

**Lack and the Secret - The Existential Ontology of the Mortal
Historicity of Deficiency and the *Dasein*
– István Király V., “the author who deals with the issues of thinking”^{*} –**

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Keywords: Hungarian philosophy, Transylvanian philosophy; István Király V.; applied philosophy, *Dasein*, lack, secret, illness, experience of death

Abstract: It is an issue important for the continuity of Hungarian philosophy how it is possible to understand and thematically explain the deficiencies and fullness of being experienced in Central and Eastern Europe “here and now”. The interpretations and applied philosophical investigations of István Király V.¹ shed new light on the issues of the mortal historicity and existential ontology of deficiency and secret, deficiency and *Dasein*, with illness and the experience of death having outstanding importance within it. The physical illness means not only physical suffering, but the deficiency and privation which engages and permeates the possibilities of the sufferer’s modes of being and the qualities of these modes of being in their entirety. Király’s argumentation is compared to the problem of possibilities of being as defined by Béla Hamvas. It is clear that, while Hamvas does not name the possibilities of being, but considers them as available for any concrete individual existence that the self does or can achieve, in Király’s understanding illness has a privileged position within the entirety of possibilities of being, and as such, it means not the absence of health, but pertains to the essence of it. Meaning that the human *Dasein* cannot be defined – among other things – without the assumption of illness. The concluding part of the paper deals with the problem of the co-original relationship of “sum”, of death and freedom seen by Király as a metaphysical fact.

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Motto:

“Every philosophy is also personal. And every approach to philosophy must be personal. Of course, this is not what usually happens. The methodology becomes technique or algorithm, the body of philosophy becomes a list of

^{*} This paper was written in the framework of MTA ELTE Hermeneutika and OTKA research no. 76865.

¹ See: [https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kir%C3%A1ly_Istv%C3%A1n_\(filoz%C3%B3fus\)](https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kir%C3%A1ly_Istv%C3%A1n_(filoz%C3%B3fus)), accessed January 2013

terms, and the philosopher becomes a bust. Meditation therefore either turns into a profession (ensuring one's livelihood), or we enclose it into ourselves as a noble little part of our lives".¹

István Király V. is a prominent figure of contemporary Hungarian philosophy in Transylvania. Although he does not organically follow the tradition of lack interpretation started by Károly Böhm, the first Transylvanian philosopher to construct a philosophical system, but the problem of the lack in its other dimensions, such as the secret, history, freedom, illness or the experience of death is a fundamental connection network in his writings as well.

His views on the *being and possibilities of Hungarian philosophy* offered fundamental insights in the 1990s when it was caught in the crossfire of assaults and misunderstandings. These insights are still worth contemplating at present, (not only) with regard to the nature of Hungarian philosophy.

Before turning to the interpretation of *lack, deficiency, secret and lie* in Király's works, it is important to emphasize his conception. In his writing on this subject, he deals with the being and possibilities of Hungarian philosophy, which he approaches from a very significant viewpoint. He claims that the problem itself can be approached from different angles: cultural history, bibliometrics, ethnology, or anthropology, and only after and beyond these can the question be asked philosophically, in which process the language of questioning is just as important than the questioned "subject". He claims therefore that, by questioning and by the actual explicit self-questioning connected to the "subject" – namely, "What is philosophy?" – one can only determine a possible mode of being of philosophy, and not its "Hungarianness". He clearly argues that "[...] there is nothing special about philosophy questioning its own being and its own meaning in Hungarian. [...] Hungarian philosophy exists therefore when philosophy questions – authentically – its own essence and its own meaning in Hungarian. For German, English or French philosophy exists no differently!"² The language, among which Hungarian too, is a medium in which we express that and how we historically partake in being. This is an organic and natural distinction of the problem. The agreement in the matter – in the Gadamerian sense – of what is the basic question of philosophy and how it is linguistically formulated is also a hermeneutical problem with repercussions, therefore, on the Hungarian philosophical language as well. But this is not the artificial Hungarian philosophical "technical language", the systematic elaboration of which, according to Király, the "Hungarian philosophy" rather neglected – probably to the "advantage" of the elaboration of "Hungarian philosophical language, technical terms" – but the Hungarian language in general, without which there could not be any Hungarian

¹ István Király V., "A titok és kategoriális szerkezete" (The secret and its categorial structure), in Idem, *Határ – Hallgatás – Titok. A zártság útjai a filozófiában és a létben* (Limit – Silence – Secret. The ways of closure in philosophy and in being) (Kolozsvár [Cluj-Napoca]: KOMPRESS – Korunk Baráti Társaság, 1996), 28.

² Ibid., 131.

philosophy, just as there could not be Greek or German or any other philosophy. He writes: “Philosophy always has to come into being in order to be able to examine the kind of being it has partaken in. While whatever Hungarian philosophy is, is precisely the world of the Hungarian language. That is to say: it partakes in this being and it makes philosophy partake in it.”¹

It is Király’s general ambition connected to any treated subject to get insight into the meanings of Hungarian words – usually not even technical terms – related to that given subject, in order to bring to the surface their living and actual – that is to say, not merely technical – possibilities, depths and values of thinking. At the same time, in the process of analyzing or explaining Hungarian words or phrases, whether etymologically or syntactically, he consciously or unconsciously reaches to philosophical depths. Therefore, by not only using the accepted technical terms of philosophy – which are actually not even such terms – he manages to take them out of their usual everyday strata to the conceptual stages of philosophy. His methodology clearly builds upon the depths of existentiality, and does not consider the abstract-speculative aspects of the language of systematic philosophies linguistically appropriate for revealing the existenzials.

There have been several important and successful attempts in the history of Hungarian philosophy to create a linguistic discourse, a conceptual framework appropriate for a given subject. This is characteristic for example for the two Hungarian philosophers creating philosophical systems: Károly Böhm and Béla Brandenstein. However, there is a significant difference between the linguistic “programme” of Böhm and Brandenstein and Király’s methodology, not only because of the linguistic differences of their times, but also the radical alterity of their philosophical background and standpoint. The artificial linguistic construction of the formers, especially Brandenstein, were in accordance with the so-to-say abstract linguistic expectations of their age, while Király, similarly to Béla Hamvas, extracts the philosophical problems to the level of thinking both thematically and linguistically from being, from the existential *Dasein*, from real and living dimensions of being. What does he say about it? “My “starting points” are in fact never purely “theoretical”, and even less do they derive from some readings, but they are always primarily existential. *Recte*: I deal with the secret because I lived in a world in which I experienced its ever more sprawling tentacles in my own life day after day. In a world, that is, which I seemed not to be able to understand without understanding what secret is. THEN: I have dealt and continue dealing with death simply because I know myself to be mortal, and this is something I should understand. [...] In both cases of course the research also unfolded the thematic networks or horizons connected to that particular problem, which again needed to be explained. Then again, I deal with ILLNESS because I am ill, [...], and I’d like to understand what that means. But – like in all other cases – I/one can never find a ready-made, simply adjustable explanation or philosophy for the problem. That is to say: I have to do it myself. One has to do it oneself.

