Reading the Diaspora

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Abstract

This thesis set the goal to contribute to the fields of diaspora studies and cultural studies from a media and communication studies angle by addressing the blank spots 'white minorities' and book use. White diasporas are nearly invisible within academia and very often 'under the radar' in society as well. Books are underresearched within media studies in favour of other media. On the other hand, previous studies on the reception of news, television and social media by ethnically-defined audiences also warned against ethnicity as the only focus of the research, because it possibly essentialises the conclusions and masks the sociocultural division in the audience made up of displaced people.

This thesis explores what role do books play in the everydays of Hungarians in Sweden and how they articulate cultural identities through reading, without overemphasising the Hungarianness if it is not an all-encompassing pattern. In order to answer the research questions, the middle-class Hungarian audience around Lund was chosen as an extreme, theoretical case because of their potential transculturality. 11 women were interviewed, their diaspora settlement varied from ten months to 33 years.

Two reading experiences were identified, an escapist immersive and a more critical. In the acculturation process shared by all women, after moving to Sweden, books are no priority because of practical reasons, but by the time the country becomes the 'here home', the library will be moved to mark the change. This discursive repertoire from the past is partly extended by books in Hungarian, purchased at every visit in the country, that are seen as ordinary media that de-ethnicises the readers. The home media also blends with newly purchased books in Swedish or in English for those arrived 8+ years ago. These are rather seen as unavoidable due to availability reasons than affective. The language of the books is emphasised much more by the Hungarian female readers around Lund than the country of origin of the authors, and thus articulates their language-based cultural identity, that varies from separated to transcultural.

Finally, this thesis places books in the digitalized media environment, and calls for the re-evaluation of the media environments of displaced people.

Keywords: books, audience studies, white minorities, transculturality, cultural identity

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Table of Contents

Introduction

I can't tell what this land could mean for someone else,
for me it is my homeland, a tiny place, up in flames,
it's the ever rocking cradle of childhood memories.
I grew up out of all this, a twig out of the tree,
and I hope it will be this soil where my body returns one day.
I am home here…
/Miklós Radnóti: I can't tell.../

Radnóti[i] wrote his poem *I can't tell* in the grip of the anti-Semitic regulations during Word War II. Most educated Hungarians can recite the first few lines and hold the poem dear. *I can't tell* is not as harsh in its patriotism as the national Romantic poems that now hold statuses as national anthems, but similarly takes up the idea of a lifetime from birth to death in the same country. Home is a given and it is exclusive: this is the dominating sentiment yielded to Hungarians by the canonical literature.

Are books creating imagined communities like the news and television in their golden age or a space for articulating multiple belongings? According to Benedict Anderson's influential theory (1983) books have been part of the birth of the imagined communities, the nations. This idea is still well and alive when we try to understand the media consumption by 'visible' ethnic groups in Europe. However, books are missing from this discourse on diasporic media use, and they are barely investigated within a digitalized media environment either.

There are around 30-40,000 Hungarians living in Sweden according to official estimations (Magyarország Nagykövetsége, 2017). What do they think if they read Radnóti's poem? What do they read? Do they care about the newest fiction arriving to the Hungarian market written by others who also moved abroad?

Thanks to the direct, cheap Wizzair flight between Malmö and Budapest, or Debrecen and Budapest taking only an hour and a half, the immigrant group in Scania is in a potentially mobile position as an audience. Their position is 1,100 km far from the home country, but still on the same continent, within the European Union, using the (workforce) mobility facilitated by free movement within the EU. Their position is also in a host country that encourages multiculturalism, citizenship based on rights and obligations instead of assimilation, and even financially supports heritage protection.

The Hungarians in Sweden constitute a population diverse in age, gender, class, origins and generation, a remarkably complex diaspora with no ready-made identities. During the last century there were at least four events of significance:

As a consequence of the historical border shifting after World War I, there are Hungarian-speaking minority groups of considerable numbers in the surrounding countries, many of them still identify exclusively as Hungarians, and hold double citizenship, or only the citizenship of their country of birth.

After the revolution in 1956 came the first bigger (Magyarország Nagykövetsége, 2017), and arguably still the most influential, Hungarian refugee group into Sweden. They fled the Socialist regime, most of them did not move back after 1989 and do not want to move back, but identify exclusively as Hungarians and look at the home country with nostalgia and through traditions: examples illustrating the diaspora identity.

Another significant wave comprised of Romanian Hungarians fleeing the Ceaușescu regime at the end of the ’80s, and others leaving Vojvodina, the mostly Hungarian-speaking region in what was then Yugoslavia, now Serbia (Magyarország Nagykövetsége, 2017). As a result, other diaspora organisations are dominated by the national identity protection approaches that individuals previously living in minority already practised, but an identity that does not tie itself to a nation state’s frontiers.

The newest wave has been arriving to Scandinavia since 1989, the fall of the Soviet Block. In even higher numbers after 2003, when Hungary joined the European Union, educated doctors, engineers and skilled workers among others arrived looking for jobs (Magyarország Nagykövetsége, 2017). This wave could best be described as workforce mobility. The children often spend summers in the home country with grandparents, and if the families can afford it, they still have their flat or house in Hungary.

Midst this diversity, the local diaspora organization in Lund – Lundi Magyar Kultúrfórum (LMKF) or Hungarian Cultural Forum in Lund – not only proclaims itself to be cultural, suggesting an educated, middle-class membership, but also admits to be picky with the performers it chooses from the offers of the country-wide umbrella organisation, as members of the management have quite different tastes from the retro discos organised in Malmö, to name but one example. The LMKF finds that the old-school touring of prominent actors or

musicians by invitation is losing significance when it is so easy to travel home for the premiere of a theatre play. The Forum also turns to the younger generations, addressing the teenagers and attempting to speak their language as well (Lundi Magyar Kultúrfórum, 2017). The organisation in Lund is quite alone in its direction among the Hungarian organisations in Sweden, but is seen as progressive by many of its members.

Readers centred around Lund who arrived in the newest wave of migration were then chosen as an extreme example, because an atypical case study could shed more light on a potential underlying paradigm change by illuminating the processes through its extremity (Flyvbjerg, 2001:78-79). What can the distinct Hungarian community in Lund show about the role of books for cultural identity? The quest is worthy of attention now, when multiculturalism is losing its momentum and displaced groups, their assimilation and media use are providing apropos of debates once more. In 2015, Hungary was the guest of the book fair in Gothenburg, and far from the opening being a neutral event, the book fair served as an opportunity for debates around the Hungarian government's actions, and not even their cultural policy. Another example of the often forgotten heat around books was the media coverage in the Swedish outlets of the Nobel Prize laureate Imre Kertész's[ii] death that once more was connected to the Hungarian government's actions. Books in the Hungarian diaspora in Sweden are readily politicised. Carefully conceptualised research can contribute to demystifying the often one-sided image of displaced people moved as puppets by their home country and the home media.

Based on the literature review presented in the first chapter, it seems that the field lacks the meticulous work needed to see the shades and details. Books explored from a media approach, and books in the diaspora are not researched enough to form an academic discourse within which differences or similarities between different waves of migration and ethnicities could be spotted. I, as a researcher, have to step back, and investigate the articulation of identity through cultural consumption in the diaspora first. How do they read, are the grassroots characteristics of diasporas brought into play? Or the more hierarchical top-down structures of the diaspora organisations? Are transcultural practices followed?

This thesis sets as a goal to illuminate the role of books as mobile media within the wider media environment of displaced people. Further, the research aims to shed light on how displaced people make sense not of certain texts but of reading itself, from a contemporary

point of view, as a complementation to classic explorations like Radway's influential study (1984).

Research questions:
Q1: What role do books play in the everyday lives of Hungarians in Sweden?
Q2: How do they articulate cultural identities through reading?

After the literature review that takes its departure from the expansion of diaspora as a working tool for social and cultural sciences during the 1990s and maps the existing research at the intersection of diaspora studies and audience studies, the second chapter self-reflexively and transparently looks at the research design and process. It considers the influences of recent ethnographic tendencies for audience studies and specifically for this research.

Finally, the analysis will lead through the rite of passage of moving countries and moving the library, and its implications for cultural identity. The six themes that emerged during the thematic coding will be investigated in order to answer the research questions.

Mapping the field

From diaspora through transnationalism to transculturality

Postcolonial diasporas

In the 1990s, several social scientist schools were attempting coming to terms with the widening concept of diaspora in a globalising world of migration. Robin Cohen (1997) aimed to react to the different theories across time and across scientific disciplines and highlighted the word's imperial Greek origins (Cohen, 1997:ix), associated with migration but also colonisation. More influential than the Greek had been the Jewish historical scattering that several diaspora theories took as an orientation point.

Clifford (1994), in a similar attempt to solve the expansion and thus the instability of the definition, tried to outline the 'borders' of diaspora as a concept, but needed to settle for a 'loosely coherent, adaptive constellation' (Clifford, 1994:310). He proposed that loss is not definitive for all diasporas, and trauma needs to be looked at in its dynamic connection to survival:

> We should be able to recognize the strong entailment of Jewish history on the language of diaspora without making that history a definitive model. Jewish (and Greek and Armenian)

> diasporas can be taken as nonnormative (sic!) starting points for a discourse that is traveling or hybridizing in new global conditions. (Clifford, 1994:306)

Postcolonialist, postmodernist cultural scholars including Hall, Gilroy, Bhabha and Bauman argued for a paradigm change in the research of diasporas and ethnic cultures, and this thesis argues that they *happened to* analyse Caribbean, Indian, Palestinian, or Black communities because of their personal positions, but their research problems and the framework created by them can be applied to other diasporas as well.

Hall (1990:235) positioned his postmodern paradigm against the Jewish diaspora, but also incorporated trauma into the hybridization of cultural identities (Hall, 1992:310). It is partly the Jewish and Armenian scattering's influence on academic discourses why Hall (1996) stressed that origin and history are not eternal determining forces, consistently throughout his life work:

> Though they seem to invoke an origin in a historical past with which they continue to correspond, actually identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from', so much as what we might become... (Hall, 1996:4).

Hall (1992:277) called the formation that is never ready and does not have a core the 'postmodern subject'. It is 'increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions' (Hall, 1996:4). This description is applicable to any person, subculture and nation in modern times, even without a history of movement. Nations have their imagined and represented histories, narratives in the form of art, literature, symbols, holidays and ceremonies that retell the stories of constructed antiquity and mythology (Hall, 1992:294).

Nevertheless, Hall's theory of identity, in which national identity is but one of the plural cultural identities, might seem more easily applicable in order to explain displaced people. In their hybridization they are caught up between determining powers of nation states, none of which truly feel like home anymore, and everyday life has its integrating, acculturating influences, resulting in multiple belongings. On the contrary, ethnic groups whose nation state is not a future project, like Hungarians, the fact that '[c]ultural identity … belongs to the future as much as to the past' (Hall, 1990:225) seems less evident, but when they identify exclusively as Hungarians in second and third generations, it is part of the never finished project of 'what we might become' (Hall, 1996:4).

The latest wave of migration of Hungarians shares a voluntary migration history that very often stems from a dissatisfaction to a certain degree with the country of origin – this willingness of migration and mobility opens up possibilities for voluntary and reflexive hybridization.

Cultural studies often describe diasporas as 'discursive' (Hall, 1996:2), narrative, formulated and articulated through representation. Several concepts were proposed and applied to dislocated people within social sciences: changing same (Gilroy, 1991; Gilroy, 1993), routes and roots (Gilroy, 1995), hybridity (Hall, 1992), translation (Rushdie, 1982; Hall, 1990; Hall, 1992), traveling cultures (Clifford, 1994), primordial loyalties and standing entities (Geertz, 1994), some of which gained more recognition than others.

'Identifications not identities, acts of relationship rather than pre-given forms: this tradition is a network of partially connected histories, a persistently displaced and reinvented time/space of crossings.' (Clifford, 1994:321) This paraphrasing of Gilroy by Clifford could be the motto for diasporic audience research that is still outweighed by the Jewish model's heritage. Kevin Smets (2013:104) listed Cohen, Gilroy, Hall, Clifford and Vertovec as the scholars theorising diaspora during the 1990s for cultural and media studies up to this day.

The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham, where Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy worked for shorter or longer periods, combined the anthropological and the humanities meaning of culture to create cultural theory, the very interdisciplinary field that ventured into popular culture. Thanks to Hall's analyses on films and representation (e.g. 1990), and Gilroy's on Black popular music (e.g. 1999) theorisations of diaspora within cultural studies have their roots in a postcolonial, postmodern angle. Research still proliferates on the media use of Black, Indian, Arabic and Turkish settlements in Europe (e.g. Gillespie, 2000; Aksoy and Robins, 2000; Smets, 2013; Vandevelde et al., 2015).

Georgiou (2006:14), who contributed to the understanding of how identities and media use are negotiated in the everydays with several researches among Cypriot, Greek and Arabic audiences mainly in Europe, stated that '*[w]hite* minorities are understudied.' Not only in the narrower field of media studies, but also in theories of race and ethnicity, because of their relative invisibility. Whiteness for the diasporic audience can be a source of creative hybridization, in which the displaced person passes for the ethnicity of the host country, and might experience less pressure to assimilate.

Transnationalism: a new paradigm?

The struggle with definitions was not sorted out during the 1990s, but persists in the new century, with further diversification. The concepts are as much not clear that Faist and Bauböck decided to dedicate to the discussion a multidisciplinary volume – in an attempt to solve the tensions between diaspora and transnationalism, 'the awkward dance partners' that 'are sometimes used interchangeably' (Faist, 2010:9).

Transnationalism at a first glimpse seems to be a much clearer term than diaspora. It describes 'migrants' durable ties across countries – and, more widely, captures not only communities, but all sorts of social formations, such as transnationally active networks, groups and organisations' (ibid:9).

Nonetheless, while in newer definitions of diaspora, dense connections to the homeland are incorporated, and even the dichotomy of homeland and settlement is completed with onward migration (ibid:12-13); contemporary uses of transnationalism also refer to immigrants besides migrant entrepreneurs and organisations. On the other hand, this convergence of the two concepts, albeit convenient, might be misleading, because 'immigrants always kept in touch with their motherlands', even before the Internet (Bradatan, Melton and Popan, 2010:4). It is also important to note that 'transnationalism' was coined in the same decade, as an answer to a very similar quest to that of the postmodernist cultural scholars: to acknowledge the agency of under-represented groups.

Vertovec (2001:578), applying the concept to immigrants, combined transnationalism with identity because transnational networks oftentimes are based on the perception of something common. The 'here and there' of their multiple places of significance result in multiple frames of 'racialised socio-economic hierarchies.' 'Each habitat or locality represents a range of identity-conditioning factors,' and the 'experiences gathered in these multiple habitats accumulate to comprise people's cultural repertoires' (Vertovec, 2001:578). Ultimately, he agrees with Robins and Aksoy, and Cağlar that transnationalism is a facilitator to 'unfix identities', 'particularly nation-derived ones – and arriv[e] at new, cosmopolitan perspectives on culture and belonging' (Vertovec, 2001:580).

Following Vertovec, Bradatan, Melton and Popan (2011) theorised transnationalism as a social identity. 'A transnational would interact in one way with the fellows from his/her origin country while s/he would use a different set of rules and behaviors when interacting with the

host country's natives, as a way to respond to different expectations' (Bradatan, Melton and Popan, 2010:11). Transnational as an identity then is more than an expansion of the national frame or the multiplication of it: nationality is 'discontinuous in one's everyday experience. Through this lens, being "transnational" makes more sense, as one can experience two different national identities in various interactional settings.' (Bradatan, Melton and Popan, 2010:11)

This performative identity definition is very close to the fragmented understanding of cultural identity without a fixed core by Hall (1992:277). It is not enough to extend nationalities but one needs to be 'translated' (Rushdie, 1983), or, hybridized in order to perform this switch between locally defined social worlds without being perceived as the Other.

Transnationalism travelled a somewhat similar journey within audience studies as in social theory: first it was used to refer to the border-crossing of the structural, the media, and this meaning is reflected in cross-national, comparative reception studies of widely distributed media, such as the reception of Dallas (Liebes and Katz, 1990), or the reception of national media outside the borders, even if in diaspora (Gillespie, 2000). Only more recently has the focus turned to the audience from the media, and the multiplicity element gotten attributed to their choices (Georgiou, 2006; Guedes Bailey, 2007).

Madianou (2011:455) proposed 'transnational' as a more diffused term for ethnicity-based audience research to avoid the closed connotations of 'diaspora', just as the audience research she proposed focused on the more open working concept of culture to avoid the essentialism in race and ethnicity. However, transnationalism for Aksoy and Robins (2000:345) and Myria Georgiou (2007:19; 2006:4) is not a move away from diaspora, but a distantiation from nation states. In her research on the media use among Greek Cypriots in London and New York, Georgiou (2006:81) focused instead on the city that is seen as a multicultural place in itself, creating networks.

Smets (2013:104), in his turn, seven years later, wrote that the deconstruction of the national had already happened in favour of complexities unearthed by a transnational or cosmopolitan approach in the development of diasporic audience studies during the previous decade. But in order to fully leave the restrictive and bias-inducing frame of the nation, the research should leave transnationalism and the still influential concept of imagined communities. Even in studies that are arguing against the nation as the unit of the research, the concept of 'imagined

communities' (Anderson, 1983) is utilised through innovations such as '(re-)imagined communities' (Georgiou, 2007:29), 'diasporic imagined communities' (Georgiou, 2006:155), 'hybrid imagined community' (Georgiou, 2006:21); or referenced in its original form (Guedes Bailey, 2007:223; Budarick, 2011).

Transculturality

Based on the hybridity and seamless switch element in the identity that Bradatan, Melton and Popan (2010:11) theorised as 'trans', and Hall's framework (1992:274) that highlighted the cultural side of nationality, this thesis will use the concept of transculturality (Hepp, 2009).

Although the proposed concept is based on transnationalism, the -ity ending is used to acknowledge Faist's critique (2010:11) that it is not an ideology. The other reason for the choice of wording is Hepp's (2009:2) proposal for a comparative media research perspective and Couldry and Hepp's (2017:36) transcultural perspective on socially embedded mediatization. A widened development of their concept will be applied for the research of a culturally distinct audience that does not necessarily maintain 'durable ties across countries' (Faist, 2010:9) in the meaning of 'racialised socio-economic hierarchies' (Vertovec, 2001:578). Transculturality, then, does not need to involve the transgression of borders as transnational entrepreneurs and organisations do, but rather symbolic – imagined – boundaries of culture, that very often are connected to nation states as source territories. 'People move between broadcasting systems as they do between languages' (Madianou, 2005:523), or, 'travel imaginatively in this mental space' (Robins and Aksoy, 2001:698).

Transcultural migrants as an audience live in a complex media environment originating from and informed by several cultures, countries where they had lived, but also where they might have not – e.g. in the case of Hollywood films. They are acquainted with the codes, symbols, myths of more than one culture, regardless of the level of their identification with these cultures, just like transnational migrants, who might not feel at home in their host countries, nor in their home countries but use the two countries' media (Georgiou, 2006:87).

This flexibility element is seen by Georgiou (2013:91) as 'mobility between media, ideological and linguistic environments', or, 'media nomadism'. Transculturality is fruitful for research according to Hepp (2009:4), because 'all media cultures had been more or less hybrid, had to translate, change their identities and so on.' This approach is proposed to leave behind the essentialising bias that national frames of reference often result in. This paradigm

shift from a national frame to a cultural one is increasingly important for Hungarians, as due to historical border shifting, Hungarians have arrived to Sweden from various nation states where they had lived in minority, and might not hold Hungarian citizenship, thus, nationality is not that evident as their identification.

Ethnic audience sitting in front of the TV or the silver screen

Harindranath (2000:161) called for the re-evaluation of the ready-made ethnic and racial working concepts, for a more detailed theoretical framework paying attention to the actual frames of reference of the audience. Based on Beck's (2007) warning of methodological nationalism, Madianou (2011:451) highlighted how important it is to conceptualise identity and culture in research, either by seeing ethnicity through social relations, or by focusing on the performative and discursive character of identities and groups.

