

Theses of Doctoral (Ph.D.) Dissertation

**The Poetics of Evanescence –
Death and Aesthetic Experience in the Hungarian Poetry
of the Interwar Period**

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Objectives—Methods— Subject Matter

The objectives of the dissertation can be summarized along three interconnected points of view. This paper is crucially determined by its preoccupation with poetry history, lyrical theory and intellectual-ideological investigations. The coherence and selection of the examined corpus is partially influenced by these thematic considerations. The texts which this project seeks to interpret are primarily centred around the themes, motives, and figures of death and evanescence. The present interpretive venture also reflects on the insight that addressing, staging and constructing a notion of the absent Other is a *par excellence* example of alienation which is immanent to the experience of death. Moreover, these inquiries often evoke the question of the creative potential of poetic language including various attitudes towards these qualities such as affirmation, desire or doubt.

The dissertation aims to answer the question whether the representation of the absent and the unknowable represents a novel poetic problem in the Hungarian literature of the interwar period. However, it is neither possible, nor intended to provide an interpretive overview of the full accessible poetical corpus of the chosen era. Therefore, I examine the period between and during the two World Wars, and within this era I focus on the 1920s to a lesser degree, and special treatment is given to the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s. The Second World War is regarded here as a conventional, but perhaps not undue historical caesura, even if the concurrence of literary, literary historical and historical periodizations can be considered as a means of productive arbitrariness in various ways. The reason for this is the juncture of several oeuvres and types of poetical speech; although the poetic discourse of death would offer a relevant research field in all eras. The topic does not only bear an emphatic role in the chosen period, but it has a fundamental significance as well. The figures of death in the later works of Kosztolányi (generally considered paradigmatically crucial) reach their polished form in this period. This is also the time when representations of existential anxiety and the nearness of death emerge in the oeuvres of the upcoming generation (Jenő Dsida, Miklós Radnóti, Attila József). We know that for various reasons the careers of these poets had a tragic end, and biographical events do appear in their works and their interpretations. The present dissertation also pays attention to this phenomenon of reception history. Furthermore, certain pieces by the highly prolific Sándor Weöres also qualify the thesis's chosen point of view. Although the mentioned above poets essentially feature my interpretive venture, I also intend to include other authors such as Gyula Illyés, Lőrinc Szabó, and others. The primary reason for this lies in the dissertation's interest in the history of poetry, which is all the more relevant an aspect since it addresses various discourses, poetic formations, and interpretive practices.

The dissertation is not concerned with what the ideas interwar poets had about death and evanescence, or how the selected poems represent the figures of ideas. It is rather an inquiry into how the poetic discourse creates (mediates, alters, conditions and questions, etc.) our concepts of death and the experience of reading a poem. What do we think when talking about death, and what are actually the key elements of the highly heterogeneous medium of poetry that we can witness here? The aspect of the history of lyrical poetry intersects the notion of the theory of poetry. Several questions are to be answered in this respect: what rhetorical and poetic figures of the day make up a certain constellation of experience concerning the bodily experience of death? How is the absent entity addressed, its presence constructed, its alienness mediated in various poetic forms, and in individual pieces of the discussed poetic oeuvres? How does the poem speak about death, or does it talk about it at all? These questions as points of departure can be helpful in disclosing the workings of different figures of speech and tropes, such as allegory, apostrophe, and prosopopeia.

Death is not only the end of life, but it is also a cultural construction (just like love, birth, and sexuality—in different ways, though). We do not only experience its advance on our skins, but it is also a determining reference point of life as a culturally constructed and transmitted, existentially formed and expected pattern of thought. Maurice Blanchot, mainly on the basis of Nietzsche and Heidegger, talks about death being not only a condition that we suffer, but it is also a form of existence, a way of being (re)created as human. The construction of our (own) mortality is decisively the consequence of an encounter with the Other as a mortal entity. In the dissertation I aim to interpret the poetical texts on the basis of their representations of the poetical and aesthetic structures of this experience, which becomes meaningful beyond the biological processes in the sense that death appears as the experience of the Being with the Other (and also Nonbeing with the Other). According to Martin Heidegger's well-known passages "the ending of Being-in-the-World" becomes objectively accessible through others' deaths. However, it is necessarily an experience of a different kind, and death as such remains ungraspable.

