

BAROQUE THEATRE IN HUNGARY
Education and Entertainment






*Baroque Theatre
in Hungary*

Education and Entertainment

Edited by
JÚLIA DEMETER



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On the cover: Allegorical figure: personification of Fire,
costume design, late 17th or early 18th century
(The Sopron Collection of Jesuit Stage Designs)
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Baroque Theatre in Hungary

Education and Entertainment

School theatres played a much more important role in Hungary and in Eastern Europe than in other countries, where professional theatre already existed. In the last 30 years, the research group of early Hungarian drama established with the guidance of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has published more than 7000 data connected to theatre and 228 Hungarian drama texts. In the data base, the data concerning the language of theatre performances are extremely interesting. At the beginning of the 17th century, there were already plays written in Hungarian, besides the Latin ones. In regions with a multilingual population, drama programmes (*periocha*, *argumentum*) were issued in two, three or even four languages in order to help the audience understand the plays. Often both the programmes and the drama texts were bilingual (Hungarian-Latin or German-Latin). School performances created the audience and taught it to understand and decode the special language of the stage.



Originally school dramas had a strict didactic purpose: they aimed to teach language, behaviour and speech, i.e. for the student-actors, and morals – also for the audience. Paradoxically enough, almost nothing remained of the original didactic purposes of school drama, and by the second half of the 18th century the main purpose of school performances became pure entertainment.

This process resulted in two different strata of the audience: teachers, clergy and mostly clerical patrons, students, parents, etc. gathered in the school, while the town audience was socially mixed, Hungarian (or sometimes other vernacular) speaking, and evidently gathered there for entertainment. This functional change is closely related to the seculariza-



tion of school drama, as well as to the sudden growth in the number of comedies. The influence of school theatres was quite strong even after the birth of professional companies (1790), as most actors and authors had gained their experience on school stages.

The authors of the book have been working on the theme since the 1980s. The research has been undertaken within the bounds of the Institute for Literary Studies (of the Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences). The work has long been supported by OTKA / NKFIH (Hungarian Scientific Research Fund / National Research, Development and Innovation Offices; present Project No. 83599).



MEDIEVAL ROOTS



MÁRTA ZSUZSANNA PINTÉR

Two of the Earliest Hungarian Dramas from the 16th Century: *The Three Christian Maids* and *The Story of The Three Youths*

Interest has recently been revived in the oeuvre of Hroswitha of Gandersheim. Numerous text editions have been published,¹ and series of studies² as well as volumes of studies³ have been issued on the ‘first European woman writer’, who is as highly evaluated by researchers of gender studies as by the representatives of the classic tradition of medieval literature and research.

Hroswitha of Gandersheim was the daughter of a Saxon noble family. She entered a Benedictine convent between the ages of 15 and 20, and soon became a disciple and protégé of Gerberga, niece of Otto I, abbess of the convent. She acquired classical literacy; her wide reading can be detected from the quotations and source references that we find in her works. Her oeuvre is usually divided into three major groups: legends, plays and historical songs (*carmina historica*).⁴ Her poem written about Mary and the Immaculate Conception is important evidence of the cult of the Virgin Mary in early times; her work about Gandersheim Abbey

1 http://www.arlima.net/eh/hrotsvit_von_gandersheim.html; HOMEYER 1970, 1973; ROSVITA, *Tutto il teatro*, traduzione di Carla CREMONESI, Milano, Rizzoli, 1952; *Hrotsvita de Gandersheim. Dramata*, édition et traduction par Monique GOULLET, Paris, Belles Lettres, 1999. (*Auteurs Latins du Moyen Age*). The edition used for the present paper: STRECKER 1930.

2 GOULLET 1992, 1996; LUCA 1974; WILSON 1988; FRANKFORTER 1979; NAGEL 1975

3 BROWN-McMILLIN-WILSON 2004

4 München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14485. Hrotsvit von Gandersheim, Opera, <http://www.manuscripta-mediaevalia.de/dokumente/html/obj3172542>; *Hroswithae [...] Opera*, ed. Heinrich SCHURZFLEISCH, Wittenberg, Schrödter, 1707. <http://digitale.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/vd18/content/pageview/1604701>.

and her gest about Emperor Otto I are important historical sources, but the most significant of her works today are the six plays she wrote after 962 A.D. This dramatic part of her oeuvre is of particular importance in Hungarian literary history: the translation of the play *Dulcitius* by Hroswitha is the earliest drama text in Hungarian and, at the same time, it is the first native language translation of the Latin drama text (preceding by two hundred years its German translation). In addition, it is not a simple translation but an update and an adaptation.⁵ In my paper, I set out to prove the research hypothesis that the unknown Hungarian translator has consciously chosen the text of *Dulcitius*, also that the excerpts from the other plays and their general ideas are included in the Hungarian codex which contains the translation, and finally that the codex as a whole reflects a conscious editorial concept.

In the preface, Hroswitha places her own plays clearly in the category of dramatic art, and distinguishes them from the other pieces of her oeuvre by copying them into a separate volume (*Liber Secundus*). The preface (praefatio), which was written specifically for this book, refers in its first lines to the dramatic art based on the poetic tradition connected to the name of Terence:

“Plures inveniuntur catholici, cuius nos penitus expurgare nequimus facti, quo pro cultioris facundia sermonis gentilium vanitatem librotum utilitati praeferunt sacrarum scripturarum. Sunt etiam alii, sacris inhaerentes paginis, qui licet ali gentilium spernant, terentii tamen fingmenta frequentius leczitant et, dum dulcedine sermonis delectantur, nefandarum notitia rerum maculantur. Unde ego, Clamor Validus Gandeshemensis, non recusavi illum imitari dictando, dum alii colunt legendo, quo eodem dictationis genere, quo turpia lascivarum incesta feminarum recitabantur, laudabilis sacrarum castimonia virginum iuxta mei facultatem ingenioli celebratur.”

Its introduction is interesting for several reasons: first of all, it is remarkable that in the *Liber Secundus* (as well as in the oeuvre as a whole) virgin martyrdom is a key category;⁶ the other interesting (and often cited) remark applies to Terence: she imitates Terence bringing glory to the commendable purity of the holy virgins, in the same manner in which

5 DÖMÖTÖR A. 2001, 2014; SZÉLL 2011

6 NEWMAN 2004

the scandalous lives of the immoral women were related before. As several researchers have highlighted, Hroswitha read not only Terence but also Donatus's commentary on Terence, which was still used in the 16th-18th century drama theory literature, and whose definitions (even in Hungary) were considered valid and unavoidable. Hroswitha's plays combine the early medieval tradition of mime (a very good example of which can be seen in *Adam's Play* from between 1150 and 1175) with the antique drama tradition.⁷ Hroswitha's purposes are *utilitas* and *moralitas* (*utility* and *morality*), and part of her concept is that major themes are presented by the comical depiction of each element, in accordance with the basic principle of medieval mystery plays. Two dramaturgical models work in her plays: her heroines either convert and rescue a heathen man, or suffer martyrdom and achieve glorification.

Hroswitha herself calls her plays 'dramas' at the end of the preface, but also provides a proper definition of the genre at the beginning of *Dulcitius*: "Passio Sanctarum Virginum Agapis, Chioniae".⁸ The same designation can be read at the beginning of the last play of the collection: "Passio Sanctarum Virginum, Fidei, Spei, et Karitatis".⁹ Although Hroswitha clearly classified them within the category of dramatic works, she was completely aware of the fact that her plays would never be presented on stage: she wrote them to educate, teach and entertain her female fellows with individual or collective readings (lessons). She achieved this goal because – as we can judge from the number of the remaining copies – her plays were widely copied and read before being finally staged in the 20th century.¹⁰

In the argument of *Dulcitius* she sums up the plot of the play as follows: "Quas sub nocturno silentio Dulcitius praeses clam adiit, cupiens earum amplexibus saturari, sed, mox ut intravit, mente captus ollas et sartagine, pro virginibus amplectando osculabatur, donec facies et vestes horribili nigredine inficiebantur. Deinde Sisinnio comiti ius super puniendas virgines cessit; qui etiam miris modis illusus, tandem Ag. et Chion. concremari et Hir. iussit perfodi."

7 STICCA 1978

8 STRECKER 1930, 140.

9 STRECKER 1930, 207.

10 The English translation, for example, was made for the Edith Terry company in 1921.

The finding and publishing of the Codex of St. Emmeram (or of Munich) containing the works of Hroswitha are associated with the name of the German humanist scientist, Conrad Celtis, who was bound to Hungary with multiple threads, so his role was probably decisive in the Hungarian reception of Hroswitha. Conrad Celtis (1459–1508) studied in Heidelberg and Italy. After his return home he became a professor of humanities in Leipzig, Ingolstadt and Regensburg, and from 1497 a professor of rhetoric at the University of Vienna. In addition to his pieces of poetry, he was known for his translations of ancient poets and his poetic work *Ars et verificandi carminum* (Leipzig, 1486, 1492). He was interested in classical theatre throughout his career. He held courses on Seneca in Leipzig and published two tragedies by the Roman playwright (*The Madness of Hercules* and *Thyestes*). In the University of Vienna he had his students perform the works of Terence, Plautus and Seneca, and organized a spectacular festival¹¹ in honour of Maximilian I.¹² He first encountered Hroswitha's works at the end of 1493 when he visited the monastery of St. Emmeram with a friend. He had the codex copied and, after correction, he had it printed in 1501, upgraded with a table of contents, an introduction and illustrated with carvings by Albert Dürer. He had previously founded a learned society in Vienna called *Sodelitas Litteraria Danubiana*. As academic thought had already enjoyed a history in Hungary (in the court of Matthias Corvinus, for example, the humanist company organized by archbishop János Vitéz in Esztergom and the academic society of Buda from the seventies), there was a branch ('coetus') of the initiative in Buda, the president of which became János Vitéz Jr., bishop of Veszprém. Celtis had been in Hungary earlier as well (he met the Hungarian humanists in Matthias's court in 1482, and he travelled to Krakow through Hungary in 1487), and at the end of 1497 he visited Buda at the invitation of the local members.¹³ He probably brought along a copy of the Codex, as it seems certain from the differences that the Hungarian translator did not work from the printed edition. Because of

11 University Library, ELTE, Budapest, lot 22.

12 *Ludus Dianae in modum comediae coram Maximiliano Romanorum rege Kalendis Martii et ludis Saturnalibus in arce Linsiana Danubii actus, ... per Petrum Bonomum regi. cancel., Joseph Grunpekium reg. secre., Conradum Celtis reg. poe., Ulsenium Phrisium, Vincentium Longinum ... representatus*. Nuremberge: ab Hieronymo Hoelcelio, 1501, Idibus Maiis. The modern edition: PINDTER 1945.

13 KLANICZAY 1985, 24-25; FÖGEL 1916; CSÁKY 1986

the differences, several researchers think that the translation may have been done earlier, as early as the period between 1450 and 1475, from a codex that has since been lost.¹⁴

The Hungarian translation is included in the Codex of Alexander (Sándor-kódex) which is now preserved in the University Library of Budapest.¹⁵ The date and the location of the creation of the Codex cannot be clearly established, nor can we identify the person who copied it. We only know that it dates back to the first third of the 16th century. It is written throughout by a single hand, in the style of writing called *Gothica textualis cursiva*. “The copyist [...] reveals nothing about himself/herself, the handwriting is not identical with any of our codex copyists’ handwriting”.¹⁶ The text is a fair copy. In my opinion, the translator of the Codex might have been a Franciscan monk, and the copyist a Clarissa or Dominican nun. So far, researchers have maintained that there are no content links in the wording of the Codex, that is, each text must have been copied in the book randomly.¹⁷ After joint examination of the six plays and analysis of the Codex as a whole, I have come to the conclusion that the Codex in its entirety is consciously structured and, in accordance with the subject matter of readings for female monastic orders, all the texts included in the Codex had to be associated with the issue of virginity and (female) monastic virtues.

The first text unit of the Codex (1/1-20/28) is a didactic treatise on Heaven. The longest, 4-page part of the tract (7r, 7v, 8r, 8v) is where the author discusses who can win the precious wreath in heaven: “You would ask what sort of virgins are those to whom the precious little wreath will be given. You must know that there are five types of virgins, but the wreath is given only to two types. Those of the fourth and the fifth ranks, namely those who keep their virginity for the love of God and by oath, will obtain the Crown: the number of days a young virgin spends on struggling, the number of days she will be a martyr, and even greater than a martyr because a martyr suffered pain only one day, while this one suffers it every day and every night.”¹⁸ The idea that keeping virginity is

14 WILSON 1982, 185; HAIGHT 1965

15 Library catalogue record: Cod. Hung. XVI. No. 6. 184 X 134 mm, 20 folio.

16 *Sándor-kódex* 1987, 13. <http://mek.oszk.hu/10400/10427/10427.pdf>

17 *Sándor-kódex* 1987, 16.

18 “Mondanád te minémű szűzek azok, kiknek az aranyos koszorúcska adatik. Így

martyrdom in itself comes from the drama *Gallianus* by Hroswitha, and it supports the interpretation of the author that the “imitatio Christi” cannot only be realised by bloody martyrdom, but in the monastic life as well.¹⁹

The translation of *The Three Christian Maids* (21/1-31/6) can be read in the second unit of the Codex. We may wonder why the unknown compiler chose specifically this play out of the available register of dramas. If we look at the six plays, we can see that Hroswitha focuses on the theme of chastity in two pieces: one of them is *Dulcitius*, the other is *Sapientia*. The latter is related to the genre of morality as its characters are personified virtues, *Fides*, *Spes*, *Karitas* (that is, not flesh-and-blood female characters), so the play is much more abstract than *Dulcitius* and, in addition, it depicts the three maids’ torments and martyrdom in a more naturalistic way, with more blood and is (perhaps not a negligible fact) twice as long as *Dulcitius*. However, *Dulcitius* was a right choice in every respect, mostly because it could be adapted to the contemporary Hungarian conditions, which were defined by the threat of the Turkish Empire. The Turks appeared on the southern borders of Hungary as early as the end of the 14th century, but fighting against them in the 15th century (e.g. the victory at Nándorfehérvár/Belgrade in 1456, or the successful campaigns lead by Matthias) successfully kept them away from the country. After 1490, when Matthias died, the Turkish threat became a reality again. The Kingdom of Hungary, weakened by internal struggles, was not able to exert force against the Ottoman Empire, which led to the great military defeat of 1526 (near Mohács) and caused the rupture of the country into three parts after 1541. The fact that the illustration of the printed book depicts no longer the Roman Emperor Diocletian but the Turkish Emperor, is perhaps due to Conrad Celtis’s trip to Hungary and to the influence of his local friends. The Hungarian translator has therefore chosen the drama, which was best related to the spiritual content of the Codex, and which could be used in Hungarian political conditions. It

vegyed eszedben, hogy öt féle szüzek vannak, de csak két rendű valóknak adatik: A 4. és az 5. rendbeliek nyerik el a koronát, vagyis akik isten szeretetéből és fogadással tartják meg a szüzességüket: mennyi napon az ifjú szűz az viaskodásban vagyon, mind annyi napon mártír, sőt még nagyobb mártírnál, mert az mártír csak egyszer egy napon szenvedte az kínt, Ímez pedig minden éjjel minden napon szenvedí.”
Sándor-kódex 1987, 15. 8r

19 NEWMAN 2004, 63.

is important here to say that the premiere of the 16th-century Hungarian translation was performed by the *Independent Theatre* (*Független színpad*, a semi-amateur company) on 2 December 1938. The leftist director of the play, Ferenc Hont, introduced the play as follows: “*The Three Christian Maids* is the oldest Hungarian play and the first religious and national political work of art” which drew the attention of the public to the “foreign peril”. In the contemporary context, this ‘foreign peril’ was posed by Hitler’s Germany, so the play could be updated in the 20th century as well.²⁰

The next unit (31/7-35/2), which keeps track of the drama translation, is a parable about “how the devil tempts the virgins, the widows and the married”. But the copyist leaves out the last part because “there is no need for you to write about the married, therefore I will not relate their temptation” (34, v 17). This sentence proves that the Codex must have been made for the Beguines.

The Beguines, members of the women’s religious movement started in the Netherlands in the second half of the 12th century, lived in community, as did the other religious orders, but unlike them, they did not take a lifetime oath, but pledged themselves to the common Christian doctrine and the apostolic life with promises or temporary vows. Each Beguine community was independent; they did not form a single body. In the second half of the 13th century, Beguine communities also worked in several Hungarian towns. Certain of these communities were under the supervision of the Dominican Order (the convent on Rabbits’ Island was one of them). Others, like the Beguines in Buda, belonged to the Franciscan (Clarissa) order. (In Buda, the widow of the Palatine founded a Beguine convent opposite the Franciscan monastery around 1290 and she also joined the community.) The Franciscan elements, which appear in addition to the essentially Dominican characteristics, suggest that the basic copy was borrowed from a Franciscan environment, presumably from the Clarissas in Buda.²¹

The next unit (34/19-35/2) is an exegesis: “Then Abigail quickly stood up and mounted upon her donkey. She was accompanied by five maids. This is how she followed David’s men, and became his wife” (Sam-

20 GAJDÓ 2000, 190.

21 <http://nyelvemlekek.oszk.hu/adatlap/sandorkodex> written by Tünde WEHLI and Máté János BÍBOR.



uel 1, 25:42). According to the author of the Codex, this scene is to be explained by biblical hermeneutics as it is Christ's prefiguration: David prefigures Christ, Abigail represents the person keeping her virginity, and the five maids personify modesty, temperance, chastity, moderation in speech and perseverance. The next text unit contains Latin monastic rules (35/3-36/4) followed by the exemplum of *The Vision of Tundale* (37/11-39/24). The Hungarian title is *To friars, canons, nuns and other churchmen who just pretend [to belong or to dedicate themselves] to God with their tonsured head and monastic robe, who did not abstain from unclean things, who corrupted themselves with hideous lechery, who will suffer such pangs of hell* (37 19 r).²²

Thus the Codex consists of constructed texts, in such a way that it leads the readers from the joys of Heaven to the torments of Hell.

The final part of the Codex (39/26-40/25) is the exemplum of the tell-tale and rivalling nun²³ from the Latin collection of exempla by Bernard de Bustis, a Franciscan monk. ("Hunc exemplum excepi de libro fratris Bernard de Bustis", that is, this exemplum is an excerpt from the book of brother Bernard de Bustis.)²⁴

The copyist maintains a personal relationship with the readers, (s)he repeatedly addresses them directly and these remarks are indicated in a different colour, in red ink, so they are separated from the text of the translator: "Note it now" 005v, "you know it very well" 010r, "here I am writing" 016r, "about those who are only nominally monks" 019v, "this writing I have found in a book" 020r, "I therefore write you, servant of Jesus, very nice things about Heaven" (1r).²⁵ As the copyist did not indi-

22 "Barátoknak, kanonokoknak, apácáknak és egyéb egyházi emböröknek, kik csak fejök megnyíretésével és ruha viselésükkel esmértenek istennek hazudni [istenéi lenni, istennek szentelni magukat], kik ő testüket meg nem tartóztatták tisztátalan dolgoktul, kik undok bujasággal magokat förtöztettek, ilyen kint szenvednek pokolban."

23 The same parable can be read in *Példák könyve* [Book of Exempla] and the Codex of Tihany, but according to Pusztai there is only a content link between them: *Sándor-kódex* 1987, 20.

24 *Sándor-kódex* 1987, 16-20. Works by Bernard de Bustis (1450–1513), Franciscan monk: *Mariale* (Milano, Ulderico Scinzenzeler, 1492), *Rosarium Sermonum* (Venezia, Giorgio Arrivabene, 1498), *Thesaurus spirituale della b. Vergine Maria* (Milano, Giovanni Antonio da Honate, 1488), *Defensorium Montis pietatis contra figmenta omnia aemulae falsitatis* (Milano, Ulderico Scinzenzeler, 1497).

25 "Vedd azt immár eszedben" 005v, "tudod jól" 010r, "im arrol irok szép" 016r,



cate the title, the play has become known with a title deriving from the first line, *The Three Christian Maids*. The same applies to the introduction written to *The Three Christian Maids*, which is in fact the argument, that is the summary of the plot of the play (non-existent in either the manuscript of St. Emmeram or the printed edition):

“Three Christian maids were captured by the Turks and were taken to the Emperor: one of them was named Agapes, another Cionia, the third Hyrena. Behold, I write you how they argued with the Emperor for the Christian faith and for keeping their virginity, so that when you get captured, you could do the same for the faith and virginity. It would be great if you could do the same!”²⁶

Tibor Kardos, the author of the critical edition, writes that the text must have been written for men, since the last remark of the introduction – “It would be great if you could do the same!” – is too harsh and derogatory for nuns.²⁷ In my opinion, these words refer – on the contrary – to a female copyist. Even if it is accepted that the translation was made by a Franciscan monk, it seems that a nun addresses the readers directly, a nun who is one of them, who knows their mistakes and weaknesses (her own feebleness as well), and from whom it is not an insult, but rather a sigh or an exclamation.

What else has the Hungarian translator changed in addition to the historical situation? He changed the names of the characters, as you can see in the table: instead of Diocletian’s name, we find the Turkish Emperor, which can be fully understood on the basis of the foregoing. However, it is not so clear why he changed the names of Dulcitus and Sisinnius to Fabius and Varius. Maybe this is because these shorter forms have Hungarian counterparts (Fábián and Varjús), therefore they were more com-

“azokról, akik csak névleg szerzetesek” 019v, “ez írást én találtam egy könyvbe” 020r, “azért is írok én te néköd Jezusnak szolgálója igen szép dolgokat az mennyországáról” (1r)

26 “Három körösztyén leányt ragadtak el az törökök és vitték volt a császárnak eleiben: egyiknek volt Agapes neve, másiknak Cionia, harmadiknak neve Hyrena. Íme, én nektek megírom, miképpen ők az császárral vetekedtenek [vitakoztak, harcoltak] az keresztyén hit mellett, és az ő szüzességüknek meg tartásáért, azért, hogy mikor titeket is oda ragadandnak [amikor titeket is ez a kísértés ér, amikor titeket is elfognak], tehát ti is ugyanezt tegyétek, mint ők tették az hitért és a szüzességért. Jó volna, az kitől lehetne!”

27 KARDOS 1955, 364.

prehensible for contemporary readers. The form Varius is, incidentally, a 'speaking name' as in the original text, with the only difference that it means here 'variable' since Varius is a 'two-faced' character: he wants to weaken the maids with threats or flattery or promises. On account of the textual changes, the nature of the characters changes slightly: Fabius, for example, is a more self-confident and stronger character than the original Dulcitus.²⁸

The translator or the copyist, instead of writing the names of the characters, uses past tense verb phrases such as "replied Agapes" and "said the Emperor", but the fact that (s)he highlights the characters in red proves that (s)he knew (s)he was copying a dramatic text, a dialogue (at least in the first half of the play, because later the use of red colour ceases). In place of the director's instructions we also find past tense narratives ("when they would have been taken to the Emperor"), and there are places where one of the characters articulates the author's statement, making a much stronger emotional impact. For example, the miracle that neither the maids' dresses nor their bodies were burned in the fiery furnace we learn from the Ottoman emperor's exclamation. Elsewhere, the translator or the copyist inserts stage directions into the text to emphasize the comic effect: "Sees him hugging and kissing the pots", "they cannot help laughing at what Fabius did". The translation reproduces neither the original rhymed prose nor its poetic style (alliterations, assonants, hyperbatons, etc.), but since it is not bound either by rhythm or rhyme, it is far more easy-running and informal than Hroswitha's style. Short sentences and longer monologues alternate and the statements and the contractions also improve the text.

The text of the other Hungarian martyr passion dates from half a century later, and was only discovered in 1964²⁹ from the cover board of a book.³⁰ After examination of the book holder, the cover board and other pages, it became clear that the drama text fragment preserved in print was made in the press operating in Nagyszében from 1575, and the copies which were not used were utilized in the bookbinding workshop. The text was printed in 1575-76; the date could be identified from some

28 WILSON 1982, 183.

29 Found by Zsigmond Jakó in 1964, cf. JAKÓ 1965.

30 It was found in the cover board of J. C. Scaliger (1484–1558), *Poetices libri septem... ad Sylvium filium*. Apud Ioannem Crispinum, MDLXI.

calendar pages of 1576, also leached from the cover board. Altogether 212 lines (eight pages) remained from the text: Act I, scenes 2, 3 and 4, and Act II, scene 1. On the basis of the notification of the sheets, the full length must have been about 40–48 or 48–58 sheets. The title of the play is not written in the fragment; later *The Story of The Three Youths* was adopted.

The unknown author's poetic literacy and knowledge of academic drama theory can be detected by the fact that at the beginning of one of the scenes he also indicates the drama parts according to Donatus: "Epitasis Fabulae". The play text tells the story of three Jewish youths, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the Old Testament, based on the book of Daniel (Daniel 3, 12–30).

This dramatic author (or translator?) also adapts and updates the original source. He introduces into the biblical story new characters who have Hungarian names "Jancsi [Jack], Péter [Peter], Poroszló [an archaic Hungarian word for soldier]"; Venus, the goddess of Roman mythology, and Satan also appear in the play. He puts the biblical play in a Hungarian environment: outside the castle there is a market and a court building, and the characters wear Hungarian clothing. The text is written in a peculiar, loose verse form, of which no other example can be found among 16th century works of Hungarian poetry. In the 1570s this play also had a unique historical and political topicality: after the Council of Trent, the issue of religious freedom assumed the highest importance in Transylvania: the story of the three youths who refused idolatry and therefore suffered torments in a fiery furnace (and thence were rescued by angels and "reborn") was able to give reinforcement and encouragement to the Protestants. The use of the Hungarian language was much more general in Protestant schools than in Jesuit ones (not a single Catholic school drama written in Hungarian is known from the 16th century). This fact also confirms that the text was presumably made in the Hungarian town of Kolozsvár, since that was the location of the only Protestant secondary school in the area, founded in 1568 by the Unitarians. No documents have survived concerning the functioning of the school, so we do not know who the teachers were. There was no printing press in Kolozsvár the time, hence the manuscript had to be printed in Nagyszeben.

We do not have any data about the staging of the play, but since 1534 biblical plays from the Old Testament were regularly played in Protestant

schools in Hungary, we can assume that this martyr passion was also staged. This is all the more likely since we know that a theological drama (a play about the religious polemics between Catholics and Protestants) had been performed in the Unitarian school in Kolozsvár in 1572, and there were performances in the school during the 17th and 18th centuries – all entirely in Hungarian.³¹

31 VARGA 1988, 361-373.

ANACHRONISTIC SCHOOL DRAMA
– FLOURISHING THEATRE





ISTVÁN KILIÁN

An Introduction to Hungarian School Theatre in the 17th-18th Centuries

In medieval Hungary (as throughout Europe), Church and school were closely related. The collegiate schools established by the Church educated not only future priests but also lay intellectuals. They wanted to create a “versatile” or “flexible” intelligentsia that would be able to enter any profession. Even conveying Christian teaching was difficult as the Latin language of the Bible was not widely known and, before the invention of printing, the Bible itself was hardly available. Most of the population was illiterate, which meant extreme difficulties for the lower clergy working in the Church. Therefore, the priests grasped all possible means to illustrate the stories of the Old and New Testament, to find examples for colouring and illuminating the complicated moral principles, while they also had to provide a long-lasting effect or experience for the audience. We know of several methods for illustration or demonstration: the preacher had some scenes painted on tablets, which they could show when necessary. In the early days, church frescoes served as illustrations. Hence medieval churches have wall paintings representing Christ’s Passion and life, or the miracles of a saint. Frescoes used as demonstration were quite expensive and, in addition, required talented painters. No doubt, the priest acting the biblical theme himself was much cheaper. Another way of demonstration must have proved extremely effective: the biblical scenes or moral principles could be illustrated by pupils on the stage. In the 11th century *Agenda Pontificalis* of Bishop Hartwick, we find *Tractus stellae* illustrating the Twelfth Day, and *Officium sepulchri*, illustrating



the Resurrection,¹ and both scenes were involved in the liturgy. These types of approach must have been quite frequent, as we can find their traces even in 20th century para-liturgy: Herod's plays and plays of the Magi² go back as far as the 11th century *Tractus stellae*; Resurrection plays have been currently revived for liturgy.³ The long period between the 11th and the 20th century clearly shows how important the Church considered dramas and dialogues in illustrating biblical scenes and moral principles.