The case is the same with freedom too, of course: mainly the experiences of communism, communist censorship, and the current censorship after the regime change

¹ Ibid., 135.

made me pursue this problem, since I think all philosophizing has an emancipatory role.”¹

This is how the thoughts connected to a subject become a philosophical discourse, a kind of linguistic communication which always derive from concrete “there and then” or “here and now” existential situations and gain philosophical relevance. His methodology opens up the way for questioning ourselves, our own existential situation and the finding of possible answers, elevating it to the confines of existential interpretation.

The problem of communication and validity is also rightfully raised. Namely, that “[...] something such as ‘Hungarian philosophy’ can always only be communicated with, or valid for, ‘Hungarians’, or that what is communicated, let’s say, through translations, how far is that Hungarian?”² Király touches upon the very core of the matter without naming any important authors or trends of Hungarian philosophy.

It would take up long pages to present the researches and results of recent decades in the field of the history of Hungarian philosophy. Nevertheless, knowing most of the results of these researches, and even taking part in several of them, I must say that we have nothing to be ashamed of either about the European standards, or the originality regarding the history of Hungarian philosophy. This also stands for the significant Hungarian philosophers of our times, justified by their presence in international philosophical life.

Following these introductory yet essential questions, let us consider those thematized questions and concepts which are analyzed in Király’s works in the referential framework of the lack and the secret.

The first appearance of the complex relations of lack and secret is in the volume *Határ – Hallgatás – Titok* (Limit – Silence – Secret, 1996), which is divided into two large thematic units. One is the block of the history of philosophy – Kant, Jaspers, Lukács, Simmel –, the other is the categorial, phenomenological and historical analysis of the secret. The concluding study on Heidegger analyzes the possible methods of the phenomenological approach of the phenomenon of secret. The philosophical “partnership” of his investigations on the secret is offered by the ideas of Georg Simmel and Martin Heidegger.

The detailed interpretations tackle the issues of the reflection or non-reflection of the “phenomenon”, the secret, the concealment, the seclusion, the forgettleness. The secret is interpreted in the framework of the concept of phenomenon, hidden and concealed by its essence, yet somehow still open to thematization. He refers to the concealment of phenomena following the Heideggerian line of thought; these “[...] first of all, can be forgotten in such a way that they are not yet revealed at all. They have no awareness of their being. Secondly, the phenomenon can be covered: the once revealed has fallen into oblivion. This can be a complete cover-in or one in which “the once revealed is still visible” – even if merely in appearance. This most frequent and most risky method of the concealment of the phenomenon Heidegger calls distortion

¹ From István Király V.’s letter sent to me, dated 13.08.2011.

² István Király V., “A magyar filozófia léte és lehetősége” (The being and possibility of Hungarian philosophy), in Idem, *Filozófia és Itt-Lét. Tanulmányok* (Philosophy and Being-Here. Studies) (Kolozsvár [Cluj-Napoca]: Erdélyi Híradó, 1991), 143.

(Verstellung).”¹ Let us add that the possibility of deception and misguidance is very stubborn in this latter case, as Heidegger says. Király does not offer an in-depth analysis of this Heideggerian phrase, although in my view one “clue” of the secret is this if we examine the working mechanism of the secret also in the existential structure of lying. This appears in some respects in the Simmel-study as well, primarily in connection with the relations of concealment and publicity.

Phenomenology must explore this concealment, this non-reflection as well. Király analyzes the secret, the categorial structure of the secret starting from this. At the same time, he also thinks about the ways to reveal a secret: a violent or guileful revelation or another possible way: renouncing the revelation of the secret. In his argument, the decided expectation characterizing the “way” to the secret means the moment when we persistently wait at the point to which we have arrived in revealing the secret.

His writing containing the “pseudo-Heideggerian meditations” – entitled *Had-Been-ness and Past*,² as a continuation, several years later, of the above line of thought – is also centred on the key-problems of lack, not being, or rather no-longer-being, where he reveals the ontological dimensions of connections, combined with theoretical analyses in the philosophy of history. He expounds in this respect his conception that the no-longer-being is mostly a concept used and understood only as Had-Been-ness, and as such, not only is it not authentic, but an outright dangerous concept of “past” ruling over the present of Central and Eastern Europe. The “secret” or “mystery” of the past in time and history is the no-longer-being, the “Had-Been”, which is nevertheless somehow present. The no-longer-being as the negation of being sends to Nothing – Király continues. The Hungarian word *sem* [meaning ‘also not’, which is found in *semmi*, meaning *nothing*] emphasizes and at the same time – as a “searching Not” – also specifies the “not”, the negation; *sem-mi* [a compound of *sem* and *mi*, both an interrogative pronoun meaning ‘what’ and the 1st person plural personal pronoun ‘we’] may mean *also-not-here*, *also-not-there*, *also-not-me*, *also-not-him/her* [3rd person singular]. We search for it, but cannot find it. Is it anywhere? Has it been any time? Perhaps it has Never been? Following the detailed etymological analysis of the Hungarian word *Sohasem* (literally meaning ‘also-never’), he claims that the *Semmi* in the semantic circle of this concept can almost be dated: “[...] we know exactly when there is *Sohasem* [also-never], as opposed to *Soha* [never] and *Soha nem* [never not].”³ This issue is reinterpreted at the analysis of the experience of death.

The considerations on Had-Been-ness and Past can become subjects of philosophical research because, the author claims, Central and Eastern Europe does not live by the Augustinian stance. In Augustine’s original understanding the only “real”

¹ “Elzárttság, elfedettség és rejtőzködés Heideggernél,” (Seclusion, covering and concealment at Heidegger), in István Király V., *Határ – Hallgatás – Titok*, 236. quoted in: Martin Heidegger, 198. *Lét és idő* (Being and Time), trans. Mihály Vajda et al. (Budapest: Gondolat, 1989), 125.

