

**THY SPEECH BEWRAYETH THEE:  
THOU SHALT NOT STEAL THE PRESTIGE  
OF FOREIGN LITERATURES**

**PSEUDOTRANSLATIONS IN HUNGARY AFTER 1989**

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The use of pseudonyms and pseudotranslations<sup>1</sup> has always been very common, particularly in popular, as opposed to elite or canonised literature, or when introducing new literary forms. When one wishes to conceal one's identity, the simplest way to do so is to adopt a pen name. In all probability, no reader will look up the copyright in the imprint. If one likes, the copyright will belong to the *nom de plume*, thus preventing even the interested reader from finding out who lurks behind the alias. But it is still possible to go further. In addition to a foreign-sounding allonym one may provide the reader with an 'original' publisher, a publication date, a translator's name (which might, or might not, be that of the author), a translation date in the imprint, a dedication, a motto referring to the author's assumed culture, and, most frequently, a foreword or afterword, which is full of hints designed to confirm the author's assumed identity. In most cases the identification process can be very difficult and time-consuming, and the results are in fact often unverifiable without the writer's avowal (as happened recently in the case of Lili Csokonai). Thus, any literature, at any time, may unknowingly include certain assumed translations, and the fictitious translations are treated as if they were genuine ones. Since pseudotranslations usually occur in popular and/or experimental genres, they tend to appear on the periphery of the literary system, a fact that of course helps to preserve the mystery.

There are times in a literature, or culture, when applying a feigned name is the "in thing," times when nobody bothers with pseudonyms, and times when fictitious names are practically compulsory for a certain group of writers and/or in a particular genre. This latter situation seems to be the case in contemporary Hungary.

As I have already written extensively about the discovery of the phenomenon and the social and cultural reasons for it,<sup>2</sup> here I will only sum up my findings very briefly in order to put pseudotranslations into context. Then I will proceed to

analyse the characteristics of modern pseudotranslations by focusing primarily on the similarities and divergences between the original, English-speaking and the domesticated, Hungarian versions of science fiction and fantasy; but I will occasionally also refer to other genres.

While researching translated science fiction and fantasy novels, I accidentally came across pseudotranslations in 1995. Investigating novels by Wayne Chapman, apparently an American writer, I discovered that Wayne Chapman was in truth a pseudonym of two separate Hungarian authors. My research led to the discovery of approximately one hundred assumed names in the genre, much more than in other popular genres such as romance, detective fiction, or thriller. There appeared to be an entire group with interconnected roles such as (pseudo)-translator, editor, manager and publisher. Furthermore, I was led to a better understanding of the significant role that these fictitious translations play in the cultural importation process. We have to bear in mind that before the political changes of 1989–1990 the government frowned upon entertainment literature; and although such literature was published in a relatively large numbers of copies beginning with the 1960s,<sup>3</sup> the assortment remained rather limited. For instance, in science fiction the annual production, local and imported, did not exceed twenty novels. Certain (sub)-genres were completely ignored, and some authors were blacklisted. It can therefore be claimed that, despite the obvious public demand for this type of reading-matter, a literary subsystem of popular writing, as it existed in the West, was almost unknown in Hungary. Consequently, a remarkable boom in publishing such books began in 1989.

It goes without saying that the altered political and economic conditions, which have characterised the transition of converting ‘socialism’ into capitalism, have heavily influenced cultural importation. This is particularly true in the case of ‘trash’ literature.<sup>4</sup> Evidently, this sort of publication is not considered to be in need of the same protection and subsidies that canonised or specialist literatures require. On the contrary, its primary purpose is to bring in a profit; which it may in fact do. The present book market remains in a state of flux and is highly concentrated.<sup>5</sup> Fifty publishing houses produce approximately eighty-six percent of the publications, and thirteen dominate sixty percent of the entire book market. About fifty to sixty publishers, usually with well-defined specialisations, partake in the rest; and according to the *Hungarian National Bibliography*, compiled by the personnel of Széchenyi National Library, about five thousand institutions possess copyright permits.

The market for entertainment literature, including illustrated popular science, covers approximately twenty-seven percent of the whole production. Two huge international corporations – whose turnovers currently account for second and third place within the book market in Hungary – own one half of the turnover in this segment of the publishing industry. Naturally, the other, small or medium-

sized, enterprises do not have the capital to compete with them. But by publishing prestigious ‘translations’ without having to pay royalties and expensive copyrights – a Hungarian writer should not expect more than 50,000 to 100,000 Hungarian *forints*, while the minimum copyright for a novel is \$1,000 – the smaller and medium sized firms can attract readers. This is particularly true, if the assumed translation is much more popular with consumers than a genuine one. Thus, the economic realities of the publishing trade provide sound reasons to encourage domestic production. Furthermore, the average number of copies for each work has been decreasing from 30,000 a few years ago to today’s 4,000 to 5,000; and in the case of foreign writers the small Hungarian publishers usually buy the copyright of only one edition.

Let me return for a moment to the previously noted prestige of English-speaking literature. American and British writers prevail in practically all popular genres, and their predominance, supported by other political, economic, and cultural factors, has given a great impetus to pseudotranslating. It is by no means accidental that most of the pen names chosen by the Hungarian authors are English. These include Martin Clark Ashton, John Caldwell, Arthur Philip Feist, Jeff Hank, Mark Shadow, and Jeremy Taylor. It also has to be taken into consideration that quite a few Anglo-Saxon writers adapt fictitious names,<sup>6</sup> sometimes more than one,<sup>7</sup> when writing popular literature. Even if they do not attempt to be accepted as mainstream authors; almost every writer assumes a fanciful name when taking an occasional trip outside his or her usual genre.<sup>8</sup> When one regularly works in different (sub)-genres, he or she is expected to use several pseudonyms, at least one for each (sub)-genre.<sup>9</sup> In these practices the Hungarians are following suit. For instance, István Nemes has at least seven pen names in science fiction and fantasy and several more when he writes detective stories, romances, or film and television scripts. Another Hungarian well-supplied with allonyms is Zsolt Szántai. These authors are by no means exceptional.

However, the use of pseudotranslations in popular genres appears to be required by the distributors<sup>10</sup> in order to enhance their marketability. In entertainment literature a book with a Hungarian name on the front cover is regarded as unsaleable, dud stock. These days, when the market is overrun with would-be best sellers, an attractive cover and an alluring foreign-sounding name are necessities. Even authors, who were well known before 1989, such as István Nemere, have applied feigned names such as Stuart Herrington during the last decade. Although there are certain exceptions such as Vavyan Fable [Éva Molnár] or Leslie L. Lawrence [László L. Lőrincz], in most cases the use of a fictitious name is not initiated by the writers or publishers but by the distributors.

The collapse of the previous distribution network, strongly connected with the privatisation of the publishing industry, which dragged on until 1994, has led to a more diversified, fairly flexible distribution system and the inclusion of some new

forms such as mail order and book clubs. It has also engendered a quasi-legal book market. The latter produces either pirate editions or obsolete, out of copyright but seemingly novel publications and sells these books for a half or a third off the cover price. Thus, the customers are deceived in multiple ways. This quasi-legal zone, which appears to possess an independent chain of bookshops of its own, is estimated to have realised a turnover of approximately two billion Hungarian *forints* [HUF] in 1997, an amount equal to a little more than eight percent of the whole Hungarian book market. In other words, the quasi-legal market makes up a surprisingly large proportion of the whole.<sup>11</sup> Needless to say, this part of the book industry has hardly been researched, as it is nearly impossible to gather reliable data. Therefore, it will be ignored in this study. The problem of the quasi-legal publishing business has been mentioned only to provide a clearer picture of the current market situation and to point out that the numerous translations brought out by ephemeral, shady publishing houses have also contributed to the relatively high standing of translated literature.

As far as science fiction and fantasy are concerned most publishers working in these genres are relatively small, sometimes medium-sized, and, with a very few exceptions such as JLX or Maecenas International, owned by Hungarians. This does not seem to be the case with other popular genres. Harlequin is the most influential publisher of romance novels, and Bastei Budapest is in second place, at least from the point of view of the number of publications. Many small publishing houses held by Hungarians also issue such books. These include Aldina, Esély, Textronic, Gold Book, Hati Kv., and Risus. The collected data<sup>12</sup> indicates that only the Hungarian publishers make use of pseudotranslations.

Now, let us have a closer look at these assumed translations. Using science fiction and fantasy novels as examples, I will attempt to outline some of the overall tendencies in promoting popular fiction and pinpoint several of the customised features by comparing them with the characteristics of original, English-speaking stories. So as to clarify its context, this task needs a brief introduction to science fiction in Hungary.

