Snow and Window: Archetypes of Imagination

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This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
This dissertation, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. No portion of it has been published anywhere or submitted for another degree. Where secondary sources have been used, this is acknowledged in the text, and full details are given in the bibliography. I certify that the dissertation does not exceed 80,000 words, excluding the Appendix and the Bibliography.

Anita R. Klujber
'Poetry is the subject of the poem, 
From this the poem issues and 
To this returns.'

(Wallace Stevens)
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Abstract

Within the field of comparative literature, this dissertation investigates how the paired symbols of snow and window illuminate certain imaginative processes such as the threshold experience of creative and receptive acts. This work is an intertextual analysis and synthesis of self-allusive poems by Boris Pasternak, Ted Hughes, Gyula Illyés, and Gennady Aygi. Poems by other authors are also discussed briefly, or linked to the main texts through epigraphs.

Contemplation of snow through a window is the central theme of the focused texts. Snowflakes falling on the window pane allegorically represent words on the page, and the observation of this process is a metaphor for the ongoing creative and receptive acts. Meditative contemplation of nature and of the processes of writing and reading are portrayed as means for an introspective self-discovery of imagination. The threshold experience of observing the creative mind as it is externalised in nature and embodied in the poetic text involves a deconstructive reversal and overlapping of the external and the internal worlds, and other opposites. The complex mental process of watching the internal in what is external is comparable to the fusion of the optical effects of transparency and reflection on a window. The works analysed reveal that poems can function both as ‘windows’ displaying external phenomena, and as symbolic ‘mirrors’ in which one can catch a glimpse of the working of imagination at the very act of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation.

The methodological scope of this work is primarily concerned with the intertextual connective function of recurring poetic images (symbols). The metaphorical symbol is a central embodiment of imagination. By focusing on recurring symbols, one can establish links between literary texts and between various imaginative systems (such as literature, mythology, music and visual arts) on a primarily aesthetic basis, without recourse to extra-literary criteria. Northrop Frye’s Theory of Symbols, Jungian archetypal criticism, Iurii Lotman’s models of communication, and more recent theoretical works by Harold Bloom, Michael Riffaterre, Owen Miller, Roland Barthes, Jonathan Culler, Jacques Derrida, and other scholars serve as the conceptual framework for this approach.

Five main intertextual relations are explored. The recurring metaphorical image is shown to be (1) a semantic link between works of the same author, (2) a manifestation of transpersonal features of imagination, (3) a trace of one author’s text in the work of another, (4) a means for establishing hypothetical dialogues between texts which are not related by their authors, and (5) a potential connective between literature and other imaginative systems,
such as mythology and visual art. These comparative analyses reveal that intertextual approaches are not only tools for uncovering and enriching the meanings of literary texts; they are also means for constructing order in one's otherwise chaotic corpus of reading, and they enable one to gain knowledge about the nature of imagination. The thematic and methodological aspects of the dissertation thus complement and support each other.

Introduction

1. Thematic and methodological aims

The investigation of the metaphorical treatment of the paired symbols of snow and window serves as a means for illuminating some of the basic features of imaginative thought. The metaphorical symbol is a primary vehicle for the imagination to manifest itself in a verbal-visual form. Any metaphorical symbol, regardless of its specific associations, is an incarnation of imagination. This work examines poetic symbols that are associated with imagination itself. The investigation of poetic illustrations of creative processes is carried out, moreover, by comparative methods which also manifest the working of imagination. The main methodological purpose of the work is to show that the metaphorical symbol (image, motif) is a potential integrating unit of verbal art: it permits one to systematise and synthesise one's literary experience on a purely imaginative ground, without recourse to extra-literary criteria.¹ The examination of two connective images is intended to strengthen the argument that the literary symbol can function as a semantic link between various texts, and that a self-contained meaning-system can be constructed within the literary universe by interrelating works through their shared symbol or symbols.

Various intertextual methods will be employed to demonstrate processes of imaginative meaning-construction. The construction of an intertextual network is an aesthetic task; it is one form of imaginative activity. One can establish an ordered verbal complexity by interrelating poems through their common symbols merely for the aesthetic purpose of creating unity within one's corpus of reading, which is relative chaos. The validity of this imaginative synthesis is confirmed by the poems analysed. These poems are self-referential texts, or they can be read as such. Since they are rich in intertextual echoes, their self-allusiveness reaches beyond their textual boundaries; it reflects a dialogic network of poems. These intertextually self-referential works convey the sense that poetry can be written and read for the sake of imaginative experience, the mental satisfaction gained from creating and comprehending a coherent verbal unit, which is a semantic mirror of an intertextual dialogic network. This is in keeping with Shelley's argument that poetry is 'the expression of the

imagination’, and that various literary texts are portions in one great ‘cyclic poem written by Time’ (Shelley 1988, 277, 287, 279-280).

The emphasis on the relevance of purely aesthetic, intrinsic approaches is not meant to be an implication that the only true purpose of writing and reading literature is an exploration of imaginative textual features and creative processes. Intrinsic approaches (such as intertextuality, structuralism, comparative poetics, stylistics, cognitive poetics) and extrinsic, applied criticism (including historical, social, political, and gender theories) complement, rather than contradict, each other.

This work is not intended to be a catalogue of the large variety of themes which have been associated with the images of snow and window; neither is it concerned with cultural, historical differences in the treatment of these symbols, or with any non-aesthetic aspects of verbal art, such as psychology, biography, or history. The thesis is an attempt to shed light on certain imaginative processes, and to demonstrate a unifying reading process, a primarily aesthetic comparative method, which is open for further application. Numerous recurring symbols, patterns, and themes are scattered in the universe of literature, waiting for readers to construct new syntheses. The reader can open up the boundaries of texts, introduce them to each other, and even set them communicating with each other, thereby enriching their meanings.

2. Brief survey of the structural organisation of material

The first chapter introduces the theoretical background and the basic terminology. Northrop Frye’s Theory of Symbols and related issues of intertextuality will be discussed. The concrete analyses following the first chapter are intended to demonstrate the validity and practical usefulness of the approaches outlined in the first chapter. Each analytical chapter focuses on a particular text and intertextual method. The works analysed require that, apart from the dominant comparative technique employed, other methods also be used, although with less emphasis.

In the first analytical part (Chapter Two), Boris Pasternak’s Снег идет will be examined in a mytho-poetic context. The main methodological purpose of this chapter is to show that the poetic symbol allows one to establish links between literature and another imaginative-metaphorical system of thought, mythology. The investigation of the poetic treatment of snow, window, and other symbols will enable us to take further the well-known observation that metaphorical poetic logic has many affinities with mythological thought. It will be shown that mytho-poetic links can exist even if they are not obvious at first sight. Personal poetic associations and innovative metaphors are often rooted in mythological tradition and they revitalise this tradition. This demonstrates that metaphorical imagination is capable of an endless renewal, while nevertheless maintaining the continuity of human experience.

This chapter also shows that a focus on recurring images is a rewarding method for establishing cross-references and unity between works of the same author, and between works of different authors. Those texts in which a motif is explicit can productively inform other works in which the connotations of the same motif are concealed.

The third chapter is concerned with coincidental symbolic-thematic parallels between works written by authors of different cultural backgrounds. Ted Hughes’s The Thought-Fox and Gyula Illyés’s Újévi ablak (New Year’s Window) will be compared to each other and to other poems. The fact that poets often invent the same metaphors independently from each other shows that certain imaginative thought-forms and mental contents are deeply rooted in the human mind. Archetypal affinities, such as the widespread use of radiation images for illustrating creativity, or the frequent use of symbols of the border for expressing threshold experiences, shed light on common aspects of poetic imagination.

The fourth chapter demonstrates ‘genuine’ intertextual dialogues, as distinguished from symbolic-thematic parallels between literary texts. Gennady Aygi’s Cнег is the focused text of this chapter, and it is related to poems by other authors. The comparative analysis of Aygi’s poem shows that an investigation of recurring symbols can guide the reader in discovering potential literary sources and influences. In enigmatic works of literature, an apparently insignificant or unintelligible image is often revealed to be the trace of another author’s text, either a casual echo, or a deliberate allusion: a hidden key, which can unlock the latent meanings of the focused text. Apart from this reconstructive method, a more innovative strategy, reader-created intertextuality is also employed. The reader can establish dialogues between texts which are not related by their authors. In examining one work of literature in the light of another, the reader can fill semantic gaps, uncover hidden meanings, generate new

1 Геннадий Айги’s name is transliterated as ‘Gennady Aygi’ (as in published English translations) throughout this work, except in his Russian-only texts listed in the Bibliography, where we follow the Library of Congress transliteration system applied elsewhere in the thesis (‘Геннадий Айги’). In transliterating Носов Георгий’s and Осин Михаил’s name, familiar anglicised spellings are used, e.g. ‘Joseph Brodsky’ and ‘Osip Mandelstam’. In referring to English translations or studies of Russian authors’ works, the translator’s transliteration is adopted, e.g. Meletinsky (instead of Meletinskii) and Vyacheslav (instead of Viacheslav).
meanings, and construct synthetic images. The reader’s voiceless voice thus merges with the voices of polyphonic dialogues.\(^3\)

Several poems are related to the focused texts, either through comparative analyses or as short epigraphs. The epigraphs show the possibility of constructing further intertextual links.

In the last part of the dissertation, a summary is given, which focuses on the thematic aspects of the work, to counterbalance the methodological nature of this introductory synopsis.

The dissertation has a spiralling thematic structure. This is an inevitable consequence of the comparative scope and the recursive development of arguments. A comparative investigation of literary symbols is not a linear mental process leading from causes to effects. It is a perspective open to many directions. This multidirectional, synthetic perspective is a characteristic feature of imagination. One way of expressing in the linear organisation of language a dynamic network of semantic relationships and an expanding dialogue of literary texts is to construct a spiralling internal structure, in which a certain amount of repetition is unavoidable. Without repetition one cannot re-create the ritual aspect of comparative reading, the mental satisfaction gained in rediscovering the same ideas in the form of the same images in various contexts over and over again. It is impossible to talk about recurrence in literature without referring back to ideas which have already been expounded. The apparent redundancy of repetitions conceals the fact that whenever an idea is repeated, it appears in a new perspective, on a higher or deeper semantic level; it carries a richer meaning, and it sheds new light on what has been read before. The spiralling, recursive development of ideas illustrates the growing semantic density of literary texts and their intertextual networks. Repetitions are inescapable since they naturally follow from the discovery of the semantic-symbolic internal rhythm of literature, and they manifest what Frye calls the ritual aspect of symbolic communication (1990, 105). The repetitions substantiate and enrich certain concepts which come up in different contexts. They serve to open up new perspectives and to prolong the reader’s reflection, thereby promoting a thorough assimilation of complex issues.

Occasionally, the terms ‘snow-poem’, ‘window-poem’, or ‘snow/window-poem’ will be used for the sake of conciseness, when referring to a text in which the symbol of snow, or window, or both appear. The expressions ‘indoors’ and ‘outdoors’ should always be visualised as ‘inwindows’ and ‘outwindows’.

Since this work is mainly concerned with imaginative processes which are inaccessible for the logocentric, reasoning consciousness, it strongly relies on the reader’s cooperation. Emotional involvement, an open-minded, slow reading, and a reflective, meditative attitude are inevitable for experiencing and profoundly understanding those imaginative processes which defy description and explanation.

\(^3\) Occasionally, the musical term ‘polyphony’ is borrowed in this work to refer to the simultaneity of various poetic voices. When used in the intertextual domain, polyphony can be contrasted to the musical term ‘monophony’, which refers to a single melodic line. M. Bakhtin gave the word ‘polyphony’ a different literary connotation. He focuses on the contrapuntal aspect of polyphony to express a non-hierarchical structure of narrative voices. The Bakhtinian use of polyphony is the opposite of musical ‘homophony’, wherein one part dominates while the others act as accompaniment.
Chapter One

Theoretical Background

1. Northrop Frye’s Ethical Criticism: Theory of Symbols

‘A snowflake is probably quite unconscious of forming a crystal, but what it does may be worth study even if we are willing to leave its inner mental processes alone’, wrote Northrop Frye in Anatomy of Criticism, as a metaphorical illustration of a constructive interpretation of literary texts (1990, 89). Frye uses the image of the snowflake as a metaphor for the crystalline unity of individual texts. He suggests that the semantic and structural integrity of a literary text is not merely the author’s creation.4 A work of literature can acquire meanings that have not been implied by its author, and it can be perceived as a crystalline verbal structure, even if it has not deliberately been shaped as such. To see a snowflake as a regular hexagonal crystal is a mental experience similar to the recognition of the ordered complexity of a work of art. The discovery of a structure is, in a sense, the construction of an order, because it is partly by the achievement of the observer’s mental processes that a verbal or visual entity is perceived as a systematically arranged, coherent unit. Even the most perfectly shaped poem may seem a chaotic mixture of words unless the reader is capable of perceiving it as an orderly verbal pattern, comparable to a snow-crystal. Promoting the interpreter’s active involvement in the construction of meaning is one of the most productive achievements of modern art.

Frye’s snowflake-metaphor can represent not only the semantic-structural integrity of a single text, but it can also symbolise Frye’s concept of literature as a potentially unified imaginative system. The cognitive act of synthetic apprehension, which allows one to grasp the integrity and internal coherence of a literary text, is operative in a larger, intertextual discursive space. Frye asserts that a comparative approach enables one to comprehend a unified pattern of images and ideas in the universe of literature. The reader can interrelate literary texts, even though they are ‘unconscious of forming a crystal’, a larger co-ordinated whole. The process of crystal formation is, then, a metaphor for the synthetic aspects of creative imagination, which enable us to comprehend the semantic and structural coherence of individual texts and of larger, intertextual networks. These implications of Frye’s snowflake-metaphor constitute the conceptual basis of the dissertation.

The mechanism of intratextual and intertextual ‘crystal formation’ will be demonstrated through a comparative investigation of the literary symbols of snow and window. The examination of these symbols is particularly revealing because, in the texts analysed, they function as metaphors for a meditative, imaginative engagement with literary texts during creative and receptive acts. Some of the methodological aspects of the work are thus embedded in its theme.

For the comparative study of metaphorical images, Frye’s Ethical Criticism: Theory of Symbols (1990, 71-128, first published in 1957) will be used as the main conceptual guideline. At times, the approach proposed by Frye will be combined with selected methods of myth criticism and intertextuality. Before showing points of contact between these approaches, I should outline those aspects of Frye’s work that are most relevant to the topic of this dissertation.

Theory of Symbols is the second essay in Frye’s Anatomy of Criticism, which is a controversial, encyclopaedic study of literature. Frye’s unique system of thought is difficult to categorise. In books about the trends of literary theory, Anatomy of Criticism is generally discussed within myth criticism.5 This work inspired a great amount of meta-critical responses. However, it is seldom used for practical application, perhaps because it is extremely original, and because it is mainly concerned with the autonomy of literary criticism, as distinguished from recently more popular applied and interdisciplinary approaches.6 For Frye, the main concern of criticism is not an indirect investigation of non-literary contexts, but ‘the systematizing of literary symbolism’ (1990, 71). This dissertation is intended to demonstrate that Frye’s Theory of Symbols provides illuminating insights into the study of poetic symbols and literary imagination. This essay, like the whole of Anatomy of Criticism,

4 Frye explicitly argues against intentional fallacy in The Responsibilities of the Critic: ‘What the critic tries to do is to lead us from what poets and prophets meant, or thought they meant, to the inner structure of what they said’ (1976b, 812).


6 By reference to Italo Calvino’s and Umberto Eco’s critical thought, Peter Bondanella emphasises the significance of aesthetic approaches, thereby supporting Frye’s theory: ‘Much contemporary literary theory employs literature as a springboard for discussions of highly charged ideological questions concerning class, gender, race, colonialism, power, and the like. All literature, both the great masterpieces and the less great pulp-fictional works, can certainly be read as a reflection of these problems. But race, class, gender, and power are not specifically literary topics, and they most certainly are not aesthetic categories. That is to say, they are not concerned with the literary-near of a work of imaginative literature.’ (1997, 163)
is a theoretical system derived from literature itself. It is a systematic study, comprising five, gradually broadening contexts for the interpretation of literary symbols. These contexts, or phases, as Frye calls them, represent five different methods of analysing symbolic meaning. Frye proposes to combine the five phases into a comprehensive theory of meaning, which can contribute to the study of the semantic richness of literary images.

At the beginning of *Theory of Symbols*, Frye introduces the term ‘symbol’. He defines it broadly as ‘any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention. A word, a phrase, or an image used with some kind of special reference (which is what a symbol is usually taken to mean) are all symbols when they are distinguishable elements in critical analysis’ (1990, 71).

Frye combines the literal and descriptive phases in the ‘formal phase’, where he calls the symbol an ‘image’: ‘An image is not merely a verbal replica of an external object, but any multiple meanings arising from the medieval exegetical theory of the four senses of Scripture. The polysemy of a symbol is nothing other than the possibility of placing it in a succession of contexts or networks of relations which define its “phases”. (1983, 7)’

Frye calls the first context of symbolic meaning the ‘literal phase’. In this context, the direction of reading is inward (centripetal). Accordingly, the literary text is viewed as a self-contained ‘hypothetical verbal structure’ (1990, 71). The symbol in this context is a ‘motif’, a connective unit within the structural-verbal pattern of the work. The motif takes a hypothetical (imaginative) meaning, which is suggested by its immediate verbal context.

A text-centred, centripetal reading of a work of literature is always combined with an outward, centrifugal semantic direction. Frye relates this approach to the ‘descriptive phase’.

In the descriptive context, the work is treated in its representational aspect. The symbol in this phase is a ‘sign’, a verbal unit referring to extratextual reality, in accordance with its lexical meaning.

The attention during reading moves simultaneously in a centripetal and in a centrifugal direction. In other words, inside and outside, inward and outward meanings, literal and descriptive phases interact. ‘Whenever we read anything’, Frye says, ‘we have two things to do with the words: fit them together, and relate them separately to what they mean in the world outside the book’ (1976b, 797). Frye argues that these directions are present in varying proportion in different texts and in different approaches:

At a certain point [of reading] we may come to feel that what the words mean, outside the book, is taking precedence over their relations to each other. That is, we have a verbal structure which is meant to be set up against something else, to which it is related as an imitation to an original. [...] On the other hand, we may come to feel that in what we are reading the interrelations of the words come first, that we have a verbal structure set up for its own sake. In that case it is a secondary verbal imitation of action and thought, and belongs to the group that we call poetic or literary. (1976b, 798)

The descriptive meaning of a symbol is generally combined with other semantic layers in a literary text. For instance, the word ‘snow’ can be used in its dictionary meaning referring to a half-frozen form of precipitation, and, at the same time, can invite associations with death, purity, or anything which is suggested by the actual verbal context. When snow refers to icy rain, it is a sign. When it represents a metaphorical or allegorical meaning, it is a motif. The sign-values and the motif-values of a symbol are commonly referred to as denotative and connotative meanings, respectively.

Frye combines the literal and descriptive phases in the ‘formal phase’, where he calls the symbol an ‘image’: ‘An image is not merely a verbal replica of an external object, but any unit of a verbal structure seen as part of a total pattern or rhythm’ (1963, 14). The image unites the sign-values and the motif-values of a symbol. For example, snow is an image, when it refers at once to half-frozen rain and to a human meaning. The formal phase is an allegorical context, where the image is associated with a theme or an idea. The relationship between the image and the corresponding idea can be indicated by the author more or less directly. Accordingly, in the formal phase Frye distinguishes different degrees of allegorical explicitness within a scale ranging from overtly allegorical to anti-allegorical use of an image.

In the next, ‘mythical phase’ of symbolism, the literary text is examined comparatively, in relation to other works of literature. The symbol in this phase is called an ‘archetype’. Frye treats the archetype as a literary category, an imaginative construct, as
distinguished from Jung’s psychological-existential notion of the archetype. Structural, the archetype is a ‘communicable unit’ [..., a typical, recurring image’ (1990, 99). Semantically, ‘an archetypal symbol is usually a natural object with a human meaning’ (1990, 113). Frye often treats the archetype in a broader sense. In this work, we use the term in a restricted sense, combining its structural and semantic aspects as follows: when an image is recurrently associated with a particular human meaning in literature, it is called an archetype. There is not, however, a one-to-one relationship between an image and the meaning attached to it. In commenting on Frye’s notion of the archetype, Robert Denham emphasizes that ‘archetypes are complex variables, which means that a given archetype may symbolize a variety of objects, ideas or emotions’ (1978, 41). Since a symbol can be associated with several recurrently used meanings, it can take part in various archetypal groups, each group representing a particular meaning. It is possible to link various semantic groups of an archetype into a larger, more diverse archetypal network, which Frye calls an ‘associative cluster’:

Archetypally [...] the symbol is an associative cluster [...] The rose in Dante’s Paradiso and the rose in Yeats’s early lyrics are identified with different things, but both stand for all roses - all poetic roses, of course, not all botanic ones. Archetypal metaphor thus involves the use of what has been called the concrete universal, the individual identified with its class, Wordsworth’s ‘tree, of many, one’. (1990, 124)

One way of systematizing literary experience is to select relatable archetypal groups and find a framework that holds their apparently disparate meanings together. For instance, one can unify two archetypal groups of snow-poems. Works in which snow is associated with death can be linked to works in which snow represents creative imagination since the creative mental state is often described in literature as a death-like threshold-experience, a mental state of self-forgetting. Contradictory meanings of an archetype can also be co-ordinated imaginatively. One can establish an associative cluster of poems in which snow is a metaphor for the creative word, and poems in which snow represents silence, because word and silence mutually interpenetrate each other in poetic discourse.

The connection of a human meaning to an archetypal image can be more or less obvious, more or less widespread. Accordingly, Frye establishes a scale ranging from conventional to unfamiliar associations of a symbol. The difference between this scale of archetypal obviousness (belonging to the mythical phase) and the scale of allegorical explicitness (introduced in the formal phase) is that the former is concerned with how obvious the association between an archetype and its connotative meaning is, whereas the latter is concerned with how clearly an author indicates the associative meaning of an image. For instance, snow is immediately associated with death due to the obvious allegorical correspondence between the seasons and the cycle of life. This conventional semantic link has a high degree of archetypal obviousness. At the same time, the semantic link between snow and death may have a low degree of allegorical explicitness if the author conceals this association, pretending that he is describing nature.

The structural role of archetypal analysis is a controversial aspect of Frye’s criticism. At times, he claims that archetypal criticism is ‘an endless series of free associations, perhaps suggestive, perhaps even tantalising, but never creating a real structure’ (1990, 118). More frequently, however, he claims that the recovery of the recurrence of archetypal meanings produces a systematic view of literature:

The archetype connects one poem with another and thereby helps to unify and integrate our literary experience. (1990, 99)

If there is no total structure of literature, and no intelligible form to criticism as a whole, then there is no such thing as an archetype. But every student of literature has, whether consciously or not, picked up thousands of resemblances, analogies and parables in his reading where there is no question of direct transmission. (1970, 59)

Paul Ricoeur interprets Frye’s archetypal criticism as a ‘way of understanding symbols from the point of view of an order that goes beyond individual creations’ (1983, 9). Ricoeur emphasizes that ‘to talk about an archetype is to presuppose that the order of words is not pure chaos, that it has its own recurrences’ (1983, 9).
Frye regards recurrence as the basic organising principle of any structure. In *Archetypes of Literature*, he points out that ‘the temporal aspect of recurrence is rhythm, its spatial aspect is pattern’ (1963, 14). An attention to archetypal recurrence entails a crystallisation of a semantic network within the mytho-poetic universe. Recurrence of archetypal meaning constitutes an intertextual structure (rhythm and pattern), and it represents the continuity of human experience. Frye defines archetypal repetition as a ‘recurrent act of symbolic communication: in other words a ritual’ (1990, 104). Ricoeur explains Frye’s idea as follows:

> If an archetype designates a stable conventional order, this order can be established in terms of its correspondence to the order of nature and its recurrences – day and night, the seasons, the years, life and death. To see the order of nature as imitated by a corresponding order of words is a perfectly legitimate enterprise, if we know how to construct it on the basis of the mimetic conception that is itself built upon the hypothetical conception of the symbol. [...] In the last analysis, we must choose between an endless labyrinth or a total form [of the literary universe]. (1983, 9-10).

The scope of this dissertation covers only a very small section of the literary universe. Therefore, I do not aim at drawing conclusions about the quality of literature as a whole: whether it is a total schematic unity or a labyrinthine discursive space. Literature as a whole cannot be encompassed by our knowledge, so it would be too daring to make statements about its total nature and internal construction. But it does not mean that one cannot hypothesise about it. Throughout his writings, Frye maintains that literature is an order of words. There is, however, an inconsistency in his view as to whether the ‘total schematic order’ (1976a, 118) exists as an objective reality or as a result of the critic’s co-ordinating perception. An orderly pattern within literature does not prove the order of the whole, but it suggests that it is possible to see the orderly part as a microstructural reflection of the whole. The dilemma as to whether a semantic network exhibiting transpersonal aspects of imagination is located out there in literature and imposes a systematising attitude on the reader, or the pattern emerges from the reader’s mind as an externalisation of his or her imaginative and ordering processes, is a semantic analogue of the epistemological dilemma as to whether the structure of the universe shapes our mental processes or our mental processes are responsible for how we see the universe. Only by leaving these questions open can we view the universe and the world of literature as a discursive space where relative chaos and order alternate. The fusion of these opposites is a characteristic act of imaginative perception.

Unlike individual texts, which, in most cases, have been shaped by their authors as coherent verbal units, the universe of literature, and one’s repertoire of literary texts, are not designed in an orderly manner. There is, however, a tendency in the creative human mind for seeing structures where none are pre-established. It is, then, a valid method to construct dialogues between literary texts which have not been related by their authors. Frye makes it clear that ‘most archetypes have to be established by critical inspection alone’ (1990, 101). Explaining Frye’s archetypal criticism, A. C. Hamilton notes:

> The term [archetype] allows him [Frye] to connect literary works not by the usual critical countercs of source, tradition, influence, shared ideas, or general assumptions, which at most yield abstract and very selective groupings, but by those particular analogies, ranging from motifs to plot structures, which organize all literary works into one body of literature. (1990, 108)

The comparative methods of the mythical phase (such as a construction of archetypal groups of texts and associative clusters of archetypal groups) are means to systematise literary experience on a purely imaginative ground. This critical attitude is maintained in the broadest context of symbolic meaning, the ‘anagogic phase’:

> For the anagogic phase of criticism, in which reading is not aesthetic contemplation of a literary work but an active imaginative involvement in it, Frye appeals to Blake, for whom the artist’s aim is ‘not to be appreciated or admired, but to transfer to others the imaginative habit and energy of his mind’. (Hamilton 1990, 115-116, quotes Frye’s *The Road of Excess*, 1974, 161)

Anagogic symbolic meanings arise from an extensive synthetic apprehension which reaches beyond the co-ordination of different meanings of a particular symbol. Anagogic criticism is concerned with synthesising different images on the basis of their shared or relatable meanings. For instance, the radial images of snow, window, light, eye, and so on, can be synthesised in an intertextual perspective. An even more global synthetic mental operation is required to recognise the all-inclusive semantic quality of certain images. For instance, when
the symbol of snow is treated as a metaphor for the creative word and for poetic silence, it absorbs all spoken and unspoken semantic units of the literary universe. ‘Anagogically’, Frye says, ‘the symbol is a monad, all symbols being united into a single infinite and eternal verbal symbol’ (1990, 121). With reference to the anagogic phase, Ricoeur notes: ‘By a monad Frye means imaginative experience’s capacity to attain totality in terms of some centre’ (1983, 10). The symbol is a monad if its immediate poetic context allows it to integrate different images, and absorb various, even contradictory, meanings that were attributed to it elsewhere, either in a literary or in a mythological context. A monad represents the ‘unity of various things’ (1990, 125). ‘This is the only type of image’, Frye says, ‘that illustrates the process of identifying two independent forms’ (1990, 124-125). ‘The monad is a center of archetypes’, (1990, 118), ‘a unit of total poetic experience’, (1965, 19), ‘a universal symbol comparable to the universal creative word which is all words’ (1990, 125). The monad is a ‘microcosm of all literature’, ‘a centre of the literary universe’, ‘a complete organization of archetypes’ (1990, 121).12

Without using the term ‘monad’, in Expanding Eyes Frye describes the cognitive process of synthetic intertextual apprehension, which constitutes the basis of the anagogic view:

I am providing a kind of resonance for literary experience, a third dimension, so to speak, in which the work we are experiencing draws strength and power from everything else we have read or may still read. (1976a, 118-119)

What Frye describes as ‘a kind of resonance for literary experience’ is comparable to what recent critics call intertextual echoes. In Theory of Symbols, Frye posits two main techniques of perceiving intertextual resonances. In the mythical phase, an archetypal systematisation takes place, which is directed outwards from the text to other works of literature. This diverging (centrifugal) direction of intertextual meaning-construction is combined with the converging (centripetal) perspective of the anagogic co-ordination of meaning. The anagogic view is directed inwards, from the broad scope of the mytho-poetic universe to the text which, in some way or another, reflects other texts and the whole literary universe within itself.

13 Frye uses the term ‘monad’ both for all-inclusive symbols and all-embracing texts. The logic underlying this apparent inconsistency will be explained in the analysis of Pasternak’s Cossacks. In affinity with Frye, Bakhtin points out that the text is ‘a unique monad that in itself reflects all texts (within the bounds) of a given sphere’ (1986, 105).

14 This definition is comparable to Losev’s description of the symbol as a generative unit, containing an infinite associative chain of individual representations (Losev 1971). Lotman (1984) has a similar definition of the symbol. He points out that a particular symbolic image, such as ‘Petersburg’, carries associations which accrued to it over time. The symbol, containing layer upon layer of meanings, is an embodiment of semantic memory.
Beside the figurative elements of simile and metaphor, Frye discusses more conspicuous, thematic relations between myth and literature. Thematic integration of myth into literature takes place in the mythical and anagogic phases, where texts enter into dialogues with one another:

The search for archetypes is a kind of literary anthropology, concerned with the way that literature is informed by pre-literary categories such as ritual, myth and folk tale. (1963, 12)

The last [anagogic] phase of symbolism will still be concerned, as the previous one was, with the mythopoeic aspect of literature, but myth in its narrower and more technical sense of fictions and themes relating to divine or quasi-divine beings and powers. (1990, 116)

In addition to the rhetorical and thematic links between myth and literature, Frye discusses some of their structural affinities. He understands recurrence, the organising principle of the mythical phase, to be a literary manifestation of mytho-ritual structures. Frank Kermode notes that ‘Frye is concerned only with the fact of recurrence, though to explain that recurrence, it is necessary to descend to the primitive, mythical level of seasonal recurrence and rebirth’ (1962, 69). Frye compares recurrence in nature to the hidden internal rhythm of literature. This parallel implies that the literary universe is a transformed mirror-image of the cosmos:

Rhythm, recurrent movement, is deeply founded on the natural cycle, and everything in nature that we think of as having some analogy with works of art, like the flower, or the bird’s song, grows out of a profound synchronisation between an organism and the rhythms of its environment, especially that of the solar year. (1963, 14, and 1990, 106)

It has been mentioned before that Frye sees an affinity between the discovery of archetypal repetitions in literature and the ancient practice of ritual, which is based on interiorising the rhythm of the macrocosm. Frye suggests that the word ‘ritual’ is not only an ontological concept related to the mythological world-view, but it can also be used as an aesthetic term referring to ‘a recurrent act of symbolic communication’ (1990, 195). Frye maintains that literature is structurally similar to myth and ritual, since it is an imitation of the order of nature:

The order of nature as a whole [is] imitated by a corresponding order of words. (1990, 96)

[We are lacking a] literary term which corresponds to the word ‘mythology’. We find it hard to conceive of literature as an order of words, as a unified imaginative system that can be studied as a whole by criticism. If we had such a conception, we could really see that literature as a whole provides a framework or context for every work of literature, just as a fully developed mythology provides a framework or context for each of its myths. Further, because mythology and literature occupy the same verbal space, so to speak, the framework or context of every work of literature can be found in mythology as well, when its literary tradition is understood. It is relatively easy to see the place of myth in a mythology, and one of the main uses of myth

criticism is to enable us to understand the corresponding place that a work of literature has in the context of literature as a whole. (1963, 36-37)

The existence of mythopoeic poetry implies a unity of all imaginative experience which contains all literature, and which would naturally lead to a search for unifying factors of such experience. (1965, 18)

Concluding the survey of Frye’s Theory of Symbols, let us return to the starting point of this chapter. In the formal phase, Frye used the symbol of the snowflake as a metaphor for an imaginative perception of the orderly internal pattern of literary texts. The mythical and anagogic phases expand the field of synthetic apprehension from individual texts to a wider intertextual landscape. The crystalline semantic-structural integrity of a single text is perceived as a mirror of the potential order of the literary universe. This idea is based on the assumption that the relational cognitive operation which governs text-centred analyses is operative in the broader perspective of comparative literary studies. The expansion of the field of synthetic apprehension can be symbolised by a concentric diagram, which depicts a circle embedded in a larger circle. Frye brings together these two aesthetic horizons not only in Theory of Symbols, but also in other essays. In The Archetypes of Literature, he writes:

It is right that the first effort of critical apprehension should take the form of a rhetorical or structural analysis of a work of art. But a purely structural approach has the same limitation in criticism that it has in biology. In itself it is simply a discrete series of analyses based on the mere existence of the literary structure, without developing any explanation of how the structure came to be what it was and what its nearest relatives are. (1963, 9)

In Criticism, Visible and Invisible, Frye draws a parallel between text-centred and intertextual scopes of relational cognitive processes:

Poet and critic alike struggle to unify and to relate; the critic, in particular, struggles to demonstrate the unity of a work of literature he is studying and to relate it to its context in literature. (1974, 89)

Frye’s commitment to a primarily imaginative critical perspective allows him to maintain the self-sufficiency of the literary text while not denying its openness to other works of literature. In affinity with Frye, Michael Riffaterre claims that the mental faculty of synthetic apprehension is operative within the boundaries of single texts as well as in a wider intertextual field. He introduces the terms ‘intertextual reading’ and ‘retroactive reading’, which correspond, respectively, to intertextual and contextual meaning, and to Frye’s intertextual (i.e. mythic and anagogic) and literal phases:

There are two possible (by no means mutually exclusive) ways of reading comparatively, reading so that comparison forces itself upon the reader’s attention: retroactive reading and
intertextual reading. Retrospective reading occurs at every step of normal (from page top to bottom) reading, growing more important as more textual space is covered. Working forward from beginning to end, the reader keeps reviewing and comparing backward, recognizing that some segments of the text are variations upon the same structure(s). Intertextual reading is the perception of similar comparabilities from text to text, or it is the assumption that such comparing must be done even if there is no intertext at hand wherein to find comparabilities. In the latter case, the text holds clues (such as formal and semantic gaps) to a complementary intertext lying in wait somewhere. (1980, 626)

The affinity between intratextual and intertextual construction of a semantic unity can, indeed, be symbolised by the snowflake. The hexagonal snow-crystal has a mandalic pattern; it can be enclosed in a circle, and its central part is normally a microstructural replica of the whole hexagonal-circular pattern. In the analytical chapters, it will be shown that the symbol of the snowflake is a potential monadic centre, into which the main thematic and methodological aspects of this work converge. Before exploring the poetic treatment of this image, it is necessary to elaborate on the theoretical background. The following part will show that Frye’s ideas reflect a wider critical context, as the centre of a snowflake reflects the pattern of the whole crystal.

2. Frye’s participation in critical dialogues about intertextuality

‘One poem proves another and the whole’ (from Wallace Stevens’s A Primitive like an Orb)

In The Anxiety of Influence, Harold Bloom noted that ‘criticism is the art of knowing the hidden roads that go from poem to poem’ (1997, 96). There are many possible ways in which one text can be linked to another. Frye suggested that it is especially revealing to examine literary symbols in a comparative manner, since they can function as ‘signposts’ directing the reader on his or her journey in the apparently labyrinthine world of literature.

Without using the word ‘intertextuality’, Frye contributed to this branch of comparative literature. Anatomy of Criticism is an intertextual model of literature, a dialogic system of literary modes, symbols, and genres, which has been derived from a wide comparative perspective. Tzvetan Todorov pointed out that Frye’s Anatomy of Criticism is related to intertextuality:

[According to Frye], critical compartmentalization is a mistaken approach, for, when we read a literary work, we are always reading much more than a single one; we enter into communication with literary memory – our own, that of the author, that of the work itself; the works we have already read, and even those we have not read, are present in our reading, and every text is a palimpsest. [...] [For Frye], all textuality is intertextuality. (1988, 91, 96)

Throughout Anatomy of Criticism, Frye gives examples of what recent literary critics call intertextual dialogues. In the ‘mythical phase’ of Theory of Symbols, he asserts:

Any poem may be examined, not only as an imitation of nature, but as an imitation of other poems. Virgil discovered, according to Pope, that following nature was ultimately the same thing as following Homer. (1990, 95-96)

In agreement with Frye, Harold Bloom writes:

Poems are not things but only words that refer to other words, and those words refer to still other words, and so on into the densely overpopulated world of literary language. Any poem is an inter-poem, and any reading of a poem is an inter-reading. (1976, 2-3)

Frye explains the intertextual nature of literary texts as follows:

The new poem […] is born into an already existing order of words, and is typical of the structure of poetry to which it is attached. […] Human beings do not create [ex nihilo]. […] The new poem manifests something that was already latent in the order of words. […] Poetry can only be made out of other poems, novels out of other novels. Literature shapes itself, and is not shaped externally. (1990, 97)

Roland Barthes develops a similar idea in The Death of the Author:

A text […] is a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture. […] The writer can only imitate a gesture that is always anterior, never original. His only power is to mix writings, to counter the ones with the others, in such a way as never to rest on any of them. (1977, 146)

Frye’s, Bloom’s, and Barthes’s argument about the inherently intertextual nature of works of literature is in keeping with one of the major concerns of deconstruction, the fallacy of fixed origin. Assimilating and synthesising Freud’s, Nietzsche’s, Peirce’s, and other scholars’ theories, Jacques Derrida, the leading theorist of deconstruction, argues that language, meaning, experience, the psyche, and presence are trace-structures constituted by ‘differance’ (difference – deferment). In the never-ending process of signification, there is no fixed origin, no absolute presence, because what is immediately present is always already inhabited by the trace of what is absent. That is to say, utterances always already bear the traces of other utterances. Derrida uses the terms ‘trace’ and ‘differance’ to refer to the presence of absence and the absence of presence, the non-presence of the other imprinted within the structure of here-and-now:
The trace is in fact the absolute origin of sense in general. Which amounts to saying [...] that there is no absolute origin of sense in general. The trace is the difference which opens appearance and signification. (1976, 65)

The presence-absence structure of the trace will be discussed later in more detail in relation to the intertextual connective and to the concept of intertextual identity. The above brief survey of relevant aspects of deconstruction is sufficient here to show that this discipline significantly supports the argument that literature is a trace-structure, where there is no fixed origin. Jonathan Culler further supports this idea in *Presupposition and Intertextuality*:

Utterances of texts are never moments of origin because they depend on the prior existence of codes and conventions, and it is the nature of codes to be always already in existence, to have lost origins. (1976, 1382)

One is interested in conventions which govern the production and interpretation of character, of plot structure, of thematic synthesis, of symbolic condensation and displacement. In all these cases there are no moments of authority and points of origin except those which are retrospectively designated as origins and which, therefore, can be shown to derive from the series for which they are constituted as origin. (1976, 1394)

In *Literary Competence*, Culler argues that literary conventions are always already there in the text because they are 'the implicit knowledge of the reader [and also] the implicit knowledge of authors' (1980, 104). In support of this argument, Culler refers to Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*:

The theory of literature of which Frye speaks can be regarded as the 'grammar' of literary competence which readers [and authors] have assimilated but of which they may not be consciously aware. (1980, 109)

By reference to Paul Valéry's *Oeuvres*, Culler develops an argument which can also be read as if it were a comment on certain parts of Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*:

This is a firm assertion of the intertextual nature of literature accompanied by a recognition that to talk about the constitutive function of the experience of other texts should involve not a concentration on particular precursor texts but on conventions, systems of combination, a logic of composition. (1976, 1395)

Culler's arguments are particularly relevant in this thesis, where we are dealing with the intertextual function of one of the main literary devices, the metaphorical image (symbol). Anticipating Culler, Frye noted that the dialogical nature of literary texts is partly due to their links with literary conventions:

Once we think of a poem in relation to other poems, as a unit of poetry, we can see that the study of genres has to be founded on the study of convention. (1990, 96)

The problem of convention is the problem of how art can be communicable, for literature is clearly as much a technique of communication as assertive verbal structures are. [...] As the archetype is the communicable symbol, archetypal criticism is primarily concerned with literature as [...] a mode of communication. By the study of conventions and genres, it attempts to fit poems into the body of poetry as a whole. (1990, 99)

If we do not accept the archetypal or conventional element in the imagery that links one poem with another, it is impossible to get any systematic mental training out of the reading of literature alone. (1990, 100)

What Frye calls 'a systematic mental training' gained from 'the reading of literature alone', is essentially the same as an intertextual perspective, whereby images and patterns are viewed as parts of one's imaginative experience as a whole. Frye's 'archetypal criticism' is, then, a branch of intertextuality, concerned with the connective function of literary images and other recurring figures. Frye makes this point clear in *Three Meanings of Symbolism*:

Whenever we have archetypal symbolism, we pass from the question 'what does this symbol, sea or tree or serpent or character, mean in this work of art?' to the question 'what does it mean in my imaginative comprehension of such things as a whole?' Thus the presence of archetypal symbolism makes the individual poem, not its own object, but a phase of imaginative experience. (1965, 18)

Our knowledge of the order of vision is [...] organized by certain integrating symbols which, by their recurrence in major poetry, enable us to bind our imaginative comprehension together. (1965, 17)

Apart from metaphorical imagery, Frye discusses other types of convention which can operate as intertextual connectives. These are summarised by Tzvetan Todorov:

[Frye's] internal approach [...] situates the work in the context appropriate to it, that of literary tradition (for us, that of the West), with its multiple conventions – its generic forms, its narrative schemas, its ways of signifying, and its sets of stereotyped images – which pass almost intact from one work to another; to these sets Frye gives the name 'archetypes', using the word broadly and in a purely literary sense (so that it is more or less equivalent to Curtius's topos). (1988, 91)

The affinities between Frye's, Bloom's, Culler's, Barthes's, and Derrida's thought show that, in spite of his relatively marginal position in literary criticism, Frye contributed to a potential theoretical dialogue about the inherently intertextual nature of literary texts. Many other issues of intertextuality are embedded in Frye's thought in an embryonic form, and have

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15 In emphasising the vitality of conventional elements in literature, neither Frye, nor Culler implies that there is no radical change or innovation in the canon. Their main point is not that all literature is conventional, but that one's familiarity with literary tradition helps one to deal with difficult texts. Culler makes this clear in *Literary Competence*: "a willingness to think of literature as an institution composed of a variety of interpretive operations makes one more open to the most challenging and innovatory texts, which are precisely those that are difficult to process according to received modes of understanding. An awareness of the assumptions on which one proceeds, an ability to make explicit what one is attempting to do, makes it easier to see where and how the text resists one's attempts to make sense of it" (1980, 116).
been re-invented and elaborated by more influential critics. Concerning archetypal criticism, Frye draws a distinction between author-established and reader-created intertextual links:

In archetypal criticism, the poet’s conscious knowledge is considered only so far as the poet may allude to or imitate other poets (‘sources’) or make a deliberate use of a convention. Beyond that, the poet’s control over his poem stops with the poem. Only the archetypal critic can be concerned with its relationship to the rest of literature. (1990, 100)

A similar idea is formulated by Culler in Presupposition and Intertextuality:

To read is to place a work in a discursive space, relating it to other texts and to the codes of that space, and writing itself is a similar activity: a taking up of a position in a discursive space. (1976, 1382-1383)

Bakhtin drew a distinction between real and hypothetical dialogues. This distinction is applicable in the literary domain. Bakhtin’s category of ‘real, externally visible dialogic relations’ includes authorial intertextual dialogues. His concepts of ‘semantic convergence’ and ‘zero-degree dialogic relations’ are comparable to reader-created, hypothetical intertextual links:

Real dialogue (daily conversation, scientific discussion, political debate, and so forth). The relations among rejoinders of such dialogues are a simpler and more transparently visible kind of dialogic relations. But dialogic relations, of course, do not in any way coincide with relations among rejoinders of real dialogue – they are much broader, more diverse, and more complex. Two utterances, separated from one another both in time and in space, knowing nothing of one another, when they are compared semantically, reveal dialogic relations if there is any kind of semantic convergence between them (if only a partially shared theme, point of view, and so forth). [...] The opposite example, which is widely used in comedy, is the situation of a dialogue between two deaf people, where the real dialogic contact is understood but where there is no kind of semantic contact between the rejoinders (nor any imaginable contact). Zero-degree dialogic relations. Here the viewpoint of a third person is revealed in the dialogue (one who does not participate in the dialogue, but understands it). The understanding of an entire utterance is always dialogic. (1986, 124)

Frye shares Bakhtin’s idea that a third person (the reader) is free to establish links between works which have no external dialogic relations:

Most archetypes have to be established by critical inspection alone. (1990, 101)

Expanding images into conventional archetypes of literature is a process that takes place unconsciously in our reading. A symbol like the sea or the heath cannot remain with Conrad or Hardy: it is bound to expand over many works into an archetypal symbol of literature as a whole. Moby Dick cannot remain in Melville’s novel: he is absorbed into our imaginative experience of leviathans and dragons of the deep from the Old Testament onward. (1990, 100)

An “archetype” for Frye is any significant pattern that a reader recognizes in a secular literary work on the basis of his responsiveness to our dual heritage of [Classical and Biblical] myth. (Russell, 1998, xiii)

Frye’s argument that the reader can act as the agent of intertextual relations is further developed by Roland Barthes, Owen Miller, Harold Bloom, Michael Riffaterre, and other critics. In The Death of the Author, Barthes (over)emphasises the reader’s role:

A text is made of multiple writings [...]. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text’s unity lies not in its origin but in its destination. Yet this destination cannot any longer be personal: the reader is without history, biography, psychology; he is simply that someone who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted. (1977, 148)

Barthes’s claims that a text’s unity is the product of the reader’s intertextual comprehension, and that the historical-cultural background and the personality of the reader do not affect his or her comparative interpretations, are debatable. Barthes goes as far as announcing ‘the death of the author’, which is another disputable idea.16

The birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author. (1977, 148)

By reference to Barthes, Owen Miller summarises the basic assumption of a reader-oriented approach:

It is the reader who establishes a relationship between a focused text and its intertext, and forges its intertextual identity. (1985, 21)

Harold Bloom also claims that intertextual links may result from the reader’s engagement with literary texts:

Antithetical criticism must begin by denying both tautology and reduction, a denial best delivered by the assertion that the meaning of a poem can only be a poem, but another poem – a poem not itself. And not a poem chosen with total arbitrariness, but any central poem by an indubitable precursor, even if the ephebe never read that poem. Source study is wholly irrelevant here; we are dealing with primal words, but antithetical meanings, and an ephebe’s best misinterpretations may well be of poems he has never read. (1997, 70)

Culler comments on Bloom’s argument as follows:

To read an author’s poem as a misinterpretation of a poem which he never read is simply an act of interpretation, a decision by the critic that valuable meaning and energy will be produced if one poem is applied to the other. (1976, 1387)

The assertion of the reader’s freedom in constructing intertextual dialogues leads us back to the fallacy of fixed origin. As a mediator between works, the reader may discover literary

16 Boym (1991) discusses the complex relations between a writer’s work and his biography, showing that Barthes’s notion of ‘the death of the author’ is an exaggeration. Deliberate intertextual allusions also indicate that the reader cannot gain tyranny over the text; he or she has to take into account the author’s choices. Barthes’s concept that the reader is an impersonal medium ‘without history, biography, psychology’ (1977, 148) contradicts the findings of the psychoanalytic literary critic Norman N. Holland. (Holland 1968, 1973, 1975).
traces of one text in another. These traces are echoes of relevant fragments from the reader's repertoire. The focused text can activate the reader's literary memory, and it is irrelevant whether the author knew the appropriate subtexts of his work. The possibility of reader-created intertextual associations is one of the main causes of what Bloom calls 'the anxiety of influence'. In what follows, we will investigate how Bloom's concept of inevitable belatedness has been anticipated by Frye.

In Anatomy of Criticism, Frye discusses the relation between originality and literary convention. His main argument is that it is not possible to escape convention. Even the most revolutionary works can be traced to tradition, as, for example, a number of avant-garde artefacts to primitivism.

The possession of originality cannot make an artist unconventional; it drives him further into convention, obeying the law of the art itself, which seeks constantly to reshape itself from its own depths. (1990, 132)

Any serious study of literature soon shows that the real difference between the original and the imitative poet is simply that the former is more profoundly imitative. Originality returns to the origins of literature, as radicalism returns to its roots. (1990, 97-98)

We have to distinguish between explicitly conventionalized literature, such as Lycidas, where the poet himself starts us off by referring to Theocritus, Virgil, Renaissance pastorals, and the Bible, and literature which conceals or ignores its conventional links. (Frye 1990, 101)

The resistance of modern writers to having their archetypes 'spotted,' so to speak, is due to a natural anxiety to keep them as versatile as possible, not pinned down exclusively to one interpretation. [...] The stream of literature, however, like any other stream, seeks the easiest channels first: the poet who uses the expected associations will communicate more rapidly. At one extreme of literature we have the pure convention. [...] At the other extreme we have the pure variable, where there is a deliberate attempt at novelty or unfamiliarity, and consequently a disguising or complicating of archetypes. [...] However, extremes meet, as Coleridge said, and anti-conventional poetry soon becomes a convention. [...] Between these extreme points conventions vary from the most explicit to the most indirect. (1990, 102-103)

Similar ideas are formulated by Bloom in The Anxiety of Influence:

Poetic history, in this book's argument, is held to be indistinguishable from poetic influence, since strong poets make that history by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves. (1997, 5)

Poetic influence need not make poets less original; as often it makes them more original, though not therefore necessarily better. The profundities of poetic influence cannot be reduced to source-study, to the history of ideas, to the patterning of images. (1997, 7)

Everything that makes up this book [...] intends to be part of a unified meditation on the melancholy of the creative mind's desperate insistence upon priority. (1997, 13)

Strong poems are always omens of resurrection. The dead may or may not return, but their voice comes alive, paradoxically never by mere imitation, but in the agonistic misprision performed upon powerful forerunners by only the most gifted of their successors. (1997, xiv)

Bloom uses the term 'poetic misprision' for an author's creative misreading and rewriting of another author's text. In so doing, the imitating poet, or as Bloom calls him, the 'ephebe', revitalises or completes his predecessor's work, or polemicises with him. Bloom argues that intertextual dialogues can also operate in the critical domain:

In the tessera, the later poet provides what his imagination tells him would complete the otherwise 'truncated' precursor poem or poet, a 'completion' that is as much a misprision as a revisionary swerve is. I take the term tessera from the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, whose own revisionary relationship to Freud might be given as an instance of tessera. (1997, 67)

The implicit dialogue between Frye and Bloom is another example of 'tessera' in the field of criticism. If the concept of 'tessera' is operative not only in the universe of literature, but also in the field of theory, then the terms 'intergenerational rivalry', and 'anxiety of influence' are applicable not only for an author's anxiety that his thoughts may have been thought by someone else before, but also for a critic's embarrassment that his ideas may be found in another critic's work. The concept of misprision is relevant to Bloom's work as well as to what he studies in his work. In certain parts of The Anxiety of Influence, Frye's 'voice comes alive', not 'by mere imitation', but in the 'critical misprision' performed on him by Bloom. Since Bloom 'antithetically completes' Frye, The Anxiety of Influence can be read as 'a large tessera in relation to' relevant parts of Anatomy of Criticism. This is not to say that Bloom's work is a mere imitation or reinvention of Frye's ideas. The Anxiety of Influence brings into focus and further develops certain issues which occur in Anatomy of Criticism in a seed form, and sometimes occupy a marginal position. The following passage from The Anxiety of Influence can be read as an implicit comment about this book's role in 'redeeming' some of Frye's valuable, but neglected or 'worn-out' thoughts:

In this sense of a completing link, the tessera represents any later poet's [or critic's] attempt to persuade himself (and us) that the precursor's Word would be worn out if not redeemed as a newly fulfilled and enlarged Word of the ephebe. (1997, 67)

The relevance of interpreting The Anxiety of Influence as a belated misreading, rewriting, and completion of certain parts of Anatomy of Criticism does not depend on whether Bloom has actually read Frye, or they developed similar ideas independently from each other. Bloom acknowledged that it is a valid interpretative strategy to point out links between texts even if

17 The phrases between inverted commas are taken from The Anxiety of Influence, where Bloom uses them to explain the concept of misprision. (1997, xiv, 68)
18 Bloom has, of course, read Frye, and referred to his works in various contexts. Strangely enough, those obvious parallels which we have drawn between the thought of the two scholars seem to have escaped Bloom's notice. One may interpret this in terms of Bloom's theory as an unconscious repression resulting from the anxiety of critical influence. Regarding the question of literary tradition, Bloom both opposes Frye and agrees with him. This inconsistency is evident in Poetics of Influence (1988, 415-416, 419).
The fact that The Anxiety of Influence confirmed in a seemingly insignificant remark, in which Bloom suggests that density of one’s field of knowledge. thesis is to show that the reader can mediate between works of criticism, as well as between these links do not result from a direct influence of one text on another. One of the aims of this thesis is to show that the reader can mediate between works of criticism, as well as between works of literature, ‘misinterpreting’ coincidental affinities as dialogues, responses, or revisions. The expansion of one’s literary and critical knowledge leads to an increasing density of one’s field of knowledge. In other words, the more the semantic network expands, the more intricate its texture becomes. The relevance of constructing hypothetical dialogues is confirmed in a seemingly insignificant remark, in which Bloom suggests that The Anxiety of Influence is open for the reader to spot sources other than the ones he actually used:

Nietzsche and Freud are, so far as I can tell, the prime influences upon the theory of influence presented in this book. (1997, 8, emphasis is mine)

The fact that The Anxiety of Influence echoes the thoughts of not only those scholars whom the author acknowledged as his predecessors, does not reduce the value of this book, nor of its potential interlocutor-texts. Through intertextual dialogues, works of criticism, as works of literature, strengthen and confirm each other. Echoes of one text in another do not necessarily signal a lack of originality, cultural belatedness, or borrowing; they can manifest independent discoveries, shared ideas, and the continuity of human experience. In this sense, ‘the anxiety of influence’, and ‘intergenerational rivalry’ take on the positive meaning of ‘mutual understanding’.

This survey showed that Frye’s Anatomy of Criticism is an invaluable contribution to a potential critical dialogue about intertextuality. Encompassing the main trends of intertextuality, Frye’s work shows that these trends complement, rather than contradict, each other. After all, source-influence studies and reader-oriented intertextual approaches share the aim of illuminating and enriching literary texts, and improving literary competence. In Frye’s thought, the Bloomian model of naming specific precursor texts is combined with a more flexible notion of infinite intertextuality (also formulated by Barthes, Culler, and others), which includes anonymous citations and unidentifiable sources, such as stereotyped images, patterns, and other forms of literary and mytho-ritual tradition. Frye’s main interest is in the dialogical nature of the literary universe, in symbolic-thematic-structural parallels between texts, and in the process of recontextualising mythology and literary conventions. In Anatomy of Criticism, he gives numerous examples of concrete intertextual dialogues between literary texts or between literature and mythology. Frye’s Anatomy of Criticism is a bridge between myth criticism and intertextuality. This is one of Frye’s main contributions to literary criticism. Theory of Symbols has been selected as the main conceptual framework for this thesis, because in this essay Frye gives a systematic account of the extratextual, intratextual, and intertextual function of literary symbols.

This part of the dissertation was concerned with supporting the relevance of Frye’s theory by pointing out affinities between his comparative criticism and works of other, more influential critics. The third part of this chapter, sub-divided into smaller sections, will show how Frye’s ideas and recent theories of intertextuality complement each other.

3. Selective survey of some aspects of intertextuality
3.1. Intertextuality: an intrinsic approach

For a comparative study of poetic imagery, it is rewarding to combine Frye’s theory with recent concepts of intertextuality. Here I restrict the theoretical summary to the most basic and relevant terms and methods. Owen Miller’s comprehensive view of intertextuality is a revealing starting point:

Intertextuality continues to acquire new meanings as various critics seek to define or refine it. [...] It has gained currency as an umbrella term, covering all and any ‘external’ relations a text may have and embracing most conceivable ways of contextualizing it within a broader frame of reference. (1985, 20)

It is a common interpretative strategy is to place literary texts in non-literary contexts. The historical, philosophical, intellectual circumstances, and the biography of the author can provide useful information for a better understanding of his or her works. It is, however, not always necessary to link the literary text to extra-literary facts. Often, a piece of imaginative writing can better illuminate another than can a book of history or the biography of the author. Whether extrinsic or intrinsic critical methods are more suitable depends on the aim of literary analysis. Extrinsic approaches are inevitable for illuminating non-literary aspects of

19 Frye’s Anatomy of Criticism is primarily concerned with centripetal, internal critical approaches, whereas literary texts are investigated in the context of literature and mythology, that is to say, within a purely imaginative domain. This does not mean, however, that Frye denied the relevance of extra-literary methods. In The Stubborn Structure he argued that the combination of external and internal approaches is a rewarding method: ‘The central activity of criticism, which is the understanding of literature, is essentially one of establishing a context for the works of literature being studied. This means relating them to other things: to their context in the writer’s life, in the writer’s time, in the history of literature, and above all in the total structure of literature itself, or what I call the order of words’ (1970, 88). The complementarity of centrifugal (outward) and centripetal (inward) semantic directions is a characteristic feature of Frye’s thought; it is not only operative in the combination of external and internal approaches, but also in the relation between the sign-values and the motif-values of a symbol, and in the balance between the diverging nature of the archetype and the converging nature of the monad.
imaginative writing. Intrinsic approaches are beneficial when one is investigating the imaginative, aesthetic aspects of texts (figures of speech, structure, imagery), or when a critic is dealing with introspective or self-allusive poetry. Since this thesis is primarily concerned with the artistic treatment of metaphorical images in self-reflective texts, intrinsic methods will be employed. We will examine intertextual links within a semantic domain which consists of imaginative systems, such as literature and mythology.

The cover illustration (Peter Ruting's fine art photograph *The Pencil*) and short footnote-references to potential links between poetry, music, and visual arts serve as brief indications that intertextuality is not restricted to the universe of literature; it can operate across the barriers of various forms of art, because the imaginative faculty enables one to translate the structures and images of one symbolic activity into the language of another. It may be a worthwhile undertaking to investigate this topic further. The cover illustration opens a window to this interdisciplinary area. As the interpretation of snow/window-poems gradually reaches deeper layers, so Ruting's *The Pencil* assimilates new imaginative meanings. In the light of the poems analysed, Ruting's work can be interpreted as an ekphrastic artefact, and an illustration of the act of performing poetic silence. The picture can represent the concept of inexpressibility, that is to say, all enigmas of poetry which are present on the untouched parts of the page, in the invisible traces of a white pencil, which can be viewed as a visual configuration of the poetic images of snow and blind, clairvoyant fingers. *The Pencil*, which is also two pencils, captures the paradox that silence is a basic component of intertextual dialogues. Ruting's photograph epitomises some of the central ideas of this thesis in a non-verbal form.

3.2. Symbolic-thematic parallels and productive intertextual dialogues

When examining the connective function of literary symbols, it is necessary to draw a distinction between semantic-structural parallels and more profound intertextual links. Jonathan Culler holds that thematic affinities, recurring images, stereotypical characters, conventional patterns of plot, and other parallels between texts can function as intertextual operators opening a dialogical space (1976, 1392-1394). Other critics, however, do not consider thematic-symbolic affinities between self-sufficient texts as genuine intertextual links, even though these texts may reflect, strengthen, and complement each other. By reference to Michael Riffaterre, Owen Miller draws a clear distinction between thematic and intertextual identity (1985, 28-29). According to these critics, not all comparative approaches are intertextual. They restrict the notion of intertextuality to cases when a literary text modifies, completes, or enriches another text. The works involved in productive intertextual dialogues are called focused text/intertext (or subtext, pre-text), metatext/prototext, or figure/ground, where the first nouns of these pairs refer to the text which is actually read or analysed, and the second to the work which is quoted in the focused text or activated in the reading process. For instance, Joyce's *Ulysses* as a focused text alludes to Homer's *Odyssey* as one of its intertexts.