The *Certamen* was one of the most important medieval school genres: it developed pupils' ability to dispute and made learning easier. *Elegy No. XXXIV* by Janus Pannonius (1434–1472) involves a contest of months (*De certamine mensium*). We have three dialogized certamens from the 16th century: *The Contest of Life and Death* (1510), *The Contest for the Soul* (the 1520s) and *The Contest of the Apostles* (1521).⁴ From the 17th century, we have several data about other certamens, e.g. contests about the seasons, Wine and Water, Fasting and Carnival, flowers, trees and crafts. The certamen, initially a pedagogical genre, simply moved away from schools and started its own development.

Prior to the 16th century, Hungarian drama belonged merely to the liturgy and the schools, while during the Renaissance, i.e. in 16th century, there was a great variety of genres, the stage became rather independent of schools and widely represented social and religious debates, as well as social conflicts.⁵ We have a 16th century Hungarian version of Hrotsvitha's *Dulcinius*,⁶ a slightly comic drama about three Christian martyr girls. Mihály Sztárai's (?–1575?) two Hungarian dramas (*Comoedia lepidissima de matrimonio sacerdotum*, 1550; *Comoedia lepidissima de sacerdotio*, 1557) are certamens promoting Protestant propaganda, while one can also discover the traditions of *altercatio* or *vituperatio*. The *Comoedia Balassi Menyhárt árultatásáról* [A Comedy About Menyhárt Balassi's Treachery; 1566–1567] of unknown author is a bitter social satire in the form of a pamphlet. *De disputatio Varadiana* (c. 1569, possibly by István Basilius) is another certa-

1 RMDE 1960

2 BARTÓK–KODÁLY 1953; KILIÁN 1989

3 Cf. Eastern Passion plays in *Éneklő egyház* 1986, 1449–1454.

4 See RMDE 1960, 425–482. (Nos. 15, 17, 18, 19, 20)

5 See RMDE 1960, 581–944. (Nos. 22, 28–35)

6 See M. Zs. Pintér's paper in the present work.

men. The disputes of these dramas are not fictitious like contests about flowers, wine, etc, but real confrontations of faith and confession. Lőrinc Szegedi (?–1594), the Calvinist pastor of Szatmár school, adapted Selneckerus's biblical story in his *Teophania* (1575). Following his schoolmates' advice, Péter Bornemisza (1535–1584) adapted Sophocles' *Electra* (1558), placing the original plot into a contemporary aristocratic court, i.e. the classical theme is transformed into a bitter criticism of Hungarian society. With *Szép magyar komédia* [A Pleasing Hungarian Comedy; 1588] by Bálint Balassi (1554–1594), the pastoral genre reached Hungary.

This development and differentiation continued through the 17th century. By this time, a growing number of Catholic school theatres made dramas increasingly popular, and, especially in order to attack Protestantism, dramas served as a means of re-Catholicization. After establishing school theatres, not only religious but increasingly secular themes appeared on stage. The growing number of secular dramas can be considered as a need of a growing audience, a natural claim for entertainment.

Research of this treasury of Hungarian dramas started at the end of the 19th century; at that time, 17th–18th century dramas were studied according to the confession or order of the school. According to that classification, there are Catholic school dramas: Jesuit, Piarist, Minorite (Franciscan Conventual), Observant Franciscan, Pauline, Benedictine, Cistercian and Premontsratsensian dramas, plays performed by Notre Dame nuns, by the Royal Catholic grammar schools, by *convictoriums*, by Catholic seminaries; plus one Greek Catholic play (Blaj/Balázsfalva, Transylvania); and Protestant (Lutheran, Calvinist, Unitarian) dramas.

In the history of theatre research, there are four separate periods in Hungary. At the end of the 19th century, the schools were ordered to collect data, and to write and publish their own history, which involved all the data of stage productions then available. The synthesis of this rich material was prepared by József Bayer, while Lajos Bernáth wrote the history of Protestant drama.⁷ The second area is that of Zsolt Alszeghy who, with his students, published several important papers and edited a collection of dramas from the Middle Ages to their day.⁸ The third era is represented by Tibor Kardos and Tekla Dömötör, who edited all the 16th–

7 BAYER 1897; BERNÁTH 1903

8 ALSZEGHY 1914

17th century Hungarian dramas known at the time, as well as a collection of comedies containing plays, also from the 18th century.⁹

The fourth period of research was initiated by the late Géza Staud, the late Imre Varga and István Kilián,¹⁰ as a consequence of their efforts, an early drama research team was formed in the Institute for Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.¹¹ The collection of sources, data and literature about Hungarian drama and theatre is complete; all data have been published in the series of *Fontes Ludorum Scenicorum*:

1. VARGA Imre, *A magyarországi protestáns iskolai színhátság forrásai és irodalma* [Sources and Bibliography of Hungarian Protestant School Theatre], 1988.

2. STAUD Géza, *A magyarországi jezsuita iskolai színhátság forrásai és irodalma I-IV*. [Sources and Bibliography of Hungarian Jesuit School Theatre], 1988-1994. (Vol. IV., ed. H. TAKÁCS Marianna)

3. KILIÁN István, PINTÉR Márta Zsuzsanna, VARGA Imre, *A magyarországi katolikus iskolai színhátság forrásai és irodalma* [Sources and Bibliography of Hungarian Catholic School Theatre], 1992.

4. KILIÁN István, *A magyarországi piarista iskolai színhátság forrásai és irodalma* [Sources and Bibliography of Hungarian Piarist School Theatre], 1994.

As such rich material is available and analysis is possible, we have published monographs on the Minorite and Piarist (István Kilián),¹² the Observant Franciscan (Márta Zsuzsanna Pintér)¹³ and the Protestant theatre (Imre Varga),¹⁴ plus one on historical drama.¹⁵

With the help of the data and most drama texts available, we can consider the statistics.¹⁶

9 RMDE 1960; DÖMÖTÖR 1954

10 STAUD-KILIÁN-VARGA 1980

11 The team continues to work today, involving Katalin Czibula, Júlia Demeter, István Kilián and Márta Zsuzsanna Pintér. The Institute is now part of the Research Centre for the Humanities. See KILIÁN 2003.

12 KILIÁN 1992, 2002

13 PINTÉR 1993

14 VARGA 1995

15 VARGA-PINTÉR 2000

16 The critical (annotated) edition of drama texts in the series of *Régi Magyar Drámai Emlékek XVIII. század* (RMDE) [*Records of Early Hungarian Dramas, 18th Century*] is in progress and we have already published ten volumes; see the list in J. Demeter's survey in the present work, p. 43-44.

The number of school performances in Hungary up to 1800

Performances in Protestant schools		Performances in Catholic schools	
Lutheran	472	Jesuit	5566
Calvinist	125	Piarist	1273
Unitarian	34	Observant Franciscan	114
		Minorite	107
		Other Catholic schools*	116
All Protestant performances	631	All Catholic performances	7176

* Regarding other Catholic schools: Catholic Seminaries: 66; Pauline: 17; Notre-Dame nuns: 11; Royal Catholic grammar schools: 7; Benedictine: 5; Cistercian: 3; Premonstratensian: 2; Urban Catholic grammar schools: 2; Royal institutes: 2; Greek Catholic grammar school (Balázsfalva, Blaj; Romania): 1.

We can analyse the past practices and values of Hungarian stage history according to mere numbers, but there still remain many questions. For example, who were the authors? Did the playwrights produce literature or were they simply forced to compile plays? Did any audience take part in these performances? If yes, from what social strata? As theatre is a complex matter, we are interested in all circumstances of the performances: scenics, scenery, costumes, props, techniques, as well as music, dance and choirs. Unfortunately, we cannot answer most of the questions we might have about these issues.

Authors

Imre Varga compiled the list of Protestant authors.¹⁷ The best known Lutheran playwrights were all teachers and/or rectors: György Bucholtz, Johannes Amos Comenius, Johannes Duchon, Daniel Klesch, Kristóf

¹⁷ VARGA 1995, 152-154.

Lackner, Illés Ladiver, János Lakos, Mihály Missovits, Johannes Rehlinus, János Rezik, Andreas Sartorius, Elias Sartorius, Johannes Schwartz, Leonhard Stöckel, Mihály Sztárai and Izsák Zabanius.¹⁸

There are two famous Unitarian authors: György Felvinczy and György Válaszúti.

We know quite a few relevant Calvinist playwrights: János Bökényi, Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, István Eszéki, József Háló Kovács, József Láczai, György Nagy, István Nagy, Ferenc Pápai Páriz, Mihály Solymosi Nagy, János Szászi, Sámuel Szathmári Paksi and Lőrinc Szegedi.¹⁹

We know only some Catholic authors by name. József Bartakovics, Ferenc Beniczky, Ferenc Csepelény, Ferenc Faludi, János Illei, Ádám Kereskényi, Ferenc Kozma, Ferenc Kunics and Mózes Lestyán were Jesuits.²⁰ Bidermann, Le Jay, Metastasio, Molière, Neumayr, Plautus and Terence were the most famous sources of Jesuit plays. Speaking of Jesuit sources, it is rather strange that we do not know any adaptation of Molière, Plautus or Terence staged in Protestant schools.

The most important Piarist authors were: Bernát Benyák, András Dugonics, Imre Hagymási, Konstantin Halápi, Keresztély Kácsor, Károly Koppi, Lukács Moesch, István Pállya, Kristóf Simai and Benedek Szlavkovszki.²¹ Due to the Piarists' rules of administration, they always registered all the pupils and teachers of a class, as well as the dramas the class staged; hence we know a lot of stage producers or compilers. It is very likely that the head teacher of a class set the play on stage as an author, translator or expurgator. Sometimes good pupils also might have taken part in writing. The Piarists often played Plautus and Terence;²² Edit Tési compiled data showing that the Piarist order had an extremely important role in making Latin comedies popular.²³

Minorite schools readily played in Hungarian. In particular, their Kanta college was important: the known authors are Demeter Bene, István Fancsali, Ferenc Jantsó, Cirják Kertsó and Ambrus Miklósi.²⁴

18 VARGA 1988, 355-385.

19 VARGA 1988, 543-550.

20 STAUD IV. *Indices*, 211-221.

21 KILIÁN 1994, 743-753.

22 KILIÁN 1994, 747; DEMETER 1998, 339-341; 2000, 327-330; 2008, 48-50.

23 TÉSI 1948

24 KILIÁN-PINTÉR-VARGA 1992, 97-15; KILIÁN 1992, 38-44.

We know quite a few Observant Franciscan playwrights: Absolon Borbély, Márton Boros, Gábor Csató, Kázmér Domokos, Krizogon Csergő, Vitus Ferenczi, Patrik Fodor, Fábián Fülöp, Gábor Jób, Gracián Kézdi, László Kuna, Bonaventura Potyó, Ágoston Szabó, Reginald Szentes and Boldizsár Tima.²⁵

We know some Pauline writers: Dániel Bors, István Péntek and Menyhért Táncz.

In other Catholic colleges, the most important authors were Antal Gubernáth and György Fejér.²⁶

Stage and scenery

We know very little about the stage itself. Protestant schools never had the money to build a permanent stage or theatre, therefore they played on temporary stages in the open air, which was rather inconvenient; thus they often asked for the town hall or some other venue. The town hall was often used, as we know from the data of Bártfa, Besztercebánya, Brassó and Körmöcbánya. Even a wedding play was performed in the town hall: in Bártfa in 1574 and Nagyszeben in 1669. Sometimes the granarium (granary) served as a theatre. Nevertheless, most often performances took place in the open air: in the school yard, the market place or the church yard. Imre Varga mentions that in 1667 the city of Kassa was quite reluctant to permit the building of a stage in the street. Fields near a town could also serve as a theatre location. The dramatic and paraliturgical plays connected to religious feasts like Christmas and Twelfth Day were performed in private houses. It could also happen that a stage was set up in the church.²⁷ György Bucholtz remembers building the stage himself and constructing the scenery, when staging his own drama. If his pupils had to play in the open air, he covered the place with some tarpaulin. On 1 May 1723 – he records in his diary – he had a terrible night. He did not sleep well, it was raining all night and the bad weather continued during the day. In the event, they gave a performance for a smaller, elegant audience. The next day they repaired the stage and had

25 KILIÁN–PINTÉR–VARGA 1992, 39-95; PINTÉR 1993, 151-164.

26 KILIÁN–PINTÉR–VARGA 1992, 151-164.

27 VARGA 1995, 155-158.

another successful performance. In Marosvásárhely, the school used a tarpaulin above the audience, while bushes were used against the heat.²⁸

Petrus Eisenberg's play, a Christmas allegory, was published in Bártfa, with two prints of the stage.²⁹ The prints prove the use of illumination. The stage itself was a raised platform with a curtain or pieces of scenery in the background. In Comenius's *Orbus pictus*, we have the picture of an open-air performance: on the left side of the stage there are some items of scenery representing a building; on the right side there are trees painted on a folding screen, while in the background there is another building with a terrace. The auditorium contained seats, as well as room for standing.³⁰ The Bártfa Archive contains the design of a permanent theatre building,³¹ which was never built.

Catholic stages were of a great variety, according to the order and also to the schools of the same order. The Jesuits had the best, most developed stages. In Nagyszombat, they had two theatres, a smaller and a larger one. In the smaller one, they played for a small audience, the larger one was used for public performances for a large number of people. They often played in the open air if the audience was even larger.³² Jesuits held regular costumed processions through the town on Good Friday, which occasion was itself a theatrical performance. On Corpus Christi Day, they set up four altars in four different spots in the town where, besides the preaching and prayers, dramatic scenes were performed and poems recited.

In Eger, prior to the construction of a permanent theatre building, performances took place in the open air. Sometimes it proved to be useful when the play required an open-air stage, like the one about István Dobó, the famous hero of Eger against the Turks. Jesuits arrived in Eger with a liberating army. They were allocated a site at the corner of the today's Csiky and Széchenyi Streets; the site was on an incline, so they built terraces on the hillside. This arrangement proved to be an excellent theatre: the old city wall (which can still be seen today) served as a backcloth and the terraces served as the stage. The audience was placed in the yard.

28 VARGA 1988, 187-188. (No. E 271)

29 RMDE 1960, illustration No. XXXII-XXXIII. EISENBERG, *Ein zweifaches poetischer Act und geistliches Spiel*, Bártfa (Bardejov), 1652.

30 RMDE 1960, illustration No. XXIV.

31 Bardejov, Okresnij Archív. No pressmark.

32 KILIÁN 1992, 53-87.

Trees, bushes, rocks on the spot could also serve as natural means of illusion. The school borrowed arms, flags and canons. This fact shows that theatre, even in its childhood, was a public matter for the city. After the grammar school had been built in 1754, a huge theatre hall was opened on the second floor. There, they arranged a stage and a large auditorium instead of classrooms.

In Sárospatak, there were performances in front of the church or in the castle, or even in the teachers' dining hall, but on great feasts also in the church and in private houses. Twice in the 1760s, the provincial had to ban the pupils setting up a May pole, as well as their Twelfth Day custom of visiting houses singing and reciting poems in costumes.

We know quite a lot about Piarist theatre. In Beszterce, before 1758, their theatre was almost the same size as the church: the church was 14 orgia (unit of measure for length), while the auditorium was 10 orgia. An inventory helped Judit Fejér³³ reconstruct the stage of Kisszeben: as in Eisenberg's book, the stage was enclosed by some textile on three sides, probably for the sake of better light and sound effects. In the corners of the stage, mirrors multiplied the light. In the front, there were two painted curtains. If they needed more space for more actors, they did not use the inner curtain, which was used to create a smaller place on the stage.

We have information about the theatre in Pest, where the size of the auditorium was decided by the mayor who wanted four windows. Obviously, one window belonged to the teacher's room, so, estimating the size of the hall, we may think of four rooms. The corridor was also added to the space, which resulted in a large theatre. The stage took the place of two windows, the rest was for the audience. A smaller part of the auditorium was enclosed for the municipal and church elite, and another closed part served for the orchestra. The common audience got terraced seats. Originally, there were standing places, too, which were later equipped with benches.

The Minorite and the Observant Franciscan theatres are almost unknown to us. Kanta is the only place where stage productions were continuous from the beginning to the end of the 18th century. The *historia domus* of Kanta did not survive, therefore we do not know anything about its stage. From Miskolc, we have data only from the third quarter of the century: performances sometimes took place in the teachers'

dining hall or in the open air. Liturgical dramas were presented in the church. Once, they played on the top of a cart carefully cleaned, in the boot-makers' shed (in the same place where the famous actress Déryné played later). The Observant Franciscans usually staged performances in the open air, sometimes in the corridor, in the dining hall of the convent, or in the church. In Esztelnek, a wooden theatre was built after 1752, later in Körmöcbánya and Csíksomlyó, too. In 1734, they played in the oratory in Csíksomlyó, and after 1740 the dramas were performed in the wooden shed built at the side of the school. The shed had to be repaired frequently. It burnt down in 1780 but was rebuilt later.³⁴

Costumes and props

The theatre of the 18th century always endeavoured to achieve a naturalist representation, i.e. every scene must have taken place within a realistic scenery, with realistic costumes and props. The possible variety of props and costumes depended on the financial means of the order and of the school. A rich school (or one with rich patrons) could perform on an expensive and luxurious stage, in wonderful costumes, while a poor school could only offer a poor spectacle on the stage.

Imre Varga has described the costumes and scenery of Protestant schools.³⁵ The stage accessory of the Lutheran school of Pozsony was extremely rich. They had special stage machinery in order to create perfect illusion. Varga published an inventory of costumes from 1663: among the 58 items listed we find dresses made of silk, linen and other materials, shoes and military uniforms, plus different props like shields, thrones, crowns and coats-of-arms.³⁶ In the play performed on the occasion of the inauguration of the school, in 1656, Poesia arrived on the back of a winged Pegasus, Occasio descended from the clouds and Pallas was taken to the sky. This clearly indicates the existence of some kind of elevator or similar machinery, perhaps also a trap door.³⁷ Although the inventory of Eperjes has not survived, the drama texts show that they were on

34 PINTÉR 1993, 44-53.

35 VARGA 1995, 155-167.

36 VARGA 1988, 252-254. (Pozsony No. E 340)

37 VARGA 1995, 161.

about the same level as Pozsony. In an Eperjes play, Religio, Innocentia and Auxilium Divinum (Religion, Innocence and Divine Aid) appeared in beautiful costumes, Insidia and Persecutio (Danger and Persecution) wore German dresses, Infamia (Infamy) wore a Polish robe, the geniuses were in a white dress and Patientia (Patience) had a black woman's robe; the allegorical figures held their attributes: a crown, a sword, a chalice, the Bible, a horn, a lute, etc.³⁸

Calvinist data are very poor and we hardly know anything about their costumes and props. The stage instructions do not provide much information.³⁹

We know very little about costumes and props of Catholic schools. Though Jesuit data and texts were published, no analysis followed. No doubt, the Jesuits had the richest patrons. There were Jesuit theatres in 44 Hungarian towns and cities. In order to gain more information, we have to read their dramas, all files concerning abolition and the inventories.⁴⁰

At the end of the 17th century, Pál Esterházy's family bought scenery and costumes in Venice for the Jesuit school theatre in Nagyszombat. He records in his diary that he used to play the biblical role of Judith: his cousin, the wife of Mihály Thurzó, helped him dressing and she also had Pál painted wearing his costume. The painting has survived: it shows that the director of the play did not intend to represent a realistic age and circumstances, as the young Esterházy wears the dress of an elegant lady of his own age.⁴¹

It is likely that the directors used several iconologies and collections of emblems.⁴² Márta Zsuzsanna Pintér mentions collections probably used at the time.⁴³

No Piarist inventory of stage accessories has survived. The first note is from Privigye in 1689, but it refers to the school theatre only in general: *res*

38 VARGA 1995, 160-163.

39 VARGA 1995, 165-166.

40 Abolition: in 1773, Pope Clement XIV dissolved the Jesuit order.

41 KILIÁN 1992, 58-63; KĀNAPP-TÜSKÉS 1993

42 PINTÉR 1993, 48.

43 Cesare RIPA, *Iconologia, ovvero Descrizione di diverse imagini di vertu...*, 1693; Jakob MASEN, *Speculum imaginum Veritatis Occultae Exhibens, Symbola, Emblemata...*, 1650. Antal Hellmayr also prepared a manual of iconology; he lists the costumes and the necessary attributes and props of more than a hundred allegorical figures, in alphabetical order.

comicae ex vilibus materiis, tela, charta, etc. picta. Una cum variis instrumentis. A similar note from 1690 is even shorter: *Res comicae*.⁴⁴ When not in use, the wings were kept under the stairs.⁴⁵ The inventory of Kisszeben gives more information: the stage had two curtains drawn by a rope, a fore-curtain with Apollo and the nine Muses painted on it, and an inner or background curtain showing Adonis with a fountain. On both sides, they set up three wings. The inventory contains a crown and flowers, as well as green and red dresses.

These data show that most school theatres had a significant stage accessory in store, enough to create a perfect illusion.

Repertoire

Schools had a characteristic repertoire. Nowadays, when a play is on for month or years, having only one (or maybe a second) occasion for a performance might seem strange. This may explain the poor niveau: still, these frail spectacles definitely attracted a wide audience. Why? The answer is the novelty of the theatre.

Imre Varga classified the themes of Protestant dramas into three large groups: biblical themes (both Old and New Testament), occasional or festive plays, and secular plays. Historical plays could represent Hungarian or universal history, ancient or fictitious themes. School themes connected to some feast or holiday could be also part of exams. There were Carnival plays, others connected to the name day of Gregory or Gál (Gallus), wedding performances, farewell plays (to the old year), etc. Certamens and morality plays are a special class.⁴⁶

Márta Zsuzsanna Pintér used a different classification for the Observant Franciscan dramas. There, religious plays contain mysteries, moral themes, allegories, dogmatic and biblical scenes, martyr dramas and plays about St. Francis. Among secular themes we find (real or fictitious) historical topics, social satires, pastorals and stories of Greek mythology.⁴⁷

The Minorites' repertoire contained religious themes: liturgical spectacles and plays, mysteries, miracle plays, martyr dramas, morality plays,

44 KILIÁN 1994, 75-76.

45 KILIÁN 1994, 410. (Kecskemét 52)

46 VARGA 1995, 40-137.

47 PINTÉR 1993, 54-60.

biblical-historical plays, psychological dramas, disputes and poetic plays. Secular themes appeared in didactic, classical, (real or fictitious) historical, (mythological) God parodies, love stories, pastorals and social themes.⁴⁸

Our knowledge of the Piarist repertoire is based on the school theatre of Privigyé: there were religious and secular topics. Religious ones included nativity plays, passion plays, Corpus Christi scenes, biblical plays, saints and martyr dramas, plays about sinful or faithful young people, and disputes. The secular topics involved (ancient, Hungarian, universal) histories, school plays, certamens, Carnival comedies, May plays and occasional plays.

Music

Music was closely connected to the dramas of the 17th-18th century. Most scenes were accompanied by songs (choirs) or an orchestra. Music historians have discovered the notes and reconstructed the music of some plays; Kornél Bárdos staged an 18th century Jesuit opera, which later was also recorded;⁴⁹ Ágnes Gupcsó presented an allegorical musical passion play from Privigyé in 1694.⁵⁰ The first historical musical play in Hungary was *Fomes discordiae* by Benedek Szlavkovszki.⁵¹ As we have seen, in Pest there was a separate place for the orchestra. From Sárospatak, an inventory of musical instruments has survived among the abolition files.⁵² The following instruments are listed in Piarist documents: *cimbalum*, *cythara*, *fagostae*, *tuba*, *tubicines*, *tympanistae*, *tympanotriba*. Drama programmes sometimes classify the soloists: *altista*, *basista*, *discantista*, *tenorista*. The programmes employed a large number of music terms: *aria*, *arietta*, *cantus cum musica*, *chorus*, *chorus musicorum*, *dallének* [song], *daljáték* [play with songs], *duetto*, *énekes játék* [Singspiel], *éneki szerzemény* [a work with songs], *kettős* and *hármás dal* [duetto, terzetto], *recitativo*, *symphonia*. Dancers were often involved: the dancers were defined as *saltatores*

48 KILIÁN 1992, 45-180.

49 BÁRDOS 1989, 87-91.; PAPP 1989, 79-86.

50 GUPCSÓ 1997

51 KILIÁN 1994, 89-90. (Privigyé No. 59.)

52 KILIÁN 1994, index: zene, tánc.

[jumpers, mimers], the genre as *saltus* [spring or jump], frequently with the adjectives: (*saltus*) *comicus, hastilis, magorum, mistasequorum, nobilium* or *theatralis*.

Summary

School theatres of the 17th-18th century are represented mostly by numbers: hundreds of plays were performed and there were many weak dramas, of course. Another part, however, was likely to be of fine quality.

The Hungarian audience learnt about Plautus, Terence and Molière from school expurgations, and they became familiar with appealing stories of Greek and Roman mythology and history. If this had been the only result of these theatres, our present age should be really grateful. The 17th-18th century theatre served the same needs as our theatre today. The author, director, designers and composers fulfilled the same artistic and professional tasks as their present-day counterparts. Their society demanded the same artistic experience as we do today. In this sense, theatre is unchanged.

Since 1988, in every third year we have organized a conference attended by Hungarian and foreign specialists of the history of theatre, drama, music, linguistics and folklore.⁵³ The early Hungarian dramas remain a dead treasury until they are performed again, thus we want researchers and theatre artists to meet. Our conference guests are always entertained with some 18th century school drama performed by amateur groups. Pázmány Péter Catholic University has a student group named Boldog Özséb company. Márta Zsuzsanna Pintér has launched a series of 18th century school dramas in modernized and abridged versions, thus producing a repertoire for modern school theatres.⁵⁴

Thus old, forgotten drama might be given back to the readers and to the audience. We have been working with the hope of saving an unknown treasury for both the present and the future.

53 1988, 1991: Noszvaj; 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003: Eger; 2006: Nagyvárád/Oradea (Romania); 2009: Kolozsvár/Cluj (Romania); 2012: Nyitra/Nitra (Slovakia). For the tenth conference, in 2015, we return to Eger.

54 The title of series is *Színjátéka*. The first anthology was edited by Gabriella Brutovszky in 2015: *Vígjátékok és didaktikus komédiák* [Comedies and Didactic Plays].

JÚLIA DEMETER

Baroque and Late Baroque: the Special Features of Hungarian School Theatre in the Second Part of the 18th Century

The initial period of Hungarian stage history is unique in Europe, since professional theatre was born quite late, in 1790, while school theatres flourished, alone, up to the end of the 18th century (in Calvinist schools, even up to the first decades of the 19th century). Apart from the almost non-existent court theatre, the dramas staged for didactic purpose in schools were the only form of theatre. Thus, school theatre in Hungary was neither the counterpart nor the alternative to professional theatre but a substitute, i.e. for centuries school theatre was *the theatre*. School performances created the audience and taught its members to understand and decode the special language of the stage. The influence of school theatres was quite strong even after the birth of professional companies, as most actors and authors had gained their experience on school stages.

Orders and churches performing school dramas

As for the number of pupils and frequency of stage productions (using the Hungarian language), the Jesuit, Piarist, the two branches of the Franciscan (i.e. Minorite and Observant) and the Calvinist schools are important in Hungary.¹ Among these schools, the Observant Franciscan and

1 Though the schools of all the three Protestant confessions in Hungary, i.e. Lutheran, Calvinist and Unitarian, performed dramas, I emphasize Calvinist dramas, as the rich theatre tradition of Lutheran schools used almost exclusively the German and Latin languages; and practically only two Unitarian colleges survived (Koložsvár and Torda), which often staged performances in Hungarian.

