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“...WHEN I APPROACH MY GARDEN ON A ROSE-SCENTED PATH...”

The first anthropological space of the hero of *Little Prince* in the work
of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

„...amikor belépek kertembe a rózsailatú ösvényen...”

Az első antropológiai tér Antoine de Saint-Exupéry A kis herceg c. művében

„...kada kročim u svoju baštu na stazu sa mirisom ruže...”

Prvi antropološki prostor heroja romana „Mali princ” Antoana
de Sen-Egziperija

Biographies and biography-like works are those where anthropological spaces can be examined to their fullest. In *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery, the third anthropological space of the protagonist includes all the space he travels from his planet to Earth and back to his home through the universe. The space of action – the second anthropological space) is carefully determined in the desert, around the desert and on the planets and other locations. These points appear iconically in the tale, as Exupéry makes the illustrations himself, the watercolors accurately represent the intent of the author, and visualize the first anthropological space of the boy for the reader. The full-body portrait of the second chapter brings to the foreground both the biological-anthropological and the social-mental characteristics of the little hero. According to his complexion, he is a member of the caucasian race and based on his clothing a representative of western culture and christianity.

Exupéry painted the „best possible picture” of the little prince, on which the blond, white-skinned child wears the cape of a ruler or high ranking army officer. The cape is red on the inside, blue on the outside. The shoulders feature a starry parolin. The body is covered with white clothes, and the shirt is connected by a rosette. The left hand holds a crooked sword. As the subject of my examination I try to understand and explain the culturally defined and significant aspects of the body. I will also attempt to describe some of the personality traits of the little prince based on the characteristics of his clothing as described by the author.

Keywords: first anthropological space, iconology, rose symbolism, history of mentality

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The picture, in our case the painting depicting the Little Prince is a meditative object, it is recommended for the reader to ponder over.

Out of the traditions relating to the symbol of the rose, Saint-Exupéry knows about the devotional role of Dominican monks: he considers the reader an extension of personality and mystical fulfillment. He considers a lot of other things similar to prayer and meditation; for pilots, thinking about home; for those lost in the desert, picturing a well, while being lonely, thinking about comrades or for any lost soul to think about their own culture. The outcast should reach out and abide to the culture, objects, relics they own with the techniques of remembering, and by this, one or two pieces of memory should be able to materialize and become observable with the help of imagination.

One of Exupéry’s heroes – based on the autobiography of the author – in times of trouble, imagines a garden full of nice old black pines, flowers and a spring so that homesickness can fill his soul and thus he can survive. According to him – your own past makes it possible to access your future.

Both Christianity and Islam have had a mystical reading of the garden. Most of the symbols in the tradition of *hortus conclusus* – spring, well, flower, grass, rose, fence – and some other familiar Christian symbols like the lamb are used in a very complex way at times quite far from each other but referred to in a similar way (Such concentration of symbols happens in the case of the child and the lamb).

Out of the features of the garden, the most valuable thing of the place is in the center: the rose. The main characteristics of the protagonist unfold against this spectacular and seemingly unique being with extreme qualities. The relationship of the child with the rose makes it possible to tell the story.

The rose is the signifier of the Edenic state, the planet's medium. The pure child without consideration possesses the lamb-sign, he is the protagonist. Both the medium and the hero have the possibility of martyrdom – since both the rose and the lamb are sacrificial. The lamb and the rose, despite their purity endanger each other. The rose (especially because of its animalistic quality) could hurt the lamb with its four claws, and vice versa, the lamb could hurt the rose with its lack of aggression, meaning the rose could serve as a source of food for it. They can become fatal for each other.

None of the creatures try to kill the other, but according to their inner traits, they are against each other. One can find similar dualities in similar relationships in case of the bird-rose, bee-rose, spider-rose etc, where the more aggressive, masculine characteristic is of the animalistic member of the pair and the female (receptive) characteristic is represented as a trait of the plant. Even though the novel indicates that the rose might stop needing service from others and that the lamb will get a muzzle so their dangerous qualities are suspended, but this is temporary: the rose can turn back to a demanding mistress at any time, and there will never be a strap on the lamb's muzzle to be put on his mouth.

In *The Little Prince*, the rose at first appears to be a valuable and good plant, just like radish: it is climbing toward the light with an innocent little shoot, and its existence does not show a threat toward the planet B-612, unlike the baobab trees with their digging and hole-making roots. It can be left alone, to grow. In its early age, the rose was similar to the baobab, but while weeding helped it to grow, it meant death for the baobab.

