

## Abstract

The present thesis discusses the interaction of religious and aesthetic experience in the lyrics at the turn of the century, in the oeuvres of Rainer Maria Rilke and Endre Ady. The first, introductory chapter aims to interpret the relationship between Christian religion and literature from a hermeneutic point of view: both rest on texts and the experience connected to both of them at this time is also based upon readings of texts. The individual religiosity of the romantic literature, can be regarded as a certain meeting point: poems also function as biblical interpretations, readings. Considering the history of lyrics, such poems often mean a shift away from a use of language which is kept under the control of the subject towards a dialogic paradigm, where the speech is no longer of a homogeneous kind.

The religious poetry at the turn of the century (by which I mean texts determining the canon of Hungarian and world literature, as opposed to the dogmatic, confessional poetry with a narrow influence) holds a dialogue with the Christian tradition: their intertextual relationship can commonly be described in terms of a provocative reinterpretation. The second chapter intends to highlight those metaphors of seeing and hearing, which are used to grasp the numinous sense as traditional media of the religious experience. In the analysed poems of Ady and in Rilke's *Das Stundenbuch*, however, these traditional metaphors prove to be insufficient – therefore, the texts seek to unify them in synaesthesia or ambiguity, for the sake of an immediate experience.

The third chapter of the thesis focuses upon the comparison of two poems by Rilke and Ady, which rewrite the story of Cain and Abel in the Genesis. This includes a (re)interpretation of the original biblical story and the process of its former literary adaptations as well. Both texts are basically defined by a paradox speech situation (the speaker claims that he does not exist), which also reflects on the mode of existence of lyrics. Chapter four addresses the function of a significant figure of the genre, the apostrophe in religious contexts. This relevant trope of addressing fits into the definition of the dialogue, which also includes the dialogue between texts (intertextuality), the dialogue between the texts and the reader, as well as the dialogue of the subject (who seeks to understand itself) with himself or with God. The complexity of this dialogue is revealed by the chosen poems by Rilke and Ady. The second part of the chapter undertakes to interpret two texts addressing Mary (Rilke's poem is part of a later

volume entitled *Das Marien-Leben*; the one by Ady was written in 1910). The person of the addressee is of a special relevance, because the apostrophe brings the religious and love poetry structurally closer to each other – they are linked on the thematic level by Mary too, who establishes a connection between courtly love (an ancestor of modern love) and divine existence. As the most significant result of the interpretation one can conclude, that the illusory presence created by the apostrophe is ideal for establishing a transcendent speech position; on the other hand, in the absence of a concrete situation it remains unclear, whether the solipsism of the lyrical I or the opposite transcendent You dominates (the latter manifests itself mainly in the problem of temporal preceding).

In the final part of the thesis I consider the influence of these parts of the two oeuvres, with special regard for the transmission of Ady's cycle-composition to the interpretation of texts, which were written in later poetic epochs and have a completely different structure. Investigating the dialogue between different oeuvres (not merely the dialogue with the Bible) can therefore be regarded as an adequate perspective to the present research.