² István Király V., “Had-Been-ness and Past,” In *Philobiblon -Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Humanities IV-V-VI-VII* (1999–2002): 312–360 and István Király V., *Filozófia és Itt-Lét. Tanulmányok* (Philosophy and being-here. Studies) (Kolozsvár [Cluj-Napoca]: Erdélyi Híradó, 1991), 79–126.

³ István Király V., *Filozófia és Itt-Lét*, 127–145.

dimension of time is the present. The past and the future do not exist in fact, since the past exists no longer, the future not yet. Király however examines precisely the being of the past and the future (in his study on the future in the volume *Halandóan lakozik* [Mortally dwells...]) as specific ontological dimensions and existential traps. The Past and the Future are therefore “real”, but the specificity of their being still needs to be pondered, which is not possible without the pondering and exposition of the ontological specificity of no-longer-being (Had-Been-ness) and not-yet-being (Will-be-being). “If Saint Augustine can still claim in his *Confessions* that, if past exists at all, it can only be in the present, then today – and especially here in Central and Eastern Europe – the “past” has become precisely the only “field” where we can grasp at once the preliminaries, the course and subsequent results of an event or happening.”¹ Király argues in his philosophy of history writings that historiography has found the fullness of time and therefore the “past” has become in fact the only “real” time.

These are the issues which await detailed examination and interpretation in the followings. First, *the secret and its categorial structure*, then *the functioning mechanisms of past secret(s) with reference also to the present*.

First of all, let us outline why Király thinks that all these belong to the subject of *applied philosophy*.

How does he understand applied philosophy? Actualization, the conscious actualization, bringing to *actus* of the possibilities is a fundamental instance of any kind of application referring to the essence of the thing. As a result of this thesis, application is always an actual relation with the essence. In what regards philosophy, applied philosophy always focuses on definite subjects or issues, and it is revealed in the course of interpretation and application how that philosophically relevant problem works in application.²

¹ Ibid., 129.

² Let me emphasize his remarks on this: “It is important to draw special attention to the fact that the related expressions “thematization” and “theme” are always used here in a previously repeatedly elaborated and ontologically, existentially, and methodologically well outlined and “tested” meaning and horizon. In this approach, “thematization” does not imply a predetermined circle of issues to be discussed or investigated, but much rather their roots, origins and horizons and the particular nature of how they are philosophically assumed. In this sense the actual “intention” of thematization, in connection with themes, issues, emerging as unavoidable, is in fact to urge philosophy, and thinking itself, to continuously think of itself, and validate itself, as indeed actual, that is, being in *actus*. And not merely with regard to the “problematological” logic of question and answer, but explicitly in the sense of an outlined experiment, trial of an all-time and actual – that is, philosophical – encounter with an existentially trying challenge. That is to say, in contrast to the need for information and solution, the “answer” of thematizing questioning is – actually! – emancipation. Raising and assuming a question in the sense of explicit thematization always acquires the power and emphasis of urgency. For it always refers to something which pertains to us, moreover unavoidably depresses, therefore it cannot be postponed, so to say. It seems that, while we are able to eternally live with “eternal” problems unproblematically, the themes of our thematizations urgently – and not hastily – need their being assumed. Since these are in fact existential challenges, or our own challenges of being. That is to say, the “theme” only comes to life and opens up in the course of its “thematization”, and only this way its inner forces and tensions and their scopes will be highlighted. Which will then be radiated around to determined directions. In this radiation the themes of thematizations send and guide us to newer and newer themes. The questioning exploration for

In this sense he also regards the issue of the secret as one of the possible problems that applied philosophy can deal with. Whether this is indeed the case, can only be revealed by the interpretation of the connections of categorial analysis and the process of application. In order to clarify the basics, he employs Aristotle's teaching on categories, then Kant's analysis of categories, and finally Husserl. In an ultimate sense, he claims, categorial analysis has to be what "[...] not simply leaves philosophy open for undertaking and treating the – usually new – problems that historical mankind in the presentness of its fate – also regional fate – must face, but directly guides it there."¹

Furthermore, he undertakes a subject which he analyzes functionally, structurally, then relationally. Then, he also claims that "[...] analysis must be deepened in such a way and direction in which it sends, leads, and connects back to the newly grasped or just discovered articulations of our terminologies about being. And the truly philosophical subject is only that which can make this happen, or utterly requires it."²

The Heideggerian term "Existenzialien" (*Existenzialien*) and the category of the secret cannot be sharply separated, and Király thinks that applied philosophy, in which existential analysis must have a dominant role, cannot ignore categorial analyses. "[...] not only can categories not be expelled from existential analysis, but they are such things which flow into existential analysis at the very depth of their being. This is how they gain their utmost existential and applied philosophical relevance."³ The secret is therefore an Existenzial, one of the modes of being of *Dasein*, which gains a structure, or ultimately categorial nature which is necessarily very determined in its operation and being, and as such, very objectualized.

The categorial structure of the secret

What is the relationship of lack and the secret? What lacks is not present; but does it need to be present? This is where one can face the question of concealment, fundamental in this respect. Is lack in fact a "not" which denies the being-present of something? Or is it merely concealed, but present, and awaits discovery? – we may ask. Does it also point

thematization meets therefore permanently – and in the possibly most natural and organic way – newer and newer themes, existential theme challenges. Therefore in a philosophical sense the only meditation which may count as "thematization" is that which leads and reclines back, together with its challenging-pressing "timeliness", to some essential and central problem or instance of "philosophy" itself, in such a way that it also yields new and/or more articulate directions and strongholds for its illumination, in the "living" historical present and action of philosophizing, and thus assuming it also with an eye to the future... That is, thematization is, and is characterized in the first place by being the reflexive thematization of the inner questions of philosophy – merely "disciplinary", beyond and external to "procedural-professional-conceptual" automatisms, but not lacking all actuality – , always also constructive for philosophy itself." For more details on this, see mainly the studies in the volume *Kérdő jelezés – több-csendbeni alkalmazott filozófiai zaj-háborítás a szabad(ság) kérdés(é)ben* (Question-marking – applied philosophical investigation on the questioning of freedom) (Pozsony [Bratislava]: Kalligram, 2004). Király V. István, *A betegség – az élő létlehetősége. – Prolegoména az emberi betegség filozófiájához. Illness – A Possibility of the Living Being Prolegomena to the Philosophy of Human Illness* (Pozsony [Bratislava]: Kalligram, 2011), 129–130.

¹ István Király V., *Filozófia és Itt-Lét*, 52–53.

² *Ibid.*, 53.

