

Résumé

Edith Gyömrői is best known for being one of Attila József's psychoanalysts. She had been mentioned only in this role for a long time, however - in addition to the psychoanalysis - she herself worked as a poet and a writer. Treatment of Attila József was just a short episode in her life; it is hard to list all the activities she did - apart from psychoanalysis and writing: carpet weaving, studying Buddhism, breeding birds, reconstructing houses. As Anna Borgos pointed out in her thorough study: Gyömrői's colorful personality was accompanied with a colorful life. She lived in Budapest, Vienna, Berlin, Colombo, London, for a short period of time in Paris, Prague and visited numerous places in the world. She was contacted with most of the intellectual trends and groups of her age. She attended the meetings of 'Vasárnapi Kör' where she made friends with Anna Lesznai. Furthermore she met György Lukács, Lajos Kassák, Béla Balázs, Bertolt Brecht. Inspired by her uncle, István Hollós, she became interested in psychoanalysis very early, and during her stay in Berlin she joined the left winged marxist emigrant group of psychoanalysts related to Wilhelm Reich and Otto Fenichel. Later in Vienna she attended Anna Freud's discussion events. This is just a short excerpt from her biography, she gathered incredible experiences during her 91 years.

She wrote poems when she was young. In 1919 her poetry was published, but she turned to prose, one of her novel, 'Megbékélés', was published in 1979.

Most of her writings - literature and studies - are yet unpublished, though. For example her novel 'Cat is a cat', written in English; her studies on psychology and her thesis on Buddhism. Her autobiographical novel 'Az ár ellen', written during a longer voyage in 1941, is also among the unpublished works.

This novel was written in German, translated to English and Hungarian later. Erzsébet Vezér was to publish the novel, but for some reason she did not manage. Gyömrői financed the publishing herself, János Kiss finished the translation, but the manuscript remained unpublished to date.

The story differs from her real life - she always emphasized that this novel is not an autobiography - , but still provides a very interesting insight into the 20th century. Through the "odyssey of the heroine" we can see the world of many societies, cultures, theories and their impact on personal life.

"My Dear Elisabeth, please don't let this novel be published as autobiography. This is certainly not. Observations in the world are real, but the happenings are not. [...] I've told you, that one can use her own life as someone who buys a mug, drops it, collects its pieces and creates a completely different mug out of them." - Gyömrői wrote in one of her letters to Erzsébet Vezér. Indeed, the story consists of fictitious and real parts making the novel easily readable and adventurous. However the author states on the very first page: "The characters in this novel are not living or ever-lived persons, but the world, the atmosphere around them is absolutely authentic."

In the novel, according to the mechanism of reminiscence, story threads run in parallel at different locations and times. Collecting the scenes of Germany in the 1930s, I am going to speak about the German thread separately, paying special attention to the parts that tell the story of spread of Nazism, the way of its expansion and how it was seamlessly integrated into everyday life.