CZECH AND SLOVAK

Journal of Humanities

Linguistica

II/2021

Czech and Slovak

Journal of Humanities

Linguistica

2/2021

Czech and Slovak Journal of Humanities (***CSJH***) is a peer-reviewed scholarly journal established in 2011 at Palacký University Olomouc, one of the oldest Central European universities. The journal is dedicated to various important fields of the humanities: history, linguistics, theatre & film (including TV and radio), music, and cultural anthropology, with interdisciplinary themes among these fields.

The journal is intended as a dialogue between Czech and Slovak research and research abroad and as a forum where innovative approaches and current topics are discussed, as well as local themes and previously neglected research. CSJH is open to Czech, Slovak and international scholars and guarantees a fair and accurate reviewing process. In order to reach an international readership, CSJH publishes the majority of texts in English. Regular scholarly papers are particularly welcome, as well as book or conference reviews, notices, research projects and other kinds of academic chronicle.

The Journal is indexed in ERIH PLUS and EBSCO database.

Czech and Slovak Journal of Humanities is published two times a year in the following sequence: Linguistica; Anthropologia culturalis; Theatralia et cinematographica; Musicologica; Historica

Contact:
Wilken Engelbrecht
Filozofická fakulta UP
Křížkovského 10
771 80 Olomouc
Czech Republic
wilken.engelbrecht@upol.cz
https://csjh.upol.cz

The publication was made possible thanks to the financial support granted in 2021 by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic within the Institutional Development Plan of the Faculty of Arts of Palacký University Olomouc.

Published and printed by:
Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci (Palacký University Olomouc)
Křížkovského 8, 771 47 Olomouc, Czech Republic
www.vydavatelství.upol.cz
e-mail: vup@upol.cz

Editor of this issue: Wilken Engelbrecht
Technical editor of this issue: Monika Pitnerová
Responsible editor: Otakar Loutocký
Technical editor: Jitka Bednaříková
Graphic Design: TAH & Lenka Wünschová

ISSN 1805-3742

Contents

Benjamin Bossaert

Univerzita Komenského v Bratislave
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9086-9812

A. Den Doolaard and a Remarkable Case of Pandemic Literature in Translation – *The Gods Will Return Home* in Slovak Translation

Abstract | This article focuses on a book that deals with a pandemic and recently received renewed attention in the Dutch language area: *De Goden gaan naar huis* (The Gods Will Return Home) by A. den Doolaard. The book was translated into Slovak in 1974 by Júlia Májeková. After the Second World War, Den Doolaard's works appeared only in reprint in Czech and only this novel was translated into Slovak. This article argues that the consequences of space travel, where American astronauts cause a pandemic upon their return from a mission to Mars, was found to be a fruitful theme in the kind of 'desired' literature during the Communist regime. Not even this novel, however, escaped strict censorship. What makes this novel special is that both the author himself and the interventions in the text. It is demonstrated that although the literature was thematically approved by the regime, editing still allowed for intervention in both the source and target texts.

Keywords | A. den Doolaard, Júlia Májeková, Literary Translation, Censorship, Dutch Literature, Pandemic, Czechoslovakia

Introduction: literature about the pandemic in the Dutch speaking language area

Last year we found ourselves in a pandemic, accompanied by lockdowns that had a profound impact on many people's lives. In reaction to being locked up, literary life also began to propagate and reread works reinvigorated by the media around lockdowns, infections, quarantined epidemics and pandemics. To illustrate this, Albert Camus' *La Peste* (The Plague), a 1947 novel, once again landed among the best-selling novels of last year, according to publishers (Flood, 2020).

The Dutch language area was not left behind either. Various media presented book tips: the website of the Flemish national television also published ten book tips with both international, such as the famous *The Plague* and Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, but also Dutch literature (Lonbois, Vergeyle 2020). A radio broadcast was dedicated to the topic on Radio 1. The major Dutch newspaper *Volkskrant* delivered a message about what can be learned from pandemic literature (Bouman, Van Zeil, De Haan 2020). Daan Heerma van Voss wrote a new work entitled *Corona Chronicles* (reviewed in Aalderink 2020) and the Flemish newspaper *De Standaard* launched an up-to-date version of *The Decameron* with a series of authors. On the blog neerlandistiek.nl,

a number of academics began writing letters to Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte recommending books for him to read in quarantine, with Petra Boudewijn specifically suggesting Wytske Versteeg's 2015 novel *Quarantaine* (Boudewijn 2020). On that same blog, the Leuven literary scholar Thomas Pierrart wrote four tips for recent and less recent Dutch-language pandemic literature in addition to an introduction with a survey of international tips for literature about corona (Pierrart 2020). Among these four tips is the book that is at the focus of this paper: *De Goden gaan naar huis* (The Gods Will Return Home) by A. den Doolaard from 1966.

The following paragraph briefly outlines the context and content of the novel and its author. The period of the novel's first publication and the historical events surrounding the race to space, the historical events around the Greco-British dispute regarding the Elgin Marbles of the Parthenon exhibited in the British Museum, and a global pandemic have lost almost no links to the current day and clearly provided a reason to translate the novel into Slovak during the period of the Communist regime.

1 De Goden gaan naar huis (The Gods Will Return Home) – A. den Doolaard

A. Den Doolaard (pseudonym of Cornelis (Bob) Spoelstra) is known in Dutch literature as the author who has thematically written the most about Yugoslavia. More than half of his oeuvre are stories set in the Balkans, and a large part of these stories are therefore based on experiences, anecdotes and encounters with the people living there. *Dolen* also means to wander and thus his pseudonym indicates a *posture* focused on restlessness and constant travelling. Den Doolaard worked professionally as a correspondent for various newspapers.

The Gods Will Return Home is a societal-critical novel set in an indeterminate year somewhere between 1970 and 2000, according to the paratext (den Doolaard 1967); the author himself warns against anachronisms. The setting constantly changes between London, Greece, the United States, outer space, and eventually the entire world during the pandemic in the second part. The Gods in the title refer to the statues of the Parthenon that were brought to Britain by Lord Elgin (and where they are still on display today in the British Museum, London), something that the main character, the archaeologist Nikos Grammatikakis wants to reverse. The second story line is a mission of American astronauts to Mars, which Nikos's brother Kostas reports about in his newspaper as a science journalist with a special fascination in outer space. While the mission to Mars is ultimately successful, already during the flight the co-workers at the Space Center in Houston notice that the astronauts are remarkably indifferent about their experience. As a result, they suggest that the astronauts go into quarantine for a while after a safe landing, but this does not happen because they have to make an emergency landing and end up at a resort. The symptoms of lethargy and indifference prove contagious and in some extreme cases cause fever and deaths. The pandemic spreads throughout the world. Eventually, a Greek and Indian virologist attempt to develop a vaccine against this unknown Martian virus (den Doolaard 1967, Koevoet).

According to Thomas Pierrart (2020), this story teaches us not to underestimate the importance of quarantine rules, with the failure to observe social distancing ultimately leading to the global pandemic in the novel. Den Doolaard himself looks back on this pandemic novel in *Ogen op de Rug* (Eyes on the Back; 1971: 134–143). Some interesting insights as to the motivation to write the novel and its genesis can be found here. It turns out that the possibility of bringing back an unknown virus from space was also discussed with a virologist whom he befriended. The last sentence in the book is also striking: "We have lived among miracles, but we have not understood it." (den Doolaard 1967: 439) This sentence and therefore the novel occupies an important place in Den Doolaard's oeuvre, which is demonstrated by the fact that these words

are also carved on the author's tombstone in Hoenderloo (Koevoet). To shed more light on these last words, he writes:

I wrote this book 'At the behest of time'. A time when science is in danger of burying itself and a significant part of humanity under its results. Out of those dangers, the Mars virus is the symbol. (den Doolaard 1971: 141–142)

The following paragraph briefly outlines the author's experiences in Czechoslovakia.

2 A. Den Doolaard and Czechoslovakia

Den Doolaard may have traveled extensively in the Balkans and especially in Yugoslavia during the interwar period and was no stranger to Czechoslovakia either. In the newspaper *Soerabajisch Handelsblad* of 22 August 1933, he published a travel report of his tour in Czechoslovakia, his experiences in beautiful Prague, but also Bratislava and even Ždiar and the Tatra mountains, which he very vividly described. Engelbrecht (2022, in print) investigates the reception of Den Doolaard's translations. In the process, the Czechoslovak reader gets to know him as a "sincere friend of Czechoslovakia." His first translations into Czech were mediated by Vincy Schwarz, a literary agent who ensured that several Dutch literary works were translated into Czech (see also above, Engelbrecht 2021: 144–145). Even after World War II, he continued to travel to Czechoslovakia, where, according to Engelbrecht, he directly witnessed the Communist Party's seizure of power in 1948.

His novels *Orient Express* (1935, translated by Lida Faltová), *De Grote Verwildering* (The Great Wilderness, in 1937, also by Faltová, reprint in 1946) and in 1964 *Het verjaagde water* (The Expelled Water, translated by Ella Kazdová) were published in Czech as well. This last translation should have appeared around 1947, but due to troubles with paper scarcity, nationalization of publishing houses, and because the translator Kazdová worked for a Catholic publishing house, which meant she was considered a state threat, this translation could only appear during the period of the cultural 'thaw' (Engelbrecht 2022, in print). In addition to these three translations into Czech, Den Doolaard's work was also translated into Slovak: *De Goden gaan naar huis* (The Gods Will Return Home) and came out as *Bohovia sa vracajú* (1974) by the publishing house *Slovenský spisovateľ* in a translation by Júlia Májeková.

This remarkable translator and her position as the first translator to translate directly from Dutch into Slovak, in a difficult period for translations, allowed it to appear from the capitalist West and is discussed in the following paragraph.

3 Júlia Májeková and literary translation in Slovakia

Júlia Májeková had her first translation commissioned by her professor Jozef Felix during her studies of German and Slovak at Comenius University, translating *Herman Coene* by Ernest Claes from Dutch. This was also the first work to be translated directly from Dutch into Slovak. The *In memoriam* of Dvořáková-Žiaranová (1991) mentions that Májeková was actually the only translator to translate from Dutch from 1944 to 1991. All the other translations into Slovak, from the period when she was active, were translated through an authorized translation via an intermediary language, either German, English or French. The total number of translations from Dutch by Májeková amounts to 28 titles, supplemented by some radio plays. Májeková translated most of her oeuvre during the period of socialism, when not every author was allowed by the regime to obtain a desired translation. Bednárová (2015: 33–34) describes some characteristic features of literature in translation from 1969 to 1980. In particular, there was a 'best-sellerization'

of well-selling titles, and older non-desirable authors sometimes disappeared from circulation. As of 1969, an independent union of Czechoslovak writers, which also included translators, emerged, whose goal was to renew the principles of Socialist Realism.

From 1971 onwards, libraries, bookstores, and distribution centres were more strictly supervised as to what kind of literature could or could not be distributed. Censorship was actively imposed. Bednárová also provides a character sketch of censorship (2015: 35–36). Preventive censorship determined in advance which authors would appear in the editions of the publishing houses, often, for example, in the form of auto-censorship at *Tatran* publishing house, where Májeková was active. A file box with foreign authors who were not desirable to be translated also existed. Editing texts with, among other things, overly religious or erotic connotations, or politically undesirable passages, also occurred. Each publishing house had its own internal rules on this and it is often only from testimonies and diaries that one can learn how and in which texts interference occurred and to what extent.

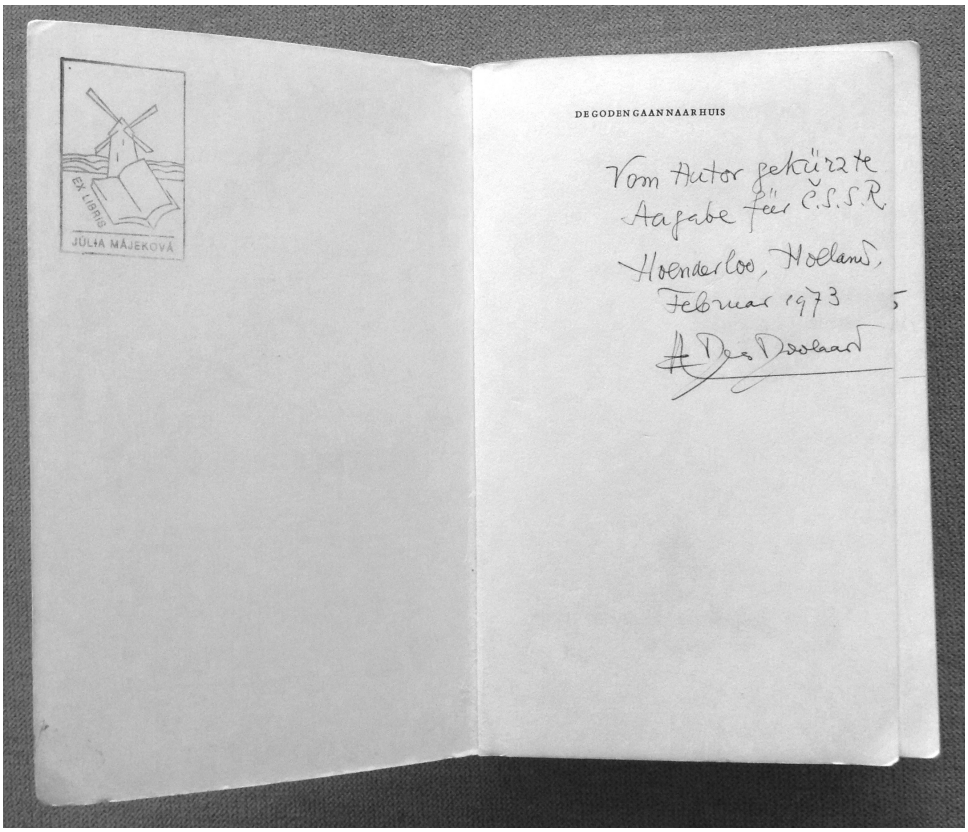
In this sense, the author's copy of Májeková of *The Gods Will Return Home* contributes to revealing these practices of deleting passages. In what follows, I will describe some examples.

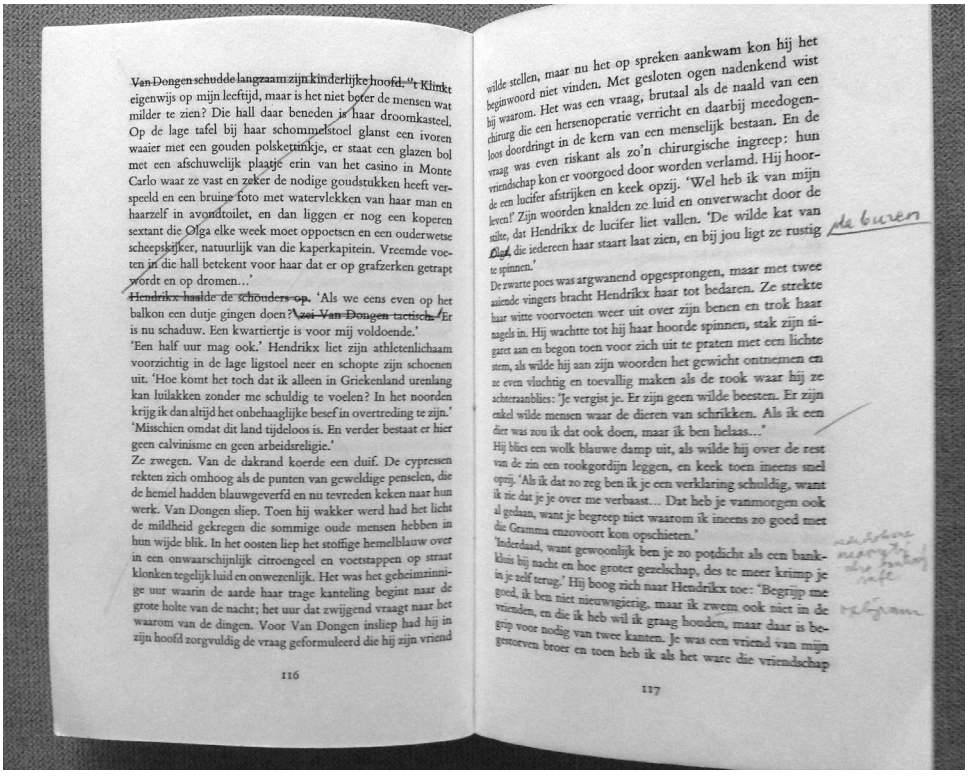
4 The translation of *De Goden gaan naar huis*

In researching the translation of the novel, I used the copy of *The Gods Will Return Home* that Júlia Májeková used to translate the book. It is a third edition from 1967 and is marked with the ex libris of the translator (see Figure 1). The book itself contains several words and expressions marked in pencil and translated into Slovak. This copy was donated by the translator Májeková to the University Seminary Library of Dutch Studies at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University where it can be freely consulted. It is remarkable that this copy contains a manuscript by the author den Doolaard himself in German with "*Vom Autor gekürzte Ausgabe für Č.S.S.R. Hoenderloo, Holland, Februar 1973*"[1] with the author's signature (see Figure 1). Unfortunately, no correspondence has been found between the translator and the author and it is also unclear why den Doolaard, although Májeková had sufficient command of Dutch, wrote here in German. Also missing from the archives is the report from LITA, the organization that handled the translation rights into Slovak with the publisher, in this case *Querido*. Some passages in the book have also been deleted with his pen and some words rewritten or passages crossed out (see image).

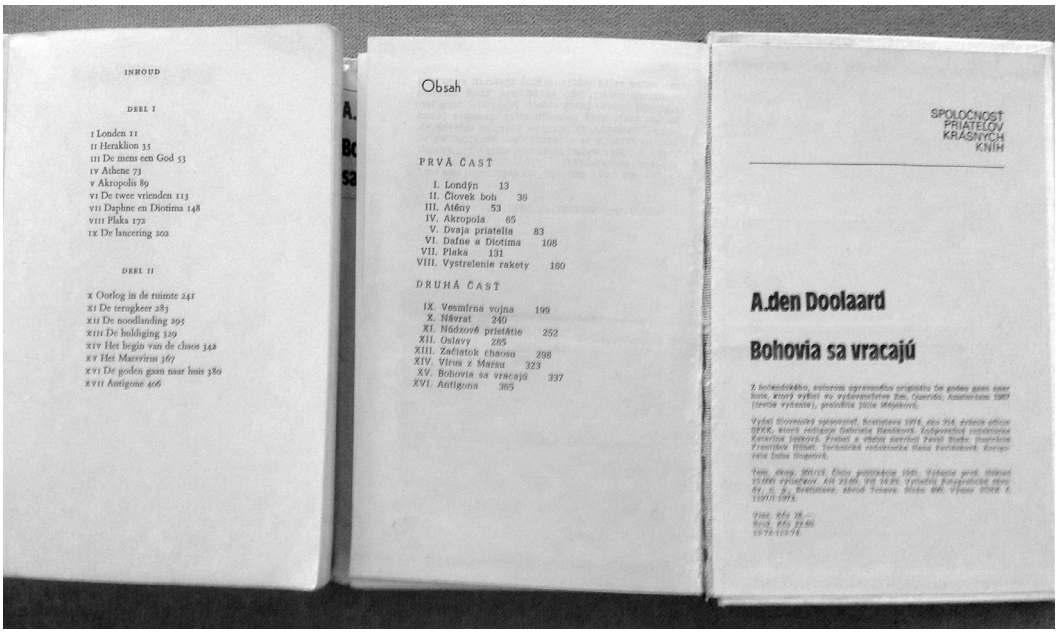
Den Doolaard himself writes when discussing books and contemporaries (1971: 141) "Perhaps the fierce debates between the two brothers occupy too much space in the beginning of the novel." It is therefore plausible that, when editing the novel for the Slovak translation, he would therefore simply completely delete the second chapter of the original, "Heraklion" (den Doolaard 1967: 35–52) from his novel. In addition, several passages describing the thoughts of the main character Nikos were actually crossed out. I therefore assume that the author agreed to make some stylistic edits in his novel, in consultation with the translator. More passages were deleted in the edition than only those that were crossed out with a pen. Some passages are especially critical of the former Soviet Union or the Eastern Bloc. As illustration, a picture of a passage on page 374 of den Doolaard (1967) is included, mentioning a nuclear disaster near Kharkov in the Soviet Union, where Den Doolaard describes a cover-up operation (see Figure 2).