As I have previously noted, this genre hardly existed before 1989. In fact, only Móra Ferenc Ifjúsági Könyvkiadó, which mainly specialised in children's and juvenile literature, had a paperback science fiction series *Kozmosz* [Cosmos], later *Galaktika* [Galaxy], and published four to twelve books yearly, or altogether 133 between 1969 and 1987. Of that number, forty-two, including four second editions,<sup>13</sup> were translated from English. In addition, there was a magazine for grown-ups called *Galaktika*, which began in 1972, and a bimonthly for juvenile readers entitled *Robur*, which was started in 1985. Other publishers also issued science fiction but only occasionally. The first translation of a fantasy was *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien and was published by Gondolat in 1981. (Better late than never.)

At that time science fiction was regarded as a specific type of ‘fantastic literature’ (as Todorov’s ‘la littérature fantastique’), whose origin went back to the Gothic novel, or more precisely to *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley.<sup>14</sup> It was not considered as part of a particular sort of American pulp literature, which had first emerged in the 1920s. This line of thought, stemming in large part from the UK, has prevailed since the 1960s and has evidently influenced the selection of novels to be published, along with the perception and reception of science fiction in Hungary. Obviously the fans of the genre have readily accepted this notion because it wholly corresponds to their attempts to establish science fiction in a more favourable literary position than ‘trash’ or juvenile literature. The promotion of science fiction as serious literature was assisted by Péter Kuczka, the editor of the above mentioned *Kozmosz/Galaktika* series, who included anthologies of short stories by Jorge Luis Borges, Italo Calvino, Mircea Eliade, Mór Jókai, and Frigyes Karinthy. It should be remembered that at that time aesthetic value and merit were still considered to be important factors for the editors in the selection of literary works.

Péter Kuczka wrote the entry ‘Hungary’ in *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*. In the article he claims, “Today [that is, 1992] 25-30 authors in Hungary are engaged in sf, although many of them work also in other genres.”<sup>15</sup>

He mentions †Klára Fehér, Mária Szepes, †László András, Péter Bogáti, †Iván Boldizsár, †József Cserna, Zoltán Csernai, Tibor Dáné, István Elek, Gyula Fekete, Mihály Gergely, Ervin Gyertyán, Gyula Hernádi, Dezső Kemény, András Kürti, Péter Lengyel, László L. Lőrincz, István Nemere, †György Nemes, László Nemes, Miklós Rónaszegi, Péter Szentmihályi Szabó, †Rudolf Weinbrenner, and †Péter Zsoldos – altogether twenty-four names – which is supposed to constitute an almost complete list. However, even by that time many more young writers had appeared on the science fiction and, perhaps more importantly, fantasy scenes. Among others, these included: Zsuzsa H. Kiss, Katalin Makó, Tibor Bihon, András Gáspár, György Juhász, Zsolt Kornya, István Nemes, Csanád Novák, Zsolt Szántai, †Tamás Viszokay. In fact, the younger generation has already taken over almost the entire science fiction business. The young writers are successfully redefining, renewing, extending, and promoting the genre, as well as introducing and popularising fantasy together with role-playing games, which include the whole range from thought-provoking speculation to heart-stirring tales, from recycled pulp to formula fantasy, “mass-produced supplier of wish fulfilment.”<sup>16</sup>

In the beginning it was quite an undertaking, but they seem to have managed very well. In the first six years after the political changes more than seven hundred science fiction and fantasy novels and numerous anthologies were published. This prodigious output was twice the number of all publications in fantastic literature during the socialist era, which had included highly canonised literature such as E. T. A. Hoffman, Virginia Wolf, Mikhail Bulgakov or Dante Alighieri to cite just a

few examples. Several magazines also came into being, although most of them vanished after just a few issues (*Dragon*, *Rúna* [Rune], *Solaria*, and most recently, *Analóg* [Analogue]). An annual science fiction convention is held in Salgótarján. Many bookshops specialising in these genres have been founded. These include stores with such notable names as Univerzum [Universe], Trollbarlang [Troll's Cave], Camelot in Budapest, the Valhalla bookshops all over the country, Csillagvég [Star's End] in Szeged, as well as others. Science fiction and fantasy newsgroups (e.g., *Solaria*), on-line fanzines (e.g., *Aurin*) and webpages flourish (*Codex*, *Beholder*, *Cherubion*, etc.), numerous associations (e.g., *Avana*, Hungarian Fantasy Association), role-playing meetings, competitions – even a national competition – and clubs have been organised. Mainly due to the popularity of fantasy the audience – its proportion, as everywhere else, is approximately seventy percent within the entire science fiction and fantasy production – and related games, has multiplied.

As opposed to the previous, careful selection of works to be published, these days competition determines what will be introduced to the Hungarian reader. The entertainment and marketability factors override all other considerations. For instance, as Table 1 shows, apart from the prestigious British and American originals, practically all other source cultures have vanished from the assortment of genuine translations. As has been said, most of the local production is published under foreign-sounding pseudonyms, a fact that at first appears to indicate a cultural homogeneity in popular genres. Nevertheless, on closer examination this impression proves to be illusory.

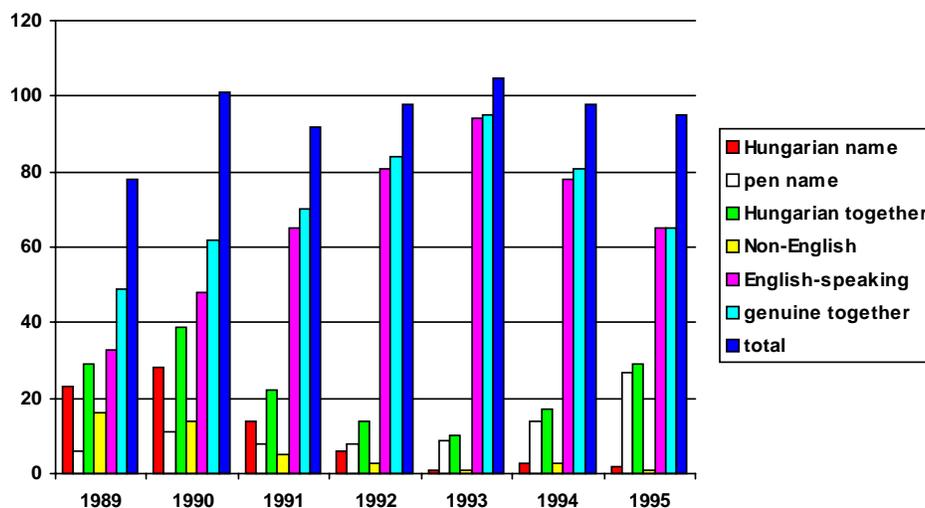


Figure 1. Science fiction and fantasy novels according to their source culture

Table 1. The textual structure of the three versions of Blood Season

BLOOD SEASON	FIRST ED.	SECOND ED.	THIRD ED.
PART 1	8 chapters chapter 1 chapter 2 chapter 3 chapter 4 chapters 5-6 chapter 7 partly chapter 7 partly chapter 8 partly chapter 8 partly	7 chapters chapter 1 chapter 2 chapter 3 chapter 4 chapter 5 chapter 5 chapter 6 chapter 6 chapter 7	17 chapters chapters 1-2 chapters 3-6 chapters 7-9 chapters 10-11 chapters 12-14  chapters 15-16  chapter 17
PART 2	3 chapters chapter 2 chapter 2 chapter 3 chapter 3 chapter 3	6 chapters chapter 2 chapter 3 chapter 4 chapter 5 chapter 6	12 chapters chapter 2 chapter 3 chapters 4-6 chapters 7-10 chapters 11-12
PART 3	7 chapters  chapter 3 chapter 4 chapter 5 chapter 6 chapter 7	8 chapters chapter 3 added chapter 4 chapter 5 chapter 6 chapter 7 chapter 8	16 chapters chapters 3-6 chapters 7-9 chapters 11-13 chapter 14 chapter 15 chapter 16
PART 4	7 chapters chapter 1 chapter 2 chapter 3 chapter 4 chapter 5 chapter 6 chapter 7	7 chapters chapter 1 chapter 2 chapter 3 chapter 4 chapter 5 chapter 6 chapter 7	13 chapters chapters 1-2 chapter 3 chapter 4 chapters 5-6 chapters 7-8 chapter 9 chapters 10-13
PART 5	no division	no division	2 chapters

\* The corresponding chapters are not included in this table.

Besides a delimitation of source cultures, one of the new elements has been the appearance of several series, set in the same, shared imaginary world. These include: M.A.G.U.S. by Valhalla, Káosz [Chaos] by Cherubion, A hatalom kártyái [Cards of Power] by Beholder). In addition, sequels, often written by several peo-

ple, and sometimes linked with role-playing games, have appeared. The sequels may continue the story of very well known, usually American, books. For instance, Valhalla published sequels to Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*, while various publishers provided sequels for *Alien*, *Terminator*, and *Star Wars*. This element has been loaned and domesticated to a certain extent as the listed imaginary worlds and linked role-playing games developed by Hungarians demonstrate. If we wish to examine the phenomenon of cultural importation, it becomes crucial for us to establish whether the Hungarian domestic versions differ from their English-speaking models, and if so, to what extent.