Calvinist plays show some quite individual features; therefore, they will be considered separately. In their dramas, one cannot find the definite and radical change around the mid 18th century that I argue can be found in Jesuit, Minorite and Piarist school dramas.

School theatre in Hungarian research

The uniqueness of Hungarian school theatre mentioned above causes quite a lot of misunderstanding and mistreatment since this exciting period of theatre history belongs to the “early modern” era in European research.² Around and after the middle of the 18th century, Baroque and late Baroque taste, views, style and genres lived in parallel with the new forms and aspects of the Enlightenment and neo-Classicism³ in Hungary, but this late Baroque world is rather alien, both for the researchers of old Hungarian literature and for the scholars of the Enlightenment. As a consequence, both kinds of scholars tend to treat it as negligible. Works on the theatre of the age of the Enlightenment start their survey with the first professional companies, while the study of “old literature” generally ends, very rightly, with the beginning of the 18th century. Due mainly to the new literary *canon* of neo-Classicism in Hungary, late Baroque popular style and genres came to be considered as low, unsophisticated and barbarian.

The difficulties have been multiplied by several political-ideological connotations:

1. (Religious material) The fact that the bulk of early Hungarian stage material is connected to schools, i.e. religious schools as there were no others, has for a long time given some non-scientific flavour to this field. The first reports of this material were published in (religious) school almanacs at the turn of the 19th and 20th centu-
- 2 We refer only to two important works on early modern literature: a foreign survey of early Hungarian theatre history: GÖMÖRI 1999; and a Hungarian one: KNAPP 2003.
- 3 Along with the language of this paper, I chose the English term of *neo-Classicism*, i.e. with reference to 17th-18th century literature inspired by antiquity. (In Hungarian, it is simply called *Classicism* as opposed to the next period similar to the *neo-Classicism* of Goethe and Schiller, or the Hungarian Kazinczy and Berzsenyi.)

ries. During and after the First World War, this field became quite unimportant. After the Second World War, research into religious school drama proved to be ideologically unwanted.

2. (Folk drama) There was one way to bring this corpus back to research and education: through the supposed folklore connections of these dramas. The archaic, i.e. pre-Classicist style of these dramas allowed them to be inserted into pseudo-folklore tradition. (In 1981, an 18th century Csíksomlyó passion play was performed in one of the leading theatres of Budapest with huge success. The adaptation imitated a folk performance given by illiterate peasants and was acceptable to the regime, folklore being considered as a precious treasury of the nation. On the other hand, folklore also referred to Transylvania and the human rights question of ethnic Hungarians there, which explained the extremely positive reception among Hungarian intellectuals.) We must emphasize that folklore as a phenomenon and national heritage has been a serious issue in Central and Eastern Europe since the late 18th century: first, by adopting the Herderean concept, later as a proof of the claim for national independence. This feature has been characteristic of the 20th century, as folk tradition has always had special ideological and political connotations, referring to national identity, either because of the Trianon Treaty (1920), or Soviet oppression.
3. The corpus of Hungarian school dramas has almost never belonged to the literary *canon*, established for the first time at the end of the 18th century. For the neo-Classicist taste, the poor quality, the low style, the irregular (i.e. anti-Classicist) forms made school dramas unacceptable, and this argument has been repeated by scholars, even in recent times. On the other hand, the literary or aesthetic level of these dramas is no lower than that of Hungarian Baroque poetry, which is considered to be a precious heritage.⁴

4 The survey entitled *The History of Hungarian Theatre 1790–1873* (KERÉNYI 1990), for example, has a chapter called *From the Beginning to 1790* (pp. 11–48), where *School Theatre in Hungary* is treated in seven pages (pp. 21–27). (We must add: in 1990, the data of the pre-professional Hungarian stage were largely missing.) There are hopeful signs: the later survey on the literature of the Hungarian Enlightenment has a chapter on the “flourishing decline” of school theatre (BÍRÓ 1994, 233–259.); Imre NAGY has published papers and monographs on late school and early professional theatre (NAGY I. 1993, 2001, 2007).

4. The corpus definitely belongs to late Baroque popular literature: in its language, style, genres and aspects, as well as in general aesthetic norms. Here “late” does not simply refer to time: it sums up all the Baroque heritage combined with *archaic* (medieval) elements and broadened with *popular* aspects, figures and genres, while also integrating some new, neo-Classical elements.⁵

Data and sources, performance statistics

The main sources of research are *Historiae Domus* and other annual reports of the schools, but relevant data can also be found in Church and general archives. Due to the special circumstances, i.e. the territorial changes after the First World War, then the secularization and taking over of Church institutes after the Second World War, exploring data and texts is a rather hard task. Some of the old manuscripts and printed materials have been lost; though fortuitously others can be found hidden among stacks of papers relating to different periods and subject matters. General statistics speak of some relevant difference between Catholic and Protestant schools and their theatre: we know of 7176 Catholic and of only 631 Protestant school performances in 17th-18th century Hungary.⁶

Basic research as well as publishing the material found is underway. Thus two representative series about Hungarian school theatre were launched in the late 1980s: one is *Fontes Ludorum Scenicorum*, which published all the stage data up to 1800,⁷ the other is the annotated edition of the 18th century Hungarian drama texts.⁸ (We are still working on the latter; the first nine volumes were arranged according to the order or denomination of the particular school, while the tenth, *School Drama Collections*, broke from this tradition by involving both Catholic and Protestant texts.)

- 5 With the introduction of the term *late Baroque*, one can get rid of the complex problem and misunderstanding connected to folklore, and one can also explain the prolongation of the early modern period in Hungarian literature, up to the end of the 18th century.
- 6 See the detailed table of István Kilián's paper in the present book, p. 29.
- 7 All data have been published, though research continues and soon a supplement will be necessary. See STAUD 1984-1994; VARGA 1988; KILIÁN-PINTÉR-VARGA 1992; KILIÁN 1994.
- 8 Present editors-in-chief: Júlia Demeter, István Kilián, Márta Zsuzsanna Pintér.

- 1–2. VARGA Imre (ed.), *Protestáns iskoladrámák I–II.* [Protestant School Dramas I–II], 1989.
3. KILIÁN István (ed.), *Minorita iskoladrámák* [Minorite School Dramas], 1989.
4. VARGA Imre (ed.), *Pálos iskoladrámák, királyi tanintézmények, katolikus papneveldek* 1990.
5. VARGA Imre, ALSZEGHY Zsoltné, CZIBULA Katalin (ed.), *Jezsuita iskoladrámák I.* [Jesuit School Dramas I], 1992.
6. VARGA Imre, ALSZEGHY Zsoltné, BERCZ Ágnes, KERESZTES Attila, KISS Katalin, KNAPP Éva (ed.), *Jezsuita iskoladrámák II.* [Jesuit School Dramas II], 1995.
7. DEMETER Júlia, KILIÁN István, KISS Katalin, PINTÉR Márta Zsuzsanna (ed.), *Piarista iskoladrámák I.* [Piarist School Dramas I], 2002.
8. CZIBULA Katalin, DEMETER Júlia, KILIÁN István, PINTÉR Márta Zsuzsanna (ed.), *Piarista iskoladrámák II.* [Piarist School Dramas II], 2007.
9. DEMETER Júlia, KILIÁN István, PINTÉR Márta Zsuzsanna (ed.), *Ferences iskoladrámák I.* [Franciscan School Dramas I], 2009.
10. CZIBULA Katalin, DEMETER Júlia, PINTÉR Márta Zsuzsanna (ed.), *Kollégiumi drámagyűjtemények* [School Drama Collections], 2015.

Table 1
18th century drama texts published

<i>Records of Early Hungarian Dramas 18th Century</i> <i>Régi Magyar Drámai Emlékek XVIII. század [RMDE]</i> (Series of Hungarian texts, annotated edition)	Number of pages	Pro- gramme, interlude	Drama text
1. <i>Protestáns iskoladrámák I–II.</i> [Protestant School Dramas, 1989]	1540	1	49
2. <i>Minorita iskoladrámák</i> [Minorite School Dramas, 1989]	958	—	20
3. <i>Pálos iskoladrámák...</i> [Dramas of Pauline Schools, 1990]	609	4	12
4. <i>Jezsuita iskoladrámák I–II.</i> [Jesuit School Dramas, 1992, 1995]	2094	32	34

<i>Records of Early Hungarian Dramas</i> <i>18th Century</i> <i>Régi Magyar Drámai Emlékek</i> <i>XVIII. század [RMDE]</i> (Series of Hungarian texts, annotated edition)	Number of pages	Programme, interlude	Drama text
5. <i>Piarista iskoladrámák I–II.</i> [Piarist School Dramas, 2002, 2207]	2238	11	38
6. <i>Ferences iskoladrámák I.</i> [Franciscan School Dramas, 2009]	940	—	15
7. <i>Kollégiumi drámagyűjtemények</i> [School Drama Collections, 2015]	1112	—	30
Hungarian programmes and texts	9491	48	228
An Anthology of Protestant Latin School Dramas <i>Ludi scaenici linguae latinae protestantium</i> , 2005 (Annotated edition of Latin texts)	733	5	13

Stage instructions of the 18th century manuscripts

In most cases, the surviving school manuscripts were copied after the performance in order to keep them as a record or, later, as a work of literature. The manuscripts with their many corrections and amendments were either used in the rehearsal period or re-used by another teacher. Unfortunately, the manuscripts contain very few stage instructions. The language of the instructions shows a change similar to the general changes of school theatre. Originally the instructions were in Latin, even within the Hungarian text, while later Hungarian was used. The Piarist András Dugonics, for example, used Latin in his early plays, but later he employed only Hungarian. Calvinist texts gave only Hungarian instructions, while all the Csíksomlyó dramas have Latin instructions.

Verse or prose

The last decades of school theatre also witnessed a change in the verse or prose form of the dramas. István Kilián, who studied the question of forms in connection with the Minorite repertoire, found that most Latin dramas were written in fine classical verse, almost all in dactylic hexameter or trimeter, though school poetics based on Aristotle and Horace generally suggested iambic lines for dramas.⁹ Most Hungarian texts, however, were either written in prose or in the best known and most popular Hungarian metre based on stress: generally called *alexandrine*.¹⁰ (This has nothing to do with the French heroic line of the same name. This Hungarian line consists of 12 syllables and a stanza of four rhyming lines). Our wider study supports Kilián's results, though due to expanding the analysis to the Protestant repertoire, our results are slightly different.

Table 2
The form of Hungarian school dramas

	Jesuit (total 35)	Piarist (total 38)	Minorite (total 19)	Observant Franciscan (total 74)	Protestant (total 82)
Verse	2	5	10	almost all	72
Prose	33	33	9	approx. 10	10

Notes:

1. All the programmes are omitted.

2. Jesuits: based on the texts in *Jesuit School Dramas*. *Intermediumnak való* [Interlude] is included (II/16), though in the case of interludes we generally suppose prose form. Two dramas may cause problems, as one is probably not a drama (verses for Corpus Christi Day: I/1.), the other is an opera, thus necessarily in verse.

3. Piarists: of the 38 full texts published in *Piarist School Dramas* all verse dramas are from the last third of the 18th century, and all are musical pastoral

9 KILIÁN 1992, 196-203.

10 Ibid., 202-203.

plays (“eclogas”), then very popular especially among the Piarists for special occasions.

4. Observant Franciscans: there is as yet no exact data.

5. Protestants: we omitted three texts of *Protestant School Dramas* (No 9: programme; No 32: Latin; No 50: the fragment is a variant of the Pauline *Joseph* by Táncz Menyhért.)

6. We did not study the volume containing the dramas of Pauline school dramas because the very small number belonging to an order or to a school could not be considered as an adequate sample.

The Piarists and the Jesuits felt the prose form to be more adequate in the second half of the 18th century. Minorites are quite similar to the Jesuits, but half of their repertoire (i.e. the devotional pieces) was written in verse. We explain the difference with the archaic and high (serious) genres of passion play, morality play and mystery.

Dramas of the Observant Franciscans and of the Protestants were almost exclusively written in verse, in most cases in the traditional Hungarian form.

Though Observant Franciscan playwrights were very well educated, they chose traditional melodies and verses for their young pupils and rather uneducated audience, as their main purpose was a mutual, emotional and devotional experience. The same form is used in the Hungarian texts of devotional, religious Minorite dramas. Bi-lingual (Latin-Hungarian) dramas and those translated from Latin into Hungarian show a strange difference: the Latin text is generally written in careful classic verse, while the Hungarian part or the translation is either in traditional Hungarian alexandrines or in prose. Jesuit translators preferred prose,¹¹ while Protestants preferred traditional Hungarian verse.¹² We find classic verses in Hungarian among Calvinist dramas; Calvinist teachers, though having a Latinist orientation, felt that teaching elegant Hungarian verse was extremely important. (These dramas are quite late, their topic is mythological and all are from Sárospatak and its virtual filiale Losonc.)¹³

11 Two Jesuit historical dramas originally in classical Latin verse by Andreas Friz are translated into prose in: *Jezsuita iskoladrámák* I., Nos. 3, 4.

12 *Protestáns iskoladrámák*, Calvinist: Nos. 31, 32; Unitarian: No. 3.

13 *Protestáns iskoladrámák* (Calvinist: Nos. 22, 24, 34, 35, 39.); *Kollégiumi drámagyűjtemények* (Calvinist: Nos. 3, 12.).

The Hungarian language is hospitable to polysyllabic metrical feet, and there were some examples already in the 16th century, but the movement for classical prosody in the vernacular was born in the 18th century.¹⁴ This process can be traced in the Calvinist curriculum, in the methods of teaching poetry. Catholic school drama did not follow this trend, probably because their drama and stage turned to everyday topics and secular genres; thus they chose the more modern prose form. Prose form was felt to suit the stage generally in Hungary: up to the early 19th century, even Shakespeare was translated in prose, and only late neo-Classicism and early Romanticism gave way to blank verse on the stage (e.g. József Katona and his *Bánk bán*).

Changes of school theatres around 1750-60

The repertoire in most of the school theatres remained practically unchanged during the 17th as well as the first half of the 18th century, but then, from the middle of the 18th century, a new process involving radical and deep changes began. In fact, this shift seems to be so sudden that the term process is somewhat inadequate. It is rather a sudden turn. It naturally evokes the question of Enlightenment, since the period 1750-60 is already marked by the influence and acceptance of European Enlightenment in Hungary. After the 1750s there is a definite change in the language, genres, subject matter, sources, purpose, function and frequency of school performances. The gradual (but similar) development of school theatres all over Europe occurred much earlier, while in Hungary that sudden and anachronistic change took place in one or two decades. School stages attracted and educated a wide audience from the neighbourhood of the school; the spectators did not belong to the school, they wanted only entertainment. School theatres had to engage with all the aims of western and southern European professional theatres, that played for different strata of society.¹⁵

14 The first two works on the question were those of the Jesuit J. MOLNÁR (1760) and the Calvinist I. LOSONTZY. See: the introduction (*Bévezető levél*) in *Hagyományörzés és hagyományteremtés*, 25-26; LOSONTZY 1769. See *Artis metricae Hungaricae regulae* in Latin and Hungarian in *Hagyományörzés és hagyományteremtés*, 27.

15 See the comparison between the functions of west European and east-central European school theatres in: ENYEDI 1972.

Language. In south-west Europe the use of both Latin and the vernacular goes back to the 16th century, since the population of the town where the school was located constituted an audience and so demanded the vernacular. As donors and patrons of the school were part of the town population, this claim had to be respected. A similar need becomes evident in Hungary in the middle of the 18th century: quite often we know about two performances of the same play, the first night in the school, in Latin; and some days later, a second performance is given, often not in the school but somewhere in the town in a larger hall or court and in Hungarian. That clearly shows two different strata of the audience: teachers, clergy and mostly clerical patrons, the students' parents, etc. gathered in the school, while the town audience was socially mixed, Hungarian (or sometimes other vernacular) speaking, and evidently gathered there for entertainment.¹⁶

Themes and genres. This functional change is closely related to the secularization of school drama, as well as to the sudden growth in the number of comedies. Statistics about the proportion of tragedies and comedies show a surprisingly great difference before and after 1750. The mainstream, in general, involves the appearance of secular instead of religious themes. The favourite genre and topic, especially in Jesuit schools, becomes historical drama, mainly tragedy. Piarist and Minorite stages follow the Jesuits, quite often adapting Jesuit historical plays. Biblical themes are much less frequent and when a Biblical story (almost exclusively from the Old Testament) is used it is treated as historical – another proof of secularization.

Sources. Both comic and tragic adaptations go back to the Latin authors on the one hand, and to the 17th-18th century neo-Classical playwrights on the other.¹⁷

The Latinist influence, the curriculum reforms,¹⁸ and the arrival of 17th-18th century European dramas brought about an extremely comprehensive Classical-neo-Classical change, including the humanistic in-

16 See PINTÉR 2005.

17 Exclusively to Plautus, Terence, Molière, Holberg and Detharding in comedies, and Metastasio in tragi-comedies or tragedies.

18 In the second third of the 18th century several curriculum reforms were taking place. For example, history teaching was initiated in Jesuit schools in 1735 and in Piarist schools in 1747; the Piarists worked on a deep and comprehensive reform in the 1740s and by 1753 the reform was completed in Hungary.

terest in the classics, as well as the tastes of European neo-Classicism. This Classical aspect still co-existed with late Baroque. The narrow neo-Classicalist “path”, however, is very important in Hungary, because it was able to change taste and aspect, it was able to strengthen the influence of the Enlightenment already present, and it was able to alter everyday attitudes. It allowed the schools to retain their school drama tradition, while making a neo-Classicalist shift.

The purpose of school performances. Originally school dramas had a strict didactic purpose: they aimed to teach language, behaviour and speech, i.e. for the student-actors, plus morals – also for the audience. The retention of school drama traditions represents a paradox since practically nothing remained of these aims and the main purpose of the performances became pure entertainment.

The author’s attitude. For centuries, the records about school performances (which belonged to the everyday routine of the teacher) did not mention the author. Then, in the middle of the 18th century, we find an increasing amount of information about the stage producer, and from the 1760s more and more dramas were printed, which shows the author wanted to preserve his work for the future.¹⁹ This is the point when the author considers his drama as a work of literature and the teacher becomes a playwright.²⁰

Attitude towards teaching morals. School drama had a pedagogic purpose, which the schools retained even in the last period of school theatre. The moral of the new comedies (the top genre) was, however, different from that of the old ones. In the final scenes of their coarse, vivid and fast-moving comedies, they taught morals, giving some eve-

19 One of the best examples is the Piarist teacher, writer and mathematician András Dugonics, who started his career in the early 1760s, adapted or wrote a dozen school dramas, in both Latin and Hungarian, and then in 1775, by then a professor of mathematics at the University of Nagyszombat, he collected and meticulously copied all his earlier literary works, adding some remarks on their reception, clearly with the desire to have them printed.

20 For about two decades (1770s and 1780s), however, being a playwright meant being the author of a *written* work, i.e. a work of literature, and thus written drama became separated from the stage. As a consequence, a drama *when staged* was not considered a work of literature. Thus, the movement to translate foreign dramas set a literary aim, while the translators did not press for performances. This view was abandoned with the appearance of the new literary *canon* and the first professional company (in 1790).

ryday advice on what to pursue in life and how to behave. The everyday nature is unprecedented, since earlier the teaching referred to biblical and religious truths. This period saw the growing fashion of lay moralities giving practical advice rather than teaching strict rules,²¹ so the teaching of these new comedies could be another proof of secularization from a different aspect.

Theatre and religious festivals. Data show a definite tendency of the school theatres to break away from religious festivals and church ceremonies; during church feasts and processions, schools no longer perform dramas, only declamations or songs. The tendency in the different schools is worth comparing.

Schools	Easter performances	Total number of theatric data
Lutheran	10	472
Unitarian	1	34
Calvinist	—	125
Piarist	4	1273
Minorite	12	107
Jesuit	115*	5566

* 17th century: 89, 18th century: 26

There is (as always) only one exception: the Csíksomlyó heritage where performances remained closely connected to Good Friday and some other ceremonies and worship.

Female figures. We must briefly mention the issue of female characters on stage. There was practically always a ban on female roles in Jesuit theatre, and this rule was followed by all Catholic schools. As we know fairly well, no one kept this rule, and in the second half of the 18th century we meet more and more women in the dramas. First, female figures appeared in the highest genres (tragedies, martyr dramas and in Metastasio's translations²²) where they were parallel to the heroes and

21 BÍRÓ 1994, 29-35.

22 For the translation of Metastasio, see: CZIBULA 2004.

anti-heroes; later, they appeared in neo-Classical professional plays, as well as in comedies. There is only one, strange, exception: the Piarist stage seems to have taken the ban on female figures seriously.

Comedies²³

We know that comedies and Carnival pieces were often the subject of severe instructions and bans; that is probably one reason why many of them did not survive. The same is true for interludes: we know about them but the few surviving texts are quite late. The comedies and especially the often improvised interludes were generally considered as unsuitable for school stages. Nevertheless, they were performed. By the 18th century, the genre of comedy had become one of the most important new developments on the Hungarian school stage. The Jesuit, Piarist and Minorite repertoire contains comedies, and what is more, there seems to be a fine network of influences and sharing of ideas. All three orders turned to comedies in the 1760s.

The Minorite ‘island’ of comedies. Only one Minorite school, the Transylvanian Kanta, produced comedies, and only in the 1770s. Hence I call this an island. They produced some extremely good adaptations of Molière’s *Bourgeois gentilhomme* and *Scapin*. The four comedies surviving are probably by the same author, but we do not know anything about his literary connections.²⁴

Plautus as a source. The most important comedy corpus is that of the Piarists, whose main source is definitely Plautus.

23 Cf. DEMETER 1998.

24 *Minorita iskoladrámák* (Nos. 12, 13, 14, 15.) There might be some Jesuit contact, though we do not know the direction: one of the adaptations (No. 15) is quite close to the Jesuit playwright Janos Illei’s famous adaptation, but according to Istvan Kilian, the Minorite Ferenc Jancso was the source.

Table 3
Terence and Plautus adaptations in Catholic schools

		Terence adaptation	Plautus adaptation
Jesuits	17 th c.	1 – Latin (1693)	—
	1700-1750	7 – Latin	2 – Latin
	after 1750	3 – Latin	—
Piarists	17 th c.	—	—
	1700-1750	—	1 – Latin (Pest, 1737)
	after 1750	7 – Latin 1 – Hungarian	39 – Latin 9 – Hungarian
Minorites	17 th c.	—	—
	1700-1750	—	—
	after 1750	—	1 – Latin

Table 4
Terence and Plautus adaptations in Piarist schools, 1750–1780

	Terence adaptation		Plautus adaptation	
	Latin	Hungarian	Latin	Hungarian
1750	1			
1751				
1752			1	
1753				
1754			1	
1755			2	
1756			1	
1757			1	
1758				
1758				
1760				
1761				
1762				
1763			3	
1764			2	

	Terence adaptation		Plautus adaptation	
	Latin	Hungarian	Latin	Hungarian
1765			1	
1766	1		5	2
1767			2	1
1768			4	1
1769	1		3	2
1770			4	
1771	1		2	1
1772			1	
1773	1		2	
1774				
1775	1			
1776		1		2
1777			2	
1778			1	
1779				
1780				
All	6	1	38	8

N.B.: No datum: 1 Terence, 1 Plautus performance. After 1780: 1 Plautus (1792)

Hungarian schools discovered Plautus and Terence much later than the Western countries, and, even in the 18th century, mostly Piarist theatres performed comedies based on Latin authors. The Piarists staged Plautus for the first time in 1737, in Pest: this is the only performance known before 1750. Then, between 1750 and 1778, we know about 56 plays based on Plautus or Terence, from 12 different schools, and about one sixth of these dramas are in Hungarian. Table 4 shows the changes from about 1750 up to about 1780, but the peak is definitely the late 1760s. It is practically impossible to identify the sources, as their vivid, buffo-like comedies show the parallel influence of Plautus, Molière and 17th-18th century European comedies following Molière (Holberg, Detharding, etc.).²⁵ The simultaneous influence of both the Classicist (Latinist) and neo-Classicist (Molière and his followers) traditions may

25 We find several comedies using *Mostellaria* and *Scapin* at the same time.

be explained by the fact that leading Piarist teachers and theorists spent some years in Rome in the middle of the 18th century working on the new curriculum, and thus they were influenced simultaneously by Classicism and neo-Classicism.²⁶ The Jesuit comic repertoire, on the other hand, left out the Classicist-Latinist phase, and their comedies were modernized. They followed directly the 17th-18th century comedies and immediately used neo-Classical repertoire. Finally, both, Piarist and Jesuit comedies (possibly used by Piarist authors after 1773) were ready not only for school but professional performances: the Piarist Kristóf Simai's Plautinian Molière adaptations became a most successful part of professional repertoire in the 1790s.

The end of school theatres

Members, authors, actors, activists and patrons of professional theatre had only school theatre experience, thus elements and aspects of the school stage can be traced even in the first decade of the 19th century. Nevertheless, the first professional companies founded in 1790 (Pest), then in 1792 (Kolozsvár) introduced a new period in Hungarian stage history: the next decades saw more and more companies but also their fierce struggle for survival, which ended in 1837 when the National Theatre²⁷ opened in Pest.

26 There are 11 important Piarist examples (complete manuscripts) in *Piarista iskoladrámák*, vol. I: Nos. 4, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18; vol. II: Nos. 23, 24, 32, 43, 44.

27 Between 1837 and 1841, it was called the *Hungarian Theatre*.



ISTVÁN KILIÁN

The Repertoire of Piarist Theatre (With a Representative Jesuit Sample)¹

The Piarist order arrived in Hungary in 1642 when the first Piarist school was also founded by the Polish Piarist province in the northern town of Podolin. Before opening their schools, the Piarist order was involved with evangelization, then initially a temporary school was built. By 1776 they had established 24 schools in Hungary: (in their order of foundation) in Podolin, Privigye, Breznóbánya, Pozsonyszentgyörgy, Nyitra, Veszprém, Vác, Debrecen, Kecskemét, Pest, Beszterce, Szeged, Korpona, Nagykároly, Rózsahegy, Máramarossziget, Tokaj, Kisszeben, Medgyes, Nagykanizsa, Tata, Kalocsa, Kolozsvár and Selmecbánya. (The last three schools were taken over from the Jesuit order after its abolition in 1773.) Though the founder of the order, St. Joseph Calasanz, was definitely against theatre, the Piarist schools soon started staging dramas. By the mid 18th century, their theatre was the most important one beside the Jesuit school stage. Their results in education were also similar to those of the Jesuits, though, unlike the Jesuit schools, they worked in poorer towns with fewer patrons. In northern Hungary, where many Slovaks and Germans lived, the difference between the rich Lutheran school theatres and the poorer Piarist theatres was evident. In the second half of the 18th century, the Piarists got rather close to the future professional theatre and many Piarist teachers and ex-pupils joined the first professional theatre company after 1790.

Due to the research work already undertaken, we are able to appreciate the place and relevance of Piarist school drama.

1 An English abstract of KILIÁN 2002.



1. A brief overview of five important Jesuit school theatres

In order to understand the achievement of Piarist school theatre, I made a comparison with the stage and drama themes of Jesuit schools. For detailed analysis, I chose five Jesuit grammar schools: Nagyszombat, Pozsony, Sárospatak, Eger and Székesfehérvár. All were important schools, and we know quite a lot about their repertoire. As their geographical, thus social and historical backgrounds were rather different, a study of their theatre would lead us to a deeper understanding.

