.

Notre ébauche aura donc pour base l'œuvre théorique du représentant le plus remarquable du Parnasse et nous nous référerons aux poésies seulement pour justifier nos constatations. Évidemment, lorsque nous examinerons des textes poétiques pour dégager leur apport en théorie, il faudra quand même les analyser comme un *tout poétique* et inclure des remarques poétiques dans leur description. Et nous essayerons de faire quelques constatations sommaires sur l'ensemble de l'œuvre poétique de Leconte de Lisle.

## I.

Si l'on voulait réduire à leur essence les manifestations et les programmes théoriques du romantisme français, la plupart se montreraient en accord sur deux points décisifs: la poésie est une partie intégrante de l'époque, de l'ère ou l'on est situé, et une partie intégrante de la vie, de l'orientation spirituelle d'une collectivité largement conçue.

La Préface de Cromwell déclare son époque celle du drame. Après avoir esquissé un aperçu de dessein philosophique de l'histoire, où chaque époque était mise en corrélation avec un genre, un style littéraire, Victor Hugo trouve que l'ère moderne correspond au drame et viceversa. Pour nous, il suffit de signaler cette conception historique, sans tenir compte des caractéristiques que Hugo attribua au drame, ni de son originalité. *L'actualité* de l'école romantique est soulignée, ainsi que l'*exigence publique, commune* qu'elle satisfait. De même, lorsque l'horizon politique, social s'assombrit, le poète veut exprimer ce doute, ce désespoir. (Chants du crépuscule, Feuilles d'automne). Lamartine, dans les Destinées de la poésie, parle de la vocation sociale de la littérature, et constate les rapports mutuels entre poésie populaire et poésie artistique. Cette dernière a pour fonction d'exprimer les sentiments du peuple, se présenter comme interprète entre le peuple et la nature.[1]

Il va sans dire que c'est le romantisme qui avait éveillé le sens historique, qui a fait valoir la variété et la multiplicité des stades d'évolution de l'humanité ainsi que de ses idéaux. Et l'on verra que cette découverte marquera bel et bien la vision poétique de Leconte de Lisle également.

Or, en passant aux idées chères à Leconte de Lisle, telles qu'il en a fait usage dans ses critiques, des différences capitales se rencontrent. D'abord dans sa conception du rôle de la poésie dans le temps:

« Les seules voix qui chantent ne montent plus de la multitude; elles tombent de hauteurs inaccessibles au vulgaire et viennent se perdre sans écho dans le bruit des locomotives et le hurlement de la Bourse. Désormais l'Art est forcément désintéressé des préoccupations contemporaines; la rupture est définitive entre la foule et lui ».[2] Ces deux phrases peuvent être considérées comme leitmotive qui jalonnent toutes les critiques. Dans la Préface des Poèmes antiques, il s'adresse aux poètes en ces termes: « Vous n'êtes plus écoutés, parce que vous ne reproduisez qu'une somme d'idées désormais insuffisantes; l'époque ne vous entend plus. . .»[3] Les ordres de pensée historiques de la Préface contredisent implicitement la conception de la Préface de Cromwell sur l'histoire

de l'évolution de l'art; Hugo avait relevé un *progrès*, tandis que Leconte de Lisle blâme toute la poésie après Homère, Eschyle et Sophocle parce qu'elle ne pouvait présenter que de grandes individualités dans l'art « sans lien et sans unité ». Là, tout comme dans le remède qu'il propose (dont nous parlerons plus loin) Leconte de Lisle est en pleine opposition avec le romantisme.

Il juge très sévèrement les poètes ayant l'ambition d'être actuels (Béranger). Cette question correspond à l'intention d'*enseigner* la morale actuelle, autre sujet de critique pour Leconte de Lisle. Lorsqu'il admire un poète (Baudelaire), c'est en premier lieu parce qu'il refuse l'actualité.

L'autre point concerne le public et la popularité. Pour Leconte de Lisle, cette dernière est négative: « je l'affirme donc résolument: la marque d'une infériorité intellectuelle caractérisée est d'exciter d'immédiates et unanimes sympathies.»[4] Et: « L'assentiment général va d'instinct aux choses dont le relief ne dépasse pas le niveau commun.»[5] Ces phrases se trouvent dans la critique sur Lamartine. Ce poète est condamné pour la facilité avec laquelle il a satisfait le goût public, avec laquelle il a évolué lui-même. « M. de Lamartine est arrivé à la gloire sans lutte, sans fatigue, par des voies largement ouvertes. . . . Il vint, chanta et fut adoré. » Outre un facteur personnel (Leconte de Lisle avait une jeunesse et une évolution pénible), une autre critique est formulée là envers l'idéal de poète du romantisme: à l'image du poète inspiré, achevé à tout moment, il oppose le poète *laborieux* en *formation continue*, qui prépare consciemment sa création. A l'aversion que Leconte de Lisle éprouve pour la popularité s'assimile une antipathie pour la civilisation *française* plus particulièrement. Ce sentiment a peu de précurseurs en France. Si l'on pense à des exemples, comme celui de Voltaire, la différence semble évidente: l'auteur du siècle des Lumières, en rabaissant la France, en faisant valoir les vertus d'une autre nation (l'Angleterre) avait eu l'intention d'exhorter son pays à les intégrer. Le romantisme est partout patriote. — Leconte de Lisle nie le sens esthétique des Français. Il les définit de cette façon:

« Race d'orateurs éloquents, d'héroïques soldats, de pamphlétaires incisifs, soit; mais rien de plus. . . . Aucun peuple n'est plus esclave des idées reçues, plus amoureux de la routine, plus scandalisé par tout ce qui frappe pour la première fois son entendement. »

Cette verve se retrouve chez deux contemporains de Leconte de Lisle: chez Baudelaire; dans ses Journaux intimes: « Le Français est un animal de basse-cour, si bien domestiqué qu'il n'ose franchir aucune palissade. Voir ses goûts en art et en littérature.

C'est un animal de race latine; l'ordure ne lui déplaît pas dans son domicile, et en littérature, il est scatophage. Il raffolle (*sic*) des excréments. Les littérateurs d'estaminet appellent cela le *sel gaulois*.

*Bel exemple de bassesse française, de la nation qui se prétend indépendante avant toutes les autres.* »[6] Et chez Flaubert. (C'est lui qui créa le Dictionnaire des idées reçues !)

Jusqu'ici, on a parlé des refus de Leconte de Lisle, du côté négatif de son esthétique. Ses idéaux poétiques seront le contrecoup des opinions romantiques.

Il s'agit maintenant de dégager positivement les exigences que les critiques avaient pour base.

D'abord, voici la nouveauté, que Leconte de Lisle a apporté à la conception du statut et de la création du poème: celui-ci abandonnera les thèmes et les milieux contemporains, pour faire revivre tel ou tel moment du passé historique. La méthode sera basée sur une élaboration scientifique.

Cette orientation en soi-même avait été la conquête du romantisme. Nous avons mentionné déjà l'intérêt que le romantisme portait à l'histoire. Au contraire du classicisme, qui cherchait des essences et des caractères stables et éternels dans l'histoire réduite

à quelques époques (antiquité), le romantisme y voyait déjà la variété et la relativité. Pour ne considérer qu'un aspect du problème (qui sera crucial pour Leconte de Lisle aussi), prenons l'exemple de la religion. La variété des cultes avait déjà servi de preuve d'infirmité pour le siècle des Lumières. Après la chute de la Révolution, au début du XIX[e] siècle, cette caractéristique a changé de sens. Constantin Volney, dans les "Ruines" (1791), avait encore parlé de la multiplicité des religions comme d'un « labyrinthe de peines et de folies ». Mais le retour à la piété fut marqué par l'œuvre de Chateaubriand, « Génie du christianisme ». Plus tard, pour Benjamin Constant, les formes variées de la foi constituent la preuve de sa force: « A chaque époque, la forme qui s'établit naturellement est bonne et utile. . . »[7] De même, le livre d'Edgar Quinet, intitulé, « Génie des Religions » considère les variations de la croyance humaine comme « le signe de sa grandeur [de l'homme] ».[8] C'est assez pour signaler un changement dans les esprits, et il est évident que la littérature prit part à ce processus (Hugo, Vigny). Mentionnons que la conception poétique que Leconte de Lisle se fit sur les religions contenait toutes les deux approches contradictoires: la série des poèmes consacrés aux civilisations diverses en montre la grandeur, mais les poèmes prophétiques et synthétiques (Dies Irae, La dernière Vision, Solvet seclum) insistent sur leur impuissance à sauver l'humanité.

Romantisme français et Parnasse se tournent également vers le passé, mais avec cela de différent, que le premier y voit des exemples à suivre dans l'avenir et *pour* l'avenir, et le second trouve là les temps d'harmonie qui sont définitivement passés.

Quant à la méthode poétique de l'évocation du passé, elle sera basée sur des recherches d'ordre scientifique. Selon les paroles célèbres de la Préface: « L'art et la science, longtemps séparés par suite des efforts divergents de l'intelligence, doivent donc tendre à s'unir étroitement, si ce n'est à se confondre. »[9] Le résultat sera une vision poétique où les détails reproduisent fidèlement la réalité historique. Le manque de ce trait, Leconte de Lisle l'a critiqué même chez Victor Hugo, qu'il tenait d'ailleurs pour son maître vénérable. Il ne lui pardonnait pas cependant de « dédaigner la science ». Il trouvait que le grand poète « a caché sous des énormités d'images une parfaite ignorance de la simple réalité des choses et des faits ».[10] Cette terminologie nous amène à remarquer l'influence possible du positivisme sur Leconte de Lisle. L'étude des faits positifs, la science avaient paru dans l'œuvre théorique de Comte, de Renan, comme les moteurs de l'activité intellectuelle de l'époque. Le dernier attendait de la science non seulement la conquête de la nature par l'homme, mais aussi l'union de la subjectivité et de l'objectivité. Il écrivait pathétiquement: «. . . tout le progrès accompli jusqu'ici n'est peut-être que la première page de la préface d'une œuvre infinie ».[11]

A ce point, il faut souligner la différence entre la conception positiviste et les vues de Leconte de Lisle. Renan alliait la science au progrès: progrès social et spirituel à la fois. Pour Leconte de Lisle, la situation est tout autre. Il ne croit à aucun progrès, par conséquent, la science, pour lui, ne sert à rien, tout comme le beau poétique.

L'idée d'associer l'art et la science n'est pas tout à fait neuve.[12] André Chénier voit l'effet des « coutumes, des sciences et des moeurs » dans la littérature antique; il demande la même relation à l'art contemporain.

> . . . Torricelli, Newton, Képler et Galilée,
> Plus doctes, plus heureux dans leurs puissants efforts,
> A tout nouveau Virgile ont ouvert des trésors.
> Tous les arts sont unis: les sciences humaines
> N'ont pu de leur empire étendre les domaines,
> Sans agrandir aussi la carrière des vers . . .
> *(L'Invention)*

Chénier trouve que la science offre des *thèmes* à la poésie. Leconte de Lisle use plutôt

des *méthodes* de la science pour élaborer le poème.[13] Dans ce sens, il n'a peut-être pas de précédent dans la poésie française. Il est à remarquer que son contemporain, Baudelaire (dont le nom se répète à juste titre lorsqu'on parle de Leconte de Lisle) saluait la même méthode dans ses études sur la poétique d'Edgar Allan Poe.

Il est caractéristique que Leconte de Lisle nomme ses poèmes *études*. La Préface des Poèmes antiques commence ainsi: « Ce livre est un recueil d'études, un retour réfléchi à des formes négligées ou peu connues. Les émotions personnelles n'y ont laissé que peu de traces; les passions et les faits contemporains n'y apparaissent point.»[14]

Le retour à la science et l'emploi de thèmes historiques vont de pair. La qualité propre aux poésies ne sera pas *l'observation* dans le temps présent mais *la résurrection* d'époques disparues.

L'intérêt porté à l'histoire — on l'a dit — est de nouveau un trait commun au romantisme et au Parnasse. En quoi consiste la différence entre les méthodes? Victor Hugo, Vigny et les autres romantiques cherchaient avant tout à donner une *vision:* la personnalité du poète dominait la matière historique, ils employaient les éléments historiques pour *évoquer;* tandis que Leconte de Lisle veut *décrire*, en multipliant les mots archaïques, etc. Pour corriger notre remarque préalable, il essaie d'introduire *l'observation* là ou l'évocation avait eu le terrain. Et cette formulation le rapproche soudain de quelques contemporains, surtout du Flaubert de Salammbô.

Encore des différences subsistent — elles. Pour les mettre en lumière, il nous faut citer le passage de la critique sur Vigny, où Leconte de Lisle parle, à propos de « Moïse », des possibilités de la poésie historique:

« C'est (Moïse), une étude de l'âme, dans une situation donnée, il faut l'avouer, plutôt qu'une page vraie, intuitivement reconstruite, de l'époque légendaire à laquelle appartient la figure de Moïse; mais nous sommes encore, sur ce point, en présence de deux théories esthétiques opposées, entre lesquelles, pour cause personnelle, il ne m'appartient pas de décider ici. L'une veut que le poète n'emprunte à l'histoire ou à la légende que des cadres plus intéressants en eux-mêmes, ou il développera les passions et les espérances de son temps. C'est ce que fait Victor Hugo dans la "Légende des siècles." L'autre, au contraire, exige que le créateur se transporte tout entier à l'époque choisie et y revive exclusivement. »[15]

Il serait difficile de définir plus exactement le point où Leconte de Lisle s'éloigne de la méthode des romantiques, et, moins nettement, de Flaubert aussi; puisque Flaubert avait l'intention d'appliquer les procédés du roman moderne à l'antiquité[16] et quelques-uns de ses caractères (Salammbô, Matho) ont des qualités, des angoisses, etc. toutes modernes, ce qui est en rapport avec la « modernisation de la vie psychique » dans l'évolution du roman historique.[17]

Ajoutons que cette opposition a double face. Nous avons parlé de l'emploi des thèmes historiques pour l'expression d'un contenu moderne. En même temps, le poème historique peut servir à encadrer des idées, des états psychologiques censés être toujours actuels: c'est le cas de maintes pièces de la "Légende des siècles" et des poésies de Vigny. Ce dernier dit expressément qu'il composa des poésies « où une pensée philosophique est mise en scène sous une forme épique ».[18] Ce procédé semble un héritier de la littérature des exemples moralisatrice. L'époque des Lumières l'avait cultivée aussi: mais là, on ne voit pas grande différence entre la tradition et Leconte de Lisle: lui aussi incarne ses idées et ses idéaux dans la plupart de ses poèmes. La différence se présente dans l'expression; chez Vigny la forme est éminemment lyrique, dans ce sens que le moi lyrique s'identifie avec le personnage qui porte la valeur principale du poème, et qui s'exprime en monologue (Moïse, La colère de Samson, Le Mont des Oliviers, etc.). En principe, la poésie parnassienne ne voudrait même pas choisir entre les qualités morales, au nom de

l'impassibilité, et pour éviter toute apparance d'enseignement de didactisme. Pourtant, Leconte de Lisle ne s'était pas éloigné tant de la tradition romantique qu'il ne le croyait. Outre que dans quelques—uns de ses poèmes le monologue, l'invocation lyrique garde son rôle (Qain!), les scènes qu'il évoque, les passages narratifs, le langage, etc. laissent toujours percer le point de vue, les sympathies, les antipathies, etc. du poète. C'est pour cela que certains tiennent Hérédia pour un représentant plus caractéristique du Parnasse.

Pour achever ce chapitre, essayons de saisir le poète—idéal de Leconte de Lisle. Il l'a caractérisé en ces termes, au début de ses critiques: « Je demanderai avant tout à chacun d'eux ses titres d'artiste, certain de rencontrer un penseur et une haute nature morale, mais non comme l'entend la plèbe intellectuelle, là où j'admirerai la puissance, la passion, la grâce, la fantaisie, le sentiment de la nature et la compréhension métaphysique et historique, le tout réalisé par une facture parfaite, sans laquelle il n'y a rien ».[19] Ce passage, dont cependant l'originalité et la netteté esthétique peuvent être mises en question, révèle bien l'époque où vit Leconte de Lisle: le poète n'est plus ce tout, cette unité indivisible et logiquement insaisissable qu'il était pour le romantisme, il est maintenant une composition de qualités, de facultés analytiquement discernables; ce point de vue est très proche de la théorie de Taine.[20]

## II.

« Le Beau n'est pas le serviteur du Vrai ». « La vertu d'une grand artiste, c'est son génie. . . . . Il voit du premier coup d'œil plus loin, plus haut, plus profondément que tous, parce qu'il contemple l'idéal à travers la beauté visible ».[21] Ces affirmations relèvent déjà de l'esthétique proprement dite. Dans ce chapitre, nous essayerons de synthétiser les vues esthétiques de Leconte de Lisle, en établissant quelques analogies évidentes.

En effet, le principe de l'art pour l'art — dont il s'agit ici — peut se réclamer du romantisme à juste titre. C'est ce dernier qui a proclamé l'indépendance de l'art, qui a annihilé les vestiges des temps où l'art avait servi d'autres formes d'objectivation de l'esprit, où l'art était *secondaire*. L'esthétique de Kant et de Hegel avait fortement marqué le romantisme: ils élaboraient un système où l'art avait une place à part, satisfaisant à des besoins humains où nulle autre manifestation intellectuelle ne peut le remplacer.

Kant séparait le Beau artistique de tout intérêt pratique et de la généralité objective des concepts philosophiques à la fois; Hegel aussi, bien qu'il mît l'art à un niveau inférieur à la pensée abstraite; c'est lui qui développait l'évolution *historique* de l'art.

Ces idées furent adoptées par les théoriciens français également. Le romantisme français était plus actif au champ des actions sociales que le romantisme allemand; aussi n'était-ce pas le côté mystique qui le dominait (comme p.e. celui de Novalis), et il ne lui était pas si important de séparer le Beau de l'action. Mais nous allons examiner l'ordre de pensée de Victor Cousin, philosophe et esthéticien alors très célèbre, qui avait une influence considérable sur le romantisme et sur l'art pour l'art à la fois.

Il établit trois idées absolues, irréductibles à rien d'autre, sinon à Dieu: le Vrai, le Beau et le Bien. Après avoir refusé les thèses voulant se baser uniquement sur l'expérience, ou bien uniquement sur l'idéal, il définit le Beau comme « un glorieux intermédiaire entre Dieu, la nature et l'homme »,[22] car et la nature et l'idéal sont imparfaits en eux-mêmes. Il sépare du beau l'agréable qui dépend de la sensation individuelle, tandis que « le beau éveille le jugement de tout le monde ». Il est intéressant que, pour lui, « l'unité, la proportion, la simplicité, la régularité, la grandeur, la généralité apparaissent plus ou moins dans les objets que nous jugeons beaux, et les caractères de l'agréable

sont la variété, le mouvement, la souplesse, l'énergie, l'individualité. »[23] Une conception *statique* du Beau apparaît ici, très caractéristique de la poésie parnassienne comme nous verrons.

L'élément le plus précieux de sa pensée réside dans la solution dialectique du problème suivant: par où commence l'artiste? par le beau concret, particulier, qu'il ramènera au beau idéal, où par ce dernier dont il déduira le premier? Cousin constate: « Mon opinion est que nous commençons à la fois par l'individuel et par l'absolu. »[24] Le beau idéal absolu se dégage d'une abstraction *immédiate* qui n'a pas besoin de la comparaison entre divers objets concrets.

Le beau idéal, cependant, ne peut pas être saisi, il recule constamment. « Toute œuvre de l'art n'est donc qu'une approximation: le dernier terme de l'idéal est dans l'infini ou en Dieu ».[25]

Conformément à ces arguments, l'art devra satisfaire à la sensation et à la raison en même temps; reproduire la substance et le phénomène, l'unité et la variété. — Il ne reste que définir la situation de l'art. Les phrases qui suivent, appartiennent au fonds commun de l'esthétique romantique et après-romantique: «. . . le sentiment du beau est entièrement désintéressé. . . Le sentiment du beau n'est pas un besoin; il ne nous demande rien au dehors; il est satisfait par cela seul qu'il existe. »[26] L'art ne tend pas donc à la possession matérielle. La théorie suivante que Cousin tâche de réfuter, est singulierèment — celle qui « confond le beau avec le pathétique, et ramène le sentiment du beau à la pitié et à la terreur ».[27] Il est évident que c'est la théorie du « catharsis » d'Aristote, ce dont l'art est séparé. Remarquons que toute cette conception de beauté absolue, abstraite, que Leconte de Lisle adoptera aussi, a pour base la pensée de Platon et moins celle d'Aristote. Le troisième système nié est celui qui « veut ramener le beau à l'utile ». Inutile de détailler: depuis Théophile Gautier jusqu'à Baudelaire et Flaubert, cette distinction sera fondamentale. Après la négation du principe de l'*imitation* (encore un mot d'Aristote), Cousin conclut ainsi: « l'art n'est pas un instrument, il est sa propre fin à lui-même. Et ne croyez pas que je le rabaisse, quand je dis qu'il ne doit pas servir la religion et la morale, je l'élève, au contraire, à la hauteur de la morale et de la religion ».[28]

Nous avons cité ce penseur peu original, mais très conséquent pour démontrer les idées esthétiques répandues en France à l'époque du romantisme et plus tard. L'art pour l'art n'en diffère que par des accents.

Constatons qu'une esthétique idéaliste régnait à l'époque, postulant l'existence d'idées pures et abstraites, auxquelles l'art donne la possibilité d'apparaître dans la matière. Cette formule de Leconte de Lisle: « L'artiste. . . contemple l'idéal à travers la beauté visible » correspond à la définition donnée par Hegel de l'objet esthétique: celui-ci est « l'aspect sensoriel de l'idée ».

L'artiste, cependant, comme nous l'avons vu, dans la conception de Leconte de Lisle doit unir en lui le génie créateur et le savant austère.[29] C'est l'autre côté de l'idée que l'époque se fit sur l'artiste. Celui-ci est non seulement à la recherche du beau divin, transcendant, mais aussi à la recherche de pensées, de vérités scientifiquement exactes et abstraites. Renan, dans un passage à la fois lyrique et logique, développe l'idée de l'unité première et fondamentale de l'intelligence, qui se divise en trois domaines: la morale, la poésie, la science. Le saint sera pour Renan celui qui sentira en lui ces facultés réunies et approchera ainsi de l'infini.[30]

Sur ce point, Renan n'est pas encore un positiviste conséquent: ce dernier s'abstiendrait déjà des recherches métaphysiques. Les poètes romantiques, eux aussi, avaient cet idéal de l'homme *créateur universel:* Hugo le caractérise en ces termes: « ce poète, ce philosophe, cet esprit, ce serait, disons-le ici, la grande épopée mystérieuse dont nous

avons tous chacun un chant en nous-mêmes, dont Milton a écrit le prologue et Byron l'épilogue: le Poème de l'Homme.

Cette vie imposante de l'artiste civilisateur. . .» etc. etc.[31]

Et citons la conclusion de "la Bouteille à la mer" de Vigny, dont on parlera encore:

> Souvenir éternel ! gloire à la découverte
> Dans l'homme où la nature, égaux en profondeur,
> Dans le juste et le bien, source à peine entr'ouverte,
> Dans l'art inépuisable, abîme de splendeur ! . . .

Les points de rencontre sont aussi évidents que les différences. Leconte de Lisle proclame également l'unité de l'intelligence, mais, lui, s'isole de toute conséquence qui pourrait servir le progrès. Il tenait les artistes pour l'avant-garde de l'humanité, tout comme les romantiques: mais il ne juge plus la foule, la communauté ni digne de leur prophétie, ni capable de s'en servir. C'est pourquoi nous pouvons constater une fois de plus que c'est la vision romantique du prophète conduisant au progrès de l'artiste, avec lequel Leconte de Lisle rompt radicalement. Chez lui, le prophète ne pourra plus que prédire la fin de l'humanité entière. En somme, rien n'est plus loin de lui que cet idéal de « l'artiste civilisateur » formulé par Hugo; et, pour nous permettre un jeu de fantaisie, si la chose dépendait de Leconte de Lisle, la bouteille n'aborderait jamais pour secourir et protéger l'humanité.

## III.

L'esquisse qui suit est consacrée à la poésie de Leconte de Lisle. — Bien que nous nous occupions de ses théories, il serait absurde de s'abstenir de tout jugement sur sa poésie; d'autant plus que celle-ci n'attire plus guère l'intérêt des chercheurs poétiques, sans parler de l'indifférence du public.

Pourtant, cette œuvre reste remarquable. Elle a un double intérêt, risquons l'affirmation: un double mérite.

Le premier est son unité exceptionnelle. Quoique tel ou tel recueil ait une thématique caractéristique, la voix est toujours la même; ce qui provient de la netteté de la conception philosophique. En outre, Leconte de Lisle est de ceux qui connaissent bien leurs capacités: il est rare qu'il entreprenne une poésie qu'il ne pourra pas maintenir au même niveau. Malgré quelques morceaux d'un ton plus facile, son style reste toujours élevé; et de plus, grandiose: il aime les figures rhétoriques, surtout la gradation ascendante. Il lui manque totalement le goût du grotesque, si pénétrant chez Baudelaire; il ne peut pas retenir sa colère à la vue des petitesses, et la colère lui confère toujours un ton pathétique. Par cela, il est un poète parmi les plus personnels de la littérature: ses descriptions les plus objectives sont pénétrées du *jugement* du poète.