By the intellectual-ideological interest of the dissertation I mean the potential meanings of the structural elements within the above mentioned coherence, which were identified as the thematic and the aesthetic ideologems of *death*, the *creative force of language*, its *creative potential* (in a sense its interpretive preconceptions). A couple of questions emerge including the following: how are they organised and how do they transform in the course of reading and in the context of their collective meaning? It is probably this interest that mainly determines the project's cooperation with philosophical texts and various constructions of ideas. To a certain extent I do intend to allude to these factors. However, as a result of its objectives and methodology, the present dissertation does not promise or take on explicitly philosophical or cultural historical reflections, since the terrain of poetic language is not organised along the lines of philosophical terminology. The starting point of the prevailing discourse on death is the experience of the lack that we have when approaching the horizon of death; and the attitude towards it as an object of philosophical and artistic reflection—thus, not the reaching of the horizon itself. Death is something inexperiencable, beyond the limits of human, and as such it can manifest itself primarily in an artistic, sensual way.

Poetry is special among the various linguistic configurations due to its pictorial density, its rhetorical, figural and sensual (sonorous) potential, and thus it can represent paradoxical phenomena and explore territories normally blocked from rational cognition. The magic of poetic language lies in the fact that it enlivens the otherwise unspeakable. We can know but little about death, but the solace of poetry can reach us even if death itself is not powerful enough to know itself as thoroughly as poetry reveals it to us. Death had not existed in such a form before figurative language called it into existence, and has been recreating it ever since.

In the *introductory* chapter of the dissertation I primarily aim at establishing the topic and the perspectives of its approaches and contexts. The second part, entitled *Terra incognita?* focuses on the mediality and the rhetorics of death, first within the dialogue of various texts and media environments, secondly through the interpretations of Kosztolányi's poems. In this chapter I investigate the following questions: to what extent do the territories of death and evanescence appear as unknown spheres of knowledge; how does languages strive to take this land into possession (to domesticate, or sometimes colonise it), and how successful this can be? In the chapter *Between Autumn and Winter* a characteristic trope of evanescence, that of Autumn, is elaborated. The representation of death and allegoricity, and the relationship between death and representation get into focus through the interpretation of a few interconnected poems. In *Solace and Language* I examine three, somewhat converging oeuvres from differing points of view, but with consistent awareness of their interlinked nature. Works by Jenő Dsida, Miklós Radnóti, and Attila József make up the frameworks of

this chapter. Some pieces by Sándor Weöres appear in two places: first when the analysis utilizes the aspect of children's literature, the *Rongyszőnyeg (Rag Carpet)* cycle is discussed in two distinct parts (*A múlás etűdjei [Etudes of Passing]*). This method implies that in his case the goal is not to provide a detailed interpretation of the oeuvre, but that of individual pieces only. Finally, the narrative of the dissertation concludes with reflections on the enigmatic poem of *Harmadik szimfónia (Third Symphony)* by Weöres.

Research Results

In his book on the (basically) self-representing quality of modern poetry, the Hungarian theoretician Zoltán Kulcsár-Szabó calls attention to the following issue: “the »voice« of poetry is regularly compared to the voice of the dead or the absent from a cultural historical point of view, and to their accumulation in various media, from written epigraphs through echoes to hallucinations; which, again, can refer us back to the necessary duplication of presence taken for granted due to the nature of voice.” (*Metapoétika*, 52.) It can be discussed in various medial dimensions of art, whether the epigraph (understood as inscription in a general sense) originally, and then in the course of historical change (re)presents, or how it presents the voice of the absent; and how, by what operations and configurations this face-giving happens (what the structure of prosopopeia is like); and how all this is related to the receiver and reception. These ways of addressing such issues seem especially adequate and productive when textuality is an emphatic part of the construction of the medium, and reception is rendered as reading in the narrow sense of the word. This is the way the final scene of the Csokonai Theater production of *Aidia* is interpreted before the poetical investigation. The same applies to the video that was created to commemorate the death of György Kolonics, an Olympic champion in canoeing.