Of the five grammar schools, the stage history of Nagyszombat is outstanding – due mostly to the special situation of the town, since after the Turks had captured Esztergom, i.e. the seat of the archbishop, the high clergy of the Hungarian Kingdom fled there, and the town served as the seat of the archbishop. Hence most nobles of the region sent their children to the Jesuit school of Nagyszombat and quite a few patrons helped to build and furnish the modern stage of the Jesuit school. We have the data of 449 stage performances. The school had two theatre halls: the smaller stage served for less interesting performances, such as declamations, which attracted a smaller audience. The larger stage, attracting many people, was extremely well equipped, due to the rich patrons who had costumes and props brought from abroad (e.g. from Venice).

The Jesuit grammar school of Pozsony produced 328 performances between 1622 and 1773. Their stage machinery was much poorer than in Nagyszombat. In Pozsony, the Jesuits played on a temporary stage in the church confiscated earlier from the Protestants; therefore, in the church they had to clear away the scenery, costumes and props after every performance.

The stage conditions of Eger improved only after 1754. Earlier, they had to build a temporary stage for every performance and then to clear it away. On the other hand, open-air space was sometimes much more convenient for certain performances. The huge site of the Jesuit school was (and still is) bordered by the city wall on the west, on the sloping part towards the brook also called Eger; here, the Jesuits formed parallel avenues. From the sloping side, an excellent view was given of the hill. The audience remained at the foot of the hill, while the hill itself served as an open-air stage with the city wall and two bastions in the background. In 1699 Bishop Telekesi ordered the Jesuits to perform a drama about István Dobó, captain of the castle of Eger in the 1552 battle that ended with the

famous victory over the Turks. Due to the setting of the theatre, the illusion of the battle was extremely realistic. The new building of the school was constructed in 1754. Later four classrooms were established on each of the two floors. One classroom on the second floor was kept for smaller school performances, while the other three together provided the space for a huge theatre with elevated seats.²

The most famous Calvinist colleges of Hungary were in Debrecen and Sárospatak. As opposed to the Debrecen college, which strictly kept to Calvin's ban on theatre, Sárospatak had a rich theatre history. The town of Sárospatak was not a good choice for the Jesuit school founded in 1663: the majority of the population, being Calvinist, was not ready either to help or send their children to the Jesuit school. We know of only 93 Jesuit performances in Sárospatak.

In Székesfehérvár, the circumstances were much better in 1688 when the Jesuit school was established, though, unlike in Eger, they could not build a theatre hall there. They performed 68 times.

The audience of the Jesuit schools was most sensitive and our records speak of deep emotions, great enjoyment and generally great success. Understanding of these performances was also an important issue. The population of Nagyszombat was mainly Slovak speaking when the seat of the archbishop was established there. The language of the theatre was mainly Latin, but sometimes performances were in the vernacular. For those not understanding Latin, programmes were published in German and perhaps Hungarian. The population of Pozsony spoke three languages (Hungarian, German and Slovak), some of them being Lutheran. Hence they often published programmes in four languages: Latin, Hungarian, German and Slovak. The population of Eger was mainly but not entirely Hungarian. After the withdrawal of the Turks many of the Moslems who remained in the town had to face enforced Christianization. The language of the theatre was Latin and we do not know of any Hungarian programme; nevertheless, the theatre attracted many people. The population of Sárospatak and Székesfehérvár was probably Hungarian. A small percentage of the population of Székesfehérvár belonged to the Eastern Orthodox Church, but they took part in the spectacles of the Catholic schools.

2 See my other paper in the present book, p. 33.

2. Piarist school theatres

2.1. Building and technical issues

We know very little about the technical conditions of their theatre. Our poor knowledge of Piarist stage techniques can be explained by the nature of our sources. At the end of every year the Piarist teachers put down the title of the dramas performed, after listing all the students who had matriculated. Most often they put down the title only, leaving out all data about any success, the audience or the stage.

Stage machinery and lighting techniques can be traced from the inventory of the Piarist theatre of Kisszeben.³ They had a curtain between the auditorium and the stage. Another curtain was used for changing the size of the stage. When the whole stage was open there was a painted curtain at the back. Lighting was a great problem. Huge mirrors were set in the back corners, multiplying the light of the candles placed in front. On both sides of the stage standing prisms served as scenery. On each surface, some scenery had been built or painted and thus when the prisms were turned the surface provided the appropriate scene. Sound techniques were a problem, too. Speaking tubes would have proved to be highly inconvenient so, in order to direct sound towards the auditorium, they covered three sides of the stage with a dark textile. This method could not solve the problems which occurred during open-air performances. Due to their undeveloped speech techniques, student actors presumably could not be heard or understood in most parts of the theatre, hence the audience had to follow the plot from the programmes.

We assume that in most towns they had only a temporary stage, where they probably used the lighting and sound technique we noted in Kisszeben. Only richer schools used curtains. Most often they played in the open air for a standing public – with the exception of distinguished visitors.

The theatre of Pest is supposed to have been the best equipped, as the mayor himself commissioned the designs of the new school with its theatre. He had the walls of four classrooms and the corridor removed, leaving a space of two windows for the stage and the same size for the audience. There was an orchestra stall, too. Seats were elevated (like in Eger) and closed boxes were built in the front rows for distinguished

3 Cp. FEJÉR 1956 (See my other paper in the present book, p. 33.)

visitors. In the back, the ordinary audience could either sit on benches or stand. The other Piarist theatres were less 'modern'. After the Piarist church, convent and school of Beszterce had burnt down, the order prepared the design of new buildings in order to get money for rebuilding. Thus we know the size of their theatre, which was only a bit smaller than the church. In Nagykároly the Károlyi family had the theatre hall built, which was used not only by the Piarist students but also by professional theatre companies invited by the Károlyis. Sharing the theatre became quite inconvenient later, as it often disturbed the silence and order of the school and, furthermore, the Piarist school had to permit the use of a path through their garden which led to the theatre.

One of the best theatres was probably that of Nyitra. This was the largest Piarist school, probably because it had the highest number of patrons. Musical plays were quite frequent there. Music, however, was not a rarity in other schools, as testified by the programmes, which often list dancers and singers. The school of Vác must have had a good theatre as they entertained Queen Maria Theresa and her family. (This was one of the first performances of Plautus in Hungary.) In Kecskemét, the Piarist students played in the open air. The council of Szeged gave wood for the building of a temporary Piarist stage. In Nagykanizsa, even operas were performed. In Tata, the theatre was set up by the lake. The Piarist school of Kalocsa was established only in 1765, at the time when the archbishop of Kalocsa, a drama enthusiast, supported the theatre. He took part in every performance. The school often organized martial shows, which were always visited by the archbishop, and these shows helped the performance of battle scenes on the stage.

2.2. Authors⁴

'Native' authors provided the twenty-four Piarist theatres with plays. András Dugonics and Kristóf Simai, authors of several school dramas, became the most successful authors of professional theatre in the 1790s. Dugonics was the most diligent Hungarian adapter of Plautus, while Simai often used Molière as his source. We are proud to have found some works which were previously unknown or thought to have been lost.

4 For a list of all Piarist authors, see my other paper in the present book, p. 29.

3. The Piarist repertoire

Piarist drama, just like that of Jesuit schools, started to use Hungarian in the second half of the 18th century. The Piarist order did not strive to establish schools in major cities such as Pozsony and their main purpose was to educate poorer children. The Society of Jesus, for missionary purposes, founded schools in Protestant towns or in places with many Moslems following the Turkish withdrawal. This explains the fact that there were Jesuit school performances of didactic morality and religious plays. Religious faith was a much more rare topic on the Piarist stage. The technical conditions of the Jesuit stage were far more developed than those of the Piarist theatre. Jesuit students were often sent abroad in order to learn foreign languages, though they also had to speak some languages (German, Slovakian, Romanian, etc.) that were in use in Hungary.

3.1. The types of Piarist school drama

The themes of Piarist school drama belong to two groups: religious and secular themes.

3.1.1. Religious themes (including a comparison with Jesuit repertoire).

Religious themes were mainly determined by the Liturgical Calendar, which is not the same as the calendar year. The Liturgical Calendar begins with Advent Sunday (the Sunday four weeks before Christmas) and ends on the Saturday before the Advent Sunday of the following year. Dramatic traditions have always been connected to the changes of season and the solstices. (The name *Advent* comes from *Adventus Domini*: the Lord's coming). In the 17th-18th century, Advent involved four weeks of fasting and penitence, since the arrival of Jesus was to be awaited with a pure soul. Dramatic traditions have been connected to Advent and Twelfth Day for centuries. The Holy Family was invariably at the centre of Advent plays. Nativity plays had four themes: seeking shelter, shepherds' plays, Herod plays and plays with the Three Magi. A picture or statue of the Holy Family looking for somewhere to stay was taken to a house for the people who lived to shelter the Holy Family; then, after some days, it was taken to another house. (This custom still exists in a para-liturgical way.) Pastorals (shepherds' plays) were performed on Christmas Day, Herod plays on Innocents' (Childermas) Day, plays with

the Three Magi on Twelfth Day. (Recent nativity plays have kept all four elements only in Transylvania and Transdanubia.)

From 17th-18th century schools, we know of a crib (Italian *presepe*), i.e. a representation of the Nativity scene, which was probably set up by the priests with a solemn liturgical ceremony. We have no data about Herod plays. On Twelfth Day, priests and pupils visited houses reciting poems and songs, wearing costumes of the Three Magi and of angels.

From Twelfth Night until Shrove Tuesday, there was Carnival, a secular feast time. This period is very rich in dramatic traditions, with dramas of worldly themes.

Ash Wednesday following Shrove Tuesday is the first day of Lent. Dramas were played only on special days, mainly in Holy Week. The main topic was the Passion of Christ, in either dramatic or oratorical form. It was mainly the Jesuit schools which organized costumed, flagellant processions not so far from a theatrical event. Liturgy in Hungary has contained a *Quem quaeritis* trope since the 11th century, and yet we know practically nothing of the *quem quaeritis* (or Resurrection) plays. A procession welcoming the Resurrection came into fashion only in the 17th-18th century.

Ascension Day also involved theatrical activities. The Jesuit school in Sárospatak raised the statues of Jesus and two angels in a spectacular ceremony. Corpus Christi Day was a real theatrical occasion. Four altars were set up and Jesuit pupils recited poems or produced plays in front of each one. (This is a popular liturgical day even in the present time.)

Plays on Holy Trinity Day were quite popular in the 17th-18th century. Schools performed plays about various saints and martyrs, not only on the saint's day. The feast of Saint Ignatius (31 July) was a special occasion for the Jesuit order, while the feast of Saint Joseph Calasanz (27 August) was a special occasion for Piarist dramas. It is worth making a separate group for dramas about Hungarian saints. Up to the end of the 18th century, only saints who at one time had been involved in politics were portrayed on the Jesuit and Piarist stages. The topics concerning Hungarian saints served the purpose of teaching both history and patriotism – there was a similar situation in most European countries. The Virgin Mary was considered a saint and yet her figure was not important on the stage, probably due to Protestant (over)sensitivity. Miracle plays of the medieval

tradition also belong to this group. These plays generally portray the miraculous life and death of a saint.

Themes from the Old Testament were quite frequent, both on the Jesuit and the Piarist stage. Christmas and Easter plays constitute separate groups, i.e. they do not belong to the themes of the New Testament. A special thematic group can be formed of the plays about religious issues and theories. The main purpose of school theatre was to make the audience aware of sin and to show the way to avoid temptation. Hence dramas were often performed about Vices and Virtues, about unbelief or the loss of faith. A young man who had become the victim of sin needs help to find a way back to the path of virtue and faith. We discovered many dramas about monarchs. The good examples show pious Christian kings. Some dramas deal with the Church, church liturgy, or dramatize a funeral ceremony. In the 17th-18th century, the Church had to ransom Christian captives, which provided rich material for dramas. Due to the stormy history of the age, innocent people easily found themselves going to prison and the Church undertook the task of leading these people back to normal life and faith.

Students of the 17th-18th century generally spent religious holidays such as Christmas, Easter or Pentecost in the college. If they performed any drama on these days, it must have been a religious one.

3.1.2. Secular themes (including a comparison with Jesuit repertoire). School feasts and holidays provided opportunities for performances on secular themes. The school year started at the end of October or at the beginning of November and lasted until mid September. In some schools, New Year's Day was celebrated with a play. Gregory's day (12 March) was a feast as Saint Gregory was the patron of lower grade classes at school. Both Piarist and Jesuit pupils made excursions on that day. They marched singing and playing music to a nearby field, where they took part in some sports competitions. In Nagykároly, they had a horse parade, which was very similar to a theatrical performance. In May they were often given a holiday to celebrate spring – with a drama, of course.

Piarists frequently performed plays at the end of the school year. In every third month, pupils of rhetoric and poetics classes had to present declamations to a small audience comprising the school's patrons, teachers and pupils. Teachers often transformed these declamations into real

dramas. Important guests, both clerical and lay, were welcomed with a performance. Any secular meeting held in the town was also celebrated with a drama. This shows that many theatrical performances were not fixed to certain days.

The most frequent drama theme was history. It comprised three main categories: world history, Hungarian history and Graeco-Roman history, the last one including plays on ancient mythology. Secular martyr dramas belonged to this theme, too.

The closing days of Carnival time were extremely good for theatrical productions. From that period we know of many scandals and punishments in schools, thus teachers generally wanted to ban profane entertainment. Most data tell only of the fact that for Carnival, a play was performed. We are sure these were comedies. Carnival plays could be social satires, plays about parents and children, about quarrels concerning a patrimony or an estate, a severe father, the greedy rich, the proud, the drunken husband or a student. There were some strange subjects: the virtuous young man frequently portrayed joins a religious order, then, following the example of his parents or of bad friends or some worldly call, he loses his faith and leaves the order, becoming depraved or even a murderer. A special figure of the kind is the Prodigal Son of the parable, who spent all his fortune, ate and slept with pigs, then, realising his sin, returned home where he is welcomed by his father.

Plautus and Terence were very popular in Piarist schools. The plays of Kristóf Simai, designated the Hungarian Plautus, form a separate group, particularly because these dramas were performed by the first professional company in the 1790s. Comedies often show legal processes and judges. Judges and lawyers are bribed in most cases. Perhaps they delay the case or blackmail the claimants.

We also know of occasional pieces. Piarist pupils often welcomed a guest with the recital of an ecloga (as they usually called pastorals). In Nagyszombat, spectacular firework displays were held by the Jesuits. The bishop of Eger was welcomed by a *ludus navalis* in his rest house in Felsőtárkány.

School itself provided themes for dramas. There were plays about bad pupils who are sent to learn a craft, or about uneducated parents who send their children to school, or about ex-students becoming vagabonds. We found many *certamens*, such as those between months and seasons,

or wine and water. We also examined declamations which proved to be rather dramatic, being more than just declamatory.

4. Tables

The tables below give the outlines of the catalogue of 17th-18th century Piarist dramas which has been completed and, as a comparison, the data of five Jesuit colleges. The tables show the more profane character of Piarist theatre as compared to the Jesuit.

Table 1
Statistics of religious themes on Jesuit stage

Themes	Nagy- szombat	Pozsony	Sárospatak	Eger	Székes- fehérvár	Total
Christmas	2	3	6	1	4	16
Good Friday	11	8	2	3	–	24
Procession	1	–	1	1	–	3
Easter	–	–	–	1	1	2
Mystery plays	2	8	1	–	–	11
Ascension Day	–	–	1	–		1
Corpus Christi Day	12	6	15		2	35
Guardian Angel	–	6	1	–	1	8
Saints	42	25	3	20	6	96
Hungarian Saints	–	–	–	–	2	2
Virgin Mary	–	4	1	1	–	6
Miracle	–	4	–	–	–	4
Psychomachia /Psychological drama	2	–	–	–	–	2
Old Testament	29	23	7	8	5	72
New Testament	10	4	–	–	–	14

Themes	Nagy- szombat	Pozsony	Sárospatak	Eger	Székes- fehérvár	Total
The Church	1	–	–	–	–	1
Dispute on faith	–	–	–	2	–	2
Lyrical drama (Poema drammatica)	2	1	–	–	–	3
Evangelization	–	–	–	2	–	2
Virtues	7	3	–	4	1	15
Vices	7	2	2	–	–	11
Conversion	–	1	–	2	1	4
Morality play	–	2	–	–	1	3
Total	128	100	40	45	24	337

Table 2
Statistics of secular (profane) themes on Jesuit stage

Themes	Nagy- szombat	Pozsony	Sáros- patak	Eger	Székes- fehérvár	Total
New Year	–	–	1	1	1	3
Carnival	–	5	–	5	1	11
May	–	–	2	1	2	4
Autumn break	–	2	–			2
World history	60	46	2	29	7	144
Hungarian history	27	30	3	17	3	80
Graeco-Roman history	37	41	1	16	9	103
Local history	–	–	–	2		2
Mythology	4	5	7	6	1	23
Comedy	–	–	6	–	–	6
Secular martyr drama	–	2	–	–	–	2

Themes	Nagy- szombat	Pozsony	Sáros- patak	Eger	Székes- fehérvár	Total
Social satire	1	1	–	–	–	2
Parents – children	–	5	1	6	2	14
Brother- and sisterhood	–	10	–	6	–	16
Prodigal Son	64	35	5	13	5	122
Feud on patrimony	–	1	–	–	–	1
Old-fashioned old man	–	1	–	–	–	1
The haughty	–	–	1	1	–	2
The miser	–	–	4	–	1	5
The drunkard	–	–	–	1	–	1
Good and bad luck	1	–	–	–	–	1
Plautus	–	1	–	–	–	1
Terence	–	–	1	1	–	2
Occasional play	9	6	2	–	1	18
Ecloga/Eclogue	–	4		6	1	11
Fireworks	1	–	–	–	–	1
Water play	–	–	–	1	–	1
School	10	5	4	61	1	81
Astrology	1	–	–	–	–	1
Alchemy	1	–	–	–	–	1
Dramatic contest				1		1
Secular, total	216	200	40	174	35	665
Religious, total	128	100	40	45	24	337
Undefined	104	22	14	34	7	181
Data and dramas, total	448	322	94	253	66	1.183

Table 3
Statistics of religious themes on Piarist stage

Themes	Podolin	Privigye	Breznóbánya	Pozsonyszentgyörgy	Nyitra	Veszprém	Vác	Kecskemét	Pest	Beszterce	Debrecen	Korpona	Szeged	Tokaj	Rózsahegy	Nagykároly	Máramarossziget	Kisszeben	Medgyes	Kalocsa	Nagykanizsa	Tata	Kolozsvár	Selmecbánya	Total
Christmas	5	5			4				2				3			1		1							21
Good Friday		9	1	1	6		2	1					2												22
Resurrection					1																				1
Ascension Day																									
Corpus Christi Day		4	1	1							1													1	8
Saints and Martyrs		8	1	1	13	2	8	1	1	2	2	1	8		2			1							49
Old Testament		5			11	1	6	3	6		7		2					2				5			52
New Testament		1			2	1	2		4			1	1												12
Virtues	1	8	2	1	6	1	4		5	1	4					2		1							36
Vices		3			2		1	1	4																11

Total	5	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	231
Selmecbánya														1
Kolozsvár														-
Tata											1			6
Nagykanizsa														-
Kalocsa						1								1
Medgyes														-
Kisszeben														5
Máramarossziget														-
Nagykároly														3
Rózsahegy							1							3
Tokaj														-
Szeged								2						18
Korpona														2
Debrecen												1		15
Beszterce									1					2
Pest														22
Kecskemét		1												8
Vác		2				2	1							28
Veszprém														5
Nyitra		1		1	1									44
Pozsonyszentgyörgy			1											5
Breznóbánya														5
Privigye		1												45
Podolin														11
Themes														
Dispute on faith														
Holy Trinity														
Virgin Mary														
Liturgy														
Scenica sepultura														
Conversion														
The Church														
Lack of faith														
Christian monarch														
Captives ransomed														
Piarist Order														
Total	11	45	5	5	44	5	28	5	8	22	2	15	18	231

Table 4
 Statistics of secular (profane) themes on Piarist stage

Themes	Podolin	Privigye	Breznóbánya	Pozsonyszentgyörgy	Nyitra	Veszprém	Vác	Kecskemét	Pest	Beszterce	Debrecen	Korpona	Szeged	Tokaj	Rózsashegy	Nagykároly	Máramaros-sziget	Kisszeben	Medgyes	Kalocsa	Nagykanizsa	Tata	Kolozsvár	Selmecebánya 2	Total
New Year																									-
St Gregory's Day				1																					1
Carnival		4	1	3			8	1	6				4		2		2								31
May		1																							1
End of school year																									-
Autumn break																									-
World history	3	16	6	1	36	4	5	6	19	2	3	3	12		2		1	4	1			2			126
Hungarian history		4			17	2	3	3	3		1	1	8					2				2			46
Graeco-Roman history		6			23	2	12	4	16	3	4	3	7		2	4		8	2	4		4			104
Local history		1																1							2
Mythology	2		2		2	2	4	2	3	1	4	1	1		2			1							27
Death							1		1																2
Tales																								1	1
Marital fidelity		1			1				1				1												4

Themes	Podolin	Privigye	Breznóbánya	Pozsonyszent- györgy	Nyitra	Veszprém	Vác	Kecskemét	Pest	Beszterce	Debrecen	Korpona	Szeged	Tokaj	Rózsahegy	Nagykároly	Máramaros- sziget	Kisszeben	Medgyes	Kalocsa	Nagykanizsa	Tata	Kolozsvár	Selmecebánya 2	Total
Comedy					2	2				1						1		6		6		6			22
Social satire					3																				3
Parents – children				2			4		2				1	1		1				1		1			13
Brother- and sisterhood		1		5			1	1	1				1												9
Prodigal Son		2					2	1				1									2				8
Feud on patrimony																									–
Old-fashioned old man																									–
The haughty							1		1										1						5
The miser		1					1	1										1							4
The drunkard																									–
The gipsy																									1
Court of Justice									1																1
Good and bad luck				1	1																				2
Plautus			1		1	1	14	3	2		3	5	9			2	1			1		3			47
Terence				1			1		3		1											1			7
Molière																									–

	Total											
												16
Selmecbánya 2												1
Kolozsvár												69
Tata												8
Nagykanizsa												99
Kalocsa												1
Medgyes												1
Kisszeben												1
Máramaros-sziget												1
Nagykároly												-
Rózsahegy												10
Tokaj												5
Szeged												2
Korpona												3
Debrecen												684
Beszterce												232
Pest												242
Kecskemét												1158
Vác												10
Veszprém												5
Nyitra												2
Pozsonyszentgyörgy												1
Breznóbánya												1
Privigye												1
Podolin												1
												1
												1
												-
												10
												5
												2
												3
												684
Religious, total												232
Undefined												242
Data & dramas, total												1158

5. A catalogue of Piarist drama themes

With the historical-statistical method used, I have created a catalogue of Piarist drama themes. For easier understanding, besides the English terms, I have also used Latin.

A) RELIGIOUS DRAMAS (DRAMMATA RELIGIOSA)

I. Holy Calendar (Annus ecclesiasticus)

1. Christmas/Nativity (Festa Nativitatis Jesu Christi)
 - a) Asking for shelter (Diversorium quaerendum Josephi et Mariae)
 - b) Shepherds' play (Ludus pastorum)
 - c) Herod play (Ludus Herodis)
 - d) Three Magi (Ludus de tribus regibus)
2. Easter (Pascha)
 - a) Lent, Holy Week, Good Friday (Quadragesima dies, hebdomadae, feria sexta hebdomadae)
 - b) Procession (Processio)
 - c) Easter Sunday: Resurrection (Dominica Resurrectionis Jesu Christi)
 - d) Mystery (Ludus Misterii)
3. Ascension Day (Ascensio Jesu Christi)
4. Corpus Christi Day (Dies festus Corporis Christi)
5. Guardian Angel's day (Dies angeli custodis)

II. Saints and martyrs (Sancti et Martyri)

1. European saints (Sancti, Santaeque in Europa)
2. Hungarian saints (Sancti, Santaeque Hungariae)
3. Virgin Mary (Sancta Virgo Maria)
4. Miracle (Miraculum)
5. Psychomachia, psychological drama (Dramma psychoanalyticum)

III. Themes from the Old Testament (Res gestae Testamenti Veteris)

IV. Themes from the New Testament (Res gestae Testamenti Novi)

- V. Church and liturgy (*Ecclesia et liturgia*)
 1. Church (*Ecclesia*)
 2. Liturgy (*Liturgia*)
 3. Dispute on faith/denominations (*Certamen de fide*)
 4. Captives ransomed (*Redemptio captivorum*)
 5. Dramatized funeral scene (*Scenica sepultura*)

VI. Lyrical drama (*Poesis drammatica*)

VII. Evangelization (*Propaganda fidei*)

VIII. Virtues and vices (*Virtutes et vitia*)

1. Virtues (*Virtutes*)
2. Vices (*Vitia*)
3. Conversion (*Mutatio morum*)
4. Morality (*Moralitas*)

IX. Christian monarch (*Rex Christianus*)

B) SECULAR (PROFANE) DRAMAS (*DRAMMATA PROFANA*)

I. Secular and school feasts (*Dies Festi mundani, scholastici*)

1. New Year (*Annus novus*)
2. Carnival (*Dies Bacchanales*)
3. End of school year (*Extrema pars anni scholastici*)
4. St Gregory's day (*Festi Sancti Gregorii*)

II. Historic dramas (*Drammata de rebus gestis historiae*)

1. World history (*Historia rerum publicarum omnium*)
2. Hungarian history (*Historia Hungariae*)
3. Graeco-Roman history (*Historia Graecorum veterum Latinorumque*)
4. Local history (*Historia urbis, oppidorum scholarumque*)
5. Graeco-Roman mythology (*Mitologia Graeca et Latina*)

III. Death (*Mors*)

IV. Secular martyr drama (*Drammata de martyribus profanis*)

V. Marital fidelity (Fidelitas matrimonii)

VI. Tales (Ludus the fabula)

VII. Comedy (Comedia)

1. Social satire (Drammata satyrica de civibus)
2. Parent-children relations (Coniunctio parentum filiorumque)
3. Brothers' relations (Coniunctio fratrum)
4. Prodigal Son (Filius prodigus)
5. Feud about patrimony (Controversia de patrimoniis)
6. Old fashioned/conservative old man (Senex conservativus)
7. The haughty (Superbus novus dives)
8. Greedy old man / The miser (Senex avarus)
9. Drunken man or woman (Ebrius vel ebria)
10. Court of Justice (Dramma de iudicibus)
11. Good or bad luck (Sors bona, sors mala)
12. Plautus's comedy or Plautiana (Comoedia Plauti vel Plautiana)
13. Terence's comedy or Terenciana
(Comoedia Terentii vel Terentiana)
14. Molière's comedy or after Molière (Comoedia Molièriana)

V. Occasional plays (Ludi occasionales scaenici)

1. Ecloga
2. Fireworks (Spectaculum pirotechnicum)
3. Naval (Water) plays (Ludus navalis)
4. Local politics (Calliditas civilis oppidiana, dieique)

VI. School (Schola)

1. School life (Vita in schola)
2. Education (Educatio juvenum)
3. Astrology (Astrologia)
4. Alchemy (Alchimia)
5. Declamatio drammatica
6. Vagabonds (Vagabundus)
7. Certamen
8. Consultatio



JÚLIA DEMETER

Calvinist School Theatre

1. Protestant school theatre

In Protestant dramas one cannot feel the radical and definite changes which can be traced with most Catholic school stages around 1750-1760.