[1] The issue has been shortened by the author for publication in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. Hoenderloo, Holland, 1973. (Translated from German by the author of this article. Other citations in this article are also translated from Dutch by the author of this article).


EX LIBRIS
JULIA MAJEKOVÁ
DE GODEN GAAN NAAR HUIS
Vom Autor gekürzte
Ausgabe für U.S.S.R.
Hoenderloo, Holland,
Februar 1973
A. Den Doolaard


Van Dongen schudde langzaam zijn kinderlijke hoofd. 't Klinkt eigenwijs op mijn leeftijd, maar is het niet beter de mensen wat milder te zien? Die hall daar beneden is haar droomkasteel. Op de lage tafel bij haar schommelstoel glanst een ivoren waaier met een gouden polsketting, er staat een glazen bol met een afschuwelijk plaatje erin van het casino in Monte Carlo waar ze vast en zeker de nodige goudstukken heeft verspeeld en een bruine foto met watervlekken van haar man en haarzelf in avondtoilet, en dan liggen er nog een koperen sextant die Olga elke week moet oppoetsen en een ouderwetse scheepskijker, natuurlijk van die kaperkapitein. Vreemde voeten in die hall betekent voor haar dat er op grafzerken getrapt wordt en op dromen…'
Hendrikx haalde de schouders op. 'Als we eens even op het balkon een dutje gingen doen?' zei Van Dongen tactisch. 'Er is nu schaduw. Een kwartiertje is voor mij voldoende.'
'Een half uur mag ook.' Hendrikx liet zijn athletenlichaam voorzichtig in de lage ligstoel neer en schopte zijn schoenen uit. 'Hoe komt het toch dat ik alleen in Griekenland urenlang kan luilakken zonder me schuldig te voelen? In het noorden krijg ik dan altijd het onbehaaglijke besef in overtreding te zijn.'
'Misschien omdat dit land tijdeloos is. En verder bestaat er hier geen calvinisme en geen arbeidsreligie.'
Ze zwegen. Van de dakrand koerde een duif. De cypressen rekten zich omhoog als de punten van geweldige penselen, die de hemel hadden blauwgeverfd en nu tevreden keken naar hun werk. Van Dongen sliep. Toen hij wakker werd had het licht de mildheid gekregen die sommige oude mensen hebben in hun wijde blik. In het oosten liep het stoffige hemelblauw over in een onwaarschijnlijk citroengeel en voetstappen op straat klonken tegelijk luid en onwezenlijk. Het was het geheimzinnige uur waarin de aarde haar trage kanteling begint naar de grote holte van de nacht; het uur dat zwijgend vraagt naar het waarom van de dingen. Voor Van Dongen insliep had hij in zijn hoofd zorgvuldig de vraag geformuleerd die hij zijn vriend
116
wilde stellen, maar nu het op spreken aankwam kon hij het beginwoord niet vinden. Met gesloten ogen nadenkend wist hij waarom. Het was een vraag, brutaal als de naald van een chirurg die een hersenoperatie verricht en daarbij meedogenloos doordringt in de kern van een menselijk bestaan. En de vraag was even riskant als zo'n chirurgische ingreep: hun vriendschap kon er voorgoed door worden verlamd. Hij hoorde een lucifer afstrijken en keek opzij. 'Wel heb ik van mijn leven!' Zijn woorden knalden zo luid en onverwacht door de stilte, dat Hendrikx de lucifer liet vallen. 'De wilde kat van Dingli die iedereen haar staart laat zien, en bij jou ligt ze rustig te spinnen.'
De zwarte poes was argwanend opgesprongen, maar met twee aaiende vingers bracht Hendrikx haar tot bedaren. Ze strekte haar witte voorvoeten weer uit over zijn benen en trok haar nagels in. Hij wachtte tot hij haar hoorde spinnen, stak zijn sigaret aan en begon toen voor zich uit te praten met een lichte stem, als wilde hij aan zijn woorden het gewicht ontnemen en ze even vluchtig en toevallig maken als de rook waar hij ze achteraanblies: 'Je vergist je. Er zijn geen wilde beesten. Er zijn enkel wilde mensen waar de dieren van schrikken. Als ik een dier was zou ik dat ook doen, maar ik ben helaas…'
Hij blies een wolk blauwe damp uit, als wilde hij over de rest van de zin een rookgordijn leggen, en keek toen ineens snel opzij. 'Als ik dat zo zeg ben ik je een verklaring schuldig, want ik zie dat je je over me verbaast… Dat heb je vanmorgen ook al gedaan, want je begreep niet waarom ik ineens zo goed met die Grammia enzovoort kon opschieten.'
'Inderdaad, want gewoonlijk ben je zo potdicht als een bankkluis bij nacht en hoe groter gezelschap, des te meer krimp je in je zelf terug.' Hij boog zich naar Hendrikx toe: 'Begrijp me goed, ik ben niet nieuwsgierig, maar ik zwem ook niet in de vrienden, en die ik heb wil ik graag houden, maar daar is begrip voor nodig van twee kanten. Je was een vriend van mijn gestorven broer en toen heb ik als het ware die vriendschap
117

The Slovak edition of the novel (den Doolaard 1974) clearly states on the cover text that the translation is a "version corrected by the author from the original of the third edition" translated by Júlia Májeková (see Figure 3).



Conclusion

Júlia Májeková succeeded, in the difficult 1970s as far as the official literary and translation ideology is concerned, to bring some Dutch literature in translation into the edition plans of *Tatran* publishing house. The theme of a pandemic caused by American hubris was clearly not an objection for the publishing house to give the translation the green light. Nevertheless, according to the principles of censorship as described by Bednárová, the editors actively intervened in the text where critical passages of the Soviet Union could be found.

Another unique feature of this work is that the author himself sent an abridged version to the translator. I suspect that the author himself made mainly stylistic interventions but had no knowledge of the deleted critical passages. More research in the archives of correspondence between den Doolaard, Májeková and *Querido* publishing house, if any are preserved, could shed light on the matter. This book demonstrates, however, that censorship was also a common phenomenon in translations of Dutch literature during the Communist period.

References

Bednárová, Katarína (2015). *Rukoväť dejín prekladu na Slovensku II.* (Situácia slovenského umeleckého prekladu v 20. storočí). Bratislava: Filozofická Fakulta Univerzity Komenského.

Engelbrecht, Wilken (2021). *Van Siska van Rosemael tot Max Havelaar. Receptie van Nederlandstalige literatuur in Tsjechische vertaling, 1848–1948.* Gent: Academia Press (*Lage Landen Studies* 14).

Engelbrecht, Wilken (2022). "A. den Doolaard, een 'oprechte vriend van Tsjechoslowakije'". In: Budimir et al. *Liber Amicorum Jelica Novaković* (to be published).

Den Doolaard, A. (1967). *De Goden gaan naar huis.* Third edition (First edition 1966). Amsterdam: Querido.

Den Doolaard, A. (1971). *Ogen op de rug. Terugkijkend naar boeken en tijdgenoten.* Amsterdam: Querido.

Den Doolaard, A. (1974). *Bohovia sa vracajú.* Translated by Júlia Májeková. Spoločnosť priateľov krásnych kníh. Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ.

Dvořákova-Žiaranová, Ružena (1991). "Za Júliou Májekovou (in memoriam)". *Literárny týždenník*, 4.6., p. 2.

Electronic references

Aalderink, Stella (2020). Bij voorbaat dank aan de schrijvers: pandemie-wijs door coronaliteratuur. https://www.evajinek.nl/nieuws/artikel/5182661/coronaliteratuur-covid-19-boeken-heerma-van-voss-pandemie-generaties-lessen. Accessed 18 August 2021.

Bouman, Hans, Van Zeil Wieteke en Martin de Haan. (2020). Wat pandemieliteratuur ons kan leren over menselijk gedrag. https://www.volkskrant.nl/cultuur-media/wat-de-pandemieliteratuur-ons-kan-leren-over-menselijk-gedrag~b3e63177/?referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F. Accessed 18 August 2021.

Boudewijn, Petra (2020) Quarantaine voor Mark Rutte. https://neerlandistiek.nl/2021/01/quarantaine-voor-mark-rutte/. Accessed 18 August 2021.

Flood, Alison. (2020). Publishers report sales boom in novels about fictional epidemics. https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/mar/05/publishers-report-sales-boom-in-novels-about-fictional-epidemics-camus-the-plague-dean-koontz. Accessed 18 August 2021.

Koevoet, Albert. De Goden gaan naar huis. https://adendoolaard.nl/goden-gaan-naar-huis. Accessed 18 August 2021.

Lonbois, Mathieu, Vergeyle, Joris. (2020) Van Camus tot Saramago: dit zijn de tien pandemieboeken die uw (corona)leven zullen veranderen. https://www.vrt.be/vrtnws/nl/2020/04/14/virusliteratuur-en-pandemiefictie-in-coronatijden/. Accessed 18 August 2021.

Pierrart, Thomas. (2020). Pandemiefictie in tijden van corona. https://neerlandistiek.nl/2020/03/pandemiefictie-in-tijden-van-corona/. Accessed 18 August 2021.

Réka Bozzay

Debreceni Egyetem
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3057-000X

Hungarian Wine Export in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Time to the Low Countries

Abstract | Research into the cultural history of wine proves that the demand for Hungarian wine in Europe was very high from the Middle Ages onwards. The transport of wine to distant regions was not always possible in the Middle Ages, because if it was not stored properly, the wine could spoil. This may explain why the volume of wine export to the Low Countries did not even come close to the volume of wine export to neighbouring areas.

The wine industry in Hungary was probably established in the Middle Ages by settlers who spoke Romance languages and came from the Low Countries. Despite the fact that the settlers from the Low Countries played a very important role in setting up the wine industry, Hungarian wine found its market in the Low Countries only very slowly. At the court of Mary of Hungary, Hungarian wine was often and gladly consumed. In the 17th and 18th centuries, German and Austrian merchants established trade contacts with the Low Countries and brought Hungarian wine to the Netherlands. The transport costs, the tolls and the great geographical distance did not make it possible to distribute Hungarian wine in large volumes in the Low Countries, and so the wine export from Hungary to the Netherlands remained a curiosity.

Keywords | Hungarian wine, merchant contacts, wine export, Low Countries, trade

Introduction

History of the Hungarian wine export is very well documented. According to these studies wine was brought from the 13th century to Bohemia and Moravia and sometimes also to Krakow. Wine export to Poland started to boom from the 15th century. According to Polish sources Hungarian wine was transported on land and on the Vistula till the Baltic Sea. (Pósán 2018: 13) In these regions, Hungarian wine was well known and a popular drink (Komoróczy 1944: 16–17). The geographical proximity to the Prussian and Polish territories and the good transport possibilities on the Vistula made it possible to sell Hungarian wine in large quantities in these regions (Pósán 1996: 319). In the Middle Ages, the transport of wine to distant regions was not always possible, because if it was not stored properly, the wine could spoil. This may explain why the volume of wine exported to the Low Countries did not even come close to the volume of wine exported to neighbouring areas.

This study has two goals. On the one hand it tries to bring forward which role people from the Low Countries played in the beginnings of wine production. This is quiet new topic and mainly

based on the studies of László Pósán who did excellent research on Hungarian wine production an export in the Middle Ages based on primal sources. On the other hand, it tries to present the first attempts for transporting wine to the Low Countries. Until now we only had partial results, because of the lack of sources and the relatively irrelevance of the wine export to North-western Europe comparing to the neighbouring regions. This study examines which steps were put in different periods for transporting wine together with other Hungarian agricultural products and which factors made the wine trade difficult.

Beginnings of the Wine Production

The wine industry in Hungary was probably established in the Middle Ages by settlers from the Low Countries who spoke Romance languages. The names of the municipalities Bodrogolaszi and Liszkaolaszi, not far from the Tokaj wine region, refer to a Romance population that came to Hungary from the Low Countries (Pósán 2017: 17). The name *olaszi* (Italian) was a collective term in the Middle Ages for all people who spoke a Romance language. In the 12th or 13th century, the word *fourmint* was introduced into Hungarian from a Walloon dialect. The word refers to a certain type of grape that was and still is produced mainly in the Tokaj region (Pósán 2017: 18).

In the Middle Ages, colonisers from the Low Countries also settled in the southern Hungarian region of Syrmia (today in Croatia and Serbia). In a source from 1096, a village there was referred to as "Franca Villa", i.e. as a Frankish village. This region is known as one of the most important wine-growing areas of medieval Hungary. The mountain where most of the wine was produced there is called Fruška Gora, i.e. Frankish Mountain (Pósán 2017: 15).

Wine Trade to the North

Foreign trade of Hungary at the beginning of the Early Modern Period fit organically into the division of labour between Western European and Central European countries. In this system Central European countries could participate with products which had favourable sales opportunities in other regions. 90% percent of the Hungarian export was based on agricultural products, mainly on cattle and wine. The most important regions where Hungarian wine was exported were Bohemia and Moravia respectively South Poland. Goods traffic was difficult, wines at that time couldn't be transported very far, transit costs rose by distance. (Tózsa-Rigó 2018: 51–52)

Despite the fact that the settlers from the Low Countries played a very important role in the establishment of the wine industry, Hungarian wine has found its market in the Low Countries only very slowly. Our knowledge of the wine trade to the Low Countries is very fragmented. The fact that we cannot speak of a continuous wine export in great volume may have played a role in this, because the wine trade flourished only at certain times and thanks to certain people. According to records from the late Middle Ages, Polish merchants transported wine to the North. Hungarian wine even reached the court of the Teutonic Order in Marienburg in 1407 (Pósán 1996: 319). A few decades later, Hungarian wine was taken from Cracow to Danzig (Gdańsk) and from there to Flanders (Halaga 142), altough it was rather an exception than a rule.

Mary of Hungary

The demand for Hungarian wine in the Low Countries became especially great at the court of Mary of Hungary, the widow of the Hungarian King Louis II Jagiello. As a former Hungarian queen, she had territories in Hungary where wine was produced. Shortly after her arrival in the Netherlands, General Wilhelm von Roggendorf received a passport from the Hungarian king Ferdinand I, Mary's brother, which allowed him to bring Hungarian *aszú* wine and fruit to Mary's court (Takáts 1900: 379). Mary's Hungarian secretary Miklós Oláh also tried to lure Erasmus, who was staying in Freiburg, home with the promise of good Hungarian wine (Ipolyi 1875: 228). There are letters from Maria preserved from almost two decades later, in which she asked for the delivery of Hungarian wine. She especially liked the wine from Syrmia, Sümeg and Kismarton. Her former Hungarian lady-in-waiting Katalin Svetkovits arranged with her husband Ferenc Battyány also for wine from Syrmia and Sümeg, as well as apples and pears from their own gardens, to be sent to Mary's court.

Hungarian wine was that important to Maria that in 1551 she asked German princes and customs officers, who collected the so-called thirtieth toll on foreign trade, to allow people who brought 16 barrels of wine for her to pass through free of charge (Ortvay 1914: 439–440). Maria was so concerned about the wine merchants that she tried to get her brother Ferdinand to grant Péter Landor, the man who transported her the wine, the freedoms of his ancestors at his court and home (Ortvay 1914: 380).

Wine Export under Leopold I

In the 17th century, people tried to find a market for Hungarian wine in the Low Countries, because the grape harvest was good, but due to the Thirtieth Toll and other taxes, the wine export was difficult. Emperor and Hungarian king Leopold I entrusted Johan Joachim Becher with the task of finding a market for Hungarian products in Western countries. Leopold hoped that the French economic policy (protective import duties of Colbert, the policy of Louis XIV) could lead to the disappearance of French agricultural products, especially grain and wine, from the Dutch market (Takáts 1899a: 349).

In 1670, Becher first visited the city leaders of Rotterdam who were positive about his proposal. As a port city, they suggested to him the water transport and wanted to know more about the Austrian and Hungarian products (Becher 1688: 625). Becher made a thorough survey of the French products that were brought to the Netherlands and also of the products that could be imported from Austria and Hungary (Becher 1688: 629–631).

In first place was pálinka (a kind of gin) which could be exported for one million guilders and in second place Austrian and Hungarian wine, which could be exported for half a million guilders (Becher 1688: 631). The Dutch agreed with the plan and asked for a taste of the pálinka and the wine (Becher 1688: 633). They did not support land transport, but proposed to ship various products like mercury, copper, steel, wine and leather from the harbour of Fiume/Rijeka (nowadays in Croatia) to the Netherlands (Becher 1688: 638, 661).

The Viennese court chamber kept silent for a long time, Georg Ludwig von Sinzendorff, the chairman of the chamber, did not support the plan (Takáts 1899a: 350). Finally, in the spring of 1671, 47 small barrels (42 litres) of Hungarian wine and pálinka were brought to Rotterdam. The cost of transport and other expenses amounted to 1419 forints (Becher 1688: 640–641). Becher reported that the wine arrived spoilt, but the Dutch liked it anyway. Wine experts in Amsterdam and The Hague claimed that the Rhine wine was too sour and the French too sweet compared

to the Hungarian wine. According to Becher, the Dutch would have gladly banned the French wine if they had known they could get a sufficient quantity of the Hungarian and Austrian ones. However, until they were guaranteed this, they did not want to cancel the trade contracts with the French, so that the wine import from the Rhine area remained intact (Takáts 1899a: 346–350).

Two years later, in 1673, Kamprich, the imperial envoy to the Netherlands, tried to stimulate the trade with the Dutch. In his message to the Viennese court chamber, he wrote about the Dutch plum trade. The Dutch bought prunes in Provence and brought them on the ships to the Dutch East Indies, where they were used as medicines against various diseases. According to Kamprich, the Hungarian plum was as good as the French plum, and together with Hungarian wine it could be exported to the Netherlands (Takáts 1902: 140). In spring 1674, several kinds of plums and 100 small barrels of wine were brought to the Netherlands via Litoměřice and Wrocław. However, the Court had to recognise that without toll reductions Hungarian wine could not compete with foreign wines (Takáts 1899a: 350–351).

In the 1680s, Johann Christian Plankenauer made a new attempt to export Hungarian and Austrian wine to the north-western countries. In 1689, during the War of the Nine Years or the War of the Grand Alliance (1688–1697), the import of French products into the Netherlands was prohibited, so it would have been easier to export Hungarian and Austrian wine. Plankenauer's company acquired a monopoly position and was allowed to export 300 small barrels of Hungarian wine. It is not known how successful this enterprise was, as no further data have survived on the fate of Plankenauer's company (Takáts 1899a: 351–352).

Transport Issues

The greatest challenge for the wine (but also for the copper and mercury trade) was the transport itself. The goods could only reach Hamburg by a diversion, because the waterways leading to Hamburg could not be used. As early as the 16th century, the regulation and interconnection of the Oder, Spree and Elbe was discussed. Thus, the Habsburg heirlooms could have had a direct water connection to the Baltic Sea. The other problem was the stacking rights of Frankfurt and Wrocław, which these cities naturally made use of. No wonder that the Dutch recommended water transport from the Dalmatian coast because of the high land transport costs. But this also could not be realised without infringing on the commercial interests of Venice (Takáts 1899a: 354–355).