Là encore, une question se pose. Étant donné l'orientation *objective*, anti-individuelle de la poésie du XX$^{e}$ siècle, comment expliquer son influence négligeable aux poètes modernes? C'est que — à notre avis il n'apporta pas de nouveautés dans la création poétique. Les poètes modernes transforment l'univers objectif pour y faire apparaître les sentiments du moi: Leconte de Lisle reste attaché à la pratique poétique traditionnelle: il y a un observateur, un narrateur *à part* qui décrit l'aspect extérieur des choses. Il ne procède pas à l'interférence de ces sphères; il pense en classifications systématiques de la nature et de l'homme. Il ne découvre pas les possibilités *lyriques* de relations, de « correspondances » nouvelles.

L'autre trait caractéristique de cette œuvre est la mise en question des valeurs traditionnelles de la civilisation européenne. C'est au début du XIX$^{e}$ siècle que l'intérêt

porté à l'Orient se dégage du pur exotisme pour intégrer *les modes de pensée* de l'Asie. (Le bouddhisme.) Leconte de Lisle est loin du système des valeurs européen, tout en étant un artiste très « occidental ». Nous avons dit maintes fois qu'il ne croit pas au progrès: dans ce contexte, un nouvel aspect de la question se montre: sa pensée nie le progrès européen et s'approche de la conception plutôt orientale du cycle de tout phénomène, de la perte et de la renaissance des mondes, etc. — Nous avons appelé « mérite » ce facteur de sa poésie. En quoi consiste-t-il? Est-ce que c'est un mérite que de prêcher la disparition du monde, du genre humain?

Dans le domaine poétique, oui. Car Leconte de Lisle a le don de l'extrême sincérité parfois implacable. Cette sincérité n'est plus celle de Lamartine, révélant l'âme individuelle; c'est celle du *juge* qui stigmatise et qui ose mettre en lumière des côtés de tout vivant qui avaient été masqués par des principes religieux et des idylles de la nature non corrompue. Leconte de Lisle dit à haute voix, au titre d'une poésie: Sacra fames! Sainte famine! Le requin hideux guettant sa proie dans les ondes devient un symbole de la vie, de tout vivant: le besoin irrésistible de la faim qui tue les autres vivants se dévoile. C'est aussi le temps de Darwin, mettant en lumière la lutte des espèces pour la vie, Struggle for life. Leconte de Lisle hésite toujours entre l'acceptation et le dégoût: il y a, sans aucun doute, des passages où il est inhumain, où il tend à glorifier ce côté tragique de la vie: il oublie la responsabilité de toute poésie, et fait un mythe de la férocité. Mais son horreur est présente presque toujours, et c'est justement pour cela qu'il termine ses recueils par un « Dies Irae » ou par un « Solvet seclum » où le moi lyrique « punit » les crimes de l'existence.

Un aspect de son éloignement du point de vue moral du poète se montre dans ses poèmes décrivant des animaux. Personne avant lui n'avait saisi en poésie la vie instinctive, vitale, « *inhumaine* » des animaux, avec leur perfection inconsciente; jusqu'alors l'animal était ou bien symbole, ou bien décor, une curiosité en somme; c'est Blake (Tiger), qui renouvela ce thème, mais encore pour représenter la métaphysique de la nature. Chez Leconte de Lisle, les bêtes ne sont pas pour représenter quelque chose: elles sont décrites pour elles-mêmes, vues de l'extérieur, mais *inexpliquées* et *inexplicables*.

La présence de la nature nous amène à la division de la poésie de Leconte de Lisle. Il y a avant tout les poèmes de caractère épique; ensuite les pièces plutôt lyriques. Ces dernières sont en général *statiques:* elles renferment une description d'un état des choses, où bien un état de l'avenir (surtout la fin du monde). Le point de vue de la relation du poète face au monde exprimé ne change pas. Ces visions lyriques sont dites avec les méthodes des poèmes épiques: donc, l'homogénéité de l'Œuvre reste intacte, le sujet seul fait décider du type de telle où telle poèsie. Ce caractère *statique* du moi lyrique et le maniement *épique* de sa matière font que la poésie de Leconte de Lisle se construit éminemment de *détails*, et le procédé stylistique fondamental sera l'*énumération*. Ces traits caractéristiques de sa poésie concourent également à l'isoler du développement ultérieur de la poésie qui tant par le symbolisme que par les courants d'avant-garde tend à *concentrer*, réduire à l'essentiel le langage poétique.

Leconte de Lisle use d'une rhétorique tout à fait classique, dont on verra quelques exemples. Ses métaphores ne rompent pas avec les images traditionnelles de la culture européenne. Pour cela d'ailleurs, il n'est pas encore tout étranger au romantisme. Le paradoxe de la littérature française consiste dans le fait que l'avènement du romantisme causa une grande secousse, cependant le langage poétique gardait beaucoup de la tradition classique (Le langage du romantisme anglais est plus libre, plus hardi).

Au cours de cette esquisse, nous nous proposons d'étudier un seul type de poésie, le plus dénué de sujet épique, celui que nous nommons *poèmes prophétiques niant toute valeur humaine*. Ce sont les poèmes d'apocalypse de Leconte de Lisle. Ces pièces générale-

ment servent de conclusion aux recueils. C'est avant tout par ces poèmes qu'on peut saisir les points de rencontre et les ruptures entre le romantisme et Leconte de Lisle.

Il s'agit de trois pièces: Dies Irae, La dernière vision, Solvet seclum. La première passe en revue les moments de déception de l'histoire spirituelle de l'homme: les deux autres se passent de ces éléments concrets de l'histoire. « Dies Irae », malgré l'évocation du titre, est un poème de ton *élégiaque*. Il est caractéristique que la la personne du pluriel y peut figurer: les deux autres poèmes l'omettent déjà. « Dies Irae » commence par une personnification de l'esprit humain.

courbé sous le fardeau des ans multipliés

et faisant son chemin rude. C'est à la fin du poème que la narration devient confession:

La route infructueuse a blessé nos pieds nus

La perspective fatale de l'humanité est atténuée par la forme de la *prière résignée collective :*

Et toi, divine Mort, où tout rentre et s'efface,
Accueille tes enfants dans ton sein étoilé;
Affranchis-nous du temps, du nombre et de l'espace,
Et rends-nous le repos que la vie a troublé !

La pensée bouddhique s'exprime par l'équilibre d'une langue poétique classique. L'enchaînement des strophes, la lenteur de la marche du poème, les images, les comparaisons explicites et les épithètes évoquant la tradition excluent le rôle de prophète du poète, qui cache son individualité derrière la désillusion humaine.

Tout autre est déjà la "Dernière Vision". (Nous parlons de chronologie à juste titre: Dies Irae paraît dans les Poèmes antiques, en 1853, les deux autres dans les Poèmes barbares, en 1862.) Le chanteur du poème ne s'assimile plus aux autres: c'est une voix prophétique à présent: il adresse la parole aux autres, à l'amour, au soleil, mais il reste à part, constatant et prédisant la chute et la perte de tout sur la Terre. La composition ne laisse plus le champ libre à la *narration* des étapes historiques; le poème se base sur la *vision* exprimée dans le titre. Si "Dies Irae" commence par une personnification explicite, la Dernière vision s'ouvre sur une image synesthétique, avec une distance sémantique énorme entre sujet et prédicat:

Un long silence pend de l'immobile nue

Le temps est au présent, mais c'est le présent de l'Apocalypse, c'est-à-dire un état futur: le texte décrit le processus de la destruction comme si cela s'était déroulé, donc au passé: et le futur n'apparaît qu'aux deux dernières strophes pour prédire une catastrophe cosmique:

Et d'heure en heure aussi, vous vous engloutirez,
O tourbillonnements d'étoiles éperdues,
Dans l'incommensurable effroi des étendues,
Dans les gouffres muets et noirs des cieux sacrés !

Et ce sera la Nuit aveugle, la grande Ombre
Informe, dans son vide et sa stérilité,
L'abîme pacifique où gît la vanité
De ce qui fut le temps et l'espace et le nombre.

Le ton n'est pas catastrophique. Ou plus précisément des contrastes subsistent: « l'incommensurable effroi » « l'abîme pacifique ». Tout ce qui est en relation avec la perte de la Terre et des étoiles évoque une expression de l'horreur; tout ce qui se rapporte au fait accompli, au néant, à l'« après », s'exprime par l'acceptation du poète.

Il apparaît ici la même énumération des concepts premiers de l'entendement humain (temps, espace, nombre) qui figurait déjà à la fin de "Dies Irae". Là, leur disparition était *désirée* par *tous*, ici elle est *prononcée* seulement par une voix.

Ce poème montre des parties distinctes (I—V. strophes; description détaillée de la fin de la vie — VI.: invocation des qualités humaines. — VII.: retour à la description — VIII—IX.: introduction à la conclusion, invocation au Soleil, ton passionné; — X—XI.: constatation rassurée de la fin universelle), et ses parties s'enchaînent par l'intermédiaire de résumés, de récapitulations emphatiques (« . . . Les temps sont accomplis: les choses se sont tues. . . Tout ! Tout a disparu. . . » et les dernières strophes). Ce procédé s'accorde à une structure poétique plutôt classique.

*Solvet seclum* est le plus court des trois poèmes. Son titre évoque du nouveau le Dies Irae du Moyen-Age. Mais, à présent, le ton, la passion du poème est digne du titre. Par surprise, le poème *commence* par le résumé:

Tu te tairas, ô voix sinistre des vivants !

Ensuite viennent les détails de cette constatation, d'abord par l'énumeration, cette fois haletante des phénomènes humains mis partout en opposition. Le discours poétique déborde de ses cadres (le poème commence par nommer des sensations auditives) et passe aux émotions les plus variées, pour arriver bientôt à un résumé nouveau:

Esprit et chair de l'homme, un jour vous vous tairez !

L'unité suivante commence par une répétition:

. . . vous vous tairez !
Tout se taira . . . etc.

C'eat un effet d'*écho* qui suggère que le jugement et la prophétie du poète peut apparaître à tout moment, qu'ils sont présents du début à la fin. C'est un premier facteur de l'unité exceptionnelle du poème. Mais nous en sommes à la seconde partie de notre division celle qui aboutira au résumé suivant:

D'un seul coup la nature interrompra ses bruits.

Ce qui nous surprend dans ces vers, c'est d'abord le manque total des références à la tradition culturelle, si fréquentes chez Leconte de Lisle, et deuxièmement, l'emploi des mots et des images comme *signes*, comme symboles, ne supportant aucune explication, déterminés seulement par les antithèses:

Tout ce qui tremble et fuit, tout ce qui tue et mange
L'accumulation des termes désignant les milieux et les mouvements,
(Les bêtes des forêts, des monts et de la mer,
Ce qui vole et bondit et rampe en cet enfer)

opposée au manque des nominations spécifiques, évoque une variété *vaine, absurde* des manifestations vitales, renforcée par la précision de ce jugement: « en cet enfer ». — Cette unité se termine par une image grandiose, évoquant la dimension verticale pour la première fois:

Depuis le ver de terre écrasé dans la fange
Jusqu'à la foudre errant dans l'épaisseur des nuits !

N'hésitons pas à dire: c'est une image romantique avec ses distances et ses contrastes extrêmes.

La troisième unité va jusqu'à la fin du poème, sans résumé, sans arrêt; elle commence par cette description négative si chère aux romantiques (voir le début de la Tristesse d'Olympio) et que Leconte de Lisle, lui aussi, emploie fréquemment:

Et ce ne sera point . . . etc.

Et se présente l'unique référence à la tradition culturelle, au cours de ce poème, l'image biblique du paradis (de plus, au pluriel: des paradis antiques) et les figures d'Adam et d'Eve. Ils apparaissent pour être niés. La tradition culturelle donc n'entre pas en ce poème pour représenter ce qui *s'est passé* (comme en général chez Leconte de Lisle), mais pour marquer ce qui *ne sera plus*. Évidemment, le défaut des noms propres, des événements connus de l'histoire, en un mot: l'autonomie du poème sont à nouveau un facteur de l'unité (les références ne peuvent pas se séparer). Et la prophétie affirmative (Ce sera quand. . .), avec une gradation, et une image visionnaire de la décomposition de la Terre renforce le caractère romantique du poème. L'évocation de la perte finale devient ici la partie essentielle du poème, et, au contraire des deux autres pièces qui se contentent plus ou moins de notions abstraites et d'états statiques, implique une série d'actions violentes et sensorielles.

Le poète n'appartient plus à une communanté, il ne parle pas au nom de quiconque, il ne s'adresse plus ni à la nature, ni à certaines facultés humaines, mais uniquement à l'humanité considérée globalement. Le rôle est celui du prophète, rôle romantique, mais avec une transformation évidente: ce prophète ne fait plus que condamner, que prononcer un jugement, et ne veut pas mener vers une perspective. Plus exactement, il prédit l'avenir du cosmos sans l'homme.

"Solvet seclum" ne parle même pas de valeurs humaines. Il y a partout l'opposition, et il n'y a plus de principes unissant l'humanité. Le ton est celui de la passion lyrique qui se passe déjà de tout détail épique pour laisser la place à des détails saisis en images, en visions, c'est-à-dire d'une manière lyrique.

Par cela qu'il met en scène une opposition totale du monde et du moi lyrique, que celui-ci développera et résoudra par les lois de sa passion, "Solvet seclum" est un *poème romantique*, qui diffère des idées du romantisme français.

## IV.

Ce dernier chapitre unira les deux domaines que nous avons traités: les théories sur l'artiste et les pièces poétiques. Nous essayons de confronter les idéaux de Leconte de Lisle d'une part, et ceux de Vigny et de Baudelaire de l'autre, manifestés dans leurs poèmes consacrés à l'art, à l'artiste.

Notre méthode est telle que nous approchons du problème central de plusieurs points de vue, nous tâchons de le circonscrire par cercles dont certaines sections coïncident, donc il faut répéter et renforcer nos affirmations.

Le personnage de l'artiste s'introduit dans des poèmes de caractère *épique* et *allégorique* depuis le "Mazeppa" de Hugo et le "Moïse" de Vigny jusqu'à "l'Albatros" de Baudelaire. C'est une tradition romantique.

Mazeppa et Moïse (écrits aux années 20) sont l'allégorie d'un idéal d'artiste qui se distingue des autres, qui a un univers souverain et qui est, par conséquent, solitaire. C'est la solitude du médiateur entre la Divinité et l'Humanité. Du côté plutôt sociologique, c'est l'époque des Chatterton, ainsi que Vigny décrit leur conditions dans sa Préface au drame: pauvreté, mépris de la foule et du monde de « la Bourse » au lieu d'estime, au lieu de distinction.

Le point de vue change avec un poème comme la Bouteille à la mer (1854). Cette allégorie tend à négliger la subjectivité, la personnalité individuelle de l'artiste, c'est l'œuvre, le message qui devient important, et, de plus, comme nous l'avons vu, le héros n'est plus l'artiste seul, mais aussi le savant, en somme l'homme *à la recherche de découvertes de tout ordre*. La mesure de la qualité de l'œuvre sera le *profit pratique* que l'humanité peut en tirer. (Ce n'est pas par hasard qu'il s'agit d'une découverte géographique permettant d'éviter un lieu dangereux de la mer.) Les temps sont changés.

Pour Leconte de Lisle et pour Baudelaire également, le problème central sera de savoir comment les œuvres peuvent-elles naître dans un milieu corrompant les artistes eux-mêmes? Leconte de Lisle évoque un artiste heureux, Valmiki, le poète de Ramayana, qui vit parmi les essences divines; il le peint de l'intérieur d'une tradition autre que la civilisation européenne: et même la mort de Valmiki, mangé par les fourmis, appartient à l'ordre des choses, et permet à l'individualité de se fondre dans l'absolu. Le poème a un style classique, plein des figures rhétoriques de la symétrie, comme la chiasme, l'antithèse.

Mais le poète contemporain n'est plus entouré de ce milieu favorable. Les sonnets qu'il a écrits sur ce thème, sont ou bien une violente diatribe contre le commun des artistes (Les Montreurs), ou bien une affirmation résignée qu'il vaut mieux d'être mort que de vivre dans l'imperfection (A un poète mort).

Leconte de Lisle n'exprime pas la lutte interne de l'artiste, la lutte avec sa propre création, telle qu'elle apparaît dans la Mort des Artistes de Baudelaire, et telle qu'elle restera le souci crucial pour un Mallarmé également. Le rôle, la situation parle: les artistes corrompus s'identifient aux montreurs se produisant devant la foule, et le moi s'écarte chez Leconte de Lisle nettement;

> Dans mon orgueil muet, dans ma tombe sans gloire,
> Dussé-je m'engloutir pour l'éternité noire,
> Je ne te vendrai pas mon ivresse ou mon mal,
>
> Je ne livrerai pas ma vie à tes huées,
> Je ne danserai pas sur ton tréteau banal
> Avec tes histrions et tes prostituées.

Chez Baudelaire, les artistes, auxquels appartient le moi lyrique également, vont à l'assaut de la création, leurs œuvres.

Le commencement ressemble bien encore aux Montreurs:

> Combien faut-il de fois secouer mes grelots
> Et baiser ton front bas, morne caricature?

On croirait que l'opposition est entre l'artiste et les autres. Mais la suite démontre qu'à la « caricature », répond « la grande Créature », comme deux pôles extrêmes de la réalisation du Beau. Les tercets apportent un changement: le discours passe à la troisième personne:

> Il en est qui jamais n'ont connu leur Idole, . . .

et s'ouvre à la perspective de la Mort qui fait songer à la conclusion du "Voyage".

Pour mettre en évidence la rhétorique, l'emploi de métaphores beaucoup plus moderne de Baudelaire, citons le début des deux poésies:
Leconte de Lisle:

Tel qu'un morne animal, meurtri, plein de poussière
La chaîne au cou, hurlant au chaud soleil d'été,
Promène qui voudra son cœur ensanglanté
Sur ton pavé cynique, o plèbe carnassière !

*

Baudelaire:

Combien faut-il de fois secouer mes grelots
Et baiser ton front bas, morne caricature,
Pour piquer dans le but, de mystique nature,
Combien, o mon carquois, perdre de javelots ?

Outre que Leconte de Lisle explique la comparaison et Baudelaire la laisse implicite, le premier y introduit des éléments secondaires, tandis que le dernier n'emploie des éléments qu'en fonction du sens symbolique.

Les différences découlent de leur conception esthétique et psychologique à la fois. Leconte de Lisle sépare le Beau, la création artistique de la réalité corruptive et par cela, suppose que l'idéal reste pur dans l'homme. Baudelaire lutte avec les extrémités qui vivent en lui-même; Leconte de Lisle n'éprouve pas de contradictions internes, Baudelaire en est travaillé sans cesse; la poésie de Leconte de Lisle sera au fond *statique* et *métaphysique*, celle de Baudelaire sera *dynamique* et *dialectique*.

Notre but a été de mettre en lumière la place de l'esthétique de Leconte de Lisle. Nous avons trouvé qu'elle est en opposition avec le romantisme dans le jugement porté sur l'actualité et sur l'influence publique de l'art. Cependant, le fond de son esthétique, comme celui de l'art pour l'art aussi, l'isolation du Beau avait été la conquête du romantisme. La même contradiction caractérise sa poésie. Il remonte au style classique, il tend à l'impassibilité, il prend des sujets épiques. Mais les poèmes les plus réussis sont les marques d'une forte personnalité et profitent des moyens de la langue romantique.

Il est une figure isolée, sans influence remarquable, à cause de son manque de concision, de ses méthodes épiques et de son éloignement du symbolisme naissant. Mais il a des pièces vigoureuses et quelquefois des visions apocalyptiques qu'un désespoir d'une verve satirique rend absurdes, et qui nous semblent particulièrement modernes.

Et il est essentiel que Leconte de Lisle comprit un problème crucial de l'art moderne: le manque de tradition, de continuité collective et la situation précaire et dangereuse de l'artiste au sein d'une société qui recherche les banalités conformes aux lois des rapports de marchandises.

*László Bárdos*

## NOTES

[1] Certes, il serait faux de dire que cette harmonie profonde des exigences et de l'œuvre se révèle sans problèmes; puisque c'est justement le romantisme qui a marqué l'individualité essentielle du poète. Au reste, nous ne parlons que du romantisme français: p.e. les poètes romantiques de l'Allemagne montreraient des traits différents. Il suffit de constater ici que le romantisme français (surtout à son âge florissant, jusqu'à la révolution de 1848), se sent assuré dans son rôle, de médiateur entre la transcendance et l'humanité.

[2] *Les Poètes contemporains*. I. Béranger. (*Œuvres de Leconte de Lisle, Derniers poèmes*. Édition: Alphonse Lemerre, pp. 244—245.)

[3] *Préface des Poèmes antiques*. Ibid., p. 218.

[4] *Les Poètes*. . . Ibid., p. 252.

[5] Ibid., p. 253.

[6] Baudelaire, *Mon cœur mis à nu*. Édition de la Pléiade 1292, p. XXXIV.

[7] B. Constant: De la religion considérée dans sa source, ses formes et son développement. Cité de: Estève; E., *Leconte de Lisle. L'homme et l'œuvre*. p. 78.

[8] Ibid, p. 79.

[9] *Préface des Poèmes antiques*. Ibid., p. 222.

[10] Cf. sa lettre à Hérédia de 1883. cité de: Ibrovac, M., *J.-M. de Hérédia*. p. 220.

[11] Renan, E., *L'avenir de la science*. Édition: Calmann—Lévy, p. 37.

[12] Là, nous ne parlons pas de l'idéal classique de la soumission aux *règles poétiques* que Leconte de Lisle renouvela d'ailleurs.

[13] Au surplus, nous trouvons qu'il est temps de remarquer que le sujet de notre étude est un *poète*, non pas un spécialiste d'esthétique. Là encore, il ne faut pas s'imaginer que l'opinion de Leconte de Lisle sur le rapprochement entre science et art a été son unique et suprême principe. Il peut s'agir ici d'une forme de recherche de l'objectivité, c'est-à-dire, une fois de plus, du dépassement du subjectivisme romantique. — Et là, qu'il nous soit permis de caractériser un peu la personnalité de Leconte de Lisle. Il n'avait pas la générosité de Victor Hugo; il se fermait dans des aspirations poétiques étrangères. Et, d'autre part, il était moins poussé au désespoir, beaucoup moins tenaillé par des contradictions internes que Baudelaire. De là une fermeté quelque peu bornée dans ses jugements (non qu'il ne pût admirer des poètes), et un orgueil foncier-qu'il avoue avec un tour élégant:

« Je sais admirer, et, si peu que je sois, j'ai trop d'orgueil pour être injuste ». (*Les Poètes* . . . Avant-propos.)

Et n'oublions pas que c'est un homme déçu, désillusionné, qui, jeune, avait eu Fourier pour idéal et des principes démocratiques. Sa colère contre la foule puise son énergie dans le *désaveu personnel* de ses anciennes idées.

[14] Ibid., p. 215.

[15] *Les Poètes contemporains*. Ibid., p. 267.

[16] Cf. sa lettre à Sainte-Beuve du 23—24 décembre 1862.

[17] Cf. Lukács Gy., *A történelmi regény*, 262—295. p. Magvető, 1977.

[18] Préface aux Poésies (1837). Cité de: Ibrovac, M., *J.-M. de Hérédia*. p. 207.

[19] *Les Poètes contemporains*. Ibid., p. 241.

[20] Cf. *La Préface de l'Histoire de la littérature anglaise*.

[21] *Les Poètes contemporains*. Ibid., pp. 240—241.

[22] *Œuvres de V. Cousin*. Tome premier, 1840. Bruxelles. Du vrai, du beau et du bien, p. 405.

[23] Ibid., p. 407.

[24] Ibid., p. 408.

[25] Ibid., p. 409.

[26] Ibid., p. 411.

[27] Ibid., p. 412.

[28] Ibid., p. 413.

[29] Est-ce que c'est par hasard que nous avons employé une expression baudelairienne?

[30] Renan, E., *L'Avenir de la science I*.

[31] Hugo, V., *Préface des « Rayons et les Ombres »*.