In the number of school performances in Hungary up to 1800,¹ we found a relevant difference, which is much higher than might be expected, given by the ratio of Protestantism within the whole population of Hungary. We know about 631 Protestant performances as opposed to the 7176 Catholic data. We can find two main reasons, an external (1) and an internal (2) explanation. 1) The 17th century involved continuous danger, oppression and frequent purges for the Hungarian Protestant population. Their schools were under continuous threat and often occupied, so these circumstances were not favourable for theatre activities. 2) The Lutheran Reformation reached Hungary very early, especially in German speaking towns,² but around the mid 16th century *The Confession* by Calvin and Bullinger had a stronger influence among the Hungarian speaking population, mainly in the eastern region and in Transylvania. In the second half of the 16th century, Hungarian Calvinism accepted Calvin's strong and strict orthodoxy,³ which was strengthened

1 From István Kilián; see Table 1 on page in the present work, p. 29.

2 Ethnic German and Saxon students from Hungary visited Wittenberg as early as 1522 and they were the first to 'import' Luther's principles. Melancthon had a strong influence and his *Confessio fidei Augustana* (1530) was soon accepted in Hungary. (See: HORVÁTH 1957, 17-18; VARGA 1995, 13-14.)

3 Cf. the *Confessions* of Debrecen and Egervölgy, 1561-62.



in the 17th century by the frequent purges of the Hungarian Protestant population. Calvin was definitely against theatre,⁴ thus the Hungarian Calvinist stronghold, the college of Debrecen, did not have a theatre until 1790.⁵ This was not general, however, as other important Calvinist colleges produced dramas quite regularly, e.g. the famous Sárospatak college became the centre of Calvinist school theatre, already in the 17th century – due mainly to the stay of Comenius (Komenský).

Lutheran and Calvinist dramas surviving with full text

Language	Lutheran dramas	Calvinist dramas
Latin	63	20
German	22	–
Slovak	10	–
Czech	7	–
Latin-Hungarian	5	2
Hungarian	10	82*

* Not including the dramas of Mihály Csokonai Vitéz, the greatest poet of the 18th century, who performed some dramas with his pupils of the Calvinist school in Csurgó.

The table shows the number of surviving Lutheran and Calvinist dramas (the Unitarian corpus being too small). The difference in the language used on the stage can be explained by the different population: the Calvinist and Unitarian populations were almost all Hungarian, while a large part (probably more than half) of the Lutheran population was Saxon (in Transylvania and in Upper Hungary) or Slovak.

- 4 Just one non-Hungarian example of the long-lasting effect of Calvinist orthodoxy: we should remember the *Geneva* entry written by d'Alembert for the French Encyclopaedia followed by a huge scandal and Rousseau's famous *Letter to d'Alembert* on theatre (1757).
- 5 No wonder, for centuries Debrecen has been called "the Calvinist Rome".

2. About some Calvinist themes⁶

Generally, studying drama themes is not worthwhile, but in the case of Calvinist dramas our research has uncovered some important and characteristic topics.

Biblical themes. Unlike Lutheran schools, the Calvinist ones rarely performed Biblical stories. If they did, they never involved Heaven or Hell, i.e. non-earthly scenes.⁷ When they could not avoid supernatural elements, they always used Gods of ancient, most often Roman, mythology in places undefined. They never performed passion plays either.⁸ As there are quite a few “bare data”, i.e. without any information about the topic, theme, etc., we examined the themes using the “meaningful data”:

	“Meaningful” data (titles, programmes or full texts)	Old Testament	New Testament
Lutheran	304	52	50
Calvinist*	123	6	5
Unitarian	29	2	6

* Not including the dramas of Mihály Csokonai Vitéz.

Mythology. The class of *poesis* was to give the pupils a rich repertoire for funerary and other occasional poetry, as well as chapters of classical literature to be known by heart. That is why they staged quite a few stories of ancient Greek and Latin mythology. These mythological dramas

6 Cf. DEMETER 2003

7 We know of only one interesting exception from Sárospatak, written in 1776: it is a funeral dialogue between the deceased József Szathmári Király willing to enter Heaven and Saint Peter at the Heavenly gate. (See NAGY 1999.) The atypical supernatural scene is either accidental or is connected to the different rules of funerary poetry.

8 We know of 19 Lutheran, two Unitarian, and no Calvinist passion plays. Luther did not forbid *acting* and *representing* Christ’s story on stage; yet most Lutheran passion plays are rather *declamations*, i.e. they are told rather than acted. Christ appears only in one or two scenes and speaks very little, and there is no supernatural scene. (Partly this tradition is reflected in Bach’s passions, too.)

are of strong dramatic strength, which we must emphasize because Calvinist playwrights never used Latin comedies or the neo-Classical European comedies or tragedies as their source.⁹ The mythological dramas were written quite late, mainly in the 1770s-1790s, often as exam pieces or exam poems later inserted into dramas.

School life. Many, rather short plays described the life and works of pupils in the school; most of them are either exam pieces, when they indicated what they had learnt during the year, or plays to attract new pupils to the school.

3. Popular late Baroque

3.1. Aspect and structure

Most Calvinist dramas are not dramas proper in the neo-Classical sense, but dialogues, declamations, certamens, morality plays, etc., i.e. the pseudo-dramatic forms of earlier periods, especially of the Middle Ages. As opposed to neo-Classicism, Calvinist drama does not really contain a plot proper. It has an epic character, the story is told rather than acted. The plot often seems to be 'confused' since new, dramatically incoherent, scenes are frequently built in, with unknown figures who do not have any link, either to the previous or to the next figures and parts of the story. Thus one often feels that the order of scenes is accidental and this order could be easily changed without doing any harm to the non-existing structure of the play. (The only exceptions are the mythological dramas, probably because their plot had been previously 'written' in the myths.) The uneven style and atmosphere, both in figures and scenes, and the mixture of low and high, comic and tragic elements were strictly forbidden by neo-Classicism, while on the Calvinist stage the comic and grotesque figures¹⁰ of everyday Hungary fitted into any kind of story and genre. The slow, illogical, epic nature of Calvinist drama is not a mistake or fault; Calvinist playwrights were no less talented than their Catholic contemporaries, but the aspect of their drama, their concept of stage was

9 Probably only one exception is known: the tragedy about the fall of Troy based on Euripides (*Protestáns iskoladramák*, No. 26).

10 These (or similar) popular vulgar figures can be found in Catholic plays, too, but with those their place is given only in the comic or grotesque interludes.

different. Calvinist authors did not find condensed situations and conflicts adequate for showing *the way of the world*, they preferred to give a kind of *presentation*, an *illustration*. For them, stage was considered to be a *treasury of examples*; they wanted to show the world through several examples, illustrations. The scenes of Calvinist drama are pieces of a mosaic that can be re-arranged, their number decreased or increased, but in any presentation they show life, the way of the world. The order or the neo-Classical logic of the scenes is irrelevant as the essence is not time but the similarity and dissimilarity of figures, events, etc. The scenes are linked by their being an example or illustration of life, by the parallels and contrasts of these illustrations. The concept of life drama or world drama, i.e. the Baroque *theatrum mundi*, was continuous through the centuries, hence Calvinist theatre (unlike the Catholic) was able to stick to moral teaching as the central purpose of school theatre. The strong didacticism explains the frequent use of the genres of morality plays and certamens, i.e. the deep medieval roots of Calvinist Baroque.¹¹

The verse form of Calvinist dramas kept until the beginning of the 19th century was considered as highly anachronistic in Hungary. Calvinist drama used prose mainly for improvisation.

3.2. Figures

Allegories and quasi-types. The *quasi-types* were the favourite figures of 18th century Hungarian popular poetry, and we often find well-known popular songs and verses inserted as scenes or interludes in Calvinist dramas.¹² The term *quasi-type* refers to the main feature of these figures. The allegories preferred so much by the Calvinist stage have also one main characteristic or property, so they are not far from the quasi-types. Furthermore, the process might be started with real, medieval allegories, like *Love*, *Drunkness*, etc., and these allegories were later dissolved in the figures of *the Lovesick*, *the Drunkard*, etc. Mythological figures behave the same way as they also have one main property, thus they are a kind of

11 As *Baroque* in Central Europe is considered mainly Catholic Baroque (some scholars even suggest the term *Habsburg Zeit* for that period), one must emphasize the existence of *Protestant Baroque*, which is strongly related and linked to folk and popular culture.

12 In Hungarian they are called “genre figures” (cf. the mocking, comic, ironic, often vulgar poems in students’ manuscripts on spinsters, soldiers, peasants, gypsies, Jews and other minorities).

allegory. Quasi-types belong to the low elements, while allegories belong to the high elements, but they are definitely parallel. That is why I consider allegorical aspects as one of the most important features of Calvinist drama.

Morio. One of the most interesting figures is *Morio*, whose name shows he is a quasi-type. His manifold figure is a mixture of that of the *Fool* and the *Clown*; his tone may be vulgar and rude. (His distant relative might be the *Hanswurst* of Viennese popular plays.) In spite of the verse form of the drama, he often speaks in prose, which shows his text is close to improvisation or fully improvised.¹³ On the other hand, *Morio* is much more than just a foolish outsider: he is a narrator, a sort of both comic and serious *raisonneur*, a *commentator* of the story. He is generally not listed among the *Dramatis personae*; although he is on the stage, he is often not heard by other figures. He is a link between the audience and the stage. He explains, interprets and also mocks what goes on. Apart from mixing comic and tragic, low and high elements, Calvinist drama is given at least a double aspect by *Morio*: tragic and serious scenes acquire a grotesque shade, and comic scenes get a serious or tragic hint. Thus *Morio* combines the role of a buffo or clown with that of a moralist. Sometimes the clownish-foolish *raisonneur* is called different names: *Larvatus*, *Satyra*, etc. György Nagy,¹⁴ one of the best Calvinist playwrights, does not use the name *Morio* but in his dramas the figure of the *raisonneur* is even doubled: one is called *Momus* being a bitter, wise and educated moral philosopher, while the clown figure is separated and called *Hanzsfurst* (twisting the name of *Hanswurst*).

Female figures. Portraying women was not forbidden; furthermore, Calvinist playwrights were quite ready to show the destructive strength of love¹⁵ initiated by women and threatening men.

13 The verse form consequently used by Calvinist drama was also seen as anachronistic. The short parts written in prose and followed by the author's remark *etc. etc. etc.* are definitely improvised: *improvisation* was extremely common in Calvinist theatre.

14 György Nagy's biography is completely unknown. In 1780–81 he was a young teacher in Marosvásárhely, Transylvania, where he staged two extremely good dramas which, being extremely critical towards society, were followed by a ban on theatre in the college. (This is a late sign of Calvinist orthodoxy. However, theatre being very much liked by that time, the ban did not last long.)

15 Still, when portraying lustful women, in spite of the authors' moral intentions, the pains of love lamented and described (often with real tragic strength) probably had

4. *Pandora* (an example)

As an example of the features mentioned above, I examine the play *Pandora* performed in Sárospatak in 1773;¹⁶ its author is Sámuel Szathmári Paksi, one of the best known college instructors. The title refers to the tragic mythological story about the relations of Gods and men, representing man as a frail creature. This theme and aspect are rather that of a morality play, which proves the close link between mythology and morality for Calvinist theatre.

In the first three, quite speedy acts, Prometheus forms a man of mud and, in order to give it life, he steals a sunbeam. Jupiter, becoming furious with mankind, forms and sends Pandora to the Earth. The centre of the morality play is the fourth act, which takes place in the world of Gods when Jupiter decides to console the suffering mankind. First, he sends twelve *Geniuses*, each of whom has a short but complete scene before leaving for the Earth. Pallas sorts out their attributes for them, one by one. Then they are, again one by one, introduced with a short monologue. Then Mercurius is sent to Aesculapius, whose duty is to cure mankind. The fifth act is the definite parallel to the fourth one, but it takes place on Earth: Aesculapius is visited by ten patients, one by one. Each patient has a short but complete scene, starting with the patient's own introductory monologue and followed by a short conversation with the doctor, who hands over a prescription at the end. These are low comic series, the patients are the drunkard, the deaf, the love-sick, the maid with huge breasts, etc. Both the allegories – the *Geniuses* – and the low comedy quasi-types appear in a similar situation on the stage, where these short scenes are glimpses or pieces of the mosaic of the world; thus the series of them draws a complete picture. The play presents a fine example not only for the mixture but also the parallelism of high and low elements. For the purpose of providing illustrations and examples on the stage, the series of types shown in the same situation proved to be extremely useful. In *Pandora*, the heavenly figures are allegories, while the low comedy figures on Earth are quasi-types. This shows how the everyday quasi-types of Calvinist plays are rooted in the allegorical tradition.

a stronger influence on the audience than the moral teaching about the dangers of love.

16 *Protestáns iskoladrámák*, No. 31.

5. Summary

Neo-Classicism fought a severe fight against the popular late Baroque literature and aspects that reigned over the Calvinist school stage and college literature. By the second half of the 18th century, Catholic school theatres drew rather close to the entertaining, professional stage performing neo-Classical plays, while Calvinist drama remained a means of everyday teaching practice with a strong moral content.¹⁷ Hence the rich tradition of the Calvinist school stage only disappeared at the beginning of the 19th century, being replaced by European neo-Classicism and Romanticism.

Two huge volumes of 18th century Protestant school dramas were published by Imre Varga in 1989,¹⁸ in recent decades, as our research opportunities have grown tremendously, we have discovered several unknown Calvinist plays, as well as new versions. So far, this new material has not altered, but rather strengthened our view of late 18th-early 19th century Calvinist school theatre.

17 This is probably rooted in Comenius's *Schola Ludus*. Comenius generally considered school drama as a textbook in dialogues. For research about links between teaching and theatre, see NAGY 1999a, 2000.

18 *Protestáns iskoladramák*



JÚLIA DEMETER

Csíksomlyó: Medieval Elements in the 18th Century Passion Plays

Within the process of the radical and deep changes around 1750-1760, the Observant Franciscan school stage of Csíksomlyó¹ in south-east Transylvania is an exception with a rather anachronistic, religious repertoire. Its Observant Franciscan monastery became famous for its collection of 18th century drama manuscripts. The bulk of the dramas (i.e. one Latin and 60 Hungarian plays) can be found in three large volumes. *Liber Exhibens Actiones parascevicas Ab anno 1730 usque ad annum 1774 diem Aprilis 27.* is the title of the largest collection, a thick leather-bound volume of 1348 pages. Copying was completed on 5 July 1774. The book contains 48 passion plays (one in Latin, 47 in Hungarian).² The two other collections – *Actiones Tragicæ* and *Actiones Comicæ* – contain, respectively, six and seven Hungarian dramas performed between 1773 and 1780.³

Among the *Actiones* there are mostly biblical and historical themes, and morality plays. The last two dramas of the collection are comedies (both from 1780), which already broke away from the tradition and are similar to the general repertoire of Hungarian school theatre of the second half of the 18th century.⁴ Though both the ‘tragedies’ and ‘comedies’

- 1 Csíksomlyó: Romanian *Șumuleu Ciuc*, German *Schomlenberg* or *Somlyoer-Berg*, south-east Transylvania, now part of Miercurea Ciuc/Csíkszereda, Romania.
- 2 Titles, instructions and other notes are always in Latin. In the dramas there are often complete Latin scenes, while some scenes involve mixed language, Latin and Hungarian. In the dramas mentioned as Hungarian ones, there is either no Latin scene or most of the scenes are in Hungarian.
- 3 For the drama corpus, see: PINTÉR 1993 and 2003.
- 4 One displays a part of Hungarian history and the very last one is a translation of *Rusticus imperans*, the Latin comedy of Jesuit Jacob Masen (Masenius: German



of the two volumes of *Actiones* bear a strong moral message and their genre is quite close to that of morality plays, we cannot identify them as medieval genres; they are rather typical historical plays of the age showing old times and manners, but aiming to teach the right behaviour for the present.

On the other hand, *Liber Exhibens Actiones parascevicas* contains typical medieval passion plays. 1774 is the closing date of the corpus as well as the tradition: as far as we know, the tradition was broken after 1774. Concerning the starting point, we have no information at all; only three dramas have survived from the late 17th century, one is a lament of Mary written in Croatian,⁵ the other two are not typical passion plays. No other trace of the tradition or heritage could be found, as if the passion corpus had arisen from nowhere. The end is similar, too: after flourishing for more than 50 years, the medieval type passion plays suddenly disappeared.

We do not know exactly what happened in 1774 when *Liber Exhibens Actiones parascevicas* was copied. Most probably, the teachers, fearing an approaching investigation of their school, ordered their students to copy the dramas performed in the school in the previous decades. There were frequent allegations at the time – mostly from Jesuits – concerning the poor quality of Observant Franciscan schools, so the teachers must have wished to prove their excellent work with the copies of the plays produced in the school: that is how *Liber Exhibens Actiones parascevicas* came to life, in haste, in 1774. That the work must have been completed in haste is indicated by the extremely untidy, erroneous writing, full of spelling and rhyming mistakes, unintelligible words, etc. It is possible that some of the copiers were not even native Hungarians and they did not quite understand the verses they had to put down. The Latin text is often incorrect, too.

The manuscripts were discovered and first mentioned in 1862 and the first reports were published at the end of the 19th century when the edition of the texts was also determined. By 1914, eleven dramas had been published, but then – since after the First World War, Transylvania became part of Romania – there was no time, money or researcher to con-

Jesuit author, 1606–1681).

5 Cf. LUKÁCS 2000

tinue the work. After the Second World War, the communist regimes in Romania and Hungary took over church schools and institutions, together with their precious libraries and archives. By the late 1940s, there was no longer any trace of the Csíkksomlyó manuscripts or valuable codices, i.e. they had disappeared and were thought to be lost or burnt – gone for ever.⁶ The treasures were re-discovered in the early 1980s⁷ – no one knows whether accidentally, or the oldest fathers did not want to take the secret to their grave. The fact is that in 1944, as the front was approaching Transylvania, the Franciscan fathers hid their most precious books and manuscripts. They found two excellent hiding places: in the wooden pedestal of the statue of their miraculous Virgin Mary in the church, while another part of the treasures was walled in the vault of the dining hall. During the 1980s, the manuscripts were restored and, after the political changes of Central Europe, the Observant Franciscan order got back its monastery (there is no school any more), since when researchers have been granted the opportunity of working.⁸

1. Performance and audience of the passion plays

The corpus of the *Liber Exhibens Actiones parascevicas* can also be described as the very last product of the Central European counter-reformation. Protestantism was always quite strong in Transylvania: the German speaking (Saxon) population was Lutheran and there was a massive Hungarian Calvinist population. Hence Catholic missionary activity was still underway in the 18th century and we find several Observant Franciscan school plays dealing with Catholic theological principles or reflecting religious disputes between denominations. Due to the Prot-

6 Books and manuscripts being burnt or destroyed in other ways was not out of the question: it happened to a number of precious religious collections when church institutes were confiscated in Socialist countries.

7 See the story, the complete bibliography and description of all the books and manuscripts in MUCKENHAUPT 1999.

8 Our team has made digital copies of all manuscripts, and the first annotated, critical volume was published in 2009. We plan six volumes altogether. (The team contains four researchers: István Kilián, Katalin Czibula, Júlia Demeter and Márta Zsuzsanna Pintér. The work is done in the Institute for Literary Studies, Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.)

estant environment, a most important aim of the Observant Franciscans of Csíksomlyó was to defend and strengthen the Catholic faith among their followers. That is why they used the didactic routine of school plays exclusively for staging religious, devotional dramas (thus creating a hard task for researchers of the 18th century). They did not use school performances for simple pedagogic purposes and, as a consequence, their audience comprised not only the pupils of the school but also the population of the nearby villages. Thus these performances were partly typical religious school productions, partly spectacular productions for the low class audience, and partly an occasion for penitence and mourning for the Catholic population of the region. The school produced one, or sometimes two, performance(s) per year. From 1721 on, a play about Christ's Passion was performed every year, exclusively on Good Friday, sometimes on other days of the Easter period; but it was never connected to or part of the Easter liturgy. The tradition of the Good Friday performance was extremely strong; the last surviving Good Friday drama dates from 1780. The plays were either performed in the school where a rather poor stage had been built, or the performance took place in sections or parts (i.e. scene by scene) in front of the Stations of the Cross on Calvary Hill. Accordingly, there are plays divided not into *scenas*, but into *statio*s (cf. the passion plays of 1723 and 1739). In addition to the Good Friday play, in a number of years they staged another performance, most often on Pentecost Saturday (the day before Whitsunday).

The Csíksomlyó mysteries belong to Baroque popular culture and (low class) popular worship.⁹ As the Observant Franciscans were engaged with the evangelization or the pastoral care of the lowest strata of society, the productions were in the vernacular already in the late 17th century, i.e. much earlier than other Catholic school theatres in Hungary. The plays were performed for a socially very low, practically the lowest, audience comprising mostly illiterate peasants of the Catholic region of Csík. They went there to worship, to take part in the Good Friday procession and, as the drama prologues show, they also attended the school perfor-

9 Hence the corpus was considered as anachronistic and was excluded from the neo-Classicist literary canon formed at the end of the 18th century. We hope to change this state of affairs: now, the corpus is being brought back to the present Hungarian literary canon (if there is such) and is studied by researchers and students of literature, history and linguistics.

mance, which was often merged with or part of the procession itself. The Csíksomlyó corpus is certainly rooted in medieval practice, but at the same time it is definitely Baroque, considering both the anachronistic religious genre and its detailed, strong physical naturalism. Studying the development of the Western passion play tradition, we can identify the Csíksomlyó corpus with the types of passion plays that were flowering in the 13th-15th century and were rooted mainly in the new Franciscan spirituality and mysticism,¹⁰ which was mostly responsible for the changes of devotion and also of religious theatre in the late Middle Ages.

The Hungarian features show an essential difference compared to the Western tradition, from the point of view of both the performers and the audience. The Hungarian Franciscan performances were *school* productions, i.e. they were not guild plays on the way towards secularization like the late medieval miracle and mystery plays in Western Europe. As opposed to the most uneducated audience in Csíksomlyó, the late medieval Western spectators came from almost all strata of society taking part in the Corpus Christi Day (or some other festive day's) procession.

2. Consequences in structure and aspect

(Repetition) The needs of the uneducated spectators in Csíksomlyó were met by the structure and aspect of the plays. All plays start with a prologue and end with an epilogue, both mediating and repeating the most important messages. The prologue calls attention to sins and the need for penitence, lists the scenes of the play and explains the typological connections, often emphasizing the fact that the play is *not* for entertainment. The epilogue usually sums up the plot, and, again, repeats the ideas of the prologue. The main messages are also repeated within the text of the drama. As we see, the authors were deeply concerned with the message reaching the audience, by means of repetitions as well as bloody naturalistic scenes. In 1739, the performance was so successful that the spectators interrupted it and attacked the soldiers who wanted to arrest Christ: the unfortunate student actors had to flee to the nearby wood.¹¹

10 STICCA 1988, 108.

11 PINTÉR 1993, 25.

(**Personalized involvement**) Naturalism was doubled: the long and detailed scenes of torture and suffering were shown on the stage and also expressed verbally in the text. The authors did not simply want to teach and deeply affect the audience (which was presumably the main aim of the Western performances), they wanted to encourage deep devotion, forcing the audience *to take part* in the recollection of the Lord's Passion and also *to get involved* in the performance itself. The Stations of the Cross during the Good Friday procession made the involvement of the spectators quite easy. The message sent to the spectators was rather direct: the Lord's suffering was always connected to the sins of mankind, not in general, but they were personalized as the spectators' own sins; similarly Christ's torturers were always identified with every single person of the audience committing sins and thus killing Christ again and again every day – just like in the passion play being performed. Western medieval dramatic tradition was based on the personal involvement of the audience, mainly through the suffering Christ's words addressed to the spectators.¹²

(**Happening**) Some scenes (or sometimes the whole drama) consist of a rather strange dialogue, practically two parallel declamations: one, a call for penitence, recited – or maybe sung – by an Angel or some allegorical figure, and another, a *planctus* (lament) of penitence recited (in effect as a response) by the Sinner, repeating not only the motifs highlighted by the Angel but almost his whole text. At this point, the performance might have changed into an active 'happening' created by the student actors and a part of the audience who were supposed to join the reciting. The laments, prayers and chants inserted in the plays created a special atmosphere and called for the audience to get involved, not only as spectators but as players. If our assumption about the spectators' involvement is correct, we may well suppose that parts of the text were either well known to the audience, or were rather similar to their prayers and chants – thus they could easily learn and repeat them on the spot.

(**Music**) Involvement of the spectators was most likely possible through singing. Many songs well known to the population were inserted, and the audience would sing along with those on the stage. The

12 Cf. "In the great speech from the cross, the dramatist turns the tables on the audience in a most striking manner." Christ addresses "all men that walk by way or street". (*York Mystery Plays*, 1984, 211-212.)

manuscripts do not contain any notes and in most cases they do not cite the text of the song. (If we are lucky the title or the first line of the song to be chanted is given with reference to another tune). Most songs referred to within the drama texts can be identified with the chants of the precious collections of János Kájoni (1629/1630–1687).¹³ Kájoni, a Franciscan monk of Csíksomlyó, collected and copied European and Hungarian music; his most important work, from the point of view of the drama corpus, is his *Cantus Catholici* (or *Cantionale cum cottis scriptum*), first published by the then new printing house of Csíksomlyó in 1676.¹⁴ The passion plays often refer to several chants of Kájoni's collection, either quoting it or giving new verses to his music. Kájoni's songs became extremely popular, thus many religious popular songs and folk songs were based on his notes and text. With the exception of some of the later dramas, all the passion plays of Csíksomlyó were written in verse (which form was considered increasingly anachronistic on the 18th century Hungarian stage). Most of the verse forms are quite monotonous; thus when the monotonous verse shifts to some other form we may well guess the appearance of a chant. Since, unfortunately, we know almost nothing of the performances and staging, we cannot separate the recited and sung parts of the plays; nevertheless, we might conclude that many more parts of the plays were sung than are indicated in the manuscripts. The fact that the Csíksomlyó drama corpus might contain quite a few well-known songs has been emphasized by Réka Kővári, the music historian of the critical edition.¹⁵ Kővári identified many parts of the dramas with several pieces of Kájoni, as well as folk chant collections.

13 See his important manuscripts: 1. *Kájoni-codex* copied by M. SEREGÉLYES, B. TASNÁDI, completed by János KÁJONI, 1634-1671. 2. Collection of Latin and Hungarian songs, poems and hymns. 3. *Sacri Conventus. Diversorum Authorum, praesertim Ludovici Viadanae. Opera ac studio R[everendi] P[atris] Fratris Joannis Kájoni, Organistae, et Organifabri [...]*, 1669. 4. *Antiphonae de Sanctis Ordinis Minorum. Opera, labore ac industria Patris Fratris Joannis Kájoni Ordinis Min[orum] Organistae, et organifabri ac Guardini Residentiae in Szárhegy, 1670*. His printed works: 1. *Organo Missale. Opera ac studio Fratris Patris Joannis Kaioni Ordinis Minorum Organistae et Organifabri, Guardini Conventus Mikhaziensis, 1667*.

14 *Cantionale hoc Catholicum, labore Admodum Reverendi Patris Fratris JOANNIS KAJONI [...]*. The 1676 edition was followed by several more. Its modern edition completed with notes: KÁJONI 1979.

15 Cf. *Ferences iskoladrámák I*.

(**Christ's figure**) Unlike in the earlier medieval liturgical plays, where Christ was a rather dignified figure, an emperor or a king, the Csik-somlyó Christ is quite similar to that of the late medieval dramas written mainly in the vernacular and depicting Christ as “the most humane of men”:¹⁶ the frail, suffering, dying and thus poignant figure of Christ could stir up penitence. Due to the Baroque aspect, Christ's torture must have been shown in long detailed scenes.¹⁷

3. The types of passion plays

As in the medieval tradition, the Passion proper is often accompanied by many other elements. According to the plot, i.e. the use of one or more elements, we may identify five groups:

- The Passion proper
- The Passion combined with typological symbolism
- Parables
- Morality plays with the Passion
- Morality plays without the Passion.

