

Loránd Eötvös University
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ANNA CSÉVE

ZSIGMOND MÓRICZ AS LITERARY WRITER

INTERTEXTUAL RELATIONSHIPS IN “MÍG ÚJ A SZERELEM”

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Topic of the Dissertation

The objective of the thesis is to explore the intertextual relationships of the novel *Míg új a szerelem* (So long as love is new) as a possible method of accessing the literariness of Móricz and unfolding the underlying contents of the main title. Péter Nagy considered the novel the most unsuccessful work by Móricz;¹ Mihály Czine disregarded it;² the relevant entry of *Új Magyar Irodalmi Lexikon* (New Hungarian Literary Lexicon), following in the footsteps of the technical literature, labelled it “a sidetrack in his career”. The novel received more critical acclaim in Géza Féja’s Móricz monograph of 1939³; in György Rónay’s volume of essays, *The Great Generation* (A nagy nemzedék)⁴ and in Imre Bori’s book on *The Prose of Zsigmond Móricz* (Móricz Zsigmond prózája)⁵. Féja appreciated its “psychology of instincts”, and Rónay the “not at all good, but occasionally shockingly deep and ruthlessly sincere autobiographical” traits. Imre Bori read the statement of artistic questions into the way the female characters of the novel were formed, and linked the crisis in the private life of Móricz to his artistic crisis, “volta”, manifesting itself in the thirties. In 1995, the 4th National Conference of Teachers of Hungarian quoted *Míg új a szerelem*, “one of the most deplored novels of Móricz”, to express its message: “To find the ‘artist Móricz’, that is our mission”.⁶ As opposed to György Rónay, in whose opinion Móricz “never slips from the observed reality of life and character to the fictitious reality of literature (...) He had a human vision of men, not a literary one”,⁷ he emphasised that “creative aspirations and problems [could be traced in his work] the same as the social or human concerns from the point of view of which the oeuvre of Móricz is usually interpreted and especially presented”.⁸ István Margócsy was the first to have referred to the modernity of this work at the conference “Móricz Re-read” (Az újraolvasott Móricz) held in 2004. He was of the opinion that *Míg új a szerelem* warranted special attention due to its divergence from the patterns applied by the Móricz reception for

¹ “This is the least successful novel of Móricz, overheated by the desire to express his personal experience and passions, which therefore cannot become more general in any way than the life stories of his strange heroes.” Péter Nagy: *Móricz Zsigmond* (Zsigmond Móricz). Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1979, 463–464.

² “The Zsigmond Móricz of the thirties faces his own life, too, with ruthless severity. In *A rab oroszlán* (Captive lion) (1936), *Míg új a szerelem* (So long as love is new) (1938) he still gives a novelistic touch to the fates; in *Életem regénye* (Novel of my life) (1938), he tells everything in a straightforward manner.” Mihály Czine: *Móricz Zsigmond* (Zsigmond Móricz). Csokonai Kiadó, 1992, 129.

³ Géza Féja: *Móricz Zsigmond* (Zsigmond Móricz). Polis Könyvkiadó, 2005, 126.

⁴ György Rónay: *Móricz Zsigmond*, in: *A nagy nemzedék* (The Great Generation). Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1971, 149–164.

⁵ Imre Bori: *Móricz Zsigmond prózája* (Prose of Zsigmond Móricz). Fórum Könyvkiadó, 1983.

⁶ Imre Bori: *Móricz Zsigmond mai szemmel* (Zsigmond Móricz as he is seen to date). Irodalomismeret, December 1995. 13–17.

⁷ Rónay, *op. cit.* 154.

⁸ Bori, *Irodalomismeret*, 13.

decades: the narrator technique of the novel “relays such a polysemantic postmodern world view as may suggest even the absolute topicality of Móricz”.⁹

In 2005, I approached the novel from the side of the writer’s diaries, to examine the text-creation practice of Zsigmond Móricz,¹⁰ because its text-world seemed impossible to bypass due to the repetitions pointing beyond the scope of the novel and appearing like self-quotations. In my opinion, it is justified to put this novel, excluded from the canon, into the limelight, due not only to its uniqueness, but also its more general relevance. I wondered already at that time whether the author’s tone and self-interpreting gestures in *Míg új a szerelem* were the specifics “simply” of that novel, or represented a method of writing. The method of creation manifesting itself in that work is not an isolated phenomenon in the oeuvre: it offers a rich interface for the examination of intertextuality. That is, the selection of the topic of the thesis has been driven by a prior intention which outgrew its original scope, i.e. the wish to contemplate the complex mutual relationships – studied previously under the title of “The reins of writing” (*Az írás gyeplője*) – which create, control and re-iterate the practice of text-creation.