³ *Ibid.*, 55.

or refer, at the same time, to that what is lacking? Is the secret a particular mode of lack? And the circle of questions closes here, because the secret becomes clear in Király's answers and interpretation: it exists so that it is structured as "the exclusion of the presence of the lacking presence". "That is to say, the secret also denies the present the privative "not", the *steresis*. By this, the lack fills up the places of its horizon with closures. This is where the secret appears as secret, and this is when the lack that we meet must be explicitly called a lack. Because what lacks – the secret – only appears in relations to the closures."¹ Closures are interconnected, and as such, on the one hand they ensure the concealment of the secret, and on the other, they are such that if we collide with them, we may encounter the secret precisely as a secret.

Lack is that what is not present, but we only lack – says Király – that what we expect to be present. We can only fill in the lack because we know what it is we lack. But – let us add, and he goes into details later on – in the initial stage of the secret as something waiting to be revealed those who take part in it do not know what it is they lack in the life-world of the I, the not initiated. This comes as natural, since we are talking about the secret. At the same time, we need to analyze how we meet the secret, or what we call in this meeting truly and meaningfully a secret.

But how do we meet at all that "something" which we will truly and meaningfully call a secret? The first that we face are the hindrances which do not allow us to get close to that "something". These can be of course even the deficient modes of my being, to be corrected later. For instance, my knowledge might not be sufficient, or my means to approach the hindrances are not satisfactory, therefore I cannot unveil the concealed. I must overcome the hindrances in my being-on-the-way to the secret. Resistance also appears along with hindrances as a deficient mode of being-on-the-way. The question to ask myself here would be if I am the right person for a resisting hindrance or its overcoming, can I eliminate what resists in opening the secret? The secret is structurally non-openness, it exists in the mode of secure closure, and as such, it ceases being a secret in the moment it opens up. Király formulates it emphatically: "The secret is a concealed and closed reality: in its actual meaning therefore the concept may signify any kind of process, idea, piece of knowledge, structure, etc. which is hindered in its public mobility by an intended and secured concealment. [...] The concept of the secret refers to phenomena which are structured in opposition to the (public) cognizing subject."²

The case is different when we secretize – argues Király –, when the *Dasein*, the I is the one who secretizes. At this point the I appears in a double quality: first as someone who wants to find out the secret, and second, as someone who also begins to secretize. But it loses this ambivalence as soon as it starts to secretize. We are able to think substantially about secretizing or about a secretizing *Dasein* – continues Király – because we have secrets ourselves. Let me add something that Király does not analyze, but is an important factor, that we have knowledge of the internal mechanisms of our secrets. We may also say that, while being aware of my own secrets, I hide them securely, and thus I deprive the Other – for whom these secrets could be arguments in

¹ István Király V., "A titok és kategoriális szerkezete," 276, and *Fenomenologia existențială a secretului – Încercare de filosofie aplicată* (The existential phenomenology of the secret. An attempt of applied philosophy (Pitești: Paralela '45, 2001), 40–75.

² Ibid., 134.

the mechanisms of decision – of some of the possible options. For example, if someone is infected with the virus of AIDS and is aware of that, but hides it as a secret from their partner or potential partners, it might be fatal for the partner as well, whose decision cannot depend on a fact that is kept a secret. The twofold nature of the secret, lying in the ambivalence of the possessor of the secret and the seeker for the secret, in their “interplay”, who “are participants in the same game, whose ability to play decides the outcome of the game”¹ must also be mentioned here.

It is no news of course that we must live together with the secrets, whether external, forced onto us, or inner, created by ourselves. It is essential however that, if we understand the structure of the secret, then we can get a step closer to solving the secrets surrounding us in a world of phenomena, in existential being. The map of secret created by István Király refers to the core of the matter, the kernel on which the levels of shells are attached more or less tightly. *Expressis verbis*, I consider that one meets here a concentrated definition of the essential structure of the secret.

Later on, he investigates the complicated processes of the mechanisms of the secret in connection with initiation, oath, *silence* and *the mask*.

In analyzing the concept, phenomenology and structure of the secret, in addition to Heidegger he uses Simmel’s fundamental ideas. He argues that the analyses on the secret of Georg Simmel, one of the most colourful figures of early 20th century, can be applied in a philosophical sense to Eastern Europe where the secret became a key concept of social philosophy during the decades of socialism.

But let us return to the subject opposite the secret, the subject that steps into the process of revealing the secret with an attitude of unmasking that what is concealed. Secret and concealment intertwines a part of the relationships between the I and the You in a life-world that they inhabit in common; while concealment is at the same time the sphere of silence or lies, since these also deny and/or hide something from the public.

In “being together” with others the basic characteristic of the secret is to secure it, by eliminating any publicity, and as a result the opposition between the two sets, the one possessing the secret and the one not possessing it is created almost automatically, since the secret, by its being secured, is structured precisely despite its recognition, revelation, etc.

At the same time we must understand that not all is secret which is not public. To justify this distinction, Király thoroughly analyzes the mechanisms of the secret at work in the private and public spheres. The private secret as a phenomenon at work in the sphere of intimacy has a different structure than the world of secrets pertaining to the public, but hidden from it. The private matter, the private sphere does not pertain at all to the public sphere, its relations are not manipulative for the public sphere. Nevertheless, the private secret can be “[...] a secured restructuring of the private sphere because of some kind of influence from the public sphere.”²

¹ Elit Nikolov, *A titok* (The secret), s.l., Tömegkommunikációs Kutatóközpont, s.a., 25.

² Király V. István, “A titok és kategoriális szerkezete” (The secret and its categorial structure), in Idem, *Határ – Hallgatás – Titok. A zártság útjai a filozófiában és a létben* (Limit – Silence – Secret. Ways of closedness in philosophy and being) (Kolozsvár [Cluj-Napoca]: KOM-PRESS – Korunk Baráti Társaság, 1996), 112.

This distinction can only be suggested by the analysis and interpretation of the categorial structure of the two spheres.

In order to thoroughly examine those said above, first one has to rethink the problem of initiation, silence and the mask. At the same time, betrayal, disclosure and decoding also belong to the contents of the secret. But, as mentioned before, the process of secretization, which is the specific behaviour of man in a secured and closed, tendentially totalizing reality, is inherent in the secret.

Once we have rethought and reinterpreted all these, we will be able to philosophically characterize the social importance of the secret.