One may hypothesise at the outset that the palette of science fiction and fantasy literature in Hungary will range from mere copycat efforts to highly idiosyncratic writings, which domesticate the particular popular genre by using to a great extent Hungarian literary traditions and models.

I have selected two novels from different genres, *A Halál Havában* [In the Month of Death] by Wayne Chapman (András Gáspár and Csanád Novák) and *Tűzvarázs* [Fire Magic] by Vavyan Fable (Éva Molnár), to be analysed in order to point out the most relevant features within the main trends of pseudotranslating.

### ***Tűzvarázs* by Vavyan Fable**

*Tűzvarázs* is the twenty-first novel by Vavyan Fable (copyright: Éva Molnár), whose first book was published in the late eighties. Several companies had published her stories previously; but since the mid-1990s Fabyen<sup>17</sup> Kiadó has issued her works. *Tűzvarázs* appeared first in 1996 and there have been several other books since then. These novels are labelled 'detective fiction' in the *Hungarian National Bibliography*; but they should in fact be categorised as an amalgam of detective story and romance, with the added flavour of ecological concerns, and, more recently, paranormal phenomena. One of her novels, *Álomhajsza* [Dream Pursuit], combines all these elements with fantasy. This hybridisation of genres is by no means exceptional; on the contrary, diverse genre mixes are symptomatic of late twentieth-century fiction.

The front cover was designed by Hungarians at SEE STÚDIÓ. In Hungary domestic cover design is quite common even in the case of genuine translations. Besides being cheaper, local design is regarded as more alluring in the local market because visualisations are also culture-specific. In the background on the front cover is a black and white photo of a female face. The woman's face is partly hidden by the author's name in huge white letters, by three other black and white photographs of a smiling man, a cat, and a small boy, by the book's title in red edged white letters, and by a promotional sentence that reads: "E könyv olvastán lehozza a padlásról jobbik önmagát!" [Having read this book you shall fetch your

better self from the attic!] As a result only the woman's beautiful eyes can be seen completely. The back cover repeats the author's name and the title (twice) in the same format, includes a photograph of the author by Tamás Diner, a short blurb, a humorous warning (*Caution! Pure inventions! Vavyan Fable did not fashion a fitness cassette and a dietary Bible!, etc.*), the ISBN number and the price of 548 HUF.

As always in the publications of Fabyen Könyvkiadó, the ecological concerns are indicated by the following claim in the imprint: "Ennek a könyvnek az elkészítése érdekében egyetlen újabb fának sem kellett meghalnia ..." [Not even a single tree had to die in order to produce this book...]. That is, it was made using recycled paper.

The first, unnumbered page contains an idiosyncratic version of the typical reminder that the characters are fictitious,<sup>18</sup> and includes a statement of the author's gratitude to Ákos Fodor, a well-known poet, whose poems are often incorporated in Fable's novels.

The different sections of the story are separated from one another not by the more typical asterisk but by an abstract image of a piece of cake. There may be several possible interpretations for this. It could be a reference to the protagonist's diet and intensive fitness program, or it could be an allusion to a well-known Hungarian saying 'Az élet nem habostorta' [Life is not a cake with whipped cream on top]. (In English one would say, "Life is not a bowl of cherries.") Italics are used to highlight important parts and linguistic puns (e.g., *fogyton-fogyvást*, made of 'fogy' [lose weight] and 'folyton-folyvást').

Despite the eventful plot told by the female protagonist, the basic situation can easily be summed up. Ex-cop Shane Negrin, now public relations officer for the police department, has to face several criminals, including two who wish to get even with her because she arrested them ten years ago. At the same time her private life is also in crisis. She dislikes being a spokeswoman, finds it difficult to cope with her teen-age son, has trouble coming to terms with her own ageing, struggles with her increased weight, and discovers that her marriage has become jaded. As the plot progresses towards the inevitable happy ending, the heroine gradually solves all these problems. The criminals end up killed – in self-defence of course – or under lock and key. The heroine becomes a detective again and recovers her self-confidence. In part this is because she starts to do gymnastics, but it is mostly due to having fallen in love with her ex-lover again, with the man who happens to be the father of her son. The rekindled affair ends her son's uncommunicative and cheeky behaviour outright, dissolves her marriage, and puts a stop to her concerns about ageing.

We should focus primarily on the stylistic components because they disclose much more than the elements of the plot about how the domestication takes place. In any event the main features of the plot correspond to those of countless detec-

tive stories and romances (including the practically compulsory car chase with gun fight and bedroom scenes). The fairly conservative narrative technique and the dramatic elements are all rather immaterial. However, it has to be pointed out that the living standards described in the novel are far beyond the average Hungarian citizen's reach. These elevated lifestyles might be attributed to the genre because detective stories and romances tend to be about the upper classes, but they could also be attached to the general idealised nature of Fable's world.

Fable can spin a good story. But her most recent works are full of digressions, or to be more precise include quite a few loosely related episodes. These are usually reminiscences of the protagonist, which are not strictly necessary from the point of view of the main story line and render the overall structure rather unbalanced. These insertions either express a strong opinion held by the author concerning various topics – ranging from a two-page long mockery of the over-use of mobile phones, particularly by men,<sup>19</sup> to several passages about wholesome nutrition or health food discussed by women – or merely serve as basis for more linguistic witticism – such as *delejízó*,<sup>20</sup> *Micimacho*,<sup>21</sup> *fogylalt*,<sup>22</sup> and *Zsába Királynője*.<sup>23</sup> Fable obviously feels that she has to educate her readers, raise their awareness of particular matters, propagate certain attitudes, and condemn others. Her intention is sometimes too easily detected and this transparency perhaps reduces the impact of the narrative on the audience. These extraneous subjects have all the lively topicality of journalism and include references to current political events, or television series, and may render the book dated for any future generation. But of course, entertainment literature is not supposed to be enduring.

The writer bestows great care upon making the locale and the culture unidentifiable in all her books. The country or city where the plot takes place is either unnamed or has a fanciful name such as Line, Dalm, Fertő City [Slough City]. Other toponyms include names such as Sólóyom-hegy [Hawk Hill], Einstein tér [Einstein Square], Orson utca [Orson Street], and Balzsam utca [Balsam Street]. The currency is also nameless. The names of the characters,<sup>24</sup> except for some nicknames,<sup>25</sup> cannot be ascertained to any particular language. In fact, this multicultural variety may suggest the United States as the location of the stories. Most of the references, especially to everyday life, are international. These include brand names,<sup>26</sup> writers and literary characters,<sup>27</sup> the film world,<sup>28</sup> and well-known personages,<sup>29</sup> institutions,<sup>30</sup> and objects.<sup>31</sup>

Quite a few English words or idioms appear in the text, either in their original form<sup>32</sup> or respelled according to Hungarian phonetics,<sup>33</sup> and are sometimes combined with Hungarian words.<sup>34</sup> This is also an international phenomenon, frequently lamented by purists. As English is today's *lingua franca*, particularly for the younger generations reared in a world dominated by English-speaking cultures, it is small wonder that more and more words and idioms are borrowed from its vocabulary. In fact, Fable is quite low-key in using words taken from English

compared with some other science fiction and fantasy writers. Some writers, who have been ‘brought up’ on role-playing games, simply Hungarianize a number of terms when writing their own fiction.

The loan-words are countered by the coined ones and the inventive use of Hungarian, resulting in an easy diction, fit for a hybrid novel, which is very close to the vernacular but draws on various lexicons. Fable’s coinage applies different grammatical methods and belongs to the realm of linguistic humour as defined by Hart (1998).

One of example of Fable’s method is combination. Here she merely puts two words together creating a new meaning: ‘újra-hajadon’ [lit. again-maiden, meaning divorced], ‘anyósjártassági’ [lit. mother-in-law proficiency, meaning married], ‘biobucka’ [lit. bio-hillock, meaning domestic animal underfoot], ‘hörögöropi’ [lit. bronchial pretzel, meaning cigarette], ‘szomszédnyővő’ [lit. neighbor-hack, meaning objectionable person], ‘nőfasizmus’ [lit. female fascism, meaning feminism carried to excess], ‘löncsdiszkont’ [lit. lunch discounter, meaning obese person].

A special form of this type of linguistic joke is when the two words have an identical syllable, for instance gömbölydedóvó [gömbölyded + dedóvó, ‘buxom’ + ‘nursery school’], and pufitness [pufi + fitness, ‘fatty’ + ‘fitness’].