The Method

The thesis puts a theoretical typography behind the multitude of analogies and intertextual relationships in the fuller text-world of Móricz – containing also the unpublished corpus – mobilised around this novel. Therefore, the dissertation concentrates on the types of intertextuality and their role in the constitution of meaning. It does not undertake to provide a comprehensive view of the world of textual relationships, or to analyse the novel; it presents the ways in which the novel “transcends” its own immanence by the intertexts.

The dissertation includes, by way of methodological example, a study of intertextual relationships in the short story *Tragédia* (Tragedy). As shown by this example, in addition to highlighting a method, the study of intertextuality indicates that, for a writer re-processing his own works, re-writing may represent a writing model of some sort. Móricz’s texts had actually been replete with intertexts already from the start of his career. The examples of his use of the technique of intertextuality, which replaces the “original” by the re-written, the re-used, range from the adaptation of *Ludas Matyi* through *Barbárok* (Barbarians) to *Rajongók*

⁹ István Margócsy: *Míg új a szerelem...*, in: *Az újraolvasott Móricz* (Móricz Re-read). Series of Nyíregyháza College, Dept of Literature, Ed.: Csaba Onder, Nyíregyháza, 2005, 52–53.

¹⁰ Anna Cséve: *Az írás gyeplője. Móricz Zsigmond szövegalakító gyakorlata* (The reins of writing. The text-creation practice of Zsigmond Móricz). Fekete Sas Kiadó, 2005.

(Admirers). According to Móricz's first plan, *Míg új a szerelem* would have been the adaptation of *A galamb papné* (The vicar's gentle wife), an early novel which he regarded as no more than a draft by 1937.

Interestingly, the text of the novel *Míg új a szerelem* has close intertextual relationships not only with the writings of Zsigmond Móricz himself, but also with the Móricz biographies of Virág Móricz and Mihály Czine. In these works, novel and biography, the narratological and creative levels of the authors and the narrators, the concepts of person and personal identity, character and representation are intertwined, inseparably entangled. Therefore, I found it necessary to take a look from within the thesis onto the posthumous text publications and in general the bipolar, or even polarised, relationship between the published works and the manuscripts in the universe of Móricz. In the current state of research on Móricz, more attention should be paid to the fact that, given the inaccuracy of the text editions, the researchers do not know – cannot know – the texts of Móricz in their “totality” or, for example, in the case of the diaries, they may read heavily selected texts under the name of Virág Móricz as author. It is urgent for philology to come to terms with the posthumous manuscript publications. The appearance of the first volume of *Naplók* (Diaries) scheduled for 2009 may well become a landmark in the further development of Móricz's reception. In view of the publication of the previous selections of notes entitled *Tükör* (Mirror)¹¹ and the volume *Naplójegyzetek 1919* (Diary notes, 1919)¹², and knowing the Móricz special collection, it can be stated that a research group will have to be set up to accomplish the tasks ahead. A series of new texts shall be published, because the oeuvre remains open in the absence of authentic text editions. It may be regarded as a breakthrough that in his closing remark at the roundtable held in 2006 in Petőfi Literary Museum on new text interpretations and editions, György Tverdota expressed this as an axiom: “There is a Móricz universe, of which the writer's books as well as manuscripts are organic parts. What we know for certain is that the legacy has become interesting for this profession: the universe of Móricz has become polarised, and whether we want it or not, the texts, if only due to their quantity, will form, and may transform, our image of Móricz. The components of this universe may be observed one by

¹¹ Anna Cséve: *A papír igényei. Móricz Zsigmond Tükreiről* (The demands of paper. On the Mirrors of Zsigmond Móricz) and Móricz Zsigmond: *Tükör* (Mirror). Ed. and notes. Forrás, July-August 2004, Zsigmond Móricz: *Tükör I–II*. (Mirror, I-II) Text edition, preface. Holmi 2004/12. and 2005/1.

¹² Zsigmond Móricz: *Naplójegyzetek, 1919*. (Diary notes, 1919.) Ed., preface: Anna Cséve. Noran Kiadó, 2006. 240.

one, but it is their interconnection that will make what we may call in general terms “Móricz interpretation” a really dynamic process.”¹³

Summary of the results

The first of the writer’s strategies revealed by the study of intertextual relationships in *Míg új a szerelem* to be mentioned here is the mixing of the levels of fiction and reference as a narrative solution to story-telling. The author plays an odd game with the novel fiction: he tries to prevent that his “fiction-as-love-story” be read as autobiographical novel or roman-à-clef by applying destructive interference, i.e. by making the narrator of the love story the protagonist of a secondary meta-fictitious plot. Within the novel, but with obvious emphasis on his own borderline position in fiction, the implicit author comments on the novel and interprets it, pointing to the possibilities of shaping it, by alternating between third person singular and the “I narrative”. The linear progress of the narrative is interrupted, as if to question the possibility of narrating the story. The presence of various narratological levels and the formal solutions of multiplication re-arrange the conventional relationships of the novel. One of the essential components of the unfolding textual movement– of relevance for the interpretation of the novel – is the frequent displacement of the limits of fiction. This is also indicative of the presence of, and the problem implied by, balancing with references.