3.1. The Passion proper corresponds to the narrowest definition of the Passion:¹⁸ the plot concerns the last week of Christ's life. The chronology starts with the Ministry of Christ (healing the blind and the leper, the raising of Lazarus). The Nativity, Christ's childhood and earlier life are not depicted at all. The trial scenes are composed in three parallel or mirroring levels: the earthly (see the trial scenes before the high priests – Annas, Caiaphas, Herod – and before Pilate), the Heavenly (or the Prophets' process¹⁹), and the Infernal trial (i.e. the quarrelling devils or daemons). The plays depict the penitence and then suicide of Judas following his betrayal. Judas, and quite often Peter, recite a planctus. The most frequent scenes are that of Mary and Jesus taking their farewell in Bethany, the trials with Caiaphas, Herod and Pilate, the death sentence,

16 WICKHAM 1978, 43; MCGUIRE 2001, 90.

17 For example, the use of the exact numbers of Christ's suffering (i.e. the lashes, or the drops of his tears and blood) of *arma Christi* (cf. MEDGYESY 2009, 234-241, 439-443).

18 Cf. the entries by Alane E. KNIGHT (*Passion Play*) and Michael T. DAVIS (*Passion Cycle*) in the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, Vol. 9, 1987, 447-448 and 446-447.

19 Deus Pater consults the Prophets about the acceptance of Christ's sacrifice for mankind.

the detailed torture of Christ, Judas's suicide following his self-accusing monologue, the lament (often laments) of Mary, the Crucifixion and the death of Christ. The closing scene of the plays is that of the Crucifixion, or the mourning Virgin with the women, or Joseph of Arimathea (often with Nicodemus) under the Cross asking for Christ's body.

3.2. The Passion combined with typological symbolism. Scenes from the Old Testament serve as typological symbols, i.e. pre-figurations fulfilled by Christ's advent: quite a few plays use the expressions *figurae*, *praefigurae* or *umbræ* as a shadow of the Passion proper. The explanation of typology is always given in the prologue and often repeated in the epilogue. The authors show exceptional Biblical and theological knowledge, as they inherited a method of thinking quite unknown to present-day readers: the comprehensive view of history as one continuous process from Creation to Doomsday through typological symbolism. This shows a close link with the Western tradition and the medieval aspect. The scenes and persons chosen from the Old Testament are likely those of the falsely accused, the betrayed, the innocent tortured, mocked and killed. The types symbolically connected either to Christ's figure, life and death, or to man's Redemption, are carefully explained. There is only one scene from the Old Testament which is not a symbol or type, but the logical starting point of the plot: the Fall of Adam and Eve (and sometimes also the story of Cain and Abel) is used as the direct antecedent to Christ's Passion, thus providing the explanation for the Father's (Deus Pater) and the Prophets' decision regarding the acceptance of Christ's sacrifice.

3.3. Parables are not used very often. They generally account for the introductory scenes of the Passion (e.g. the wicked tenants are depicted quite often).

3.4-5. Morality plays are perhaps the best known medieval genre, presenting psychomachia, and teaching *ars vivendi* and *ars moriendi*. Man's figure seems to be rather passive with active allegories around him fighting for him, while man has to make the most serious decision, since he has to choose between right and wrong. The most frequent allegorical figures are those of the seven deadly sins, Lucifer and his Devils, Tentator, Caro, Sanguis, Mundus, Mors, Dolor, Deus, Angels, Genus Humanum, Justitia, Charitas, Misericordia, Amor, Sapientia, etc. These figures appear both in the passion story strongly influencing the earthly decisions, thus affecting the fate of Christ, and in the morality plays as tempters and consolers when

a young man has to choose his way of life and future. No wonder school teachers often presented morality stories of sinful young men living for worldly joy and ending up in Hell, or turning to Christ and gaining eternity. In the 48 passion plays of *Liber exhibens*, there are six morality plays about young men who either make the wrong choice and are damned for ever, or convert to Christ.²⁰ In all of these morality plays, Christ himself appears, calling the boys to follow, describing his pains in a monologue; sometimes Christ calls them from the Cross or bespatters his own blood onto the face of the boy.²¹ The drama performed in 1752 presents the Passion story with several prefigurations inserted, but there are also traces of a morality play in the third act involving the fight of Amor Divinus and Satan for the souls of three young men; finally, the young men – called *Theophilus primus, secundus* and *tertius* – convert and follow Christ.²²

The Csíksomlyó corpus might show a tendency to leave the Passion itself out of morality plays. The earlier half of the corpus combines the Passion with psychomachia, using allegorical figures, with the soul of some young men in the centre. In the earliest dramas we suppose that the whole Passion story was presented or chanted as an argument for the youth; e.g. the instructions of the 1737 play indicate singing the Passion story of Christ (scena 9).²³ Later, probably, only some scenes of the Passion were shown. In a later drama of 1758 there are no longer any allegories: a father, wanting a good tutor for his six sons and six daughters, finally chooses an old woman, who turns to be the devil himself; after the realistic story, Christ's Passion shows the result of this education, when the twelve wicked boys and girls become his tormentors and the play ends with the Crucifixion.

20 Cf. MEDGYESY 2009, 69-72.

21 1737; 1753 version played in Esztelnek, a village with a Franciscan school in the 18th century, some 60 km from Csíksomlyó.

22 This part of the drama might go back to the 13th century play of Rutebeuf (*Le miracle de Théophile*), which inspired some songs and hymns in Central Europe. (Cf. MEDGYESY 2009, 80)

23 The earliest play that can be considered (partly) as a morality play is from 1725: its first scene is a morality one with a man living for worldly joy and cynically inviting a skeleton or skull; he is suddenly carried away by Death and then, after a dispute involving the man's Body and Soul, his soul is finally taken to Hell. The personal story of the man refers to the whole of mankind and the play ends with the Last Judgement.



4. Special features of the passion plays

(Planctus Mariae) The sources of the plays are similar to the Western passion play tradition going back to the early Christian era and to the practice of the Eastern Church²⁴ with the use of apocryphal testaments, mainly *Acta Pilati* (B) and the *Gospel of Nicodemus*.²⁵ One of the favourite, indeed extremely popular sources of the Csíksomlyó authors was also based on apocryphal testaments: a long book translated by the Clarissa nun (*Ordo Sanctae Clarae*) Judit Újfalussy from Czech about the life of Christ and his parents, with Mary's family and life in the central focus.²⁶ Most of our Hungarian plays contain at least one lament (sometimes two, or even three) or *planctus* of the Virgin, and this phenomenon definitely justifies Sandro Sticca's analysis of the role *Planctus Mariae* had in early and late medieval literature.²⁷ Mary's role is emphasized and strengthened by the fact that the Csíksomlyó dramas depict only the last week of Christ's life: from his ministry to his death on the cross.

(Other laments) *Planctus* had an important role in all Good Friday performances in Csíksomlyó: both verses and songs recited and sung by the spectators together with the students on the stage strengthened mourning and penitence, and thus their personalized involvement. As we have seen, these parts frequently inserted in the performances helped to recall the Passion, through the laments of man's inexpressible sin. Thus we have the lament of Judas (1744), as well as Peter's (1744, 1753) and Adam's (1727, 1744). The declamations of the Angels' are often laments to be repeated by the audience.

24 EDWARDS 1977, mainly pp. 30–40; STICCA 1988, 33–34. Cf. the Virgin “has strong liturgical affiliations in the form of the Latin hymn known as the *planctus Mariae*...” (*York Mystery Plays* 1984, 222.)

25 Cf. *The Apocryphal New Testament*. The Csíksomlyó passion plays most often use the apocryphal scenes of Bethany, Judas's suicide and *Uxor Pilati*'s message to her husband; the central role of Mary can also be connected to the early Eastern tradition.

26 *Makula nélkül való tükör, mely az Üdvözítő Jesus Kristusnak és szent szüleinek életét... és halálát adgya elé* [A Stainless Mirror Showing the Life and Death of our Saviour and his Parents], Nagyszombat, 1712. The first Hungarian edition was followed by more than ten others. The original book was written by the German Capuchin (Order of Capuchin Friars Minor) Martin von Cochem (Martin Linius, 1634–1712) titled *Das grosse Leben Christi* (first edition: 1677), which was translated into Czech by the Capuchin Engelbert of Nymburk (Prague, 1698) and was translated into Hungarian by Judit Újfalussy (1676–1738). Cf. VIDA 1969.

27 STICCA 1988



(Defaults) As opposed to the best known medieval corpus, the triumphal cross (*crux invicta*) and the resurrection are completely omitted, thus making a tragic story without any relief. The scenes of *Harrowing of Hell* (*Descent into Hell*) and *Doomsday* (so frequently used in Western mystery plays) are also omitted, as both would provide a kind of relief. For a similar reason there is no *comic* action or figure on the stage, because nothing must disturb the mournful atmosphere that the performance aims to create. We interpret the lack of these parts with the special occasion of the Csíksomlyó performances: Good Friday was the day of mourning and penitence where there was no place for relief.

(Supernatural elements) On the Csíksomlyó stage, supernatural beings appear only in two types of scenes: one recalls the typical Franciscan heritage of Prophets' process and of heavenly trial (being often combined in one scene or a series of scenes in Csíksomlyó); the other type of supernatural scene resembles morality plays, when devils, angels, daemons, the seven deadly sins and other allegories (Mundus, Caro, Amor Divinis, etc.) appear. Apart from these situations, there is no supernatural scene in Csíksomlyó. This relatively *limited* use of supernatural elements, as well as the closing scene of these plays, may also differ from the Western tradition where medieval mystery and passion plays frequently depicted supernatural scenes and figures. As the message of the triumphal cross (*crux invicta*) is completely omitted in Csíksomlyó, the closing scene remains on earth; there is no relief, all plays end in and with sorrow. This ending is intelligible if we think of the main purpose of these performances. Christ is by no means the protagonist and, as we have seen, the *earthly* protagonist of these dramas, the Csíksomlyó Christ, is very much a *man*. Godly role is passed to *Deus Pater*, who appears on the stage only once, in the opening scene(s) in Heaven when he accepts the Prophets' decision about his son's sacrifice. In the closing scene, however, Christ calls his Father (*Eli, Eli, lamma sabachtani?*), and his last words painfully emphasize the distance between man on Earth and God in Heaven, thus the Father provides only a *distant* framework for his son's earthly route. This tragic distance, the tragic lack of a helping God, the tragic lack of both the resurrection and of the triumphal cross can be called almost blasphemous. With that change, the Earth, i.e. the worldly and human side, becomes emphasized, the main scene of the stage becomes the Earth and man. Unearthly scenes like Heaven and Hell are necessary only in order to show the consequences of man's choice.

5. Some words about Minorite mystery and passion plays

About half the published Hungarian Minorite dramas (as well as the data) of the 18th century focus on devotion; thus they belong to the complex genre of mystery plays. These allegorical morality plays, parables and passion plays recall the medieval tradition. The fact that the Minorite passion plays are very similar in view, aspect and purpose to those of Csíksomlyó, might call our attention to a special Franciscan heritage. The Jesuits and the Piarists stopped performing religious, especially devotional pieces, right in the first half of the 18th century, only Franciscan schools kept the tradition: fully in Csíksomlyó and partly in Minorite schools. The bulk of Minorite texts come from Kanta in Transylvania, not far from Csíksomlyó, so some mutual influence is plausible. Such an assertion regarding mutual contact is still to be fully justified, though we have some proofs already.²⁸ We must add that the same school of Kanta was the one we called an “island” for performing the fine adaptations of Molière, so it is perhaps the best example of the co-existence of old and new theatre.

6. Summary

Our research team has published one annotated volume containing the first 14 dramas of the corpus. This was the first edition, where the critical notes were translated into English. We are working on the next five volumes of Observant Franciscan school dramas. When reaching the last, i.e. the sixth, volume we aim to reveal and publish the complete network of links and borrowings of all the plays. In this way, we shall have a complete view of the drama heritage that combined medieval and Baroque features, generating a long-lasting tradition, which is still vivid in our times.

28 In a Minorite passion play, we found the text of a Csíksomlyó fragment. The Minorite drama is the only passion play in the Hungarian corpus which pairs an episode of the Old Testament to every scene of the Passion. The prologue and the epilogue carefully explain the typological connection of every parallel scene. (See: *Minorita iskoladrámák*, No. 5.)

KATALIN CZIBULA

Symbols of Water: From Spectacle to Verbal Symbolism

Water as an ancient symbol

“Water refers to continuous movement as well as quiet eternity. There is water everywhere. *Theios hydór ouden estin*: there is nothing without the divine water. Water is the beginning of the existing world: *arché tón ontón*. Water is history, it is eternal, because the surface and the depth of time is water, too.”¹ Béla Hamvas expresses the importance of water in human thought and history from antiquity to the present time, as the symbolic interpretation of water is as old as mankind. “Every element is adequate for developing metaphysics, thus the understanding of the world is possible through analogies; but water is the most appropriate element for this.”²

European philosophical thought goes back to Thales, who considered water as the source of life and world. “Thales thought of the living world as one full of daemons (*daimones*) and controlled by a divine spirit. This divine strength gives life to water. That was an important step: the cosmological explanation is based not on a story, but on the deliberate actions of more or less anthropomorphic gods. Water is existent everywhere, due to its properties. This theory stresses the unity of the world.”³ Water plays a key role in ancient Egyptian, Babylonian, Sumeric and later Graeco-Roman mythology; it is also one of the main symbols of the Old and New Testaments. Christian symbolism goes back to Graeco-Roman mythology, but the role

1 HAMVAS 1988, 457.

2 Ibid., 454-455.

3 HUYGHE 2000, 113.

of water is inherited from Jewish teaching – it is connected to purification. That is how water, fountains and wells became the symbols of purity, later of healing and thus of life in the Christian arts.⁴ Possibly it was St. John Chrysostom or St. Basil who delivered the famous speech about water: “... water washes and purifies everything. That is the main property of water spread throughout Creation in many different ways; it becomes sour in grapes, sweet in oil, white in lilies, red in roses, nutritive in fruits, strength for growth in trees; it provides drink for four-legged-animals and life for fishes, and it cleanses human bodies. Our life is made possible with the help water ... human speech is inadequate to describe the mercy of water, as one cannot measure the waters of the seas with words ...”⁵

Baroque mysticism concentrated on the invisible, eternal essence, instead of the visible, accidental phenomena. This happened through symbols referring to the world; Baroque had a close contact with early Christian mysticism and biblical interpretations, as well as Graeco-Roman symbolism.

Water as a spectacle

Studying water as one of the main elements of the 18th century spectacles, one has to deal with gardening and the garden symbols of the era, as theatricality is provided not only by the closed or framed space of the theatre, but also by parks and gardens. In this paper, we would not deal with Baroque gardening art, but we speak of the Baroque garden as a theatrical space, where water plays an important role as one of the elements of the spectacle.

The garden has always been a diminished copy of the Universe, an earthly Paradise, in both Christian and ancient Eastern mythology. It is used very early as the symbol of life.⁶ The everyday explanation, that water was a need in these lands, is not sufficient, because water has also been a general symbol of fertility and prosperity.

Biblical sources highlight the extremely relevant importance of water, wells and fountains.⁷ Wells and fountains symbolize the Virgin Mary.

4 VANYÓ 1988, 127-133.

5 Ibid., 130-131.

6 See *Szimbólumtár* 2005, 263-264.

7 The *Song of Songs* (*Canticle of Canticles*) addresses the bride as “Fons hortorum, putens

That is why *hortus conclusus* – the trellis of roses referring to Mary – is used in the Renaissance: it is a new composition with the fountain symbolizing life in the centre. Later, the Baroque garden inherits *hortus conclusus*, especially its fountain as the symbol of *varietas* with multiple references.

Also in the Renaissance, there is another, worldly concept of gardens, which uses water as a main element: the *hortus deliciarum* (the garden of delights).⁸

These two types of garden (i.e. the religious one and the place of earthly delights) are woven together in the Baroque world, which is mystical and hedonistic at the same time. We have some Hungarian examples of these Baroque gardens, though unfortunately we have only a few data from before the 19th century. We definitely know – e.g. from reports about the park of Esterháza and its festivities – that the Hungarian aristocracy was very fond of spectacles in gardens and parks. The Esterházy family organized spectacles in Cseklész, where they also used the elements of the nearby river, the Danube; the Grassalkovich family had similar festivities in Pozsonyivánka. In northern Hungary, the Jesuits of Eger performed a *theatrum navalis* in 1724, which was produced in the garden of the famous Fourcontrasti palace of the archbishop, Ferenc Barkóczy. (His palace and its wonderful garden became quite notorious due to the worldly joys of its festive occasions. Unsurprisingly, following the death of Barkóczy, it was angrily demolished by the succeeding archbishop). For the moment, we examine these festivities from the point of view of water, which was one of the main elements of the space provided by the Baroque gardens. As we shall see, Baroque stage design, scenery and gardens were closely related in the 17th century. As stage design and scenery were composed of the elements of real gardens, by the 18th century a new type of garden was created on and by the stage, too. “Poetry should be similar to painting: it was the demand of the old poetics, thus it was reached through scenography...”⁹

Representative examples of scenery can be found in the collection of Jesuit Stage Designs of Sopron: this is a unique collection in Central Europe and was discovered in Sopron (though it was not made or collected

aquarum viventium” (4.15.), her virginity is expressed also by the garden-water symbol: “Hortus conclusus, soror mea, sponsa, Hortus conclusus, fons signatus.” (4.12)

8 *Szimbólumtár* 2005, 265.

9 BUTTLAR 1999, 33.

there). Fortunately, the collection was published in 1999.¹⁰ The collection contains a surprisingly large number of drawings that reveal the symbolism of Baroque gardens, parks and water. In the preface, Marcello Fagiolo classifies these pictures as a special type – *Mystic Gardens* – and calls attention to some typical representation of *hortus conclusus* (No. 42, 51) being a special form of Baroque garden.¹¹ These pictures show most of the features of Renaissance representations, i.e. trees lining the borders of the garden (*lignum vitae*), fountains (*fons vitae*), often a trellis of roses, sculptural elements of shells or animals, allegorical human figures and, what is more, once we see allegorical animals, too – four swans floating on the water (No. 57).

Besides the allegories, some numbers and also components of the same numbers get a symbolic meaning. These mystic numbers reveal some eternal, deep truths for the lazy human mind: “Intuere caelum et terram et mare et quaecumque in eis vel desuper fulgent vel deorsum repunt vel volant vel natant. Formas habent quia numerus habent; adime illis haec, nihil erunt.”¹²

One of the most frequent numbers of fountains is *three*, either as a lonely number or as a certain rate combining *two* and *four*. Pictures No. 51 and 61 show a fountain in a triple architectural frame; two wells surround a statue in one, and two statues form the frame of the well in the other one. In picture No. 63, the three fountains of the triple grotto are connected by four human figures. Revealing just a symbol of trinity would be too simplified, because dualism stands also for life and death, constancy and change: “Water proves the mysterious conservation of matter, the cycle of nature, the eternal repetition of form, space and time. Thus the motionless sea refers to eternity and the running river refers to the indifferent flow of time.”¹³ The figure *four* definitely stands for the four elements, which are often represented in the collection. Trinity is connected not only to the divine (holy) trinity, but gets a new meaning in the 18th century: the Freemasons spoke of the triple properties of water as the creator of a unity. In alchemy there are three types of water: female, male and androgynous water, the last-mentioned being *aqua ignificata*, or

10 *The Sopron Collection of Jesuit Stage Designs*

11 *Ibid.*, 16.

12 BÀN 1988, 111: quoted from Saint Augustine's *De Libero Arbitrio*.

13 *Szimbólumtár* 2005, 509-510.

burning water. “*Aqua ignificata* is the combination of water and logos (i.e. the burning spirit, mind, thought, the creative fire).”¹⁴

The allegories of water in the designs of Sopron emphasize the importance of two, three and four: around the female figure, water pours in the fountain from the mouths of four dolphins, two reeds are woven together around her, while behind her the water of the well springs in three arches.

According to the iconographic description, we find an extremely rich *hortus conclusus* in picture No. 51, where the symbols refer to the Virgin Mary: “Depiction of a garden with the symbol of the Virgin Mary. The garden itself – a *hortus conclusus* – is also a symbol of the purity of the Virgin Mary... The garden at the centre of the illustration is divided by two lines of parterres, with four parterres in both. The hillside enclosing the rear of the garden is overgrown with roses. Three niches are cut into the opposite wall, with fountains in the two smaller niches to the left and right. A winged putto standing on a tall plinth holds aloft a medallion with initials. The medallion resembles a monstrance and is surrounded by rays of light. The initials consist of the letters that make up the name of Mary, in a similar fashion to other *hortus conclusus* depictions, where the letters of Mary’s name are used as ornaments in the garden. Trees set in stone vases stand on the high plinth between the arches. A line of six cypresses stands before the hillside, cypresses being the trees in God’s garden. The front of the garden is flanked by two flights of steps and enclosed by an arched stone wall topped by four stone vases. In the centre stands an altar shaped like a tomb, its upper level divided by pilasters and crowned by an empty medallion. A red cross appears on the fence surrounding the pedestal.”¹⁵

Here we find the symbols strengthened by numbers: the dualism of *two*, the holiness of the trinity, the tripleness in the complexity of water; *four* symbolizing the four gospels, but also the elements, the seasons and human temper, and finally *six* is in the form of a cypress. Here the cypress is not the symbol of death, but represents the Virgin,¹⁶ and the figure of *six* hidden in the cypresses points to water as the symbol of life and Mary: “According to the Pythagorean Philolaos, the figure of *six* is the chain in-

14 HAMVAS 1988, 454; *Szimbólumtár* 2005, 512.

15 *The Sopron Collection of Jesuit Stage Designs*, 176; See also: BARDI 2001

16 *Lexikon christlicher Kunst*, 1986, 61.

dependent of the creative universe, which also connects the things inside. The figure marks the link between material nature and idea, just at the point where ideas become material. According to the theory of numbers, the number of water is *six*.¹⁷

We find another type of water representation in the collection: the one connected to the allegory of salvation (see pictures No. 5, 6 and 7). In pictures No. 5 and 7 we see a small boat on the surface of water symbolizing the erring man who is saved from the stormy sea by salvation. The Virgin Mary as the allegory of good death awaits man in the gate of salvation, while in the other picture, the crucified Christ as an anchor lifts man out of water. In picture No. 6 “The crucified Christ who gave His own life to redeem the sins of the world is here symbolized as a fountain. He appears both as the statue in the fountain and as symbolic fountain. When His side was pierced by Longinus’s spear, there issued forth both blood and water (John, 19:34). The blood flowing from Christ’s wounds is the water of life ... Through baptism, the faithful are born again in the Church: the Blood of Christ is the Water of Life. The chalice to the right of the illustration is the one used at the Last Supper (a chalice also being a recognized symbol of Christ the Redeemer). The symbolic figure of Ecclesia (the Church) is also often represented holding a chalice to catch the blood that flows from Christ’s wounds.”¹⁸

The most complex allegory of water can be seen in picture No. 35. It is interpreted by Géza Staud as the boat of Faith having lost its way, but according to Éva Knapp it represents the strength of Faith. Anyway, the scene of a boat lost in the storm is connected to the human soul which has lost its Faith. “In all probability an allegorical representation of the redeeming power of the Christian faith or of love. A boat appears on a choppy sea, its prow emblazoned with a heart, the symbol of the love of Christ. The mast of the boat is in the shape of the Cross and a spear: both of them an allusion to the Christian faith and to Christ’s Passion. The boat is steered by a winged Cupid, his oar an arrow, a quiver full of arrows on his back. Waves break against the rocks that flank the bay. From two pairs of caves, child figures, personifying the winds, direct squalls onto the surface of the sea, and from a cave high in a rock adjoining

17 HAMVAS (1988, 449) refers to the ancient identification of numbers: 1 = light; 2 = oxygen; 3 = hydrogen; 4 = gaseous material; 5 = fire; 6 = water.

18 *The Sopron Collection of Jesuit Stage Designs*, 90; BARDI 2001

the shore Aeolus, the ruler of the winds, here depicted as a grey-haired old man with a beard, conjures up a storm in the bay. Above the bay, to both left and right, Furies are seen descending on their chariots (moving pieces of painted stage décor or flying machines). They hold burning torches in their left hands and snakes in their right. The chariots, which ride on banks of cloud, are made of the jaw bones of carnivorous beasts and are drawn by bats.”¹⁹

We shall see that this interpretation of the visual appearance on the stage will influence the symbolism of the text.

Symbolism of water in the drama texts

The visual and verbal arts both use symbols connected to water – in Graeco-Roman literature as well as in Jewish-Christian symbolism. (For example, the allegory of the state’s boat goes back to Horace, but the thread is much longer, reaching back to Alkaios and Theognis.

The boat in the storm as the symbol of human life in crisis is frequently used in Jewish-Christian literature. Let us quote some words from the testament of Nephtali: “Then a sailing boat (filled with dried fish apart from the rooms of the captain and the crew) arrived, and bore the inscription: Jacob’s boat. Our father told us to get into the boat. When we embarked a terrible storm arose, and our father was swept away but he could seize the rocks. We were thrown by the sea, the boat was filled with water and was almost broken. Then Joseph got into a small boat and left us. The ten of us seized ten logs, but Levi and Juda stayed in their place. We, all the others, were spread all around the world ...”²⁰ The author tells the story of Israel’s diaspora in the language of allegory.

We find a similar allegorical meaning in Saint Augustine’s *Confessions*, in his own story, going out to sea, because he wanted to get away from his doubts. He hid this task even from his mother:

“...et finxi me amicum nolle desedere, donec vento facto navigaret. Et mentitus sum matri, et illi matri, et evasi: quia et hoc tu dimisisti mihi

19 *The Sopron Collection of Jesuit stage Designs*, 148; BARDI 2001

20 Quoted in VANYÓ 1988, 137-138.

misericorditer, servans me ab aquis maris, plenum exsecrandis sordibus, usque ad aquam gratiae tuae, qua me abluto siccaentur flumina maternorum oculorum... Flavit ventus, et implevit vela nostra, et littus subtrahit aspectibus nostris: in quo mane illa insaniebat dolore..."²¹

In the text, Augustine's journey is both real and spiritual, just like Monica's voyage following her son represents both a realistic scene and the spiritual trip of a woman of firm faith:

"Jam venerat ad me mater pietate fortis, terra marique me seguens, et in periculis omnibus de te securo. Nam et per marina discrimina ipsos nautas consolabatur, a quibus rudes abyssi viatores, cum perturbantur, consolari solent; pollicens eis perventionem cum salute, quia hoc ei tu per visum pollicitus eras."²²

As we have seen, the boat lost on the stormy sea has two main interpretations in European culture: the allegory of state, of government, and also the allegory of man lost in the trials of life. Both interpretations were used already during the Renaissance. In Shakespeare's works, we find examples for both meanings. 1. The opening scene of *The Tempest*, where the lost boat marks how ineffective the earthly power is; 2. In *Twelfth Night*, where the storm on the sea is continued in the love labyrinth of the twins, thus Viola sums it up:

O time thou must untangle this, not I;
It is too hard a knot for me to untie.
(Act II, Scene 2.)

Now, we turn to Hungarian dramas and examine the main symbols in 18th century drama texts. First of all, we find verbal expressions bearing this tradition in the Baroque and neo-Classical Jesuit plays, which stuck to the traditions of Classical tragedies.

Ferenc Faludi's figure, Fokás, mentions political tricks when speaking of governing a state:

21 *Conf. Lib. V. Cap. VIII*, 15.

22 *Conf. Lib. VI. Cap. I*, 1.