Riffaterre suggests that the notion of the intertext should only be used when texts communicate productively, as distinguished from cases when texts are compared on the basis of their symbolic, thematic, or structural parallels:

Intertexts are not just themes and motifs. Intertext exists only when two texts interact whether or not they are themes as well. (1990, 74-75)

Riffaterre draws the following theoretical conclusion from one of his concrete analyses:

[The text] is grammatical, self-sufficient, in no need of bolstering by comparison with [other texts]. True, if readers chance upon such poems, they verify the poem as a variant of a theme. This verification, however, remains aleatory. The poem is interpretable and enjoyable for the reader quite innocent of [other texts]. Rather than recognising an intertext here, it is better to speak of a theme. (1990, 61)

Works of literature that are accessible without activating an intertext can be compared on the basis of the similarity of their themes and images. A comparison of these isolated texts reveals their thematic-symbolic affinities, but does not affect them. Through an intertextual interaction, however, literary texts supplement, modify, and enrich one another.

3.3. The intertext

There is no general agreement among critics as to what can be regarded as an intertext (pre-text, subtext). Unlike Riffaterre's notion of the intertext, Culler's term 'pre-text' includes works which exhibit thematic or symbolic affinities with the focused text but do not influence the interpretation of the focused text. The definition of the intertext varies according to various types of comparative approaches. In *Compulsory Reader Response*, Riffaterre gives a broad definition:
Riffaterre’s argument that anonymous mythological semantic units function as potential intertexts implies that myth-criticism is a branch of intertextuality. This is in accordance with Frye’s theory.

The use of poetic symbols as vehicles for the construction of intertextual links may result in expanding the notion of the intertext beyond the boundaries of verbal art. Since most poetic symbols are verbal substitutes of visual objects, they can open a wide dialogical space. Symbols like snow, window, candle, flower, star, tree, the sun, the moon, and so on, can bring their mythological connotations into literary texts from visual art and ancient ritual practices. Such interaction between verbal and non-verbal art is consistent with Miller’s definition of intertextuality as ‘an umbrella term covering all and any “external” relations a text may have’ (Miller 1985, 20). In the analytical chapters, we will establish intertextual dialogues between verbal art and mytho-ritual tradition. Instead of identifying specific mythological narratives, we will rely mainly on dictionaries of mythological symbols, in which the archetypal meanings of symbols have been derived from a wide spectrum of verbal and non-verbal mytho-ritual tradition.

If the aim of the comparative analysis is to establish cross-references or unity within the author’s oeuvre, then the notion of the intertext is confined to works written by the author of the focused text. This approach will be applied in comparing a number of Pasternak’s poems with one another.

In the paradigm of positivism and source-influence studies, the concept of the intertext is restricted to those works which the author of the focused text has actually read and assimilated into his or her works (Hermeren 1975, Guillén 1977, Böning 1980). The subtext embedded in the focused text can be a deliberate allusion, or a casual echo, which the author unconsciously activated from his or her corpus of reading. In the latter case, the intertext is so deeply absorbed into the author’s mind that he may not realise that he is rewriting a fragment of his literary memory. The forgetting of the source of an image, theme, or idea may be explained by affinities between the influencing and the influenced author’s imaginative thought. The process of profound assimilation may result in the influenced author’s unconscious reinvention of what he or she has already read before. Bloom reports a case when a writer (Stevens), being conscious of the possibility of involuntary borrowing, avoids reading powerful poets:

‘I am not conscious of having been influenced by anybody and have purposely held off from reading highly mannered people like Eliot and Pound so that I should not absorb anything even unconsciously. (1997, 7)

Obviously, this is a symptom of the anxiety of influence. However, this attitude does not seem to be general. In most cases, writers are willing to enter intertextual dialogues with one another. Intersubjective authorial dialogues will be illustrated in the analysis of Gennady Aygi’s Omez.

The study of author-established dialogues is also called ‘reconstructive intertextuality’. The principles of causality, temporality, and priority constitute the basis of this teleological model (Miller 1985). It is often difficult to identify specific subtexts, because the reader cannot recreate the author’s total verbal and non-verbal imaginative experience, and because the reader cannot always be sure whether the author of the focused text has actually read the text which seems to be a plausible intertext. Moreover, the author may rely on anonymous conventions, such as folklore, myth, legend, or on semantic units (images, themes, etc.) whose origins are unknown or forgotten. When dealing with anonymous sources, it is difficult to decide how conscious the author was in reactivating them. Poetic recontextualisation of mythological symbols and concepts may be a deliberate authorial technique, or it can be the result of the poet’s intuitive rediscovery of transpersonal imaginative experience. However, it is also possible that it is the reader who imposes the latent presence of myth-poetic sources on the focused text. It is often impossible to draw a boundary between author-established and reader-created dialogues. The reader cannot always be sure whether he or she is reconstructing the author’s dialogical imagination, or constructing new intertextual dialogues. It is, therefore, relevant to categorise these uncertain cases as ‘(re?)constructive intertextuality’. This method will be applied in the fourth chapter.

The survey of various intertextual approaches and corresponding definitions of the intertext would be incomplete without a detailed discussion of the concept of reader-established dialogues (or ‘constructive intertextuality’). This method has been derived from one of the central arguments of phenomenology, reader-response theory, reception aesthetics, and deconstruction, namely, that the reader can actively participate in the creation of meaning by filling syntactic-semantic gaps, activating extra-textual or intertextual associations, and constructing unity out of the apparently diverse linguistic elements of the focused text. 20 In 20 For a concise survey of these approaches, see Eagleton 1989, Iser 1997, Maclean 1997, Selden 1993, Suleiman 1980, and Tompkins 1994. Potential links between deconstruction and reader-centred approaches will be discussed later. Here I only refer to John Lechte, who elucidated an analogy between deconstruction and reader-response theory: ‘Whereas the traditional literary critic might tend to search for the truth (whether semantic, poetic, or ideological) of the literary text written by another, and then adopt a respectful, secondary role before
order to distinguish between passive reception and an active making sense of texts, Barthes introduced the terms 'readerly' ('lisible') and 'writerly' ('scriptible') approaches (1990, 4).

He argued that the reader can take a 'writerly', creative attitude to texts, because in literature, 'it is language which speaks, not the author' (1977, 143). Since every unit of language is a potential quotation or echo, 'one can gain access to [the text] by several entrances' (1990, 5).

All reading is intertextual, because language, the raw material of texts, is, by its nature, rich in intertextual echoes. That is to say, several utterances resound in each word:

[The] I which approaches the text is already itself a plurality of other texts, of codes which are infinite, or, more precisely, lost (whose origin is lost). (1990, 10)

A text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. (1977, 148)

Reader-centred approaches can also be explained by reference to Bakhtin, who, like Barthes, argued that language is dialogical, and words have many voices because they are charged with associations which have been attached to them in other contexts:

With a creative attitude toward language, there are no voiceless words that belong to no one. Each word contains voices that are sometimes infinitely distant, unnamed, almost impersonal (voices of lexical shadings, of styles, and so forth), almost undetectable, and voices resounding nearby and simultaneously. (1986, 124)

The perception of the intertextual resonances of the focused text may be preceded by a stage of 'zero intertextuality', 'unfulfilled' or 'unactualised intertextuality'. Riffaterre introduced these terms to describe cases when 'the intertext is not yet known or has been lost with the tradition it reflected' (1980, 627). From this zero intertextuality, a many-voiced echo may arise:

In literary writing, every lexical element is the tip of an iceberg, of a lexical complex whose whole semantic system is compressed within the one word that presupposes it. To put it otherwise: the literary text is a sequence of embeddings with each significant word summarising the sintagm situated elsewhere. (Riffaterre 1980, 627)

Any work of literature is, then, a trace-structure, an inherently dialogical, unfinalisable construct, a mosaic of other texts and of anonymous quotations. In Riffaterre's view, the intertext is a broad, expanding concept:

the "primacy" of this text, Derrida turns the "primary" text into a source of new inspiration and creativity. Now the critic/reader no longer simply interprets (which was never entirely the case anyway), but becomes a writer in his or her own right. [...] There is a new emphasis on the individual autonomy and creativeness of the researcher / philosopher / reader. Maybe this anti-populist yet anti-Platonic element in grammatology is Derrida's most important contribution to the thought of the postwar era (1994, 109).

21 Bakhtin elaborated on the dialogical nature of language in various contexts. For a summary, see Wall 1990.

Words signify by presupposing an intertext either potential in language or already actualised in literature. (1980, 627)

The intertext proper is the corpus of texts the reader may legitimately connect with the one before his eyes, that is, the text brought to mind by what he is reading. Theoretically it can go on developing forever, in accordance with the reader's cultural level; it will expand as his readings expand and as more texts are published that can be linked up to the original point whence these associated memories took their departure. (1980, 626)

The shift from the positivist notion of intersubjective influence to the poststructuralist concept of reader-created intertextuality entailed a radical expansion of the notion of the intertext. Culler, Barthes, Riffaterre, Owen Miller, Derrida, Bloom, and others freed the notion of the intertext from the constraints of temporality and authorial intentionality. Referring to Riffaterre, Owen Miller defines the intertext as 'the perception by the reader of relationships between a focused text and others, which both chronologically preceded it and followed it' (1985, 30). The rejection of the positivist-rationalist principles of temporality, causality and priority can be supported by Nietzsche's argument formulated in The Will to Power (1888), that opposites, such as cause/effect, before/after, outside/inside, can flow into each other. Nietzsche calls this cognitive operation 'the phenomenology of consciousness'. Paul de Man summarises Nietzsche's argument as follows:

The outer, objective event in the world was supposed to determine the inner, conscious event as cause determines effect. It turns out however that what was assumed to be the objective, external cause is itself the result of an internal effect. What had been considered to be a cause, is, in fact, the effect of an effect, and what had been considered to be an effect can in its turn seem to function as the cause of its own cause. (1979, 107)

The inversion of the logic of causality is implicit in the intertextual approach proposed by Culler:

The goal of this project would be an account of how texts create presuppositions and hence pre-texts for themselves. (1976, 1395)

The focused text thus can serve as the cause which impels the reader to search for plausible intertexts, thereby activating his or her literary memory. In this sense, the focused text is not the effect but the cause of its own intertextual echoes. This reversal of temporality and causality undermines the basic principles of source-influence studies. Bloom seems to agree with this view:

Source study is wholly irrelevant here; we are dealing with primal words, but antithetical meanings, and an ephebe's best misinterpretations may well be of poems he has never read. (1997, 70)
Elsewhere in *The Anxiety of Influence* Bloom asserts that even the cases of direct intersubjective influence can be understood in terms of inverse causality. The receptivity of the author of the focused text serves as an internal cause, or precondition, which enables him to interiorise and activate an intertext:

The central point of this book is that the anxiety of influence comes out of a complex act of strong misreading, a creative interpretation that I call 'poetic misprision'. What writers may experience as anxiety, and what their works are compelled to manifest, are the consequence of poetic misprision, rather than the cause of it. The strong misreading comes first; there must be a profound act of reading that is a kind of falling in love with a literary work. (1997, xxiii)

In support of this view, Bloom notes: 'Borges remarks that poets create their precursors' to interiorise and activate an intertext:

Owen Miller gives a detailed explanation of how the dynamic exchange of cause and effect, and the reversibility of the conventional order of priority can operate in the field of reader-oriented intertextuality:

There is a sort of ongoing dialectical order established by the reading process. We begin by attempting to interpret a text by treating it as a gestalt bringing words' normal associations to bear on those forged by a text, to establish some form of intratextual reading. At a second stage intertextual connections are made on the basis of initial engagement with the text and lead to a selection of pertinent intertexts. It is at this stage that the selected intertexts form the necessary ground in terms of which the focused text is read as figure. In this sense, then, we can argue that both text and intertext establish priority at different stages of the reading process. (1985, 33-34)

The question of priority is after all a logical way of expressing a figure/ground relationship. To see the figure we must have a secure ground; thus the security of the ground can be seen as prior, in a sense, to seeing the figure. If we speak, however, of figure/ground relationships in spatial terms with the framework of a psychology of visual perception, from which it originates, we are confronted by the phenomenon of reversibility: figure becomes ground, and ground figure. Intertextuality viewed in this light takes on a new sheen. For if we speak literally of a focused text, we must envisage a reversal between figure and ground, between text and intertext as we reverse focus. The reversibility of figure/ground relationships in perception, we are told, is caused by perceptual fatigue on the part of the perceiver. Saturated with a static image, the human mind creates reversals to alleviate the perceptual fatigue. It would seem that we are not yet too fatigued to cease reading Ulysses in terms of origin and which, therefore, can be shown to derive from the series for which they are constituted as origin. (1976, 1394, italics mine)

In de-chronologising the notion of intertextuality, the basic teleological principles of source-influence studies (causality, temporality, authorial intentionality, and priority) have been rejected in favour of a more open and flexible reader-centred paradigm, in which 'the intertextual relationships of any work of literature are theoretically infinite' (Miller 1985, 24).

One can distinguish three types of infinite intertextuality: (1) a free search for intertexts in the whole of literature (that is to say, in one's entire corpus of reading), (2) an even wider 'infinity', whereby the whole of one's verbal experience, including non-literary utterances, is taken into account in the search for intertexts, and (3) intertextuality as a term covering any potential external relations of a text, including non-verbal forms of art and symbolic rituals. The first two types of reader-established intertextuality are discussed in more detail below.

Jonathan Culler explains the concept of infinite intertextuality as follows:

The study of intertextuality is not the investigation of sources and influences, as traditionally conceived; it casts its net wider to include the anonymous discursive practices, codes whose origins are lost, which are the condition of possibility of later texts. Indeed, Barthes has specifically warned against confusing the study of the intertextual with source-hunting. (1976, 1383)

We are faced with an infinite intertextuality where conventions and presuppositions cannot be traced to their source and thus positively identified. Readers, in whom these conventions dwell, are the representatives of a general intertextuality. (1976, 1382)

In Culler's concept of infinite intertextuality, the notion of the intertext is restricted to texts which belong to the domain of literary discourse. He elaborates on this idea in *Literary Competence*. In this article, Chomsky's theory of linguistic competence serves as a methodological analogy of literary competence. As one has to possess an internalised grammar to be able to understand everyday language, so one has to be equipped with a grammar of poetics in order to comprehend literary structures and meanings:

To read a text as literature is not to make one's mind a tabula rasa and approach it without preconceptions; one must bring to it an implicit understanding of the operations of literary discourse which tells one what to look for. [...] By internalising the 'grammar' of literature, [one can] convert linguistic sequences into literary structures and meanings. [...] In order to identify various levels of coherence and set them in relation to one another [...] one must have considerable experience of the conventions for reading poetry. (Culler 1980, 102)

The seminal approach suggests [that] the poem be thought of as an utterance that has meaning only with respect to a system of conventions which the reader has assimilated. (Culler 1980, 104)

In emphasising that the reading of literature is a process of assimilating specifically literary conventions (patterns of plot, stereotypical symbols, rhetorical devices), Culler implies that one's repertoire of reading is a storehouse of potential intertexts, and that the interpretation of...
any work of literature is based on the knowledge of these latent intertexts. This internalised grammar of literature is activated whenever a piece of imaginative writing is interpreted. When Culler defines literary competence as 'a set of conventions for reading literary texts' (1980, 105), he affirms that the reading of literature is, by its nature, an intertextual process. Culler supports these arguments by referring to Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* as an example of a systematic grammar of literary competence (1980, 107-109). Indeed, the taxonomies presented in Frye's book constitute a comprehensive poetics, which is based on a comparative perspective. In accordance with the main argument of *Anatomy of Criticism*, Culler writes:

In *Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye's main interest is in dialogues within the literary domain. However, this does not mean that he confines the notion of the intertext to specifically literary texts. In *The Stubborn Structure*, he asserts that extra-literary verbal experience also has a constructive intertextual function:

I wish all teachers of English, at every level, could feel that they were concerned with the whole of a student's verbal, or in fact imaginative, experience, not merely with the small part of it that is conventionally called literary. The incessant verbal bombardment that students get from conversation, advertising, the mass media, or even such verbal games as Scrabble or cross-word puzzles, is addressed to the same part of the mind that literature addresses, and it does far more to mould their literary imagination than poetry or fiction. (1970, 84-85)

In emphasising that 'the area of literature should not be restricted to the conventionally literary, but expanded to the entire area of verbal experience' (1970, 85), Frye implicitly proposes to expand the notion of the intertext from works which have a specifically aesthetic status to any verbal matter. Owen Miller clearly distinguishes these two intertextual approaches:

Culler [...] limits the inferential potentialities of the text to those concerns which are more properly literary. This itself seems as a significant retreat from an even fuller notion of intertextuality envisaged, in theory at least, by Kristeva, who conceives of it as a mode of integrating literary discourse with any other form of discourse, where no special status is accorded to literary or aesthetic values. (1985, 25)

In formulating the term 'intertextuality', Kristeva was indebted to Bakhtin, whose dialogic concept of language allows a fusion of poetic and everyday discourse. Bakhtin explains the many-voiced nature of linguistic units as follows:

The life of the word is contained in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another context, from one social collective to another, from one generation to another.
Reversing the traditional sequence of cause and effect, Owen Miller arrives at the notion of ‘plausible intertextuality’, which is a reconciliation of free and constrained intertextual associations:

In the context of an argument attempting to establish ‘plausible’ intertextuality, the choice of intertext must be viewed as an implication rather than a presupposition. In other words, as a result of my inextricable interpretation of the text, I infer from it a pertinent intertext, that is one which I select from my repertoire and which seems to address itself to the interpretational problems which I have encountered. My selection is not a personal whim but one imposed to some degree (like an implication) by certain constraints of the text. In this sense my engagement with the text is prior to my selection of an intertext. The choice of an intertext functions as a supplement brought by the reader to facilitate additional meanings of the text, to which the text lends itself. (1985, 34-35)

In the last sentence, Miller emphasises that the intertext serves as a supplement of the focused text. Riffaterre also points out that the intertext functions as a supplement rather than a key to interpretation. This is in accordance with the concept of intertextuality as a relatively free, reader-oriented approach, whose objective is not to unlock latent authorial messages, but to increase the semantic plurality of the focused text:

If [the trace of the intertext in the focused text] were a key to interpretation, it would be a quotation or an allusion, not an intertext. [The intertext] functions as a supplement to the text. (Riffaterre 1990, 70)

The words ‘key’, ‘quotation’, and ‘allusion’ imply a reconstructive intertextual method, whereas the terms ‘intertext’ and ‘supplement’ are applicable in reader-established dialogues. To avoid confusion, one can refer to recovered authorial quotations as ‘pre-texts’ as distinguished from supplementary ‘intertexts’. It is, however, often difficult decide whether a text which seems to be a possible source of the focused text has actually been read by the author, or its semantic link with the focused text is merely the reader’s free association. In this case of (re?)constructive intertextuality, it is reasonable to use the neutral term, ‘subtext’. The paired terms ‘prototext/metatext’ are applicable when the focused is about another text, that is to say, when the subject matter of the focused text is another text.

The main distinctions between citational (author-oriented) and reader-created intertextuality can be summarised as follows: (1) In the citational model, the primary agent of intertextual relations is the author, whereas in the case of reader-centred intertextuality it is the reader who constructs intertextual links and networks. (2) Source-influence studies focus on intersubjective relations between authors, whereas reader-oriented approaches are more specifically intertextual. (3) Citational intertextuality is based on a temporal framework, whereas reader-created intertextuality is a spatial model, in which all texts exist simultaneously, and are open to dialogues regardless of their chronological relations. (4) Author-oriented intertextuality is concerned with deliberate quotations, borrowings, allusions, or casual echoes, in order to find keys which can unlock hidden messages and shed light on authorial intentions. This reconstructive approach aims at recovering already constituted meanings, thereby ‘demonstrating and proving authorial intentionality and eliminating the possibility that one text’s links with another are the product of a reader’s personal engagement with the text’ (Miller 1985, 26). Reader-created intertextuality is a less scholarly, more imaginative approach. It is concerned with potential intertexts which can supplement and enrich the meanings of the focused text. The purpose of reader-created dialogues is to construct additional meanings, thereby illustrating the self-generating, synthetic, and polyphonic nature of literary language and imagination. (5) In the teleological model of source-influence studies, the reader’s search for subtexts is guided mainly by extra-literary factors (such as the author’s biography, and his historical, social, and cultural circumstances), and by the positivist-rationalist principles of causality, temporality, and priority. In the paradigm of the reader-oriented approach, it is valid to search for intertexts either in the whole universe of literature, or in the infinite storehouse of language, or even in non-verbal forms of art, without any temporal or extra-literary (cultural, historical, geographic) constraints. However, the objective traits of the focused text limit the reader’s freedom of selecting intertexts. The de-chronologisation (i.e. spatialisation) of the notion of intertextuality entails a continuous retrospective re-evaluation and renewal of the literary canon. Old texts and fossilised metaphors can be revitalised and enriched in the light new works of literature. Conversely, literary conventions can also inform new texts. Both the reconstructive (i.e. temporal) and the constructive (i.e. spatial) types of intertextuality are aids to illuminate texts, and to discover or construct networks in the relative chaos of the literary universe. These approaches productively complement each other.

3.4. The presence-absence structure of literary language

In agreement with Barthes, Bakhin, Derrida, Eco, and other critics, Riffaterre claims that one of the distinctive features of literary texts is that they are not self-enclosed (as the formalist-structuralist school and new criticism claimed), but they are open to other works of literature:

23 This thesis focuses on works written by modern European poets. However, the intertextual dialogue of the focused texts covers a large semantic space, ranging from ancient Eastern mysticism through the Victorian Age to contemporary poetry.
The literary artefact is, by its nature, an elliptic, open form of discourse. It can only fulfill its artistic-aesthetic function if it breaks with the rational, straightforward logic of non-is obscure, indeterminate, multivalent, and dialogical, or it is read as such. These problematic features, together with a wide range of poetic and rhetorical devices, play a crucial role in making the literary text an embodiment of imagination, and a stimulus for creative response. Owing to these distinctively aesthetic features, language can transgress its own boundaries, and it can articulate meanings which are inexpressible in non-imaginative discourse. An organised violence against the rules of ordinary language makes the reading of literary texts difficult, yet this obstacle is a major stimulus for the reader to activate his or her imagination and participate in the creation of meaning. Theories of intertextuality lay emphasis on the significance of intratextual gaps and obscurities. From the point of view of non-imaginative discursive logic, intratextual unintelligibilities seem to be linguistic flaws. However, an aesthetic approach regards these apparent semantic ‘deficits’ as essential features of literary texts. In a comparative perspective, intratextual anomalies function as ‘gates’ or ‘windows’ opening up the boundaries of the focused text towards other texts, thereby guiding the interpretation and making additional readings possible. Riffaterre illuminates the significance of semantic instability in literary language:

Ambiguity is generally, if empirically, recognised as a feature typical of literary discourse. As I see it, ambiguity exemplifies the idiolectic ungrammaticalities that warn the reader of a latent intertext. Text and intertext are at once the question and the answer, having both textual and intertextual relevances. (1990, 71)

Riffaterre often uses the Greek word ‘syllepsis’ as a synonym of trace, connective, and other related terms, to indicate that intratextual gaps carry a semantic load:

Syllepsis consists in the understanding of the same word in two different ways at once, as contextual meaning, and as intertextual meaning. The contextual meaning is that demanded by the word’s grammatical collocations, by the word’s reference to other words in the text. The intertextual meaning is another meaning the word may possibly have, one of its dictionary meanings and/or one actualised within an intertext. (1990, 637)

This passage illustrates a potential dialogue and a mutual understanding between Riffaterre and Frye. Syllepsis is an alternative term for Frye’s concept of the simultaneous semantic operation of various phases. The fusion of dictionary meaning, contextual meaning, and intertextual meaning in Riffaterre’s definition of the syllepsis is the same thing as the synthesis of sign-values, motif-values, and archetypal values in Frye’s concept of the symbol. This parallel confirms that in *Theory of Symbols* Frye presents a valid comparative approach. Several years before the recent flourishing of intertextuality, Frye has shown that the literary
symbol is a potential intertextual connective. In the mythical phase, which is concerned with archetypal-intertextual criticism, Frye specifies the symbol as an archetype, and defines it as 'usually a natural object with a human meaning […]', which connects one poem with another and thereby helps to unify and integrate literary experience' (1990, 113, 99). Frye's notion of the archetype is comparable to what later critics call an intertextual connective.

Frye's specific concern with recurring images is a useful addition to Culler's theory, which is concerned with the connective function of literary convention in general, and to Riffaterre's theory of intertextuality, in which the definition of the connective is rather broad and unspecified. Riffaterre defines the connective as 'words and phrases' (1990, 58), 'verbal shapes, that is, words considered at one or more of three levels: phonetic, lexical, syntactic' (1980, 625). Frye's notion of the recurring archetypal symbol is practically more easily applicable for the construction of intertextual dialogues than Culler's broad concept of convention, or Riffaterre's boundless definition of the connective. In specifying the connective archetypal symbol as a recurring metaphorical image (an object of nature with a human meaning), Frye offers a useful tool, which almost immediately reveals for the reader the intertextual potentials of literary texts. The metaphorical image is a widespread literary device. As such, it is extremely productive for constructing dialogues between texts. This is not to say that Frye restricted the notion of the intertextual connective to metaphorical images. In keeping with his broad definition of the symbol ('any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention' (Frye, 1990, 71)), the notion of the connective archetype covers not only symbolic objects of nature, but a large variety of recurring figures, including images of man-made objects (such as the wheel, window, cathedral, table, etc.), abstract concepts (such as 'winter solstice' or 'blindness', or 'threshold situation'), narrative patterns, and even poetic gaps and silences, since these can also be isolated for critical attention. Frye, then, also allows a wide variety of conventional figures and verbal units to function as connectives, only he chooses to elaborate on the role of the metaphorical image, to show that it is a particularly fruitful connective.

By emphasising the intertextual potentials of poetic images, Frye opened up new horizons in comparative criticism. It is implicit in his work that connectives can not only be linguistic units which show verbal resemblances, but also recurring visual mental images which may be conjured up by various verbal expressions, even incomparable ones. For instance, the phrases 'white stars', 'white fire' (Boris Pasternak), 'white sparks' (Gennady Aygi), 'constellations falling' (Ted Hughes), 'crystal manna', 'shining cloak', 'starry flake' (Walter de la Mare), 'hand folded flakes', 'fallen sky' (Dylan Thomas), 'broken family crystal', 'rainbowlike, multicoloured, blurred commas, ellipses, spirals, linking heads of barley, concentric rings' (Joseph Brodsky) have nothing to do with the verbal form of the word 'snow', yet they can function as semantic variants of the snow-archetype, since they evoke the mental image of snow in their immediate poetic contexts. Similarly, one can bring together 'geraniums', 'roses', 'carnations', and so on, in the archetype of the flower. The concept of 'visualised connective' allows one to treat the paired symbols of snow and window as one communicative unit. The analytical chapters will show that the symbolic triad of snow-window-flower can also be treated as an intertextual connective, since these images make up a unified entity when they are visualised, and they appear together in works of different authors. The visual aspect of the connective is particularly revealing in the intertextual interpretation of sight-poems or speaking pictures (such as Illyés's Újévi ablak (New Year's Window)), in comparative investigations of poems in which a visual figure is embedded among words (for instance, the form of the cross in a number of Aygi's poems), and in the field of interdisciplinary intertextuality, where one can connect various forms of art through their shared symbols and structural devices (for instance, one can establish a hypothetical communicative link between window-poems and Vermeer's window-paintings; snow-poems, and the land-earth artist Andy Goldsworthy's works made of snow and ice). The visual perception of poetic images stimulates a metaphor making process, whereby several symbols can be condensed or superimposed on one another as if they appeared in a dream-text. The analytical chapters will deal with how the image of the eye can be synthesised with the images of snow, window, flower, and candle. An intertextual network of metaphorical images not only helps one to make sense of difficult works; it is also a rewarding method for enriching the meanings of simple, straightforward texts which may seem to have no significant aesthetic merit. This approach will be demonstrated in comparing Pasternak's Czez udom to works of less aesthetic merit, such as Francis Thompson's The Mistress of Vision and Robert Louis Stevenson's Winter.

The recurrence of poetic images manifests the trace-structure of literary discourse, i.e. the simultaneous absence and presence of intertexts in focused texts. Recurring archetypal images are, by their nature, polyphonic, since they function as visual echoes of distant voices in a single poetic voice. Frye pointed out that in studying recurring verbal structures, 'we are led very quickly from what the individual work says to what the entire convention it belongs to is saying through the work' (1976c, 60). Here Frye is referring to the narrative pattern of the romance, but his observation is applicable to any form of convention, including
stereotyped images. In *The Secular Scripture*, Frye introduced the concept of ‘symbolic spread’, which is very similar to what recent critics call ‘intertextual echoes’:

‘Symbolic spread’ is the sense that a work of literature is expanding into insights and experiences beyond itself. [...] The sense that more is meant than meets the ear comes very largely from the reverberations that its familiar conventions set up within our literary experience, like a shell that contains the sound of the sea. (1976c, 59)

What Frye describes as ‘the sense that more is meant than meets the ear’ is applicable to the reader’s encounter with any kind of intertextual connective unit. Riffaterre also pointed out that traces of subtexts represent the intersection of the individual authorial voice (idiolect) with other voices (sociolect). This intertextual polyphony manifests the revitalisation of tradition:

The intertext enables the text to represent, at one and the same time, the following pairs of opposites (within each of which the first item corresponds to the intertext): convention and departures from it, tradition and novelty, sociolect and idiolect, the already said and its negation or transformation. (1990, 76)

Intertextual polyphony is a paradoxical concept, not only because it is characterised by the synthesis of convention and innovation, sociolect and idiolect, but also because the reverberations of distant voices often take the form of silence. Frye’s simile quoted above is a pertinent description of soundless polyphony, since the mental perception of intertextual echoes is often comparable to ‘hearing’ the ‘soundless sound’ of the sea in the hollow of a shell. For instance, a literary quotation can associatively bring with it those parts of the focused text that contain the sound of the sea. (1976c, 59)

The sense that more is meant than meets the ear can be triggered not only by articulated words, images, phrases, and structures, but also by textual gaps. Riffaterre pointed out that those gaps (ungrammaticalites, unintelligibilities) where something seems to be missing from the focused text can function as the very sources of intertextual meaning (1990, 57). One can distinguish two kinds of textual gaps: wordless gaps and word-created gaps. Wordless gaps occur when the author performs silence and indicates this typographically by omissions, such as ‘( )’, ‘ ... ’, or ‘:’. Word-created blanks occur when the author ‘defamiliarises’ language, for instance, by using obscure phrasings, unusual images, or elliptic syntax. Intratextual gaps and anomalies allow the reader’s imagination to enter the text and fill it with potential meanings and intertexts. Gaps and ambiguities are basic features of the literary text since they prevent it from being reduced to a univocal meaning. Without such ‘vacancies’, the text would be less open, pluralistic, and stimulating. Since textual omissions stimulate the reader’s creative participation, they can be regarded as creative gaps, or polyphonic silences, details where the text can speak in many voices, as a result of articulating less than necessary for immediate comprehension. By filling intratextual gaps and activating intertexts, the reader’s voice can add to the polyphony of intertextual dialogues.

4. Trans-linguistic aspects of the intertextual trace

The intertextual trace is an ambivalent semantic unit; it is always surrounded by an aura of unspoken, unwritten meanings. That is to say, it both reveals and conceals meanings. The presence-absence structure of the intertextual trace is perceived as an interplay of word and silence. Owing to this feature, the intertextual connective enacts in language the threshold situation of creation, the moment when words emerge not from nothingness, but from one’s linguistic memory, the plenitude of the pre-creational silence, which potentially contains all language, or all literature. The ambivalent semantic behaviour of the intertextual connective is
a linguistic-metaphorical analogue of ontological concepts, such as the paradoxical interpenetration of presence and absence, and of the trace-structure of mental experience, the simultaneous concealing and revealing of the deep content of the unconscious.29

The intertextual trace has a transitory nature. It functions as a semantic threshold, or ‘window’, connecting the focused text to its intertexts. Due to this connective function, the intertextual trace manifests the deconstruction of the law of identity, which includes the blurring of the boundaries between the internal and the external, presence and absence, word and silence, original and derivative, innovation and tradition, idiolect and sociolect, central and peripheral, surface and depth, figure and ground, identity and difference, the ‘I’ and the ‘Other’, and so on. The intertextual trace manifests the paradoxical logic of deconstruction and the imaginative act of synthesising mutually exclusive opposites. The presence-absence structure of the intertextual trace represents an affinity between the imaginative process and some of the major cognitive operations of deconstruction. Owen Miller points out that Derrida’s notion of ‘relational identity’ can be applied in the intertextual domain and translated as ‘intertextual identity’.30 Derrida adapted Saussure’s relational definition of the sign, which is based on the differential nature of meaning:

Each sign is defined not by some essential property but by the differences which distinguish it from other signs. […] The sign is a purely relational unit. […] This is a principle wholly at odds with logocentrism and the metaphysics of presence. […] It defines identity in terms of common absences rather than in terms of presence. Identity, which is the very cornerstone of any metaphysics, is made purely relational. (Culler 1979, 166)

Derrida attacks Western logocentrism and the metaphysics of self-presence (the law of identity), by arguing that presence is already inhabited by absence, identity by difference. That is to say, difference constitutes and makes identity possible. Derrida’s terms ‘trace’ and ‘differance’ (difference, differing, deferring) encapsulate the argument that there is no identity without difference, presence without absence. This principle is operative in the intertextual domain. Literary texts are always already inhabited by traces of other texts; they cannot be isolated from other texts because their words and silences contain echoes of other texts, and because they depend on other texts for their identity.

29 In reinterpreting some of Freud’s central ideas, Jacques Lacan argues that the unconscious is structured like the poststructuralist concept of language. Both language and the unconscious manifest an endless movement from one signifier to another, from one metaphor to another, without ever reaching the signified or ultimate meaning. (Lodge 1996, 79-106)

30 Miller derived this parallel from Culler’s article on Derrida. This is why Culler’s text is cited in the discussion of the parallel between relational and intertextual identity.
Chapter Two

Focused text: Czez uedom by Boris Pasternak.

Transparency and reflection: the poetic text as a window to the world, and a mirror of the imaginative mind

1. Snowfall: a metaphor of time and the poetic text

This chapter explores the semantic function of the paired symbols of snow and window and other images in Boris Pasternak’s *Czez uedom*. The main methodological purpose of the chapter is to show that one can enrich the semantic scope of a literary text by unearthing the mythological roots of its symbols. The analysis will confirm the well-known observations that mythological thinking has many affinities with poetic imagination, and that mythological logic is not always explicit in the poetic text. Apart from integrating *Czez uedom* into transpersonal imagination, the poem will also be linked to various literary texts through brief comparative analyses. The epigraphs further enrich the intertextual resonance of the focused text. The analyses and epigraphs exhibit various kinds of intertextual links which have been outlined in the previous theoretical chapter.

The symbols of snow and window appear frequently in Pasternak’s works, often separately, sometimes together. In *Czez uedom* the poet describes a scene in which snow is divided by a window from the indoor plants. Snow is a recurring leitmotif in the text, and it is highlighted in the title as the central image. The window and flowers are equally significant images, but they are less dominant, and their poetic functions are more hidden. Therefore, it is reasonable to start the interpretation of the poem with investigating the symbol of snow.

The seventh stanza reveals that the referential meaning of snow can be shifted onto a metaphorical plane. The snowfall is compared to the process of time, and to the ongoing acts of writing and reading. We are dealing with an anthropo-cosmic, mytho-poetic model, in which nature and the human world are inextricably intertwined.\(^32\)

\(^{31}\) Boris Pasternak, Russian poet, 1890-1960.

\(^{32}\) Several critics have pointed out that Pasternak’s poetry is comparable to mythological imagination in that it exhibits a correspondence between the macrocosm and the human microcosm. See Baevskii 1980 and 1993; Jakobson, A. 1978; Zholkovskii 1978. The snowfall is comparable to the flow of sand in the hour-glass, which is a widespread spatial manifestation of time.\(^{33}\) The sight of snowfall can evoke associations with various aspects of time. The seemingly endless repetition of the descent of snowflakes and the apparently boundless spatial position of snowfall invite associations with eternity and immortality. Conversely, the descent of transient snowflakes can symbolise the irreversibility, limited nature of life-time. Put very simply, as the descending movement of a snowflake comes to an end, so does life. Or, as the snowfall comes to an end, so does life. In this sense, the snowfall is comparable to the flow of sand in the hour-glass, which is a widespread spatial manifestation of time.

In these lines, the poet draws a parallel between the progress of years, the sight of snowfall, and the poetic text. He formulates this comparison as a question, thereby alerting the reader that temporal continuity, which is the most obvious link between the movement of years, poetic words, and snowflakes, is just one aspect of their similarity. The poet’s question stimulates us to find other common attributes which can link these apparently dissimilar phenomena to each other. In what follows, we will examine what features are shared by the snowfall and time, and how these features can characterise the poetic text.

In the 7th stanza quoted in the previous section, the symbol of snow functions as a chronotope, spatial manifestation, time.\(^{34}\) The sight of snowfall can evoke associations with various aspects of time.

\(^{33}\) The intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature. […] It expresses the inseparability of space and time (time as the fourth dimension of space). In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one, carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible, likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterises the artistic “chronotope” (1983, 84).

\(^{34}\) Several critics have pointed out that Pasternak’s poetry is comparable to mythological imagination in that it exhibits a correspondence between the macrocosm and the human microcosm. See Baevskii 1980 and 1993; Jakobson, A. 1978; Zholkovskii 1978. In the 7th stanza quoted in the previous section, the symbol of snow functions as a chronotope, spatial manifestation, time. The sight of snowfall can evoke associations with various aspects of time. The seemingly endless repetition of the descent of snowflakes and the apparently boundless spatial position of snowfall invite associations with eternity and immortality. Conversely, the descent of transient snowflakes can symbolise the irreversible, limited nature of life-time. Put very simply, as the descending movement of a snowflake comes to an end, so does life. Or, as the snowfall comes to an end, so does life. In this sense, the snowfall is comparable to the flow of sand in the hour-glass, which is a widespread spatial manifestation of time.
symbol of mortality. Those flakes which have accomplished their descent may be associated with the past, whereas the ones falling in mid-air can represent the ongoing present. The image of snowfall is, then, a complex chronotope, representing, on the one hand, an analogy between the infinity of space and the eternity of time, and, on the other hand, an analogy between irreversible spatial movement and irreversible temporal flow.

The simultaneous perception of falling and accumulated snow evokes associations with a different concept of time, which is based on the principle of reversibility. Since the snowflakes look identical from a distance (each being a regular hexagonal crystal), it may appear for the observer that those flakes which have already landed are the same ones which continue falling, as if they symbolised moments which have passed but can be brought back to memory over and over again. However, these recollected moments are never quite the same as the actual ones, just as the newly falling flakes are never quite the same as the ones which have fallen in the past. The image of snowfall encapsulates the idea that the ongoing present retrospectively changes the past, as the ongoing process of reading retrospectively throws new light on what has been read.

The snowfall can also represent time as a perpetual process, which can be linear or cyclical. According to Larissa Rudova, in *Цей зимний* 'the sight of the falling snow becomes a reminder of life’s eternal cycle and time’s unrelenting progression from one snow to the other, from one season to the next, from year to year’ (1997, 180). The apparently ceaseless fall of snowflakes can represent time as an everlasting, irreversible linear flux. The concept of irreversibility is suggested by the fact that each snowflake is a unique, unrepeatable crystal. Superficially, however, the snowflakes look identical. Therefore, their recurring descent can also be associated with the cyclical, periodical rhythm of time. The cyclical model can be regarded as a reconciliation of the aforementioned contradictory associations of snow, because this model holds together the opposites of irreversibility/reversibility, temporal flow/eternity, and mortality/immortality.

In mythological thought, the cyclical notion of time is symbolised by circular objects, including the mandala, the wheel, the dial-plate, the circle of the Zodiac, carved calendar stones, and the Later Heaven Sequence of the eight trigrams of the Chinese *Book of Changes* (*I Ching*). The recurring cycle of days is thought to be analogous with the cycle of the year and with the cycle of life. In the 7th stanza of Pasternak’s poem, the abstract concept of cyclical recurrence is projected onto the concrete image of snowfall. The snowfall is, then, a new poetic representation of the mythological periodical notion of time.36 The idea of cyclical recurrence is also evoked in the poem by mentioning turning points when one year ends and another begins, such as ‘новый год’.37 These winter festivities allude not only to the endless recurrence of the annual cycle; by analogy, they come to symbolise a cyclical concept of life. The end of the cycle of life (‘жизнь не ждет’) is conceived of as a new beginning since it is related to Christmas-tide and New Year.

In keeping with the ambivalent temporal aspects of snow, there are several possible interpretations of the phrase ‘жизнь не ждет’ (stanza 5). It can allude to the irreversible nature and the limited duration of life (‘life does not wait’, i.e. it will be gone, finished) and, paradoxically, it can also refer to the notion of everlasting temporal process, which can be either a linear flow or a cyclical recurrence (‘life does not wait’, i.e. it is always on the move, it never stops).

The winter feasts as reminders of the cyclical concept of time can be treated as connectives between *Цей зимний* and Pasternak’s last poem, *Единственные дни*. In *Единственные дни*, the idea of cyclical temporality is illustrated by the endless recurrence of the winter solstice:

На протяжении многих зим
Я помню дни солнцестояния,
И каждый был неповторим
И повторялся вновь без счета.

In *Цей зимний*, the concept of endless recurrence is symbolised not only by the winter festivities (as in *Единственные дни*), but also by the image of snow. This allows us to take an imaginative leap, and draw a parallel between the description of the winter solstice in *Единственные дни* and the image of snow in *Цей зимний*. This parallel illuminates why snow is a pertinent metaphor for the notion of recurrence and for the ambivalent relationship between temporal flow and eternity. The cyclical recurrence of the winter solstice is comparable to the seemingly endless repetition of the descent of snowflakes. Every snowflake is a unique crystal and it falls once only (as every winter solstice is unique and transient: ‘каждый был неповторим’), yet, for the observer of the snowfall, the same hexagonal snowystals seem to fall over and over again (as the winter solstice is repeated year by year: ‘И повторялся вновь без счета’). Every snowflake, as every winter solstice, is one, and, at the

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36 On Frye’s scale of archetypal obviousness, the snowfall as a metaphor for the cyclical notion of time belongs to unfamiliar symbols, whereas the circular objects listed before have a high degree of archetypal obviousness since they are immediately associated with cyclical recurrence.

37 ‘новый год’ share their symbolic significance with the astronomical annual turning point, the winter solstice, and with its Christian equivalent, Christmas.
same time, many: it exists 'now' and 'forever'. Similar relations hold true to the snowfall. The snowfall is transient, yet recurring; it is unrepeatable, yet it can hardly be distinguished from other snowfalls. Like the winter solstice, the snowfall is both irreversible and reversible: it is 'one and many', and it is 'now and forever'.

The instant when one snowflake touches the ground and another is released from the sky is comparable to temporal turning points, such as the winter solstice, when one cycle ends, and another begins. In the sight of snowfall, this turning point is visualised not only as an endlessly recurring, periodically happening event, but also as an extra-temporal moment which is prolonged to eternity. This is because the moment when one snowflake lands and another starts its journey is constantly happening, as if it were an ever-present 'now'. In a thick snowfall, like the one described in Снег идет ('Снег идет, густой-густой'), this unique simultaneity of end and beginning is happening all the time. As the abstract concepts of repetition and everlasting present are fused in the visual appearance of snowfall, so they are synthesised in the description of the winter solstice in Единственных днях. In the 1st stanza (quoted before), it is the endless recurrence of the winter solstice which is emphasised. In the last stanza, however, the winter solstice is described as an eternally present, extra-temporal day prolonged to eternity:

In this poem, the recurrence and the quasi-eternal nature of the 'unrepeatable' days of the winter solstice are merely surface subject matters, concrete poetic illustrations of the paradoxical synthesis of one/many, now/always, irreversibility/reversibility. These binary oppositions are also inherent in the image of snow, but they are not explicitly articulated by the poet in Снег идет. A comparison with Единственных днях reveals that the snowfall in Снег идет can function as a visual manifestation of the synthesis of now and always, whereby either the moment is prolonged to eternity, or all time is compressed in a moment.

The temporal expansion of the moment is comparable to the sight of snowfall. Paradoxically, any unrepeatable phase (moment) of the descent of a flake seems to be everlasting since it is continuously happening in the snowfall as a whole, because the snowfall consists of countless look-alike flakes. The sight of snowfall also enables one to observe successive phases of the descending movement simultaneously, as if all phases of time were contained in a moment.

The symbols of snow and winter solstice are two different representations of the same abstract ideas. Both of them illustrate the profound ambivalence of opposites, such as dynamic, perpetual process/static, everlasting 'now', one/many; now/always; unrepeatability/repeatability, periodical repetition/reversibility, linear flux, and transience/eternity. The ambivalent semantic aspects of snow represent crucial ontological dilemmas, such as the interrelation of mortality and immortality, and of temporality and eternity. The overlapping of these opposites is one of Pasternak's major poetic themes.

1.2. Meta-poetic connotations of snow

Апарт from its temporal aspects, the image of snowfall is endowed with meta-poetic meanings. The 7th stanza reveals that the snowflakes represent poetic words. The snowfall thus symbolises the poetic text. The simultaneous presence of temporal and meta-poetic meanings in the connotative field of snow stimulates us to transfer the temporal aspects onto the aesthetic plane. The falling of snow as a metaphor for the flow of time is, then, a metaphor for the processes of writing and reading. This self-allusiveness is in keeping with the use of the present tense throughout the poem. In covering the page with words, the poet's hand imitates the sight of descending snowflakes. Following the traces of the poet's hand, the reader's eyes move from line to line, in a spiralling pattern. The spiral is a figure in which the linear and the cyclical concepts of time are reconciled. Accordingly, the acts of writing and reading are comparable to a spiralling motion. Writing and reading are linear temporal processes, however, they also involve mental shifts backwards and forwards. Another kind of mental spiral is constructed when a poem is read several times. With each repetition, the poem is read on a higher or deeper level of the never-ending spiral.

\[38\] Several critics have noted that the paradoxical fusion of the momentary and the eternal, or the ambivalent synthesis of the one and the many are recurring concepts in Pasternak's poetry. See Zholkovskii 1978, 288, 294; Baevskii 1993, 30. Both critics refer to Единственных днях as an example of these ideas.

\[39\] According to Jakobson, in Единственных днях, 'миг, растянутый до вечности, а не захоронён: вечность, сжата до мига, как у эпизода Пастернака' (1978, 373). In Снег идет, the image of snow is open to both interpretations.
It logically follows from the analogy between the image of snowfall and the creative-receptive acts that the written or read parts of the text are comparable to the snow accumulated on the ground. The continuity of reading, which involves backward glances at what has already been read, is comparable to the simultaneous visual perception of falling and accumulated snow. The simultaneous visual grasp of moving and resting snow is also comparable to the endless repeatability of the reading of any text. At repeated readings, the words are the same as the ones which already inhabit memory, yet they are different because they are charged with meanings which they have acquired in the light of the text as a whole. This is analogous to the impression that the falling snowflakes are the same as the ones resting on the ground, yet they are, in fact, different. Repeated readings may thus result in an endless semantic thickening of the texture of a poem. The description of snow as ‘ыкотил-рыкотил’ and the repetition of the phrase ‘снег идет’ can thus refer to the increasing semantic density of the poem. The seemingly endless repetition of the descent of snowflakes can symbolise both the cyclical concept of time and the recursive, never-ending potential of the poem. This is one of the many possible meanings of the 7th stanza. The snowfall as a metaphor of time and the poetic text is comparable to the circle and the spiral. These geometrical forms have a rich semantic significance in mytho-poetic imagination.

The explicit parallel between time, snowfall, and the poetic text suggests that it may be relevant to search for aesthetic analogues of the ambivalent concepts of ‘existing now and always’, and ‘being one and many’. Zholkovskii points out that there is a correlation between the temporal and the aesthetic meanings of these abstract concepts. In his article on Pasternak’s treatment of the image of the window, he argues that ‘the contact between the temporary – the eternal’ is manifested by “readymade objects” of two main types: [The first type is] repetitive phenomena of all kinds, which are both now and always, such as festivals, seasons, dates in the natural calendar (as in the example earlier “I remember the days of the sun’s turning”) (1978, 294). Here Zholkovskii refers to Единственные дни, but his description (“repetitive phenomena of all kinds”) is also applicable to snow. Zholkovskii points out that in Pasternak’s works the concept of ‘now and forever’ is also illustrated by another type of ‘readymade objects’, ‘the deeds of great men, in particular creative artists, who have left a trace in time’ (1978, 294). Both types of ‘readymade objects’ are symbolised by snow in Снег идет. On the one hand, snow is compared to the periodical rhythm of years. The 5th stanza reveals that the cyclical recurrence of years is best discernible at their turning points, the winter festivities, which Zholkovskii identifies as typical representations of the contact between the temporary and the eternal. On the other hand, snow is used as a metaphor for the poetic text, which, being a trace left by the creative artist in time, belongs to the second type of objects representing the unity of the temporary and the eternal. The synthesis of ‘now and forever’, ‘one and many’, and ‘unrepeatable yet recurring’ characterises the objective traits of snowfall, and also its symbolic meanings, time and the poetic text. 41 Every poem is ‘one’ in the sense that it is an unrepeatable achievement, a unique ‘fingerprint’ of its author, yet it is also ‘many’, because it is always already permeated with other poetic voices. Every poem is ‘one’ because it is a fixed verbal structure, yet it is ‘many’ because every reader perceives it differently and because it is an open entity, capable of absorbing new meanings.

There are several ways in which a poem can manifest the ambivalent concept of ‘now and always’. The creative and receptive processes take place in temporal continuity, in a succession of ‘now’-s. However, during the moments of imaginative state, one can transcend time and glimpse eternity. The imaginative acts are, then, threshold experiences when temporality and extra-temporality overlap. Other examples of the synthesis of now and always are the long-lasting emotional-intellectual effect of a poem, the repeatability of its readings, and what Zholkovskii describes as a trace left in time by creative artists. These issues are strongly related to the paradoxical fusion of irreversibility/reversibility, and of one/many, which characterises time (as revealed in Единственные дни), and the snowfall. As each moment of the annual cycle (such as the winter solstice) and each snowflake are unrepeatable yet repeated countless times, each reading of a text is a unique, unrepeatable, yet reiterable mental experience. A single poem is one and many because whenever it is read, it appears to be slightly different. The common experience that the never-changing surface of a literary text is like the topmost layer of a palimpsest, concealing a many-layered depth, can be explained by the self-generating mechanism of the hermeneutical circle, and by the dynamic cross-fertilisation of the text and the reader’s imagination. The text stimulates imaginative response, and, in turn, it grows, evolves, and acquires new meanings. The kaleidoscopic nature of the literary text is, then, a reflection of the generative nature of imagination, and it is a manifestation of the paradoxical synthesis of one and many.

The deconstructive interrelation of the opposites of one/many, and now/always can also be explained by the fact that the poem does not end when the last word has been written or read. The accomplishment of the acts of writing and reading may appear to coincide with

41 Gennady Aygi, a poet-friend of Pasternak, often depicts in his works the ambivalent temporal concept of ‘now and forever’, and its spatial analogue, ‘one and many’. In Aygi’s works, these concepts are frequently related to snow and the imaginative act. See for example Теперь весна снесет; Есмь оде-мо: а басъ; Москва: зазеркалье мозаики; И: манна снес. Лес: танко по яку; Оконч-Сон. It may be due to the paradoxical semantic function of snow that the poet frequently uses it in the plural (‘снега’).
the poem’s death, since this is the moment when the poem enters the post-creational silence. However, this moment is also the birth or rebirth of the poem, since the poem can only function as a dynamic, vital semantic unit when it is completed. When the writing and the reading of the text are accomplished, the words start to ‘move’ again and establish new dialogues with one another. When all the words of a poem have been read, the reader can apprehend the semantic and structural unity of the text, and the relations of its parts to the whole. The stillness of the accomplished text thus involves a perpetual motion. The sight of snowfall, in which various phases of the descending movement co-exist, can be associated with the simultaneous mental perception of what is successive in a literary text.

Northrop Frye explains the interaction of the linear continuity of reading and the static apprehension of the whole text with an illuminating analogy. He compares the movement of the words to the rhythm of music and he likens the simultaneous mental grasp of the whole text to the perception of pattern in the visual arts. Both rhythm and pattern are based on the principle of recurrence: the rhythm of music is temporal, the pattern of painting is spatial recurrence. All arts, including literature, can be apprehended both temporally and spatially (Frye 1990, 77-78; 1963, 14). At the moment when the acts of writing and reading are accomplished, the verbal interrelations are perceived simultaneously (‘spatially’), and the whole text retrospectively sheds new light on itself. This illuminating turning point is comparable to the winter solstice, when the death of the year and the birth of new light coincide in the order of nature.

The last line of Czvez wodem, ‘неперехрестка новоріть’, contains a threefold reference to a turning point. Both words of this line denote a turning point, and their inverse grammatical order is also a manifestation of a turn. The context of the poem demands that this phrase should be applied on both the temporal and the self-reflective semantic planes. Thus, ‘неперехрестка новоріть’ can be associated with the turning point of life and of the year, and it can also refer, in a self-allusive way, to the turning point when the poem ends and is born again. After this turning point, at a second reading of Czvez wodem, one can apply the connotative meanings of snow from the very beginning. Thus, the poem will appear to be slightly different. In the light of the text as a whole, the merely descriptive first four stanzas gain metaphorical significance. In Frye’s terms, signs become motifs or images. Having been familiarised with the associations of snow, one can apply these semantic correspondences retrospectively to the whole text in an allegorical manner. It logically follows from using the image of snow as a metaphor for time and the poetic word that the observers of snow, the geraniums, represent the contemplators of time and words, the poet and the reader.

2. Two-directional contemplation

‘on the eyes […] in the palms of one’s hands –
There is more than glass between the snow and
the huge roses.’
(from Snow by Louis MacNeice)

The image of personified flowers appears in the first and last stanzas, enclosing the poem in a circular frame. This framework technique can be regarded as a semantic-structural analogue of the cyclical concept of time. The portrayal of the flowers in the last stanza is a turning point (‘неперехрестка новоріть’), when the poem returns to its first image. In keeping with the cyclical conception of time, an endless repeatability is built into the structural arrangement of the image of flowers.

The geraniums are endowed with human attributes. It appears as if they were watching the snowfall. The first stanza describes them as they are stretching out for (striving after, longing for) the snowfall (‘ратуємося’). At the end of the poem they are shown to be surprised (‘урахованые растения’) at the sight of snow. The framework technique, depicting a scene in which the flowers are watching the snowfall, highlights the act of contemplation. The theme of the poem is, then, not merely the snowfall and its connotative meanings, but the contemplation of snowfall. The act of looking through the window is a metaphor for the threshold experience of creation and reception.

The embedding of the image of flowers in the text enables the poet and the reader to observe themselves at the very act of contemplation. The poem thus promotes an introspective self-discovery of the mental processes involved in creative and receptive acts. Let us, then, reflect on our contemplative processes. In the previous section, we have been simultaneously observing an imaginary snowfall, and its metaphorical analogue, the poem. We have been engaged in a dynamic contemplation, whereby the imaginary snowfall and the poem activated our associative thought processes and, in turn, they absorbed new meanings. Gradually, we discovered more and more interrelated meanings in these visual and verbal objects of contemplation. As we endowed the snowfall and the poem with connotative meanings, they have undergone transformation. They are no longer external objects separated from us; they are embodiments of our metaphor-making, synthetic, imaginative processes. We have experienced a threshold situation of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation. This process is based on the internalisation of the external, and the externalisation of the internal: a blurring of the boundaries between the observed object and the observer, between nature and
the mind, between the text and the reader, and, to some extent, between the poet and the reader.

The image of flowers, occupying a spatial 'threshold' by the window, is a suitable metaphor for the mental threshold situation of creative and receptive acts. The image of the window stimulates us to visualise the process of mental transformation. The initial stage of contemplation takes an outward direction; it is comparable to looking through a transparent window, which displays the external world. This outward gaze represents the first stage of reading, whereby the reader is caught up by the referential content. This happens when one interprets the first four stanzas of Ceev adem as nothing else but a verbal copy of snowfall. During a peaceful observation, the beauty, the rhythm, and the structural pattern of the observed object may induce an enchanted, imaginative mood. As a result, outward gaze gradually turns into a meditative, associative contemplation. During this creative apprehension, mutual processes of externalisation and internalisation take place. Thus, snowfall is no longer just a concrete object of nature, and the poem is no longer just a description of snowfall; both of them are embodiments of abstract, metaphorical concepts, and of intangible mental processes, such as the overlapping of outward and inward contemplation. The simultaneous transformation of the observed object and the observer involves the metamorphosis of the window. At the moment of imaginative transformation, the window not only lets the eye see through; it becomes a reflecting looking glass, in which the observer can catch a glimpse of his or her mental processes projected onto the sight of snow. The double vision of the observer is comparable to the fusion of the optical effects of transparency and reflection on a window, whereby the reflected image of the internal realm is superimposed on the sight of the outside world. Thus, in watching the outside, one is also watching the inside.42

The process of transformation is depicted in Pasternak's poem in a narrative sequence. The text begins with a descriptive portrayal of the outward contemplation of snow (stanzas 1-4). Then, a meditative, introspective attitude is adopted: the poet introduces his abstract, philosophical thoughts that have been inspired by the sight of snowfall. By the end of the text, snow and other images turn out to be many-layered metaphors representing various aspects of the human mind.

42 'The dialectics of outside and inside' in literature is discussed by several critics, including Bachelard 1994, 211-231, Iser 1988, 211-228, and Wheeler 1994, 182-188.
of the contemplator and the object of contemplation. One of the main contributions of Lotman’s theory is that, by elaborating on the role of rhythm and pattern, it illuminates the process of an almost imperceptible transition from passive outward gaze to active metaphorical perception and introspection. The transparent, reflecting window is a poetic analogue of this mental process.

Lotman’s distinction between the I-S/he and the I-I models is comparable to the well-known distinction between denotative and connotative meanings, and to Jakobson’s referential and poetic functions of the communicative act. These categories also correspond to Frye’s distinction between descriptive and ‘literal’ (literary) contexts. In the descriptive context, like in the I-S/he communicative system, words are treated as referential signs. In the literal phase, like in the I-I model, words function as motifs carrying imaginative, hypothetical meanings. Both Lotman and Frye emphasise that these semantic directions are not separable. Lotman argues that ‘poetic texts are evidently formed from a peculiar “swing” of structures. […]’ The poetic text is a kind of pendulum that oscillates between the I-S/he system and the I-I system’ (1990, 33). Frye calls the same kind of synthesis a ‘formal phase’. In the formal context, the sign-values and the motif-values of a symbol are synthesised, whereby an image is constructed. Frye defines the image as ‘not merely a verbal replica of an external object, but any unit of a verbal structure seen as part of a total pattern or rhythm’ (1963, 14).

The oscillation of sign-values and motif-values is one of the hidden themes of Pasternak’s Снег вдом. This theme is embedded in the poem’s images in a concentrated form. The speaker of the text alerts us that the symbol of snow conveys associative meanings. An auto-communicative approach enables us to enrich the referential meaning of window, and compare the transparent and reflective nature of this object to the combination of denotative and connotative meanings. The window is, then, a metaphor for a two-directional communicative attitude, and also for the object manifesting this attitude, the poetic text. Since the text is also symbolised by snow, the window can be regarded as a poetic synonym of snow. As the window is simultaneously outdoors, indoors, and in-between these realms, so is snow. The snowfall appears outdoors in its real form, and indoors as a metaphor for the poem and for those abstract concepts which the snow-poem stimulates in the observer’s mind. The snowfall also appears on the level of the window (as if in a mirror), both outside and inside, in a transitory state between being a real object and a poetic motif.

This section has shown that Pasternak’s Снег вдом is a prominent example of the simultaneous transmission along I-S/he and I-I channels, whereby objects of outward reality represent inward mental processes. This two-directional mental attitude is part of the self-allusive meanings of the text. At first, snow is being watched as an object of nature which is separated by the window from the observer. However, the continuity of the rhythmic, monotonous snowfall generates meditative processes, whereby snow undergoes transformation and acquires metaphorical meanings. Snow is no longer merely an external object, but an image reflecting the mental realm of the observer. The externalisation of the contemplator’s imaginative mind, and the internalisation of snow are two sides of the same transformative process. The simultaneous metamorphosis of snow and of the observer involves the transformation of the window into a mirror.