She also forms verbs out of nouns: melléfrigyel [aside + nuptials + verbal suffix, meaning mismarry], fitnesskedik [fitness + verbal suffix, meaning engage in fitness activities], kipszichéz [preverb + psyche + verbal suffix, meaning analyse psychologically], kifreudoz [preverb + Freud + verbal suffix, meaning analyse psychologically], in one case she makes up a new verb replacing one verbal suffix by another without altering the meaning [go dotty]: meghibbul out of meghibban.

Some of her coinages are derivations, made by adding an unusual ending (marked by bold) to a common word on the analogy of a synonym or similarity. For instance, she invents expressions such as fax**améta** (analogous to paksaméta, meaning lots of facsimile messages), gonosz**di** (uncommon suffix to form an adjective with less pejorative meaning [between catty and spiteful] out of the original adjective [evil], analogous to ravasz**di**), izmol**ás** (two suffixes, the former to form a verb out of a noun, the latter to form a noun out of that verb, analogous to many words, slang for ‘do exercises’), macerat**úra** (analogous to szekatúra, slang-type, meaning rag), pasiz**mus** (guy + ism), röpd**e** (noun-forming suffix added to the verb ‘fly’, meaning bird-cage), trillá**rium** (analogous to aquarium, ending added to the noun ‘trilla’, meaning bird-cage), agyá**sz**, gyagyá**sz**, elmés**z** (noun-forming suffix, these derivations always refer to occupation, their bases are ‘brain’, ‘loony’ and ‘mind’ resp., meaning psychiatrist), fürgö**nc** (the underlying form is füрге [brisk], synonym of and analogous to küldönc [errand-boy]).

Fable also likes punning by altering just one letter – for instance, jógászasszony instead of jogászasszony (long ‘o’ turns the word ‘female jurist’ into ‘female practitioner of yoga’); or bö**h**ömbika (böhom is a slang word, meaning very large, in

current slang *bika* [bull] is used as a synonym of man, put together the new word means a body-builder who takes steroids and the connotation of the term is very pejorative: brainless idiot) instead of *bölömbika* [mire-drum, *Botaurus stellaris*]; or applies homonyms, which are far less frequent in Hungarian than in English but do exist, for instance, *hangyász* (ant-eater and a slang word for psychiatrist), very assonant to *hangyás* [dotty]).

Besides these linguistic innovations it is very characteristic of her language use that she often applies nouns as attributives: for instance, *turbék géphang* (approx. cooing mechanical voice), *gerlice női hang* (lit. turtle-dove female voice), *frígó Bella* (lit. fridge Bella, meaning frigid), *konga harangnyelv* (lit. clang/conga bell-hammer, referring to sound and motion simultaneously), *jegesmedve asszony*, *jégmackó nő* (approx. polar bear woman, meaning woman of ample proportions), *liba Cindy Crawford* (lit. goose C.C.), *kohó város* (lit. furnace city, meaning very hot), *torlasz járgány* (approx. barricade car, meaning car blocking the traffic), *titanik Vitara* (lit. Titanic Vitara, meaning sunken), *bifla vers* (lit. swot poem, meaning poem learnt by heart), *fityma száj* (lit. foreskin mouth, meaning despising expression, playing with *fitymál* [despise]). This stylistic instrument is not rare in Hungarian but Fable seems to favour it much more than is customary in literary texts.

Fable also applies many synonyms – frequently repeating the same word is a very serious stylistic error in Hungarian – making the text more colourful. Since she draws from several lexicons, Fable is able to deploy thirty-four synonyms for woman<sup>36</sup> and forty-one synonyms for man<sup>36</sup> in this novel alone. Interestingly, the scope in the case of ‘woman’ is more wide-ranging than those used for men. Some are very pejorative: *kurva* [whore], *liba* [goose], *lotyó* [slut], *némber* [approx. nag], *picsa* [vulgar for ‘vagina’], *rongy* [rag], *satrafa* [termagant], *tehén* [cow]; while some are eulogistical: *bajadér* [bayadere], *dáma* [dame], *igézet* [glamour, enchantment, meaning enchantress], *nimfa* [nymph], *szépség* [beauty, belle], or *szirén* [siren]). The synonyms for ‘man’ usually do not carry such strong, positive or negative, implications.

If someone still had any doubts concerning the author’s cultural background, after these linguistic games they can be set at rest easily by looking at the cultural references. Even if this novel was translated most freely by the most brilliant translator, it could not contain so many specifically Hungarian allusions and connotations, only an original work can possibly incorporate the following jokes:

- **Száz év ármány** (One Hundred Years of Intrigue, playing with García Márquez’s famous title, *One Hundred Year of Solitude*, as ‘magány’ and ‘ármány’ sound similar);
- **Ki vesz ma?** (Who loses today?, playing with the title of a well-known radio programme ‘Ki nyer ma?’ [Who wins today?]);

- **brazil rabszolgalány** (Brazilian slave-girl, referring to the heroine of a Brazilian soap opera television series, Isaura);
- **eltűnési viszketegség** (playing with feltűnési viszketegség [approx. histionics], the missing ‘f’ changes the meaning into approx. ‘attitude to disappear’);
- **magad lányom, ha jógid nincsen!** módszer (lit. you-yourself-my-daughter-if-you-don’t-have-a-yogi method; twisting a well-known and often used saying ‘magad uram, ha szolgád nincsen’ [lit. you yourself, my lord, if you don’t have a servant], that is, one should do the job oneself);
- **csak lóbálok/ez sem fog többé lóbálni** (lit. I’m just dangling/this will not dangle again; reference to a famous water-polo sportscast by György Szepesi that was later parodied in a radio cabaret by Pál Peterdi ‘Faragó csak lóbálja ...’ meaning that from the point of view of the speaker the person referred to lazes his time away when he should act);
- **félművelt és egész hülye** [approx. half-educated and wholly stupid];
- **aki á-t mond, mondjon G-t is** (original saying: aki á-t mond, mondjon b-t is [in for a penny, in for a pound], Fable replaces ‘b’ by ‘G’ referring to Dr. Grafenberg);
- **“Jöjjék a mese, mi esett meg azokban a nehéz napokban, amikor még szárnyasbetét se volt ...”** (Let’s hear about what happened in those difficult days when winged sanitary napkins did not exist ... reference to the incredible amount of television ads for such products);
- **“Hol lakik az alkoholista? Az üveghegyeken túl!”** (Where does the alcoholic live? Beyond the glass/bottle mountains; reference to the customary beginning sentence of Hungarian fairy tales ‘beyond the glass mountain’ playing with the two meanings of ‘üveg’);
- the suggestion to disguise oneself as **‘pancsoló kislány’** [lit. splattering girl] or **‘mákos metélt’** [a sort of pasta with poppy seeds] for a fancy-dress ball (the former was a pop song-hit in the sixties, the latter hints at ‘körülmetél’ [circumcise, the original verb plus adverb/preposition] as the person in question is Jewish);
- **“Hörrentem erre, hogy hát szent nap a mai, ülj te a hokedlira, várjad a locsolókat!”** (approx. Hearing this I grunted that today being a holy day, you just sit down on the stool and wait for the sprinklers!; reference to the habit that on Easter Monday the men traditionally sprinkle the women with water – recently and regretably with eau de toilette – and get a paste-egg in return, vestige of an ancient fertility ritual).

These jokes can be labelled ‘cultural humour’ (Hart:1998).

The third, ‘universal’, type of humour is less important from our point of view as it can be found in any culture or language. Examples include, for instance:

- “Lupon harminc másodpercen belül kénytelen volt megválni rajongott késétől, később néhány fogától, végezetül testi épségétől.” [Within thirty seconds Lupon had to part first with his beloved knife, later some of his teeth, and finally his physical health.] p 165;
- “Fiatalabb korodban sokkal messzebbre düllede a halántéki ereid a mérgeledéstől, mint mostság.” [lit. In your youth your temporal veins bulged far more farther from fuming than nowness (these days)] p 210;
- “– Royal nem lesz a terhetekre, azt mondta, korcsolyázni készül, egyébként a te koridat is becsomagolta. Amíg ő csúszkál, ti vígan szeretkezhettek.  
– Príma ötlet – hagytam rá. – Bár szerintem enélkül is nagy tolongás lesz a jégpályán.”  
[‘Royal won’t inconvenience you, he said he’d go skate. By the way, he has also packed your skates. While he is skating, you may merrily make love.’ ‘Good idea,’ I said acquiescently. ‘Although I think even without this, there will be a large crowd in the ice-rink.’] p 251.

One would assume that this sort of humour occurs most frequently, but it certainly is not the case in this novel, or, for that matter, in any other work by Fable. The specifically Hungarian cultural connotations are far more abundant than one would expect in any pseudotranslation.

