

**Angelika Reichmann**

**„ALLEGORIES OF INTENT”  
MYTHS OF IDENTITY IN THE WAKE OF DOSTOEVSKY**

**Consultant: Dr. Zoltán Hajnádý, Doctor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences**

**The Topic and Aims of the Thesis**

The thesis deals with the analysis of three novels, Dostoevsky's *The Possessed*, Andrey Bely's *The Silver Dove*, and John Cowper Powys's *Wolf Solent*, from a mythopoetic aspect. This choice is motivated partly by the similarities of the action and system of motifs of the novels, partly by the connection between the authors, which is well documented in their critical writings and also in special literature. The thesis covers the analysis of the individual novels in separate chapters, in which the development of recurrent mythologemes is placed in the centre of attention. Based on this interpretation, in the concluding chapter of the thesis the intertextual relationship of the three novels is outlined in a more strictly comparative manner. The thesis aims at demonstrating how the three texts, which, though philologically definitely related, still belong to different periods in literary history, to different stylistic trends and partly even to different cultural heritages, become “allegories of intent”, that is narratives that try to define identity through mythic texts, in which the attempt to manifest a univocal meaning and the “sacred” is just as immanent as the unavoidable appearance of allegorical turns.

The (hollow?) centre of *The Possessed* is Stavrogin's enigmatic identity, which is mainly the consequence of the fact that due to his minimal speech activity he appears almost exclusively through the discourses of the narrator and the other characters of the novel. In these texts the role assigned to him is that of the mythic hero – a role which he neither wants to nor is able to fulfil. At the same time, the action of the novel is fairly rich in elements of carnivalisation, which – together with its polyphonic structure and the specific features of narration – undermine these heroic stories. Practically only Stavrogin's confession and his letter written before his suicide can form authentic narratives which can shed light on his identity, that is, in which he can come into being as a subject. On the one hand, explicitly one of the crucial elements of Stavrogin's self-definition is a mythic text, the vision of the Golden Age. On the other hand, this confession – and Stavrogin's identity – is implicitly structured by a different mythic narrative, the story of Narcissus, which, together with the elements of carnivalisation and polyphony, also undermines the unity of the apparently coherent identity consisting of the implication of the myth of the Golden Age.

In the case of *The Silver Dove* the primary factor revealing its intertextual connection with *The Possessed* is its action itself: just like Dostoevsky's novel, it deals with a political conspiracy with mythic/mystic overtones, in which Pyotr Daryalsky, the main character, who keeps searching for his identity and who is a late descendant of the Dostoevskian type (also) embodied in Stavrogin, plays a central

role, only to become a helpless victim of the plot. Daryalsky unwillingly becomes part of a most unholy profane Trinity, and thus an active participant in the attempt at re-staging the Christian mystery of Salvation, which unavoidably turns into carnival – and tragedy. In this case, the narrative technique of the novel also makes the issue of both the elements of its action and the identity of Daryalsky problematic, since the text of the narrator(s) of skaz, characterised by low narrative competence, almost unnoticeably intermingles with Daryalsky's self-reflexive meditations conveyed in free indirect speech. All this results in such a constant oscillation between mutually exclusive interpretations, which seems to discredit the very core of Symbolist poetics and aesthetics – the discourse, which propagates “life-creation” through symbols and the creation of myths, that is, the self-assertion of the subject, and in which Daryalsky, a minor Symbolist poet, clearly believes. Daryalsky desperately searches for a way out of this narrative of identity, clearly revealed as Narcissistic, even if it apparently means going beyond the limits of language. However, it is eventually still asserted as the only way to define identity in the novel.