There are a lot of differences, sometimes even divides, when it comes to these audiences, reflected in their media use: waves of migration (Sreberny, 2000), generation (Georgiou, 2006; Guedes Bailey, 2007:223; Smets, 2013; Smets et al., 2013; Noorda, 2017), age (Georgiou, 2006, 2013), gender (Sreberny, 2000; Madianou, 2005; Guedes Bailey, 2007:223; Georgiou, 2006, 2012), class (Georgiou, 2006), language knowledge (Madianou, 2005; Dali, 2013; Hosoya-Neale, 2016), and also taste (Dali, 2012; Quirke, 2014). Vandevelde et al. (2015:102) went as far as to state that the 'centrality of ethnic identity for diasporic' audiences needs to be questioned, or even 'downplay[ed]'.

This echoes the issues Hall (1992), Clifford (1994) and Gilroy (1999) had already highlighted two decades earlier, namely that the home country is not the unitary definition of displaced groups and their cultures; who would be constantly waiting for return, turning against their host countries in their media use (Georgiou, 2013:80). One example going against this traditional view was Budarick's research (2011) among Iranian Australians who mostly felt belonging in Australia, even if they did not '*feel at home*' (Budarick, 2011:13), or viewed Iran as their homes, too. The findings showed that they did not use Iranian media to sustain a connection with that home (Budarick, 2011:7).

Furthermore, the ethnic media use might be actually de-ethnicising from the point of view of the audience because it is the home media that does not position them as migrants or Others, rather it is ordinary media culture for them (Aksoy and Robins, 2000; Madianou, 2005). But

transcultural media use is also more layered than 'simply taking its audiences "home"' (Aksoy and Robins, 2000:355). Even more so because most often there are two homes (Georgiou, 2006:6). Migrants might claim that they 'are in the middle' (Madianou, 2005:234), and feel double detachment (Georgiou, 2006:61;86-87; Aksoy and Robins, 2000:363) even as voluntary migrants, such as the newest wave of Hungarians. Previous research unearthed a more complex articulation of multiple belongings. Ang's findings (2001) showed that identity affirmations do not 'privilege neither host country nor (real or imaginary) homeland, but precisely keep a creative tension between "where you are from" and "where you are at"' (Ang, 2001:35).

Homeland media helps to keep track of the political life at home (Georgiou, 2006:111) and together with media produced in the diaspora can serve nostalgic desires (Guedes Bailey, 2007:223), very often most characteristic for middle-aged, first generation immigrating men who might attempt to 're-cover' their exclusivist identities in their new countries, in the home sphere and community centres (Georgiou, 2006:109) and keep it separated from the public sphere (Sreberny, 2000:194) forming a resistance against the new country. The source of nostalgia is not necessarily a longing for the country left behind as they used to know it, but for the security its stable and evident position provided before the journey (Georgiou, 2006:87). Nostalgia is a desire to 'revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition' (Boym, 2007:8).

In other ethnic formations, however, sports, films and format programming were the most popular (Madianou, 2005). Host country or international media then enters their mediatized transnational space when the available media in the native language does not cater to other tastes and interests: soap operas, blockbuster films, TV formats, women's and entertaining magazines are sought out by socially defined parts of the audience (Guedes Bailey, 2007). Women, middle-class immigrants, LGBTQ people or those pursuing non-traditional lifestyles then are resisting their origin culture (Georgiou, 2006:67). The 'creative tension' (Guedes Bailey, 2007:226) in the media use is then characterised by reflexive (Georgiou, 2006:132), critical thinking, a distantiation from both media spheres (Aksoy and Robins, 2000:363), and individualism (Georgiou, 2013:90). This reflexivity, and symbolic project of self (Madianou, 2011:449) is as rooted in the banalities of the everydays as it is informed by the 'personal front' of the self (Goffman, 1959:67).

Everyday viewers

Most research so far has been interested in news (Budarick, 2011; Madianou, 2005), and television (Gillespie, 1995; Aksoy and Robins, 2000; Georgiou, 2012) because these media are more directly connected to the nation state. There is also an abundance of research on phone (Benítez, 2006; Lopez, 2017), Internet (Benítez, 2006; Georgiou, 2013), and social media use (Godin and Doná, 2016; Dhoest and Szulc, 2016; Imani Giglou, d'Haenens and Ogan, 2017; Hossein and Veenstra, 2017), because these media are seen as providing more democratic access that facilitates keeping contact with those left home, and thus new media is seen as giving the diaspora audience a sense of control over media (Georgiou, 2013:92). Very few researches looked at the media environment in its entirety, with the notable exception of Guedes Bailey's (2007) exhaustive investigation of the lives of Latinos/as in the United Kingdom, taking into account CDs, music, dance classes, radio among other media.

Television is very often not actively forming national sentiments, rather it is on in the background (Madianou, 2005:530); an apropos and centre of social life either in the home or in ethnic cafés and community centres (Georgiou, 2006:109). Identities are lived in the everydays, but this very banality of the media-saturated environment and routine-like circumstances is what makes the media use contradictory (ibid:52), like the identity formation that is informed by the struggle, co-existence (ibid:59) and juggling (ibid:109) of the migrant life. Even though no one can consume media all alone, nor avoid the conversations surrounding it (ibid:82), the deterritorialised character of the imaginary, virtual spaces that media create (Madianou, 2005:535) are mental spaces rather than a transnational travel (Robins and Aksoy, 2001:705).

Closer to books stand the readings of films and cinema-going (Smets, 2013; Smets et al., 2013; Vandevelde et al., 2015), that can turn into public family events (Smets, 2013:107). According to Vandevelde et al.'s (2015:101-102) findings, they create bubbles of interpretation afterwards, in which the film-viewing itself does not connect the local diaspora together permanently, nor the ethnic audience with the other parts of the audience sitting in the multiplex cinema. Instead, the moving pictures are interpreted between parties mutually interested, from the home country or from another diasporic community, at the intersection of fan activities and diasporic communication networks. Likewise, the connections on facebook are also useful when it comes to choosing which film to watch. Reviews in media outlets are

also consulted beforehand, thus a media environment surrounds the film-viewing (ibid.:100). Cinema-going is 'not an exclusivist expression of diasporic identity, but an assertion of the multifaceted sociocultural identities of their audiences.' (Smets, 2013:108) To articulate belonging by watching films from the home country is very often limited by the availability of such films; and the social practice of cinema-going as families and community is disrupted by issues of 'convenience' and 'conformism' to Western habits, i.e. withdrawal from loud commenting, laughing, and dancing. This leads to a decrease in deterritorialisation (Vandevelde et al., 2015:101-102).

Additionally, sometimes exactly because of the (un)availability of ethnic films (Vandevelde et al., 2015:95), 'diasporic media cultures are often interlaced or sidelined by the ordinariness and wide circulation of more mainstream media industries, particularly Hollywood' (Smets, 2013:108), the equivalent of this in literature is probably the canon of world literature, and international bestsellers in more entertaining genres. The viewers are more dispersed and can be better analysed through social categories than solely by ethnic ones, and Smets urges to embrace the distinctness (2013:108) of what can be seen as diffused audiences (Abercrombie and Longhurst, 1998:68-69).

Films are also seen as 'sources for cultural knowledge' (Smets et al., 2013:127), another trait that is mostly attributed to books (Dali, 2012:270). The connection between films and books was vocalised by a Turkish cinema-goer, to the degree, at least, that both media help language acquisition of the host or home culture (Smets et al., 2013:127). Research among Australian Hungarians states that they are 'language-centred — that is, they consider their mother tongue to be one of their core values' (Andits, 2017:361), a tool of symbolic, instead of, or even against, practical survival. Thus, it is not only the author or the original language of the books that plays a role for cultural identity, but any translated book can also serve maintenance purposes.

'Bookish' audiences

Books are less bound to time and space than the consumption of print media and cinema (bound to space), radio and television (bound to time) are; books are mobile media. Reading books thus potentially yields more sense of freedom. It is also more directly discursive than audiovisual media.

> Readers treat books not only as sources of information but also as guides and friends that present role models; give courage to make a change; help in problem solving; and provide comfort, a sense of belonging, and a much deeper understanding of the world. Books and reading are vital coping tools of choice for many people, particularly significant at turning points (Dali, 2012:261).

Although reading is most often perceived as a solitary act (Burwell, 2007:284), it is still at the intersection of the private sphere and the public, a key point in transnational audience research (Smets, 2013:107), interested in how media 'provid[e] touchstones, references, for the conduct of everyday life' (Silverstone, 1999:6).

Reading is thus a complex, maybe even ambiguous mix of mobilities and fixities. Books have a social side, providing opportunities for interaction and engagement as well, and with the spread of e-books and audio books, at least the possibility of the same distant consumption appeared as for films and news, thanks to the consumption-changing effect of digitalization (Couldry and Hepp, 2017:40).

Books are a part of

> *the narrative of the nation,* [that] is told and retold in national histories, literatures, the media, and popular culture. These provide a set of stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols, and rituals which stand for, or *represent*, the shared experiences, sorrows, and triumphs and disasters which give meaning to the nation (Hall, 1992:293).

Books do not need to be part of the literature critic's canon to tell the national narrative, and they definitely do not need to be non-fiction to do so. As the rather few studies made on the cultural identity's role in book consumption in the diaspora showed, entertaining historical fiction and romance can be preferred for heritage protection (Noorda, 2017), and classical works can join recent novels on bookshelves, and travel between continents in suitcases (Dali, 2012).

As Noorda (2017) explored, books have been there at the birth of nations thanks to the invention of the printing press that according to modernist scholars like McLuhan and Anderson was a prerequisite to nation-building. Noorda (2017:1) also referred to the postmodernist argument that books as commodities create their own cultures, to highlight the consumer choices that signify belonging to subcultures and social groups (ibid:3-4).

Benedict Anderson (1983) incorporated the modern novel in his theory as media that supported the creation of imagined communities of nation states. On the other hand, the simultaneity of reading was crucial in Anderson's theory for creating the imagined national communities of reading audiences, while the simultaneity for books nowadays cannot be

taken for granted by any means, neither that the audience would read the same books at all when even national cultures are increasingly pluralistic. De Certeau (1984) reflected on the traditional Book, religious for many societies, and the loss of its significance. 'It is no longer a referential book, but a whole society made into a book' (de Certeau, 1984:xxii).

Although my researched group probably read the same novels and poems in elementary and high school as an obligatory part of their education, thus there is overlapping in their reading inventories, probably it is less so in their contemporary leisure reading. Instead of a nationally shared corpus of novels, 'in the current convergence culture, book consumption is more than the solitary practice of reading a paper book' (Dörrich, 2014:4), rather constituting a part of multimedia repertoires that include film adaptations, publisher's and author's websites, e-books or audio books (ibid:50). These provide dozens of possibilities to transgress borders, both those of home and of host country.

This thesis refers to 'bookish' audiences and 'bookish' communicative networks in order to refer to reading and to books at the same time, unlike readers as audiences that would prioritise the intellectual activity. Books are not only about reading, they serve as gifts, and taste markers in public, and a well-equipped bookshelf as a status symbol and cultural capital (Griswold, Lenaghan and Naffziger, 2011:26; 32) can become significant when a migrant is building up a social status again, in a new country. What the sociology of reading does not cover, on the other hand, is the individual experiences while consuming letter after letter, page after page.

Literature critique and theory, in their turn, often dismiss the materiality of reading for the sake of imagined, sacred aesthetics, or, 'for literary theorists both the text and the reader are abstractions' (Littau, 2006:2). Littau thus put aside Barthes among others, although Barthes's (1968) claim that the author is dead and the reader does the interpretation work was an early literary predecessor to hypertexts that do not exist without the reader's productive interaction with them.

In Barthes's theory, the work can be closed between the covers of a book. The 'Text', on the other hand, is open, and its reading is an unfolding of infinite meaning (Barthes, 1971). Different elements in literature history can contain work and Text to different levels, but the Text is also '*experienced only in an activity of production*' (Barthes, 1971:157), thus, it is a

field of meaning-making of the sign. The work instead is closed around the *signified*, and its reading is a pleasurable consumption (ibid:163).

According to Littau (2006:6), a media history perspective is missing from the study of literature, that is excluded from mass media studies because literature is seen as too highbrow. She claimed that 'texts also act on readers' (2006:134), but from this point of departure opposed Radway's work (1984) on the female audience of serialised romance novels. Littau (2006:133) found that audience studies, Radway's work included, attribute too much agency to the audiences, while 'losing oneself in a book' is a 'loss of self', a switching off of critique.

Nonetheless, Radway's study (1984:20) had contributed to filling in the gap that also Littau identified. Radway presented an audience-centred approach to literature that takes into consideration the economic, social, and industrial factors leading to extensive novel reading, and the sense-making of romance readers without patronising them for reading misogynistic texts.

Ritual reception

Readers as audiences have been investigated even less from the perspective of ethnicities or cultural identities, despite this angle revealing more nuanced attitudes than 'more utilitarian variables, such as English-language proficiency, the reading of newspapers, or information-consumption patterns' (Dali, 2012:262). Hosoya-Neale (2016) researched the library use of Japanese women in New Zealand in connection to their family dynamics. The politics of reception of the orientalised Other's texts within white women's book clubs (Burwell, 2007), and Benwell's (2009) ethnographic study on book clubs discussing racism in novels, further, the sense-making of Black women readers (Bobo, 1995) have highlighted the embodied reader and the importance of marketing and distribution for reception. Or, 'texts do not read themselves, readers do, and [...] audiences do so at a specific intellectual moment.' (Allen, 2001:198) Dali (2012) stated that:

> [T]he issue of the role of books in the lives of immigrant readers has escaped the attention of reading researchers in the two largest immigrant-receiving countries, Canada and the United States. … No data are available about what kinds of books immigrants read, how many, how frequently, and in what language (Dali, 2012:261-262).

Therefore, Dali (2012) conducted research among ex-Soviet émigrés in Canada, from a library and information science angle. In the other single example of research shedding light on the issue, arriving from a publishing research background, Rachel Noorda (2017)

interviewed chairs of Scottish heritage organisations, thus both were conducted outside media studies. Both Noorda's (2017) and Dali's (2012) research illustrated the connection of conscious and unconscious identity-maintenance to reading.

Noorda (2017:4; 9), however, introduced a choice element to ethnic identities in diasporas, relying on Maffesoli's postmodern theory of neo-tribes. In Noorda's argument, elective consumption influences a purposeful decision on which ethnic heritage to identify with. Identity theories such as Goffman's (1959) performativity contrast such a view, because they presuppose a core underlying the behaviour that the 'I' cannot decide on.

Dali (2012:263) was interested in reading habits adding a psychological aspect, assuming that books can be key as 'doctors' as well, providing remedy and entertainment during the difficult acculturation period, when home sphere and public sphere are separated in terms of media use as well. The former is often kept for the familiar, for the home media (ibid:263-264), in order to psychologically comfort the migrant. Reading favourite books again can especially provide this reaffirmation. From the host media's side, however, reading as language acquisition also inscribes cultural codes, for example illustrates success stories and cultural patterns that in the reflexive media use of transcultural migrants is verbally articulated. Thus, fiction and even speculative genres were grasped in their depiction of the American dream or child education by the interviewees in their meaning-making (ibid:270-271).

Dali's research (2012:269-270) highlighted the home as the sphere of reading, while Noorda (2017) focused more on reading as heritage protection, as mainly a social activity. Both research relied on interviews to get access to identities and motivations behind reading habits; but while Noorda (2017:4) approached the ethnic media use, and its significance for identity maintenance exclusively, Dali (2012) looked at the acculturation period and so looked at the reading habits in their complexity and their role in the everydays, including books from both countries.

Turning towards research

With ethnicity as its point of departure, diasporic audience research oftentimes reaches the only conclusion that the audience is socially divided, and their media use alike (Benítez, 2006; Vandevelde et al., 2015). Critical research, however, needs to reach beyond and investigate how displaced people make meaning of diverse media (Aksoy and Robins, 2000),

how do their identities motivate their media use and are reaffirmed by it (Guedes Bailey, 2007), and further address the reasons behind it (Sreberny, 2000; Madianou, 2005; Georgiou, 2006).

To avoid methodological nationalism, it is important to conceptualise identity and culture in the research, by listening to the narratives of individuals and groups (Madianou, 2011:451). Mapping the field, a media studies perspective is missing from the study of literature, as it has been studied from the perspectives of literature theory, history of books, sociology of reading, library and information science and publishing. Audience-focused research assigning agency and gaining standpoint is rare, with the notable exceptions of Radway (1984) and Bobo (1995) providing examples in the last century. It is time to re-investigate the role of reading and the embodied reader in a digitalized media environment.

Reflections on the research design and process

In order to grasp the richness and ambiguity of the everydays, for the collection of empirical material a qualitative approach was chosen. For a case study that does not yield predictive results, qualitative research methods can provide the context needed for gaining standpoint (Harding, 2008:120), before 'studying up' (Harding, 2008:108). Like Harding, Flyvbjerg (2001:30, 63) also argued that narrative case studies are needed in social sciences that should not aim at producing predictive science.

'Exploring media among diasporas makes audiences "visible"' (Livingstone, 1998:250, cited in Smets, 2013:106), because it sheds light on 'media cultures that are marginalized, under the radar, structurally informal or pirated' (Smets, 2013:106). Qualitative interviewing, both individual (Noorda, 2017) and in focus groups (Georgiou, 2013) has been a popular choice in diasporic audience studies combined with media ethnographic methods in longer term research (Deger, 2011; Gillespie, 1995; on the rise of media ethnography in audience studies, see Smets, 2013) because of their bottom-up approach, comparable to the grassroots community-building in diasporas. Nonetheless, examples of more statistical approaches also exist (e.g. Ahmed and Veronis, 2016).

In the research design, in order to avoid essential definitions, and answer Madianou's call (2011:451) to conceptualise identity and culture, I approached the Hungarian cultural identity as a matrix of place, folk traditions, habits, values, food, history, art and language, in which

not two individuals connect the same dots. This methodology draws on social or mediated constructionism following Hacking (1999), Burr (2003) and Couldry and Hepp (2017).

Social constructionism

> invites us to be critical of the idea that our observations of the world unproblematically yield its nature to us, to challenge the view that conventional knowledge is based upon objective, unbiased observation of the world (Burr, 2003:3).

It was used as a methodology 'to distinguish ideas from objects' (Hacking, 1999:28) and understand 'the social world as *fundamentally interwoven with media*' (Couldry and Hepp, 2017:16).

A deessentialising strategy highlighted by Madianou is to focus on people's own narration, re-narration and negotiation (Madianou 2011:451). Stuart Hall's (1992:277) essay *The Question of Cultural Identity* similarly described 'the post-modern subject' as a discursive entity. Both arguments support interviews as a suitable method for researching identities. Preparing the interview guide, I paid attention to avoid phrases such as nation, Hungarian culture, Swedes, ethnicity and identity (Byrne, 2012:220), not to 'construct' what I claim to 'describe' (Gray, 2003:18), although the interview is unavoidably a 'socially constructed encounter' (ibid:99). At the same time, I kept in mind that 'diasporic audiences might still essentialize/ethnicize themselves in a process of differentiation. Also, even if ethnicization is a social construct, it can still have material and social effects on those groups.' (Smets, 2013:108)

Nevertheless, to fit the open-ended 'articulation of a matrix of geographical, cultural, and historical elements that inform diasporic identity' (Georgiou, 2013:84), language-defined culture was deemed to be an apt angle to research this group and thus spoken language formed the basis of recruitment providing more neutrality (ibid:88).

