

Veronika Hermann – Balázs Varga
Foreword

In March 2022 we organized a workshop in the Institute for the Theory of Art and Media Studies at ELTE University, Hungary. Entitled Between Two Beauties – Discussions about Hungarian and Eastern European Midcult, the modest workshop turned out to be truly inspiring for all the participants. One of the causes might have been the relative lack of attention that creations of midcult positioning – be they closer to mass cultural, or, conversely, to high cultural canons – receive currently. Two of the articles in this subsection of *Kellék* were presented as talks at this event – those by Katalin Baráth and Ágnes Strickland-Pajtók – and these inspired the translation into Hungarian of two further texts: Virginia Woolf's Middlebrow (in *The Death of the Moth, and Other Essays*, Hogarth Press, 1947, 113–120) and Alex Cistelean's Istorie și conștiință de clasă medie în filmele românești ale anilor '90 (in Andrei Gorzo – Gabriela Filippi (coord.): *Filmul tranziției. Contribuții la interpretarea cinemaului românesc „nouăzecist”*, Editura Tact, Cluj-Napoca, 2017, 97–132). The collection continues and enforces our initial aim to incorporate this important problematic into Hungarian language humanities and social sciences discourses.

Keywords: midcult, middlebrow, cultural classification, Hungary, Eastern Europe

Katalin Baráth

**“Equally Interesting to the Countess and the Maid”
Observations on the Socio-historical Aspects of the Midcult,
Focusing on the ‘Uj Idők’ Weekly Magazin
(1895–1949, Hungary)**

“A good novel is equally interesting to the countess and the maid. ‘Something happens’ on every page. It’s as exciting as a pulp fiction, but it’s also poetry at its best. Pure literature.” This definition of “a good novel” comes from the publisher of the *Uj Idők* (*New Times*) weekly. In my study, based on definitions similar to the above, I tried to find an answer to the question of how the concept of midcult, the “cultural middle”, and the concept of mass culture separated (?) from it, appears in the pages of the magazin, which was controlled by the popular writer of the time, Ferenc Herczeg, and sometimes sold 40 000 copies, so it could have had a wide impact.

From the many self- and genre definitions of *Uj Idők*, we can detect an ambition for integration and inclusion. In slogans like “entertainment and literary quality”, we can recognize the cultural program of addressing, then elevating everyone to the educated middle class, moreover, the vision of the massification of the middle. Maybe it’s not an exaggeration to declare that the heterogeneous cultural selection provided by *Uj Idők* and its novel series, which definitely avoided certain topics, points of view and artistic risk-taking, was well suited to the emerging diversity of the middle class(es), and offered the new entrants a point of alignment, a code of taste and manners.

Keywords: Uj Idők, midcult, popular literature

Ágnes Strickland-Pajtók

**A Hungarian(-born) Middlebrow in Great Britain:
the Works of Baroness Emma Orczy**

Hungarian-born British writer, Baroness Orczy (1865-1947) is a largely understudied author. However, her seminal hero, the Scarlet Pimpernel has been a well-known figure in middlebrow culture ever since his first appearance on stage in 1903. One of his key characteristics is his dual identity: as Sir Percy Blakeney he is an effeminate and passive British aristocrat, however, when

embodying his courageous alter ego, the Scarlet Pimpernel, he is a masculine and courageous spy. Similarly, the author Emma Orczy also continuously tried to harmonise the irreconcilable clashes stemming from her Hungarian-English dual nationality. The aim of this research paper is to position Baroness Orczy and her significant body of work within the hierarchy of cultural spheres, and meanwhile to probe the taxonomy of middlebrow art.

Keywords: Baroness Orczy Emma, middlebrow, Scarlet Pimpernel, transculturalism, popular literature

**Virginia Woolf
Middlebrow**

In *The Death of the Moth, and Other Essays*. Hogarth Press, London, 1947, 113–120.

**Alex Cistelean
Istorie și conștiință de clasă medie
în filmele românești ale anilor '90.**

In Andrei Gorzo – Gabriela Filippi (coord.): *Filmul tranziției. Contribuții la interpretarea cinemaului românesc „nouăzecist”*. Editura Tact, Cluj-Napoca, 2017, 97–132.

**Gábor Hannos
Recognition and Communication: Some Theoretical
Aspects of Richard Rorty's Philosophy of Communication
in the Ethnic Dimension of the South Park Episode
“With Apologies of Jesse Jackson”**

In terms of its object of study – an episode of the popular television series South Park – this paper has a circular structure, treating it as both an empirical ground that is explored and delved into by the method of

exaptation/critical misreading. However, it also functions as an exemplar to convey some of the theoretical considerations of communication, most inspired by Richard Rorty. In my view, it is this methodological circularity that makes film hermeneutics, or more narrowly, the social-philosophical analysis of the moving image, possible and meaningful. In this respect, I will argue, by means of the aforementioned episode, that the communication of heterogeneous groups can only be successful if it is oriented not towards mutual consent but towards mutual politeness, because only in this way is it ensured that the dignity of the individuals involved is preserved, by virtue of the parallel guarantee of recognition, both by themselves and by the other.

Keywords: South Park, dignity, recognition, hermeneutical medium, Richard Rorty

Zalán-György Ilyés

The Concept of the Body in the Philosophical and Theological Anthropology of Saint Gregory of Nyssa

In my thesis, I seek to answer the question of how the perception of the body changed in the age of the Church Fathers compared to antiquity. While the misconception that Christianity is the heir of Platonism in terms of the way the body is viewed is still widely held today, I argue that, in addition to the detailed theological, philosophical and anthropological explorations of the body in the Church Fathers, many of their theological, philosophical and anthropological investigations paint a positive picture of the body. I will support my arguments with a case study: I will attempt a preliminary reconstruction of St. Gregory of Nyssa's theology of the body, examining questions such as "how does Gregory define the ontological and moral status of matter and the body?", "how does the body relate to the soul in Gregory's theology?" or "how does Gregory articulate the eschatological and soteriological functions of the body?". Undoubtedly, my research is not representative, since Gregory's theology is only one of many that also deals with the problem of the body. Nevertheless, I think that it can be a good starting or reference point for archaeological investigations on the body.

Keywords: Saint Gregory of Nyssa, theological anthropology, body, soul

András Áron Ivácson

**Liberalism through the Prism of Republicanism:
From Radicalism to Conservatism**

The volume titled *Kortárs Republikanizmus* (Contemporary Republicanism) edited by Szilárd János Tóth és Márk Losoncz fills a considerable void in recent intellectual history. For the last three decades the role of ideological hegemon was filled by liberalism whose adherents comfortably got used to the idea that no one is allowed to question them. Now, when all sorts of criticisms of liberalism already form part of mainstream thought, it seems that we lack the reception of the criticisms of liberalism formulated by classical republican thought. This volume aims to remedy this situation and presents a series of standpoints that may help readers understand the criticism aimed at liberalism by republican thought.

Keyword: liberalism, republicanism, *Kortárs Republikanizmus*