Király starts to analyze the problem by explaining the process of initiation, which has been a classic ritual of human communities since ancient times. But when “[...] the conditions of the initiatory communication relation are not secured, the primary act connected to the secret is silence. Silence is the order and interdiction always accompanying the initiation. The ritual and cult of silence is probably fixed and structured in its relation with the secret. As a ritual task and practice, silence shapes its cultural historical importance and role by its ancient relationship to the functioning of the secret and initiation. Silence is not simply an intended withdrawal, suspension or inability for commitment resulting from the situations emerging in the speech act. Silence is on the one hand an ability, technology and achievement cultivated and tailored by the process of initiation, on the other hand it is a self-contained act deriving from the revision of the expectations, impulses and challenges of the environment.”¹ At the same time, the uttering of the secret is not simply speaking or making heard, but betrayal and disclosure.

The author offers a highly sophisticated analysis of the Hungarian word “hallgatás” (“silence”, but also “listening”), both as hearkening, the attentive listening to others, as listening to something, and also as submissiveness and subordination. However, the mask and its “operation process” ‘steps into’ the “process” of silence, the obstructiveness of communication and the special formations of this obstructiveness.

How does it happen? The secret appears in the most concentrated way in the mask, and in this respect Király argues that, if the secret ever reveals itself anywhere, then it will do it by the mask, that is, it appears in the mask. He understands the concept of mask primarily in a cultural historical and anthropological sense, then it also examines its possibilities as a model.

If the mask falls, something is revealed, if I take it off, I become a traitor. It is not the same!

The mask is not an arbitrary, incidental appearance of the secret, but it is a new revelation of the original face, which is “false” and “face” at the same time. Its specificity lies in the fact that by it, the secret reveals itself to other in some way. As he writes, the mask is an archaic shape and model “[...] in which the inner (secret) interdictions referring to the secret have not yet separated completely from the outer (public) interdictions about them. The original relation and tension between the two can still be perceived in it, because the mask stands as evidence for the rules of the revelation of the secret.”²

¹ Ibid., 124.

² Ibid., 132.

It must also be added that if the secret is structured in spite of, or against, publicity, then the person possessing the secret puts on the mask defined by the given secret in attitude, communication and its entire existential being. In my opinion the varied forms of the secret are part of its structure. Approaching the question from the point of view of set theory, one may see that the realms, the sets of secrets can or may rule the complexity of the *Dasein* or certain part of it. First, regarding the various kinds of official, political, legal, religious or economic, etc. spheres,¹ which are naturally influencing factors, and second, in the private sphere, such as communication, where the intricate web of secrets is dominant. If we regard the concept of mask as described by Király as a model in the life-world of the *Dasein*, it is clear that we may encounter its derivative forms and appearances. In Béla Hamvas's interpretation, these derivative forms change the *Dasein* into pseudo-existence, and therefore transform man within the essence of his being. The *Dasein*, the being-here is always a *being-with-the-Other*, and the *being-alone* – although it is a particular kind of being – is always a *being-together-in-the world*. The secret can only be interpreted in the *being-together-with-the-Other*, and the mask also only becomes meaningful in this respect. Naturally, in the process of the secret the mask does not function in its original meaning but goes through a metamorphosis.

However, there is a question we have to ask that Király does not. When, how and why does the Other find out – if at all – that he meets the mask which hides something from him, when he 'comes and goes', messes about, or is being ill, or even faces "the experience of dying"? We must realize that the mask entails also a change in personality, which for a good observer may hint to the secret behind it. This is when the revelation or the possible betrayal might work, but it is a different question, and the process is contrary to secretization.

Coming back to the process of secretization, Király argues that it shapes an enclosed reality, totalizing and total in its tendencies, in which hierarchical relations are strictly at work and which is structured so that it shows the structural difference from the original core of the secret. These hierarchical relations mark at the same time the ranks of initiation and the special movement of inner interdictions. At the same time, the secret and the secretization process itself reshapes the personality from its foundations, and this also brings about the distortion of the personality, since the individual does not only take on a mask as part of a secret, enclosed and totalizing other reality, but – in my view – it can identify with this role to such an extent that self-deceit or self-lie is no longer a lie for it. The worlds of the secret – and I formulate it like this because it is not simply a secret but a web of secret is at work around us – entwine the individual as an intricate net, at a periodically changing degree and intensity. The new objectivity, the "second" world – says Király – continues to extend and it naturally also influences the public discourse. In my understanding it is not merely a second world, a second objectivity that comes into being next to the public discourse, but the two worlds have a common set in which the dichotomy of the I present in the secretization process and the given system of secrets must function in a network of the mask and silence, concealment and lies.

¹ See on this: Tamás Földesi, *A "Janus arcú titok". A titkok titka* (The "Janus-faced secret". The secret of secrets) (Budapest: Gondolat, 2005).

Following the line of the categorial structure of the secret, he arrives to the thesis that Bourdieu formulates in relation to symbolic power: “The secret is also an invisible power which can exclusively be practiced with the complicity of those who refuse to accept that they are subordinated, or even subservient to this power.”¹

In order to be able to show the mechanism of the secret at work in history – taking the socialist political regime in Romania as an outstanding example for the entire communist world – he rethinks the totality of the process of secretization, the mechanisms of guarding the secret, and the reasons that trigger or require the unmasking of certain secrets, by which the new objectivity, the “second world” was born. He writes: “The secret therefore is not a frozen, still reality the existential situation of which could only be influenced by the movement and change of the public sphere separated from it, but a formation which always extends according to its own uncontrollable rules and eminently influences the public reality.”²

He offers clear analyses on the “socialization” of the secret, in parallel with the formation of an “intellectually perfected” elite – let me add, one may only speak of this elite in reference to the web of secrets – which has its privileges over the community because of the power that the possession of the secret conveys to it.

Symbols, institutions and the functioning of a privileged elite³ are further problems that Király treats in various fields of analysis.

Secret and history

This context also raises a multitude of questions for Király, opening up new paths in further analyses. For instance: what is the historical relation of secrets and mysteries? How can the derivative forms of the phenomenon of secret become the basis of a new perspective on the past? Another question is that, since the past is always something that no longer exists, does the confession of the horrors of the past, the apology mean at the same time also that these are assumed, that the past is indeed turned into something that is passed?

These theoretical considerations are completed by many details and analyses, culminating in timeliness and applied philosophical approach in the study entitled “Secret and interdiction”. As the author formulates: the secret is one of the most important, yet less scrutinized categories or problems of Central and Eastern Europe, which globally structures the entire society. He also covers the concrete analyses of the historically privileged relationship of the secret and socialism. This does not only mean state secrets, or the limitless power of the secret services, but also that the secret is in these societies an essential systemic element and driving force of the entire system, of the working mechanisms of society as a whole.