“Fokás: We stepped in a deep sea, and we are already in the deepest depth, and though we could not catch anything, at least we stirred up water.”²³

Andreas Friz uses it as the metaphor of the unstable, transitory and unpredictable:

“We have just shown the young Salomon’s master who once had enough of the court: of the unrestrained young king and the immorality of his counsellors. That is why he exchanged the court, which is more unstable than the waters of the Danube, for the peaceful forest and a cave.”²⁴

This symbol can be the leading motif of a whole drama, as in Ádám Kereskényi’s *Augustine’s Conversion*. As we have seen, the author could easily find allegories from *Confessiones*, but Kereskényi worked out a real symbolic system. The first act ends with the instruction: “Here we see the stormy sea at the coasts of the city of Carthago.”²⁵

This is a uniquely exact definition of place, given that in school dramas place is identified with loose generalities. (They give either a geographical location, e.g. a town, or some other scene, e.g. in or in front of the royal palace, or in a rocky part, etc.) The instruction quoted has a symbolic value: the three friends – Augustine, Alipius and Nebridius – stand on the coast of the stormy sea and catch sight of a boat; they would embark and go to Rome in order to find their faith there. This allegorical meaning is stressed in the first scene of the second act, which starts with an exclamation. While the friends speak of the search for prudence and truth, Nebridius cries out: “Oh, Heaven! Let this noisy sea be smooth today, let the angry wind slow down, let us be taken to Rome!”²⁶ What did Rome mean for the 18th century Catholic spectator? Naturally, the centre of the Church. Thus the picture of the erring man lost in the stormy sea acquires another meaning: longing for Rome.

Soon a new figure appears who is the author’s product (i.e. he cannot be found in *Confessiones*), in order to eliminate the important female figure of Monica, mother of Augustine. The new figure is Navigius, younger brother of Augustine, who brings the desperate message of their mother.

23 FALUDI Ferenc, *Constantinus Porphyrogenitus* (Jezsuita iskoladrámák I., 136.)

24 Andreas FRIZ, *Salamon, Magyarország királya, Sommás elő köszönet* (Jezsuita iskoladrámák I., 252.)

25 KERESKÉNYI Ágoston, *Ágostonnak megtérése* (Jezsuita iskoladrámák I., 504.)

26 Ibid, 505.

Seemingly, his name comes from the verb *navigare*. Other symbols of *Confessiones* are used in the drama (like Monica's dream, her cry and later the symbolic garden scene of the conversion), but uncertainty and doubts are represented in both the real story and in the spiritual development.

"Augustine: The sea is calming down, slowly, very slowly. Oh, Heaven! Potitianus and my Alipius will start, and without me. Let the sea waves role in a terrible storm, let the winds blow, because I want to gain time! But it is useless. The waves are disappearing..."²⁷

The first two acts show Augustine's preparations for his voyage; the boat, the embarking and the voyage are the elements of the realistic plot, of the dramatic action: the friends want to go to Rome, wait for a fair wind, but cannot start because of the storm. Augustine fights with the storm of his own soul, he does not know if he should go or stay, whether he wants to go to Rome (to the Church). Thus the first level of the text provides the verbal reality of the boat and the sea, but the second level reveals already another interpretation: "Augustine, you are not tossed by the storm";²⁸ and "I feel the coast very close, but my hesitation pushes me back to the deep sea".²⁹ In this context, even the simplest action (and the text conveying it) becomes symbolic: "Keep the Boat prepared", "Step in the Boat", "Let us go to the Boat". This layer of the text, both its real and allegoric strata, disappears from the third act. The further stations of Augustine's conversion follow the text of *Confessiones* and concentrate on the process leading to philosophical knowledge and Christian theology. In the last two acts (IV-V) the questions of human will and error are shown again, on the levels of real life and dramatic action: now Augustine already accepts the main principles of Catholic theology, his intellect is already convinced, but he does not want to give up his previous life, he does not want to exchange physical delights for asceticism. The boat-sea-storm appears again as the symbols of his doubts and dangers. He is scolded by his spiritual leader while "the hesitating hope goes down at the coast".³⁰

"Simplicianus, I came here to help you. Oh, how often and how close you have been to the coast! Oh, how weak the breeze was, which took

27 Ibid, 508.

28 Ibid, 526.

29 Ibid, 531.

30 Ibid, 591.

your boat back to the deep waters, though the boat could have been safely anchored!”³¹

This verbal expression recalls the spectacle again. We should not forget that in the 17th century, the stage designs of the Sopron collection were primarily aimed at visibility in relation to the spectators, but one century later it was enough to express the symbol with words: Christ is the safe anchor for human beings on the stormy sea of their lives.

31 Ibid, 583.



JÚLIA DEMETER

Paths between the Real and the Unreal: Allegories on the Jesuit Stage

“An Embleme is but a silent Parable.”¹

1. Emblems and emblematic dramas

*A Picture, though with most exactnesse made,
Is nothing but the Shadow of a Shade.
For, ev'n our living Bodies, (though they seeme
To others more, or more in our esteeme)
Are but the shadowes of that Reall-being,
Which doth extend beyond the Fleshly-seeing;
And, cannot be discerned, till we rise
Immortall-objects, for Immortall-eyes.*²

George Wither's poem describing the emblem tells us that reality is beyond what we see.

The present paper deals with exactly the same idea in the theatre, with the relation of the visual and verbal aspects of 17th-18th century (mostly Jesuit) school performances where the story, the plot taking place on the stage, had something behind (or beyond) it, a secret meaning in the depth to be decoded.

17th-18th century dramas often had two parallel layers: the plot (main plot), and its *allegorical* interpretation shown in the *framing* scenes. (All the prologues, epilogues, interludes, choruses, etc. are in a *framing* posi-

1 *To the Reader = Emblemes by Fran[cis] Quarles*, London, 1658. (The preface is missing from the first edition of 1635.)

2 George Wither [1588–1667] (in: *A Collection of Emblems*, 1635) Quoted as a motto of the chapter *The Jacobean Masque* (KOGAN 1984, 39.)



tion within the structure: every two of them provide the frame of a part of the main plot; thus I call them *framing scenes*.) I chose historical dramas with a continuous allegorical story parallel with the realistic main plot.

According to Peter Daly, “[d]uring the 16th and 17th centuries, drama in its various forms was the most emblematic of all the literary art, combining as it does a visual experience of character and gesture, silent tableaux and active scene, with a verbal experience of the spoken and occasionally the written word.”³ The emblematic drama uses the interaction of text and vision.⁴

“‘Emblem’ originally meant mosaic, insert or inlay, and it is no coincidence that individual emblems make miniature statements complete in themselves.”⁵ “The emblem is introduced by a short motto, or *inscriptio*, beneath which stands a *pictura*, and beneath this again is printed an explanation or *subscriptio*.”⁶ “The emblem can be regarded as a *mode of thought* combining thing or word with meaning, and as an *art form* combining visual images and textual components.”⁷

On the stage, the equivalent of *pictura* and *inscriptio* is the main plot called *representation*, the *interpretation* (cf. *subscriptio*) of which is given in the allegorical scenes.⁸ Accordingly, we have two parallel tales: the main plot or plot proper usually depicting a realistic story (most often taken from history) and the framing scenes showing an unrealistic one. The main plot and the allegorical scenes explain and refer to each other; thus, the two parallel plots, with a very special network of inter-relation, provide a complex system of text and *muta*, word and spectacle, earthly and unearthly story, individual and non-individual figures; thus the notion of *real* and *unreal* have lost or changed their original meaning. (Modern studies also speak of a double understanding and decoding when dealing with the framing scenes and the *meta-dramas* inserted in the main plot.⁹)

3 DALY 1979a, 134.

4 Cf. VALENTIN 1978, 317; MEHL 1998; KNAPP 2003. On allegorical scenery and spectacles, see DAVIDSON 1991 examining the English data prior to 1580.

5 DALY 2003, 385.

6 DALY 1979a, 151; DALY 1979b, 21.

7 DALY 2003, 383.

8 DALY 1979a, 162.

9 See: MINER 1990, 41-42.

1.1. The practice on the stage

As pupils of the 17th-18th century must have been rather bored by the Latin plays in the school theatres, the teachers inserted vivid interludes between the acts, thus making understanding and decoding easier. We know very little of the stage design and other circumstances of the performances: the manuscripts contain only a few short instructions and the programmes give only the story. Nevertheless, one finds hidden information in the lists of *dramatis personae*, diaries and memoirs. Based on these descriptions and the beautiful drawings of the *Sopron Collection of Jesuit Stage Designs* (1999), we may state that the framing scenes were extremely spectacular, as the audience had to be cheered up and refreshed after the rather boring Latin main plot. There was little or even no text recited in the framing scenes, which simply stood in contrast with the verbalistic main plot. The allegorical scenes were often mute performances, spectacular *tableaux vivants* without any motion, or, on the other hand, pantomimic motion, with dance becoming most important. Music and spectacle dominated the stage: colourful props and curtains – in the richer schools, also machinery – were used, while speech and dialogues were less important or completely left out. The interludes called *chorus* were the same, i.e. they did not necessarily mean only a song or choir. The spectacular allegorical scenes had some didactic aspects, as they could involve many pupils (sometimes even crowds) on the stage.

This practice goes back to the *intermezzi* of the Medicis' court and the Stuart court masques,¹⁰ but was mainly directed by the 17th-18th century school books on poetics, which were quite sophisticated when dealing with the different parts of drama and prescribed an interpreting allegorical plot in parallel with the main plot. The moral or main message was to be deducted not from the events of the realistic plot but from its pure *idea* ('*ex idea argumenti vel totius fabulae*') shown in the allegorical scenes.¹¹ The message was conveyed by the mythological figures, personalized ideas and properties, the *genuses* of the framing scenes. The events of the

10 For the masques, see: DALY 1979a, 163-167.

11 According to Du Cygne, the most influential 17th century Jesuit theorist, the *prologue*, *epilogue* and the *choruses* – i.e. the framing scenes – were *not* parts of the (main) plot (Martinus DU CYGNE, *De arte poetica libri duo*, Leodii, 1664.). Cf. KNAPP 2003, 164-165. The other theorist, Franz Neumayr, mentioned that the musical interludes parallel with the main plot helped understanding. For Franz Neumayr's *Idea Poesos*, see: VALENTIN 1972, 184-190.

main plot might be accidental but their allegorical interpretation proved to be infallible and eternal. The schools, especially the Jesuit institutes, wanted to strengthen the central didactic messages with repetition, and they directed understanding with the help of music and spectacle affecting sensibility.

2. Terminology: allegory, symbol, emblem

Instructions and descriptions of the framing scenes in the programmes rarely use the word *allegory*.¹² Most often, modern experts and critics use the terms *allegory*, *symbol* and *emblem* as synonyms when referring to 17th-18th century school dramas.

Some theories, though they do not reflect on dramatic allegory, are also important, such as Kennedy's about the two types of allegorical interpretation,¹³ i.e. secular (ancient) and religious; or the seminars of Boys-Stones¹⁴ organized in Corpus Christi College (Oxford) from 1997. Philip Rollinson examined the classical mythological heritage and St. Paul's methodology in interpreting Hellenic and Hebraic allegorical tradition related to typology.¹⁵ We could not really use Donald Dietz's book; although Dietz dealt with dramas, his terminology was based on the Spanish *autos* where, as he emphasized, all motions and actions, i.e. the dramatic situations, made the allegory work.¹⁶

12 A Piarist drama about the Hapsburg Charles VI depicts the emperor's role of driving Hungary back to the road of Catholicism. It compares his role to that of the Good Pastor or Jesus. The complete story is allegorical defined as 'figurative': a bucolic story is depicted with another parallel allegorical plot. The dramatis personae are decoded under the title *Analysis allegoriae*, giving the equivalent of every dramatic figure. (*Gyarapodása a közönséges akolnak Magyarországbán. A Felséges és meggyűzhetetlen római VI. Károly császár s Magyarország kegyelmes királya által, hémes beszéd alatt = Piarista iskoladrámák II.*, No. 22. I have translated *hémes beszéd* as *figurative*.) In the passion play collection of Csíksomlyó, one drama bears the word *allegory* in the title (*Androphilus áldozata: a megváltás allegóriája / The Sacrifice of Androphilus: The Allegory of Salvation; 1742*), but it is a translation where the word *parable* is translated as *allegory* after Jacob Masen's *Tragico-comoedia Parabolosa. Androphilus*. (Cf. also HALBIG 1987)

13 KENNEDY 1972

14 BOYS-STONES 2003

15 ROLLINSON 1981

16 DIETZ 1973, 172-175.

Jon Whitman, while examining the ancient and medieval allegorical techniques (though not dealing with dramas), stated that the “basis for the technique is obliquity – the separation between what the text says, the ‘fiction’, and what it means, the ‘truth’. This very obliquity, however, relies upon an assumed correspondence between the fiction and the truth.”¹⁷ This separation of fiction and truth can be easily seen in the double – ‘realistic’ and ‘unrealistic’ – layers of our school dramas. Whitman identified two main allegorical traditions: (1) “Interpretive allegory claims to discover the truth hidden beneath a text.”¹⁸ “Allegorical interpretation repeatedly departs from the apparent meaning of the text, reinterpreting it in order to sustain a correspondence.”¹⁹ Here, Whitman’s example is Athena who “really corresponds to wisdom”. (2) “Compositional allegory is essentially a grammatical or rhetorical technique. In its most striking form, it personifies abstract concepts and fashions a narrative around them.”²⁰ By the Middle Ages, the use of allegory is integrated in “a broad, allusive framework (...) a rich interpretive and compositional interplay”.²¹ With regards to the interplay of visual and verbal forms, printing brought important changes in the 16th century, “with the expansive composition of books in which elaborate forms of *pictura* and *scriptura* gloss one another”, thus in the emblems Whitman finds “a protean phenomenon (...) resisting comprehensive definition.”²² With the period of and after the 16th century, we arrived at the allegorical school stage, which was not studied by Whitman but whose allegorical system proved to be useful in our survey.

The main reason why we could not really use theories on literary allegory is the fact that allegories on school stage must have been rather simple and intelligible for all the students. That is why our main source is Jean-Marie Valentin, who, dealing with the questions of *allegories* and *emblems* of the 17th-18th century Jesuit stage,²³ stated that the allegorical figures could be easily identified by their costume, props and attributes.

17 WHITMAN 1987, 2.

18 WHITMAN 1987, 3.

19 WHITMAN 1987, 3-4.

20 Personification developed in full scale in Prudentius’s *Psychomachia*. (WHITMAN 1987, 4.)

21 WHITMAN 1987, 122.

22 WHITMAN 2003, 276.

23 VALENTIN 1978, 314-318.

The visual (scenics: *pictura*, icon, *imago*) and the verbal (the text spoken and heard on the stage) parts of the emblem resulted in a complex effect necessary to explain the world as a poetic labyrinth.²⁴ Julia Kristeva, in a semiotic approach, used the term *symbol* for the figures personifying properties in the 13th-15th century mysteries (her examples are heroism, courage, nobility, virtue, etc.).²⁵ Valentin and Kristeva in effect used different terms for similar phenomena.

The most simple allegories are personified properties giving also the name to the figure;²⁶ Daly, as we saw, traces back the personified figures to the tradition of emblems.²⁷ Ancient mythological figures were familiar *topoi* taught in the schools, thus they could be easily identified. There were also more complicated allegorical scenes (*tableaux vivants*, *mutas*, etc.) where a complete allegorical composition was to be decoded,²⁸ but which was repeatedly explained and revealed within and by the text. Due to the didactic purpose, the prologues and epilogues of school dramas always explained and decoded all the allegories. As we have seen, the hidden meaning and message had to be revealed several times: no secret was to remain for the audience by the end of a school performance.

3. Drama programmes and drama texts

Apart from the mere data given in school histories, our knowledge of 17th-18th century school performances is based on two different sources: the programmes and the drama texts (the latter, in most cases, have survived in manuscript). Surprisingly, these two sources are never identical.

The programmes (*periochas*) were distributed among the audience in advance, usually in two or three languages, so that people could follow and understand the story, which was most often performed in Latin. The programme listed all the important information about the performance (title and author of the play, place, time, occasion of the performance,

24 VALENTIN 1978, 318.

25 KRISTEVA 1980, 38-41.

26 CARLSON 1990, 26-27.

27 DALY 1979a, 143-144.

28 The allegorical aspect of Jesuit epic poetry of the 17th-18th century is quite similar, thus it would be worth examining epic and dramatic literature together. Cf. SZÖRÉNYI 1993.

VIP visitors, *dramatis personae*, etc.) and described the plot in detail, scene by scene. The manuscripts do not contain the framing scenes; they only give the continuous story of the main plot. In contrast, the framing scenes (listed in the programmes) include a chorus, a *muta*, a *tableau*, etc., introducing the allegorical layer.

The present paper uses as sources the 31 programmes published in the modern collection of Jesuit school dramas (*Jezsuíta iskoladrámák II.*), and several other programmes published or found in the archives.

3.1. History in the main plot

The realistic historical story of the main plot is proved to be accidental compared to the eternal essence of the allegorical plot. There is nothing temporal, only eternal, and hence Jesuit school drama completely lacks any personal fate or personal tragedy. History, thus emphasized in the allegorical scenes, is reduced to stereotypes and schemas, just as Valentin stated it as the general characteristic of Jesuit histories.²⁹

4. Examples of the inter-relation of the main plot and the allegorical scenes

4.1. Values to infiltrate

Jesuit schools and their theatre can be described as a healthy mixture of idealism and practicality. In 1614, general Aquaviva's³⁰ decree banned all performances depicting a "double power" (i.e. faction, usurpation, struggle for the throne) and tyranny;³¹ nevertheless, most historical dramas involved usurpers and pretenders, and turbulent struggles for power. There was also a deep interest in history, which was used in the form of parables, examples for the present. Jesuits had to find a delicate balance: one of the main practical purposes of their education was to train loyal statesmen, which task often proved to be in sharp contrast with their teaching on the pursuit of eternal values. Order and harmony were desirable, while everyday courtly and political life was mostly dominated by disorder and

29 VALENTIN 1978, 337-338; VALENTIN 1983-84.

30 Claudio Aquaviva (1543-1615), the fifth General of the Society of Jesus, one of its most important leaders.

31 VALENTIN 1978, 259.

disharmony. Jesuit playwrights tried to solve the antagonism of political loyalty and eternal values with a sort of classification of kings and courtiers: the good rulers and courtiers follow God's laws (and St. Paul's words on the duties of a sovereign) and in this way they unite eternal and political order. Evil rulers, on the other hand, follow their daily interests, neglect their duties and, finally, fail.

Below, we present some typical examples of allegorical framing scenes explaining, interpreting and/or altering the message of the historical main plot in relation to power and values.

4.2. Female characters and values

There was a strict ban on female roles in Jesuit theatre, but in practice no one kept to this rule, partly because they were eager to call attention to the threat coming from women. The use of female figures in historical stories generally resulted in a much more complex and ambiguous dramatic climax than in the more simple plays with only masculine power struggles.³² In the two programmes quoted below, the female principal reveals rather strange views on fate, tragedy and justice.

4.2.1. *Arsinoe*, Nagyszombat, 1730³³

The *real* story of *Arsinoe* is known from history. In the drama, there is a crime in *Arsinoe*'s past: she poisoned her stepson in order to keep her throne. At the beginning of the play, *Arsinoe* is the legal queen of Macedonia but her brother, *Ptolomaeus* the usurper, conquered the whole kingdom except for one town, the fortress of which he keeps under siege. Though *Ptolomaeus* promised loyalty to *Arsinoe*, he wants to get her throne. *Arsinoe* is in love with *Demeter* (*Demetrius*) and *Ptolomaeus* hopes to use the queen's passion in order to gain power. Due to some misunderstanding, *Demeter* dies in a duel, and *Ptolomaeus* arrests one of *Arsinoe*'s two sons. *Ptolomaeus* promises peace, therefore *Arsinoe* gives

32 See: CZIBULA 2003; DEMETER 2002 and 2011

33 Világhi István: *Arsinoe*, Nagyszombat, 1730 = *Jezsuita iskoladrámák* II., programme No. 17; Budapest, OSZK Theatre History Collection, Pro 18. The performance lasted for seven hours, with about 90-100 players. The framing scenes must have been vivid, interesting and most probably mute scenes with much movement, pantomimic elements and music.

up the fortress. Ptolomaeus does not keep his promise but kills both sons of Arsinoe and the story ends with Arsinoe learning about the death of her sons (she even catches sight of the head of her beheaded son) and heading into exile.

Ptolomaeus the usurper remains the king – this conclusion is rather upsetting, especially for a school tragedy; remember: “*the time is*” not “*out of joint*”, the school stage must “*set it right*” within the drama.³⁴

The message unfolded in the (‘unrealistic’) framing scenes is about the danger of female love, which makes queens (i.e. female sovereigns) forget about their royal duties. In the prologue,³⁵ the dominant element is fire induced by the torch of love in the hands of Ambitus (Ambition), Furor (Fury) and Dolus (Deceit).³⁶ Majestas (Majesty representing Arsinoe’s royal self) is weeping, the royal house is in decay. Between acts 1 and 2, and 2 and 3, we have two inter-connected *choruses*³⁷ explaining and strengthening Jupiter’s final sentence. In the first chorus, the ships of Ambitus, Furor, Dolus and Majestas are sailing the sea but Ambitus and Dolus stir a storm: Majestas is almost lost but Perseus and Venus liberate her. In the second chorus, Ambitus and Dolus call for Medaea, the evil witch who gives Majestas a poisoned crown causing terrible pains, and Majestas finally loses her crown. These two allegorical scenes focus on Ambitus, Furor and Dolus, whose influence is based on the strength of Love. The second interlude emphasizes the danger of female love with the example of Medaea, whose mythological figure itself invokes the tragic consequences of female love-fury. We must remember that female passion, “female sex was thought the disorderly par excellence in early modern Europe”,³⁸ i.e. in 17th-18th century Hungary; several dramas use the Latin adjective *nimius* (disorderly) for improper, exaggerating passions. In the epilogue³⁹ reflect-

34 “The time is out of joint; O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right!” (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 1.5)

35 Latin *prologus*. *Előljáró Ábrázolás* (i.e. *prelude*) in the Hungarian version of the programme.

36 The programme is trilingual: Latin, Hungarian, German. I use the Latin names of the allegories.

37 Latin *chorus*. *Közben-járó ábrázolás* (i.e. *interlude*) in the Hungarian version of the programme.

38 BUSHNELL 1990, 66.

39 Latin *Epilogus*. *Példának utolsó ábrázolása* (i.e. *postlude*) in the Hungarian version of the programme.

ing our anxiety about the ending of the play, Momus, the god of blame and mockery, accuses Ambitus, Furor and Dolus of destroying Arsinoe: because of this injustice he goes to Jupiter and Fatum, but both of them approve Arsinoe's tragic fate. Conclusion: a *female* Majestas can easily be endangered by Love – and there is no remedy. On the other hand, the *male* Ptolomaeus's lust for power may be 'presented' with a legal throne, and he remains on the usurped throne as if he were the legal king.

4.2.2. *Hymenaeus fraude proditus*, Nagyszombat, 1725⁴⁰

The plot, full of intrigues, is taken from Danish history. After being freed from the captivity of Vandals, Jarmericus king of Denmark restores and even enlarges his country, conquering Svecia and killing its king. Then he marries Svanvilda, sister of the Constantinople emperor, meanwhile he forces Bicco, the brother of the late Svecian king, to serve him as a councillor. Bicco plans his revenge: he accuses the virtuous Svanvilda of adultery with her stepson (Jarmericus' son) Broderus. The corpus delicti is the broken pearl of a golden medal given to the queen by Jarmericus. The furious Jarmericus sends his son to prison and throws Svanvilda in the pit of wild beasts, where the unfortunate and innocent queen is killed. The Constantinople emperor revenges Svanvilda's death, occupies Denmark and kills Jarmericus. Broderus is freed and he burns Bicco. At this point the enemy goes home and Broderus becomes the legal king of Denmark.

In order to understand this strange story, we provide some details of the plot and the allegorical scenes.

The allegorical prologue gives the full summary of the plot. Here, the positive allegory is Innocentia who proves Svanvilda to be faithful, loving her husband with true love. But the negative allegories – Crudelitas, Mendacium (Lie), Suspicio – “soot” Svanvilda's heart with false accusations, therefore the cruel lions (i.e. Danish heraldic animals) kill her. Innocentia is almost destroyed, but finally Jupiter drives her back to Denmark.

The prologue is followed by two interludes (choruses), both with the central allegory of Mendacium. The first act ends with Bicco's accusation of Svanvilda; Jarmericus falling asleep sees the “outcome” of the events

40 *A házasság csalárdul elárult istene (Hymenaeus fraude proditus)* [God of marriage fraudulently betrayed] = *Jezsuita iskoladrámák II.*, programme No. 16. (BEKK Min. A. 6, Univ. Library, Budapest)

in his dream – we do not know if the outcome is positive or negative for Svanvilda. The first interlude is closely connected to the dream of the king: Mendacium, in the disguise of the goddess Diana, lures Innocentia to the mount of Cruelty, where Innocentia is tossed in the pit of Suspicio. At this point the real Diana asks for the help of Jupiter, who saves Innocentia.

In the second act, Biccio persuades the princes of Constantinople. In the fifth scene, a sinister comet appearing in the sky frightens the Danes; Jarmericus has another dream about a pair of loving doves. Both signs are (mis)interpreted by Jarmericus as being against his wife. The second act ends with the arrest of Svanvilda and Broderus.

In the second interlude, Mendacium, first in the disguise of Justitia, later without the mask, changes the royal hall into a pit of lions killing the faith of marriage. Suspicio is to kill Innocentia, who is finally saved by Jupiter.

In the third act, after Svanvilda's cruel death, the wicked are punished and peace returns to Denmark.

There is no justice for the innocent Svanvilda, either in the main plot or in the allegorical interludes, the latter sending the message about the triumph of the good helped by Jupiter. The allegory of Innocentia is connected to Denmark and the throne, but there is no word about Svanvilda. The lions, so peaceful in the Danish coat-of-arms, become cruel beasts due to the disorderly passions of the king, i.e. due to his failure in royal duties. The central problem is the responsibility of a ruler. Svanvilda is the object of the king's disorderly passions, she is just the corpus delicti of Jarmericus's sin. At the beginning he used to be a good king (enlarging his country) but later when he becomes a maniac he is punished by the occupation of his country. The chaos caused by his immorality is offset by a virtuous kind, i.e. his son.

We may recognize the themes of the great tragedies of the age: jealousy, (real or falsely accused) love between the stepmother and her stepson deeply confronted with royal duties, the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the throne. The didactic Jesuit stage had nothing to do with the depth of human passions, which would have provided real dramatic situations, like the struggle against the strength of passions (either love or jealousy), royal duties confronting private emotions, etc. The Jesuit author used human passions only to complete the pattern of the evil councillor directing

the king towards the wrong way, thus provoking chaos in the country. The insensibility towards Svanvilda proves that there is no tragic aspect on the Jesuit school stage.

4.3. Fortitudo and Constantia

Disorder caused by female passions can be equilibrated, order and harmony can be kept or brought back by the two cardinal values taught by Jesuit education: *Fortitudo* (Force) and *Constantia* (Perseverance). Virtue, moral and spiritual strength or courage, persistence in maintaining eternal values, were represented by these two allegories, which were personalized by Hercules and Attilius Regulus.⁴¹ The values conveyed testify to the influence of Seneca and neo-stoicism.⁴²

4.3.1. *Christian Hercules, or István Dobó*, Pozsony, 1729⁴³

The realistic story of the play depicts the triumph of István Dobó over the Turks but, in the allegorical layer, it is elevated as a victory of Christianity against pagan chaos. Dobó is identified with one of the most frequent topoi: the *Christian Hercules*.⁴⁴ The prologue starts with Hecate and Mercurius who want to bring decay to the three hills of Hungary:⁴⁵ while Peace is put to sleep they change the horn of plenty for Pandora's box. The awaking Peace asks for Jupiter's help who sends Hercules. In the epilogue, Hercules defeats Hecate and brings Peace and harmony back to Hungary.