3. The inside and the outside: opposites and synonyms

‘The Inside and the Outside’
(from Of Grammatology,
by Jacques Derrida)

In what follows, the three main symbols (snow, window and flowers) will be examined to show how their connotations can increase the density and the semantic plurality of the poem.

The juxtaposition of the symbols of snow — window — flowers is apprehended visually. In referring to this mental picture, short expressions will be used, such as ‘symbolic triad’, ‘total visual setting’, or ‘whole scene’. At first sight, the arrangement of the three main symbols may appear to be a metaphorical representation of binary opposites. The window, which divides and connects the snowfall and the flowers, functions as a spatial threshold, a mediator between the outside and the inside realms, representing a transitory state between one mode and its opposite. The contrast between the external, limitless territory of snow and the internal, bordered realm of the flowers invites associations with a number of binary opposites, such as infinity/finiteness, eternity/temporality, death/life, sterility/fertility, winter/summer, and so on. Later we will find that an associative approach can result in a reversal of these correlations: all those qualities which seem to characterise the outdoor realm of snow, as distinct from the indoor realm of flowers, can hold for the flowers also, and vice versa. Such deconstructive inversion does not affect the structure of opposites, which seems to be the basic organising principle of the imagery of the text. Regardless of which pole of an
antithesis corresponds to the outside terrain and which pole to the inside realm, the overall setting represents the structure of bipolar opposites, either their tension or their balance.

One may assume that, by excluding one pole of the opposites, the tension can be released, or the balance will be destroyed. However, a thorough examination of the three main symbols reveals that the tension between opposites or their balance can never be altered because each part of the total visual setting contains in itself the symbolic bipolar unity, which characterises the whole scene. The threshold between opposites is not a firm dividing line, but a permeable boundary, which permits not only the inversion, but also the fusion of inside and outside features. Reversal of opposites is, then, merely the first step in deconstructing the undermined.

3. 1. The mytho-poetic symbolism of snow

3.1.1. Snow: an ambivalent symbol

'Dying! Dying in the night!
Won't somebody bring the light
So I can see which way to go
Into the everlasting snow?'
(from poem 158 by Emily Dickinson)

In the total visual setting, snow seems to represent part of the whole, for example, the outside world, or the winter season of the year. Snow can be associated with passing time and mortality because it appears in winter, and only in winter, as opposed to the indoor flowers, which are alive throughout the year, thus symbolising eternity and immortality. However, these associations are reversible. According to a chronotopic logic, the boundless outdoor realm is analogous with eternity and immortality, as opposed to the spatially confined indoor realm, which is analogous to limited temporality. It has been argued before that snow is a complex chronotope, symbolising various aspects of time, such as irreversibility, perpetual linear flow, cyclical recurrence, and eternity. Representing the succession of years, snowfall is perceived as if it were everlasting. It is depicted in such a way that it appears to be still falling, or still echoing, after the writing and the reading of the poem have been completed. The repetition of the phrase ‘ever naer’ (‘snow is falling’) implies that the snowfall is continuous and recurrent. Although the individual snowflakes accomplish their descent, the snowfall as a whole does not disappear from the air; it fills the whole horizon incessantly. The descending movement of snowflakes has ambivalent connotations. On the one hand, it can represent the continuity of life. On the other hand, it can be associated with the transition from life to death. According to the traditional seasonal symbolism, winter and its attributes (snow, frost, cold, or ice) are analogous with death. The associative link between snowfall and dying is very strong because descending movement is universally regarded as the inner experience of dying. In this sense, snow takes on the symbolic role of the window, which, being located between the organic flowers and the inorganic snow, can be regarded as a spatial metaphor of the transitory state between life and death.

Descending movement is associated with various threshold experiences which are analogous with dying, such as falling asleep and the journey into the deep, unconscious strata of the mind either during meditation or creative imagination. The mental transformation achieved in the imaginative state is comparable to the dying fall and to falling asleep, because it involves abolishing the rational ego-consciousness. The semantic link between descent and the imaginative state is embedded in Pasternak’s treatment of snowfall as a metaphor for

44 Durand (1973) introduces three major ways in which death can be euphemised: images of slow descent, images of ascent, and cyclical process. All of these means of beautifying death are synthesised in the visual image of snow. Snowfall is a slow, gentle descent. Snow is rising on the ground while it is falling from the sky. The repeated descent of snowflakes and the recurrence of snowfall illustrate a cyclical process. Durand’s views on the beautification of death together with other relevant issues are summarised in Hankins 1985, 138-140.

45 The symbolic equivalence of death and sleep is a literary commonplace. It can be traced to ancient Greek mythology (Hesiod’s Theogony), where Thanatos (the god of death) and Hypnos (the god of sleep) are twin brothers, sons of Nyx, the goddess of night. The common metaphorical link between sleep and the imaginative state occurs in Gennady Aygi’s Con-s-nessus, Keats’s Sleep and Poetry, and many other works of literature. C. G. Jung pointed out that ‘“beyond the grave” or “on the other side of death” means, psychologically, “beyond consciousness”’ (Collected Works, vol. 7, 1966, 191). Ancient ‘Books of the Dead’ (such as the Egyptian Pert em hru and the Tibetan Bardo Thödol) appear to be manuals for preparing for the journey of dying. However, these books are meant to be guides helping initiates to attain a non-ordinary, heightened state of mind, which is represented by the mystery of death.
poetic words, since poetic words are products and embodiments of the poet’s imagination, and they are aids for opening the reader’s mind towards imagination. The symbol of snow not only represents the realm of imagination but it also functions as a sign, referring to a real object of nature. The opposites of reality/imagination, nature/the mind, matter/spirit, tangible/intangible, and visible/invisible, are thus balanced in the semantic scope of the symbol of snow. The poem portrays a mysterious concurrence of snowfall and what the snowfall represents for the poet, the imaginative state. This synchronistic correlation of outward reality and its metaphorical significance in the world of the spirit is typical of Pasternak’s poetic thought, and it will be discussed later in more detail. Reading the snow-poem on two semantic planes simultaneously, as a descriptive text and a metaphorical portrayal of the imaginative state, is an interpretative analogue of the synchronistic co-occurrence of snowfall and the imaginative act.

3.1.2. Snow: an emblem of wholeness, transition, and ambivalence

... И на мгновенье
вновь различаешь кружки, глазки,
веер, радужное пятно
многочинна, собыка, звенья,
колоски, волоски,
бывший привольный узор неря,
карту, ставшую горстю юрьев
хлопьев, летящих на склон холма.
(from Осеньний крик асребба, by Joseph Brodsky)

It has been pointed out in the previous sections that the image of snow can be associated with one pole of a binary opposition, and, paradoxically, it is also an all-inclusive symbol, representing an ambivalent fusion of opposites (such as now/always, one/many, imagination/reality, beginning/end). Snow functions as a many-layered metaphor, representing transitory ontological states, two-directional contemplation, and the simultaneously dynamic and static perception of time and of literary texts. There are other types of ambivalence and wholeness inherent in some of the physical properties of snow. The repeated phrase ‘всё в смутность’ conjures up the chaotic appearance of snowfall, whereas the description of snowflakes as stars (‘белые звездочки’) reminds us of the orderly pattern of the snow crystal. Thus, chaos and order co-exist in the image of snow. Due to this unique feature, the snowfall is a pertinent metaphor for the creative process, whereby a well-structured verbal unit emerges from the unorganised chaos of language. The transitory state between chaos and order is also a central experience of reading poetry, whereby a verbal structure whose meanings and coherence are not immediately grasped, gradually takes on a crystalline form.

In mytho-ritual tradition, the creative act of constructing order out of chaos is often symbolised by chronotopic axial figures which mark the centre of the universe, connecting heaven and earth, the divine and the human worlds. The cosmic axis (‘axis mundi’), like human imagination, binds together opposites. The snowfall’s mediating, axial position between the sky and the earth is in accordance with its poetic meaning, the synthesis of opposites during the creative act. The snowfall which is simultaneously up in the sky and down on the earth is a suitable metaphor for the threshold experience of imagination, whereby the soul feels to be ‘up’ in a heavenly sphere, and, at the same time, ‘down’ in the depth of the unconscious mind.

Physical properties of snow, such as the combination of solid ice and fluid water, and its unstable, melting or freezing state are associatively related to the abstract concepts of ambivalence and transition. Snow is an inherently paradoxical form of nature because it is cold, yet it is also a ‘warm’ blanket protecting plants from freezing. The apparent omnipresence of snowfall is suggestive of the concepts of wholeness and penetration. Several other properties of snow reinforce its association with totality. In the first stanza, snowflakes are described as white stars (‘белые звездочки’). In this image, white is united with light. Natural light is white, and it contains the colours of the rainbow. There is no hint in Сосе идем of the physical fact that the whiteness of snow contains the colours of the spectrum. Nevertheless, the poem can assimilate this extratextual association, since snow is used as an all-embracing symbol, representing all and any poetic word. From an intertextual perspective, the idea that the all-inclusive property of white light can be read into Pasternak’s snow-poem is not as arbitrary as it may seem in a text-centred approach.

47 Both ascent and descent are recurring metaphors for travelling into the world of imagination; e.g., the imagery of Coleridge’s Kubla Khan, and The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. The fountain is a typical example of simultaneous ascent and descent, and this image is widely used as an axial symbol, an emblem of the cosmic centre.
48 The following literary examples as potential intertextual echoes can substantiate the relevance of the apparently far-fetched link between white snow and the colours of the rainbow. Pasternak’s treatment of snow as a metaphor for words reminds us of Brodsky’s poem, Осеньний крик асребба, where the snowflakes are compared to rainbow-coloured typographic units of verbal texts. In Pasternak’s Снідочка (a poem in the novel Днепр Живе), the images of snow and peacock are fused since both of them represent the bride. The
The significance of this image is evident in that it is described twice, from the perspectives of the two main contexts of Aygi’s poetry, whose typical feature is the use of self-deconstructive concepts and imagery, it is the addressee of the poem is God, who represents inward human essence, the invisible, colourless, transparent protagonist). A similar image is used in one of A. R. Ammons’s snow-poems entitled ‘A Christmas tree / crystalline with / colored lights’. The title of Pasternak’s ‘The Tyger’, Paustovsky’s short-story, ‘Bessiu radusa alludes to snow. In Aygi’s ‘Замороженная тишина, snow represents the colourlessness of God’s face. In the context of Aygi’s poetry, whose typical feature is the use of self-deconstructive concepts and imagery, it is relevant to transform colourlessness into its opposite, the synthesis of all colours. This is in keeping with God’s paradoxical ontological state of being nowhere (as if having no colour) and, at the same time, being everywhere (as if containing all colours), and with the ambivalent nature of God’s creative word, which is both silence and plenitude. God’s white colourfulness is a transparent void or by white light, most often the light of the Sun. Light is also a conventional symbolic form of creator figures, and of both human and divine creative power. The image of bright snowfall in ‘Вече убом’ can be regarded as a poetic reincarnation of the traditional symbol of the light of creation because it connects heaven and earth, permeates all space, and it represents the poetic word, which is an embodiment and a vehicle of human creativity.

In cosmogonic myths, the emergence of light from the darkness of the primordial chaos symbolises the establishment of ordered structures, and, by analogy, it conventionally represents any kind of creative, imaginative activity or mental illumination. The simultaneity of darkness and light marks the transition when chaos turns into cosmic order. This temporal change is expressed in a spatial, visual form in Pasternak’s poem, where the mentioning of white stars conjures up the mental pictures of the starry sky and the nightly snowfall. In these images, white light and darkness co-exist. By a chronotopic logic, these all-

It may be due to its shining whiteness and all-pervasiveness that snow is often used as a metaphor for the creative process or the poetic word. This associative link may be traced to a mythological model, where the poetic word is regarded as a human analogue of the divine, universal creative word. Throughout mythology, the inaudible world-creating Word (or primordial vibration, ‘OM’ in Hindu cosmogony), which is a synthesis of everything and which includes all language in seed form, is represented either by a transparent void or by white light, most often the light of the Sun. Light is also a conventional symbolic form of creator figures, and of both human and divine creative power. The image of bright snowfall in ‘Вече убом’ can be regarded as a poetic reincarnation of the traditional symbol of the light of creation because it connects heaven and earth, permeates all space, and it represents the poetic word, which is an embodiment and a vehicle of human creativity.

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The discussion of correspondences between some of the physical properties of snow and its poetic meanings is not meant to imply that poetic imagination is characterised by analytical operations and deliberate choices. It is more likely that the inherent qualities of snow are perceived intuitively, and thus transformed into human meanings. The productivity of poetic images is partly due to the fact that they open the boundaries of texts towards extra-textual associations. The relevance of bringing such associations into Pasternak’s poem is confirmed by its auto-communicative nature. In a contemplative mood, the process of reading is slowed down, and the reader’s horizon expands. The poem, which is in the centre of the reader’s attention, is obeying the law of centrifugal semantic forces; its periphery of meaning covers wider and wider territories. At the same time, a centripetal movement of semantic focusing and integration is taking place. The simultaneous processes of semantic expansion and concentration result in enriching the density of the focused text.
3.1.3. Snow: a monad, a literary equivalent of solar and axial symbols

"Four words crystallise the spirit in the place of power. 
In the sixth month the white snow is suddenly seen to fall."
(from Yu Ch'ing's chant for the Far Journey)

The simultaneity of darkness and light as a metaphor for the moment of creation is evoked in Снег утем not only by using the image of star-like snowflakes, but also by referring to winter festivities in the 5th stanza. Christmas-tide and New Year are symbolically equivalent with the winter solstice, the astronomical turning point, when, at the longest night and darkest day of the year, light returns. From the day of the winter solstice, the Earth starts a new annual circle around the Sun, and the periods of daylight get longer and longer. In ancient agricultural societies whose calendar followed the astronomical events of the Solar year, the winter solstice was the turning point of the year, and it was celebrated as the rebirth of light. This annually recurring macrocosmic event has always been associated with the birth of Sun-Gods (Mithra, Christ, Osiris, and other deities), who are personifications of the creative light, or the world-creating Word. The symbolism of the winter solstice is repeated on a smaller scale each day at midnight. This turning point and the actual visible appearance of the sunlight at dawn is frequently associated with the creative activity of deities and of man. Cosmogony is traditionally regarded as the prototype of the artistic organisation of language, sounds, colours, and so on, into structured poetic, musical, or visual forms. Light appearing out of darkness also represents understanding and a crystallisation of new ideas. Thus, light-imagery can be associated with those flashes in the mind, which happen during the interpretative process. Discoveries of semantic interconnections, hidden meanings, and intertextual links are, then, symbolic dawns or winter solstices in the reader's mind. Any poem or poetic word can be symbolised by the winter solstice because they are embodiments of creative imagination, inward analogues of the macrocosmic birth of light from darkness. Since the production and reception of poetic structures are illuminating mental transformations, it is relevant to compare them to the winter solstice (or any feast of the Christmas season, such as Christmas, New Year, or Epiphany), and to any symbolic representation of the winter solstice, such as the Sun, the Christmas Star, or snow shining through the night. In Снег утем, the moments of creative illumination are related to the winter festivities by the mediation of snow. Both the winter festivities (turning points of the year) and the words of the poem are compared to snow (white starlets). In the snowfall, countless white Christmas stars descend on earth recurrently. This image represents the never-ending quality and the enlightening potential of poems, and it is a manifestation of latent axial symbolism.

The above discussion substantiates the argument developed earlier that snow and the winter solstice, the central symbols of Снег утем and Едінистьне дни, can be regarded as poetic synonyms. Both images represent the cyclical concept of time and the imaginative act of uniting one/many, now/always, and other opposites. Due to their shared meanings, the symbols of snow and winter solstice can semantically cross-fertilise each other. The cyclical concept of time can function as a connective, which can carry its aesthetic connotations and its symbolic form, snow, from Снег утем to Едінистьне дни. In turn, Едінистьне дни can illuminate some of the shared features of the temporal and aesthetic connotations of snow. As every winter solstice is unrepeatable yet recurring, so is every snowflake, every snowfall, every poetic word, every poem, and every experience of mental-spiritual enlightenment. These analogies allow us to expand the denotative meaning of the first two stanzas of Едінистьне дни by reading the description of the winter solstice as a metaphor for the inward experience of creative illumination:

На протяжении многих зим
Я помню дни холодов и метели,
На которые ненадолго
Звезды снова вновь без счета.

И цели их череда
Составляет мало-помалу –
Тех дней единственный, когда –
Нам кажется, что время стало.

The stopped moment of the winter solstice, when the interaction of darkness and light is felt to be prolonged to eternity, is chronotopically analogous with the image of the nightly snowfall, in which a spatial oscillation of light and darkness is stretched out to infinity. Both symbols can be associated with the extra-temporal experience of creative illumination. In supporting the relevance of bringing the theme of creativity into Едінистьне дни, it is instructive to point out that this is a love poem, and love in Pasternak's poetic world is analogous with artistic creativity and receptivity.53

52 Light is a common mytho-poetic metaphor for wisdom, imagination, and understanding. This associative link is evident in the etymology of words like the English 'illuminating', 'enlightening', 'clear', 'flash of wit', 'bright', the Russian 'свет', 'яркий', the German 'klar', the Hungarian 'világos', and so on. Chevalier and Cheever note that 'light is knowledge and the two senses of the word are to be found in the Chinese ideogram ming as well. It synthesises sunlight and moonlight and has the meaning of "Enlightenment"' (1996, 601). When the ideogram for white ('hai') is added to the ideogram for light ('ming'), they together ('white light', 'white sunlight and moonlight', 'ming hai') mean 'to understand'.
The hidden radial (or solar) symbolism is one of the key factors of the all-inclusive nature of the image of snow. There are two ways in which the synthesis of snow and light ('белое явленье') can represent totality. (1) It is possible to view cold snow and warm light, ice and fire, as complementary opposites. The synthesis of these apparently irreconcilable opposites is a paradigmatic variant of any threshold situation when opposites are combined in an indissoluble unity. (2) It is also possible to view snow and light as synonyms, since both images represent the total creative word, thus both of them have an all-inclusive symbolism. In one of Pasternak's letters, sunlight is related to the flower of art as light, ice and fire, as complementary opposites. The synthesis of these apparently antagonistic elements is water and fire (the elements of snow and the Sun) function as implicit synonyms, both being representations of the prima materia. C. G. Jung pointed out that water and fire are consubstantial in alchemical symbolism.54

Besides the idea of the prima materia, that of water (aqua permanens) and that of fire (ignis noster) play an important part. Although these two elements are antagonistic and even constitute a typical pair of opposites, they are yet one and the same. (Collected Works, vol. 12, 233.)

In the footnote to this section, Jung cites a few examples from various alchemical texts:

The aqua permanens is the 'fiery form of the true water'. [...] 'The aerial soul is the secret fire of our philosophy, our oil, our mystic water.' [...] 'The water of the philosophers is fire.' [...] 'And when they desire to extract this divine water, which is fire, they warm it with their fire, which is water.' (Collected Works, vol. 12, 233-234, footnote 7).

In Pasternak's poetic thought, snow (which is described as white fire in part 8 of chapter XIV of Доктор Живаго) and the Sun of the winter solstice function as poetic synonyms, all-inclusive symbols, similar to the prima materia of water and fire.55

travelling to a Christmas party with his future wife. Through a synchronistic link to the macrocosmic event of the winter solstice, he experiences a birth of inward light, both in the emotional and in the aesthetic sense. 54 Jung regarded alchemical symbolism as an expression of the collective unconscious. 55 In The Psychonautics of Fire (1964), Gaston Bachelard gives a survey of the main connotations of fire-imagery. It is remarkable that the same associations are often evoked in literature by the image of snow. Shared connotations of snow and fire include death, life, destruction, creation, love, purification, imagination, and mediation between the divine and the human worlds.

The winter solstice can be regarded as a symbol of the totality of complementary opposites, such as light/darkness, masculine/feminine, creative/receptive, chaos/cosmos, one/many, and now/always. Since the turning point of the year has a synthetic, all-inclusive power, it is analogous to one of the most widespread mythological symbols of divine light, the cosmic axis. Chevalier and Gheerbrant note that 'in space, the World Axis is the polar axis, in time that of the solstices' (1996, 61). The paradoxical fusion of now and always in the moment of the winter solstice corresponds to the ambivalent, simultaneously central and omnipresent spatial position of the world axis.56 Similarly to the world axis, the light of the winter solstice represents the creative act, the world-creating Word, which includes the whole universe. The symbol of bright snow, being a manifestation of white light, assimilates the unitive function of the winter solstice and the world axis; it represents the poetic word, thus contains all words of the poetic universe. The symbol of snow is explicitly identified with words: not only with the word 'cser' but with all poetic words. Snow is, then, an all-inclusive centre of the text and of the world of literature. When a symbol achieves such an all-embracing verbal significance, Frye calls it a 'monad'.

The monad as a verbal centre of gravity is comparable to the simultaneously converging and diverging centre of one of the universal symbols of mankind, the mandala, or magic circle. The centre of the mandala is a chronotopic concentration of the whole circle. It is symbolically equivalent with the winter solstice and with the world axis, sharing their symbolic meanings, such as the union of opposites, the white light of divine and human creation, and the total creative word. The assimilating mytho-poetic function of the image of snow is comparable to the synthetic function of white in the circle of colours. The circle of colours is a mandala, the all-inclusive centre of which is white. White contains all colours, even black, which is regarded as its opposite. This is in keeping with the poetic treatment of the symbol of snow. Opposites of black and white are synthesised when the image of white snow is compared to a black staircase, and used as a metaphor for black printed words. Here we are dealing with the anagogic aspect of meaning, where, according to Frye, 'the formula "A is B" may be hypothetically applied to anything, for there is no metaphor, not even "black is white", which a reader has any right to quarrel with in advance' (1990, 124).

56 The world axis has both a converging and a diverging function. It is regarded as a unitive centre, from where all manifestation evolves and where everything is concentrated. The world axis is comparable to the focused text in that both are focal points of simultaneously centrifugal and centripetal forces.
3.1.4. Metaphorical synthesis of white snowfall and black staircase.

In the 2\textsuperscript{nd} stanza of Čiže wóem, the snowfall is metaphorically related to a ‘black staircase’ ("черная лестница").\textsuperscript{58} The staircase, unlike snowfall, is one of the conventional symbols of the world axis.\textsuperscript{59} The metaphorical fusion of staircase and snowfall manifests a synthesis of mythological tradition and poetic innovation.

This thesis is not concerned with deciding whether the associative link between the cosmic axis and the complex image of snowfall-staircase is a deliberate authorial choice, a subconscious authorial recontextualisation of mythological thought, or a reader-created intertextual link.\textsuperscript{60} The purpose of this analysis is to show that poetic images are capable of absorbing and revitalising worn-out, conventional symbols. By constructing intertextual links between mythological thought and poetic imagination, one can increase the semantic density of literary texts. In what follows, we will investigate what attributes of the cosmic axis are assimilated in the synthetic image of snowfall-staircase.

The world axis is a chronotope, symbolising the central point of time and space. It represents a timeless moment, which is all time, and it manifests an empty space, which is all space.\textsuperscript{61} The world axis is a symbolic representation of the creator, who is nowhere and, at the same time, everywhere. Accordingly, the world axis symbolises the moment of creation and the inaudible world-creating Word, which is silence, yet potentially contains all sound.\textsuperscript{62} Although the world axis represents the central point of the psycho-physical universe, it is also omnipresent due to its all-inclusive nature. Pasternak’s poetic device of superimposing the image of staircase upon the image of snowfall allows us to visualise the paradoxical fusion of spatial confinement and omnipresence. The ambivalent spatial position of axial figures is analogous to those timeless moments which contain eternity. According to mytho-poetic tradition, such mystical moments can be experienced during meditation, creative inspiration, erotic union, and ontological transformation.

It has been mentioned before that the world axis is metaphorically interchangeable with the creative light of the winter solstice. The central axis is a spatial, the winter solstice is a temporal equivalent of the threshold experience of creation. Various representations of the world axis, most obviously the tree, symbolise the never-ending rhythm of nature, eternal renewal, regenerative process, and immortality. The cosmic axis is an anthropo-cosmic figure: it symbolises the equation of the macrocosm with the human microcosm. All these connotations of the central axis are evoked by the image of staircase-like snowfall in Pasternak’s poem. As the axis mundi represents eternal renewal, so the symbol of snowfall is a metaphor for the cyclical recurrence of years and recurring moments of creative illumination. In Čiže wóem, the recurrence of turning points is expressed in a visual form by evoking the image of a spiralling, winding staircase.

Similarly to the world axis, the snowfall connects heaven and earth ("Сходит небо, небосвод"). The contact between the sky and the earth is a traditional metaphor for reaching the ‘divine’, creative light at the centre of the soul. The relevance of bringing this mythological concept into the poem can be demonstrated by the fact that snow is used as a metaphor for the poem, which is an embodiment (or ‘Corporeal illustration’)\textsuperscript{63} of the creative light dwelling in the soul. As the world axis occupies a central place in the psycho-physical universe, so the symbol of snow functions as a central monad of the poem and of the poetic universe. The following section from Wallace Stevens’s \textit{A Primitive Like an Orb} (1984, 441) can be read as a meta-poetic description of the process of revitalising conventional axial symbols in the image of snow:

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\textsuperscript{57} ‘What is the colour of snow at night? / It cannot be white and it is not black. / It is glimmer, penetrating darkness / like life shimmering through death.’ (from \textit{On Two Riverbanks}, by Zsuzsa Beney).

\textsuperscript{58} In Russian, "черная лестница" also means back staircase. This meaning can be integrated into the poem if we think of the snowfall as a metaphor for the secret routes which lead into the depths of the imaginative mind.

\textsuperscript{59} Other typical forms of axis mundi include the all-inclusive white light of creation (such as the Sun, or a star, representing the creative word), cosmic breath, the cosmic tree, the Christmas tree, ladder, sacred mountain, rope, the Pole Star, the thread of the umbilical cord, smoke, beam of light, the redemptive cross of Christ, or Jesus himself (as the embodiment of Logos, the world-creating Word) and so on. Any axial figure is symbolically equivalent with the centre of the mandala, and any symbol which represents the creative centre (including snow) is interchangeable with the whole circle of which it is the centre. The mandalic, axial centre is also equivalent with the symbol of the threshold, because both of them represent the marriage of opposites. These semantic links are evident in window-imagery, because the window is both a ‘threshold’ and a source of illumination. In Emily Dickinson’s poem 709 snow is a metaphor for poetry, which is described as a ‘Corporeal illustration’ of imaginative, ‘divine’ thought.

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\textsuperscript{62} St John of the Cross describes the world-creating Word as silence: ‘The Father uttered one Word; that Word is His Son, and He utters Him for ever in everlasting silence; and in silence the soul has to hear it’ (quoted in Huxley 1946, 247).

\textsuperscript{63} In Emily Dickinson’s poem 709 snow is a metaphor for poetry, which is described as a ‘Corporeal illustration’ of imaginative, ‘divine’ thought.
Lose the old uses that they made of them,  
And cloud, the used-to tree and used-to cloud,  
Lose the old uses that they made of them,  
And cloud, the used-to tree and used-to cloud,  
Free knowledges, secreted until then,  
Until the used-to earth and sky, and the tree  
Each other by sharp informations, sharp,  
And the world the central poem, each one the mate  
And they: these men, and earth and sky, inform  
Each other by sharp informations, sharp,  
Free knowledges, secreted until then,  
Breaches of that which held them fast. It is  
As if the central poem became the world,  
Cloud, the used-to tree and used-to cloud,  
And the world the central poem, each one the mate  
Of the other.  

The discussion of the poetic function of the image of staircase would be incomplete without mentioning a paradox inherent in this image. The metaphorical synthesis of snowfall and staircase results in an ambivalent fusion of connection and disorientation. The axial staircase situated between heaven and earth implies the mythological idea of orientation by means of marking the centre of a spatio-temporal sphere. The staircase can also be associated with descending mental-ontological processes, when the soul is directed from one stage to another, perhaps from life to death, or from conscious-extraverted to unconscious-introspective states. It may appear to be a contradiction that, traditionally, the symbolic staircase leads the spirit on a fixed route, yet in the poem its steps are compared to snowflakes whirling chaotically in the air. In visualising the fusion of these two images, one can conjure up an almost surrealist, kinetic picture of steps moving in air like snowflakes. These steps seem to be arranged in an orderly pattern, leading rhythmically up or down, yet, they also appear to be chaotic. The staircase-snowfall, is, then, at once an axial figure of spatio-temporal orientation, and an image of disorientation. This ambivalence is further emphasised in the second line of the second stanza, where the snowflakes and the steps are characterised by both descent and (upward) flight (‘Все русяется с нелёг’). One of the most common connotations of flight is ‘up, high’. Thus, the sentence ‘Все русяется с нелёг’ may conjure up an image of simultaneous descent and ascent, which is, indeed, visible in the sight of snowfall. Most snowflakes are descending, but some of them are carried upwards by the wind. Some snowflakes are high up in the air, coming downwards, while others are down on the ground, accumulating and rising upwards.64 The opposites of up/down, or ascent/descent, represent opposite mental or physical states, as shown by expressions like ‘lift up one’s spirits’ and ‘being downhearted’, or ‘warm up’ and ‘cool down’. Up and down are strongly associated with light and darkness, respectively. Simultaneity of up and down is, then, a spatial analogue of the union of darkness and light, which is a conventional metaphor for the moment of creation. The spatial ambivalence inherent in the visual sight of snowfall is in keeping with its meta-poetic connotation, creative inspiration. The imaginative mood is often described in literature as a flight high up, a blissful, heavenly state. (Hence the literary convention of using the bird, Paradise, the cloud, the Sun etc. as symbols of imagination.) Paradoxically, the non-ordinary mental state of creative imagination is also frequently compared to a somewhat frightening and unsettling death-like descent, whereby something hidden in the dark depth of the unconscious is approached (related images are the valley, the grave, the well, etc.). Due to its inherent ambivalence, the image of snowfall is an apposite metaphor for the crucial moment of imagination, when light and darkness, life and death, ascent and descent, warmth and coldness, fire and ice, joy and distress, are balanced in the soul.65

3.1.5. Snow: a symbol of transformation

‘Falling from heavens
Earth knows little of
Yet marding it
As with a flawless love’,
(from Snow by Walter de la Mare)

“This is how the universe is made. He enters her
and love explodes into star
she fine as cell-point
be delicate as pollen
star exploding into flower.‘
(from In the Skin House,
by Jeny Couzyn)

In mythology, the axial contact between sky and earth, and various metaphorical configurations of this contact, such as the creative light (i.e. the Sun of the winter solstice), or

64 Similarly to the snowfall, conventional axial figures, such as the staircase, the mountain, the ladder, and the cosmic tree, are generally regarded as symbols of both ascent and descent.

65 The association evoked by the simultaneous descent and ascent of snow can be transferred from Pasternak’s poem to Debussy’s piano-piece, Snow is Dancing. Throughout this piece, the mirror-technique of simultaneous upward and downward movement is used as a musical analogue of snowfall. An intertextual link with Pasternak’s poem allows one to endow this abstract musical technique with a human meaning. One possible explanation of the powerful emotional effect of the piece is that it enacts in the non-representational medium of music the inward experience of an imaginative state, a movement out of all directions, which includes a concurrent ascent and descent. This is an example of ‘interdisciplinary intertextuality’, a comparative method concerned with cross-fertilising various forms of art through their shared symbols and structural devices. In support of the relevance of this method, I shall refer to the Hungarian poet Attila József, whose short study on Bartók’s music (Egy Bartók-tanulmány rázolta, 1936) starts with the following sentence: ‘A nem-zenéből érjük a zenét’ (‘We understand music from what is not music’; 1967, 263).
the emanating centre of the mandala, symbolise at least three interrelated modes of creation: cosmogony, human creativity, and love. What links these three modes of creation is that each of them is an emotionally intense threshold situation, characterised by a state of non-duality, in which chaos/order, silence/word, darkness/light, death/life, temporality/eternity, masculine/feminine, creation/reception, and other opposites are momentarily united. In mythological imagination, both creativity and sexual love are symbolised by the contact between heaven and earth. Sky and its attributes (such as stars, the Sun, and forms of precipitation) are commonly regarded as masculine phenomena, whereas the earth is traditionally a feminine, receptive entity (Mother Earth). Due to their beneficial effects for the earth, precipitation and the Sun function as fertilising agents. In ancient agricultural societies, the sacred marriage of heaven and earth ('hierogamy') symbolises the regenerative processes of vegetation, as well as erotic union and the creative act. In literary imagination, heaven-sent influx is a common metaphor for creative inspiration; it may appear in the metaphorical form of the Sun, or stars, or snow, etc., and it may also be personified as the Muse, God, or other divine beings. Poetic creativity can be described in terms of the mythological concept of hierogamy, where the fertilising heaven and the receptive earth represent two aspects of the poetic soul: creative inspiration, and a receptive submission to the imaginative power. During the creative act, some sort of completion takes place, a union with the inward, 'divine spark', or divine beloved. This process is often compared to carnal knowledge. If one is familiar with these mytho-poetic conventions, then one may recognise that Pasternak’s Снег идет is open to the theme of love, even though this theme is not included in the key stanza (7th), which reveals the central themes of the text. The interrogative form of this stanza alerts us that there may be deeper layers of meaning beneath the explicitly articulated associations of snow. One way of enriching the semantic density of the poem is to compare the contact between the snow and the flowers to the sacred marriage of masculine heaven and feminine earth, thereby integrating the theme of love into the thematic scope of this self-referential poem. The symbolic union of snow and flowers in the threshold situation of imaginative acts can be regarded as an aesthetic analogue of erotic union. The verb ‘тянутся’, which depicts the flowers’ attraction to the snow in Снег идет, has erotic connotations in Единственные дни. In the latter poem, the winter solstice, and the union of ice and fire (ice and the Sun, which are comparable to the paired images of snow and flower) are symbolic equivalents of erotic union:

Зима подходит к середине,
Дороги понуз, с крыш течет,
И солнце греется на дыне.

И любящие, как во сне,
Друг к другу тянется поспешней,
И на деревьях в высшие
Погреб от тепла звёздочен.

The direction of attraction is the reverse in Pasternak’s Зимняя ночь, where it is the snowfall which is moving towards its complementary opposite. In this poem, a candle substitutes the flowers of Снег идет. The creative history of Зимняя ночь embedded in the narrative parts of Pasternak’s semi-autobiographical novel, Доктор Живаго, reveals that the themes of love and artistic creativity are synthesised in this poem. Зимняя ночь and Снег идет can be regarded as twin-poems for many reasons, including their shared imagery, which consists of a transparent, reflecting window mediating between the outdoor snow and an indoor radial image (candle or flowers).

The same symbolic triad appears in Robert Frost’s Wind and Window Flower (1955, 20), with both flower and fire indoors. Note that the window is also referred to as a ‘looking glass’:

Lovers, forget your love,
And list to the love of these,
She a window flower,
And be a winter breeze,
When the frosty window veil
Was melted down at noon,
And the caged yellow bird
Hung over in tune,

66 One example is Aygii’s Τε - λογος λαμπρον, where the image of white flowers absorbing white light represents the poetic soul which is both a source and a recipient of creative light.
67 The metaphorical interrelation of love and the creative act is a common concept in the mytho-poetic domain. Here I list just a few examples. Blake, Keats, Dickinson, and other poets use the theme of sexuality as a metaphor for creative imagination. Aesthetic and erotic energy, intellectual and carnal knowledge, are fused in Ezra Pound’s deliberate mistranslation of Properties: ‘... my songs will travel / And the devirginated young ladies will enjoy them / when they have got over the strangeness’. In ‘Anatomy of the Literary Muse’, Ursula R. Mahler points out that creative imagination is frequently associated with love: ‘The hero encounters [...] a female symbol of love, his muse. The relationship for the female artist is reversed: she encounters [...] a male muse’ (1985, 189). In the Secret of the Golden Flower, the mental experience of attaining the inward source of creativity (the central light of the psyche) is compared to carnal knowledge: ‘It is as if man and woman embraced and a conception took place’ (Wilhelm 1979, 31). The creative light in the centre of the mandala often takes an alternative form, depicting the perfect union of masculine and feminine principles, which underlies all existence. Hermaphroditic mythological figures represent a state of perfection, which is one of the distinctive features of creation. Sigmund Freud in his famous essay about Leonardo de Vinci argues that the urge for artistic creativity may result from channeling ('sublimating') sexual psychic energy, which he calls ‘libido’ (1990, 145-231).
He marked her through the pane,
He could not help but mark,
And only passed her by,
To come again at dark.

He was a winter wind,
Concerned with ice and snow,
Dead weeds and unmated birds,
And little of love could know.

But he sighed upon the sill,
He gave the sash a shake,
And witness all within
Who lay that night awake.

Perchance he half prevailed
To win her for the flight
From the firelit looking-glass
And warm stove-window light.

But the flower leaned aside
And thought of naught to say,
And morning found the breeze
A hundred miles away.

At first sight, this poem appears to be an allegorical representation of the traditional semantic link between death and ‘the little death’ ('la petite mort'), erotic union. The image of wind-driven snow is an embodiment of death, who has fallen in love with the flower. The unwillingness of the flower to join the wind-driven snow can represent a mental-ontological state, an inability to lose one’s sense of self that would allow one to achieve erotic union or a primal integration with the world in dying. In the light of Pasternak’s Литава ночь and Снег утром, Frost’s poem gains deeper metaphorical significance. The interrelated themes of unfulfilled love and unaccomplished death can be regarded as metaphors for unaccomplished imaginative acts. As the erotic union of the wind-driven snow and the window flower does not take place in the poem, so the symbolic union of the outside and the inside worlds is not actualised in the imaginative act if one is interpreting the poem as merely an allegory of unfulfilled love or unfulfilled death-instinct. In this sense, the flower is an ironic portrayal of a superficial reader who is not capable of transgressing the threshold which leads into the world of imagination. Paradoxically, as soon as one recognises this mirror-technique, the hidden irony abolishes itself. The first stanza, which highlights the imaginative act as an alternative of love, reinforces the idea that in this poem the interrelated themes of love and death have a hidden meta-poetic aspect. In support of this interpretation, it is worth mentioning that wind, which in this poem is metonymically equivalent with snow, is a common metaphor for imagination. 68

The hypothetical intertextual dialogue of Pasternak’s and Robert Frost’s poems can be enriched with Robert Louis Stevenson’s Winter (1950, 257), a nineteenth century poem in which indoor ‘flowers of fire’ are juxtaposed to flowers drawn by the frost (or snow) on a window-pane:

In rigorous hours, when down the iron lane
The redbreast looks in vain
For hips and haws,
Lo, shining flowers upon my window-pane
The silver pencil of the winter draws.

When all the snowy hill
And the bare woods are still;
When snipes are silent in frozen bogs,
And all the garden garth is whelmed in mire,
Lo, by the hearth, the laughter of logs —
More fair than roses, lo, the flowers of fire!

In the first stanza, winter has ambivalent connotations. It is depicted as a season of death, yet it also has a vital, creative power since it is producing flowers from ice and snow. In a text-centred reading, the image of crystalline flowers drawn by the silver pencil of the winter seems to be no more than an ornamental detail. However, in the light of Pasternak’s Снег утром, this image can gain metaphorical significance, and function as a self-allusive device depicting the ongoing act of decorating the page with flowers of speech. The shining flowers of winter appearing on the window in contrast to the desolate surroundings, and the laughing flowers of fire bringing warmth and breaking the silence of winter, are comparable to poems. These ‘flowers’ create a positive emotional effect which is comparable to the experience of writing or reading poems. The flowers of winter and fire manifest imaginative perception because they are not actually flowers, just beautiful patterns of frost and flame.

68 A typical literary example of the associative link between wind and imagination is Shelley’s Ode to the West Wind. In this poem, the wind is addressed as ‘Destroyer and Preserver’. This is a strong suggestion that destruction and creation are intertwined in the imaginative act. This idea is implicit in Wallace Stevens’s Man and Bottle and Poetry is a Destructive Force. The ambivalent nature of imagination is also implied in Frost’s Wind and Window Flower, where the wind appears to be a destructive force, yet it can also represent creative inspiration. Its failure to attract the flower can be interpreted as a failure of accomplishing the creative act, in both the erotic and the aesthetic sense. Wind is a widespread metaphor for imagination; one can find examples of this semantic link from ancient Persian to modern European poetry. This associative link can be traced to mythological tradition, where wind and air are common symbols of God’s cosmic breath. Wind is, then, a conventional metaphor for both divine and human creative power. In Prometheus Unbound, Shelley compares the snow to the wind: ‘Snow - white and swift as wind.’ (Act III, Scene III.)
The opposites of frost and flame are indirectly synthesised because both of them are described as flowers. These flowers can be compared to one of the central symbols of Taoist mysticism, the Golden Flower, which represents the creative white light, and functions as a mandalic symbol of the Tao, the underlying unity of all existence and of the central monad in the individual. As a poetic variant, the image of snow (flying vapour) substitutes the Golden Flower in Yu Ch’ing’s magical charm for the Far Journey. Both the Golden Flower and bright snow represent a synthesis of the elements of water and fire, and both of them symbolise the inward creative light (Wilhelm 1979, 53-64). The elements of water and fire are strongly crystalline glass. The image of shining flowers on the window-pane is, then, a visual synthesis interrelated in Pasternak’s Зимняя ночь, where creative inspiration is represented by both snowstorm and a burning candle. Although snowstorm and candle (i.e. water and fire) are opposites, they are also mirror-images of each other. In one of the narrative episodes of Доктор Живаго depicting the creative history of Зимняя ночь, the snow absorbing the moonlight is described as white fire (‘белый огонь’, chapter XIV, part 8). This is an obvious allusion to the synthesis of the mutually exclusive opposites of water and fire. A similar synthetic image appears in Снег идет, the ‘white starlets’ (bright snowflakes), representing creative imagination. The material of ‘white starlets’ is a water-element, snow, but they are also poetic synonyms of the winter solstice, which is a fire element.

In Stevenson’s Winter, the image of shining flowers assimilates yet another symbol, the window. On a frosty window, the flowery patterns of ice crystals seem to be parts of the crystalline glass. The image of shining flowers on the window-pane is, then, a visual synthesis of the symbols of snow (or frost), window, and flower. The fusion of these images represents the inseparability of the outside, the inside, and the boundary between them. Similarly, in the narrative context of Зимняя ночь, there are several descriptions of a visual synthesis of snow (or frost), window, and various indoor radial images, such as colourful Christmas lights, Lana’s candle, and the poet’s lamp (parts 8, 9, 10, in Chapter III, and part 8 in Chapter XIV). These indoor radiation images can be regarded as metaphorical synonyms of the flowers in Снег идет. In this poem, the symbols of snow, window, and flowers are visually separated, but they are imaginatively united in several ways. The flowers internalise snow during the threshold experience of creative-receptive acts. Both the window and the flowers are synthesised with snow because they are words in the poem whose words are compared to snowflakes. Later we will discuss other aspects of the latent synthesis of these images.

A fusion of the elements of water and fire appears in Pasternak’s Единственные дни:
eroticized, and the seemingly innocent plot aimed at gaining access to the house takes on almost explicit sexual overtones of penetration" (1994, 6-8). The dialectics of the inside and the outside can be treated as an intertextual connective, which reinforces the idea that the theme of love can be woven into Pasternak's Снег вдом, even though only with a very thin thread.

The imagery of this poem manifests the logic of deconstruction in that the traditional spatial representation of gender roles is both maintained and abolished. That is to say, the inside and the outside worlds can be associated with feminine and masculine attributes, respectively, but these associative links are reversible. Snow can be associated with both masculine and feminine features. According to mytho-poetic conventions, snow, which belongs to the sky and to the outside world, functions as a masculine, fertilising, creative agent. However, snow as a form of water can also be regarded as a poetic version of the prima materia, the feminine origin. In Pasternak's poetry, snow is often associated with love, or the beloved woman, and it often symbolises artistic creativity, which, according to Pasternak, has a feminine, receptive aspect. Pasternak viewed the artist as a receiver, a medium, a 'free suprapersonal subjectivity', or a 'sponge', which absorbs universal processes.

The masculine, fertilising, life-giving aspects of snow seem to be incompatible with its associations with sterility and death, which are equally relevant connotations when snow is viewed in opposition to the organic flowers. A changing perspective allows us to view snow as a 'self-deconstructing image' combining death and life, sterility and fertility, receptivity and creativity.

The interdependence of creation and reception is a common feature of love and the imaginative act. Reception functions as the accomplishment of the aesthetic communicative act. In this sense, the acts of creation and reception are temporally divided and they belong to different persons: creation to the author, reception to the reader. This relation is more complex in Pasternak's poetry. His poetic world is characterised by a deconstructive overlapping of the complementary opposites of creation and reception. That is to say, both creation and reception contain the other as their attribute. The reading of Pasternak's poems involves the reader's active, creative participation in the construction of meaning. The reader's act of 'creative reception' is balanced with the author's 'receptive creation'. All these issues can be related to the symbol of snow. When viewed in a broad mytho-poetic context, snow in Снег вдом takes on both masculine and feminine attributes. As a messenger of the sky, or a fertilising agent, snow is a masculine phenomenon. As a metaphor for the poetic word or creative imagination, snow can be related to the Pasternakian 'feminine' imaginative power. In a few of Pasternak's poems, snow appears as a (dis)embodied form of a woman, who either represents creative imagination, or acts as the source of creative inspiration. The appearance of women in the form of snow is actually their embodiment in the words of poems. In Снег вдом, there is no explicit indication that snow is endowed with either feminine or with masculine features. Perhaps this is why it can evoke associations with both.

The descriptive content of the poem can be related to several poetic themes in varying dominance. The creative and the receptive acts, and the nature of temporal process are well-elaborated, explicit topics, which are allegorically applicable to the whole text. The theme of love, however, is merely a free intertextual association. The two opposite gender roles only vaguely hover in the dichotomous layout of the main symbols of the text. The theme of love emerges only at a few points and in the deep mythological layers of the poem, and when the poem is viewed in a wider, intertextual perspective.

In Единственное дни, by inversion, love is the predominant, explicit human analogue of the descriptive content, the winter solstice. Nevertheless, the poem is not restricted to this theme. In some parts of the text, traces of the theme of creative act can be
found if the poem is read in the context of Pasternak’s mytho-poetic thought, where both love and the winter solstice are potential synonyms of artistic creativity. In Зимняя ночь, the dominance of the themes of love and poetic creativity are balanced, but both of them are equally concealed.

As a summary of this section, let us return to the central idea introduced at the beginning, that creativity, love, and cosmogony are traditionally regarded as analogous threshold experiences. Since the symbol of snow in Снег удет is explicitly identified with poetic words, one of its main functions is to symbolise the creative power of man. At the same time, snow is endowed with divine attributes. Heaven, which is traditionally regarded as the dwelling place of divine beings, is also the dwelling place of snow. In Снег удет, snow is metonymically identified with the sky. As it descends on earth, it brings to the human world a heavenly state, the state of creative inspiration. The descent of heaven in the form of snow is one of Pasternak’s recurring metaphors for the release of internal, creative energies. The metaphorical relation between snow, creative imagination, and the creative word entails that the poetic word takes on the mytho-poetic attributes of snow and of its synonym, the staircase. As snow and the staircase can represent the cosmic axis, so the poetic word can function as a monad, a mandalic centre of the poem and of the literary universe. In Снег удет, the word ‘снег’ is such an all-inclusive unit. It represents all words, similarly to the world axis, which is an omnipresent, all-embracing centre. Snow as a symbol of the poetic word absorbs the main functions of the mythological world axis. Both the world axis and snow (poetic word) represent a correlation between macrocosm and microcosm, the construction of order out of chaos, a chronotopic fusion of space and time, the interrelated themes of creation and love, the concept of immortality, the idea of endless recurrence, a synthesis of masculine and feminine attributes, and a fusion of creation and reception. A further analogy between the central axis and snow (poetic word) is that both of them are related to the winter solstice. Indeed, poetic words are verbal analogues of the winter solstice since they bring light into mental darkness, re-create order, and manifest the eternalised threshold moment of creative imagination.

3.1.6. Snow: a configuration of the Christmas tree and of the star

The associative link between snow and the winter solstice allows us to establish further mytho-poetic syntheses. The light of the winter solstice has traditionally been represented by various ritual objects, including the candle and the so-called ‘garden of Adonis’, a pot of sprouting, growing corn symbolising life springing from death, and the return of light at the turning point of the solar year. In the seventeenth century, this symbol was replaced by the Christmas tree. The evergreen pine tree decorated for Christmas with golden and silver ornaments represents the axial cosmic tree with the Sun, the Moon, and the stars shining through its branches. Similarly to the poetic image of snow, the Christmas tree symbolises the contact between heaven and earth. These associative links between the Christmas tree, the winter solstice, and snow encourage us to compare the use of snow in Снег удет to the poetic treatment of the Christmas tree in Pasternak’s Зимняя песнь. Baevskii points out that the personified Christmas tree in Зимняя песнь represents the concept of eternity and an analogy between the macrocosm and the microcosm (1993, 37). The Christmas tree, which brings eternity into the room, seems to reach the sky as it wears stars on its branches, perhaps ‘white stars’, which in Снег удет are comparable to Christmas stars since they symbolise the appearance of creative light and the complex symbolism of the winter solstice. Both snow and Christmas tree can be regarded as configurations of the mythological world axis. As such, they represent the creative light, the marriage of heaven and earth (and other opposites), immortality, and the mystical experience of compressing eternity in a moment.

75 Corn is a traditional analogue of the Sun, and of Sun-gods. At the end of Brodsky’s Осенний крик ветра, ears of corn (‘heads of barley’) are parts of a complex image, in which various symbols of the creative light (such as the circle, the eye, the rainbow and snow) are synthesised in a many-layered metaphor of the poetic word.

76 One of the central symbols of Chinese mysticism, the Golden Flower, is a mediator between the Christmas tree and snow. In his commentary to the Secret of the Golden Flower, C. G. Jung mentions that the Christmas tree shares the main associative meanings of the Golden Flower, both being mandalic symbols of the creative light (Wilhelm 1979, 101). In the Chinese text itself, the Golden Flower is symbolically equivalent with snow. (Wilhelm 1979, 58, 60, 62).
In the narrative context of Зимняя ночь (a twin-poem of Снег идет), the sight of snow is inextricably intertwined with the sight of many-coloured Christmas trees. It is the window where the synthesis of these images takes place:

Покрытые толстым слоем снега чудесные деревья сказки и новогодние огни домов тронули медом, и по их непрохладной поверхности двигались цветные отсветы зажженных елок и тени веселявшихся, словно люди на улице показывали из домов туманные картины на белых, развеянных перед водевильным фоном простыней. (Pasternak, Доктор Живаго, 1989, 88-89)

Юра смотрел по сторонам и видел то же самое, что незадолго до него попадалось на глаза Ларе. [...] Светящихся изнутри и заживалных огонь домов переоделся в драгоценные звезды из дымчатого скопления топок. Внутри них тихо, светочная жизнь Москвы, горе высек [...] (Pasternak, Доктор Живаго, 1989, 92)


The visual overlapping of snow, window, and the Christmas tree is comparable to the metaphorical synthesis of the images of snow, window, and flowers in Снег идет.

The Christmas tree and most traditional symbols of the world axis are static and limited in space. The snowfall, however, is dynamic, and it is expanded in space. One of the main features of the axial figures, their distinct, central position is not discernible in the image of the snowfall. For the observer, the snowfall is not in the centre of the world: it is everywhere. This apparent contradiction may be the very reason why snow is a suitable poetic substitute of traditional axial symbols. The axis mundi, like the radiating light, occupies a central place in the psycho-physical universe, yet it is symbolically omnipresent. The all-pervasive visual appearance of snowfall actually manifests the concept of omnipresence, which is less discernible in the case of traditional axial figures.77 The dynamic nature of the snowfall allows the observer to capture totality, temporal process, and eternity in a moment. In the snowfall, the contact between heaven and earth is being established continuously. Some of the snowflakes are already resting on the ground, while some are descending in mid-air, and others are still in the clouds. By contrast, most of the traditional, static symbols of the central axis represent different phases of the temporal cycle in succession, not simultaneously.

77 The paradoxical concept of the omnipresence of the centre is often illustrated by a mandalic diagram of concentric circles. This diagram represents the symbolic equivalence of the centre and the circumference. Unlike most traditional axial figures, the diagram of concentric circles is a precise visual analogue of the all-inclusiveness of the centre. The anonymous author of The Secret of the Golden Flower writes: 'the centre is omnipresent; everything is contained in it' (Wilhelm, 1979, 35). The cosmic tree is often depicted as an all-inclusive centre. For instance, on Jen Deliby's design of the Celtic Tree of Life, the intertwined branches and roots form a circle around the trunk (Green, 1997, 213). In the vision of the Anglo-Saxon shaman, Odin, the world tree is depicted as a spatially all-pervasive axis of the cosmos: 'its branches spread out over the whole world and reach up over heaven' (Bates, 1996, 263).

The direction of the hero's, or initiate's, or shaman's passage on the axial staircase, ladder, or mountain is either descending or ascending, so he cannot be 'up' and 'down' at the same time.78 Similarly, the seasonal regeneration of deciduous trees symbolises the cyclical course of time and the perpetual cycles of death and rebirth in a temporal succession. The trees wear four dresses each year, but only one at a time, symbolising the successive phases of human life. Unlike deciduous trees, which manifest the change of seasons in temporal continuity, the regenerative processes of evergreen trees are not so apparently divided in time. The evergreen Christmas tree thus can symbolise different phases of time simultaneously, as in Pasternak's Зимние праздники:

Бутылу недостаточно, 
Страста, нового малю.
Надо, чтоб елкою снегочной 
Вечность средь комнаты стала.

In its all-inclusive temporal meaning, the Christmas tree is comparable to the symbol of snowfall. They complement each other, since the Christmas tree is a static, whereas the snowfall is a dynamic object, and the Christmas tree is located indoors, whereas the snowfall is located outdoors.

The evergreen Christmas tree and snow are closely associated with another traditional representation of the central axis, the star. The stars, like the snowflakes, are 'one and many'. Therefore, every star can share the symbolism of the Star of Bethlehem or the Pole star, which are universally regarded as symbols of axis mundi. In Зимние праздники, the Christmas tree is wearing stars, and it represents eternity within the borders of the room. The evergreen Christmas tree and the stars normally belong to the external, limitless space. By a chronotopic logic, they symbolise eternity, even when they are brought indoors. It is obvious that in Снег идет the snowflakes are poetic synonyms of stars because they are described as 'white starlets' ("беля звездочки"). This may be regarded as an insignificant descriptive detail, a superficial allusion to the similarity between the shape of the stars and the snow-crystals. However, one can also assume that every word has weight and symbolic significance in the poem. As the 'black staircase' can fulfil more than an ornamental function, so the image of 'white stars' can bring new semantic aspects into the text by opening the boundaries of the poem to the wide context of mytho-poetic imagination.79
3.1.7. The starry sky in a single star – the snowfall in a snow-crystal

"To see a World in a grain of Sand
And Heaven in a Wild Flower,
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
And Eternity in an hour"
(from William Blake’s Auguries of Innocence)

Bright stars shining through the dark night are common symbols of creative light, and, by analogy, come to represent the immortal poetic spirit. Being a source of light, the radial image of the star (especially the Pole star and the Christmas star) often functions in mythology as an analogue of the mystic centre, that is to say, a synonym of the all-inclusive white light of the winter solstice and of the world axis. The star in mythology is a geometrical version of the cosmic pillar. Throughout, the Pole Star is called the column of the universe, or the pillar of the world. All the constellations revolve around this absolute, fixed centre. The Pole star is commonly associated with the creator, the motionless first cause, or creative light. The geometrical representation of the Pole star, or of any other star, denotes the union of the upper and lower worlds and also the orientation within a circle. The division of the circle by a 12-pointed star gives the pattern of the clock, and of the Zodiac. These images represent the organisation of time. The division of the circle by a star also symbolises orientation in space. The star, like the snowfall, is a chronotope, in which spatial and temporal meanings overlap. In Снег и звёзды, the phrase ‘white starlets’ conjures up a synthetic image in which stars are united with snowflakes. The metaphorical synthesis of the figures of star and snowflake, or of the starry sky and snowfall, can be regarded as a ‘visual’ manifestation of potential links between mythological and poetic imagination. Both the mythological symbol of the star and the poetic image of snowfall take on the metaphorical functions of the world axis, a spatio-temporal metaphor. The metonymical correspondence between the whole and its parts is also applicable on a larger scale. While the snowfall represents the whole in relation to its parts, the ‘white stars’, it is also part of a larger scene of snow-window-flowers. Here we are dealing with a structure of recursive embeddings. The bipolar structure of the whole setting of inside-outside is condensed in its part, the snowfall. The ambivalent meanings of the snowfall are maintained on a smaller scale, in the traditional mythological symbolism of its constituent parts, the ‘white starlets’. Moreover, each star has a centre, whose symbolic function within the star is a microstructural replica of the symbolic position of the whole star in the macroworld. The central point where the rays of the star intersect is the centre of the circle which can be drawn around the star. In mythological imagination, the radiating centre of the star symbolises the undivided One, the underlying unity of all existence. It is an axial point, from where the creative white light emanates, and where everything returns. It represents the sacred point and the all-inclusive moment of creation and transformation. In the structure of recursive embeddings, the central point of the star is not only a replica of the whole star, but also of the starry sky, which is a poetic synonym of snowfall. This is in accordance with the poetic function of snowfall as a configuration of the central axis, a spatio-temporal metaphor of the threshold situation of the creative act.

The star, like snow, is an ambivalent image. On the one hand, it is associated with light and life. It is a sign of the birth of Christ and of other divine beings, thus representing the creative, ‘divine spark’ in man. The star is an attribute of the sky, therefore it is associated with creative power, as opposed to the receptive earth. The descent of stars and the downward path of their light represent divine and human creation. On the other hand, the fall of a star is commonly regarded as a sign of death. In mythological thought, stars also represent the immortal spirits of the dead. The connotative aura of the symbol of star includes apparently contradictory, yet interrelated meanings, such as life, birth, death, immortality, and eternity. The same associations are evoked by the image of snowfall in Снег и звёзды.

Due to their shared symbolic meanings, the star (as a poetic synonym of the snowflake) and the snowfall can be related to each other metonymically, whereby the parts contain the essence of the whole. The ‘white starlets’ are parts of the snowfall, yet each of them contain the main symbolic meanings of the snowfall, at least in an intertextual perspective. The metonymical correspondence between the whole and its parts is also applicable on a larger scale. While the snowfall represents the whole in relation to its parts, the ‘white stars’, it is also part of a larger scene of snow-window-flowers. Here we are dealing with a structure of recursive embeddings. The bipolar structure of the whole setting of inside-outside is condensed in its part, the snowfall. The ambivalent meanings of the snowfall are maintained on a smaller scale, in the traditional mythological symbolism of its constituent parts, the ‘white starlets’. Moreover, each star has a centre, whose symbolic function within the star is a microstructural replica of the symbolic position of the whole star in the macroworld. The central point where the rays of the star intersect is the centre of the circle which can be drawn around the star. In mythological imagination, the radiating centre of the star symbolises the undivided One, the underlying unity of all existence. It is an axial point, from where the creative white light emanates, and where everything returns. It represents the sacred point and the all-inclusive moment of creation and transformation. In the structure of recursive embeddings, the central point of the star is not only a replica of the whole star, but also of the starry sky, which is a poetic synonym of snowfall. This is in accordance with the poetic function of snowfall as a configuration of the central axis, a spatio-temporal metaphor of the threshold situation of the creative act.

90 One example is Shelley’s Adonais, an elegy written on the death of Keats: ‘The soul of Adonais, like a star, / Beacons from the abode where the eternal are.’

91 Jesus is an embodiment of the divine, creative light, thus, he is also a symbol of human creative power, or spiritual light. St Athanasius (4th century) summarised these symbolic interrelations as such: ‘The Word of God was made human in order that we might be made divine’. Northrop Frye (1990a) compared the Bible to a double mirror, where the Old Testament and the New Testament reflect each other. The creative word of God is metaphorically identified with Christ, and the act of cosmogony is synonymous with the birth of Christ just after the winter solstice, on the day when the rising Sun starts moving again on the horizon.
These considerations may seem to be too distant from Pasternak’s poem because the text does not include any hint at an analytical perception of the pattern of the star (or snowflake), and it does not allude to metonymical correspondences between the whole bipolar setting, the snowfall, and the snowflake. In what follows, we shall investigate whether the structure of recursive embeddings can be more firmly integrated into the thematic scope of the poem.