It is most emblematically represented in the tradition of lyrical poetry by Dezső Kosztolányi's *Halotti beszéd* that the existence of the dead is dependent on the interpretations of the living (or how it is at the mercy of the look of those who live on). Furthermore, that the dead can inevitably manifest themselves only through some kind of a mediality. This poem declares exactly the significance and the conservation of non-recurring uniqueness (the personal *was*): „Okuljatok mindannyian e példán. / Ilyen az ember. Egyedüli példány” (“Profit all of you by his example. This is what man is like, a singular sample”). The “profit”, in terms of a parable can provide the insight that the individual quality is the product of various (here primarily linguistic) mediating systems, and consequently, it is the result of others' vision and comprehension. The story of the dead, their identity, and their figures as such are constructed in others' narratives. Moreover, it is the gaze of others that creates the image that is evidently not identical with that of the actual late person.

By the investigation of the various poetic formations from different points of view, I intend to present the complex meaning production by which the medium of lyrical poetry partakes in the aesthetic and cultural mediation of the experience and the phenomena of evanescence and mourning. Dezső Kosztolányi's poems *Ének a semmiről* (*Song About Nothingness*) and *Esti Kornél éneke* (*The Song of Kornél Esti*) are texts that unfold in their constructedness as having emphatically linguistic texture. The rhyming and tropology of *Esti Kornél éneke* does establish a free, more open linguistic function, even if it does not stage the arbitrariness of the verbal automatism and the evolving meanings. This is meant primarily in the Nietzschean sense, which is first and foremost interested in the redefinition of “truth”, and conceptualizes truth not as a substance, rather as a convention, a tradition, mainly as an entity created by language use, not *preexisting* it. If we interpret this piece as a poem that demonstrates the desire and necessary failure of an aesthetic experiment to fight “pain” and death, we can point out a new link between this poem and *Ének a semmiről*. Their ambiguous mutuality, interlocking nature and the exchangeability of “all” and “nothing” also refer to the metaphoric – aesthetically oriented – reconciling of life and death, the way they can be folded into each other by the power of the word. *Ének a semmiről* tries to make the lack of existence familiar and homely by making nothing to a natural state, in which life is but a momentary alienness full of suffering. This attitude is mainly subverted and also exposed by the

emblematic fifth verse, which advises to turn to the dead. Nevertheless, it is precisely this appeal to Everafter, and the implicit personification in this invocation that marks the necessity of the need for anthropomorfization and the unavoidable nature of face-giving as a verbal act. However, if nothingness does receive a face, then it ceases to be (exist?) mostly as nothing. This paradox can be detected in the line “de nem felelnek, úgy felelnek”, where it is exactly muteness that becomes eliminated in its dependency on being interpreted, and it probably shows the most that we are incapable of understanding *the dead as dead*, or rather we do not understand them as dead people in their radical alienness, but we see ourselves as well in the existential situation of “we will be dead”. The dead, exactly because of their aforesaid state are the products of the living, and thus it is necessarily them who give a face and a voice to the non-existent and the non-speaking in a way that this gesture is interested in making its own function visible. If it has a goal, it is to civer through speaking the fact of the incomprehensibility of nothingness, while maintaining the knowledge of this incomprehensibility.