As opposed to this, superficially *Wolf Solent* is connected to Dostoevsky's art only by some concrete allusions partly to *The Brothers Karamazov*, partly to *The Possessed*. The action of Powys's work is devoid of all political implications: one of the central issues of the novel rich in self-reflexive meditations is the very identity of the character in title. In the interpretation of *Wolf Solent*, mostly defined through contradictory intertextual references, two Dostoevskian allusions play a fairly significant role: his identification with Ivan Karamazov and his closing “vision” of the Golden Age of Saturn, which is clearly parallel to a central section of Stavrogin's confession, even sharing its relationship with the golden lights of Claude Lorraine's paintings. The very title of Powys's work can be interpreted as a reference to the central issue of the main character's identity, since in one of its possible readings the novel is nothing but an attempt – or rather a series of attempts – at defining *Wolf Solent*'s identity, the identity which also determines the narrative consciousness of the text at the same time. The metanarrative of the self-created histories of *Wolf Solent*'s identity is his mysterious “mythology”, however, the mythic readings he produces are constantly at variance with the carnivalesque elements of the action, while his continuous “self-reading” and self-reflection make the history of Narcissus the only “authentic” narrative of his identity. The voice of the consciously mythologizing character and the impersonal third person narrative voice intermingle almost inseparably, which eliminates all fixed points of reference in the text. Writing and reading are overtly elaborated themes in *Wolf Solent*'s mythic quest for his identity: he does not only embody the reader, but also the writer, as such, by his compilation of *The History of Dorset*. Though similarly to the two Russian works, constant mirroring and reflection create a most claustrophobic and at the same time infinite space in the novel, as opposed to Stavrogin and Daryalsky, *Wolf Solent* does not choose death as the only possible end to this process. Accepting the status quo, Powys attempts to offer an alternative based on using the opportunities provided by the carnival and viewing Narcissism not only as a fact of life but rather as a preliminary to the emergence of an identity.

The philological connection between the art of Dostoevsky, Bely and Powys is well documented not only in their critical writings, but also in special literature on the topic. Andrey Bely's attitude to Dostoevsky was articulated in notoriously extreme opinions, in which a major turn, surfacing in the dramatic change of his views on *The Possessed*, took place just at the time of his writing *The Silver Dove*. The place of his almost absolute rejection, which was characteristic of Bely's "revolutionary" phase and which had been preceded by unconditional adolescent idolisation, was taken by a still polemic attitude parallel to the writing of *The Silver Dove*, which, however, clearly acknowledged the greatness of the outstanding forerunner. Dostoevsky, maybe as a rebound of Bely's early idolisation, remained the writer with whom he could never make his peace, for whom he could express his unconditional respect or whose impact on his own works he could never wholeheartedly acknowledge.

Though Dostoevsky's influence on Bely is a commonplace in special literature, the relationship of the two novels is treated as a fact that goes without saying and for this reason it is usually not elaborated on apart from some terse remarks primarily on the action of the novels, that is, on the political conspiracy and murder, and on the similarities between the narrative technique of the two texts. As if it had become compulsory to follow the direction given by Bely's self-interpretation, in comparative literary studies the exclusive interpretation of *The Silver Dove* as a stylisation of Gogol's texts, mainly as a (mis?)reading of the short story "Terrible Revenge", has become dominant. However, this thesis aims at demonstrating that *The Silver Dove* concerning its action, mythopoetic structure and psychoanalytic aspects is at least as close to Dostoevsky's world as to that of Gogol, the latter dominating mostly its narrative technique and stylistic features. Dostoevsky and the text of *The Possessed*, immortalising the chaotic depths of the human psyche and the extremely solipsistic nature of the subject in mythic narratives, are the – inescapable – shadows the Bely believing in the teurgic, "life-creating" function of art is unable to run away from.

In Powys's case, though his admiration for Dostoevsky was unconditional and unbroken, one can speak of rather a continuous dialogue with Dostoevsky's art than concrete parallels. In his "Preface" written to *Wolf Solent* in 1960 Powys does not only highlight the autobiographical aspects of his novel, but within that he also tells the story of how in his childhood he got acquainted with the art of the Russian classic, whom he simply calls "the greatest of all novelists in the world" even at the end of his life. In the highly prolific writer's essayistic texts – which, however, can hardly be called literary criticism proper – Powys only details the aspects of this admiration without changing his basic opinion.