But what is the meaning of the rose in the novel? Who is it?

Eugen Drewermann¹ has observed and analyzed *The Little Prince* and the rose in it, with the help of Jungian psychoanalysis, and other novels and letters by the author. In his lasting story-analysis, the therapist-philosopher describes the author as a function of the rose, squirming in the emotional space created by the plant, a personality rejecting adulthood.

He also embarks to symbolically analyze the rose, according to him, Saint-Exupéry considers the child as a life-renewing symbol. The protagonist who experiences reality, at the end of his suffering comes to the eternal truth of love and the rose. The relationships of the boy are characterized by love and loving known from Christian tradition, and the feeling of love is represented as zestful and similar to those of mystics. The objects and events appearing around the loved person promise the feeling and the person itself, while the person becomes a symbol which can help to grasp the entire universe.

It is the rose who helps the prince gain experiences regarding love; it gives meaning to the sunsets, the planet, work done day by day and life in its entirety. According to the psychoanalytic reading, this rose is very similar to a mother, and Drewermann unfolds the problematic relationship of Exupéry and his female parent. In the end, he could have talked about the relationship of the wild rose and the garden rose, if we note the minute detail about different qualities of plants in *Courrier Sud*. Drewermann considers the novel a coded childhood report (too), and indeed, uncurls the female qualities of the Rose and the loving-torturing mother and her relationship with the child.¹ The strange qualities of the unquestionable rose – especially if one imagines a mother figure behind them – serve as an explanation for the characteristics in the story. Along the path of symbol-forging, this rose-mother gets a lot of traits similar to those of the Cult of Mary in Christian tradition, and it is perhaps this and similar parallel are the reason why the reader can easily familiarize with the story and it becoming a cult novel.

We see the rose of *The Little Prince* as a bit more complex. The rose is the center of garden symbols, indicating Christian and Muslim traditions. On the other hand, the mother-analysis is relevant only in the sense that the love-expressing quality if the mother/rose can show itself.

Which qualities does the little prince notice of the grown-up rose, and which become important to him? First, he sees it as a flower which has thorns. Moreover, why does a gentle plant promising beauty has weapons usually not attributed to a flower? According to the child's answer, it is because the flower is weak and unsuspecting, and can imagine itself fearsome via the thorns. The qualities of the rose are shown along the analogue thinking of a child.

Second, these qualities are also true of the child and his world and become emphasized: the rose is impeccable and needs protection. Not all the care which the planet of the prince got by itself (and therefore the rose has also got) is enough, it desires more caring. Its dependent situation means an increase in value.

After all this, the author signifies the scent of the rose, then blossoming, the colorful petals, the complete, open flower. Possible oppositions are also signaled by the appearance of the lamb (behind them the defense control against each other developed during millions of years), or by the comparison of the rose and other wild flowers. We are the witnesses of value-creation, and along the process both the traits and contradictions are seen.

And just what is the blooming rose like? It opens up its giant, only bud slowly, preparing for a long time. Its many petals unfold without wrinkles at sunrise, and showcase its beauty instantly. To describe its beauty, Exupéry uses the adjective radiant, and it is characterized by its scent and its four thorns as well. Its botanical characteristics are usual: an unmoving, rooted plant. Its anthropomorphic traits include speech – its first utterance is a demand toward the

little prince that he should water it, take care of it and protect it from the wind and the night – when it is clearly not visible in the dark, stays alone in the lightlessness and cannot maintain physical contact with its caregiver.

The understandable, speaking plant is not a big surprise in a tale; after all, it is expected of it to communicate in the human tongue. Nevertheless, it is a long way until the little prince will realize what the gardeners of *Citadelle* have already known: the only valid method of dialogue is without words.

The meaning of the plant is obvious based on these characteristics: it radiates warmth, just like the time of day when the rose could showcase its full grown beauty. Sunrise is the time of bloom, the opposite of the sunset which the melancholic child likes to observe. The qualities of the Rose are similar to the Sun in other aspects as well: it was born at the same time as the Sun, it shines like the Sun, and it needs light, since it is a plant. The little prince and the adult, when they find the well (which is totally unlike any well in the Sahara), long before the final goodbye, notice that the sun is shimmering while being reflected on the water. „I'm thirsty for this water” – says the little prince who never drinks anything. Most qualities of the rose take the reader close to the Sun, the traditional symbol for the soul.