The contrasting attitudes of life and nothingness are not only called into question by the rhetorical structure of the poem and the enigmatic figure of addressing in the fifth verse, but they are even more radically questioned by the mark-like inscription that seems more original than the sonority-based tropes of *Ének a semmiről*. This poem can also be a paradigmatic text of poetic speech about death. It is able to demonstrate in an especially precise way that the medium of poetry is capable of surmising the unique complexity and the intricate artistry of a phenomenon (which is partly created by itself). This is fundamentally characterized by the attributes of muteness incomprehensibility and unknowableness.

The dissertation investigates the Hungarian poetry of the interwar period partly from the aspect of the oeuvres that are determining considering the chosen objectives, and it also discusses the corpus from sharply distinct points of view. Such perspective is the characteristic, traditional trope of evanescence, and Autumn is often rewritten in the texts of this period. If Winter is usually read as the allegory of death, then Autumn is a potential sphere of facing death, the spatio-temporal entity of agony, the gesture of turning towards death. As opposed to the static nature of death Autumn seems more of a process. Still, if we describe it as a state, it can be characterized by the paradox of permanent transitoryness. Because of the ambiguous system of conventions the allegorisation of Autumn can represent the highly controversial anthropological situation of ageing, evanescence and death in a highly complex way.

Yet another special perspective is that of *children's literature* is Sándor Weöres's cycle *Rongyszőnyeg*. How can these lyrical etudes (and sometimes in connection with this, alienness) contribute to the mediation of the experience of passing away? The childlike way of reception is connected to the primary experience of sonority, which is not far from the feeling of being “enchanted”, and this receptive attitude is presumably not lost even for the adult who in the course of years assumes various conventions and rules of reading, rooted in the cultural system of habits. In *Rongyszőnyeg* one can often meet pieces that are different from the conventional child-topics, that daringly touch upon the sad aspects of life, fleeting memory, evanescence, and the experience of alienness. I investigate some of these pieces focusing on the ways of the mediating systems of the texts that trigger sensual effects, and take part in the mediation of the above mentioned circles of ideas (and experiences). I also pay attention to the complexity of the figures of subjectivity in connection with the poetry understood as addressing and enunciation on the other.

I aspire to give a detailed overview of three oeuvres: in the cases of Jenő Dsida, Miklós Radnóti and Attila József beside their poems I also examine how the life narratives constructed on the basis of their personal fates are read together with their works. The criticism

on *Jenő Dsida* repeatedly reflects on the fact that as a result of his heart condition the poet died young, and the leitmotifs of his art are evanescence, the constant threat of death. The death awareness of Dsida manifests itself basically in two ways: the majority of the poems beam with a certain kind of delicate gaiety, these are euphemistic poems that imagine death as a jovial friend, expecting evanescence as a mysterious stepping over that precedes the meeting with the angels. However, we can also meet a shudder at life's finality, the enigmatic alienness of evanescence in other poems that represent the darkness of death (I give a detailed interpretation of *A sötétség verse* [*The Poem of Darkness*] and *A félelem szonettje* [*The Sonnet of Fear*]). Still, both directions of thought are strongly imbued with transcendental presence – the Catholic Dsida does not face nothingness, like Koszolényi, but the Secret, which is sometimes fearful, sometimes appealing (and sometimes both at the same time). Although it is not emptiness without any consciousness and it means the end of the joys of the earth, there is still some kind of a presence even beyond this world. The basic situation of Dsida's poetry is facing death, being in the “nagy sötét” (“big darkness”) before God, in the “meztelenül vacogó” (“nakedly shuddering”) state of man (*Hálóság nélkül... [Without Dressing Gown...]*).

