DE GRUYTER OPEN

Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Philologica, **7**, 1 (2015) 7–19

DOI: 10.1515/ausp-2015-0031

# "Journeys are Meaningful" (Travelling, Travellers, Literary Periods, Literary Journeys)

István FRIED
University of Szeged
Department of Comparative Literature

**Abstract.** If the changes of the "discourse networks" (Aufschreibesysteme) from 1800 to 1900 model the relations pertaining to the personality, to the cultural determinedness of technology and personality as well as to their interconnections (Kittler 1995), especially having in view the literary *mise en scène*, it applies all the more to travelling – setting out on a journey, heading towards a destination, pilgrimage and/or wandering as well as the relationship between transport technology and personality. The changes taking place in "transport" are partly of technological, partly (in close connection with the former) indicative of individual and collective claims. The diplomatic, religious, commercial and educational journeys essentially belong to the continuous processes of European centuries; however, the appearance of the railway starts a new era at least to the same extent as the car and the airplane in the twentieth century. The journeys becoming systematic and perhaps most tightly connected to pilgrimages from the Middle Ages on assured the "transfer" of ideas, attitudes and cultural materials in the widest sense; the journeys and personal encounters (of course, taking place, in part, through correspondence) of the more cultured layers mainly, are to be highly appreciated from the viewpoint of the history of mentalities and society.

**Keywords:** history of literature, history of travel, Sterne, Smollett, Radishchev, Gogol

> Mann reist ja nicht, um anzukommen, sondern zu reisen.
> (Goethe qtd. in Robel 1980, 18)
> What is only important for me in travelling is what happened within myself under the impact of the journey experience.
> (Márai 1995 [1947], 10)
> It will be one step toward knowing himself.
> (Sterne 1968, 11)

The world history of transport can be periodized in the same way as the personal and "universal" endeavours emerging in parallel with transport, regarding wider knowledge acquisition, the placement of the self in the widest possible

BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)

(and of course, the narrowest possible) context, and also the manifestation of the possibilities of the individual in the course of travelling. In the periodization the stages of humanizing, minimizing or in other cases interpreting distance (as an ancient ally and enemy to be defeated) are getting shape, the journey evolves from myth to novel-utopias, from exploring-adventurous stories to the demonstration of the change of mentality, from the messianistic colonialism of Europeanness to the identity crisis of the wanderers of the "inner journey" bordering on psychoanalysis, from the introduction of the new literary genre to the almost simultaneously emerging parodic-satirical novel forms, from imagological premises to the turn in cultural studies (and within, spatial turn) (Bachmann-Medick 2006, 184–328; Hillis Miller 1995). In this way, it is relatively early that the journey/travelling became the metaphor of life/death, of the journey of life and the lyrics of death.

To start my lyrical–narrative review with lesser-known texts, I quote from Propertius's elegies. First I quote a few lines from the characteristically polysemic enunciation of the topos of escape complaining about the hostile nature of distance (II/30):

> Where are you going, O, mad one? There's no escape:
> though you head for Tanais, Love will pursue you there.
> Not even if coursing the air on Pegasus's back,
> nor if the wings of Perseus moved your feet.
> Even if winds, divided, snatch you on winged sandals,
> the highways of Mercury will do you no good.[1]

The mythological dimension opens up the imaginary-poetical sphere; through the gesture of addressing the basic, archetypal situation becomes more human. The incorporation of various myths indicates a mutual referenciality of the universal and the personal, the earthly and the "divine" dimensions, which reveals the unique and particular in the individual. This is why the earthly and the aerial, transcendental journeys simultaneously indicate an existential-mythological situation expressed in the lyrical mode.

Elegy 11 of Book IV speaks about the closing of the road(s); with death the roads cease to exist, a border is drawn between the road and its absence:

> Paullus, no longer burden my grave with tears:
> the black gate opens to no one's prayer.
> When once the dead obey the law of infernal places,
> the gate remains like adamant, unmoved by pleas.[2]

1 *http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/PropertiusBkTwo.htm.*
2 *http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/PropertiusBkFour.htm.*

BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)

The poet turning into verse his own death similarly projects his journey from thinking back to life to the act of will into larger spaces; the poetic word contextualizes distance and also the traversed (life) journey in terms of family, mythology and "history," thus making his own fate significant, but also referring to the knowledge of a wider sphere than those traversing similar life journeys. The "knowledge" accumulated during the life journey is capable of endowing the description or narration with lessons well beyond the particular case, while the personal moments prevent the poem from becoming a didactic one.