At the end of the 17th century, there were good opportunities to increase trade with the Dutch. The States General began to consider seriously the possibility of moving its maritime trade to the East (especially to the Turkish Empire) from the sea to the mainland. In this case, the trade route would lead through the Habsburg heirlooms and Hungary. In order to promote this, a trade treaty was already concluded with the court in 1692. The Dutch traded with 'neutral' products, which did not pose a threat to the war between the Viennese court and the Turks (Takáts 1899a: 358–359).

English Trade

The English also wanted to be part of the eastern trade and were not opposed to replace French products (grain and wine) with products from elsewhere. An important promoter of this cause was Giuseppe Maria Vecelli, the postmaster of the Vienna-Venice route. He supported the transit trade with the English and Dutch and took steps as well for the Hungarian wine trade. His main goal was to remove the French wine from England, and with the merging of the Danube and

the Oder, to make possible a new waterway for eastern trade through Hungary (Takáts 1899c: 440–443).

The 1699 Karlovac Peace Treaty, which ended the Turkish wars on the territory of the Hungarian Kingdom, provided new trading opportunities for the English merchants. Of them, Zacharia Sedgewick, an Armenian-English merchant is of particular interest. He was the first to realise Vecelli's plans. After he became acquainted with Hungarian wines, he decided to bring Hungarian red wine to London instead of Persian. With the imperial passport he was able to bring several barrels of wine from Buda to the Netherlands and to Denmark (Takáts 1899a: 364).

The court chamber monitored the quality of the wine. In 1701, the administration in Buda was instructed to cultivate the land and to harvest the different types of grapes separately. Sedgewick continued his trading activity until 1705, but due to the Rákóczi uprising in Hungary (which was a freedom struggle of the Hungarians against the Habsburgs between 1703 and 1711) he had to end it (Takáts 1899a: 359–364). In the same year, the Netherlands lifted the trade embargo against France and Spain and this hampered trade with the Hungarian products (Takáts 1899a: 446).

Following Sedgewick's example, Franz Jakob Ferner tried to sell Hungarian red wine from Buda and Szekszárd. He was the agent of a London company and of the Amsterdam wholesaler Georgius de Beschen. Ferner was granted an imperial patent and a waiver of the payment of additional taxes. The wine transported to England was very successful, so Leopold I decided to export wine to England and the Netherlands. In 1703, 200 small barrels of wine were brought to Holland and 800 and later 1600 small barrels to England. The passports guaranteed Ferner freedom from tolls, but he had to pay a toll once in Vienna. Ferner was also found to be trading with Northern countries during the Rákóczi uprising because in 1704 the court chamber asked the court-martial to protect Ferner who was transporting Hungarian wine to England and presumably also to the Netherlands. A year later, he was again granted freedom from tolls by the court chamber. In 1704, Hungarian wine was confiscated by the Rákóczi insurgents (Takáts 1899b: 400–402).

In order to restore the trade contacts with England and Holland, Vecelli and the special imperial envoy to the English court, Conte Gallas, appeared before the Dutch Pensionary in 1705 and told him about the trade possibilities with Austria. They also had another assignment. Leopold I wanted to borrow one and a half million pounds. The board of trustees was willing to discuss Vecelli's and Conte Gallas's offer, but he first waited for the answer from the English (Takáts 1899c: 446–449). Two memoirs by Vecelli (on the credit and on the Levant trade, including the case of Hungarian wine) came before the English Council of Ministers and found support there. In order to promote trade contacts, a private company was founded. However, the Austrians did not take any further steps towards the establishment of a trading company, so nothing came of the trading contacts. In 1710, the Austrians wanted to take credit from the Netherlands. Only the private trading company of Kristian van Neitsch was prepared to give half a million guilders to the Austrians without guarantee. He had one condition: he wanted to trade freely for thirty years in Hungary and in the Habsburg heirlooms especially with fish, but he had to pay the toll and the thirtieth as well (Takáts 1899c: 456–464).

Trade during the 18th Century

After the Rákóczi uprising, the Palm brothers set up a separate 'wine company' to trade Hungarian wine in England and the Netherlands. In 1726, they received a passport for 1300 small barrels of wine and 25 barrels of pálinka, which they were allowed to transport toll-free.

In the 18th century, the Hungarian wine export increased, the trial exports of wine to England and the Netherlands were very successful. In 1749, Wilhelm Friedrich Hafelmeyer wrote about Hungarian wine exports *Project ein Commercium mit ungarischen Weinen unternehmen* and in 1751 Count Bentinck sent a report from The Hague *Anmerkungen von dem H. Dominico Palairet wegen der hungarischen Weinen* (Takáts 1899b: 403).

Maria Theresa's envoy to The Hague, Freiherr von Reissach, brought Tokay wine to his place of envoy. His guests liked the wine so much that they asked him to bring it for them too. The envoy and his son had Tokay wine worth thousands of forints brought from Trieste to Amsterdam. Chancellor Kaunitz waited for a suggestion from the Hungarian Stadtholder's Council, the largest administrative organisation of Hungarian affairs in Vienna, to ask the Hungarian towns for their opinion on wine exports. The merchant guilds and the wine merchants considered the transport of wine to the Netherlands very risky. The province of Zemplén (where the Tokaj wine region is located) was only prepared to accept wine exports if they were handled by a Dutch trading company itself (Komoróczy 1944: 232).

In the 18th century, the Habsburgs did not want to support the Hungarian wine trade, their trade policy was advantageous for the Habsburg heirlooms, but often very disadvantageous for the Hungarian kingdom (Heckenast 1990: 19). They suppressed agricultural branches in Hungary, which could also occur in Austria, such as the wine trade, which could be a competition for Lower Austrian wine production. It was decided that if Hungarian wine was brought abroad, an equal amount of Austrian wine had to be exported as well.

Conclusion

As we can see, already in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Times, Hungarian wine had a good reputation all over Europe. People from the Low Countries settled down in regions, where climatic conditions allowed wine production and they contributed with their agricultural knowledge to the growing financial benefits from wine trade.

Most Hungarian agricultural and mountain products were brought to the neighbouring countries, but some agricultural products, including Hungarian wine, found their way to the Low Countries. However, wine export from Hungary to the Low Countries was a curiosity. We saw several attempts for bringing Hungarian wine to the Netherlands. Mary of Hungary let wine come from here Hungarian territories, but it served for the consume of her court and did not reach a volume which could have been sold on Netherlandish markets. After reunification of Hungary under Habsburg rule there were several endeavours to transport wine to the Low Countries. The transport costs, the tolls and the great geographical distance, however, did not make it possible to distribute Hungarian wine in large volumes in the Low Countries. In the eighteenth century, due to the trade policy of the Habsburgs, it then became almost impossible to export Hungarian wine to the Netherlands. Studies on the following centuries doesn't deal with the Dutch wine export, because it happened rather occasionally that Hungarian wine was exported to the Low Countries.

References

Becher. Johann Joachim (1688). *Politische Discurs von den eigentlichen Ursachen deß Auf- und Abnehmens der Städt/Länder und Republicken in Specie, wie ein Land Volkreich und Nahrhaft zu machen/ und in eine rechte Societatem civilem zu bringen. Auch wird von dem Bauren- Handwercks und Kaufmannstand/ derer Handel und Wandel/ item Von dem Monopolio, Polypolio und Propolio, von algemeinen Land-Magazinen/Niederlagen/*

Kaufhäusern/Montibus pietatis, Zucht- und Werckhäusern/Wechselbäncken und dergleichen/außführlich gehandelt. Frankfurt (Main): Johann David Zunners.

Halaga, Ondrej (1989). "Verbindungen ostslowakischer Städte mit dem europäischen Markt über Polen und die Ostsee und die „Pacta mutua" Krakau-Kaschau." In: (ed.) Evamaria Engel, Konrad Fritze & Johannes Schildhauer, *Hansische Stadtgeschichte – Brandenburgische Landesgeschichte. Eckhard Müller-Mertens zum 65. Geburtstag* (Hansische Studien 8), Weimar, 132–143.

Heckenast, Gusztáv (1990). "A gazdaságpolitika lehetőségei és korlátai (Magyarország példáján)" [The possibilities and restrictions of economic policy (at the example of Hungary)]. *Világtörténet* 1–2, p. 18–20.

Ipolyi, Arnold (1875). *Oláh Miklós levelezése* [The correspondence of Miklós Oláh]. Budapest: MTA Könyvkiadó.

Komoróczy, György (1944). *Borkivitelünk észak felé. Fejezet a magyar kereskedelem történetéből* [Our Wine Export to the North. Chapters from the History of Hungarian Wine Trade]. Kassa: Kazinczy.

Ortvay, Tivadar (1914). *Mária, II. Lajos magyar király neje 1505–1558* [Mária, the Wife of the Hungarian King Louis II 1505–1558] (Magyar Történeti Életrajzok). Budapest: Athaeneum Társulat.

Pósán, László (2017). „Németalföldi telepesek az Árpád-kori Magyarországon [Dutch Colonists in Hungary in the Period of the Árpád Dynasty]". Németalföld emlékei Magyarországon – Magyar-holland kapcsolatok [Memoires from the Low Countries in Hungary – Connections between Hungary and the Low Countries]. red. Attila Bárány, Gergely Tamás Fazakas, Gábor Pusztai, Miklós Takács, Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetemi Nyomda, 2017, pp. 13–20.

Pósán, László (2016). "Magyar-porosz kereskedelmi kapcsolatok a középkorban" [Hungarian Trade Connections in the Middle Ages]. In: (ed.) György Kövér, Ágnes Pogány & Boglárka Weisz, *Magyar gazdaságtörténeti évkönyv 2016 Válság-kereskedelem* [Yearbook for Hungarian Trade History]. Budapest: Budapest MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 303–332.

Pósán, László (2018) "Bortermelés és borkereskedelem a középkori Magyarországon [Wine production and wine trade in Hungary of the Middle Ages]". In: (ed.) László Pósán &Attila Tózsa-Rigó, *"Vina bibant homines, animantia cetera fontes" Tanulmányok a magyar bor történetéből* [Studies from the History of Hungarian Wine]. Debrecen: Kapitális, 8–16.

Szalay József-Baróti Lajos: A magyar nemzet története [The History of the Hungarian Nation]; http://mek.niif.hu/00800/00892/html/doc/c300081.htm (last accessed 20 March 2021)

Takáts, Sándor (1899a). "Külkereskedelmi mozgalmak hazánkban I. Lipót alatt. (Első közlemény)" [External Trade in the Time of Leopold I (First Communication)]. *Gazdaságtörténelmi Szemle* 6/8: 342–372.

Takáts, Sándor (1899b) "Külkereskedelmi mozgalmak hazánkban I. Lipót alatt. (Második közlemény)" [External Trade in the Time of Leopold I (Second Communication)]. *Gazdaságtörténelmi Szemle*. 6/9: 391–412.

Takáts, Sándor (1899c). "Külkereskedelmi mozgalmak hazánkban I. Lipót alatt. (Harmadik közlemény)" [External Trade in the Time of Leopold I (Third Communication)]. *Gazdaságtörténelmi Szemle*. 6/10: 439–464.

Takáts, Sándor (1900). "Bor- és gyümölcskivitel Németalföldre" [Our Wine and Fruit Export to the Netherlands]. *Magyar Gazdaságtörténelmi Szemle*, nr. 7: 379.

Takáts, Sándor (1902). "Aszaltszilva kivitele Hollandiába" [The Export of Prunes to Holland]. *Magyar Gazdaságtörténelmi Szemle* 9: 140.

Tózsa-Rigó, Attila (2018). "A Magyar Királyság északi irányú borkereskedelme a 16. század második felében [Wine trade of the Hungarian Kingdom to the North in the second half of the 16th century]"]". In: (ed.) László Pósán &Attila Tózsa-Rigó, *"Vina bibant homines, animantia cetera fontes" Tanulmányok a magyar bor történetéből* [Studies from the History of Hungarian Wine]. Debrecen: Kapitális, 50–63.

Milen Jissov

BNU-HKBU United International College
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9412-2938

Natural-Born Tyranny? Czesław Miłosz on Totalitarianism and Human Nature

Abstract | This article reassesses a signature work of the twentieth century: *The Captive Mind* by the Nobel laureate for literature Czesław Miłosz. It examines Miłosz's thinking on a key issue in his book – the relationship between totalitarianism and human nature. After reconstructing his concept of human nature, the article explores how, for Miłosz, totalitarianism both synchronizes with, and deforms, human nature. The article consequently dissects how, inadvertently, Miłosz demonstrates that totalitarianism and human nature harmonize far more strongly than he thinks. This momentous aporia precludes the main goal of Miłosz's book – to understand the *modus operandi* of Eastern Europe's "captive mind".

Keywords | *The Captive Mind*, Czesław Miłosz, Human Nature, Totalitarianism

Introduction

It is a myth widely accepted that political tyranny rests on coercion – that dictatorships terrorize their *unwilling* subjects into frightened obedience. The history of modern tyrannies definitely dispels this myth. Nazism, their worst variety, enjoyed the support, or at least the authorizing acquiescence, of millions of Germans. Historians now agree that even the Holocaust – Nazism's worst enormity – was made possible by the active or passive *mass* support of ordinary, more or less normal, people – multitudes of genocide-abetting Everymen.[1]

Probing the subjectivity of the subjects of tyranny became an urgent problem for Western intellectuals at the nadir of the twentieth century. Thus, as Nazism was raging in Europe, academics associated with the Frankfurt School of social theory launched, across the Atlantic, the most extensive research project up until that time on the psychology of the supporter of tyranny – what they termed "the authoritarian personality." Their work was published in 1949 and 1950 as the series of *Studies in Prejudice*.[2] The Frankfurt School's two leading thinkers, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, added to the *Studies* their 1947 *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, a now-classic

[1] This widely accepted thesis has appeared in: Arendt (1967); Arendt (1994: 306); Browning (1993); Hilberg (1985: 994, 1011); Eley (2010: 15).

[2] The *Studies* included the following books: Leo Löwenthal & Norbert Guterman, *Prophets of Deceit* (1949), Paul W. Massing, *Rehearsal for Destruction* (1949), Nathan Ackerman & Marie Jahoda, *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder* (1950), Theodor W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson & R. Nevitt Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality* (1950), and Bruno Bettelheim & Morris Janowitz, *Dynamics of Prejudice* (1950).

of European philosophy (Horkheimer & Adorno 2002). It sought to understand how the West, led by its Enlightened *mind*, degenerated into the horrors of Nazism.

Another thinker who probed human subjectivity in the world of tyranny was Czesław Miłosz. Born in 1911 into a Polish family in what was then Tsarist Russia, Miłosz was destined to suffer his century's horrific storms. He found his calling – literature – as a university student, when he first ventured into poetry. Then the tragedy of World War II exploded in Europe. Miłosz survived it in Poland, as a member of the country's underground anti-Nazi resistance. With the War over, he joined in the establishment of a socialist Poland, entering its diplomatic service. Disillusioned, however, by the Stalinization of his homeland, he escaped to the West in 1951. After a decade spent in France, he settled in the United States, having obtained a professorship in Slavic languages and literatures at the University of California, Berkeley. As the Cold War waned and ended, Miłosz was able to return to Poland, for which he had never stopped longing. By the time of his death in 2004, he had created a rich oeuvre of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, which had made him one of the major intellectuals of his age. Its crowning recognition was the 1980 Nobel Prize for Literature.

The best-known part of Miłosz's oeuvre is *The Captive Mind*. Published in 1953, it is a work of non-fiction. It is a critical, politically dissident, historical and cultural analysis of the Eastern Europe of its time. Its main objective, as formulated by Miłosz, is "to explain how the human mind functions" in Eastern Europe.[3] A more general aim is to understand "the power of attraction" of totalitarianism over "the twentieth century [*sic*] mind" (*CM*, vii–viii). To achieve these objectives, Miłosz focuses mainly on the milieu most 'familiar' to him at the time: the intellectuals of Eastern Europe (*CM*, xv).

Critics have commended Miłosz for achieving his objectives. No less a luminary than Karl Jaspers (1953: 13) applauded *The Captive Mind* as an "analysis of the highest order." Echoing Jaspers, Edward Możejko (1988: 15–16) has called the book a "most superb" work, offering "an extensive well-ordered analysis of a system imposed by the Soviets on the countries of Eastern and Central Europe … [that] reveal[s] the depths of its degeneration." More recently, Tony Judt (2010) has praised the book as "by far the most insightful and enduring account of the attraction of intellectuals to Stalinism and, more generally, of the appeal of authority and authoritarianism to the intelligentsia."[4]

This article casts a more critical look at *The Captive Mind*. Its purpose is to examine Miłosz's thinking on a central issue in his book: the relationship between totalitarianism and human nature. To achieve that objective, I first reconstruct Miłosz's understanding of human nature. I then explore an important line of analysis in *The Captive Mind* – how totalitarianism and human nature synchronize in important ways. I analyze further how Miłosz also insists that totalitarianism deforms human nature. Finally, I examine a significant aporia in Miłosz's text. While probing how it "captures" the "mind" of Eastern Europe, Miłosz demonstrates, inadvertently, that totalitarianism and human nature harmonize far more strongly than he thinks. Ironically, he thus reveals that totalitarianism exists in strange harmony with our nature. This correspondence is momentous: it precludes the main goal of Miłosz's book – to "explain" the *modus operandi* of Eastern Europe's "captive mind."

---

[3] Czesław Miłosz, *The Captive Mind* (2001: xv). Hereafter cited in the text as *CM* followed by a comma and page numbers. Miłosz understands the term "mind" in a general way. He equates it with the entire inner life of humans, including cognition and rationality, as well as human psychology.

[4] Other intellectuals have also praised *The Captive Mind*, including Albert Einstein (Franaszek 2017: 304–306). I have reviewed how scholars have interpreted *The Captive Mind* in Jissov (2021: 33–34). This article is referring only to the scholarship on the book – that of Aleksander Fiut – that is related directly to its topic – Miłosz's views on totalitarianism and human nature.

The Captive Mind and Human Nature

The Captive Mind is, indeed, a resolute critique of the Stalinist political tyranny established in Eastern Europe after World War II. Using the ideologically loaded term of the Cold War, Miłosz terms that tyranny 'totalitarianism' (*CM*, viii).[5] And he minces no words in repudiating it: he calls it "stupefying and loathsome" (*CM*, xv). In what is his main argument, he claims, à la George Orwell (1990), that the foundation of this hateful regime is mind control. Stalinist totalitarianism, he asserts, imposes a "rule," a "mastery," "over the mind" (*CM*, 161, 191, 197). And it does so by enforcing a "total rationalism" on human thinking (*CM*, 215). Miłosz has in mind a specific kind of rationalism – that of communist ideology. He calls that ideology "the New Faith" and "Diamat" – the latter being a shorthand for "the revision" of Marx's "dialectical materialism […] by Lenin and Stalin" (*CM*, xii–xiii, 52).

Miłosz insists that Diamat is, indeed, a "total" – a totalitarian – kind of rationalism. It is a logically consistent system of ideas that imposes itself aggressively on human beings and their world. It seeks to explain society and human life exclusively according to its precepts (*CM*, 48, 219–220). It also interprets history mechanically, rigidly in line with its doctrinaire philosophy of history (*CM*, 201). And it forcefully ideologizes intellectual inquiry and art (*CM*, 49). Thus, it locks up human thinking in the prison of its dogma. The mind is forced to work, and to perceive humans, their past, and their present reality, only through the ideology. This is the "captivity" of mind that titles Miłosz's book. To Miłosz, the "mind" of Eastern Europe has been Diamatized – incarcerated in Diamat.

