sign a meaning to the hero's death, but also glorify his uniqueness and his individuality, by momentarily opening a gap in the wall of mute indifference enclosing Hardy's Wessex.

#### Abstract

George Eliot, by claiming common people's right to tragedy and by showing how a monotonous life is probably a tragedy worse than death, made the first step towards the convergence of the realistic mode and tragedy. Thomas Hardy continued Eliot's legacy and made common people dominated by ordinary passions the protagonists of tragic destinies. Yet Hardy had to take some realism away from the plot in order to give his heroes the dignity Eliot's protagonists lacked. At the same time, however, Hardy carried to extremes Eliot's conviction that the tragic destiny may be an insignificant existence. Although Hardy's tragic novels usually end with the hero's classic death, this is not the cruellest punishment inflicted on them. The present contribution takes into consideration Hardy's tragic novels and aims at illustrating how his heroes' efforts to defend their identity are mockingly punished with a sort of 'damnatio memoriæ' only the author can relieve.

#### Keywords

Hardy, Thomas; tragedy; Eliot, George; realism; identity; Jude the Obscure; Tess of the D'Urbervilles

## Tamás Juhász

# On the Prince Rudolf Motif in Joyce's *Ulysses* and Krúdy's *Jockey Club*

The mysterious death of Prince Rudolf and his lover Maria von Vetsera in 1889 provoked a large number of artistic and literary responses. These ranged from novels through musicals to films, and *The Waste Land*, T. S. Eliot's supercanonical, exemplary modernist poem evokes the memory of the young baroness in the very first section: 'And when we were children / staying at the arch-duke's / My cousin, he took me out on a sled, / And I was frightened. He said, Marie, / Marie, hold on tight. And down we went.'2 Eliot's reliance on ominous wording suggesting fear and a downward move is in harmony with the manner in which many others—by then distinguished by their ability to review World War I in retrospection—believe that the Crown Prince's death in Mayerling revealed a major discord within the skeletal, but still powerful communal frame of the monarchy, and thereby anticipated the eventual demise of dynastic rule. In my paper, I would like to discuss and compare two early twentieth-century reactions to the famous incident. One of them is another supercanonical modernist text, James Joyce's Ulysses from 1918/1920 (1922). The other, in terms of its influence and reputation, is a somewhat peripheral novel, especially for non-Hungarian audiences. Even though Gyula Krúdy's Jockey Club from 1925 bears a somewhat unusual English-language title, one with a reference to a still existing international organization, there is no English translation available, and the book has arguably fallen into relative critical neglect, even among Krúdy scholars. While Joyce, like Eliot, treats the Rudolf motif in a distanced, quite oblique manner, Krúdy wrote a kind of historical novel with very directly portrayed characters, and this, in the context of his otherwise brilliantly impressionistic, quintessentially modernist writing may seem to be a romantic and overtly nostalgic engagement with a popular, sensational subject matter. Yet neither Joyce's seeming casualness nor Krúdy's obvious concern with marketability discounts the artistic relevance of Prince Rudolf's presence in the two novels. As I will argue, portraying the archduke helps both authors capture deep and complex

- Examples are numerous, and they include, but are not limited to, two novels (Claude Anet's Mayerling from 1930, Michael Arnold's L'Archiduc from 1967), a musical (composer Frank Wildhorn's Rudolf—The Last Kiss from 2006), and a ballet (choreographer Kenneth MacMillan's Mayerling from 1978). The list of films is quite long, and while some of the Western productions feature such notable actors as Audrey Hepburn and Omar Shariff, two Central-European productions should also be pointed out in the present context: Alexander Korda's Tragödie im Hause Habsburg (1924) and Miklós Jancsó's Magánbűnök, közerkölcsök (1976).
- T. S. ELIOT: 'The Waste Land': Collected Poems 1909-1962, London, Faber and Faber, 1963, 63.

relations that govern gendered behavior, shape notions of lineage and community and, ultimately, impact the modernist sense of time and history. In exploring these processes, the essay places special emphasis on how and why the evocation of Rudolf's death creates a distinct Gothic register in the two narratives.