# The Importance of Matthew Arnold's Critical Theory

Whenever we come across the judgement that a critic is important, the assertion is usually motivated by one or more of the following three reasons. First, he may be considered important because *representative*, i.e. his text may be read as an epitome of the characteristic problems that engaged his age or generation, and the solutions or symptomatic lack of solutions that emerged from their treatment of these problems. Second, he may be judged important because *influential*, i.e. because he left the stamp of his

thought on his fellow critics or those of subsequent generations. Third, he may have a claim for importance by providing a text which is profound and thus have a high *intrinsic value*. The three issues may be, and frequently are, connected; in many cases, however, they seem to be separable. Matthew Arnold is an interesting example of the seeming disconnectedness of the first two and the third factors. As was pointed out in a recent article, even today there are a "surprising number" of those "who do not concede importance or originality to Arnold as critic."[1] I suspect that these stubborn non-believers reject him mainly for the third reason. Few critics can have ever doubted that Arnold was representative or influential. No thorough analysis of the rather elusive term "Victorian" can leave him unmentioned and no genealogy of critics as diverse as George Saintsbury, A. C. Bradley, Irving Babbitt, T. S. Eliot, F. R. Leavis, and Lionel Trilling can afford to ignore his influence on their thinking, either in the form of straight inheritance, or elicited reaction, or both. And yet, in the introduction to a collection of critical essays on Arnold, published in 1973, the editor could sum up his present index on the literary stock exchange in the following way: "Within recent years Arnold has even been denied the title of literary critic, and his theory of literature is dismissed by some as feeble and self-contradictory."[2]

This fall from favour did not come out of the blue; previous generations rarely lacked an authoritative voice that tried to undermine his reputation. Many of his opponents in his own lifetime can be classed as lightweight and dismissed easily. One of the most devastating attacks, however, as early as 1976, came from the eminent logician and philosopher F. H. Bradley, who ruthlessly dissected some of the "loose phrases" and "phrase-making" of *Literature and Dogma*, concluding that they are tautological and "*say* nothing". But in his own attempt at a definition of religion, in the course of the very argument directed against Arnold, Bradley maintains that in "the religious consciousness we find the belief, however vague and indistinct, in an object, a not-myself".[3] The whole Bradleyan description of the religious consciousness, especially the phrase "not-myself", eloquently testifies to the inescapable influence of the haunting Arnoldian "not-ourselves" and the corresponding description from *Literature and Dogma*, loose and tautological or not. Bradley's verdict had a long career and has been discussed, with interesting pros and cons, to this very day.[4] Its long influence, at least partly, is due to the reinforcing agreement of Bradley's chief 20th century advocate, a critic as heavily indebted to Arnold as anyone can be: T. S. Eliot. Repeating a statement of J. M. Robertson, Eliot in fact echoed Bradley's criticism: "Arnold had little gift for consistency or for definition." But what he adds on his own account is even more severe than anything Bradley ever said: "Nor had he the power of connected reasoning at any length. . . Nothing in his prose work, therefore, will stand very close analysis. . ."[5] Nevertheless, he admits that Arnold, while being "the poet and critic of a period of false stability", is "a representative figure".[6] Double evaluations like this may have paved the way for our present-day condescending, if seemingly balanced, judgements, typified perhaps by George Watson's succinct formula, in 1962: "A historic estimate of Arnold must always conclude him to have been the most influential force among the Victorian critics. But there seems no good reason now for accepting his claims to greatness as a critic."[7]

With due respect to all these distinguished authors, the purpose of my paper is to prove that the intrinsic value of Arnold's critical writings is very high. I do not want to deny that occasionally a critic can be representative or influential without being profound, but I aim to refute the view that this is the case with Arnold and offer the alternative thesis that he can and ought to be considered important on the basis of all the three reasons given above. I want to prove that in spite of his seemingly unsystematic style of presentation, which he defended with both honest self-criticism and ironical counter-

attack against pedantic accusations,[8] his critical thoughts fall into a pattern and are coherent enough to constitute a system which does stand (and amply repays) close analysis and a comparison with the critical ideas of T. S. Eliot. Besides, I want to demonstrate that the legendary indifference of English criticism towards theoretical problems and the whole myth of the incurably empirical and pragmatic bent of the English mind are generalizations for too sweeping to be left unexamined; the writings of Matthew Arnold reveal a critic in the second half of the 19th century who is not only aware of *his* theoretical presuppositions (a virtue that has always been rare among literary critics) but who is constantly seeking to clarify and revise the theoretical foundations of critical activity in general.

To elaborate both theses I am going to concentrate on his theory of criticism. And here emerges a methodological difficulty which no scholar of Arnold should overlook: the impossibility of confining oneself to those writings which fall within the strict boundaries of literary criticism. Even René Wellek, one of the finest historians of criticism alive today, could not escape the grave consequences of ignoring this necessity. After having given a rather sketchy summary of Arnold's Weltanschauung in one single paragraph, he says: "But for our purposes — confined as always to literary criticism — much of this, however important for the great debate on religion and culture, is irrelevant. We must rather try to define Arnold's contribution to thinking about literature and poetry."[9] This gesture is at first sight disarming and honourable, the gesture of the sober and reliable scholar who wisely knows that he cannot write about everything and who suspects dilettantism behind all attempts transcending the wholesome limits of any subject, and who, no doubt, frequently evokes our admiration by his well-organized material, relentless erudition and eminent sense of proportion. The same method of compartmentalisation, however, leads to no good results when studying Arnold. It seems worth while to base the foregoing reconstruction of Arnold's theory of criticism on his writings both within and outside the domain of literary criticism, since the ideas expounded in these diverse contexts have a remarkable affinity, congruence, and a tendency to illuminate each other. Especially his notions concerning the function of literature and that of criticism, his views concerning the nature of man and the prospects of man's improvement, and his early response to what we may call the challenge of positivism emerge as interconnected and constitute a solid basis for his critical theory.

Arnold tried to formulate his views about the function of literature and criticism several times and his rather enigmatic dicta have continued to puzzle his interpreters and annoy his opponents ever since. The function of literature in general and the function of poetry in particular can be deduced from his thesis that poetry is "criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty."[10] He firmly believes that "the noble and profound application of ideas to life is the most essential part of poetic greatness" and has no objection to calling these ideas *moral* ideals either.[11] In another of his definitions poetry appears as a confrontation or at least simultaneous presentation of external reality and the inner moral world of man.[12] The function of criticism, in turn, can be derived from the very nature of the creative process. "The grand work of literary genius is a work of synthesis and exposition, not of analysis and discovery; its gift lies in the faculty of being happily inspired by a certain intellectual and spiritual atmosphere, by a certain order of ideas, when if finds itself in them; of dealing divinely with these ideas, presenting them in the most effective and attractive combinations, — making beautiful works with them". The function of criticism, accordingly, is to prepare the ground for the creative artist, to clarify and evaluate the ideas the creative artist will subsequently work with, "to make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can profitably avail itself."[13] Besides, criticism is to

represent an authoritative standard of informed judgement as a correction to idiosyncratic eccentricity and national provincialism. Last but not least criticism must remain independent of the practical spirit, must preserve a disinterested curiosity, and instead of judging things by their effects and practical consequences, must see them as they are in themselves. The application of ideas to practice is beyond the boundaries of criticism, maintains Arnold and repeatedly warns against "transporting" the results of abstract analysis abruptly into the world of practice, ignoring the circumstances and hastily refusing to wait for the right moment. There is a marked conservative streak in the way he approvingly quotes and interprets Joubert's doctrine of "*force till right is ready*" as justification for the use of power to preserve an unjust status quo until the inevitable course of events will prepare the ground for organic, natural transformation; or in the way he approvingly quotes Renan, who, although a liberal and in theory a believer in the non-intervention of the state, in practice acknowledges the temporary necessity of state action; let alone in the way he disapprovingly speaks about "the grand error of the French Revolution" "by quitting the intellectual sphere and rushing furiously into the political sphere."[14] All these opinions, however, are very much in line with, and implied by, his conception of criticism as something to be confined to abstract analysis, something with a merely preparatory function.

His most concise definition of criticism, which is almost verbatim identical with his definition of culture, interprets criticism as "a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world, and thus to establish a current of fresh and true ideas."[15] George Watson is probably right when he contends that the concept of "disinterestedness" is borrowed from Sainte-Beuve, one of the major influences on Arnold, but he erroneously claims that the definition of criticism as a "disinterested endeavour" is "hopelessly nut of key with Arnold's own achievement"[16], this being passiionate and polemical. The juxtaposition of the definition with several formulae of *Culture and Anarchy* renders it clear that the term "disinterested", whatever it may have meant for Sainte-Beuve, for Arnold meant not the opposite of passionate or polemical but the opposite of committed to or subordinated to something that would make free and unbiased examination no longer possible. This meaning is transparent from *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* as well: "how is criticism to show disinterestedness? By keeping aloof from what is called 'the practical view of things'; by resolutely following the law of its own nature, which is to be a free play of the mind on all subjects which it touches. By steadily refusing to lend itself to any of those ulterior, political practical considerations about ideas. . . which criticism has really nothing to do with." The role of the critic is defined in the same way: "the critic must keep out of the region of immediate practice in the political, social, humanitarian sphere" to secure a "more free speculative treatment of things"; the "critic's duty is to refuse" "to make one of the party movement" and he has to resist the temptation of being a "*terrae filius*".[17] Scholars tend to agree that this definition of criticism as a disinterested endeavour to see things as they are is question-begging and no doubt it really is. Moreover, one may argue that the implied possibility of seeing things as they are in themselves runs in the face of the theoretical impossibility of having a description, let alone evaluation, without a point of view. Still, all things considered, René Wellek's judgement seems sound when he says that Arnold's formula "may raise more questions than it solves, but it is a good antidote" to a series of critical maladies.[18]

None of the Arnoldian definitions enumerated above can be fully understood without having a look at his views concerning human nature, and that is why most of his interpreters, being unaware of the implications contained in these views, fail to understand their proper meaning. Human nature can be understood in terms of two conflict-

ing selves, suggests Arnold: the "ordinary", "everyday" or "apparent" self with its "native, instantaneous, mechanical impulses of the instinct of self-preservation" and a "higher", "best" or "real" self with its nobler aspirations.[19] The road to improvement leads through denying, sacrificing, or at least checking and restraining the first impulses of our everyday self and thereby liberating and realizing our best self, "the real law of our being".[20] In Arnold's view man can and must re-create himself, almost in an existentialist sense; man's essence is not something known and ready-made before the act of self-renouncement and self-creation: "the law of our being is *not* something which is already definitively known and can be exhibited as part of a speculative theory of the system of things; it is something which discovers itself and *becomes*, as we follow (among other things) the rule of renouncement."[21] Self-conquest, self-transformation and self-correction is the way to improvement and culture. Having said this it is easy to recognize the paramount significance of the fact that for Arnold one of the functions of criticism is to provide an authoritative standard of informed judgement whereby to correct the spontaneous but cheaper manifestations of human activity.

Criticism thus runs parallel with one of the two spiritual traditions which helped man in his striving for perfection, the tradition which Arnold calls Hebraism. On the other hand, criticism is equally in accordance with the other of the two major forces of human progress, i.e. Hellenism. In *Culture and Anarchy* Hebraism urges man to obey the best light he has, whereas Hellenism aims at a disinterested examination of that best light to make sure that it is really the best.[22] Their final aim is the same: human perfection; but they pursue it by different courses. Hebraism follows man's moral impulse in an "effort to win peace by self-conquest" and by the "staunch adherence to some fixed law of doing we have got already" "encourages us to stand staunch and fast by the rule and ground we have", whereas Hellenism, following man's intellectual impulse is an "effort to see things as they really are" and "to go back upon this rule, and to try the very ground on which we appear to stand", "tends continually to enlarge our whole law of doing." Obedience to the unum necessarium, to "the one thing needful", i.e. the will of God, versus "a turn for giving our consciousness free play and enlarging its range"; "strictness of conscience" versus "spontaneity of consciousness": this is Hebraism versus Hellenism.[23] Hellenism, in other words, tries to see things as they are in themselves, without being biased by their current status in the accepted hierarchy of values. Criticism, similarly, while clarifying and examining the ideas which will subsequently enter the work of the creative artist, analyses these ideas in themselves, instead of judging them by their practical consequences and instrumental applicability. Neither Hebraism, nor Hellenism alone is sufficient for human culture, maintains Arnold, history has given examples of their "alternate preponderance", but only their combined forces, mutually balancing, understanding, and correcting each other, may lead to progress.[24] The paramount importance Arnold attributed to criticism can be grasped only in this context; ciriticism in his descriptions seems to unite the characteristic features and functions of both Hellenism and Hebraism, spontaneity of consciousness and strictness of conscience, disinterested analysis and obedience to norms. The implications of his essay on *The function of Criticism in the Present Time* can be made explicit only by such a juxtaposition with *Culture and Anarchy* and *Literature and Dogma*.

And only in the light of this juxtaposition, only in the light of comparing his views on man and on the function of criticism can we hope to understand the complicated and revealing relationship between Arnold and his most influential 20th century successor: T. S. Eliot. In the course of his career Eliot frequently passed judgements, both favourable and — more often — unfavourable, on Arnold, but these judgements are so dissimilar that there is hardly any clear-cut trend or consecutive pattern of development

one could discern among them.[25] It seems promising, however, to compare the position taken in his 1923 essay on *The Function of Criticism* to that of the 1933 essay on *Matthew Arnold*. The central issue of the former paper is a discussion of Middleton Murry's theory of the two ultimate human attitudes: obedience to Outside Authority on the one hand and listening to the Inner Voice, on the other. Adherents of the former, represented by Catholicism in religion and Classicism in art, "believe that men cannot get on without giving allegiance to something outside themselves". They "depend upon tradition and the accumulated wisdom of the time". According to Eliot, both he and Matthew Arnold belong to these "weaker brethren" ("weaker" here is unmistakably a term of praise). "The inner voice", says Eliot, "sounds remarkably like an old principle which has been formulated by an elder critic in the now familiar phrase of "doing as one likes". "The elder critic is of course Arnold. Eliot resorts to the Victorian critic, whom he otherwise frequently scorns, to discredit the inner voice "which breathes the eternal message of vanity, fear and lust."[26] He assumes that his own, rather pessimistic view of human nature (akin to that of T.E. Hulme), which suspects immorality and self-deception behind the impulses of man and believes in the absolute necessity of an external authority, is identical with that of Arnold.

Although this assumption is wrong, because based on an oversimplified and somewhat distorted rendering of Arnold, it throws an interesting light on Eliot's altogether different attitude to Arnold in the 1933 assay. Here he appears as representative of a stance much less to be recommended. Whereas the best of his poetry "is too honest to employ any but his genuine feelings of unrest, loneliness and dissatisfaction", both his creative and critical writings are permeated by a characteristic weakness. "The same weakness, the same necessity for something to depend upon, which make him an academic poet make him an academic critic". Even "his charm and interest are largely due to the painful position that he occupied between faith and disbelief." Eliot felt "an inner uncertainty and lack of confidence and conviction in Matthew Arnold: the conservatism which springs from lack of faith, and the zeal for reform which springs from dislike of change".[27] One can clearly see that this evaluation of Arnold is very different from the former although both are based on the same description; to be "weak" and to depend on outside authority and tradition counted there as virtues and necessary correctives to the frailty of human nature, here the same dependance counts as weakness but to be weak is already a term of reproach, meaning lack of faith and want of inner resources. In the former essay Eliot distorted Arnold to express his own position and to find or rather to create an ally to support it; in the latter he is irritated by the shortcomings of his own former outlook. First he cast an Arnold in his own image, and then turned his back on it a decade later. The history of that decade, of course, explains a lot from the different responses; with the spread of fascism Eliot was less and less satisfied with the dependance on external authority.[28] But whatever his reasons may have been, in 1933 he seems to be repelled by his own former view of man; the essay is an interesting but unfaithful rendering of Arnold together with a profound piece of unconscious self-criticism, based on a creative misunderstanding of a semi-conscious, almost deliberate kind.

The presupposition behind the 1923 essay, as I mentioned above, was that in the debate of External Authority versus Inner Voice,[29] they are on the same side, i.e. on the side of External Authority. Nothing is more characteristic of the tactical shifts of Eliot's opinions than the fact that four years later, siding with Bradley against Arnold and Irving Babbitt, he considers Arnold as a representative of the Inner Voice. Here Arnold is criticised, for instead of giving exclusive importance to the "will of God" he wants to give authority to our "best self", which "looks very much like Matthew Arnold slightly disguised" and thus is as accessible to subjective manipulations and as prone to self-

deceptive rationalization and wishful thinking as the "inner check" recommended by Irving Babbitt as a substitute for the obsolete forms of external authority.[30] Neither of the two representations of Arnold can be justified; he gave exclusive support neither to the External Authority nor to the Inner Voice. Moreover, he apparently did not believe in the either/or of this opposition at all. Arnold, to be sure, emphasises the wholesome effects of authority and a widely accepted high standard, but the same Arnold attributes epoch-making historical importance to Goethe's gesture whereby "he puts the standard, once for all, inside every man instead of outside him".[31] Again, the conclusion of *The Literary Influence of the Academies*, if somewhat surprisingly, is that, beneficent as the French Academy is in France, it cannot, and what is more, it need not be superimposed upon the English intellectual life since the individual can perform the same job of self-correction within himself.[32] Similarly, in *Literature and Dogma* God is said to be in ourselves while representing the "not-ourselves"; and Arnold emphatically suggests the inseparableness and ultimate identity of *inner* and *objective* in questions of morality and religion. He points to "the falseness of the common antithesis . . . between *natural* and *revealed*. For that in us which is really natural is, in truth, *revealed*. We awake to the consciousness of it, we are aware of it coming forth in our mind; but we feel that we did not make it, that it is discovered to us, that it is what it is whether we will or no."[33]

It was Eliot's undeniable merit to discover the subtle but decisive difference in this respect between F. H. Bradley and Arnold. One of Bradley's crucial passages recommends: "give up your will, as the mere will of this or that man, and . . . put your whole self, your entire will, into the will of the divine". This means that one must die to one's private self because it could never coalesce with the divine. Eliot is pleased to see that with Bradley the "distinction is clearly drawn between man's "mere will" and "the will of the divine"[34] and avoids the psychological puzzle of how, once the intuition of the Inner Voice is excluded as self-deceitful, one gets to know the divine will. With Arnold, on the other hand, the way is not total self-denial but self-correction, the sacrifice of a less authentic self for the sake of a more authentic. In other words, although Eliot more than once admitted the psychological difficulties inherent in any attempt to maintain an absolute separation of "outside" and "inside" and goes so far as to admit that "the idea of the (*sic*!) religion is the *inner* control . . . so that in the end he (man) is controlling himself",[35] here, as in *The Function of Criticism*, mainly for tactical reasons he deliberately disregards the problem, whereas Arnold seems to have a constant awareness of and deeper insight into the inevitable interplay of human nature and norms. He found this interplay beneficial whereas the notion of ready-made, hermetically closed and invariably applied norms was positively harmful: "fatal is the notion of possessing, even in the most precious words or standards, the one thing needful, of having in them, once for all, a full and sufficient measure of light to guide us, and of there being no duty left for us except to make our practice square exactly with them".[36] Far from maintaining a rigid opposition between external and internal authority he acknowledged the intricate connectedness of the two.

The same applies to his views on Catholicism and Protestantism, where his picture, again, is more complex and less reductionist than that of Eliot.[37] And instead of Eliot's transparent effort to justify his own religious affiliation, in Arnold's evaluation there is an effort to do justice to both Catholicism and Protestantism, whether in praise or in disapproval.[38] One must suspect, nevertheless, behind Arnold's divided loyalty a certain detachment from both, due, perhaps, to his intellectual dissatisfaction with a certain type of religious mind in general. The symptoms of this dissatisfaction can be clearly seen in one of his most uncompromising judgements, which is as far from Eliot's position as anything can be: "for the thinking side in man . . . the attitude of mind of Protestan-

tism towards the Bible in no respect differs from the attitude of mind of Catholicism towards the Church. The mental habit of him who imagines that Balaam's ass spoke, in no respect differs from the mental habit of him who imagines that a Madonna of wood or stone winked; and the one, who says that God's Church makes him believe what he believes, and the other, who says that God's Word makes him believe what he believes, are for the philosopher perfectly alike in not really and truely knowing, when they say *God's Church* and *God's Word*, what it is they say, or whereof they affirm."[39]

Their interpretations of human nature are no less different. The very terminology of Arnold, calling the inferior, ordinary and immediate self "apparent" and the high best self the "real" implies a more optimistic attitude to man than the Hulme—Eliot version. Human nature, once bereft of the corrective support of canonized norms, is bound to be frail and unreliable, suggests Eliot, whereas Arnold's mistrust does not transcend the boundaries of our "ordinary" self;[40] he believes that "our best self . . . is capable of affording a serious principle of authority" and is even worthy to be embodied in the State.[41] The notion of *sin*, that looms so large in the picture of man drawn by Hulme and Eliot, for whom it constituted a dividing line between what they held to be the far too optimistic and therefore immature belief of romanticism in man's infinite possibilities, together with their own neoclassicist tenet about the insurmountable limits of human perfectability, is not explained away by Arnold either, but cut to a more reasonable size. Surveying the divergencies of Hellenism and Hebraism he compares their different attitudes to man. In the hands of Hellenism human life is "invested with a kind of aerial ease, clearness, and radiancy", full of "sweetness and light"; man is "a gentle and simple being, showing the traces of a noble and divine nature." In Hebraism, on the contrary, *sin* "thwarts and spoils all our efforts"; "the space which sin fills in Hebraism, as compared with Hellenism, is indeed prodigious. This obstacle to perfection fills the whole scene", man is here "an unhappy chained captive". The Hellenic conception of human nature, at the time of its exposition in ancient Greece, was "unsound" because it was "premature": "the world could not live by it". "The indispensable basis of conduct and self-control, the platform upon which alone the perfection aimed at by Greece can come into bloom, was not to be reached by our race so easily; centuries of probation and discipline were needed to bring us to it." This strengthened the hold of Hebraism on the world whilst the "bright promise of Hellenism faded". Arnold's judgement is clear: the Hellenic conception of human nature was unsound *only then* because *then* it was premature. "Absolutely to call it unsound . . . is to fall into the common error of its Hebraising enemies."[42] This more optimistic attitude to man offers an explanation for the divergency between Arnold and Eliot, their different views on the problem of authority and inner voice, and consequently their different positions in several issues of critical theory.

The last decisive difference between their position leads us to what I called the challenge of positivism. When Eliot postulates a sharp opposition between principles and man, between external and internal, and when he confines wholesome effect to fixed and canonized norms which the individual cannot revise any longer, he emphasises the necessity and instrumental value of such norms for human development. He does not seem to face the epistemological considerations introduced by positivism in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, which make such a solution no longer possible. In this respect, paradoxically enough, Arnold sounds much more modern. In *Literature and Dogma* the reader is at once confronted with a very perceptive early response to the puzzling questions raised by positivism. The starting point of Arnold's argument in this book is his clear awareness of a radical change in the intellectual climate and the new habits of mind the "Zeitgeist" helped to create. He speaks about a "spread of scepticism", hand in hand with a new key-word, a new touch-stone of assent: the concept of *verifi-*

*ability*. "Is what this story asserts *true*, they are beginning to ask; can it be verified? — since experience proves, they add, that whatever for man is true, man can verify."[43] This new attitude is a menace to religion, says Arnold, because religion is made to stand on the false basis of unverifiable assumptions like prediction and miracle.[44] Arnold's aim is to find a new basis, a new substratum of belief, instead of the old one which is "inevitably doomed". The Zeitgeist is right, Arnold has no doubts about it. "For whatever is to stand must rest upon something which is verifiable, not unverifiable".[45] He wants to find for the Bible "a verifiable basis and not an assumption", "a basis in something which can be verified, instead of something which has to be assumed".[46]

With this constant emphasis on the difference between the verifiable and the unverifiable, and with a similarly relentless effort to eliminate the latter from religion Arnold aimed at and in fact achieved much more than "a valiant attempt to dodge the issue, to mediate between Newman and Huxley". *Literature and Dogma* is neither "irrelevant to Arnold's main position as given in the Essays and *Culture and Anarchy*", as Eliot liked to think, nor is it a book which "has served its turn and can hardly be read through".[47] It is the opposite: the very nucleus of his thought and a most exciting book even today. It is worth while having a look at what Arnold here calls "Aberglaube" and the corresponding problem of what today would be called instrumental value. The Messianic promise of the Old Testament about "the day of the Eternal's coming" and "the restitution of all things" arose out of a basic conviction that "righteousness tendeth to life", says Arnold, with the decisive difference of lacking the "firm, experimental ground" of its predecessor. It is made of hopes and anticipations; natural but beyond the verifiable. "It is a kind of fairy-tale, which a man tells himself, which no one, we grant, can prove impossible to turn out true, but which no one, also, can prove certain to turn out true. It is exactly what is expressed by the German word 'Aberglaube', *extra-belief*, belief beyond what is certain and verifiable."[48] To compare this extra-belief to fairy tales is a severe judgement in itself, but Arnold is aware of what one could call the dilemma of *verifiability versus instrumental value*: "one might well hesitate to attack an anthropomorphism or an extra-belief by which men helped themselves in conduct. . . But, after all, the question sooner or later arises. . .: Is it *sure*? can what is here assumed be verified? And this is the real objection both to the Catholic and Protestant doctrine as a basis for conduct. . . , that it assumes what cannot be *verified*. For a long time this objection occurred to scarcely anybody. And there are still, and for a long time yet there will be, many to whom it does not occur. . . Who. . . can doubt, that for a not small portion of the religious community, a difficulty to the intelligence will for a long time yet be no difficulty at all? With their mental condition and habits, given a story to which their religious emotions can attach themselves, and the famous *Credo quia ineptum* will hold good with them still".[49]

Arnold's preference is clear enough: in his judgement verifiability prevails over instrumental value, an uncompromising acknowledgement of the demands of the intellect prevails over the altogether different attitude of *credo quia ineptum*. Perhaps preferences like this have evoked Eliot's contemptuous remark that in religion Arnold was a Philistine.[50] To apply the same criterion of verifiability to all sorts of human experience, including matters of belief, seems at first sight a rather pedestrian gesture indeed. But there is, at the very least, intellectual honesty behind it and a desire to eliminate the painful dichotomy of emotional and intellectual options for the sake of securing both. In the eyes of many the very striving to get rid of the dichotomy of consciousness has an element of Philistinism in it; after all, many would argue, human consciousness is comprehensive enough to include dimensions both for verifiability in matters of science and for belief in matters of religion including belief in the miraculous as well. But for Arnold this would

have meant a degradation of the intellect; for him the unity of consciousness was a vital matter.