Research connects the date of age-shaping changes of travelling (Klátik 1968, 17–61) to various events: some date it to the turn of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries (Robel 1980, 11, 22), when the acts of pleasure/entertainment are taken over by cultural journeys. These certainly do not exclude entertainment – Goethe's *Italian Journey* is usually mentioned as the conclusive example of culture, cognition and aesthetic-scientific education – and raise the issue of the correlations between autobiography and travel account, "self-account" (Goethe 1984), with particular regard to the construction of the figure of the traveller. They also question whether the space of the travel account formed in the course of recollection can be rendered independent of the events, rich in newly gained knowledge, of the time that has passed between the journey and its projection into the literary work; whether the landscape is also the indicator of such "constitutedness" as that of the attentive, learning, reacting and reflecting personality, whose work will be apt for being placed in a collected edition. A rather lengthy quotation from the 1830s is very important in my line of thoughts as besides reporting on the changes of social mobility taking place in the history of travelling it also indicates the ever wider sphere of travellers, in the background of which travelling plays a significant role in the slowly–gradually emerging process of democratization. My summoned witness is Karl Immermann (1796–1840), who started his career under the spell of German Romanticism. Thus I do not refer to an English or Russian author thematizing – though poetizing (thus creating genres) in the eighteenth century – the most notable travellers, travel novels as well as travel as lifestyle, as a mentality-shaping possibility, although English and Russian literature created the genre of the "sentimental" novel still influential today, in which versions of conduct, ironically drawn episodes related to journeys as well as time dissolved in space can be found, not only as a form of existence evincing a concrete life event (the journey), but also as the allegory of life, mostly in a way that the useful information on the concrete details of the journey can be found not in these novels but in travel books becoming popular by the end of the eighteenth century. After these considerations, let's read the quotation carefully:

**BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó**
**Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)**

> Travelling penetrates into people's present state even more deeply. Otherwise, people also travelled thirty-forty years ago; for those belonging to the middle class it was exceptional, and when it took place, the reason was business matter, a concrete aim, unfolding with the special elegance of spirit or relations. Now it is different. To remain in one's home is exceptional; that everybody who disposes of the proper means, (…) moves farther than one hundred German miles every year or in not much longer intervals is regular. The minority of the travellers are merchants who travel with a concrete aim; the majority travel for the sake of travelling. (Immermann qtd. in Sautermeister 1986, 271, trans. J. P.)

If we open the prominent volumes of English literature, we can realize that there this process took place much earlier, with the French – and later with the Polish – emigrational interludes increasing the number of travellers already in the eighteenth century, whereas in the case of the Russians it is mainly (but not exclusively) the aristocrats who travel abroad (the account of such a European journey is inserted in *Anna Karenina*); inland travelling becomes the subject of *belles lettres* from the eighteenth century. Not even Pushkin is an exception; however, it is officials, inner exiles and soldiers who take part in these journeys, which in the course of time will be connected with the Caucasian military operations of tzarist imperialism (Pushkin, Lermontov). It can be brought in connection with the interest of Russian literature (and partly of Russian society) in English culture that Russian literature keeps referring to Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* even in the twentieth century (the great formalist Shklovsky (1966) reports on a real journey in the country and abroad). I would add, before looking into the English literary prose of the eighteenth century, that the means of transport get not less poeticized than the types of travellers, and we can identify as reasons for this not only the customs, the variants of the transport system making travelling possible, but also the way the accessories of travelling become national stereotypes; the stagecoach carries the literary characters in London and to the countryside not only in Dickens's and Thackeray's novels, but it [the red stagecoach] is also the main character of the Hungarian writer Gyula Krúdy's twentieth-century novels; the troika is connected to Russianness, albeit through the translations into European languages of Russian novels. The stagecoach and the troika complete the figure of the traveller. The stagecoach accelerates communication, it cooperates in correspondence. While they swallow distance, they also reveal the social status of the traveller. It is to be noted here that the train is no longer connected to imagological concepts; due to its border-crossing character it reinforces the idea that functions in line and in cooperation with the strengthening of the intensity of connections between peoples, nations, cultures and literatures, thus it does not bear the indicators of any nation (the inscriptions

BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)

on a train can cause national conflicts later on);[3] however, it maintains social stratification, the first, second and third class providing transportation to nearer and farther destinations for travellers of different rank and occupation. Besides, it is not only the distance but also the speed conquering distance that has to be paid for, as there is significant difference in price between the international express trains and the passenger trains destined for inland use; the services of the international express trains serve the needs of the elite as compared to the poorer equipment of the inland rail transport. To mention a literary example: the disguised countess of Mór Jókai's late novel entitled *Rich Poor* (*A gazdag szegények*, 1890) can successfully elope because she travels among the travellers of the third class and at the destination nobody looks for her among the poor.

Turning back to the eighteenth century, English literature attests that travelling is no longer the prerogative of the privileged; it has become a general practice. The travellers heading mainly towards the European south feel the need of belonging to the ever widening circle of travellers, that travelling adds to social prestige, it turns from a commercial or cultural journey into a tourist journey, sometimes the goal is less the spectacle, but rather the events, curiosities and specificities abroad that will serve as discussion topics. The travellers strive less to understand, to get to know and to acknowledge the 'foreigner,' the other, they rather call to account the own, the habitual on the foreign. The critical traveller bears hard the world of customs different from his way of life; the English traveller will be a recurrent, not always sympathetic figure on the continent in the eighteenth century (and even later, as Dickens's and Thackeray's novels testify).

The English self-image is changing, and this can be well illustrated with Tobias Smollett's and Laurence Sterne's (Warner 1993) travel descriptions (the latter author introduced himself relatively early and with considerable success in German and Hungarian literature; it is a revealing data as regards the reception history of *A Sentimental Journey* that almost at the same time with the posthumous English publication it was published in German; Kazinczy translated it into Hungarian and published it in 1815 [Kazinczy 2007, 377–454]). The simultaneous reading or cross-reading of these travel descriptions not only contour two/several kinds of traveller's attitudes, but testify to the struggle for a different concept of the travel novel, a literary polemics initiated by Sterne.[4] Whereas in the description of his journey to France and Italy Smollett represented the rationality of the critical Englishman, Sterne (who was profoundly influenced by Locke's sensualism) introduced the figure of the sensitive (sentimental)

3 The conflict broke out at the beginning of the twentieth century, because of the Hungarian inscriptions on the trains of MÁV [Hungarian State Railways], and the situation became extremely tense in Croatia, leading to protests against Hungarians and actions on the part of authorities.

4 "A *Sentimental Journey* makes fun of the conventional book of travels."

**BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó**
**Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)**

traveller, who travels not only with his mind, but – to use his own phrasing – also with his heart; as a proof of this he not only contemplates with proper distance the bustle of his contemporaries in Europe, but breaking with their pedantry and self-quest, tries to rethink himself by reconciling his satirical world view with the claim of understanding, also where the situation is comical (a French aristocrat appears to recognize *Hamlet*'s Yorick in the narrator Yorick applying for a passport), inscribing his traveller-self into the episode at least to the same extent as the fervour of the aristocrat. Smollett will make use of his travel description experience in novel writing; his *Humphrey Clincker* (1771) reports journeys in letters sent during travelling in the country. However, these letters are written by different members of the family to different people, thus a heterodiegetic and hetero-perspectivical narration is created, the same event is experienced differently by various characters, and the particular episodes are bricolaged together through the various letters, while the framework is provided by the journey itself. Contrary to Smollett's journey, one of Sterne's first gestures is that of distancing. In the mid-eighteenth century it already proved possible to draw the typology of the travellers,[5] for Sterne to distinguish himself from the average traveller. It is in fact this typology that will be taken further by Thackeray in *The Book of Snobs* (191?, Chapter XXI, 82, 89) only to arrive at the ironical attitude towards his characters in *Vanity Fair* who are tourists in the German dukedom called Pumpernickel (Thackeray 1901 [1847–48]). Sterne's travel description is, on the one hand, the counterpoint of Smollett's work (cf. Fried 2014, 362), on the other hand, he blurs the boundaries between travel description and travel account, in a way that he says almost nothing about the journey itself, and after the typology of the travellers the portrayal of the sentimental traveller is carried out by the entire (uncompleted) novel. As concerns the typology, it can be noticed that the particular types do not refer to the aristocrats, Yorick rather views the journey and the travellers from below/from a side perspective, and we can also assume from the fact that he presents himself as a sentimental traveller that he strives to interfere into the process of creating the novel. And he may also aspire towards a prose that would differ from Richardson's sentimental novels. The polemics, the distancing, however, is just one layer of Sterne's travel description; in the subsequent typology the intent aiming at entwining the stories of the sentimental traveller reaching a new place (a place in general), at the same time at offering the work as one single whole: a travel description into which stories and fragments are inserted which do not move the storyline, the journey ahead. Certainly, continuous narration is less important for the traveller; the reflection on the events, the processing of the sentiments and experiences and their use for self-education are more important. All these are contrasted with the