3.1.8. Anagogic view: the poem and the literary universe

Converging into the image of snow

'The Brain - is wider than the Sky -
For - put them side by side -
The one the other will contain -
With ease - and You - beside.'
(from poem 632 by Emily Dickinson)

'the essential poem at the centre of things'
(from A Primitive like an Orb, by Wallace Stevens)

One can apply the structure of recursive embeddings on the meta-poetic plane, substituting snow with its main poetic meaning, the creative word. As suggested by the 7th stanza, the poem can be visualised as snowfall, where each word is comparable to a snowflake. If one transfers the mytho-poetic correlations between snowfall and the world axis to the aesthetic plane, then the poem (as an analogue of snowfall) comes to represent the centre of the world of literature. This is in keeping with Frye’s concept of the anagogic context:

[In the anagogic perspective] the center of the literary universe is whatever poem we happen to be reading. One step further, and the poem appears as a microcosm of all literature, an individual manifestation of the total order of words. Anagogically, then, the symbol is a monad, all symbols being united in a single infinite and eternal verbal symbol which is, as dianoia, the Logos, and as mythos, total creative act. This is the conception which Joyce expresses, in terms of subject matter, as 'epiphany'. (1990, 121)

Pasternak’s *Czesław* is, indeed, a potential centre of gravity in the literary universe, because the metaphorical identification of snow with the creative word is not merely a self-referential allusion, but a meta-poetic device. That is to say, the symbol of snow is not only a metaphor for the words of this poem but a symbol of any creative word, and all poetic words. The snowfall, then, not only represents the poem, but also the world of literature, as it is reflected in the central poem. If the universe of literature is compared to snowfall or stary sky, then each snowflake or star comes to represent a literary text. Poems, as stars, or snowflakes, are ‘one and many’: each of them is a unique verbal entity, yet what they have in common is that each of them is an embodiment of creative light, and each one is a potential centre of the literary universe. One can take further the allegorical correspondence between the star-like snowflake and the literary text by comparing the central, axial point of the figure of the star to all-embracing central symbols of poems, such as snow in Pasternak’s *Czesław*. Snow is a monad, a converging centre in the poem because it is a metaphor for the creative word. In the structure of recursive metonymical embeddings, the symbol of snow functions as an all-inclusive centre within an all-inclusive centre: it contains the whole poem, and, together with the poem, it assimilates the whole of literature. The snow-crystal as a monad represents ‘the Word that contains all poetry’, ‘the universal creative word which is all words’. It is a poetic analogue of the ‘Word of God’, thus, it is also ‘an analogy of Christ’ (Frye’s definitions of the monad, 1990, 121, 126).

Within the structure of recursive metonymical embeddings, it is easier to understand the logic underlying Frye’s apparently inconsistent use of the term ‘monad’. He uses this term for poems, as well as for symbols which are parts of poems. The analysis of *Czesław* reveals that this terminology is entirely relevant in a structure of metonymical embeddings. The poem *Czesław* is obviously a ‘monad’: it represents all verbal works of art because it is about poetic creativity in general. The central symbol of the poem, snow, is also a monad because it symbolises any creative word.

If one compares the poem to snowfall, and each word to a snowflake, then it is expected that the word ‘snow’ is not the only potential centre of the poem. Indeed, most of the key words of the text have a converging semantic significance, such as white star, flower, window, cross, everything, chaos, staircase, turning, sky, earth, life, Christmas, New Year, time, year, word, and poem.

The chain of metonymical recursive embeddings, which ranges from a symbol through the poem to the universe of literature, can be compared to some of the inherent features of snow imagery which are not mentioned in the poem, but which may be evoked associatively. Each snowflake is unique, yet each one is a hexagonal crystal, which consists of smaller hexagonal units. The centre of the snowflake is generally a six-pointed star, a microstructural replica of the whole crystal. Since the snowflake consists of smaller hexagons, it is like a

82 The pattern of the snow crystal is clearly visible on W. A. Bentley’s 2453 enlarged photographs (Bentley and Humphreys 1962). For a concise scientific description of the pattern of the snow-crystal see the discussion of the ‘Koch curve’ (also called the ‘snowflake curve’) in Osserman, 1996, 161-163. Here I only quote the key sentences: “The process that forms a real-life snowflake […] is a process of accretion, starting with a central kernel, which “grows” a symmetric set of six crystals, each of which then grows further crystals, and so on. […]"
condensed snowfall, or a miniature mirror-image of snowfall. The only difference is that the snowfall is chaotic, whereas the 'snowfall' within the snow-crystal has an orderly pattern. The idea that the orderly snowflake is interchangeable with the chaotic snowfall may seem to be a conceptual mistake. However, if we think of Frye's snowflake-metaphor quoted at the beginning of the first chapter, we can see that the interrelation of snowflake and snowfall is a precise analogy of the interplay of order and chaos, which is a central feature of imaginative comprehension. Whether a text appears to be chaotic or orderly largely depends on how one apprehends it. A poem may initially seem to be somewhat obscure and chaotic, comparable to snowfall. Repeated readings and an imaginative, synthetic apprehension may alter this perception. As the semantic and structural interrelations of the text are gradually crystallised, it comes to be comparable to a snowflake, or an 'orderly' snowfall, whose constituent parts, the 'white stars' are not randomly scattered on the page, but in such a way that they can be linked to one another to make up meaningful verbal patterns, which can be compared to constellations. Frye argues that the same process of 'crystallisation' is applicable in a wider, intertextual field. This broader synthetic apprehension is the main methodological concern of this dissertation, where we are trying to interrelate poetic texts, thereby constructing a coherent intertextual structure in the labyrinthine world of verbal imagination. The analysis of Coetz uoem reassures us that this is a worthwhile undertaking. The intratextual integrity of the poem can be regarded as a microstructural analogue of its intertextual network and of the possible order of works of literature. In this sense, the central position of the symbol of snow in the poem is as a small-scale analogue of the central position of the focused text in its intertextual network.

The interchangeability of the images of star, snowflake, and snowfall, and the relevance of their aesthetic connotations have been demonstrated by aspects of mythological thought. Snow, the central symbol of Coetz uoem, has been revealed to be a new poetic form of the common mythological symbol of the all-inclusive, central creative light. In what follows, we shall investigate further links between mythological and poetic imagery, in order to support the idea that there are correspondences between the symbolic meanings of the snowflake and the snowfall.

The process repeats itself indefinitely. The end result is the Koch snowflake. [...] [This] example became the archetype of the [...] theory of fractals’ (1996, 161-162).

3.1.9. Snowflake and snowfall: mytho-poetic synonyms

"everlasting snow" - "everlasting flake"
(from poems 158 and 275 by Emily Dickinson)

"Two things of opposite natures seem to depend
On one another, as a man depends
On a woman, day on night, the imagined
On the real. This is the origin of change."
(from Wallace Stevens's Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction)

The geometrical form of the hexagonal snowflake, the six-pointed star, is a widespread mythological symbol. There are striking parallels between the traditional connotations of the six-rayed star and some of the main connotations of snowfall in Coetz uoem. To elucidate similarities between the mythological symbolism of the hexagon and the poetic associations of snowfall, I will quote relevant sections from descriptions of the six-pointed star in various dictionaries of symbols, and include in italics, in parentheses the corresponding poetic meanings of snowfall. (Suspension points in square brackets indicate ellipses.)

The six-pointed star depicts the Creation. (The snowfall connecting heaven and earth is an axial symbol of poetic creation.) [The snowflake] is the combination of the masculine and feminine triangles of fire and water. (The snowfall as an attribute of heaven, is a masculine, fertilising, creative principle. However, it also represents the Ptolemaic feminine, receptive imagination. Snow is a frozen form of the element of water.) At the same time, the shining snowflakes or 'white starlets' can be associated with the creative light, the Sun of the winter solstice, which is a fire element.) (Cooper 1978, 159)

The double triangle, the six-pointed star, [...] is the union of opposites (snowfall is also a union of opposites), male and female, positive and negative, the upper triangle being white and the lower black (the white snowfall is metaphorically identified with black staircase and with black printed words); fire and water; evolution and involution; interpenetration, each being the image of the other; the hermaphrodite; the perfect balance of complementary forces; the androgynous aspect of the deity; man looking into his own nature (Contemplation of snowfall, which is a metaphor for writing and reading poems, has been revealed to be a threshold situation of simultaneously outward and inward gaze. By looking at snowfall, or at its metaphorical analogue, the poem, the poet and the reader are looking into their own minds.); the twin forces of creativity; the synthesis of all elements with the upright triangle as the celestial nature and the inverted as the terrestrial, the whole representing universal man uniting the two as mediator (the snowfall connecting heaven and earth is a metaphor for the divine light dwelling in the human mind). [...] The two interlocking triangles are the union of opposites which become 'fluid fire' or 'fiery water' (The hidden solar symbolism of snow may be regarded as a poetic analogue of the synthesis of water and fire.) (Cooper 1978, 180)

83 Although snow is frozen water, it is metaphorically identified with fluid water in Wallace Stevens's The Man with the Blue Guitar: "The sea is in the falling snow.' Water is a conventional metaphor for the soul. A literary example is Goethe's Spirit Song over the Waters: "The soul of man / Resembleth water: / From heaven it cometh, / To heaven it soureth, / And then again / To earth descendeth, / Changing ever." (from The Poems of Goethe, trans. by E. A. Bowring, London, 1953, 219).
In mystical numerology, the number six denotes the spiritual realm, which is an immaterial reality, qualitatively different from the sensory data obtained by the five senses. The spiritual realm is the right soil for cultivating the inner light, which is symbolised, among other things, by the Golden Flower and by snowfall (Wilhelm 1979, 30, 58, 60, 62). The common association of six with the spiritual realm is maintained when the hexagonal snow crystal functions as a metaphor for imagination. One of the distinctive features of creative imagination is that it reaches into an extra-sensory realm beyond the limits of sense-bound, empirical perception.

The number 6 has a special significance in mystical numerology. Marie-Louise von Franz refers to the number 6 as an example for explaining the Jungian notion of acausal orderliness, and the unconscious origin of numerology:

In the realm of the mind or psyche acausal orderliness is manifest in such examples as the fact that 6 is a perfect number; the addition of its factors, 1+2+3, and their multiplication 1x2x3, both yield 6. We are mentally forced to accept this as true without being able to indicate a cause for 6 having just this quality. (1997, 27)

All human beings are simply forced, by the very structure of their innate capacity to think, to acknowledge that the number 6 is a so-called ‘whole’ number, that is, it consists of the sum of its parts, 1, 2 and 3, but no one could advance a causal psychological explanation for this. For us it is simply evident, our psyche is apparently so structured that we have to look at it in that way and not in another way. All the natural numbers, in Jung’s opinion, are especially ‘primitive’, that is, they are archetypal structures which reach farther into the depths of the unconscious than most. They demonstrate an ‘acausal orderliness’ in the psyche. (1998, 239)

A. E. Abbot’s discussion of the esoteric meanings of the six-rayed star further supports our argument that the poetic meanings of snowfall are implicit in the figure of the hexagonal snowflake:

The symbol of six is the six-pointed star [...]. It represents the above and the below (as the snowfall connects the heaven and the earth), Spirit and Matter intermingled (union of matter and spirit is expressed in the twofold semantic function of the snowfall: it is a sign referring to real, material snow, and it is a motif symbolising the imaginative spirit). The geometrical equivalents of the six, the regular hexagon and the hexagram, the six-pointed star known as the ‘Star of David’, are particularly harmonious figures. The six illustrates the relationship of the divine and the human (the descent of the snowfall from heaven illustrates the activation of the divine, creative power in man) [...] it represents harmony, proportion, co-operation, and implies order and harmony brought to manifestation (the snowfall as a symbol of the world axis represents the organisation of the universe, and it also manifests the process of creating order in the poetic microcosm). The hexad was considered by all nations a sacred number, because the world was created in six days (the snowfall is also associated with the creative process). The six signifies perfection of the parts because it is the only number under ten which is whole and equal in its divisions and produces a hexagon by extending the measure of the radius of a circle six times round the circumference. The six was ‘the perfection of parts’ (the principle of reproductive metonymy is also based on the perfection of parts), a symbol of creation and a sign of the soul. (The snowfall is also a symbol of creation and of imagination. These mental processes are attributed to the soul, not to the rational mind.) Medieval writers on numbers associated six with earthly perfection because of the relationship to the days of creation. (By tradition, the poetic universe and the each poem are analogous to the order of the macro world: they are verbal forms of earthly perfection, and they are symbolised by the snowfall. As the hexagonal pattern of the snowflake is associated with the days of creation, so the snowfall expresses temporality in a spatial form. It represents the everlasting feature of the temporally confined creative process.) Six is manifested harmony, order, or arrangement (the snowfall, as a metaphor for the poem, is also harmony, order, and arrangement), and thus it plays a prominent part in nature: The honey-combs of bees are built of hexagonal cells. Quartz (like water) crystallises according to the hexagonal system. (Abbot, n.d. 219-221)

In the last sentence, the allusion to various hexagonal forms of nature shows that the associations of certain mytho-poetic images may be imprinted in their very structure. It is possible that this structure is perceived intuitively when a particular image is chosen to represent a particular concept.

In The Mystic Spiral, Jill Purce points out that the six-pointed star (Seal of Solomon) is interchangeable with the symbol of two gyres in W. B. Yeats’s A Vision, and with the Chinese yin-yang diagram, whose alternative representation is the circle of the 64 hexagrams of the I Ching (Book of Changes). These symbols are different configurations of the universal concept of the dynamic interaction of opposites (1997, 20-22, 119). The two interlocking triangles, which make up the pattern of the six-pointed star, are often depicted at the second circuit of the self-expanding centre of the mandala, representing the indissoluble unity of opposites and the state of primordial one-ness. Cirlot links the image of the hexagonal star (Seal of Solomon) to mandala symbolism:

[The Seal of Solomon] consists of two triangles superimposed and interlaced so as to form a six-pointed star. Wirth terms it the ‘star of the microcosm’ [...]. In reality it is a symbol of the human soul as a ‘conjunction’ of consciousness and the unconscious, signified by the intermingling of the triangle (denoting fire) and the inverted triangle (water). Both of these are, according to alchemic theory, subject to the principle of the immaterial, called Azoth by the philosophers, and represented in the Seal of Solomon by a central point which is not actually portrayed but which has to be seen in the imagination alone, as in some of the mandalas of India and Tibet. [The Sri-Yantra and the akarshani-yantra are typical examples.]84 (Cirlot 1971, 281-2)

The hexagonal emanation of the invisible mandalic centre is a configuration of the world axis, the central creative light, and the mind’s omnipresent self-reflecting eye. It represents a state of non-duality, which involves a sense of mystical at-oneness with the cosmos, and a realisation of the unity of all phenomena and experience. The latent axial symbolism of the snowfall is consubstantial with the mandala symbolism innate in the hexagonal snow crystal.

This section has shown that the poetic image of snowfall has taken over the main associations of the conventional figures of the hexagon and the six-pointed star. These

84 The symbolic significance of the hexagon in the mandala is discussed in Khanna (1997) and Shearer (1993).
traditional metaphors are revitalised when they appear in the poem as snowflakes (‘white starlets’). The apparently unusual association of snow with creative imagination may be rooted in the conventional meanings of the hexagon. Taking into consideration the typical mythological meanings of the hexagonal star, the association of snow with the marriage of opposites is not as arbitrary as it may seem at first sight. The union of opposites is a characteristic feature of imaginative acts, and it is imprinted in some of the microstructural properties of snow, which may be recognised on an unconscious level.85

The interchangeability of the mythological symbolism of the star with the poetic associations of snowfall is a metaphorical analogue of the anagogic correspondence between the poem and the world literature. The metaphorical consubstantiality of the snowflake and the snowfall also signifies the paradoxical co-existence of form and formlessness, the presence of the infinite in the small, the many in the one, and the eternal in the ephemeral.

3.1.10. The four-pointed star as a symbolic equivalent of snow

The six-pointed star is not the only microstructural representative of the poetic meanings of snowfall and of the whole setting of snow-window-flowers. The star is closely associated with the metaphor in mythology as well as in Pasternak’s poem. The cross is a basic mythological symbol, and it is a recurring motif in Слово идем, where the expression ‘перехрестка поворот’ appears twice and the phrase ‘оконный переплет’ evokes the image of a window which is divided by the pattern of the cross.86 The phrase ‘перехрестка поворот’ manifests its meaning by its form: it is an inverse poetic form of the colloquial ‘поворот перехрестка’. That is to say, it is a grammatical ‘cross’ involving a turning of the ordinary word order.

Conventionally, the cross shares the symbolism of the star: both are chronotopes, geometrical models of the world axis. Both of them can be surrounded by a circle in which they represent the organisation of space and time. The cross is a universal symbol of the crossing of roads, threshold situations, turning points in human life, and the unity of opposites. There are numerous equivalences between the conventional meanings of the cross and the poetic meanings of snow. Quoting Champeaux in A Dictionary of Symbols, J. Chevalier and A. Gheerbrant summarise some of the main connotations of the cross:

‘The cross is above all other symbols the one which creates totality. [...] The cross performs a function of synthesis and measurement. In it, Heaven and Earth are conjoined... in it time and space intermingled. [...] Of all symbols the cross is the most universal and all-embracing. It symbolises [...] the natural and permanent structure of the universe and communication between Heaven and Earth and Earth and Heaven’ (1996, 248-9).87

The authors of the dictionary add further details:

The cross symbolises the Crucified Christ, the Saviour, the Word. [...] The Cross and the hill of Golgotha became the pole of the world. The four arms [of the cross] display the division of the four elements – Air, Earth, Fire and Water – with their traditional humours – hot, dry, moist and cold. [...] The two axes of the cross call to mind the flow of time and the four cardinal points. [...] The two axes are also those of the equinoxes and solstices or their intersection with the polar axes. [...] The centre [of the cross] in which time and space cease to exist and there is no change of any sort, is a place of passage or communication between this world and the Otherworld. [...] The centre of the cross, the point at which divergent directions converge and where balance is achieved, effectively corresponds to ‘the void in the centre’, with the ‘non-active action at the centre’. [...] The cross has a cosmic significance, as its totality, since it indicates the cardinal points. [...] As the crossroads, it depicts the paths of life and death. [...] The cross is a marriage of opposites [...], the symbol of the world in its totality (1996, 248-261).

Most of the traditional symbolic meanings of the cross are present in the connotative field of the symbol of snow in Pasternak’s poem. This synthesis of mythological tradition and poetic innovation can actually be visualised in the context of the poem. As the traditional axial image of the staircase is fused with the image of snowfall, so is the cross. In the second stanza, ‘перехрестка поворот’ is related to the synthetic image of snowfall-staircase. The chaotic snowfall is, then, fused with two traditional axial symbols, the staircase and the cross.

85 Jung believed that ‘identity of opposites is a characteristic feature of every psychic event in the unconscious state’, and that the coincidence of opposites ‘can adequately be expressed only by the symbol’ (Collected Works, vol. 12, pp. 282, 283). The inherently ambivalent nature of snow may be the reason why it is widely used as a metaphor for creative imagination and its products. This connotation of snow appears in poems by E. Pasternak, G. Aygi, O. Mandelstam, V. Briusov, J. Brodsky, A. Khusner, O. Mityaev, V. Turiansky, G. Illyés, J. Duida, Zs. Bényei, M. Radnóti, D. Kozintzov, P. Celan, T. Hughes, D. Thomas, L. Rosenberg, E. Dickinson, H. Leifer, L. MacNeice, R. Frost, R. L. Stevenson, F. O’Hara, J. Cocteau, W. Stevens, W. B. Yeats, A. R. Ammons, H. C. ten Berge, and other poets. In most of the cases, the treatment of snow as a symbol of imagination is an independent invention of poets rather than a result of borrowing. The unconventional semantic link between snow and imagination is used so frequently in poetry that it can be regarded as a ‘new convention’. In this oxymoronic phrase, ‘convention’ is used in an unconventional sense, since most poets using this snow-metaphor were unaware that their poetic invention is also the invention of other poets, therefore it is part of an intertextual network, where a personal poetic association is perceived by the reader as a common literary device.

86 Pasternak often uses the image of the cross in his poetry and prose, maintaining its traditional, mythological connotations. For example, in Домопр!Куудо, the cross is associated with a change in life when Zhivago, standing at one of the crossroads of Moscow, reads the news of the October revolution, or when he is forced to join the partisans at the crossroads to Varykino.

Chaos and order co-exist as the steps of the black staircase and ‘the crossroad’s turning’ are descending in flight like snow (2nd stanza). Since the ‘crossroad’s turning’ (‘неперпектифика носор’г’) appears as part of the falling snow, it is relevant to integrate it into the poetic meanings of snow. If snowfall is interpreted as a metaphor for the continuity of the year, of life, of the poem, and of the creative and receptive acts, then the turning crossroads of snowfall can be regarded as metaphors for turning points in the year, in life, in the poem, and in the creative-receptive mind. Such turning points are the winter solstice, rites of passage, and aesthetic threshold situations, illuminating moments during imaginative acts when chaos/order, nature/mind, subject/object, creative/receptive, darkness/light and other opposites are synthesised. The turning points of the poem also include details which undergo semantic transformation, thereby manifesting moments of mental illumination, which are comparable to the winter solstice. Such textual turning points are the symbol of snow, or the line ‘неперпектифика носор’. This line appears at the beginning and at the end of the poem. Literally, it appears in the second stanza and in the last line of the text, but metaphorically it is already embedded in the title and in the very first line (‘Свер натер’) since it is part of the snowfall, and symbolically equivalent with the snowfall. In keeping with its structural position, the line ‘неперпектифика носор’ refers to those moments of transformation when end and new beginning coincide, either in the year, or in life, or in the poem.

The simple geometrical form of the cross is all-inclusive both in mythology and in Pasternak’s poem. In the poem, the motif of the cross may be regarded as a mytho-poetic concentration of those dualistic themes which are expressed in the image of snowfall-staircase and in the whole layout of snow-window-flowers. The cross is part of these entities, yet its basic connotations are equivalent with their complex meanings. The cross, like the snowflake, contains the essence of the whole poem. It is, then, another central monad in the text. Since the cross is a symbol of the threshold experience of imaginative acts, and a poetic synonym of snow, it is also a potential axis of the literary universe.

The metaphorical interchangeability of the symbolism of the snowfall and the cross (i.e. threshold, crossroad) is not only a semantic link, but it also shapes the structure of the poem. The recurring phrases ‘Свер натер’ and ‘неперпектифика носор’ organise the text by constructing a spiralling structure. The recognition of this structure is one of the crucial moments of the receptive act. It is a transformative experience, comparable to the illuminating moment of beholding orderly visual entities in random non-figurative images. The superimposition of the images of snowfall and (winding) staircase arrests this moment of mental transformation.

3.1.11. A summary of the poetic significance of the symbol of snow

'snow rhymes soundwise but
contrarily in colorwise
and unlike in one set of terms
they are meta-poetic devices
being alike in one whole form
overmastering the one polar unlikeness

(from A. R. Ammons’s When in Early)

During the investigation of the symbol of snow, we discovered an organising principle of recursive metonymical embeddings of the whole in their parts. The first step of this process includes the relation of the total scene of snow–window–flowers to the snowfall. The second step includes the semantic interchangeability of snowfall-staircase and its parts, the white stars and the cross. We have found that the implicit, mythological meanings of the star and the cross coincide with the ambivalent poetic connotations of the snowfall and with the dualistic connotations of the whole setting in which the inside and the outside worlds are juxtaposed and reflect each other. The images of star and cross not only symbolise the text’s self-allusiveness; they are meta-poetic devices representing any poetic word and any threshold situation. Moreover, they function as distillations of the mystical experience of recognising universal and cosmic patterns in simple geometrical forms.

The activation of mythological and intertextual associations enabled us to expand the thematic scope of the poem. Snow not only involves the explicitly indicated themes of cyclical temporality and imaginative acts, but it can also be associated with love and cosmogony. The manifest and the latent themes of the poem are closely interrelated because each of them is a threshold experience, analogous with the turning point between life and death, and with the symbolic meanings of the winter solstice. Both the creation and the imaginative reception of works of art involve a death-like oblivion of the empirical, reasoning consciousness. When one is deeply engrossed in a work of art, one may become unaware of the material world and corporeal existence, and enter a hypothetical world. This dream-like state is a condition for the activation of those synthetic mental processes which reach beyond analytical reason. The activation of creative energies and the non-ordinary mental state of imagination are comparable to the mechanism of initiation rituals, which is universally
regarded as analogous with the ontological transformation of death-rebirth. The journey into the unconscious-spiritual region of the mind has often been compared in mythology and in literature to a death-like descent into an unknown, mysterious world of darkness. When darkness is at its most extreme, like at the end of the winter solstice, it turns into its opposite, a flash of newly born, concentrated, blinding white light, which represents the spiritual centre. This process is analogous to the experience of reading literary texts. The act of reading is a journey into the mysterious darkness of an unknown world. However, the gradual understanding of what initially may have seemed to be a somewhat obscure verbal unit is comparable to a mental journey from darkness to light. The two processes are interdependent. The brighter the light of understanding, the deeper the darkness of mystery, because the better one understands a poem, the more complex and unattainable its hidden depth becomes. The simultaneous passage from darkness to light and from light to darkness is comparable to a momentary synthesis of death and birth, which is a symbolic inner experience of the crucial moment of imaginative acts.

The processes of artistic production and imaginative reception are also comparable to the threshold experience of love, in the sense of ‘mysterium conjunctivus’, marriage of the complementary opposites of male and female, creation and reception. In this sense, love has a component of death; it involves self-oblivion, a dissolution of the boundaries of the ego. At the same time, it brings about new life.

In mytho-poetic thought, both erotic love and creative imagination are related to the divine creative power. Cosmogony, like its human analogue, the imaginative act, is associated with the union of opposite sexes. In mythological imagination, hermaphroditic deities represent the primordial state of undivided opposites. Androgynous figures are metaphorically identified with the primal cause, the creative light from which all life emanates. Cosmogony, like the sexual act and the processes of artistic creation and reception, is a synthesis of death and birth, of being and non-being. Cosmogony, artistic production, creative reception, and erotic union are metaphors for each other because each of them is a metamorphosis, and a state of wholeness, in which opposites are united.

Snow is a suitable metaphor for human experiences of transformation, due to its discernible and less apparent physical properties and mytho-poetic associations. Snow is normally in the process of transformation: it is melting or freezing, and it is in-between fluid and solid states of matter. Snow changes the appearance of the world, whether it is falling or melting. Snowfall is chaotic, yet it consists of regular crystals. Snow is the combination of the four humour: it is both wet and dry; it is cold yet it is a ‘warm’ blanket protecting plants from freezing. When it falls, snow is in-between sky and earth. It is associated with both male and female attributes. The hexagonal pattern of the snowflake symbolises creative transformation and the mutual attraction of opposites. The snowflake, like the snowfall, is ‘one and many’, ‘now and forever’. Transformation and union of opposites are, then, inherent in the image of snow. It may be due to the ambivalent nature of snow that it is widely used as a metaphor for threshold situations. It is irrelevant whether the innate ambivalence of snow has been recognised consciously or perceived unconsciously by poets who use it as a symbol of transitory ontological or mental states.

One of the most discernible attributes of snow is its whiteness. Most of the common associations of white are maintained in the poetic meanings of snow. According to traditional colour symbolism, white, the colour of light, represents creation, self-illumination, the spiritual centre, transcendent perfection, and a state of primordial, undifferentiated one-ness. In the associative field of white, snow (water-element) and the Sun (gold, light, fire-element) co-exist. White thus unites in itself water and fire. The synthesis of these opposites is a common metaphor for the creative act. White symbolises love, marriage, life, and it is also a

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88 Frye points out another kind of analogy between the pattern of initiation rituals and the process of reading: ‘When students complain that it will kill a poem to analyze it they think (because they have been told so) that the poem ought to remain out there, as an object to be contemplated or enjoyed. But the poem is also a power of speech to be possessed in his own way by the reader, and some death and rebirth process has to be gone through before the poem revives within him, as something now uniquely his, though still also itself.’ (1976a 119.) In The Act of Creation, Arthur Koestler gives a concise summary of the Death-and-Rebirth motif (or the motif of night journey) and its semantic link with the creative act (1969, 358-365).
colour of death, burial, and mourning. Accordingly, it is associated with both the East (sunrise, ascension, growth) and the West (sunset, descent, decay). By a deconstructive reversal of opposites, white in marriage symbolises death to the old form of life, and in death it represents the rebirth of the soul. White is associated with cleanliness and purity, therefore it plays a significant role in initiation rituals whose aim is, among other things, to purify the soul. White is a symbol of *rites of passage*, of threshold situations, and of metamorphosis. White is, then, the colour of the boundary and the unitive centre where opposites meet. White is, indeed, profoundly ambivalent. Apparently, it is the absence of colour, yet, by the laws of optics, it is a sum of all colours. Hence it is a suitable metaphor for silence, which is the potentiality of all sounds. White light, which is a widespread symbol of the world-creating Word, is soundless, yet it contains all language, like its poetic equivalent, the ‘white starlets’ in *Снегири*.

The symbol of snow in Pasternak’s poem absorbs and recharges old metaphors, such as the star, the light, the cross, the staircase, the Christmas tree, and the number six. As a configuration of symbols of the world axis, snow is a poetic equivalent of the alchemical ‘mysterium coniunctionis’, and of the mythological concept of ‘coincidentia oppositorum’. Both terms denote one of the main features of imagination, a fusion of opposites, which is encapsulated in the term ‘threshold situation’.

The synthesis and revitalisation of worn-out symbols in the new poetic form of snow demonstrates that mythological schemes are still operative and that poetic imagination is capable of endless renewal, while maintaining the continuity of human experience.

The paradoxical simultaneity of continuity and discontinuity in the treatment of literary symbols has been discussed by poets and critics alike, including Jung, Frye, and Coleridge. Jung has conducted extensive research in the symbolic structure of the collective unconscious. He claimed that the collective unconscious is a repository of archetypes: of universal situations, thought-forms, mental contents, ideas, themes, narrative patterns, stories, primordial images, mythological motifs and emblems. Manifestations of the collective unconscious can be typical images that have a universal character, such as the mandala, or the cosmic tree, but ‘mythological themes clothed in modern dress also frequently appear’ (1972, 183). The symbol of snow in Pasternak’s poem may be said to be such a ‘mythological theme in modern dress’. Jung pointed out that the use of archetypal symbols is an effective way of externalising unconscious, imaginative thought-forms:

In investigating the nature of literary symbols, Frye also observed a peculiar overlapping of tradition and novelty. According to him, unconventional poetic associations are often deeply rooted in mytho-poetic convention. In the mythical phase of *Theory of Symbols*, Frye established a scale that shows different degrees of how obvious and conventional the meaning of a symbol is. At one extreme of this scale, he placed learned, conventional associations, and those connotations that are strongly suggested by the ostensible qualities of a symbol. When snow is used as a symbol of death or purity, it is a conventional figure. The association of white with purity, and the analogy between seasonal change and the process of life, where winter and snow correspond to a standstill and death, are obvious, universal, traditional semantic links. These are examples of what Frye meant by a high degree of symbolic obviousness. Immediate, obvious semantic links between an image and an idea (say between light and mental illumination) are not dependent on cultural and historical circumstances. These links form the basis of proper Jungian archetypes, traditional symbols whose connotations are inherited in the human brain-structure and travel across barriers of languages and cultures. What Jung calls ‘archetypes clothed in modern dress’ (1972, 83) are comparable to images which are not immediately associated with the meanings which they carry. These

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90 According to Jung, ‘...the alchemical mysterium coniunctionis [...] is nothing less than a restoration of the original state of the cosmos and the divine unconsciousness of the world. [...] It is the Western equivalent of the fundamental principle of classical Chinese philosophy, namely the union of yang and yin in tao (Collected Works, vol. 14, par. 662). The Seal of Solomon (Star of David), and the satkona (six angles, ṛakṣaṇa- yantra) which are schematic variants of the hexagonal pattern of the snow-crystal, are symbolic equivalents of the yin-yang diagram. The image of snow is interchangeable with another symbol of the Tao, the Golden Flower (Wilhelm 1979, 53-64).
images have a low degree of symbolic obviousness on Frye’s scale.\(^{92}\) Snow is such an image when it is used as a metaphor for the creative word. Although the associative link between snow and creative imagination is not conventional, it is presented in poetry in such a way that it can be traced to tradition. Frye explains this apparent contradiction as follows: ‘Extremes meet, as Coleridge said, and anti-conventional poetry soon becomes convention. […] The attempt to reach originality through turning one’s back on explicit convention […] results in implicit convention’ (1990, 103). ‘Originality returns to the origins of literature’ (1990, 97).

Frye’s scale of archetypal familiarity closes itself into a circle when the extremes of anti-conventional poetry and convention meet. The overlapping of tradition and novelty is a characteristic feature of imaginative thought.

The symbol of snow as a metaphor for the creative word manifests three different ways in which convention and poetic innovation are synthesised. (1) The poetic image of snow can be regarded as a disguised form of several traditional metaphors of creativity, such as the star, light, the cross, the world axis (staircase), and the hexagon. (2) Poetic innovation and tradition are united when an anti-conventional image is used frequently. If an apparently unconventional associative link, such as between snow and the imaginative acts, is invented by several poets, then the recurrence of this associative link may be perceived by the reader as poetic convention, even though it is in fact the recurrence of novelty. Poets using the same metaphors can reply to each other by the mediation of the reader, even if they are unaware that what they have written is part of a polyphonic intertextual dialogue, and that they have participated in the creation of a new convention. (3) Poetic innovation and tradition are inextricably intertwined when snow represents the imaginative acts, since this non-conventional association implicitly contains some of the traditional, immediate associations of snow, such as death, love, and purity. Throughout literature, snow, as a metonymical substitute of winter, is frequently associated with death and stillness, according to the traditional seasonal symbolism. However, snow is perceived not only as a destructive force which turns green fields into bleak deserts. The snow-blanket, which protectively covers the bare trees and the Mother Earth, has a beneficial, fertilising agricultural effect. Thus, snow is often associated with rebirth and love. Snow is a common metaphor for purity and innocence because of its all-embracing whiteness. It is also a typical image of silence.\(^{93}\) All of these immediate associations are implicitly embedded in a less obvious connotation of snow, the creative and receptive acts. It has been pointed out before that love, death, and rebirth are, in an abstract sense, aspects of the threshold experience of imaginative acts. Freud’s theory of the unconscious as the root of artistic creativity involves the assumption that the creative impulse consists of a duality of death instincts and life instincts at their most intense. The profound ambivalence of death and life is also fundamental to carnal knowledge, which, therefore, is favourably used in literature as a metaphor for artistic creation and reception. Both the ecstasy of love and the creative-receptive aesthetic process are based on the pattern of initiation rituals. These are events of internal transformation, comparable to the threshold situation between death and life. These crucial human experiences have a purifying power. Silence is a typical feature of introspective imagination and of the cathartic moment of inward transformation. Conventional connotations of snow, including death, life, love, purity, and silence, are thus synthesised in its less obvious association, the aesthetic situation. It is due to the inherently ambivalent nature of imagination that it can hold together those associations of snow which contradict each other, such as death and life, destruction and creation, descent and flight, word and silence.

The interrelation of the themes of creation, destruction, love, death, and purity in the associative field of snow may be regarded as a poetic concentration of some of the central aspects of literary carnivalisation. Carnival is an alternative term for the ancient Greek cult of Dionysos. According to Nietzsche, Viacheslav Ivanov, and Mikhail Bakhtin, the mytho-ritual tradition of the suffering, dying, and rising god, Dionysos, is a projection of unconscious processes. Léna Szilárd (1989) pointed out that the cult of Dionysos is a sublimated form of

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\(^{92}\) In spite of these parallels, there are notable differences between Frye’s and Jung’s concept of the archetype. Frye’s definition of the literary archetype is, in a sense, broader than the Jungian psychological archetype. For Frye, any recurring literary image is an archetype, regardless of whether the semantic link between the image and its human meaning is based on the contents of the collective unconscious or not. Discussing archetypal criticism, Frye writes: ‘[T]he emphasis on impersonal content has been developed by Jung and his school, where the communicability of archetypes is accounted for by a theory of a collective unconscious – an unnecessary hypothesis in literary criticism, so far as I can judge’ (1990, 111-112).

\(^{93}\) Here I refer to only a few examples of various metaphorical treatments of the image snow. Snow figures as a metaphor of death in several poems by M. Radnóti, including Öz és halál (Autumn and Death) and Téli vers (Winter Poem), in V. Briusov’s Hochoj sova, in M. Vörösmarty’s Elszáj (Preface), in Wallace Stevens’s The Snow Man, and in works by many other authors. Snow is associated with love in A. Kushner’s ‘Bot csany…’, and in D. Kozolnay’s Széremai (Serenade). Snow illustrates love, protection, cleanliness, and warmth in W. de la Mare’s Snow. The themes of love and death are united in the connotative field of snow in Robert Frost’s Wind and Window Flower. Love, death and life are fused in the image of snow in J. Dufa’s Szép halál (Beautiful Death) and in G. Kinnell’s Good Bye. In K. Szepanski’s The Last Hiding Places of Snow, the symbol of snow represents both death and after-life. Snow is a metaphor for love and purity in H. Leifer’s Marriage Song. In I. Kormon’s Havas rózsa (Snowy Meadow) the image of snow symbolises purity and innocence. The motif of snow unites birth and death in Amy Clampitt’s A Procession at Candlemas. Snow is associated with death and the creative process in V. Briusov’s Berep csónakcsóCos, in Zsuzsa Berny’s Két parton (On Two Riverbanks) and in several poems by G. Aygi and by E. Dickinson. Snow has ambivalent connotations in A. Kushner’s Amazon e csócos, where it is associated with both creation and destruction. Snow is a metaphor for silence in poems by Aygi, Dickinson, e. e. cummings, J. Pilinsky, W. Stevens, A. Drapney, H. C. ten Berge, and others.
the interrelated threshold experiences of death-rebirth, creative state, and erotic union. The myths and cults of Dionysos may be interpreted in terms of the psychology of creativity. Similarly to the imaginative acts, Dionysian rites are characterised by a reconciliation of contrary principles, such as water/fire, death/birth (hence the image of pregnant death), destruction/creation, winter/summer, high/low, and so on. Both the inner experience of creative imagination and the Dionysian mytho-ritual tradition are based on the pattern of initiation rituals. The fragmentation of Dionysos into the elements of air, water, earth, and fire is a mythological expression of a psychological state whereby the self is liberated from the constraints of the reasoning consciousness, and dissolves in the primordial one-ness of being. Dionysos, 'the teacher of downward road' (καθηγητής), manifests the shattering of 'principium individuationis', the losing of the sense of everyday self. During this process, the bodily outlines which isolate the ego from the outside world seem to dissolve, and the self becomes part of the cosmic unity of being. As the true inner self rises, it can behold the permanent order of things beneath the surface of appearances. This experience is traditionally described as a glimpse of clear light, and a feeling of mystical one-ness with the whole of existence, and it is universally symbolised by the unitive centre of the mandala. Reintegration into the totality of being in non-ordinary mental states and in the moments of creative imagination can be linked imaginatively to death-rebirth transformation and to erotic union. These threshold experiences have a cathartic, purifying effect.

The symbol of snow in Pasternak's poem has a synthetic power. It assimilates and integrates fundamental themes which are rewritten over and over again in literature, such as a transition from receptive, outward attention to an active contemplation of mental contents, imaginative illumination, cyclical recurrence, immortality, the analogy of time and space, the union of opposites in ontological, aesthetic, erotic, and cosmogonic threshold experiences. As an axial symbol, snow represents the eternal enigmas of the cycle of creation and destruction and of the imaginative mind. Snow functions as a spatial equivalent of the all-inclusive, creative moment of the winter solstice. As a reincarnation of creative light, and a metaphor for the poetic word, snow is analogous to the universal creative word. Thus, it can be regarded as

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94 Basic texts about literary carnivalisation include Nietzsche 1956, Ivanov 1904, 1923 and Bakhtin 1984, 101-181. Lena Szilárd (1989) gives a concise survey of these scholars' interpretation of Dionysian myth and ritual, and provides a detailed bibliography. West 1970, 76-84 is a good introduction to Ivanov's study of Dionysian religion. In summarising Ivanov's theory of carnival, Szilárd points out that in the оргiastic cult of Dionysos, the experiences of love and death are ontologically related to each other through the dissolution of the boundaries of the ego. Love and death are symbolically interchangeable because both of them are based on the fundamental morphological principle of metamorphosis whereby the boundaries separating the individual are blurred (1989, 76-77). Szilárd claims that the interrelation of the experiences of love and death is an ancient and universal topos (1989, 79).
flowers in a bordered and in a boundless space evokes associations with a dynamic interrelation of temporality and eternity. This is in accordance with the thematic scope of the poem. The flowers, standing near the window, represent threshold situations, such as the imaginative act or love. These events are characterised by a paradoxical synthesis of time and eternity. The ecstasy of love is described in Frye's composition as a timeless moment. The state of the imaginative act has an aspect of temporal continuity (i.e. the processes of contemplation, writing and reading), yet it is generally described as a unique, extra-temporal eternity. The ecstasy of love is described in an imaginative act or love. These events are characterised by a paradoxical synthesis of time and eternity.

In Pasternak's poetry, as in mythology, outdoor, organic, self-regenerating forms of vegetation, the flowers, near the window, represent the role of the matrix as the evergreen Christmas tree. The symbolic role of the indoor flowers is similar to the poetic function of the evergreen Christmas tree. The relevance of constructing such intertextual links is acknowledged by Zholkovskii, who proposes studying Pasternak's poems in relation to each other:

Now what happens if we declare that all the poems by Pasternak are one poem and, leaving aside for a moment their differences, try to bring together all that is common in them to a single formula [...] Presumably we must come up with a formula of that Pasternakian element that is intuitively known by all his readers who are capable of recognizing the poet from any single line which seems like a splinter from that poetic world. [...] The poet has a distinct unified view of the world and expresses it in his works; the differences between which are, so to say, purely external, purely various translations of a single complex of ideas into the language of things. (1978, 264)

Frye has a similar view:

The first and most striking unit of poetry larger than the individual poem is the total work of the man who wrote the poem. (1990, 110)

These ideas retrospectively validate our attempts to establish a dialogue between Pasternak's Снег идет, Единственны дни, Зимние праздники, Рождественская звезда and other poems. Zholkovskii's approach also confirms the relevance of studying different poetic meanings of recurring symbols in relation to each other. His investigation of Pasternak's treatment of the image of window shows that a comparative examination of recurring symbols is a revealing approach. Other critics of Pasternak's works also apply this method. Iakobson, for instance, summarises the semantic significance of plants in Pasternak's poetry. He argues that Pasternak often uses the symbol of plants in their mythological meanings (1978, 344, 375-379, 388). Plants in mythology and in Pasternak's works can symbolise a section of time (mainly summer and spring), and the brevity of life and of beauty, yet they also represent the eternal process of renewal and transformation. According to Iakobson, the image of flowers in Снег идет symbolises immortality.

In general, the symbol of the flower has a wide range of associations, including life, decay, resurrection, and metamorphosis. Plants are displaced forms of the Mother Earth, which is a symbol of eternal femininity. Indeed, the plants in Снег идет have a feminine attribute as they represent passivity and reception in contrast to snow, which is a fertilising attribute of heaven. As the earth is associated with both the tomb and the womb, so the plants can represent decay as well as rebirth and spring revival. Since the image of plants assimilates both death and life, it can represent any threshold situation in which symbolic life and death are united, such as the creative-receptive acts, both in the aesthetic and the erotic sense. The ambivalent semantic potential of the image of plants is summarised in Pasternak's Доктор Живаго:

Царство растений так легко себе представить ближайшим соседом царства смерти. Здесь, в земле земли, между деревьями кладбищ, среди вышних из гряд цветочных ворот, сознанных, может быть, тайны превращения и загадки жизни, над которыми мы бываем. Вышедшего из гроба Иисуса Мария не узнала в первую минуту и приняла за изумленного по вестию садовника. (1989, 574)

In Снег идет, the flowers are personified indirectly. It logically follows from the poetic treatment of snow as a metaphor for poetic words that the observers of the snow, the flowers, represent the poet and the reader. The flowers thus symbolise the whole aesthetic communicative act, creation and reception. The fusion of the roles of poet and reader in a single image can also be understood as a symbolic representation of a deconstructive overlapping of these complementary opposites, which is expressed in the paradoxical concepts of 'receptive creation' and 'creative reception'.

In mythology, flowers (such as the lotus, the rose and other species) are all-inclusive, mandalic symbols. They are emblems of the world axis, similar to the poetic image of snow. Both snow and the flower symbolise the marriage of sky and earth, which is one of the main features of the creative centre. When plants absorb sunlight and rain-water, attributes of earth meet with attributes of sky. During their photosynthesis, plants unite the four main elements: fire (Sun), water, air, and earth. Throughout literature, flowers often symbolise poems, perhaps because of their capability of endless self-renewal, and because they emerge as a result of the union of fire (Sun) and water (rain), which is a conventional symbol of creation. The unfolding of petals from buds can illustrate how the hidden beauties and secrets of a
In the context of Pasternak's self-deconstructive poem, the flowers represent both the subject and the object of aesthetic contemplation because the boundary between the observer (flowers, poet, reader) and the observed thing (snowfall, poem) is dissolved through simultaneous acts of externalisation and internalisation.

In her lecture notes on Romantic literary theory, K. M. Wheeler points out that the symbol of the flower is a radiation image. Due to their structure and meanings, poetic radial images are comparable to the mandala, which is an esoteric archetype of the all-encompassing centre, and an emblem of creative imagination and its products:

One of the major techniques in Romantic poetry is the revitalization of old metaphors and whole mythologies or systems of thought which have become so familiar that they are worn-out, dead, and no longer stimulate relational apprehension and imaginative response as they once did: E. g. light metaphors and images: sun, lamp, moon, star. Natural metaphors and images: flowers, trees, animals, birds. Artistic metaphors: song, dance, creating things. All these metaphors can be related by the idea of radiation and organicism. Radiation involves the idea that a source of light causes rays of meaning to extend out in all directions from a centre to a non-existent circumference. Star, flower, song, are good examples of radiation imagery, which is the pre- eminent metaphor for imagination and how it works. It is a source, a tremendous energy which radiates meanings and relationships in all directions, and causes huge networks of connections and relations to develop for the mind. If knowledge is conceived as a field of networking relationships, imagination makes it possible both to extend and expand that field, and also to enrich existing portions of the field with more or different relations which had not been before perceived. The Romantics took many ancient metaphors and stock images from classical, Egyptian, and also medieval and Renaissance poetry and art, and revitalized them by setting them into new relations or adding new dimensions.

As the images of star, flower, and song are related by the idea of radiation in Romantic poetry, so are snow (white stars), flower, and the creative word in Pasternak's Снег идем. Pasternak follows the Romantic tradition of recharging conventional symbols. He revitalises the images of light and star by embedding them in the less common radiation image of snow, and he refreshes and expands the conventional meanings of the flower by using it as a metaphor for the imaginative perception of the poet and the reader.

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95 Flowers are metaphors for poems in works by Emily Dickinson, Gennai Aygi, Rainer Maria Rilke, Robert Louis Stevenson, and other poets.

96 For the influence of Romantic tradition on Pasternak's poetry, see Evans-Romaine 1997, and France 1990.

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The window has many features which can be integrated into the thematic scope of the text, even though these features are not mentioned in the poem. Apparently, the window is a simple everyday object, yet it has many unique, ambivalent features, among which the most obvious one is its intermediary position between the inside and the outside worlds. The window is made of glass, a solid matter, yet it is transparent as though it were immaterial. The window-pane is palpable yet invisible. The pattern of the cross, which divides the window in Снег идем makes the invisible, transparent pane visible. The window is both a transparent and a reflecting object, therefore it can represent the imaginative act of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation. Due to its ambivalent nature, the window is a pertinent metaphor for both the division and the marriage of opposites.

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3.3. The window: an axial figure

*Neck of an hour-glass on its side –
Hermitage, equilibrium.
The slightest tilt and a grain would glide
Away from you or towards you;
So without tremolo hold this moment
Where in this window two worlds meet*
(from The Window by Louis MacNeice)
The symbolic role of the image of the window in Pasternak's poetry has been thoroughly investigated by Zholkovskii (1978). According to him, one of the main semantic functions of the window is the connection of opposites:

The window as a readymade object expressing the theme of contact [...] turns out to be a poetic synonym for trees, mountains, and the mirrors of the waters (contact between earth and heaven), feast days, seasons, and the deeds of great men (contact between the temporary and the eternal), and so on. (1978, 303)

In Crime and Punishment, the image of the window connecting the flowers and snow manifests a contact between earth and heaven, summer and winter, temporality and eternity, and other opposites. Zholkovskii's observation that in Pasternak's poetry the window functions as a synonym of trees, mountains (i.e. a poetic representation of the world axis), is applicable to Crime and Punishment.

Holding together opposites, the window, like snow and the geraniums, contains the symbolic meanings of the whole visual setting of which it is part. The structural arrangement of the three main images, in which the window occupies a central position between the inside and the outside worlds, supports the relevance of associating the window with the unitive, creative centre. The threshold and the centre are synonyms in that both of them are characterised by the synthesis of opposites. The all-inclusive centre is often described as a creative void, which is not emptiness but a concentrated nucleus from which all of existence evolves. It can be imagined as a central 'hole', which contains 'the whole'. The transparent window functions as an alternative poetic metaphor of the central creative void.

This network of symbolic interrelations enables us to integrate the apparently insignificant image of the window-cross into the metaphorical scope of the poem. Since the cross is a traditional symbol of the unitive centre, the window-cross may be regarded as a small-scale reproduction of the metonymical principle of embedding the whole in its parts. The cross is part of the window, as it is part of the snowfall-staircase, yet it contains their symbolic meanings in its microstructure.

The window, being the nucleus of the bipolar setting, can be imagined as a transparent, two-sided mirror. Its indoor side reflects the flowers and its outdoor side reflects the snow, while its indoor side displays the outdoor world of snowfall and its outdoor side displays the indoor realm of flowers. The synthesis of the effects of reflection and transparency constitutes a transformative mirror-effect, whereby the flowers and the snowfall see themselves in the form of the other. On the level of the window, the outside and the inside worlds overlap. The window is, then, a chronotope representing the site and the moment of transformation. That is to say, the window symbolises the threshold experience of interiorisation and externalisation, the transitory state when receptive, outward attention turns into an inward contemplation of mental contents. The window itself undergoes transformation when it functions as a membrane-like object between the inside and the outside worlds. During the threshold situation of imaginative acts, the window functions as a transparent mirror, in which the flowers (i.e. poet and reader) can watch themselves while watching the white stars (i.e. the poem) behind or in the frame of the window. That is to say, the window is a metaphor for any poetic text which is describing external phenomena while also reflecting the mental processes of the poet and the reader. Being a metaphor for the poetic text, the window is a poetic synonym of snow and of the flowers. The synthesis of transparency and reflection is a precise visual analogy of the projection of the mind onto the outside world. This interaction between the observer and the observed world is an archetypal issue which travels across the barriers of space and time, from ancient Eastern mysticism, through Kant's philosophy and Blake's poetry to phenomenology. A concise summary of the paradoxical experience of projected introspection can be found in the Lankavatara Sutra (fourth century AD): 'Foolish common people do not understand that what is seen is merely their own mind.'

One of the universal visual representations of the dissolution of the boundaries between the self and the cosmos is mandala symbolism. The centre of the mandala has many common features with the window. It is a transparent, reflective point, a creative void which is also an eye and a mirror, representing the mystical experience whereby the self achieves a state of non-duality, realising its original unity with the ultimate One which is also the Many.

In supporting the idea that the window is a poetic incarnation of the mandalic centre, it is instructive to enlarge the scope of mythological associations. For many reasons, the window is regarded as a radiation image. It is a synonym of conventional symbols of the mandalic centre, such as light, the cosmic breath, and the eye. Etymologically, the word 'window' is a compound noun, wind-eye, that is to say, the wind's eye. Both the window and the eye are sources and recipients of light. Thus, they evoke associations with creativity and receptivity. Being a radiation image, the window is a synonym of the symbols of snow and flower. The window appears as the eye of the house, and the eye is commonly regarded as the

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97 Meeting of opposites at the boundary between the inside and the outside worlds can be one of the latent meanings of the closing line of Louis MacNeice's Snow: 'There is more than glass between the snow and the huge roses' (1979, 30).
window or the mirror of the soul, an organ of both outward sight and inward vision. This is in accordance with the metaphorical function of the window as a transparent, reflecting object which displays the territory of the mind in the form of the external world. In mythology and in ancient folk rituals, the internal space near the window was regarded as the place of the creator. An eye within a triangle has often been drawn above windows to represent the creative power of the Divine Essence. In *Cнег идёт*, the internal space behind the window is occupied by the geraniums, which are metaphors for the creative observers, the poet and the reader. Zholkovskii points out that the spatial position by the window is typical of Pasternak’s contemplative lyric persona:

If we ask ourselves in what pose it is most natural to imagine the figure of the poet who emerges from Pasternak’s verses, [...] then one of the most suitable answers would probably be: by a window. (1978, 279)

The position of the contemplating lyric persona behind the window is comparable to the symbolic representation of the creator as an eye above the window. The window, like the eye, the snow, and the flowers, synthesises both sides of the aesthetic process: artistic creation and reception. It opens to snow, light, air, and wind, which are common poetic symbols of creativity. Air and wind are similar to snow in that they are not limited in space, yet when they represent the creative act, they function as synonyms of the cosmic axis. Air and wind are common mytho-poetic symbols of God’s cosmic breath, and they are universal figures of the spirit and the creative power. According to Francis Huxley, ‘the wind’s eye in a house is the window’ (1990, 8). The window represents the mind’s receptive and creative eye, and, accordingly, it functions as a boundary where reality and imagination meet. In displaying the snowfall, the window lets the eye see the external reality, which, in a contemplative mood, may come to function as an embodiment of inward, imaginative processes. The transparent window appears as an extension of the observing eye, yet it is also equivalent with the observed world (i.e. the transformed mirror-image of the observing mind), which appears to be on the level of the window, as if it were a framed picture. Since the window encloses the sight of snowfall in a frame, it can be regarded as a metaphor for the poem, or for the page, on which the words appear like snowflakes, transformed mirror-images of the mind.

The analogy between the window and the eye can be extended by allegorical logic. If the window represents the eye, then the house is a model of the body. In this sense, contemplation through a window is a metaphor for the common perception whereby one is inside one’s body looking out to the world, which has its separate existence. During the process of outward contemplation, one may discover that the transparent window is a reflecting glass, that is to say, what is out there is a mirror-image of the observing mind. This change of perception involves the realisation that the house is not only a model of the body, but also a symbol of the mind, and an archetype of the universe. The threefold analogy between the mind, the body, and the universe can be inferred from a comparative reading of Jaan Kaplinski’s and Emily Dickinson’s poems. Kaplinski’s poem is about the mutual reflection of the mind and the body, whereas Dickinson’s work is concerned with how the mind (‘Brain’) and the universe reflect each other:

The Brain – is wider than the Sky –
For – put them side by side –
The one the other will contain
With ease – and you beside –

The Brain is deeper than the sea –
For – hold them – Blue to Blue –
The one the other will absorb –
As Sponges – Buckets – do –

The Brain is just the weight of God –
For – Heft them – Pound for Pound –
And they will differ – if they do –
As Syllable from Sound.

(from Kaplinski’s *The Same Sea in Us All*; 1990, 75, translated by the Author and Sam Hamill)

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In Emily Dickinson’s poetry, and in other poets’ works, the mind and its transformed mirror-images, the sky, the sea, and God, are related to snow. The image of snow does not appear in poem 632, yet its invisible presence can be felt if one is reading the poem in a comparative perspective. Thus, the poem can be viewed as part of an intertextual network of snow-poems.

In supporting this idea, it is revealing to quote Paul Celan’s Kristall (Crystal), a poem about silence and negative presence. The title of Celan’s poem is interchangeable with both snow and window. None of these crystalline objects appear in the poem directly, yet they are dwelling there, invisibly, transparently, enigmatically, seven layers below the surface of the palimpsest, where only the seventh sense can reach:

Nicht an meinen Lippen suche deinen Mund,
Nicht vorn Tor den Fremdling,
Nicht in Aug die Träne.

Sieben Nächte höher wandert Rot zu Rot,
Sieben Herzen tiefer pocht die Hand ans Tor,
Sieben Rosen später rauscht der Brunnen.

(Not on my lips look for your mouth,
Not in front of the gate for the stranger,
Not in the eye for the tear.

Seven nights higher red makes for red,
Seven hearts deeper the hand knocks on the gate,
Seven roses later plashes the fountain.)

The metaphorical interchangeability of snow and the sky is obvious, since snow is an attribute of the sky. In Cień widm, the descent of snow is described as the descent of the sky. The sea is a poetic synonym of snow in Emily Dickinson’s poem 1264. Both images represent the imaginative state. The description of the sea in the last lines of the poem is applicable to the ‘escapeless’, impenetrable snowfall, which immediately restores its texture. When one is walking in it. This is an essential feature of the snow-sea metaphor: ‘Too distant to arrest the feet / To walk this plank of balm - / Before them lies escapeless sea - / The way is closed they came.’

3.4. Snow, window, and flower: radial images, configurations of the eye

The motifs of snow, window and flower have been revealed to be radial images, poetic synonyms of the symbol of light. One of the common metaphorical configurations of light is the eye. Some of the fundamental aspects of Cień widm, including two-directional contemplation and the mirror technique of observing the act of observation, are strongly associated with the eye. Although there is no explicit reference to the contemplative, self-reflecting eye, it plays a significant role in Cień widm, where the objects of contemplation are reflected images of the mind’s eye, representing both the seer and the seen. This mirror technique confirms that the eye can be related indirectly to the three radial images of the poem. The negative presence of the eye in Cień widm is comparable to the latent presence of snow and window in Celan’s Kristall. Each of these images dwell seven layers below the explicit content, in the silent realm of the invisible.

Apart from being a metaphor for both outward and inward sight, the symbol of the eye has other attributes which can be integrated into the semantic scope of Cień widm. The eye is a radial image, a symbol of Sun-gods, representing the central creative light, the innermost divine essence of man. It is an emblem of omnipresence, omniscience, and it is closely associated with the symbol of the star. In mythological imagination, the eye represents the androgynous, which is one of the traditional metaphorical synonyms of the central monad. Being a configuration of the central light, the eye symbolises the soul and the radial structure of human imagination and the world-creating imagination of God. Similarly to the three main symbols of Cień widm, the eye represents a synthesis of opposites, including the inside/outside, masculine (Sun)/feminine (Moon), word/silence, and time/eternity.

The ambivalent temporal experience of being simultaneously in time and in eternity is traditionally attributed to the perception by the eye of the heart. Angelus Silesius explicitly states that ‘the soul has two eyes, one fixed on time, the other on eternity’ (quoted by Chevalier and Gheerbrant, 1996, 363). This is in affinity with Cień widm, where the

100 The metaphorical interchangeability of snow and the sky is obvious, since snow is an attribute of the sky. In Cień widm, the descent of snow is described as the descent of the sky. The sea is a poetic synonym of snow in Emily Dickinson’s poem 1264. Both images represent the imaginative state. The description of the sea in the last lines of the poem is applicable to the ‘escapeless’, impenetrable snowfall, which immediately restores its texture when one is walking in it. This is an essential feature of the snow-sea metaphor: ‘Too distant to arrest the feet / To walk this plank of balm - / Before them lies escapeless sea - / The way is closed they came.’ Snow is metaphorically related to the sea in Wallace Stevens’s The Man with the Blue Guitar (‘The sea is in the falling snow’) and in János Pilinszky’s Vezszőzély télen (Place of Execution at Winter) (‘S a hő a téli hő? Talán / száműzött tenger, Isten hallgatatán.;’ ‘And the snow, the winter snow? Perhaps / exiled sea, the silence of God’). Snow and God are metaphorically related in several works by Gennady Aygi and Emily Dickinson.

contemplating flowers are empirical symbols of the poetic soul, and they appear to have two eyes, because they can 'see' both time and eternity in the external form of snowfall. Each of the three main symbols of the poem represents a synthesis of time and extra-temporality. It has been discussed at length at the beginning of this chapter that snow has ambivalent temporal connotations. Similarly, the window has been revealed to be a symbol of threshold experience, of moments of metamorphosis which contain eternity.103 Being engrossed in the sight of snow behind or in the frame of the window, the inward experience of the flowers (i.e. of the poet and the reader) is the ambivalent imaginative state of being simultaneously in time and in eternity.104

Ambivalent temporal perception is one of the central aspects of Pasternak’s Зимняя ночь. In the first stanza, there is a parallel between the apparently opposite images of snow and candle. Both images represent an inextricable fusion of time and eternity. The concept of ambivalent temporality, which permeates this poem and its narrative context, allows us to bestow metaphorical significance on the apparently insignificant ornamental detail of circles and arrows drawn on the window by the snowstorm (stanza 3). The circle evokes associations with eternity, whereas the arrow with linear temporal progress.105 In the third stanza, the interaction of time and eternity is suggested not only by portraying frosty patterns of circles and arrows, but also by bringing together the three main symbols of the text (snow, window, and candle), which are also emblematic of the concept of ambivalent temporality.