However, the comparative analysis of Dostoevsky's and Powys's concrete texts is still an unbroken field in special literature: apart from general remarks, according to which Powys resembles Dostoevsky, the studies about him do not deal with this topic. Giving a more concrete form to this very general claim, the present paper's basic proposition is that Powys leads a dialogue with Dostoevsky through elaborating the problematic nature of identity in *Wolf Solent*. The main character of the novel is practically a descendant of one(?) of the most important Dostoevskian "types", the underground man. Not only the main character of "Notes from the Underground", specified by a fundamental split in his consciousness, but also the

central heroes of his novels, such as Raskolnikov, Stavrogin (and his doubles) and Ivan Karamazov, do belong to this type. Powys's hero is characterised by several features of the underground man, dominantly by his extreme self-reflection and narcissism rooted in daydreaming and reading, by his exchange of the "real" world for an imaginary one, by his constant internal dialogues, which are, just like in the case of the underground paradoxalist, symptomatic of his split consciousness and self, and last but not least, by his undistinctive and helpless nature and his unavowable amorality, based on Nietzsche, which make him a "softened" version of the Dostoevskian type. To top it all, in Wolf Solent's personal "mythology" the myth of the Golden Age, which seems almost to haunt Dostoevsky and keeps reappearing in his art bound inseparably to the underground man, plays a central role: it is one of the emphatic closing images of *Wolf Solent* and apparently the solution for the main character's central dilemmas. Out of Dostoevsky's novels, *The Possessed* has been chosen to elaborate on the dialogue between the Russian writer and Powys on the theme of the narrative identity because it is this novel which – by its mythopoetic and psychoanalytic aspects and by the conspicuously great number of its carnivalesque elements – contains the most common features with Powys's work.

The present thesis, using the philological connections outlined above as a starting point but still diverting from the path marked out by the authors' self-interpretation and criticism of Dostoevsky, handles the two Modernist novels as different readings of Dostoevsky's *The Possessed*, especially concerning the problematic status of the subject manifested in Stavrogin's character and the issue of identity defined through mythic narratives. In all of the three novels myth and carnival appear together and fundamentally determine the narratives of identity and the possibilities of the subject's being. The thesis aims at showing how Bely's and Powys's novels develop the implications of Dostoevsky's novels on identity, myth and carnival in two different directions. The myth of Narcissus, which, next to the explicit myths of the Golden Age and the Hero, appears in *The Possessed* implicitly – and tragically – as the fundamental myth of self-reflection and thus of the emergence of the subject, becomes dominant in the narratives of identity in both Modernist works. For Bely, who considers the fate of the individual inseparable from issues of national identity, the tragedy of Narcissus's solipsism is further deepened: from the viewpoint of the individual the phenomena of reflection (mirroring) and inversion inherent in Narcissism have fatal consequences, the narrative gradually discrediting the myths of the Golden Age and the Hero takes the lead and the myth locating the core of identity in the realm of signs and language becomes the both unavoidable and unacceptable fundamental narrative of identity. Powys, gradually moving from mythic readings to the standpoint of extreme Narcissism and subjectivity, celebrates exactly this solipsism, which, however, is only bearable through the conscious elevation of the carnivalesque view into a positive philosophy of life, which also means making use of the potentials of the infinite chain of signification. Thus Powys's position is at variance with the two Russian writers' concerning the presentation of both Narcissism and the carnivalesque, since in both *The Possessed* and *The Silver Dove* the mirror-phenomena of Narcissism and carnivalesque inversion appear as factors deconstructing the sacred stories defining identity and

creating an anti-world which results in the individual's inescapable solipsism and division at the same time. While in the Russian novels carnivalesque elements can be interpreted in the context of the prominent carnivalisation of Russian Literature from the 19<sup>th</sup> century on and of the specific factors of the semiotics of Russian culture, in Powys's belletristic work the intellectualised version of the carnivalesque view of life can be traced back directly to Rabelais's art, on the one hand, and shows striking similarities with Bakhtin's theoretical approach, on the other. Simultaneously, the poetics of his novel foreshadow elements of postmodernism and deconstruction.

## **Methods of Analysis**

The reading strategy applied in the analysis is openly eclectic exactly because of the joined appearance of the elements outlined above: it is the deconstruction of a basically structuralist reading relying on the methods of traditional Myth Criticism elaborated in works by Mircea Eliade, Northrop Frye, Yezhov Meletinsky, V. V. Ivanov and Toporov. It is based partly on Eric Gould's post-structuralist Myth Critical standpoint, which relies on Lacanian psychoanalysis and its consequences concerning theories of language, partly on Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of the carnival and its potentials developed in post-structuralist criticism. The detailed outline of these methods is contained in the introductory theoretical chapter of the paper.