The little prince has plant-like qualities as well. During the one year he spent on Earth, he did not need food or drink; he was satisfied with what he has left for his rose: light. And through the rose, he is connected to the clearest quality of the spirit: unselfish, receptive love.

The rose as a symbol of love is an everyday experience for the catholic faith – it is precisely this feeling – *caritas* – which determines the iconography depicting Mary, where the inside of her cape is painted red. Just as in „the best picture” (which the author of the book made), the cape of the little prince is red from the inside as well (and its outside, just like on images of Mary, is blue, representing the entire universe; and it cannot be a coincidence that his shirt is held together with a rosette, and in his hand, the hero holds a thorn-like sword. The little prince has taken up characteristics of the rose.

The relationship of the prince and the rose is determined at the first moment of their communication. The first sentence is of initializing, the little prince says, „*How beautiful you are!*” The rose enters an initiative, dominant position. It is discovered. It needs to be served, so the little prince obeys the power of the rose. It is no surprise that the flower becomes more and more fastidious and headstrong while the child – with the growth of his dependency – turns increasingly unhappy. The meaning of the rose-sun-spirit symbols is related to the narrative logic of the story. The seemingly weak Rose has to grab the attention of the boy to rule over him later on.

An important scene of the novel offering an important aspect of understanding is that when the little prince finds himself in a real rose garden. The child re-

flects on his own rose-image, and realizes that one rose, if it is tamed has bigger value than a garden of roses. Therefore, there is a personal rose, whose meaning is only understood by its owner, and there are common roses, which cannot have anything but a common meaning, and they can only be valuable because they signify and remind one of the personal rose.

The blooming rose garden lies on one of the roads leading to humans. It is a place of temptation: before finding it, one needs to go through rock, sand and snow, and its appearance signals the aim: desired people. The rose garden is a sign of coming happiness, and it can be identified only if one has previous knowledge of the rose. Is it possible that the roses appearing in great quantity are the reason why the little prince does not continue his search for humans and is satisfied with the knowledge gained from the prisoner of the desert, the pilot? This decision is helped by the fox explaining the technique of taming.

„*His flower told him, he has no counterpart in the world, and now there were five thousand in front of him, all alike, in one garden!*” – we read. The Rose speaks figuratively, and the little prince has to understand this double talk to make his decision. He is hesitant, needing help. He is sad (just as at times of sunsets) and he desires enlightenment, the sunrise. This is how he arrives (with the help of his guide) to the inner conclusion: he has to go back to the Rose. The Rose only exists if there is someone to take care of it, if someone sees it, someone who is related to it.

It is not enough for a cult to have its object. There is no cult without its supporters.

It is the fox, which leads the hero to the doors of enlightenment. According to tradition, it is the fox's relative, the jackal leads Isis in the underworld to find the scattered parts of Osiris. This animal is of the underworld for other reasons as well, and it is the signifier of resurrection. This animal is afraid of humans and knows there is another place besides the armed world of humans: where being tamed is law. Our suspicion gets stronger that the rose garden surrounded by a high wall is the place of the imperfect world, even if its qualities point to the place ruled by the personal Rose of the prince.

The novel shows a path which is possible for everyone to go along: first, loving the seemingly perfect small planet of the rose, the relationship becoming disunited, leaving the Edenic planet, being faced with the lack of the rose via an imperfect rose garden and searching for the true one. This is how the mastering of civilization happens: as a conclusion of getting to know things, a final evaluation happens and then a decision. The fox speaks about this when the field of wheat suddenly becomes important to him – only because he is reminded of it by the color of the prince's hair. Similar logic appears in other stories by the author.

The characteristics of the rose describe the plant itself: the rose is not in a middle position; it is not in a mediative state. The rose is a rose, not an allegory of a person. The qualities of the rose however (this is significant when introducing the first anthropological space of *The Little Prince*) are like of a person's: they can be linked to the Virgin Mary image of Christianity and the mother image derived from it. They are related to the image of the Virgin fused with the rose and to content linked to motherhood.

In *The Little Prince*, two characters bear qualities of the rose: the flower growing up on the planet and the protagonist himself. The appearance of the prince is depicted with Mary-like attributes: the color of the inside and outside of his cape and the rosette are all evidence of this. The boy's rose-characteristics are not as strong a sin as the rose itself, though strong enough for both to be seen operating under the same emotional laws.