Apart from the paradoxical fusion of temporal flow and eternity, there are more obvious examples of the hidden presence of the eye beneath the surface layer of the symbols of snow, window, and candle. In Зимняя ночь, the snowstorm is endowed with sight. It is compared to midges which fly towards the flame. This reminds us of Frost’s Wind and...
together, and seeing themselves reflected in the eyes of the other. The apparently insignificant image of the eye in the narrative context of Зимняя ночь can be charged with poetic meanings when it is integrated into the semantic scope of Зимняя ночь and its twin-poem, Сне́е увём. The novel and the two poems mutually enrich each other.

3.5. Virtual mandala symbolism: the eye and the snow crystal

"Each mandala of lives has a single life at its centre. Can I bespeak this flurry of snow-grains, Palace of crystals?" (from In the Skin House by Jeni Couzyn)

"Like a meaning in nothingness, Like the snow before it softened And dwindled into patches, Like a shelter not in an arc But in a circle." (from Wallace Stevens’s Celle Qui Fit Héaulmiette)

The symbolic equivalence of the eye with the radial symbols of snow and flower allows us to transform the imagery of the poem into a scene where an eye is watching an eye, either itself or another eye, or an eye watching itself in the pupil of another eye. This simplification of the relation of snow and flowers deepens our understanding of the metaphorical link between the themes of self-reflection and love. In discussing the main connotations of the image of the eye, Francis Huxley (1990) raises several issues which are applicable to the context of Сне́е увём. The eye is generally associated with love, creativity, and self-reflection. The schematic diagram of an eye reflected in an eye is a simple mandala, a dot at the centre of a circle. This diagram designates self-reflection, impregnation, and the creative act. Creation is universally re-enacted in rituals by casting a circle and marking its centre. The fact that creation, self-reflection, and the cosmic union of male and female principles are brought together in this mandalic image indicates that they are interrelated.

It is by looking into each other’s eyes that the bonds of love are tied [...]. Gazing thus, one sees in the black of the other’s eye its pupil, a tiny doll that is the reflection of oneself. Rightly speaking, then, I see my pupil in your eye, and you see yours in mine. It is simple fact which gives force to Meister Eckhart’s pronouncement: ‘The eye wherewith I see God, that is the same eye wherewith God sees me; my eye and God’s eye, that is one eye and one vision and one knowing and one love.’ An eye of this kind is, to quote another mystic, Boehme, a centre of nature and the similitude of the first principle. [...] In Plato’s Alcphades, Socrates is pondering the meaning of the Delphic inscription ‘Know thyself’. It is, he says, as though someone were to say to the eye, ‘See thyself’, which it should do in a mirror, especially in the mirror of another eye. ‘If the eye is to see itself, therefore, it must look at the eye, and at that part of the eye—the pupil—where sight which is the virtue of the eye resides.’ It is then a small step to be talking about the soul, which should look at that part of the soul in which wisdom resides, and looking at wisdom we may arrive at God, and thus come to know ourselves. (Huxley 1990, 7, 32.)

All these associations of the eye are embedded in the imagery of Сне́е увём in a concealed, new poetic form. The symbolism of the eye leads us back to the archetypal correlation between divine wisdom and the universal centre of the imaginative mind. Whatever point of departure we take, we find ourselves moving towards this centre. This is why the structure of the analysis is like a spiral tracing wider and wider circles around this central axis.

At this point, it is instructive to give a brief summary of mandala symbolism and show how it permeates Pasternak’s poem. Mandala is a Sanskrit word for circle. Being the most perfect geometrical form, the circle is an archetype of God. According to Hermes Trismegistus, ‘God is a circle whose centre is everywhere and circumference is nowhere’ (quoted by Cooper 1978, 36). The mandalic circle is, then, also an all-inclusive centre. Its principal forms include a concentric set of circles, a circle divided by a cross, and the radiating sun-disk with God’s reflecting eye at the centre. The vacuous centre of the mandala is a focus of simultaneous convergence and divergence; it is a concentrated point, in which the whole circle is contained, as the universe is contained in the inaudible world-creating Word. Since the mandala is an imago Dei, it is also an imago mundi, a symbol of divine wisdom as it is manifest in the macrocosm. The mandala is a chronotope, representing the interrelated structure of space and time. Being an archetype of divine intelligence, the mandala is also a symbol of immanent transcendence, the innermost essence of man.108 Blake calls this spiritual essence ‘Jesus who is the Divine Vision’ (The Four Zoas), ‘Imagination the Divine-Humanity’ (Jerusalem), Crashaw refers to it as ‘God in Man’ (Hymn in the Holy Nativity), Wallace Stevens writes: ‘We say God and the imagination are one’ (Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour). The mandala is then, an emblem of the central monad in the individual, which is a microcosmic equivalent of the macrocosmic all-inclusive centre.109


109 Mandala symbolism is well-elaborated in Eastern mysticism. The ultimate aim of the Hindu journey of self-liberation is the realisation of the self’s original identity with the ultimate source of existence (the identity of
mandala is a psycho-cosmogram; it functions as a transparent, reflecting object, representing the unity of matter and spirit. The centre of the mandala symbolises the threshold experience when the individual consciousness transcends opposites, and thereby finds itself to be one with the cosmos.

The mystical moment of attaining the mandala’s vacant still centre is symbolically equivalent with threshold experience. Both the mandallic axis and the threshold function as an equilibrating centre of dual polarities; they symbolise a state of heightened consciousness, which is characterised by a dissolution of all dualities. Grasping the symbolic significance of the centre of the mandala is essentially the same as realising that the world behind (or in the frame of) the transparent window is a transformed mirror-image of the mind. This self-liberating experience involves the recovery of primordial oneness, a realisation of the essential unity of the heterogenous world. The snowfall is a perfect illustration of this axial threshold experience. It has been shown that snow is an ambivalent image, representing the indissoluble unity of opposites. As the snowfall covers the world, it abolishes all distinctions. In the snowfall, the diversity of the universe gradually vanishes from sight, and all things become united in a homogenous oneness. The snowfall is, then, a suitable visual analogue of the mental experience of seeing the non-manifest unity in manifest diversity. In this sense, the snowfall is symbolically equivalent with the ultimate integration of the Many in the One, of the circumference in the axial centre. Mandala symbolism is imprinted in the hexagonal pattern of the snow crystal, whose mytho-poetic associations correspond to the metaphorical function of the snowfall.109

The mandala, like the imagery of Cue2 uoem, signifies wholeness, the union of opposites, the mutual reflection of nature and the mind, a metonymical embedding of the whole in its parts, and the ultimate unity of all existence. Both the mandala and the snow-poem are aids for introspective meditation, which leads to a realisation of the ungraspable, evanescent nature of the mind.

The hidden mandala symbolism of the motifs of snow, window, and flower expands the semantic scope of the poem towards cosmic dimensions, and, in turn, the poem adds an aesthetic aspect to the common meanings of the mandala. Both the mandala and the snow-poem are concerned with the nature and dynamics of the intangible mind. In affinity with mandala symbolism, the snow-poem alludes to the inner unity of the external and internal worlds, i.e. of nature and the mind. Besides, the snow-poem reveals that the literary text, which can be viewed as a microstructural analogue of the potential order of the literary universe, is also an embodiment of the mind. The combination of these two sets of relations entails the conclusion that the mind, the cosmos, the literary text, and the literary universe reflect each other. The realisation that the semantic and material worlds are but two different versions of the mind can be called an ‘axial threshold experience’, because these links emerge from the synthesis of the symbolism of the mandallic centre and the threshold experience of imaginative acts. The term ‘axial threshold experience’ denotes the process whereby the mind integrates both the semantic and the cosmic spheres into itself through an act of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation. This process involves the realisation that nature is like a text, and the poem is a model of the universe, as well as an embodiment of the mind.

The concept of axial threshold experience implies a synthesis of mandala symbolism and Frye’s view of literature. The convergence of the universe into the individual centre is comparable to the convergence of the literary universe into a single text and its central monad or monads. These processes are united in Cue2 uoem, since the central monads of this poem are metaphors for the cosmic centre of the imaginative mind. Jung’s observation that ‘mandala symbolism shows a marked tendency to concentrate all the archetypes on a common centre’ (Collected Works vol. 14, p. 463) is applicable to Cue2 uoem, where the poetic images of snow, flower, and window, representing human imagination and its products, are consubstantial with each other and with various symbols of the central creative light, such as the eye, the circle, the star, the cross, the Sun, the androgyne, the Word, and the cosmic breath. Jung’s definition of the mandallic centre is comparable to Frye’s definition of the monad as ‘a center of archetypes’ (1990, 118), ‘a unit of total poetic experience’ (1990, 19), ‘a universal symbol comparable to the universal creative word which is all words’ (1990, 125). Frye points out that the poetic work containing a monadic symbol is ‘a microcosm of all literature’, ‘a centre of the literary universe’, ‘a complete organisation of archetypes’ (1990, 121). In Spiritus Mundi (1976a) Frye established a link between his concept of literature and mandala symbolism:

At the centre of [Jung’s] vision of life is a progress from the ‘ego’, ordinary life with its haphazard and involuntary perceptions of time and space, to the ‘individual’ modes of perception. In Jung the symbol of the ‘individual’ perception is the mandala, as he calls it (perhaps he should have called it a yantra), a symmetrical diagram recalling the geometrical cosmologies so common in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The view of literature set out

\textit{Atman} with \textit{Brahman}. This mental experience is visually represented by the central, self-expanding point of the mandala (the so-called binda, the first circuit), whose first emanation (i.e. the second circuit) is often a hexagon (satkona), as in the mandala of the Śrīśaktra (Tucci 1961, 137-141, and Plate III) and the akarshani-yantra (Shearer 1993, 27).

\textit{In} the \textit{first volume of The Ancient Secret of the Flower of Life}, Drunvalo Melchizedek points out that the pattern of the snow crystal is a version of the mandala of the Flower of Life (1998, 179).
in *Anatomy of Criticism* has many points of contact with mandala vision, so much so that people have drawn up mandalas based on the book. (1976a, 116-117).

Later in the same chapter Frye draws a parallel between mandala, music, and the unitive, anagogic view of literature:

One of the central principles in *Anatomy of Criticism* is founded upon an analogy with music [...] I am by no means the first critic to regard music as the typical art, the one where the impact of structure is not weakened, as it has been in painting and still is in literature, by false issues derived from representation. For centuries the theory of music included a good deal of cosmological speculation, and the symmetrical grammar of classical music, with its circle of fifths, its twelve-tone chromatic and seven-tone diatonic scales, its duple and triple rhythms, its concords and cadences and formulaic progressions, makes it something of a mandala of the ear. We hear the resonance of this mandala of musical possibilities in every piece of music we listen to. Occasionally we feel that what we are listening to epitomises, so to speak, our whole musical experience with special clarity: our profoundest response to the B Minor Mass or the Jupiter Symphony is not 'this is beautiful music' but something more like 'this is the voice of music': this is what music is all about. Such a sense of authority, an authority that is part of one's own dignity and is not imposed from outside, comes mainly from the resonance of our aural experience within that piece of music. [...] I am providing a kind of resonance for literary experience, a third dimension, so to speak, in which the work we are experiencing draws strength and power from everything else we have read or may still read. (1976a, 118-119.)

These quotations confirm the idea that the monad of the anagogic phase functions as a semantic equivalent of the all-inclusive mandalic centre. Both the semantic and the mandalic axial points are characterised by a balancing of centripetal and centrifugal forces, and by combining stillness and movement, beginning and end. The latent mandala-symbolism of Frye’s view of literature is compressed in his snowflake-metaphor quoted at the beginning of the first chapter. The snow crystal is an appropriate image because it is a natural mandala. The quintessence of Frye’s view of literature is encapsulated in Pasternak’s *Che2 uoem*. The poem is a verbal manifestation of the snowfall and the snowflake; it functions as a monad, or a poetic mandala, a symbolic equivalent of the potential order of literature.

Pasternak’s poem is encircled by axial, monadic symbols; it begins with the image of snowfall (‘Снег идет, снег идет’) and it ends with a metaphorical equivalent of snowfall, the threshold (‘перекрестка певорот’). This semantic-structural frame is a precise poetic expression of one of the key concepts of mandala symbolism, the consubstantiality of the centre and the circumference. Put very simply, when end and beginning meet, the circumference of the circle is completed, and at this moment the centre (or threshold) is attained. This moment is the climax of the quest for meaning; it involves the realisation that all observation of external phenomena is a projected introspection, and that the central light of the universal mind can never be grasped. *Che2 uoem* can be regarded as a verbal mandala since it is a manifestation of creative imagination, and it functions as an aid for approaching the central creative light in an act of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation. End, beginning, and central monad are united in both the structure and the semantics of this poem, like in the circular shape of the mandala. The following lines from Wallace Stevens’s *A Primitive like an Orb* (1984, 440-443) are applicable to the interrelation of the anagogic significance and the latent mandala symbolism of *Che2 uoem*:

The essential poem at the centre of things [...] The central poem is the poem of the whole, The poem of the composition of the whole The composition of blue sea and of green, Of blue light and of green, as lesser poems, And the miraculous multiplex of lesser poems, Not merely into a whole, but a poem of The whole, the essential compact of the parts, The roundness that pulls tight the final ring.

3.6. Inseparable duality: a key factor of universal interrelatedness

‘I call it death-in-life and life-in-death’
(from W. B. Yeats’s *Byzantium*)

‘It must be visible or invisible, Invisible or visible or both:
A seeing and unseeing in the eye.’
(from Wallace Stevens’s *Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction*)

Having examined the symbols of snow, flower, and window in a mythological-intertextual scope, the following conclusions can be drawn. Pasternak’s *Che2 uoem* is based on a metonymical principle, whereby the bipolar duality of the whole setting is encapsulated in its parts. This organising principle is reminiscent of the process of cell-division, therefore, it can be called ‘reproductive metonymy’. These are, of course, not causal links, merely contingent affinities. The process of chromosome duplication is a distant analogy of the imaginative act of reproducing the whole from its complementary constituent parts, or seeing the whole reflected in its parts.111 In support of this unusual association, I should refer to C. G. Jung, who discovered some astonishing affinities between psychic and microphysical processes, and therefore assumed that the world of matter and the world of the spirit may be mirror-images.

111 During the process of chromosome duplication, two new double helix spirals are constructed from the double helix which is contained in the cell’s nucleus. The two new DNA molecules are replicas of the unwinding double helix which formed the templates for their construction.
of each other (Collected Works Vol. 14, 768f). In accordance with Jung’s assumption, David Maclagan compared the division of the cell to the mythological concept of cosmogony. He also compared the structure of the cell to that of the mandala, which is a radial image, and a psycho-cosmogram, representing an analogy between the structure of the universe and of the human mind (1997, 14, 7). Alistair Shearer has also drawn a parallel between Hindu cosmogony (which is one version of the universal mythological concept of the evolving cosmos) and chromosome duplication:

Creation begins with the golden Egg of Brahman, emerging from the depths of the ocean of unbounded Consciousness. From the pure potential of this seed emerge all the dualities that compose life - spirit and matter, male and female, light and dark. [...] In the microcosm, the same process takes place each time the fertilized egg begins the duplication of cells that lead to the creation of a new form. (1993, 95)

The process of cell-division is indirectly related to the imagery of Louis MacNeice’s Snow (1935; in MacNeice 1979, 30), which is a poetic reflection of the imagery of Снег упом. The word ‘spawning’ seems to be a translucent allusion to the comparability of the mechanism of biological reproduction and the irresolvable ambivalence of the world:

The room was suddenly rich and the great bay-window was
Spawning snow and pink roses against it
Soundlessly collateral and incompatible:
World is sudden than we fancy it.
World is crazier and more of it than we think,
Incorrigibly plural.

The concept of ‘incorrigible plurality’, which is explicitly articulated in MacNeice’s poem as one of the poetic meanings of the juxtaposition of snow, window and flowers, is implicit in the imagery of Снег упом. The symbolic triad can function as a visual trace, which brings verbal echoes with it from one poem to the other. The intertextual dialogue of the two poems entails their semantic cross-fertilisation. In the light of Снег упом, one can attribute specific meanings to the general concepts of threshold situation and irresolvable ambivalence formulated in MacNeice’s poem. In turn, the latter poem reveals that Снег упом is not merely a symbolic representation of various threshold experiences, of cyclical temporal change, and of other themes. The latent metonymical organisation of the poem’s imagery addresses crucial ontological dilemmas in a non-verbal form. Namely, dualities are the fundamental nature of the world and of human existence; they are deeply imprinted in the human mind, as in cells and in atoms. Opposites are distinguishable, yet they cannot be separated from each other. They are inextricably intertwined, and they are totally dependent on each another for their very existence. If one pole would destroy the other, it would destroy itself at the same time because each part of a bipolar whole is itself ‘incorrigibly plural’. Ambivalence is, then, irresolvable.

The non-dualistic comprehension of the world is not a new development of human thought. It is an axiom of mysticism, of mythological and imaginative thought, of esoteric wisdom, including alchemical and Kabbalistic traditions, and of Eastern philosophies and religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism.112 The logic of ambivalence is the key to Ivanov’s and Bakhtin’s theory of literary carnivalisation, which, like Nietzsche’s theory of artistic creativity formulated in The Birth of Tragedy, is an aesthetic-philosophical interpretation of the ancient Greek Dionysian mytho-ritual tradition. A relatively recent reinvention of the concept of mutual interpenetration of opposites is the paradoxical, non-logocentric thought-form of deconstruction.

The assumption that one pole of a bipolar contrast secretly dwells within the other entails an alternative understanding of threshold situations. Namely, two equally ambivalent spheres occupy both sides of the threshold. The border between opposites is, then, a border between synonyms. The transgression of the boundary is, therefore, not always perceptible. The step from life to death may be understood as a step from ‘death-in-life’ to ‘life-in-death’. ‘Death-in-life’ refers to death-like experiences, such as the creative and receptive acts, both in the aesthetic and erotic sense. ‘Life-in-death’, which is a synonym of after-life, results from moments of ‘death-in-life’. That is to say, the fruits of creative acts are manifestations of one’s after-life, or immortality.113 Pasternak’s fictional alter-ego, Yury Zhivago, explains the concept of immortality to his dying stepmother as follows:

Но все время одна и та же необъятно тесная жизнь наполняет вселенную и ежечасно обновляется в непременных сочетаниях и превращениях. [...] Нет, сколько я припомнило, вы всегда заставляли себя в наружном, деятельном проявлении, в делах

112 One of the central emblems of Taoism, the yin-yang diagram, is a visual representation of non-dualistic thinking: ‘Yin-yang symbolism is expressed by a circle divided into two equal halves by a wavy line, one half white (yang) and the other black (yin), in which it is noticeable that the length of the dividing line equals half the external circumference of the circle and that hence the total perimeter of each half, of yin or yang, is equal in length to the total circumference of the circle. [...] The yin half bears a yang dot and the yang half a yin dot, a sign of their interdependence, the trace of light in darkness and of darkness in light [...] This concrete symbol expresses the complete structure of the world and of the spirit.’ (Chevalier and Gingerbrunt 1996, 1140-41.) The yin-yang diagram is a configuration of the symbol of six-pointed star made of two interlocking triangles. Снег shares with the yin-yang diagram the idea of bipolar unity, whereby the parts contain the ambivalence of the whole. Poetic reformulations of the inherently ambivalent doctrine of yin-yang can be found in the works of Gennagii Aygi. He often uses the symbols of snow and window as metaphors for threshold experiences which are portrayed as unnoticeable transgressions of the boundary between two, equally ambivalent existential states.

113 The word ‘immortality’ is often used to designate an artist’s after-life, that is to say, the eternal presence of his or her spiritual essence in his works. This meaning of immortality is close to the meaning of ‘memory’. The word ‘immortality’ is also used in a different sense, denoting a unique mental state, an experience of eternal presence.
The act of dissolving ourselves in everyone is a process of leaving a trace of life in eternity. This process is called metaphorically a wedding, and it is related to the image of the window.

Similar treatment of this image occurs in Mandelstam’s self-allusive poem Дай мне тепло:

Ни стекла венченья уже легко
Мое дыхание, мое тепло.

Both poems exhibit a non-dualistic logic, whereby time and eternity are inextricably intertwined. According to non-dualistic thought, it is not time and eternity which occupy the two sides of the threshold, but the intermediate states of eternity-in-time and time-in-eternity. The phrase ‘eternity-in-time’ refers to those extra-temporal moments of life in which time seems to stand still: death-like moments of altered mental states, when one attains the central monad in the soul, and becomes unaware of corporeal existence, or moments when one is dissolving oneself in others, thereby achieving the ‘immortality’ of the soul. There is a hint in Свадьба that the moment of dissolution is equal with eternal life. This theme is elaborated in Единственными дня, where the moment of the winter solstice is prolonged to eternity as it coincides with a non-ending embrace, an act of holding the universe while dissolving oneself in the other. In Richard Crashaw’s Hymn in the Holy Nativity (1972, 83), the all-inclusive moment of the winter solstice symbolises immanent transcendence, the divine, creative spirit of man:

A poetic concentration of these ideas can be found in one of Zhivago-Pasternak’s poems, Свадьба, where the leaving of a trace in others is depicted in terms of marriage and creative activity:

Жизнь ведь тоже только мгновенье,
Только растворенье
Нас самих во всех других
Как бы мы в деревне:

Только свадьба, в глубь окон
Рушится свежий,
Только песня, только сон,
Только голубь сийный. (1989, 615)

In this stanza, the list of paradoxes appears to be an implication that the principle of inseparability is applicable to any kinds of opposites. This calls to mind Jung’s notions of ‘ánima’, the female part of the male unconscious, and ‘animus’, the masculine aspect of the feminine psyche. A similar overlapping of gender roles characterises the imagery of Caelestrom, where both snow and the flowers can be endowed with feminine as well as masculine attributes. Thus, both images can be associated with creation as well as reception.

According to non-dualistic thinking, the boundary between reality and imagination can be re-conceived as a transparent, almost non-existing threshold between ‘imagination-in-reality’ and ‘reality-in-imagination’. That is to say, nature and the imaginative mind, matter and spirit, are inseparable since they reflect each other. The internal is external, the external is internal, and the threshold (or the ‘window’) is both external and internal. The window, being a transparent, reflecting object, is an apposite metaphor for the almost imperceptible boundary between two overlapping spheres. Figuratively speaking, to be located either indoors or outdoors is just the same thing as standing on the threshold, on the crossroads in-between, which is symbolised in the poem by the window-cross (‘оконный переплет”).

The symbol of the cross is related to each of the three main images of the text: the turnings of the snowfall-staircase, the window-cross, and the turning of the crossroad, on which the whitened walker (who can be an externalised counterpart of the flowers) stands, all represent threshold situations. Everything appears as metaphorically equivalent with everything else, because everything contains in itself ‘the everything’. 115 Many critics have discussed the principle of symbolic-semantic interchangeability in Pasternak’s poetic


115 This is a poetic version of mythological cosmologies, which are represented mainly in axial symbols and mandalas. Brian Bates summarises their structural features as follows: “The World Tree is a sacred image: a Western shamanic version of the meditational images [mandalas] of Tibetan Buddhism. […] The people of ancient Europe thought of the tree as structured holographically, in which every place, every tree - and in fact every human being - is considered to be the essence, the centre. This belief gives rise to a cosmos with a sacred dimension from every aspect, like light shining through a complex crystal, a cosmos in which each detail represents and incorporates the whole so that everything is related to everything else’. (1996, 263-4). In Vedantic texts, this view of the cosmos is referred to as ‘Indra’s Net of Jewels’ (Shearer, 1993, 27), and it is comparable to Frye’s anagogic context, where every poem is a monad, a potential centre reflecting the literary universe. Bakhtin also defines the text as ‘a unique monad that in itself reflects all texts (within the bounds) of a given sphere’ (1986, 105).
thought. Here we are dealing with a poetic representation of one of Frye’s theoretical ideas, the anagogic context:

In the anagogic aspect of meaning [...] the formula ‘A is B’ may be hypothetically applied to anything [...]. The literary universe, therefore, is a universe in which everything is potentially identical with everything else [...] as though all poetic images were contained within a single universal body. Identity is the opposite of similarity or likeness, as total identity is not uniformity, still less monotony, but a unity of various things. (1990, 124-125)

CHez uoem exhibits the principle of total identity in that its symbols (snow, flower, the black staircase, the stars, the cross, the window, etc.) are metaphorically interchangeable with each other and with various traditional axial figures. The interchangeability of the dissimilar images of snow, window, and flower is expressive of the threshold experience of self-reflection whereby the outside and the inside, the contemplated object and the contemplator, are united. The three main images merge on a metaphorical plane because each of them represents the concept of profound ambivalence, the consubstantiality of the macrocosm and the human microcosm, and various threshold situations. Each of these symbols is a half-physical, half-spiritual figure, a concretisation of abstract concepts and mental contents. Each of them functions as a monad, a radiation image, in which the whole poem, the whole literary universe, and the non-dualistic nature of the creative mind are reflected.

In imaginative thought, the symbols of snow (star), window, and flower are often interlinked. In mythology, stars are regarded as the windows and the eyes of the universe. Accordingly, in CHez uoem, the white stars share the main connotations of the window. Both symbols manifest an intermediate realm between spirit and matter. In other words, both of them function as axial connectives between heaven (spirit) and earth (matter), representing the reflection whereby the outside and the inside, the contemplated object and the contemplator, are united. The three main images merge on a metaphorical plane because each of them represents the concept of profound ambivalence, the consubstantiality of the macrocosm and the human microcosm, and various threshold situations. Each of these symbols is a half-physical, half-spiritual figure, a concretisation of abstract concepts and mental contents. Each of them functions as a monad, a radiation image, in which the whole poem, the whole literary universe, and the non-dualistic nature of the creative mind are reflected.

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The images of snow and window visually overlap in any poem which depicts snow on or behind a window (i.e. snow in the frame of the window). Flower and window are intermingled in the figure of the rose-window and in Jung’s mandala called ‘Window on Eternity’. In poetic thought, the images of snow and flower are often synthesised. In Yü Ch’ing’s poem for the Far Journey, snow substitutes the symbol of Golden Flower. In Dezső Kosztolányi’s Szerenád (Serenade), snow is compared to white roses. In Robert Louis Stevenson’s Winter, flower, window, and snow (or frost) visually overlap. In Louis MacNeice’s Snow the contrasted images of snow and flower are also transformed mirror-images of each other, as both of them are ‘incorrigibly plural’. In Wallace Stevens’s The Poems of Our Climate (1984, 193) the outdoor world of snow and the indoor realm of flowers overlap:

Clear water in a brilliant bowl,
Pink and white carnations. The light
In the room more like a snowy air,
Reflecting snow.

A more explicit poetic synthesis of snow and flower can be found in Marianne Moore’s Those Various Sculpels: ‘your eyes, flowers of ice and snow’ (1981, 51). In Emily Dickinson’s poem 409, the images of snow, star, and flower are interchangeable. Each of them represents the products of creative imagination (1975, 194-195):

They dropped like Flakes –
They dropped like Stars –
Like petals from a Rose –
When suddenly across the June
A wind with fingers – goes –

They perished in the Seamless Grass –
No eye could find the place –
But God can summon every face
On his repealless – List.

Stars, which are poetic synonyms of snow, are related to the image of flowers in Pasternak’s Oхранная грамота (part 2, chapter 8): ‘Цветы и звезды так сближены, что похоже’. This sentence reminds us of the mirror technique which unites the flowers and the white stars in CHez uoem. Star and flower are united through metamorphosis in Jeny Couzyn’s untitled poem from the collection In the Skin House: ‘star exploding into flower’. In The Mistress of Vision (from the collection Sight and Insight, 1992, 149-155), Francis Thompson (1859-1907) uses the same images for an illustration of the experience of glimpsing the basic one-ness of

the universe. The speaker of the poem is quoting the words of a mysterious Lady, whom he encountered in a secret garden:

‘When to the new eyes of thee
All things by immortal power,
Near or far,
Hiddently
To each other linked are,
That you cannot stir a flower
Without troubling of a star;
When thy song is shield and mirror
To the fair-snaked curlid Pain,
Where thou dar’st affront her terror
That on her thou may’st attain
Persian conquest; seek no more,
O seek no more!
Pass the gates of Luthany, tread the region Elenore.’

The first part of these lines can be related to Сиез удеам, where the white stars and the flowers are mutually interdependent through simultaneous acts of externalisation and internalisation. That is to say, the observed physical reality and the psychological state of the observer mutually affect each other.

The metaphor-making process of internalising material objects or projecting mental contents is based on a direct transformative connection between outside reality and poetic interior. There are less obvious kinds of interconnections, such as coincidental structural parallels, between the world of matter and the world of spirit. Abstract, structural affinities between psychic and physical processes manifest the ultimate unity of all existence. It is this universal interconnectedness which Thompson explicitly formulates in the lines quoted above. This poem can increase the latent philosophical depth of Pasternak’s Сиез удеам by stimulating us to link the notion of non-dualistic perception to the concept of the basic oneness of existence. In Сиез удеам, the relation of flowers and white stars represents the implicit unity of explicit opposites. In Thompson’s poem, the same paired images evoke the idea that the universe is a unified field of infinite correlations. The two poems complement each other, since the mental acts which they depict are mutually interdependent. By transcending opposites, the observer realises that he is not separate from the observed cosmos. This leads to a further insight into the ultimate unity of all existence. 

In affinity with Pasternak’s poem, threshold experience is a central concern of The Mistress of Vision. In the latter poem, the act of crossing a threshold (‘Pass the gates of Luthany, tread the region Elenore’) is used synonymously with meeting with a wise, beautiful Lady (perhaps the poet’s Muse) at the centre of a secret garden (‘The Lady of fair weeping, / At the garden’s core, / Sang a song of sweet and sore / And the after-sleeping; / In the land of Luthany, and the tracts of Elenore.’). Both movements (crossing the threshold and attaining the centre) are used in the conventional sense as metaphors for mental transformation and spiritual realisation. The lyric persona has to pass ‘the fosse of death’ and nine emerald walls to reach the core of the secret garden. This mystical centre is a psycho-chronotope, a spatial metaphor for the unique moments of a visionary, imaginative state, which the poet describes as ‘a mazeful wonder’. In the first stanza, the poet recalls his spiritual experience: ‘My eyes saw not and I saw’. Here we are dealing with the conventional mytho-poetic device of depicting mental transformation as closing the bodily eyes and opening the mind’s far-sighted inner eye. This change of perspective enables one to ignore the illusory appearances of the visible world, and see the fundamental unity of existence:

‘Learn to dream when thou dost wake.
Learn to wake when thou dost sleep.
[...]
Die, for none other way canst live.
When earth and heaven lay down their veil,
And that apocalypse turns thee pale;
When thy seeing blindeth thee
To what thy fellow-mortals see;
When their sight to thee is sightless;
Their living, death; their light, most lightless;
Search no more -
Pass the gates of Luthany, tread the region Elenore.’

The moment of blinding illumination involves the awareness that the ordinary perception of the universe as a random conglomerate of unrelated entities, which are separate from the observing self, is a product of the analytical, categorising intellect. This illusory perception can be transcended by quieting the reasoning consciousness. In an altered mental state one can attain the universal centre of the mind, and perceive the world as an indivisible unity, a web of interconnectedness. As the poet states, ‘And then the Windows failed - and then / I could not see to see -’ (627).

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117 We have encountered various examples of such parallels, including the acausal correspondence between non-dualistic thought forms, the process of cell-division, and the structure of the atom. These are mutually independent, incommensurable phenomena, yet they exhibit fundamental structural similarities. It is a well-known observation that certain geometrical patterns, mathematical concepts, forms of nature, and processes in the material world have structural affinities with works of art and other embodiments of the human mind. Such 'coincidental' parallels are the central concern of sacred geometry and other interdisciplinary fields. See Barrow 1995, Blair 1975, Capra 1992, Franz 1974, Lawlor 1998, Melchizedek 1998, 2000, and Walter 1996.

118 For a detailed discussion of how the inner unity of opposites is linked to the concept of all-embracing interconnectedness see Watts 1987.

119 In Emily Dickinson’s poetry, the closing of eyes and death often function as metaphors for seeing beyond the perceptible reality: ‘the Cheated Eye / Shuts arrogantly - in the Grave - / Another way - to see -’ (627); ‘And then the Windows failed - and then / I could not see to see -’ (465).
mutually interrelated phenomena. This perception includes the awareness that entities which are ordinarily considered to be opposed to each other have a basic unity.

The intertextual cross-fertilisation of Thompson’s and Pasternak’s poems reveals that the two threshold experiences articulated in these texts are mutually interdependent. The recognition that the apparently disparate entities of the world are interconnected in a cosmic network (The Mistress of Vision) is inseparable from the awareness that polar opposites constitute a dynamic unity (such as death). This knowledge can only be attained by passing ‘the fosse of death’, that is to say, through a renunciation of the everyday consciousness, which is an inevitable precondition for a reintegration into the totality of being. The climax of this mystical self-sacrifice is an experience of blinding illumination, a mental transformation, whereby one no longer perceives the illusory distinction between matter and spirit, and no longer feels oneself to be a passive observer, divided from the observed reality, but an integral part of the all-embracing unity of being. This state of illumined dissolution is perceived as an extra-temporal moment in which one attains the central monad, the all-encompassing void at the heart of existence. It is this mystical experience which is depicted in Crashaw’s Nativity-hymn (‘Welcome, all Wonders in one sight! / Eternity shut in a span. / Sommer in Winter. Day in Night, / Heaven in earth, and God in Man.’ 1972, 83). A mythological-intertextual perspective reveals that the illuminating experience of seeing ‘all wonders in one sight’ is encapsulated in Pasternak’s Czez wedem. The window and the snowfall function as poetic configurations of the mystical centre, where heaven and earth, man and woman, the divine and the human worlds are intertwined.

The threshold experience of blinding illumination is traditionally depicted as a transition from outward sight through outward blindness to inward vision and inward blindness. ‘Outward blindness’ is meant to denote the mental transformation whereby the observer no longer sees the world in the ordinary way, that is to say, when the manifold world vanishes from sight and the underlying unity of all existence is crystallised. In this sense, ‘blinding illumination’ (i.e. ‘outwardly blinding illumination’) refers to the threshold moment of closing the bodily eyes and opening the mind’s eye, which can grasp the fundamental unity of all existence. ‘Inward blindness’ refers to a further recognition, whereby the seer not only understands that all apparently separate things are interrelated, but also realises that they are interrelated in an infinitely complicated, indescribable, and never quite comprehensible way. In this sense, the term ‘blinding illumination’ (i.e. ‘inwardly blinding illumination’) denotes the wisdom about the limitations of knowledge, an awareness that there is a mystical core at the heart of existence which evades our grasp. This enigmatic centre is traditionally represented by concentrated clear white light, the world-creating solar light of the winter solstice, axial symbols, the all-inclusive void at the centre of the mandala, and abstract concepts such as the psycho-physical vital energy, the cosmic breath, Dharmakaya (in Buddhism), the Tao (in Taoism), the unity of Brahman and Atman (in Hinduism), or boundless nothingness, the depth of primordial being (Ayin in the Jewish mystical tradition of Kabbalah). It is at once the unifying centre of the multiplicity of the world, and the universal centre of the human mind. The centre of the cosmos and of the mind coincide, since this centre is a psycho-chronotope, symbolising the moment of inwardly blinding illumination, which involves the awareness that there is no boundary between the observer and the observed world, the knower and the known. In other words, the cosmos and the human mind are mirror-images of each other. This idea is implicit in the traditional view of the poetic text as a model of the universe and an embodiment of the imaginative mind. The poetic text is thus comparable to a transparent, two-sided mirror, in which the mental and physical worlds reflect and mutually shape each other.

In Czez wedem, the moment of ‘outwardly blinding illumination’ is represented in a new poetic form, in the synthesis of snowfall and staircase. Perceiving the image of an axial staircase in the chaotic snowfall is a reflection of a mental transformation, whereby the mind’s eye beholds orderly structures and interrelations in what the bodily eyes see as a disarray.

This perceptual transformation forms the basis of the consubstantiality of the images of snowfall and snowflake. At first, this metonymical link may have seemed to be an over-interpretation, but gradually it gained a rich semantic significance. It not only epitomises the principle of reproductive metonymy (seeing the whole in its parts), but it can also be regarded as an emblem of the mental transformation which enables one to glimpse a hidden, all-embracing, crystalline network in ostensible chaos.

The interchangeability of the images of snowfall and snowflake led us to the conclusion that the semantic-structural integrity of the poetic text is a manifestation of the structure and dynamics of the creative human mind, and it can also be viewed as a microstructural analogue of the potential order of the world of literature. The text-centred and the intertextual acts of ‘crystal formation’ are also analogous to the experience of grasping the basic one-ness of the universe. It logically follows from these correspondences that the central monad of the poetic text coincides with the potential centre of the literary universe, and it also represents the universal centre of the mind, and the unifying, simultaneously diverging and converging, centre of the cosmic whole. The central monad of Pasternak’s Czez wedem, snow
and window, have many attributes (including whiteness, transparency, the inner unity of opposites, axial and radial symbolism), which support the relevance of applying the aforementioned correspondences to the poem, and regarding these symbols as innovative metaphors of the all-encompassing central creative void of existence and of the enigmatic centre of the mind.

The question as to whether universal interrelatedness is an objective feature of the observed entity (the poem, the literary universe, or the world) or a projection of the observing mind is irrelevant in the state of mystical illumination, because the very essence of this experience is the mental act of transcending the distinction between matter and spirit, reality and imagination, object and subject, observed thing and observer, and other opposites. This synthetic perception is a recurring literary theme. One obvious example is from William Blake’s Jerusalem: ‘as in your own Bosom you bear your Heaven / And Earth & all you behold; tho’ it appears Without it is Within, / In your Imagination’ (Chapter 3, plate 71). Blake often formulates explicitly the idea that the external world is a reflection of the imaginative mind. In Pasternak’s Человек, this concept is not laid bare theoretically, but it is compressed in the poetic technique of transformative mirror-effect. The window, which divides and connects the white stars and the flowers, functions as a transparent, two-sided looking glass; it enables the observing mind to recognise its transformed mirror-image in the observed object. These relations expand the primary meaning of snowfall-staircase: this image is not only a metaphor for the poem, but also an embodiment (or reflection) of the imaginative mind, a model of the potential order of the literary universe (which is yet another reflection of synthetic apprehension), and an analogue of the interrelated cosmic web.

This perspective sheds new light on the images of star and flower in Francis Thompson’s poem. The explicitly formulated idea that ‘All things by immortal power, / Near or far, / Hiddenly / To each other linked are, / That you cannot stir a flower / Without troubling of a star’ (1992, 154) is more complex than it seems at first sight. While it appears as a poetic summary of the ultimate unity of the cosmos,121 it can also be read as a metaphor for the poem, but also an embodiment (or reflection) of the imaginative mind, a model of the potential order of the literary universe (which is yet another reflection of synthetic apprehension), and an analogue of the interrelated cosmic web.

3.7. Acausal interrelatedness: a central aspect of Pasternak’s model of existence

‘The frolic architecture of the snow’
(from Emerson’s The Snowstorm)

‘Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge.’
(from P. B. Shelley’s A Defence of Poetry)

The anagogic view of literature, which is based on the principle of meaningful, acausal semantic interrelations, and involves the notion of an all-encompassing central monad, can be viewed as a semantic analogue of the final unity of existence. The belief in the acausal connectedness of mental, spiritual, and material processes played a central role in Pasternak’s artistic apprehension of existence. This mode of perception is a basic compositional principle of Доктор Живаго, where linear causality is replaced by a network of meaningful coincidences. The principle of acausal orderliness is manifest throughout the novel in that events and mental states are often reflected in nature in symbolic forms. The author’s belief that there is a mysterious unity between nature and man is laid bare in part 8 of chapter IV: ‘Что-то сходное творилось в нравственном мире и в физическом, вблизи и вдали, на земле и в воздухе’ (1989, 224). This sentence reminds us of Thompson’s The Mistress of Vision (‘All things by immortal power, / Near or far, / Hiddenly / To each other linked are, / That you cannot stir a flower / Without troubling of a star’, 1992, 154). Thompson’s poem takes us back to another Pasternakian hint at the concept of cosmic interrelations: ‘Цветы и звезды так сближены, что похоже’ (Охранная грамота, part 2, chapter 8). The poetic treatment of the images of flower and star in Thompson’s and Pasternak’s texts can be regarded as a metaphorical concentration of the acausal, meaningful interrelatedness of all existence, which involves the idea that the external and the internal worlds reflect each other.

The inseparability of the worlds of matter and mind is a central aspect of C. G. Jung’s psycho-cosmological system of thought. In agreement with other scholars (including

121 It is theoretically true that the motion of a flower exerts a minuscule force on a distant star, via the gravitational field that exists between them. I doubt that the catholic mystic Francis Thompson knew this, and he was probably thinking of a more metaphysical connection constituted by god’s omniscience; I am grateful to Jeff Vern for allowing me to quote his unpublished interpretation, as it epitomises the concept of unus mundus (or psycho-physical universe), which will be discussed in detail in the next section.
scientists)\textsuperscript{122} and with ancient mythological wisdom, Jung posited the concept of psycho-physical universe. He often referred to this concept as the 'unus mundus', borrowing the term from medieval philosophy:

Undoubtedly the idea of the unus mundus is founded on the assumption that the multiplicity of the empirical world rests on an underlying unity and that not two or more fundamentally different worlds exist side by side or are mingled with one another. Rather, everything divided and different belongs to one and the same world (\textit{Collected Works}, vol. 14, par. 767).

In \textit{Psychology and Alchemy}, Jung pointed out that the symbol is a pre-eminent manifestation of psycho-physical interconnections:

The physical and the psychic are blended in an indissoluble unity. [...] This intermediate realm of subtle reality [...] can adequately be expressed only by the symbol. The symbol is neither abstract, nor concrete, neither rational nor irrational, neither real nor unreal. It is always both. (\textit{Collected Works}, vol. 12, par. 394, 400)

The central monad of Снег идем, the symbol of snow, can, indeed, be regarded as an emblem of the concept of ‘unus mundus’ because it manifests a synthesis of matter and spirit, the inner unity of opposites, and the principle of total interconnectedness. Jung pointed out that mandala symbolism is a pre-eminent representation of the concept of ‘unus mundus’. This supports our argument that snow functions as a psycho-cosmogram, a mandalic radiation image:

The mandala symbolizes, by its central point, the ultimate unity of all archetypes as well as of the multiplicity of the phenomenal world, and is therefore the empirical equivalent of the metaphysical concept of unus mundus. (\textit{Collected Works}, vol. 14, par. 661)

Later in the same work Jung adds: ‘If mandala symbolism is the psychological equivalent of the unus mundus, then synchronicity is its parapsychological equivalent’ (\textit{Collected Works}, vol. 14, par. 662). Jung regards synchronistic phenomena (i.e. meaningful coincidences, so-called ‘pens of destiny’) as particular instances of the acausal orderliness and of the all-embracing unity of existence. Synchronicity is a cohering principle in Pasternak’s \textit{Доктор Живаго}, where an intricate network of interrelated incidents is constructed by various kinds of coincidence.\textsuperscript{123} There are numerous examples throughout the novel where human events and states of mind are reflected in nature in symbolic forms. Other kinds of synchronistic phenomena include chance occurrences, crossings of paths of lives, and what Jung calls the transgressive aspect of the archetype, incidents when an archetype is activated in the unconscious of an individual, and at the same time (or somewhat earlier or later) this archetype manifests itself in the world of matter. Synchronistic phenomena are embodiments of a dynamic interrelation of the inside and the outside worlds. This is why it is relevant to mention them in the analysis of Снег идем. There are several instances of synchronicity in the novel which can be linked to the symbolic structure of Снег идем. Here I only mention one detail, a striking parallel between the colours of the indoor and the outdoor realms, which occurs while Zhivago is writing Зимняя ночь, a twin-poem of Снег идем.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Зимняя ночь, a twin-poem of Снег идем.}
\end{center}

Свет лампы спокойной желтизной падал на белые листы бумаги и золотистым бликом плавал на поверхности чернил внутри чернильниц. За окном глубила зимняя морозная ночь. Юрий Андреевич шагнул в соседнюю холодную и неосвещенную комнату, откуда было виднее наружу, и посмотрел в окно. Свет полного месяца стигал снеговую полосу оснеженной ветвью веяния бёлая или влевых бежка. Иосиф морозной ночи была непременным. Мир был на душе у доктора. Он вернулся в светлую, тепло исполненную комнату и принялся за писание. (1989, 508)

The poet’s lamp appears as an indoor reflection, a transformed mirror-image of the full moon. These sources of light are also metaphorical synonyms of the candle in Зимняя ночь. The ink and the white sheets of paper, which are illuminated by the yellow lamplight, appear as transformed reflections of the moonlit snow. The yellowish white colour of lamp-lit papers and the golden blue colour of the lamp-lit ink are intermingled in their external analogue, the moonlit snow, which is coloured by tinges of blue and yellow. In the framework of this parallel, the blueish, yellowish snow appears as an outdoor analogue of both the page and the ink, that is to say, of both the silence of the page and the words written (or to be written) on the page. This synthetic reflection anticipates the physical contact of the paper and the ink during the act of writing. Indeed, just after the poet observed (and probably noticed) the parallels between the inside and the outside worlds, he started writing poems.

Snow is compared to the written page at several points of the novel. An initial stage of the development of the snow-text metaphor can be found in the Christmas episode (part 8 in chapter III), when there is a surface similarity between chalk (a material which is instantly associated with writing) and snow. The chalk-like snow covering the windows at Christmas is not only a descriptive detail, but a semantically charged image, which perfectly fits into the symbolic structure of Зимняя ночь and Снег идем:
In the episode of the October revolution (part 8 in chapter VI), there is a synchronistic co-occurrence of blizzard and the words of the freshly printed newspaper. The grey snowflakes actually merge with the printed words:

Метель хлестала в глаза доктору и покрывала печатные строки газеты серой и шершавой снежной крупой. Но не это мешало его чтению. Величие и вековечность минуты потрясли его и не давали опомниться. (1989, 225)

In part 18 of chapter XIII a mysterious coincidence brings together snow and the words of Tonya’s letter. From behind a window, Zhivago is watching two magpies:

Сережа к снегу’, - подумал доктор. В ту же минуту он услышал из-за портьер:


Yury believes that magpies are portents for the impending snow, while Sima thinks that magpies are omens for news. At the very moment when Yury is pronouncing the word ‘snow’, Sima is uttering the word ‘news’, by which she means guests or a letter. In this context, snow and letter are interchangeable since both of them are associated with magpies. The black-and-white colour is a potential link between the magpie, the snowfall, and the written text. A few moments after the words ‘snow’ and ‘news’ have been pronounced simultaneously, a meaningful coincidence happens. Both news (a letter) and snow manifest themselves in physical reality. Yury receives a letter from Tonya. While he is reading it, the snow starts falling, as if nature ‘enacted’ Tonya’s letter. Yury is aware of this acausal interconnectedness. He compares the snow with the white gaps between the words of Tonya’s letter:

За окном пошел снег. Ветер вес его по воздуху влек, все быстрее и все гуще, как бы этим всем нечто захватывало, и Юрий Андреевич так смотрел перед собой в окно, как будто это не снег шел, а продолжалось чтение письма Тони и проникновение и мелькание несуших звездочк снега, а маленькие промежутки белой бумаги между маленькими черными буковками, белые, белые, без кожи, без копца. (1989, 487)

This is an explicit portrayal of a dynamic interconnectedness of the internal and the external worlds. Tonya’s letter seems to continue outdoors in the form of snow. This is similar to the coincidental parallel between the colours of the moonlit snow and the lamplit page and ink in the Varykino episode. In the same episode, when Yury is writing Зимняя ночь, he compares the wolves in the snow to pencil-strokes on the page:

Белый огонь, которым был объят и полчал неистовый снег на снегу месяца, оледенил его. Наверное он не мог ли во что вглядываться и ничего не увидел. Но через минуту расслышал ослабленное растопырением протяжное угрюмоблекшее звывание и тогда заметил на крышке полны за оврагом четыре вытянутые тени, размером не больше маленькой черточки. Волки стояли рядом, мордами по направлению к дому и, подняв головы, вышли на луну или на отекающе серебряным отблеском околя Минкулинского дома’ (1989, 510).

The unusual parallels between the outdoor and the indoor reality can be interpreted as metaphors of the acausal connectedness of the world of matter and the world of spirit. While Zhivago is writing Зимняя ночь, the image of snowstorm as a metaphor for the creative process is activated in his mind. He is writing about a window which is being covered by snow: ‘Метель лепила на стекле / кружки и стрелы’. After finishing his work, he wants to look out of the window again, but by this time the window has been covered with frost, as if nature imitated Zhivago’s act of writing: ‘За те часы, что он провел за писанием, стекла успели сильно зазицветь’ (1989, 510). This is an example of what Jung calls the transgressive nature of the archetype, a magical concurrence of symbolically interrelated events. It appears as if Zhivago performed ‘white magic’ through a deep-communication with nature. Such coincidences are particular instances of the concept of ‘unus mundus’. Marie-Louise von Franz summarises Jung’s ideas about meaningful coincidence as follows:

Jung observed a class of events that appear to point to a direct relationship between psyche and matter. If one observes a series of dreams and unconscious processes in an individual over a considerable period of time, one sees that with some frequency, but sporadically and irregularly, a dream motif or an unexpected fantasy will appear in the material environment also, as an outer event, either in very similar form [...] or in a symbolic way. [...] Jung described such a combination of events as phenomenon of synchronicity. The connection between the inner event (dream, fantasy, hunch) and the outer event appears not to be a causal one, that of cause and effect, but rather one of a relative simultaneity and of the same meaning for the individual who has the experience. [...] In the synchronistic phenomena, or instances of meaningful orderedness, images appear in the inner field of vision, which stand in analogous, that is, in meaningful, relation to objective outer events, even when a causal relation between the two classes of events cannot be demonstrated. (von Franz, 1998, 237, 240)

The Jungian explanation of the acausal connectedness of the spiritual and material worlds is applicable not only to Зимняя ночь and its narrative context, but also to its twin-poem, Снег адвент. This poem can be read on two main semantic planes simultaneously, as a descriptive text and as a metaphor for the imaginative act. This implies the transgressive nature of the archetype of snow. Similarly to Зимняя ночь and other poems by Pasternak (such as После
Transformation is the process underlying the mirror-technique and the anagogic model of total interconnectedness, therefore, it is one of the hidden themes of the poem. The text is not only an indirect expression of transformation, but also an embodiment of this concept, since it constantly changes and expands, and it always brings new insights. Transformation is, then, the experience of reading the mind in the mirror of this self-allusive text.

One of the most obvious manifestations of the semantic metamorphosis of the poem is that at least four different relations can be distinguished between its three main symbols. (1) It is possible to view the window as a dividing border between two opposites. In this case, three different qualities make up a whole: the internal, the external, and the threshold represent, respectively, one pole of a bipolar whole, its opposite, and the meeting of opposites. Snow and flowers represent only a part of their otherwise more complex, ambivalent connotations. In this view, the imagery of the poem portrays various three-part structures, such as life-death-the moment on the verge of life and death, or heaven-earth-their sacred marriage, or reality-imagination-their synthesis. (2) The layout of the three main symbols can be seen as a static juxtaposition of three synonyms, each of which is an 'incorrigibly plural' analogue of the whole setting, when the setting is viewed as a model comprising binary oppositions. (3) In a different perspective, the snowfall is not juxtaposed with the geraniums, but surrounds them. The flowers are located both in the limited space of the room and in the limitless space of snowfall. This perspective invites associations with various ambivalent situations, such as the threshold experience of being simultaneously in time and in eternity. If the boundless snowfall is viewed as a metaphor for the eternity of death, then the flowers located within the limitless snowfall and within the bordered room can represent the immortal presence of life in death. Indeed, the flowers are metaphors not only for the agents of imaginative acts, but, according to the logic of non-dualistic thinking, they can also be associated with the products of artistic creativity. The products of imagination are traces of time in eternity and traces of eternity in time. (4) A further possible relation between the three main symbols results from the connective function of the window. The transparent window is comparable to a membrane, because it facilitates a dynamic exchange and a fusion of the inside and outside worlds. In this model, the categories of inside, outside, and threshold are not sharply divided; the corresponding meanings of snow, flower, and window overlap. Each symbol can be a metaphor for the poetic text, which is an embodiment of the synthesis of the outside/the inside, physical reality/the imaginative mind, object/subject, word/silence, and other opposites.

While the 'flowers' are engrossed in the outdoor scenery, an interpenetration of the indoor and the outdoor territories is taking place. During their contemplative auto­communication, the poet and the reader transform in their minds the real snow by associating it with time, eternity, the poetic word, and other meanings. Perceiving the image of snow as a metaphor is the same thing as endowing it with an aura of meaningful silence. As soon as snow is enriched with unspoken meanings, it transgresses the threshold; it is no longer an outward object of material reality separated from its observers, but a mirror-image of the imaginative mind. At this moment of metamorphosis, the chaotic snowfall turns into a crystalline order.

The poem can be interpreted as a self-allusive portrayal of this process of crystallisation. Accordingly, the line 'Снег идет, и всё в смятенье' undergoes semantic transformation. When this line appears at the beginning of the poem (in the 2nd stanza), it can refer to the chaos of snowfall, and, by analogy, to the disorder in the poet's and reader's minds. The chaotic appearance of snowfall can be associated with the initial stage of creative inspiration, when various images and feelings are mixed in the poet's mind. During the processes of contemplation and writing, the inchoate mixture of symbols and meanings comes

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124 'With a variable key / you unlock the house in which / drifts the snow of that left unspoken', from With a Variable Key, by Paul Celan, translated by Michael Hamburger.
125 This arrangement is comparable to the relation of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis in Hegel's dialectics.
to be disentangled in a linear form. Similarly, at the beginning of reading, everything in the poem may seem to be somewhat confused and disarrayed, but this impression changes when connotative meanings are activated, and the poem is comprehended as a whole. Accordingly, when the phrase ‘всё в смятеньи’ reappears at the end of the poem, it can acquire a different meaning. After the 7th stanza, which reveals the main allegorical meanings of the poem, the phrase ‘всё в смятеньи’ can express the sudden realisation that everything which at first seemed to be disarrayed is now correlated, or interlinked in a complex network of semantic-symbolic relationships. At the end of the poem, the expression ‘всё в смятеньи’ can imply that various images, semantic planes, and mutually exclusive opposites are closely interwoven in the complex, well-organised fabric of the text.

The verbal context of the poem allows us to associate the phrase ‘всё в смятеньи’ with both chaos and meaningful interrelatedness. This semantic ambiguity is comparable to the synthesis of the images of chaotic snowfall and axial staircase, and to the consubstantiality of the snowfall and the snowflake. The semantic ambiguity of ‘всё в смятеньи’ is consistent with the assumption that any poetic text has a hidden ‘crystalline’ structure, because the creative human mind is capable of filling semantic gaps and establishing meaningful connections even in apparently chaotic verbal contexts. The interpretation of the poem as a whole determines how the reader understands the phrase ‘всё в смятеньи’. One can regard the interrogative form of the 7th stanza as an indication that nothing can be entirely intelligible in the poetic text because poetic images create an endless chain of uncertainties. Such interpretation will result in maintaining the lexical meaning of the expression ‘всё в смятеньи’. It is, however, also possible to understand the 7th stanza as a key, which unlocks the central meanings of the image of snow, thereby throwing light on the whole text. This interpretation will result in transforming the lexical meaning of the expression ‘всё в смятеньи’ into a metaphor for the meaningful interconnectedness of the text’s intricate semantic network. One of the latent themes of Pasternak’s meta-poetic text is the aesthetic process whereby a seemingly chaotic verbal structure is transformed into a coherent semantic unit.

The ambiguity of the phrase ‘всё в смятеньи’ not only represents a transformative process whereby order emerges from chaos, but it also indicates that chaos and potential order, formlessness and form, can co-exist in any work of literature. Снег идет, which is comparable to a formless, chaotic snowfall, and which also has an orderly (circular, spiralling, axial) structure, is a model of the co-existence of chaos and potential order in any literary text, in the literary universe, and in the cosmos. The mental act of relational apprehension, which enables one to comprehend the semantic and structural coherence of the text and the inwardly interrelated structure of the world, can never be fully accomplished. There always remains something which does not entirely fit into the network, thus creating a sense of disorder and unfinalisability.

It logically follows from regarding Снег идет as a ‘micro-cosmogram’ of the literary universe that the oscillation of order and disorder is applicable to the context of literature. The poem thus offers an answer to the dilemma as to whether the world of literature is a labyrinthine chaos or a potential order. The semantic ambiguity of the line ‘Снег идет, и всё в смятеньи’, and the method of transforming mutually exclusive opposites into mutually inclusive synonyms suggest that order and chaos, like any other kinds of opposites, are inseparably united within the context of a single text, within the context of literature, and in many aspects of human existence. In support of this idea, I shall quote a few lines from Wallace Stevens’s Connoisseur of Chaos (1984, 215):

A. A violent order is disorder; and
B. A great disorder is an order. These
Two things are one. (Pages of illustrations.)

Snow is a relevant image for the expression of the interplay of chaos and order. The chaotic snowfall consists of regular snow crystals, which reflect the snowfall, as the apparently chaotic world of literature consists of orderly structured texts, which reflect the literary universe. Due to its constant motion, the snowfall can illustrate the dynamic, unstable nature of verbal structures. This impermanence can account for the alternation of order and disorder. A prolonged contemplation of the falling ‘white stars’ may result in discovering orderly spatial designs that are similar to constellations or to the crystal lattice. One can also perceive rhythm in the seemingly disorganised dance of the snowflakes. These hidden spatial and temporal patterns of snowfall are comparable to the potential order of a single text and of groups of interrelated texts. The interchangeability of the symbolism of the snowfall, the axial staircase, the snowflake and the cross is a unique mytho-poetic representation of the co-existence of chaos and order, and of the moment of creative metamorphosis.

The semantic transformation of the line ‘Снег идет, и всё в смятеньи’ signals a transformation in the reader’s mind. This line is lexically the same at the beginning and at the end of the poem, yet it can be endowed with different meanings. The technique of repeating this line word by word implies that the poem is unchanged on the surface. It is the mental transformation of the reader which brings about changes in the meanings of the poem. In the course of this semantic metamorphosis, the words of the text remain the same; what changes
is the way in which associations and intertextual echoes are activated. These unspoken meanings inhabit poetic gaps, and transform them into semantic connectives. Poetic silence thus plays a significant role in transforming the text into a mirror, in which one can observe the imaginative process of ‘crystal formation’. It is due to this process that the description of chaotic snowfall turns out to be a metaphor for the well-structured poem.

The oscillation of the contradictory concepts of chaos and meaningful interrelatedness highlights the paradoxical nature of introspective imagination. Achieving the mental state which is traditionally symbolised by central creative light, the self-observing mind obtains a certain degree of self-knowledge, yet this knowledge involves the realisation that the nature and operations of the creative mind can never be fully comprehended. The totality of the central monad is not only inexpressible, but it is ungraspable and unthinkable. Contemplation of mental contents is, then, an endless process. The aim of the inward quest is not to achieve full understanding, but to be in the process of observing and exploring the ever-changing, never quite graspable, elusive mental interior. The endless continuity of the snowfall is a suitable analogue of this experience. The semantic link between snow and the imaginative mind is strongly related to the conventional association of snow with death, since both the mind and death are eternal secrets.

In the last stanza, the ambiguous line ‘Снег идет, и всё в смятень’ ends with a colon. This punctuation indicates that the things listed after the colon (‘Уб Welfare пешеход, / Удивленные растения, / Перекрестка поворот’) are either randomly juxtaposed or meaningfully interrelated. In the latter case, this stanza can be interpreted as a portrayal of a recognition scene, whereby the flowers become aware of their threshold situation of observing themselves while observing the outside world. When the flowers look through the window, and, at the same time, look at the window, as if into a mirror, they may recognise themselves in the snow-covered walker. This mysterious figure appears from nowhere. Perhaps he descended on the snowfall-staircase, and is now reaching a crossroad, (‘перекрестка поворот’), like the poet and the reader, whose pen or glance descended on the ladder-like shape of the snow-poem, and are arriving at the turning point when the text reaches into the silence which is filled with the poem’s echo. The journey through the poem is analogous with coming through the year, or through life, and arriving at a turning point when one cycle ends and another begins. This process is comparable to the drawing of a mandalic circle, which is a unified, yet infinite pattern.