There is a sort of private joke in several of her books, in which one of the characters buys, or reads, a Fable book:

- “továbbá egy dundi könyv, valami Vavyan Fable nevű szerzőtől.  
– Legalább jó? – kérdeztem, körmöm hegyével megkocogtatva a kötetet.  
– Most lőttem – felelte vállat vonva.” [in addition, a thick book by someone called Vavyan Fable. ‘Is it any good?’ I asked tapping on the volume with the tip of my finger-nail. ‘I’ve just bagged it,’ she shrugged.] p. 477.

However, there is one sentence that seems to hint at a definitely non-Hungarian environment:

- “– Nem gondolod, hogy Pool is elhunyt volna a csatában, praktikusán?”

– Összetévesztesz az igazságszolgáltatás későbbi fázisával – feleltem. – A bíró még halálra ítélheti. Aztán jöhet a bakó.“  
 [‘Don’t you think that Pool should have died in the battle, practically?’ ‘You confuse me with a later phase of justice,’ I replied. ‘The judge may sentence him to death. Then the racker can come.’]  
 p 309.

As the constitution of Hungary has prohibited the death penalty, this conversation, just as the previously mentioned living standards, appears to refer to a different society. Nevertheless, such elements cannot counterbalance the inventive use of language and the domestic cultural references, or Hungariana.

I have also found a mistake that could perhaps be attributed to careless translation. At one point the author seems to have forgotten that her protagonist has already taken off her coat:

- “kigomboltam az ajtót, a kabátomat, utóbbi széles ívben a kanapéra röptettem ... ültem a fotelban, tűkön, kigombolt kabátban, szerencsétlenül” [I unbuttoned the door, my coat and let the latter fly in a wide arc to the couch ... I was sitting in the armchair, on pins and needles, miserably in an unbuttoned coat] pp. 438, 441.

Apart from using a pseudonym and avoiding unmistakably transparent cultural allusions such as explicitly Hungarian names, it seems quite evident that Fable does not even make an attempt to render the possibility of a genuine translation probable.

### *A Halál havában* by Wayne Chapman

Wayne Chapman is one of the most popular fantasy authors in Hungary. His novels are published in print runs of approximately 15,000 and are quickly sold out, usually within a month. Three of them have had further editions, which is very unusual for any popular fiction in Hungary nowadays.<sup>37</sup> One of the first Hungarian fantasy role-playing games was based on his imaginary world. When I began to research the cultural importation process of popular fiction into Hungarian, it thus seemed obvious that I should start by examining Chapman’s novels. After several months of thorough – and highly frustrating – investigation in 1995 it became obvious that Wayne Chapman was a pseudonym of two persons who happened to be the founders, managers and editors of one of the most important publishing houses specialising in SF & fantasy. When I presented the amassed facts to the Hungarian publisher, it was very reluctantly admitted that Wayne

Chapman was in fact a pseudonym, and I was asked not to reveal this fact in Hungary.

*A Halál havában* [lit. In the month of death] was first published by Unikornis Kiadó [Unicorn Publishing House] in 1991 as the ninth volume in the Griff [Griffon] Series. This was the very first fantasy series in Hungary and advertised as offering “Izgalom! Kaland! Fantázia! Szerelem! Költészet!” [Thrills! Adventure! Fantasy! Love! Poetry!]. Only thirteen fantasy novels were published in this series. Most of them were works by western authors such as Brian W. Aldiss, Steven Brust, Rick Cook, Tom Deitz, Raymond E. Feist, Richard A. Knaak, Tanith Lee, Robert Silverberg. One was by a Hungarian writer (András Gáspár), and the series also included – under the names Michael Aschroft, John Caldwell, Wayne Chapman, Gwyn Gwylin – what later proved to be the first four pseudotranslations of fantasy fiction. But the publishing house gave up the venture, apparently because the new genre was not well received. The imprint claimed that **the translation** had been done, using the 1987 edition of Chapman’s *Blood Season* (note the different title!) issued by Pendragon Publishing Co., Inc., London, by András Gáspár and Csanád Novák in 1990. The copyright is held by Wayne Mark Chapman; and the front cover has been designed by Gábor Szikszai and Zoltán Boros. The back cover bears the logo, name and usual advertisement of the series, a short blurb, and the price. The length of the text is twelve folios, or 191 pages including the appendices. Moreover, it is remarked **in English** that the book was published, “*With the most sincere written consent of the Author.*”

The second, extended paperback edition was brought out in the M.A.G.U.S. *avagy a kalandorok krónikái* [M.A.G.U.S. or the chronicles of the adventurers] Series by Valhalla Páholy in 1994. The imprint claims that the **translation** was done by András Gáspár and Csanád Novák between 1990 and 1994. Furthermore, the translators used the 1987 edition of Chapman’s *Blood Season*. The copyright belongs to Wayne Mark Chapman. The front cover, different from the first edition, contains a painting by Gábor Szikszai and Zoltán Boros. The back cover displays a short blurb, the name of the publisher, the price and the ISBN number. The text length is twenty-five folios, or 395 pages, including appendices.

The third, a hardcover edition, published in *A fekete dalnok* [The black songster] together with the second edition of *Csepp és tenger* [Droplet and ocean] and the third edition of *Észak lángjai* [lit. Flames of the North, fictitious title: Banners of Flame] and announced as the first trilogy of the Gorduin Cycle, was issued by Valhalla Holding Kft. in 1997. The imprint claims that *A Halál havában* is a novel by András Gáspár and Csanád Novák. A painting by Gábor Szikszai and Zoltán Boros can be seen on the front cover, and again the cover is different from the previous ones. The back cover bears a quotation from a poem in *Banners of Flame*, a short blurb, a recommendation, the name of the publisher, the price, the ISBN

number, and a bar code. The text length (pp. 159–351) is not mentioned in the imprint.

All editions are categorised as fantasy novels in the *HNB*.

The twenty-one centimeter format of the first paperback edition is characteristic of all Unikornis publications; the second edition is only nineteen centimeters, which is the favoured format of Valhalla books, while the hardcover is again twenty-one centimeters.

As has been mentioned, the first edition of *Blood Season* does not entirely correspond to the second and third editions. The first edition is only half as long as the second (twelve vs. twenty-five folios). One might suspect that the difference was due primarily to the publishing house. Yet, such suspicion is not enough to prove that the work is a pseudotranslation; and the second edition of *Blood Season* was carefully advertised as the “First complete unabridged edition.”

All Chapman novels are dedicated to persons with an English-sounding name, including *Csepp és Tenger* dedicated to ‘Eddie’ – which happens to be another pseudonym of András Gáspár, the more industrious half of the authorial duo known as Wayne Mark Chapman.<sup>38</sup> *Blood Season* is dedicated “to Rick, Sally-Ann and of course Bob E. Howard, wherever he sails.”

The domicile of Chapman given in the Author’s Note in *Blood Season* is Concord, New Hampshire, US.

The Chapman ‘translations’ are part of a series called M.A.G.U.S.,<sup>39</sup> which stands for “Miracle Adeptia Guns Urrus Sorrata”<sup>40</sup> [Chronicles of Adventurers] and is about the imaginary world “Ynev.” Certain novels in this series have been advertised using Chapman’s name – “Új kalandok Wayne Chapman világán!” [New adventures in Wayne Chapman’s world!], or “Wayne Chapman előszavával!” [With a preface by Wayne Chapman!] or are dedicated to him as Wayne Chapman, or to half of him as G.A. or N.CS.

Interestingly enough, the fictitious features of these pseudotranslations become less prominent as time passes. I assume that the fictitious English-language origin was felt necessary when the publishers were attempting to establish a new genre, but it lost its importance when the novelists met with success. The fact that I was fairly easily able to draw up a list of pseudotranslators shows clearly that the disguise became less important with the passage of time. Of course, the identities most easily revealed were those that were relatively minor participants in this network of writers and sometimes translators. Things were rather more difficult with the identities behind Wayne Chapman. But even here the disguise has slowly been falling away. For instance, in *Csepp és tenger* all fictitious bibliographical references have vanished and no translator was mentioned; only the pseudonym remains. It seems no longer necessary to pretend that Wayne Chapman is an American as the imprint of *A fekete dalnok* clearly indicates.

With the value of hindsight we can see that already the external packaging of the novels should have aroused our suspicions. A striking portrayal of human figures on the front covers plays a central role in the Chapman novels and indeed in most Valhalla fantasy publications. Yet, this is definitely not the case elsewhere. Not only in Hungary but all over the world fantasy covers tend to display magi (with the signs of their superhuman powers), elves, dwarves, dragons, griffins or other miraculous beings, and often scantily dressed minor female characters. The difference here could have been explained by the different visual traditions in popular literature, which would also be worth examining, particularly if we take into consideration that even the genuine translations are rarely published with the original cover.