For the investigation of the ongoing acculturation and negotiation process in the latest migration wave, first-generation immigrants living in the diaspora for 2-10 years seemed like the richest case, however, the whole research design was assembled in the spirit of 'planned flexibility' (Bazeley, 2013:33). Regarding years of settlement it would be hard to draw a clear line at the end of acculturation, as Dali's results showed:

> Not for everyone is the most troubled psychological period limited to the first two or three years after immigration. In fact, some people drown in nostalgia and depression many years

> after the actual move, when the personal and professional routine is, by and large, stabilized and when there is no longer the need to fight for survival on a daily basis. (Dali, 2012:268)

A sample of connected, but lonely readers

I recruited by snowball sampling (Byrne, 2012:218) to get an insight into the social side of reading, based on my already existing contacts in the field. I have previously done research in the same community (Orbán, 2017b), and as part of that have both conducted participant observation and participated for my own pleasure in events organised by the LMKF. This previous experience, together with my position as an expatriate Hungarian unavoidably influenced this research but also offered me the opportunity to be accepted as *one of them*, one they trust enough to talk with about the struggles of in-betweenness.

I recruited my pilot and a further initial interviewee through attending a board game night. My main point of entrance to the field and interviewees was through the chair of LMKF with whom I have established an informal relationship during previous research (Orbán, 2017b:3). The fact that she asked on my behalf the people she assumed would be interested bore twofold consequences. First, this again established trust and willingness and made the recruitment process much quicker. Second, the sample started to lean towards participants based in Lund, members of the local diaspora organisation, middle-class women of relatively high level of education and literacy. A sample of demographically very similar participants is the common flaw of snowball sampling (Byrne, 2012:218). To balance this, I asked other former contacts, with no known relation to LMKF, to recommend names; and posted a call for participants in the facebook group *Hungarians in Malmö and Scania.* These acts yielded one participant who diversified the data with her resistance towards any diaspora organisation.

The previous experience also gave me a feeling of an existing network of female friends within the LMKF who know about one another's cultural consumption habits and preferences, and in the end the sample was based on and extended from this core of a network, also taking up the core of the organisation. The friendships, however, included gender similarity, and the sample followed this pattern as a consequence.

The fact that the sample turned out to be a relevant range (Byrne, 2012:216) of the female membership of LMKF, with the only one exception, but two participants being in the management and a further one working close to SOMIT, a country-wide Hungarian initiative, gave me a more nuanced and deeper look at this loosely organised group of people. One

interview conducted with a man was taken out of the sample so that his differences would not be attributed to his gender and thus mislead the results, leaving the sample all-female. The interviewed women readily talked a lot about coping with emotionally overwhelming periods in their lives (Gray, 2003:76). Thus the research turned out to tackle wider questions than only cultural identity in diaspora; what is not researched enough either, that is, the complexity of the emotional-intellectual experience of reading (Littau, 2006:133), and its role if isolation is experienced on both community and personal level (Dali, 2012:261-262), due to being a full-time mother, for example.

The second consequence of my entry point or gatekeeper (O'Reilly, 2008:132; Byrne, 2012:218), turned out to be a unifying force in the sample when I needed to broaden other sampling criteria. The original intention to interview first-generation immigrants in Scania who have been living in Sweden for 2-10 years, in order to focus on the latest wave of migration, was quickly compromised when migrants who arrived in 1993 or 1985 were reading more avidly than newer arrivals and offered a more advanced outlook on the research problem thanks to their degree of acculturation. This resulted in time lived in Sweden from ten months to 33 years (Figure 1).

	Years lived in Sweden	Age	Occupation	Interview length
Nóra (pilot)	10	57	psychologist	1:25:35
Kitti	5	30	digital strategist	37:10
Julianna	17	43	administrator	46:18
Gizella	2.5	51	teacher	52:29
Titanilla	8	40	remedial teacher	58:20
Zsófia	1 (+3.5)	36	full-time mother	1:02:23
Anita	33	61	economist	1:25:51
Karolina	25	46	occupational therapist	46:04
Alma	20 (+6)	65+	retired teacher	1:18:13
Anett	<1	35	customer service representative	57:11
Mária	4	34	special education assistant	48:07

Figure 1: Demographics of sample. All names have been changed.

Most participants, however, can still be categorized in the newest wave of migration after the end of the Socialist era in Hungary, and were not fleeing political systems. Only one interviewee had left the Ceaușescu-eran Romania, and other two came from Romania and Slovakia respectively, but the latter two after the political changes. What the widening of sampling criteria did change was that it was possible to see the route of becoming transcultural readers with the decades by comparing the newcomers and the earlier arrived.

'[C]ultural taste and preference [is] something of a black box' (McQuail, 1997:81), instead, the interview guide (see Appendix B) was assembled with special focus on the role of reading in everydays, including rituals, banalities and the experience of both reading as a process and books as material objects. This was a pathway to focus on the affective and cognitive identity work based on similarities, differences and politics of place. Experiences are not only expressed through language, but this articulation is of inhabited culture (Gray, 2003:28; 32); and their research can lead to understanding the 'life-worlds' that create that experience (ibid:2; 28).

The pilot interview was conducted before finishing the literature review, as a preliminary testing of the theoretical framework and design of the research. The long and deep conversation with an avid reader yielded such rich data and supported the preliminary interview guide so fully that I included it in the research with her written consent as was the case for all interviews (see Appendix A).

Ethnographic methods in operation

Ann Gray (2003:12) proposed that researchers of culture need to take into account its materiality, and thus 'cultural studies has developed a particular set of qualitative methods which have often been described as ethnographic.' (Ibid:2) Applied to media, '[a]ttempts to explore the everyday and lived cultures focused on media use and largely in the domestic context.' (ibid:46)

I do not claim that the research conducted for this thesis was ethnographic, acknowledging Marie Gillespie's critique (1995:54-56) that audience research tends to forget the lengthy and observational character of fieldwork ethnography requires. Nevertheless, the methodology and research design were heavily influenced by contemporary critical anthropology's approach to the alternately insider-outsider insight research offers (Hage, 2009:166, Colic-Pleisker, 2004), the researcher's catalyst experiences (Luhrmann, 2010), and the

embodied gaze (Hastrup, 2010; Cook, 2010). As part of the mentioned critical discussion Hastrup (2010:191) encouraged ethnographers to internalise the sense of space the participants have. Following her work, I argued previously (Orbán, 2017b:2) that the researcher had to learn 'being on the way' or 'having two homes', and what it entailed in order to understand transcultural people.

I was positioning myself as a Hungarian, not only by recruiting through the LMKF and interviewing in Hungarian, but from the point of entering my respondents' homes. I was abiding Hungarian cultural codes when I offered a chocolate bar – a reciprocation for being invited in someone's home, a common gesture of guests.

The invitation, however, was not always a gesture of generosity from the side of the participants, rather a choice of convenience (Byrne, 2012:218). Out of 11 interviews, 5 were conducted in participants' homes where they could give me a bookshelf tour and we could sit down next to their books, perhaps at their reading spot. This method turned out to be fruitful because looking at the bookshelves made it easier to recall titles. They were eager to jump up and look for something, put it in my hand, one interviewee had also separated before the interview the two books she had been reading recently. Thus, they shared their reading worlds with the researcher. Other interviews were conducted in cafés or at Folkuniversitetet because that was what the participants asked for. During these interviews I tried to ask them to recall the latest ten books they had read, so that the conversation would be anchored in details, because when speaking generally, it was more likely for them to utter sentences like they only read in Hungarian or they only have books in Hungarian while when delving deeper, this turned out to be but one facet of their reading inventories.

Just like Colic-Peisker (2004), I have also been offered lunch and traditional hospitality and had to answer questions (Colic-Peisker, 2004:88), explaining what I personally think of Swedes and what I plan on doing after I graduate, a form of testing (Crapanzano, 2010:65). And as usually, there were the rich moments before and after recording that I only have archived in the form of field notes (Gray, 2003:102).

I conducted semi-structured interviews with a focus on own narratives and choice of words, and for these reasons face-to-face, one-on-one interviews were chosen. I did not expect interviews about books to bring people to tears, but it happened once. More often has it happened that the conversations turned sensitive, because the women felt comfortable telling

me about their husbands, coping with divorce, death of loved ones and unsatisfied emotional needs (ibid:76).

Most women confessed not having a friend to talk about books with, and the majority expressed sadness over this, that such a company was missing in the diaspora. I temporarily filled this friend position in our interviews, so that the participants asked me if I knew the books they were talking about or recommended cultural products to me, then and again turning the interview into a two-way conversation with their questions. My – for the most interview situations significantly younger – age could also have played a role in their attitudes to welcome me as a daughter and explain and recommend things to me (ibid:105). (See Appendix C for one translated interview transcript.)

Immersion in the interview texts

After 11 interviews, the topics reached saturation, and I decided to stop conducting interviews, and finished the thorough transcription to move on to coding. Interview transcripts had been sent to the interviewees to check if it only included their willingly given words, before which most transcripts had been listened to once more which facilitated a deeper immersion in the data. A thematic analysis was applied to the transcripts based on Rivas's (2012) three-step thematic coding method. This text-close, rigorous method was chosen to ensure that no chunk of data was left uninterpreted due to the researcher's embodied gaze, instead let unexpected themes and connections to be found (Rivas, 2012:370), so to say 'be "surprised" by our research' (Gray, 2003:18). Coding was seen as a method 'both to represent and to access' (Bazeley, 2013:125) data. The inductive coding started by open coding, including many in vivo codes (Rivas, 2012:370; 372), and even whole sentences taken word by word because of the use of very metaphoric language and revealing formulations by the interviewees.

Parallel to the coding, theories were revisited and their number extended in order to aptly serve as analytical tools. Codes formed categories, new categories were added if needed, until all pieces of information in the interviews were a part of a bigger grouping. All codes were re-read while forming circles of themes, to make sure that none of them were forced into a category (Appendix D). Categories were merged or renamed when their contents made it necessary. For example, what started as 'praktikus adatok' ('practical details') turned out to be about 'olvasás körülményei' ('conditions of reading'), while 'új könyvek' ('new books') and

‘mennyit szán egy könyvre’ (appr. ‘how much she is willing to spend on a book’) were merged. Six themes emerged – rite of passage, reading inventories, identity, reading experience, books as a physical experience and cultural embeddedness.

The themes were complemented with several mind maps and tables (Appendix E) showing correlations to further interpret the interviewees’ individual stories. Among them was a spider map with original phrases used to describe the reading experience; and chosen excerpts from the interviews not to get too distanced from the personal voices (Gray, 2003:161). It was kept in focus, due to the sensitive nature of cultural identity at ‘the intersection of two states, both imposing their national identities and power structures’ (Orbán, 2017a:1), to interpret the data in a way that makes sense to the participants in line with Luhrmann’s (2010:235) warning that the analysis ‘must persuade the audience independently of the ethnographer’s experience in the field’. At the same time, ‘raw description’ would be like ‘describing the scene of a crime without trying to solve the crime’ (Bazeley, 2013:373) and thus to be avoided as the other extreme.

Analysis

The following chapter will lead through the six themes listed in the previous chapter, combined into four sections. The chapter will investigate how reading is a part of the everydays for the Hungarian readers around Lund, a relaxing part of their time that expresses who they are because it is the sphere where they get to articulate their preferences, desires and belongings.

The majority of the 11 Hungarian women read one book a month or a week, thus they are ‘frequent readers’ according to Griswold, Lenaghan and Naffziger’s criteria (2011:24), out of which two can be called ‘avid readers’ who read more than one book a week.

Three interviewees have real estate in their origin country, thus live at two places parallelly (Zsófia, Alma, Anett), a characteristic of being transnational, according to Portes (1997:812). One interviewee expressed her plan to move home in the coming few years, three are insecure about their futures, while one interviewee expressed that she had already realised after 4 years in Sweden that she would stay. Staying was implied in most interviews, especially by those having lived here for over a decade, the living conditions for whom could be labelled organised and them as integrated.

The researched group can be considered middle-class. Most of them hold one (or more) degrees and five had experiences in foreign countries like Australia, France or the Soviet Union before. Apart from Swedish that all but three of them speak fluently, knowledge of English is very common, but German, Russian, Arabic, Romanian and Slovakian are also spoken.

All interviews were conducted in Hungarian, consistent with the language-based sampling criteria. It is important to acknowledge the 'language use in the interviews' (Blommaert and Dong, 2010:72-75), 'especially for cultural identities that partly live through language' (Orbán, 2017b:6-7). Therefore, without a linguistic analysis, it is worth to look at the trilinguality and the use of 'itthon' and 'otthon' below.

I encouraged my interviewees to say the sentences as they came to their minds while they primarily strove to remember phrases in Hungarian to keep the conversation consistent. Still, foreign phrases such as 'chick lit' and 'balans' were uttered. Titles were generally referenced in the language they had read the book. But they translated titles to Hungarian automatically from time to time, made clear to me by the fact that verbatim translations very often did not coincide with the titles of the published translations. For example Alma referred to Tjänstekvinnans son[iii] (The Son of a Servant) as 'A szolgálólány fia' instead of A cseléd fia. Hungarised words popped up often, reflecting the cognitive affects of living in another country, e.g. 'abszolút' or 'organizál'. Hungarian's role as a tool of symbolic survival cannot be emphasised enough, as described in the first chapter (Andits, 2017:361).

Secondly, the pair of words 'otthon' and 'itthon' is used by most diaspora Hungarians in a way that itthon (literally 'here home') refers to Sweden and otthon ('there home') refers to the origin country. In the case of Romanian and Slovakian Hungarians, there is a distinction between itthon, otthon, and Hungary. The pair of words is part of the common Hungarian language and is usually used to reveal if the person speaking is inside the home or referring to the home from outside; thus, only their usage in the diaspora is a creative linguistic innovation.

The rite of passage

The integration, as also reflected by the bi/trilinguality, however, needed to be reached through the rite of passage. The wide sample that included interviewees having lived in Sweden from 10 months to 33 years was able to shed light on the passage in its process.

Moving one's life across countries can be demanding and troublesome, and books are not a priority. Nevertheless, Kitti remembered that she had said there was no way she was going to move and live without books at all. During the interview she added details: 'Our move was hard, the first half year, so then I didn't, I didn't bother much about reading.' After moving, reading is very rarely a possibility in the favour of settling practical matters. As Kitti continued: 'I don't remember this exactly, but knowing myself, I had rather escaped back to familiar soil, so that I would have re-read things'. The very same coping mechanism of re-reading – that Dali's (2012:267) research only highlighted as re-reading books from there home, but Kitti takes up favourites like Jenny Colgan and Roald Dahl again – is what she resorts to in her current life situation when staying home with a baby does not enable the time and energy needed for enjoying new books.

On the other hand, she had experienced an emotionally heavy move twenty years before, when her family had moved back from the UK. She had been reading frantically then, and self-reflexively did so 'to keep the continuity in [her] life' by reading British children's books sitting at the dinner table. Continuity is part of the nation's mythology in large (Hall, 1992:294) and in small self-narrations of the identity. It is not necessarily a conscious identity maintenance. Still, Kitti carries on even now with the help of British romance and Harry Potter. Meanwhile she does not give up the hope to move back to Britain once in the future which counteracts any possible interest in Sweden's culture. Hers is thus a case of the 'marginalisation' form of 'psychological acculturation', in psychologist John Berry's categorisation (2001, cited in Dali, 2012:263) that Dali made use of for the research of migrant readers. According to Berry, 'marginalisation' is when the migrant withdraws from the host and the home country's culture at the same time, but in Kitti's case it is in favour of what is perceived as 'another home country', thus a peculiar 'separation' from Sweden, at least on the level of her reading habits.

However, for those migrants who had known they were going to stay, and wanted to learn the language in order to find jobs, this was the period of reading for language acquisition. Astrid

Lindgren[iv] was the most popular for this purpose, because Pippi Långstrump (Pippi Longstocking) or Emil i Lönneberga (Emil in Lönneberga) had been read before, besides international children's fiction like Micimackó (Winnie the Pooh).

When confidence in children's fiction was reached, popular genres followed, because they comprise

> simple thoughts, simple problems, simple situations formulated in simple sentences in a simple way. Described beautifully. It could be learnt from it, too, what it is that is humour, what one should laugh at. (Nóra)

Six women reported on having read Swedish literature for learning, and two were reflexive on also learning cultural codes with the help of popular literature, just like Dali found (2012:270-271), but pointing to a reflexivity factor that had only been discussed in other media use (e.g. Georgiou, 2006:132; Aksoy and Robins, 2000:363). Personal aesthetic judgements are overwritten by displacement. For the understanding of this, it is important to look at the experience of reading and what role it plays in the everydays, to be discussed through the theme 'Reading experience'.

In spite of its devalued status, 'pulp fiction' reading in Swedish still provides catharsis (Aristotle, n.d.) besides language knowledge:

> it is interesting that any language I read in, the pictures come in the same way. No matter, in the beginning… It is as if I would be standing on the bank of a river with a rushing stream, and then come on now I should go into the water then. Uh, but it may be flowing fast and cold. But once one is in. The stream catches one already, then already then you go, then you swim. (Nóra)

In-between the semi-utilitarian reading for learning, pleasure can also be squeezed in via reading in the mother tongue that psychologically reaffirms the migrant thanks to the power of the familiar against the challenging Other that is already dominating the public sphere, bringing into play the affective aspects of identity.

> [W]hen there was a-a calm afternoon, and then well, let's look for something on my bookshelf, but what? And then I took Jókai and Kárpáthy Zoltán. So… then I read that so. And then if I had read – let's say – 10 pages, and then it was good to put it down so, [knowing] that I had read Hungarian literature. (Alma)

The initial interest in the Swedish literature seems to correlate with having lived in Sweden for 8-33 years. However, the newcomers have not reached this phase in the passage yet, despite being here for up to five years. This points to a potential shift in attitudes towards cultural identity in the newly arrived that will be discussed in the coming sections.

By the point of moving, interviewees had collected a decent library that could have amounted to 300 volumes or even more. These collections made the migrants face practical decisions about storage. In the most optimistic of cases, they were put into boxes in a relative's attic where they were or are waiting until 'they will be with me again', as Kitti put it with a pinch of anthropomorphism that revealed her affections. In Anita's, Zsófia's, Alma's or Julianna's case, however, they were merged with others' bookshelves. Thus, the media collection was still available to them when they visited their childhood home or siblings, but was not a distinct, personal collection any more. When parts of the library were given up, they were sold or donated, signalling a final change (Nóra, Titanilla). When Nóra sorted her bookshelf, she had thrown away obsolete psychological literature – but not books that symbolise 'what [she was] when [she] had read them for the first or second time.' The simultaneous renewal and preservation can be metaphoric of the dynamics of the more abstract choices made, the negotiations of hybridization. The 'postmodern' '[c]ultural identity … belongs to the future as much as to the past.' (Hall, 1990:225)

Titanilla is the only one who had lived through giving up her whole library that she described as 'huge', when moving to Syria in 2006.

> And my heart was breaking, but I couldn't take it with me. And I decided that never ever was I to buy books again. Everything can be ... borrowed from the library or from someone, or now even digitally, although that I dislike – but buying I would not do any more.
>
> Interviewer: Was it because you didn't want to start from scratch again, then?
>
> Exactly. Exactly. And, and those books that meant such dear memories for me, those are gone already. And those I won't be able to purchase again. And since I am living in the fourth country already – and at every switch I needed to leave something there, I needed to give up on something – now it's so much already, you know? And then to start collecting again… And… when do I have to leave it behind again? (Titanilla)

This traumatic move, giving up on an extension of her identity, can best be seen as a translation – even if none of the life stories in this thesis include escaping regimes with no possible future return. The concept, connected to Salman Rushdie (1983), theorised by Hall (1992:310), has its core in the irreversibility of being 'borne across the world' (Rushdie, 1983:17). But just as Rushdie believed in that something can be gained, not only lost, Titanilla is more open as a consequence to locally available novels than any other Hungarian in Sweden I have spoken with.

This trauma sheds light on the duality of books – besides the reading experience of the text they also play a role as the affectionate objects that Griswold, Lenaghan and Naffziger

(2011:22) already highlighted that reception studies should take into consideration. They are attached memories and emotions and can be very close to the centre of identities. For Titanilla, one significantly irretrievable volume was the copy of Szív (Heart) by Edmondo de Amicis that she had gotten from her mother as a child. Mentioning this volume brought her to tears. Later she returned to the topic by saying that she had read the novel in Swedish as well, even if finding it within the library network required some effort. Physical and textual aspects interplay in the decades-long relationship towards her favourite Text that 'cut[s] across the work, several works' (Barthes, 1971:157), thanks to her reception prioritising the story over the physical copies.