The strong phonetic similarity of the adjectives ‘убеленный’, ‘удивленные’ that are attached to the nouns ‘walker’ and ‘plants’ respectively, reinforces the idea that the whitened walker (‘Убленный пешеход’) and the astonished plants (‘Удивленные растения’) are alter-egos. Even though the walker is physically outdoors, and the flowers indoors, symbolically they stand in-between these realms. Their threshold experience is indicated by the last line of the poem, ‘перекрестка поворот’. In support of the idea that the snow-covered walker can be a metaphorical counterpart of his observers, the flowers, I should refer to Zholkovskii, who argues that the internal and the external territories are essentially the same in Pasternak’s window-poems. In relation to Цвет у нем, he quotes a line from another poem by Pasternak, in which the flowers are both indoors, outdoors, and on a threshold: ‘“And the swellings of the same white buds / Both on the sill and at the crossroads” – the variation something is the same as something else; “Towards the white stars in the snowstorm / Stretch the geranium flowers / Across the window embrasure” ’ (1978,299).

The idea that the plants and the snow-covered walker are mirror-images can be supported by the observation that the geraniums represent human beings, the poet and the reader. The poetic technique of bringing an outdoor, anthropomorphic alter-ego of the flowers into the text highlights the poet’s and the reader’s threshold situation of being outside the text, and, at the same time, being part of it. This mirror-technique is reminiscent of the the eye symbolising the mind as both the seer and the seen.

The last stanza represents the creation of order out of chaos not by dividing opposites but by suggesting the close interrelation of the poem’s images and their semantic layers. The astonishment of the flowers may represent the readers’ astonishment at the poem’s density and self-allusive nature. If not before, then at this point, the reader may recognise himself or herself in the flowers, who are, at the very moment, recognising themselves in the figure of the whitened walker. Both the flowers and the reader are astonished at what they have been absorbed in: the snow behind (or in the frame of) the window-pane, and the snow-poem on the page. The last line (‘Перекрестка поворот’) can refer to the semantic transformation of the poem, and to the transformation in the reader’s mind. Since this is the last turning point of the poem, it is analogous with the winter solstice, if snowfall is compared to the passing of the year. On the corresponding aesthetic plane, the moment of the winter solstice represents mental illumination as well as new beginning. The end of the poem is, then, the moment of its (re)birth. The last line is not the end of the snowfall, but a turning point, the beginning of a new cycle. The words resting on the page do not freeze and do not melt. They start to fall again whenever the poem is read or remembered.

The reader’s entering of the landscape of the snow-poem is comparable to the flowers’ contemplative absorption into the sight of snowfall. As the flowers undergo metamorphosis at
the threshold between the inside and the outside worlds, and step out to the snow in the form of
the whitened walker, so the reader enters the world of the snow-poem in the disguise of
flowers. Put very simply, as the flowers step through the window-pane, so the reader is
stepping, symbolically, through the page, into the poem. The flowers' entering of snowfall is
comparable to the reader's experience of becoming part of the poem. When 'walking' in the
snow-poem, one is actually part of a lattice-like order, which is also chaos, an always
changing, elusive, never fully explorable outer and inner landscape. This ambivalent
experience is depicted in one of the Hungarian Zsuzsa Beney's snow-poems, where the
snowfall (as an analogue of the snow crystal) is meant to represent the lattice-like order and
the manifold nature of the world and of human existence, and it can also symbolise the black-
and-white lattice of the poetic text as an embodiment of the impenetrable human mind. The
snow-poem is, then, a model of the 'unus mundus', a transparent window which is also a two-
 sided mirror, reflecting the crystal-lattice structure of the mind and of the world:

Chapter Three

Symbolic-thematic parallels manifesting
transpersonal thought-forms and mental contents.
Focused texts: Ted Hughes's *The Thought-Fox* and Gyula Illyés's *Újévi ablak*

1. Theoretical background

This chapter deals with two poems which are comparable to Pasternak's *Czez wdum* in their
treatment of the symbols of snow and window: Ted Hughes's *The Thought-Fox*, and Gyula
Illyés's *Újévi ablak* (*New Year's Window*). It is unlikely that there are any authorial links
between these works. The main aim of this chapter is to show that differences of language and
culture do not always affect the workings of the poetic mind. The focus here is not on the
well-known observation that archetypes of the collective unconscious appear recurrently in
literature without limitations of space and time. The central issue is the recurrence of
unconventional semantic links, such as between the theme of imaginative acts and the paired
symbols of snow and window.126 We are concerned with the curious phenomenon whereby
poets invent the same metaphors independently from each other, without relying on a
common source.

Coincidental parallels between non-traditional treatments of poetic images signal a
mental-spiritual kinship between poets who may not have known each other. Borrowing
Jung's term, such affinities could be called 'synchronistic' thought-forms. In this expression,
the word 'synchronistic' does not imply that we are dealing with cases when poets
constructed something similar at the same time (or about the same time), independently of
each other. We are concerned with a different kind of spatio-temporal simultaneity, when
related literary texts, which may have been written at different times, co-exist in an
intertextual space. In this context, the word 'synchronistic' implies the reader's experience
that something similar is happening coincidentally at different spatial points of the literary
universe. Synchronistic thought-forms manifest a deeper affinity between poets than shared

126 A similar approach has been applied by W. Lillyman. In his article on the literary symbol of the blue sky, he
claims that this image is recurrently used for the expression of man's isolation. This theme, unlike freedom, is
not an immediate association of blue sky. The author offers several examples of this unusual semantic link
'from German, French, English, Italian, and American novelists and poets who were, as far as can be
ascertained, not directly borrowing from one another, but giving artistic form to a commonly held concept of
man by their unanimous choice of this symbol' (Lillyman 1969, 118).
mental contents. Thought-form is used here as a more abstract and comprehensive concept than mental content; it is meant to refer to how the mind perceives the inner and outer world and their relations, and how it organises material, as distinct from what is the content of the mind. The distinction between thought-form and mental content is blurred in the poems analysed, where the snow-window imagery is a shared mental content, yet at the same time it is used as a metaphorical manifestation of abstract cognitive processes and imaginative thought-forms.

The discovery of accidental similarities in the poetic treatment of symbols is one of the aesthetic experiences of comparative reading. It is similar to the experience of encountering synchronistic phenomena in real life. If one attributes significance to causally unrelated phenomena, then for this person coincidences gain meaning, and function as signs of a hidden (or potential) artistic structure of life as well as of the literary universe. Synchronistic phenomena can be regarded as manifestations of the human desire to make meaningful connections between coincidental events, thereby creating some sort of order from relative chaos. Frye, Riffaterre, and other scholars have pointed out that the creative mental process which enables us to perceive meaningful links within the boundaries of a single text is operative in a broader context, in the universe of literature. Frye argued that the synthetic apprehension of ‘recurrent acts of symbolic communication’ is similar to the perception of rhythm in nature, and to the anthropomorphic representation of this rhythm in rituals (1990, 105; 1963, 14). In attributing significance to coincidental affinities between literary texts, the reader is, then, performing a semantic ritual.

Through a comparative investigation of literary symbols, one can encounter deliberate borrowings, casual echoes, as well as causally unrelated, ‘synchronistic’ intertextual links. The relational apprehension of recurring metaphors has two main benefits. (1) The mere perception of recurrence is an experience of aesthetic beauty because it exhibits two basic structural principles, rhythm and pattern. In the field of creative arts, recurrence is never a dull repetition but more like the movement of a spiral tracing the same circular pattern around the same centre, moving deeper and deeper or higher and higher. This spiralling movement is characteristic of the mental experience of reading the same text over and over again, and of coming across similarities between different texts. The discovery of potential intertextual dialogues is comparable to the mental satisfaction gained by recognising a structure of hidden interconnections in life or in a single work of art. According to Frye, ‘the contemplation of a detached pattern, whether of words or not, is clearly a major source of the sense of the beautiful, and of the pleasure that accompanies it’ (1990, 74). One of the methodological aims of this work is to support Frye’s idea that it is possible to systematise literary experience on an exclusively aesthetic basis. By transgressing the barriers of languages, space, and time, one can construct co-ordinated symbolic systems in literature. The emphasis on the reader’s freedom to bring together comparable works and see them as parts of a larger whole is not meant to imply that there are no discernible cultural, personal, or historical differences in the use of literary symbols. (2) A comparative approach allows one to participate actively in the construction of literary meaning. One text can illuminate and enrich the meanings of another, even if they are not related by their authors. The boundaries of texts are open to other texts, and the reader can establish productive dialogues between them. Intertextual dialogues not only provide a deeper insight into works of literature; they can also expand the meanings of texts in unexpected ways. Moreover, they reflect the cognitive faculty of constructing large networks of interrelations.

The main purpose of the forthcoming two analyses is to demonstrate that Frye’s archetypal criticism, which is mainly concerned with the aesthetic significance of coincidental affinities in the use of literary symbols, is a valid approach. This chapter mainly focuses on symbolic parallels, as distinguished from more productive intertextual dialogues. The two texts to be discussed here have many affinities with the meta-poetic aspects of Чеко уоем, but none of these poems are open to the theme of love, which is an integral sub-topic of Pasternak’s poem. Although a comparison with Чеко уоем can increase the semantic density of Hughes’s and Illyés’s poems, it cannot enrich their semantic diversity. This chapter shows that the objective traits of the focused text can constrain the reader’s freedom of interpretation. The analyses of Hughes’s and Illyés’s poems indicate the potentials as well as the limitations of reader-created intertextual meaning-expansion.
When reading Ted Hughes’s *The Thought-Fox* for the first time, one may not recognise immediately that the poem has many affinities with Pasternak’s *Czezudesem*. The central image of Hughes’s poem, the fox, appears to be alien to the context of *Czezudesem*. However, this ostensible incomparability should not stop the reader from connecting the two texts through less dominant images, such as snow and the window. The main topic of both texts is contemplation of a snowy scenery through a window. In both poems, the window functions as a transparent, reflecting medium, which enables the contemplator to observe his mental interior as it is projected onto the snowy landscape. Both poems are self-sufficient in the sense that their central allegory can easily be unravelled in a text-centred reading.

The title word ‘thought-fox’ highlights the fact that the central image of the poem, the approaching fox (which is compared to dark, falling snow in the 3rd stanza), represents an emerging thought. As the fox is coming closer and closer to the observer, its contours become more and more visible. This is comparable to the process whereby an emerging thought, which initially has an obscure silhouette, gradually takes on a more definite form with well visible outlines. The significance of the approaching movement may be the reason why the set phrase ‘going about one’s business’ is rephrased in the poem as ‘coming about its own business’.

The 1st, 2nd, and last stanzas reveal that the dark forest is an imaginary construct, a metaphor for ‘the dark hole of the head’.

This projection and concretisation of the mental landscape entails an inextricable fusion of outward contemplation and introspection. In this context, the fox’s brilliant eye illuminating the dark forest functions as a projected self-reflective device representing the process whereby an idea is born and enlightens mental darkness. The image of the approaching fox is not only an externalisation of the process whereby a thought is taking shape, but also a metaphor for the physical, graphic manifestation of this process on the page where the poem is being written. The growth of poetic idea is simultaneous with the description of the approaching fox and with the process whereby ‘the blank page’ is being ‘printed’. Put very simply, the fox’s footprints in the snow represent the words which are being written (‘printed’) on the page.

At first, it may seem to be inconsistent with the text’s self-referentiality that it ends with the line ‘the page is printed’ instead of ‘the page is written’, for printing is a mass-scale reproduction of the (hand?)written text, not the instant trace of the emerging poetic thought. One possible explanation of the poet’s choice of the word ‘printed’ is the allegorical correspondence between the fox’s footprints in the snow and the words on the page. Another explanation is that it is the printed page which is transmitted to the reader, therefore, the last line can draw the reader into the text. In other words, the poet anticipates the reader’s self-reflection during his own act of self-reflection.

A comparison with Pasternak’s *Czezudesem* can enrich the meanings of Hughes’s simple, straightforward poem since such comparison can direct one’s attention to details which otherwise may easily escape one’s notice. The fox-metaphor as the poet’s portrayal of himself at the act of writing is so obvious in *The Thought-Fox* that it conceals the possibility that this surface theme can have other allegorical meanings. This is not so in *Czezukesem*, where the image of the flowers is indefinite, therefore more flexible. It functions as a mirror-image of both the poet and the reader. If one is familiar with this technique of drawing the reader into the self-allusive text, then one can easily recognise that the same mirror-technique is applicable in *The Thought-Fox*. The use of present tense in both poems entails that their central theme, the ongoing act of writing, is metaphorically interchangeable with the process of reading. One of the hidden themes of both texts is, then, the reader’s self-reflection during the act of reading. The co-existence of these semantic planes is a typical example of what Lotman called an oscillation of I/(S)he and I-I communicative models. One is taking an I/(S)he approach when reading *The Thought-Fox* as the poet’s metaphorical account of himself. However, one can also take an auto-communicative approach by re-enacting the poet’s introspective situation. Put very simply, the ‘blank page’ where the poet’s ‘fingers move’ (1st stanza) is analogous with the not-yet read page, where the reader’s eyes have just started following the traces of the poet’s hand. The last line, ‘The page is printed’, coincides with the moment when the reading of the poem is accomplished. Of course, the actual physical processes of writing and reading are not the ultimate meanings of the poem. The

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128 The forest is a conventional symbol of the unconscious mind. It is associated with disorientation, darkness, and the labyrinth, as in fairy tales and in works by Blake, Dante, Aygi, Mandelstam, and others.
allegorical correspondence between the descriptive and the meta-poetic meanings turns into a deeper semantic relation when the observation of the acts of writing and reading are viewed as metaphors for the projection and contemplation of ongoing imaginative activities. The externalisation of thought-forms is a border-situation in which the objective and the subjective realms overlap, constituting a unique quality. In manifesting an indissoluble unity of the external and the internal worlds, poetic words can reach beyond the limits of reason, and they can evoke that which can never be articulated and grasped. In this sense, words function not so much as vehicles of thoughts but as means to produce silence which manifests the inexpressible. The nature of the imaginative mind is one of the unresolved mysteries of mankind. These self-reflective poems show that introspection through projection is a good method for exploring the mind at work, and it is the only possible way of gaining self-knowledge about the nature and structure of the creative mind. However, even this method is not sufficient for a full understanding of mental operations. The central creative light (which is often symbolised by an eye) can never be comprehended in its totality, as there always remains something hidden in the widening, green, brilliant eye of the fox. The eye, like the mind, can never see itself unless there is a mirror (or a reflecting window, or the eye of another 'I') in front of it. And when a looking glass is placed in front of the mind's eye, it is the very act of self-observation which the mind's eye can see.

Self-observation through a transparent, reflecting window is a well elaborated theme in Hughes's poem. In the third stanza, the 'two eyes' can represent 'two I-s', the poet and the reader, who are looking through a window, 'watching a movement, that now / And again now, and now, and now // Sets neat prints into the snow.' The 5th stanza depicts a self-recognition scene. The 'two eyes' are looking into their own minds' eyes when they are watching the imaginary brilliant eye of the fox, which illuminates the forest at the very moment when understanding brings light into 'the dark hole of the head'. The widening eye of the fox functions as a metaphor for evolving thoughts and their vehicles, the poetic words. The poet's and reader's eye-contact with the fox is comparable to the transformative mirror-effect of the imagery of Снег удел. In both poems, a metamorphosis is taking place at the moment of self-recognition, on the threshold where the inside and the outside worlds flow into each other. In Снег удел, the flowers recognise themselves in the image of snow (or snow-covered walker). The poet and reader of Hughes's poem behold their minds in the image of the fox. In both texts, the window is a transparent, reflecting medium displaying an altered mirror-image, which is not a precise reflection of the observer, but his metaphorical substitute, a concretisation of abstract mental contents and thought-forms. This transformative mirror-technique is a true representation of the metaphor-making mind, of the border situation when the subjective and the objective realms overlap, and of the experience that the mind can never fully reflect itself.

The self-recognition scene in The Thought-Fox has many affinities with the archetypal quest, whose narrative scheme can be summarised as follows. In a dark, labyrinthine forest, the seeking hero arrives at a central clearing, which represents his illuminated mind. An alternative version of this recognition scene is based on a more explicit mirror-technique, whereby the seeker beholds his double. By looking into the eyes of his alter-ego, the seeker is looking into his own eyes as if in a mirror. The mirror-effect in Hughes's poem is peculiar in that two eyes (or 'two I-s', the poet and the reader) are looking into a single eye. This may suggest that there is something common in the poet's and reader's thought-forms and mental experience. The poet's writing fingers, which capture his visual and imaginary experience, appear as extensions of his mind's self-reflecting eye. As the mind's eye can never see itself directly, without mediation, so the seeing fingers are partially blind since the words they produce not only describe what is visible, but also evoke that which can never be witnessed as pure presence. By following the 'prints' of these half-seeing, half-blind fingers on the page, the reader can visualise certain aspects of both the poet's and his or her own imaginative thought-forms, yet he or she can never entirely grasp the nature of this projected inward object of contemplation. This is because every observation, even introspection, requires an external (or externalised) point of view. Alan Watts formulated this problem as such: 'In trying to figure out the brain, the obstacle is that we have no finer instrument than the brain itself for the purpose' (1979, 50).

One of the shared thought-forms of The Thought-Fox and Снег удел is the hypothetical synthesis of the acts of writing and reading, which entails a metaphorical synthesis of the poet's hand and the reader's eye. In both texts, the poet's writing hand is an extension of his outward and inward sight, yet it is also partially blind in the sense that by writing words, it is also writing silence, evoking more than what is perceptible for the external and the inner eye.129 Paradoxically, the manifestation of blindness in the form of unarticulated meanings is a sort of clairvoyance; it is a way of seeing that certain things can never be seen or expressed as full presence; they abide in thought, yet are transparent, like a window.

129 There is a brief comparative survey of the trope of the seeing hand in the first chapter. For the semantic function of the image of seeing fingers in Mandelstam's poetic thought see Leon Burnett 1990, 32, note 44.
The border situation of synthesising outward and inward sight results in a
deconstructive reversal of the inside and outside worlds in both The Thought-Fox and Cще
идем. In Hughes’s poem, the indoor and outdoor spaces acquire an inverse metaphorical
meaning. The interior of the room (the clock, the page) represents physical reality, which is
external to the lyric I and to the reader, whereas the outside world, the imaginary forest
beyond the window, symbolises their internal, mental terrain. A closer examination reveals
that the relation of the inside and the outside worlds is more complex than this metaphorical
inversion. Apparently, the written page as a concrete object of external reality is opposed to
the forest, which is a projected mental interior. However, the words on the page are traces of
the poet’s seeing fingers, which imitate the fox’s footprints on the snow. Being a
typographical analogue of the outdoor scenery, the written page is an alternative image of the
projected landscape of the mind. Here we are dealing with a sequence of inversions. First, the
mental interior is projected onto the outside world, then this externalised interior is brought
indoors as it is reflected on the page. During this process, the page, which is a concrete object
of external reality, is internalised, and functions as a symbolic mirror-image of the mental
process of developing an idea and creating a verbal structure out of nothing. The actual visual
sight of the written page obtains a metaphorical function in both Hughes’s and Pasternak’s
poems. In both works, a sequence of reversals and a complex mirror-technique characterises
the relation of indoor and outdoor spaces. This represents an inextricable fusion of
reality/imagination, object/subject, concrete/abstract, literal/metaphorical, and other opposites.
The overlapping of these opposites is a way of giving shape to thought-forms which are
incomprehensible for the rational mind.

Similarly to Cще идем and The Thought-Fox, there are numerous analogies between
the sight of the outdoor snowy scenery and the sight of the page indoors in the narrative
context of Зимняя ночь. The shadows of wolves in Доктор Живаго are comparable to the
‘lame shadow’ of the fox in Hughes’s poem. Both the wolves and the fox appear in the snow
as if they were transformed mirror-images of the verbal, graphic manifestations (pencil-
strokes, hyphens, prints) of the poet’s thought on the page. Put very simply, the thought-fox
represents ‘prints’ on the page, and the wolves are compared to hyphens (‘черточки’) on the
page. This meta-poetic meaning does not abolish the impression that there is something
disturbing about the life-threatening wolves and the stinking, cunning fox. In both texts, the
indoor space of human habitation evokes a sense of protection from the outdoor predators. At
first, it may seem to be paradoxical that threatening predators, which are often associated with
death, are used as metaphors for products of poetic imagination, which are generally
associated with light and life. It has been shown in the previous chapter that this is not
necessarily a contradiction, for both death and life, darkness and light, are metaphorical
attributes of the imaginative act. A death-like descent into the dark depth of the unconscious
is a conventional paradigm of the non-ordinary mental state of imagination, which produces
an eternal light. These ambivalent connotations characterise the image of bright, descending
snowfall in Cще идем, as well as the bright-eyed predator in The Thought-Fox.

The most obvious semantic link between the approaching fox in Hughes’s poem and
the snowfall in Cще идем is that both images represent crystallising poetic thoughts and their
embodiments, the words on the page. Due to their shared meta-poetic connotations, the image
of the fox appears to be a poetic configuration of the snowfall. In the light of this comparison,
the fox manifests the ambivalent, simultaneously destructive and creative, aspects of
imagination, the process whereby fossilised or obvious metaphors are deconstructed, that is to
say, transformed or replaced by strikingly new images. The revitalisation of poetic images
involves a witty twist in poetic logic; it is an act of concealing, which is in accordance with
the cunning nature of the fox.

The creative transfiguration of poetic imagery and perception involves a destruction of
worn-out, conventional, or obvious metaphors. This ambivalent process is depicted in
Shelley’s Ode to the West Wind, where the speaker of the poem addresses the wind as ‘Wild
Spirit, which art moving everywhere; / Destroyer and preserver’. The interrelation of the
creative and destructive aspects of imagination is one of the themes of Wallace Stevens’s Man
and Bottle (1984, 238-239):

The mind is the great poem of winter, the man,
Who, to find what will suffice,
Destroys romantic tenements
Of rose and ice
In the land of war. More than the man, it is
A man with the fury of a race of men,
A light at the centre of many lights,
A man at the centre of men.
It has to content the reason concerning war,
It has to persuade that war is part of itself,
A manner of thinking, a mode
Of destroying, as the mind destroys,
An aversion, as the world is averted
From an old delusion, an old affair with the sun,
An impossible aberration with the moon,
A grossness of peace.
It is not the snow that is the quill, the page.
The poem lashes more fiercely than the wind,
As the mind, to find what will suffice, destroys
Romantic tenements of rose and ice.

The previous chapter provided examples of how the traditional contrast between ice and rose (i.e. snow and flower, ice and fire) is revitalised in Pasternak’s Cuez udom and its intertexts. The image of the fox in Hughes’s poem is an even more radical innovation.

The parallel between the apparently incomparable images of fox and snowfall is not just a potential intertextual link, but it is embedded in Hughes’s poem. In the 3rd stanza, the falling dark snow is compared to the fox’s nose, which, by metonymical extension, is equivalent with the approaching fox:

Cold, delicately as the dark snow
A fox’s nose touches twig, leaf.

The comparison of the falling dark snow and the approaching fox is a manifestation of the deconstructive act of transforming the snow-thought-word metaphor into the more innovative associative cluster of fox-thought-word. The fox’s nose touching twig, leaf is an alternative representation of the approaching movement which two lines later is described as ‘a movement that […] sets neat prints into the snow’. Here we are dealing with a set of parallel images: the fox’s nose and the dark snow touching leaf can be correlated to the fox’s footsteps in the snow. In these lines, the word ‘leaf’ can be regarded as a syllepsis130. Literally, it refers to a leaf of a tree, yet metaphorically it can refer to the page. It is necessary to draw a semantic distinction between the falling dark snow (3rd stanza), which is correlated to the fox’s nose and footprints, and the snow on the ground (4th stanza), which is correlated to the ‘leaf’. In contrast to the dark snow, the snow resting on the ground is not specified by an adjective. Therefore it can be visualised as white. The qualitative difference between falling and resting snow is maintained on the metaphorical plane. The snow on the ground on which the fox sets its prints allegorically represents the white page, which is being covered with words. Due to the explicit comparison of the falling, dark snow and the fox’s nose in the 3rd stanza, the dark snow assimilates the connotations of the fox. Both images represent the emerging poetic thought and its physical manifestations, the dark words which are touching the ‘leaf’ in front of the poet.

The allegorical simplicity of the poem conceals a complex structure of shifting metaphors. The approaching fox is consubstantial with the falling snow, whereas the ‘leaf’ is a poetic synonym of the snow resting on the ground. The first semantic pair is a two-layered metaphor for poetic words, whereas the second pair represents the page. The poem, however, is not merely an allegorical representation of the physical process of writing words on a blank page. The writing process is tenor in relation to the image of the approaching fox as vehicle, yet it is also vehicle representing the mental act of developing new poetic thoughts. We are dealing with a many-layered semantic construction: the dark snow touching leaf, the fox’s nose touching leaf, the footprints in the snow, and the words on the page all represent newly developed thought-forms and mental contents which bring light into ‘the dark hole of the head’. In this context, the associative cluster of leaf - resting snow - blank page can be associated with pre-creational silence, into which thoughts and words step like the fox into the untouched snow. Snow as a metaphor for white ‘leaf’ can also be associated with afterthought, or with unspoken connotations, traces of blind, clairvoyant fingers, which surround the words like their shadows, the white gaps on the page. In this sense, the resting white snow is more than just a descriptive detail, and more than an allegorical representation of the white page. It is part of the mental landscape, where it plays a qualitatively different function from the falling dark snow.

Page (as a potential metaphor for silence and unarticulated or inexpressible thoughts) and word (as a manifestation of thought) are distinguished in that they correspond to resting snow and falling snow, respectively. However, they are also interrelated since both of them are represented by the image of snow. The inconsistency of the snow-metaphor is not a semantic error, but a sophisticated poetic device, which deepens the scope of the poem by hinting at the fact that the opposites of word and silence are distinguishable yet indivisible semantic entities. Poetic images and metaphors are pre-eminent examples of the interpenetration of word and silence. Since snow represents both word and silence, it can be regarded as a metaphor of metaphor.

Lines 11-13 further suggest that the presence-absence structure of poetic language is a potential theme of the poem:

Two eyes serve a movement, that now
And again now, and now, and now
Sets neat prints into the snow.

130The Greek term ‘sylepsis’ refers to a certain kind of polysemy, when two or more meanings of a word or phrase are simultaneously applicable in their verbal context. Michael Riffaterre (1980) defines ‘sylepsis’ as a combination of ‘meaning’ and ‘significance’. Riffaterre uses the term ‘meaning’ for referential meaning, while he uses ‘significance’ for connotative meaning which a word acquires in its poetic context. Riffaterre’s ‘meaning’ and ‘significance’ are comparable to Frye’s notions of ‘sign’ and ‘motif’. Sylepsis, the synthesis of ‘meaning’ and ‘significance’, thus corresponds to Frye’s definition of the ‘image’ as a unity of the ‘sign-values’ and the ‘motif-values’ of a symbol.
The sequence of ‘now’-s represents the instants when the poet’s pen is leaving traces on the paper, and when the reader’s eye is following the traces of the poet’s pen. In spite of its explicit temporality, the word ‘now’ acquires a spatial meaning, referring to ‘here’, to the continuously moving spots where the poet’s pen and the reader’s eye touch the ‘leaf’. This is, however, merely the allegorical, surface content. Both ‘now’ and ‘here’ transcend themselves in that their corresponding images, the footprints and the falling dark snow, are metaphors for any and all ‘here and now’-s of the poem. This is an example of how a symbol can function as a monad, a word which is all words.  

The verbal sequence of ‘now’-s reminds us of one of the central axioms of deconstruction, according to which every present instant is always already inhabited by absence. In his article on Jacques Derrida, Jonathan Culler explains this interaction of presence and absence by referring to the famous paradox of the Greek philosopher Zeno:

Consider, for example, the flight of an arrow. If we focus on a series of present states we encounter a paradox: at any given time the arrow is at a particular spot; it is always in a particular spot and never in motion. Yet we want to insist, quite justifiably, that the arrow is in motion at every instant between the beginning and the end of its flight. When we focus on present states, the motion of the arrow is never present, never given. It turns out that motion, which is after all a fundamental reality of our world, is only conceivable in so far as every instant, every present state, is already marked with the traces of the past and the future. An account of what is happening at a given instant requires reference to other instants which are not present. There is thus a crucial sense in which the non-present inhabits and is part of the present. The motion of the arrow is never given as something simple and present which could be grasped in itself; it is always already complex and differential, involving traces of the non-now in the now. (1979, 162-3).

The impossibility of looking at the arrow as a sequence of static spots is comparable to the impossibility of reading a verbal unit ‘in vacuum’, in isolation from other parts of verbal experience. The arrow-metaphor can be regarded as a simplified (linearised) image of relational apprehension, which is operative in both contextual and retroactive reading. Both the intratextual and the intertextual trace-structure of language are based on the cognitive act of relating new information to what is known from other parts of the focused text and from the whole of one’s verbal and non-verbal mental experience. Figures of speech also manifest the presence-absence structure of language; syllepsis and pun are obvious examples. These devices frequently appear in Hughes’s poem. Here I list a few examples. The word ‘print’ refers to the fox’s footprints, which represent printed words. ‘Leaf’ refers to a leaf of a tree, yet it is also a metaphor for the page on which the words fall like dark snowflakes. This semantic link may be the reason why leaf is used in the singular. The word ‘bold’ functions as an adjective of the fox, yet its typographical meaning (bold print) is also applicable on the metaphorical plane. The phonetic construction of the word ‘snow’ contains the words ‘now’ and ‘now’-s. This is in accordance with using the image of snow as a metaphor for every ‘here and now’-s of the poem, including words and silences.

The word ‘clearings’ is another example of a semantic presence-absence structure. The noun ‘clearing’ is derived from the adjective ‘clear’, which has two interrelated dictionary meanings, bright and understandable. The fusion of these two meanings in one phonetic form shows that the metaphorical identity of light with mental enlightenment is deeply imprinted in the human mind, and it can be traced to the origins of language. Towards its end, the poem depicts clearings which are illuminated by the fox’s brilliant eye in the midnight forest. This image is an innovative poetic configuration of the archetypal topos of light in darkness, which is one of the most common concrete manifestations of mental illumination.

The brilliant eye of the fox appearing behind a window in an imaginary dark forest at midnight is comparable to the white starlets in Pasternak’s Снег идет and to the gazing snowflakes in После перерыва. In an intertextual scope, these radial symbols appear as transformed mirror-images of the candle, which, like an eye, is shining through the window at Christmas eve in the narrative context of Зимняя ночь.

The ‘midnight moment’ of creative-receptive illumination in Hughes’s poem is analogous to the hidden winter-solstice symbolism of Зимняя ночь and Снег идет. Midnight in the daily cycle corresponds to the winter solstice in the cycle of the year. Both symbolise the appearance of light in the ‘dark hole of the head’. The birth of light from darkness is a universal metaphor for the creative act.

In Снег идет, the threshold experience of the creative act appears to be more complex than division of light from darkness; it is depicted as a transition from light-in-darkness to darkness-in-light. A similar simultaneity of light and darkness occurs in Hughes’s poem. An obvious example is the image of illuminated clearings in the midnight forest. A less obvious example is the image of dark, falling snow, which is endowed with the attribute of light when it is viewed as part of a many-layered metaphor. Being a metaphorical synonym of the thought-fox, the dark snow falling on leaf gradually becomes bright as it assimilates the light...

131 Similarly to The Thought-Fox, now and always, here and everywhere are united in Pasternak’s Снег идет and in Aygi’s Темно весело снег.

132 The biblical ‘Let there be light’ is a typical example. Richard Webster in his article on The Thought-Fox devotes a few lines to the ‘God-like nature of Hughes’s vision’. ‘There is’, he says, ‘a powerful element of magic in the poem. […] It is […] like the sublime and awesome magic which is contained in the myth of creation, where God creates living beings out of nothingness, by the mere fiat of his imagination.’ (Webster, 1984, 38.)
of the fox’s brilliant eye. Paradoxically, the dark snow functions as a radial image, a poetic synonym of the brilliant eye. The snowflakes can be visualised as eyes, representing the traces of the poet’s seeing fingers and of the reader’s eyes on the page. The thought-fox and the dark snow touching ‘leaf’ are analogous to dark words on the page, which are typographic manifestations of bright poetic ideas. Simultaneity of light and darkness characterises the image of snow, the deep, green, brilliant eye of the fox, the winter forest, and its typographical analogue, the written page. This oscillation of light and darkness represents a typical feature of imaginative experience, the recognition that something always remains hidden even in the most illuminating thought. In other words, the seeing fingers are always partially blind.

Paradoxically, the innovative poetic treatment of the symbols of fox and snow can be traced to some of the most common traditional meanings of light and eye. Fusion of tradition and novelty is achieved (1) by the use of synaesthesia, (2) by metonymical principle, and (3) by complex metaphorisation. (1) Synaesthesia is used when the poetic thought entering ‘the dark hole of the head’ is represented by entities that are related to different organs of perception: the fox’s green, brilliant eye illuminating clearings in the dark forest, the fox’s nose touching leaf, the cold, delicate dark snow touching leaf, and the ‘sudden sharp hot stink of fox’. Since these images are synthesised in one complex sensation, light, the attribute of the eye, becomes an attribute of the dark snow. The dark snow gradually becomes bright as it is lit up by and metaphorically related to the widening eye of the fox. (2) A shift from apparent novelty to implicit tradition is achieved by a metonymical equivalence of the whole and its parts. The nose, the eye, and the footprints are parts or traces of the fox, yet their metaphorical meaning is equal with that of the whole animal, the thought-fox. Furthermore, the fox is part of the surrounding dark snowfall, yet their allegorical meanings are equivalent. The attribute of light is thus transferred by metonymical extension from the brilliant eye through the thought-fox to the dark snowfall. (3) A complex metaphorisation is achieved by comparing the fox’s nose with the falling snow, and identifying both with the words falling on the ‘leaf’. Both the fox and snow are unusual associations to thoughts or words. The strangeness of this semantic link is diminished when the fox’s eye appears as a source of light which illuminates the darkness of the mind. The three-layered metaphor of fox-snow-thoughts can be regarded as a poetic innovation through which mytho-poetic tradition shines.

The visual sight of the poem is comparable to a midnight forest with clearings, where the words, like snowflakes and like the fox’s eye, are shining through darkness. Here we are dealing with a reversal of colour symbolism. The dark words represent mental light, whereas the white page is analogous with the ‘dark hole of the head’, which is gradually illuminated as more and more dark, shining words are printed on, or read from, the page. An inextricable fusion of darkness and light, black and white, word and silence, is achieved by using the image of snow to represent both poles of these binary oppositions. The visual appearance of The Thought-Fox on the page seems to be a schematic mirror-image of a window whose frame encloses the sight of an imaginary forest, a fox’s footprints on the white snow, and traces of dark flakes on a blank ‘leaf’. All these scenes are superimposed on each other; they appear in an abstract visual form which is composed of words and silences, framed by the margins of the page.

The poem on the page can be viewed as an abstract figurative image of a window, which displays a scene of dark snow falling on white snow. The images of window and snow are inseparably united on both the visual and the metaphorical planes. The same visual transformation is applicable to Pasternak’s Czce udom, where the words are compared to snowflakes seen through a window. The title Snow is Falling is, then, a compression of the poetic analogy between snow falling on the window pane and words falling on the page. Writing and reading are performative processes enacting the snowfall in a metaphorically displaced form. The same technique is used as a compositional principle in the Hungarian poem to be discussed in the next section of this chapter, and in the focused text of the last chapter.

Snow in Hughes’s poem is a complex metaphor because it represents the printed words as well as the white paper. Snow is, then, both figure and ground, both word and silence, blindness-in-sight and sight-in-blindness. As such, it represents both spoken and unspoken meanings. Furthermore, snow portrays two sides of the aesthetic situation, writing and reading. It is a monad, an all-inclusive symbol, which refers to all poetic words and thoughts, all ‘here and now’-s of the self-referential poem. The symbol of snow not only illustrates the continuous appearance of words during the processes of writing and reading, but it also manifests the static apprehension of the whole text. This subtle treatment of snow is expressive of an essential feature of the creation and reception of any text. The ongoing acts of writing and reading are dynamic like the snowfall. However, any text can be made sense of only when its creation or reception is completed: when all the words, like the fallen snow, rest on the page or in the reader’s mind as if they were frozen, motionless. This apparent stillness, however, is permeated with movement. When the words of the text are perceived spatially and simultaneously as parts of an integrated whole, the reader can establish semantic links between the various units of the text. And when the structures of verbal inter-relations are
revealed, the words acquire new connotations, and the text starts to move, grow, and evolve. As soon as the words participate in a network of metaphorical relationships, they start to communicate with other, often distant, parts of the text, and with other texts. In establishing a network of semantic relationships, we rely on our mental capability of synthetic apprehension. One normally applies this mechanism within the boundaries of individual texts. Frye, Riffaterre, and others argue that this relational apprehension is operative in a broader context, in an intertextual discursive space. When we try to interconnect the shared symbols of different texts, we expand the field of our relational apprehension. It has been mentioned before that Frye explained the interdependence of continuous and static textual perception by a felicitous analogy. Texts, he said, move in time, like rhythm, but the network of their interconnected motifs can be comprehended spatially when they are looked at as a pattern. This analogy applies both to intratextual and intertextual construction of meaning. To be able to perceive principles that produce rhythm and pattern in an intertextual space, one has to be familiar with as many details of texts as possible. In other words, the more detailed the analyses of individual texts are, the broader and denser the intertextual syntheses can be. This principle has been demonstrated by enhancing the significance of the eye and wolves in the narrative context of "Зимняя ночь", and recollecting these details in relation to The Thought-Fox. The metaphorical links between the eye and the candle, and between the wolves and pencil strokes ("черточка", "hyperbosis") proved to be significant details in a network of symbols that can connect "Зимняя ночь" to The Thought-Fox. This is an example of how literary texts can inform each other through coincidental parallels.

The image of snowfall as a metaphor for text-centred reading can also represent the mechanism of intertextual reading since both acts are based on the cognitive faculty of relational apprehension, and both are characterised by a paradoxical overlapping of rhythm and pattern, movement and stillness, chaos and order. There is a sense of chaos and instability when one is in the temporal process of moving from one word to the other, since one never knows what will follow. This experience is comparable to watching the snowfall. There seems to be no logic in the spontaneous, unpredictable movement of snowflakes. However, when the snowfall is perceived spatially as a momentarily frozen whole, one can behold 'constellations' in what seemed chaotic during temporal perception. The same happens if one 'freezes' the focused text or a group of texts for a moment, as if their temporally sequential parts co-existed in space. Due to the mental synthesis of the experiences of temporal and spatial apprehension, chaos and order co-exist in both text-centred and intertextual reading. 'Labyrinthine' is an appropriate adjective for this sort of ordered chaos, since the labyrinth is chaotic yet it has a centre, and its shape is normally a regular geometrical form, such as a circle or a square. Both Све м idem and The Thought-Fox take the shape of a circle in the sense that their end returns to their beginning.133

The complex treatment of snow in Hughes's and Pasternak's poems demonstrates the interdependence of movement and petrifaction, of rhythm and pattern, and of kinetic and static textual apprehension. A similar relation of motion and motionlessness is illustrated by the temporal organisation of these texts. Pasternak's poems discussed convey the sense of an ambivalent perception of time. The snowfall (in Све м idem and in Зимняя ночь), the burning candle (in Зимняя ночь), and the days of the winter solstice (in Единственные дни) are associated with both temporal flow and eternity. These symbols can represent the infinitely prolonged epiphanic moment of imaginative acts. Eternity is compressed in the moment of imaginative awakening in Hughes's poem, as well. The poem is an account of one moment only, the 'midnight moment' of imaginative transformation.134 However, this intense, static moment is prolonged and mobilised because it contains the ongoing acts of writing and reading. The poem is based on a subjective perception of time, which is characterised by an ambivalent fusion of temporal continuity and temporal void. This is illustrated by the symbol of the clock. The clock appears at the beginning and at the end of the poem, providing a circular thematic frame for the whole text. An endless repeatability is built into this circular structure, which counterbalances the association of the clock with a frozen midnight moment. In the first stanza, 'the clock's loneliness' can be an allusion to the process during which the lyric persona and the reader imaginatively transgress the boundary of the window, and gradually move out to the projected landscape of the poem, as if leaving the clock alone indoors. This process involves the loss of conscious awareness of time and reality. When the journey into the imagined midnight forest ends, the poem also ends, and conscious perception awakens: 'the clock ticks, the page is printed'. As the symbol of the clock encircles the whole poem, so the single stopped moment registered on this clock contains in itself the temporal

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133 It is not obvious that these poems have a circular structure because they do not begin and end with the same word. However, their end returns to their beginning in a concealed way. In Све м idem, the first phrase 'снега' is metaphorically related to the last phrase, 'побег из тени'. Due to their shared connotations, the snowfall and the crossroad are interchangeable images. The circular frame of The Thought-Fox is the portrayal of a non-imaginative mental state, which the poet transcends when he imagines the fox in the forest, and which he regains when 'the clock ticks, the page is printed'. The concealed circular structure of these poems is more like a spiral, where there is a return to the point of departure, but on another level.

134 In his book on the symbolism of North in Russian Romantic literature, Otto Baede (1996) establishes the following chains of associations: midnight-north-winter-snow, as opposed to midday-south-summer-fire. The poems analysed show that it is possible to synthesise these apparently irreconcilable opposites in the threshold situation of imaginative acts. The deconstructive reversal and overlapping of these opposites is a central feature of Emily Dickinson's poetry.
continuity of the acts of writing and reading. Similarly to this poem, the clock appears in Pasternak’s Зимняя ночь and Единственные дни as a metaphor for the ambivalent temporal experience of expanding the threshold moment of imaginative transformation. The circles and arrows on the window in Зимняя ночь (‘кружки и стрелки’) resemble the main parts of the clock, dial-plates and pointers. In this text, and in its twin-poem, Снег идем, the window is an emblem of the fusion of time and eternity in the eternalised moment of metamorphosis. The same association is evoked by the image of circles and arrows: the circle, being the traditional form of the dial plate, is associated with endless recurrence and eternity, whereas the arrow, which is the shape of the clock’s pointer, is associated with temporal progress. The ‘clock’s loneliness’ in Hughes’s poem is comparable to the sleepy pointer in the last stanza of Единственные дни. In both poems, the clock symbolises the stopped ‘midnight moment’ or ‘winter-solstice-moment’ of imaginative awakening. The manifold thematic and symbolic affinities between these poems reinforce the relevance of associating the snowy patterns of ‘circles and arrows’ in Зимняя ночь with the image of the clock, which is yet another metaphor for the ambivalent temporal meanings of snow and window.

The comparative analysis of Hughes’s poem is an example of how large networks of shifting, interacting metaphors can reinforce the self-sufficiency of meta-poetic meanings, and stimulate an introspective discovery of imaginative thought-forms.

3. Gyula Illyés: Újévi ablak (New Year’s Window)

‘It is not the snow that is the quill, the page.’
(from Wallace Stevens’s Man and Bottle)

‘Эта прозрачная, белая тишина.’
(from Vladimir Solov’ev’s На байне замой)

The Hungarian Gyula Illyés’s Újévi ablak (New Year’s Window)135 is obviously a sight-poem or speaking picture. The lyric persona, who is situated behind a snowy window, recreates the object of his contemplation on the page, using words to construct a graphical pattern of a snowy window. The title New Year’s Window refers both to the subject matter and to the visual form of the text, highlighting its self-referentiality. The same device is used in Снег идем. The two titles are interchangeable, and they complement each other.

In Újévi ablak, the combined effects of rhythm and pattern are especially productive in stimulating an enchanted mood in which outward contemplation turns into inward meditation. During this process, the word ‘hó’ (‘snow’) is repeated ten times in each of the first five lines. Later, its phonetic mirror-image, the word ‘oh’ (translated as ‘woh’136) is repeated numerous times. The monotony of these one-syllable words is comparable to the ancient mantra-technique of evoking a meditative mood by repeating certain words or syllables. In Újévi ablak, the combined effects of rhythm and pattern are especially productive in stimulating an enchanted mood in which outward contemplation turns into inward meditation. During this process, the word ‘hó’ (‘snow’) becomes internalised, and takes an inverse phonetic form, ‘oh’, which is an exclamatory word, expressing a mood of meditative melancholy mixed with amazement. ‘Hó’ (‘snow’) refers to an object of the external world, whereas ‘oh’ refers to an emotion, i.e. to the poetic interior. In this sense, these words are opposites, yet in another sense they are also mirror-images of each other. Both words are written (or drawn) on the window-page, which is a symbolic boundary where the external and the internal worlds flow into each other. This is reminiscent of Pasternak’s poems, where the external and internal realms (snow and flowers, snow and candle) are at once opposites and synonyms. In both Pasternak’s and Illyés’s poems the meeting of opposites takes place at their transparent, almost non-existing boundary, on the level of the window.

Újévi ablak depicts a complex threshold situation. The speaker of the poem is meditating by the window, which is a spatial boundary, and he is also in a temporal turning point between one year and another, and between one day and another. By a common analogy, he imagines that he is on the verge of life and death. His half-sentences reveal that he has a rather pessimistic view of his past: ‘hány bukás hány elsikoltott némá oh’, ‘mennyi végős késső oh’, ‘mennyi hiábavaló oh’ (‘how many downfalls how many screamed mute woh’, ‘how many

The regretful experiences become purified by merely articulating them in a poetic form, as if transforming them into snowflakes. Death, cleanness, and poetic creativity are thus synthesised in the associative aura of snow.

Similarly to Cuez udom and The Thought-Fox, an endless repeatability is suggested in Illyés’s poem in several ways, most obviously by referring to temporal turning points of the daily and annual cycles. The thematic concern with the turning points of temporal cycles is reinforced by a circular semantic-structural frame. The last word ‘szö’ (‘word’) is metaphorically related to the first word ‘hó’ (‘snow’) since snow represents the poetic word itself. The poem thus encloses itself in a circle. End and beginning are united in that the poem ends with the concept of death, yet the whole text is a New Year’s Window, a symbol of new beginning. The final phrase ‘halál tiszta szö’ (‘death-clean word’) is not only a reminder of death, but also a hint at poetic immortality. Death is euphemised in this phrase by using it as an analogue of the purity of poetic creation. The circular frame, in which the last ‘death-clean word’ is metaphorically equivalent with the first word, snow, not only suggests the endless repeatability of the poem but also manifests a mythological, cyclical concept of time and existence.

The threshold experience on the verge of life and death is accompanied by the fusion of sound and silence throughout the text. Word and silence are united in the oxymoronic expressions ‘elsikoltott néma oh’ (‘screamed mute woh’) and ‘halál tiszta szö’ (‘death-clean word’). It is almost impossible to read the poem out loud because of the frequent repetition of the sound ‘h’. The words ‘hó’ and ‘oh’ have an onomatopoetic effect, resembling the fusion of sound and silence in breath. One can view the regular pattern of the words ‘hó’ and ‘oh’ on the page as a spatial projection of the monotonous rhythm of breathing. At the end of the text, when the rhythm of breathing stops, the words are described as ‘death-clean’.

In this poem, the image of snow assimilates the traditional semantic link between breath and the creative word. The metaphorical synthesis of snow, breath and word implies that the creative word is inextricably intertwined with silence. Perhaps this is why snow, a soundless object of nature, is frequently used as a metaphor for the creative word, whose distinctive feature is that it always contains unspoken contents. The phrase ‘death-clean word’ and the ambivalent colour symbolism of the poem further suggest that word and silence are mutually interdependent entities, and that this is one of the meta-poetic meanings of this sight-poem. The analogy between words and snowflakes includes a reversal of colour symbolism since the words printed in black represent white snowflakes. When taking into account that snow is described as death-clean word, and that it is also comparable to a silent sigh, one can visualise the poem in an alternative manner that is true to the real colours of a snowy window at night. The black printed words are comparable not only to snowflakes, but also to the darkness of the night disseminated through the white snowflakes. Applying the same reversal of figure-ground relations, the phrase ‘death-clean word’ can refer not only to the words which stain the whiteness of the page and have a kinetic effect, but also to the soundless, motionless, apparently non-existing, death-like ‘words’, the unuttered meanings which lurk between words and lines. In this sense, the snow-coloured gaps on the page are not empty spaces, but integral parts of the sight(-)poem, traces of the poet’s blind, clairvoyant fingers. The ambivalent colour symbolism represents the interchangeability and mutual interpenetration of word and silence. ‘Hó’ and ‘oh’ are metaphors for printed words as well as for white poetic spaces, death-clean silences. Word and silence are synthesised in a different way when Ujféri ablak is treated as a sight-poem and a speaking picture, a text in the stage of ongoing transformation, both the object and the product of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation.

Snow and sigh, as metaphors for the creative word, contain both sound and silence. This is why they can function as the ‘materials’ from which the sight-poem is built. New Year’s Window is actually made out of snow (word and silence) both visually and verbally. The reversibility of figure and ground relationships is equivalent with the interchangeability of two images, snow and glass (window), both of which are crystalline materials. A similar blending of the metaphors of snow and window occurs in the previously analysed focused texts. In further supporting this view, it can be mentioned that both snow and window can be associated with breath. The window is comparable to breathing in that it mediates between the internal and the external worlds. The window-poem functions as membrane which

137 In these expressions, ‘how many’ is not a question, but a synonym of ‘what a lot’. In the translation of the poem, the phrase ‘how many’ has been chosen because the word ‘how’ can reconstruct in English some aspects of the phonetic play of the original Hungarian poem. ‘How’ is not only a phonetic inversion of ‘woh’, but half of the word ‘snow’ is also embedded in its typographic construction.
138 The same device is used in the Hungarian Árpád Farkas’s Díszdoló, where the snowfall, an image of the lyric persona’s disseminated soul, is described as a ‘consuming huge silent verse / the breath of the universe’.
139 Perhaps this is why snow, a soundless object of nature, is frequently used as a metaphor for the creative word, whose distinctive feature is that it always contains unspoken contents. The phrase ‘death-clean word’ and the ambivalent colour symbolism of the poem further suggest that word and silence are mutually interdependent entities, and that this is one of the meta-poetic meanings of this sight-poem. The analogy between words and snowflakes includes a reversal of colour symbolism since the words printed in black represent white snowflakes. When taking into account that snow is described as death-clean word, and that it is also comparable to a silent sigh, one can visualise the poem in an alternative manner that is true to the real colours of a snowy window at night. The black printed words are comparable not only to snowflakes, but also to the darkness of the night disseminated through the white snowflakes. Applying the same reversal of figure-ground relations, the phrase ‘death-clean word’ can refer not only to the words which stain the whiteness of the page and have a kinetic effect, but also to the soundless, motionless, apparently non-existing, death-like ‘words’, the unuttered meanings which lurk between words and lines. In this sense, the snow-coloured gaps on the page are not empty spaces, but integral parts of the sight(-)poem, traces of the poet’s blind, clairvoyant fingers. The ambivalent colour symbolism represents the interchangeability and mutual interpenetration of word and silence. ‘Hó’ and ‘oh’ are metaphors for printed words as well as for white poetic spaces, death-clean silences. Word and silence are synthesised in a different way when Ujféri ablak is treated as a sight-poem and a speaking picture, a text in the stage of ongoing transformation, both the object and the product of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation.

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facilitates the exchange and fusion of the inside and the outside worlds, as an open window lets the air move in and out. Both breathing and the window are often associated with threshold experiences when the inside and the outside realms (and other opposites) interact, as, for instance, during imaginative acts. Deeply imprinted in the human mind, there is a semantic link between cosmic breath, the creative act, and the soul. This semantic link is evident in the phonetic-semantic interrelations of words like the Hungarian lelek - lélekzet (soul - breath), or the Russian дух, воздух, дыхование, and дых, and in the acoustic similarities between the Russian душа, дышать, and дымять. With the last breath, the soul is thought to leave the body. The dissolving of the invisible breath in the invisible air signifies the unification of the soul with the cosmic breath. Death is one form of such reintegration into the totality of being, creative activity is another. In Ilyás's poem, the image of breath-like snowflakes disseminated on the window-page reminds us of the common belief that poetry can dissolve the self in the universe and immortalise the soul.

The metaphorical interrelations of snow, window, and breath involve an interplay of whiteness and transparency. Snow is white, yet, as a potential metaphor for breath, it is transparent. The window is transparent, yet as a metaphor for the page it is white. This oscillation of whiteness and transparency is consistent with our observation that snow and window are consubstantial symbols; both are configurations of breath, the traditional symbol of cosmic and human creative power. Both images are suitable metaphors for the holistic centre, the hole at the centre of the whole, where nothing and everything, silence and the total creative word, are inextricably united. Snow, window, breath, soul, transparency, whiteness, word, and silence constitute a complex metaphor for the threshold experience of imagination. While the central symbols of snow and window acquire manifold metaphorical significance, the poem changes its quality from a descriptive text to a self-referential, self-generating sight(t)-poem. This semantic metamorphosis is at once the cause and the effect of an imaginative transformation in the reader's mind. Transformation is, thus, both the subject matter and the experience of reading the poem.

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1. Brief introduction to Aygi's poetic thought

The literary symbol as a meaning-generating connective.

Intertextual self-referentiality of Gennady Aygi's Снег

The methodological aim of this chapter is to illustrate productive intertextual dialogues as distinguished from symbolic-thematic parallels between literary texts. The contemporary Chuvash poet, Gennady Aygi's Russian poem Снег will be analysed to demonstrate various ways in which literary symbols can function as meaning-generating connectives. Snow and window are recurring leitmotifs in Aygi's poetry, and they often constitute a symbolic pair. Aygi's oeuvre is a unified context, which is rich in symbolic cross-references. The images of snow and window play a crucial role even in those works where they seem to occupy a modest position. Aygi's poetry is characterised by a unique synthesis of innovative avant-garde techniques and mytho-poetic tradition, including elements of his native Chuvash folklore. This poetic world restores poetry's ancient introspective function and its task of dealing with universal themes such as poetic creation, the imaginative mind, immortality, threshold experience, the interrelation of existence and non-existence, and the aesthetic-ontological significance of silence. Pure imaginativeness is often achieved in Aygi's works by means of psycho-chronotopes (images in which certain mental, temporal, and spatial experiences overlap), such as the field, snow, or window. The introspective nature of Aygi's poetic thought entails the frequent use of interior dialogue, whereby the lyric persona addresses his personified inner essence. This 'alter-ego' often acts as a speechless interior listener, a quasi-divine being dwelling in the soul. One of the central dilemmas of Aygi's poetry is the ambivalent nature of border-situations, the experience of a paradoxical
interchangeability and interpenetration of opposites. Aygi wrote many self-deconstructing poems which thematise or enact the inseparable unity of opposites such as life/death, life/after-life, beginning/end, waking/sleep, reality/imagination, material/immaterial, presence/absence, light/darkness, light/shadow, insight/blindness, outside/inside, nature/the mind, one/many, now/always, word/silence, the ‘I’/the ‘Other’, and so on. Aygi’s difficult, enigmatic texts require the reader’s active participation in the construction of meaning, and, as a result, they prove to be extremely rich in meaning.

2. Illyés’s Üjvéi ablak: a potential intertext of Aygi’s Cée

A potential intertext of Aygi’s Cée is a fairly early poem (1959); it nevertheless exhibits some of the major characteristics of Aygi’s poetic thought. At first reading, the poem appears to be somewhat obscure and chaotic. Repeated readings and an intertextual approach are helpful in understanding the text’s metaphors, unravelling its layer-upon-layer of meanings, clarifying who can be the anonymous addressee, and integrating the seemingly incompatible parts into a coherent whole. Let us start exploring the poem as Frye suggested, by investigating the use of imagery in a comparative manner. One of the most revealing parts of the poem is the comparison of the window-frames with white paper:

"investigating how one’s repertoire of literary texts can affect one’s interpretation, I introduced Aygi’s Cée to twelve readers, six of whom were familiar with the metaphorical function of snow and window in self-reflexive poems. These six readers immediately attributed significance to the simile in which the window-frames are compared to white paper. However, this detail escaped the notice of those informants who did not have previous knowledge about the recurrent use of the paired symbols of snow and window as a meta-poetic device. Most of these readers picked up details which are suggestive of the themes of love and death. It did not occur to them that the poem may be self-referential, and they had difficulty in creating an integral semantic unit out of the disparate entities of Cée. This experiment supports Culler’s and Frye’s argument that the wider one’s knowledge of literature, the easier it is to comprehend ‘difficult’ texts, and the richer one’s interpretation can be."

"The semantic link between the snowy window and the written page is not a proper allegory, neither is it a genuine metaphor. It is somewhere on the boundary between allegory and metaphor. Therefore it is reasonable to regard it as an allegorical complex, or a complex allegory, which serves as the two-layered vehicle-part of various metaphors."

In a close reading, the images of distant hands and paper-like window-frames may seem unusual, almost surreal. The juxtaposition of hand and paper may evoke associations with

"The comparison of page and window is a visual-allegorical affinity between Aygi’s and Illyés’s poems. In both texts, the allegorical complex of window-page is inseparable from the images of nightly snowfall and distant hands. As in Illyés’s poem the writing hand is covering the window-page with the words ‘hó’ (‘snow’), and with other words and silences, which appear on the page like snow on a window, so in Aygi’s poem the distant hands are actually writing, performing Snow on the window-page. The Hungarian poem, in which snow is almost explicitly identified with the main constituents of poetic speech (word and silence) can productively inform Aygi’s work where this association is concealed."
visual affinity between the two poems, since both of them conjure up the image of a snowy window, which is comparable to the written page.

Illyés’s work as a supplementary intertext reveals that Aygi’s Снеег can be viewed as a sight-poem or a speaking picture. This visual self-allusiveness is one of the reasons why only the frames of the window are described as white in the 5th stanza of Снеег. The window-frames are comparable to the four margins of the page, which enclose the central part where the poem appears, resembling a snowed up window pane. In affinity with Illyés’s speaking picture, there are two ways of looking at Aygi’s sight-poem: either the black words on the white page represent white flakes on the dark window (with a reversal of colour symbolism), or the white intra- and interlinear spaces illustrate the figures of soundless snowflakes scattered through the dark background of the night. This inversion of visual figure-ground relationships is a manifestation of the interdependence of word and silence, which is a typical feature and a recurring theme of Aygi’s poetry.145

3. Whiteness as a metaphor for both word and silence

‘S a he, a tili he? Tádán számítózott tenger, Isten hallagatása.'
(from Veszthely télen, by János Pilinszky)146

'There be
Three silent things:
The falling snow... the hour
Before the dawn ... the mouth of one
Just dead.'
(Triad, by Adelaide Drapsey)

In Aygi’s poetic thought, as in works of many other poets, silence is often compared to whiteness, which reigns in the soul as a sort of inward mirror. Mystics and imaginative thinkers are well aware that concentrated silence is a basic precondition for attaining a state of inwardness. Longing for silence is a common paradigm of longing for ‘death’, in the sense of the silence preceding and following the creative act can be perceived paradoxically as the plenitude of unuttered thoughts. As soon as one starts putting ideas into the linear structure of language, something is inevitably lost, especially when abstract and complex issues are meant to be articulated.149 The post-creational silence is, likewise, a semantic abundance. When all

attain the universal centre of the mind, where opposites are reconciled. The renunciation of the ego leads to a mystical reintegration into the primordial one-ness of being, which is often described in poetry as homecoming.

Silence is not only the precondition, but also the product of writing purely imaginative, introspective poetry, for such poetry is extremely rich in unspoken and elusive meanings. Silence enables one to transcend time through a concentrative absorption into one’s inner centre. The silence of the soul is frequently personified as an inward listener, who, like God, is evoked by the act of addressing him or her. The interior dialogue with the speechless alter-ego is often depicted in poetry as a conversation with a deity, or with the Muse.

The interrelation of word and silence is a major issue in Aygi’s Познавание-как-мчание, where the poet emphasises that word is created from silence, and silence is created by the word:

Мчание – как “место Бога” (место нанывшей Творческой Силы).

(Silence is like the “Place of God” (the place of the highest Creative Power)). (Aygi 1997a, 147)


(And they ask: about that too – in words? Yes, - both silence and quietness can be created: by the Word alone. And the notion emerges: “Art – of Silence”.) (Aygi 1997a, 159)148

The silence preceding and following the creative act can be perceived paradoxically as the absence yet the fullest presence of words and thoughts. The pre-creational silence is a plenitude of unuttered thoughts. As soon as one starts putting ideas into the linear structure of language, something is inevitably lost, especially when abstract and complex issues are meant to be articulated.149 The post-creational silence is, likewise, a semantic abundance. When all

145 The reversal of figure-ground relationships as a means for illustrating the interrelation of word and silence can also be found in Aygi’s Всё дальше в снеге. In this poem, the common perception that the air is the container of snow and dust is reversed. The air, like silence, is contained in the snow and dust: ‘... в снеге – давню душевным снегом / а снег/ работает в полях – в ложбинках – как крестьянин / (скрытый поэт истинный поэт) / и прыгает... – воплощением / какой-то новой тишины – без просьб / держащейся как в прахе воздуху...’.