The self-quotations connect many Móricz novels into the analysis, and hence the closed narrative of *Míg új a szerelem* opens up. The novel segments itself; it lets in the private communications of the diary and the correspondence. The diary perspective creates an interpretative distance, in retrospect, in regard of *A galamb papné* or *Sárarany* (Mud-gold) and *A fáklya* (The torch) , or in relation to the later *Életem regénye* (Novel of my life) and even the entire oeuvre.

The commentary which interrupts the story on four occasions offers an implicit *ars poetica* for reading the novel. The plot of the honeymoon of Péter Dus and Ágnes Városy puts on stage the reader’s and, in the broader sense, the receiver’s aspect, relying on the solutions offered by the commentaries. The excursion to Semmering Pass summit expounds the idea of ascendance, the “altitude experience” of creation, representing also its receptive aspect. Together with the creator, the viewer, the reader, the receiver also ascends to the summit. The author’s position as reader is illustrated by how he “spells” the landscape with "the woman"

¹³ 27 February 2006. The tape recording is in PIM’s Book and Media Archives.

and the woman with the "landscape". This section of the novel holds up a mirror to the entire work. While contemplating the nature of women, in the love story, the author reckons also with the nature of writing. The work provides a model for interpreting the love stories in previous Móricz novels as writing histories and, in general terms, it offers another interpretation option instead of the former, more or less conventional, readings.

Míg új a szerelem – the novel of the novel – supplies information on its own fictitious character. Ágnes Városy interprets the term “sárány” (‘mud-gold’), it is through her that the history of the author as writer is reflected upon – in this sense, this work is also the novel of the recollection of writing experiences. Statements on creation as an object and creation as an act merge in the love story, and this provides links to details in the entire oeuvre. The texts of Móricz are “re-contextualised”, and references are made to pre-texts still in manuscript form. The novel “remembers” these written sources, the intertextual roots of its own text, and hence it can be “put to use” in the textologic sense as well: it gives precise descriptions of some manuscripts dating from 1924, and even quotes from them. The genetic texts of 1924–1925 outline plans for a prospective novel, whereas the novel dating from 1937 outlines the documentary past of the literary text.

The interfaces are further duplicated as the story having happened to the “I” (the author) at some earlier date is reformulated as the story of the “he” (the protagonist), as an example of simple self-reflection (*mise en abyme* pure). Intertextuality makes it possible to demonstrate the presence of the autobiography of Zsigmond Móricz at both levels of fiction; the works of the commenting author (e.g. *Seven pennies* (*Hét krajcár*)) and the home of the protagonist (“Lányfalu”) are identifiable under the same name. The textual backgrounds of the two levels of narrativity are identical; the narratives, on the other hand, are markedly distinct, appearing as simultaneously heard polyphonic voices.

This simultaneity is suggested by the set phrases, the recurrence and lead role of which is indicated also by Péter Szirák, who emphasises that the linguistic elements which play an important role in the organisation of meaning “wander like quotations, loosening thereby the relationship of language to reality, and creating rather than representing the world”.¹⁴ The self-quotations concerned are constant syntactic elements. They suggest the underlying meaning in the form of quotations with or without quotation marks, literally or by allusion. For example,

¹⁴ “Reducing glasses” carrying interpretative power in the inner world of the novels are, for example: “The meaning-organising phraseme of *Tragédia* (Tragedy): »to eat somebody out of his fortune«. Péter Szirák: Az ösztön „nyelve” és a nyelv cselekedtető ereje (The “language” of passion and the activating power of language). Szempontok Móricz Zsigmond néhány művének újraolvasásához (Criteria for re-reading some works by Móricz.), in: *A kifosztott Móricz?* (Móricz plundered?), 226–240.

the full meaning of the story elements with links to other texts/other genres – e.g. “you only see me from the outside, and imagine the rest”, “I have no soul” – is the aggregate of their various aspects shown in the various novels, and their being traceable to the diary. Behind these phrases – highlighted sometimes typographically by being set in italics –, there lies a latent, sometimes decipherable, sometimes more mysterious secret, which reinterprets the entire text: it gives it a metaphorical connotation as its semantic halo is revealed in the diary or in some other private notes. They are of verbal origin; they are associated with specific stories, life situations. The incongruence of the semantic level so suggested and the speech situation in the novel opens up a new aspect of constituting meaning.