A comparison of the three front covers appears to be edifying. The first depicts Tier Nan Gorduin and his treacherous lover before an ochre background. The man wears bluish black and shiny leather clothes, holds a gun, and sports both a moustache and a beard. The longhaired woman in front of him looks rather sensual and incredibly thick-lipped; her breasts are scantily covered and her trousers skin-tight. She holds a dagger in her gloved hand. Her colours are blue and violet. Both of them appear to look in the face of the beholder.

On the second cover all four protagonists are represented in a rather abstract desert. Tier Nan Gorduin is in front, still black-clad – with an added cloak – but holding a crossbow and whiskerless. His lover is behind him. Now she is mounted, but without any trace of sensuality or weapons. In fact, she looks rather sad and a little boyish in her orange shirt and dark waistcoat. The others, the elf and the priest, appear to be relatively insignificant.

The third image portrays only Tier Nan Gorduin, again clean-shaven and in rather nondescript coloured clothes. The cloak is still there but the jacket has vanished. The protagonist is sitting on a rock with a sword on his knees, while abstract mountains lie in the background. He looks definitely younger than on the previous front covers.

I find it very interesting that the woman happens to be in the center of the first two front covers – particularly if we take the portrayal of women in the Chapman novels into consideration – and I will return to this question later.

When we compare the evolution of the blurbs and the pictures on the covers of the books, a tendency from ‘authentic’ to ‘mystic’ becomes clearly recognisable. The publicity text on the back cover of the first *Blood Season* emphasises that “the first volume of Wayne Chapman’s Ynev Cycle offers a detailed, elaborate, strange world, lots of excitement and romance.” The second one stresses the hero’s solitude, unbelief and dangerousness. While, the third one emphasises his atheism, success in his enterprises, including braving death itself, and his ‘chosenness’. The same trend can also be observed in the extended texts. For instance, the second edition of *Blood Season* contains a whole newly inserted chapter<sup>41</sup> in which

the four main characters meet the ghosts of three adventurers and a company of soldiers who died almost 7000 years before.

Wayne Chapman's popularity and that of fantasy in general must be explained in view of the failure of Griff Series as recently as 1991. We have to take into consideration that in keeping with international trends approximately seventy per cent of the novels published since 1992 have been labelled 'fantasy'. I believe this is due to the policy of the publishers specialising in the genre, who carefully select their novels in order to target different audiences. Yet, it also involves linking the stories with a fantasy role-playing game, choosing specific translators, establishing SF bookshops, and of course undertaking pseudotranslations.

In order to understand the social importance of these features, we need to form some concept of the nature of the novels concerned. In what follows I will try to sum up the main features of these novels in Hungary and establish their differences, if any, from English-language fantasy fiction.

The plots of all the Chapman – and M.A.G.U.S. – novels are set in a very well worked-out imaginary world called Ynev. Several of the novels include an Appendix giving data on the geography, history, politics, religions, and languages of Ynev. For example, the first *Blood Season* includes an appendix, two tables (pantheons and a calendar of Ynev), and two maps (topographical and political) of Ynev. The appendix is actually a sort of general encyclopaedia with about 150 brief entries. Of course, these elaborate data serve as base for the fantasy role-playing game.

The plot in the Chapman novels is a happy mixture of adventure, romance, thriller, and mystery. The earlier novels are more adventurous; the later ones are more mystical and thrilling. The main character Tier Nan Gorduin is almost superhuman: good-looking, strong, clever, intelligent, famous and musically gifted. He also has a second sight,<sup>42</sup> can handle magic as well as a sword or a bow, has friends everywhere to help him with his quest, is irresistible, and, most importantly, always victorious. Sometimes he is a mercenary fighting either for money (*Blood Season*, *Csepp és Tenger*, and *Karnevál*), or to save his hide (*Blood Season*), or to repay his friends for favours (*Banners of Flame*). However, he always turns to be on the right side, at least in the sense that 'rightness' (not quite righteousness) means he does not exhibit unnecessary cruelty. He simply kills or removes anyone who happens to be in his way. Furthermore, small obstacles, such as his own death (in *Carnival*), will not stop him. The depicted society is also rather conservative, a sort of idealised Middle Ages. It is quite similar to, say, Guy Gavriel Kay or David Gemmell alternative history/heroic fantasy novels.

In the case of *Blood Season* the plot can be adumbrated as follows: the bard and adventurer Tier Nan Gorduin, after successfully rescuing the Emir's only daughter, the vizier's bride, from being offered as a sacrifice to an evil god, has to kill

the vizier. Consequently he falls straight into the trap of a magician, who demands that he, along with three companions, go to the Haunted Region and get the Goddess Orwellla's dagger from the witch who rules there. The companions are a priest, a half-elf necromancer, and a beautiful female thief, who also owes a favour to the magician. On their journey they are followed by a professional assassin sent by the deceased vizier's first concubine, face perils and temptations, and enter into various relationships with one another. For instance, Tier Nan Gorduin and the thief Eriel become lovers. The narration shifts back and forth between the four adventurers' and the assassin's stories. Reaching their destination, the adventurers succeed in disposing of the witch, her lover, the dagger, as well as the priest who turns out to be the magician himself in disguise and an ancient enemy of the witch's undead partner, whose real goal was simply revenge for his murder. The story ends with Eriel's desertion and the first steps of a tentative friendship between the hero and the necromancer.

Since the M.A.G.U.S. series and the linked role-playing games have gradually evolved from a single novel (the first version of *Blood Season*), there are certain chronological, historical, and ideological contradictions in the texts. For instance, at the end of *Csepp és tenger*, the publisher adds a note in which "Mr. Chapman" is reproached for his liberalism concerning historical dates. More importantly, Tier Nan Gorduin, who was a rather 'ordinary' fantasy hero in the beginning, has been turned into a supernatural being in human flesh. His transformation is by no means extraordinary. All Chapman heroes seem to have 'gained' additional positive or superhuman characteristics in the later editions or novels. For example, in *Csepp és tenger* Tier Nan Gorduin gives an unsuspecting goblin an elixir that will considerably extend his life. This goblin was just a spy, though a highly successful one, in *Banners of Flame*.

It also seems to be characteristic of the Chapman novels that the happy ending is always impaired in the same way. In *Blood Season* a love affair comes to an abrupt end. In *Two Moons* the woman abandons her partner and leaves behind only a farewell letter. While in *Banners* the man turns out to be a spy and a most hateful enemy, who must thus be killed by his lover. Whereas the ending of *Carnival* is exactly the opposite: Tier Nan Gorduin's lover proves to be a traitor, and she must thus die by his hand.

The message of these works would seem to be that life is nothing but continuous struggle, where only temporary victories can be achieved. No values or principles are lasting, and therefore they do not deserve appreciation. In fact, there is no essential difference between right and wrong. This relativistic attitude is also reflected in the cyclical and deterministic history of the fantasy world. Empires and religions rise and fall without leaving any lasting change or mark on the course of human history, which is simply divided into nine eras. Some unknown creator determines the beginning and end of each age. The only constant factor is the

existence of “nine chosen beings who can control their destiny, who are ruled neither by gods, nor by demons, nor by stars.” Of course, Tier Nan Gorduin is one of the nine (*Banners of Flame*).

This withdrawal from any ethical commitment seems related to the consequences of the recent socio-political changes in Hungary, or the general and deepening uncertainty regarding values. Nevertheless, the presence and increasing influence of mystical and occult topics, in both society and science fiction, should be perceived not just as a result of the loss of stable values but as part of the present cultural importation process as well.

The palpably cynical ideology manifest in these novels – comparable to Glen Cook’s *The Black Company* series – is partly concealed behind mystical or occult occurrences. In one episode Tier Nan Gorduin suddenly found himself among the legendary Kyr nobility about ten thousand years prior to his own era. “Shri-En Igron, Kyria utolsó uralkodója felemelte jobbját: kezdetét vette a tanácskozás. Gorduin, aki csak őt figyelte, idővel rátalálni vélt a lázadás valódi okára: a gyarló ember számára nincs bőszítőbb a nap alatt az ilyen szembeötlő tökéletességnél.” [Shri-En Igron, the last ruler of Kyria, held up his right hand and the council commenced. Gorduin, who watched only him, thought after a while that he had hit upon the real cause of the rebellion: for fallible humans there is nothing more exasperating under the sun than such striking perfection, p. 265]. Yet, some familiar stereotypes are also used. The people in power, the gods, the magi, the priests, and the politicians are never truly reliable; and the women are generally beautiful, treacherous and lustful. Salina in *Banners of Flame*, although very pretty, is different. But her character is just the exception that proves the rule. There are certain clichés in how men have depicted women, or acknowledged female roles in the course of time; and both of the female characters in *Blood Season* belong to the type that can only be described as succuba, or a demonic version of the *femme fatale*, the deadly seductress. None of them is wholly human. The other type, for instance in *Two Moons*, is the victim. This may be an individual trait, or perhaps springs from the rather conservative worldview that is so characteristic of Hungarian fantasy fiction. Nevertheless, it certainly deserves further investigation.