In stressing this imprisonment, Miłosz implies that East European totalitarianism deforms humans; that it cramps their mind – thereby denaturing them. In Miłosz's thinking, the totalitarianized mind is thus related to the philosophical problem of human nature. Indeed, the relationship between Stalinist totalitarianism and human nature emerges as a key theme in *The Captive Mind*.

As scholars have observed, the problem of human nature is an important theme in Miłosz's oeuvre. Crucial in this respect is the work of Aleksander Fiut. Noting its "anthropocentric" character, Fiut (1987: 65, 67) has argued that Miłosz's poetry "persuades us – in spite of numerous doubts and reservations […] – to believe in the existence of an undiminished element in human nature."[6] Put simply: in his poetry Miłosz posits the existence of a human nature.

This is also what happens in *The Captive Mind*. Admittedly, the book does not theorize human nature systematically. Miłosz does, however, identify properties of being human that, for him, undoubtedly *exist*. As we will see, he is not certain whether all of these properties stem from nature, or from nurture; thus, there is a moment of uncertainty in his thinking on human nature. He does, however, conceive all of these properties of being human as real, actual, existing – he postulates their existence. In this sense, he articulates a conception of what I call "immanent humanity." This conception constitutes Miłosz's concept of human nature as it transpires

[5] For a history of the concept of "totalitarianism," see Abbott Gleason, *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War* (1995). I am skeptical of the concept's heuristic value as a tool of historical analysis. When applied to Nazism and Stalinism, it tends to ignore the differences between the two regimes. It also tends to conflate the two into a single historical phenomenon. To put it in other words, it *totalizes* two discrete historical phenomena into a single one. In that sense, the concept is itself totalitarian. For a critique of one of the concept's most famous formulations, Arendt's *Origins*, see Jissov (2020). I am using the term "totalitarianism" in this article because Miłosz himself is using it in his book.

[6] In his article, Fiut (1987) sketches Milosz's thinking on human nature in his poetry. He develops his sketch into a full analysis of the problem of human nature in Miłosz's poetry in *The Eternal Moment* – a landmark in Miłosz scholarship (Fiut, 1990).

in *The Captive Mind*.[7] Again, that concept is fragmentary and partial; it does not, for example, conceptualize how human reason is a part of human nature. It is, however, the only concept of human nature that appears in Miłosz's text.

What, then, is this concept? Miłosz considers it intermittently – when analyzing "the captive mind" leads him to reflect on whether the features of that mind are natural. In that reflection, he reveals what he thinks are the properties of immanent humanity.

Thus, for Miłosz, the general character of immanent humanity is malleability. In his understanding, human nature is not static or unchangeable; it is pliable, moldable. Reflecting on World War II, he asks an odd question: whether the hell of war is a "natural" human condition. And strikingly, he claims that it is! World War II, he describes, regressed Eastern Europe to a wild, bestial state of nature, where people lost all sense of morality, started stealing, abused, and butchered, each other ruthlessly. But these barbarities, claims Miłosz, are as "natural," as human, as, say, reading a book about them in peacetime (*CM*, 25–29). "Man," he asserts, "is so plastic a being than one can even conceive of the day when a thoroughly self-respecting citizen will crawl about on all fours, sporting a tail of brightly colored feathers as a sign of conformity to the order he lives in" (*CM*, 29). Profoundly malleable, immanent humanity, professes Miłosz, allows a metamorphosis of humans into four-legged, long-tailed Big Birds.

Miłosz also discerns more specific properties of immanent humanity. Thus, for him, good and evil are immanent in humans. Miłosz sees humans as both angels and demons. At the end of his book, he begins to reminisce about what his life would have been, had he chosen not to escape to the West. He concludes that he would have had a life of comfort in Eastern Europe – a scholar cared for by a paternalistic regime, benevolent to intellectuals, on condition of their political loyalty (*CM*, 248). But that pampered life would have been deathly. "The writer's essential task," he declares, is "to look at the world from his own independent viewpoint [and] to tell the truth as he sees it" (*CM*, xiv). Remaining in Eastern Europe would have meant death for Miłosz as a writer, because he would have been unable to tell the truth – the truth about human beings. "Knowing there is a light in man," he confesses, "I could never have dared seek it; for light is not, I believe, the same as political consciousness, and it can exist in fools, monks […], and kulaks. Knowing there is crime in man, I could never have pointed it out; for I would have had to believe," with socialism, "[…] that crime is a product of history [and society] and not of human beings" (*CM*, 250). The reign of Diamat would have prevented Miłosz's disclosure of what he thinks is the truth about humans – that humans are, by nature, both saints and fiends (*CM*, 250).

A key property of immanent humanity is a special human aspiration. "There is," Miłosz declares, "an internal longing for harmony and happiness that lies deeper than ordinary fear or the desire to escape misery or physical destruction" (*CM*, 6). This is the human, all too human, wish for what Western philosophy has for centuries dreamt of as "the good life" – a wish for individual and social bliss. For Miłosz, this impulse is immanent in humans.

Contra Diamat, humans, for Miłosz, are not exclusively creatures of reason. The human mind, he thinks, has a *non*-rational side – a dimension of non-rationality. And he identifies what he takes to be its constituents.

One of them is what he calls our "spiritual needs." In Diamatized Eastern Europe, they manifest themselves, concretely, as a wish for new, worthwhile "cultural values" – non-Diamat values, ones promising a better future (*CM*, 40). This is the specific, immanent form that these needs assume in Miłosz's native region.

Apropos of culture, another part of non-rationality is what Miłosz calls humans' "aesthetic needs" (*CM*, 68). These include a "need of […] harmonious forms" – a desire for beauty (*CM*, 68).

[7] Using a word used by Miłosz himself, Fiut (1987: 65, 68) calls Miłosz's concept of human nature "humanness."

They also include a "hunger for *strangeness*" (*CM*, 67). And they consist, too, of a yearning for "mystery" – for a chance of experiencing something "unexpected" – a surprise (*CM*, 66).

Significantly, Miłosz suggests that these aesthetic impulses *might be* natural, but he does not claim that they *are*. He refrains from ascribing them to nature, as opposed to nurture. Reflecting on them, he poses a rhetorical question, which he leaves unanswered: "How can one still the thought," he exclaims, "that aesthetic experiences arise out of something organic" (*CM*, 69)? Natural or nurtured, their aesthetic impulses are, for Miłosz, immanent in humans.

Another side of non-rationality is emotionality. Humans, Miłosz thinks, have a "rich" "emotional life" (*CM*, 201, 205). For him, its most important part is its "religious needs" (*CM*, 205, 206). Once again, Miłosz is not sure whether human religiosity is natural or nurtured; as with aesthetics, he hesitates (*CM*, 206–207). But he is sure that it is all too real. "… [I]t matters little," he asserts, "whether religious drives result from 'human nature' or from centuries of conditioning; they exist" (*CM*, 207).

What Miłosz calls humans' "psychological needs" also belong to non-rationality (*CM*, 245). Miłosz does not explore all conceivable urges of this kind, but focuses on "national pride" (*CM*, 244–245). He claims that this sentiment is "spontaneous" (*CM*, 245). And he implies that it belongs to nature, not to nurture. He does so in an animalistic, and patriarchal, metaphor. "National pride," he says, "may be an absurd feeling, yet a rooster's pride as he struts about his own yard amid the hens is biologically useful" (*CM*, 244–245).

By claiming that human nationalism is "spontaneous," Miłosz in effect propounds that spontaneity also constitutes a part of human nature. In so doing, he echoes a central argument of a classic work on totalitarianism – Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. In it, Arendt argues that the quintessence of human nature is precisely spontaneity. She defines it as "man's power to begin something new out of his own resources" – humans' ability to initiate new projects (Arendt 1994: 455). For Miłosz, likewise, spontaneity belongs to immanent humanity.

Human non-rationality also shows an odder penchant. In difficult moments, claims Miłosz, humans have a natural tendency to embrace deception. "Men will clutch at illusions," he declares, "when they have nothing else to hold to" (*CM*, xii). In times of crisis, Miłosz propounds here, humans are gullible – they are natural believers in lies.

And finally, constituting immanent humanity, besides non-rationality, are what Miłosz variously calls humans' "irrational" "desires," "longings," "impulses," "instinct" – human *ir*rationality (*CM*, 22, 206, 213). Miłosz terms irrationality "mysterious" – impossible to understand in full (*CM*, 206). But though eluding understanding, for him it works in a decipherable way: it "makes man revolt against a reasonable explanation of all phenomena" (*CM*, 206).

This concept of human irrationality echoes Dostoevsky. His *Notes from Underground* are a paean to irrationality – precisely of the kind Miłosz talks about. The hero of the *Notes* famously asserts that our unrestricted "whim," our freedom to choose to do whatever we like, even going straight against reason and our best interest, is the quintessence of being human. This freedom may in fact be "very stupid," but "it preserves for us what's most important and precious, that is, our personality and our individuality" (Dostoevsky 2001: 21). Skipping class to read poetry may be silly and bad for one's GPA, but it saves one's identity as a lover of poetry.

Miłosz calls human irrationality "mysterious." But he goes beyond it in his thinking on how humans are mysterious. Indeed, he proposes that humans *are*, in fact, "a mystery" – that "mystery" is an inherent part of being human (*CM*, 249). Miłosz thus proposes that one property of immanent humanity is a question mark: that one dimension of human nature is unknown and unknowable – that it eludes human understanding.

In Sync: Harmony between Stalinist Tyranny and Immanent Humanity

At the very outset of his book, Miłosz rejects the myth that Stalinist totalitarianism in Eastern Europe rests on terrorized obedience. This notion, he notes, is common in the West; but, it "is wrong" (*CM*, 6). That tyranny, Miłosz proffers, aligns with, and satisfies, the all too human impulse to "harmony and happiness" (*CM*, 6). Thus, as he sees it, "the nature of humankind" actually feeds totalitarianism in Eastern Europe (*CM*, 6, 22–23).

Miłosz explores how this harmony transpires among East European intellectuals (*CM*, 6–7). He divides his peers in two classes (*CM*, 6–7). The first consists of true believers in Diamat – for whom the ideology is *the* path to "the good life." Miłosz confesses that he actually admires such people. In their case, the tyranny of Diamat is no tyranny at all; it satisfies directly their impulse to "harmony and happiness" (*CM*, 6–7).

The second class is half-hearted believers. They do not embrace Diamat sincerely, and with all of their heart and mind; for them, acceptance of Diamat is a tolerable arrangement, an okay deal. Miłosz calls them "intellectuals who *adapt* themselves." To him, these chameleons merit little respect (*CM*, 7). Still, Miłosz profiles their chameleonic subjectivity. Four main factors, he claims, lead to it. One is "social usefulness" (*CM*, 9). In days of yore, Miłosz reasons, religion served as a cement of society, providing a common set of ideas for all of its members, thereby bringing their thinking together. In Miłosz's secular present, Diamat has taken on the function of a social glue. Intellectuals, the luminaries of society, feel *connected* to it – through Diamat. They are not social outsiders; they have a role to play in society, and even to become its leaders – as Diamat's prophets (*CM*, 7–9).

A second Diamat attraction for his peers, claims Miłosz, is disappointment with what they see as the philistinism of capitalist society. Atomization, spiritual mediocrity, empty personal lives, unfulfilling work lives, base pleasures: disillusioned with these inanities of capitalist society, East European intellectuals turn to a system of thought that contains a promise for a new and better world (*CM*, 9–11).

Diamat's third magnet stems from the conditions of intellectual work. That work, claims Miłosz, is born and sustained by its social and historical reality – without which it cannot exist: a Kafka cannot appear without a modern Europe. As Eastern Europe has reconstituted its social reality in Diamat's image, it has rendered intellectual work outside the ideology impossible. The author of such work would be thrown into unproductive exile. For the sake of their work, to make it at least possible, intellectuals accept Diamat (*CM*, 11–16).

And finally, what attracts East European intellectuals is the very "success" of the ideology (*CM*, 16). It has subjugated the Eastern Bloc; it is captivating myriads of people even outside that Bloc; its takeover of the entire globe looks possible. Lured by its triumph, East European intellectuals embrace it. They are like new fans of a winning soccer team: winning wins them over (*CM*, 16).

All of these forces of attraction, claims Miłosz, convert East European intellectuals to Diamat. Notably, their conversion is not easy, for it demands the suppression of the converts' existing convictions, such as their religion (*CM*, 16–18). Even more, that suppression spawns a mental debility: a "schizophrenic" "split" in subjectivity – between one's old, now-suppressed, way of thinking and the newly adopted ideology (*CM*, 17–18, 20–22). Still, this malady enables an inner *modus vivendi*. Its victim "attains a relative degree of *harmony*, just enough to render him active [*emphasis mine*]" (*CM*, 23). Diamat's "adapted" intellectuals develop an inner illness, while gracing themselves with a partial taste of "the good life." Though disabling, their afflicted condition gratifies – partway – the human impulse to "harmony and happiness."

In Prison: Stalinist Tyranny's Deformation of Immanent Humanity

Satisfying it partially, Stalinist tyranny, Miłosz claims, also deforms immanent humanity. Thus, it abuses human malleability. For Miłosz, as we saw, humans are potential Big Birds. Targeting their moldability, the tyranny of Diamat tries to become their keeper. It shapes humans into its fitting subjects. Thus, it compels them to adopt a specific psychology: of self-less devotion to society, of obedience, discipline, conformity, hard work, humility, prudery, readiness to betray political dissidence to the authorities (*CM*, 75–76, 239). As we indicated, Stalinist tyranny also molds the mind. It infixed Diamat in human thinking, imprisoning the mind in the ideology (*CM*, 5–7, 220). This incarceration is highly deleterious – it dispirits the jailbirds: it breeds in them an "apathy," a profound "paralysis" of their entire inner life, including their thinking and their psyche. That life is deadened, argues Miłosz, turned into a waste land (*CM*, 23–24).

Stalinist tyranny, Miłosz claims further, seeks to crush human non-rationality. More specifically, it "is incapable of satisfying" the immanent human wish for non-Diamat "cultural values" pointing to a better future. In Diamatized Eastern Europe, as Miłosz sees it, they simply do not exist (*CM*, 40).

Far more aggressively, Miłosz stresses, Stalinist tyranny has declared war on human aesthetic impulses. Coldness stamps the architectural demeanor of its cities; the closure of small businesses, now seen as germs of capitalism, stamps out the once-picturesque hustle and bustle of everyday urban life. Austere and uniform clothing gives people a standardized look. Conformist behavior, down to body language, transforms them into automatons. Beauty, "strangeness," surprise, are killed in Eastern Europe. Boredom reigns (*CM*, 65–67).

This Reign of Boredom has also victimized art. The official doctrine of art is "socialist realism." Launched at the time of his escape to the West, it was, Miłosz confesses, a key reason for that fateful choice (*CM*, xiii). For him, socialist realism is a devilish dogma. It "is not […] merely an esthetic theory," he writes, but "involves […] the whole Leninist-Stalinist doctrine. […] In the field of literature it forbids what has in every age been the writer's essential task – to look at the world from his own independent viewpoint, to tell the truth as he sees it, and so to keep watch and ward in the interest of society as a whole" (*CM*, xiii–xiv). Socialist realism is highly detrimental to art, as it demands a thoroughly ideological art, one that murders truth. By enforcing it, claims Miłosz, the tyranny of Diamat stifles the aesthetic urges of its subjects.

Stalinist tyranny also wars against human emotionality. Thus, it assaults its subjects' religious impulses. Militantly atheistic, it is their open enemy (*CM*, 207–208). More generally, foisting itself upon the human mind, Miłosz claims, the extreme rationalism of the tyranny of Diamat represses the human emotions severely. Yet, it cannot stifle them out of existence. Though badly mutilated, they survive. In fact, they metamorphose into inner, emotional "resistance" to the reigning tyranny, into a "terrible hatred" against it (*CM*, 201, 205).

Stalinist tyranny seems friendlier to the human "psychological need" of nationalism. Eastern Europe, Miłosz claims, has set out to gratify the nationalism of its subjects. Its national regimes have set up massive propaganda machines that extol their nation. This effort, however, is not entirely successful. Being created and imposed by the rulers, this nationalism is fabricated – not "*spontaneous*." It is fake – failing to satisfy the real, genuine, inner needs of people (*CM*, 245).

This critique of nationalism on Miłosz's part again echoes Arendt. In *Origins*, Arendt (1994: 458–459) famously argues that totalitarianism assaults human nature. It tries, she claims, to abolish human spontaneity – and this attempt is its greatest crime (Arendt 1994: 455, 458–459, 466, 473). For Miłosz, too, totalitarianism is an enemy of human spontaneity.

Finally, imposing on the mind its "total rationalism," the mental jail of Diamat smothers its polar opposite in human nature: irrationality (*CM*, 22, 206, 213). While not perfect, claims

Miłosz, the democratic regimes of the West provide chances for expressing one's political dissent from them – offering salubrious relief of one's impulses of anti-rational rebellion (*CM*, 244). In Eastern Europe, whose society has been remade in line with Diamat's rationalism, these impulses are suppressed. They lurk as an underground, unarticulated, inner current of resentment (*CM*, 212–213). And of course, also stifled down there, "underground," is the Dostoevskian freedom of the "whim."

Miłosz, as we saw, believes that humans are "a mystery." In what is a momentous personal confession, he admits that precisely this belief was what inspired his rejection of East European totalitarianism, in his book and in his life. That tyranny, he argues, is turning its subjects into brainless automatons, who follow blindly the commands of Diamat. It is re-engineering their very being – how they think, how they feel, how they act – into its thorough incarnation. Elements of being human that do not fit Diamat are erased. And that project, claims Miłosz, is horrendous! Humans are "a mystery," he declares, and that mystery must be respected – deeply, humbly, resolutely (*CM*, 75–76, 220, 239, 248–250).

Strange Sync: Stalinist Tyranny's Inadvertent Harmony with Immanent Humanity

Ironically, Miłosz's respect for mystery inadvertently spills into and afflicts his book, in the form of an enigma. His analysis of Eastern Europe's "captive mind" unwittingly shows that that mind harmonizes with Stalinist tyranny far more than he realizes. Let us now look at this momentous puzzle.

Miłosz, as we saw, conceives humans as figurines of clay: for him, human nature is profoundly moldable; and taking advantage of that malleability, totalitarianism molds its subjects according to its will and whim. For Miłosz, as we also saw, this treatment of humans is a ruinous abuse. Significantly, to condemn it, he compares it to sculpture. The tyranny over Eastern Europe, he writes, "ha[s] set out to carve a new man much as a sculptor carves his statue out of a block of stone, by chipping away what is unwanted" (*CM*, 249). The undesirable parts of being human are seen, cut off, and thrown away as, garbage. The object that is left, even if desirable, is dead – as dead as a stone. And yet, as dreadful as it is, this petrifying play with humans is, according to Miłosz's own thinking, enabled by immanent humanity – by its moldability. Stalinist tyranny does what immanent humanity allows it to do. In that sense, it follows immanent humanity.

Alignment also appears apropos of Miłosz's views on human morality. For him, humans are both good and evil, both angels and demons – by nature. *The Captive Mind*, however, resolutely demonizes East European totalitarianism. Miłosz represents it insistently as an aggressively evil, diabolical tyranny. It imprisons the mind of its subjects, desiccates their spirit, wrecks them into schizophrenia, turns them into robots, into stones, entombs them in boring cities. For Miłosz, this radical abuse of humans is, purely and simply, "wrong" (*CM*, 249). He describes the Soviet Union, the center of that abuse, as a dystopia of Biblical proportions: "a vale of tears and of gnashing of teeth" (*CM*, 236). In his thinking, Sovietized Eastern Europe is an incarnation of evil. But, if evil, it corresponds to what Miłosz calls "crime in man" – the dark side of human beings. In Miłosz's text, Stalinist tyranny harmonizes with human diabolism.

