

literary and translation phenomena from both historical and contemporary perspectives. Simultaneously, they also observed new developments that have become integral to the formation of Bulgarian literary identity. This approach has proven to be most useful in the effort to understand the complexity of the subject even though its goal was not to provide a definitive history of Bulgarian

literature. The book is a highly valuable contribution to the study of Bulgarian literature, Bulgarian literary studies and international comparative literary studies in general.

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SZÁZ PÁL: A tizedik kapu. A haszidizmus hatása a magyar irodalomra

[The tenth gate. The effects of Hasidism on Hungarian literature]

Bratislava: Kalligram, 2022. 360 pp. ISBN 978-80-8297-004-5

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31577/WLS.2022.14.3.12>

The monograph *The tenth gate* by Pál Száz provides an introduction to interpreting 20th- and 21st-century Hungarian Hasidic literature. The title of the book references the allegory of the gate of Hasidic knowledge and tradition, a recurring motif in Central European works related to Hasidism (see e.g. Jiří Langer's *Nine Gates to the Chassidic Mysteries*); in Száz's monograph, the gate opens to a literary-critical interpretation of Hasidism-related works of literature. As such, the works considered in the book are interpreted not as documents but primarily as literary constructions and works of fiction. At the same time, however, Száz's analyses also consider the socio-cultural context and trans-cultural aspects of the texts, as well as their intertextual connections to the textual tradition of Judaism.

Among the significant merits of Száz's research are an intention to join the broader discourse on Hasidism and the literary works it inspired (pointing out the Western inspirations of the Hungarian Hasidic legacy and the influence of Martin Buber's German-language collections as well as the works of Jiří Langer) on the one hand, and an attempt at outlining a Central and Eastern European Neo-Hasidic transcultural and minority canon in its socio-cultural context on the other. Such a canon simultaneous-

ly becomes a general medium for Hasidic phenomena through its open and fragmented nature, and unique due to its regional constraints. The latter attempt is a unique and innovative enterprise as until now, the only available general study of Hungarian-language Hasidic works of literature has been Zoltán Kelemen's essay "Az emlékezet szépirodalmi nyomai" (The literary traces of memory). Száz highlights that whereas Hasidism constitutes an organic part of the Eastern European Hebrew- and Yiddish-language Jewish literary tradition as well as of Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish literature, in Hungarian literature it is cast as a form of otherness, as a phenomenon of in-betweenness, fluidity, peripherality and marginality, and as such, it provides ample grounds for investigation through the lenses of transculturality, cultural hybridization, regionality and many others.

The main text of the monograph consists of three major parts and an appendix. The first part treats the contextualization and literary connections of Hasidism and the matter of literarization of Hasidic stories, considering the historical and cultural embeddedness of Hasidism beyond national and regional levels as well as its reception in Hungarian literature. The chapter also describes the Hasidic movement, clarifies key

concepts related to Hasidism, and discusses the most widely known Hasidic genres (parables, allegories, legends, hagiographies, anecdotal narratives) as well as region-independent, characteristically Hasidic motifs (such as putting the pious believer in the spotlight, the power of a devoted prayer, the narrative about the hidden righteous ones, the redeeming power of telling tales etc.). After establishing the context, Száz defines the corpus to be analyzed, and considers the issues of classification of Hasidic literature. Referencing Kelemen's work, Száz separately discusses the concepts of authentic primary texts (written in Yiddish, for and by Hasidic authors) and secondary (Neo-)Hasidic literature (written for secular audiences about, but not represented by, Hasidic people), and emphasizes that the texts to be analyzed are secondary Hasidic works with an aesthetic-poetic function that have a genetic and/or generic connection to primary literature. These works are either adaptations, transpositions, and paraphrases, or they are related to the genres of imitation, pastiche, apocrypha, satire, and parody.

The second part of the book begins by considering the Hasidic stories of József Patai and Lajos Szabolcsi, the founding authors of the Hungarian Neo-Hasidic literary tradition, and goes on to outline a transcultural Hasidic canon. Száz regards the Hasidic narratives of Patai and Szabolcsi as equally exemplary, and thus engages the two works in a dialogue with one another for his analysis focusing on transtextual, textual, and comparative aspects. Száz devotes a separate chapter to the consideration of Patai's book *A középső kapu* (The middle gate) in which he highlights the Hasidic features articulated in the textual space of the work, followed by a discussion of the narratives and mytho-motorics of remembrance as well as analyses of boundary crossings and textual transfers. To establish a transcultural Hasidic canon, Száz relies on Dan Miron's concept of narrative-controlling metaphors, and through a comparative analysis of the works, he identifies the

dichotomy of secularization and seclusion, extreme poverty, the subordination of Jewish women, and the narrative-controlling metaphor of intra-community conflict as recurring patterns that pull the works considered into a common textual space.