His research questions are the followings: when and how has the communist movement and the secret been connected historically? In this respect he discusses the communist illegalist past and how and in what forms were its secret-mechanisms passed over to legal communism, to the actual power of existing socialism.

¹ István Király V., *A titok és kategóriális szerkezete*, 136.

² *Ibid.*, 141.

³ *Ibid.*, 142.

His other question is: how does the state secret become in socialist societies a ruling form of the secret? This process is again analyzed based on the Romanian legal system as an exemplary one.

The concretization continues with the interpretation and analysis of the connections of conspiracy and “past secret”, which is “a conceptual sketch of Romanian secret library collections”.

He asks as a clear and evident question: is there a conceptual definition of “secret library collection” in dictionaries for librarians and library science? The answer is: there is not. The documents can be blocked, inaccessible for certain periods of time, and as secret collections they refuse to reveal the fine structure of operative powers.

Király starts his analysis of the Romanian history of secretization with the decree-law of King Mihai I issued on 4 May 1945, then analyzes the role of secret announcements, documentary collections, and paper shredders in the decades of socialism. His claim on former socialist countries is true, albeit distressing: “One of the most important peculiarities of the secretization and secret management concepts and practices of former socialist countries is that the highest levels of professional or workplace secrets one always finds the secretization activity of central state institutions. In this respect the so-called “workplace secrets” are not different from state secrets by their nature – like in western democracies – only in their status. The Romanian legislation and especially the Romanian practice in using these was a model for exemplifying these tendencies. It is widely known that the employees were forced to take mass-oaths enforced by signatures that were only paralleled by Nazi Germany, referring to obligations to keep the confidentiality of workplace secrets understood as state secrets.”¹

Lack and illness – the connections and ontology of the secret and the experience of death

One needs to rethink newer connections of lack and the secret in order to get closer to the thematization of issues treated in Király’s further works. These refer to the illness as the lack of health, and also touch upon the subject of death and the experience of dying.

The entire human existence, the healthy existence in the course of which – as a life history – the illness is defined in Király’s interpretive network as a special possibility of being, or, we could say, not-yet-reality or no-longer-reality. “The possibilities of being and of life [...] – on the basis of, and according to, the physis and the essence, the ousia – are always also articulated by the life history. For all kinds of living beings of nature, as well as for man. The life possibilities of a young, an adult and an aged living being are different. And in what regards the man, who of course interests us the most, it is also clear that – as regards his life history – some of his possibilities become narrower as a tendency, while others become wider or deeper.”²

¹ Ibid., 217, and also István Király V., “Library Secret Fonds and the Competition of Societies”, in *Books, Libraries, Reading & Publishing in the Cold War*, ed. Hermina G. B. Anghelescu and Martine Poulain (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress – The Center for the Book, 2001), 185-192.

² István Király V., *A betegség – az élő létehetősége. – Prolegoména az emberi betegség filozófiájához. Illness – A Possibility of the Living Being. Prolegomena to the Philosophy of*

Király's interpretation of Aristotle is the starting point and basis for the understanding of illness as a possibility. He argues that illness appears as a mode of being of the entirety of human existence which, on the onset of a concrete illness, involves the human being as a whole, not only the part that is ill. An influenza – this is his example – influences the man as a whole, his psychological, mental and physical abilities, in such a way that it deprives him of a normal life conduct, re-organizing the daily routine of the *Dasein* (man), and thus deprives him – producing further *steresis* – of virtually all of his previous life “deprived” of illness. This way, continuing Király's line of argument, the privation caused by illness shows that a given illness may produce further “disorders” and lacks. A physical illness does not only mean physical suffering but “[...] the deficiency or the privation which, as a tendency, addresses and permeates the possibilities and qualities of the sufferer's modes of being in their entirety.”¹

In my opinion the fact that illness is the living being's reality and not only possibility of being can be grasped in the context of realization. For it is in fact the actual, real illness, and not merely its possibility, that induces a change in the quality of being. While Aristotle has already been cited about this problem, it might be helpful to look at Hegel's connected ideas. In analyzing the concept of possibility, in his logic Hegel also refers to the fact that the production of the thing, the something presupposes that all the possible conditions needed for it stand together, and the possibility that what is going to be produced is another thing and not the expected phenomenon is necessarily present all along. In other words, a concrete illness as such is not merely a possibility but an actual condition of being produced or realized as a result of all the necessary conditions fulfilled.

However, if one looks for instance at the problem of possibilities as defined by Béla Hamvas, one may observe that while he does not name the possibilities of being but takes them as being given together² with concrete individual existence that the I does or may achieve, in Király's understanding the illness has a special or privileged position among all other possibilities of being, and as such, it means not merely, or rather not at all, the lack of health, but it belongs to the essence of health. In other words, human *Dasein* cannot be defined without the assumption of illness. But why is that position privileged? – one may rightfully ask. It is a fact that man does not choose or accomplish illness, but it either is or is not, or it exists permanently and leads to finite existence, to death. In this respect it presents itself to us as the world of the “is” not of the “must”. One may also say that illness is not a matter of choice. One may also say that there is no man – or perhaps there is by exception, but not typically – who would normally choose any kind of being ill. In my view this is of the rare “modes” of existential possibilities of being which does not belong to the world of “must”.

Human Illness (Bratislava [Pozsony]: Kalligram, 2011), and “The Meaning of Life and the Possibility of Human Illness,” *Philobiblon – Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Humanities* XVI/2 (2011): 443–480.

¹ *Ibid.*, 80–81.

² “The entire existence is given to us all at once: in its totality, in one time and in one place. But it is not only our existence, but of the entire mankind, of the entire early and history. We don't get our life in instalments, but in one single amount.” Béla Hamvas, *Szellem és egzisztencia* (Spirit and existence) (Pécs: Baranya Megyei Könyvtár, Pannónia könyvek, 1988), 117–118.

Comparing Király's concepts with Béla Hamvas's approach, one finds that Hamvas assumes the triad of logic, morality and aestheticism when explaining human existence in its entirety in a similar manner to the thinkers who create philosophical systems, and he defines the concept of the normal man in this dimension, as he who is "[...] true, alert and healthy alike. The normal man is intact on the level of morals, aesthetic and logic, in body, soul and spirit. The presence of his characteristics and skills is not the disproportion of his corruption (a hump, a demon), but an elementary outburst of the richness of being."¹ The normal man is therefore the personality who possesses as his possibilities all those above – among which health as well.