He did not have serious doubts regarding his own religious belief but he was anxious to save man from what to him seemed inevitable disappointment and probably a loss of belief due to discredited certainty. Religion for him was "the solidest of realities"[51] now endangered by its own unverifiable supporters. If you take something, he argued, which cannot be verified by experience and is consequently not certain, as if it were an object of certainty, you can benefit from its instrumental value as the basis of your conduct, but whenever the negative certainty *can* be established, as in the case of unfulfilled predictions, it is a most dangerous game based on self-deception.[52] This is a good example of the kind of issues that Arnold, far from being the smug and hypocritical pseudo-thinker we falsely expect a representative Victorian sage to be, honestly faced and honestly tried to answer. His terminology sometimes resembles that of A. J. Ayer and other neopositivists of our century; even his stubborn suspicion regarding the unverifiable basis of all wishful thinking is very similar to their cast of mind. There is, however, a basic difference between their interpretation of the "verifiable" and his; for Arnold, due to his acceptance of *inner* as *objective*, may accept psychic realities we are immediately aware of. With Arnold verification by experience therefore means not only empirical verification of external objects but subjective affirmation of inner realities as well. The abstruse metaphysical assumption about the necessity of a "great Personal First Cause, the moral and intelligent Governor of the universe" "can never be verified", according to the first edition of *Literature and Dogma* and "cannot, at present, at any rate, be verified", according to the more cautious phrasing of the later popular edition, whilst the assertion of "an enduring Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness", can be: such a distinction implies an interpretation of "verifiability" much more comprehensive than that of A. J. Ayer.[53] Verifiability with Arnold is not focused exclusively on the correspondence between a proposition and *external* reality, neither is it bound up with the referential theory of meaning as it is in *Language, Truth and Logic*. This explains the way Arnold could preserve religion against positivism; that is how he could base it on "verifiable" grounds while divorcing it from its "unverifiable" supporters of prediction and miracle. God as inner reality was all he really cared for and this he thought he could save without inconsistent and wishful thinking, merely by the logic of his interesting, unique and mild version of early positivistic thought. His religious position is less mystical and demonstrative than that of T. S. Eliot, but certainly not less genuine and probably more in accordance with the other domains of his thought than that of his successor.

To sum up the issue from the point of view of critical norms: Eliot emphasised the necessity of external norms and authority; Arnold did not deny this but he had important reservations; he had an eye for both the necessity of individual self-correction and the verifiability of our aids to progress. Mechanical obedience to external authority and adoption of unverifiable doctrines of however high instrumental value were solutions he could not accept. His literary criticism was based on an overall theoretical foundation which lacked neither insight nor complexity. This is not to say, of course, that our own views concerning the function of criticism, the ways of man's improvement, and indeed the whole theory of criticism do not differ from those of Arnold. The function of criticism is more than to prepare the ground for creative work, and the relationship of criticism and creation, as already Eliot rightly observed, is more complicated than Arnold had thought it to be. His views on human nature are expounded with the help of metaphors, like the "best self", which seem dated and simplistic in the light of the more sophisticated apparatus of modern psychology. His accounts of the epistemological problems of positivism, perceptive and complex as they frequently are, give too uncritical

an approval to the positivist claims which in the light of modern analysis turned out to be anything but impeccable. But of course, the present-day critic has access to that body of knowledge which has been accumulated over the long and rich century that has passed in literary criticism since Arnold's day. If we know more at some points, we must not forget that this is due, among others, to *his* stimulating heritage.

*Péter Dávidházi*

## NOTES

[1] DeLaura, D. J., *Arnold and Literary Criticism: Critical Ideas.* In: *Writers and their Background: Matthew Arnold;* edited by Kenneth Allott. London, 1975., p. 118.

[2] DeLaura, D. J., *Introduction* In: *Matthew Arnold. A Collection of Critical Essays;* edited by David J. DeLaura. New Jersey. 1973. p. 1.

[3] Bradley, Fr. H., *Ethical Studies.* Second edition. Oxford, 1927. (First published Oxford 1876), pp. 315—316. Professor A. Thorlby, of Sussex University, kindly called my attention to the possibility of the influence of German philosophical thought on both "not-myself" and "not-ourselves".

[4] Cf. Trilling, L., *Matthew Arnold.* London, 1939, re-issued with additional material 1949., pp. 339—340; and Willey, B., *Arnold and Religion* In: *Writers and their Background: Matthew Arnold;* edited by Kenneth Allott. London, 1975., pp. 250—251.

[5] Eliot, T. S., *Arnold and Pater* (1930) In: *Selected Essays* Third enlarged edition. London, 1951., p. 431.

[6] Eliot, T. S., *Matthew Arnold* (1933) In: *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism.* London, 1933., pp. 105, 119.

[7] Watson, G., *The Literary Critics* Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1962., p. 160.

[8] Cf. Arnold, M., *Culture and Anarchy* (1868—9) In: *Arnold and Education.* Edited by Gillian Sutherland. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1973., pp. 165, 200, 202, 205.

[9] Wellek, R., *A History of Modern Criticism.* Vol. 4. London, 1966., p. 156.

[10] Arnold, M., *The Study of Poetry* (1880) In: Arnold, M., *Essays in Criticism. Second Series.* London, 1888., p. 5. Cf. Arnold, M., *Byron.* Ibid., pp. 186—187.

[11] Arnold, M., *Wordsworth* In: *Essays in Criticism. Second Series.* London, 1888., p. 140—141—142.

[12] Arnold, M., *Maurice de Guerin* In: Arnold, M., *Essays Literary and Critical.* London, 1906., p. 71.

[13] Arnold, M., *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* In: *Selected Criticism of Matthew Arnold.* Edited by Christopher Ricks. New York, Scarborough (Ontario), and London, 1972, pp. 94—95.

[14] Arnold, M., *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* In: *Selected Criticism of Matthew Arnold,* pp. 98—99; *Culture and Anarchy* In: *Arnold on Education,* p. 219.

[15] Arnold, M., *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* In: *Selected Criticism of Matthew Arnold,* p. 114, see also 115. For very similar definitions of culture see Arnold M., *Culture and Anarchy* In: *Arnold on Education,* p. 183 and Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma.* London, 1873., p. XIII.

[16] Watson, G., *The Literary Critics.* Harmondsworth, Middlesex. 1962. pp. 153, 160—161.

[17] Arnold, M., *The Function of Criticism at the Present Time* In: *Selected Criticism of Matthew Arnold,* pp. 102—103, 107—108.

[18] Wellek, R., *A History of Modern Criticism.* Vol. 4. London, 1966., p. 157 and see also 159.

[19] Cf. Arnold, M., *Culture and Anarchy* In: *Arnold on Education,* pp. 198, 199, 201, 204, 206, 207, 210, 211, 212, 216; Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma,* pp. 25, 89, 208, 209, 236.

[20] Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma,* pp. 204—206.

[21] Ibid., p. 209.

[22] See also Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma,* p. 219 and following pages.

[23] Arnold, M., *Culture and Anarchy,* pp. 220, 226, 229, 232—233.

[24] Arnold, M., Ibid., pp. 220, 225, 227. 230, 231.

[25] Cf. Raleigh, J. H., *Matthew Arnold and American Culture.* Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1957., pp. 195—196.

[26] Eliot, T. S., *The Function of Criticism* (1923) In: Eliot, T. S., *Selected Essays*, pp. 26, 27, 29.
[27] Eliot, T. S., *Matthew Arnold* In: Eliot, T. S., *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*. London, 1933., pp. 106, 108, 114, 119.
[28] Cf. Kojecky, R., *T. S. Eliot's Social Criticism*. London, 1971., p. 91.
[29] See also Eliot, T. S., *The Frontiers of Criticism* In: Eliot, T. S., *On Poetry and Poets*, 1957.
[30] Eliot, T. S., *Francis Herbert Bradley* In: Eliot, T. S., *Selected Essays*, p. 452.
[31] Arnold, M., *Heinrich Heine* In: *Selected Criticism of Matthew Arnold*, p. 425.
[32] Arnold, M., *The Literary Influence of the Academies* In: *Selected Criticism of Matthew Arnold*, pp. 68—90; for a succinct summary of its conclusions see especially, p. 90. Cf. Arnold, M., *Culture and Anarchy* In: *Arnold on Education*, p. 208.
[33] Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma*, p. 49, cf. pp. 50, 27—30.
[34] Eliot, T. S., *Francis Herbert Bradley* In: Eliot, T. S., *Selected Essays*, pp. 452—453. Cf. Arnold, M., *Culture and Anarchy* In: *Arnold on Education*, p. 221.
[35] Eliot, T. S., *The Function of Criticism* and *The Humanism of Irving Babbitt* In: Eliot, T. S., *Selected Essays*, pp. 26—27 and 476 respectively.
[36] Arnold, M., *Culture and Anarchy* In: *Arnold on Education*, pp. 234—235.
[37] Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma*, p. 175, 232—233, 294.
[38] Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma*, pp. 293—294.
[39] Arnold, M., *Culture and Anarchy* In: *Arnold on Education*, pp. 226—227.
[40] Cf. e.g. Arnold, M., *Culture and Anarchy* In: *Arnold on Education*, p. 229.
[41] Ibid., pp. 199, 207, 210, 216.
[42] Ibid., pp. 222—224.
[43] Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma*, p. 310.
[44] Ibid., pp. 108, 114, 249 and cf. p. 126.
[45] Ibid., p. X.
[46] Ibid., pp. X—XI. See also pp. XII—XIII.
[47] Eliot, T. S., *Francis Herbert Bradley* In: *Selected Essays*, p. 450 and Eliot, T. S., *Arnold and Pater* In: Ibid., p. 432.
[48] Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma*, pp. 76—77.
[49] Ibid., pp. 307—308.
[50] Eliot, T. S., *Matthew Arnold* In: *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, p. 105.
[51] Arnold, M., *Literature and Dogma*, p. 108.
[52] Ibid., pp. 107—108.
[53] Ibid., pp. X., 331 and Popular Edition, p. XVII.

# La Chaire de Philologie Hongroise de Varsovie a 25 ans

La Chaire de Philologie Hongroise de Varsovie (Katedra Filologii Węgierskiej) fut fondée en 1952 au cours des années suivant la Libération, dans des cadres très modestes, mais dans l'esprit de traditions nobles et d'une nouvelle coopération. Grâce à son activité de 25 ans, la Chaire de langue et de littérature Hongroise, débutant dans la capitale polonaise en pleine renaissance de ses ruines, s'est fait un nom dans les milieux philologiques nationaux, internationaux, ainsi que parmi les comparatistes et les spécialistes de l'histoire des relations polono—hongroises.

Le 26—27 octobre 1977, nous avons fêté le 25e anniversaire de la Chaire de Philologie Hongroise de Varsovie dans le cadre d'une session scientifique. Dans la salle des fêtes du Palac Kazimierzowski (Sala im. Brudzinskiego), lieu de beaucoup de sessions scientifiques de différentes chaires, le professeur Stanislaw Orlowski, vice-recteur a fait longuement

état, au nom de l'Université de Varsovie, des résultats de la Chaire. Pertti Virtaranta, professeur à l'Université de Helsinki et István Sipos, professeur à l'Université d'Eötvös Loránd de Budapest, se sont rangés de cet avis élogieux, bien mérité. Cela a été suivi des exposés en langue hongroise des spécialistes de la Chaire, programme de la première journée de la session commémorative. A la séance de discussion, présidée par István Szathmári, doyen de l'Université Eötvös Loránd, István Csapláros, professeur titulaire de la chaire a fait dans son exposé un bilan et une rétrospection sur les résultats de l'enseignement, de la recherche et sur les problèmes, et il a à la fois esquissé les devoirs futurs. Son exposé a été suivi de trois autres. Andrzej Sieroszewski, professeur chargé d'études, a fait une intervention sur les recherches de méthode comparative et Jerzy Jakubiuk et E. Cygielska-Guttman, magistères, sur des questions didactiques et méthodologiques. D'abord partie de la Faculté des Sciences Humaines, plus tard de la Faculté de Philologie Moderne, cette Chaire fonctionne actuellement dans les cadres de la Chaire de Philologie Slave et Russe. Depuis son existence, quatre-vingt-deux étudiants en langue et littérature hongroises ont acquis un diplôme de magistère, deux ont passé leur habilitation de professeur et également deux ont soutenu une thèse de doctorat, parmi eux Jan Slawski, professeur à la Chaire de Philologie Polonaise de l'université. Les enseignants et les étudiants s'appuient dans leur travail sur une bibliothèque hongroise et finno-ougrienne, au début composée de quelques rayons d'imprimés et aujourd'hui de 21 000 volumes.

Au cours de cette session commémorative continuée par des interventions et une discussion, on a entendu l'exposé de Miklós Nagy, professeur à l'Université Eötvös Loránd qui a fait mention de la dernière partie de la bibliographie des traductions d'œuvres littéraires hongroises en polonais, publication de la chaire, parue l'année passée et intitulée *Bibliografia przekladów z literatury węgierskiej w Polsce*. Avec sa partie précédente, relative à la période s'étendant entre 1918 et 1960, cette bibliographie embrasse presqu'un siècle et demie. Dans sa conclusion tirée de la discussion, le président a fait état des résultats obtenus dans l'activité d'enseignement et de recherche de la Chaire, il a souligné les avantages mutuels de la collaboration et la nécessité des efforts communs aussi bien au niveau personnel qu'institutionnel. Il a relevé les résultats méritoires de la Chaire de Philologie Hongroise qui, comparés à ceux des chaires de philologie, de littérature et de langue hongroises de l'étranger, sont éminents.

Parmi les plus importants travaux communs, l'on peut mentionner le volume bilingue intitulé *Tanulmányok a lengyel—magyar irodalmi kapcsolatok köréből* (Studia z dziejów polsko—wegierskieh stosunków literackich i kulturalych /Etudes sur les rapports littéraires polono—hongrois), fruit de la collaboration de l'Académie Hongroise des Sciences et de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences, édité à Budapest et à Varsovie. C'est cette année qu'a paru en polonais dans la rédaction d'István Csapláros en hommage au défunt professeur Jan Reychmann, premier titulaire de la Chaire, le *Studia z dziejów polsko—wegierskich stosunków literackich*, travail de compilation contenant le matériel de langue polonaise, française et allemande de la session scientifique organisée à l'occasion du 20e anniversaire de la Chaire. Parmi les publications récentes, on peut mentionner d'une part le travail d'habilitation de Sieroszewski *Wegierska i polska historyczna w dobie romantyzmu*, Warszawa 1976, édité l'année passée, traitant le roman historique hongrois et polonais à l'époque du romantisme, d'autre part le volume d'études du titulaire de la Chaire. Troisième partie du travail de compilation mentionné ci-dessus, le travail de J. Jakubiuk, de E. Cygielska-Guttman et de T. Samociuk-Klocek, bibliographie critique de la littérature hongroise est en préparation. Le nouveau volume du *Studia. . .* à éditer à l'occasion du 25e anniversaire comportera pour la plupart les exposés de langue polonaise, française et russe de la session commémorative tenue en 1976 de Rákóczi et ceux de la session commémorative d'Ady organisée en 1977. Ces publication de la Chaire, ces

études et travaux de recherche systématiques sont les preuves tangibles des rapports fructueux et calmes. Elles sont à la fois l'exemple encourageant, comme l'a souligné la titulaire de la Chaire, de la collaboration d'esprit nouveau, scientifique, culturelle à développer entre les spécialistes polonais et hongrois, tout comme entre ceux des pays voisins socialistes. Ainsi, sous le signe de cette collaboration, nous saluons la Chaire de Philologie Hongroise de Varsovie à l'occasion de son 25e anniversaire.

La deuxième journée de la session de Varsovie a été continuée par la séance commémorative tenue à propos du centenaire d'Endre Ady. Les exposés du premier ensemble de sujets ont traité l'importance d'Ady dans l'histoire littéraire (par Mihály Czine), la révolution du style du poète (par István Szathmári), le thème de la vie et de la mort dans la poésie d'Ady (par J. Trzecunska-Mejor), la problématique de Dózsa à l'époque d'Ady (par György Székely), l'héritage d'Ady entre les deux guerres mondiales (par M. Krajkó); cela a été complété par une étude — lue à l'auditoire en l'absence de l'auteur — (de Gy. Radó) sur les problèmes et les difficultés de la traduction de la poésie d'Ady en langues étrangères. Le deuxième ensemble de sujets de la session tenue à l'Institut Culturel Hongrois de Varsovie consacré à l'œuvre poétique et aux rapports et traits communs dans la manière de penser des peuples voisins comprenait de nombreux exposés dont quelques-uns ont été lus en l'absence de leur auteur: les messages d'Ady (de G. G. Kemény), idées socialistes dans la poésie d'Ady et de ses contemporains (d'Oleg Rossijanov, Moscou), Ady dans la littérature serbocroate (d'Imre Bori, Novisad-Újvidék), Ady dans la littérature slovaque (d'I. Csukás). Ces exposés étaient suivis de celui de J. Wierzbicki (Varsovie) intitulé Miroslaw Krleža et Endre Ady. Il y avait trois exposés sur les rapports d'Ady avec la Pologne: Ady et les mouvements révolutionnaires polonais de 1905—1907 (par I. Csapláros), les Polonais sur la poésie d'Ady (par I. Molnár) et le nouveau recueil polonais des poèmes d'Ady (par I. R. Nowak, Varsovie). Dans son discours de clôture présidentiel résumant les interventions, compléments du panorama sur Ady, et les résultats de la session commémorative, A. Sieroszewski a exprimé sa conviction selon laquelle la collaboration amicale actuelle en développement constant était le principal facteur du travail commun tout aussi bien dans les recherches historiques traditionnelles que dans les recherches littéraires modernes. Cela est assuré par le développement des contrats de collaboration entre les universités, la consolidation des bons rapports entre les chaires des universités et des écoles supérieures hongroises et polonaises, tout comme l'élargissement et le raffermissement des relations qui existent ou qui sont à créer avec les chaires de langue et de littérature hongroises des universités des pays voisins. Tout cela est en rapport avec le travail de réputation et de niveau internationaux de deux décennies et demie de la Chaire de Philologie Hongroise avec sa conception perspicace et portée aux bonnes initiatives à l'échelon centro-européen et avec son activité scientifique et de politique scientifique bien équilibrée.

*Lajos Hopp*

# Jahrestagung der Internationalen Lenau-Gesellschaft in Keszthely

In der letzten Augustwoche fand in Keszthely am Balaton die diesjährige Generalversammlung und Jahrestagung der Internationalen Lenau Gesellschaft statt. Es war die sechzehnte seit dem Bestehen der Gesellschaft, die VR Ungarn war zum drittenmal der großzügige Gastgeber, dem am Ende der herzliche Dank aller Teilnehmer galt.

Das Generalthema »Literarische Nachbarschaft — geistige Verwandtschaft« bot den weiten, keineswegs problemlosen Rahmen der Konferenz; denn beide Begriffspaare bilden ja in mancherlei Hinsicht eine durchaus widersprüchliche Einheit. Die ungarischen Gastgeber aber hatten mit ihrem Gefühl für die Macht des Sinnfälligen einen glücklichen Einstieg gefunden: Sie entwickelten das Tagungsthema gleichsam aus dem Tagungsort heraus: Nach dem einleitenden Festvortrag von István Sőtér, der mit reichem Material aus europäischen Literaturen die Ausprägung der Landschaft in der Naturdichtung der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts belegte und auch theoretisch zu bestimmen versuchte, wurde von Dezső Keresztury gleichsam am Modell gezeigt, wie die konkrete Umwelt des Balaton im Prozeß der Geschichte konturiert wurde und vor allem mittels der Literatur ihre nationale, gedanklich und seelisch erfüllte Gestalt gewann. Das ehemalige Schloß des Grafen Festetics, in dessen Festsaal die Versammlung tagte, Keszthely selbst, die Natur und soziale Umwelt des Balaton, die in einigen Exkursionen erkundet wurden, waren so nicht nur eine schöne, aber beliebige Staffage, sondern der sinnliche Boden, auf dem sich die Konferenz mit ihrem Thema organisch entfalten konnte.

Auf dieser Basis ließen sich dann sehr verschiedenartige Beiträge mit relativer Selbständigkeit plazieren, Beiträge, die zugleich sehr verschiedenartige Interessen bedienten: Neben der Dokumentation, die das Ungarn des 19. Jahrhunderts in der Sicht tschechischer Schriftsteller zeigte (Alois Hofmann, Prag), der vergleichenden Betrachtung österreichischer und ungarischer Epostheorien (Viktor Suchy, Wien), dem Beitrag zur Verbreitung Goethes in Ungarn durch das Eintreten von János Arany und seinem Kreis (Miklós Nagy, Budapest), zur Aufnahme Lenaus im Spiegel dreier Gedichte Gottfried Kellers und Heinrich Leutholds (Martin Stern, Basel), der Erkundung verwandter Züge in den Dichtungen Lenaus, Petőfis und Radičevics (Katalin Hegedüs-Kovačević, Novi-Sad), der Vorstellung von Lenaus Zeitgenossen unter den serbischen Dichtern Südungarns (Strahinja K. Kostić, Novi-Sad), einer mit Dias veranschaulichten Dokumentation über Lenaus Weg in die literarische Öffentlichkeit (Walter Scheffler, Marbach), also Beiträgen zur Komparatistik, Rezeptions- und Wirkungsgeschichte, gab es den das Thema unmittelbar aufnehmenden Vortrag über Nachbarschaft und Verwandtschaft in der Literatur der Lenau-Zeit (Antal Weber, Budapest), die eingehende Werkanalyse, und zwar der »Albigenser«, unter dem Aspekt Ketzerhistorie und revolutionäre Geschichtsphilosophie (Norbert Altenhofer, Frankfurt a. M.) sowie die behutsame, aber durchdringende Kritik des Biedermeierbegriffs im Lichte der Literaturen der Donaumonarchie (Mihály Vajda, Szeged).

Was eine wissenschaftliche Konferenz zu leisten vermag, was ihr Sinn und Zweck sei, wird heute vielfach in der Welt erörtert. Die dringend gefühlte Notwendigkeit des Gesprächs, des persönlichen Austauschs und der wissenschaftlichen Auseinandersetzung schließt ja die Frage nach der Effektivität solcher wissenschaftlichen Veranstaltungen nicht aus, sondern bringt sie gerade hervor. Die ILG hat unter der bedachten Leitung ihres Vorstands ihren eigenen Tagungsstil längst gefunden. Im Geist des Schriftstellers,

dessen Namen sie trägt, versucht sie das literarische Werk ihres Dichters in den Kämpfen der Zeit zu begreifen. Die Aufforderung ihres Präsidenten bei der Eröffnung der Tagung, des österreichischen Bundesministers Sinowatz, daß die Pflege und Aufbereitung von Lenaus Dichtung immer mit dem Blick auf ihre Leser erfolgen sollte, konnte diese Ansicht nur bekräftigen. Daß die ILG das Werk des freiheitlichen österreichischen Dichters des 19. Jahrhunderts in seinen über Österreich und Lenaus Zeit hinausgreifenden Beziehungen sieht und demzufolge als ein Erbe begreift, das erst im Gespräch der Wissenschaftler aus vielen Ländern umfassend erschlossen werden kann, gibt ihr unter ähnlichen Literaturgesellschaften vielleicht eine besondere Stellung, eröffnet ihr jedenfalls besondere Möglichkeiten. Die Mitglieder und Freunde der ILG, die aus Ländern mit unterschiedlicher Gesellschaftsordnung kommen, verstehen ihre wissenschaftlichen Bemühungen in dieser Gesellschaft durchaus als einen Beitrag auch zur Völkerverständigung und zu jener Entspannungs- und Friedenspolitik, von der heute die humanitäre Zukunft nicht nur Europas abhängt. Diese Haltung schließt freilich den kontroversen Disput nicht aus, im Gegenteil. Es ist daher um so mehr zu bedauern, daß die Tagung in Keszthely von dem heute allerorts beklagten Mangel wissenschaftlicher Konferenzen nicht frei war: Die Fülle der Vorträge bot kaum Raum für die öffentliche Diskussion. Was damit vergeben wurde, zeigten die wenigen Gespräche, die freilich aus Zeitmangel meist abgeschnitten wurden.