After the initial phase of settling down, once there is money and physical capacity for books, the accumulation starts again. The building up of the bookshelf and the cultural capital it represents (Griswold, Lenaghan and Naffziger, 2011:26) thus happens simultaneously to acquiring a class status in another country.

Every visit home means carrying the brick-like objects in suitcases and handbags.

> [O]riginally I brought around 10-20 books with me, but then at every visit Mother said, well, if you need something, take it. And then we looked at her shelf, and took what was such. Meanwhile, I bought a great deal. The children's. (Anita)

The books to be brought can be chosen from the brother's, aunt's bookshelf from the previously owned collection (Anita, Kitti) or can be newly bought. When buying new ones, Hungarian authors are favoured (Nóra, Alma, Karolina, Zsófia) or favourite authors' new works are sought out (Julianna, Gizella, Alma) or sometimes the newest interest is served (Anita, Zsófia, Anett, Mária). This gradual building up results in libraries of 20-50 volumes after 1-5 years, the point that at the time of the research the 'newly' arrived have reached which the readers labelled 'not too much. Unfortunately' (Kitti).

It is not enough partly because libraries are grasped as a collection, and partly because the half-empty bookshelves in Sweden are a constant reminder of an absence and a change. However, this is not necessarily a source of nostalgia for the home country, rather, for the home, as Georgiou's (2006:87) research on other media also disproved. Nostalgia is a desire to 'revisit time like space' (Boym, 2007:8). A wish to continue without disruption what has already been 'built up', and provided convincing self-narratives even if they were constantly in formation in Hall's terms (1992:277). The past bookshelf, very often collected since childhood, provided a discursive repertoire for a life story. What is 'not sufficient' is the

uncertainty and multiplicity of having to build a new discursive field, and how much of the home country can find its place on the new IKEA bookshelves.

In connection with the bookish network at there home, books are transported to the host country thanks to guests as well. Karolina recounted how her latest favourite found its way to her through 1,100 km thanks to her friend visiting her. In the recent two years, since she has registered to the online Hungarian bookshop Bookline, she has regularly ordered to her friend's place with the timing that the books would arrive by the time she travels home. Such complex tactics are rare, but Mária also spoke of friends and her partner who have occasionally called her from bookshops to ask if she had a book in mind they should buy for her; and she only reads new books based on others' recommendations. Furthermore, Kitti's father chose a grandiose gesture when he had sent fifteen of Kitti's favourite books by post as a Christmas present, another illustration of the textual–material duality of books as mobile media.

These family and friend recommendations and presents, when forming a denser network, add a social side to book consumption. Three participants never had a network. For the others, if the pre-existing relations from before the move also include reading experience discussions, the network can support interpretation by book talk across countries. This links books to films rather than the audiences of television, creating interpretation bubbles that do not connect the diaspora together as an active local audience (Vandevelde et al., 2015:101-102). For Zsófia, her network had always been her family, they not only give books to each other and share a book collection, but had read each other's temporary favourites, e.g. dozens of Danielle Steel novels starting from the mother or István Fekete, started by the father. Now that Zsófia mostly reads on her iPhone, her e-book library is shared with her father so that he has access to see it. This is very different from how Anett exchanges e-mails with a friend living far:

> we go on and on, woohoohoo, this character... and I would have written it in the following way, or, or, I intend the following ending for the protagonist, and oh, this is unfair, that they have to suffer so much.

Titanilla also recounted an online form of literary talk, an associative play via messenger with friends, that they answer each other in poems, sometimes written by themselves. This associativity, the intimate knowledge of literature she understood as a lifestyle that again points out how reading is more than a hobby for the interviewees, closer to their self-images.

These connections were not seen as disrupting the comfort zone of reading that will be described during the 'Reading experience' theme in the last section. Instead, it was not unique to claim that reading is 'theirs':

> With mothers, if I meet, then obviously the child issue is the main topic. Yeah. With friends we gossip, of course. We bitch about men, so. About books? Don't joke, we don't talk. No. So that is mine. (Titanilla)

Less protectively, most of the women expressed a certain sadness over the fact that they cannot share the reading with friends locally. Only Julianna reported on having found a lone soulmate in Sweden, and Karolina on having a grandmother figure with whom she can talk about books. Anett, in order to share the stories she enjoys, tells them to her husband, or even to their son, in a summarised form.

The existing social network that the snowball sampling was based on, albeit indicating that the chair person knows about the readers, does not result in active bookish relationships and shared reading. Their differences in taste suffice to stand for this. These solitary interpretations link to the more general question if readers can be seen as constituting an audience, an attempt that had been made by theorists Griswold, Lenaghan and Naffziger (2011:20-21). They claimed that shared identification or demographic criteria can constitute an audience, albeit it will still mostly be a scientific creation that consists of 'private engagements', and it is only the reception study that finds patterns in the separate interpretations. The current thesis questions if such sporadic sense-making as found among the Hungarian women based in Lund, can be fruitfully conceptualised as an audience in lack of book circles and other social ways to share the reception.

The friend and family relations that bridge the displaced readers home are closer to an interpretive community, but scattered. From Griswold, Lenaghan and Naffziger's (2011:20) sociological point of view the latter could not be called a reader audience, not being a 'mass phenomenon'.

It is worth to note that between 2003 and 2008 there used to be a book circle in the LMKF, led by Alma, and thus the findings of this research only reflect the present situation of Hungarians in Lund, but cannot be generalised.

Those who arrived in the beginning of the wave were ready to illuminate that the back and forth carrying, together with continuous purchase in Sweden, might construe the new library,

like for Alma, who according to her own account succeeded to move the part of her past library she wanted to, by car, within the first 3-4 years. However, at a certain point, that can be after varying years for different people, when it became clear that they were to stay, and if there was still any, the real estate at home was sold or the parents died, and the past library or the parents' real estate and library needed to be taken care of. If this happens, like it happened for Nóra, the books were sorted, and the amount that was deemed necessary put in five boxes and sent North by a professional transporter. Her present library was described as:

> what one saves from a shipwreck, what one quickly snatches out of a burning house. … Because somehow there needs to be something that links one to the past. (Nóra)

This again points out a difference between the different media: books can follow one for a lifetime which is much rarer for a film or a magazine. The bridging of multilocalities is also different from the transnational mediated spaces digital media create that previous diaspora audience research illustrated (e.g. Georgiou, 2006:75, 97). This requires much more effort on the migrant's side, and creates a more personalised 'mental space' (Robins and Aksoy, 2001:705) to experience belonging through. This thesis argues that the move of the library, be that one grand transportation or a process during the first years, is a significant element in the hybridization of book lovers in diaspora. The move of the library is symbolic since it is not practically needed for the new life, but intellectually. Therefore, its pure weight and size anchors one down – where the library is, home is. Considering that even after 17 and 26 years there are still books dispersed among relatives in the home country, the here home is not exclusive, but rather in-between.

Just like favourites can be read while visiting Hungary, and books are carried towards Hungary as well, to balance the size of the library in Sweden; the rite of passage points towards negotiating transculturality. There is no definitive end to the rite of passage, rather, it is an opportunity for constant formation (Hall, 1992:277).

The reading inventory

Despite the regular buying and carrying of books is kept up after the library as such is moved, one to four visits per year cannot possibly provide a sufficient amount of books for reading all year. Obstacles in availability very often only spark the purchase or library loan of books that are in Swedish or in English, but not necessarily originally written in those two languages. Vandevelde et al. (2015:101-102) somewhat similarly found that cinema-going preferences

were disrupted by the films screened, thus, Hollywood and Bollywood films were mixed by Indians in Belgium.

Two phenomena were connected to the Swedish literary world by the participants and are worthy of a closer look. The interest in Swedish classic, contemporary or non-fiction work will be interpreted next. Then their relationship to Hungarian literature will be investigated, but first their language tactics are taken into consideration.

A 'tactic', according to de Certeau (1984:xix), is 'a calculus which cannot count on a "proper" (a spatial or institutional localization)'. A tactic is thus the act of the 'ordinary' person, between institutions, in this case nation states. This is an area where the realities of everydays and the intentions are conflicting:

> Like I said, I prefer to read in Hungarian. Although, in any language, it doesn't matter. In Swedish and in English and in Hungarian one after the other. (Anita)

This kind of conflict is not unique for Anita. There are different tactics employed by the Hungarians based in Lund, at one extreme of the attitudes stands Zsófia, who only reads in her second language if she really wants to read a specific book. The reading inventory is similarly mainly in Hungarian for the newly arrived, who, as discussed before, do not find it necessary to read for learning.

As an opposite, Titanilla nearly exclusively reads in Swedish, and added:

> I don't really care about Romanian anymore, nor Romania as it is. I don't really care about Hungary, either. Sorry, but no.

The uttered sentiments can be seen as a book version of the resistance towards home country culture, traces of what Georgiou's previous research (2006:67) found among Greek Cypriots.

Most Swedish speakers, who arrived at the beginning of the wave, on the other hand, read very diversely, sometimes the same book or the same author in different languages. Nóra had an explanation other than availability issues, rather one of literary joy, interpretation across several physical copies:

> I think one can play around it and experiment in which language a certain writer is more worth it or better or more exciting to be read.

The Nobel Prize in Literature is awarded by the Swedish Academy and is thus seen by many as a Swedish event that is the most important annual event in the literary world. While the local connection should not be overestimated, three out of the four readers who follow critically acclaimed literature discussed their relationship to the Nobel Prize.

> The Nobel Prize winners I read always, at least one, it's mandatory. (Anita)

Because the Nobel Prize in Literature is usually awarded in November, Anita's efforts of seeking out, in Hungarian translation, the books she is interested in are counterpoised by the wish to read the winner as soon as possible. Therefore, her other principle of trying to read the text in its original language is dominating. She had read recent winners in English, except for Bob Dylan who she does not consider a winner, because it was 'mockery'.

Alma, who does not read in English, read books by the same authors, like Orhan Pamuk or Kazuo Ishiguro, in Swedish, because her sons buy it for her:

> I always get that for Christmas … So I always read the actual Nobel Prize winner, in Swedish, of course. (Alma)

The prize also has Hungarian associations. When discussing Elie Wiesel with Alma, the Nobel Peace laureate writer was defined as a 'Jew of Hungarian origin' and Herta Müller as a 'Romanian Hungarian', despite actually coming from the German-speaking ethnic minority; two telling examples of the similarity element important in identities (Vertovec, 2001:573). Alma also recited how she had gotten to know the news from Swedes that the Hungarian Jewish author Imre Kertész[v] (residing in Germany then) had been awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, during a lesson teaching Hungarian as second language. All three writers then have migration histories, a relatable aspect for Alma.

Secondly, the international popularity of the Scandinavian crime fiction is shared by the women in Lund as well. Nevertheless, this again is not necessarily connected to a hybridized mediated interest, since it might have started before the move, as it did for Anett, but rather can be explained by the international acclaim and popularity of the subgenre. In the same way, the only series mentioned by more interviewees, the Millennium Trilogy and Jo Nesbø's novels are international bestsellers.

This does not exclude local appropriation. Because most of the women prefer 'realistic' novels and focus on the content more, it is no surprise that Alma said:

> I was encouraging my younger brother and sister-in-law that they would read the Swedish crime novels, that not only a crime novel results from it, instead the whole Swedish society is in there. With all its goodness, hardship, sin, everything.

Dali's findings of enlightening reading experiences among the ex-Soviets in Canada that 'explained' the society for the migrants (Dali, 2012:270-271) can be contrasted by this kind of reader reflexivity when the pre-existing conclusions about the host society are found mirrored

in literature. Nóra reflected upon this when she said that a certain 'exposure to culture' is needed in order to fully grasp writing from other cultures than one's own.

Mária provided a more detailed example when talking about her beloved series by Jussi Adler-Olsen, as to how the novels are understood differently from a local point of view. From her perspective, Adler-Olsen took a real-world subject that she was already acquainted with from home, the begging mafia, and she understood the novel through the mafia's local presence. Again, the similarity was emphasised (Vertovec, 2001:573). All the same time, it is as if she would convince herself, too, that it is real and local:

> That is thriving here, too, unfortunately. And from the side of the Romanians, actually. … [Adler-Olsen] leads the whole story along this line. What – was very interesting to see, because however we would like to close our eyes, this exists unfortunately. ... And this is real. And it's interesting that I read this from a Dane as well. (Mária)

Because of pluralised cultures and a socioculturally divided, displaced audience that previous research on the media use among ethnically defined audiences already showed in the case of other media than books (Georgiou, 2006; Guedes Bailey, 2007:223; Smets et al., 2013), very few concrete authors or titles were mentioned by three interviewees, and none by more than four. Such shared Swedish authors are Astrid Lindgren, August Strindberg[vi] and Vilhelm Moberg[vii]. The first two are also the ones that anyone a bit interested in Swedish literature in Hungary could name, so this again can be traced back to international critical acclaim, and an entry-level interest in the here home's classical culture. Vilhelm Moberg will be explained later in connection to diaspora fiction.

Interest towards getting a taste for Swedish literature exists among those who have been living in Sweden for more than eight years. Titanilla, for example, confessed having the desire from time to time to try different literary periods or the latest contemporary fiction from Malmö. However, she has not necessarily enjoyed it:

> I couldn't quite comprehend it, is this really the Swedish fictional literature? But it was said to me that it is a literary work. I read it.

Somewhat similarly, Julianna concluded her attempts as:

> I am not impressed by the Swedish literature.

On the other hand, Anita liked Torgny Lindgren[viii] whose North Swedish dialect she found interesting. Alma had even been to a lecture of Ann Heberlein's[ix], and a signing with Sigrid Combüchen[x]. Afterwards she read books by the two local writers. This coincidentally is also a very rare example of participation at a literary event because other participants were not

interested in book fairs or readings in neither countries. While interest towards classics is more of a question of cognitive efforts at getting to know the host culture, contemporary literature enters the life-worlds of migrants more organically and sometimes unavoidably, once integrated into workplaces and Swedish-speaking communities. Such was the case for Anita, who got to know the popular science bestseller Omgiven av idioter (Surrounded by Idiots) by Thomas Erikson[xi] on a group travel because seemingly every participant was talking about it, and she needed to know what it was about. The fact that she did not want to be left out not only points to Anita's wish for integration but also proves that interpretive communities can exist in the case of books as well. In this case study however, examples of Swedish bookish connections were sporadic in the narratives, regardless of the degree of integration.

Contrary to the traditional view on diaspora individuals, that they turn homewards, building boundaries from home country media – the relationship towards the Hungarian literature is not evident, either.

> I am not biased towards the Hungarian literature- I know that it is good, but at the same time there are sixty-six others that are very good, too. (Nóra)

When asked about favourites in the beginning of the interviews, in nearly all cases examples from world literature were mentioned.[xii] But as the conversations got deeper, it became clear that a Hungarian inventory is in there deeply and sometimes traumatically. This again can be approached through the division of classical and contemporary works.

The cultural canon is ingrained thanks to the education system that includes mandatory reading, not rarely as homework in the summer which only makes the students have an ambiguous relationship, to say the least, towards the critically acclaimed works. It was not different in the accounts of the interviewees either. Julianna and Kitti respectively described the Hungarian system as 'literature is pouring' and such that certain authors are 'very pushed', both with sentiments of resentment. The very fact that Gizella only 'realised' recently that Endre Ady[xiii] is her favourite poet points out how the relationship towards the classics is not an evident foundation of the cultural identity that one could lean on once displaced.

Titanilla discussed at length how this cultural canon is the 'narrative of the nation' (Hall, 1992:293). She referred to the role of literature to retain the national identity, and how the literature that is seen in a heroic light, never the 'beautiful poems' are used for that. She found

the use of literature during commemorations in minority communities in Romania and in Sweden similar, and suggested that it is still the very same poems recited at every occasion, even though 'we are not there anymore'. This gave an opportunity for Titanilla to also reflect on the plurality of the culture and the choices that need to be made in the diaspora:

> What kind of culture do we want to pass on? What part of the culture? This… insisting to be patriotic part, the chest-thumping, tricolour cockade Hungarian or the… or the plum pálinka one or the… so which one? (Titanilla)

Her pondering links back to the plurality of cultures, 'imposed' on society that is itself the book and its producer (de Certeau, 1984:xxii).

Contemporary Hungarian literature, however, might require more effort than following Swedish contemporaries, because it is not a given repertoire like the classics, nor is it a lived cultural environment.

Alma explained that she found the elder generation from the previous migration wave in Lund to be out of touch with Hungary's present:

> But truth is, what I kind of like from contemporary literature they don't accept, it's not their favourite, for example a Spiró[xiv] or … Tóth Kriszta[xv]. They don't, don't like it. So I don't even bring it here, because I know that they wouldn't understand it, because they are quite torn apart from the Hungarian, the Hungarian reality. (Alma)

The writer mentioned most times was Magda Szabó[xvi], Nóra's favourite despite her disinterest in canonical literature, a writer who wrote iconic and loved young adult novels. The other two most mentioned were critically acclaimed novelists György Dragomán[xvii] and Péter Nádas[xviii], who are known internationally as well. Dragomán provided opportunity for a rare case when Hungarianness of a writer was stressed. Anita follows the book reviews in Sydsvenskan, the Scanian daily newspaper, and the one written on Dragomán's novel made her interested enough to inquire about it when at home in Romania, where she was told that he is Transsylvanian, a fact that only made her want to read him more due to the relatability aspect. Then she took the effort to ask for it in Budapest again, where it was cheaper. This is but one illustration that the tactics to keep the continuity of the life-narrative are informed by the banalities of the everydays such as the price factor here.

The reading inventories do not align host and home country. This can partly be explained with Hungary's position in Europe. 'There home' the bookshelves in shops, libraries and living rooms are unavoidably very diverse in terms of country of origin of the books, and this is the

continuity striven for in the diaspora as well. If it is in Hungarian, it is ‘ordinary media’ (Aksoy and Robins, 2000).

The difference from the bookshelves in the home country is unavoidable, on the other hand. Swedish books ‘wander’ to the bookshelves ‘here home’, to continue with Zsófia’s anthropomorphism. This again points out that the bookshelf is a fruitful metaphor for the negotiation and hybridization going on in the diaspora, as Hall (1992) theorised it. They reflect roots and routes (Gilroy, 1995) at the same time, not defined by single origins, but by complex ongoing histories.

The cultural identity

As a continuation of the discussion on the relation to the two cultures, this section will briefly look at the changes in identity with the years spent in Sweden, then at what aspects of the identity are expressed through reading choices to shed more light on the second research question.

Only Nóra expressed a certain sadness over the changes in Budapest. She claimed that thanks to facebook she is in the loop on the happenings in Hungary, and missed the city of her youth, thus implying a cultural identity that manifests itself in reading already-known literature. For her, nostalgia is fed by in-betweenness,

> ...like fish on the shore. Because Sweden is not her home, and what used to be her home that is changing to nearly unidentifiable, so one does not feel at home in any way, nowhere really, mostly in the past, but that is nowhere yet, so that has already ceased to exist. (Nóra)

A few Hungarians, however, are so not ‘torn apart from the Hungarian... reality’ that their reading can be called transcultural. Alma, Julianna, Anita and Karolina follow home news media besides the newest books, but have no trouble with switching to Swedish, either.

Titanilla reads nearly exclusively in Swedish, but identifies vehemently as a Hungarian, thus her case, this thesis argues, is a form of radical claiming of the cultural identity without the references of any nation state, explained by her previous struggles to be seen as a Hungarian in both Romania and Hungary. All these six women have been living in Sweden for over than eight years. Acculturation still gives way to diverse life stories, and its result is not defined by the commonness of the rite of passage.

The newly arrived, however, are mostly segregated from Sweden in their reading, and though acquired confidence in the language might change this in the future alongside their

hybridization, their current narratives point towards different future conclusions in terms of a new paradigm, perhaps more cosmopolitan reading habits than ever. Future studies researching the same case could gain more insights. But the underlying difference of the displaced position is there for all of them, that 'we are not what we were' (Gilroy, 1995:26), or, that the move 'unfix[ed]' their identities (Vertovec, 2001:580).