Teodora Cosman, *Immortality* (diptych)
50cm x 90cm, acrylic, gouache on tissue, 2013

¹ Béla Hamvas, *A láthatatlan történet* (The invisible story) (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1988), 337.

Király's existential interpretation has nothing whatsoever to do with any theoretical background, or any theoretical study of man; he thinks here as well about the *existenziells* of being. An ill person is not simply another person, but the Other, who by its essence can be healthy as well as ill. In Király's fundamental thesis, health is the *steresis* of illness. So he reverses the thesis, illness is not the lack of health, but health is a condition of being 'deprived' of illness.

In the end, let us rethink the interpretation of the ultimate metaphysical fact, *death and the experience of dying*, in Király's concept. He also draws upon the key units of the categorial structure of the factually treated experience of dying which have been and are present in the theoretical and conceptual-linguistic discourse of individual philosophical conceptions. However, he has a particular approach of considering death a phenomenon which is articulated in its facticity and the interpretation of this facticity as a metaphysical "fact". As a result, the connection of *sum-freedom-death* and the experience of dying are the guiding principles through which the unquestionable *sum* triggers new questions for the other two. For anything except the *sum* can become doubtful, as long as there are beings who think and are convinced about their existence. Death belongs to *sum* as its end, which also means the facing of death at the end of the process of life, but does not mean the experience of dying.

Király treats it as natural that the experience and process of dying is in fact the inevitable and necessary cessation of any other possible experience. As an inevitable and necessary experience it has a specifically existential and factual character, and as such, it is understood in his argumentation as a metaphysical factuality. This raises the question whether philosophy or metaphysics are able to offer any certainty at all about the ultimate question, or how can they do that?

Philosophies have always treated the issue of death leaving aside the experience of dying, and offered concepts of death which were necessarily not "universally" valid inasmuch as there is no elaborated concept of death which could be applied for any one concrete case. We can experience death, this is a fact, but we cannot render it into a form that can be communicated. Or rather, we ARE NOT ABLE TO, because it is impossible, or, essentially, when we "can", when we experience it, then we can no longer make it part of human communication, we cannot make up a discourse on that experience. Most importantly, Király refuses any connection with any kind of Absolute, God or Great Spirit "present" in many philosophical systems. He argues that the only certainty is the I and its *Dasein* and freedom. Transcendence finds no place in his thinking in any manner that can be thematized. When he explains the cipher of transcendence based on Jaspers, he does it with the same stance as well. The points of reference between transcendence and the secret are external to his philosophical attitude.

Of Jaspers's philosophy and terminology (e.g. cipher), Király's researches only tend to "absorb" the basic approaches connected to philosophy's *sui generis* existentiality and mission.

Király's basic stance in the interpretation of the fact of death is that it must be one of the tasks of philosophy and metaphysics must be to help the finite, conscious beings called humans to indeed "become mortals" in the *Dasein*. For willingly or "[...] unwillingly, consciously or unconsciously, explicitly or implicitly the human existential

being, the *Dasein* is in fact a kind of being that relates to its own finiteness.”¹ Man is a finite and imperfect being, and he must be made conscious of that, in which philosophy and eminently existential philosophy may have an important role. “[...] philosophy is the only mode (of being) through which we humans can face death, our death and the problem of death with its dead ends, difficulties and weight in the most authentic and responsible – although not comforting – way we can.”²

It is clearly outlined in Király’s writing that death as an experiential fact in his understanding does not belong to the phenomenon of the secret. Or, if one still wants to find some reference points, then it only belongs to the secret in such a way that the one who could keep the secret is no longer in the condition to keep it, his being is a “not-yet-here” being. At the same time, and in agreement with this, should we suppose a mystical experience or refer to the relations of transcendence and the experience of God, then, although the whole issue would appear in a different light, we follow no different way as regards the essence of the experience of dying. Király does not talk about this, since in his understanding death also implies the end of human communication, which means at the same time that he does not claim that communication might have a non-verbal dimension which allows me to contact another, let’s say, transcendental level and be able to receive the “ciphers” of transcendence. However, in his book *Halandóan lakozik...* (Mortally dwells...), he argues for these possibilities on rethinking the problem of immortality. Here is what he writes on this: “[...] the ‘phenomenology’ which thinks about the idea or belief of the ‘immortality of the soul’ in relation to death [...] does not in fact miss the ‘phenomenon of death’, but treats a completely different phenomenon.”³

It is completely indifferent whether or not I believe in the Absolute, God, or transcendence, I still cannot communicate the “full” experience of dying. Let me note just as an additional remark that we also cannot meaningfully communicate on how people born blind can form images for themselves about the surrounding world. This involves the limits of knowledge in a Kantian sense.

In Király’s view it is impossible to write a rounded, complete treatise on death, one should rather cast glimpses on it, follow the references by questioning and re-questioning, since death happens without the experience of dying. That is how his writing is like a circle from the centre of which radius-arrows are thrown to its non-closed outline.

Questions and arguments for the thematization of the experience of death

It comes as a fundamental question therefore why and how philosophy is able to offer evidence on something about which one may only claim to no longer be in that region of experience.

He argues that, since man is a finite being who “possesses consciousness”, he is necessarily aware of his finiteness and by this, of the fact that he is surrounded by a

¹ István Király V., *A halál és a meghalás tapasztalata. Metafizikai és alkalmazott filozófiai odatekintés* (Death and the experience of dying. A metaphysical and applied philosophical regard) (Budapest: Közdok kiadó, Közlekedési Dokumentációs Kft., 2003), 30.

² István Király V., *Halandóan lakozik szabadságában az ember* (Mortally dwells man in his freedom) (Pozsony [Bratislava]: Kalligram, 2007), 26.

³ *Ibid.*, 63.

limitless and infinite world, but this also seems to be a fact just as impossible to experience as the fact of death. In Király's opinion, no metaphysics has ever succeeded in describing this world.¹

From all these, it eventually derives that one can describe both levels, the human and the transcendent world, either by an existent communication network, or search for a conceptual framework appropriate for describing the limitless and the infinite, and thus, the Absolute. At the same time, there is one single point, the *sum [I am]*, that man has clear experience and knowledge of.