Die diesjährige Tagung dürfte unabhängig von ihrem sonstigen wissenschaftlichen Ertrag in der Geschichte der ILG Epoche machen. Nach langwierigen Bemühungen ist es — vor allem dank der Anstrengungen von Antal Mádl, dem Vorsitzenden des Wissenschaftlichen Beirats — gelungen, die lange geforderte neue Lenau-Ausgabe endlich zu starten. Ein Vortrag über Erfahrungen bei der historisch-kritischen Gesamtausgabe Petőfis (József Kiss, Budapest), die Vorstellung der ungarischen Lenau-Bibliographie samt einem Vorschlag zur Erarbeitung der internationalen Lenau-Bibliographie (Ferenc Szász, Budapest) und vor allem der grundlegende Vortrag Mádls selbst über das Konzept einer künftigen Ausgabe verdeutlichten manche der zu lösenden Probleme und Aufgaben. Die Arbeit, die hierbei zu leisten sein wird, ist beträchtlich, und die zu überwindenden Schwierigkeiten, die sich abzeichnen, nicht gering. Aber der Anfang ist gemacht, und die Gewißheit, daß erfahrene Philologen aus Ungarn, Österreich, Polen, der BRD und der DDR mitarbeiten werden, daß ein Kuratorium und ein Herausgebergremium seine Kräfte für die Verwirklichung dieses Plans einsetzt, daß wissenschaftliche Institutionen der beteiligten Länder helfen werden, der ungarische Akademie-Verlag den Druck und Antal Mádl mit seiner Kraft und Autorität als Vorsitzender des wissenschaftlichen Beirats die Gesamtleitung der Ausgabe übernehmen werden, dürfte auch die Skeptiker ermutigen. Bis Mitte der achtziger Jahre soll die Ausgabe fertig vorliegen, fortlaufend ergänzt durch eine Museums-Reihe, die neben einer vollständigen internationalen Bibliographie, Vertonungen lenauscher Werke, Bildmaterial, Wirkungsgeschichte usf. dokumentiert. Am Ende wird mehr als nur eine textlich verbesserte und vermehrte sowie sorgfältig kommentierte Ausgabe für eine neue Generation von Lenau-Lesern vorliegen. Im Zuge der Ausarbeitung werden viele Fragen auftauchen, und es ist mit Sicherheit zu erwarten, daß nicht allein die Lenau-Forschung, sondern das wissenschaftliche Leben der Gesellschaft überhaupt und speziell ihre Jahrestagungen von dorther viele Impulse empfangen.

*Helmut Brandt*
(Jena, DDR)

# Miklós Szabolcsi: Érik a fény. (József Attila élete és pályája 1923—1927)

## Das Licht reift heran. Das Leben und Schaffen von Attila József in den Jahren 1923—1927

Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1977. 802 S.

1. Wer dieses Buch von Miklós Szabolcsi rezensieren will, das der zweite Band der monumental angelegten Darstellung von Leben und Schaffen Attila Józsefs ist, muß einigen wichtigen prinzipiellen und theoretischen Grundfragen der zeitgenössischen Literaturgeschichtsschreibung Rechnung tragen.

Es ist ein Gemeinplatz zu sagen, daß die im 19. Jahrhundert entstandene Monographieform nicht mehr den heutigen Ansprüchen der Fachwissenschaft entspricht. Diese war nämlich meist ausschließlich oder erstrangig biographischen Charakters und Interesses, die alle mit dem konkreten Autor zusammenhängenden Angaben und Kenntnisse zusammenzutragen und sie mit Hilfe der psychologischen Ursächlichkeit in den Zeitrahmen der Biographie einzubauen bestrebt war. Selbst wenn die Werke analysiert wurden, betrachtete man sie in der Regel *als die Laufbahn des Schriftstellers beleuchtende, seine Persönlichkeit vorstellende und erklärende Faktoren.* Auch die, die über diese Ziele hinausschritten, wollten in den Werken fast immer die *direkte* Darstellung der Gedanken- und Erlebniswelt der Epoche, die *direkte* Widerspiegelung der einzelnen Weltanschauungen und die *direkte* Abbildung der Gesellschaft des Schriftstellers finden.

Die Werke wurden nicht als Schöpfungen mit relativ selbständigem Prinzip und mit relativ selbständigen Regelmäßigkeiten betrachtet, die in der Komplexität des Lebens, in der Vollständigkeit der Lebenswerte nur durch das Ästhetische als Vorbilder für etwas, als Argumente für oder gegen etwas dienen können. Die drei im 19. Jahrhundert entstandenen literaturgeschichtlichen Richtungen, die romantische, die positivistische und die geistesgeschichtliche, teilten, natürlich bei weitem nicht auf die gleiche Art und Weise, diese Eigenschaft. So war zum Beispiel eigentlich auch Gundolf bestrebt, den Prozeß, die Beschaffenheit und die Qualität der Herausbildung der Persönlichkeit aus den Werken herauszulesen und zu abstrahieren, obwohl er in seinen Monographien mit diesem Verfahren zu brechen glaubte. Es entstanden natürlich auch ästhetische Werkanalysen im engeren Sinne des Wortes, doch nur äußerst selten und fast nie im Rahmen von biographischen Monographien.

Im ersten Drittel unseres Jahrhunderts unternahm die phänomenologische Richtung den Versuch, diese Lage grundsätzlich zu ändern. Sie lenkte die Aufmerksamkeit auf die Bedeutung des Werkes, und wollte diese ausschließlich aus der Gesamtheit solcher Bestandteile des Werkes, die für den Betrachter wichtig und hauptsächlich sprachliche Bestandteile waren, herausarbeiten. Diese Tendenz, die mit den russischen Formalisten und mit dem Namen R. Ingardens verbunden ist, war für die immanente analytische Deutung äußerst nutzbringend, ihre Ergebnisse waren aber auf dem Gebiet der historischen Interpretation nur schwer anwendbar. Nicht nur deshalb, weil es auf diese Weise nur schwer möglich oder fast unmöglich war, die Werke *von den subjektiven Gegebenheiten des Betrachters* und *vom historischen Moment der Analyse* zu abstrahieren und im Prozeß der objektiven Entwicklungsgeschichte zu ergreifen und einzuordnen, sondern auch deshalb, weil die Werke *außer der Sprache aus fast jedem historischen Kontext* sozusagen ausgeschlossen waren. Dementsprechend konnten sie durch die Mediatoren, durch die gegenseitig verbindenden Mittler der Gesellschafts- und Kulturgeschichte weder in der eigenen Laufbahn noch in der Literaturentwicklung kaum an andere Richtungen und Lebenswerke angeschlossen werden. Zwar trifft es zu, daß die vollständige Erhellung der sprachlichen Mittel im *Prinzip* alle bezüglichen und erklärenden

Momente der Kultur- und Gesellschaftsgeschichte beinhalten kann, *in der Praxis* ist das aber fast undurchführbar. Man würde dadurch die Bedeutungen und ihre historischen Verknüpfungen zerstören, sie in sprachlich-sprachgeschichtlich-sprachpsychologische Erörterungen, in erkenntnistheoretische *und* sprachliche, ontholologische *und* sprachliche, geschichtsphilosophische *und* sprachliche, gesellschaftsgeschichtliche *und* sprachliche (usw.) Konfrontationen auflösen. Die Beschreibung der Entwicklung, des Prozesses wäre dadurch unmöglich, unverfolgbar gemacht. Charakteristischerweise haben die erwähnten Richtungen auf die Verwirklichung dieser *prinzipiellen* Möglichkeit zum größten Teil auch verzichtet, und sind bei dem Hermetismus der sprachlich-begrifflichen Bedeutungsanalyse im engeren Sinne des Wortes geblieben.

Dies kann jedoch bei weitem nicht bedeuten, daß die Literaturgeschichte hie und da keine so vollständige, auch die Gesellschaftsgeschichte beinhaltende sprachlich-semantische Annäherung unternehmen dürfte oder gar müßte. Es ist nämlich allgemein festzustellen, daß das Wesen jedes literarischen Werkes als ein sich in der Sprache verwirklichendes, durch die Sprache aufnehmbares Wesen immer wieder im Denken unserer Literaturforscher erblaßt. Auch die Erscheinungen, die aus den anderen Sphären des Lebens in das Werk einfließen und durch Mediatoren anderen Sphären auf dem Empfänger ausstrahlen, sind letzten Endes, wenn auch indirekt, mit der Sprache verbunden, ihr untergeordnet, und heben mit ihrem *Fehlen* sogar ihre Wichtigkeit hervor (Bewegungskultur, Pantomime, Theaterbild, visionäre Mittel; die konkrete historische Athmosphäre, positionsassoziativer Raum, polisemantische, gesellschaftliche Erwartungen und Intuitionen; situative Ergänzungen, symbolhafte Übertragungen, Persönlichkeitsausstrahlungen usw., usf.).

Kein Zweig der marxistischen Literaturwissenschaft kann auf die wirkliche Geschichtlichkeit im gesellschaftlichen Sinne verzichten. Besonders zu betonen ist sie in einer Monographie über einen Dichter, dessen Biographie und schöpferische Laufbahn noch nicht wirklich wissenschaftlich geschrieben wurden. Besonders, wenn dieser Dichter in einer Periode der Entwicklungsgeschichte seiner Literatur eine neue Epoche bedeutet und eine zentrale Stellung einnimmt. Sowohl die intensive als auch die extensive Notwendigkeit der Geschichtlichkeit wird durch die Tatsache gesteigert, daß die Ereignisse dieses Lebens in einem soziologischen Bereich abgelaufen sind, dessen Kulturgeschichte größtenteils noch nicht erschlossen ist. Und in einem kulturgeschichtlichen Bereich, von dessen historischer Soziologie — von der Welt des schöpferischen Intellektuellen, der aus der untersten Schicht des Proletariats aufbrach und sich ständig darauf berief — wir nur wenige Kenntnisse haben.

Der marxistische Literaturgeschichtsschreiber, Biographieautor, Lebensbahndarsteller kann natürlich nicht zu den Methoden seiner Vorfahren des 19. Jahrhunderst, welcher Richtung sie auch angehören, zurückkehren, und kann nicht auf die analytische Interpretation der Werke und des Lebenswerks, sowie auf die mit ihrer Hilfe unternommene Auswahl der charakteristischen und repräsentativen Werke verzichten. Dabei muß er auf der Grundlage der relativen Autonomie der ästhetischen Erscheinungen und Werte stehen. Auf der Grundlage der *relativen Autonomie*, d.h., er muß die in die anderen Grundbereiche und -werte des Lebens hinübertragenden, an- und einpassenden Verfahren finden.

2. Miklós Szabolcsi war sich der Schwierigkeiten seiner Aufgabe bewußt, die noch durch die Tatsache kompliziert gemacht wurden, daß das Verhältnis seines Helden zu der in die Illegalität gezwungenen Kommunistischen Partei und zu ihrer Kulturauffassung eigentlich bis heute noch nicht ausreichend geklärt ist. Szabolcsi trug ein riesiges Material zu jedem Lebensmoment und Lebensbereich, zur Entstehung, zum Schicksal und zur Interpretation eines jeden Werkes des Dichters zusammen. Das war zwar auch für den ersten Band seines Werkes charakteristisch, die Erfordernis der ästhetischen Autonomie konnte aber dort grundsätzlich noch keine so große Rolle spielen wie hier. Dort konnte er dem traditionellen Verlauf der Biographie noch besser folgen. Hier mußte er sich aber an jenen Grundsatz halten, daß man Biographien wegen der Werke schreibt, und sich nicht der Biographie zuliebe mit den Werken befaßt.

Er war bestrebt, kontinuierlich und *mit gleichzeitig verwendeter zweiseitiger Annäherung* seiner Aufgabe zu entsprechen. Einerseits versuchte er die in den Werken vorhandenen Resonanzen jeder psychologisch wesentlichen biographischen und den Dichter betreffenden zeitgeschichtlichen Tatsache aufzuspüren. Andererseits und *gleichzeitig* wollte er aber von jedem charakteristischen Element eines jeden Werkes zu irgendeinem suggerierenden Moment der Biographie und der Zeitgeschichten zurückgelangen. Mit dieser gegensätzlich gerichteten parallelen Bewegung verfolgte er diese

vier wichtigen, formenden Jahre seines Helden, von der Bewirtung im Schloß in Hatvan bis zur Kontaktaufnahme mit der Wiener Emigration, vom Aufenthalt in Lainz bis zu seiner Etappe in Paris und Südfrankreich.

Szabolcsi verfügt über eine besonders gute Fertigkeit, die psychologische Athmosphäre charakteristischer soziologischer und kulturgeschichtlicher Milieus zu ergreifen. Innerhalb dieses Problems versteht er es ausgezeichnet, die sich daraus ergebenden Verhaltensunterschiede der Menschen und die Verhältniskonsequenzen dieser Unterschiedswahrnehmungen zu zeigen. Ein einziges Beispiel dafür sei in zwei Bereichen und zwei Beziehungen hervorgehoben.

Der Band veranschaulicht ausgezeichnet die ideologisch-gedankliche Frühreife von Attila József, die, sowohl wegen der großen Schichtunterschiede aber als auch in sich, mit der Schwerfälligkeit, dem Widerwillen und Fehlen der Aneignung, oder eher vielleicht des Ernstnehmens der Umgangsformen, der Annäherungsformen und der Selbstverwirklichungsmöglichkeiten verbunden war. Und auf diese Weise mit dem Gefühl einer gewissen Ungeschicktheit vor sich selbst und mit dem Eindruck dieser Ungeschicktheit vor anderen. Und sogar mit dem Anschein eines gewissen Gegensatzes zwischen seiner geistlichen Überentwickeltheit und der Retardiertheit seiner Lebensgestaltungsfertigkeit. Das verspürte er selbst, daran litt er selbst schon damals. Und er war immer sehr erfreut, wenn er in eine sozusagen »auflösende« Umgebung geriet, wo der eine nicht der Gegenstand des Erstaunens, und der andere nicht der der peinlichen Unruhe war. In der leicht konditoreiartigen, exkursionellen und sogar exterritoriellen Athmosphäre der bürgerlichen Emigration in Lainz, deren objektive Beschreibung gut von der unvoreingenommenen Sachlichkeit Szabolcsis zeugt, schwingen sich sein Geist, wie auch seine puerile Verspieltheit genauso frei empor, wie während der »Sommerfrische« in Südfrankreich in einem rustisch-primitiven Milieu.

Wenn er aber verspürt, daß etwas, was für ihn die spontane Freude der vernunftgemäßen Freiheit und Natürlichkeit ist, anderen nur eine gelegenheitliche oder gerade mit ihm spielende Rolle bedeutet, d.h., wenn er das Fehlen seiner Anpassungsfähigkeit bemerkt, ist er zutiefst verstimmt. Es ist wohl gerade deshalb so, daß er von seinen zwei Schwestern die vielleicht weniger menschliche, aber über eine entwickelte Anpassungsfähigkeit verfügende Jolán vielleicht nicht mehr liebt als eher bewundert und als Stützpunkt an ihr hängt. Während wir derartige suggerierende Beschreibungen des Bandes lesen, tauchen — ihre Schatten bereits vorauswerfend — die immer wieder zurückkehrenden bitteren Spätverse auf: »Siehe, mit fünfeinhalb Kilo brachte mich meine Mutter zur Welt/, aber sie vertrug es. Deshalb muß ich abwarten, / der mich von hier nimmt und mich verträgt, / damit ich auf dieser Welt frei werde«, oder: »So lebte ich und war ich umsonst, / kann ich selber feststellen. / Man hielt mich zum Narren.«

Der größte Wert des Buches von Szabolcsi ist vielleicht, daß er die riesige Menge der den Dichter betreffenden verschiedensten Einflüsse nicht nur zusammenträgt, sondern sie mit dem erwähnten *Parallelismus mit doppelter Bewegung* so konfrontiert, daß alle auf den Charakter, des Werkes hinweisen. Wir erhalten nämlich nicht nur die Entwicklungsbeschreibung der Psychologie des Dichters detailliert, aus Tausend Tatsachen zusammengestellt. Die Evolution seiner Ideen, die Gestaltung seines Weltbildes, die Abänderung seiner Mittel, das Heranreifen seiner Poetik, die volle Entfaltung seiner Poesieauffassung, sein Platzsuchen im literarischen Leben, seine Orientierung nach den Richtungen erhalten alle ihren Platz, wobei sie einander durchdringen und kreuzen, damit die Gestaltung des Lebenswerks in die Schnittpunkte kommt. Wie besinnend Paris mit seinem Surrealismus und sprudelnden öffentlichen Leben auf ihn wirkte, wie anregend die Wiener Emigration mit ihren bald erlöschenden, bald aufflammenden Hoffnungen ihn beeinflußte, welch widerstrebendes Gefühl die Erstarrung des Konservativismus der heimatlichen Welt in ihm erweckte — das alles wird behandelt. Genauso wie die erwünschten Lieben und die sich verwirklichenden Freundschaften sowie der Einfluß der reproduzierbaren Lektüren und der diesen folgenden Debatten.

Für eine solche Deutung einzelner Werke finden wir hier zwar noch nicht viele Beispiele, die die in der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Lyrik repräsentativ gewordenen Typen des Dichters und die klassisch gewordenen Arten seiner Schaffensmethode vorstellen würden. Das ist verständlich. Obwohl diese Periode von Attila József bereits sehr reiche und ausgezeichnete Früchte trägt, ist sie trotzdem noch nicht die Epoche der wirklich großen Gedichte. Wenn wir in Verbindung mit Szabolcsis Buch ein Mangelgefühl haben, kann dies gerade in diesem Problemkreis gefunden werden. In dem noch nicht Bedeutenden,

aber bereits Bezeichnenden, in dem noch nicht Repräsentativen, aber bereits Charakteristischen, in dem noch nicht Einmaligen, aber bereits Neuartigen wäre es vielleicht nicht verfehlt gewesen, die Merkmale, die Konturen der späteren repräsentativen großen Typen nachdrücklicher zu prognostifizieren. Die übliche Gefahr der nach Bänden getrennt geschriebenen und getrennt herausgegebenen Biographien und Lebenswerkbeschreibungen droht auch hier. Man hat den Eindruck, daß die Schlußfolgerungen hinsichtlich der endgültigen Konklusionen nicht immer und nicht deutlich genug gezogen werden können. Beim Entstehen des früheren Bandes war es noch nicht immer eindeutig, welchen endgültigen Schlußfolgerungen die in ihnen ausgeführten Tatsachen dienen. Und dies kann sowohl zur Ausweitung des Umfangs, als auch zu einer gewissen Lockerheit der Struktur beitragen. Die Abgeklärtheit der Endziele und Endwerte selektiert immer stark und baut immer ein starkes logisches Netz aus.

Dieses riesige Material, das Szabolcsi hier mit einer bewunderungswerten forscherischen Leidenschaft zusammengestellt hat, ist auch in sich eine gut benutzbare, mit ausgezeichneter Empfindlichkeit gesammelte historische Schatzkammer von unschätzbarem Wert. Mehr pointiert könnten wir sagen: Zur Darstellung des Schaffens von Attila József hat Miklós Szabolcsi — weil er es tun mußte — die Kulturgeschichte der Literatur zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen und das am wenigsten bearbeitete Segment dieser Kulturgeschichte geschrieben. Eine schärfer umrissene Vorwegnahme der poesiegeschichtlichen und ästhetischen Endziel würde sein Werk vielleicht proportioneller, erfaßbarer machen. Welch ein unersetzbarer Verlust wäre es für die anderen Forscher der Epoche jedoch, wenn dieses vorzüglich nutzbare kulturgeschichtliche Material literarischer Orientierung nicht zur Verfügung stünde.

Szabolcsi übernahm eine große Aufgabe, als er die Modernisierung der unentbehrlichen Gattung der schriftstellerischen Biographie, der Beschreibung der schöpferischen Laufbahn mit marxistischer Geschichtlichkeit in Angriff nahm, wobei er *die relative ästhetische Autonomie* nicht nur respektierte, sondern *sie direkt in den Mittelpunkt stellte*. Der Erfolg seines Unternehmens wird sich wahrscheinlich in seinen die großen Werke und die große Epoche des Dichters behandelnden Bänden in seiner Komplexität zeigen. Jedoch kann er seine Leser bereits jetzt ausreichend davon überzeugen. In der doppelbahnigen parallelen Bearbeitung fand er einen sicheren Weg von den Lebensfakten zu den Werken, von den Werken hin zu den Lebensfakten, um den Fallen sowohl der biographischen Werkanalyse vom Typ »des 19. Jahrhunderts«, als auch der hermetischen Deutung »des 20. Jahrhunderts« auszuweichen, dies aber so, daß er die unentbehrlichen Traditionen der ersteren und die unumgänglich notwendigen Beiträge der letzteren auf moderne Art und Weise nutzt.

*Béla G. Németh*

## Sur Miklós Tótfalusi Kis, à l'occasion de la parution de la monographie de Zsigmond Jákó

L'amour de la lettre est l'amour de l'humanisme. Traîner le livre dans la boue, c'est profaner la culture humaine. Le témoignage des carrières brisées — avant leur accomplissement — par la méchanceté, la stupidité et la mesquinerie devient, tout comme le livre désembourbé, héritage pour la postérité. Nous avons suffisamment de leçons à tirer de notre passé jalonné du sort tragique entre autres de ceux, nombreux, qui devinrent martyre de la lutte menée pour la cause du livre, de la parole humaine. Nous pouvons nous instruire par la vie de Miklós Tótfalusi Kis (1650—1702), témoignage pour le vrai, pour l'apothéose d'un être humilié et pour sa subsistance.

A son époque, seuls les plus éminents reconnurent son importance, tel Ferenc Pápai Páriz (1649—1716), savant universel et auteur de dictionnaires, Miklós Bethlen (1642—1716), mémorialiste, une des figures les plus marquantes de l'époque et Péter Bod (1712—1769), inspirateur de ce titre suggérant la sûreté et la renaissance: *Erdélyi féniksz*. (Phénix de Transylvanie.) Cela contribua déjà à l'égarement de l'héritage: l'exemplaire original du poème funèbre de Ferenc Pápai Páriz qui est le panorama poétique de l'histoire de l'imprimerie de l'époque, écrit pour la mort de Miklós Tótfalusi Kis, était inconnu déjà au siècle précédent. C'est une chance que l'érudit Péter Bod (1712—1769) conserva

et publia à temps l'œuvre intitulée *Életnek könyve* (Livre de la vie).

Au cours des siècles, le sort de Tótfalusi devint le symbole de l'homme qui, à travers une carrière tragique dont le résultat n'en survécut pas moins pour la postérité, fait preuve du sens de la bataille. C'est pour cette raison qu'il est non seulement une figure riche de la recherche scientifique, mais encore inspirateur d'œuvres littéraires, pour ne citer que le roman biographique *A betű mestere* (Le maître des caractères) d'Andor Németh (1891—1953) ou la magnifique pièce de théâtre *Eklézsia-megkövetés* (La propitiation de l'Eglise) de László Németh (1901—1974).

En feuilletant l'anthologie de Zsigmond Jákó, on ne peut pas s'empêcher de donner un coup d'œil rétrospectif sur les antécédants. L'œuvre de Miklós Tótfalusi Kis intitulée *Mentség* (Justification) fut mainte fois éditée par les amateurs hongrois et étrangers de l'histoire de la civilisation du XVII[e] siècle. Citons en guise de rappel l'histoire de la fameuse édition Kner de Gyoma. L'imprimeur de sort tragique, Imre Kner, né à Gyoma vit dans le cours de vie mouvementé de Tótfalusi l'exemple du sien propre. L'inspirateur de cette édition digne de son idéal et l'un des premiers à en avoir fait l'éloge fut Zoltán Kodály. Nous citons ses lignes encourageantes d'une de ses lettres adressées à Imre Kner: « Quand je pense qu'il faut encore un peu de papier et du travail. . . et voilà prêt par ex. la Justification de Misztótfalusi faite à partir d'un seul exemplaire inaccessible, pour l'instruction de beaucoup de gens. » L'édition de 1940 de *Mentség* (Justification) — avec la postface de Gábor Tolnai — devint «pendant les années fatales» un acte politique, de même que l'évocation des figures oubliées de l'ancienne littérature hongroise, comme l'édition par Gábor Gaál d'Europica varietas de Márton Szepsi Csombor, premier journal de voyage en langue hongroise.