When I first started analysing these novels, their use of language and style did indeed make me wonder whether they could possibly be translations. The writing was excellent, inventive, yet not excessively so. Its touch of heroism and humour was very characteristic, and therefore easily recognisable. These characteristics made the reading easily intelligible and undemanding. These books do not require any effort from the reader; and particularly the second versions tend to include fashionable mystical strands. Since one of the ‘translators’ was an excellent SF writer, the translational status did not seem to be impossible. The many misspellings only serve to heighten the perception that these are after all translated works; and one geographical name was rendered differently in the two editions of

*Blood Season*. In the second edition the text and the appendices were extended, while the maps were omitted. All of these differences could, of course, also be explained by fictitious translation.

I have compared the three versions of *Blood Season* with one another, word by word, sentence by sentence. In comparing the first chapter of the first two editions – and this is typical – I have found fifty-one slight differences (eight omissions, eight additions, thirty refashioned and longer sentences, and five variations in punctuation). There are seventy-six modifications between the second and the third editions (twenty-one omissions, thirty-three refashioned sentences, three additions, and nineteen variations in punctuation). The differences seem to move toward a more familiar, less literary and less archaic language. By deleting idiosyncrasies, the later editions appear to lessen the effect of the unmistakable style of Wayne Chapman. I assume that it may be linked with the fact that other, less talented authors started to contribute to M.A.G.U.S. series, and this required a more generic style.

It seems likely that these changes reflect the genre's move from a new or 'peripheral' position to a more integrated or 'central' status, and that this move in turn reflects something of the overall process of cultural importation. In order to pursue this hypothesis I will briefly run through the main differences between the first, the second and the third editions of *Blood Season*, where the lack of external variables means that the changes are most clearly manifested.

1. The layout is completely different, particularly with regard to the font used and the page formatting. The use of italics is rarely the same. The 'Author's Note' has a different place in the second edition, moving from the very beginning of the text to the end of the book. It has been deleted from the third edition. In the second and third editions there is a serious grammatical mistake in Shakespeare's sonnet, *valld-valdd* (sic!), imperative of 'vall' [admit/confess], and a reference is provided to the tenth sonnet, as translated by Lőrinc Szabó.

2. The textual structure has been modified. For instance, the preface of the appendices has an added paragraph on cosmogony and philosophy in the second edition but its last part on the rules of transcription has been omitted from the third edition. It reads, "A különféle nyelvek neveit és szavait egységesen a dorani átírás szabályai szerint jegyeztem le, mert ez logikailag jóval közelebb áll az **angol**hoz..." [I have recorded the names and words of the different languages consistently according to the rules of transcription in Doran because this comes logically much closer to **English** ...] (my emphasis). The titles of the different parts of the novel have sometimes been altered, and poems have been added without references to all of the parts as mottoes. These include: 'Taba el-Ibara', instead of 'Dél' [South]; 'Úton' [On the road] instead of 'Taba el-Ibara'; the third, fourth and fifth are unchanged, then: 'Az elátkozott vidék' [The accursed region]; 'Tetemre hívlak ...' [approx. 'I call you to the ordeal of the bier'], which is in fact a very well-known

reference to ballad entitled ‘Tetemrehívás’ [Ordeal of the bier] by János Arany, a famous nineteenth-century Hungarian poet; ‘A bosszú hava’ [The month of vengeance, or (taking the fictitious English title into consideration) The Season of Vengeance]. No part has the same chapter division, nor the same divisions into paragraphs or sentences (see Table).

3. In the ‘encyclopaedia’ of the second edition two articles have been added (Gods and Gates), four have been modified (Henkel/Hergol, Kahre/Khare, Kyr birodalom [Kyr Empire]/Kyria, Pelin Oviara/Pelin Ovieran), and six omitted (Witch Prison, Blue Fire, Symbol of Hopelessness, Larion, Sonion, Wendol). The changes within the entries are mostly added texts, but sometimes the spelling of a name is also different (Kyell – Kyel, Domwick – Domvik). Obviously, the more sophisticated this imaginary world and its history, the more elaborate the encyclopaedia. For instance, new pantheons (of the elves, dwarves, orks and goblins) are included in the second version, and the previously unnamed months are named and arranged according to three seasons. The encyclopaedia is different in *A fekete dalnok* since those of the three novels are merged into one.

4. As I mentioned above, the maps are omitted and a whole chapter has been inserted both in the second and the third editions, which include numerous other, more minor additions.

5. On the microtextual level the general tendency is to make the text more explicit and easier to digest; and this requires longer sentences and paragraphs. The first versions are ballad-like and leave a lot to the reader’s imagination; while the later ones are much more explicit, a feature that, interestingly, corresponds to a general characteristic of translations. (On explicitation, see Baker 1996.) On the other hand this also renders the text less enjoyable. Consider the following examples (the divergence is marked by bold, please also note the incorrect quotation marks in the second version):

- “Ha »szerencséje« kitart, talán még a legendás Jahrn-On Kryelt is láthatja, aki a végveszély esztendeiben, hadba szólította az anuriai sárkánylovasokat! Meglehet, már most is ehhez igyekszik megszerezni az engedélyt. És nem kapja meg. Pedig talán ...” [If his ‘luck’ lasts, perhaps he may see the legendary Jahrn-On Kryel, who in the years of distress summoned the dragon riders of Anuria to the fight! It is quite possible that he has already been seeking permission to do the same. But he will not get it. Although perhaps...] p. 88
- Ha »szerencséje« kitart, talán még a legendás Jahrn-On Kryelt is láthatja, aki **utóbb**, a végveszély esztendeiben, hadba szólította az anuriai sárkánylovasokat! Meglehet, már most is ehhez igyekszik megszerezni az engedélyt. És nem kapja meg. Pedig talán ...” [If his ‘luck’ lasts, perhaps he may see the legendary

Jahrn-On Kryel, who **later**, in the years of distress, summoned the dragon riders of Anuria to the fight! It is quite possible that he has already been seeking permission to do the same. But he will not get it. Although perhaps...] p. 171

- “Ha »szerencséje« kitar, talán még a legendás Jahrn-On Kryelt is láthatja, aki a végveszély esztendeiben, hadba szólította az anuriai sárkánylovasokat. Meglehet, már most is ehhez igyekszik megszerezni az engedélyt. És nem kapja meg. Pedig **ha szabad kezet adnak neki, talán minden másképp alakul; ha nem korlátozzák, új irányt szab az eseményeknek – megvolt benne az ehhez szükséges elszánás és erő.**” [If his ‘luck’ lasts, perhaps he may see the legendary Jahrn-On Kryel, who in the years of distress summoned the dragon riders of Anuria to the fight! It is quite possible that he has already been seeking permission to do it. But he will not get it. Although, **if he had been given a free hand, perhaps everything would have turned out differently; had he not been restrained, he might have determined the events in another way. He did have the resolve and might requisite for it.**] p. 264

There are also ideological and stylistic modifications in the later editions. Let me quote a brief passage from *Banners*:

- “**Nem** az acél ejtette sebek **fájdalma ez: azt** a kint egykettőre legyűri a **test**, feledésre ítéli az **emlékezet**. **Bizonyos** sérülések **sajna sokkal lassabban** gyógyulnak, **s jobban meggyötrik az áldozatot még a toroniak kristályhegyű nyílveaszóinél is**. Ilyen sebeket kizárólag a legnagyobb mágusok és a nők osztogatnak – a nemlétező istenek legyenek irgalmasak ahhoz, aki eléjük kerül ...” [This is not the pain of wounds inflicted by steel: **those** torments are rapidly overcome by the body, and **memory** sentences them to oblivion. **Alas, certain** hurts heal **much more slowly, and victimise the sufferer more than the crystal-tipped arrows of the Toronians**. Such wounds are distributed only by the greatest magicians and women. May the non-existent gods be merciful to those who encounter them.] p. 18
- “Az acél ejtette sebek **kinját** egykettőre legyűri a **lélek**, feledésre ítéli az **elme** – a **láthatatlan** sérülések **azonban lassan** gyógyulnak, **emlékük makacs kopó, mely esztendőkön át lohol az áldozat nyomában, s újra meg újra belemar**. Ilyen sebeket kizárólag a legnagyobb mágusok és a nők osztogatnak: a nemlétező istenek legyenek irgalmasak ahhoz, aki eléjük kerül ...” [The **soul** quickly smothers the **agony** of wounds inflicted by steel, and the **mind** sentences them to oblivion. The **invisible** hurts, **however**, heal