Reading choices are more informed by other aspects of the identity than cultural, be that an interest, a profession or a self-image. Alma, who used to work as a teacher, has a professional interest in childhood development, and thus her readings include descriptions of the childhood of famous people. Gizella, interested in history, reads non-fiction on alternative history, and her favourite fictions, by Wilbur Smith, Mika Waltari and Ken Follett, all operate with historical topics. Karolina's choices are guided by her thirst for the otherworldly and also Erich Maria Remarque and George Orwell she sees as having written 'life philosophies'. Kitti likes to cook and bake herself and enjoys her career, and on the list of her favourites, Jenny Colgan's romances present heroines who turn baking into a business.

These connections, the identity's role in reading have been commented on by the interviewees themselves, because they are part of their narratives:

> who I am, who my favourite is, Madame Bovary. That I have read around three times, perhaps three times. Four times. … I always recognise something new in it, why she's a great person. … For me Madame Bovary is, Emma is the one who has plans, dreams, expectations and follows them. (Alma)

Zsófia read many Éva Fejős novels, a combination of romance and travelling. This selection can be approached from the romantic side, since she said that romance serves a function for her emotional life that is reminiscent of Radway's (1984) thesis about the role excessive romance reading plays in the Smithton women's lives so that they would return to catering to their families. The travel element of the combination is not less interesting, on the contrary, it reveals a narrative of Zsófia's displacement. When asked about diaspora fiction by listing a few recent Hungarian titles, she answered by taking control of the approach to the topic:

> No, no, these I haven't read.
>
> The traveller books, the travels of Éva Fejős, they don't live abroad, that is never about that, right, that someone should live abroad, instead one travels somewhere for self-awareness and adventure.
>
> But there is Vilhelm… Moberg. Moberg? Do you know him? His three books?[xix] (Zsófia)

The three sentences are revealing. Zsófia – and nine others – had not heard about the non-fictional and fictional books published in the last 15 years about/by emigrating Hungarians. Nor are they interested in this form of representation, unlike Dali's participants (2012:268), because what they depict is believed to be too well-known or too painful. This brings their reception attitude closer to the Black women Jaqueline Bobo (1995:17) interviewed who saw their reality as troublesome enough, and did not wish books to depress them by depicting this situation. However, right after this, Zsófia turned to the contemporary Hungarian books she *knows* and *loves* and explained that they are journeys of self-exploration. Her family moves around a lot, and her answer reveals that she sees the displacement as adventure and constant travel rather than any form of exile, as mirrored in her current favourites.

Finally, she recalled diaspora fiction, but from Sweden. Vilhelm Moberg's Utvandrarna and its sequels – thanks to their canonical status – were mentioned by two further interviewees. Zsófia connected it to the Hungarian emigrants and thus to herself, revealing that the migration element in her life story she connects to the host country.

Meanwhile she can keep up-to-date on Hungary thanks to the deterritorialising and de-ethnicising by the ordinary (Aksoy and Robins, 2000) home country contemporary novels that she follows avidly. Thus the identity articulation is interconnected with the language and cultural tactics described in the previous section, but the two do not collide. The bookshelves reflect other forms of belongings, too, than spatial ones. Cultural identity, as articulated through the reading of Hungarian women around Lund, is a 'discontinuous experience' (Bradatan, Melton and Popan, 2010:11), underlying the reading inventories, but not always coming to the fore.

Reading experience, materiality and media embeddedness

Three themes are going to be discussed in this section that are connected in order to better understand the role of reading and books in the everyday lives of Hungarians in Sweden.

Reading creates a sort of comfort zone. It is done in the evenings and at weekends, at home by most interviewees. They have a good lamp that provides sufficient light, Julianna and Alma have books within arm's reach, they have their favourite position, be that in bed (Julianna) or

in an armchair with the cat sitting in their lap (Nóra). They read until they possibly can, sometimes until they fall asleep. Mária even voiced that it is a kind of 'me time':

> But in the weekend my Sunday afternoon is always … Mária day, when if I feel like, I am with friends, if I don't, then I'm not, I go for a round, do sports. A bit of a beauty day… And then this is included, too, that my little tea, I make tea, bit of snacks, and book. So that it is a bit of a ritual for me … The one on Sunday... is longer, so then I let myself … in peace, that no one should bother me, usually I even put my phone down, so in flight mode, and then that's it, and on the evenings too I do the same. (Mária)

The Hungarian female readers in Lund thus seem to side with the kind of arguments Griswold, Lenaghan and Naffziger (2011:22) cited from the paper book against e-book debate, protectors suggesting getting in bed with a book as a qualitatively different experience.

Reading is also practised in the garden and on the beach. However, reading on transportation only happens while on holiday, which is partly connected to the fact that the local Hungarians do not commute by public transport, however, Nóra does not because:

> It has happened that I was reading on the train and missed stations, I can really get immersed and it's life-threatening...

The participants had a lot of picturesque phrases for this pleasurable consumption of the work (Barthes, 1971:163) that is their main reading experience. 'Flow', 'I can switch myself off', 'I am in the present', 'the images were coming', 'I can stay in that world', 'and you are there, like a little stowaway on the horseback', 'the text goes', 'I cannot put it down', 'sink into it',

> So I, I can get into it so, so much… The last time there was an Australian seaside scene, and then I looked out the window, what do you mean it's snowing? (Titanilla)

Admittedly, entertainment, escape and relaxation are the goals of such reading, connected to the 'me time' role of reading. It is easy to get caught up in the everydays, as Titanilla reflected, and then it feels good not to think about the past or the future, instead be able to experience the present, as Mária put it, distancing oneself from the running thoughts and anxieties. This feverish reading explains why they do not have a time frame for reading, rather, start to read, then let themselves sink into it.

Such a reading experience is also an affective process, here this research answers Littau's theory (2006) of affect and bodily reactions. Not only have Titanilla confessed that whatever feels and moods are in the book, she feels them even a few days after having finished it, Anett, Gizella and Zsófia, all mothers of young children, reported of difficult readings when children were harmed in the plot. Furthermore, Anita 'properly got chills' when she was

reading Szegény Sudár Anna, because she ‘actually experienced [her] own past through the book’.

Such ‘realistic’ or ‘relatable’ readings are preferred among the Hungarians around Lund. Books about families, middle-aged women or people who ‘could be real’ are sought out. However, unlike by the women in Radway’s study (1984) this is not seen as gaining practical knowledge by the women, rather as curiosity or a form of gossip. Thus, they rarely venture far from the everydays they are escaping, but immerse themselves in a fictional version of reality that is more interesting. This stands true for the historically inspired, socially detailed fantasy novels, too, that Anett loves.

The less directly pleasurable, deciphering form of reading, closer to Barthes’s (1971:164) production of the Text, is practised as well. Among the ‘functions of books’, ‘intellectual necessity’ was there, too, and the joy of the beautiful style. For Nóra, Julianna and Alma, reading has a role in the everydays that exceeds pure escapism and further two women, Titanilla and Gizella can appreciate the sign itself instead of using it as a transparent window to the realistic content, the fixed signified. This overlaps with the women who read Swedish for language acquisition after the move, as discussed previously. The acknowledgement of the construction of the text thus is twofold, it can be the source of artistic catharsis, and seen as language, too.

The materiality of books has been discussed previously in terms of availability of home country culture abroad and the very physical process of moving a library through 1,100 km. There are a few additional aspects of books as a physical experience that formed a theme of their own that is worth exploring briefly below.

One category in this theme reads ‘how much they are willing to spend on a book’, as connected to other categories that explore owning books, shopping at second-hand bookshops, hoarding books, giving books as presents or loaning and borrowing books. Opinions varied from Kitti, Anita and Zsófia who found that money spent on books is always well spent, because ‘books are necessary’ (Kitti), to Julianna and Nóra who nearly exclusively shop at book sales and ‘loppis’, or read from the library, since the ‘bookshop is too expensive’ (Nóra), just like Titanilla, although her not buying books is because of other reasons, as already discussed. Anett set herself the rule of maximum five books at one purchase.

Alma's strategy, however, is also interesting in the light of articulating cultural identity through reading, because her evaluations are different for books in Swedish and in Hungarian. Books generally cost more in Sweden than in Eastern Europe, that could be a pragmatic reason, but she voiced the difference herself which suggests a hierarchy instead. While in Slovakia she buys contemporary books in the local bookshop, implied for full price, Swedish books she 'tests'. She first reads them from the library and if she really likes them, classics like Hjalmar Söderberg[xx], deemed worthy for her collection, she buys a second-hand volume.

The 'value of books' explores the object-text binary of books, in which a whole infinite universe is closed in the object and thus made finite, from Text to work, next to dozens or hundreds of other universes that tempt deciphering. Kitti reads books again and again until they fall apart. Alma thought that all volumes can be replaced, as losing them is in the cards when they are lent; Zsófia was willing to donate two bags of books she did not need any more. For Nóra and Titanilla, however, there existed unique volumes. Nóra connected them to the photos and her mother's embroidery on the shelves, and the tickets and postcards kept between the pages that bring memories to the surface. For Titanilla, the unique volumes of her past library are irretrievable, and 'broke her heart', but her son's books she was capable of treating as objects of everyday use that get torn and thrown away. In the end, they are objects of the material culture.

Books were seen as friends that do not get jealous when ignored, thus they are affectionate objects. Nevertheless, they are still objects that can be gifts to others since 10 out of 11 prefer reading hard copies. This aspect especially is grasped as a physical experience of paper books:

> [I]ts touch, smell, the colour… of the pages, the … you cannot even compare the experience in my opinion. (Julianna)

On the other hand, there is a limit to this physical comfort from book-friends, when compared to the therapeutic effect of cats by Nóra, who indeed bought a cat after reading Hrabal's late writing about his cats:

> But ... books don't purr and cannot, cannot be petted. (Nóra)

On the contrary to the paper book, e-books and audio books are distrusted, they are rather understood as a future necessary evil. Considering the overly affectionate relationship to paper books, the negative affect towards e-books and audio books and the resulting abstention, the interviewees side with those talking of the threat of the digital for books. If

Griswold, Lenaghan and Naffziger (2011:22) called for the exploration of this phenomenon and of what materiality means for the reading per se, this research only proved Barthes's point (1971:163) that consumption and such finite forms as the work cause pleasure that is fundamentally different from the intellectual pleasure of the Text.

On the other hand, e-book readers could effectively solve the availability problem because e-books transgress borders easier than hard copies, a capacity that several participants acknowledged. As the only exception, Zsófia nearly exclusively reads digitally ever since she has a phone that is capable of it, and Mária was planning to get a new reader in place of her broken one.

One final linguistic element to highlight in the interviews is the use of the word 'reading'. Reading is seemingly monopolised by literary theory, but is not exclusive for books, nor was it so for my interviewees. Albeit I made it clear before the interviews that the research is about 'book reading habits', during the conversation the participants regularly blurred the lines between reading books and reading blogs, chat messages and glossy magazines. This is very much in line with their aesthetic evaluations, and the role of reading in their lives. Book reading does not need to be put on a pedestal, praised as an art form, but rather it is another way to 'enrich one's life' (Nóra) compared to travelling in its such capability; although 'definitely not a hobby' (Julianna). Kitti called chick lit 'a bit more than the [glossy] magazine, but a bit less than a real – book'; and Zsófia even compared books to articles when describing the kind of entertaining books she was reading in this period of her life:

> a bit extended newspaper article. It doesn't take ten minutes, but let's say three days to read. (Zsófia)

Another conclusion to be drawn from the other media that reading had been mentioned side by side with is that the Hungarian readers in Lund are living in the world of digitalization, or the 'increasing deepening of *technology-based interdependence*' (Couldry and Hepp, 2017:53). Just like Couldry and Hepp (2017:51) claim, different waves of mediatization overlap and do not mean the diminution of the previous media. Newspapers became digital, films are now available on Netflix and the Hungarian public broadcasting media are similarly available through their websites. Similarly, the media environment of reading is mainly digital: books can be ordered or looked up online. Information on books to read is gained from litera, an online literary magazine, index.hu, and hvg's, Nők Lapja's, Bors's and Blikk's online versions, moly.hu or Goodreads, two social media platforms for readers, from

Sydsvenskan, or from Nők Lapja, a Hungarian weekly print magazine, the Hungarian radio Klub Rádió and the Swedish public TV channel's cultural programming.

The same way, films emerged in the interviews organically thanks to the flourishing film adaptations. The films and TV series and the books were not understood as fundamentally different, but rather as carriers of the same story in a different form. Thus, the adaptations and the original works do not cancel each other, but both can be followed in no prescribed order. Zsófia developed a tactic to break the loneliness of reading in lack of a local bookish network that is based on this preconception, that books and films are just different forms of the same content. In order to share her experiences with her husband, she made him watch the TV series adaptation of Henning Mankell's[xxi] crime novels and Travelling to Infinity by Jane Hawking, even though Zsófia herself preferred the books to the adaptations.

Meanwhile, the same is not true for television in general. Television was seen as a rival of reading, the same kind of leisure activity that could take the time that reading could be done in. This was especially clear in Julianna's and Karolina's accounts. Karolina claimed to have stopped watching television three years ago, however, carpool interviews and other post-television content available on YouTube she did not consider contradicting this statement. The latter form of leisure activity is what she chooses if she does not feel like reading in the evenings. Julianna had also stopped watching TV which in her case happened as a consequence of her divorce, because hours-long reading was more suitable for coping with the emotional aftermath for her than television. This can be understood in the light that reading is more actively comforting as it requires more intense processing. Television in general versus concrete films leave less space for personal choices and are not as close to the identity, because television programming is less discursive and can be consumed as a background activity, unlike books that 'do not read themselves, readers do.' (Allen, 2001:198)

Nevertheless, in the eyes of the Hungarians in Lund, reading is not only a cultural activity, it has its place embedded in the media environment as well, because reading has its place in the ambiguous everydays, saturated with media already where books as mobile media should not be underestimated.

Conclusion

Buying a book is equivalent to a single person doing the groceries during the week in price. One book for reading during the flight can fit in a handbag easily, but three or four in a suitcase jeopardise the success of keeping luggage under the weight limit. A newly bought book might give the reader a hard time because of unnecessarily small letters, bad quality paper or binding, or, on the contrary, add to the pleasure with its beautiful illustrations, cover and layout. Some readers buy book-scented candles, use pretty bookmarks and take aestheticised photos of books with a cup of tea, fairy lights and flowers for their instagram accounts. Books as such without doubt have their own fan culture, and unlike the fan cultures of Frozen or musician Magda Rúzsa, the fannish attitudes towards the inherent materiality of the medium come more to the front for a frequent reader as well.

Hungarian female readers in Sweden are not different, this is why this thesis leant towards books in the disfavour of reading per se. Books are valued as collections, they are smelled, their weight felt, they are taken to bed. And the experience is not less addictive – books are an intellectual and emotional necessity or a narcotic. By the Hungarian female readers around Lund, fiction is taken seriously, not a hobby, but a coping mechanism in life. It is important to see that in spite of reading being a cultural activity, books are mobile material media and the average reader does not expect Aristotle's purging catharsis but an entertaining end to the day they spent working in their job or as a full-time mother. The Hungarian female readers around Lund want a streaming, rushing flow of text that transports them to other worlds when they are isolated in their displaced position. Everyday needs and banalities meet cultural identity maintenance and considerable effort to read Hungarian books.

This thesis researched a sample of female readers based in Lund, one interviewee categorically outside, ten actively or passively inside the local diaspora organisation; to look at the role books play in the diaspora. The qualitative interviews offered a view at acculturation from ten months to 33 years lived in Sweden, including transcultural practices and the diverse life stories that can lead to becoming transcultural. After the topics in the interviews reached saturation, the pattern that emerged depicted a rite of passage of moving to Sweden, and moving the library along with settling down in the host country. First a few books are brought, and reading is no priority, then the carrying phase starts that also includes carrying in the direction of the 'there home', or, Hungary, Slovakia or Romania, depending on

the origin country, in order to keep the library's size in Sweden manageable. Spatiality of diaspora (Gilroy, 1995:26) and materiality of books meet in the rite of passage thus. Unless the previously accumulated collection that provided sufficient discursive repertoire for the narrations of the 'postmodern subject' (Hall, 1992:277) is transported in one big move, boxed then unboxed, it can only be determined retrospectively when it happened. Rather, the move of the library happens parallel to hybridization and building up a new social status. The reading done meanwhile articulates the negotiations forming the cultural identity. Once the library is in Sweden, it anchors one down, thus marking the home.

Nevertheless, there is no definitive end to the carrying of books, just like the identity in diaspora, according to Hall (1996), the book collection is always a future project. Thus, the displaced person's library materially illustrates the cultural identity's complexity: fragments are still at 'there home', available at loved ones' living rooms. In the 'here home', Hungarian and Swedish books get piled on the shelves besides English, Russian or Slovakian ones, just like the migrants become integrated, bilingual, in some cases even transcultural. Other aspects of the identity: age, professional belongings, taste, gender are more evidently communicated through the content of the reading choices than culture that is mostly expressed by the place of the purchase. The Hungarian corpus is not a stable foundation to lean on, once displaced, to articulate the identification, rather, in order to keep the media use 'ordinary' (Aksoy and Robins, 2000), as if one was still both buying and reading the books 'there home'. The language is crucial. The books themselves are diverse, but bought at home whenever visiting, and thus the reading could be happening in the home country. This language-based media use reveals tactics in the choices and the importance of similarity (Vertovec, 2001).

Some participants were more flexible than others, but reading in the mother tongue was more preferred on the level of the 'impression management' as Goffman (1959) put it, than in their actual reading inventories. The role of comfort versus the importance of cultural identity articulation needs to be weighed, since the native language can provide a seamless reading experience during which one can focus on the content entirely, treating the constructed language a pure conveyor of the story. The bigger group of the women, who mostly read according to this, mentioned 'well-written' texts, but even these were explained as serving the advancement of the plot rather than beautifully crafted.

The focus on content is significant, because joyful reading was connected to 'realistic' stories by this group of the sample. This 'realistic' is however not the aesthetic attribute, characteristic of art in the late 19th, early 20th century by any means, but the readers' way to describe stories that 'could be real' or are relatable. This closeness in topics is reminiscent of the preferences of the Smithton women in Radway's classic study (1984) who saw an idealised reality in the romances. On the other hand, the Lund women did not claim, unlike the Smithton readers, that these 'realistic' stories would provide them with practical knowledge or they would change their outlook on life because of them. Rather, books were seen as an intensified reality that provides a flow and an immersive rush without nagging thoughts of past and future troubles. The resulting isolation and loneliness of reading is more of another manifestation of the escapism in the kind of immersive reading that this group of women in Lund prefer than an exile in another country.

Unlike the ex-Soviet émigrés Karen Dali interviewed (2013), the participants in this thesis were not interested in any form of representation, or in their emotional journey expressed by an author's words. On the contrary, anything that other emigrants had to say was seen as already-known and it was taken for granted to be more painful than positive. Since they readily could imagine what the diaspora fiction published in the recent years in Hungary is about, they were not impressed by the prospect of reading it. It is not hard to see how the books imagined to be traumatic are far from the stories preferred for the sinking feeling they enjoy in exchange of the effort put into the buying and the active reading of the books, a treat after the long day.

Furthermore, the relatable aspect in diaspora fiction, in representations about displaced people, proved to be not more than a preconception by the researcher, since it is not colliding with the identifications of this bigger group of the participants. Rather, they saw themselves as simply Hungarians and read contemporary Hungarian literature therefore. Or they saw themselves as adventurers moving around and read romances with travelling heroines. This again creates a link to Radway's theory (1984). In this aspect the classical work was reaffirmed by the contemporary findings – in the way romance reading reassures one in their lives to return to its hardships.