The third part of the monograph discusses the representation of Hasidism in contemporary literature. Száz analyzes Géza Röhrig's imagined Hasidic stories, the image of Hasidic people in Szilárd Borbély's discursive and literary works as well as three contemporary Hasidic plays. The discussion of Röhrig's short prose works focuses primarily on their modes of imitation and magic realist features, which offer an alternative response to the question of the unspeakability of the Holocaust. The chapter on Borbély supplements and further elaborates on Száz's monograph *Haszid vérző Kisjézuska* (Hasidic bleeding Little Jesus) published in 2021. This chapter points out that Borbély considers the Hasidic people presented in Holocaust narratives to be a specific subgroup of Jewry living in Northeast Hungary, and interprets Hasidism parallel to Christianity. Száz considers the latter phenomenon using the poetic methods of bricolage, and emphasizes the encounters between Christian and Hasidic motifs that take place via allusions, embedded texts, and hybridization. This part of the monograph examines Hungarian Hasidic drama through a play each by Szilárd Borbély, Péter Kárpáti and Martin Boross, and points out the central role of the Messiah theme in these works as well as the way in which irony, mimesis, and rites function as common stylistic and structural elements. The monograph ends with an appendix that presents the Hasidic oeuvre of Czech author Jiří Langer and his portraits depicted from multiple perspectives, which have had a significant influence on – primarily Hungarian – Hasidic literature.

The carefully constructed monograph features multiple perspectives on its subject, proposes a number of original ideas, and it also benefits from the way the author strikes a balance between the perspective of a lay-

person and that of a researcher. Száz never fails to mediate, translate, and interpret the Hasidic worldview and terminology necessary for those not familiar with them, while also confidently and effortlessly commanding the relevant terms and concepts, and readily guiding readers through the maze of the world of Hasidism. Besides account-

ing for the literary-critical aspects, Száz also manages to interpret these powerful literary works as narratives of remembrance.

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JÁN JAMBOR – ZUZANA MALINOVSKÁ – JAKUB SOUČEK (eds.): Rodina ako spoločenský problém v súčasnom švajčiarskom a slovenskom kriminálnom románe [Family as a social problem in contemporary Swiss and Slovak crime fiction]
Prešov: Prešovská univerzita v Prešove, 2022. 149 s. ISBN 978-80-555-2886-1

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31577/WLS.2022.14.3.13>

The 2022 collected volume *Rodina ako spoločenský problém v súčasnom švajčiarskom a slovenskom kriminálnom románe* (Family as a social problem in contemporary Swiss and Slovak crime fiction), edited by Ján Jambor, Zuzana Malinová, and Jakub Souček, was preceded by two other thematic volumes, which also discuss how Swiss and Slovak authors treat current social problems in their crime fiction texts: the issue of the journal *World Literature Studies* 2/2020 focused on “The Representation of Current Social Issues in the Contemporary Crime Novel” edited by Jambor and Malinová; and the collected volume in German, French, and Slovak edited by Jambor, Souček, and Monika Zázrivcová in 2021. Starting from a chosen social phenomenon, namely the family, the authors attempt to show that “the representation of the family [...] captures diverse and explosive social problems of two concrete countries (Switzerland and Slovakia) as well as of the globalized world” (4; here and further trans. by J.T.).

At first glance, one is struck by the effort to analyze the topic from as many points of view as possible. The articles were contributed by university lecturers who work in the fields of German studies, Romance studies, English/American studies, and Slovak studies. Three authors belong to the lit-

erary and three to the linguistic orientation of the above-mentioned fields. The articles are written in Slovak and deal with a German-, French- and Slovak-language crime novel written after 1990: Swiss-German literature is represented by the novels of Hansjörg Schneider (1938), Swiss-French literature by Joseph Incardona (1969) and Marco Voltenauer (1973), and Slovak literature by Dominik Dán (1955) and Daniela Kapitáňová (1956). Although all three Swiss authors can boast of a highly appreciated and popular oeuvre in their home countries, Slovak translations are only available for the first of them, since Ján Jambor, co-editor of this volume and author of the first chapter included, has translated novels by Schneider into Slovak.

Given the multilingualism of the analyzed works, it should be positively emphasized that all direct quotations from the primary and secondary literature are placed in the running text in Slovak translation; the original versions can be found in the footnotes. Theoretical terms are also used in the original language if they refer to a specific scientific tradition and have no established counterpart in Slovak.

When a collected volume claims to examine a certain topic, supported by several philological disciplines, it is reasonable to ask