## **Results and Conclusions**

The following conclusions can be drawn on the basis of the interpretation of the three novels concerning the interrelationships of myth, identity and carnival:

### **Myth and Self-definition**

In *The Possessed* Stavrogin defines – writes – himself through the antithesis of the Golden Age (Paradisiac state) and the Hell coming after the Fall. As a character, he unconsciously but unavoidably interprets himself through myth, which he handles with irony and the constant maintenance of the possibility of a comic reading at the same time. He turns to myth with a need for an allegorical reading in the traditional sense of the word, but in the world of the novel it proves to be impossible. The myth of the Golden Age – and later the versions of the hero myth – embodying the ideal are parodied in the context of the carnival, though in Stavrogin's own narrative, in the mythic narratives reading him and in the chronicler's text it all happens with the deepest respect for the original myth. The deeds of the "scorners", who parody with the aim of mockery and ridicule, are condemned by the chronicler, which can be interpreted as an attempt at re-establishing the status and authority of the "sacred" profaned by them. However, the weakened interpretative power of myth, which cannot be repeated without an act of transgression, does not make it possible any more to create closed readings, which has tragic consequences in the novel.

In Bely's novel the Symbolist poet Daryalsky, embodying a basic tenet of Symbolist poetics and aesthetics, consciously mythologises both in his poetry and

life, that is, in an absolutely serious and pathetic manner he creates a mythic narrative out of already existing mythic texts, through which he can define his identity. This myth undergoes several transformations in the course of the novel, which, on the one hand, characterises his Symbolist myth creation as “radical typology”, on the other hand, indicates the problematic nature of the quest for “ultimate answers” in mythic narratives. As opposed to Stavrogin, Daryalsky is characterised not only by his conscious and intentional myth creation, but also by the lack of ironic distancing: the current version of his constantly transforming myth is always “sacred” for him in the given moment, and his pathetic self-sacrifice, which sometimes becomes even ridiculous for the outsider, clearly is an organic continuation of Shatov’s Christian-Slavophil ideas. Daryalsky seems to realise a version of Stavrogin’s story, in which he does undertake the messianistic role related to the legend of Czarevitch Ivan and sectarian traditions even in *The Possessed*, that is, he seems to rewrite the story regarded by Vyacheslav Ivanov as the central myth of the novel in a version that complies with Symbolist aesthetics. As opposed to Shatov, who is rather a stand-in (double) for Stavrogin, the figures of Daryalsky and Stavrogin show more similarities: apart from their apparent and emphatic Narcissism they both seem to be suitable for fulfilling the role of a leader in the sectarian or political circle encompassing them, respectively. This role would make/makes them the puppet of the forces behind the given movement, which would lead to the final annihilation of their identity instead of its consolidation. While Stavrogin spectacularly resists the lure of the messianistic role offered, Daryalsky, as a result of the affinity between his personal myth and the collective myth of the sectarians, consciously embraces it as the only saving grace only to try to back out of it when it is already far too late. These two tragic reports on the fate of the intelligentsia, which plays a crucial role in defining Russian national identity, suggest by the rather similar outcomes of the two possible choices that there is no right decision in the given situation.

Similarly to Daryalsky and characteristically of Modernist Literature, Wolf Solent is also a conscious creator of myth. His personal “mythology” is obviously the narrative of his identity, which is rooted in his unconscious. In his case, however, the word “mythology” means rather a metanarrative than a coherent story: it forms a paradigm in which Wolf Solent reads the events of his life, moreover, he does so allegorically in the traditional sense of the word, within the limits of the hero myth, even at the cost of the drastic misreading of the events and characters of his life story. Thus this metanarrative is also a necessary misconstruction, without which Wolf Solent’s personal integrity cannot be maintained. What the novel traces down in the death of Wolf Solent’s “mythology” and the beginning of his “posthumous life” is nothing but a paradigmatic change of the different reading strategies: the main character, who creates myth in a totally serious manner and orders the events of his life in a coherent and closed mythic narrative at all costs, must realise the unavoidable opening up of closed readings and must move towards a reading strategy, which is basically comic, carnivalesque and ironic, and which accepts continuous transformation. This is also a preliminary of mythicity. Out of Stavrogin, Daryalsky and Wolf Solent the latter is the only one who is able to live together with the metaphysical and epistemological consequences of this reading strategy.