La foule des études littéraires et d'histoire de l'art tenta de rendre justice — même si ce fut après de long siècles — à la cause de Miklós Tótfalusi Kis. Il suffit de prendre comme exemple la dernière monographie (*Tótfalusi Kis Miklós. A betűművész és tipográfus.* — Miklós Tótfalusi Kis. Artiste des caractères et typographe.), le manuel d'une présentation hors de pair de l'histoire de l'imprimerie hongroise, preuve d'une sûreté professionnelle totale, travail de niveau artistique de György Haiman. Le but de György Haiman est la réhabilitation de Miklós Tótfalusi Kis dans l'histoire de l'imprimerie. En s'appuyant sur le grand trésor de facsimilés des imprimés de Tótfalusi et avec l'analyse soigneuse et circonspecte de l'activité de l'imprimeur et typographe, György Haiman indique sa place d'une main sûre au front des imprimeurs européens de son époque. Dans son livre édité en anglais, Haiman résume l'importance de Tótfalusi dans l'histoire de l'imprimerie de la manière suivante: « Son art d'imprimeur fait partie intégrante de l'histoire d'environ cinq cents ans de la lettre imprimée dont il fut non seulement le simple ouvrier, mais il fit également mûrir des changements et encouragea l'évolution ». Voilà l'avis du spécialiste de l'histoire de l'imprimerie sur cet imprimeur. Que d'approches et d'appréciations demandent encore la vie et l'œuvre de Tótfalusi. Naturellement, la majorité des chercheurs est empoignée par le tragique de ce sort humain. La vie de Tótfalusi pleine d'ombres, de lumières, de contrastes et d'oppositions fatales ne laissa pas indifférents même les plus exigents du métier, puisqu'à la suite ou malgré les contraintes, cet imprimeur et éditeur atteignit le niveau qui lui vaut, même après des siècles, une place dans l'avant-garde des personnalités de l'histoire hongroise et internationale du livre. Les débuts de la carrière de Tótfalusi ne manquèrent pas de succès, et, outre son talent et son application, il fut aidé dans son ascension de météore par les conditions également. L'appui protecteur, l'amitié de Ferenc Pápai Páriz, l'éducation éminente de Kolozsvár lui permirent de faire à Amsterdam, un des centres de l'imprimerie et de l'édition de livres, les premiers pas vers le métier de ses rêves. L'aide et l'appui extérieurs se terminèrent là. Tout ce qui suivit, fut le résultat du talent et du dévouement de Tótfalusi. Grâce au niveau qu'il atteignit de sa propre force à Amsterdam, il fut non seulement le disciple des célèbres imprimeurs hollandais, mais représentait une certaine concurrence pour eux. Ayant appris toutes les ficelles du métier d'imprimeur, il devint non pas le maître, mais l'artiste de l'impression. Il se tourna avec prédilection vers les exotiques, peu connus. C'est ainsi qu'il fut le créateur des imprimeries géorgienne et arménienne. Dans une de ses lettres, Jan Leusden, professeur d'hébreu à l'université d'Utrecht, écrivit à Tótfalusi le passage ci-dessous qu'il reprend fièrement dans son autobiographie: « Dicebant te superare omnes Belgas in arte fusoria et superoria. Tuus olim magister conquirebatur, te sibi panem eripere. Praeteribant typographi ipsius aedes et te quarebant, qui literas sculpi volebant. » L'atelier d'Amsterdam qu'il fit fleurir et son talent rapportèrent

leur fruit sur le plan matériel aussi, ce qui fut bien nécessaire, car Tótfalusi ne fut pas envoyé en Hollande par ses protecteurs uniquement pour faire l'apprentissage de l'imprimerie, mais en vue d'y imprimer la traduction hongroise de la Bible. Cependant, les sources financières de la protection finirent par se tarir, et l'affaire eut plus d'opposants que de promoteurs. C'est dans ces conditions-là, sans demande, sans appui, malgré réprobation générale que ce typographe entreprit de réaliser à ses propres frais, au prix de grands efforts le but primitif de son voyage d'étude, c'est-à-dire d'imprimer la Bible dans la traduction de Gáspár Károli. Outre l'impression, il fit également des remarques exégétiques dans le texte de la Bible. Il ignora que, par là, il eut barré à lui-même tous les chemins vers les grandes puissances de la Transylvanie. Dans la situation politique changée, l'édition de la Bible imprimée par Tótfalusi devint un facteur politique et sa façon d'agir arbitraire, ainsi que ses remarques exégétiques stigmatisèrent Tótfalusi aux yeux des aristocrates conservateurs de la Transylvanie décadente.

Tótfalusi revint quand même. Il quitta l'imprimerie d'Amsterdam, source de la reconnaissance financière, morale et marquée par l'assurance professionnelle, pour retourner à sa patrie, pour sa patrie, la Transylvanie. Si, jusque-là, Tótfalusi prouva qu'il était un excellent imprimeur, à partir de ce temps-là, c'est sa réputation d'homme vrai, de combattant de sa patrie et d'animateur culturel progressiste qu'il devait défendre. La petitesse des gens de son entourage en Transylvanie entrava la réalisation de ses projets de large envergure, les conditions économiques de la Transylvanie en décadence mirent un empêchement au développement et à l'existence du travail de l'imprimerie. Pourtant, ce que l'objectif de Tótfalusi prétend, ce n'est pas autre chose que de vouloir la floraison de la culture de la langue maternelle et de faire des hommes des amateurs de la lecture. Ainsi, c'est à lui que l'on doit le fait qui est unique depuis, notamment l'impression d'un abécédaire à ses propres frais, pour les pauvres. Nous pouvons rattacher son programme culturel à celui de János Apáczai Csere (1625—1659). Le point central de la lutte de tous les deux fut l'objectif — l'enseignement en la langue maternelle — qui ne parvint à la proximité de la réalisation qu'après 150 années, aux assemblées législatives de l'ère des réformes.

Lors de l'impression, il fit attention à beaucoup de facteurs, il résuma ses réformes orthographiques dans sa thèse écrite à la défense de l'édition de la Bible (Apologica bibliorum, Kolozsvár, 1697.). En analysant l'activité de Tótfalusi déployée pour le culte de la langue, István Szathmári constate que son travail joua un rôle important dans la formation de notre orthographe actuelle et dans la création de la langue littéraire unifiée. (István Szathmári: Bemühungen um die Sprachpflege — Efforts pour le culte de langue de Miklós Tótfalusi Kis. Acta Litteraria Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Tom. 13. 493—501). Mais ses conditions de travail devinrent toujours plus difficiles. Toutes les portes sont fermées pour ce typographe érudit, naturalisé hollandais, pays d'esprit ouvert à la pensée philosophique. Son travail, sa science ne sont pas reconnus, et il est même humilié dans ses droits humains. On ne me prend pas pour un savant, écrit-il, mais pour un ferronnier méprisé. Obligé, vers la fin de sa vie, à la révocation de ses thèses publiées par écrit, humilié spirituellement, il mourut, la santé ébranlée par les souffrances et atteint d'une paralysie totale de quelques années. Cet imprimeur, ruiné et humilié aurait pu dépasser en Transylvanie ses prédécesseurs, les Elzevirs, les Manutius.

Voilà le destin qui ne laisse pas de tenir en éveil à l'heure actuelle encore l'intérêt des chercheurs. La lecture de son œuvre de plaidoirie *Mentség* (Justification) nous bouleverse de nouveau après des siècles et nous oblige à lui rendre justice. C'est dans ce but que fut écrite l'anthologie de Zsigmond Jákó. L'objectif de l'étude préambulaire du volume est de résumer — conformément au sous-titre de l'ouvrage *Patrimoine de Miklós Misztótfalusi Kis* — les résultats obtenus jusqu'à présent par la recherche sur Tótfalusi, et de rectifier les opinions erronnées. Mais ce n'est pas le seul but. Ce qui excite l'auteur, c'est la question de savoir ce qui nous fait voir *le typographe érudit* comme un homme « vif, en chair et en os » après de long siècles. Quel est le surplus qui le distingue de ses prédécesseurs et fait de lui un exemple en guise d'instruction pour la postérité. C'est Jákó qui nous donne la réponse à la question: « nous-mêmes nous sentons l'insulte faite aux connaissances professionnelles et au travail laborieux, tout comme la collision de l'intelligence créatrice et de la conscience de la responsabilité intellectuelle ». C'est de cette façon que s'approche Jákó de Tótfalusi, donne une appréciation justicière dans tous les domaines de l'activité de l'imprimeur, de l'écrivain, du puriste en justifiant sa carrière tragique.

C'est aussi pour cela que le résumé de Jákó comble une grande lacune, car il ne distingue pas la notion d'artiste de celle d'écrivain, de même que le sort humain, inspirateur d'activités littéraires de celui de thèmes de romans. C'est la connaissance étendue de Jakó qui lui permet de retracer le portrait de Tótfalusi, en faisant la synthèse de l'habileté professionnelle proprement dite et de l'humanisme. Il ne le dit pas explicitement, mais il suit très clairement de sa conception qu'en la figure de Tótfalusi il voulut évoquer l'homme entier du XVII[e] siècle et nous donner par l'analyse approfondie de son activité l'exemple valable encore aujourd'hui.

L'anthologie de Zsigmond Jákó comble une grande lacune, car elle fournit une vue synoptique, fait connaître les récents résultats et désigne les tâches futures de la recherche. La structure de sa composition est également examplaire: après la réédition de l'étude préambulaire et de *Mentség* (Justification) elle nous présente des morceaux choisis des œuvres de Tótfalusi, tandis que le chapitre intitulé *Levelek és irományok* (Lettres et écrits) documentent le succès le plus riche obtenu jusqu'à présent dans la recherche archivistiques concernant Tótfalusi. Dans l'évocation du patrimoine, ce sont le vers d'adieu de Pápai Páriz et la charte de décès exposée dans l'église de la rue Farkas à Kolozsvár qui facilitent l'évocation du patrimoine. Il faudrait parler séparément du chapitre de la bibliographie et des notes explicatives. Zsigmond Jakó composa un répertoire bibliographique complet sur Tótfalusi. Ses notes, ses gloses sont presque du même niveau que les publications critiques. A l'égard de l'illustration, son volume ne peut pas être naturellement aussi riche que celui de György Haiman, bien qu'il comprenne évidemment les photocopies et les facsimilés des imprimés. Il n'y a qu'une seule question qui puisse être l'objet de discussion avec Zsigmond Jákó, et c'est le problème de l'usage du nom. Il semble que, concernant l'usage du nom de Tótfalusi, il n'y ait pas à l'heure actuelle d'opinion publique unanime, et la littérature de la question emploie souvent Misztótfalusi et aussi M. Tótfalusi. Zsigmond Jakó lui-même emploie Misztótfalusi quoique Gábor Tolnai prouvât — il y en a plus de trois décennies — avec des arguments irréfutables la justesse de l'emploi de lavariante Tótfalusi (T. G.: Tótfalusi vagy Misztótfalusi? It, 1942. 28—30.). Pour démontrer l'exactitude de ce point de vue, János Herpei affirma que l'utilisation du nom incorrect se ramenait à la conception du professeur Lajos Dézsi, premier monographe de Tótfalusi, et cette position se transmit par le truchement des disciples à la postérité. (H. J.: Hogy nevezzük Tótfalusi Kis Miklóst? Comment doit être nommé Miklós Tótfalusi Kis? Magyar Könyvszemle, 1962. 57—79.)

C'est un ouvrage captivant que le livre Zsigmond Jakó. Il est à la fois une lecture difficile. Le lecteur doit connaître les plus récents résultats de la recherche, — auxquels il reçoit de Jakó pour base d'orientation une vaste bibliographie indicatrice — moyen unique, exempt de polémique ouverte, d'être au courant des résultats de la recherche sur Tótfalusi. La critique de l'histoire typographique aura la tâche d'apprécier tout ce que Zsigmond Jakó offre dans le domaine professionnel dit restreint. Qu'il nous soit permis de souligner deux exemples seulement dont l'un est une analyse sur les débuts de la stéréotypie. Contrairement à la prise de position répandue dans la littérature de la question, l'analyse situe l'application de la stéréotypie — sur la base des recherches archivistiques de Gyula Boné effectuées en Hollande — un demi-siècle plus tôt et range Miklós Tótfalusi Kis parmi les connaisseurs ou du moins initiateurs des innovations de l'imprimerie. Pour ce qui est des autres tâches à accomplir de la recherche, Jakó écrit que « les examens complémentaires à effectuer sur les débuts de la stéréotypie constituent l'intérêt primordial de l'histoire de la typographie hongroise. Ils permettront de démontrer que Miklós Tótfalusi Kis fut non seulement un participant important à la rénovation de l'imprimerie européenne du XVII[e] siècle, mais aussi un partisan ouvert aux efforts les plus modernes de la technique typographique. Le rêve audacieux de Misztótfalusi Kis s'accomplit, et de nouveaux liens joignent l'histoire typographique hongroise à l'universelle.»

L'autre problème qui ne devrait pas être réservé aux revues spéciales est celui des caractères romains de Janson, question ouverte encore aujourd'hui, car, dans l'activité très variée de Tótfalusi, c'est cette question qui fit le plus grand écho international. Les produits « d'une modernité distinguée de l'imprimerie hollandaise » selon les termes d'Udipke furent mis en vente à Francfort et dans le monde entier par la fonderie des caractères typographiques David Stempel, sur la base des matrices originaux, achetés vers 1920 à Leipzig et refondus. Ces matrices parurent pour la première fois en 1739 sur la page spécimen de la fonderie de caractère typographiques Erhardt à Leipzig, sous le nom de « caractères hollandais », puis

en 1868 sur la page spécimen de Wilhelm Drugulin comme types de la Renaissance hollandaise ». Les caractères de gravure artistique furent longtemps attribués à Anton Janson, graveur leipsickois qui fit ses études à Amsterdam. Bien qu'en peu de temps après la refonte de Stempel, la littérature spéciale mît en doute la compétence de Janson, il ne se produisit de progrès important qu'au cours des années de 50. Harry Carter, historien oxfordien des caractères démontra au moyen d'examens approfondis, à l'aide de György Buday que le graveur contesté des types de caractères n'était autre que le hongrois Miklós Tótfalusi Kis. (Carter, Harry—Buday, George: The Origin of the Jansons Types: with a Note on Nicholas Kis. Litype Matrix 1954. 7.) L'américain Jack Werner Stauffacher aboutit également, indépendamment d'eux, au même résultat. (Janson, a definitive collection. Janson, la collection définitive. San Francisco, 1954.) Le sort des matrices de la « romaine hollandaise » sert d'apport de valeur au tragique posthume de la vie de Tótfalusi. Tótfalusi était contraint de lutter contre la malveillance et les méprises non seulement pendant sa vie, mais encore deux siècles et demie après sa mort. *Mentség* nous apprend que Tótfalusi fut un homme circonspect et prudent qui, en quittant la Hollande, laissa des matrices à Leipzig aussi, notamment juste celles de la romaine dite de Janson. Ces objets souvenir importants de son imprimerie survécurent même l'incendie des mondes du XX^e^ siècle, mais la démonstration des mérites de Tótfalusi et la refonte ne purent pas avoir lieu. La postérité étant moins circonspecte, les souvenirs irremplaçables furent mis, à la suite d'un hasard fatal, au rebout en 1970. C'est ainsi que les seuls objets souvenir de l'activité de Tótfalusi, fondeur de caractères typographiques sont les matrices à Francfort. En dehors de l'appréciation professionnelle de l'artiste des caractères et de l'imprimeur, Jakó met consciemment en relief le programme culturel de Tótfalusi, par lequel « le pauvre garçon » devient l'écrivain de l'évolution. En vue de la réalisation pratique du programme culturel, il mit tous ses efforts à éditer des œuvres qui étaient de nature à favoriser la diffusion de la culture de la langue maternelle. Nous notons encore à titre de curiosité que ce fut son imprimerie qui publia le premier livre en langue hongroise sur l'Amérique. Il mit du soin à éditer des œuvres séculières, fit paraître pour la couche lisante des livres populaires, bon marchés et de belles histoires. Quant au nombre des imprimés de caractère séculier, l'atelier de Tótfalusi dépassa de loin les imprimeries de l'époque de la Transylvanie.

L'appréciation de l'activité littéraire de Tótfalusi est un sujet de discussion qui relève de l'histoire littéraire. *Mentség*, composé de 39 points ne peut pas être rangé de manière univoque dans aucune catégorie de genre. Le flot irréfrénable des irrégularités structurelles, des éléments autobiographiques, des explications théologiques et des questions typographiques témoignent de l'état d'âme déséquilibré de l'auteur. Son style est lui aussi rude, parfois dur, hérissé d'expressions latines. Mais Zsigmond Jakó prouve de façon convaincante que, la passion de haute température, la collision du sens vif de la justice avec les expériences amères, élèvent *Mentség*, malgré ses irrégulaités intérieures, à un rang important, parmi les chapitres de la littérature autobiographique hongroise.

L'échec de Tótfalusi à la Transylvanie du XVII^e^ siècle était inévitable. Ce flambeau du progrès resta une flamme solitaire « Dans les ténèbres désespérantes du féodalisme » — pour reprendre les termes de Zsigmond Jakó. Mais, aujourd'hui encore, quand nous lisons la préface de *Mentség*: « le bien commun doit avoir la priorité sur l'individuel ! », son influence, le résultat de sa lutte lient définitivement la culture européenne avec la hongroise, et se font sentir encore aujourd'hui.

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En 1974 le Ministère des Affaires Culturelles fonda une décoration pour les spécialistes les plus éminents de l'édition de livres hongrois. Cette décoration est décernée d'année en année à des spécialistes théoriques et pratiques de l'imprimerie hongroise: historiens de l'imprimerie, dessinateurs de caractères, des typographes, bref les maîtres de la lettre. La décoration porte le nom de Miklós Tótfalusi Kis.

*Katalin S. Németh*

# Zoltán Szabó: A mai stilisztika nyelvelméleti alapjai
# Les bases théoriques linguistiques de la stylistique moderne.

Editions Dacia Kolozsvár-Napoca, 1977. 215 pp.

Grâce en premier lieu à Zoltán Szabó, Kolozsvár devint le centre des recherches stylistiques hongroises modernes d'inspiration linguistique, mais de contenu littéraire. Depuis une décennie, des travaux importants paraissent dont le trait commun est d'avoir un mérite universel dans les recherches stylistiques hongroises. Autrefois, ils servirent de bouche-trous, mais passent aujourd'hui pour des précis de stylistique. En comparaison aux recherches stylistiques nationales, dans cette école de perspectives nettement plus larges, l'adaptation aux exigences directes (les travaux peuvent être également utilisés dans l'enseignement roumain et hongrois) se compatit bien avec l'examen des sujets traditionnels et importants, tout comme avec la connaissance et l'application des méthodes linguistiques et de sciences littéraires. C'est ce qui fait que la stylistique de Kolozsvár est plus moderne que celle de Budapest, et, moins effrayante, sa modernité apporte des résultats valables pour tout le monde. La formation de ce moyen terme fut secondé par la linguistique roumaine d'une réputation mondiale bien méritée et aussi par la connaissance directe des résultats de la stylistique roumaine. Vu qu'il n'est pas question ici de connaissances acquises par oui-dire, mais de la coexistence au sein d'une science, ce rapport mutuel n'est pas simplement déclaratif, il est présent à plus d'endroits qu'on ne le pense d'après les références bibliographiques. D'ailleurs, les circonspections d'histoire de science, méthodologiques et terminologiques des chercheurs de l'école de Kolozsvár ont rarement leur fin en soi: elles ont pour but de faciliter la solution des différentes questions, ce qui, grâce surtout à leur rareté, leur vaut une appréciation positive.

Quant à l'histoire de cette école, en voilà les principales publications. János Barta — Tibor Horváth — Mária Józsa Nagy — Zoltán Szabó: *Kis magyar stilisztikák* (Précis de stylistique hongroise.) Bucarest, 1968. Irodalmi Könyvkiadó 229 p. L'ouvrage, paru dans la rédaction de Zoltán Szabó, donne à travers cinq chapitres (stylistique et style — la musique de la langue — l'emploi du vocabulaire — les constructions syntaxiques) un aperçu détaillé suivi d'analyses de textes littéraires traduits de hongrois en roumain et de roumain en hongrois. La monographie intitulée *Kis magyar stílustörténet* (Petite histoire de la stylistique hongroise) dont l'auteur unique est Zoltán Szabó, procède, après une introduction consacrée aux rapports de la stylistique et de l'histoire du style, à une présentation de l'histoire du style, allant dans l'ordre chronologique des écrits médiévaux jusqu'à l'analyse du style d'Attila József et de Lőrinc Szabó. D'autres sujets, le style d'une période de l'histoire littéraire et d'un courant littéraire, sont traités dans un recueil d'études paru dans la rédaction de Zoltán Szabó intitulé Tanulmányok a magyar impresszionista stílusról (Etudes sur le style de l'impressionisme hongrois). Bucarest, 1976. Kriterion Könyvkiadó, 181 p. Cet ouvrage comporte les articles de cinq auteurs sur le style de Kaffka, de Kosztolányi et d'Áprily, sur leurs effets de couleur, sur les traits impressionistes du style de la prose de l'art-nouveau. Les chercheurs de l'école de Kolozsvár ont édité plusieurs travaux, parmi lesquels le livre d'Erzsébet P. Dombi: *Öt érzék ezer muzsikája. A szinesztézia a Nyugat lírájában* (Univers musical des cinq sens. Synesthésie dans la poésie lyrique de Nyugat). Bucarest, 1974. Kriterion Könyvkiadó, p. 240. En son temps, ce travail était la monographie stylistique la plus cohérente, de niveau scientifique dans toute la philologie hongroise comportant une conclusion rassurante du sujet traité, ce qui est fort rare dans les travaux de stylistique. L'œuvre de Mária J. Nagy: *A szó művészete. Bevezetés a stíluselemzésbe*). (L'art de la parole. Introduction à l'analyse stylistique). Bucarest, 1975. Tudományos és Enciklopédiai Könyvkiadó, 141 p.) était, à l'origine, la réalisation d'un projet visant des buts pratiques. Nous trouvons des exemples concrets et des références à l'analyse stylistique. Cette œuvre est devenue une création théorique de grande importance: a l'aide d'une image systématique, elle fournit une théorie stylistique sur les systèmes du texte poétique qu'il traite sous l'aspect de l'opérativité et de la valeur icônique. Ce point de vue lui seul, mais plus encore les constatations concises et substantielles au sujet des différents phénomènes (tel que stylisation, subjectivité, rhétorique, les divers sortes et moyens de l'expression, le signe artistique et le modèle artistique) font de cette œuvre un vrai précis de stylistique, beaucoup plus suggestif que nos

manuels « systématiques » à la suite de sa richesse en idées et en vues originales. L'ouvrage de Jakab Máté et de Paul Schveiger paru sous le titre: *Nyelvészet és matematika* (Linguistique et mathématiques. Kolozsvár-Napoca, 1977. Dacia Könyvkiadó, 100 p.) est une preuve pour la manière complexe et étendue dont l'école de Kolozsvár s'approche de ses sujets de recherche. La brève introduction donne une image déjà connue de la linguistique structurale et de ses principales tendances. Par contre, dans la suite, la présentation de la linguistique mathématique sous un aspect nouveau, la meilleure vue d'ensemble actuelle en langue hongroise de la statistique linguistique, de la traduction automatique, de la grammaire générative et de l'étude sémiotique de la langue, est d'autant plus intéressante. Jusqu'à présent, dans les travaux des chercheurs de Kolozsvár, l'examen détaillé de la statistique linguistique de stylistique constituait une lacune que ce petit livre est destiné à combler.

Les travaux ci-dessus sont brefs. Quelques-uns sont parus dans des séries vulgarisatrices auprès l'éditeur desquelles il fallait peut-être même insister pour que le nom des collaborateurs scientifiques camouflé par les éditeurs puisse être publié. Ce sont l'ingéniosité, l'expertise et la compétence scientifique qui caractérisent tous ces travaux. Nous devons des hommages à leurs auteurs.

Le livre le plus récent de Zoltán Szabó présente des bases théoriques et, par là, il rend la tendance des chercheurs de Kolozsvár encore plus claire et plus cohérente. Ce ne sont pas les tendances modernes de la science littéraire influant sur les recherches de stylistique qu'il présente, mais celles de la linguistique moderne (et de ses branches interdisciplinaires). Donner une vue d'ensemble sur les tendances récentes de la stylistique littéraire constituerait à son tour un autre devoir à faire dont la réalisation retomberait sur des chercheurs plus compétents que ceux de Kolozsvár, mais, par suite de leur assiduité et de leur persévérance (et de l'application bien moindre de leurs collègues de Hongrie), c'est tout de même à eux de s'en charger. En suivant un ordre plutôt logique que chronologique, mais quand même intelligible, l'ouvrage traite en six grandes parties les tendances qui entrent dans ce domaine.