5 Idle Travellers, Inquisitive Travelleres, Lying Travellers, Proud Travellers, Vain Travellers, Splenetic Travellers.

BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)

travellers classified in the other type, Smelfungus and Mundungus. It is worth leafing into what is written about the two tourists, especially with respect to the fact that generic issues can be discussed through their figures. Although Sterne proves to be unworthily strict, this indirectness leaves a mark on Sterne's own poetical-narratological concepts; he mentions a conduct version in order to form an opinion about the antinomies of the travelling-traveller issue. First I quote from what we can read about Smelfungus-Smollett:

> I popp'd upon Smelfungus again at Turin, in his return home; and a sad tale of sorrowful adventures he had to tell; 'wherein he spoke of moving accidents by flood and field, and of the cannibals which each other eat—the Anthropophagi.' He had been flay'd alive, and bedevil'd, and used worse than St. Bartholomew, at every stage he had come at. (Sterne 1831, 284)

Mundungus is Samuel Sharp, author of the 1766 *Travels through France and Italy*; his name bearing references to several meanings of *mundus*; he embodies the *proud* traveller, whereas Smelfungus belongs to the *splenetic* type. They are both the opposites of the narrator of *A Sentimental Journey*, whose positive attitude to the tiny joys of life meets the pleasure of narration (of the text?). The discovery of the foreign is interpreted as a factor enriching the self; his mistakes can be harmonized with the intent of positive acceptance of the impulses arriving from the foreign with the help of his ironical world view. Contrary to this, in spite of striving to get familiarized, Smelfungus and Mundungus form a critical attitude, not disposing of means to draw a balance of experience with the hermeneutics of goodwill.

> Mundungus, with an immense fortune, made the whole tour; going from Rome to Naples—from Naples to Venice—from Venice to Vienna—to Dresden, to Berlin, without one generous connection or pleasurable anecdote to tell of; but he had travell'd straight on looking neither to his right hand or his left, lest Love or Pity should seduce him out of his road. (Sterne 1831, 284)

Sterne's reception history reaches an important Hungarian stage with Ferenc Kazinczy's translation. Sterne's language – for example, his use of French terms in descriptions for the sake of authenticity – had a liberating effect on Kazinczy, whose stylistic reform seemed justified by Sterne. On the other hand, the status in narration of social, conversational and landscape-observing moments created with the help of the "poetics" of sensitivity may have urged Kazinczy to try his wings in this direction. Thirdly, the caricature-like figures and contrary to them, the example of the traveller moving freely in the foreign world, with a free mind

**BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó**
**Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)**

and a free heart, open to the happenings around, also made their presence felt in his travel descriptions. Sterne's polyvocal prose, his satirical style prone to exaggerations are counterpointed with the odaic style, the picturesque episode drawn sometimes in an elusive, suggestive manner combined with well-planned dialogues result in the diversity of presentation; the emerging "insert" stories (especially the already mentioned fragment) serve to maintain the reader's interest (according to the intention of the literary work), but of course we can make one step further and note the emancipatory intent of the fragment. The closure of Sterne's work is the tragic irony of both his biography and literature; it interrupts a (previously mentioned) picturesque episode, it creates the impression of the lack/impossibility of completion, and seems to make accepted the justification of fragmentariness, biographically from the perspective of the author's factual death. This diversity, this series of changes in the narrative tone that might as well be called polyphony led to the success story of Sterne's urging role for the generation immediately following him. In Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, besides the more frequent mentions of Richardson, mostly placed in an ironical context, the occurrence of "Poor Yorick" cannot be ignored either, in connection with (the Schillerian-idealist) Lensky (characterized with considerable irony); and although Sterne is not mentioned by name, the perhaps first travel novel of Russian literature, triggering intervention on the part of the ruler, with a stormy reception, Alexander Radishchev's *A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow* (1790) can thank a lot to Sterne's path breaking, to the circumspect world view of the sentimental traveller. Although Radishchev is an inland traveller, this world view is not less diverse, often panoramic, than Sterne's, also characterized by the changes in the narrative tone, and the Ode to Liberty, which can be read in one of the closing chapters as a summary of the much more open social portrayal/criticism (at Radishchev in excerpt and in verse form) fulfills a similar role as in Sterne's prose. We find out about the travel as much as at Sterne, the succession of events (which can also be conceived as case studies) seems more important than the account of the actual advancement in space. The story, that is, each and every episode creates its own couleur locale; the narrowness of the time frame, however, as the traveller has to reach Moscow by all means, makes possible only a succint narration. Otherwise, Radishchev plays with the well-known "technique" of transforming the found manuscript into a narrative, and uses essayistic prose to a better understanding of social problems occurring in the particular stories. The apparently loosely conected series of events testifies in fact (in agreement with Sterne's procedure) that whatever the story, the end cannot be arrived at; an episode starts by the traveller's arriving at the respective place and it ends when the traveller leaves; what is in-between can either be accounted for or not, is either recorded in form of a manuscript or ends without reflection on further events. The travel account does not come to an end either, the episodes of the arrival are not known. Radishchev's

BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)

work was confiscated, so it spread in manuscript form, while Sterne could be read in original and in translations.

Gogol's novel *Dead Souls* (1842) can be approached from both directions: on the one hand, from the direction of the densely depicted journeys, on the other hand, by having in view the novel-forming narrative strategies. What is certain is that when reading the first completed part of the novel, the narration of the visits placed in-between two journeys may be conspicuous, with equal focus on the genre picture, on the various types of landowners, on the narrator hiding behind the protagonist. As a consequence of the vast Russian distances, the travel novel almost becomes an account of a journey around the world, with the only restriction that it is a journey around the Russian world, placed into the adventure time – and space – of an average hero. This adventure time is the continuation of the stream of European novel tradition which Cervantes or even Sterne also belong to: along his journey from landowner to landowner the protagonist, essentially with a formed personality, meets the diversity of human nature, odd figures about whom we mostly find out as much as the protagonist perceives, as is revealed from conversations-negotiations, and as it becomes clear from the description of the environment. In the introductory lines of the novel the britzka, which represents social status and signals what kind of personalities it carries on the endless roads, enters the yard of the inn: "Through the gates of the inn in the provincial town of N. drove a rather handsome, smallish spring britzka, of the sort driven around in by bachelors: retired lieutenant colonels, staff captains, landowners possessed of some hundred peasant souls – in short, all those known as gentlemen of the middling sort" (Gogol 1997, 3). Chichikov belongs to those whose existence is insecure, who are situated far from the upper layers of society, and whose similarity with their britzka betrays little about their real entity. Besides, it is not only the britzka that signals the features of the protagonist that manifest in the course of the journey; the narrator of the novel also wishes to express something important about the journey, turning narration itself into a journey. The infinite perspectives may seem frightening; however, the reader is reassured that at a certain point the narration, the journey will come to an end: "But of all that the reader will learn gradually and in due time, if only he has patience enough to read the proffered tale, a very long one, which is to expand more widely and vastly later on, as it nears the end that crowns the matter" (Gogol 1997, 16).