In Joyce, a strong narrative reliance on cultural associations with Prince Rudolf asserts itself through the central character Leopold Bloom's family history. Bloom is barred from traditional patterns of genealogy and paternal interaction in that he is placed between the two dead figures of his father Rudolf Virag (who migrated from Hungary and who would later commit suicide) and his son Rudy (who died at the age of eleven). This structural setup itself parallels those concerns with broken continuity and failed reproduction that one finds in the tragically short life of the historical Prince Rudolf.

Indeed the situation of Franz Joseph's only son was unusual and complicated, if not absurd.<sup>3</sup> As an heir to the throne, he was trained as a military leader as well as a statesperson from the beginning of his childhood. Nevertheless, in what seemed to be a conventional paternal arrangement about succession, no real power sharing appeared on the horizon. This was partly because of personal differences (biographers usually describe the relationship between Franz Joseph and his son as a deeply estranged one) and political differences (while the emperor tried to maintain close ties with Germany and keep a cold distance from Hungarians, the Crown Prince was his polar opposite: distrustful of Germany and, like his mother, pro-Hungarian in his sentiments). Rudolf's peripheral position would have changed, of course, with his father's death, but, in one commentator's wording, 'Franz Joseph, like Queen Victoria, seemed immortal.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the sheer length of the emperor's rule from 1848 to his death in 1916 is unparalleled in modern Western monarchial history.

As a husband (there was an arranged marriage between him and Princess Stéphanie of Belgium), Rudolf's failure was more gradual. The marriage looked, initially at least, acceptable, and the couple had one child, Elizabeth. Yet as time went by, the relationship grew colder and Rudolf started once again seeing numerous women, like he had done before his marriage. Even if there were periods of reconciliation between husband and wife, Rudolf insisted more and more on a divorce, but his father refused to consent. Thus, succession and dynastic expansion, especially in its patrilineal form, became an impossibility for the prince.

- For Anna Fábri, the Rudolf of *Jockey Club* exists 'in the double-bind of identification and rejection [in relation to his father]' (146). 'Bécs volt a városa. A Ferenc József-i Bécs Krúdy Gyula műveiben.' *Mi ez a valósághoz képest? Kérdések és válaszok Jókai, Mikszáth és Krúdy olvasása közben*, Budapest, Kortárs Kiadó, 2013, 149–150.
- Robert Weldon Whalen: Sacred Spring. God and the Birth of Modernism in Fin de Siècle Vienne, Grand Rapids MI, Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2007, 31.
- It is to be noted in the present literary context that Stephanie was the daughter of King Leopold II of Belgium, the monarch whose exceptionally cruel rule over the Belgian Congo (the ironically named Congo Free State) constitutes the historical background for yet another supercanonical modernist text, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

Ulysses, within the context of its overall engagement with cultural discontinuity, brings home for the reader the variety of ways in which Bloom's story is embedded in another, Central-European narrative. Because the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is Bloom's place of origin, some of these semantic correlations connect the Austrian royal family and the Jewish/Irish/Hungarian family of the Blooms, while others create a more unambiguously Hungarian backdrop for the Irish narrative. Thus, the first-name Leopold in Ulysses evokes the memory of Saint Leopold III, the patron saint of Austria. In addition, the novel makes reference to the old Hungarian city known in Latin as Alba Regia, where thirty-nine kings were crowned. Joyce calls this place by its current, Hungarian name (Székesfehérvár), but in a distorted, misspelt manner (Szesfeharvar)<sup>6</sup>, and in juxtaposition with a weird imagery of clogging or constipation, thereby creating a sense of blockage and impediment in matters of tradition and continuity. So when facing the discontinuity of generations, the dead end of his lineage, 'the Hapsburg family crisis becomes,' in Andras P. Ungar's words, 'a subtext to' Bloom's story.<sup>7</sup> As the same scholar sums up,

'Bloom, the last male of the lineage, is threatened by the extinction of his name ... His isolation in 1904 Dublin between the two deaths resonates with a notorious Hapsburg parallel: the death of the imperial heir, Crown Prince Rudolf, under mysterious circumstances on January 30, 1889, a harbinger of the doom that seemed to cling to the Hapsburg emperor who had lost his brother, Maximillian to a Mexican firing squad, and would lose his empress, Elizabeth, to an assassin's bullet [in 1898].'8