Au lieu de s'appuyer sur des faits d'histoire de science, l'auteur donne d'abord un aperçu du structuralisme avec, au premier plan, une vue d'ensemble des questions les plus importantes de l'analyse stylistique (telle la segmentation, les couches de l'œuvre littéraire, le style en tant que structure) en l'illustrant par des exemples tirés d'analyses. La partie suivante, consacrée à la sémiotique, parle du caractère sémiotique de l'œuvre littéraire, de la notion de la connotation et de la dénotation. Ayant inséré la partie relative à la théorie de la communication dans ce chapitre, c'est ici que Zoltán Szabó traite le style littéraire, l'encodage, le décodage, le message, ainsi que les autres phénomènes appelés facteurs de communication. Dans la partie importante suivante, il s'agit des questions de la sémantique. Ici, en dehors de brefs aperçus de l'histoire de la science, l'auteur fait en premier lieu référence à l'examen de la notion de signification et des couches sémantiques. A la base de la sémantique fonctionnelle, l'essence des rapports et les relations de signification se trouvent ainsi mis en lumière. C'est là un domaine qui suggère la poursuite des recherches aussi bien à l'auteur qu'au lecteur du livre. En dehors des recherches directes de linguistique algébrique, la partie suivante, destinée à présenter la linguistique mathématique s'occupe de toute sorte de phénomène, en prenant pour base les théories de la linguistique mathématique roumaine (surtout celles de Solomon Marcus). C'est sous ce point qu'il range la statistique stylistique et en général les questions de la théorie de l'information, disciplines parmi les questions desquelles ce sont principalement les catégories de l'expressivité et de la valeur communicative qu'aborde Zoltán Szabó. La partie suivante présente la grammaire générative. A première vue, ce domaine semble être plus éloigné de la stylistique, mais comme le livre le prouve, la compétence stylistique et la « poéticité » (n'y a-t-il pas un terme plus heureux?) sont des catégories fondamentales, et il est vraiment nécessaire de distinguer la stylistique de la structure de surface de celle de la structure profonde. Zoltán Szabó parle de cette question et fait mention des transformations également. On pourrait encore ajouter pas mal d'idées à ce chapitre, car surtout les chercheurs français ont réinterprété justement à l'aide de ces méthodes-là la plupart des notions de la rhétorique. Cela aurait pu être pris en considération dans le cas d'une stylistique prise dans un sens aussi large que la stylistique de Zoltán Szabó. Le sixième et dernier chapitre étendu s'occupe de la textologie, discipline récente de la recherche littéraire et linguistique et de plus en plus répandue aujourd'hui. A ce point, Zoltán Szabó présente la formation des nouvelles méthodes de recherche, fait allusion aux problèmes

théoriques de l'étude textologique de l'unité, de l'organisation et du contexte, et, à ce propos, examine cas par cas, ce que l'on peut considérer comme vue importante sous l'aspect de l'étude stylistique. Etant donné que les conclusions déduites de la théorie textologique donnent à la fois la somme des résultats obtenus grâce aux méthodes structuralistes, sémantiques, sémiotiques, etc., les conclusions de ce chapitre sont à la fois celles du livre entier.

Nous pouvons être d'accord avec ces conclusions finales de Zoltán Szabó selon lesquelles la stylistique moderne est plus cohérente, plus théorique et plus solide en ce qui concerne sa méthode que n'étaient ses prédécesseurs. (Les efforts de ce sens se voient prouvés dans les recherches internationales, et c'est justement là, à savoir dans la méthode que réside l'une des principales vertus de l'école de Kolozsvár. Cependant, il n'y en a pas moins d'idées éclectiques et bâclées qui voient le jour moderne. Même le présent ouvrage n'est pas toujours assez conséquent dans ces questions-là. Bien entendu, un aperçu composé de chapitres de l'histoire de la science, détaillé et articulé en vue de la bonne compréhension n'est pas identique à un système d'une logique rigoureuse, ce qui fait que dans ce domaine, la stylistique hongroise, tout comme les chercheurs de Kolozsvár ont encore d'autres possibilités et devoirs à réaliser.) Il souligne d'autre part le fait que le style est un phénomène bien plus complexe et plus large qu'on ne le pensait autrefois. C'est seulement dans la stylistique nouvelle que la question du corpus textuel entier et de la sémantique est devenue un domaine de recherche vraiment important. (Ce dont nous pouvons relever ici l'absence, c'est que Zoltán Szabó ne fait pas référence aux recherches effectuées avec les différents systèmes de communication, lesquelles recherches seraient susceptibles, par la description du style du folklore, du film ou du parler commun, de fournir des perspectives de comparaison à l'analyse du style des belles-lettres. Il ne s'agirait pas ici de faire une présentation détaillée, mais d'esquisser le côté théorique du problème dont la mise en lumière retomberait éventuellement sur toute une série d'études partielles.) Troisièmement, il énumère les avantages de la nouvelle stylistique consistant dans l'effort de dépasser, lors des analyses le segment qu'est la phrase, dans l'examen de la cohésion textuelle, dans la recherche des différents contextes corrélatifs entre eux et finalement dans la définition des phénomènes extralinguistiques de la stylistique relevant du domaine de recherche de la théorie de la performance et de la pragmatique. Zoltán Szabó délimite très justement ces domaines des recherches et pose également avec pertinence que dans ces questions, la stylistique d'aujourd'hui peut donner du nouveau, par contre il ne dit pas que la « nouvelle stylistique » ait déjà apporté tous ces résultats.

Comme son titre l'indique, ce travail traite les bases linguistiques de la stylistique, et c'estce qui fait qu'il n'a pas parlé des récents résultats de la stylistique littéraire qui sont d'ailleurs moins importants que ceux que l'on vient de voir. Nous n'en serions pas moins contents de pouvoir lire l'avis des chercheurs de Kolozsvár sur les nouveaux résultats de la stylistique littéraire hongroise, sur l'étude du style de l'époque et de la culture. De toute manière, la littérature n'a pas pu être exclue de ce livre non plus. Il n'y a pas que la majorité des exemples qui relève des belles-lettres, mais la manière de voir du livre est également valable pour les littérateurs.

Le bilan des bases de principe et de méthode de Zoltán Szabó et de l'école de stylistique hongroise de Kolozsvár une fois fait, il semble encore plus clair que l'application, l'analyse précise et la direction résolue n'expliquent leur résultats qu'en partie. Un autre facteur, non moins important, est la théorie solide, cohérente et bien pensée. C'est la présence de cette dernière qui fait que l'une des écoles les plus importantes de notre stylistique a été créée par ces chercheurs. Quelques-uns de leurs travaux sont parus en langues étrangères aussi, mais les plus importants, sont les petites monographies en langue hongroise. C'est pourquoi, la publication de leurs résultats en vue de les placer a leur rang mérité dans le monde scientifique demanderait une autre entreprise. C'est une tâche à laquelle nous devons absolument donner un appui en contrepartie des grands services qu'ils avaient rendus jusqu'à maintenant à la philologie et à la stylistique hongroises.

*Vilmos Voigt*

# Т. Мотылева: ''Война и мир'' за рубежом.

Переводы. Критика. Влияние. Москва, Советский писатель. 1978. 483.

Тамара Лазаревна Мотылева — видный советский литературовед. Она уже давно занимается творчеством Л. Н. Толстого и его восприятием за границей. Ее диссертация на соискание степени доктора филологических наук *Л. Н. Толстой во французской литературе и критике* (1947 год) уже была посвящена этой теме. Потом, в 1957 году, она выпустила книгу *О мировом значении Л. Н. Толстого*. Однако в предисловии сам автор предупреждает: «Эта работа — не повторение, а развитие, уточнение, конкретизация того, что было сказано в моей давней книге.»[1] Это замечание Тамары Мотылевой слишком скромное, потому что в ее труде впервые в самом деле обстоятельно и разносторонне освящена судьба одного из классических произведений русской литературы в контексте мировой литературы. Автор книги исходит из того, что произведения Вольтера, Байрона или Гёте уже при жизни читались в разных странах Европы, в том числе и в России, на языке оригинала, в то время как Толстой и Достоевский приобрели мировую известность (Толстой — при жизненную, Достоевский — посмертную) только после начала распространения переводов их прозы на иностранных языках.

По данным Т. Мотылевой, *Война и мир* переведена на тридцать семь иностранных языков. На английский язык она переводилась восемь раз, на немецкий — четырнадцать, на японский семь раз. Автор рецензируемой книги сверила с оригиналом свыше 20 переводов романа, изданных на французском, немецком, английском (и в Англии и в Америке), чешском, польском языках и выходивших в течение целого столетия. В первом разделе *Переводы* Т. Мотылева выдвигает тезис, «что *качество* переводов и публикаций не безразлично для судьбы великого произведения. И потому, что восприятие этого произведения читателями и критикой в какой-то мере зависит и от характера изданий. . .» (131).

Знакомство с иностранными текстами *Войны и мира* начинается с издания, стоящего у истоков всемирной славы Толстого, — с первого французского перевода, в котором роман был прочитан Ромэном Ролланом, а также и Флобером, Золя, Доде, братьями Гонкурами, Мопассаном, Анатолем Франсом. — Этот первый французский перевод, подписанный «Une Russe», принадлежал княгине Ирине Ивановне Паскевич, он был напечатан в 1879 году в Петербурге и выпущен в Париже в продажу под фирмой издательства Ашетт,[2] а потом выдержал ряд повторных изданий. В продвижении *Войны и мира* к французским читателям особенно активную роль сыграл Тургенев. По определению исследователя, в переводе И. И. Паскевич обнаруживается общая тенденция — смягчение авторских формулировок, которые кажутся ей слишком резкими, округления незаконченных предложений — с одной стороны, а с другой — дополнения, досказывания — наряду с сокращениями. Перевод И. И. Паскевич на первых порах помог удовлетворить бурный читательский интерес, и даже первое издание романа на английском языке было подготовлено на основе французского перевода — Кларой Белл.[3]

В конце XIX века в разных странах стали выходить многотомные собрания сочинений Толстого, во Франции за это дело взялось издательство Сток, а перевод выполнил Ж. В. Бинштоκ[4] (J. W. Bienstock). Французский язык для него, как, впрочем, и для И. И. Паскевич, не был родным, притом работал он явно торопливо, но бережнее обращался с иностранными текстами в произведении. Он также, как и до него Паскевич, не задумывался серьезно над своеобразием толстовского синтаксиса. Бинштоκ проявил свою самостоятельность, корректируя название книги: он написал без артиклей: *Guerre et Paix*. В такой формулировке сильнее подчеркивается обобщенный, философский смысл понятий — *война* и *мир*. По этому изданию знакомились с шедевром Л. Толстого Роже Мартен дю Гар, Жорж Дюамель, Анри Барбюс, Жан-Ришар Блок, Луи Арагон. Лучшим переводом на французском языке Т. Мотылева считает работу, выполненную Анри Монго, вышедшую в серии «Библиотека Плеяды» в 1945 году в издательстве Галлимар. Преимущество этого переводчика в том, что он француз, знающий русский язык и выступающий во вторую треть XX века. Он уже мог опереться и на достижения своей отечественной прозы, включая творчество писателей новейшего времени. На основе этих размышлений приходит Т. Мотылева к важному выводу: «после Пруста многоярусное строение толстовской фразы, ее большая протяженность и не удивляли, и не заключали в себе для переводчика столь уж непреодолимых трудностей» (42). «В XIX веке еще никто не пробовал с такой не-

посредственностью воспроизвести хаос полусознанной, спутанной внутренней речи. В XX веке подобные приемы уже перестали быть новостью, широко вошли в литературный обиход — не только у Джойса и близких к нему писателей, у которых они стали главным средством психологического анализа, но и у писателей-реалистов, которые прибегают к таким приемам в меру художественной необходимости» (43).

Из переводов на английский язык автор книги добросовестной работой считает издание Констанс Гарнет, которое ценили Джон Голсуорси, Джозеф Конрад, Кэтрин Мэнсфилд. Эрнест Хемингуэй в книге *Праздник, который всегда с тобой* вспоминает о своих русских чтениях в период жизни в Париже. Несколько дальше Хемингуэй передает свой разговор с поэтом Ивеном Шипменом: «Толстой у Констанс Гарнет пишет хорошо. — Я знаю. Я еще не забыл, сколько раз я не мог дочитать «Войну и мир» до конца, пока мне не попался перевод Констанс Гарнет. — Говорят, его можно сделать еще лучше, — сказал Ивен. — Я тоже так думаю, хоть и не знаю русского. Но переводы мы с вами знаем. И все равно, это чертовски сильный роман, по-моему, величайший на свете, и его можно перечитать без конца» (93—94). Однако автор книги лучшим английским переводом считает труд супругов Элмера и Луизы Моод. Свой перевод романа-эпопеи Мооды впервые обнародовали в 1922—1923 гг. Впоследствии он выходил не раз, и в Англии, и в США.[5]

Первое немецкое издание *Войны и мира* было подготовлено Эрнстом Штренге, домашним учителем детей Толстого, и опубликовано в 1885—1886 гг. Однако немецкая исследовательница Христиана Штульц предполагает, что Штренге переводил с французского текста И. И. Паскевич. Т. Мотылева на основе анализа оспаривает ее мнение, она приходит к выводу, что французское издание Штренге считал для себя только своего рода ориентиром, прецедентом, но у Штренге еще больше сокращений, чем у Паскевич. Шаг вперед — работа Клер фон Глюмер и Рафазля Лёвенфельда для Собрания сочинений Толстого, начавшегося выходить в 1892 году. Однако, лучшим переводом на немецкий язык Т. Мотылева находит труд Вернера Бергенгрюна, впервые вышедшей в ФРГ в 1953 году, а затем в ГДР в 1954 году. В ГДР очень популярно Собрание сочинений Толстого в двадцати томах под редакцией известных славистов Эберхарда Дикмана и Герхарда Дудека. В результате тщательного изучения автор книги приходит к выводу: «Есть основания сказать, что это издание «Войны и мира» подготовленное ученными ГДР, — одна из лучших иностранных публикаций романа-эпопеи Толстого» (86).[6]

На основе анализов перевода исследовательница делает заключение, что судьба *Войны и мира* проходит три этапа развития подобно русскому прозаическому переводу в XX веке: «перевод небрежно-вольничающий сменился буквалистским, и наконец возник перевод художественно полноценный» (131). И это тем более важно, что очень многое зависит от того, насколько точно сумел переводчик передать художественную цельность произведения, концепцию писателя и его сложный, многогранный и неповторимый стиль. Интересными примерами доказывает автор книги, что неверные представления сложились о Толстом из-за неполноценных переводов. Например, Ромен Роллан высказал мнение, что Толстой не заботился о форме своих произведений, и т. д. Только эстетический уровень перевода, его адекватность подлинникy могут быть основой верного суждения о писателе за пределами его родины, поэтому и анализировала Т. Мотылева с такой глубиной и детальностью разные иностранные издания Толстого, ведь на их основе создавалась и критика о них.

Вторая часть книги «*Война и мир*» *за рубезом* содержит *Первые отклики* на роман, восприятие его *Глазами писателей* и *Глазами литературоведов*. Изучение первых откликов начинается с рассмотрения первых французских отзывов. Здесь мы получаем интересные данные о том, что Ипполит Тэн не относился к Толстому с полным вниманием и даже делал упреки Мелькиору де Вогюз, что слишком увлечен «гениальными невеждами» (т. е. Толстым и Достоевским) (175). Интересно наблюдает исследовательница то, как рано возникает сравнение Толстого со Стендалем, и как это сопоставление касается, в основном, батальных картин (179). В Италии заинтересовались *Войной и миром* уже в начале 1869 года, о чем свидетельствует одна из первых итальянских статей о Толстом. Итальянские критики сравнивали Толстого с Мандзони, имея в виду прежде всего этическую направленность творчества обоих мастеров. Эта параллель много позже заинтересовала и Антонио Грамши, который в заметках из *Тюремных тетрадей* глубже рассмотрел поставленный критиками вопрос (191). Здесь автор книги разрабатывает на достоверной почве фактов и документов разные отклики критики, в начале носившие только характер общих высказываний, но потом все более уверенные, превращающиеся в биографии. При отборе этих материалов Т. Мотылева старается учитывать специфику национального восприятия и вызванную ею реакцию: то

восторженный, то сдержаниый прием во Франции, довольно холодное отношение в Германии, где большим успехом пользовались другие, более поздние произведения Л. Н. Толстого. В главе *Глазами писателей*, — после анализа переводов, пожалуй, самой интересной и содержательной —, широко использован материал семдесят пятого тома *Литературного наследства: Толстой и зарубежный мир*, подготовленного на основе толстовских празднеств 1960 года.[7] Опубликованные в томе опрос писателей и их высказывания, раздумия о творчестве Толстого Т. Мотылева включает в историческое освещение судьбы *Войны и мира* за рубежом. Из этих суждений многие известны венгерскому читателю благодаря прекрасному сборнику,[8] составленному Библиотекой им. Эрвина Сабо в Венгрии, на основе анкет, разосланних писателям, живущим в разных концах мира. Т. Мотылева уже общеизвестные мнения дополняет свежими данными. Размышления художников о художнике в интерпретации автора книги создает очень живую, волнующую картину. Уже одно перечисление имен дает представление о многообразии и богатстве мыслей, где в центре всегда мастерство Толстого, воздействие его идей, искусство создания романа и живого повествования, специфика литературных приемов. Об этом говорят Г. Флобер и Мопассан, Золя и Ромен Роллан, М. Пруст и Роже Мартен дю Гар, А. Жид и Л. Арагон, Т. Драйзер и Э. Синклер, У. Фолкнер и Э. Хемингуэй, Т. Вульф и Карло Леви, Р. Музиль и Леонгард Франк, братья Г. и Т. Манн, А. Зегерс и А. Моравиа, Ф. Мориак и Н. Саррот, Б. Шоу и Ч. П. Сноу. Из этих мнений хочется выделить только одно — слова Алехо Карпентьера о специфике мастерства Толстого: «Лев Толстой был замечательным предшественником композиционной полифонии. . .», «У Толстого мы находим приемы психологической характеристики, предвещающей наш современный стиль. . .» ««Война и мир», — литературный *космос*, где равно значительны и микро- и макромир, где отдельный индивидуум и *общественная практика* движутся бок о бок» (263).

Не менее интересна глава *Глазамили тературоведов*, где оцениваются книги, написанные с целью популяризации, и серьезные трактаты, вступительные статьи и научные труды. Среди них Т. Мотылева с большим уважением отмечает исследования крупного венгерского эстета Дьердя Лукача. Она пишет: «Первым иностранным исследователем, который попытался рассмотреть в свете идей Ленина творчество Толстого как явление *мировой* литературы, был венгерский ученый Георг (Дьердь) Лукач» (278). Т. Мотылева имеет в виду обширную статью *Толстой и развитие реализма*, которая впервые появилась на русском языке в 1939 году в *Литературном наследстве* (т. 35—36), а после второй мировой войны неоднократно печаталась на разных языках. Оценивая работу Лукача, она пишет: «заключающийся в ней конкретный анализ вовсе не замыкается в рамки антитезы мировоззрение-творчество. «В ней говорится о глубокой связи *мировоззрения* Толстого «с развитием русской крестьянской революции»» (279). Затем она переходит к монографии Д. Лукача *Исторический роман* и в связи с ней устанавливает: «в книге об историческом романе, как и в других работах Г. Лукача, «Война и мир» рассматривается по преимуществу в теоретическом плане, анализируется лишь суммарно, в самых главных, крупных чертах. Это связано с особенностями литературно-критического метода Г. Лукача. Его сила была в широте исторического, философского кругозора, в умении видеть международный литературный процесс как целое» (281). Правильно пишет она и в дальнейшем, что научное наследие Д. Лукача вызывает и сегодня большой интерес за рубежом. Останавливаясь на известных западных изданиях, в книге Джорджа Стейнера *Толстой или Достоевский*[9] Т. Мотылева улавливает методологическую эклектичность, несмотря на одаренность критика, проявившуюся во многих частных наблюдениях. В характеристике монографии Джона Бейли,[10] которая посвящена Толстому — мастеру романа, исследовательница с признанием пишет о попытке «вдуматься в русской классический роман именно как явление искусства» (289), но вместе с тем указывает на односторонность выводов, подхватывающих иногда идеи Л. Шестова или Д. Мережковского. В монографии Кете Гамбургер[11] Т. Мотылева подчеркивает два момента: выделение автобиографической тенденции у Толстого и анализ принципа формы, в которой появляется «склонность к «открытой форме», к «диффузности»» (291). В этой трактовке *Войны и мира* Т. Мотылева увидела некоторую связь с философией экзистенциализма, взглядами М. Хайдеггера. С уважением упоминается автором книги ценный труд Эрвина Веделя,[12] который положительно был оценен и в советской научной печати, и работа Р. Ф. Кристиана[13] — первая зарубежная синтетическая монография о *Войне и мире*. «В ней идет речь и об источниках, и о жанре, и о композиции, и о приемах обрисовки персонажей. И в каждой из глав — наряду со сведениями, почерпнутыми из советских публикаций, — имеются и собственные (бесспорные или

спорные) суждения и наблюдения автора» (302).

Обобщая значение части *Критика* следует подчеркнуть широкую осведомленность автора, меткие наблюдения и добротный научный уровень ее суждений.

Часть *Влияние*, которая в начале больше всего возбуждает интерес читателя, несмотря на заслуживающие внимания размышления, менее целостна. Это и неудивительна, ведь в части *Критика*, особенно в главе *Глазами писателей*, было немало замечаний, касающихся вопросов литературного воздействия. Причем воздействие Толстого — очень сложная, многомерная тема. Оно проявляется и в сходстве тематики, мировосприятия, взглядов, в том числе и морально-философских, и, не в последнюю очередь, — эстетических: в изображении личности, его внутреннего мира, архитектонике и богатстве языка, в совокупности способствующих выражению правдивости и гуманизма толстовского письма. В сжатых рамках одной части провести многопланный анализ — почти непосильная задача.

Наверное, Т. Мотылева, будет продолжать это чрезвычайно ценное, глубокое и разностороннее исследование, значение которого неоспоримо в толстоведении, и, по всей вероятности, она уже намечает контуры новой книги. С интересом и нетерпением будем ждать ее появления.

*Мария Рев*

Примечания

[1] Мотылева Т. *»Война и мир« за рубежом. Переводы. Критика. Влияние.* В дальнейшем цитаты из этой книги указываются нумерацией страницы в скобках. Стр. 3.

[2] Comte Léon Tolstoi. *La guerre et la paix.* Roman historique. Traduit avec l'autorisation de l'auteur par une Russe. Paris, Hachette, 1879.

[3] Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace.* A historical novel. Translated into French by a Russian lady, and from the French by Clara Bell. Vol. 1—6. New York, Gottesberger, 1886.

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## *Ernst und Renate Schumacher:* Leben Brechts in Wort und Bild

Henschelverlag, Berlin, 1978. 440 p.

Zum Anlaß eines Jubiläums wie das von Bertolt Brecht im Jahre 1978 war, hat sich viel Bemerkenswertes sagen lassen. Es hat sich jedenfalls gezeigt, daß Brechts Gestalt und sein Wirken nicht nur, wie es Willy Jaeggi 1961 formulierte, noch heute ein »Ärgernis« darstellen, sondern daß seine »Experimente« und Theorien Interesse erwecken, seine Ansichten der Forschung stets neuen Antrieb geben können. Wenn ich aus der Fülle der neuesten Brecht-Literatur ein einziges Buch herausgreife, das Brechts Leben in Worten beschreibt und in Bildern veranschaulicht, so geschieht das des Bandes Anziehungskraft wegen, die er auf den Leser auszuüben vermag.

Detailliert, jedoch mit strenger Ökonomie wird der Lebenslauf dargeboten, der Autor zieht so manchmal hinter Brecht-

Zitate und Zeugenberichte zurück. Ernst Schumacher war in persönlicher Bekanntschaft mit Brecht, er brachte seine erste, noch heute grundlegende Brecht-Monographie noch zu Lebzeiten des Dichters heraus und widmete sich seitdem Jahrzehnte lang der Brecht-Forschung mit reichem Ergebnis. Er dehnte seine Forschungen auf theoretische Fragen, auf Probleme der Interpretation, auf die Wirkungsgeschichte Brechts aus und gehört heute zu den größten internationalen Autoritäten auf seinem Gebiet. Da er sich mit dem Bilderbuch an breitere Leserkreise wendet, konzentriert er sich hier auf seinen Hauptgegenstand, auf die Darstellung des Lebens von Brecht, jedoch läßt sich ein so reiches, bewegtes und an die künstlerischen und politischen Problem seiner Zeit gebundenes Dichterleben nicht isolieren. So bietet das Buch in Wort und Bild ein Stück Zeitgeschichte dar.

Die Anziehungskraft des Bandes wird natürlich zum großen Teil vom Bildmaterial, die hauptsächlich Renate Schumacher zusammengestellt hat, bedingt. Tausend Gesichter des Dichters ziehen vor den Augen des Lesers vorbei — Brecht als Kind, als kecker Jüngling, als tatkräftiger Mann, als alternder Meister —, und sorgfältig ausgewählt tauchen Antlitze von Menschen auf, mit denen der Dichter zusammenkam, Bilder von Frauen, Künstlern, Politikern, von Freunden und Mitkämpfern, Feinden und Kritikern. Eine Konzession für die didaktischen Zwecke des Buches vielleicht ist, daß darin auch Porträts von »geistigen Ahnen« wie Shakespeare, Villon, Rimbaud, Büchner u.a. auftauchen. Eine schöne Auswahl von Bühnenbildern und Szenen aus verschiedenen Aufführungen der Stücke Brechts wird dargeboten, und wir begegnen den berühmtesten Darstellern der Brechtschen Figuren. Alles in allem: es ist ein genußreiches Erlebnis im Bande zu blättern. Was man vielleicht noch zu sehen wünschte, wäre Brechts Theater in seiner theatralischer Umgebung, konfrontiert mit anderen Richtungen seiner Zeit, um seine Neuerungen noch plastischer erfassen zu können.