Curiously, Stalinist tyranny aligns with human goodness as well. A realm of evil, Stalinized Eastern Europe, claims Miłosz, nevertheless promises a "golden age" – the blissful reign of socialism (*CM*, 234–235). This is a paradise of humanism, where " 'man's exploitation of man' " is abolished (*CM*, 211). Tragically, argues Miłosz, this "vision" "is merely a useful lie:" a deliberate chimera dangled by the tyranny of Diamat before the entire world to lure people into baptism

and faith in itself (*CM*, 234). The horror of this ploy is beyond dispute. But there is something striking in how Miłosz describes it. In his description, the deceit of the "vision" is known only to the leaders of the tyranny, not to its victims (*CM*, 234). To its nescient victims, the "vision" is still a positive, humane vision. As such, it corresponds to their own goodness – to the "light" that Miłosz sees "in man." But Miłosz's text goes even further. We saw that, for him, humans have an immanent penchant for deception. Thus, even if felt by its subjects as deceptive, Stalinist tyranny's chimerical promise of a paradise still synchronizes with the immanent human propensity for lies. In Miłosz's text, totalitarianism and human nature harmonize still.

Another affinity between them involves human psychology. Focusing on nationalism, Miłosz, as we saw, claims that totalitarianism fails to satisfy this "psychological need" entirely. Yet, looked at from an opposite perspective, this failure is not total. "National pride," Miłosz also writes, "is *flattered* by the display of national flags as well as by daily announcements of the latest economic achievements, of the buildings, highways, and railroads constructed and the production quotas fulfilled [*emphasis mine*]" (*CM*, 245). While experienced as fake, official nationalism does gratify partially its analogue in immanent humanity.

Human emotionality fares similarly. For Miłosz, as we noted, our "religious needs" are its core; driven by a militant atheism, Stalinist totalitarianism wars against them. Yet, it does not simply extirpate them; as with nationalism, it also tries to satisfy them, at least partially. Miłosz calls Diamat a "New Faith" – an entire, new, surrogate religion. Its tyranny, he claims, has invented "a new institution[–]the 'club' " (*CM*, 197). Born in the Soviet Union in the 1920s, the club was a cultural-political organization, of various sizes, whose purpose was to promote socialist culture, to serve as a venue for leisure activities, and to provide political education into socialist ideology (Tsipurskz 2016: 335; Siegelbaum 1999: 78–92; Bokov 2017: 403–436). This establishment, notes Miłosz, is ubiquitous in the Eastern Bloc. Significantly, it works as a kind of religious temple, bewitching people into embracing the values and ideas of the New Faith (*CM*, 197–199). "On its walls," writes Miłosz, "hang portraits of Party leaders draped with red bunting. Every few days, meetings following pre-arranged agendas take place, meetings that are as potent as religious rites. … [These] [c]ollective religious ceremonies induce a state of belief [in the New Faith]" (*CM*, 198). And, in general, the totalitarianism of the Eastern Bloc mobilizes education, the mass media, the whole culture of the Bloc, to convert its subjects to Diamat (*CM*, 197–199, 207–208). In effect, observes Miłosz, it has come to resemble a new species of "church" (*CM*, 207). As such, however, it meets, at least partway, the immanent religiosity of human beings.

No less surprisingly, Stalinist tyranny also meets partway humans' immanent aestheticism. Miłosz's ostensible claim is that it kills that aestheticism. His text, however, belies this claim. It aligns the two. Thus, it synchronizes Stalinist tyranny with our desire for "mystery." Despite his great stress on its manic rationalism, Miłosz represents the Eastern Bloc as mysterious. "Mystery," he observes, "shrouds the political moves determined on high in the distant Center, Moscow" (*CM*, 16). The government of the Soviet Union resembles a secretive, ghostly, sorcerous control center, manipulating the entire Eastern Bloc. Mystery also inheres in the Bloc's ruling ideology. Diamat, writes Miłosz, "is mysterious; no one understands it completely – but that merely enhances its magic power. Its elasticity, as exploited by the Russians, who do not possess the virtue of moderation, can result at times in the most painful edicts" (*CM*, 51). Not comprehended and expounded fully, Diamat allows for interpretation, misinterpretation, and manipulation. In Miłosz's Russophobic words, it is an enigma. Miłosz himself acknowledges that this enigma is the source of Diamat's power of attraction. Significantly, in describing the Soviet government and Diamat as enigmatic, he mystifies them. By doing so, he aligns them with his concept of human nature. In his text, even though he does not acknowledge it, there is little mystery in Diamat's appeal: the ideology corresponds to humans' bent for "mystery."

Even more, the tyranny of Diamat also corresponds to the human aesthetic impulse to "strangeness." This affinity is highly striking, given Miłosz's strong stress on the aggressive dullness of the Eastern Bloc. But, contradicting that emphasis, he also stresses that the Bloc's realm of tyrannical boredom is exceedingly strange. Indeed, for him, it is downright weird. Describing it, he writes: "The inhabitants of Western countries little realize that millions of their fellow-men, who seem superficially more or less similar to them, live in a world as fantastic as that of the men from Mars" (*CM*, 78). The Eastern Bloc is truly an alien universe. Miłosz, in fact, stresses this weirdness dramatically by foregrounding it in the preface of his book. He confesses:

> If I have been able to write this book, it is because the system invented by Moscow has seemed, and still seems to me infinitely strange. Any civilization, if one looks at it with an assumption of naive simplicity (as Swift looked at the England of his day), will present a number of bizarre features which men accept as perfectly natural because they are familiar. But nowhere is this so marked as in the new civilization of the East, which moulds the lives of eight hundred millions of human beings. (*CM*, xv)

Miłosz, then, approaches the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe as an absurd universe. For him, they come straight out of Kafka. By seeing them in this way, however, he also harmonizes them with what he sees as immanent human aestheticism. In fact, if the impulse to "strangeness" does, indeed, belong to human nature, as Miłosz thinks, then his claim that its victims "accept [totalitarianism] as perfectly natural because they are familiar" with it, makes little sense. On his concept of human nature, they should accept it because of its absurdity. What is more, on that conception, totalitarianism should be appealing, naturally, to outsiders – including Miłosz himself. Thus, how he finds it hateful, rather than attractive, itself appears bizarre.[8]

In Miłosz's eyes, the strangeness of Stalinist tyranny is paired with another, graver peculiarity. Miłosz diagnoses that tyranny as sheer lunacy. He calls the other totalitarianism of the twentieth century, Nazism, a "collective insanity" – a regime of savage madness (*CM*, 132). He describes its Soviet counterpart in similar terms. We saw that, according to him, the totalitarianism of Diamat wrecks the human mind, spawning a "schizophrenic" subjectivity. In Eastern Europe, forecasts Miłosz, "the schizophrenic as a type will," "probably," "not disappear in the near future" (*CM*, 22). This divided subjectivity is so numerous and deep-rooted as to constitute an enduring "type" of human subjectivity, a prominent and resilient mental species. Mental disorder is thus a defining trait of Eastern Europe's society and culture. But more, lunacy is an inherent trait of Stalinist tyranny: it resides in the latter's fanaticism. That tyranny, claims Miłosz, demands a full devotion to its ruling ideology, commanding a *total* acceptance of Diamat (*CM*, 213–215). "The only friend," writes Miłosz, is "the man who accepts the doctrine 100 per cent. If he accepts only 99 per cent, he … [is] considered a foe" (*CM*, 214). This fanaticism, Miłosz claims, is the tyranny's "madness" (*CM*, 214). Miłosz, thus, represents the Eastern Bloc as an insane asylum, a cuckoo's nest of schizophrenia, monomania, lunacy. By showing it in this way, however, he inadvertently brings it into resonance with the element of immanent humanity that is akin to madness: irrationality.

Apart from these inadvertent correspondences, Miłosz's text implies three ways of being human that do conflict with Stalinist totalitarianism. They involve our spiritual impulses, our

[8] As I have argued elsewhere, Miłosz's representation of Eastern Europe is negative, rendered in terms of what Edward Said called "Orientalism." He portrays Eastern Europe as a bad Orient. In that sense, his book is an Orientalist text (Jissov 2021). By thus Orientalizing it, Miłosz exoticizes Eastern Europe – he represents it as a strange universe. This Orientalization intensifies further his portrayal of the Eastern Bloc as absurd.

spontaneity, and our aestheticism. As it turns out, however, totalitarianism's clash with them is not as tragic as Miłosz alleges.

Regarding spiritual impulses, Miłosz, as we saw, postulates a wish for non-Diamat, future, "cultural values" – which do not grow in Eastern Europe. As they are non-existent in that desert, argues Miłosz, its intellectuals hope to find them in the West (*CM*, 40). Alas, that hope is vain: Miłosz never shows any values of that sort existing in the West of that time. In *The Captive Mind*, the West is thus also a desert, devoid of such values. In that sense, the Stalinist tyranny over Eastern Europe is no better than its contemporary West. Both fail a significant property of immanent humanity.

The next failed human trait is spontaneity. For Miłosz, as we noted, the fabricated nationalism of the tyranny of Diamat jars with human spontaneity (*CM*, 245). Unlike Arendt, however, who formulates a concept of "spontaneity" with a definite meaning, Miłosz never does so. In his text, it is a rather empty concept, a hollow signifier without much conceptual content. His remarks on fake nationalism imply that spontaneity is what that nationalism suppresses: some sort of a gratuitous, supposedly authentic, nationalism (*CM*, 245). But nationalism is a slippery phenomenon. It can manifest, and has historically manifested, both a positive and a negative valence: a humane devotion to one's nation, as well as a ferocious hatred of that nation's imagined outsiders.[9] In fact, Miłosz himself tends to understand nationalism in the latter, deeply tragic way. Strikingly, in his very discussion of it, he admits that government-enforced, artificial worship of one's nation in Eastern Europe does not remove the region's long-standing, widespread, and deep-seated hatred of Russia. He writes: "Official safety valves are probably insufficient channels for feelings of national pride if most Estonians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, or Rumanians would willingly cut the throat of any available Russian were they not restrained by fear [of severe punishment]" (*CM*, 245). Since, as Miłosz implies here, humans' immanent nationalism is a vicious impulse, then its obstruction or manufactured management might not be that bad, after all. Thus, Miłosz's critique of Stalinist totalitarianism as a demolisher of spontaneity not only hollows itself out, as his unformed concept of spontaneity implies; it very much unravels.

There is, however, one property of immanent humanity that *The Captive Mind* shows as surely suppressed by Stalinist tyranny. It is especially dear to Miłosz, and it is what he identifies as one of the three human aesthetic impulses: the human yearning for beauty. Miłosz represents the Eastern Bloc, relentlessly, as dull. In his eyes, as we saw, its people resemble identical automatons; its cities are epitomes of boredom; its art is destroyed by socialist realism. Miłosz devotes more than a third of his book to analyzing the work of four Polish writers, all of whom embraced the new political order of Diamat. In his assessment of them, they are all failures – because of that embrace – because they became "adapted" to the "brave new world" of Diamat (*CM*, 82–190).[10] Indeed, as we also noted, the enforcement of socialist realism in Poland motivated Miłosz's own departure for the West. All in all, in *The Captive Mind*, the realm of Stalinist tyranny does extinguish artistic beauty.

This judgment on the Eastern Bloc is highly significant. Out of all the properties of immanent humanity, it is the impulse to beauty that, according to Miłosz's text, is destroyed, unequivocally, in that totalitarian realm. Crucially, this judgment transforms *The Captive Mind*, inadvertently, into an *aesthetic* critique of Stalinism. That tyranny, Miłosz shows, is evil because it demolishes

[9] A historical example of the former is the altruistic, international Jewish nationalism of the French journalist Bernard Lazare, one of the leading figures and fighters for justice in the Dreyfus Affair in *fin de siècle* France. See Wilson (1978) and Bredin (1992). Examples of the latter in Europe's modern history are, unfortunately, myriad, Nazi nationalism being the most horrific one.

[10] Huxley, *Brave New World* (2004).

humans' natural love of beauty. Ultimately, Miłosz thus condemns totalitarianism on aesthetic grounds.

Conclusion: Understanding Tyranny

This article does *not* seek to imply, even remotely, any form of apologia for political tyranny. Stalinist tyranny perpetrated some of the worst tragedies that history has ever witnessed. It must be condemned, not condoned.

What the article is attempting to do is to problematize what I think is a very meaningful moment in the intellectual history of the Cold War. Setting out the explore the Stalinist tyranny enthralling Cold-War Eastern Europe, Miłosz shows, inadvertently, that that tyranny actually aligns with his concept of human nature. All the traits that he sees as belonging to what we called "immanent humanity," with one exception, align with the political tyranny that he portrays. The significant exception is aestheticism – the human impulse to beauty. This is the one human trait, Miłosz shows, that the tyranny of Diamat victimizes unequivocally. In effect, Miłosz articulates an aesthetic critique of the political tyranny over 1950s Eastern Europe, condemning it as a destroyer of human aestheticism. And that is a feeble critique. It condemns Stalinist tyranny for its war on art, not for its war on humans. Even more than that, by showing that it corresponds to key properties of immanent humanity, Miłosz unwittingly *naturalizes* that tyranny.

This paradox constitutes a real drama of interpretation. If every age has its signature works, *The Captive Mind* is such a work for the Cold War. And Czesław Miłosz, a Nobel laureate, is one of the keenest observers of his age. Thus, what we have with *The Captive Mind* is the human intellect at its best, getting entangled in contradiction – failing to grasp a great tragedy of human making. One is reminded here of Albert Camus's declaration: "To a man devoid of blinkers, there is no finer sight than that of the intelligence at grips with a reality that transcends it" (Camus 2000: 54). Camus describes a drama where the human mind seeks – and fails – to understand the world; for him, this doomed effort at understanding is noble, sublime, inspiring awe. This admiration certainly behooves Miłosz – a pioneer who sought to grasp a phenomenon that perplexed post-World War II Western intellectuals profoundly. But what is also notable in his work is that it shows a probable reason for failing to understand that historical reality. And that reason is his postulation of a putative human nature. Qualified as it may be, it is his essentialization of humans. In *The Captive Mind*, as this essay has argued, essentialized immanent humanity slides Miłosz's analysis of political tyranny into a paradox.

A similar drama of interpretation was exemplified recently by another analysis of totalitarianism – this time, of Nazi totalitarianism: Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. Published in 1996, this book probed the fundamental historical problem of how the inconceivable tragedy of the Holocaust could happen. Goldhagen found the answer in the minds of "ordinary Germans." He argued that, their minds readied in this direction by centuries of Christian antisemitism, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Germans developed an "eliminationist" antisemitic "mind-set" that viewed Jews as a hostile element in German society and demanded their removal from it. This mental condition, claimed Goldhagen, spread everywhere in Germany before Nazism seized power in 1933; thereafter, it made legions of Germans eager supporters and executors of Nazism's genocide of European Jewry (Goldhagen 1996).

This was a forceful interpretation of the Holocaust, but its forcefulness could not hide its serious problems. One of these is especially relevant to this article. Geoff Eley has captured it well. Providing "remarkably little evidence" to support his interpretation of the Holocaust, observes

Eley, "Goldhagen made […] the baldest of essentializing generalizations about Germany" (Eley 2010: 6). For Eley, essentialization is a key flaw in Goldhagen's book. Judith M. Hughes (2015: 180) has echoed this criticism. Goldhagen's "claim," she notes, "that Germans – all Germans, throughout long stretches of their history – invariably incorporated eliminationist anti-Semitism transformed his subjects into automata." By essentializing Germans into eliminationist machines, Goldhagen eliminates from history the diverse ways, ranging from fanatical devotion to opposition, in which Germans did relate to the Nazi regime. "The issues of conformity and opposition," writes Eley (2010: 10), "collaboration and resistance, accommodation and dissent – plus the grayness coalescing between these polarities – were never allowed to emerge in Goldhagen's account." Essentializing Germans and their history, that account is thus limited, indeed.[11]

The interpretative move of essentialization is what Goldhagen and Miłosz have in common. Goldhagen does not, of course, ascribe the eliminationist mind-set to human nature, but sees it as the product of history. Still, like Miłosz, he conceives it as an "immanent" element of being German in a German history fated to cause a civilizational catastrophe. In the work of both authors, essentialization damages their analyses of political tyranny. The moral of their work is that this (mis-)interpretative strategy hampers our understanding of historical reality.

Bibliography

Ackerman, Nathan & Marie Jahoda (1950). *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder: A Psychoanalytic Interpretation*. New York: Harper.

Adorno, Theodor W., Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson & R. Nevitt Sanford (1950). *The Authoritarian Personality*. New York: Harper.

Arendt, Hannah (1967). *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. Rev. and Enlarged Ed. New York: Viking.

Arendt, Hannah (1994). *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Orlando: Harcourt.

Bettelheim, Bruno & Morris Janowitz (1950). *Dynamics of Prejudice: A Psychological and Sociological Study of Veterans*. New York: Harper.

Bokov, Anna (2017). "Soviet Workers' Clubs: Lessons from the Social Condensers." *The Journal of Architecture* 22, no. 3: 403–436. DOI: 10.1080/13602365.2017.1314316.

Bredin, Jean-Denis (1992). *Bernard Lazare: De l'anarchiste au prophète*. Paris: Éditions de Fallois.

Browning, Christopher R. (1993). *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. New York: HarperPerennial.

Camus, Albert (2000). *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Translated by Justin O'Brien. London: Penguin.

Dostoevsky, Fyodor (2001). *Notes from Underground*. Translated and edited by Michael R. Katz. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Eley, Geoff (2010). "Ordinary Germans, Nazism, and Judeocide." In Geoff Eley. Ed. *The "Goldhagen Effect:" History, Memory Nazism – Facing the German Past*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1–31.

Finkelstein, Norman G. & Ruth Bettina Birn (1998). *A Nation on Trial: The Goldhagen Thesis and Historical Truth*. New York: Metropolitan Books.

Fiut, Aleksander (1987). "Czesław Miłosz's Search for 'Humanness.'" *The Slavic and East European Journal* 31, no. 1: 65–75. Accessed Dec. 30, 2019. https://www.jstor.org/stable/307014.

Fiut, Aleksander (1990). *The Eternal Moment: The Poetry of Czeslaw Milosz*. Translated by Theodosia S. Robertson. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Franaszek, Andrzej (2017). *Miłosz: A Biography*. Edited and translated by Aleksandra and Michael Parker. Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap.

[11] For further critiques of Goldhagen, see Kwiet (1996–1999) and Finkelstein & Birn (1998).

Gleason, Abbott (1995). *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Goldhagen, Daniel Jonah (1996). *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Hilberg, Raul (1985). *The Destruction of the European Jews*. Rev. and Definitive Ed. 3 Vols. New York: Holmes & Meier.

Horkheimer, Max & Theodor W. Adorno (2002). *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. Edited by Gunzelin Schmid Noerr. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Hughes, Judith M. (2015). *The Holocaust and the Revival of Psychological History*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Huxley, Aldous (2004). *Brave New World*. London: Vintage.

Jaspers, Karl (1953). "Endurance and Miracle [Review of *The Captive Mind*]." *Saturday Review*, June 6, 1953. 13, 30.

Jissov, Milen (2020). "Atavistic Novelty: Questioning Hannah Arendt's Analysis of Totalitarianism." *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms* 25, no. 1: 38–61.

Jissov, Milen (2021). "A Wretched Subjectivity: Eastern Europe in Czesław Miłosz's *Captive Mind*." *Poljarnyj vestnik: Norwegian Journal of Slavic Studies* 24: 33–53. https://doi.org/10.7557/6.5828.

Judt, Tony (2010). "Captive Minds, Then and Now." *The New York Review of Books*, July 13, 2010. Accessed September 18, 2020. https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2010/07/13/captive-minds-then-and-now/.