In addition to these cases that involve Rudolf quite directly, the end of the century sees an unusually high number of deaths in the social circles closely and less closely connected to the Austrian royals. Thus, just the previous year, 1888 sees the passing away of both Emperor Wilhelm I and, completely unexpectedly, his son Friedrich III in the neighboring German Empire. In 1896, Franz Josef's brother, Archduke Charles Ludwig, father of the yet again ill-fated Franz Ferdinand, dies of typhoid. Parallel to all this, a strange spate of suicides rages in Vienna. The city, claims Frederick Morton, 'had not only more suicides per capita than most European cities, but a particularly high incidence among the upper bourgeoisie.'9

Assuming that all these narratives of bereavement function indeed as (one of the many) subtexts for Joyce's hero, it is unsurprising that Bloom's attempts to repair the rupture in his patrilinear descent carry further monarchial echoes. Let me

- <sup>6</sup> JOYCE, James: *Ulysses*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1987, 594.
- Andras P. Ungar: "Among the Hapsburgs: Arthur Griffith, Stephen Dedalus, and the Myth of Bloom", Twentieth Century Literature 35.4 (480-501).
- <sup>8</sup> Ungar makes a strange factual mistake in his otherwise excellent study on Joyce: Elizabeth was not shot, instead, she was stabbed to death by the Italian anarchist Luigi Lucheni in 1898.
- Frederic MORTON: A Nervous Splendor: Vienna 1888–1889, New York, Penguin, 1979, 67.

resort to Ungar's perceptive examples again. To restore continuity, Bloom adopts a paternal attitude toward the other main character of the novel, Stephen Dedalus. A sonlike figure, Dedalus at one point thinks about a 'hawklike man'<sup>10</sup> (who, in the Joycean context, is his namesake Daedalus) and this leads us to the etymology of the family name Hapsburg, as it comes from *Habitschburg*, or Falcon's Castle (Habitsch is falcon in German). In addition, there is a specific Austro-Hungarian Monarchial reference in Stephen's name: just as Saint Leopold is the patron saint of Austria, Saint Stephen is a quintessentially Hungarian saint—King Stephen was the first Hungarian king, and his heavily politicized figure has stood for the idea of Hungarian statehood ever since. Furthermore, the first name Stephen itself denotes royalty in that the Greek *Stephanos* means crown. Thus, the relationship with Dedalus (and his symbolic crown) represents, again in Andras Ungar's words, 'dialogue with the fathers with whom Bloom has broken.'<sup>11</sup>

If, in terms of this symbolic conversation, Bloom is a figure of impediment, Stephen of hope and continuity, then Rudy, Bloom's dead son stands for what was once a possibility but now irrevocably gone. Rudy is, on one level, an indicator of the state of Leopold and Molly's marriage. After his death, there is no sexual contact between the parents, and the child's name (through never ending Joycean word play) will reappear in association with the book title Ruby: Pride of the Ring, a pornographic novel Bloom gives as a gift, that is, as a substitute for sex, to his wife. On another level, this is clearly more than just a family story because the ongoing crisis of Bloom's masculinity reflects, quite systematically, on the various cultural narratives that are associated with the historical Crown Prince, especially in their gendered dimensions. Thus, references are made to the ruler's ring, a token of monarchial sovereignty (Pride of the Ring), and the idea of power, leadership, and publicity (Bloom takes his time to sample a passage or two, so in the book one can read about sadistic animal taming in a circus and how the large attendant crowds watch this in awe). When the Ruby Ring motif returns in the Circe chapter, reference continues to be made to troubled masculinity and the dead Rudolph Bloom's monarchial namesake, Prince Rudolf. Here, in a dream vision about transformation and subjugation (remember how the mythical goddess Circe turned Odysseus and his men into swine), Bloom, who happened to walk into a brothel, experiences various humiliating challenges to his virility and allows 'his latent femininity and submissiveness'12 to be displayed and exploited. But in a very close alternation with this process, Joyce's hero also sees himself as a royal character: he becomes a 'mantled, sceptred figure, '13 and in this imaginary preparation for coronation, he actually 'puts on a ruby ring.' A complex imagery emerges then in *Ulysses*, where an at least triangular dynamism connects Bloom, his dead son and the dead prince, partly to unfold the Irish narrative, and partly to delve into the ill-fated Prince Rudolf's masculine identity as disobedient son, unfaithful husband and self-destructive inamorato.