146 An obvious example is the beginning of Aygi’s Н: мене праздник: ‘в начали мы / с Белыми-

Tимпнами... - ’.

147 The Russian word мчание (a noun derived from the verb ‘мочить’, ‘to be silent, to keep silence’) implies the act of listening or the presence of non-speaking, whereas тишина (quietness) is passive silence, the absence of sound. Bakhtin draws a distinction between these words: ‘In quietude nothing makes a sound (or something does not make a sound); in silence nobody speaks (or somebody does not speak). Silence is possible only in the human world (and only for a person). Of course, both quietude and silence are always relative.’ (1986a, 133-

134.)

148 In his essay Слово и кумирство, Osip Mandelstam uses the image of the mould (in relation to blindness) as a metaphor for the pre-creational silence which is pregnant with words: ‘Словей узнает молчное лицо, едва прикоснувшись к нему зрыцими перстами, и слезы радости, настоящей радости узнавания, брызнут из глаз его после долгой разлуки. Стихотворение живо внутренним образом, тем звучящим сложен форм, который предваряет написанное стихотворение. На одного слова еще нет, а стихотворение уже звучит. Это звучит внутренний образ, это осьется слух поэта’ (quoted in Burnett, 1994, 157). Similar cognitive operation characterises non-verbal creative activities, such as visual art, or music. In a letter Mozart described the pre-creational silence as a plenitude of inaudible sound: ‘The whole [piece of music], though it be long, stands almost complete and finished in my mind, so that I can survey it, like a fine picture or a beautiful statue, at
the words of a poem have been read, they co-exist in the mind simultaneously, therefore they can productively interact, modify, and enrich each other. Only in this holistic perception can one reveal the text's semantic and structural integrity. Silence not only reigns before and after the articulation of words; it permeates the literary text itself. It dwells among words in semantic omissions, syntactic gaps, and in elliptic phrases, and it inhabits the words themselves. Whenever an implication, a presupposition, or a connotative meaning is attached to a linguistic unit, this unit is perceived as a combination of word and silence, of spoken and unspoken meanings. That is to say, whenever we have the feeling that more is meant than presence-absence structure of linguistic units that they can acquire additional meanings and they can function as poetic tropes. Thus, what is not said in poetry is of equal importance to what is explicitly articulated. In Поэзия-як-малчание, Aygi explains the significance of silence by reference to Wagner: "величие поэта скорее всего открывается там, где он может, чтобы невысказанным само высказывалось в молчании" ['in truth the greatness of the poet is revealed most of all when he is silent so that the unuttered word can utter itself in the silence'; 1997a, 151].

The penumbra of unspoken meanings surrounding poetic words can be visualised as the white gaps in the body of the text. By treating the white textual spaces as visual manifestations of non-articulated poetic meanings, these blanks can no longer be perceived as the emptiness of the page. Once a text, either visual or poetic, is enclosed in a frame, it is supposed to have structure and unity; it is meant to be a coherent entity without any empty, meaningless, background spaces. The white intra- and interlinear spaces belong to the body of the text; they are not the whiteness of the empty paper, but what Aygi calls in Сон-поэзия 'non-paper spaces', 'poetic spaces' ('non-paper spaces', 'poetic spaces' ['небуяжные пространства', 'поэтические пространства'; 1989, 92])

150, that is, wordless, visual metaphors for poetic silences where inexpressible thoughts, unuttered connotations, intertextual associations, or undefined connections between apparently incompatible words and images reside. As the unspoken meanings are created by the articulated units, so the shapes of white interspaces are formed by a glance. Nor do I hear in my imagination the parts successively, but I hear them; as it were all at once inexpressible thoughts, unuttered connotations, intertextual associations, or undefined meanings are created by the articulated units, so the shapes of white interspaces are formed by the printed words. The gaps on the printed page appear as the white shadows of words. In Сон-поэзия, Aygi illustrates the interdependence of word and silence as 'light images with shadow hieroglyphs' ('образы световые, с тенями-горизонтами', 1989, 92). This metaphor can be traced to the archetypal representation of the world-creating Word as light. Both light and snow are soundless phenomena, both are white, and both represent the creative word, which is always already inhabited by silence.152 In Aygi's works, poetic silence and the interpenetration of word and silence are often compared to God's voice.153

In affinity with Aygi's poetic thought, God's world-creating Word is described as silence in the Hungarian Zsuzsa Beney's prose poem Szó és csend között (Between Words and Silence):

...a szó, mely olyanira különbsízik a miénkről, hiszen a mién, ha kimondjuk, a levegő lassan lecsengő hullámává, ha pedig leírjuk, fentelek lejáró hangok a papír fehér hávan, a telít színt havon, melyet még emberi lépteik még nem érintettek de az éve nem hang és nincs is jel, és mégis egyetlen, hangzásálatlan csengő hang és egyetlen, dallamátlan arabszójaként a semmhiből egyszerűen jel. [...] A szó, mely megteremtette a világot [...] hangzásálatlan szólt, mert nem volt levegő, hogy továbbítsa és előlőnyek sem, hogy meghallják és befogadják a hangot. (Beney 1993, 90, 91)

[God's] word is different from our word, for if we were to exhale the slowly stilling currents of air and we could then record this sound, black marks on snow-white paper, on winter's virgin snows, as yet untouched by any human step, but this word is neither sound, nor symbol, an inaudible resonance and single stroke drawn into nothingness by the arabesques of melody, [...] The Word that created the world [...] was spoken without sound, because there was no air to be its medium, and no living beings to hear and receive the sound. (Beney 1999, 53, 54)

The interrelation of the all-inclusive creative word and silence is one among the many paradoxical conjunctions of opposites which characterises the threshold situation of imaginative acts. Silence in itself manifests a clash of opposites, such as...

150 In Сон-поэзия, Aygi uses the word hieroglyph as a synonym of snow: 'A снеговик [...] не снега и не снегу на земле - перигибла бога'. 'Hieroglyph' is a bisemous word. It refers to the pictorial linguistic units of ancient Egyptian script, and it is commonly used to denote obscurity and incomprehensibility. The semantic link between hieroglyph and snow suggests that in Aygi's poetic thought, snow is a complex metaphor substituting the interrelated units of poetic language (including word and image, by analogy to hieroglyphs) as well as unarticulated, hidden meanings (corresponding to the enigmatic aspect of hieroglyphs). Both snow and hieroglyph are, then, metaphors of the presence-absence structure of language.

152 One of the most obvious poetic representations of the interdependence of word and silence is the use of soundless objects, such as the Sun, the star, the flower, and snow, as metaphors for the creative word. In Aygi's poetry, God's voice and the inaudible creative word are frequently symbolised by wordless noise, such as whisper, rustling sounds, birdsong, the sound of the wind, or by audible phenomena which are in a transitory state between silence and noise, such as breath and the silent sound of the forest. Breath as a symbol of the poetic word is related to the mythological representation of the cosmic creative energy as primordial breath. A prominent example of the associative link between the creative word, snow and breath is Aygi's Tanés szépség ('omnibenevolent molydát veremhívó megjelené: "szépség..." / [...] de szállás és zaj... / [...] és de zajnál - dűlni újratükrözik!'). See for instance Две березы, Роза в гробе, И снега — лес, Снег: места в лесу, Близко: поэзия, И вновь: вопреки, И как большой лес.
nothingness/plenitude, absence/presence, reception/creation, and so on. It may be due to the ambivalent nature of silence that it often conjures up the mental image of whiteness, the colourless colour, which contains all colours. In Aygi’s poetry, white silence is often described as the dwelling place of God and of the creative human spirit. Since quietude, God, and the soul are inaudible, invisible, and impalpable phenomena, they are also perceived in mytho-poetic imagination and in Aygi’s works as transparency, such as the wind, breath, air, water, and the window pane. It may be due to the shared associations of whiteness and transparency that the white page is often compared to a transparent window, and snow to invisibly existing, ‘transparent’ entities such as silence, the soul, imagination, and God. Snow is also a twin-image of the sea (transparent water), the traditional ‘prima materia’, a maternal first cause. Water represents the amorphous, all-encompassing, non-differentiated unity of being, the pre-creational state of primordial one-ness, and, by analogy, the unconscious. The primeval state of undivided cosmic totality, from which all dualities arise, is re-established in threshold situations when opposites co-exist in a transitory state of simultaneous balance and instability. One of these border situations is the transition between crystalline and liquid states of matter, which can represent a spatio-temporal co-existence of pattern and rhythm. This moment of metamorphosis is captured and extended in time in the analogy between snowfall and water (sea). The analogy is quite obvious, for transparent water is the form in which the white snowflakes exist before and after their crystalline lives, that is to say, in their pre-creative and post-creative silence. When snow melts, it does not disappear; it dissolves into the form of transparent existence, and in this form it penetrates and nourishes life. The cause, the undifferentiated, radiating creative energy.

155 Since transparency is an attribute of the invisible, ‘impenetrable’ soul, it comes to be an attribute of the page, invisibly existing, ‘transparent’ entities such as silence, the soul, imagination, and God. Snow is depicted as all-encompassing colourlessness in Aygi’s poetry. As the dwelling place of God and the creative human spirit, snow often complements the seen and the unseen, the visible and the invisible, the real and the imagined, the concept of a distant, imagined window, or both appeared at the same time as a synchronistic event (as in Pasternak’s Doktor Живаго). This double fusion of reality and imagination is compressed in lines 8-11. These two stanzas depict the lyric persona’s synaesthetic perception, whereby the sensations of his contemplating eyes and writing hand overlap. That is to say, the poet’s pen touching the page is actually re-creating what his eyes see, snowflakes touching the window pane. The surface level of the synaesthetic fusion of sight and touch is the verbal-visual reflection of the snowy window on the page. At a deeper level, the writing hand not only describes (verbally) and re-creates (visually) what the corporeal eyes see in reality, but also captures what the mind’s eyes observe beneath the surface of visible appearances. Here

The synaesthetic association between whiteness and silence represents a tendency to visualise the poetic process. This technique is fundamental in Aygi’s sight-poem, where the comparison of window and page represents a metaphorical simultaneity of outward gaze and the acts of writing and reading. In affinity with the poems analysed before, the transformation of the snowy window into the printed page entails that the reader re-creates the poet’s threshold experience. Together with the lyric persona, the reader is also watching a ‘window’, the page, on which the traces of ‘distant’ hands appear like snowflakes, leaving only the frames empty, white. Contemplation and the writing act are so perfectly balanced that one cannot decide which one is more real than the other; whether a real snowy window aroused the image of the written page, or the poem which the author was writing conjured up the sight of a distant, imagined window, or both appeared at the same time as a synchronistic event (as in Pasternak’s Doktor Живаго). This double fusion of reality and imagination is compressed in lines 8-11. These two stanzas depict the lyric persona’s synaesthetic perception, whereby the sensations of his contemplating eyes and writing hand overlap. That is to say, the poet’s pen touching the page is actually re-creating what his eyes see, snowflakes touching the window pane. The surface level of the synaesthetic fusion of sight and touch is the verbal-visual reflection of the snowy window on the page. At a deeper level, the writing hand not only describes (verbally) and re-creates (visually) what the corporeal eyes see in reality, but also captures what the mind’s eyes observe beneath the surface of visible appearances. Here

This poem illustrates that white can be perceived not only as the lack of colour, but also as an all-inclusive colour. The synthetic quality of white is reinforced by the punning title, where the plural genitive case of the word ‘snow’ is used, which is a homonym of the plural genitive of ‘colour’ (цветов).
we are dealing with the implicit image of ‘seeing hands’, which also figures in the poems analysed before. The heterotopic eyes transferred to the writing fingers are endowed with both outward and inward sight. This is why the poet’s hand can capture the invisible, spiritual world in the form of visible reality. Paradoxically, while the poet’s fingers have both outward and inward sight, they are also blind in the sense that they arrest the inexpressible by the act of writing silence. The latent image of half-seeing, half-blind hand manifests a deconstructive interpenetration and interchangeability of sight and blindness. Put very simply, there is always something unseen and unwritten in what is seen and written. To see something is also to be blind for something which is not manifest. Conversely, the poet’s blind fingers can ‘see’ the invisible which escapes the notice of the seeing fingers. When the blind hand arrests the invisible and the inexpressible in the form of silence, it actually manifests its clairvoyant ‘sight’. The interplay of sight and blindness is analogous to the interrelation of sound and silence, and black and white.

The metaphorical synthesis of contemplation with the acts of writing and reading represents a dynamic exchange of the outside and the inside terrains. Similarly to the poems analysed previously, there are correspondences between the physical world outdoors and indoors. The reflection of the snowy window on the written page is, however, merely the surface layer of a more complex metaphor, where inside refers to the mental-spiritual interior, and outside to external reality. In this sense, the term ‘outside’ involves the physical reality of both the outdoor and the indoor realms, whereas ‘inside’ denotes the mental interior which is projected onto the sight of snowy window and written page. The physical objects of snow and silence, and black and white...
5. Snow as an incarnation of the immortal mental-spiritual interior

"A до этого - все дальше - в снег. В голое нищетство. Как мало было нужно вещей. Чуто больше - рук. Стихотворение... - все это ненужное, все близко - без нас - Мир." (from Aygi’s Позывы-волнований)

'You're back. Listen to this life splinter
clash clash
like blown glass
like snow-crystals
icon after icon.'
(from Jeni Couzyn’s In the Skin House)

In Aygi’s Cee, the transparent window, which displays the snowfall, also reflects the interior journey of the lyric persona. As in Illyés’s Újévi ablak, the sight of snowfall stimulates the poet to embark on a mental journey in two temporal directions simultaneously, backwards to the past, and forward to the future, when he will no longer be present physically, only in the memory of others, as an ever-silent interlocutor of their interior dialogues:

а там, за ними, [за оконными рамами]
около фонарей,
хрупкого снега,
с самого нашего детства.

И будет кружиться, пока на земле
тебя вспоминают и с тобой говорят.

The last stanza quoted here is ambiguous in that it connects the phrase 'тебя вспоминают' to the phrase 'c тобой говорят', thereby implying both the absence and the presence of the addressee. This apparent paradox can be reconciled in the concept of negative presence. This stanza can be read as a condensed reformulation of Pasternak’s concept of immortality in the form of the lyric persona’s interior dialogue, whereby he assures himself of his poetic afterlife. The anonymous addressee, who is incarnated in the form of whirling snow, thus can be identified with the incorporeal, immortal aspect of the poetic self, a spiritual essence, which is believed to be present after death in the form of Snow and other poems, in the memory of friends, relatives, and readers.159 It logically follows from using snow as a metaphor for poetic word and silence that snow is also a metaphor for what poetic language manifests, the immortal, creative soul.160 The last part of the poem, depicting a ceaseless snowfall, confirms the lyric persona’s belief in poetic immortality:

И эти белые холмы когда-то
увидел я навсегда,
и закрыл глаза, и не могу их открыть,
и кружатся белые искры,
и остановить их
я не могу.

These lines, depicting the threshold situation of the imaginative act, anticipate the border situation of dying, which is the beginning of eternal poetic memory. As suggested by the visual self-referentiality of Cee, the shining snowflakes, which continue falling behind the closed eyes, can represent creative words and silences, or their echoes, in which the spiritual, incorporeal essence of the poet’s personality continues to exist. The image of white sparks scintillating in the darkness behind the eternally closed eyes is, then, an illustration of a synthesis of being and non-being, presence and absence, life and after-life, movement and stillness.

There is an apparent contradiction in that the image of eternally closed eyes implies death, whereas the inward sight of ceaseless snowfall implies that life is still going on. This contradiction is an innovative poetic representation of the common concept that threshold-moments contain eternity. Here we are dealing with an implicit winter solstice symbolism. The image of white sparks scattered in darkness may be said to be a spatial configuration of the eternalised midnight-moment when light is reborn at the longest and darkest night of the year. Pasternak’s description of the days of the winter solstice in Единственные дни is so similar in essence to Aygi’s description of inward snowfall that these two symbols can be fused by blending the two texts through their shared anaphoric device:

И каждый был неповторим
И повторился вновь без счета.

159 The image of white sparks in the last stanza is comparable to the 'white radiance of eternity' from Shelley’s Adonais, an elegy on Keats.

160 C. G. Jung characterised the creative soul as 'a spiritual and immortal figure within', 'an invisible, personal entity that apparently lives in a world very different from ours. Consequently, once the activity of the soul is felt to be that of an autonomous entity having no ties with our mortal substance, it is but a step to imagining that this entity must lead an entirely independent existence, perhaps in a world of invisible things' (1966, vol. 7, 192, 191). According to Jung, 'the immediate meaning of “immortality” is simply a psychic activity that transcends the limits of consciousness' (1966, vol. 7, 191). This definition implies that immortality is not the same as poetic memory, although the two concepts are often used as synonyms. The extra-temporal experience achieved during a deep absorption into imaginative activity is a death-like state, as well as a form of immortality. The most obvious manifestation of the immortal spirit is the work of art, which functions as a trace of the creative artist: a trace of time in eternity (which is poetic memory), and a trace of eternity in time (which is immortality in the Jungian sense of the word).
The winter solstice symbolism of  

6. Interplay of opposites in metaphorically related border situations

61 'Augen, weltblind,  
Augen im Sterbegefühl,  
Augen Augen:  
Das Schneebett unter uns beiden, das Schneebett.  
Kristall um Kristall,  
zeitig gegittert, wir fallen,  
wir fallen und liegen und fallen.'  
(from Schneeberg, by Paul Celan)

In the last two stanzas of Aygi’s poem, the closing of eyes can represent not only dying, but also a transition from waking to dream, from reality to imagination, from outward contemplation to introspection. These threshold experiences are frequently correlated in Aygi’s works. Most obviously, in Сон-пoезия, the transitory state between conscious awareness and unconscious mental state is related to falling asleep, to the creative act, and to the moment between existence and non-existence. These border situations are treated as metaphors for each other, and they are conceived of by inversion as illuminating, awakening experiences. Their fundamental unity is expressed in Aygi’s compound nouns such as ‘Sleep-Poetry’, ‘Sleep-the-creator’, ‘Sleep-the-artist’, ‘Sleep-Illumination’, ‘Sleep-Lethe’, ‘Sleep-Haven’ (‘Сон-Пoэзия’, ‘Сон-творец’, ‘Сон-художник’, ‘Сон-Оправление’, ‘Сон-Лега’, ‘Сон-Прибежище’; Aygi 1989, 90, 97, 96, 90, 85). These transitory states are united at the end of the poem, where the closing of the eyes not only portrays the processes of falling asleep and dying, but it can also be a metaphor for attaining an imaginative insight. In these threshold experiences, snow has a manifold existence: it is apparent for the conscious mind in its real, physical form, which is referred to as ‘белые искры’, and it is present for the inward sight of imagination in its chronotopic and metaphorical form as ‘белые искры’, embodiments of the immortal soul, radiating, creative words together with their white shadows, the meaningful silences.

The death-like descent into the unconscious realm during dream, introspective meditation and the imaginative state can be associated superficially with a transition from light to darkness. By inversion, this process can also be associated on a metaphorical level with a transition from darkness to light. This paradoxical reversal of light and darkness can be explained by the simultaneous operation of reasoning consciousness and imagination. From the point of view of reason, to disregard outward reality is to dwell in darkness; dream and imagination mislead from truth; knowledge and mental enlightenment are achieved by trusting the physical organs of perception. From the point of view of imagination, however, there is a spiritual, imperceptible significance beyond the world of appearances, which cannot be comprehended by imitative reason. Some sort of illumination, a spiritual awakening to a liberated, heightened mental state is taking place when one attains the ‘dark’ depth of the unconscious either in dream or in the imaginative state. This oscillation of darkness and light is widely used in Aygi’s poetry as a metaphorical condensation of the border-situation of holding together two points of view. The interplay of light and darkness is evoked, for instance, by the compound noun ‘Sleep-Illumination’ (‘Сон-Освепение’), and by the image of white sparks disseminated in the darkness behind the closed eyes. The mutual interpenetration of conscious and unconscious states entails the ambivalent feeling that one is moving towards an inner light while descending to darkness. This state of paradoxical equilibrium is often illustrated in Aygi’s works by sunset or dawn, transitory periods when light permeates darkness, and by dispersal images in which various forms of light, such as shining particles of snow or golden dust are scattered through darkness. Alternatively, dissemination images, such as sound-waves, smell, or rain penetrating the neutral, invisible, soundless background of air also appear. These images can represent, among other things, the threshold moment of creation, when light and darkness, word and silence, movement and stillness, existence and non-existence, and other opposites coexist. 612 These binary oppositions are interrelated in

611 ‘Eyes world-blind, / eyes in the fissure of dying, / eyes eyes: // The snow-bed under us both, the snow-bed. / Crystal on crystal, / meshed deep as time, we fall, / we fall and lie there and fall.’ (from Paul Celan’s Snow-bed, translated by Michael Hamburger).

612 Typical examples of the issues discussed in this paragraph are Aygi’s Заря: после занятий, Лес – только по шапку. Здесь, Теперь всегда снега, Снятся переправы, and Всё дымя в снегу.
creation myths where the appearance of the world-creating Word from the pre-creational silence is compared to the appearance of light from darkness at the midnight-moment of the year. In dispersal images, figure and ground are interchangeable; there is no strict temporal or spatial division between light and darkness, or between word and silence. In all-pervading dissemination images, the threshold moment of transition from one mode to its opposite is prolonged to eternity, which is illustrated in the spatial and temporal co-existence of the opposites of figure and ground.

The 9th stanza of CHez portrays an intermediate state, when conscious and unconscious states of mind interact. The first two lines describe conscious perception of reality by the bodily eyes, whereas the last two lines describe dream vision seen by the inward eyes. There is, however, no sharp dividing line between these modes of perception. The inward vision of white sparks scattered through darkness appears as a reflection of the nightly snowfall. This similarity of outward and inward sight represents the simultaneous processes of introjection and projection, whereby concrete objects are interiorised and turned into metaphors, and, conversely, mental images are externalised. In other words, as there is room for reality in imagination, so imagination can inhabit reality. The 9th stanza of CHez is, then, an artistic portrayal of the paradoxical threshold situation when the outside and the inside worlds overlap, both realms representing an interplay of reality and imagination, light and darkness, while still maintaining their dominant features. One dominant mode is distinguishable from its opposite (as life can be distinguished from death, waking from sleep, reality from imagination, outward gaze from inward vision, rational perception from non-ordinary mental sensitivity), yet they are indivisible because both modes always already contain their antitheses. This dynamic interrelation of opposites is one of the distinctive features of the imagery of all the focused texts discussed previously, and of other poems in which the image of the window functions as an ambivalent, connecting and dividing border, a two-sided looking glass between the external and the internal worlds. These poems reveal that the border situation of uniting an outward and an inward point of view enables us to catch a glimpse of the fundamental double-mirror-structure of the psycho-physical universe.

The synthesis of outward and inward perception also designates a semi-conscious state, which enables one to reach the ambivalent, paradoxical, and enigmatic core of existence. One needs to transcend the limitations of ordinary consciousness to glimpse the undifferentiated, hidden essence of being, yet, at the same time, this synthetic information is processed through the rational cognitive apparatus, which is why the data of altered consciousness appear as ambivalence, paradox, and mystery. In other words, what our reason perceives as undifferentiated chaos, ambivalence, paradox, or eternal enigma, is the natural order of things according to the inner logic of non-ordinary consciousness. Things which are rationally incomprehensible may have a secret inner structure, which we cannot understand, yet we can sense through deep emotional involvement. Only by balancing a rational and a non-ordinary point of view can we comprehend that incomprehensibility is the ultimate nature of the deepest layers of existence. It is in this intermediary mental state when we can combine thought and feeling, perceive the wonder of mystery, sense the reality of miracle, and believe in the existence of a non-ordinary, abstract reality, which is not perceptible by the physical organs of perception and the brain, only by the extra-sensory, emotional 'logic' of the mind and the soul. In the threshold situation of combining the sensory data of the bodily eye (and other organs of perception) with the extra-sensory data of the mind's far-sighted inner eye, one can experience an epiphanic moment of blinding illumination, which involves the recognition that the concentrated essence of existence is forever concealed from ordinary cognitive thought-forms, yet it is accessible (but not explicable) by pre-cognitive and post-cognitive imaginative acts.

7. 'White sparks' and 'white stars', representing inward light

"змуна и свет и спи" (from Aygi's "Теперь всегда снег")

In the 9th stanza of CHez, the transition from extraverted perception to a reflective mental state is accompanied by the transformation of snow. As the white flakes ('бялые хлопья') enter from reality into the dark interior realm behind the closed eyes, they become white sparks ('бялые искры'). This transformation is almost imperceptible. The internalised snow is very similar to the outdoor snow, yet it is also different from it; it is both a mental replica (a 'copy' in memory) of what the poet saw in reality, and a qualitatively different inward entity. The process of interiorisation, whereby the genuine white flakes become mental pictures of radiating white sparks, is a manifestation of the artistic activity of turning real objects into metaphors, in order to express abstract, spiritual, transcendental ideas in the form of concrete, outward reality, or to depict the threshold experience whereby the world and the mind dissolve in each other. The transformation of white flakes into white sparks represents the simultaneity of outward contemplation and introspection, whereby the half-seeing, half-blind
hands, extensions of the poet’s half-closed eyes, capture the scene beyond the window, and, at
the same time, arrest the invisible contents and thought-forms of the mind. This two-
directional contemplation manifests a synthesis of nature and the mind, of conscious and
imaginative modes of perception, of referential and connotative meanings, and of the
transformation of the window-page into a two-sided looking glass.

During the metaphor-making process of simultaneous projection and introjection,
snow is endowed with the property of light. When the white flakes are referred to as white
sparks, they immediately assimilate connotations of conventional radiation images, such as
light, fire, and the eye. The image of white sparks, as a poetic configuration of common radial
images, is comparable to Pasternak’s description of snow as ‘белые звездочки’ and ‘белый
снег.’ The image of shining snow is widely used in literature as a metaphor for the
imagination. The embedding of light in the image of snow manifests an oscillation of life
and death, because light is a common symbol of life and creative energy, and the ice-cold,
descending snowfall is metonymically related to winter, the season of death. Since the image
of shining snow contains the attributes of both death and life, it is a more precise analogue of
the border-situation of imaginative acts than pure light without the connotation of non-
existence would be. The imaginative act has both destructive and creative aspects. It involves
a death-like oblivion of the self, and it is a paradigmatic event of the creation of a new life.
Imagination is a mental act of deconstructing worn-out concepts and metaphors.

The image of bright snow as a metaphor for creative imagination and its products is an
emblem of a unique balance of novelty and tradition. It is an innovative yet recurring
metaphor, in which death and life, the traditional components of snow and light, are
synthesised as a poetic condensation of the ambivalent nature of threshold-situations.

Similarly to the texts discussed in the previous chapters, the reader of Aygi’s Coec can re-
effect the poet’s two-directional contemplation. While looking outwards at Snow, the traces of
the poet’s distant hands on the window-like page, the reader is also looking inwards, thereby
witnessing the transformation of the window-page into a mirror. The closing of eyes in stanza
9 can represent the mirror-phase of interpretation, the reader’s mental shift from the explicit
surface content to unspoken meanings, that is to say, a shift from focusing on words to
interpreting silence. The semantic transformation of the ostensible subject matter into a
metaphorical context is a manifestation of the border-situation of the receptive act, whereby
the reader surpasses the limits of outward gaze and gains an inward insight. As the silences
surrounding the words obtain meanings, they come to function as invisible reflections of the
reader’s and the poet’s inward sight on the mirror-like page. The transformation of the
window-page into a mirror takes place at the moment when the poet and the reader start
writing and reading meaning into silence. This shift from passive, imitative reason to creative
imagination is only possible if the poet and the reader ‘close’ their bodily eyes so that they
can open their inward eyes, adopting an introverted, imaginative attitude, which enables them
to grasp a spiritual, immaterial, eternal reality beyond the reach of senses, and to enrich
visible appearances or ostensible subject matters with ‘invisible’ meanings.

Traditionally, the closing of eyes and blindness have two contradictory associations,
which are comparable to the mutually incompatible meanings of light and darkness discussed
in the 6th section of this chapter. From the point of view of the sensebound reasoning
consciousness, blindness symbolises ‘ignorance of the real state of things, denial of the
obvious, and hence madness, stupidity, and irresponsibility’ (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 1996,
99). From a more imaginative and philosophical viewpoint, ‘the blind are those who ignore
the deceitful shows of this world, and thanks to this are privileged to know its secret reality,

164 Here I list just a few examples: Jenő Dósa’s Útban a rendeltetés felé (On the Way Towards Destiny), Dylan
Thomas’s A Winter’s Tale, Shelley’s Mont Blanc, Wallace Stevens’ Pieces, Robert Frost’s Stars.
165 ‘Are you asleep? // Sleep. // Ocean-mill turns, // Ice-bright and unheard // In our eyes’ (From Paul Celan’s
White and Light, translated by Michael Hamburger).
too deeply buried to be discerned by ordinary humanity." (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 1996, 99). The darkness behind the closed or blind eyes is, thus, the dwelling place of inward light, of white sparks, which can symbolise clairvoyance, mental illumination, self-knowledge, imagination, or prophetic wisdom.166

At the end of Aygi’s poem, the closing of eyes may symbolise the threshold moment of blinding illumination. The countless, ever-falling white sparks emanate so much light that they make the speaker of the poem snow-blind. The appearance of white sparks behind the closed eyes can represent the conventional paradox that blindness is associated with the gift of seeing some sort of spiritual essence beneath the surface of physical reality. Applying the ambivalent fusion of blindness and insight to the poem, the white sparks, which bring light into the dark realm behind the closed eyes, can be associated with inward vision, and thus with the mind’s self-reflecting eyes.167 This is consistent with the double mirror-technique applied in the poem. While the white sparks can be endowed with sight, as if they were observing inward eyes, at the same time, they are also being observed; they are actually seen as dream-like images permeating the dark realm behind the closed eyes. This portrayal of self-examining eyes, a hidden mirror-technique, can represent the introspective self-discovery of the soul. The semantic link between snow and the eye is based on the affinity between the poetic function of snow and the traditional symbolism of the eye. The eye is commonly regarded as the window or the mirror of the soul; it is, then, a potential synonym of both snow and the window. Etymologically, the window is the eye of the wind, that is to say, the eye of the creative spirit, just like snow, which, in these poems, is both the seer and the seen. Introspection can be described figuratively as looking with the mind’s eye into the mind’s window-page is perceived as an embodiment of the mind. The act of seeing the mind in the process of simultaneous introjection and projection, the external objects of snow and window and, at the same time, they are looking into the mind’s eyes, as if in a mirror. During the process of simultaneous introspection and projection, the external objects of snow and window can be perceived imaginatively as transformed mirror-images of the self-reflecting mind’s eye.

On a metaphorical level, the closing of bodily eyes can symbolise the process whereby the eyes are turning inwards for the sake of self-discovery. Surprisingly, in Aygi’s poem, the sight of outward reality is maintained after closing the eyes. What the inward eyes see behind the closed eyes (snow scattered in darkness) appears to be a copy of what the corporeal eyes saw in reality. There is, however, a latent transformation concealed in this parallel. The closing of eyes may symbolise a metaphor-making process, a typical technique of self-expression, which is based on simultaneous acts of introjection and projection. The objects of outward material reality (such as snow and window) are interiorised and are endowed with inward meanings. Conversely, abstract, immaterial mental concepts are externalised and embodied in the forms of concrete objects. The similarity between what the bodily eyes see outside in reality and what the mind’s eyes see in the world of dream or imagination shows that what appears to be a transition from external reality to another, physically imperceptible, inward reality, is a more complex process. The outside world of white flakes is hardly distinguishable from the inside world of white sparks. These realms interpenetrate each other, as if they had always already been in the state of ongoing transformation. It seems that once the synthetic quality of the border has been experienced, one can never again be either outside or inside, either in reality or in imagination, only in the border-land, regardless of whether one is actually standing on the threshold, or outside, or inside. As soon as the window is revealed to be a two-sided looking glass, this unique quality expands, and comes to characterise the outside and the inside worlds. In this extended border situation, outward and inward gaze (sight and blindness) cannot be divided. In the threshold situation of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation, the eyes are looking at snow, at the words and silences of Snow, and, at the same time, they are looking into the mind’s eyes, as if in a mirror. During the process of simultaneous introjection and projection, the external objects of snow and window can be perceived imaginatively as transformed mirror-images of the self-reflecting mind’s eye.

The closing of eyes as a metaphor for the opening of inward eyes is revealed to be an alternative poetic illustration of the mirror-phase of imaginative acts, whereby Snow on the window-page is perceived as an embodiment of the mind. The act of seeing the mind in the form of outward reality is illustrated in the 9th stanza by an ambivalent balancing of parallel/contrast, and of similarity/dissimilarity in the perception of white flakes and white sparks. As it has been pointed out before, the transformation of white flakes into white sparks is more than a poetic description of a transition from reality to imagination, from outside to inside, and it is more than the illustration of an imitative recollection of reality; it can be interpreted as a poetic representation of a mirror-technique, a simultaneous interiorisation and externalisation, which entails the reversibility and mutual interpenetration of outside/inside,
nature/the mind, material/spiritual, object/subject, concrete/abstract, reality/dream or imagination, life/after-life, conscious/unconscious states of mind, and other opposites.

9. Snow and window: mirrors of the soul, poetic synonyms of the eye

The 'Outer' – from the Inner
Derives its Magnitude – [...] –
The Star's whole Secret – in the Lake –
Eyes were not meant to know.
(from Emily Dickinson's poem 451)

In the context of Aygi's poem, it is particularly relevant to perceive snow imaginatively as the mind's eye, or a transformed reflection of the mind's eye. Both snow and window take on the symbolic function of the eye as a window or a mirror of the soul. It has been mentioned earlier that the window is commonly associated with light, with the eye, and with the soul. These traditional metaphorical correspondences are operative in Aygi's poem, where the outward contemplation of window comes to represent an inward contemplation of the soul, and, conversely, introspection is comparable to looking at a window, or looking into the eye of the wind, both the eye and the wind being conventional symbols of the soul. The traditional associative link between window and the eye is maintained indirectly in any poem where the window, and its metaphorical substitute, the page, function in the threshold experience of imaginative acts as mirrors of the soul. The semantic fusion of the images of snow, window, wind, eye, and mirror is in accordance with the synthesis of the seer and the seen in self-reflecting poems.

Window and snow are used interchangeably as transformed mirror-images of the mind's eye. They are both the mirror and the reflection in the mirror. Both snow and window are crystalline materials; both of them are associated with light, with the imaginative mind, and both of them represent a threshold-experience, whereby the two contrasting poles of the binary units of outside/inside, reality/imagination, the observer/the observed object, the creator/the creation, and so on, are reflected in each other. Window and snow are almost inseparable in actual visual perception due to the transparency of the window-pane. They are strongly interrelated on a metaphorical plane as well, since snow, as a metaphor for the words and silences of Snow, actually makes up the window-page. Both snow and window are objects of contemplation, metaphors for the poem itself. The interchangeability of white snow and transparent window is most evident in the affinity between the meta-poetic function of the title of Aygi's Snow and Illyés's New Year's Window.

A deeper affinity between these symbols can be revealed when comparing them to the image of the eye. What snow, window, and their half-allegorical, half-metaphorical counterpart, the poem, have in common is that they assimilate the symbolic meaning of the eye, functioning as means for self-reflection. This is an example of the presence-absence structure of signification. The symbolic pair of snow and window is a 'vehicle' representing the written page as its 'tenor'. However, this tenor is also a 'vehicle' comparable to the symbol of the eye, functioning as a mirror, or an embodiment of the soul.

One may wonder what is the benefit of complicating the poem with weaving the image of the eye into its texture, when the reflecting function of snow, window, and poem can be inferred from the text anyway. One reason for assimilating the symbol of the eye into the observed objects of snow and window is that it highlights the fact that we are dealing with a double mirror-technique, a mutual reflection of the observing mind and the observed world. Another reason for bringing the image of the eye into the poem is that indirectly it makes us aware of the transformative mirror-effect employed in the poem. For what the observing eye sees in the mirror of the snow-poem is not an eye, but its transfiguration, snow and window.

The same sort of metamorphosis is at the heart of the threshold situation depicted in Pasternak's Чело ведет and Зимняя ночь, where flowers and snow, or candle and snow, are different entities (opposites) yet they also reflect each other. This transformative mirror-technique conveys the message that the structures of the mind can never appear as pure presence, and that the imaginative mind can never fully reflect itself, not even when it projects itself in another form, because there is always something ungraspable and elusive at the core of imaginativeness. In other words, the self-observing mind can never arrive at an ultimate knowledge of itself. The last lines of the poem depicting a perpetual snowfall suggest that the inward quest can never be accomplished. Aygi's snowfall is comparable to the metaphorical function of ripples in the work of the thirteenth century Jewish mystic, Moses de León:

Thought reveals itself only through contemplating a little without content, contemplating sheer spirit. The contemplation is imperfect: you understand – then you lose what you have understood. Like pondering a thought: the light of that thought suddenly darkens, vanishes;

168 The phrase 'reflective function' is used, of course, in a non-literal sense. Neither snow nor the poem reflect optically, yet they can function as mirrors of the soul. Any poem and any metaphor which is a projection of thought-forms and mental contents is a symbolic mirror. Moreover, the poems analysed are built on the mythological-phenomenological concept that the world is a mirror of the mind.
The latent associative link between snow, window, and eye is an example of how conventional images (such as the eye) can take on new poetic forms. The eye here functions as a ‘trace’, because it is absent, yet it is vaguely present in the images of snow and window.

By enriching the poem with the symbol of the eye, the abstract mirror-technique of self-examination and the mutual reflection of the inside and the outside worlds obtain a concrete visual form. The latent presence of the eye in the observed objects of snow and window implies the presence of a two-sided mirror and a synthesis of the seer and the seen. The eye which looks back from the snowy window-page is both an observed eye and a reflection of the observing eye. The composite image of snow-window-eye is, then, both the mirror and the observer’s reflection in the mirror. By transforming the observed objects of snow and window into observed and observing eyes, one can actually visualise the identity of the seer and the seen. This supports the argument that the poem can function as a mirror, in which one can watch the mind at the very moment of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation. The comparison of snow and window with an eye makes it easier to grasp that the act of watching snow and window (i.e. dealing with the poem) is metaphorically the same as watching the contemplating ‘I’. By illustrating this technique as the mind’s eye-contact with itself, one can visualise in a concrete form the abstract processes of introspection, self-discovery, and self-reflection.

We have related the image of snow to the organ of contemplation (the eye) and to the medium of imaginative thought (word). Synthesising word and eye, the image of snow can represent words about contemplation, self-reflecting words (words about words), and self-reflecting eyes (eyes looking into their own eyes, as an illustration of the self-exploration of the mind, and of the very act of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation). The association of snow with both the eye and the creative word is consistent with the basic organising principle of the text, the metaphorical synthesis of contemplation and the imaginative acts. The simultaneous presence and absence of the eye is in keeping with the poetic function of snow as a metaphor for both word and silence. The semantic pairs of eye-word and blindness-silence are inextricably intertwined throughout the poem, as we have seen in the hidden motif of the half-seeing, half-blind hand.

The image of white sparks, when compared to introspective eyes which both observe and are being observed, functions as a microstructural replica of the mirror-technique applied in the poem as a whole. Here we are dealing with a method of recursive embeddings of mirrors within mirrors, similar to the Chinese box-structure.169 This recursive repetition of the technique of reduplication is part of the meaning of the poem, since it highlights the act of self-reflection.

The correlation of snow and the eye may seem somewhat far-fetched until we link it to relevant intertexts. It has been mentioned in the second chapter that in the narrative context of Pasternak’s Зимняя ночь there is an associative link between the candle and the eye, and that the candle (like the flowers in Чехов’s Ozymandias) is a transformed reflection of the snowfall. Snow and candle are, then, watching each other as if they were two eyes, or two mirrors. The associative link between snow, candle, and the eye is consistent with the technique of double reflection, which involves the identity of the observer and the observed object.

More convincingly, one can relate Aygi’s Чее to Pasternak’s После переправа, where the snowflakes illuminating the darkness of the night are endowed with sight. Snow is depicted as the eye of the personified, feminine creative inspiration,170 that is to say, the inward eye of the poet, a symbol of his creative soul. Snow is, then, both outside and inside; it is both a concrete object of nature and a manifestation of the imaginative spirit. By using a window-mirror alternation, the poet portrays himself as he is looking through a window at the snowflakes, which appear as reflections of his inward eyes. These reflected inward eyes look back at him from the garden through the (looking) glass. (This is similar to the technique of twofold reflection applied in Hughes’s poem, where the fox’s eye is looking back into two eyes, which are watching it from behind a window.) The associative chain of snow - eye - mirror/window of the soul, which we have read into Aygi’s Чее in a somewhat arbitrary

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169 The self-referential technique of embedded mirror-structure is widely used in literature. Typical examples are Shakespeare’s Hamlet, Borges’s The Man on the Threshold, and Shelley’s Ozymandias. The technique of enclosing frames within frames is also used in visual art. For instance, Vermeer, the painter, painted a painter who is painting the painting in which he appears (The Artist’s Studio). Another example is an anonymous master’s caricature of an artist painting his own self-portrait (c. 1700, National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon).

170 Instead of snow or snowfall, which are masculine nouns in Russian, their metonymical substitute, winter, a feminine noun, is used in the poem as personified inspiration.
manner, is obviously applicable to the transformative, double mirror-technique in Pasternak’s *После перевода*. This poem was written in 1957, two years before Aygi’s *Снеег*. It is possible that there is an author-established link between the two poems, whether conscious or unintentional.171

When snow is used as a metaphor for imagination and its products, it is often related to traditional radiation images, such as the star, the candle, the window, the Sun, and also the inward eye. The symbol of the star can mediate between snow and the eye. The stars appear as the eyes of the night sky, and they are often compared to snow-crystals. Pasternak’s ‘white starlets’ (in *Снеег угод*) and Aygi’s ‘white sparks’ resemble the stars, the eyes of the night. The associative link between snowflakes, stars, and eyes gains support in an intertextual perspective, in which Pasternak’s *После перевода*, *Снеег угод*, Рождественская звезда, Aygi’s *Снеег*, Январь: с кутежем, В июне: совзвездие, Зима Гави-Магомеда, Альп, Robert Frost’s *Stars*, Emily Dickinson’s ‘They dropped like flakes’ (409), Wallace Stevens’s *Snow and Stars*, Ted Hughes’s *Snow*, Peder Eytin’s *The star looks*, and other poems are interrelated through their shared images, demonstrating what Bakhtin called ‘semantic convergence’. This hypothetical dialogue of poems can be extended to anonymous, mythological texts. As snow is associated with the creative word in poetry, so is the eye in mythology. Cirlot mentions that ‘the Egyptians defined the eye – or, rather the circle of the iris with the pupil as centre – as the “Sun in the mouth” (or creative word)’ (1971, 99).

When soundless objects, such as the eye, the Sun, ‘white stars’, or snow represent the creative word, they transcend themselves in that they manifest the co-existence of silence and word. The interdependence of these opposites can be correlated to the dynamic interaction of blindness and sight. Both binary oppositions characterise the threshold-experience of imaginative acts, and both are associated with dispersal images, such as light scattered in darkness, or little particles disseminated in the invisible, transparent air. In Aygi’s *Снеег*, the overlapping of dark background and white sparks illustrates the synthesis and reversibility of blindness and sight, and of silence and word. Blindness, closed eyes, sleep, and silence are associatively related to each other. Paradoxically, they can represent their apparent opposites, including inward vision, the awakening of inspiration, and the germinal stage of the creation of words. Similarly to Aygi’s *Снеег*, the interplay of closed eyes and inward sight is correlated to the interdependence of silence and word in a number of Paul Celan’s poems, most obviously perhaps in Erblinde (Go Blind):

Erblinde schon heute:  
die Wigkeit steht voller Augen –  
ertrinkt, was den Bildern hinweghalf  
über den Weg, den sie kamen,  
erlischt, was aus der Sprache  
fortnahm mit einer Geste,  
die du geschehn ließte wie  
den Tant zweier Worte aus lauter  
Herbst und Seide und Nichts.

(Go blind now, today:  
eternity also is full of eyes –  
in them  
drawn what helped images down  
the way they came,  
in them  
fades what took you out of language,  
lifted you out with a gesture  
which you allowed to happen like  
the dance of the words made of  
autumn and silk and nothingness.)172

In Celan’s poetry, which has many affinities with Aygi’s poetic thought, the images of snow (or ice) and inward eyes are often united, and associated with interior dialogue, and with the white silence of introspection. Snowflakes, or raindrops, which are also eyes, represent the co-existence of articulation and non-speaking, and of blindness and inward sight in *Augen* (Eyes), *Unen* (Below), *Schneebett* (Snow-bed), *Weiss und Leicht* (White and Light), and *Zuversicht* (Confidence). These poems, together with mythological intertexts and with Pasternak’s relevant works, can be linked to Aygi’s *Снеег*. By activating these intertexts, one is probably more willing to accept that the image of white sparks may represent the introspective soul, thus it can be associated with self-examining inward eyes, and with what the inward eyes see in the mirror-phase of imaginative acts. By bringing the images of the eye and mirror into the poem, it is easier to understand that the lyric persona can be one with the snowflakes, and, at the same time, he can see the snowflakes from an outside perspective.

The parallel between the images of snow and eye is an example of the meaning-generating and systematising potentials of intertextual reading. I am aware of the danger that this method can lead to the misinterpretation of the authorial intention and to a radical expansion of the meaning which is suggested by the poem as a self-contained unit. The

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171 Aygi is not only familiar with Pasternak’s poetry, but he was a friend of the older poet; they were neighbours in the writers’ village of Peredelkino. Some of Aygi’s poems are explicitly related to Pasternak, including Ночь первого снега, Утро в перелке, Предчувствие революции, and Пока.

The methods of image-construction and image-synthesis are comparable to the technique of condensation in dream-texts, a visual overlapping of two or more images.173 There is, however, a slight difference between condensation in dreams and these processes of intertextual imagination. Condensed dream images are more like multiple exposure photos, where two or more images are simultaneously present, as the eye is present in the candle in the narrative context of Pasternak’s Зимняя ночь, or as the star is present in the snowflake in Celan’s idem (‘white starlets’). Intertextually created visual metaphors are characterised by a flickering of presence and absence of one image in the other. The methods of image-construction and image synthesis have been employed throughout this work, for instance, in drawing parallels between the snowflake, the star, and the sun of the winter solstice, comparing the snowfall to mythological axial symbols, fusing two dictionary meanings of the words ‘leaf’ and ‘print’, and relating the window to the eye, to snow, to a looking glass, and to the page. Palimpsest-like mental images, like the window-page, manifest the imaginative act of creating visual metaphors. This process is a step towards what Frye considers as the highest level of the systematic view of literary symbols, the anagogic phase, where ‘the symbol is a monad, all symbols being united in a single, infinite and eternal verbal symbol’ (1990, 121). The synthesis of different images is also an example of how the silences of a text can be filled and turned into a mirror, in which one can observe the metaphor-making imaginative act.174

173 Here I am using the Freudian term, condensation, which, together with the technique of displacement, constitute the two major operations of symbolic dream-texts. These ‘visual’ techniques are analogous to the two major verbal tropes, metaphor and metonymy. These correspondences contributed to Jacques Lacan’s idea that ‘the unconscious is structured like a language’ (Lodge, 79-106). Intertextual condensation of images can, indeed, be related to the unconscious, since it is an imaginative operation.

174 The white mirror is a prominent example of intertextual image-construction. This mental image can be inferred from Celan’s, Aygi’s, and Dickinson’s poems. It can function as a reader-created intertextual connective, a visual metaphor for the word-creating silence of introspection. By employing the methods of image-creation and image-synthesis, one can read the symbols of white mirror, snow, and window into Celan’s Krisnall (Crysal), where these images do not appear as words, yet they dwell in-between the words and lines. It is especially relevant to employ these methods in Krisnall, since one of the themes of the poem is the imaginative act of using the ‘seventh’ sense to reach beyond the perceptible surface of reality, and reading meanings into silence. In affinity with Aygi’s Cnez, there is an implication in Krisnall that one can see more in words and images than meets the eye if one closes one’s bodily eyes and looks with one’s ‘deep-sighted’ inward eyes.
Apart from functioning as a metaphor for introspection, the image of white sparks can evoke many other associations. The ceaselessly whirling, sparkling snowfall appears as an incarnation of the poet’s immortal spiritual essence. The realm behind the closed eyes can thus represent the reader’s mental-spiritual interior, inhabited and illuminated by an internal bond is established between the poet and the reader. The reader’s empathic poet’s soul, becomes part of himself or herself. Through this profound interiorisation, an divide these two persons are blurred. The poem is, then, no longer an outward object of identification with the poet is a threshold situation whereby the boundaries which normally reader’s mental universe entails that the reader’s deep communication with the absent-yet-present poet overlap. 176 The assimilation of Snow in the reader’s mental universe entails that the reader’s deep communication with the absent-yet-present poet is also his or her interior dialogue. In the last three stanzas, the poet’s self-addressing voice and the reader’s voice addressing the absent-yet-present poet overlap.

The image of ceaseless snowfall is a ‘question mark’ at the end of Aygi’s poem. It has many possible associations. Apart from poetic immortality, it can represent poetic inspiration as an irresistible urge, which cannot be hindered or postponed. The perpetual snowfall can also symbolise time as an everlasting, irreversible flux. Another possible association is the endless repeatability and ever-growing richness of the poem. The bright snow which is still falling after the poem has come to an end can be a metaphor for the afterglow of imagination, the reverberation, or dissolution of words and their white shadows in memory. The final image of the poem, and is still whirling transparently when no more words are falling on the page. The semantic ambiguity of this image can be captured by the word ‘dissolution’. One of the dictionary meanings of this word is the termination of life, both in the sense that the body ceases to exist (vanishes, disintegrates, disappears from existence), and in the sense that the soul continues to exist (‘the dissolution of the soul from the body’). This metamorphosis is enacted at the end of the poem, when the white sparks become no longer visible for the corporeal eyes, yet they are still whirling inside. The disembodiment of white sparks takes place at the threshold moment when the words of the poem step into the realm of silence, and reverberate in that silence. This moment of transformation is referred to in the last line of Pasternak’s Czez wem as ‘неквестори писем’. In both poems, the final image represents an existential and an aesthetic border-situation, whose ambivalent nature can be arrested by
the word ‘dissolution’. At the final turning point of the poem, the words dissolve in the sense that they no longer fall on the page (they disappear, like the evanescent, melting snow), yet they don’t cease to exist because they are still there on the page, and they reverberate in memory. The echo of the poem is dissolving in the sense that it is being assimilated and absorbed in the mind.

At first sight, it may seem to be inconsistent with the self-referential lyric plot that at the end of the poem, when the words stop falling on the page, the perpetual movement of white sparks is emphasised. The poem seems to come to a standstill, yet it is still going on. There are many ways in which this apparent contradiction can be resolved. The final image (‘и кружатся белье искры, / и остановить их / я не могу’) is open to many interpretations. It may be an emblem of the poet’s awareness about the limitations of language. There are border-situations and other emotionally intense experiences which can never be arrested in language. Words are never enough for articulating the greatest mysteries, yet we need words because they can evoke that which cannot be expressed in language, and cannot be grasped by reason. That which is inexpressible and elusive can manifest itself in the silence which is created by words. The border-situation where word and silence, objective and subjective, outside and inside, movement and stillness, and other opposites co-exist in a paradoxical state of simultaneous balance and instability, is a unique quality, which manifests eternal ontological and epistemological enigmas. The perpetual, unlimited snowfall depicted at the borderline where the poem ends and returns to its beginning can be an emblem of the elusive nature of the self-reflecting mind and of the never-ending quest for meaning. The poem implies that the endless quest for meaning is meaningful, and that ‘the fairest thing we can experience is the mysterious’ (Albert Einstein). The inexhaustible semantic richness of the poetic text as an embodiment of the never-quite comprehensible, elusive imaginative mind is a prime example of multi-layered concealment. Perhaps the deepest knowledge is the knowledge about the limitations of knowledge. There are unfathomable, unthinkable, incomprehensible, inexplicable, and inexpressible mysteries at the heart of existence. At the crucial moments of profound understanding, things tend to turn into their opposites. As soon as something is crystallised, it dissolves, or deconstructs itself; it vanishes from sight, and thus evades our grasp.

At the end of Aygi’s poem, the closing of the eyes signals a transition whereby the seeing fingers become blind. Performing silence, the blind, inwardly seeing, clairvoyant hands can see that which cannot be seen, and they can grasp that which cannot be grasped. Everything which is not explicitly said in the poem exists in the traces of the blind fingers, in

the invisible snow, which is still falling, even now. The semantic plurality of the last lines is an integral part of the poem’s self-referentiality. The apparent inconsistency of finishing the poem with an image which implies the everlasting movement of words can be viewed as a deliberate abolishing of initiative, superficial self-allusiveness for the sake of a deeper, more genuine reflection of what is happening when ‘the words, after speech, reach into the silence’.

The following section from T. S. Eliot’s *Burnt Norton* (1977, 175) can be read as a poetic interpretation of the final image of Aygi’s *Cone*.

Words move, music moves
Only in time; but that which is only living
Can only die. Words, after speech, reach
Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
Can words or music reach
The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
Moves perpetually in its stillness.
Not the stillness of the violin, while the note lasts,
Not that only, but the co-existence,
Or say that the end precedes the beginning,
And the end and the beginning were always there
Before the beginning and after the end.
And all is always now.

Northrop Frye formulates similar thoughts in explicating the moment of entering the post-creational silence: ‘When a critic deals with a work of literature, the most natural thing for him to do is to freeze it, to ignore its movement in time and look at it as a completed pattern of words, with all its parts existing simultaneously’ (1963, 21). Arriving at the crossroad when the words enter silence, one can freeze the text, as if transforming rhythm into pattern. Similarly, when life, or a part of life, is accomplished, its seemingly random rhythm may crystallise in the form of a meaningful pattern.

The combination of temporal and spatial perception is a border-situation where chaos and order co-exist. There is a sense of chaos and uncertainty during the process of reading and in the course of life, because it is unpredictable what words or events will follow. As T. S. Eliot wrote in East Coker, ‘For the pattern is new in every moment / And every moment is a new and shocking / Valuation of all we have been’ (1977, 179). The semantic unity and integrity of life and of the literary text can only be perceived when they are looked at from a distance as accomplished wholes. One has to ‘freeze’ life and the text (at least for a moment) in order to see it as an ordered complexity.

The image of snowfall is a suitable visual analogue of the simultaneous mental grasp of what is successive in time (either in life or in a literary text). The snowflakes look alike, so the newly falling ones appear to be the same as the ones which have accomplished their
descent. In this sense, the snowflakes are ‘frozen’ in mid-air; they don’t seem to disappear. At the same time, they also move and escape from sight, because each one is a different crystal. They are, indeed, similar to poetic words, which are still there in memory while new ones are being written or read, and after the poem has reached its last turning point. The paradox that the snowflakes appear to be indistinguishable from each other yet each is a unique, ‘unrepeatable’ crystal reflects the observation that the snowfall is static and dynamic at the same time, like the threshold-moment when the rhythm of a work of literature is turning into a pattern. Due to this interplay of static and dynamic features, the snowfall is a suitable metaphor for the mental process of comprehending the text as a ‘frozen’, ‘completed pattern of words, with all parts existing simultaneously’ (Frye 1963, 21), and, at the same time, seeing it as an organic, kinetic semantic entity, which can never be brought to a static, frozen state. The simultaneity of perpetual motion and perpetual rest arises from a balancing of centripetal and centrifugal forces. The synthesis of stillness and movement is traditionally represented by the centre of the mandala, ‘the still point of the turning world’ (from T. S. Eliot’s *Burnt Norton*), which is consubstantial with the threshold, and with the meeting of end and beginning when the circle, the symbol of infinity, is completed. The synthesis of the opposites of stillness/movement, and end/beginning is enacted in the last lines of T. S. Eliot’s *East Coker*, which complements the synthesis of sound/silence and now/always in *Burnt Norton* (quoted before):

We must be still and still moving
Into another intensity
For a further union, a deeper communion
Through the dark cold and the empty desolation,
The wave cry, the wind cry, the vast waters
Of the petrel and the porpoise. In my end is my beginning. (from *East Coker*, Eliot 1977, 183)

When the reading and the writing of the literary text are accomplished, the work is seen as a whole, as if it were frozen, yet at this very moment it is no longer frozen because new semantic links are revealed when the parts are related to the whole. This movement is different from the continuity of writing and reading. In the light of the text as a whole, even distant parts can interact. Like snowflakes, they touch each other, and melt into each other. Paradoxically, in its frozen, holistic state, the text is perpetually changing, dissolving. In fact, this is a double paradox. At the very moment when the text is frozen, or crystallised, its parts start dissolving in each other, and when the text is thus dissolving, its essential dynamic and ambivalent features are crystallised. Crystallisation and dissolution are mutually interdependent features of snow, of the literary text, of imaginative perception, and of the final crossroad of life.

The never-changing, frozen appearance of the printed text conceals a dynamic semantic depth, which, being a reflection of the elusive nature of imagination, is impenetrable in the sense that it cannot be fully grasped or arrested. This kaleidoscopic perception involves the knowledge that uncertainty and inexplicability are essential features of genuinely deep imaginativeness. The dynamic cross-fertilisation of the text and the imaginative mind means that the text can never be captured as a static, frozen entity. What is reached for, escapes just before or at the very moment of grasping it, as a snowflake dissolves in one’s hand, or as the snowfall always changes its appearance, never coming to a standstill. Paradoxically, the last lines of the poem manage to capture the evanescent and the elusive by formulating figuratively the open-ended nature of the quest for meaning. The threshold experience of grasping the never quite graspable is comparable to the final stage of the archetypal quest, when the seeking hero arrives at a mystical centre, which is not a full stop at the end of the journey, but a question mark, epitomising the inherently ambivalent, enigmatic, and elusive nature of all genuinely deep human experience and knowledge. The reader’s journey in the landscape of the literary text can never end with a full stop. Perhaps the most we can achieve during our literary quests is to find the most relevant questions, which will never have definite answers. Figuratively speaking, we have to walk further and further into the impenetrable snowfall.

14. Traces of Pasternak’s Čoev obed

‘Lo, shining flowers upon my window-pane
The silver pencil of the winter draws’
(from *Winter*, by Robert Louis Stevenson)

The associative link between the paired images of snow-window and the threshold experience of imaginative acts is not immediately recognised in a close reading of Aygi’s Čoev. The activation of Ilyès’s *Uževi ablok* as a supplementary intertext can reinforce the implicit self-referentiality of Aygi’s poem. This intertextual interpretation retrospectively sheds light on the first part of the text, which we have neglected so far. The first seven lines of the poem (stanzas 1-3) are rather obscure. The images described in this part are seemingly incompatible with each other, and it is also difficult to integrate them with the more coherent second part (stanzas 4-10). The random transition from one set of images to the next gives the impression...
of semantic disarray and incomprehensibility in the first part of the poem. The very first image, in which snow, window, and flowers are juxtaposed, may seem to disturb the unity of the whole poem in a text-centred reading because the figure of flowers does not come up again in the text. This image may escape the reader’s notice during close reading as the result of a common selective strategy, whereby apparently merely ornamental details are overlooked. However, it is unlikely that the significant textual position of the first stanza is occupied by a disposable detail. Thus, the reader is compelled to treat the symbolic triad of snow-window-flowers as a sign of ‘a complementary intertext lying in wait somewhere’ (Riffaterre 1980, 626). The juxtaposition of snow, window, and flowers is a visual connective, which can mobilise many poems in which the same symbolic triad appears, including Pasternak’s Снег, витраж, цветы, Wallace Stevens’s The Poems of Our Climate, Robert Frost’s Wind and Window Flower, Louis MacNeice’s Snow, Robert Louis Stevenson’s Winter, Dezső Kosztolányi’s Szerencső, (Serenade), Valerii Briusov’s Весна and Aygi’s Повеление снега. From among these poems, Pasternak’s Снег витраж цветы seems to be the most revealing intertext since this poem has obvious affinities with the self-allusive meanings which we have inferred from the focused text with the help of Illyés’s poem. Whereas the communicative link between Aygi’s Снег and the Hungarian poem is hypothetical, one cannot decide whether the symbolic triad of snow-window-flowers as a visual trace of Снег витраж цветы in Aygi’s Снег is a deliberate authorial borrowing, a casual echo, or a hypothetical reader-created link. Aygi’s poem was written in 1959, two years after Pasternak’s Снег витраж цветы, and it could therefore be assumed that Aygi’s Снег витраж цветы portrays an intersubjective dialogue with Pasternak. Nevertheless, since there is no literal citation from Снег витраж цветы in Aygi’s Снег or other proof that Aygi had Pasternak’s poem in his mind when he wrote Снег, it is better to leave the question open, and regard the links between the two texts as examples of (re?)constructive intertextuality.