Kwiet, Konrad (1996–1999). "'Hitler's Willing Executioners' and 'Ordinary Germans:' Some Comments on Goldhagen's Ideas." *Jewish Studies at the Central European University: Public Lectures, 1996–1999* 1. Accessed September 12, 2021. Available at: web.ceu.hu/jewishstudies/pdf/01_kwiet.pdf.

Löwenthal, Leo & Norbert Guterman (1949). *Prophets of Deceit: A Study of the Techniques of the American Agitator.* New York: Harper.

Massing, Paul W. (1949). *Rehearsal for Destruction: A Study of Political Anti-Semitism in Imperial Germany*. New York: Harper.

Miłosz, Czesław (2001). *The Captive Mind*. Translated by Jane Zielonko. London: Penguin.

Możeiko, Edward (1998). "Between the Universals of Moral Sensibility and Historical Consciousness: Notes on the Writings of Czesław Miłosz." In Edward Możeiko. Ed. *Between Anxiety and Hope: The Poetry and Writing of Czesław Miłosz*. Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1–29.

Orwell, George (1990). *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. London: Penguin.

Siegelbaum, Lewis H. (1999). "The Shaping of Soviet Workers' Leisure: Workers' Clubs and Palaces of Culture in the 1930s." *International Labor and Working-Class History*, "Gendered Labor" 56: 78–92. Accessed Feb. 3, 2021. https://www.jstor.org/stable/27672597.

Tsipursky, Gleb (2016). "Jazz, Power, and Soviet Youth in the Early Cold War, 1948–1953." *The Journal of Musicology* 33, no. 3: 332–61. Accessed May 5, 2021. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26414239.

Wilson, Nelly (1978). *Bernard-Lazare: Antisemitism and the Problem of Jewish Identity in Late Nineteenth-Century France*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Martin Rodan

Hebrew University of Jerusalem
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7629-432X

Pandemics of the 14th century and modernity in Egon Friedell's *A cultural history of the modern age*

Abstract | Friedell's *A cultural history of the modern age* is not only one of the most important but also one of the most successful works dealing with the rise and decay of Western civilization. Friedell asserts that the Black Plague of the XIVth century should be considered the starting point of modern times as it was singularly responsible for vitiating platonic universalism, the underlying philosophy of the Middle Ages and replacing it with nominalism, a worldview which perceives objects as concrete and tangible. No longer governed by a God-inspired mystery, the world is ruled by rationality that is accessible to human understanding. Friedell sees the Renaissance with its high artistic achievements and emphasis on individualism as the sublimation of the violence that prevailed during the Black Plague. Describing the religious and political turmoil of the transition from the Middle Ages to modern times, particularly in Central Europe, Friedell – who was one of the first victims of the Nazi regime in Austria – characterizes the tragic character of the 20th century as "the collapse of reality." He warns of totalitarian ideologies, especially that of National Socialism.

Keywords | Friedell's tragic death – Black Death – The triumph of nominalism – Hussite movement – The collapse of reality in the 20th century

Introduction

Egon Friedell's *A cultural history of the modern age (Kulturgeschichte der Neuzeit)* is along with Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West (Der Untergang des Abendlandes)*, Johan Huizinga's *The autumn of the Middle Ages* and Arnold J. Toynbee's *A study of history* one of the most important 20th century works illuminating the ascent and decay of different civilizations, particularly that of the West.

Friedell's book, which in the original German spans 1571 pages was first published in Munich by C. H. Beck Editing House in 1927–1931. Highly acclaimed then, it has been repeatedly reedited in German-speaking countries and has been translated into several languages, among them English. *A cultural history of the modern age* has as its subtitle *The crisis of the European soul from the Black Death to the World War (Die Krisis der europäischen Seele von der Schwarzen Pest bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg)*[1] indicating that the breadth of its concern is Western history from

[1] Friedell's translated quotes in this paper are taken from the following edition: Egon Friedell, *A cultural history of the Modern Age*, *volumes I–III*: New York, Alfred A Knopf, 1954, translated by Charles Francis Atkinson; the number of the volume and the page of the quote are inserted in the text.

the 14th–20th centuries. Originally it was to be part of a series covering civilization from ancient times, but Friedell's tragic death prevented him from carrying out this plan in its entirety. Some volumes in this ambitious project, such as *Kulturgeschichte Ägyptens und des alten Orients*, *Kulturgeschichte Griechenlands* as well as other preserved manuscripts have been published, mostly posthumously.

On one hand, *A cultural history of the modern age* contains complex interpretations of historical events, requiring that readers possess astute knowledge of modern philosophy, art and culture as well as the philosophy of history. On the other, it includes comic anecdotes associated with historic events, quotations from famous personalities, reports of secret conspiracies, scandalous gossip and tragic destinies, all of which have made the book attractive to wide audiences for many generations. Although at times to make a joke, Friedell disregards scientific rigor and critical thinking.

The book's lighthearted, bohemian style adjoined to the reality of tragic events is characteristic of Egon Friedell's (1878–1938) tumultuous life as well.[2] Born in Vienna into a Jewish family of handkerchief manufacturers, Egon, the second of three children was still a small child when his mother left the family. The children, raised by their father until he died were adopted by one of their aunts when Egon was thirteen years old. At the age of 19, Friedell converted to the Evangelical faith. He studied literature and philosophy at the Universities of Vienna and Heidelberg and obtained a doctoral degree following the defense of his thesis, *Novalis as philosopher.*[3] However, instead of seeking employment in academia, he chose the career of an actor, stand-up comedian, stage director and theater critic, appearing regularly in Germany and Austria. After World War I, he settled permanently in Vienna and was one of the most colorful and eccentric frequenters of its famous cafes. At the same time, he wrote for newspapers and published various historical and philosophical essays before writing *A cultural history of the modern age* which brought him worldwide fame. Friedell was an outspoken opponent of the Nazis and when the Anschluss that annexed Austria to the Third Reich was consummated, his friends begged him to leave immediately. But, unable to part with his library of thousands of volumes, he remained. On March 16, 1938, just five days after the Wehrmacht entered Vienna, two SS men knocked on the door of his third-floor apartment and questioned the landlady about a Jew living there. Friedell went out to the balcony, called out to passers-by on the sidewalk to step aside and … jumped to his death (Lorenz 1994: 317–322).

The Black Death as starting point of modernity

In *A cultural history of the modern age* Friedell states: "… we propose to risk the assertion that the year 1348, that of the Black Death, was the year in which modern man was conceived." (I, 54)

He opines:

> … the hour in which the new age was born is marked by a heavy sickness of European humanity – the Black Death. It is not, however, suggested that the Black Death brought about the new age. On the contrary, the new age, modernity, came first and it was through it that the Plague happened. (I, 81)

---

[2] For Friedell's biographies cf. Haage Peter, *Der Partylöwe, der nur Bücher frass; Egon Friedell und sein Kreis*, Hamburg, Classen Verlag 1971; Wolfgang Lorenz, *Egon Friedell, Momente im Leben eines ungewöhnlichen*; Bozen, Edition Raetia, 1994; Bernhard Viel, *Egon Friedell, der geniale Dilettant;* München, C. H. Beck 2013

[3] Egon Friedell, *Novalis als Philosoph*; München, Verlagsanstalt F. Bruckmann A.-G., 1904

For Friedell, modern times, with its numerous achievements in culture, science and technology could not have arisen without the morbidity of the plague. Friedell's unique view of evolution, the source of this claim states that in the struggle for survival, it is the strong creatures with complex internal structures that are defeated, not the weak, simple creatures. Unlike Darwin (cf. I. 63ff.) he asserts:

> Higher things are … less healthy things. The very complexity of an organism, if very high, involves a liability to constant disturbance of equilibrium, or at the very least to the danger of such disturbance, and hence to insecurity, disequilibrium, lability. The 'healthiest' of all creatures is undoubtedly the amoeba. (I. 57)

A further argument given for the better adaptability of simple organisms is their capacity to transform their internal structure to fit the changed environment in which they now live. In other words, their ability just like viruses, to become variants of themselves. According to Friedell:

> New varieties are nothing more than old ones which can no longer support life under existing conditions; in the struggle for existence, it is not the 'fittest' – that is, the dullest, the most brutal and least intelligent organism – which survives, as a certain Philistine's and tradesman's philosophy would have us believe, but the rashest, most labile and intelligent. The selective principle of evolution is, not survival of the fittest, but survival of the unfittest. (I, 65)

This view derived from Schopenhauer who contended that existence is suffering and that the more complicated beings are, the more they are troubled by unsatisfied needs. Friedell claims that in nature, illness is the natural state, quipping: "Health is a disease of the metabolism." (I, 60)

Friedell maintains that just as in nature, disease plays an essential role in the history of mankind. He quotes from Troels-Lund's *Health and sickness as viewed in ancient times (Gesundheit und Krankheit in der Anschaung alter Zeiten)*:

> It is not improbable that illnesses have a history of their own; so that each age has its particular illnesses, which have not occurred [exactly] so before and will never occur just so again. (I, 82)

The current Covid-19 pandemic seems to adhere to his thesis. Friedell repeatedly emphasizes that Western culture, in particular has grown out of epidemics, prejudice and arbitrary massacres. Its lofty, humanistic values of intelligence, finesse, intellectual curiosity and scientific knowledge grow from a permanent state of epidemic and war. Friedell's work abounds in examples of atrocities committed by the peoples of Europe in modern times and expresses concern that Western culture will eventually collapse back into the abyss from which it emerged.

The idea that the modern age started in a pestilence that decimated Europe in the second half of the 14th century was for Friedell's contemporaries not entirely new. Although impressed by Huizinga's thesis of the superiority of French and Burgundian culture in the 14th and 15th centuries, Friedell conceives the historical context of this time differently:

> the Dutch scholar Huizinga, in an excellent, recently published book has described [Burgundian culture] as 'the autumn of the Middle Ages.' To us it seems more like a mysterious prelude to spring, the subterranean awaking of new life amid snow and hail and all the capricious spaces of expectant, agitated nature. (I, 117)

The dispute between the realists and the nominalists, its impact on European cultural history

To understand the fundamental changes that took place in Europe in the 14th century, we need to mention the heated debate among philosophers and theologians of that time: the Realists (also called Universalists) versus the Nominalists. The Realists advocated for the principle of *universalia ante rem* meaning that general ideas precede the existence of tangible objects which, as in the cave of Plato are only shadows and reflections of the unique, real and true universe of ideas. The nominalists held the opposite, *universalia post rem* which states that only individual and concrete objects are real although the terms by which we denote them are merely names. For example, for the realist the word "tree" is a prototype of all the trees in nature that are more or less perfect replicas of it; whereas nominalists see only the multitude of trees, not a generalized concept of a tree.

According to Friedell, Platonic universalism was "the central idea of the Middle Ages" (I, 76). "[While] Plato propagated this theory, the Middle Ages lived it." (Ibid.) Friedell maintains that in medieval times, humanity was a *'universal' people*, standing under the nominal dominion of a *universal king*, a Caesar and under the actual dominion of a *universal church* – or rather, two churches, both of which claimed to be universal: the Catholic and the Orthodox. Further, this universal people had a *universal* feudal *economy,* a *universal* Gothic *styl*e, a *universal code*: the etiquette of chivalry, a *universal science*: theology, a *universal ethic:* the evangelical, a *universal law*: Roman, and a *universal language*: Latin. (cf. I, 76–77) The Middle Ages came to an end when Nominalism vanquished Universalism. Friedell points to the contribution of the philosophers and theologians of the 14th century Duns Scotus, the Franciscan Pierre Aureol and William of Occam in creating this demise. The "game changing," innovative ideas of William of Occam, who, by the way was one of the first victims of the Black Death in 1348, ushered in the triumph of Nominalism. Friedell remarks:

> But there was nothing unconscious or unintended about [Occam's] nominalism. It was the work of five hundred years of Scholasticism issuing forth in one sentence that killed it: Universals are not real; they were not *ante rem* nor *in re*, but *post rem* and even *pro re*: merely representative signs and vague symbols of things, *vocalia, termini, flatus vocis,* nothing but artificial aids for easier comprehension and in the end verbiage without content – *Universalia sunt nomina.* (I, 89)

But what conjoins the erudite disputation of scholars in ivory towers in medieval universities to the Black Plague which raged throughout Christian countries? Friedell argues that the universalist principle, namely allegiance to a universal corporation and not personal responsibility nor the uniqueness of the individual that determined social value in the Middle Ages. Thus, in the eyes of the medieval Christian, a priest could be a thief, a rapist or a murderer still be considered chaste and virtuous so long as he was part of the establishment of the Holy Catholic Church; by contrast, a Jew, be he perfectly righteous and even having saved the life of a Gentile, would always remain a sinner since he descended from the people who murdered Jesus. When the Black Plague broke out in 1348, the mass of Christians believed that it would strike the sinful and have mercy on the Church and its believers; but, in reality, the opposite happened: the plague in the dreaded first wave almost completely bypassed both the Islamic countries and Jews residing in Christian countries, who observed the religious commandment of washing hands before eating, *netilat yadaiim*. Furthermore, the number of plague victims was higher among church officials than among common people and the disease was particularly rampant in monasteries. The fact

that it harmed those who were supposed to enjoy the grace of heaven caused no less of a shock than the plague itself. In response, various conspiracy theories spread, most of which accused Jews of poisoning wells and led to a terrible massacre of Jews in Central and Western European countries (Byrne 2004: 81–85). But as the plague continued year after year and it became easier to count the number of survivors rather than the number of victims, the rage of the people was finally directed against the monks and priests who were accused of greed and carnal sin. Friedell mentions that during this pandemic, ideas of heretical, extremist groups multiplied, particularly those of sects of "flagellants" who

> taught that flagellation was the true communion, in that their own blood became mingled with the Savior's. Priests were unworthy and superfluous, and their presence was not tolerated at [the flagellants's] devotional exercises. (I, 83)

The Black Plague and the accompanying social turmoil were, in Friedell's view, symptoms of the collapse of medieval culture based on a Universalist worldview. It opened people's eyes to the Nominalist worldview. He writes: "The triumph of Nominalism is the most weighty fact in modern history – much more important than the Reformation movement, gunpowder or printing." (I, 89) He sets forth:

> By the middle of the fourteenth century there appears on the stage an entirely different kind of humanity, or, rather, one which contains the germ of another kind. There is still seeking, but also finding; still agitation, but not only in the depths. Tragic culture is making way for bourgeois culture, a chaotic for an organic, finally even for a mechanical one. The world is thence forward no [longer a] God-inspired mystery, but man-made rationality. (I, 80)

Henceforth, not rank, but individual character, skill and action will – at least as a matter of principle – determine one's way in this world and one's redemption in the next world. This disintegration of the monolithic medieval, authoritarian corporations in the West hit the Church first and foremost: struggles between the poor common people and the rich priests, spitefulness among church representatives of different countries, discrepancies in the decisions of ecclesiastical establishments and the Councils, but above all, the papal schisms are irrefutable proof of this erosion of authority. Friedell notes:

> In 1409, the world witnessed the extraordinary spectacle of three popes appearing simultaneously: one Roman, one French, and one chosen by the Council. For the people of those days this was very much as if they suddenly had three Saviors sprung upon them, or as if every man had been told that he had three fathers. (I, 91)

Also, in those days, the flourishing sale of indulgences shows – according to Friedell – that membership in the Catholic Church was no longer considered a guarantee of redemption and it was everyone for himself. It was during this period that personal reading of the Bible began which ultimately led to the Reformation of the 16th century.

The triumph of individualism as a byproduct of the pandemic

The same process beginning with the Black Death occurred in "secular" spheres of life as well affecting economics, culture and art. Belonging to a social class was no longer considered as destiny. Everyone sought to change and to improve one's status. Friedell observes:

> No one was content to stay in his own class. The medieval principle that a man's class was born in him like his skin long ceased to have any meaning. It was the peasant's ambition to be a townsman [wearing] fine clothes, a townsman's to be a knight in armor, clod-hoppers challenged each other to absurd duels, craftsmen's guilds started feuds with one another, while the knight for his part cast envious eyes on the bourgeois and his comfortable existence. (I, 92)

Friedell argues that the Renaissance for all its high artistic achievement is the final product of the sublimation and refinement of the dark violence which prevailed throughout the time of the Black Plague and is, in addition, an expression of desire for power and extroverted individualism by talented and powerful members of society. This new worldview found appropriate theoretical expression in Machiavelli (cf. I, 193–94). In Friedell's view, during the Renaissance the capacity of strong and gifted individuals not complying with the rules and hierarchy of tribe or guild and becoming by force of one's own will and skill, a powerful, creative personality emerged from the desperate effort to survive the Black Death. It is too early to make hazardous comparisons to the present Covid-19 pandemic, but the dismantling and atomization of social life in our current topsy-turvy atmosphere could in the long run lead to similar results.

By way of comparison, Friedell notes the uniqueness and unprecedented character of the Plague, observing that there was no consensus about the source and origin of this disease:

> Some maintain that it slipped in the train of the Crusades, but if so, it is strange that it should never had been approximately so terrible among the Arabs as it was with us. Others have put its place of origin as far away as China. … There it was, anyhow – and suddenly, first in Italy, then slinking over the whole Continent. (I, 82)

Likewise today, the real source and origin of the Covid-19 virus are also far from clear.

Secondly, according to Friedell, the behavior of the pandemic was horrible and incalculable:

> At times it spared whole stretches of country[side], as, for instance, eastern Franconia, and skipped individual houses; or it would disappear all of a sudden and reappear years later. (I, 82–83)

The different waves of the current Covid-19 pandemic were also unforeseeable.

Thirdly, Friedell points out the violent and painful symptoms of the Plague which led to a quick, unavoidable death, just like those of Covid-19:

> It appears to have been a form of bubonic plague, manifesting itself in swelling of the lymphatic glands (the so-called plague boils), violent headaches, great weakness, and apathy, though also in some case delirium. According to contemporary reports, death occurred on the first or second, or at latest, the seventh day. (I, 83)

Fourthly, Friedell emphasizes the terrifying mortality:

> While it was at its height, we hear of sixty deaths daily in Berne, a hundred in Cologne and in Mainz, a total of thirteen thousand at Elbing. Two-thirds of the students at Oxford died, and three-fifths of the Yorkshire clergy. … Europe's total losses, according to recent calculation, amounted to twenty million. (Ibid.)

But most peculiar was the long, slow, steady progression of this epidemic which came and went over and over again in new destructive waves. Friedell notes that the pandemic continued right into the middle of the fifteenth century which means that it raged for more than one hundred years. Thanks to the achievements of modern science, particularly the invention of vaccinations, we may presume that the Covid-19 pandemic will be less disastrous and shorter-lived than the Black Death that ended the Middle Ages.

The consequences of religious and political turmoil in Central Europe

Egon Friedell describes this epoch of transition from Middle Ages to the modern times in the third chapter of *A cultural history of the modern age* which he entitles "The incubation period" (Die Inkubationszeit). Throughout Europe, as he explains, parallel to occurrences of the Plague, there was great political turbulence and volte-face which demolished the medieval social order and its values. He mentions, among other events, the Hundred Years' War, the conquest of Constantinople and the revolts of Cola di Rienzo (Rienzi) which almost put an end to the political power of the Roman popes. Friedell argues that political stability – at least provisory – was maintained on the continent, due to the sagacity of Charles IV (1346–1378), the Holy Roman Emperor, King of Germania and Bohemia from the House of Luxemburg whose reign was "brightened by a wise and beneficent encouragement of science and art" (I, 114). It is not by chance that in 1348, precisely at the starting point of the pandemic, Charles IV founded the famous university in Prague that still bears his name. The most important political act of Charles IV was his decree of the Golden Bull, stipulating in great detail the rules for the election of Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire by the ecclesiastical and secular princes.