Nevertheless, there are a few women who read for aesthetic pleasure, too, and appreciate literary style and language. It should be pointed out, that this correlated with being avid

readers. They also had humanities education: two teachers and a psychologist were readier to take literature very seriously, see books as their personal friends, as sources of life lessons. These women expressed that messages in books can be used in life, a mode of reading that previously has not been elaborated on within media studies, and the books might answer

> how do we live, do we get on our feet, do not get on our feet, what do we cling to, who has a backbone, who has not, who is the strong, who is the weak, who is the decent, who is the indecent (Alma).

For them, reading in Swedish was a way of learning, that can be connected to their attitude not to 'see through a text'. This mode of reading also correlates with a higher level of multilocal picking and choosing according to their own tastes, their reading inventories being less distorted by the language barrier and the availability issues, because they are more flexible in terms of language. Those reading for artistic pleasure were also reflexive to express their idea that a cultural background in other countries was needed for reading foreign literature and vice versa, not to guide the reading choices, but for a better quality reception.

This research addressed the inherently physical side of reading in relation to its social side that Griswold, Lenaghan and Naffziger (2011:21) called for. While the materiality is stressed by the interviewees in connection with the host country more, as a practical problem and the material experience of holding the books, the social side of reading was rather bridging them home thanks to their pre-existing bookish networks, if they had such.

The thesis further attempted to contribute to the understanding of the place books have in the media environment in order to add to the ongoing discussion about diasporas. Books are the ancient mobile media that should not be treated as high art and exiled to the territory of critics who judge their values. The audience without doubt treats it less as art than the academic disciplines. Not only are they close to the core of identity, but they are also experienced through their material qualities. Albeit this physical aspect grants books a unique position among other media, perhaps only comparable to vinyl in its cult and television in its home-making capabilities, they need to be incorporated in any research that aims to understand media repertoires in their entireties that has not been done in the diaspora before. This thesis argued that books in diasporas are not a given, but considerable effort is put into their presence, into the collection of the libraries and into their consumption in the reader's current life situation that can be emotionally overwhelming. Hungarians in Sweden were found to be less a community than what not only traditional views on diaspora presupposed,

but most diaspora audience studies did as well. The results call for a reinvestigation of the role all kinds of media play in the articulation of cultural identities in a mediatized society, as Hungarians in Sweden were not found to build boundaries from the host country media. Rather, they found their ‘here home’ in Sweden, and even if it never can reach up to the ‘there home’, a seamless switch and limited interchangeability is possible.

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Appendices

A. Consent form

A) The research studying the reading habits of Hungarians in Sweden is included in the Master‘’s thesis research at Lund University. The research is executed by Krisztina Orbán.

B) The interview is conducted for the above mentioned research, it will only be used within academia. This might include presentation, publication and conference presentation besides the Master’s thesis. Every information is guaranteed to be kept confidential, the interview is used anonymously.

C) This consent can be withdrawn anytime.

I agree with conducting an interview for the above mentioned purposes:

Interviewee’s name:

Interviewee’s signature Date

B. Interview guide

(in case interview is conducted in their home) Please show me your bookshelf!

I. Warm-up

How do you like to spend your free time?

Do you like to read?

II. Reading experience

What kind of books do you like to read? Can you maybe recite the latest 10 books you read? (in case there was no bookshelf tour)

Do you have a favourite? Genre, author or a single book maybe?

What do you like about it? How does it make you feel? Do you remember when you have read it first? Have you re-read it? Was that a different experience?

Would you like to read all books by your favourite author?

When and for how long do you read?

Where? Do you have a favourite spot? Do you also read outside your home?

How?

In what form? E-book or audio book maybe?

How much do you read (in a month or a year)?

How many books do you have? How big library did you have before moving? How did you move that library/where do you store that library at home/in Hungary/who did you give that library to, what happened to it? Had you taken any books with you right at the point of moving? How did you get your books here, how do you get books here now? Were there any copies that are impossible to replace? (signed books, special gifts)

How do you choose which book to read next?

What does reading mean to you?

III. Practical details, book as an affectionate object

Do you borrow, lend books?

Do you give, get books as gifts?

Where do you get your books from? Bookshop, library, loppis, antikvárium?

Where, in which country, go-to one, reasons?

In what language do you read? In what language were the books written originally? Where do their authors come from?

IV. Social aspects and national sentiments

How do you get information about books?

Do you discuss your reading experiences with anyone?

Do you read together as a family? What do your children read, in what language?

Are you interested in Swedish literature?

What do you think about the Hungarian literature? Do you follow the contemporary publications?

V. Diaspora

How long have you been living in Sweden?

How you lived in a third country before?

Do you travel home/to Hungary? If yes, how often, for how long?

Can you recall a book that left a lasting impression on you after you had moved here?

Do you go to/Are you interested in going to book launches, readings, book festivals, book weeks? Hungary, GBG?

Are you a member of local diaspora organizations? The LMKF or the Malmö ones? Do you go to their events? The bigger events, like the Rúzsa Magdi concert, the monodrama by Csányi, Farkas Berci's visit, for example? Did you enjoy them? Do you ever go to the Malmö groups' events?

Do you go to/Are you interested in going to the theatre, concert, cinema? At home/in Hungary, here?

VI. Diaspora book

Are you interested in books whose author also lived in the diaspora? Nabokov, Márai, Murakami, Ishiguro…

Are you interested in books about displaced, diaspora people? In books written about and by diaspora Hungarians specifically?

C. A translated interview transcript

Titanilla – female, 40, remedial teacher, 8 years in Sweden

How do you like to spend your free time?
I sleep. I should have answered now that I read, shouldn't I. No. Really.
I'll ask you later if you like to read, as well, but the first question is only what do you like to spend your free time with.
If I had free time, an amount that I don't have, then uhm, I'd read, even more. Then I'd go out, to nature. But I do that, after all. In that small amount of time that I have. With or without children. Yeah.
And do you like to read?
Yes. Really.
How much do you read?
Juj. I- Not a daily average I can say. So-so… There are periods when one novel per week. There are others when- nothing for a month. And then it happens that I bring the book back because I ca- I can't- so that I haven't had time to read it, but… Tja. So it could be said that at least one a month. At least one novel a month. When there is a better period, of course then more, but, but I say this is very changing.
What does it depend on if it is a better period?
On the-the difficulty of my love life. No-not necessarily love. Rather yes, the, the private life. 'A.
So when you're overwhelmed then you're not in the mood to read?
I-I-I don't have the mood, the energy, the time! So the, the moves and the kid, starting a job, getting the kid used to the kindergarten and vomiting and diarrhea periods, this, this all takes away one's energy. And I'm not, how should I say, entirely healthy either. All kinds of medical examinations, and everything, well, that kind of, kind of brings one down. But, but, but, I'm telling you, I realised that when I cannot go outside, 'cause I simply cannot let the kid be, then, then I read, if my energy allows me. Hm.
And at those occasions how much time do you dedicate to it?
Uhm. There's no such thing that I dedicate time to it. I start and then I simply cannot stop. I-if until two, if until three in the night, or if until eleven, it depends. Just that part, one mo-! A bit more, just until I get to when something gets revealed, I read until that. So such thing doesn't exist for me that it would be limited.
So are we talking about hours?

Ja, ja. Ja, ja. It has happened that I started to read some series, and uhm, so now I mean, like, let's say, I'm talking about, like, fictional literature series. And uhm, so I was reading until around four in the morning, 'cause, 'cause I felt that no, now I need to finish this, this, 'cause the next one is coming, and that was going to be even more interesting. So uh.

Do you always read in the evening?

Yeah… no, no! Not on the weekends. When on the weekends his father takes the small one, then during the day. Of course. Ja.

Do you do something else simultaneously? Do you do this as a parallel activity, or is it only reading then?

Like put a pot on the stove and such, you-you mean? 'A. Of course. And well, but evidently a text message or something similar comes in, one checks that. But… but it happens that I simply don't know what has happened around me. The older boys come in or talk or something and then I always say sorry boys, but now I must-must. 'A. This part is rather, a b-bit scary because uhm – and indeed there are periods when I intentionally don't borrow books exactly for the reason that it would be good to concentrate on something else at that point. And then uh, uh, I know about myself that once I start t- t- then it's done. And uhm, then I rather don't bring books [from the library].

You feel you get lost in it.

Uh, of course! And really it is so that the guys are adolescents, 'cause of that the occasions when they want to be with me need to be seized. So. But-but the summer break is coming. So. Yes! [English in original] What, what I mind is that the boys don't like to read any more. They used to adore it when we were reading. And it got simply lost for them at some point. I don't know at which point. I don't know when. It's such – torment for them to read the books that they need to, in school. Here, there's no such think any more that obligatory home reading or similar. Not any more.

And what they have to, in what language do they read that?

In Swedish or in English. Hm. Hm. I, too, read in Swedish. Of course. But well uh, I don't know when have I read a Hungarian book for the last time. N-not because there's no possibility. The reading in Swedish of course started when we moved out here. And uh to-partly because I found interesting books and partly u- I feel like I constantly need to improve the Swedish knowledge. Because – exactly by not having Swedish as my mother tongue, and not, well, should I say now that only – but no – I speak it during eight hours daily, but that's not the same. The professional language that we speak every day and the literary language are entirely different. Not to mention that at the workplace, in my case, nearly in, like-l, uh, in imperative sentences. In sentences? I speak with our patients using one-word sentences. So yeah. Also the Swedish use is… very, like, limited. And-and I simply like fiction.

And before you moved had you read Swedish literature? Either in Swedish or in Hungarian.

Uh, probably yes. Just somehow. And don't ask me which, what is the title of the books I'm reading! The other day I asked- seriously! the other day I asked in the library if there's a note somewhere with the books I had borrowed? Because I don't know. I know that it was a plenty but I don't know which ones. Because it doesn't stick. I tell to story gladly. But I don't know who is its author, I don't know what is the title. I remember the cover of the book and the rest – flies away. But probably also because I don't aim at collecting data. But experience. And, a-nd, really, around- two weeks ago when I was there then, too, I asked the woman if it could be found somewhere? And she said that at most by those emails that I receive when I borrow one book or the other. But this was only introduced in January so before that all the data got lost. So- to return to your question, if I had read Swedish literature – definitely. I have even played work by Swedish uh authors. But… In the theatre.

Yes, I just thought to ask whose which work did you play.

Strindberg. Plays. Play-s not, that is an exaggeration th- several. One for sure. I played in one for sure. In the Ezüstlakodalom [no English title].

And what kind of an experience was that?

Every theatre experience was v-very good. Back then. I worked as an actress for two years. In Romania.

A lot of things came up. But you said that the experience is the important, not who wrote it or the title. And what do you feel during reading? Or what kind of an experience is it?, to stick with this phrase.

I love it when the descriptions are crafted in such a very d-d-detailed manner, colourfully. Anything. From nature to personal descriptions, anything. And uhm, I nearly see it in front of myself. So uh, how should I put it? the action part can be exciting in a certain moment, the war part, too, exactly b-because it is described so detailed and colourful a manner and uhm the love part as well. And uh what do I feel? Uh, well uh, that is hard to say. Because uhm not specifically, so in a, in a novel there is not only one kind of emotion popping up. And then a-uh obviously if one is into it then one drifts with the mood and the feelings and the-the with the weather, even. So I, I can get into it so, so much… The last time there was an Australian seaside scene, and then I looked out the window, what do you mean it's snowing? No joking. I'm the same with films. And the, the novels I like because it doesn't show it but my fantasy takes it up and then I picture it. And... uh, from this point...

And is the book stronger than the film, or less strong?

Well, stronger, of course… for me. So feelings? Well what comes at that point, what is depicted at that point. That, and uh, a certain plot or or novel marks me for quite long. E-

emotionally, too, and, as I say, exactly in the visions it presents for us. Uhm, I can't tell which one exactly right now. So not necessarily love and not necessarily death and such things I talk about. It can be a landscape or, or uhm… Recently there was a very tiny detail taken out of the history of a uhm indigenous Australian group and the writer wrote it into casual and – I keep wondering about it until today. So not – I was continuing with the reading of the novel but the novel was about something entirely different, only the introductory part was about this and I keep wondering about it up until today that why hasn't she written a novel on that? That would have been much more exciting. To continue that there. So ja, so the, so the atmosphere if gets me. And it h-has happened, that I have simply read its, I don't know, first three, four chapters and it simply couldn't captivate me, because I didn't get it, what do they want here? And not the language difficulty, but it didn't captivate me. And then I stop reading it.

And this Australian story, for example, did you stop reading that, too?

I stopped reading it, because of lack of time. Not uh not because the story did not interest me, rather because… Simply many things came up in the recent weeks, so. I hope I can continue with it. Allegedly it is the most famous novel of the lady. It would be god to read it. If I have borrowed it twice.

And then you read only from the library?

Uhum. Yes.

And do you have your own library at home?

I don't. Not anymore. I don't. When uhm I was a kid, then, I don't know when, I don't remember but a, like, own pocket money collection period started and I've spent all my money on books. And uh… Then as I grew up and earned money I bought more and more books. And when we were moving out from Hungary to Syria, then I left an enormous library the-there. But like… I don't know. All the fictional novels, from Hungarian fictional novels to poetry books, in the classics' poetry books, a lot of stuff. And my heart was breaking, but I couldn't take it with me. And I made my mind up that never ever was I to buy books again. Everything can be bought from the l- or borrowed from the library or from someone, or now even digitally, although that I dislike – but buying I would not do any more.

Was it because you didn't want to start from scratch again, then?

Exactly. Exactly. And, and those books that meant such dear memories for me, those are gone already. And those I won't be able to purchase again. And since I am living in the fourth country already – and at every switch I needed to leave something there, I needed to give up on something – now it is so much already, you know? And then to start to collect again… And… when do I have to leave it behind again? Naturally I don't plan on moving anywhere now, just th-this was kind of enough already. Done. I don't collect. Books, at least. For the kid I buy! Fairy tale books and picture books. But that's different, that's how should I put it? a

useful object. It becomes obsolete once. Rather many of them have worn out already. But not for myself.

And in which language do you buy those?

The what? For the kid? So far we only have Hungarian books. Except for that one the library gave to the kid when it was born. But… Hungarian books. Hm… I got it from relatives they sent it, brought it. Uhm, I've been to – when? Last year last Easter we've been down to Hungary then I bought masses of books. So now that's enough so far for a while. Then I have an acquaintance whose children are big already and they haven't thrown away the books so it's likely that we'll inherit from there, too.

And what happened to that library?

Hm… I've sold a part of it. Another part I donated. There were books my mother took home. To home in Transylvania. But… well, kind of, that doesn't exist anymore.

[pause]

Yeah, it's not true either that I only read novels because art- articles pop up and uhm I don't know like short stories or uhm poems or such things that either on Facebook or I don't know like someone sends it I read those, too, actually. For example there's a Transylvanian newspaper, periodical, daily, rather. Those articles I usually read the ones that seem to be more interesting or so. So uh. That, that I only read novels is clearly not true.

And so does reading in Hungarian blend in, too?

Sure. Sure. And for the kid, of course, I only read in Hungarian. Even if the book is Swedish, I read it in Hungarian. Ja. I find it important that my children should know Hungarian, speak Hungarian. I only speak to them in Hungarian. So now for example for the older ones there already-already are things that they cannot tell in Hungarian then he tells it in Swedish first and then I tell him in Hungarian that this is what it is. But… I think that they get enough Swedish here I don't need to make up for that.

And in other languages maybe? I don't know if Arabic bleeds into it or I don't know what other languages you speak?

Romanian. Seldom I do one-one, I'm telling you, kind of acquaintance, the article or something they might have liked I check it out but those I don't appreciate or I don't know it doesn't quite interest me- or I don't know I don't really care about Romanian anymore, nor Romania as it is. I don't really care about Hungary, either. Sorry, but no. Okay, now maybe the political situation over there a bit but we're not going to get into that. In Arabic I read, like, what we write to each other with my acquaintances via Messenger so they write to me in Arabic and I answer them in Arabic using not Arabic but Latin letters. So this is what I read in Arabic.

So not literature?

I have never read Arabic literature. Uh, I speak the language but but not the literary language. And that is different entirely, the literary Arabic differs very much, ohh, very, very much. So I suppose that there, I don't want to say something stupid, 70% of the average population doesn't even understand the, the literary Arabic.

So when you lived in Syria then you didn't have a similar experience like now, that to go to the library and read in this language?

Ja, no, no, no. No. Uhm, to the library I've been to twice I guess, there. No, oh no, I couldn't recall why, I've been to, I've been for sure. I remember the first occasion, also that I was with my father-in-law. At the second time I was looking for a dictionary, but… so it wasn't for that I would look for a literary experience for myself. No.

Where were you living in which years?

Sure. From '77 to, uh, I'm gonna say it, to '97, '97? no- until '97 in Romania. Then in '97 I moved to Hungary. We lived there until 200-6. In 2006 I moved to Syria. And in 2009 here from Syria. At the end of 2009, rather in 2010. Since then I live here, uh, Sweden.

In your library, you said, that those books you definitely won't own anymore, did you mean that they cannot be purchased anymore or that exactly those copies that you used to have?

Those copies, right. So uh I used to have a book, I even remember its title. The-the heart. That's its title. I got it for Mikulás [German-originating Hungarian holiday, St. Nicholaus's Day, 6th December] from Mother once. I'm about to cry. It doesn't exist anymore. So. Let's not talk about it.

And other than the library do you borrow or lend from or to someone perhaps?

Hm, the friendship hasn't gotten that far with anyone. No, with the Swedes rather not. How should I put it? I have Swedish friends but… of an entirely different quality, another... context. I have a female colleague that I keep in touch with but from her it's rather fictional – not fictional! uh, readings of professional character. Then no, no, uh… In reality I don't usually speak about literature with anyone 'cause this, this, this is mine. So these experiences I get regarding reading, that's that's that's mine. I don't know if at all – jaa, one or two acquaintances of mine know perhaps how much I read but other than them I don't think this interests one? It doesn't interest me either how much a person reads, actually. No, really not. Maybe this sounds weird in your circle. But… I don't know. With mothers, if I meet, then obviously the child issue is the main topic. Yeah. With friends we gossip, of course. We bitch about men, so. About books? Don't joke, we don't talk. No. So that is mine.

This, that literature, fiction [beautiful literature in Hungarian] how do you define that for yourself?

What's beautiful for me that's beautiful. What's not beautiful that's not. Uh, uh, hah. Literature? Well, everything that is written down, that's literature, isn't it? However dirty it may be, it is literature to a certain degree. Then what makes it fiction and why that author exactly and that work have they chosen to be fiction…? Uhm, yeah…

I'm asking because you said earlier that you rather read fiction.

Y-y-yes, so what, I go to that shelf where t-that's written. So like this, in this sense I mean it. So I don't, no, I nearly said it in Swedish, uh…

By the way, you can say it in Swedish too!

Faktabok. [non-fiction, verbatim: fact book] So not, not uh… facts, like I said, I'm not interested in facts neither do I want to learn programming, but I crave experience. And then it's like renting a film that what kind of a person, what kind of experience a person wants from a film. So I s-say, for me, the goal for me is to have the widest possible perspective and the… my vocabulary, def-definitely is getting richer. And uh, I really rely on my imagination in a lot of things during reading.

So then the fiction [beautiful literature] for you is not, you didn't mean, like, high literature?

What is high literature for example?

I'm just asking, that you don't create such boundaries for yourself?

Right, that I only borrow what, what won three Oscar prizes? No. Hah. No, no. No.

And what do you base the decision on, what to read next?

I always read the brief summary on the back, and if that gets me, then, then I borrow it. But I don't like the, the crime fiction. I don't like the, yeah, the… action might still be able to fit in, but what's stronger so when it's about killing and such, those I don't like. No, it should rather be about nothing or they may be a desperate Malmö girl's suicide attempts, rather than who do we kill where and how many times and how do we investigate it. This, this doesn't attract me.

So you like there to be a message?

Of course, I have read, there was a period, even, when I went to the library saying that I want the newest Swedish writer's, modern writer's book. And uhm well it happened that some of them kind of, kind of, was very difficult to crawl myself through it 'cause it really didn't capture my attention, and I couldn't quite comprehend it, is this really the Swedish fictional literature? But it was said to me that it is a literary work. I read it. Not much, not much of it stuck, that's true. But that's another-

And this, for example, don't you know who it was?