In the case of *Miklós Radnóti* an interpretive method can be detected that does not let the special, tragic fate of the author break away from the texts. What is more, it provides the poems' meaning by using this fate as a starting point, regards them addressable from this position, whether by showing up the poems as mirrors of biographical events or as examples of verbal perfection calling out even in terrible circumstances. The unremitting funeral orations of the commemorators have not let the mourning work end, but the work itself cannot break off of it until this happens, and it cannot start its own way either. The face of Radnóti is probably constructed only partly through the readings of the poems, and these mechanisms play a more important role that construct the oeuvre with a certain (albeit noble) interest that also *uses* the life story as a mechanism inscribing it onto the corpus. Making a distinction between the biographical narrative and the last poems, and instead of their *mutual reading of each other* I talk about their *being written into each other*, marking the evolution of the symbiosis between the two kinds of textuality, which as a result of their interdependence does not retain their visibility distinctly *either*. During the mourning of Miklós Radnóti in the memory of mourning the biography is being inscribed onto the oeuvre as an epitaph and the oeuvre itself also becomes the memorial (the sepulchre) of the poetic fate; but in a way that in the meantime this monumentalisation (and figuration) remains unmarked, undetected, and appears as rather substantial than constructive.

Concerning Radnóti's attitude towards language an idea is incessantly being proposed and questioned: does language, the poetic word possess the magical power to create, to change, to purify and to enliven reality, and it is also capable of breathing life into nature (for example in the case of anthropomorphical landscapes). In 1946, after the death of the poet the volume *Tajtékos ég* (*Foaming Sky*) was published and in these pieces the *awareness* of the magicality of the poetic word is transformed into a *desire* for it, without any certainty of its coming true. *Tajtékos ég* also speaks about the creative power of language being able to call into existence another, viable world where one can live; and then the poems increasingly deny themselves this possibility. Talking about the Other and the death of the Other is heading towards the ever more direct representation of talking about one's own death. The desire for life turns into the desire for a beautiful death and the expression of mourning for life. These processes all point to a similar direction (towards the reign of reality and death); and thus their simultaneous tracking by a series of poem interpretations (*Ősz és halál, Ötödik ecloga, Koranyár, etc.*) is a reasonable method of reading.

In the chapter discussing the works of *Attila József* I insert three mosaic pieces next to each other that do not connect inherently, but rather successively, and are supposed to interpret each other. In the first part I intend to answer the question what kind of patterns can

be detected in the criticism describing the poetry and the biography of Attila József? How the ending (the death that can also be understood as suicide) becomes a decisive interpretant in the story of Attila József? (The “end” as a teleological point only matters in these narratives as a “dénouement” as a necessarily heading towards this point). The second part interprets the Kosztolányi-allusions in the poetry of Attila József with reference to the topic of the dissertation, examining two poems that explicitly appear also as mourning poems for the poet-predecessor. Beside the mourning poem entitled *Kosztolányi* the interpretation of *Thomas Mann üdvözlése* (*Greeting Thomas Mann*) is also crucial because this poem reflects on the other major objective of my dissertation, that of the demonstration of the world establishing power of literary language. (And the poem *Nem tudhatom...* [I cannot know] by Radnóti is already drawn into a dialogue by the work of Attila József, and thus this piece is briefly referred to as well). In the third part of the chapter I focus on a group of poems within the oeuvre which has received relatively little attention by the previous interpreters of the corpus, but it also proves exciting from the point of view of the dissertation: the poems to Flóra. One of them (*Én, ki emberként...* [Me, who as a man...]) I compare with two poems by Jenő Dsida composed in the very same form (Sapphoean metre). (And since these texts are emphatically connected to the tradition of love poetry, I consider it important to reflect on this tradition as well, and Lőrinc Szabó’s poem *Semmiért Egészen* [*For Nothing at all*].) The speaker of the Flóra-poems is definitely interested in being able to show up a unified self (his self), or rather construct one, and to do so primarily within the medium of language, the realm of the poetic word. The classical sense of form, also characteristic of other pieces of the group (*Hexaméterek*; [*Én, ki emberként...*] etc.), can be linked to this need as well, just like the pedestalizing of the poems’ You (identifiable with the proper name of Flóra). This in many ways evokes the tradition of courtly literature, its blessing speech act, staging the other as a muse – a seeming contrast with the eradication of the You in the Edit-poems and the speech of cursing directed towards her. In both cases it is the poem, speech itself that provides the possibility, the sphere, the medium of destruction and construction. Furthermore, the spatial and temporal establishing of the I takes place in the mutuality of the established (or being established) You in both cases, be it about the destruction of the I or its construction. If we seriously consider the interpretive strategy proposed by Zsuzsa Beney (“As if a very remote, but still existing analogy of Flóra here were a synonym of death.”), and we do not look for the motivation of the verbal material in the psychographic description of the poet’s consciousness, we have to answer the following question: how the poetic formation is built up, where does death become inscribed into Flóra’s name, and where does the desire of the I resonate with the voice of the desire to face nothingness?

