

Hungary, principally furniture, ceramics, costumes and textiles. Research workers can now carry out the groundwork for their research in Finland and continue their work by means of an exchange visit to Hungary. The republic finds the collections both enjoyable and stimulating, while students can learn a great deal from them about the culture of the Hungarian people.

The Finnish collections in Hungary were used in 1985 to put on an exhibition of Finnish art to mark the 150th anniversary of the Kalevala. The exchange of exhibitions will continue: we are still very much interested in each other's cultures. From Finland's point of view, the gap in our knowledge has now been bridged. Our internationally important Finno-Ugric collections are well balanced, thanks partly to the very notable exhibits we have obtained from Hungary.

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## RECENT TRENDS IN HUNGARIAN VERSE RESEARCH

Research in Hungarian versification is a demanding task for both linguistic and literary reasons. Hungarian poetry is relatively rich in rhythmic organizing principles (different systems exist simultaneously as e.g. phrase-stress, syllable-length, metre-link, sentence-intonation, syllable-counting principles etc.) which are intrinsic to the phonetic structure of the language. All these principles were at some time activated by various metric conventions (folk poetry, sung poems, and airs, translation from Old Greek and Roman poetry, or European poets, Finno-Ugric folk poetry etc.) in the successive periods of the history of Hungarian versification.

The complexity of the problem explains why a general synthesis on Hungarian versification has rarely been attempted; so far only János Arany, László Négyesy, János Horváth and László Gáldi have attempted to produce comprehensive theories of the Hungarian verse rhythm.

In the recent past (mainly from 1952 to 1966) the problem of the linguistic (syntactic, phonetic) foundation of different Hungarian rhythm systems inspired lively debates (by Lajos Vargyas, László Szabédi, Zsigmond László, Iván Főnagy etc.). László Gáldi's distinction between abstract metre and realized rhythm and László Péczely's insights into the aesthetic functions of verse forms offered new approaches to metric research.

A brief survey of the history of metric research prior to 1978 and of the important issues at the time is available in András Kecskés's and Andrew Kerék's study in English: *Directions in Hungarian Metric Research. In Language, Literature and Meaning II: Current Trends in Literary Research*. Ed. John Odmark, Amsterdam, 1980, pp. 319–359. It also contains a bibliographic reference list of 55 items. That is

the reason why my present paper hopes to direct attention to changes only after 1978, to the latest issues and to works in preparation.

An unprecedented working meeting in the history of Hungarian verse research took place at the Lajos Kossuth University in Debrecen on 3–4 July 1978. Experts of sharply contrasting opinions gathered to exchange ideas and to discuss the possibilities of future cooperation. Lajos Szuromi, the organizer of the meeting, took pains to record every significant element of the conversation on tape and printed for university circulation the proceedings that very year. (Szuromi, Lajos: *Verstani párbeszéddek* /Prosodic Dialogues/, Debrecen, 1978, 236 pp.).

Following the meeting in Debrecen, the Institute of Literature of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences organized an even more comprehensive debate in Budapest on 13 December 1979. Eight scholars presented their full analyses of the much debated rhythm of a poem by Endre Ady. The lectures were at first photocopied at Debrecen University (1980) in 50 copies, then the papers were supplemented by a *précis* of the debate and subsequently published by the Institute of Literature, „*A Tisza-parton*”: *Ritmikai kérdések egy Ady-vers kapcsán* /“On the Banks of Tisza-river”. Rhythmical Problems Appearing in a Poem by Endre Ady/ (Ed.: Szerdahelyi, István, and Kecskés András, Budapest, 1981, MTA Irodalomtudományi Intézet, 112 pp.).

In November 1980, the Institute of Literature invited seventeen scholars to join a *Verse Research Committee* (Verstani Munkabizottság). Unfortunately, two prominent representatives of the senior generation, László Péczely and Zsigmond László died shortly afterwards, while others declined to accept the invitation. However, a committee of twelve members have regularly been in communication ever since.

The statutory meeting of *Verstani Munkabizottság* was held on 23 January 1981 in Budapest. (Its chairman is István Szerdahelyi, the secretary is András Kecskés.) The participants established a quinquennial programme and decided to draw into their activity as many external contributors (poets, teachers, researchers, students etc.) as possible. At present there are over fifty honorary members in permanent contact with the committee. They take part in the meetings, read papers and engage in research.

The first International Congress on Hungarology (*I. Nemzetközi Hungarológiai Kongresszus*) was held in Budapest on 10–14 August, 1981. Hungarian verse was among the central topics of the discussions. András Kecskés, one of the speakers at the plenary meeting on August 13th outlined the history and the present state of Hungarian Verse Research (See: Kecskés, András: *Irányzatok és álláspontok a magyar verselméletben*. /Trends and Positions in Hungarian Versification Theory/, *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények* 86 (182) pp. 482–492.). An important publication of the congress: *A magyar vers* /Hungarian Verse/ *Az I. Nemzetközi Hungarológiai Kongresszus előadásai*. Ed.: Béládi, Miklós – Jankovics, József – Nyerges, Judit. Budapest, 1985, Nemzetközi Magyar Filológiai Társaság, 501 pp., with 75 papers.