No, no, really not. I remember the cover of the book, but I don't even know the author, nothing. I know a guy from Malmö who writes about Malmö, mostly, and the experiences

there. Oh, uh, I'm telling you, there are these, these periods when I get the idea, come on, now let's try that, I don't know what. I've read Swedish literature from the beginning of the century, too. You've certainly read- or uh- I'm pretty sure that you've read the book series called Kivándorlók [Emigrants] and Bevándorlók [Unto a Good Land]. Utvandrarna, [Emigrants], Invandr- I don't know, I don't know, I'm not sure if you know it in Swedish. Films.

Ivar Lo-Johansson? [I was wrong]

Maybe. Huge books. Uh, the, it's concretely about the great Swedish emigration, around th-the famine and after. And when the big Swedish group arrived to America, the settling there, and the rest. So uhm, to a certain degree I'd like to substitute for what I didn't get because I didn't grow up here, in the Swedish history? Let's say. Because, how much the students learn in school, and how much do they get in detail, I don't know about that. But uhm, I don't want to feel stupid. The-the geography interests me of course and I make up for it so that we go to places. So I myself look it up, what are the sights, and so on. But like I said, the history, and exactly by reading Swedish novels written in different periods, uhm, I do get historical information from that. But, but, I say it once more that I don't want to sit down like that, now I'm going to work my way through a history book. Uh, the thought that masses of years, and-and data are in there that already, already scares me away and from that point it doesn't interest me. On the other hand, if it's described in the form of a novel then that gets me. And history so the-the important part it-itself, what's in there that, that's important, that sticks. Then in which century or what King Edmond 86th was called… he wasn't Edmond, but, ha. So that, that is besides the point for me.

And so this have been interesting you since you moved out and it is still?

Of course, of course. Well uh, I'm nowhere near to have an overview of it all. So starting from the point when I don't know, some Katarin, Katalin tsarina or she wasn't a tsarina, but a wannabe queen, but then she didn't become one, she brought the French artists in to fill her palace with art and from there to the present days actually, actually rather a lot has happened in Sweden. The… the catholic through the let's be Catholics wave to the, the everything. It interests me. But not necessarily so that I should play smart in front of someone but just for the sake of it. And well, when one goes to a museum, there we have gone a lot, too, we go, if something is on the way, because by now all the viewable museums, all the museums understandable by a kid's mind we have been to already in the region, actually one sees a lot there, too. And when, now, this is what I like! that in a book then I meet the character who-se clothes I have seen in the museum. Well that's, that's exceptionally exciting. And I don't like to see it on film because it's such, illusion-deconstructing in my opinion, in most cases.

And where do the authors that you read come from, by the way?

I'm telling you, from Swedish to English, America, Australia. I don't-don't-don't know. I have also read Indian!

So it's no criteria when choosing?

Not, oh, not. No, no. I say, if… if the story gets me, that is written in the background, so written on the cover then, then it's okay.

And other than from the library, do you get information on books from somewhere?

No. Jo! Well, very rarely. The Hungarian Cultural Forum in Lund had recently, not now, back in the Autumn, its 60th anniversary there was this event and then we sit next to each other at the same table, the Ambassador lady, the Hungarian Ambassador and me for a little while and she mentioned some Swedish novel. Or more exactly if it is in Swedish or not I don't know but she mentioned a book that is about Sweden's history, but a novel. And uh, I have already considered to get in touch with the lady and ask which novel she was talking about, because we simply couldn't, couldn't figure it in the library. And Swedish historical novel, historical novel as such there are quite many. So, based on this they couldn't guess what I want. Not at all.

And then where do you read the books?

At home.

At home? Do you only read at home?

Yeah, it's pretty difficult in the car.

And at home do you have a favourite spot perhaps where you usually sit down?

Nä. No. I don't... I don't, I don't. It depends on my mood, or no-not, nothing, wherever I get around to it.

And other than in paper form do you read audio book or e-book maybe?

No. No.

It doesn't even interest you.

Not yet.

We have talked about genres already after all, but if you have a favourite author or a certain favourite book?

…

Yeah. This, this Szív [Heart]. Edmondo de Amici[s], that's the name of the, I don't know if I pronounce his name correctly, an Italian writer, you know him, probably. Uhm, this stick with me since my childhood, for some reason it really, really got me, I've read it in Swedish, too. They found a quite an old edition in some archive, in the library, but they've found it. So uhm, yes this, if I could say that I have a favourite book then this is it. And uhm for a short time, that I read a book, for a short time it remains my favourite book afterwards still in the case of

some books. Then it sinks into oblivion, details might pop up but it has never happened that I would've read a book several times.

Not even this, the Heart?

This! This, except for this.

None except for this.

None except for this, no. Poems! those I do, of course. But…

Who do you like to read poems by, for example?

…

So there not one that would be your favourite?

No, whoever sends it via Messenger. Uhm, I have several acquaintances concerned, or interested in literature. And uh this is not necessary or it doesn't belong to reading but we do such a thing sometimes that some-one writes a poem, and then I answer that with a poem.

So you write, too?

'Aha. I'm not bragging. So no- nothing that would mention. Depends on my mood, I've just seen a picture or I don't know what, frost looking like a flower on the window, whatever, anything. Or it depends on what the other has written. Or uhm with my ex actor colleagues I still keep in touch, right, and what they send sometimes as an attachment. Or uhm like poems that. But… but… I'm telling you, it's entirely secondary who writes it because most of the time we don't even send it to each other that way that with the author or title, just a fragment of a poem connected to that topic. From anyone's poems. And this is exactly what I like the most… when people's brain switches. That not… so that they know it so well, the text is in their minds that there, then it's bzzz! a quote comes. I like that a lot. I'm not saying that we play this but it has happened multiple times already. It's not a game, I'm saying, it's a, it's a uh… it's a lifestyle when one made the poems her own so much and everything. I had a colleague they perform up until this day, won awards multiple times in Transylvania, in Hungary, they usually organise an Ady evening. Well… she has all Ady at her fingertips. So- I wouldn't compete with her ever anyhow. So not even if the Ady book- volumes are in front of me. That, I say because of this that even in that case it doesn't matter who's the author. In reality. Because uh from [unclear] to the French writers it can be anyone. Even, rather, even lyrics become a part of it.

So you don't have a favourite poet?

No.

And what do you think about the Hungarian literature?

The contemporary I absolutely don't know. Unfortunately or, or I don't know maybe it's for the better. That I don't know the lit- now. I don't know anything about the contemporary.

What do you mean by it might be for the better?

I might, get disappointed. I don't know, really, no uh who- … I'm aaafraid that the current political, economical, whatever situation influences people's minds. I would be afraid that my taste has changed so much that I don't get it. R-regarding children's fiction and these, so I mean the quite small children not the, the teenager literature, I can already see a huge difference between what has been fif-teen, let's say fif-teen years ago and now. So these books changed qualitatively.

To a good or a bad direction?

Well the jump in the quality is positive, that's what I see. Then the question is if this, this, how should I put it, like, how good it is considering the environment. Now, if we have arrived, if we have arrived to this point. So seriously do they need to unconditionally thrive towards having this plastic-like paper in the book, 'cause the child cannot tear that? But which rubbish bin are we to put it in afterwards? So here, here it's a problem, here, in Sweden it's a problem. Because this [the paper cup in her hand] I take apart and this goes to plastic and the other to paper. Now, where am I to throw away this book? So uhm… but-but it's good, obviously, because I can leave my child there and he's tearing the book for half an hour and it doesn't fall apart between his hands, it's good from this aspect. But what I've, I've experienced that's such a uh… exactly because these 15 years are missing for me from following the changes in literature and Ii still got stuck with th-th-those nursery rhymes, those little children's poems, children's songs. And now there's an entirely different that's uh… well, I'm just looking, that seriously, what, what is this now? But but but I can't look at the all- the overall picture, either. Because I've brought here way too few books to say that this is what the Hungarian uhm children's fiction looks like today. So I really went for the nursery rhyme books that, in what, there are as many rhymes as possible, so that there would be a lot in one, and uh, pictures, maybe. So uh… the style became rather different, as I've seen. The- as I said the other side of the literature I'm not familiar with.

And the classical Hungarian literature?

Tja. What should I say?

Just what's your opinion on it, does it interest you?

From the same point of view that the Swedish historical literature interests me, yes. But… like, if I try to think back, there was quite a lot of historical quality in the Hungarian literature. It's something, something that I'm quite sorry for, like in poetry, too, that… We push it so hard with these 15th March and 23rd October exactly and whatchamacallit, here, too, that, that this is not what the Hungarian literature is all about that we should always remember the heroes and weep for the past. This-this could easily be- [cut]. I- I simply don't go to 23rd March celebrations anymore. 'Cause I'm sick already of the great pathos what's-its-name, hív a haza, ma- talpra magyarokból [appr. the motherland calls you, on your feet Hungarians],

you know, already? We are not there anymore. This is exactly what, what never ever gets the youth here. I'm not saying that the current Hungarian literature and the current Hungarian poems would get them but I absolutely don't see the, the, that with the help of this we could get them for the Hungarian literature. On the contrary. And when we try to bring modern theatre here, and-and-and perform such an event in a modern set-up, then there's fighting. There's such-such-such violent fighting, here, inside the Hungarian communities 'cause the elderly wants the old and the great hoisting of the flag with the great cockades, and the we, the youngers are like, well really, come on.

So uh yes, the old Hungarian literature r- or the older Hungarian literature had exactly this, in my opinion, this drawback that we had always wanted to shed light on some great historical event. Then the- the beautiful poems and the, the poems that are about other stuff, those, like, didn't really get to the fore. Uh, they exist!, but one who doesn't work with this specifically, doesn't know it exists. Even though I don't know if uh-I I went to school in Romania but I'm telling you, there, there it was the great uh, uh all the heroic poems and things of great moving pathos that constantly came to the fore. Or, or the other extreme the th- these well not stupid but love poems. And between the two extremes, the, the nature poetry, and so on, it was kind of – gone.

And if we'd try to look at them next to each other, the Hungarians living in minority in Romania like Hungarians also living in minority here in Sweden, can they be put next to each other?

No. No, because in Romania we constantly needed to fight for it that we are Hungarians, and we're Hungarians. That part I'm only whispering to you that in Hungary I also needed to fight for it, that I'm Hungarian, not Romanian. And here? no one cares, no one. But like, like I say. What can see on TV and in the papers that th- the whole immigrant-calling is going on here right now, and I don't know, that's, that's a current problem. Yes. But other than that, really no one gives a damn where one comes from. I think you saw too that at the universities, too, and in the shops, too, uh. If they aren't understanding the Swedish you're speaking then they utter themselves in English, anywhere. From the bakery to the McDonald's, anywhere. So uhm… That I want to remain Hungarian here in Sweden that's because I am. For my children, now, actually, if you ask them, my two big children, who they feel themselves to be, they don't know. Because: they were born in Hungary but we never were Hungarian citizens. I had been living in Hungary for eight years in such a situation that I was a Romanian citizen and everyone called me Romanian. Although I've never been Romanian. Well and then we come here, we are already Swedish citizens and from that starting point no one else cares what mother tongue do I speak at home. So uhm I try to maintain it 'cause it's important for me that they have an identity. And more importantly that mine remains to a certain degree. Uhm, but,

here I don't have to fight that I'm Hungarian. If I want to go to a Hungarian event, I go. If I don't, I don't, that's all.

I mean that the relation to literature and history, can that be compared in Romania and among the Hungarians here?

Uh, hm. We've started in the recent years – I say we've started 'cause I used to be in and to a certain degree I'm rather in in several associations' management- And uh-

Can we name these for the recorder?

Of course! One of them is the SOMIT. And uh… I'm not in the management in Lund but I'm rather close nevertheless to, to the organisings and, like, the events, and we actually do talk in the management what could be done, and how could it be done. I'm not in any of the managements right now on purpose but, but it interests me, the Hungarian association as such, the future of the Lund one specifically, and of SOMIT. And uhm… a very big generational gap have started to develop. So there are... very few – now and less and less, the old ones, the '56 Hungarians. They have their own interest, their expectation level. Don't misunderstand level so I'm not showing a scale right now. And then uh there's another generation who uhm doesn't necessarily requires that csárdás [Hungarian folk dance style] mulatozós [literally: having fun, Hungarian low culture music genre]. And then we realised that there's a generation, about to grow up, that won't necessarily be Hungarian anymore. At least not in the same sense as us. And uh the, the Cultural Forum in Lund got the taste of it really, really well, and does it really well, to organise events, performances, activities for small children, children. To get them, to keep them in. But this, in the Swedish relation, considering, like, a whole Sweden, is rather insufficient. So it's a rather small part to the whole. And then this is for example why the, the SOMIT, too, was uhm organising on several levels in the recent years so that the youngsters who are twenty, twenty-five years old at most and below that, get them, too. It's not easy. Not easy, 'cause Hungary and any home country is but a jump today, the Hungarian television is pouring in a wide stream. So the people don't have such a need for Hungarianness. So that kind of Hungarian culture-

[interrupted by an incoming call]

So the youth needs to be drawn in. So that we can yield the Hungarian culture to a certain level. But the question is: what kind of culture do we want to pass on? What part of the culture? This… insisting to be patriotic part, the chest-thumping, tricolour cockade Hungarian or the… or the plum pálinka one or the… so which one? And uhm regarding this the opinions differ quite a bit actually. That, that, and the needs, mostly. So that what's needed, what's necessary.

If you ask me, it's the need to belong somewhere that should develop in everyone, but exactly because we're so overwhelmed by ourselves in the everydays, in the working days that there's

no – not time, that's stupidity that there wouldn't be time because everyone has time for what one wants to have time but uh it's somehow of eighth priority now to belong somewhere. And then uh for me it's important, for example, to feel that I'm a member of a group. Not necessarily 'cause I lead the group, but 'cause I can be there, 'cause, 'cause uh, one can go back there. But to those young today I don't know how we can provide this 'cause in their case – they didn't grow up in the spirit that they need Hungarian company, because exactly for the reason that already in the kindergarten they breathe in Swedish they develop a different, a relationship to the Swedish community. And then here comes what is it that we want or can to give them in order to get them.

Uhm it hurts me that there's absolutely, absolutely no demand for the quality Hungarian culture. Nothing. We don't get it. N-o, now, I say we don't get it because I don't want to hurt anyone by this. But-

By which generation? Are you still talking about the youth or generally?

Now I – mean generally. The elderly doesn't need culture because they, if they come to an event, they want to have fun. Or to go home with tears in their eyes, paper tissue in hand, that we commemorated 23rd October again. Okay, let it be theirs, I wouldn't want to take it away from them. But what I say is that whether, if a quality, decent Hungarian performance is the topic, you cannot even lasso the people. 'Cause, 'cause, like I say, don't, they either don't understand it, or there's no need for it, or 'cause one really shows up to laugh out loud, relax and then it can already get forgotten. So at these, these events like a SOMIT camp for the youth only like, stand-up comedians can be invited. 'Cause everyone wants to party. And then here emerges the question: what kind of Hungarian culture do we pass on? 'Cause this really is not the Hungarian culture by any means. So not its entirety at all. So it belongs in the everydays, for sure. But it's, it's only its tenth, if that much. So the difference is huge in expectations, possibilities.

Then what's in Romania, I don't know. I haven't been living there for twenty years. Twenty-twenty-two.

And what is it that people cannot be lassoed for?

Like I say, a, a performance. A uhm, one that is not a comedy, for example.

Has it happened in the recent years, that you tried to – already invited someone and then not many showed up?

I don't know if anyone dares today to invite a performer.

So it doesn't even make it to the organising phase?

Well this doesn't really relate to the reading habits. But… but…

…

How should I put it briefly, and not get personal. There wer- are differences in the opinions, are until today on the SMOSZ level about what we can, have to bring here. And the question was put into one person's hand so what events should be organised and then the Sas cabaret came- all the time. Once, twice, three times… it's okay. But for years? I'm only saying Sas 'cause, 'cause his name came to my mind. But we're talking about that level, approximately. Now when we celebrated the, I guess, the 20th anniversary of SMOSZ or I don't know how many years, a few years ago, it was a huge, huge event with incredibly good Hungarian performers and performers from regions of Hungarian population – some rooms were echoing the emptiness. 'Cause that had to be paid for already, the entrance there. So again, again, how much money are we willing to uh actually spend on culture? So from the point that the entrance costs 250 crowns then one says that I want to have fun. And I want to enjoy myself. So yeah.

So we discussed that you're a member of LMKF, how often do you go to their events?

The ones at the weekends? Not to the children activities, though. Nja, it's not true that I don't. There are some I can make it to, and there are others where I can't. The older boys already – sometimes I kick them, I literally kick them all the way to be there and stay there. And the small one, when I've already dressed him up in the costume and leave for the costume party then he gets fever, so it's not that easy with him. But of course, yeah. We've been to the Mikulás party, too. So that's why I say that whenever I can I drag them along. Yeah.

And the bigger events that I know of, Csányi, Rúzsa Magdi, Szalóki Ági, who'd been in Copenhagen, or Farkas Berci, how often do you go to the stuff like that? Or is this the more popular category already?

This is the more popular category, exactly. Wow.

And when the graphic artist had an exhibition, a little while after Farkas Berci?

No. No, I haven't been to, I remember these invitations, but that was a rather, how should I put it? trouble, troublesome period. The latest event, that I can state for sure that I've been to, that's when the Fölszállott a páva dance group was here. And then my pregnancy wasn't very good, so, how should I say it, there were all kinds of difficulties in the meantime, so uh I got left out of nearly all events in that time. Uh I wa- jo- but, I've been to what the Lundians organised once, in the last weeks of my pregnancy, there was a performance, I've been to that. But that I would've travelled like for Rúzsa Magdi and them, no. No.

And now that you separated Lund, do you go to Malmö or to the events in Malmö?

Earlier I've been there, too, of course. Of course, I've been there, too, earlier, jaja. Uh, like I said, a kind of 86th Sas version made me fed up, so I said, from this, I, I don't pay for this. So we can watch it on YouTube as many times as we want, I think.

A wider question, so not necessarily only here, do you go to or used to go when you were living in Hungary, to book fairs, book weeks, readings, launches?

There, yes. There, yes. To the International Book Exhibition, I've been to. For sure. But… book launches? A, aa… no, I wouldn't say that. That I've been there very often. But without doubt, when I was living in Hungary, then I used to be closer to literature. So more openly, it wasn't such an experience exclusively for myself. No, no. S- then, then our life was different somehow. We were more social, too.

How often? Like in every month or half year?

Oh, that's a tough question. I don't know because what kind of- do you only mean Hungarian company or Swedes, too, or just generally?

With anyone, I only mean, how much are you interested in the book launch-like events?

Events… Tja, no- I don't know how much it interests me! I'm always scared that I need to buy something, and I have to explain again why I'm not buying books. Uh. Yes. Really. Hah. No… I know that there's, like, a big International Book Fair, and such, but I don't go. No uh… I don't want to break my heart. That there are so many good- valuable books, and I find ten crowns to much to spend on them, but this, this is part of it, too, obviously.

And to the theatre, concert, cinema, how often do you go, either in Hungary or here?

Uh, I'd put that in reversed order. Cinema. Regarding my life here, it's rather cinema, because, right… 'cause we go with the boys easier. Concert…

And how often do you do that?

How rarely? Let's put it that way. No, it's not easy to draw the attention of my boys. M-my second son, he's like… interested in everything and in nothing – really. My older son, he… I drag him along, and then if he doesn't enjoy it, he stares at his shoe in the worst case. So approximately at this level.

…

Every half year? Should I say? Once? Certainly at least once in a half year, we go to the cinema for some screening. But it's going to change now, because I'm going to go more with the small one! They can be persuaded to such things, still. Concert, that's like, well. I don't know. The concert is rather a question of money. That rather. I've been there, too. But… that's again such a thing that I'd rather spend 1,000 crowns on a Bocelli concert than to travel to a Rúzsa Magdi to Gothenburg. Uh, I have nothing against Rúzsa Magdi, it's just how I prioritise. 'A.