## Narcissus: the Myth of Self-Reflection

The myth of Narcissus, which structures Dostoevsky's novel in an implicit manner, undermines the hardened antithesis of the Golden Age and Hell both in Stavrogin's own narrative and in the mythic narratives created about him by others through the hidden motivation of infinite reflection (mirroring) and Narcissism functioning behind these narratives. This impossibility of a closure, apart from being the key to the mythicity of the novel, also gains tragic overtones: it outlines a world without any fixed point of reference, which threatens with chiasmus both the characters and the chronicler, turning to myth as a sacred text.

Out of the three novels the elements of the myth of Narcissus may appear in the most classical manner in *The Silver Dove*, and thus they are mythologemes structuring this novel much more overtly than the narrative of *The Possessed*. Daryalsky is a direct descendant of Stavrogin exactly because of his Narcissism, his need for objectifying and contemplating his own identity in a text: the artist of the turn of the century turns out to be a potential continuation of the type of the underground man. The "prehistory" of *The Possessed*, Stavrogin's "roles" for Shatov and Kirillov and his Narcissistic relationship with the different female characters of the novel are clearly reflected in Daryalsky's "mugging" and in his relationships with Katya and Matryona. Nevertheless, while Stavrogin strives to break out from a world built of the clichés of general role-playing, for Daryalsky identity is conceivable only as a consciously "written" part, as a role compiled from different mythic narratives. On the level of metaphors the novel reveals an interrelationship among Narcissism, mirroring, reflection, the double, language, the unconscious and identity, which, independently of the contemporary standpoint of psychoanalysis, foreshadows its much later outlined tenets similarly to Dostoevsky's novels, but much more overtly. Identification with the symbolic Father proves to be basically impossible, but the novel leaves the reader with its newer and newer attempts – apart from death – as the only remaining alternative. In the novel the impossibility of permanent identification – the closure of the story – is rooted in the very nature of the Symbolic: its basic condition, like that of the mirror image appearing in the water of the lake and making identification possible at all, is that of permanent transition. In *The Silver Dove* the very nature of language, as such, described in terms of the myth of Narcissus, results in mythicity, in the impossibility of a closure, which gains tragic overtones, just like in *The Possessed*. Its myth reading is unambiguously "antirealist": "reality" – just like consciousness – is the product of linguistic activity.

In *Wolf Solent*, just like in Stavrogin's case, the traces of the myth of Narcissus can be tracked down primarily in the phenomena of psychological Narcissism, the metaphor of the mirror and the function of the text. Wolf Solent is, similarly to Stavrogin, an extremely Narcissistic character, though his constant self-reflection – in the mirror of his "mythology" – does not lend him the depth of self knowledge Stavrogin has for a long time. Curiously, his own transgressive desires and consequently his vices, the suffering he causes to other people form a "blind spot" in his vision: he reads himself as a hero in the metanarrative of his "mythology" so consistently that he does not even notice elements which are incompatible with it.

Finally, similarly to Stavrogin and Daryalsky, he creates the narrative of his self objectified in a text, *The History of Dorset*. The mechanisms of the writing of this text reveal a relationship between writing and reading, the conscious and the unconscious, language and identity, metaphor and metonymy, which can be interpreted in terms of the mirror stage, a central element of the paradigm of Narcissism – just like Stavrogin’s dialogue with Tikhon. As an organic development of Dostoevsky’s novels, *Wolf Solent* focuses on the central theme of the search for the Father and the function of the identification with the Symbolic Father in defining one’s identity much more explicitly than *The Possessed*. Similarly to *The Silver Dove*, the field of force of the mother’s desire counteracts this identification: the desire for and the fear of the union with the mother, accompanied by a strong fear of castration, overtly appear in both novels. As opposed to the two Russian texts, however, identification with the Father and thus transcending the Oedipal stage becomes possible here. As a continuation of Wolf Solent’s special “reading neurosis”, the subject is also defined as language here. On the one hand, Wolf reads everything as a sign, on the other hand, the reading of these “signs” clearly takes the place of reality in the narrative consciousness of the novel which can be defined only in the context of reading. Since on the level of metaphors Wolf Solent is a reader of “gaps” from the very beginning, his interpretative strategy, which undergoes a dramatic change by the end of the novel, can be explained as the unfolding of the hidden potentials of the metaphors for reading in the text. This paradigmatic change, simultaneously, is a preliminary for the emergence of a “radical typology”, a constantly transforming, creatively rewriting and rewritten myth, that is, mythicity. All in all, a central element of Wolf Solent’s “mythology”, his permanent self-reflection and solipsism embodied in his reading and its metaphors, remains an invariant at the end of the novel. Thus, by accepting an extremely Narcissistic and subjective standpoint, the novel hallmarks a digression from the paradigm of Christ-Dionysos and Christian ethics so prominent in the two Russian novels and also featuring in Wolf Solent’s “mythology”.