The recurrent text quotations are the “speeches” of female characters, mainly the voices of Janka Holics and to a smaller extent of Mária Simonyi and Olga Magoss. According to the diaries of Móricz, Janka Holics no longer recognized her words, out of context, in the novels, because they were either not uttered by a female character, or the otherwise authentic sentences of the female character were mixed with alien elements. She often complained of this “falsification”, so much so that she could not accept Móricz’s writings as art. The wife, referred to as co-author, lost the remains of her intellectual and emotional reserves when, with the entry on the scene of Mária Simonyi, new phrases, unknown to her, came to be woven into the texts.

The intention of the author of *Míg új a szerelem* was that the novel should not be read as the life history of the person registered under the name of Zsigmond Móricz, but as a linguistic product. For that purpose, in addition to the insertion of pre-texts originating from verbal comments and to the duplication of the narrative levels, the novel uses the strategy of converting language into the methods and instruments used to create the 3D pieces of art in sculpture. “For the system of the picture to enter into an intertextual relationship with a verbal unit”, Laurent Jenny writes in her study *The Strategy of Form*, “it must put on the linguistic form of expression of its diagram. Whichever point of view is selected, the purely figurative dimension is obviously absent from the intertextual relationship, but there remains a common network of relationships.”¹⁵ The novel repeatedly refers to this common “network” of relationships. From among the works of fine art “borrowed” in the text, Ödön Moirer’s *Léda relief*¹⁶ bears the dedication of Móricz’s *Búzakalász* (Ear of wheat) engraved in stone. A special role is assigned to the fact that the arts are embedded in specific materials; the linguistic “customisation”, adaptation, of the borrowed signs is driven by an essential word

¹⁵ Laurent Jenny: *A forma stratégiája* (Strategy of form). Helikon, 1996/1–2, 40.

¹⁶ *Léda*, 1912. Hammered bronze, Nemzeti Galéria.

processing principle: the adoption of József Rippl-Rónai's concept of "painting in one breath". "Painting in one breath"¹⁷ may be approached also from the side of the writer's invention. Móricz creates under the effect of ideas born in one moment – "in statu nascendi" – ,¹⁸ and that one moment contains, as a still picture, the beginning as well as the end of his story. The end-point shown in the initial point and, vice versa, the initial point shown in the end-point pegs the honeymoon in *Míg új a szerelem*, too, to a single instant: "in vain does he know that as soon as they depart, they will also return, he must nevertheless repeat to himself that, at that instant, they are at their destination ..." György Eisemann expresses this condensing technique as follows: "Beginning and end meet, so that what happened in between, the time flow, seems an illusion, and represents but the repetitions of this state, frozen in one point, and makes the story appear as a series of variations."¹⁹

The parallel presentation of the love of the artist for the model and the work of art made of the model is a typical feature of the artistic novel. The love felt by Péter Dus for Ágnes Városy and its expected artistic outcome, the re-make of the Venus statue to made of Ágnes, is one of the starting points of the novel. However, instead of another 'antique Venus' the sculptor makes an "anti-Venus": the statue of the *Scrubbing girl*. The clay statuette is a work in the work (mise en abyme); the key to reading the novel. Its model is not Ágnes Városy, but a secondary character, the girl scrubbing the floor of the pub, who is the "verbal translation" of a small sculpture in bronze made by Ferenc Medgyessy in 1913 entitled *Scrubbing woman*. The copies reproduced as model and also as sculpture illuminate the entire novel as small mirrors.

The transformations of the Medgyessy statue, playing with fiction and reality, raise the possibility that, for Móricz, the formal and existential worlds of the works of art were not simply a "non-existent world", but a "world vested with an ontology of its own".²⁰ The blending of the layers is shown also in that Ágnes Városy is an almost perfect "statue" in the beginning of the novel: "He raised his hand and put it on the bare hand of Ágnes on his left. He left his stubby hand there and started to knead and squeeze the flesh with his fingers used

¹⁷ "How I can write anything at one casting...", *Naplók* (Diaries), 3 May 1933, PIM MS Archives, M.130.

¹⁸ *Míg új a szerelem* (So long as love is new), in: *Móricz Zsigmond összegyűjtött művei* VI. (Collected works of Zsigmond Móricz, VI). Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1978, 652.

¹⁹ György Eisemann: *Barbárok a Móricz-prózában* (Barbarians in the prose of Móricz). In: *A magvető nyomában* (In the footsteps of the sower), Móricz Zsigmondról (On Zsigmond Móricz.), Anonymus Kiadó, 1993, 92.