The closing chapter of the dissertation aims to examine one of the best known texts by Sándor Weöres, from the 1944 volume *Meduza*, entitled *Háromrészes ének* (*Three-piece Suit*) (later renamed as *Harmadik szimfónia* in a cycle). This poem usually seriously challenges the reader with its “floating”, “ungraspable” stanzas, and the chapter tries to examine the relevant relationships of death, hallucination and disappearance, and the nature of the sign.

The constant reflection on the state of death, or the reflective way of speaking in the first part of the poem is connected to the necessarily hallucinatory nature of existence, and temporal fixity. Thus, the two basic features of the state of existence are considered attainable by the possibilities of language. The third structural unit of *Harmadik szimfónia* on the meta-level of the text allegorizes the relationship of the reader and the text (imagined and represented in a I-It relation). The central figures of the pictorial-metaphorical system still bear close kinship to the issues of evanescence, non-existence and death. However, the number of more definitely self-reflexive allusions increases. In this sense the poem demonstrates the never-ending quest for fleeting, ungraspable meaning, the ongoing, hopeless hunt for an unfixable meaningful whole, which can only be fixed arbitrarily by force as a

result of the incessant flow of signs in the world. The interdependence of the thrust to understand the world-text is repalced by another mutuality, the state of being dead together. The “text” imagined as transcendent and the interpreter freeze to death together from the icy breath of death. With the ceasing of the flow of signs, i.e. the encounter with transcendence, the final understanding of the world and the text, with its gesture to fix the subject’s meaning, the interpreting self-understanding would become immobile as well, this allegoresis would really be death. “Lehelletét / szél verte szét, / lángja kormát vas-pohárban / őrzí a sötét (“His breath in the air is dispersed by the wind, the black of his light is kept in an iron-cup by the darkness”).