### Myth, Identity and Narration

In Dostoevsky’s novel Stavrogin’s readers and writers read his identity through the myth of the solar hero, related to the myth of the Golden Age, while their readings, irrespectively of all their seriousness, become ironic due to their lack of authenticity or their parodistic elements. These mythic stories are not the results of conscious myth creation, but of the general practice of trying to read Stavrogin into already written narratives of “common property”, which, however, can all be read as versions of the myth of the solar hero. The chronicler seems to mediate this reading practice, which is continued in the reading of Stavrogin into literary works and generic traditions, carried out by the chronicler himself both in the body of the text and in chapter titles.

In *The Silver Dove* the epic distancing missing from Daryalsky’s narrative unfolds on the level of the narrative voices. Though reflecting the point of view of the fictional characters the need for reading through a sacred, mythic narrative also

appears here and even becomes dominant for a while, the dialogue (polyphony) of the contrasting narrative voices and the growing significance of carnivalesque elements gradually undermine the status of this discourse, and thus they become the most important sources of the novel's mythicity. The parody of the different "sacred" texts also appears at this level. This parody is not destructive: the maintenance of borderline situations, the undermining of the status of "sacred" texts but not their final ridiculing is characteristic of the novel. Symbolist life-creation, which is also parodied, identity defined through the linguistic sign, at least a momentary correspondence of the signifier and the signified and the identification with the ideal represented by Christ are all controversial issues in the novel, but are offered as unavoidable alternative solutions "in need of a better one".

As opposed to the two Russian novels, in *Wolf Solent* the narrative voice is dominated by the main character's narrative consciousness, and thus it is pointless to talk about ironic distancing between the narrator and character. Dialogue appears here in the character's internal speech, in his imaginary dialogues with his father, and unquestionably emphasises Wolf Solent's internal conflict, the possibility of simultaneous but contradictory readings. Mythic reading is embodied in the "self-reading" of the novel's action filtered through the narrative consciousness: in Wolf Solent's interpretation his story becomes a version of the hero myth. Irony is related to temporality in the present case: Wolf Solent's necessary and constant re-readings generally result in the emergence of ironic distancing, in a move from a pathetic, serious reading towards a comic one. Here irony appears to be directly connected to the "Rabelaisian", that is, carnivalesque worldview, and for this reason can be related to the term of "reduced laughter" and the narratological aspects of carnivalisation. Consequently, the simultaneous pathetic and ironic readings and the ironic re-readings emerging with the passing of time result in the representation of a dialogic consciousness, which is also a fundamental characteristic feature of the Dostoevskian type of the underground man. While in Stavrogin's case this infinite oscillation of meanings threatens with the tragedy of chiasmus, from which only death can mean a way out, Wolf Solent after the experience of metaphoric death accepts his identity as a basically infinite, continually transformed and rewritten narrative. The novel can be read as a parody undermining the authority of T. S. Eliot's "mythic method", which leads to the conscious discrediting of the metanarrative "creating order" and, ironically, to the unconscious preservation of some of its metaphorical elements at the same time. The extreme and infinite process of reflection and the autoerotically self-centred nature of Narcissism standing behind Stavrogin's identity almost explicitly become the only "authentic" myth of self-reflection and identity, which is consistent and constant only in its transformation.

## Myth and Carnivalisation

The world of *The Possessed* is dominated by metaphors of the carnivalesque underworld as an antithesis of the myth of the Golden Age forming the narrative of Stavrogin's identity and as a continuation of the carnivalisation of Russian Literature directly related to the tradition of Pushkin's art. Thus from a mythopoetic viewpoint

the action of the novel is nothing but the story of the mythic hero's descent to Hell, in Christian terms the re-staging of the mysteries related to Easter. Continuing the traditions of Russian Culture and theology, the carnivalesque elements form a negative pole in the novel, though they appear in their classical form, they are still not characterised by the typical regenerative power of carnivalesque ambivalence. The infinite dialogue and polyphony, which Bakhtin treats as the poetic consequences of carnivalisation, also appear with negative, tragic overtones in the novel.