²⁰ Cf. e.g. the fiction theory of Christine Baron mentioned in "A metaleptikus hatás és a fikcionális beszédmódok státusa" (The metaleptic effect and the status of fictional styles of speech). In: *Narratívák 6., Narratív beágyazás és reflexivitás* (Narratives, 6. Narrative embedding and reflexivity). Eds.: Adrián Bene, Tímea Jablonczay, Kijárat Kiadó, 2007, 256.

to clay.”²¹ But by the end of the novel, he no longer offers to make a statue-like representation of femininity, and the finished statue is more life-like than artificial, and Ágnes is more artificial than life-like. The novel justifies the artificial creation of Ágnes Városy by the paraphrase of the well-known Pygmalion story: “It turns out at the end that the entire woman is a substitute, made of rubber, and inflated, and he is the assistant chemist of Kispest who did not get the beautiful grocer’s girl, because they wouldn’t let her marry him (...) so he had the girl made of rubber in Paris, based on photographs, and he loved her so much it drove him mad, because however he loved her, he got no response ... And does he?...” In the novel, the model and its artistic “representation” shows a sophisticated set of interrelationships; the statue–model connects more distant semantic fields into the interpretation: the intertextual relationships lead from József Katona’s *Bánk bán*, through the short novel *Kamaszok* (Adolescents) to *Míg új a szerelem*.

Visual narrativity plays a part in an essential creative dilemma of the sculptor inspired by models and loves – and the author–commentator communicating the implicit poetics – concerning the message-relaying power of the “first image”. “Nevertheless, it seems most clever to stick to the first concept, the one born in him under the effect of the first external impact”, so *Míg új a szerelem* reads. “Will anyone understand that ... that is, will it ever be possible to make Ágnes understand that? It is the same with the woman. When he first caught sight of Ágnes, he immediately had a definite image of her, and he has been sticking to that image ever since. In that image, Ágnes contained Margit and something extra, what was not present in Margit and what he absolutely needed.” The female portraits present in *Míg új a szerelem* “simultaneously” unfold the story as ekphrases copied on one another. The similarity of the two female characters, the overlaps and differences, are shown by the mirroring structures of “multiplication” and “reduction to one” which, as fluctuations of the intertext, “allow more or less variants, but finally trace them back to the same invariant.”²² The phenomenon of simultaneously focusing on one model and disintegrating that model is obviously one of the essential structural drivers of the novels of Móricz. There is no doubt as to its autobiographical origin, but the duet of Zsigmond Móricz and Janka Holics, the writer and the model, can be associated with specific characters to different extents (or hardly at all); the multiplication of their identity makes the models identifiable indirectly only. The identification of the author as the model of the self-portrait, and of the female model as co-author, that is, the interchangeability of the personalities, carries subversive meanings, and

²¹ *Míg új a szerelem*, 685.

²² Michael Riffater: *Az intertextus nyoma* (The trace of the intertext), Helikon 1996/1–2, 67.

serves the repeated imprinting, the repetition, of the same personality trait. Móricz expresses the significance of writing from dictation in the cases of Janka Holics, Mária Simonyi, Olga Magoss and Erzsébet Litkei, too, and this way of writing may be conceived of as the re-utilisation of previous texts. “I could sit down at any time for ten years after Janka’s death, and write 64 pages as if it was a phonogram”, Móricz writes in his diary,²³ and he does not only refer to autobiographical facts or to novel texts, e.g. *Rab oroszlán* or *Míg új a szerelem* – “Margit could speak for 64 pages without interruption”²⁴ –, but also to their lexical-text-organiser status, i.e. the cohesion force that is the precondition of the narrativity of the stories. The “woman problem” is hence nothing but the writing problem of a person who is forever waiting for a pre-text that can be “developed”, i.e. recalled and put in writing, at any time, and the woman is the stake and stabiliser of the author’s name: “I expected to gain an unhopd-for artistic effect from her that would save my name and make my art real”.²⁵

The other layer of the strategies of repetition in *Míg új a szerelem* is that of the metaphoric, the mythic, narrative. This existential model form has become accepted since István Margócsy’s analysis of *Sárary*²⁶; László Arató demonstrated its presence in the novel *Faithful onto Death (Légy jó mindhalálíig)*,²⁷ and the short story *Tragédia* is built on the same structure. The examples quoted of the various forms of self-cursing as a stage in the history of initiation, collected in the dissertation, are recurrent text fragments representing seemingly pre-established, stable functional elements of the work being produced. The repetitions of the Calvary written on the basis of the mythic model and put in a personal perspective are the actualisations of a universal state of existence, the examples of an existential model.

Still keeping to the close reading of the poetic principles of the novel, the writer describes the process of creation – after the decisive moment of the all-important first impression – as a “mechanical series”²⁸. The diary calls this “automatic movement” “easy writing”,²⁹ a concept akin to the idea of the “self-writing text”. The first hypothetical description of the organisation of the novel, based on *Míg új a szerelem* and within the limited

²³ 18 September 1936, Virág Móricz: *Tíz év I* (Ten years, I). Szépirodalmi, 1981, 622,

²⁴ *Míg új a szerelem*, 659.

²⁵ *Míg új a szerelem*, 583.

²⁶ István Margócsy: *Sárary* (Mud-gold), in: *A magvető nyomában* (In the footsteps of the sower). 17–23.