The self-reflective narrator/narration is aware of entering the above mentioned adventure time essentially characterized by repetition (Chichikov is travelling, arrives at the respective landowner, negotiates with him, sometimes more easily, other times in a more difficult manner, then sets out on the journey again and continues the same pattern). However, sometimes the narrator steps out of his role, addresses the reader directly in first person: in the sixth chapter of the first

**BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó**
**Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)**

part he reflects on the fact that as opposed to the enthusiasm of the journeys at a young age, he is now travelling "ravnodusno" (indifferently). We could confront the traveller's attitude with Sterne's typology of travellers; even the sentimental traveller can be discovered behind the lines. However, it seems that by the end of the novel the story of the traveller turns into the lyrical prose of travelling, which thematizes the passionate desire of expression of lyrical prose. Chichikov's repeatedly narrated journeys, the petty micro-world of the provincial town seems to disappear behind the performance of travelling and travelling customs. Neither irony, nor self-reflection, nor the dialogue initiated with the reader can be given voice, it is rather the journey that turns into a life experience, into the tone of self-accomplishment and through this, of separation from the world.

"But which Russian doesn't like travelling? As he feels really in his waters when he flies with a breathtaking speed and sometimes cries out in extasy: 'Damn the whole world!'" (Gogol 1997, 355). As follows, leaving the customs behind, the troika gets independent of the concepts associated to it, and quickly acquires symbolic overtones, becoming the symbol of the viability of a nation and that of Russia; the myth is gradually formed, in the course of which the troika functions as a sacred object, as a polysemic symbol in a cosmos organized around and through it. "And you, Rus, are you not also like a brisk, unbeatable troika racing on? The road smokes under you, bridges rumble, everything falls back and is left behind" (Gogol 1997, 356).

Each of the short questions and exclamations use visual and auditive tools and the phonetic parallelism tells us about a speech condensed to the last ditch (e.g. Dümom dümitszja, otsztajet i osztajetszja). In the end it is not the novel, not the plot acted out by the characters that we follow, but the sound of bird-troika (i.e. ptyica troika) and the questions of speeding through the world. Nature, the Universe is witness to this speeding up and Russia, whose unsolvable and unsolved force lies in its infinite loneliness, (understood in its literal meaning) symbolized by the troika, changes into a primary force. The final few pages of the novel grow out of Chichikov's escape. The adventures of the mediocre trickster remain unfolded behind the rhapsodical finale, just like the world in which he failed and the (outside) world which might experience speeding up as a threat. The speaker of the last few paragraphs is not the self-reflecting narrator wandering about the possibilities of the narration, but a speaker from whose words the self-narrating Russian novel evolves, a novel which looks for and eventually finds its own possibilities for expression. The ending is less and more than a novel, it is an appendix of another genre of narrative. It represents the vision of the existence of a Russia which leaves behind the world of the novel, as well as those nations and states which observe its flight with more and more concern. In *Dead Souls* no chance of a different life emerges, the troika flies us towards unknown possibilities, faith, destiny and existence.

BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)

> Russian land, Russian homeland, where do you fly away? Answer me. But Russia does not answer. The bells sound beautifully, they turn into wind, the torn-to-pieces air is wuthering, everything on earth remains behind and other nations stand aside with sneaking looks. (Gogol 1997, 357)

Not even the author knows the answer. The second volume of *Dead Souls* survived only in fragments, as the author was not satisfied with it (or with the answer?), so he burnt it.

Between the two World Wars more and more writers choose to write travel journals or to make reports about their journeys. International literary or scientific conferences, apparently advantageous offers made by travel agencies and demands of the newspaper readers, all urge writers to inform readers about their experiences in the daily press, and gathering the articles, publish them in volumes or print collections of essays on their journeys. Serbian writer Jovan Dučić, as well as Karel Čapek or the Slovakian Martin Kukučin, even Dezső Kosztolányi and Sándor Márai did so. Kosztolányi reported on his European journeys in his newspaper articles (Kosztolányi 1979), as well as poems, sometimes appearing to be sceptical about mass tourism, other times considering it as a characteristic symptom of the modern world, wandering about the dichotomies of knowledge or the projections of the already possessed knowledge during his trips. However, this remark sheds light upon the binary relation between adventure and travelling, on the one hand, and on the process of change in case of symbols, on the other, how apparently unimportant objects can grow into symbols in particular contexts. The spirituality of the journey, destination and experience is made possible by the materiality of accessories. "The train is the titanic toy of contemporary mankind. Travelling – what an adventure! What used to be a walking stick, a trial of one's luck, the great sea, setting off for the world, today is condensed and simplified into a slim little train ticket" (Kosztolányi 1979, trans. J. P.).