- slowly. Their memory is a stubborn foxhound, which snaps at the heels the victim for years and bites into him again and again.** Such wounds are distributed by only the greatest magicians and women. May the non-existent gods be merciful to those who encounter them.] p. 19
- “Az acél ejtette sebek kínját egykettőre legyűri a lélek, feledésre ítéli az **emlékezet**, a **másik**, a láthatatlan **fajta** azonban – **melyet csak varázstudók és nők osztogatnak** – lassan **heged**, s **gondoskodik arról is, hogy az áldozat ne lelje örömét gyógyulásában.**” [The soul quickly smothers the agony of wounds inflicted by steel, and the **memory** sentences them to oblivion. But **the other**, the invisible **sort** of wounds, **those that only savants of magic and women distribute, scab over** more slowly; **and the victims can take little enjoyment in their recovery.**] p. 364

Apart from the move towards the more mystical elements, the changes can be explained by the publisher’s preferred text length, which would seem to have called for extensions to the earlier versions. We should not forget that Wayne Chapman and the publishers of his novels are actually the same people! I also suppose that the audience consists of youngsters, mostly teenagers, who are devoted to this fantasy role-playing game, so that the earlier, ballad-like versions, which demand imaginative effort and background knowledge to fill the gaps, were considered less suitable.

At least in the case of the small Hungarian publishers the use of a pseudonym is said to be necessary in order to sell popular fiction. Hungarian names are still unattractive for teenagers, who are the main consumers. Even when they must know the real nationality of the author, they tend to favour books by ‘English’ or ‘American’ writers. This can mean that the very same popular author is not marketable when his or her Hungarian name appears on the front cover. This would explain why András Gáspár and Csanád Novák still prefer ‘Wayne Chapman’ on the front cover even when the imprint reveals the author’s true name.

The writers and publishers behind Wayne Chapman & Co. were clearly able to introduce a new (sub)-genre and come out on top because, having been SF fans for years, they knew the genre thoroughly; and having been translators specialising in SF, they had plenty of information on the demands and standards of the Hungarian readership. They selected a particular audience and produced ‘adequate’, culturally adapted novels and games in the right place at the right time.

I must admit my research owes a lot to Wayne Chapman. May God preserve him and his gang; and may they provide me with more data for further research.

## Notes

1. As defined in Toury 1995, 40.
2. See Sohár, 1999, 1998a, 1998b, 1997, 1996a, 1996b.
3. For instance, Frank Herbert's *Dune* was published in 87,800 copies in 1987.
4. Consider the 'cultural incident' [kulturális járulék], widely known as 'trash tax' [giccsadó] payable after any publication which is not textbook or does not serve educational purposes. This is usually one per cent of the cover price, although if the book includes any violence or eroticism the rate rises to twenty per cent.
5. See Bart 1998, 7.
6. For instance, Jonathan Wylie is in fact an alias of Julia and Mark A. Smith, John Wyndham is an allonym of John Beynon Harris, Megan Lindholm is now writing as Robin Hobb, et cetera.
7. For instance, John Brosnan's pseudonyms are Harry Adam Knight and Simon Ian Childer.
8. For instance, when writing detective fiction Stephen R. Donaldson becomes Reed Stephens, and Bridget Wood, when writing thrillers, is called Frances Gordon.
9. For instance, Sheri S. Tepper has three feigned names: E. E. Horlak, B. J. Oliphant and A. J. Orde.
10. As István Nemes claimed several times during the on-going discussions concerning pseudonyms of 'Solaria' Science Fiction Newsgroup on the Internet.
11. See Bart 1998, 9.
12. See Sohár 1999.
13. Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy and George Lucas' *Star Wars*.
14. See Aldiss 1986/1994–1995.
15. p. 604.
16. Attebery 1992, 1.
17. Fabyen, writer of popular novels, is the heroine of Fable's *My Fair Lord*, perhaps a sort of alter-ego. Fable sometimes refers to her own novels in her books, e.g. "I saw the latest Fable novel and bought it at once".
18. "A könyvben szereplő *fiktív* figurák makulátlanul vétkelenek abban, ha esetleg élő vagy élő-holt személyre emlékeztetnek. Ha valaki mégis úgy találná, hogy egyik-másik regényalak hasonlít hozzá vagy valamelyik ismerőséhez, az nem a Szerző, hanem kizárólag a Véletlen műve. A Véletlen ezúton kér elnézést szeszélyes tetteiért. [lit. The *fictitious* figures present in the book bear no responsibility for their possible resemblance to any persons, living or dead. If somebody might find that some character resembles them or any of their acquaintances, it is not the Author's but exclusively Chance's work. Chance apologises herewith for its whimsical deeds.]
19. pp. 95–97.
20. Pun, made of 'delej' [mesmerism] and 'televízió' [television].
21. Pun, made of 'Micimackó' [Hungarian version of Winnie-the-Pooh] and 'macho'.
22. Pun, made of 'fogy' [lose weight] and 'fagyalt' [ice-cream].
23. Pun, made of 'zsába' [neuralgia] and 'Sába királynője' [the Queen of Sheba].
24. e.g., Ohio Di Giacomo, Royal, Joker, Jerven, Kyle Zaza, Aura, Smilee, Heide Tills, Scarlett, Yaphet, Naqvi, Remo Lupon.
25. e.g., Poranyó [Gammer Dust], Hapsifüles [pun, made of 'hapsi' [approx. guy] and 'tapsifüles' [bunny].
26. e.g., Libero, Pampers, Golf, Vitara, Wrangler Jeep, Yamaha, Pontiac, Boeing 747.
27. e.g., Gerald Durrell, Csipkerózsika [Sleeping Beauty], Hófehérke [Cinderella], Dr Watson, Oz, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and Ophelia, Káma Szútra, Stephen King, Anyegin, Shakespeare, Dickens, *Blown with the Wind*, Cassandra, Cipolla.

28. e.g., Tom Hanks, Forrest Gump, Terminátor, Jessica Lange, Jack Nicholson, Al Pacino, Mad Max, Bridget Fonda, King Kong, Sharon Stone, Michael Douglas, Kim Basinger, de Niro, Rambo, Hegylakó [Highlander], Schwarzenegger.
29. e.g., David Copperfield, Dr Hay, Dr Grafenberg, Elvis, Al Capone, Dzsingisz kán [Ghengiz Khan].
30. e.g., Scotland Yard, Ritz.
31. e.g., Barbie, Tycoon, Garfield magazine, Lennon-glasses, Cindy Crawford's fitness videotape, Callanetics book.
32. e.g., Number One, Top Gun, jeep, press, no smog!, rent a kid, light, hard, joint, jogging, show, blues, fucking, no comment, teddy bear, happy, drink, fair, VIP, IQ.
33. e.g., aerobic/aerobik, demó [demo], dzseki [jacket], dzsessz [jazz], fitt [fit], imidzs/imázs [image], biznisz [business], derbi [derby], tréning [training], szexepil [sex appeal], spícs [speech], csíz [cheese], hendikep [handicap], szleng [slang], jard [yard, meaning 'cop'], sztár [star], tinédzser [teenager], start.
34. e.g., vaslédi [iron lady], Teljesség Tours [Completeness], csók-time [kiss], konditime [fitness], shoppingolás [shopping], Road Ördöge [devil of the road].
35. anyó, asszony, bajadér, bige, bringa, csaj, dáma, füge, hölgy, igézet, lány, leány, kurva, liba, lina, lonya, lotyó, massa, moha, némbér, néni, nimfá, nő, picسا, rongy, satrafa, spiné, szárcsa, szépség, szirén, szüfrasztett, tehén, teremtés, tyúk.
36. alak, api, bácsi, bika, csóka, egyén, ember, fazon, férfi, férfiú, fickó, figura, fiú, flótás, fráter, hapek, hapi, hapó, hapsi, ipse, jampi, klapec, krapec, legény, mandró, melák, ördög, pacák, pali, pasas, pasek, pasi, pofa, suhanc, srác, spóra, strigó, szivar, tag, ürge, versenyző.
37. Information from an interview with Miklós Héjjas, editor of Valhalla at that time (1995).
38. Valhalla also published *Profundis* by Ed Fisher, in which Tad Newport and the Network, introduced in *The Quest of Two Moons*, play the central role.
39. 'Mágus' means magician, wizard in Hungarian.
40. Needless to say, meaningless in Latin.
41. Chapter Three of Part Three (Az Elátkozott Vidék [The Haunted Region]), 186–206.
42. A 'third eye' which enables the characters to see the spiritual world.

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