²⁷ László Arató: *A Légy jó mindhalálíig mint beavatástörténet* (Faithful onto death as initiation novel). In: *A kifosztott Móricz?* (Móricz plundered?), 126–152

²⁸ “I mean, is fantasy capable of putting Chaos, autogenesis, primeval creation into motion? What creates the first moment? Because the rest is a mechanical series: the essential thing is the first movement, creation, the birth of life.” *Míg új a szerelem*, 622.

²⁹ “What was it that made [writing] easy?... That I had always had a life-frame at hand, in which any amount of personae appeared.” *Naplók* (Diaries), 12 September 1933.

scope of the dissertation, calls the attention to the fact that the striking repetitions in the intertextual relationships of the novel can be described, according to their meaning constituting role, also as *changing constants*. There are some mobile elements within the bigger construct of the novel which turn around as the forms and colours of a “kaleidoscope”³⁰, and are renewed by the repetitions – “literature is constant packing”³¹. Consequently, instead of a linear structure, the force of cohesion of the novels is a divergent system operating narrative isles. The individual elements and their variants are their own previous transcriptions, that is, they point beyond the limits of the specific works of Móricz and show marked intertextuality.

The process of writing

Intertextuality may be interpreted as the written relationship between the singularly big volume of preserved notes and the published oeuvre. If the document fragments (building blocks) inserted in *Míg új a szerelem* are capable of operating their new context – the novel –, it is to be presumed that other, non-fictitious, contexts may also let the oeuvre be read through the self-quotations. On the basis of the foregoing, and of the quasi-fictitious nature of the private genres, the correspondences, it is to be presumed that the oeuvre may be conceived of as a novel-forming textual ensemble. The references to private notes in the literary works indicate the dialogic relationship between the two textual worlds, and the importance and continuity of that relationship. The method of intertextuality seems to be suitable for describing the dialogue taking place in the intertextual space as Móricz’s method of writing.

The hypothesis outlined in this chapter refers to the intertextual relationship between the singularly large volume of notes, not added to the oeuvre yet, and the published oeuvre. The self-confession-like novel of *Míg új a szerelem* tells about the significance of fragmented notes considered a peripheral genre: “This is the earliest [form]. This is what the writer and artist of yore concealed with most care, lest someone should see it; this is the reason why they destroyed their drafts, experiments, notes.”³² The relationship between the unhidden, undestroyed notes, referred to elsewhere also in his literary works, and of the published oeuvre, can be justified most easily through the concept of writing as work. Orsolya Rákai

³⁰ “...If he keeps dwelling further on the inspiring debris of life, he will produce no more but variants. Every new plane, angle, hump, every new datum brings new variants to his mind, and these run as if in a kaleidoscope, and the smallest move evokes new picture frames.” *Míg új a szerelem*, 603.

³¹ *Míg új a szerelem*, 563.

³² *Míg új a szerelem*, 651.

approached the issue of writing and the work of the writer from the side of the studies of Móricz and his concepts of literary history: “Móricz has been interested from the beginning of his career in the relationship of work and writing, more precisely writing as work and indirectly by existence as a writer. (...) writing as actual work (measurable in terms of hours, in time) – and not only in the sense of writing something, but also of writing down something (note-taking, record-keeping) – that will lay the bases somehow of the writer’s ethics and may become useful also in a more generic sense in the next step ...”³³ In his critical writings and self-confessions, Móricz makes statements concerning these *two types of writing* under the *same* concept, which gives rise to many contradictions for example between the concepts of social utility, missionary literature or socially motivated literature and Móricz’s interpretation of the notion of peasants or “Hungarian characters” in the novels. This contradiction seems to dissolve in the dialogue between texts written and text written down, i.e. if the two methods are examined as the process of writing, as hierarchical processes.

The writer’s notes, including the note series summed up in *Tükör*, record the pictures and voices of ten thousands of persons, with names, addresses, dialogues, stories and themes, in thousands of pages. The notes contain a real social panorama – the “Hungarian *Human Comedy*” as György Rónay called it³⁴ –, in the form of individual fate, text, visual and writing fragments. It is on these pages that Móricz finds his way out of the novelist tradition which represented society overall. Note-taking is his attempt to bridge the gap to novel writing, to carry on in some way the tradition of the mission of 19th century writers. This systematic work refutes the opinion that the writer’s “extensive panoramic survey came about on its own, without premeditation and *plan*, [italics mine, A. Cs.], from the need of a writer characterised by an extremely rich and full-blooded nature to represent and create reality”.³⁵

Tükör is not simply a collection of raw materials and topics with indices, but also a writer’s workshop. Móricz experiments with expressing the visualisation of colours; he draws portraits; studies the interplay of light and shadow on the face. He “reads” the profile of Janka Holics from the windowpane of the flat on Üllői street.³⁶ This collection shows many examples of the multiplication of a face, i.e. the creative process of the visual multiplication

³³ Orsolya Rákai: *Genealógia és reflexió. Móricz Zsigmond „irodalomtörténete(i)”* (Genealogy and reflection. The “literary history (histories) of Zsigmond Móricz), *Alföld* 2005/9, 94.