The qualities of the rose can be understood from the perspective of love-cult and horticulture. Some of its traits are emphasized by signs originating in Muslim and Christian tradition related to the circle of symbols of gardens. The aforementioned values are to extend the cult of the Rose and what is actually behind it. The Rose signifies the importance of a philosophy where understanding the world happens in a mystical, loving way. In addition, the qualities of the Rose are the qualities of the little prince as well.

„...amikor belépek kertembe a rózsailatú ösvényen...”

Az első antropológiai tér Antoine de Saint-Exupéry *A kis herceg* c. művében

Az életrajzok, életrajzszerű művek azok, amelyekben legteljesebben vizsgálhatóak az antropológiai terek. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry *A kis herceg* című művének hőse harmadik antropológiai tere mindaz a térség, amelyet a bolygójától a Földig s onnan az otthonába visszatérve az univerzumon át bejár. A cselekvési – vagy második antropológiai – terek is pontosan körbehatárolódnak a sivatagban, a rózsza körül, az égitesteken s egyéb színhelyeken. E pontok ikonikusan is megjelenítődnek a meseregényben, mivel Antoine de Saint-Exupéry saját maga készíti el az illusztrációkat, az akvarellek pontosan képviselik a szerzői szándékot, s az olvasó számára vizualizálják a fiú első antropológiai terét. A II. fejezet egész alakos portréja előtérbe hozza mind a kis hős biológiai-embertani, mind a szociális-mentális sajátosságait. *A kis herceg* színkomplexiója szerint az europid rassz tagja, s a ruházat értelme szerint is behatárolható kultúrkör – a nyugati kereszténység – hagyományának a képviselője.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry megrajzolta a kis hercegről a „lehető legjobb képet”, melyen a szőke hajú, fehér bőrű gyermek hadvezéri-uralkodói köpenyt visel. E köpeny belseje piros, külseje kék színű. A kisfiú vállán csillagos parolin

látható. A testet fehér ruha fedi, s a fehér ing hasítékát rozetta kapcsolja egybe. A gyermek bal kezében görbe kard. Előadásom tárgyául a testfelület kulturálisan meghatározott részleteinek fölfejtésére vállalkozom. S egyben arra teszek kísérletet, hogy az öltözék sajátosságai révén föltáruul sajátos szerzői szignatúratán révén felvázoljam a herceg személyiségének egynémely jegyét.

Kulcsszavak: első antropológiai tér, ikonológia, rózsa szimbólum, mentáltörténet

„...kada kročim u svoju baštu na stazu sa mirisom ruže...”

Prvi antropološki prostor heroja romana „Mali princ” Antoana de Sen-Egziperija

Biografije, odnosno dela biografskog karaktera su primeri u kojima se u najpotpunijem vidu mogu proučavati antropološki prostori. Treći antropološki prostor junaka romana „Mali princ” Antoana de Sen-Egziperija jeste sav onaj prostor koji junak, krećući se kroz univerzum od svoje planete ka Zemlji i vraćajući se odatle do svog doma, obilazi. Aktivni – ili drugi antropološki – prostori se isto tako zaokružuju u pustinji, u okolini ruže, na nebeskim telima i na ostalim scenama. Ove tačke se u bajkovitom romanu i u ikoničkom smislu pojavljuju, naime Antoan de Sen-Egziperi sam izrađuje svoje ilustracije, te akvareli precizno zastupaju autorove intencije, a čitaocu vizuelno predstavljaju prvi antropološki prostor dečaka. Portret celog lika u drugom poglavlju donosi u prvi plan kako biološko-antropološke, tako i socialno-mentalne karakteristike malog junaka. Mali princ je prema kompozitu boja pripadnik evropske rase, a i po smislu odeće se može odrediti kao predstavnik jedne određene – i to zapadno hrišćanske – kulturne tradicije.

Antoan de Sen-Egziperi je o malom princu naslikao „najbolju moguću sliku” na kojoj plavokoso dete bele kože nosi šinjel vladara vojskovođe. Unutrašnja površina šinjela je crvene, a spoljašnja plave boje. Na ramenu dečaka vidi se epoleta sa zvezdama. Telo je pokriveno belom odećom, a izrez košulje spojen rozetom. U levoj ruci deteta je zakrivljena sablja. Namera autora u ovom izlaganju jeste da dekodira kulturalno determinisane detalje telesne spoljašnjosti, odnosno da na osnovu specifične autorske signature koja se očitava u karakteristikama odeće napravi skicu određenih crta prinčeve ličnosti.

Ključne reči: prvi antropološki prostor, ikonologija, simbol ruže, istorija mentaliteta

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