He goes on by arguing, on the basis of Descartes's thesis, that everything can become doubtful or questionable in being-here except the *sum*, the I am, and as long as I am, as long as I know I am, as long as I think, I have to know that this *sum* (I) is also finite. This is a *limit*, the limit of my being and my awareness of it, this limit is the final limit of my own death and my own knowledge. And not of the Other. The certainty that death belongs to the *sum*, and it means at the same time the facing of death. This is rationalism so strong that it makes no concession, gives no gap, no little slit for any hope that maybe I will not die completely. Király want to enlighten man with the force of his consciousness, faith is of no interest to him, he makes no concessions or renders no possibilities to the so-called evidential power of faith, which – so we think – could still not be completely left out of human complexity between *sum* and *death*.

Simmel's thoughts are the main basis of dialogue for Király in this respect, one of whose greatest merits in his opinion is that "[...] he admits: the 'problem' of death is not a problem of the relationship of 'life' and 'death', and even less a question of the ('general') 'meaning' of 'life', but death 'belongs to' life, as its end."² He argues that death belongs to the structure of life, when it 'devours' itself, and does not "interfere" with life from outside, but is given a priori. "[...] so, although it is powerful, it does not 'interfere' with life or decides over life as an external force, but it is an act of life in a certain sense, which can be a priori foreseen as certain."³

Man faces death as the factually intranscendable non-being connected to the completeness of (his) being.

Death is very much present in man's being, it cannot be 'misplaced', it is inside being, only that it 'does not show', as Heidegger's 'moon'. Heidegger uses his well-known examples on end- and full being to suggest that death is in fact a phenomenon of life (the moon, the ripening/ripe fruit),⁴ its not-yet belongs to it just as the non visible part of the moon, or the not-yet-ripe part of the fruit belongs to the whole. Linking to Heidegger's concept of phenomenon, Király argues that death first of all pertains to ourselves, it is part of our complete being, but we have no kind of communicable, let alone verifiable knowledge about it. In other words, the Other living individual can never understand either in content and structure, or by emotion and consciousness what death means for the dying man who cannot share his experience. And that is the problem at its core.

¹ Ibid., 35.

² Ibid., 37.

³ Ibid., 85.

⁴ See on this: Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Steibach (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 48§

But could we find some other similar phenomena? Such that the interpretation of which helps give other answers to the question of death, to death as an experience? I think it is perhaps the ‘experience’ of God (of the Absolute) can come close to this, as it repeatedly appeared, for example, with Károly Böhm, Sándor Makkai, Béla Brandenstein, Ákos Pauler or even Béla Hamvas. The experience of God and the faith makes the facticity of death, the interpretation of the experience of death and its specific structure open to empathy, which are also uncommunicatable.

One may refer here briefly to these thinkers’ interpretation of the questions of the experience of the Absolute, of God. Ákos Pauler makes it clear for instance that in his concept of philosophy the *Absolute* is the ultimate prerequisite of anything, and an ultimate presupposition of the categories. Analysing the rules of development in the sense of correlativity, according to which there is no relativity without the absolute, he claims that the condition of any kind of cognition is the presupposition of the Absolute. Any philosophical system must necessarily presuppose the Absolute, whether it is matter, time or God.

Brandenstein equally speaks about the emotional and intellectual sides of *faith*, the sense of god, and the *unmediated* experience of God, where the individually changing certainty of the *intuition* of the existence of God which is very difficult to express by linguistic means appears as an important argument, but the very semantic field of the word *intuition* refers to it to a certain degree, and the individual must experience it for himself in order to understand it. This sense is not identical with the mystical experience of God.

Sándor Makkai on the other hand describes the possibilities to complete the experience of God as the *lack* of infinity and perfection. He calls the religious sense of lack, which can be distinguished from any other kind of lack, the sense of lack for infinity. The soul seeks salvation in this situation, it searches for the way out from this crisis, and this desire for salvation is the essence of the religious experience.

In Makkai’s view, it is *death* that defines and shapes our lives, our essence in this life situation, and the will for life, the will turned into being can be interpreted from the direction of death. The being leading to death, interpreted by Heidegger as well, appears with Makkai as something that irradiates the entire life. In interpreting this, Makkai uses a specific concept: *compressing*, *compression*. It is death that forces compression, guiding life towards the beauties of the soul. The qualities and types of life and the being can be explained from death. Faith and inner strength, the faith in Eternity are the only guiding principles and forces which help dissolve the fear of the unknown, essentially connected to death. Death interweaves life with a multitude of fears, because it refers everywhere to lack, to the lack of infinity and perfection.

Of course, none of these thinkers get any closer or offer a more precise approach to the issues connected to the experience of death by the logical, ontological and epistemological rethinking and analysis of the experience of God and the lack; they only bring other interpretive horizons into discussion.

Király clearly states that the immanent future of our existence is death, and as such, it cannot be understood as pertaining to the sphere of the transcendent, so in this respect the belief in immortality cannot affect the core of the matter. Ultimately, death is the *will be* of “is”.

The next glance in Király's train of thought engages the question whether the particular We-awareness that happens in being-together with the death of the Other may lead to understanding? The problem here for me is that this We-awareness cannot be an experientially understood awareness of being-here, since I do not take part in the Other's experience of death. In Király's understanding, this is the phenomenon of mutilated death, but I do not think it is mutilated except for the non-experiencing I.

Furthermore – Király continues – the experience of death cannot be understood as a liminal situation because we survive liminal situations, therefore it should rather be interpreted as a process which begins with birth. Heidegger's insights in these respects offer fundamental connection in that we live under the threat of death all along our *Dasein*, our being-here, and that is always accompanied by anxiety.

Seen from yet another glance, another question needs to be answered, namely, how does the phenomenon of freedom enter this life of anxieties? Király argues that man must be made aware of the finiteness of life, that is, all reasonable beings must first become mortal in the Heideggerian sense, which, for a conscious being, means at the same time freedom for his ultimate possibility. "For "making possible" death as the finiteness of human life means nothing else than liberation, or being liberated from the ultimate and most certain, yet most indefinite and unsurpassable possibility of his life."¹

In this context being and freedom always shine through each other, and freedom does not mean that there is no more lack of human desires, or that nothing hinders any more the fulfilment of these desires, or it does not mean the liberation from the Other. What Király argues, is in fact that freedom is none other than existence open to being, and as such it is always factual and historical, without which the being-towards-death cannot be understood. Since "[...] human death, as well as "becoming mortal" are equally impossible without freedom."²

To conclude, Király regards the *co-originating*, interconnected system of 'sum', 'death' and 'freedom' as a fundamental metaphysical fact, a system that can only be understood by the exploration of the complicated networks between them.

Translated by Emese Czintos

¹ Király V. István, *A titok és kategoriális szerkezete*, 111.

² *Ibid.*, 119–120.