³⁴ Rónay, *op.cit.*, 156.

³⁵ Rónay, *op.cit.*, 156.

³⁶ Forrás, 108.

of appearances and copies – in details, in mirror splinters: ³⁷ it records complaints, jokes, anecdotes, stresses, intonations, ways of laughing, lips, nose forms, profiles of individuals from the most diverse social strata. This is the source from which the novels are filled with secondary characters and traits drawn or pasted onto the lines of the self-portrait. In other words: Móricz the writer's "self" is being composed as a reflection of these forms, by the gestures of self-identification and identification. *Sárarany* fulfilled the accomplished writer's success, the expectation expressed by the periodical *Nyugat*: the new peasant novel was born, but it swept along every passion, the emotional richness of the long initial phase of the career of the novice writer, and blended and embodied in the peasant character the problems of marriage, writer's freedom, independence and self-assertion. Dani Turi's character was modelled on Janka Holics: "I took the external traits of the character from her, and I filled them with my own savage, cruel and overwrought tempers"; "I inherited emotions of such impulsive strength that they tolerate no limits based on manners, and this may be called peasantness", "I artificially broke myself back into a peasant".³⁸ Initially, Móricz did not choose the peasant character as fate model on the basis of ideological premises: this interpretation came to be associated with it later on. Its antecedent was the preparatory, grounding, experience of his expedition to collect folk poetry, as in the case of Béla Bartók. The writer unfolded his talent, his originality, by committing himself to a way of expression which accepted without selection every "individual and hence uncontextualisable, unmanageable, event"³⁹ into the series of emotions suitable for expression.

This form of note-taking mastered on the field trips to collect folk poetry was the first reflective surface where the anamorphosis of the novel started and, meanwhile, externally, the writer's ethics also acquired an authentic foundation thanks to his studies of village life. For Móricz, the writer's work means also his commitment to a fate: "During my long life-path when my strange fate made it my work to observe and criticise, and re-experience emotionally in myself, lots of lives, this is what preserved my affinity for work and my fresh strength: whoever creates something will not walk out on it. (...) someone who gave birth to an undertaking which is the expression of his life, cannot, does not want to and is unable to, give it up."⁴⁰ Móricz's "own undertaking" was the novel. His village tours were not fuelled by his

³⁷ Cf. "...I keep using a bit of reflecting. I show details in the mirror. As a conceited man will look at his eyes, his verruca, and draw conclusions concerning the whole from that. But I do not use full-length mirrors that would reflect the entire figure." *Naplók* (Diaries). 17 February 1934. PIM MS Archives.

³⁸ *Naplók* (Diaries). 27 May 1925. Property of Imola Simon.

³⁹ Rákai, *op. cit.*, 94.

⁴⁰ Damaszkuszi élmény (Damascus adventure), in: *Tanulmányok III.* (Studies, III.). 137.

sense of social responsibility, but by his writer's sense of responsibility, since he met there his chosen "fate model",⁴¹ the peasant.

Note-taking is an accumulative type of activity – notes may represent transition to the novel, but they are not productive texts in themselves. Móricz seldom used his notes. He considered it important to state the difference: "I myself, as writer, got all my real impressions, experiences outdoors, but I have never drafted a single line outdoors before writing or in writing. Once I became impregnated with life, I rushed indoors, and I wrote there what I had to write."⁴²

The direct relationship between the listener and the speaker, that is, the first phase of the writing process, is repeated in the second phase, but the writer's role in the communication chain is altered: the receiver turns into creator. Word of mouth, speech, plays a special role in the text-creating relationship (in both phases of writing). Móricz mentions this phenomenon as his special, personal talent: "by stirring memories and ideas, I can mobilise and bring to the surface masses of precise and genuine recollections and emotions. *I find this most admirable in myself* [italics mine, A. Cs.], and this is the main reason why I can tell a tale so easily. Miraculously, *I have no memory for data* [italics mine, A.Cs.], but I store an overall image of life and, within the limits of my natural talents, almost everything is at my disposal."⁴³ What Móricz as literary writer had at his disposal, in addition to his typewriter, was no other than language, i.e. an excellent speech memory which expressed itself at the level of elocution, the level of linguistic operations.⁴⁴ From this speech-oriented memory, one may deduce the decisive role of speech sounds preserved by hearing in his creative work. One cannot over-emphasise the fact that it is the preserved written documents, the notes and diaries, which give the philologist an opportunity to explore verbalism as intertextuality.