A large number of special summarizing publications on metrics appeared at the same time. László Orosz chose a remarkable period in his analysis of the metric theories in Hungary between 1760 and 1820, offering a survey of contemporary contributions to the theme (*A magyar verstani eszmélkedés kezdetei* /Beginnings of

Hungarian Metrics/ Budapest, 1980, Akadémiai Kiadó, 154 pp. — Irodalomtörténeti Füzetek, 97.) Important elements of Hungarian prosody are discussed in Péter Szilágyi's collection of essays and studies. He attempted to find a new historical interpretation of the aesthetic function of verse form (*Forma és világkép* /Form and World Concept/ Budapest, 1981, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó. 330 pp.).

András Kecskés' book is both a study and a handbook: it focuses on problems of identifying and transcribing the actual, sounding verse rhythm, and deals with questions concerning the linguistic bases and the aesthetic function of rhythm (*A vers hangzásvilága* /Sound Universe of Verse/ Budapest, 1981, Tankönyvkiadó, 207 pp.).

The first fruit of an attempt of computer analysis is the processing of 300 early lyric pieces of Petőfi, by Lajos Szuromi and Pál Jékel, a computing mathematician (*Petőfi metrumai I.* /Petőfi's Metres Vol. I./ Debrecen, 1980, 651 pp.). Eight coding positions serve to determine in figures the most important factors of the sound rhythm. The book has a short German summary.

A general work on metric systems is István Szerdahelyi's and Erika Szepes's *Verstan* /Metrics/ (Budapest, 1981, Gondolat, 598 pp.). Both authors are participants in the editorial work for the publication of the *Világirodalmi Lexikon* (a multi-volume encyclopedia of world literature). Through their work on the more than ten volumes of the Encyclopedia they have gained an overview, which has enabled them to offer a uniquely comprehensive systematization of versification in world poetry. Some aspects of their work (exclusion of free verse from the concept of verse, statements on Hungarian beat-stressing (*ütemhangsúlyos*) verse, etc.) immediately gave rise to violent debates. (See e.g.: *Tiszatáj* 1982, No. 6–9; *Irodalomtörténet* 64 (1983) No. 1.; Rákos, Péter: *Reflexiók egy Verstanról és a verstanról* /Reflections on metrics and on a book named Metrics/ in *Irodalomtörténet* 75 (1983) pp. 186–213.

The number of publications on verse rhythm has considerably increased in various journals and reviews. A polemic, in several rounds, about András Kecskés's study *Ritmuselvek és versrendszerek* /Rhythmic Principles and Verse Systems/ was published by the *Kritika* monthly in 1980 and 1981. Lajos Szuromi exposed his views on Sándor Petőfi's and János Arany's use of metres in the yearbook *Studia Litteraria* in 1981 and 1982, published by the University of Debrecen. István Szerdahelyi commented on the aesthetic questions of abstract forms in his *A versritmus szemantikája* /Semantics of Verse Rhythm/ in *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* 1981. László Elekfi elaborated his paper originally read before the Verse Research Committee, into a linguistic study (*Beszédütem, versütem* /Speech Measure, Verse Measure/ in *Magyar Nyelvőr* 196 (1982) pp. 129–138.).

It is a welcome improvement that in school textbooks metric information is nowadays more elaborate and up to date than it used to be, but the general picture is still far from rosy. Exemplary are the textbooks for children between the age of 10 and 14. The Verse Research Committee endeavours to link research and training. The methodological attempt by Lajos Szuromi (*A versritmus elemzése az iskolában* /Verse Rhythm Analysis at School/ Debrecen 1980, 111 pp.) serves this aim. A small practical handbook (Kecskés, András–Szilágyi, Péter–Szuromi, Lajos: *Kis magyar verstan* /A

Short Hungarian Versification/ Budapest, 1983. Országos Pedagógiai Intézet, 156. pp.) was published by the National Pedagogical Institute.

According to the working programme of the Verse Research Committee in 1981 the question of beat stressing versification (*ütemhansúlyos verselés*) was discussed after lectures given by István Szerdahelyi, András Kecskés and László Elekfi. Two fundamentally different approaches were proposed, namely a conventional (logical) interpretation of Hungarian verse-rhythm and a syntactic (phonological) one. This contrast in opinion was also apparent at a conference devoted to the textual analysis of three epigrams by Miklós Zrínyi, held on 17–18 December, 1981. The material of the conference was already published, edited by András Kecskés: „Az idő és hírnév”. *Zrínyi három epigrammájának ritmikája* /“Time and Fame”. Rhythmical Patterns in Zrínyi's Three Epigrams/ Budapest, 1984. MTA Irodalomtudományi Intézet, 175 pp.