The world of *The Silver Dove* is characterised by a double carnivalesque turn. On the one hand, from the very beginning official culture appears in the novel as an anti-world usurping the power of authority. On the other hand, the sectarians criticising the official culture are finally revealed as an equally demonic phenomenon, which parodies the mysteries of Christianity and embodies the carnivalesque inversion of sacred texts. The intertextual relationship of *The Possessed* and *The Silver Dove* is most obvious in the appearance of carnivalesque elements, that is, in the latter novel this phenomenon can also be traced back directly to the traditions of the carnivalisation of Russian Literature. All in all, similarly to *The Possessed*, carnivalesque elements form a negative pole in the novel. On the contrary, the dialogue, polyphony and irony apparent at the level of narration imply a fundamentally playful authorial position, which indulges in making use of the potentials hidden in the tradition of carnivalesque genres. Among other things, this playful manner makes the mythic stories hardly digestible in Daryalsky's pathetic reading transmissible at all and results in the appearance of "radical typology" and mythicity at the level of narration.

Similarly to the two Russian novels, *Wolf Solent* is also rich in carnivalesque elements. In this text with abundant references to Dante, fictional space also appears as a carnivalesque underworld, as a space dominated by transgression and the demonic doubles of the father. Just like in *The Possessed* and *The Silver Dove*, doubles (shadows), who can be interpreted in the context of both carnival and Narcissism, play a prominent role in the novel as symptoms of the amorphous nature of identity. Nevertheless, the grotesque elements of carnival, such as forms of transgression, grotesque bodies, the motifs of death, disintegration and decomposition, are still dominant here. In the interrelationship of these phenomena the carnivalesque view of life becomes a positive philosophy by the end of the novel: as a counterpoint to abjection provoked by the grotesque nature and the cosmic ironies of being, it appears as life-assertive laughter. This phenomenon is naturally inseparable from the narratological aspects mentioned above, from the dominance of carnivalesque readings and parallel with this the dramatic move from closed mythic narratives towards mythicity, from the allegorical reading fulfilling Wolf Solent's desires towards a "radical typology".

In conclusion, it can be claimed that due to the specific interrelationship of the narratives of identity relying on the same myths and of the carnivalesque elements, all three novels become stories aiming at capturing identity in its totality through myth, that is, "allegories of intent".

## Publications Related to the Topic of the Thesis

- „Megszentségtelenített ’szent színek’ – Milyen szint vall Andrej Belij Ezüst galambja?” *Új Holnap különszám* Ed. Kabdebó Lóránt. TIT: Miskolc, 1997: 65-87.
- „Профанированные ’Священные цвета’ – Сер(ебрян)ый голубь Андрея Белого.” *Annales Instituti Slavici Universitatis Debreceniensis XXVI* (1997): 117-134.
- “Portraits of the Artist as a Young Man – James Joyce’s *Portrait* and Andrey Bely’s *Kotik Letaev*.” *Сучасні дослідження з іноземної філології. Збірник наукових статей*. Відп. ред. Фабіан М. П. Ужгород: Ліра, 2003: 296-304.
- “What Made Ivan Karamazov ‘Return the Ticket’? – John Cowper Powys’s Rabelaisian Reading of *The Brothers Karamazov* in *Wolf Solent*.” *Annales Instituti Slavici Universitatis Debreceniensis XXXII* (2003): 261-281.
- “The History of Dorset – Writing as Reading in John Cowper Powys’s *Wolf Solent*.” *Romanian Journal of English Studies* 1 (2004): 304-313.
- “In the Name of the Father, ‘Forget’ – John Cowper Powys’s *Wolf Solent*.” *HUSSE Papers 2003*. Ed. Bényei Tamás, Donald Morse, Szaffkó Péter et al. Debrecen: University of Debrecen, 2004: 124-130.
- “Reading *Wolf Solent* Reading.” *Eger Journal of English Studies* Vol. 4 (2004): 45-55.