If one accepts that the symbolic triad in the first stanza of Aygi’s poem may be a conscious or unconscious allusion to Pasternak’s Снег витраж цветы, then one can integrate this image into the poem as a whole. The composite image of snow-window-flowers is a visual trace; it manifests both the presence and the absence of Pasternak’s Снег витраж цветы in the focused text. The symbolic triad brings with it meanings which have been attached to it in the intertext. In the light of Снег витраж цветы, the 1st stanza of Aygi’s poem can be read as a metaphorical condensation of the threshold experience of imaginative acts. This interpretation is in accordance with the self-referential feature of the latter part of the poem. In what follows, we will examine how Снег витраж цветы can help us to uncover the semantic richness and unity of the seemingly disconnected images of the first three stanzas of Aygi’s Снег.

15. Imminent snow, nearby snow, and close snow: on the threshold between pre-creational silence and articulation

‘Crystal on crystal until crystal clouds
Become an over-crystal out of ice,
Exhaling these creations of itself.

There is a sense in sounds beyond their meaning’
(from Pieces, by Wallace Stevens)

There are at least two possible interpretations of the phrase ‘ближний снег’ in the first line, since ‘ближний’ is both a spatial and a temporal concept. Accordingly, the 1st stanza has two, apparently incompatible meanings. When ‘ближний’ is treated as a spatial concept, the phrase ‘ближний снег’ means ‘nearby snow’. In this case, the 1st stanza, like the first stanza of Pasternak’s Снег цветы, describes the simultaneous presence of snow and flowers, an unusual concurrence of winter and summer, of inorganic and organic phenomena, of death and life, and other opposites. In this context, the 1st stanza describes the astonishment of the observer, for whom the flowers appear strange as they are juxtaposed to snow.

When ‘ближний’ is treated as a temporal concept, the phrase ‘ближний снег’ translates as ‘imminent snow’. This can refer to the moment before articulation, the pre-creational stage when snow has not yet appeared on the window-page. Paradoxically, the word ‘снег’ is already present in the phrase ‘ближний снег’ (‘imminent snow’), which can allude to the not-yet present snow, i.e. the not-yet articulated words, and not-yet manifest intratextual silences. This paradox is a precise verbal manifestation of the state just before articulation, when the pre-creational silence is pregnant with words and poetic thoughts. When ‘ближний снег’ is read as ‘imminent snow’, one may go as far as to interpret the 1st stanza as a description of an ambivalent situation when the flowers appear or even ‘feel’ strange as they ‘sense’ the presence of the not-yet-falling, imminent snow. In this context, the flowers have an active function, which is in keeping with Снег цветы, where the personified geraniums represent the poet and the reader. By transferring the meta-poetic meanings of the images of snow and flowers from Снег витраж цветы to Aygi’s poem, one can interpret the first stanza either as a metaphorical portrayal of the ongoing acts of writing and reading (in this case, ‘ближний’ is read as a spatial concept), or as a metaphorical representation of the moment just before the burst of creative energies (in this case, ‘ближний’ is read as a temporal concept).

These apparently incompatible interpretations can be reconciled by comparing the poem to Pasternak’s Зима приближается and После перерыва. In these poems, the principle of retrospective self-reflection is employed: both poems are already being written
while the poet depicts the rise of inspiration (symbolised by winter and snow), or reports that
he is just about to start writing. In both texts, snowfall is associated with creative imagination.
The 1st stanza of Aygi’s Cnee is comparable to these poems since it portrays both the pre-
creational state and the creative process, a paradoxical oscillation of silence and articulation,
which results from the interplay of two lexical meanings of the word ʽблизкийʼ.

Apart from its temporal and spatial meanings, the word ʽблизкийʼ designates intimacy, as, for instance, in the phrase ʽблизкий другʼ (ʽclose friendʼ). In this sense, ʽблизкий снегʼ (ʽclose snowʼ) can be a metaphor for the addressee, the poet’s inward interlocutor, perhaps the personified poetic inspiration, who is so close that he or she is part of
the poet, as the invisible, imminent snow is a reflection of the flowers’ minds.

It is consistent with the poem’s self-referentiality that the semantically ambiguous
phrase ʽблизкий снегʼ (ʽimminent/nearby/close snowʼ) occurs in the first stanza, whose
textual position manifests the transitory state when the pre-creational silence is still ‘echoing’
in the first words and intratextual silences.177 The different meanings of ʽблизкий снегʼ refer
to three stages of an approaching movement: ‘imminent snow’ is the stage of void full with
the negative presence of snow, ‘nearby snow’ refers to the stage when snow is already
present, but it is divided from the observer, and, finally, ‘close snow’ implies a thresholdsituation, a partial interiorisation of snow, as the common phrase ‘close friend’ implies that
this friend has a place in the speaker’s heart. The fact that the context of the poem allows
three different meanings of ʽблизкийʼ to co-exist is reliant upon the phrase ʽблизкий снегʼ functioning as a compression of an approaching movement, which involves the crucial
moment of arriving at a boundary.

The image of imminent/nearby/close snow is comparable to the approaching fox in
Hughes’s poem. Both images represent the ongoing process whereby a lyric thought is taking
shape, coming closer and closer to the introspective observer, and its mirror-effect is
becoming more and more ‘visible’ for the mind’s eye. A notable difference between the two
images is that the fox has very strong negative connotations (it is not only a cunning predator,
but it is described to have a disturbing sharp, hot stink), whereas the snowfall is associated
with cleanliness and purity.

The starting image of Aygi’s Cnee, observation of approaching snow from behind a
window, is comparable to the first image of his poem Понедельник,

о мы будем спокойны с тобой
всегда в земных ночи
они будут казаться чернее
от близкого движения метелей

Similarly to Cnee, we can interpret the image of approaching snow as a metaphor for the
transitory state between pre-creational silence and poetic articulation. This interpretation
sheds light on the next stanza, where there is a bizarre comparison between a ʽscar on the
cobble stoneʼ (ʽшрам на бульяжникеʼ) and Beethoven’s death-mask:

всё мы знаем и понимаем
что там перед домом шрам на бульяжнике
напоминает маску
с лица Бетховена

The mask is directly related to the image of the mould, which evokes associations with all
sorts of negative presence, such as the pre-creational silence, which is filled with
inexpressible thoughts and with the inaudible presence of the poem.178

In the first stanza of Aygi’s Cnee, the approaching snow is related to the flowers as the
stretching flowers are related to the snow in the first stanza of Pasternak’s Cnee wdom. Pasternak’s poem, where the flowers are reaching for the snow, and Aygi’s poem, where the
snowfall is approaching towards the flowers, complement each other. The superimposition of
the two images results in a scene of mutual attraction. The flowers stretching towards the
snow in Cnee wdom are comparable to the distant hands reaching towards the snow in Aygi’s
poem. It may be due to this parallel that the word ‘hand’ is used in plural (ʽрукиʼ). The
multiplication of the poet’s writing hand can be a hidden allusion to the limitations of poetic
expression. Put very simply, there are never enough hands to grasp the whole snowfall.

177 Aygi often deliberately blurs the boundary between the silence preceding the creative act and the first
articulated words by means of starting the poem with a co-ordinating conjunction, such as ‘and’ or ‘but’. This
technique evokes the sense that the poem is a circle (a symbol of infinity), which has no beginning and no end:
[...] сложен вопрос о начале и (также д), не только в начале стихотворения, но и во ʽвнутреннихʼ
строфах. [...] Думал, что это вызывает – более интуитивно, чем сознательно – одним жизненным (даже
можно было бы сказать ʽинстинктивноʼ) – дедуктивного такого видения, что иначе как бы в а ʽне началосьʼ, в не
начинаетсяʼ, в ʽуже естьʼ, ʽмы давно уже в нейʼ. И также: чтобы ʽв органичеVемʼ стихотворение одно
переходило в другое как бы без признаков этого ʽпереходаʼ (Aygi 1975, 196).

178 In The Guests of Reality: Mandelstam and Anamnesis (1994), Leon Burnett shows that the poetic image of
the mould functions as a metaphor for the ʽas yet inarticulate creative wordʼ in Mandelstam’s works. He draws a
parallel between Mandelstam’s, Maksimilian Voloshin’s, and Nikolai Gumilev’s treatment of the image of the
mould (pp 156-157). By reference to Mandelstam’s Слово и культура и Шум времени, the author points out that
the Russian words ʽсловоʼ and ʽсловаʼ are interrelated not just phonetically, but metaphorically as well. This
idea supports our argument that the pre-creational silence is comparable to a mould, which contains the cast
invisibility, and it is also comparable to blindness which is inward sight in disguise. In Mandelstam’s poem ʽЖ
слово разоблаченоʼ, the pre-creational and post-creational silence are metaphorically related to the inseparable unity
of blindness and inward sight (the image of seeing fingers appears in the poem), and to various containers (such
as the dried-up river-bed, and the empty boat) which imply the negative presence of the contained.
Similarly, the flowers can never touch the snowflakes directly, not even when they stretch as far as the level of the transparent window. The process whereby the flowers and the snowfall are coming close to each other and meet on the level of the window can represent the cognitive process of crystallisation, whereby a poem or a thought emerges from silence and is captured on the window-page. The window, which is a crystalline material, functions as a spatio-temporal metaphor for the self-deconstructing nature of crystallisation. The meeting of flowers (hands) and snow on the window is always just a partial and a momentary crystallisation, because the snowfall as a whole can never be reached at the level of the window. Some snow-crystals are caught by the distant hands, but there are many more out there which can never be grasped and arrested on the window-page. The image of the transparent window dividing and connecting the flowers (hands) and snowflakes functions as a poetic concentration of the realisation that genuinely deep poetic thoughts and concepts can never be captured wholly and directly, only through the mediation of metaphors, and sometimes they can never be captured at all; they can only be evoked by the presence of silence.

16. Sequential self-allusiveness as a lyric plot

'Szélfelvezető ablak miligöt fehér
píhát, elolvadt kavicsok kavarognak.
 a padlón nő a hó, mint papírok.
mosolyog a gyönyörű dolvasatlan.'
(from Két partiő, by Zsuzsa Beney)179

It is in accordance with the self-referentiality of the text that the very first stanza conveys the sense of an ambivalent co-occurrence of pre-creational silence and creative word. This stanza is the beginning of a lyric plot about the creative history of the text embedded in the text itself. First, the appearance of Snow (both as a natural object and a metaphorical image of the poem) is described, then the ongoing imaginative processes of contemplation and interiorisation are portrayed, and finally the never-ending quality of Snow and the after-life of its author are depicted. The self-referentiality of the poem follows a logical, apparently linear, temporal process. The same device is used in the focused texts of the previous chapters. In Čnez idem, the thickening of snowfall is analogous to the accumulation of the words of the poem, and the last line, ‘непересипка прозопор’ alludes to the final turning point, when ‘the end precedes the beginning’ (T. S. Eliot, Burnt Norton). The Thought-Fox depicts the continuous process of writing from the rise of thoughts, through the leaving of traces on the snow-white page, to the moment of completion, when ‘the page is printed’. Illyés’s Újévi ablak ends with the phrase ‘halál tiszta szó’ (‘death-clean word’), which designates the completion of the poem and of the cycle of life.

The technique of sequential self-allusiveness is more hidden in Aygi’s poem than in the previously examined texts. Relying on Pasternak’s and Illyés’s poems as potential intertexts, we have found that the ongoing contact with the text is one of the themes of Aygi’s poem. The first stanza portrays the first stage of the creative act. Accordingly, the second stanza is concerned with the problem of articulation; it depicts the poet’s effort to find words which could express his thoughts, as if he were still in the stage just before writing or speaking. In this stanza, the oscillation of silence and word is explicitly thematised:

Ты улыбнись мне хотя бы за то,
что не говорю я слова,
все что тебе я могу говорить;

(stanza 2)

чтобы ты мог мне сказать,
что я говорю, чтобы ты знал,
все, что я могу сказать.

(stanza 3, line 7)

The 2nd stanza can be interpreted as the poet’s half-conscious remark about the limitations of language, and about his experience that normally, there are inexpressible meanings lurking among articulated words. What is explicitly said and understood in poetry usually contains deeper implicit issues which are incomprehensible, or even unthinkable, for the rational mind. By selecting and combining words, the poet also creates unspoken meanings, which take the form of silence. Thus words evoke the inexpressible.

If the poem is read as a self-reflective account of the creative act, then the anonymous addressee of the lines quoted above can be the inward interlocutor of the poet, or the hypothetical reader, both of whom are waiting for the poem to start, and, paradoxically, they are already ‘listening’ to the poet’s voice. If the first two stanzas are interpreted as descriptions of the pre-creational stage of searching for words, then it is the third stanza (line 7) where the poem within the poem actually starts. This stanza is preceded by a colon, thus, it appears as a quotation of the poet’s first articulated words. Accordingly, the full presence of snow is reported in this line, whereas in the 1st stanza it is not clear whether snow is present (‘nearby snow’) or absent (‘imminent snow’), or its presence is embedded in its absence (‘close snow’). The juxtaposition of the images of chair, snow, eyelashes, lamp (‘стул, снег, ресницы, лампа’) may be a fragmentary description of what the poet observes around him during or before the act of writing. The word ‘ресницы’ may allude to the poet’s half-closed
eyes, his transitory state between waking and sleep, reality and imagination, outward and inward contemplation, or life and death. This interpretation is in keeping with the 9th stanza, where the closing of eyes represents the accomplishment of transformation and interiorisation.

The 3rd stanza is introduced by a line which concerns the limitations of language and human understanding: ‘не говорю я слова, / которые никогда не пойму’). There are two affirmative sentences hidden in the negative form of this statement: (1) ‘I speak only those words which I understand’, and (2) ‘I am performing the act of non-speaking, thereby evoking that which I shall never understand’. Both paraphrases suggest that the speaker of the poem is aware that there are certain phenomena which are not understandable for ordinary consciousness, and not expressible directly, or not expressible at all. There are at least two possible interpretations of the 3rd stanza, as suggested by the negative sentence which introduces it: (1) The spoken words ‘стуа, снег, ресницы, лампа’ can refer to things which the poet ‘understands’, either in their literal, or allegorical-metaphorical sense, or both. In this case, the four images appear as an account of the poet’s changing perspective in the initial stage of the creative act, when, through half-closed eyes, he is observing now the snow outdoors, now the objects around him indoors, which are parts of physical reality, and which may function as allegorical substitutes of concrete inward meanings. (2) It is possible to shift attention from what the poet says, sees, and understands to what he can never articulate, never see, and never fully understand, only evoke by the obscurity of poetic language. By saying words, the poet communicates more than what they mean in their lexical sense, and more than what they represent allegorically. In the context of the poem as a whole, snow in line 7 can take up retrospectively those obscure, never-quite understandable meanings which accrue to it later in the text. It is, then, relevant to treat the image of snow in line 7 as an anticipation of intangible concepts which lurk in the words and silences of the poem. The poet communicates not only with the words on the page, but also with the silent gaps around the words, that is to say, with the whiteness of the page. The line ‘стуа, снег, ресницы, лампа’ thus can be read as the self-portrayal of the poet, who is sitting at a lamp-lit page, which is being covered with the words and blanks of the poem Snow. Looking at the window-page in a transitory state, through the curtain of eye-lashes, the poet’s half-seeing, half-blind hand captures the word ‘snow’ both in its graspable and ungraspable meanings, that is to say, he writes both word and silence.

In the initial stage of the creative process portrayed in line 7, the image of snow has several potential poetic functions: (1) it can be a referential sign, (2) it can function as an allegorical analogue or metaphorical substitute of concrete poetic meanings which have already taken shape in the poet’s mind, (3) or it can be a referential sign in the process of transformation, gradually acquiring poetic meanings. In the latter case, snow is not a ready-made metaphor, but an external stimulus for imaginative reflection. The overlapping of these poetic functions of snow manifests the complexity of the metaphor-making process. Here we are dealing with the question as to whether the concrete image precedes the idea, or the idea precedes the image. It is possible that thought is prior to the image. In this case the image is a mere allegorical illustration of a pre-existing idea. It is also possible that the image comes first, then it evokes human meanings. However, this relation of cause and effect is reversible. Often, the reason why an image attracts the poet’s attention is that, unbeknown to his conscious mind, an inward meaning, or an unsolvable question has already taken shape in his unconscious, which later he may recognise in the chosen image. The poetic image can function as both the source and the product of imaginative thought. The treatment of snow in Aygi’s poem exhibits this reversibility of cause and effect. The semantic richness of snow manifests the metaphor-making process and the mirror-phase of transformation, whereby the external world is interiorised, and the internal world is projected onto outward reality.

After the portrayal of the initial stage of imaginative acts in the first three stanzas, the creative history of the poem continues with self-allusive descriptions of the ongoing processes of writing and reading, which are characterised by an oscillation of outward and inward contemplation. The last stanza depicts the unfinalisability and vitality of the text, and the open-ended process of interpretation. When the poem is accomplished, its units start to interact, and new relations are established retrospectively. As the units of the text dissolve in each other, new meanings are crystallised, new obscurities are generated, and new questions arise. The accomplishment of the imaginative act is the beginning of a dynamic, never-ending contact between the parts and the whole in the hermeneutical circle. Once Snow has settled on the window-page, it appears to be frozen, crystallised, yet in this accomplished state the white
sparks are still whirling invisibly, without ever coming to a standstill. The analysis of the poem can never be completed, because the text is continuously changing as more details are scrutinised and integrated into the whole, and as more intertexts are activated. One can also multiply meanings by taking into consideration other readers' interpretations. Every reader has his or her own repertoire of poems and his or her unique mental universe, which he or she can activate to fill gaps in a text. Therefore, the variety of potential intertextual relations is infinite.

17. Traces of Pasternak's Зимняя ночь

"Слетались холодъ со двора
К оконной рамь.
Метель лепла на стекле
Кружки и стежки."

(from Pasternak's Зимняя ночь)

In investigating how different readers respond to Aygi's Снег, I found that the poem reminded some of the informants of Pasternak's Зимняя ночь. It is, then, instructive to take up these intertextual associations, and examine the potential links between the two texts in detail. Pasternak's Снег andet can mediate between these poems since it is a relevant intertext of Aygi's poem, and it is a twin-poem of Зимняя ночь. Each of these texts is based on a composite metaphor of snow outdoors, a radiation image (flowers or candle) indoors, and a window between these realms. A few readers suggested that the phrase 'оконные рамы' in Aygi's Снег may be a verbal echo from Pasternak's Зимняя ночь. As an intertextual trace, 'оконные рамы' brings with it relevant associations from its immediate poetic context (Зимняя ночь), and from its wider narrative context (Доктор Живаго). The lines 'Слетались холодъ со двора / К оконной рамь' from Зимняя ночь and the lines 'и оконные рамы / будто вырезаны из белой бумаги' from Снег complement and cross-fertilise each other on a metaphorical level. This 'intertextual shuttle' supports the relevance of associating the latent mirror-technique which unites the indoor lamp and the outdoor lamp-posts. The image of snowfall around lamp-posts. Snow and lamp also appear together in the 3rd stanza, where snow is listed among indoor objects, such as chair, lamp, and eyelashes. A comparison with the relevant section of Доктор Живаго suggests that the juxtaposition of snow and lamp in the 3rd stanza may be a hidden allegory of the lamp-lit written or unwritten page. In the 6th stanza, snow and lamp appear in the outdoor world, perhaps as a transformed reflection of the lamp-lit page. The lamp, which is a radiation image, and a configuration of the gazing candle in Доктор Живаго, may be a metaphorical substitute of the contemplating eye. The indoor lamp can be an analogue of the bodily eye, which is fixed on the snow falling on the page or on the window, whereas the outdoor lamps may represent the mind's far-sighted eyes, which can see beyond the concrete reality of the page and the snowfall. Here we are dealing with the technique of two-directional contemplation, whereby the mind's eye is watching itself in what the corporeal eye sees in the outside world.

The self-allusive portrayal of the writing of Снег is comparable to the narrative description of the writing of Зимняя ночь. Similarly to the speaker of Снег, Zhivago is looking at his indoor surroundings, then outside at the snowy scenery, and makes a metaphorical link between the indoor and outdoor objects: the lamp-lit ink and yellow paper on the poet's desk appear as indoor reflections of the moonlit blueish, yellowish snow (part 8 in chapter XIV). It is possible that the same transformative mirror-technique is used in Aygi's poem in a more concealed and condensed form. The 6th stanza describes snowfall around lamp-posts. Snow and lamp also appear together in the 3rd stanza, where snow is listed among indoor objects, such as chair, lamp, and eyelashes. A comparison with the relevant section of Доктор Живаго suggests that the juxtaposition of snow and lamp in the 3rd stanza may be a hidden allegory of the lamp-lit written or unwritten page. In the 6th stanza, snow and lamp appear in the outdoor world, perhaps as a transformed reflection of the lamp-lit page. The lamp, which is a radiation image, and a configuration of the gazing candle in Доктор Живаго, may be a metaphorical substitute of the contemplating eye. The indoor lamp can be an analogue of the bodily eye, which is fixed on the snow falling on the page or on the window, whereas the outdoor lamps may represent the mind's far-sighted eyes, which can see beyond the concrete reality of the page and the snowfall. Here we are dealing with the technique of two-directional contemplation, whereby the mind's eye is watching itself in what the corporeal eye sees in the outside world.

The latent mirror-technique which unites the indoor lamp and the outdoor lamp-posts can be interpreted as a poetic compression of the common imaginative experience that the material and spiritual worlds flow into each other when the mind's eye sheds light on what the bodily eyes see. At first, it may seem to be inconsistent with the latent mirror-technique that there are several lamp-posts outdoors, whereas there is only a single lamp indoors. One way of integrating this apparent inconsistency into the semantic scope of the poem is to interpret it as a visual expression of the idea that the mind's eye(s) can see more than the bodily eye. By objectifying the corporeal and the inward eyes as parts of the poem's imagery, the act of contemplation is thematised, and the contemplation of the act of contemplation is made
possible. This is consistent with the recursive mirror-technique, and with the technique of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation, which are central features of Aygi’s Cnee and its intertexts.

18. Lamp-posts ‘watching’ the snowfall: Aygi’s Покой as a possible subtext

“The sky clears
And the moon and the snow
Are one colour.”
(Segeta-Ni)

White
Its countenance, like the whiteness of bright snow.
Its plumes are as feathers of sunny frost,
Its limbs gleam white, through the wind-flowing folds
Of its white robe, woof of aetherial pearl.
Its hair is white, - the brightness of white light.”
(from Promethius Unbound, by P. B. Shelley)

The shared mirror-technique of Aygi’s Cnee and the narrative context of Зимняя ночь suggests that the image of lamp-posts in the 6th stanza of Aygi’s poem is not merely a decorative element. If we treat the image of lit up snow as a visual connective between the two texts, then we can endow the 6th stanza of Aygi’s poem with a metaphorical function. In the narrative context of Зимняя ночь, there are various radiation images which appear as sources of light in the dark snowy night. The moon illuminating the snow appears as a transformed mirror-image, or synchronistic configuration, of the lamp whose light falls on the pages on the poet’s desk. The lamp is analogous with the candle, the candle with the contemplating poetic eye, and also with snow. The metaphorical relation between candle (and its configurations, the eye, the lamp, and the moon) and snow implies the mutual reflection of the seer (candle, eye, lamp, moon) and the seen (snow). If one transfers the associative link between lamp, eye, and snow from the narrative context of Зимняя ночь to the 6th stanza of Aygi’s Cnee, then the motif of lamp-posts comes to be a transformed mirror-image of the contemplating poetic eye, which, by looking at snow, is also looking into itself, as if into the mirror of the soul. The associative link between lamp and eye is based on the concept of radiation. During the act of imaginative contemplation, the eye is more like a lamp, shedding new light (the light of the mind) on the observed object, which can be the reflection of the observer.

The sight of snow stimulates the observer to embark on an inward journey in two temporal directions, backward to childhood, and forward, to reach the time beyond life. The sight of several lamp-posts along a road can be a metaphor for the mental act of retrospectively shedding light on life’s journey. This is in keeping with the technique of fusing different layers of time.

The application of the Pasternakian associations between lamp, eye, and snow to the 6th stanza of Aygi’s poem may appear far-fetched until we relate this stanza to another poem. Aygi’s Покой (written in 1958, not long before Сnee) seems to be a relevant subtext because in this poem the image of lamp-post is personified and identified with the introspective poet, who, by looking at snow, is mentally involved in his past, present, and future. Compare the relevant sections of Cnee and Покой:

а там, за ним [за оконными рамами],
около фонаря,
кружится снег
с самого нашего детства.
И будет кружиться, пока на земле
тебя вспомнят не с тобой говорит. (from Aygi’s Сnee)

в дальше на тропинке — о ты ведь знаешь? — светится снег
приглушенно и густо
снег, засыпанный кем-то
в моем детстве
контрольные бумаги!
и перед домом горит тот самый
знаменитый фонарь,
который собирается выйти в отставку
и устало светит на перекрестке,
вспоминает в последний раз свою молодость. (from Aygi’s Покой)

Both poems encompass the whole life cycle, from childhood to death, and beyond death. In this, they are comparable to Ilyés’s poem, which manifests the cycle of life from the first to the last breath, with a strong implication that the death-clean words continue to exist as transformed reflections of self-observing eyes.

180 The moon is traditionally associated with the all-seeing and all-knowing eye (See Jung, Collected Works vol. 14, p. 32., reference to Roscher, W. H. (ed.) Ausführliches Lexicon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie (Leipzig and Berlin, 1884-1937, vol. II, col. 3138)). The moon as an image of the omniscient eye is comparable to the candle, which represents the creative eye in Зимняя ночь and in its narrative context. As the boundary between the candle and snow is blurred in the poem, so it is between the moon and snow in the epigraphs of this section. When these images are brought together, they come to represent the identity of the observer (moon or candle) and the observed object (snow).

181 This interpretation is consistent with the argument developed earlier that the snowflakes appear as transformed reflections of self-observing eyes.
manifestations of poetic immortality. Each poem highlights the experience of being on the threshold between life and death, when the whole of life is re-experienced in memory, and continues with the snowfall.

In *Cnez*, the poet speaks about ‘our childhood’, which is both different from and similar to the expression used in *Pokoa*, ‘someone in my childhood’. Both expressions imply a long-lasting acquaintance and an intimate relationship, either with another person, or with the poet’s childhood self, who is both the same and different from his adult self. In Aygi’s poetry, childhood innocence and the pure white poetic soul are often intermingled.182 This synthesis is represented by the image of snow in *Cnez* and *Pokoa*. The poet, objectified as a lamp-post (or lamp-posts), is watching the snowfall, which is a transfigurative reflection of his childhood self and his creative spirit.

In *Pokoa*, the personified lamp-post is in a spatio-temporal threshold-situation: it is ‘looking at’ a cross-road, which is a conventional symbol for turning points on life’s journey (often used by Pasternak), and, accordingly, it is on the verge of life and death, recollecting its youth and preparing to ‘retire’. The threshold situation of the lamp-post strongly resembles the transitory state of the introspective lyric persona in *Cnez*.

The validity of linking Pasternak’s radiation images to the 6th stanza of Aygi’s *Cnez* is demonstrated by *Pokoa*, where there is an obvious author-established dialogue with Pasternak, a quotation from *Eve Hen* (‘Cни, царца Спирты’). This quotation confirms that Pasternak’s poetic thought permeates *Pokoa*, and its companion-poem, *Cnez*.

Aygi’s *Pokoa*, Pasternak’s *Cnez udeh*, and the narrative context of Зимняя ночь can serve as supplementary intertexts of Aygi’s *Cnez*. These intertexts reveal that the metaphorical function of the image of lamp-posts is equivalent with that of the flowers. The lamp-posts outdoors and the flowers indoors appear as transformed reflections of each other; they function as personified images, that is to say, objectified forms of the contemplative lyric persona, who, in watching the snow, is watching the words on the page, and introspectively observing his mind. The lamp-posts and flowers can also represent the reader, who, in watching the snow on the window-page, is watching an imaginary snowfall, and also looking inwards into the poet’s and into his or her own mind. In Aygi’s *Cnez* and in its intertexts, snow is lit up by (i.e. it is watched by) various radial figures, including lamp-posts, flowers, the moon, a desk-lamp, and a gazing candle. All these images are configurations of reflecting eyes, thus they can represent the act of simultaneously outward and inward contemplation.

The radial symbols of flowers and lamp-posts in *Cnez* appear as objectified observers of *Snow*, metaphorical representations of the poet and the reader within the text. At the same time, they are observed by the poet and the reader from outside the text. By looking at the flowers and the lamp-post, the poet and reader are watching themselves in the act of twodirectional contemplation, in the mirror of the text, during the process of imaginative writing and reading. This reduplication of the act of two-directional contemplation highlights the theme of imaginative acts and the self-referential nature of the text. The same technique is used in the focused texts of the previous chapters. Aygi’s *Cnez* is not merely a thematic parallel of the poems analysed. Most of these poems are woven into the texture of *Cnez* as intertextual traces, therefore, the meta-poetic function of Aygi’s poem is more complex than self-allusiveness. By pointing to itself, the poem also points to its intertexts, and to the many-voiced dialogue with these intertexts. Contemplation of snowfall is, then, not only a metaphor for the writing and reading of *Snow*, but also for the intertextual adventure of both the poet and the reader.

19. Complexity of meta-poetic meanings

1. the listener, who listens in the snow,
And, nothing himself, beholds
Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is.
(from Wallace Stevens’s *The Snow Man*)

One can distinguish three main aspects of the meta-poetic function of Aygi’s *Cnez*. (1) We are dealing with ‘text-centred self-referentiality’ when we read the text as a self-enclosed verbal structure, a poem about itself, and a mirror in front of the poet and the reader. (2) We can also read *Cnez* as a meta-text, a poem about its prototexts. For example, the symbolic triad of snow-window-flowers in *Cnez* can function as a visual allusion, or a response, to *Cnez udeh*. *Cnez* thus can be read as a mirror reflecting the creation and reception of *Cnez udeh*. Put very simply, the flowers in *Cnez* may represent Pasternak in the act of writing *Cnez udeh*, and Aygi in the act of reading Pasternak’s work. The lyric dialogue of these poet-friends may be one of the themes of *Cnez*. The following lines can be read as Aygi’s words to Pasternak, assuring the absent-yet-present poet-friend of his poetic after-life:

182 See the following poems: Зимна: в тишині дня, Сніг в грудині, Покоя – до озера чистий, Павильон снігу, К міцній сніговій, З просвітнім у душі.
(3) *Cnie* can also function as an intertextually self-referential work, a poem reflecting its own dialogical resonances, portraying the poet at the act of resurrecting other poetic voices, and the reader at the act of recognising echoes of other works in the focused text. In this perspective, the anonymous addressee can be Pasternak, Illyés, or Celan, or any other poet whose work is a relevant intertext. The 8th stanza (quoted above) thematises Aygi’s lyric dialogues with other poets, and the reader’s recollection of other poetic voices during his or her engagement with Aygi’s *Cnie*. Through authorial and the reader-created intertextual dialogues, the authors of intertexts are remembered and immortalised.

At first, the idea that the poem thematises the act of rewriting other texts may seem to be too technical, alien from its lyrical quality. One way of integrating this theme into the emotional atmosphere of the poem is to think of intertextual dialogue as an expression of a mental-spiritual kinship with a poetic soul-mate. Such a spiritual bond can be more intimate than ordinary friendship because it reaches into the deep strata of the soul, and beyond the barriers of space and time. Fellow spirits mutually understand each other’s innermost essence even if they don’t know each other personally. Empathic understanding of one poet by another, or of a poet by a reader, is based on their shared inward experiences and mental attitudes. To understand a poet deeply requires one’s whole personality. Through an intense spiritual involvement in a poem, the reader can grasp something of the poet’s inner essence, and this seems to be a mutual relation, even if the poet is dead. This virtual deep-communication with someone who can only be remembered is one of the potential themes of *Cnie*.

In the context of intertextual self-referentiality, the closing lines (‘и кружится светлая искра, / и остановить их / я не могу’) can refer to an ever-expanding intertextual landscape, and to the after-life of poets whose voices are resurrected in dialogues.

The activation of various intertexts allowed us to transform the text-centred self-allusiveness of Aygi’s poem into a more complex, intertextual self-referentiality. Pasternak’s *Cnie* and *Зимняя ночь*, where the theme of imaginative acts is interwoven with the theme of love, encourage us to further expand the semantic scope of Aygi’s *Cnie* by reading it as a love poem. The validity of this intertextual link can be supported by Aygi’s *Пока*, which is an intermediary text between *Cnie* and Pasternak’s poetic world. *Пока* contains echoes of *Cnie*, and a deliberate allusion to Pasternak’s poem *Евнё*.

Aygi’s *Cnie* is open to the theme of imaginative act as well as to the theme of love, but none of these subject matters dominate over the other, and none of them are clearly expressed. The word ‘рассыпь’ is more evocative of a woman figure than of the poet’s half-closed eyes, although the latter interpretation is also suitable when it is integrated in to the meta-poetic scope of the poem. The anonymous addressee can be identified with the poet’s beloved. In affinity with Pasternak’s poetic thought, there is a latent associative link between the addressed woman and snow in Aygi’s poem. The 8th stanza reveals that snowfall is a manifestation of the after-life of the addressee:

И будет кружиться [снег], пока на земле тебя вспомнят и с тобой говорят.

In *Пока*, the lyric persona is actually speaking to the absent woman addressee on a snowy night:

о дай мне думать
о чем-то ярком и неразгаданном тайнстве
о чуде окна распахиваемого
вдруг среди разговора
когда забывало о чем говорил
и о чем было странно
утомляющее вспоминанье плакать
и склонившись к тебе говорить
слова от которых глаза в темноте
начинают плавно блестеть:

'семь
царица Спарты'
In this poem, the opened window through which the snowfall enters the room symbolises the contact between the poet and the absent-yet-present addressee. Here we are dealing with a reversal of the conventional perception of the internal world as a feminine space, and the external world as a masculine space. The same reversal is taking place in Czce, where the complementary binary opposition of woman and man is comparable to the juxtaposition of outdoor snow and indoor flowers. The meta-poetic function of the image of flowers as an objectification of the poet can be maintained when the text is read as a love poem and snow is associated with the poet’s beloved. As snow makes the flowers appear or feel strange, so the addressed woman makes the poet confused, speechless:

От близкого снега
цветы на подоконнике страны.
Ты улыбнись мне хотя бы за то,
что не говорю я слова,
которые никогда не пойду.
Все что тебе я могу говорить:
студ, снег, росинки, лампа.

It cannot be decided whether the addressee is physically present, or her negative presence embodied in her absence inhabits the poet’s mind. This is consistent with the semantic ambiguity of the phrase ‘близкий снег’ (‘nearby/imminent/close snow’). The last three stanzas describe the absence of the addressee, who, however, is eternally present in the poet’s memory and in his poems, that is to say, in the form of snow. Put very simply, by performing Snow on the window-page, the poet’s half-seeing, half-blind hand immortalises his beloved as he actually brings about and shapes her negative presence.

To read Czce as a love poem is not alien from its self-referentiality. In fact, these themes are almost inseparably interwoven. The anonymous addressee can be identified with the personified inspiration, who is generally (but not always) a female figure in the works of male authors.182 The personified feminine inspiration (or Muse) is often addressed in poetry as the woman in a love poem. This is why the anonymous addressee can be both the poet’s beloved and a personification of his creative-receptive imagination. In Aygi’s poetry and in

Pasternak’s works, the imaginative activity is often related to a feminine unconscious power.184 The fusion of the personified inspiration and the beloved in the figure of the anonymous addressee is in keeping with the conventional poetic technique of treating creativity and love as metaphors for each other. These intense mental-emotional states are threshold experiences, when the undifferentiated primal unity of being is restored for a prolonged moment. The dialectics of inside and outside is widely used in literature for the portrayal of the imaginative acts as well as for the illustration of the complementary opposites of male and female.

In Aygi’s Czce, the mysterious ‘you’ appears in the form of all-embracing, ceaseless snowfall, which is both outdoors and indoors, both outside and inside the poet. It is, then, appropriate to enrich the temporal and spatial meanings of ‘близкий’ (‘imminent’/‘nearby’) with a third lexical meaning of this word, which denotes closeness, intimate relationship. In this sense, ‘близкий снег’ (‘close snow’) can refer to the addressee, who is so close to the poet that she is actually part of his soul.

Aygi’s Czce has many affinities with one of Jeni Couzyn’s poems (untitled, in Couzyn 1993, 50), in which the addressee, the poet’s absent-yet-present beloved, appears in the form of snow, while snow is also a symbol of the poem itself. The comparability of the two poems shows that gender differences do not always affect the thought-forms and mental contents of poetic imagination:

I’ve released my song
on the fronds of my mind.

Now my heart puts on its snowshoes
and begins to trudge after, slowly
and with blind faith.
Snow-blind in a white landscape
I don’t know the direction.

I face the white waste.
I paddle out over the snow
awkward in my snowshoes.
If you are death it doesn’t matter
which way I go.
You’re all around me
within each snowflake, each atom
illuminating everything.

183 In agreement with Jung, who established the psychological concept of ‘inner feminine’ anima inhabiting the unconscious of men, Frye writes in Theory of Symbols: ‘When a poet speaks of the internal spirit which shapes the poem, he is apt to drop the traditional appeal to the female Muses and think of himself as if in a feminine, or at least receptive, relation to some god or lord, whether Apollo, Dionysus, Eros, Christ, or (as in Milton) the holy spirit’ (1990, 98). In ‘Anatomy of the Literary Muse’, Ursula R. Mahlendorf points out that creative imagination is often conceived of as a psycho-erotic relationship (1985, 189). For further details about this topic, see Lisa Rado’s The Modern Androgynous Imagination (2000).

184 Obvious examples of the interrelation of imaginative activity and femininity are Aygi’s M. K. and Pasternak’s Poems and omes. In M. K. the central image is glass, which is a variant of window, and in Poems the central image is snow.

185 The quotations from poems of women poets in some of the epigraphs also indicate that gender difference is not always a relevant selective principle in the construction of intertextual dialogues.
If you're life, beloved,  
The case is the same.  
Whichever direction I take  
will bring me to you.  
But how to reach you  
across the distances?  
I think of you, snug in your hut  
or perhaps  
half-buried in a snowdrift  
knowing I will come  
not knowing who I am, or how, or why  
but the certainty of miracles.

Similarly to this poem and Aygi's Снег and Пока, snow symbolises the negative presence of  
the addressee in Pasternak-Zhivago's Свидание (a poem from Доктор Живаго):

This poem has many affinities with Снег, including the juxtaposition of the images of snow  
and eyelashes, the associative link between snowfall and the absent-yet-present addressee,  
the motif of transgressing the threshold, and the blurring of the boundaries between the poet  
and his beloved. The title Свидание could be replaced by the phrase 'ближайший снег', because  
this phrase involves three main stages of the whole process of meeting: 'имминент снег' refers  
to the negative presence of the addressee, 'nearby snow' alludes to the presence of the  
addressee, who at this stage is not yet part of the speaker, and finally, 'close snow' implies  
the threshold situation when the addressee and the speaker are simultaneously divided and united.

The image of close snow occurs in the first stanza of both Снег and Пока. Like Снег  
and Свидание, Пока is about meeting a mysterious 'you', who takes the form of snow. In  
Пока, the snowfall actually steps into the poet's room when his virtual dialogue with the  
addressee is interrupted by the sudden, spontaneous opening of the window. (The relevant  
part has been quoted earlier in this section.) It seems that the imagined addressee (the absent  
woman, who is evoked by the poet as snow) actually visits the poet in the form of snow,  
perhaps as a mysterious, transcendental response to his calling voice. This is an example of  
meaningful coincidence, which is yet another link between Aygi's and Pasternak's poetic  
thought.

The image of close snow ('ближайший снег') is a potential connective between Снег,  
Пока and Pasternak's Снег idem. In this poem, the flowers are reaching towards the  
snowfall, whereas in Снег it is the snowfall which is coming near to the flowers.  
Superimposing the two poems, we obtain an image which represents mutual attraction.  
Снег idem mediates between Aygi's Снег and Pasternak's Единственные дни. The white  
starlets in Снег idem and the white sparks in Снег could be described by the words  
which Pasternak used in Единственные дни for describing the days of the winter solstice:

И каждый был неповторим,  
И повторялся вновь без счета

186 Similarly to Снег, the indoor world attracts the snowfall in Завия нон, where the snowflakes like midges  
fly to the candle, and in Пока, where the snow steps into the poet's room.
The paradoxical simultaneity of repetition and unrepeatability is linked to the image of snow and to the theme of love in Aleksandr Kushner’s ‘Вот в снегу’ (1969, 103). This poem can be integrated into the intertextual dialogue of Снег, Снег идет, Зимняя ночь, Единственные дни, and Покая.

Вот снег на шагом ступал
В тесной комнате моей,
Плюю в нос напережу,
Что отрезало от гостей.

Мы печальны - что причиной?
Нас не любят - кто так строг?
Всей спиной за гандарной
Белый чувственный снегок.

На подходе зимний признак,
Хмур, ката, серпантин.
С будущим годом все прекрасней
Снег и запах легких вин.

И любовь от повторенья
Не ускользнет, просто в ней
Больше звезд и тверды
И немыслимых вещей.

21. Thematic summary

"Если гаджук, hogy egykor a világ szával teremtetett, s hogy szavainkban hull, hull a hö. Elbirt, De a hét felől birtokomagakat havazék."

(from Két parton, by Zsuzsa Beney)\(^{187}\)

As a summary of the semantic richness of Aygi’s Снег, let us survey the potential meanings of its title-word and central image, snow. The referential meaning of snow is enriched with several interrelated connotative meanings, which are either contextual or intertextual. The unspoken associations of snow include flow of time, the overlapping of different layers of time, personal and poetic memory, eternity, and immortality. Snow is also a disembodied incarnation of the addressee, who may be the poet’s beloved, or the interlocutors of the poet’s intertextual dialogues, or an inward interlocutor, perhaps the immortal creative soul, the interior ‘divine spark’. The white sparks, inward counterparts of genuine white flakes,

represent the presence-absence structure of dream, of the unconscious, of poetic language, and of intertextual imagination. Snowfall is also a metaphor (or a hidden allegory) of the physical appearance of words and gaps on the page. The poem is, then, a performative utterance, a typographical analogue of a speech act. The image of snow plays a crucial role in transforming the verbal text into a sight-poem or a speaking picture. Snow represents the interdependence of word and silence. Being a metaphor for these two fundamental constituent parts of poetic speech, snow assimilates all articulated and hidden meanings of the poem; it is, then, a metaphor of each aspects of Frye’s term ‘symbol’ (sign, motif, image, archetype, and monad). Snow is interchangeable with window since both images represent the soul and its externalised embodiment, the poem. The window (which, etymologically, is the wind’s eye, i. e. the eye of the imagination, or the mind’s eye) is both the seer and the seen, just like the snowflakes, which are comparable to self-observing, reflected eyes. The indoor and outdoor worlds reflect and permeate each other. This double mirror-technique is compressed in the image of the window. Snow and window are both outside and inside; they are externalisations of the mind, and they are metaphorical representations of the mirror-like poem. This hidden meta-poetic function is more than text-centred self-reflectiveness since Snow alludes to its intertexts and to the many-voiced dialogue with these texts.

The image of snow functions as a syllepsis, in which referential, contextual, and intertextual meanings interact. In the framework of Frye’s theory, snow in Aygi’s poem is a versatile symbol since it has sign-values, motif-values, image-values, and archetypal values. Moreover, it also functions as a monad, a poetic analogue of the total creative word, which is all words, and also silence. Snow is a synthetic symbol, assimilating the images of window, eye, and light. The symbol of snow represents the presence-absence structure of the linguistic sign and of the verbal-visual intertextual trace, thus manifesting the endless chain of intratextual and intertextual signification. The symbol of snow, and its companion image, the window, are transformed mirror-images, externalised manifestations of the creative mind. Introspection can only take place by creating an ‘Other’, in which the ‘I’ can watch itself from an external point of view, as if in a mirror. This ‘Other’ can be an image, a verbal structure, or an inward interlocutor. The contemplation of snow beyond the transparent, reflecting window represents the act of observing the ‘I’ in the form of the ‘Other’. This ‘Other’ is part of the ‘I’, yet it is different from it; it is a transformed mirror-image, which can only be created and observed in a border situation of simultaneous balance and instability, when the transparent window is actually in the process of becoming a looking glass. Through projecting and objectifying itself, the immaterial and imperceptible spiritual essence can catch a glimpse of

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\(^{187}\) ‘We accept that the world has been / created by the word, and that in our words / the snow is falling, falling. Blanketing. But the clouds / of existence are releasing their own snows’ (from Zsuzsa Beney’s On Two Riverbanks).
itself, yet it can never quite comprehend itself. This is one of the reasons why the snowfall can never come to a standstill.

The comparative approach used in this analysis helped us to transform the apparently chaotic, dream-like focused text into a unified, many-layered, dialogical semantic entity. This is an example of the paradoxical logic of supplementarity, a concept of deconstruction, which Owen Miller adapted to describe the process of intertextual meaning-construction:

An intertextual perspective helped us to integrate the diverse parts of Aygi's poem into the unified context of the whole. The analysis showed that images whose semantic function is not clear in a text-centred reading (the flowers, the lamp-posts, distant hands, and paper-like window frames) can function as 'windows' opening the focused text to other texts. When these problematic details are seen as potential traces of other texts, they acquire multiple layers of meaning. By activating relevant intertexts, apparently insignificant or difficult details become connectives, sources of intertextual meanings. There are many intertextual thresholds (windows or doors) through which other poems can step into Aygi's poem, and both. Being a metaphor, and a metaphor for the creative word, snow is immediately associated with both the printed words and the silent gaps on the page. This is because whenever the image of snow represents the creative word, it also represents silence. The poetic word, by its nature, is always already inhabited by a semantic void which can be filled imaginatively. This semantic presence-abSENSE structure accounts for the transformation of the window-page into a looking glass, which displays the transformed mirror-image of the outward-and-inward-looking eye.

The semantic expansion of Cinec includes the assimilation of intertextual self-referentiality into the text-centred self-referential scope of the poem. This transformation is a hidden subject matter of each focused text, when they are viewed as parts of an intertextual network. The ostensible theme of the focused texts, contemplation of snow behind a window as a metaphor for the process of watching the mind at the act of writing or close-reading a poem, expands through intertextual dialogues, and comes to represent the process of watching the mind at the act of establishing intertextual dialogues. This semantic change includes the transformation of snow. Initially, the nightly snowfall appears to be an analogue of the black-and-white landscape of the poem, where each snowflake represents a word or a linguistic unit. As the boundaries of the focused text open up towards other poems, the image of snow takes on new connotations. It comes to symbolise an intertextual network, where each snowflake represents a poem. This transformation is comparable to the mandalic pattern of expanding concentric circles, which involves a recursive embedding of the whole in its parts, as a whole intertextual network can be reflected in a single poem, and as a whole poem can be contained in its central monadic symbol or symbols. It is this structure of recursive embedding which allows us to read Frye's snowflake-metaphor (quoted at the beginning of the first chapter) not only as an allusion to the mental process whereby the semantic integrity

'tHohles Lebensgehöft. Im Windfang
die leer —
geblasene Lunge
blüht. Eine Handvoll
Schlafkorn
weht aus dem wahr —
gestammelten Mund
hinaus zu den Schnee —
gesprachen.'

(Paul Celan)188

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188 Hollow Homestead of Life. In the porch / the lung / blown empty / blossoms. A handful / of deep grain / walls from the mouth / stammered true / out to the snow / conversations' (Paul Celan, translated by Michael Hamburger).
of a single text is crystallised, but also as an analogy of a broader synthetic apprehension, whereby several texts are linked to form an intertextual ‘crystal’: ‘A snowflake is probably quite unconscious of forming a crystal, but what it does may be worth study even if we are willing to leave its inner mental processes alone’ (1990, 89).

Crystal formation is a metaphor for relational apprehension, i.e. the border situation of transforming the linear flow of ‘rhythm’ into a ‘pattern’ of semantic interconnections. As parts of a larger pattern, words can transcend themselves, and reach into such depths which are otherwise inaccessible. In poetic language, the non-ordinary selection and combination of linguistic units is based on a complex web of unspoken interrelations; these interrelations can evoke and arrest unsolvable dilemmas which cannot be expressed by the linguistic units themselves. The border situation of crystal formation thus involves the recognition of the unknowable.

To accomplish the act of intertextual crystal-formation, we have to return from the end to the beginning, from the last words of Aygi’s Снег to the first words of Pasternak’s Снег, thereby folding the open-ended line of poems into a circle, which is the underlying pattern of the snow-crystal:

As soon as Снег is read in the context of Aygi’s poem, the word ‘романция’ takes on new connotations. It assimilates the ambivalent, frustrating and delightful, inward experience of the lyric persona of Aygi’s poem, who, in an emotionally charged threshold situation, realises that it is impossible to stop the white sparks; that is to say, it is impossible to arrive at ultimate meanings and interpretations. The last words of Aygi’s Снег can shed new light on the first words of Pasternak’s Снег, revealing that the flowers are eternally longing for the snowfall; their half-seeing, half-blind, distant hands can never grasp the endlessly falling, always changing snow, and they can never give up trying. All mysteries are concentrated in the act of reaching out for the ceaseless snow. This eternal longing is an inward experience of both the poet and the reader, who realise that words are never enough to capture the deepest thoughts and feelings, and hands are never enough to reach the central, inherently enigmatic, elusive, and paradoxical essence of the world, of the poetic text, and of the creative mind.

Now if we look into the mirror of the joined poems, we can see ourselves standing at an intertextual threshold, where the end of the last focused text and the beginning of the first meet, forming a circle. Paradoxically, at the very moment when the shape of the circle is crystallised, it dissolves itself, because it is the concept of the impossibility of crystallisation which is crystallised when the circle is completed.
Summary and Conclusion

"The mind was what transformed and what was transformed. [...] There was consciousness and there was an eye watching consciousness. In the same mind were two beings. Who might become three, thirty, thousand. Eyes that watched eyes that watched eyes. But that first step was enough in itself. All the other eyes were there in that “one see” and in the waters.'

"the waters of the mind flowing into the waters of the world and the waters of the world flowing into the waters of the mind to the point where they become indistinguishable one from the other" (from Roberto Calasso’s ‘Ka’)

In this work, we have been dealing with a special genre of poetry, speaking pictures or sight poems. These self-reflective texts are similar to performative utterances in the sense that their authors’ half-seeing, half-blind hands are performing snowfall when writing words and silence on the window-like page. The poem is, then, a transformed reflection of the outward and inward object of contemplation, the snowy window, which represents both the external world and the imaginative mind. The snowy window is, then, a chronotope of the merging of the internal and the external worlds.

When observed from indoors, the snowfall is framed by a window. Due to the transparency of glass, the two images actually overlap, as if the all-pervasive, more than three-dimensional (material and spiritual) snowfall were compressed and arrested on the level of the window. Through this visual overlapping, the two images enact some of the ambivalent aspects of imagination which they can also represent in isolation, but less obviously. The superimposition of snow and window manifests both the omnipresence of the threshold (or its configuration, the centre) and the compression of wholeness in its all-inclusive point of convergence, the threshold (or the centre). Thus, the synthetic image of snowfall and window is a pertinent metaphor for both the expansion of the moment to eternity and the compression of eternity in a unique threshold-moment, such as the turning point of the day or of the year. This synthetic perception enables us to see that the eternity and infinity of snowfall is not merely an emblem of limitless time and boundless space; it is a metaphor for the peculiar mental state of experiencing a timeless moment in the threshold situation of imaginative acts. The same ambivalent connotations are evoked by the image of the window, which, therefore, can be perceived as a transparent, two-sided mirror.

The visual overlapping of snow and window manifests an interplay of whiteness and transparency, which is a suitable analogue of creative imagination, the inward divine. The invisibly existing transparency is a border-phenomenon, where non-being and being, imperceptibility and perceptibility, overlap. This is why transparent objects (such as the window, wind, and breath) are frequently used as symbols of the creative soul or the divine creator. Whiteness is another common metaphor for imagination and the divine creator. Whiteness, like transparency, is an all-inclusive nothingness; it is the colourless colour, which contains all colours, as silence contains all words, and as the central void of creation contains everything.

Both snow and window are connective symbols. The intermediary position of snowfall between heaven and earth, and of window between the inside and the outside worlds represents the undifferentiated, pre-creational state, which the act of creation both abolished (by dividing opposites) and preserved (by dividing opposites in such a way that they secretly interpenetrate each other). The in-between-ness of snow and window is the prototype of both the primordial one-ness of being, and the re-creation of this primate unity in various threshold situations. These transitional states represent a unitive, imaginative perception, which transcends the limits of rational, ordinary consciousness, thereby providing an insight into the realm of the mysterious, which is the deep core of existence.

In each of the focused texts, contemplation of snow through a window is a metaphor for the acts of writing and reading. The threshold situation of imaginative acts is yet another metaphor for the introspective self-observation of the imaginative mind. The invisible, imperceptible, and intangible mind cannot see itself, unless it concretises and externalises itself by imposing itself on objects of external perception. The poetic text, as a reconstruction of the observed snowy window, is such an embodiment of the mind. The paired symbols of snow and window, as metaphors for the poetic text, function as transformed mirror-images of the mind.

The transparent, reflecting window symbolises the threshold moment when the mind’s eye beholds itself in the form of outward reality, and, at the same instant, its transformed reflection dissolves itself, thereby manifesting the transparency, invisibility, and imperceptibility of the mind. Perhaps it is the observing eye which assimilates its own reflection, which is why the reflection becomes transparent at the very moment of self-manifestation. Only through this transparency and invisibility can the mind truly manifest itself, and this is why there has to be a window between the observing eye and its mirror-image, the observed snowfall. The transparent window is a two-sided looking glass, in which the mirror-images of the perceptible external world and the imperceptible mental reality overlap. The transparent, two-sided looking glass represents the concentrated, eternal mystery of all border situations where opposites are entangled in an undifferentiated unity. By its very
nature, mystery can never be solved, yet it attracts the curious mind over and over again. Eventually, it leads us back to the same old questions which have been puzzling mankind all the time, and which have always left us in uncertainty: Is it the structure of the universe which imprints itself upon and shapes the human mind, or is it the structure of the mind which we project onto the structure of the universe? Is it the poetic text which brings about transformation in our minds, or is it our relational apprehension which transforms the poetic text? In *A Primitive like an Orb* (1984, 441), Wallace Stevens linked these two questions, suggesting that the boundary between reality and imagination may be just a transparent, two-sided looking glass:

[...] It is
As if the central poem became the world,
And the world the central poem, each one the mate
Of the other

In exploring the nature of the imaginative mind, and how it is reflected in the poetic text and in the universe, we found that all we can do is to proceed from one question to another, because what we are searching for evades our grasp. One window opens to another, and so on to infinity. The window we have been looking at in this work is open and closed at the same time. It is a snow-covered, transparent, reflecting glass, which enables us to watch and participate in the process whereby the snow of the outside world and the snow of the mind permeate each other. The threshold situation of this two-directional contemplation manifests an eternal dilemma, a question which returns over and over again in new contexts and in new forms: Are we seeing the world, the poetic text, and the mind through ‘snowy glasses’?
Борис Пастернак

Снег идет

Снег идет, снег идет.
К белым звездочкам в бурю
Тянутся цветы герани
За охваченный переплет.

Снег идет, и всё в смятенье,
Все пускается в полет, -
Черной лестнице ступени,
Перекрестка поворот.

Снег идет, снег идет,
Словно падают не хлопья,
А в заплатанном салоне
Сходит нам в небосвод.

Слово с видом чудака,
С верхней лестничной площадки,
Крадучись, играя в прытку,
Сходит небо с чердака.

Потому что жизнь не идет.
Не оглянешься - и святки.
Только промежуток краткий,
Смотрящий, там и новый год.

Снег идет, густой-густой.
В ногу с ним, стопами теми,
В том же темпе, с ленью той
Или с той же быстротой,
Может быть проходит время?

Может быть, за годом год
Следуют как снег идет,
Или как слова в поэме?

Снег идет, снег идет,
Снег идет и всё в смятенье:
Убегая пешеход,
Удивленные растения,
Перекрестка поворот.

(1957)


Boris Pasternak

Snow is Falling

Snow is falling, snow is falling:
Stretching to the window pane
Pale geraniums gaze out
Where the starflakes blow white rain.

Snow is falling, all's a flurry,
Everything wings off and flies:
Steps down in the shadowed staircase,
Corner where the crossroads rise.

Snow is falling, snow is falling -
Somehow, though, not flakes teem round
But heaven's arch, in ragged furs,
Is descending to the ground.

Looking like an old eccentric,
From the upper landing sly -
Creeping, playing at hide-and-seek -
From its attic steals the sky.

Flow of life is not for waiting;
Eyelid's wink, Christmas is here:
Just a moment, time's brief passing,
Look around and it's New Year.

Snow is falling, faster, faster:
Stepping out, in rhythmic feet,
Tempo same and same the drag,
Might not with the selfsame beat
Time itself flit by and pass?

Might not all years come and go
Like the words knit in a poem,
Like the falling of the snow?

Snow is falling, snow is falling,
Snow is falling, all's a flurry -
Whitened walker in a hurry,
Flowers covered with surprise,
Corners where the crossroads rise.

Boris Pasternak

**Snow is Falling**

Snow is falling, snow is falling.
Reaching for the storm’s white stars,
Petals of geraniums stretch
Beyond the window bars.

Snow is falling, all is chaos,
Everything is in the air,
The angle of the crossroads,
The steps of the back stair.

Snow is falling, not like flakes
But as if the firmament
In a coat with many patches
Were making its descent.

As if, from the upper landing,
Looking like a lunatic,
Creeping, playing hide-and-seek,
The sky stole from the attic.

Because life does not wait,
Turn, and you find Christmas here.
And a moment after that
It’s suddenly New Year.

Snow is falling, thickly, thickly,
Keeping step, stride for stride,
No less quickly, nonchalantly,
Is that time, perhaps,
Passing in the street outside?

And perhaps year follows year
Like the snowflakes falling
Or the words that follow here?

Snow is falling, snow is falling,
Snow is falling, all is chaos:
The whitened ones who pass,
The angle of the crossroads,
The dazed plants by the glass.


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**Борис Пастернак**

**Единственные дни**

На протяжении многих зим
Я помню дни солнцестояния,
И каждый был неповторим
И повторялся вновь без счета.

И целая их середина
Состоилась мало-помалу —
Тех дней единственных, когда —
Нам кажется, что время стало.

Я помню их наперечет:
Зима подходит к середине,
Дороги множатся, с крыши течет,
И солнце греется на ладони.

И любящие, как во сне,
Друг к другу тянутся поспешней,
И на деревьях в вышине
Потекут от тепла скошенны.

И полуночным градом день
Ворочаться на циферблате,
И дальше вдоль дня,
И не кончается объятье.

(1959)

Boris Pasternak

Unparalleled Days

Still through the range of many winters
I can recall those solstice days
With each day unrepeatable
Yet each repeated timeless ways.

And one by one their sequence grew
Together slowly to fulfil
Unparalleled those rare days when
It seemed to us that time stood still.

For I recount them one by one:
The winter halfway on its course,
Thaw on the roads, the dripping of Roofs,
The red sun warmer on thick ice;

Then lovers swiftly each to each
Are drawn, as in a dream they meet,
While cradled high up in the trees
The bird-cotes swelter in the heat;

The sleepy needle registers
Inertness on the dial’s face,
And each day’s longer than a lifetime,
And still unending each embrace.


Boris Pasternak

Unique Days

How I remember solstice days
Through many winters long completed!
Each unrepeatable, unique,
And each one countless times repeated.

Of all these days, these only days,
When one rejoiced in the impression
That time had stopped, there grew in years
An unforgettable succession.

Each one of them I can evoke.
The year is to midwinter moving,
The roofs are dripping, roads are soaked,
And on the ice the sun is brooding.

Then lovers hastily are drawn
To one another, vague and dreaming,
And in the heat, upon a tree
The sweating nesting-box is steaming.

And sleepy clock-hands laze away
The clockface wearily ascending.
Eternal, endless is the day,
And the embrace is never ending.