Orsolya Rákai draws several conclusions concerning writing as work based on the designation of "recording and statement", "recording and representation" as literary tasks, the identification of life and writing, which are in surprisingly good agreement with the interpretation of Móricz's manner of writing as a process: "What is exposed here is the special, two-component, nature of text and fact, the interim state which cannot be identified

⁴¹ Margócsy, *op.cit.*, 26.

⁴² A puszta és a könyv (The Pusta and the book), in: *Tanulmányok III.* (Studies, III.), 164.

⁴³ *Hogy nézi a regényíró az életet* (How the novelist looks at life), in: *Tanulmányok I* (Studies, I.), 700.

⁴⁴ Cf. "If a hundred characters were needed, they would all live and speak, and I never had to wait an instant to see what each would say, because they could hardly wait, as if in a social gathering, to speak up, and I had to hold them back lest they should jabber on superfluously. Formerly, this had been so true that there was simply no question of a tale, because one scene would have lasted forever. (...) I wonder if I shall manage to bring into a work written already the structure and the energies of action in retrospect." *Naplók* (Diaries). 12 September 1933.

with either pole”.⁴⁵ The interim “writer’s state” is undeniably present also in both the autobiographical and the literary readings of *Míg új a szerelem*, in the blurred borderline between fact and fiction, the incessant floatation of the possibility of writing the texts further. As if this way of writing knew only continuations, and variability would be its ideal state. György Eisemann’s paper on the “móriczean” novel as a model of receptivity urges the examination of the “intertextual character”⁴⁶ of writing. What we have here is not an opposition of the “either...or” type: even in case of fiction and autobiography, one may speak rather of similarities and differences, that is, of an undecided issue. The reflective structure of the autobiography “gets incorporated in every text in which the writer makes himself the subject matter of his own understanding”. The works “repeat an essential instability which disintegrates the model at the moment of its creation”.⁴⁷ The textual presence of autobiographical elements – topics, motives, literal repetitions, self-quotations – is not the result of pasting, but of partial insertions. The level of self-reflection created as a result of the “undecided” limits of fiction and autobiography is a totality on its own, defined by repetitions which, although it takes place as a process, suggests simultaneity. A close contextual relationship is established between the re-usable syntactic elements, and the components move about between the works, while broadening and varying each other’s meanings. In other words, this movement is the material of the work,⁴⁸ its continuous creation and repeated appearances are traceable via the intertexts – but what makes this continuous and maniac re-writing narratically motivated? As a result of the mediating type of writing (bipolar writing process, re-writing, reflection, etc.), the author himself always occupies an interim position; he is being created in the process of creation.

As a brief summary, let us stress that repetition is one the most decisive features of linguistic organisation in the novel and in the writing. Maybe the repetitive structure cannot be explored with sufficient exactitude from the side of intertextuality: the cycle does not consist of the re-expression of pre-existing texts, but rather of the repeated expression of an original relationship. The text is being re-written almost maniacally, with the same phrases and word strings, the same semantic units. Perhaps the repeated mixing and re-arrangement of the latter is not repetition, but the re-written and semantically modified expression of an

⁴⁵ Rákai, *op.cit.*, 100.

⁴⁶ György Eisemann: A szereplő mint olvasó Móricz Zsigmond regényeiben (The character as reader in the novels of Zsigmond Móricz). In: *Az újraolvasott Móricz* (Móricz re-read), 60.

⁴⁷ Paul de Man: *Az önéletrajz mint arcrongálás* (The self-portrait as face destruction). Pompeji, 1997/2–3, 95.

⁴⁸ “What will obviously remain problematic is the determination of the level of development of intertextuality in the individual works, except for the borderline cases of literal quotations. Although it is clear that structural criteria may »verify« an intertext, in one group of the cases it is difficult to tell whether the intertext derives from the use of the code or represents the material of the work itself.” Jenny, *op. cit.*, 24.

earlier fixation, to prevent the finalisation of the text and preserve its roots, i.e. to retain the flexibility inherent in speaking to someone about something.

It is frequently heard in the special literature on Móricz that the writer “has never had any so-called ‘aesthetic requirements’ concerning creation.”⁴⁹ In addition to László Rónay, Péter Balassa also argues in favour of “‘aesthetics’ kept at a minimum” in formation.⁵⁰ However, the correspondences of the intertextual relationships in *Míg új a szerelem* highlight such open structure-organising layers, emerging under our eyes or being applied already, and such elocutionary instruments (i.e. instruments pertaining to linguistic formation) as leave no doubt as to Zsigmond Móricz being a literary writer.

⁴⁹ Rónay, *op. cit.*, 153.

⁵⁰ Péter Balassa: *Leonóra papírai* (Leonora’s papers), Jelenkor Vol. XLVI. , No. 12., 1143.

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