Publications in the Field of the Doctoral Thesis

1. *A formán innen és túl. Széljegyzetek Dsida Jenő költészetéhez (The Hither Side of Form and Beyond. On the Margins of Jenő Dsida's Poetry)*, Új Hegyvidék, 2009–2010, Vol. 1–4., 97–106.
2. *A múltás etűdjei – Weöres Sándor Rongyszőnyege (Etudes of Passing – Rag Carpet by Sándor Weöres)*, Prae, 2010/01, 83–94.
3. *Az emlékezet keringője – A Valse triste érzékisége (The Waltz of Memory – The Sensuality of Valse triste)*, Parnasszus, Winter 2007, Vol. XIII./IV., 82–88.
4. „Az értelemre merőlegesen” (Weöres Sándor: Harmadik szimfónia) [‘At Right Angles to Sense’ (Sándor Weöres: Third Symphony)], Alföld, 2005/2, 66–82.
5. *Az évszakok retorikája – Csend, hó, halál Radnóti Miklós két költeményében (The Rhetorics of the Seasons – Silence, Snow, and Death in Two Poems by Miklós Radnóti)*, Palócföld, 2009/5, 52–58.
6. *Az ősz-líra lehetőségei a 19. század második felében (The Possibilities of Autumn-Poetry in the Second Half of the 19th Century)*, Zempléni Múzsza, 2005/3, 5–17.
7. *Ferencz Győző: Radnóti Miklós élete és költészete (Győző Ferencz: The Life and Poetry of Miklós Radnóti)*, Irodalomtörténet, 2007/1, 125–131.
8. *Fény, való, varázs – A szó hatalma a két világháború közötti lírában = Tanulmányok a XX. századi irodalom köréből (Light, Reality, and Magic – The Power of the Word in the Poetry of the Interwar Period = Studies in 20th Century Literature)*, ed. IMRE László–GÖNCZY Monika, Debrecen, Debrecen University Press, 2009 (Studia Litteraria, XLVII.), 102–111.
9. *Ismeretlen ének – Halálalakzatok Kosztolányinál és Dsidánál = Szótér – Az Alföld Stúdió antológiája (Unknown selves – The Figures of Death in Kosztolányi and Dsida = Word-Space – The Anthology of Alföld Studio)*, ed. FODOR Péter–SZIRÁK Péter, Alföld, Debrecen, 2008, 32–43. Also in: Tiszatáj, 2009/1, 66–76.
10. „Jajra csap a legszebb rímmel” – Kosztolányi Dezső és az elmúlás poétikája = „Alszik a fény” – Kosztolányi Dezső és Csáth Géza művészete (“Striking Woe With The Finest Rhyme” – Dezső Kosztolányi and the Poetics of Evanescence = “The Light Is Sleeping” – The Art of Dezső Kosztolányi and Géza Csáth), ed. BEDNANICS Gábor, Budapest, FISZ–Ráció, 2010 (Minerva Books 1.), 51–70.

11. „Másról igyekeztem írni” (Radnóti Miklós: *Tajtékos ég*) [*“I Strove to Write About Something Else”* (Miklós Radnóti: *Foaming Skies*)], *Alföld*, 2006/4, 45–61.
12. *Weöres Sándor Rongyszőnyege és a nyelv érzékisége = Változatok a gyermeklírára II.* (*Sándor Wöres’s Rag Carpet and the Sensuality of Language = Variations on Children’s Poetry II.*), ed. BÁLINT Péter–BÓDIS Zoltán, Didakt, Debrecen, 2009, 83–98.

Further Publications

Articles

1. „A másik hallgat” (Ironikus és parodisztikus eljárások Márai Sándor *A gyertyák csonkig égnek* című regényében) [“The Other Is Silent (Ironic and Parodistic Methods in Sándor Márai’s Novel *The Candles Burn Down to the Stump*)], *Alföld*, 2003/12, 76–88.
2. Személyes trópusok, szomorú névmások – Jónás Tamás lírai munkásságáról (Personal Tropes, Sorrowful Pronouns – On the Works of Tamás Jónás), *Symposion*, 2004/41–42, 53–64.
3. „A másik parton” – Ismétlés és kényszer Márai Sándor *A gyertyák csonkig égnek* című regényében (“On the Other Bank” – Repetition Compulsion in Sándor Márai’s Novel *The Candles Burn Down to the Stump*), *Tiszatáj*, 2006/5, 73–82.
4. Gondolatok a mediakonfigurációkról – K. Ludwig Pfeiffer *A mediális és az imaginárius* című könyve alapján (Thoughts on Media Configurations – On the Basis of K. Ludwig Pfeiffer’s *The Medial and the Imaginary*), *Szkholion*, 2007/2, 91–98.
5. Az örök vőlegény – Don Juan és Nietzsche = Szerelemfelfogások az irodalomban (*The Perennial Fiancé – Don Juan and Nietzsche = Notions of Love in Literature*), ed. Goretity József, Debrecen, 2006 (*Studia Litteraria XLIV.*), 111–125.
6. A kritika anatómiája (*The Anatomy of Criticism*), *Árgus*, 2008_2, 132–145.; also in: *The rebellion of the Reader? – Criticism, Debate, Internet*, ed. Bárány Tibor–Rónai András, Kalligram–JAK, 2008, 157–168.
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