Unfortunately, his sons, Wenceslas IV and Sigismund were in Friedell's view much less successful rulers, although a new wave of the plague in 1380 also contributed to a worsening of the situation. Friedell sees in Wenceslas IV "a grotesque daemonic, sadist, alcoholic maniac" (I, 115) and he illustrates this with examples of Wenceslas' strange and cruel decisions towards subordinates in his court. Friedell also relates:

> the common knowledge that he [Wenceslas] had John of Nepomuk, the future national hero of the Czechs drowned in the Moldau, apparently because he would not betray the secret told in confessional by Wenceslas' wife – clearly one of those manifestations of jealousy which are a regular concomitant of alcoholic mania. (Ibid.)

But Friedell admits that "at the same time [Wenceslas], an extremely clever, too cunning, diplomat always provided altogether excellent reasons for his actions." (Ibid.)

Friedell also mentions that incessant struggle among Charles IV's heirs led to the situation in 1410 — the same year that the Catholic Church had three popes — where the Holy Roman Empire had three Emperors: Sigismund, Wenceslas IV and Jost of Moravia. Friedell is even

more critical of the opportunistic Sigismund than the foolish Wenzel. This is how he portrays Sigismund:

> We can see him before us, the old hypocrite, leaning this way and that, seeking shallow compromises, now persuading Huss to give in, now flattering the princes of the Church; the voluptuous fop and corrupt rhetorician with his red forked beard, the connoisseur of brilliant witticisms, elegant courtesans, and delectable fish dishes; smooth, hollow, without aim or conviction, hatred or love, a totally *unreal* person, a glittering, polished cipher. (I, 114)

But the main thrust of Friedell's reproach of Sigismund is his betrayal of Jan Huss, whom he lured – as is well known – to his death in the Konstanz Council by a letter of safe-conduct. Friedell does not so much find fault with Sigismund's treacherous behavior which he remarks "constituted no breach of the law according to the views of the time, and there is no record of a single important contemporary raising this accusation" but attacks him because:

> he act[ed] in bad faith when he set himself against the progressive forces in the heart of his own nuclear land and – be the legal rights of the matter what they may – permitted the fall of the man who embodied the will of the people. (ibid.)

Friedell sets up an opposition between the character of Sigismund and that of Huss:

> the figure of Huss himself acquired a terrific impressiveness by reason of his earnestness, strength of character, and unyielding determination to seek the truth. (I, 118)

Yet, Friedell's appreciation of the Hussite movement which developed after Jan Huss' martyrdom is ambiguous. While arguing, on one hand, that Hussite armies:

> invented a wholly modern form of tactics which proved itself irresistible, and, fired by their threefold religious, national, and social enthusiasm, they overran everything that stood in their way. (I, 94)

On the other, he perceives the Hussite movement as an expression of the nihilism at the beginning of the fifteenth century which was the result of political disorder and religious crisis caused by the long and ceaseless pandemic. Friedell remarks:

> The wild Hussite torrent soon poured over its native boundaries and flooded half of Germany, raging everywhere with senseless vandalism which destroyed for the sake of destroying, without motive of either gain or revenge. (ibid.)

In the Hussite movement, faith in purification by the power of violence was related to the sects of flagellants – it was also close to them in its anti-clerical rather than anti-Catholic character. (cf. I, 120)

The decline of nominalism in the 20th century

In the beginning of his extensive presentation of the cultural history of the modern age, Friedell highlights the question posed by Novalis: "Does not the best everywhere begin with illness?" (I, 51) In the last chapter of *A cultural history of the modern age* entitled "The Collapse of Reality," Friedell presents the thesis that by the beginning of the 20th century the nominalist approach itself had become obsolete and was about to expire as did the universalist approach before it. This leads to the question: how would Friedell perceive the present Covid-19 pandemic? Venturing a partial answer, we can only paraphrase Friedell (cf. quote I, 83 on page 3 of this paper): "it is not suggested that *Covid-19* brought on the new age. On the contrary, the *digital* age came first, and it was through it that the *Covid-19* happened." There is no doubt that the endurance of the Covid-19 pandemic can be understood only in the context of our new online way of living.

In any case, we can now readily agree with Friedell about the 20th century: "most probably our century will seem as ghostly and unreal to a later age as the fourteenth century [does to] us." (I, 147) Technological inventions and revolutionary scientific discoveries, particularly Einstein's theory of relativity led Friedell to conclude that henceforth man would no longer exist within an objective reality composed of real objects, but in a kind of "virtual reality" attached to different instruments and machines and guided by them:

> There are no realities anymore, there is only apparatus. It is a world of automata, conceived in the brain of a malicious and crazy Doktor Miracle. Neither are there goods anymore, but only advertisement: the most valuable article is the one most effectively lauded, the one that the most capital has gone to advertise." (III, 475–6)

Friedell gives many examples of why the term "objective reality" no longer makes any sense in light of the endless micro- and macrocosms discovered by science. He argues:

> Even if we follow the idea of the infinity of the cosmos – with which the modern age set in – to its logical conclusion, we arrive at unreality; for infinity is nothing but a mathematical formula for unreality. (III, 459)

Friedell defines the whole of the modern age from the end of Middle Ages until the 20th century as a "rationalistic intermezzo" (III, 467) and he confesses that as an offspring of this age, he is unable to foresee anything concrete about the future for "unfortunately, our faculties for comprehending it are those of the modern age itself." (III, 467)

Friedell feared that the radical change caused by the "collapse of reality" would necessarily be accompanied by great suffering, various diseases of new kind and extreme social shocks, but it could also eventually lead to a new renaissance. He rightly foresaw that the real danger threatening society lay in attempts to solve the crisis of nominalism by an irrational, fatal regression to moribund medieval values. Friedell watched with great apprehension as the contagion of totalitarian ideologies that preached that an individual's belonging to a particular social class or race determined his superiority or worthlessness gained force. This was most brutally expressed in the philosophy of National Socialism, about which Friedell wrote:

> The Third Reich is a kind of devil kingdom: Any hint of nobility, humanity, education or intelligence is abominably suppressed by a bunch of vile and despicable thugs.[4]

[4] Translation of the German quote published in Heinz Knobloch, *Sinn und Form, 1982/1*, p. 158–159.

In the chapter "Collapse of reality" Friedell predicts that in the 20th century, the world would be dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union. He perceived that these two superpowers despite their rivalry and differing ideologies were one huge condominium governed by materialistic narratives and a worship of the economy:

> There is congruence, in spite of apparent divergence, between the American and the Soviet economic outlook, in that in both countries, economics is not a necessary evil, but an aim in itself and a thing of vital importance. (III, 477)

Nevertheless, Friedell devotes the main part of the last chapter of *A cultural history of the modern age* to analyzing different movements in modern and avant-garde art from Impressionism to Surrealism. He sees in all of them premonitions of the collapse of reality and the approach of catastrophe.

Today it is still too early to make a comprehensive analogy between Friedell's analysis of the impact of the Black Death and today's Covid-19 pandemic. But we can already see that in the case of the USA, Covid 19 has had a destabilizing impact on the presidential election of 2020, the unprecedented attack upon US Capitol on January 6, 2021, and the discrediting of American democracy and scientific medical doctrine; similar examples could be also found in many other countries.

Conclusion

Friedell's *A cultural history of the modern age,* a provocative and polemical oeuvre with unusual and sometimes unconventional methods of argumentation, is, nevertheless, inspiring and challenging. In this paper, we examine his thesis that the pandemic of the 14th century is inextricably linked to the start of modern times, and revealing that Friedell's approach was determined by his philosophical conviction that sickness is the normal state of all creatures in nature and health is a fragile and rare exception. Hence, his view that, like the Black Death at the end of the Middle Ages, physical and mental disturbances of human collectivities are symptoms of the general discrediting of religious (schisms in the Catholic Church), philosophical (the triumph of nominalism), social (the breakdown of traditional class hierarchies) and political (dissension in the Holy Roman Empire) certainties. In perceiving a similarity between the 14th and the 20th centuries, Friedell notes that our "ghostly and unreal modern times" (I, 147) are marked by the decline of nominalism and the ascent of genocidal, totalitarian ideologies. Finally, Friedell's detailed description of the plague in the 14th century permits us to uncover common portents in all pandemics, past and present.

References

Byrne, Joseph P. (2004). *The Black Death*: Westport (Conn.) & London: Greenwood Press.

Friedell, Egon (1904). *Novalis als Philosoph*; München: Verlagsanstalt F.Bruckmann A.-G.

Friedell, Egon (1927–1931). *Kulturgeschichte der Neuzeit. Die Krisis der europäischen Seele von der Schwarzen Pest bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg.* München: C. H. Beck Verlag.

Friedell, Egon (1954). *A Cultural History of the Modern Age*, *I–III volumes*: New York: Alfred A Knopf Publisher. Translated by Charles Francis Atkinson.

Haage, Peter (1971). *Der Partylöwe, der nur Bücher frass; Egon Friedell und sein Kreis*, Hamburg: Classen Verlag.

Huizinga, Johan (1919). *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen*. Haarlem: H. D. Tjeenk-Willink.

Lorenz, Wolfgang (1994). *Egon Friedell, Momente im Leben eines Ungewöhnlichen.* Bozen: Edition Raetia.

Spengler, Oswald (1919). *Der Untergang des Abendlandes: Umrisse einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte.* München: C. H. Beck Verlag.

Toynbee, Arnold J. (1934–1939). *A Study of History.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Troels-Lund, Frederik (1901). *Gesundheit und Krankheit in der Anschauung alter Zeiten.* Leipzig: B. G. Teubner.

Viel, Bernhard (2013). *Egon Friedell, der geniale Dilettant.* München: C. H. Beck.

Lech Giemza

Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7079-9108

Czesław Miłosz's *Ode to a Bird* – an Attempt at a New Reading

Abstract | This article is a proposal for a new reading of Czesław Miłosz's poem "Ode to a Bird". The poem refers to the traditional models of the ode, but seeks to expand the boundaries of the genre. The protagonist's admiration for a bird that jumps off a branch is a pretext for confronting the problem of language, which is unable to express admiration for the world. The inexpressibility of beauty makes man aware of his smallness and the powerlessness of culture.

Key words | Czesław Miłosz, Ode, Modernism, Epiphany, Sensuality

Introduction

A fascination with bird nature has accompanied humanity since the dawn of time, and the Icarian myth is a reverberation of this fascination. We know that Miłosz experienced this fascination as a child, reading *The Miraculous Journey of* Selma Lagerlöf, the Swedish Nobel Prize winner. Who hasn't dreamt of soaring into the sky under their own power at least for a moment. The works of the Polish Nobel Prize winner are also teeming with birds: magpies, hummingbirds, cranes, cuckoos and many others. In *Oda do ptaka* (Ode to a Bird) there is simply a bird, a bird and the admiration of the person who observes it; and he tries desperately to express his admiration. The outline of the lyrical situation remains very clear: together with the subject, we witness the take-off and flight of the title character, and observe the entire action step by step, from the moment when the bird "kołysze się na gałęzi" (stays on the branch), through the take-off and the subsequent "ruch nienaganny" (impeccable motion). What may surprise us, however, is the final stanza. Why "dziób twój półotwarty zawsze ze mną" (your half-opened beak is with me always)? And whose "obnażona ręka" (naked arm)[1] is it?

Text of the poem

For the sake of the reader's convenience, we first provide here the text of the complete poem with its English translation by Miłosz himself in his *Collected Poems 1931–1987* (Miłosz 1988: 124–125). The stanzas of the Polish original are reordered according to the English translation.

[1] Miłosz's translation 'naked arm' for 'obnażona ręka' does not completely capture the Polish archaism – 'unsheathed arm' would be more precise.

Oda do ptaka

O złożony.
O nieświadomy.
Trzymający za sobą dłonie pierzaste.
Wsparty na skokach z szarego jaszczura,
Na cybernetycznych rękawicach
Które imają czego dotkną.

O niewspółmierny.
O większy niż
Przepaść konwalii,
Oko szczypawki w trawie
Rude od obrotu zielono-fioletowych słońc.

Niż noc w galeriach
Z dwojgiem świateł mrówki
I galaktyka w jej ciele
Zaiste, równa każdej innej.

Poza wolą, bez woli
Kołyszesz się na gałęzi nad jezioramipowietrza,
Gdzie pałace zatopione, wieże liści,
Tarasy do lądowań między lirą cienia.
Pochylasz się wezwany, i rozważam chwilę
Kiedy stopa zwalnia uchwyt, wyciąga się ramię.
Chwieje się miejsce, gdzie byłeś, ty w liniekryształu
Unosisz swoje ciepłe i bijące serce.

O niczemu niepodobny, obojętny
Na dźwięk *pta, pteron, fvgls, brd*.
Poza nazwą, bez nazwy,
Ruch nienaganny w ogromnym bursztynie.
Abym pojął w biciu skrzydeł co mnie dzieli
Od rzeczy którym co dzień nadaję imiona
I od mojej postaci pionowej
Choć przedłuża siebie do zenitu.

Ale dziób twój półotwarty zawsze ze mną.
Jego wnętrze tak cielesne i miłosne,
Że na karku włos mi jeży drżenie
Pokrewieństwa i twojej ekstazy.
Wtedy czekam w sieni po południu,
Widzę usta koło lwów mosiężnych
I dotykam obnażonej ręki
Pod zapachem krynicy i dzwonów.

Ode to a Bird

O composite.
O unconscious.
Holding your feathery palms behind you.
Propped on your gray lizard legs,
On cybernetic gloves
That grasp at whatever they touch.

O incommensurate.
Larger than the precipice
In a lily-of-the valley
Or the eye of a scarab in the grass
Reddish, turned violet-green by the sun.

More vast than a galleried night
With the headlights of an ant –
And a galaxy in its body
Indeed, equal to any.

Beyond will, without will
You stay on a branch above lakes of air
And their submerged palaces, towers of leaves,
Terraces where you can land in a harp of shadow.
You lean forward, summoned, and I contemplate the instant
When your foot loosens its hold, your arm extends.
The place you have left is rocking, into the lines of crystal
You take your warm palpating heart.

O not similar to anything, indifferent
To the sound *pta, pteron, fvgls, brd*.
Beyond name, without name,
An impeccable motion in an expanse of amber,
So that I comprehend, while your wings beat,
What divides me from things I name every day,
And from my vertical figure
Though it extends itself upward to the zenith.

But your half-opened beak is with me always.
Its inside is so fleshy and amorous,
That a shiver makes my hair stand up
In kinship with your ecstasy.
Then one afternoon I wait in a front hall,
Beside bronze lions I see lips
And I touch the naked arm
In the scent of springwater and of bells.

Structure

The poem has a strophoidal structure and a clear compositional bracket. Tt is dominated from the beginning by the 'lyrical you', the lyrical subject is revealed (significantly) in the middle of the piece, with the words "rozważam chwilę" (I contemplate the instant). The title of the work refers to the ancient model. The ode has its roots in the sixth century BC and Pindar is considered to be its author. It belonged to one of the genres of the high style and was a form of a song of praise.

> The text of the song was a praise of the victor, it was addressed to the victor and was intended to ensure his deeds memory and fame among posterity. It also contained references to the deity who inspired the singer, evoked the content of the relevant myth, and formulated maxims and moral guidelines. The work, although rooted in the specific circumstances of its creation and public performance, was thus both universal and timeless, consolidating in the collective

> memory a character and deed worthy of universal acclaim, and laying down important ethical principles (Kostkiewiczowa 2009: V-VI)[2]

Kostkiewiczowa does not stop at emphasizing the panegyric character of the ode, but also points to the unique role of the speaker: "a wise man who positioned himself as if above the community, and as one endowed with a special creative gift, became a representative of the community and an exponent of its feelings, beliefs and judgments, speaking not only to it and for it, but also in its voice and on its behalf" (ibidem).[3] It is not difficult to see that in terms of this point Miłosz remains faithful to the determinants of genre.

This is an ode subjected, however, to Modernist modifications. Of course, the solemn tone is preserved, yes, the poem has a clear panegyric character, and the numerous apostrophes serve to emphasise the uniqueness of the hero, but this does not change the fact that the role of the addressee is played by an ordinary bird (and not even a historical hero), which clearly breaks from the model of the traditional ode. The ode remains a living genre in the twentieth century, but, as Łapiński notes:

> The ode poses serious difficulties for the contemporary poet. In its metaphysical variety, it comes into conflict with the prevailing spiritual climate, which does not allow one to be enraptured – in good faith – by the beauty and perfection of being; in its political variety, it pushes one towards conformism or demagogy; in its strictly literary aspect, it presents itself as a genre that has been completely exploited, forcing one either to repeat the old tricks, or to abandon everything, apart from the empty name, that has hitherto constituted the concept of the ode (Łapiński 1992: 751).[4]

In Miłosz's case, it is certainly not an "empty name", nor is it – as in many other cases – a polemic against tradition ("antipode"), but rather a broadening of the possibilities of genre, a "search for a more capacious form", as we said in the introductory chapter of our book *"Rzieka, która cierpi." O poezji Czesława Miłosza* (Giemza 2021). Miłosz subordinates genre features to the poetics of sublimity, which is also evident in his vocabulary: "zaiste" (indeed), "nienaganny" (impeccable), "rozważam" (I contemplate), "abym pojął" (so that I comprehend)… Moreover, *strictly* philosophical issues appear in the circle of problems addressed, the subject weaves into his observation the question: "co mnie dzieli / Od rzeczy, którym co dzień nadaję imiona" (what divides me / From the things I name every day), confronting us with a strictly epistemological question. The poem turns out to be a form of poetic essay. At the same time, it places us at the

---

[2] Tekst pieśni był pochwałą zwycięzcy, do niego był zwrócony i miał zapewnić jego czynom pamięć i sławę u potomnych. Jednocześnie zawierał też zwroty do bóstwa zsyłającego śpiewakowi natchnienie, przywoływał treść stosownego mitu, formułował maksymy i wskazania moralne. Utwór, choć zakorzeniony w konkretnych okolicznościach powstania i publicznego wykonania, był więc zarazem uniwersalny i ponadczasowy, utrwalając w pamięci zbiorowej postać i czyn godny powszechnego uznania oraz ugruntowując ważne zasady etyczne. (The English translations are by the author, except otherwise noted).

[3] Mędrca, który sytuował się jakby ponad zbiorowością, a jako obdarzony szczególnym darem twórczym stawał się przedstawicielem wspólnoty i wyrazicielem jej uczuć, przekonań i osądów, mówiącym nie tylko do niej i dla niej, ale też niejako jej głosem i w jej imieniu.

[4] Przed współczesnym poetą oda piętrzy poważne trudności. W swej odmianie metafizycznej wchodzi w konflikt z panującym klimatem duchowym, który nie pozwala zachłysnąć się – z dobrą wiarą – pięknem i doskonałością bytu; w odmianie politycznej popycha w stronę konformizmu lub demagogii; w aspekcie ściśle literackim przedstawia się jako gatunek doszczętnie wyeksploatowany, zmuszający bądź do powtarzania starych chwytów, bądź do porzucenie wszystkiego, poza pustą nazwą, co składało się dotąd na pojęcie ody.

centre of Miłosz's eternal themes: "To perceive a thing is to unite with it, to become the world for a moment. Such situations are not rare in Miłosz's poetry […]" (Zaleski 2005: 154).[5]

An interpretation

It is first worth noting that this work is one of the many poetic epiphanies of the author of *Gucio zaczarowany* (1965, Gucio Enchanted). The starting point is an inconspicuous event, which in the eyes of the poet grows to the status of an Event, dense with meaning, confronting us with questions of a metaphysical nature. The only thing we are able to say (following the poet) is that the bird is "somehow different", different in relation to man, who painfully feels this otherness, but also different in relation to the world it comes from, the world of fauna and flora.

