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Literature of early 20th century

Program of 'Nyugat' and its age

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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Composition of volume and cycle in Ady Endre's volume *Szeretném, ha szeretnének*

THESES

Budapest, 2007

The starting point of our dissertation is that although literature on Ady from the very beginning referred to the internal unit of the oeuvre as an evidence, to the motives and symbols appearing from time to time as an organic unit and to the new poems responding to preceding works as antecedents its projection on individual volumes and cycles has not been analyzed.

The goal of our dissertation is to collect the main features of Ady Endre's cycle and volume composition focusing on the volume *Szeretném, ha szeretnék*, highlighting the author's work as editor. In addition, we want to show the way from the 'mini-cycles' published in periodicals to the volumes including the printing press manuscript of the first publication and proofreader's copy of the volume *Szeretném, ha szeretnék* studying it as text and as a work of art. As a result, we want to show that in case of a 'volume-poet' a volume and the cycles included through intertextual relations amount to more than the simple aggregate of the collected poems. The collected volume(s) built from poems may be read as self-descriptions. "The published oeuvre is a self-portrait evolving from the account of volumes."¹

Speaking about the way of reading collection of poems we can speak about selective reading, just leafing a book, when no additional meaning is attributed to the aggregate of the poem texts. On the other hand, integrative reading is reading, which perceives and interprets the poem collection both separately and one by one, the reader pays attention to the composition of the collection, cycle titles, composition of cycles or poems responding to each other.

In the latter case the reader realizes the 'presence' of the author. Gerard Genette: devoted his work entitled *Seuils* (Thresholds) to the texts besides the text, that is, 'paratexts', which according to Philippe Lejeune "a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one's whole reading of the text".²

Regarding Ady's volumes and cycles we can state they are greater works than the poems, which do not eliminate the independence of the constituting poems, but say more and different than the poems separately. The author's, editor's intention is expressed by repetition of motives, connections of peritexts, references forwards and backwards and contrasts. In Ady's cycles one thread links the pieces therefore the individual poems have relative freedom.

¹ RÁBA György: *Vita* It. 1976 II. 417

² Quotes GENETTE: *Paratexts (Thresholds of Interpretation)*. Cambridge University Press. 2001. 2.

Looking at Ady's reception, it is almost evident Ady's ideas "[...] constitute and organic unit, a whole world therefore all formal elements have specific place, assume the whole context [...]"³

We can say that although others, like Erzsébet Vezér and Sándor Koczkás sometimes refer to the compositions of cycles it is Zoltán Kenyeres, who deals with the composition of volumes and cycles on the merit. Besides him H. Péter Nagy mentions briefly the cycle compositions and there are some other references e.g. Mihály Szegedy-Maszák whom we quote in our introduction.

Looking back, the patterns Ady might have followed in composing his books we can see Balassi or rather Csokonai, the three are also connected by the fact that their poems were inspired by a woman. (It is worth mentioning that authors compiling edited volumes of poems had the greatest impact on Ady like Sándor Kisfaludy, Byron and János Vajda). However, regarding cycle composition Baudelaire exerted the greatest influence. Similarly to him, Ady also builds a closed system of symbols and the cycles are only its external expressions.

Baudelaire's six cycles try to rehabilitate life falling apart. Life falling apart is also a key expression in Ady's oeuvre, looking for completeness, the attempt to grasp holds together Ady's poetry.

The poems of the first 'real Ady-volume' project cycles published later and in this way fragmentation, and there is always a poem, as a frontrunner in the volumes from the cycle bringing the new in the next volume.

László Németh referred to the cycles of the first five Ady volumes as a "branchy family-tree". Thinking his idea further we can draw the following figure:

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In the background of the cycle's fragmentation there is the basic experience 'All entities are fragmented', which is the basic feeling of the premodern age as Tibor Gintli says: "[...] The extreme points of Ady's poetry seemingly excluding each other are connected by his attempt to

³ KIS PINTÉR Imre: *Esélyek*. 258-259.

achieve the experience ‘Entirety’.”⁴ In Gintli’s opinion this attempt is conscious from the volume *Minden titkok versei*. In our opinion until that volume Ady takes into account, collects the motives whose entirety may approach the Entirety. The new and new motives do not mean they want ‘include entirety’ individually, but want to achieve entirety by adding all of them, the multitude of motives represent whole life. This contradicts Gintli’s interpretation saying that the Entirety is unattainable for the lyrical ego. In our opinion the whole compiled paradoxically from the fragmentation of the cycles is meant to achieve the ‘Entirety’.

If we examine the volume *Szeretném, ha szertnének* as text and cycle building, first the mini-cycles are to be looked at since they show Ady’s conscious composition of cycles then that of volumes. These “mini-cycles” are groups of poems published in papers. From these edited the author as an editor his volumes. When he prepared his works for the printing press manuscript, Ady made changes, most of them referred to the titles, giving the final title at that time. For the time being we know only one printing press manuscript that of the first publication of the volume *Szeretném, ha szertnének*, preserved in the Petőfi Literary Museum. The Museum also preserves a copy of proofreading consisting of seven sheets, which, however greatly differs from the volume published a little later.

The volume *Szeretném, ha szertnének* was published first in 1909 December dated 1910. It is noteworthy there are two differences compared to later publications.

A general volume composition principle is the contrast of seeking identification and the reality of loneliness, as structure-creating bipolarity, it was highlighted also by Zoltán Kenyeres. We can also conclude that private and public spheres alternate in the succession of cycles.

Regarding composition of volume, trinity is also a principle: the three cycles are in three groups and there are three poems in each group.

The composition is also strengthened by a special alternation of poems about desire for love, feeling of being persecuted, hiding and combative topics through their intertextual relation.

In addition to the above editing methods there are other conscious procedures, like narrowing perspective, motive-links, arranging poems with identical motives one after the other, intertextual dialogue of poems, expounding, circular arrangement and the principle of varietas in the cycles.

⁴ GINTLI Tibor: l. c. 35

Examining the volume *Szeretném, ha szertnének* we highlight the motives we found the most typical, they are the motive of northernness, the motive network of waters, the motives of towns and the village, representation of the feeling of solitude. At the same time we also deal with the diary-poems.

In connection with the north motive, resorting to some epitexts, interpretation of one of the key words of the poem '*Északi ember vagyok*' 'speech' on two levels is shown and we highlight polyphony present also regarding the north-motives in the oeuvre.

We also describe how important the volume *Szeretném, ha szertnének*, especially the poem *A vén komornyik*, is regarding water-motive, and regarding the cycle *Áldott, falusi köd*, we underline that a separate cycle about Érmindszent, family, the village full of contrasts, the peculiar countryside – like the Bible – inspiring sources of the oeuvre, was composed for the first (and last time) in the volume *Szeretném, ha szertnének*.

Nine days are recorded in Ady's oeuvre in a lyrical diary, eight of them in the volume *Szeretném, ha szertnének*, the author as editor integrated them in the volume by eliminating their external references of being part of a diary. Summarizing, we can conclude that only the poem *Kuruc Ádám testvérem* sticks out, the others correspond to the requirements of the diary genre.

We show the description of solitude in two poems (*Kisvárosok őszi vasárnapjai*, *Ezvorász király sirirata*) and in a cycle (*Egyre hosszabb napok*.)

The representation of the lyrical I is shown in the last chapter of our work. Here we try to point out the depiction of the differences of the lyrical I in the different cycles. Since the lyrical I is enhanced for example in *A Hágár oltára*, it is less stressed in the kuruc poems, in the poems to God and the cycle is entitled *The Jövendő fehérei*.