And what's your opinion on the theatre here?

Nothing, 'cause I don't go.

And if you go home, then do you go to the theatre at home? Or, I don't really know what do you call home.

Transylvania. The last time I've been home was in 2012. A-and I went to the theatre. If I can, I always go. Ja. I have ex colleagues in many places. So the, the relation to several theatres is also more personal to a certain extent. So uh… Here I haven't been, uh... because it didn't happen. No! Of course I've been! Not specifically to the theatre, but like a opera- Last summer I went with my friend, we surprised each other with an opera performance here in Lund, it was Romeo and Juliet, to our big surprise Romeo was also played by a woman. But… Yeah! So if this can be called theatre. But I absolutely, absolutely wouldn't say that there's something, the, e, nothing, so if I had the chance to go to some very good theatre performance then I wouldn't have the chance to leave the kid with someone. So it's complicated, well. And I feel like this rather stresses me. But I watch Swedish theatre on TV.

And you said that you were home in 2012, but you mentioned something like you go to Hungary, on the other hand?

A. No, we don't regularly go there either, there are no habits! I was there. It happened like that. I was there.

So it's not a regular thing?

In my life the only regularity is that I have to go to bed every evening and the small one wakes up at half past five in the morning, but other than that, nothing.

Are you interested in books perhaps whose author lived in diaspora?

… Hm. I don't know.

Among the Russians Nabokov was such a writer, contemporary ones, Ishiguro, Murakami, among Hungarians Márai?

I don't know how much importance this holds for me, I'd say, no- it's absolutely not the author or their be- origins that interest me but what they write.

And if the story was about that?

Nja. Probably if I knew it I wouldn't take it [from the shelf]. Because… I'm afraid it would be too painful. Or… yeah. No, it's more than probable that I wouldn't, wouldn't take it from the shelf and wouldn't take it home.

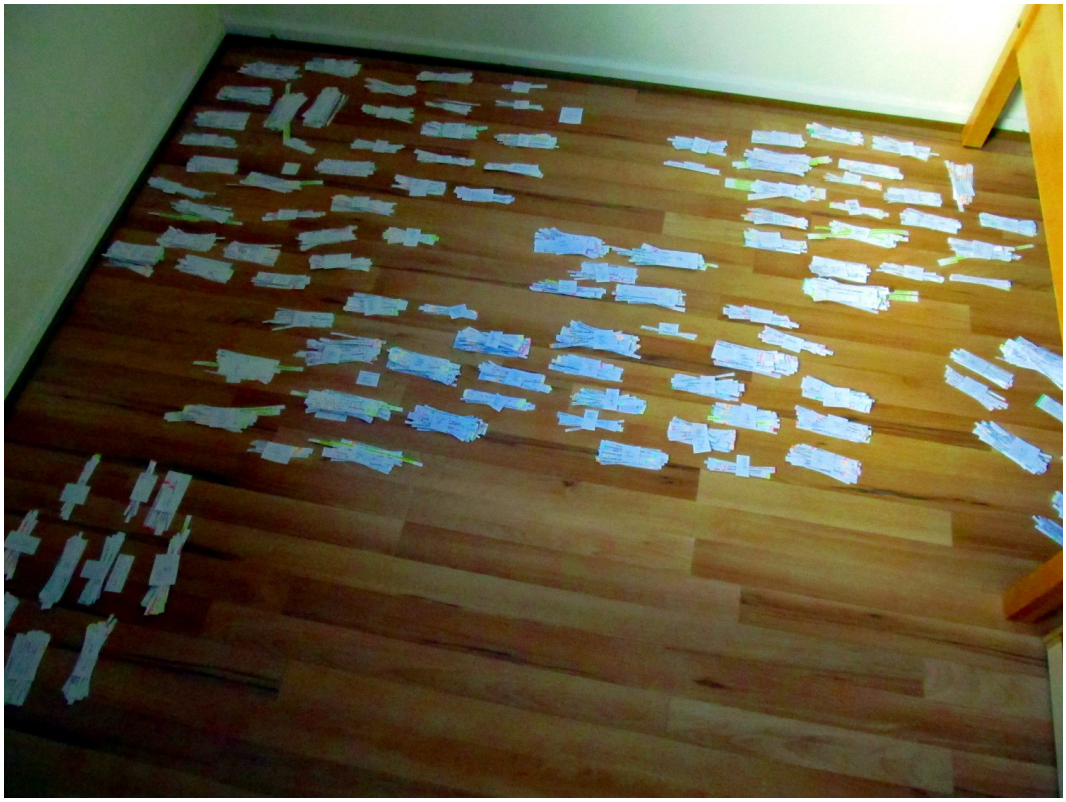
And if it would be about emigrating Hungarians specifically?

Then definitely not. No. Because everyone's story is so unique, and I'm not so… in my opinion – without having read any of them – most of these are about pain and bitterness. And there's enough of those in the everydays, I don't want to read to suck more of it into myself.

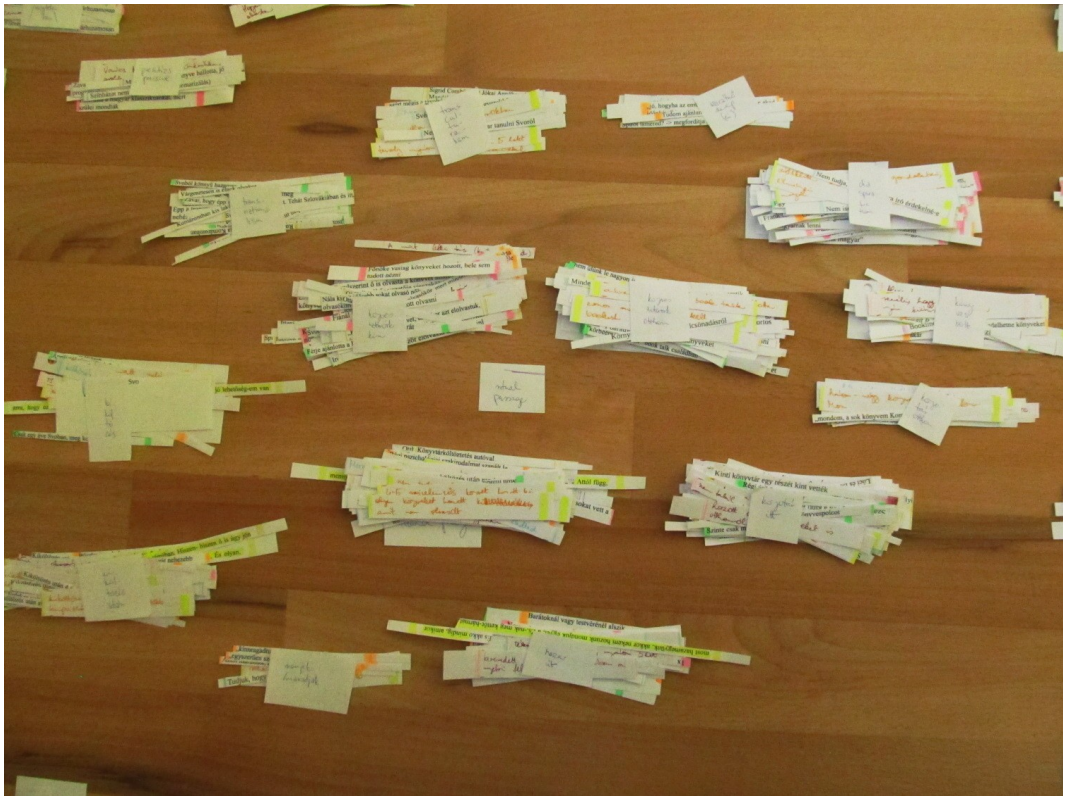
So do you know about such books, that emigrating Hungarians have written?

No, but, but I can imagine wh- what they write about. So obviously not about how tasty the ice cream in McDonald's is. Rather, how much we needed to save so that we can buy it. So, I'm putting it this way because we're here right now, but you know what I mean.

D. Themes, categories, codes

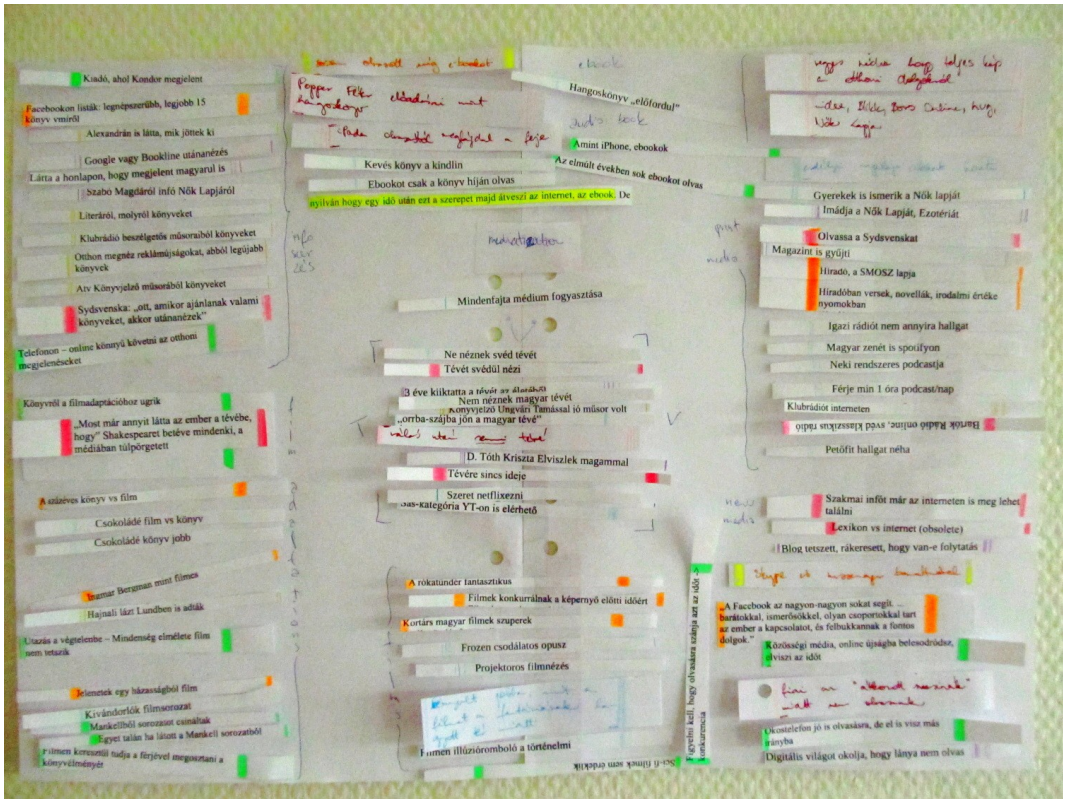


Visualisation of the themes.

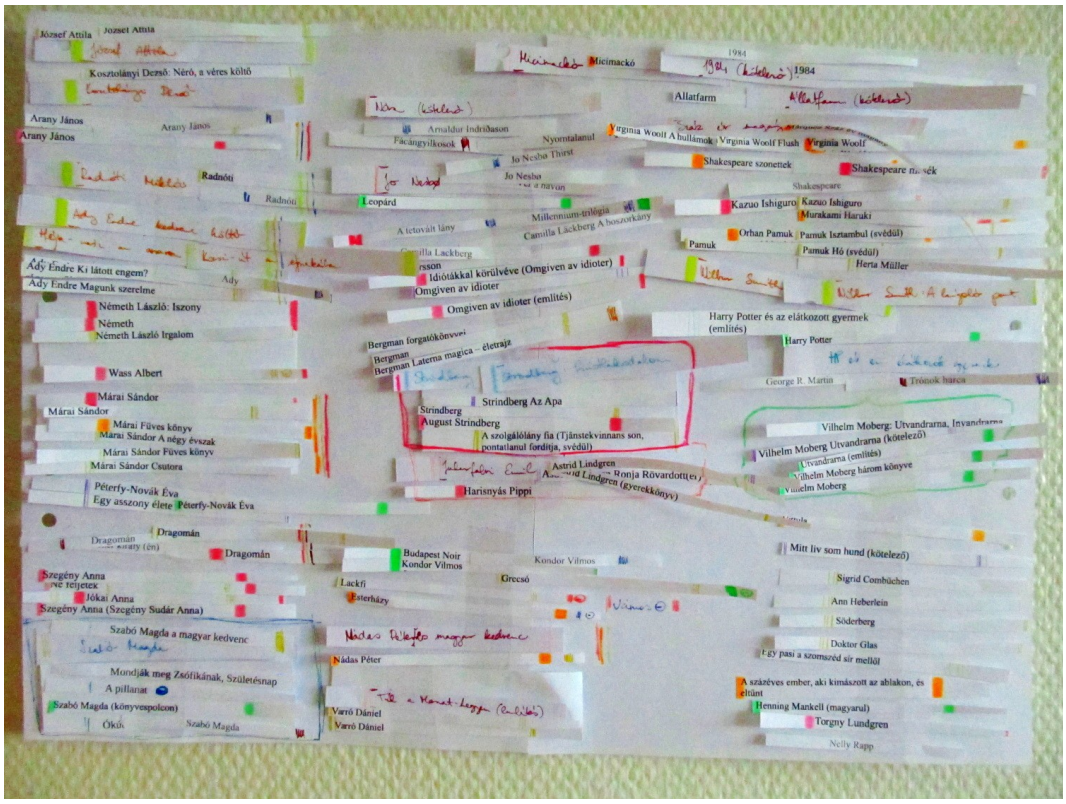


Colour-coded codes forming categories in the rite of passage theme.

E. Mind maps and tables

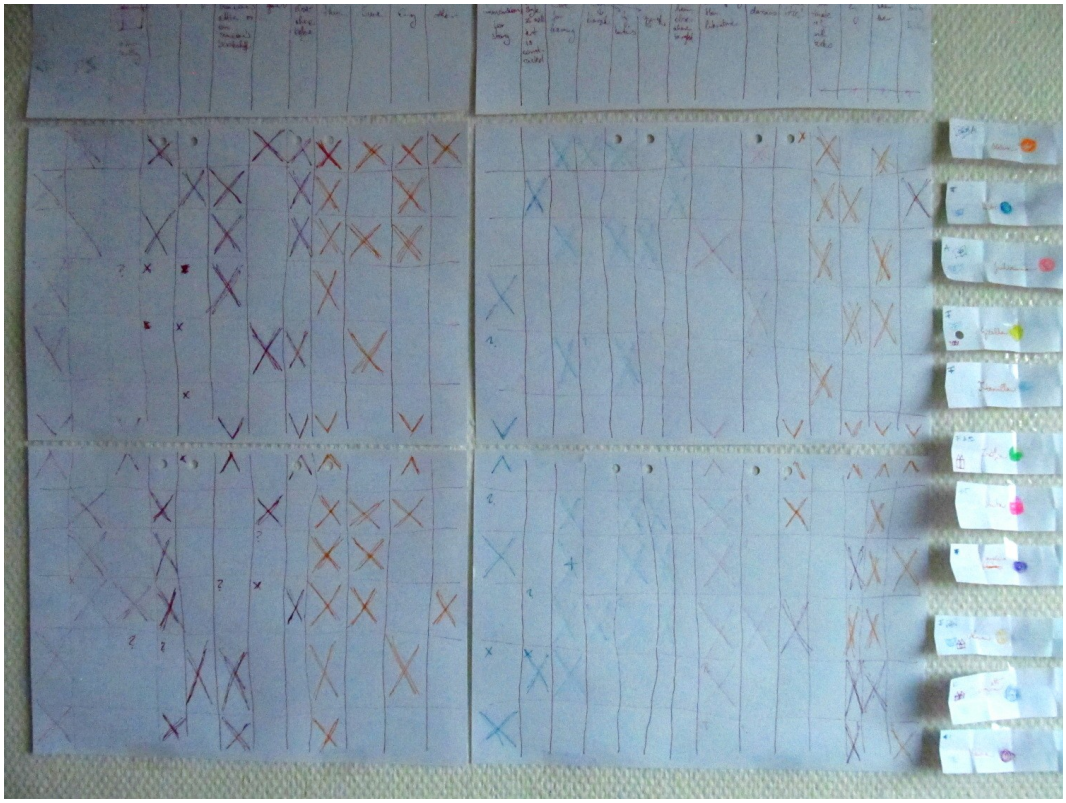


A map arranged based on codes about different media in the mediatization category.



Authors and titles mentioned at least twice arranged according to country of origin and more

specific ingroups.



A table seeking correlations.

i Miklós Radnóti (1909-1944), Hungarian Jewish poet. His life was heavily affected by the discriminative regulations in the upheaval of anti-Semitism before and during WWII. He was forced into a labour camp and died during a forced march, but kept writing until his last days, therefore, his poems are reflecting these experiences.

ii Imre Kertész (1929-2016), Hungarian novelist, Nobel Prize in Literature winner. Kertész is famous for his work on the Holocaust, partly based on his own experiences.

iii Titles are mentioned in the language the works were read in the thesis. English translation in brackets, if published.

iv Astrid Lindgren (1907-2002), Swedish author, most famous of her books centring around Pippi Longstocking.

v Imre Kertész (1929-2016), Hungarian novelist, Nobel Prize in Literature winner. Kertész is famous for his work on the Holocaust, partly based on his own experiences.

vi August Strindberg (1849-1912), Swedish poet, novelist and playwright, part of the 'Modern Breakthrough'.

vii Vilhelm Moberg (1898-1973), Swedish novelist and journalist. Seen as a 'ploretarian writer' by some, because he wrote about the folk in the countryside.

viii Torgny Lindgren (1938-2017), Swedish poet and novelist, a member of the Swedish Academy from 1991. Västerbotten, where he grew up, played a central role in his body of work.

ix Ann Heberlein (1970-), Swedish author and politician based in Lund.

x Sigrid Combüchen, (1942-), Swedish author and journalist.

xi Thomas Erikson (1956-), Swedish consultant, lecturer and author.

xii This came as no surprise, since Hungarian is a small language and around two times more foreign books are published every year (based on the Central Statistical Bureau's data) than books written by Hungarian editors. Furthermore, the country has always only been on the periphery of Western art movements, and thus traditionally the aristocracy or 'reading class' followed German and French literature that is even today mirrored in the canon yielded to any Hungarian thanks to the educational system, therefore, world literature is valued and also provides a richer corpus. Especially in genres like fantasy, romance and crime foreign variety is stronger and richer, while science fiction has a strong tradition like in other post-Soviet countries.

xiii Endre Ady (1877-1919), modernist poet of the Nyugat generation. His strong opinions on Hungary's position relative to the West and his heavily symbolic poetic style did not always grant him popularity, but he is part of the high school curriculum in the 21st century.

xiv György Spiró (1946-), Hungarian writer. He got awarded the Kossuth Prize in 2006.

xv Krisztina Tóth (1967-), Hungarian poet and novelist.

xvi Magda Szabó (1917-2007), Hungarian poet and novelist. Szabó was not allowed to get published between 1949 and 1958, but got awarded the József Attila prize after the regime's change of mind in 1959. Her young adult novels are still largely associated with the Socialist era.

xvii György Dragomán (1973-), Hungarian novelist. He was born in Marosvásárhely, Transylvania, Romania as was pointed out by several interviewees.

xviii Péter Nádas (1942-), Hungarian novelist. He got awarded the Kossuth Prize in 1992.

xix Zsófia recalled the number of the books incorrectly, there are in fact four books in the series by Moberg: Utvandrarna (The Emigrants), Invandrarna (Unto a Good Land), Nybyggarna (The Settlers), Sista brevet till

Sverige (The Last Letter Home). The novels played a central role in Swedish literature, especially for the previous generation, and were adapted to the screen.

[xx] Hjalmar Söderberg (1869-1941), Swedish novelist and playwright. Part of the Modern Breakthrough like Strindberg, but less known abroad. His novel Doktor Glas (1905) inhabits a cult book status.

[xxi] Henning Mankell (1948-2015), Swedish novelist, author of the Wallander crime series that take place in Scania. The Wallander books have been dramatised several times, one Swedish TV series was running from 2005 to 2014, and the BBC's adaptation 2008-2016.