We become participants in a silent drama between the perceiver and the perceived, the latter being the embodiment of perfection, while the former – the human being – searches, without the slightest success, for an opportunity to put this perfection into words. Is it possible to move from pure admiration to cognition of the object of that admiration? To know is to distance oneself from the object one gets to know; that which distinguishes a given thing from a crowd of other things is the *differentia specifica*, i.e. a significant and distinguishing feature. But at the same time, this same distance distances us from the object that made us ecstatic.

The rhythm of the poem is marked by successive apostrophes, defining further attributes of the bird: "O złożony" (O composite), "O nieświadomy" (O unconscious), "O niewspółmierny" (O incommensurable), "O większy niż […]" (O larger than). "O niczemu niepodobny, obojętny […]" (O not similar to anything, indifferent), to the above we can add the initial line of the third stanza "Poza wolą, bez woli" (Beyond will, without will), and the following one: "Poza nazwą, bez nazwy" (Beyond name, without name). One should note that at least some of these epithets leave us with questions, because if *composite*, then of what, to what extent? The solution seems to be suggested by the following lines – it is probably about "dłonie pierzaste" (feathery palms) and "skoki z szarego jaszczura" (leaps from a grey lizard). *Unconscious*? Or only of its own compositeness? Probably not – like any animal, and unlike humans, the bird lacks self-awareness. According to anthropology, it is self-awareness that is the necessary condition for self-determination: I must know who I am so that I know what fate I choose for myself. The bird, however, lies perfectly outside the human world – "beyond will, without will" and is at the same time an integral part of the world of Nature and something that infinitely transcends it. Incomparable – that is, incomparable in any way, unable to be compared, unable to be described by the same set of notions, the essence of "birdiness" eludes someone who wants to see in a bird only a representative of nature, one of many creatures.

The poet, attempting to touch the essence of his enlightenment, seeks to break the inertia of colloquial language. He searches for means of expression that will make it possible to grasp not only what is superficial but what is commonly known. We arrive at what scholars call the "uncommunicability of experience". For we are not talking about "some" bird, but about "this" bird that has absorbed the attention of the poem's protagonist. The question is how to "express" so as to thereby "communicate" at least part of the protagonist's ecstasy, so as not to repeat empty-sounding words over and over again. First and foremost: Miłosz strives to overcome the word that generalises; in generalities the individuality of experience is lost, while the author of *Ocalenie* (1945, Rescue) aims to capture the detail:

[5] Postrzegać jakąś rzecz to jednoczyć się z nią, stawać się na moment światem. W poezji Miłosza sytuacje takie nie należą do rzadkości.

> Miłosz's poetics is also built on a love of detail. It consists, as Wyka has already noticed, in a *quasi*-filmic serialisation of images, juxtaposing punctual experiences and perceptions. It is based on synecdoche, a *pars pro toto*, on all kinds of metonymic figures. From a bird, a day, a man, a building, what remains is a beak, a moment, a hand and a mouth, the brass lions of decoration: in the ending of *Ode to a Bird* there are only two metaphors per stanza, while erotic resonance is aroused by allusive understatement […] (Błoński 1998: 58).[6]

Błoński, partly following Wyka, stresses two issues that we have already mentioned in the main article – the film technique, which is very much present in *Ode…,* and the ubiquity of synecdoches and metonymy. The reduction of the whole into parts not only imbues the described space with concreteness, but also gives the viewer a sense of intimate closeness – when, for example, we read about "the eye of a scarab" or "the headlights of an ant", which we would not really be able to see.

Going beyond language

Miłosz also exceeds the limitations of phraseology and syntax. When reading the line "Które imają, czego dotkną" (They grasp whatever they touch), we catch ourselves at first unintentionally correcting the expression with the missing "themselves"; after all, the verb "imać się" meaning "to grasp", is commonly used. It turns out that *imać* functioned without a reflexive pronoun in Old Polish.[7] It seems, however, that in juxtaposition with "cybernetic gloves" a meaning closer to the recipient is triggered, referring to the derivative "vice", which conveys the precision, strength and mechanical perfection of the bird's body. Doubts are also raised by the phrase "Abym pojął w biciu skrzydeł" (So that I comprehend, while your wings beat), where the initial "abym" (literally: "let me") may be a conjunction (like "żebym," let me) or a particle, as for example in the sentence "Aby do wiosny!" (Until the spring!), which in this case would probably express a desire, a wish: "Niech pojmę…" (May I comprehend). Thus, we are confronted with the mystery of language in verse in which the poet tries to capture the 'birdiness' of the bird in a grid of primitive sounds, as if reaching into the word stem and extracting the primitive, archaic, half-gibberish sound were to help in the effort of comprehension: "pta, pteron, fvgls, brd". Language reveals its inefficiency, we are unable to convey in sound what the sensual world brings with it. This problem was noticed in the context of *Ode to a Bird by* Aleksander Fiut:

> The problem of the participation of language in the process of cognition is also touched upon in *Ode to a Bird*. Once again, but from a different angle, the poet approaches the border separating the human world from the animal world, at the same time not forgetting the mysterious links that bind man and nature. The argument written into this poem could be simplified as follows: the phenomena of nature that I encounter every day, birds in particular – says the author of the ode – evoke in me an unflagging admiration. But how to convey it? […] It is hard to forget that the relation of the word to the object is completely arbitrary. How many names of the bird there are in different languages! Even a return to the origins of speech, to

---

[6] J. Błoński, *Epifanie Miłosza*: Również poetyka Miłosza zbudowana jest na miłości szczegółu. Polega ona, jak spostrzegł już Wyka, na *quasi*-filmowym szeregowaniu obrazów, zestawianiu punktowych doznań i spostrzeżeń. Opiera się na synekdosze, *pars pro toto*, na wszelkich figurach metonimicznych. Z ptaka, dnia, człowieka, budowli zostają dziób, chwila, ręka i usta, mosiężne lwy dekoracji: w zakończeniu *Ody do ptaka* dwie tylko przenośnie na zwrotkę, zaś erotyczny rezonans wzbudzony aluzyjnym niedopowiedzeniem […].

[7] For: https://spxvi.edu.pl/indeks/haslo/54989 [accessed 31.07.2020].

> its primitives ("the sound of pta, pteron, fvgls, brd") changes little, because it does not allow us to define the winged creature unambiguously and once and for all. Such a multitude of words referring to one phenomenon is visible proof of the powerlessness of language in the face of something unnameable (Fiut 1993: 77).[8]

All knowledge of anatomy, the origin of species, aerodynamics, linguistics – turns out to be useless. The attempt, made again and again, to put the phenomenon of the bird into a cognitive framework is like beating one's head against a wall and seems to be an expression of the powerlessness of human reason. Does this mean the failure of the poet, and thus of poetry? We touch herewith something that is unspeakable, hides under the texture of language and wants to remain unspeakable. Cognition, in the sense of being rationalised, embraced by reason, seems to be beyond the reach of human capabilities. There remains, however, a "but", and this "but" is as literal as possible: "Ale dziób twój półotwarty zawsze ze mną…" (But your half-open beak is with me always). The last stanza is a counter-proposal to the poem as a whole, and can be put in three words: "czekam" (I wait), "widzę"(I see), "dotykam" (I touch). Cognition here means something different than explanation, it is closer to sensation, or even to the union of the knower with the known. Although the poetic image here is framed by a number of allusions, there is no denying that we are dealing with a situation that evokes unambiguously erotic connotations; "drżenie" (shiver), "ekstaza" (ecstasy), "cielesne wnętrze" (fleshy inside) leave no doubt here.

It should be borne in mind here that the language of erotic experience does not have to denote the sexual sphere or refer directly to the sexual act. Eroticism in Miłosz's poetry refers to those phenomena when the subject loses himself in himself, transgresses the boundaries of his own 'I' towards the knower. It is worth noting that the first four stanzas show the dominance of the human perspective. The bird is subjected to an anthropologising gaze – we see "feathery palms", a "foot" that "loosens its hold", but also an "eye of a scarab", even the "impeccable motion" has something distinctly human about it. This is how we used to look at the natural world, trying to tame its strangeness and at the same time our loneliness towards it. But nature is inhuman, taking into account all the aspects of the epithet's meaning. It is beyond good and evil, beyond morality. It cannot be comprehended in human terms. In the last stanza, however, the subject adopts the opposite strategy: instead of reducing the "inhuman" to the "human", he finds the "extra-human", crosses the seemingly impassable distance. "But your half-open beak is with me always…" – there is in us, then, a kinship with a distant bird cousin, which is, after all, a metonymic figure of the natural world, or more broadly: of what is primordial and untamed.

Conclusion

Slowly we return to the starting point outlined at the beginning – what is poetic knowledge, can the poet overcome the distance separating him from the object of interest? It turns out that there is a key to another kind of knowledge, the poetic word has the power to illuminate meaning by

[8] Problem udziału języka w procesie poznania porusza również Oda do ptaka. Poeta raz jeszcze, ale z innej strony, zbliża się do granicy dzielącej świat ludzki od zwierzęcego, nie zapominając zarazem o zagadkowych związkach, które łączą człowieka z naturą. Wpisany w ten wiersz wywód można by w uproszczeniu przedstawić następująco: zjawiska przyrody, z którymi się co dzień spotykam, ptaki zwłaszcza – powiada autor ody – wywołują we mnie niesłabnący zachwyt. Ale jak go przekazać? […] Trudno zapomnieć, że związek wyrazu z przedmiotem jest całkowicie arbitralny. Ileż jest nazw ptaka w różnych językach! Nawet powrót do źródeł mowy, do jego pierwocin („dźwięk pta, pteron, fvgls, brd") niewiele zmienia, gdyż nie pozwala jednoznacznie i raz na zawsze określić skrzydlatego stworzenia. Taka wielość słów, odniesionych do jednego zjawiska, jest widomym dowodem bezsilności języka wobec czegoś nie do nazwania.

finding hidden harmony. In *Ode to a Bird*, in the final part, the subject discovers a kinship, with a bird – he finds himself in the order of Nature, he becomes part of the whole again. How else to understand the last three lines, which are an explosion of sensuality?

Widzę usta koło lwów mosiężnych	Beside bronze lions I see lips
I dotykam obnażonej ręki	And I touch the naked arm
Pod zapachem krynicy i dzwonów.	In the scent of springwater and of bells.

Sight, touch and smell are named by name, taste ("krynica" is a pure source) is perhaps the most debatable in this order, but hearing, evoked by "the bells", closes the order of the five senses. The effort of reaching the sources of cognition is rewarded a hundredfold – with the gift of sensual participation in the world that really exists, in a way that cannot be denied.

Literature

Błoński, Jan (1998). *Miłosz jak świat*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Znak.

Fiut, Aleksander (1993). *Moment wieczny. O poezji Czesława Miłosza,* Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Open.

Giemza, Lech (2021). *"Rzeka, która cierpi." O poezji Czesława Miłosza.* Kraków: Instytut Literatury.

Kostkiewiczowa, Teresa (2009). *Oda w poezji polskiej: antologia,* Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im Ossolińskich.

Łapiński, Zdzisław. (1992). "Oda." In: Alina Brodzka et al. (red.) *Słownik literatury polskiej XX wieku.* Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im Ossolińskich, p. 751.

Zaleski, Marek (2005). *Zamiast. O twórczości Czesława Milosza,* Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie.

The Authors

Lic. Benjamin Bossaert, Ph.D. (*1985) studied Eastern European Languages and Cultures (Russian, Czech and Slovak) and teacher training at Ghent University. He is currently working as a senior lecturer Dutch language and literature at the department of German, Scandinavian and Dutch studies of Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. He engages in theory of literature, literary translations from Slovak, Dutch language acquisition and (cultural) history, focused on comparative research of the Flemish and the Slovak national movements or the intersection of Dutch and Slavic studies.

Katedra germanistiky, nederlandistiky a škandinavsitiky FiF UK,
Gondova 2, 811 02 Bratislava, Slovakia
e-mail: benjamin.bossaert@uniba.sk

Doc. Dr. Réka Kornélia Bozzay (*1977) studied Dutch, German and History at the University of Debrecen in Hungary, defended her PhD in in 2007 and her habilitation in 2021. She works as an assistant professor at the Department of Dutch Studies in Debrecen. Her main field of interest is Dutch-Hungarian cultural, economic, political connections from the Early Modern Age till World War II. She published together with Sándor Ladányi the book *Magyarországi diákok holland egyetemeken 1595–1918* (Hungarian students at Dutch universities 1595–1918) and is author of the book *Die Peregrination ungarländischer Studenten an der Universität Leiden 1595–1796*.

Néderlandisztikai Tanszék BTK, Debreceni Egyetem,
Egyetem tér 1, 4032 Debrecen, Hungary
e-mail: bozzay.reka@arts.unideb.hu

Dr hab. Lech Giemza, Prof. KUL (*1976) studied Polish Philology at the KU Lublin, defended his doctoral thesis in 2005, and obtained his habilitation in 2016. He is lecturer in contemporary literature at the Department of Polish Literature of the 20th and 21st Centuries of the Catholic University of Lublin, he deals with Polish poetry after World War II, essay writing, diaries, and new forms of literature on the Internet (e.g. blogosphere). Author of several books, i. a. *Nowa Fala wobec historii* and *Rzeka, która cierpi. On the poetry of Czesław Miłosz*. Apart from scholarly and didactic activity, he conducts a wide range of educational activities as part of the project *Książka z plecaka* (A Book for Your Backpack).

Katedra Literatury Polskiej XX i XXI wieku, Instytut Literaturoznawstwa WNH,
Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II, Al. Racławickie 14, 20–950 Lublin, Poland
e-mail: lech.giemza@kul.pl

Dr. Milen Jissov (*1974) completed his Ph.D. in History at Queen's University, in Canada. Specializing in Modern European Intellectual and Cultural History, he is an Associate Professor at the BNU-HKBU United International College, in Zhuhai, China. His current academic interests include the work of the German-Jewish philosopher Hannah Arendt and of the Polish-American poet Czesław Miłosz. His scholarship on it has appeared in about half a dozen publications in the international academic press.

General Education Office, BNU-HKBU United International College,
2000 Jintong Road, Tangjiawan, Zhuhai, Guangdong, 519087 China
e-mail: mjissov@uic.edu.cn

Dr. Martin Rodan (*1947) studied French Literature and Classical Studies at Comenius University in Bratislava. After his emigration to Israel in 1968, he continued his studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He obtained a doctorate from the University of Clermont-Ferrand (France). His thesis, *Camus and Antiquity* launched his career as a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Romance Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, a position he has held for many years. He is currently a researcher there. His book about European cultural history *Notre culture européenne, cette inconnue (Our unknown European culture)* has been published in French, Hebrew, and Slovak and will soon appear in German. His newest research centers on German Jewish thinkers born in the second half of the 19th century, among them Constantin Brunner, Theodor Herzl and Egon Friedell.

Department of Romance Studies, Hebrew University,
Mt. Scopus, 91905 Jerusalem, Israel
e-mail: msmrodan@mail.huji.ac.il

Czech and Slovak Journal of Humanities

For contributors

Texts already published or accepted for publication in other journals or books will not be accepted by the editorial board. The peer-review process, the editing and the publication of articles is done according to *CSJH* ethics statement.

The text of the article should be accompanied by an abstract in English of some 10 lines (maximum 100 words), with three to ten keywords in English in alphabetical order, and by author's affiliation, address and e-mail address. Reviews of books and conference proceedings should present all necessary bibliographical data concerning the reviewed book, including the place and dates of the conference in question.

The affiliation address of the contributor should be given at the end of the article or review as well as an e-mail contact. If necessary, another contact address may be provided. Contributors are kindly requested to send their contributions by e-mail to the addresses of issue editors:

Linguistica	Wilken Engelbrecht	wilken.engelbrecht@upol.cz
Historica	Martin Elbel	martin.elbel@upol.cz
Theatralia et cinematographica	Milan Hain	milan.hain@upol.cz
Musicologica	Jan Blüml	jan.bluml@upol.cz
Anthropologia culturalis	Jakub Havlíček	jakub.havlicek@upol.cz

Style Sheet Rules

Submitted texts should be written in one of common text editors (doc, docx, rtf, odt), in the Times New Roman 12 font, line spacing 1.5; pictures and figures should be submitted separately in formats as jpg, tif, eps, and gif.

CSJH follows the Chicago Style Manual.

Publication Ethics

Guidelines for Editors

General Responsibilities

- Editors are accountable for all content published in their journal. Editors must be ready to publish corrections and apologies when necessary.
- Editors must follow transparent editorial policy. Submission guidelines and requirements for potential contributors to the journal must be published.

Conflict of Interest

- Editors require authors, reviewers and editorial board members to disclose potential conflicts of interest.
- Editors make decisions to accept or reject submissions based on the quality of the submission and its suitability for the journal. Editors must make sure that commercial considerations do not interfere with their editorial decisions.
- Editors must make sure that non-peer-reviewed sections of the journal are clearly marked as such.

Peer-Review Practice

- Editors must ensure that all research submissions are peer-reviewed. A description of the peer review practice must be published for the benefit of potential contributors to the journal.
- Editors are accountable for recruiting qualified reviewers. Editors must strive to obtain highly competent reviewers and discontinue using reviewers who consistently deliver poor quality reviews.
- Editors must ensure that reviews are relevant, courteous and timely. Reviewers should judge the quality of the research and not comment on the researcher's gender, race, beliefs and the like.

Academic Integrity

- Editors and reviewers must treat all submissions under review as confidential. Editors must protect the identity of reviewers and the identity of authors if a double-blind review process is used.
- Editors must ensure that all submissions comply with ethical research standards, particularly in research involving human or animal subjects.
- Editors must make sure that all submissions comply with academic integrity standards, particularly with respect to plagiarism, data falsification, image manipulation and the like. Suspicions of scientific misconduct must be promptly investigated and response from authors suspected of misconduct must be sought.

Guidelines for Authors

General Responsibilities

- Authors are accountable for all aspects of their research submitted for publication to a journal. Authors of a multi-author submission have joint responsibility for their research, unless stated otherwise.
- Authors must promptly notify editors if they discover any errors in their research. This applies to research that has been submitted, is under review or has been published. Authors must cooperate with editors to rectify any errors.
- Authors must comply with submission guidelines and requirements published by the editors.
- Authors are aware that failure to meet these requirements may result in rejection of their research for publication.

Conflict of Interest

- Authors must disclose potential conflicts of interest.
- Authors must publish all sources of their research funding, including both financial and nonfinancial support.
- Authors must disclose their relationship to the journal, particularly when editors and reviewers seek publication in a journal that they are affiliated with.

Peer-Review Process

- Authors must cooperate with editors at all stages of the publication process. Authors must notify editors if they choose to withdraw their submission at any stage of the peer-review and publication process.
- Authors must respond to comments of reviewers in a relevant and timely manner. Authors must carefully check proofs supplied by editors before authorising them.

Academic Integrity

- Authors must not seek publication of their research in more than one journal concurrently, unless all parties agree on co-publishing.
- Authors are accountable for the soundness and honesty of their research. Authors must use appropriate methods for reporting their research and provide sufficient detail for other researchers to repeat their experiments. Authors must publish the complete results of their research and not withhold findings that are inconsistent with their hypothesis.
- Authors must comply with ethical research standards, particularly in research involving human or animal subjects, and must be prepared to provide sufficient proof on request.
- Authors must comply with academic integrity standards, particularly with respect to plagiarism, data falsification, image manipulation and the like. Authors must appropriately quote and cite all sources used in their research and refrain from including indirect quotations from sources that they have not consulted.
- Authors must obtain permission to use any third-party images, figures and the like from the respective copyright holders.