As to this last context of love affairs, it is notable that despite the popular cultural tendency to see the relationship of Rudolf and Mary as a star-crossed one, the Crown Prince bears at least as much responsibility as the stars. In other words, the story should by no means be romanticized. Clearly an attractive person, Rudolf cultivated simultaneous relationships, had an unknown number of illegitimate and completely neglected children, contracted sexually transmitted disease, and passed it on to his wife and presumably to others as well. Other factors—alcohol, morphine, lack of sleep—also contributed to the deterioration of his health, and at the same time, they are likely to have fuelled his growing fascination with death. Eventually, he managed to lure young Maria von Vetsera into a suicide pact, but it is a remarkable, and not widely known, historical point of interest that while the girl may appear to be the unique and ultimate object of love for the Prince, Rudolf had previously tried to convince his other lover, a certain Mizzi Casper, a former prostitute, to enter a suicide pact with him. Mizzi refused. From our cultural historical perspective, the significance of this parallel relationship (with Mizzi and Maria) within another parallel relationship (with Maria and his wife Stephanie) is that it reflects a new, specifically modernist engagement with a sense of the primary and the original on the one hand, and a sense of the secondary, even spectral, on the other.

Spectrality and duplication are key dimensions in Jockey Club, Gyula Krúdy's work. In this novel, the Hungarian author presents, on one level, an essentially conservative, or at least respectfully romanticised account of Prince Rudolf's final days. Rudolf's chief problem is that he is too educated, too enlightened. Unlike the other Hapsburgs, he has excellent writing skills (this is historically accurate), he maintains friendly ties with Hungarians (this is accurate too), and his attitude towards women is not as destructive as it was in reality. So even if a variety of mistresses from his past make their essentially absurd or funny appearances, Maria von Vetsera is now the exclusive focus of his emotions. The young woman's mother is an even more idealized person: she is the respectable widow of a general, relatively poor but always proper, always dignified (in reality, she was extremely ambitious, and she made advances to a no lesser person than Franz Joseph himself). This idealization must have satisfied many readers, and it is in harmony with what John Bátki, one of Krúdy's English translators, sees as the writer's fundamentally conservative outlook: '[the novelist] was deeply ... traditionalist. He had a great, and abiding respect (more: a love) for old standards, old customs, for older people ... He had ... a nostalgic, almost hopeless, and surely a melancholy longing for an older Hungarian way of life that was no longer his.'14 Yet parallel to this traditionalism, Krúdy is seen as a key writer of Central European modernism, and it is almost clichéd to compare

<sup>10</sup> JOYCE, 175.

UNGAR, 492.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Harry Blamires: The New Bloomsday Book. A Guide Through Ulysses, London, Routledge, 2009, 192.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> John Lukacs: 'The Chronicler and the Historian', in *Krúdy's Chronicles: Turn-of-the-Century Hungary in Gyula Krúdy's Journalism*, ed. by John ВАТКІ, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2000, viii.

him to Marcel Proust on account of his handling of time. But while his concern with memory, remembering and temporality in general is indeed central in his finest work, the historical-sensational-sentimental *Jockey Club* can strike its readers as a particularly modernist piece of literature for other reasons. Among these is the level of spectrality, where Krúdy creates a Gothic subtext about repression and disintegration that is at once individual and collective.

To achieve a Gothic quality, the author introduces an alter ego when the Prince accidentally encounters a young, penniless Hungarian and realizes that the man is his exact lookalike. In a well-known narrative formula, which is familiar from, for example, Mark Twain's The Pauper and the Prince, Rudolf will use the other person to substitute for him, which is a welcome service because the prince is under increasing pressure in his father's court. This key element of duplication in the storyline has no historical basis. Rudolf had his confidants, from among which a particular coach-driver appears under his own name (Bratfisch) in the novel, and there was also a servant who stayed with the prince in the Mayerling hunting lodge until the fatal hour, but he never had anybody to actually replace him. The fictional lookalike's Hungarian origin, and especially the fact that he bears a highly symbolic name, Rudolph de Vienna in its Germanized version, just emphasizes the element of fictionality. This Rudolph often displays a comic ease and contrast, nevertheless, his very existence should be seen as part of a fundamentally Gothic artistic vision in the nineteenth-century-early twentieth century, with examples ranging from A. T. Hoffman's romantic characters through Stevenson's Jekyll and Hyde to Joseph Conrad's short story 'The Secret Sharer.'