1982 was devoted to the problems of quantitative (*időmértékes*) versification in Hungarian, and first of all to the iambic metres, the predominant metres in modern Hungarian poetry. Hungarian iambic verse was analysed from different aspects: Péter Szilágyi approached it from a historical angle, Ágnes Nemes Nagy examined it from the viewpoint of a poet and translator and Erika Szepes set it in an international context. Győző Ferencz studied the correlation of linguistic and rhythmic phenomena in the Hungarian equivalents of classical Greek and Roman metrical forms.

In 1983 the debates centred around “simultaneous” versification, a characteristic product of Hungarian prosody, since a considerable part of modern Hungarian poetry is of bimetric nature: i.e. it displays characteristic features of both the beat-stressing versification and the quantitative one. Péter Szilágyi and Sándor Varga examined the development of these verse forms in the last century. Lajos Szuromi pointed out important theoretical connections and methodologic aspects. A work by Szuromi on simultaneous versification is to be published.

Mention must be made of a number of works under preparation on subjects within the scope of the verse Research Committee: Katalin Soltész wrote a monograph on János Arany's versification; Péter Szilágyi on Endre Ady's metres; András Kecskés's studies deal with János Horváth's theoretical works on metrics (*Literatura*) and with Hungarian beat-stressing versification. (See Kecskés, András: *A magyar ütemhangsúlyos verselés* /Hungarian Beat-Stressing Versification/ in *Irodalomtörténet* 66 (1984) pp. 334–363., and his book *A magyar vers hangzásszerkezete* /Sound System of Hungarian Verse/ Budapest, 1984. Akadémiai Kiadó 294 pp. – *Opus. Irodalomelméleti tanulmányok* Vol. 8.). Ágnes Pálfi and Péter Turcsány wrote a study on Arany's metrics (*Arany Toldijának versmértéke és ritmusa* /Rhythm and Metre in Arany's Toldi/, in *Irodalomtörténet* 66 (1984) pp. 936–955.), based on an all round inquiry. (See the review Szerdahelyi, István: *Bonyolult verstant vagy tudományost?* /Do we need a complicated or a scholarly founded versification?/ in *Irodalomtörténet* 67 (1985) pp. 617–631.).

Other works are also under preparation, such as a comprehensive study on Hungarian approaches to problems of metre by András Kecskés in the Hungarian Academy's Institute of Literary Studies. Péter Szilágyi's verse historical studies are now con-

cerned with the bisecting twelve-syllabic verse (*alexandrine*) form and the rhythmical evolution in Mihály Babits's poetry. Lajos Szuromi continues processing Petőfi's metres by a computer project.

In Szeged a metric repertory of early Hungarian poetry is being prepared under the direction of Iván Horváth using computers. István Szerdahelyi wrote his summarizing dissertation on Hungarian beat-stressing versification.

The Verse Research Committee offers a possibility for impartial, open and fair polemic; a consensus in all questions is not regarded as necessary.

The Committee in its second term (from 1986 to 1990) devotes its activity mainly to general topics: characteristics and limits of Hungarian versification. Several seminars and publications are scheduled. Proceedings of previous meetings, on *vers libre* and modern Hungarian versification are in progress. For the members of the committee a stencilled series of bibliographies are available: hitherto three issues appeared. *A magyar verstani irodalom annotált bibliográfiája 1981–1982* [Annotated bibliography of Hungarian versification studies 1981–1982], edited by Dénes Kövendi et al., Budapest, 1984. 20. pp.: *A magyar verstani irodalom annotált bibliográfiája 1979–1980* [Annotated bibliography of Hungarian versification studies 1979–1980] edited by Dénes Kövendi et al., Budapest, 1985. 24. pp., and *A magyar verstani irodalom annotált bibliográfiája 1977–1978* [Annotated bibliography of Hungarian versification studies 1977–1978] edited by Dénes Kövendi et al., Budapest, 1986. 32 pp., respectively. Because of practical reasons the bibliographies run backwards, i.e. the next issue will cover the years prior to 1977 and so on.

We welcome all colleagues who take interest in our work and wish to cooperate with us. (Address: Kecskés, András – Budapest, MTA Irodalomtudományi Intézet, Ménesi út 11–13, H-1118, Hungary.)

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## TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF TEACHING OF FOLKLORE AT A HUNGARIAN UNIVERSITY

As we are all aware that the term *folklore* was coined by an Englishman in 1846, one might ask, how it is possible that we are celebrating the bicentennial of folklore education and research at a Hungarian University? A very brief answer is that even if the term is of later origin, the phenomenon itself derives from a more noble age. In a country – Hungary, as you might guess – with such rich cultural traditions the kind of jubilee we celebrate, and when we choose to celebrate it,<sup>1</sup> is a question of decision and devotion.

If we understand the term folklore to be equivalent with folk life, we can boast that the first printed books belonging to the topic date from more than two centuries ago in