41 See: Marcus Attilius Regulus (c. 307-250 BC). In spite of his being a real historical person, his figure was mythicized, thus he became similar to the mythical figure of Hercules. Cf. mostly the influence of Jacob Masen's poetics; VALENTIN, 1978, 321-326. On Masen's influence in Hungary: TÜSKÉS-KNAPP 2004. Valentin's repertoire links the mythical figure of *Attilius Regulus* with the notion of *amour de la Patrie* (VALENTIN 1983-1984, 972.).

42 Seneca's influence reached Hungary in two phases and was extremely strong: his reception started with the Protestant preacher and writer Peter Bornemisza in the mid 16th century and, in the 17th century, it was strengthened by neo-stoicism mostly propagated by the Jesuits.

43 *Keresztyén Hercules avagy Dobó István (Hercules Christianus, sive Stephanus Dobo) = Jezsuita iskoladrámák II.*, programme No. 25; Budapest, OSZK Theatre History Collection, Pro 10-11-12.

44 Traditionally, Godfrey of Bouillon, the medieval Frankish knight of the first Crusade (in the 1090s) was called *Christian Hercules*. In the 18th century, some other Hungarian heroes were also called *Christian Hercules*, e.g. János Hunyadi in the Jesuit János Pákay's epic poem. Cf. SZÖRÉNYI 1993, 38.

45 Cf. the territorial symbol of the three hills on the Hungarian coat-of-arms.

4.3.2. *A rare example of love and strength*, Nagyszombat, 1717⁴⁶

There is a similar battle story taken from international history about the heroic resistance of the population of Calais against the Protestant English army. The framing scenes unfold a complete allegorical story with the personification of Perseverance (*Constantia*) as the central figure. In the prologue, Mars, Furor and Vulcanus start a war against Perseverance, but in the epilogue peace is brought back by Fortitudo sent by Providence. In the first interlude, Perseverance resists enchanting promises, in the second one, she hides among ivies (cf. laurus as eternity, immutability). In the closing scene, Hesperus, the Evening Star, bids farewell to the Christian (i.e. Catholic!) world, for which Perseverance promises everything good. (As we have no text, we do not exactly know what they could see *In Choro Musicorum*: there are several further allegories listed, including Liberalitas Astrae, Religio, Fortitudo, Charitas, America, Africa, Europa and Asia.)

4.3.3. *St. Ladislaus, founder of Várad diocese*, Nagyvárad, 1744⁴⁷

After Saint Ladislaus king of Hungary (1045-1095) had defeated the pagan Cumans, he founded the diocese in the town of Várad. These events are universalized in the allegorical framing scenes showing Fortitudo's and Religio's fierce struggle against the pagan forces of the underworld. Both allegories focus on the topos of the pious king. There is no lust for power in Ladislaus, his only aim is peace and faith; therefore he is ready to pass the throne to his rival Salamon – but the Virgin Mary (Patroness of Hungary) interferes and forces Ladislaus to keep his power. In the second interlude, Fortitudo and Religio fight against Idolatria (Idolatry). In the third act, Ladislaus offers his country to the Virgin Mary and promises to erect a church. After the victory, the hunting king already plans the site of the church led by a voice from heaven, and thus the epilogue shows the triumph of Fortitudo and Religio.

46 *A szeretet és erősség ritka példája = Jezsuita iskoladramák II.*, programme No. 14; Budapest, OSZK Theatre History Collection, Pro 3.

47 *Szent László, a váradi püspökség alapítója = Jezsuita iskoladramák II.*, programme No. 23; Budapest, OSZK Theatre History Collection, Pro 40.

5. Copulative elements between the real and the unreal

Some non-allegorical elements, usually not in the framing scenes, are closely connected to the allegorical representation and interpretation: these are dreams, comets, prophecies, omens and some special explainer, e.g. the astrologer. A dream – unrealistic as such – is a definite link or copula between earth and heaven, and predicts the positive turn of the action. It was most probably performed as a chorus or chorus-like pantomime or tableau vivant with music.

5.1. The performance of Dobo's triumph over the Turks must have been exciting with 15 scenes and many figures, fighters and traitors – without any break; thus the audience needed some rest from the 'hectic' plot. This is provided towards the end of the drama (in scene 12), when the distressed Dobó falls asleep and has a dream: he sees the signs of Strength and Perseverance. The 'unrealistic' dream scene is connected to the transcendental and belongs to the allegorical layer.

5.2. There is a dream in the drama about Calais, too: Johannes, the Captain of Calais sees lilies at arms (*Joanni Oppidi Praefecto per somnum lilia armata obijiciuntur...*) indicating the French help (cf. the lilies) in the next scene.

5.3. In the drama about Ladislaus, after his prayer for God's help, a comet appears in the sky (in the last scene of the first act). In the opening scene of the second act, several courtiers try to interpret the comet and the enemy would give a false explanation. The right interpretation of the appearance of the comet is given only in the third scene of the act when the king has a dream. The dream predicts the hostile preparations of the Cumans, so Ladislaus is able to get ready for war. Here, we find both the topoi of a dream and a comet, now, interwoven in the main plot but with an important link to the transcendental, thus they are also connected to the allegorical story.

5.4. There is strange handling of the dream scenes in Svanvilda's Danish story. In the last scene of the first act, the king has a dream (the content is unknown but he translates it as being against his wife) which is definitely connected to the following allegorical interlude (with *Mendacium* wearing the mask of Diana). Within the second act there is a comet followed by another dream about two doves. Jarmericus misinterprets all three transcendental messages (the two dreams and the comet), which

shows that the messages are not to be passed to anyone, i.e. to disorderly kings.

5.5. Quite often, there are figures with allegorical allusions giving a personal link to the transcendental: prophets, astrologers and other ‘decoders’ of the message. In the play about St. Ladislaus, four *haruspices* are listed among the dramatis personae; we suppose they were the ones giving the right explanation of the comet. (We should remember that the word *Haruspex* is translated as *Diviner* referring precisely to the transcendental.)

5.6. In several dramas, we have *genuses* in the framing scenes. *Genus* is the abstract idea (imago, essence, summary) of the allegorical properties of a dramatic character. (Thus, Calais and the fort of Eger against the Turks bear the allegorical notion of Christianity; the heraldic elements of Denmark and the three hills of Hungary represent the country.)

5.7. Due to the fact that mythology was taught in detail and well known in 17th-18th century schools, mythological figures, Graeco-Roman gods and goddesses were ‘automatic’ allegories with both ‘real’ and ‘unreal’ references.

5.8. Allegorical scenes use some typical props and objects, which were the most frequent items of the Baroque treasury, both written and engraved.⁴⁸ (On the other hand, the use of props also depended on the school’s props room.)

6. Conclusion

We found the tradition and methods of dramatic allegorical framing scenes of Jesuit theatre in the Italian and English court masques and festivities. Ben Jonson defined the genre of masques as “the mirrors of man’s life”.⁴⁹ Behind the breath-taking spectacles, we find a definite ethos, a strong desire for harmony, stability, unchanging eternal values, a fight against time and the temporal. “The intertwining of time and eternity governs the universe of the Jacobean masque and accounts for that delicate sense of balance...”⁵⁰ In English court masques, experts discover a

48 DALY 1979a, 143-144, 152.

49 LINDLEY 1984, 8.

50 KOGAN 1984, 50.

“quest for absolute poise and unity”: “Within this genre of superlatives, the masque presented its deepest Platonic allegories of world harmony in its most elaborate scenes and, paradoxically, expressed this taste for the extreme in the very balance of its structure, since the form attempted to bring its visual effects and its symbolic language into a state of perfect equilibrium.”⁵¹

The Baroque world of the Jesuit theatre was similar. Within an unpredictable, unsafe world, they also had a claim for stability and harmony; one can see the typical Baroque uncertainty in these historical dramas, as if human fate as well as the fate of states were only at the mercy of the capricious Fortuna. But school dramas wanted and had to give a different, a deeply religious answer or solution for the quest of stability: Fortuna as an actor of history had to be ‘Christianized’, hence she was considered just a *tool* in the hands of Providence.⁵² As a result of this change, the fragile world regained stability and unity. Thus nothing is accidental, though it seems to be, yet everything is wisely planned. Due to the allegorical framing scenes of the dramas, the accidental stories, earthly passions, unjust conclusions of the realistic main plot proved to be false and untrue: their fragile, volatile reality was successfully overwritten by the message of eternal harmony and work of Providence.

51 KOGAN 1984, 29.

52 Regarding the Christianization of Fortuna, the theorist Baltasar Gracián (1601–1658) called Fortuna the maidservant (ancilla) of Providence. (VALENTIN 1978, 331–334)

KATALIN CZIBULA

Multilingualism on the 18th Century School Stage

German language played an extremely important role in the birth of Hungarian theatre. In the 18th century, town theatres played in German, and – besides Italian operas – German plays were performed in the aristocratic court theatres. School theatres used languages in a most creative and differentiated way: the main reasons for this phenomenon might include, partly the pedagogical purpose of school performances, and partly the audience coming from different strata of society; thus, the performers had to meet the needs of every social stratum in the audience. Multilingualism proved to be the simplest method: they mixed Latin and other (vernacular) languages within one performance.

The main purpose of school performances was to give the pupils experience in public behaviour, in the elegant use of languages (of Latin and the vernacular). Meanwhile, the whole school was challenged while playing for the town, as the audience contained the school's patrons, members of the aristocracy and the highest clergy, parents, nobles, as well as citizens of the town. The teacher-director of the play must have been quite aware of his responsibility.

Our present example is an interlude on the Piarist school stage of Kecskemét: the gipsy carter did not want to undertake the work, because "tomorrow there will be a comedy and I have to be there".¹ For a long time, this used to be considered an anecdote of a somewhat real story, but research has not been able to identify the sources and it turned out to be

1 FEJÉR 1956, 381-384.

fictitious: it took place only on the stage as an interlude.² Thus it can be considered as a reflection of the author and not that of the audience.

Players had to play on many registers in order to impress every stratum of the audience. The simplest way of achieving this proved to be the use of multilingualism, i.e. mixing Latin and other languages within the same performance. We can find programmes in two or three languages, or languages which changed in every act, or Hungarian, German and Slovak interludes “accompanying” a Latin main plot.

My paper deals with some examples where the choice of the language(s) is motivated not only by practical reasons but also by some dramatic function: thus the foreign text or figure inserted in the Hungarian context acquires a rather special dramatic role.

1. The Ishmaelite merchants of András Dugonics

The dramas which have survived often use Latin instructions within the Hungarian texts: that is a general feature. One may also find mixed Latin and Hungarian dialogues, which is a frequent characteristic of the Observant Franciscan passion plays of Csíksomlyó. We do not have many examples of German and Hungarian mixed dialogues, hence a play by András Dugonics is an extremely interesting example. The play titled *Joseph Sold by His Brothers* was performed in 1762 in the Piarist school of Szeged, but was copied later, in Nagyszombat in 1775, when Dugonics collected all his works.³ As Júlia Demeter the editor of the critical text has remarked: “The drama is written in three languages. One, Latin as the language of school stage, is also characteristic of the Baroque biblical theme. The scenes showing Joseph’s life in Egypt are all in Latin. Most parts of the drama are written in Hungarian, which is its main language: thus it is a sign of Piarist theatre switching increasingly to Hungarian. German is the language of foreigners, i.e. the Ishmaelite merchants.”⁴ The changes of language can be also interpreted as a dramatic means. At the beginning of the play, the choice of Latin or Hungarian seems quite accidental, as both languages are used in Jacob’s

2 KILIÁN 2002, 216.

3 *Piarista iskoladrámák* I., 343–408.

4 *Piarista iskoladrámák* I., 406.

house. The evil daemons opening the second act also speak both Latin and Hungarian. But later, the playwright proves to be extremely conscious. The intimate language of Jacob's family is mostly Hungarian; the brothers in the field preparing to sell Joseph speak only Hungarian. Hungarian is exclusively used for expressing passions, emotions (see also the Hungarian exclamations like *jaj, jaj, jaj, ha, ha, ha, haj, haj, haj*). At home, only Jacob and Joseph speak Latin. The others are not good in Latin: only Dinah has some longer Latin text, while Naphtali, Simeon, Asher and Reuben speak only one sentence. When talking with the Ishmaelites, Gad is the interpreter for the brothers: he translates from Latin into Hungarian. In Egypt, Latin is the language of the Pharaoh's court, the *Administrator* translates the Latin texts of Joseph and the Pharaoh for the brothers. In this way, the ignorant audience could follow the dramatic action. Bilingualism is quite realistic for Jews living in Egypt: the vernacular is Hungarian, while the official or state language of the Pharaoh's court is Latin, which is understood only by some members of Jacob's family. Joseph's brothers need an interpreter for the Ishmaelite merchants, too. On the stage, the Ishmaelites speak German, Jacob's sons speak Hungarian, thus Gad is the interpreter who translates the Latin of the *Ismaelita secundus* into Hungarian. Let us see how the multilingual dialogue is applied extremely well:

ISMAELITA SECUNDUS

Ach, Himmel, was sehe ich! Sind es gefälte Rumpfe oder sind es Menschen in der That, die altort in einem dichten Thatten ligen, will näher hinzugehen, und die Sache gen< >er in Augen schein nehmen ... unterhaftes Glück, wirkliches sind Menschen. Es scheint: der günstige Himmel erklärt sich auf einmal für uns, lasset mich hingehen, sie erfragen, welche Gegend des Himmels uns umschließe? Sind gegrüst ihr Männer! Saget uns was das für eine Lantschaft seye, in welcher wir uns befinden, welche Gegend des Himmels uns umschließe und wer ihr sey, ober ob einer unter eich zu finden ist der unsere sprach redete...

GÁD

Micsodát, mit mond kigyelmetek?

ISSACHAR

Látom én, nem tudnak azok emberül.

GÁD

Mein Herr, wir können nichts taits reden.

ISMAELITA SECUNDUS

Erit fortasse inter vos, qui vel latina lingua loqvatur?

GÁD

Illa quidem vobis servirre possum.

ISMAELITA SECUNDUS

Dicite ergo nobis, qvae nos regio excipiat, qvi vos estis?

GÁD

Terra haec? Terra est Chanaan. Hebraei sumus. Ab uno omnes sene Jacobo geniti filii. Gregem hic in Sichem pascimus. Sed qvi vos?

ISMAELITA SECUNDUS

Medianitae sumus. Victui necessaria quaerimus.

GÁD

Hogy ők Maedianitai Ismaelita Kereskedők, el fogyott eledelük helyébe valamit venni akarnak.”⁵

2. Sámuel Szathmári Paksi’s Captain with a German accent

We also found an example of the dramatically motivated use of German in eastern Hungary. The play is a typical Hungarian Calvinist adaptation of classic mythology, in a rather special manner, with genre scenes and figures. Sámuel Szathmári Paksi is the (possible) author of *Elvádolt ártatlanság*,⁶ performed in Sárospatak in 1773 and in Losonc in 1786. It

⁵ *Piarista iskoladramák* I., 367-368.

⁶ *Protestáns iskoladramák*, 1021-1069.

tells the story of Phaedra, keeping both the main line and the names of the original story. It seems to be quite strange for a school stage, especially when we hear Phaedra's lyrical monologue about her love and passion. But, for the present, we mention the Captain's words when he announces the sentence on Hippolytus:

Halli halli, mint picsiletes filák,
Én most mek montani szomorú nat ujság.

Exemli gratia Hippolitus mek folt,
A ki most majt mintárt kolopissal mek holt,
Mert csuszik az Anát meleg tunnájába,
A szopápa ott mek kapni a szopápa.

No hát ne sinálik ketek illy gonoság,
Három Flinétával Herr bey Katonasák!⁷

After this sentence, we see the execution of poor Hippolytus: *then, he is shot: durr!* ("azután durr, meg lövik"). So, the positive hero is, in a rather anachronistic way, shot. The Captain's comment:

Schon aus, es hat auf link Seit kommen,
Hat So geschossen gleich ist gefalt. Teremtette!

The play reflects the composition of the population of the region, too: it is full of German and Slavic words.

3. József Rájnis's András Ondré

The most interesting dramas from the point of view of linguistic characterization can be found in western Hungary, from the last – but flourishing – decade (the 1790s) of school theatre. The most creative author is Mihály Csokonai Vitéz who, in his play titled *Cultura*, used the differentiation of languages as a means of dramatic characterization.

⁷ *Protestáns iskoladrámák*, 1044-1045.

Another drama is much less known today. József Rájnis adapted the Plautinian *Menaechmi* (*Az ikerek*)⁸ and the play was performed by the Catholic seminary in Győr on 28 January 1796. Though the performance had a rather elite audience, the play mostly used vulgar comic and buffo elements. The plot follows the original, keeps the conflicts based on errors, but due to the requirements of expurgation, i.e. of ‘cleaning’ the plot, the author omits the female figures. Instead, he presents the typical genre figures of the 18th century: roisterers (see the two friends: Tamás Orros and Lajos Mézesi), the starveling (Pali Matska), the fussy cook (András Ondré) and the pedant doctor (Péter Hippokrátész). Beside his stupidity, Ondré’s main comic characteristic is his broken Hungarian with a German accent. This is the author’s original idea, as Plautus’s cook (Cylindrus) has an important role in the dramaturgy. He receives the order for the dinner, but mixes up the twins and serves it to the wrong one. At the same time, he has no individual features. Rájnis’s Ondré is what can be called a great role for actors: his dramatic function is that of the clown. Such a figure is usually important in comedies where some preparation for a feast is in focus, thus a fussy cook is needed. The feast is organized in secret by the two friends (Orros and Mézesi), behind the backs of their wives. The cook gets the orders; his German-accent Hungarian is the main comic source, which is increased by his narrow mind interpreting the world from the only point of view of capons to be fried. Ondré’s figure can be interpreted following Northrop Frye on the extreme form of a temperament showing a distortion of behaviour.⁹ Ondré’s monomania is his being a cook. Several errors and misunderstandings are connected to Ondré: he is the first to mix up the twins (the one living in the town, the other just arrived there) – this is the same in the original drama. But in Rájnis’s version, the misunderstanding is a linguistic one, which cannot be found in the original: Ondré mentions Pali Matska (the starveling who waits for the dinner), but the servant of the newcomer, Menaechmus, thinks the cook wants to fry his cat:

8 *Pálos iskoladramák...*, 515-565.

9 FRYE 1998, 143-144.

ONDRE ANDRÁS

No már!

Asz úr nem ismérni az Ondré Mészesi szakáts,
Ki mekh csinálíkh a' khappant? Ej, ej! te hol
Fan már aszasz jú Matska? majt mek mondani -

BOTONDI MÁRTON

Hallod-e te sógor! ódd magad'; hijában fened
Fogaidat a' matskámra; van gondom reá!"¹⁰

Rájnis gives further dramatic functions to this figure: Lajos Mézesi and his servants are ready to defend their friends against the police. Of course, the defence is rather ironical. The heroes are armed not only with swords, but paddles and spits. Comic behaviour is emphasized by their look, and the smutty cook arriving with a spit becomes a true *miles gloriosus* of the street fight. Thus, the German-accent cook is not a sideman but, through the episodes, his figure takes up several comic cues.

4. Csokonai's *Cultura*

When preparing this paper, I expected to find the most typical cases of linguistic characterization in figures imitating foreign fashion and customs, which is a frequent occurrence in Piarist and Calvinist school plays. Such characters are also a sort of aladzon or pedant figure.¹¹ Both are the opponents of the good Hungarian hero. The pedant uses wrong Latin phrases trying to show his (missing) erudition; the one aping foreign customs shows off with French erudition. The latter is interesting because in Hungary one would suppose German as the main foreign language and fashion; but most figures are French imitations. There is only one example for the use of erroneous German: Ágyúsi, the bragger in András Dugonics's play *Gyönygyösy*. (In the later version of the drama, titled *Tárbázi*, he omits the point!). But Ágyúsi is not a German imitation, his incorrect German expressions are military ones where there is no Hun-

10 *Pálos iskoladramák...*, 530.

11 DEMETER 1993, 87-100.

garian equivalent. Thus, his figure is quite close to the Captain in the Calvinist play.

Mihály Csokonai Vitéz used the widest spectrum of languages as a means of dramatic characterization. His play *Cultura*¹² was performed on 12 July 1799. At that time, Csokonai was a teacher in the school of Csurgó.¹³ There has been a debate about the value of this play; some critics think it was written much earlier as it is mediocre,¹⁴ but according to the critical edition, writing and performing went in parallel.¹⁵ My research substantiates the latter opinion and, furthermore, the text must have been subordinated to the performance – which is rather special. The literary values of *Cultura* may not be as great of those of Csokonai's other plays (*Tempefői*, or *Karnyóné*). The structure is rather loose, there is no conflict at all, the story is thin and we do not really understand. A nice, young, educated Hungarian nobleman wants to marry a similar young woman; they are accepted by the girl's father, the owner of a well-kept manor and estate. Another suitor, a German style dandy appears, but before a conflict would arise he leaves in the hope of a better match. Thus, there is no obstacle for the lovers who happily marry.

Seemingly, the author was not interested in the weak story, rather in the comic situations of the plot. There are well-known types in the play with special *couleur locale*: the silly Pufók (servant to the manager of the manor house), Firkász, an extremely comic pedant, Ábrahám, the cute and defenceless Jew, Szászlaki, the dandy aping the Germans and his servant Conrad using a German-like broken Hungarian. Conrad's broken German must have been well known in Csurgó, both for the pupils and Csokonai himself.¹⁶

CONRAD
Carsamadiner.

12 CSOKONAI 1978, II., 141-171.

13 CSOKONAI 1978, II., 323-324.

14 FERENCZI 1907, 39-40.

15 CSOKONAI 1978, II., 316.

16 CSOKONAI 1978, II., 321.

FIRKÁSZ

Salveat Conrad Salveat. – Hát hol jár Conrad hol hol?

CONRAD

Eben asz örek ur az Knediger her.

FIRKÁSZ

Ugy a' D[omi]nus Spectabilisnál?

CONRAD

Ja Frajlic od od.

FIRKÁSZ

Et cui bono?

CONRAD

Asz piszon nem tutom tessék szúr.

FIRKÁSZ

Miért volt ottan miért?

CONRAD

Ha mied? – A Ludvig Zaszlaki az én Batron diszdeli a' Knediger her mindjárt el lesz jönni kitsin vizitre.

FIRKÁSZ

Ugyan ugy é?

CONRAD J

a Frajlig – Asszolgaja.

FIRKÁSZ

Servus.¹⁷

17 CSOKONAI 1978, II., 153.

Instead of the earlier French-aping dandies, Szászlaki imitates German fashion and customs.

The figures representing the ideal moral and good behaviour are all Hungarian: the suitor Lehelfi, Pertonella, the diligent young lady who knows and likes Hungarian music, literature and theatre, Tisztes, the ideal Hungarian nobleman. These scenes are quite loose genre pictures – and not a carefully formed drama text. But they are very good examples of how well Csokonai learnt the rules of stage and dramaturgy! He works with exactly ten figures because he had ten pupils. He uses his pupils' skills and abilities: some play the violin, others can dance, or have an ear for comic language. In line with these given skills, Petronella plays the clavier (actually, professor Csokonai does it behind the stage and the pupil on the stage just pretends to be playing), the servant Kanakúz performs the special swineherd dance, we hear a folk tune on a pipe (also played behind the stage), and the rebellious Rákóczi song is sung. The latter was not an univocal success with the audience. Count György Fesetics being present at the performance wrote in a letter: "This song did not fit either the locations, the audience or our present days; furthermore, it was a huge mistake. On such festive occasions, it would be much more advisable to praise our Royal Majesty and the High Palatine."¹⁸ One important comic source is the wrong or special use of language: Abraham, the Jew, speaks a 'coughing' aspirated Jewish Hungarian, the German Conrad speaks a German-like broken Hungarian. The pure Hungarian Szászlaki, aping the Germans, has a different function: he boasts of his adventures abroad and he also mixes up several languages (Hungarian, German, French and Latin). Thus linguistic characterization also serves some moral purpose: the use of languages separates good and bad figures.

SZÁSZLAKI

Már én, Tekintetes Uram, annyira hozzászoktam azok[na]k a' tsinos nemzeteknek, minden kottümjeihez, hogy mihelyt valami nem auslendis, vagy nem olyan mint az auslendis, előttem kedvet nem talál. Velem a' Somogyi Sódért, Thúri sajtot, azt az elszenvedhetetlen kövér magyar kolbászt meg unatta az a fein Ah igen igen fain vestfaliai Sonka, Helvetiai sajt és Veronai Salami. – A ketsége igen jó hal; de minthogy magya-

18 CSOKONAI 1978, II., 323.

rországi és comiz, százért sem adok egy Scotiai heringet, vagy egy Venetiai Szardellát. A' magyar országi halak közzül nem is szeretek egyebet az egy Vizánál, de az meg is érdemli; mert 200 mértföldnyiről emigral hozzánk.

TISZTES

Az Urnak igen igen nagy szerentséje volt a' maga izlését külső országon ki mívelni, mit tsinál majd véle itten köztünk, együgyű magyarok között.

SZÁSZLAKI

Tudom én majd mit tsinálok Tekintetes Uram. Én az udvaromban mindent, mindent külső országivá teszek. Cselédim mind idegen nemzetűek, annál fogva pallérozottak lesznek. Anglus Lovat, Suaitzer marhát, Spanyol Juhot, Khinai disznót, Török Ketskét, Olasz Pujkát, Norvégiai Ludat, Alexandriai Katsát, Nigritiai tyúkot 's'a t. szerzek udvaromba, a' mint ezt láttam Justitzvart Svevelhaj Lord King Sinyor Di Caropellegrina és mossió emigrant Deniente érdemes és Tudós külföldi Zseniknél, kikkel utazásomban, megbarátkozni szerentsém volt.¹⁹

5. Csokonai's *Tempefői*

A comparison between *Cultura* and *Tempefői* may be useful, as the early version was *Tempefői*. In both dramas, we have a lovely couple, also a father representing the values of Hungarian nobility (Fegyverneki -Tisztes), a dandy aping foreigners (Serteperti - Szászlaki), a folkish low figure (Szuszmir - Kanakúz) and a Latinist pedant (Iroványi - Firkász). Both dramas present the most important values, such as modern Hungarian culture and the defence of Hungarian language. The parallel of Szászlaki is Baron Serteperti, who also imitates the Germans and foreign fashion.

GRÓF FEGYVERNEKI

Akkor haragomat türtöztettem; de végre meg nem állhattam, ki kellett fakadnom. A Leánnyommal kezdett tzimborázni: nyájasabban beszélt velem, mint a' leg ki nyiltabb Bécsi politzia is hozta volna magával.

19 CSOKONAI 1978, II., 155-156.

Magyarra fordították a' beszédet. Nem tudom, mit mondott Rózsi, 's azt feleli reá a' Politicus Professor: Sétáljon hozzám a' Madamoiselle, vatsora után én meg mutatom szeme láttára hogy nem lesz ing.

BÁRÓ SERTEPERTI
Tausend himmel!

GRÓF FEGYVERNEKI
Én erre elő pattantam, 's haragossan azt kérdem tőle: 's Hát nem lesz?
A' mellyre azt feleli minden szemérem nélkül a' Német Professor: Éppen semmi módon nem lesz, a' Német Országának egy szép erkölcsöt tanítója. Meg bosszankodom: Nem lesz, nem lesz ing; – hát gatyá annyival inkább nem lesz, Nationalcharacterere szerént az Úrnak?²⁰

6. Summary

As we have seen, multilingualism in Hungarian school theatres assumed dramatic functions. Comic figures based on linguistic characterization often speak German or Germanic Hungarian; the most conscious representations are Rájnis's and Csokonai's dramas (from western Hungary). The common features of these figures are the connection with the classical aladzon, now, in the Hungarian versions, using broken Hungarian or a foreign language. The pedant dandies aping foreigners are always negative figures. Comic language strengthens the other comic elements of the drama, such as genre characteristics. Thus these elements contribute to the success. The use of foreign language represents one of the basic types of Hungarian comedies.

20 CSOKONAI 1978, I., 19-20.



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