Of the numerous cultural and literary implications of doubling, we can note at least two crucial facts by reference to *Jockey Club*. One is that such representations are possible only through the 'evolution of a self-culture,' through the appearance of the 'concept of the individual self.' Thus, along with the emergence of psychoanalysis, alter egos come to be seen as subpersonalities that are in a more or less permanently conflictual relationship to each other. This is, from another angle, also a reproduction, on the level of personality, of how collectivism and centralized-hierarchical structures in a social sense give way to pluralistic, often deeply divided, social-political systems in the modern world. The other factor is this: the modernist subject is not simply alienated and fragmented but it also 'laments the loss of a self that was once coherent and self-sufficient, just as secularists followed Nietzsche in both pronouncing the death of God and grieving over it.' The modernist self is 'dualistic or divided,' and at the same time, it laments the 'loss of an older, integrated self.' In other words, the self is not simply split into multiple subselves, but it also has deeply divided sentiments about its own division.

I think it is this link between split and disintegration on the one hand, and desire and nostalgia for integrated selves and, ultimately, unquestionable absolutes on the other hand that accounts for the fascination with the narrative of Prince Rudolf. Thus, in Krúdy's rendition, the author's nostalgic, even sentimental, and surely commercially motivated interest in the monarchial setting can be seen as a kind of reproduction of his readers' interest and belief in unchanging, unquestionable truths and absolutes. The writer reflects on a sense of primacy embodied by a never dying, almost totemistic emperor and supported by the universal, foundational spirit of Catholicism, a religious tradition thoroughly defining the archconservative sexual mores and general behavioral patterns of the Hapsburgs. And at the same time, this setting is also Freud's Vienna, a big and extremely vibrant immigrant city with not only all the innovations, fantasies and thought-structures of what would come to be referred to as modernism, but also with sordid (and surprising) social realities, such as an unusually high rate of suicides. Prince Rudolf inhabits (incarnates, in fact) both spheres, the unchanging-monarchial domain as well as the new, shifting, ever transforming realm of social mobility, exerting an appeal to a readership that is itself part of modernity and yet feels the fascination of a dynastic, premodern civilizational frame.

Compared with Joyce's novel, *Jockey Club* treats, to a great extent, Gothic spectrality in the context of genealogy, gendered behavior and masculine space. Rudolf finds himself more and more on the fringes of traditional succession and genealogy for reasons that have been mentioned earlier: his own sexual choices, his distaste for conventional aristocratic male activities, and especially his alienation from his father, which reflects irreconcilable personal and political differences between the two. Typical of Krúdy, who often created titles out of names, objects or concepts which have only some loose, metonymic relation to the main story, the Jockey Club is a place and organization that Rudolf never actually visits in the narrative. Yet the capacity of the club to portray the chilling immobility of the male aristocracy that frequents it—at one point, the organisation is described as the most boring place on earth<sup>17</sup>—designates both the ominous calm before the storm that the First World War would soon represent, and the social-political repression that the preservation of the skeletal,<sup>18</sup> conflict-ridden, economically powerful yet in many respects still semi-feudal Monarchy inevitably entailed around the century.

That violence is the price at which at least some status quo is achieved is apparent through a small, but in the present reading quite essential, detail in *Ulysses* as well: if a daguerreotype of Bloom's grandfather was created in 1852, the date itself is likely to evoke the memory of the crushed Hungarian Revolution of 1848–49. Joyce

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Jane Silverman VAN BUREN: *Modernist Madonna: Semiotics of the Maternal Metaphor*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1989, 116.

Peter Childs: Modernist Literature. A Guide for the Perplexed. London, Routledge, 2011, 135.