As for the closure, let there stand a slightly enigmatic quote by Márai from the *Western Patrol* which proposes to look at and experience Western democracies:

> We will be travelling really slowly, looking thoroughly at everything that lies before us, we will be stopping even in places where officially there is nothing worth seeing, we will be wondering around in London and Paris. If anyone is in a hurry, presumably offended, please, travel with other company. Because if there is a shuffle for this journey, it cannot be anything else, but this tardiness, this careful looking around, this aimlessness. (Márai 1936, 10, trans. J. P.)

*Translated by Judit Pieldner*

**BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó**
**Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)**

## Works cited

Bachmann-Medick, Doris. 2006. *Cultural turns, Neuorientierungen in den Kulturwissenschaften*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt.

Fried István. 2014. A Gorohovaja utcában. Gogol-Goncsarov-Gogol. [In the Gorokhovaya Street. Gogol-Goncharov-Gogol.] *Filológiai Közlöny* vol. 60 no. 3: 361–366.

*Goethe önéletrajzi írásai.* [*Goethe's Autobiographical Writings.*] 1984. Trans. into Hungarian by Miklós Győrffy and György Rónay. Budapest: Európa.

Gogol, Nikolai Vasilievich. 1997. *Dead Souls*. Trans. and annotated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volochonsky. New York: Vintage Books.

Hillis Miller, J. 1995. *Topographies*. Stanford University Press.

Jókai Mór. 1969 [1890]. *A gazdag szegények.* [*Rich Poor.*] Edited and arranged for publication by Gergely Gergely. Budapest: Akadémiai.

Kazinczy Ferenc. 2007. *Szép Literatúra*. [*Belles Lettres.*] Critical edition. Edited and arranged for publication by Ferenc Máté Bodrogi. Debrecen.

Kittler Friedrich A. 1995. *Aufschreibesysteme* 1800–1900. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag.

Klátik, Zlatko. 1968. *Vývin slovenského cestopisu*. Bratislava.

Kosztolányi Dezső. 1979. *Európai képeskönyv.* [*Picture Book of Europe.*] Budapest: Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó.

Robel, Gert. 1980. Reisen und Kulturbeziehungen im Zeitalter der Aufklärung. In *Reisen und Reisebeschreibungen im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*, hg. B. I. Krasnovaev, Gert Robel, Herbert Zeman, red. Wolfgang Kessler, 9–37. Berlin: Camen.

Sterne, Laurence. 1968. *A Sentimental Journey with the Journal to Eliza and A Political Romance*, ed. with introduction by Ian Jack. Oxford University Press.

Márai Sándor. 1936. *Napnyugati őrjárat*. [*Western Patrol.*] Budapest: Révai Kiadás.

Márai Sándor. 1995 [1947]. *Európa elrablása.* [*Europe's Abduction.*] Budapest: Akadémiai.

Pushkin, Alexander. 1998 [1833]. *Eugene Onegin*. Trans. by James E. Falen. Oxford University Press.

Radishchev Alexander. 1958 [1790]. *A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Sautermeister, Gert. 1986. Reisen über die Epochenschwelle. Von der Spätaufklärung zum Biedermeier. In *Reisen im 18. Jahrhundert. Neue Untersuchungen*, hg. Von Wolfgang Griep und Hans-Wolf Jäger, 271–293. Heidelberg: Winter.

BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)

Shklovsky, Viktor Borisovich. 1966. *Érzelmes utazás. A Zoo*. [*A Sentimental Journey. Zoo*.] Trans. into Hungarian by Pál Justus, postscript Ferenc Botka. Budapest: Európa.
Smollett, Tobias. 1961 [1771]. *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*. London – New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Sterne, Laurence. 1831. *The Works of Laurence Sterne, in One Volume, with a Life of the Author*. J Grigg.
Thackeray, William Makepeace. 191?. *The Book of Snobs. Barry Lyndon*. London.
Thackeray, William Makepeace. 1901. *Vanity fair. A Novel without a Hero* (1847–1848). London – Edinburgh – New York.
Warner, John M. 1993. *Joyce's Grandfathers: Myth and History in Defoe, Smollett, Sterne and Joyce*. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press.

**BDD-A22778 © 2015 Scientia Kiadó**
**Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-15 01:55:48 UTC)**