

THEMES OF THESIS

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**Fantasy in Maurice Carême's novel titled *Médusa*
and in *Contes pour Caprine* tales**

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„The originality of Carême: benaming things again with very few words, giving back the original meaning to very few words ... He created difficult, ambiguous, fine simplicity: an almost unperceived synthesis of specific and fictive, ordinary and wonderful...”

László Ferenczi, *Maurice Carême – return to poetry* = Lóránt Kabdebó, Ernő Kulcsár Szabó, „*but they answer by not answering*”, Pécs, Janus Pannonius, 1992.

I. Topic of the thesis, subject of the research

In my thesis I introduce the works of the creative career of Maurice Carême (1899-1978) Belgian writer, poet and literary translator related to literary fantasy. My objectives include the brief introduction of a few significant stages of Belgian literary history and the placement of Carême in Belgian and Hungarian reception.

As the subject of my research I study a field of his life-work that is less known in Hungary; I analyse the novel titled *Médua* which is impregnated with fantasy and the book of tales titled *Contes pour Caprine* that is rich in fantastic elements. The writer's fantasies filled with transcendent secrets and visions as well as the imprints of his explained and inexplicable

inner speculations appear in these texts. In the fantastic prose of Carême an unknown, inapprehensible phenomenon suddenly appears in the usual, modest everyday milieux and puts out the protagonists from their own inner world. My analysing work targets the unique appearance of the fantasy of Carême's tales.

II. Method and nature of the research

In the first chapter of my thesis I introduce the life-work of the author and the reception of his works in Belgium and Hungary by relying on the studies of László Ferenczi, János Lackfi and Jeannine Burny.

In the second chapter I outline the approaches to the emergence of fantasy literature and the problematic intersections thereof, closed by the interpretation of Carême's fantasy and its analysis along a few main criteria.

The works examined in the thesis require the definition of literary fantasy and the enumeration of the features of the genre. According to Molino, a renowned researcher of this topic, three supplementary methods of defining the genre of fantasy literature has appeared in theoretical literature on this topic: a historical-philological direction, a thematic-semantic approach and a structuralist method of analysis. Molino also mentions psychoanalytical and sociological approaches, but he interprets these latter as the subordinates of the previous three main directions. Because of contradictory conceptual interpretations that vary by researcher I considered it expedient to summarise the history of fantasy literature and, within that, the examination of the various directions. Due to the above consideration I cover the separation of the genre of fantasy from other genres.

For my work analysing the theoretical background of the research of fantasy literature I have used the theoretical assumptions of Caillois, Vax,

Todorov, Molino and Judit Maár. Most analysts set up their own unique system of topics, thus numerous thematic approaches have arisen which outline the topics of fantasy in ways that sometimes contradict each other. The inconsistency of these lists inspired Todorov to place the system of examining the genre on a new foundation, thus narratological and thematic analyses of fantastic texts have come to the fore. In my work I attempt to characterise the typical points of literary fantasy in the works of Carême through the theory of a few researchers.

In the third chapter I analyse Maurice Carême's novel titled *Médua* and his collection of tales titled *Contes pour Caprine*. During the analysis of these works I point out the ways, in which Carême's fantasy appears. In *Médua* I examine the techniques of narration, structural and thematic features, the concept of strange and wonderful, the forms of appearance of "I" topics and "you" topics, intertextual references,

the fantastic general effect that arises through the abundance of characters and events and the meanings related to the discrediting of witnesses. I believe there is a uniquely northern atmosphere among the fantastic elements, which has great traditions in Belgian literature.

I examine the tales of Carême in light of the typical characteristics of literary tales. In the collection that consists of nine individual parts we can find the ingredients of the writer's unique story-oriented text, the alarming background stories of living-spaces that become irrational in addition to the motives typical of the features of folk tales. Depressing anxiety – one of the most important semantic features of fantasy literature – is the organising power of *Caprine tales*. The collection exposes readers' waiting for a miracle, their attraction to the unknown. The physical and mental world run into one another in the writer's tales, the concepts of time and space are revaluated and the

appearance of fantasy interlacing everyday life transforms the stories into naturalistic ones.

III. Conclusions of the thesis

The uniqueness of Carême's technique of fantasy appearing in the novel and tales analysed in the thesis manifests in the use of auditory and visual effects, the elaboration of duplication and the intertextual characteristics embedded into the narration. In Carême's texts the strange thing that appears in the world of ordinary phenomena and does not fit in there opens a new, supernatural dimension in the story. Carême's special principle of editing is characterised by the impacted narrative that is related to an objective fact, the horrors of the Korean War in the novel titled *Médua*. This realistic component is alloyed with the song of complaint intoned from the dunes of the mystical seaside landscape and starts the

Médusa – medusa – muse metamorphosis, the merge of the realistic and unrealistic atmosphere in the novel. The progression of evil also appears in the unique tale universe of Carême along classic tale traditions, which is alloyed by the writer with the atmosphere of waiting for a miracle that is typical in tales.

In his fantastic prose, Carême incorporates a phenomenon that seems unrealistic into the elements of everyday reality by using exaggerations related to supernatural rhetoric shapes, metaphorical expressions, a visualised narrator typical of fantastic language, which restructures the line of events, and the unknown world arising in the new dimension creates the fluctuation between realistic and unrealistic reading in the recipient. He raises topics, such as the metamorphosis that can be linked to the questioning of the border between material and intellect, duplication of personality, mind-reading, telepathy, space extension, stop of time, repetition of images.

Carême wrote his works filled with fantasy in possession of Hoffmann's heritage, with a way of portrayal that can be linked to trend of Belgian fantasy literature at the time of a lonely author's recoils. The latent contents bursting out from the writer's soul and the agonizing, anxious moments are hidden in his novels and tales.

BERECZKINÉ ZÁLUSZKI Anna, *List of publications*

I. Publications related to the topic of the thesis

1. *La Nouvelle Revue Française and Mercure de France 1909-1910. Reception of Marinetti and futurism in Paris in light of the two journals* = Poetry and tradition, Nyíregyházi Főiskola, 2001, 17-18.
2. *The topics of fantasy in the world of tales of Maurice Carême* =Tolle et lege, Trezor Kiadó, Bp., 2008, 143-151.
3. *Translation of francophone tales for reception-oriented teaching of literature* = New ways of education in the mother tongue and pedagogist education, Trezor Kiadó, 2008, 54-58.
4. *Folklore, tale, pilgrim motive* = Joint way - Kethano drom 2008/4., 58.
5. *Recipient-oriented teaching of literature and talent development at the Maurice Carême literary translator seminar*= Methodology of working with talented students. Hungarian Language Teachers' Training Faculty, Szabadka, International scientific conference, November 2011, 579-583.