Gyula Krúdy: Jockey Club. Az utolsó gavallér. Ed.: András Barta. Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1980, 362.

László Fülöp describes Franz Joseph as "phantomlike" in Krúdy's fiction, a word choice warranted partly by the emperor's anachronistically simple lifestyle and his reluctance to appear in public. Közelítések Krúdyhoz. Budapest, Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1986, 256.

does not particularly pursue the implications of this loss, but such an event in the background creates an additional context for the sense of discontinuity that characterizes Bloom's genealogical position. The revolution and the ensuing retribution is not, strictly speaking, Rudolf's individual story, but it is certainly part of a larger narrative surrounding the key characters of both *Ulysess* and *Jockey Club*, one that is punctuated by traumas in Irish<sup>19</sup> as well as Central-European history. Referencing such events contributes to the two authors' engagement with a partly playful, partly frightening spectrality where an ineffaceable past keeps blocking the way to progress and genuine change. Thus, in the Hungarian novel, it is the usually cheerful, vital character of Rudolf's alter ego who, after becoming a near-witness to the prince's so Gothically portrayed death, falls prey first to depression, then madness.

The analogy between the two literary works should not be overstretched. But the tricky, clearly modernist interest in the link between such primary fields of life as sexuality and religion on the one hand, and their secondary, subversive forms on the other, definitely connects the two. Joyce's artistic strategy is to just indicate the memory of what has been lost, and foreground, in the author's teasing, provocative texture, the symptoms and the consequences of this loss. Combining traditionalist and modernist traits, Krúdy follows a different course of narrative action. In his novel, he restores and portrays the magnificence of the declining dynasty, but then the sentimental and perhaps too historically faithful main text is overwritten by the novelist's deeper artistic instincts: hence the emphasis on secondariness, duplication, and spectrality, extending to those fields of life that traditional thought structures associate with primacy and exclusivity: marriage, religion, and the very notion of romantic love.

#### Abstract

This paper explores the presence of Prince Rudolf, son of Franz Joseph and Archduke of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy as theme, motivic structure and artistic inspiration in James Joyce's Ulysses and Gyula Krúdy's Jockey Club. While these two literary reflections are not the only cultural responses to the Mayerling incident in which the Prince and his lover Maria von Vetsera lost their lives, they are among the ones that focus not so much on the sensational impact of the historical material but treat the mysterious royal narrative as emblematic of a major civilizational transition from dynastic rule to nationalism and political pluralism, from the predominance of communal thought to individualism and, ultimately, from lingering premodern cultural contexts to full-blown modernity.

One of the relevant studies to relate spectrality to the history of Ireland is James F. Wurtz's 'Scarce More a Corpse: Famine Memory and Representations of the Gothic in Ulysses' in *Journal of Modern Literature* 29.1 (2005), 102–117.

#### Keywords

Prince Rudolf, Maria von Vetsera, Hapsburgs, Joyce, Krúdy, modernism, genealogy, Gothic

### Rezümé

A dolgozat azokat az okokat vizsgálja, amelyek miatt Krúdy Gyula és James Joyce Rudolf főherceget, Ferenc József fiát választotta regényeik, a Ulysses és a Jockey Club modernista víziójának kibontásához. Bár mindketten tudatában vannak annak a nosztalgikus, sokszor szenzációhajhász gesztusnak, amellyel a korabeli populáris kultúra a trónörökös és Vecsera Mária halálának történetét újramondja, és bár a modernizmusra jellemző módon ezeket a populáris kulturális elemeket bizonyos mértékig be is építik műveikbe, a hangsúlyt mindketten Rudolf alakjának emblematikus voltára helyezik. Ennek értelmében a herceg ábrázolásával mindkét szerző azt a civilizációs fordulatot ragadja meg, amelyet a dinasztikus uralom és a nacionalizmus, valamint a politikai pluralizmus, kollektivizmus és individualizmus – végső soron még létező általános premodern kulturális minták és a kiteljesedő modernizmus közötti átmenet jelentett.

#### Kulcsszavak

Rudolf herceg, Vecsera Mária, Hapsburgok, Joyce, Krúdy, modernizmus, genealógia, gótika