Wort und Bild kreisen um den Helden: der Band trägt den Titel »Leben Brechts«. Und doch sind vielleicht die interessanten Stellen darin, wo dieses Leben von Zeitgenossen und Zeitereignissen umrahmt erscheint, inmitten der Umwelt oder im Kampf mit ihr. Sachkundig und taktvoll werden die Expressionismus-Debatte der 30-er Jahre sowie die Formalismus-Diskussion der 50-er Jahre dargestellt, neue oder wenig bekannte Einzelheiten über Brechts internationale Verbindungen beleuchtet, hochinteressant sind die Dokumente seiner Zusammenkünfte mit sowjetischen Künstlern an der Wende der 20-er und 30-er Jahre. Auch über Brechts Nachleben wird einiges gesagt, eine kurze, kritische Geschichte des Schicksals seines Berliner Ensemble gegeben, die wichtigsten Wendungen seiner Rezeption aber leider nur hauptsächlich in der Bundesrepublik beschrieben und am Ende wird die spezifische Aktualität seines Werkes im Bezug auf das Theater der Entwicklungsländer betont. Theoretische Fragen eingehend zu besprechen wäre in dem kurzen Lebensabriß nicht am Platze gewesen: Brechts theoretische Grundpositionenen kommen jedoch auch in diesem Rahmen zum Vorschein.

Weniger ist es dem Verfasser und seiner Mitarbeiterin gelungen, die Bedeutung von Brechts dichterische Leistung hervorzuheben. Denn schließlich trifft das Goethewort von der »grauen Theorie« und vom »goldenen Baum des Lebens« — der lebendigen Dichtung — auch auf Brecht zu. Wäre er kein großer Dichter gewesen, hätte er seine Theorien, seine theatralischen Neuerungen, seine Weltanschauung und Ideologie nicht durch welterobernde Dichtung bestätigt, so wäre seine Wirkung gering gewesen, so hätte er keine richtigen Gegner und Kritiker gehabt, so hätte er seine Ansichten nicht unter so scharfen Kämpfen verteidigen müssen. György Lukács wird im Buch mehrmals zitiert und seiner Stellungnahme wegen gegenüber der Theorie und Methode Brechts verurteilt. Daß aber Brecht ein überragend großer Dichter war, daran hat auch Lukács nicht gezweifelt.

*György M. Vajda*

# Сравнительное изучение литератур.

Сборник статей к 80-летию академика М. П. Алексеева. Ленинград 1976. Наука, 562.

This volume, which students of Slavonic languages and researchers engaged in comparative literature may be interested in, has been made for the eightieth birthday of the scholar, academician, and historian of literature living in Leningrad, well-known and deservedly acknowledged in Hungary also. Slavonic studies and comparative literature: that is how we could outline the purview too of the life-work of M. P. Alekseyev, who, aside from Russian literary phenomena, gained distinction in the setting forth of Russo—English, Russo—French, Russo—German, etc. relations and parallels. He published a volume of essays and studies in Berlin in 1974 under thetitle "Zur Geschichte russisch-europäischer Literaturtraditionen", and another one in Madrid in 1975, which bears the title "Rusia y Espana: una respuesta cultural", something which testifies to the international interest that the activity of M. P. Alekseyev has attracted. Miklós Szenczi commemorated in an essay the seventieth birthday of the Russian scholar (Filológiai Közlöny 12. 1966. 468—470), in which he expressed appreciation for his far-flung activity, speaking on the strength of personal experience about the "distinguished scholar", the highly competent "leading personality". This symposium also corroborates all that has been said hitherto, for it scarcely contains a paper which would not, in one way or another, start from a paper, idea or datum of Alekseyev: the numerous studies on Turgenev and Poushkin, the writings supplying new data as to the international relations of Russian culture all develop the data and writings of Alekseyev. Mention is made for example of Turgenev's Polish, Romanian, German, Hungarian, etc. connections and reception. And what we should like to emphasize this time is not that Turgenev influenced not only (and perhaps not primarily) Slav literatures, inspiring experiments with form, but the fact that in literatures of a similar development the novel or shorter prose work of Turgenev's type integrated itself in a similar fashion with the national traditions. This is well exemplified by an arresting study by Zs. Zöldhelyi, which we may compare with a paper by Polish authors (A. Semczuk and T. Šiško), treating a similar matter. Both writings call attention to the role played by Turgenev's short novel in the evolution of literary actuality, to Turgenev's part in inspiring the formation of new genres.

Of course, not only this type of a potential "reception" is mentioned. Yu. D. Levin supplements with hitherto undisclosed data the image of Shakespeare as conceived by eighteenth century Russian literature, attesting through the versions of renditions and adaptations the various outward shapes of a literary phenomenon in a given national literature. The paper of N. V. Izmaylov, entitled "The Theme of Vampirism in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century", is of a different nature, affording opportunity rather for comparison. The poetic and folk-poetic treatment of the "vampire"-motif is a constantly recurring theme of the early part of the nineteenth century, often to be encountered in folkloristic descriptions, poems, portions of novels, and travelogues; it can even be detected in the works of Poushkin, Byron, and Mérimée. It is to be regretted that the author undertook rather to represent the migration of the motif than to compare. We can meet with papers of a similar nature in writings discussing the relations of two writers. P. Brang for example writes about Turgenev's treatment of the character of Mignon, and he arrives at some relevant conclusions concerning the relations of Goethe and Turgenev and the discrepant character-drawing of the two writers. V. V. Pugachov has chosen an ostensibly unusual topic: he scrutinizes the relations of Poushkin and A. Smith. This province is only ostensibly "unusual": as we learn, not only the "politico-economic" ideas of Poushkin are discussed, but also a domain of his attitude towards history. Thereby the author promotes a better understanding of the Onegin, besides supplying valuable data for the elucidation of Poushkin's Weltanschauung.

The book, which consists of six parts, denotes, on the one hand, the range of interest and inspiring influence of M. P. Alekseyev, while on the other hand, the main spheres of comparative literature. The title of the first section is "Russian Literature", in which we learn a lot about the stages of Russian literary development, from the Igor-song up to the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the second part the relations of Russia and Russian literature with other literatures is dealt with, from the Moscovian

episode of a German popular book up to the activity of the Australian translator V. Palmer. The third section treats the reception in Russian literature of foreign literature, from the ancient elements of Russian—Slavonian "sbornik"-s up to the Dante-translation of M. L. Lozinsky. The fourth part bears the title "Foreign Literatures", where we can find the papers of the two Hungarian authors who, beside Zsuzsanna Zöldhelyi, have been assigned a place in the volume. Miklós Szenczi writes about the "romantic" streaks showing in the English critiques of the age of enlightment, and Tibor Klaniczay about the Petrarchism in the Hungarian poetry of the age of the Renaissance (in effect, about Bálint Balassi). In the fifth section we can read papers on the international relations of writers, especially their contacts with foreign writers, while the final, the sixth part bears the title "The Theory of Literary Relations, the Problem of Genres", the sole ground for including the studies in one and the same group being the fact that both the starting-point and the method of investigation are of a theoretical nature. From here let us pick out an intriguing paper by Dionyz Durisin on translation as a form of inter-literary relations, and a writing by Kupreyanova, in which she secans the evaluation of George Sand in the writings of Zola and Dostoyevsky, thereby attempting to delineate the typology of Russian realism.

It is outside the scope of this paper to dwell on all the studies of the eighty-three authors and the theoretical problems appearing from these studies. The only inference that we can set down is that those papers are the most informative (and the ones specially mentioned by us are such!) which, beyond the statement of facts and the recording of literary relations, take pains to capture the typical that can be extrapolated from this fact and this relation; which indicate, even within the limited scope, that which can be developed, which tends towards the typical. It is not by attesting adventitions parallelisms — and this is trenchantly proved by the volume — that comparison attains its object, but by the depiction of the typical gained after comparing literary phenomena growing out of similar development and similar backgrounds. This is the teaching of, amongst others, the celebrated M. P. Alekseyev, whom the scholarly public mind of the world has fittingly congratulated with work and many papers of high value.

*István Fried*

## Л. Г. Андреев: Современная литература Франции. 60-егоды

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La littérature toute contemporaine est rarement choisie comme matière de monographie. L'immense production d'une littérature nationale de nos jours, comme la littérature française, est insuffisamment connue même par les critiques des quotidiens français. Faute de recul nécessaire, il est encore plus difficile de dégager les grandes lignes de cette littérature. En France la dernière synthèse de ce genre est le livre de Pierre de Boisdeffre: *Une histoire vivante de la littérature française d'aujourd'hui*, mais il embrasse une période plus longue et s'arrête au seuil des années 1960.

Le professeur Leonid Grigorevič Andreev, doyen de la Faculté des Lettres de Moscou, auteur d'une remarquable monographie consacrée au surréalisme, courant international (Moscou, 1972, Vyssaja Škola) propose dans le présent ouvrage un tableau de la littérature française des années 1960. Il démontre de façon convaincante l'unité de la période en question. Cette unité s'explique par une relative stabilité économique, sociale et politique du capitalisme, caractérisée par le développement d'une société de consommation et, en politique, par le pouvoir solide du général de Gaulle. Cet équilibre relatif est ébranlé par les événements de mai 1968 où les difficultés économiques, sociales, politiques et idéologiques du capitalisme français et international deviennent évidentes et où commence une période révolutionnaire. Le livre d'Andreev embrasse donc essentiellement la littérature de la décennie allant de mai 1958 (avènement au pouvoir du général de Gaulle) à mai 1968 (mouvement étudiant et ouvrier) avec quelques allusions à la période précédente et une analyse un peu plus détaillée des premières années qui suivent le mouvement de mai-juin 1968, mais la littérature des années 1970 ne fait pas l'objet de ce livre.

D'après les analyses approfondies de

l'auteur cette décennie est caractérisée sur le plan idéologique par l'anéantissement des espoirs nés de la Résistance et de la Libération. Dans le domaine littéraire c'est la crise de la littérature engagée de Sartre, la perte du prestige de Sartre et de Camus, survenue après la mort de ce dernier, ainsi que la transformation de la poésie nationale et du réalisme socialiste d'Aragon en une littérature subjective et expérimentale. L'idéologie dominante de l'époque est une idéologie antihistorique et néoscientiste, accompagnée du formalisme littéraire et artistique. Cette idéologie est le structuralisme. Le règne tout-puissant du formalisme a été facilité par le fait que les positions du marxisme étaient affaiblies. La théorie du réalisme sans rivages de Garaudy avait ramené l'esthétique marxiste dans un état préscientifique, par conséquent elle n'était pas capable de faire face aux problèmes posés par les courants littéraires et idéologiques formalistes.

L'auteur étudie la littérature des années 60 en trois chapitres. Le premier parle du nouveau roman et du structuralisme, le deuxième chapitre s'occupe de l'œuvre d'Aragon et d'Elsa Triolet et d'autres écrivains réalistes socialistes, attirés par la théorie du réalisme sans rivages, le troisième traite des écrivains réalistes.

La société de consommation est caractérisée par une pseudoculture de masses. A cette pseudoculture — suggère le livre d'Andreev — s'opposent les trois courants cités.

Selon le premier chapitre, les années 60 sont caractérisées par « l'alittérature », la mise en question de la littérature par le drame absurde et le nouveau roman. Mais le drame absurde commence à s'épuiser. Excepté Oh les beaux jours! de Beckett et les Paravents de Genêt les auteurs de drames absurdes se répètent, varient les mêmes clichés et deviennent académiques de leur vivant.

En ce qui concerne le nouveau roman, ses principaux représentants commencent à l'abandonner (Robbe—Grillet s'intéresse au cinéma, l'œuvre de Butor devient lyrique, etc.). La rupture qui aura lieu en 1971 est latente avant cette date. Nathalie Sarraute et Michel Butor refusent la réduction du roman à l'écriture, au texte, au jeu sémantique, comme le font Robbe—Grillet, Ricardou et les représentants du nouveau noueveau roman; pour Sarraute et Butor, le sens et l'expression de la subjectivité humaine sont nécessaires au roman, même s'il est vrai que Nathalie Sarraute limite l'homme aux tropismes végétatifs et que le problème social est rarement posé chez Butor (le problème noir aux Etats Unis dans Mobile, etc.).

Cette crise du nouveau roman et du drame absurde, sans parler de celle de la poésie descriptive (Ponge) explique la naissance d'une nouvelle idéologie à la fois formaliste et scientiste qui finira par aboutir à la négation même de la « littérarité ». Cette idéologie est le structuralisme, qui se veut une philosophie générale, dont les principaux représentants sont Lévi-Strauss, Lacan, Foucault et Althusser.

Le structuralisme se révolte contre la philosophie subjectiviste et la culture de consommation, mais il pense que ce sont les mots qui inquiètent, qui réveillent et provoquent le lecteur. Par conséquent, au lieu de la *littérature engagée* sartrienne il prêche l'*engagement en littérature*, la responsabilité devant les mots. Le principal centre de ces recherches réunissant paradoxalement les traditions de l'art pur et du positivisme est la revue *Tel Quel*.

Le structuralisme littéraire s'est manifesté avant tout dans la mise en question par la « nouvelle critique » du subjectivisme et du bavardage de la critique impressionniste, du caractère superficiel et empirique de l'histoire littéraire positiviste traditionnelle, mais en réalité il a repris le positivisme sous une forme nouvelle, inspirée par la linguistique structuraliste de Saussure à Chomsky, l'ethnographie de Lévi-Strauss, la psychanalyse de Lacan, etc.

La nouvelle critique est un courant hétérogène qui désire étudier l'objet littéraire, l'œuvre et donner à la critique un ton philosophique et moderne. Andreev analyse surtout la discussion Picard-Barthes, mais il ne néglige pas la prise de position de J. P. Weber et les idées de Serge Doubrovsky, inspirées de l'existentialisme sartrien. Ce dernier insiste sur le rapport qui relie le langage à la réalité à travers la personnalité de l'auteur, c'est-à-dire qu'il ne nie ni la réalité, ni l'auteur, comme les structuralistes proprement dits, il ne réduit pas la littérature au texte qui ne renvoie à rien.

Andreev démontre la nécessité de l'exactitude dans les études littéraires. C'est un objectif appréciable, mais qui, dans le cas présent, ne justifie pas les moyens utilisés pour l'atteindre. Et ce n'est pas parce que ces moyens sont mauvais en eux-mêmes (p.e. la linguistique structuraliste), mais parce qu'ils sont déplacés, ils ne sont pas adaptés à la spécificité de l'objet étudié. L'intégration des méthodes scientifiques, l'introduction d'autres disciplines dans les recherches littéraires, dont les disciplines les plus exactes — mathé-

matiques, linguistique — est possible et même nécessaire, mais à condition de garder la spécificité de l'objet étudié, de ne pas en faire une lecture réductrice. Il est vrai que Philippe Sollers parle déjà de la transformation de l'âge de la littérature en âge de la « pratique théorique », donc il nie la spécificité de la littérature, mais — heureusement — seule une toute petite fraction de la littérature contemporaine n'est plus qu'« écriture », et ce sont justement les « textes » publiés par Tel Quel.

Le groupe Tel Quel prendra position révolutionnaire en mai 1968. Sollers reconnaît que la révolution ne peut être que marxiste—léniniste. Seulement, il pense que le « texte » est en lui-même révolutionnaire, tandis que la « littérature » — reflet ou expression — est par définition bourgeoise. A partir de ce moment les membres de ce groupe prêchent l'identité totale de la littérature (production de textes) et de l'économie. Par exemple l'œuvre correspond à la marchandise, le sens à l'argent, etc. C'est-à-dire que, si avant 1968 la notion de la littérature est entièrement absorbée par la notion de langue, après 1968 elle le sera par l'économie. Donc — dans les deux cas — ils nient la spécificité de la littérature — démontre Andreev. Nous ajouterions aux analyses pertinentes d'Andreev que le schématisme de leur attitude s'explique aussi par le fait qu'ils négligent entièrement les médiations entre le texte littéraire et le contexte (économique, social, psychologique, culturel, etc.).

C'est dans ce chapitre qu'Andreev parle des survivances des autres courants modernistes, du surréalisme et de l'existentialisme. L'intérêt renouvelé à l'égard du surréalisme vers la fin des années 1960, une interview accordée par le surréaliste Jouffroy au structuraliste J. P. Faye en mai 1968 ainsi que l'identité de leur réaction devant le rapport de l'écriture et de la révolution lui donne l'occasion de tirer une conclusion importante. Il pense que l'histoire des rapports entre le surréalisme et la révolution ressemble à celle des rapports entre *Tel Quel* et la révolution. Dans les deux cas, il s'agit d'une tentative d'alliance entre une « écriture » essentiellement « pure », dépourvue de contenu social et un révolutionnarisme politique. Cette opération a abouti à un échec dans le cas du surréalisme, Tel Quel rompra aussi avec le Parti Communiste en automne Ricardou et Thibaudeau s'éloigneront de la revue. A cette époque Tel Quel attaque le Parti Communiste de gauche, depuis il a encore changé d'avis. . .

L'écrivain le plus influent de l'époque précédente, Sartre, renonce à la littérature, forme d'action peu efficace, et se tourne vers la philosophie et la politique. Sans renoncer à la lutte des classes et au marxisme, il attaque le nouveau roman et le structuralisme au nom de l'histoire et de l'anthropologie. Il est vrai qu'en « existentialiste pénitent » il confondra révolution et maoisme gauchiste dans la période des mouvements révolutionnaires. Pendant toute la décennie, la catégorie du vécu joue un rôle primordial dans son œuvre (Les Mots, l'Idiot de la famille).

Dans la catégorie des écrivains post-existentialistes, Andreev classe Anna Langfus et Le Clézio, ce dernier se méfiant des littératures idéologiques et représentant des personnages privés de toute personnalité de la société de consommation, mais le dernier roman cité, La Guerre (1970) propose un tableau historiquement et socialement concret du monde absurde.

Le deuxième chapitre (Quel désordre, mon Dieu, quel désordre, traite de la conception du réalisme sans rivages prônée par Garaudy. Cette conception éclectique et superficielle désarme l'esthétique marxiste et permet l'intégration sans critique du surréalisme et du structuralisme dans l'esthétique marxiste. Les représentants de cette esthétique dénoncent l'imitation, la théorie du réfléchissement, comme les structuralistes, mais ils insistent sur les sensations subjectives de l'individu, la créativité et l'autonomie de l'art. En dehors de Garaudy le vulgarisateur le plus connu de ce courant est Pierre Daix. Cette tendance est caractérisée par le subjectivisme et le relativisme idéologique et esthétique.

Des écrivains réalistes socialistes aussi importants qu'Aragon, Elsa Triolet et André Stil ont aussi subi l'influence de cette théorie. Andreev souligne plus d'une fois que l'œuvre d'aussi grands écrivains ne peut pas être ramenée à cette théorie simpliste. Il s'agit dans chaque cas de l'expression d'une crise et de la recherche personnelle d'une attitude humaine et esthétique devant le capitalisme consolidé et la société de consommation. Pourtant le renoncement à l'imitation aboutit au renoncement à la représentation du monde extérieur, l'expression de la subjectivité, le rôle accru du lyrisme supposent également le retour à certains procédés du surréalisme. Il ne s'agit pas de la négation de l'homme des relations humaines et de la littérature, ni de la responsabilité de l'écrivain devant la société et l'avenir, mais le processus historique s'obscurcit et devient subjectif.

Chez Aragon, c'est l'intensification du

lyrisme qui indique le processus de la subjectivation. Ce lyrisme est présent dans la Semaine Sainte aussi, mais là — selon les analyses pertinentes d'Andreev — l'artiste et les autres conservent un contact dont l'artiste s'inspire, tandis qu'à partir des Poètes la poésie et l'amour sont les seules valeurs qui garantissent l'existence digne de l'homme dans un monde inhumain; par conséquent la présence des autres s'efface. Il est certain que la poésie et l'amour sont des recherches de communication avec les autres, mais chez Aragon, le thème de la poésie et du couple s'oppose entièrement à la société, l'histoire et la réalité étant caractérisées par la souffrance, la mort, les crises, les déceptions, les guerres. C'est cette vision et les expériences formelles qui caractérisent Le Fou d'Elsa, mais aussi ses romans de crise, comme la Mise à mort et Blanche ou l'oubli. Andreev considère cette attitude et cette méthode comme néoromantiques. L'autonomie du roman se réalise en deux étapes. D'abord le roman se détache de la réalité, ensuite il devient la réalité, l'unique moyen de recréation du monde et du moi comme réalité et comme surréalité. Le même subjectivisme et relativisme historique se trouvent dans Le grand jamais d'Elsa Triolet.

Le troisième chapitre (Plongé dans mon temps) traite des écrivains réalistes. Le réalisme — selon Andreev — est une conception de la réalité. Aussi empirique qu'elle soit au moment donné, elle s'oppose au modernisme. Ce n'est pas à la « technique » vieillie que s'attachent les réalistes, mais à l'art qui remplit une fonction sociale, qui réhabilite l'homme dans un monde impersonnel et aspire à la connaissance du monde réel.

Ce chapitre analyse également la « poésie de circonstance » qui subit une crise grave après la Résistance. C'est dans cette catégorie qu'il range Guillevic, J. Prévert, Gaucheron, Dobzynski, Frénaud, Follain, Bosquet, Marcenac, ce qui prouve que la « poésie de circonstance » reste une des tendances majeures de la poésie française des années 1960, même si cette poésie des années 1960 vise moins les objectifs politiques et sociaux immédiats qu'à l'époque de la Résistance et si l'effet social de la poésie s'est singulièrement rétréci. Parmi les revues, il souligne l'activité d'Action poétique qui publie une poésie militante et considère la poésie comme un fait social.

Une partie des théâtres montent des pièces politiques et veulent éduquer le public populaire suivant l'exemple de Jean Vilar et de Roger Planchon. Le Théâtre de l'Est Parisien, le théâtre d'Aubervilliers et de Saint-Denis jouent les pièces de Brecht, d'O'Casey, du Français Armand Gatti. Malgré les tendances apolitiques de la société de consommation, un ancien auteur de drames absurdes, comme Adamov, deviendra dramaturge engagé, Salacrou écrira une pièce importante en l'honneur d'une personnalité du mouvement ouvrier (Boulevard Durand), même une pièce d'Anouilh (La Grotte) représente les problèmes sociaux.

La liste des romanciers réalistes nous semble un peu hétérogène dans le livre d'Andreev. Il parle de Vercors, de Lanoux, de Merle, de Chabrol, de Georges Perec, mais aussi de Giono, Marguerite Duras, Françoise Sagan et Simone de Beauvoir. A notre sens, ces derniers auraient pu aussi bien figurer dans le premier chapitre.

Andreev trouve à juste titre symbolique que cette période commence par le Printemps 71 d'Adamov et se termine par le Canon Fraternité de Chabrol et les romans consacrés à la Commune par Lanoux. Ces derniers romans, ainsi que Derrière la vitre de Merle accusent en effet, un changement dans la litterature française, un retour à la réalité, comparable à celui des années 1930 et 1940.

Cette monographie d'Andreev étonne le lecteur par la richesse de son information et la précision lucide de ses jugements. Rares sont les auteurs importants dont il ne fait pas une analyse pertinente, excepté les représentants de la littérature de consommation et du théâtre des boulevards. Parmi les auteurs importants, nous avons relevé une seule lacune, le nom de Semprun.

Pour finir, une question s'impose concernant la délimitation des différents courants. Dans une littérature vivante, les différentes tendances sont mélangées et s'interpénètrent. D'où l'extrême difficulté de classer les écrivains qui, souvent, se cherchent et dont l'œuvre est contradictoire. L'auteur sent lui-même que son classement est parfois discutable (p.e. Marguerite Duras dans la catégorie des réalistes). Il est également conscient du fait qu'il y a une grande différence entre les représentants théoriques du « réalisme sans rivages » (Garaudy, Daix) et les œuvres littéraires classées dans le deuxième chapitre (Aragon, Elsa Triolet, André Stil, Hélène Parmelin), dont plus d'une — à notre sens — pourrait également figurer dans le troisième chapitre, réservé au réalisme. Dans son compte rendu très élogieux Tamara Balašova, spécialiste de la littérature française du XX$^{e}$ siècle insiste également sur cet aspect problématique de la composition du livre (*Literaturnoe*

*obozrenie* 1978/1 p. 68.). En effet, trois catégories ne nous semblent pas suffire pour traduire la diversité et la complexité d'une littérature.

Grâce à ses pertinentes analyses, l'auteur de cette synthèse offre un tableau juste, vivant et riche de la littérature des années 1960, qui permet d'entrevoir aussi les discussions idéologiques, cachées derrière les œuvres littéraires.

*István Fodor*

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