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Myths, Science, and Literature – Different Fields, the Same Essence

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Abstract. The present study aims at analysing the relationship and establishing the similarities between ancient Eastern myths, literature, and today's leading scientific views such as quantum physics. In ancient times, the mythic worldview was the only one being widely accepted, a dominancy that lasted up into, roughly put, the mid-nineteenth century, when most sciences as known today started to flourish and overtook the place of mythology, invalidating it. Nowadays, however, ancient myths and modern sciences have begun getting closer to each other and, at a deep insight, one may discover that they reveal the same truth. Thus, the paper shall discuss and compare ancient Buddhist texts with leading quantum theories and literary works by Béla Hamvas and Sándor Weöres that facilitate the comprehension of the essence.[1]

Keywords: myths, quantum physics, literature, reality.

"All is One." (Heraclitus)

Introduction

One of the oldest and most intriguing questions is undoubtedly how the universe works. There have been many attempts to unravel it throughout the centuries in various fields, starting from ancient mythologies through literature to contemporary scientific views. Each of the above-mentioned areas has reached its own results and has long tried to validate theirs as the ultimate truth, often in contrast to each other.

Thus, for example, with the rise of sciences – anthropology, psychology, and natural sciences – towards the end of the nineteenth century, mythologies were dismissed as valid means of explaining the world and its phenomena.

1 I would like to express my appreciation to my colleague, dr László Mátyás, Senior Lecturer at Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, for proofreading the parts on quantum physics.

According to Edward Burnett Tylor, myths were characteristic of primitive cultures, representing people's endeavour of explaining their surroundings and the occurrences they did not understand. However, when scientific research and data described and elucidated the same thing or happening as myths had done, the latter were degraded to mere stories (Tylor 1920, n. p.).

In the twentieth century, there were efforts to reconcile mythology and sciences. In psychology, Sigmund Freud, Carl Gustav Jung, and Joseph Campbell either made use of myths in therapy, used them in connection with archetypes belonging to the collective unconscious, or saw them as metaphors of individual inner growth and evolution (Abrudan 2003, 12). Mircea Eliade in his oeuvre as a historian of religion also highlighted the value of myths and mythology. In his view, myths relate things that occurred at the beginning of times. Knowing the myth means that one possesses the knowledge of the origin of the phenomena and is thus able to control them. Myths are relived through rituals and the stories told. They are not abstract. Mythical time – the moment when something new, important, and powerful manifested – is repeated (Eliade 1963).

One of the domains where there has been virtually no resistance to myths is literature, which, in fact, can be regarded as its continuation. According to Northrop Frye, rites and myths together stand at the base of oral literature, with mythology as a system of symbols being a permanent archive for the latter. In his view, the evolution of literature is to be thought of as a circular movement starting from myths of origins to modern ones (Frye 1971). Literature builds a modern myth itself. If one thinks of Roland Barthes's theory of the way modern myths make up a secondary semiotic system, this is definitely true of literature, which uses language as a primary system and empowers it with a new meaning through the way it combines the elements, themes, and symbols (Barthes 1972).

As far as the relationship between mythology and modern sciences is concerned, there are three possible directions. According to the first one, myths and scientific views are opposite to each other. This interpretation goes back to Tylor's perception mentioned above. Another path would be to consider today's scientific worldview as a myth itself, i.e. science is the myth of modern man since it is the system that guides his/her life, having taken the place and role of mythology in our culture. This point of view can be traced back to Jung's theories on archetypes:

> All the most powerful ideas in history go back to archetypes. This is particularly true of religious ideas, but the central concepts of science, philosophy, and ethics are no exception to this rule. In their present form they are variants of archetypal ideas created by consciously applying and adapting these ideas to reality. For it is the function of consciousness not only to recognize and assimilate the external world through the gateway of the senses, but to translate into visible reality the world within us. (Jung 1924, 342)

If we look at the Big Bang theory, for example, it consumes the basic elements of a myth. This cosmological theory has mythical images such as the "bang," an initial explosion or ignition that starts everything, the idea of the beginning of the universe or the world, marked in a distant, non-human place.

The third way of looking at the relationship between myths and modern natural sciences is the one adopted in this paper, namely to view them as complementary since they both represent attempts at deciphering and explaining the same reality, i.e. how the universe works. I would also like to take this further by proving through a direct comparison that ancient Buddhist cosmology came to very similar results as today's quantum physics does. Using different languages and different perspectives, both fields describe reality in a very close manner and draw related conclusions. Thus, the truth value of these ancient Buddhist myths is re-established by means of modern sciences. The link between them often becomes clearer through certain literary texts that bridge the apparent communicational gap by merely bringing ancient ideas into the foreground again. Through the way literature works with, presents, and interprets these worldviews, it often makes them more accessible to the readers who are thus able to comprehend them better.

Buddhism and Quantum Physics

In this part of the paper, I shall present and compare basic concepts of Buddhist philosophy and leading theories in quantum physics. The comparison involves the perception of reality according to ancient Buddhist texts and its equivalent in quantum mechanics with a special insight into terms such as emptiness vs the quantum field, mind and unity vs quantum entanglement. In the analysis, I am going to rely on two texts, *The Heart Sutra*[2] and *The Mahamudra Prayer*,[3] which represent core teachings of Mahayana[4] Buddhism, as well as on Heisenberg's, Einstein's, Planck's, etc. theories.

2 *The Heart Sutra* – sutras refer to discourses attributed to the Buddha – is one of the oldest and most important texts of Mahayana Buddhism, dating from around 661 CE. The sutra appears in form of a dialogue between Shariputra and Avalokiteshvara – both belonging to the circle of Buddha's closest disciples. However, it was the Buddha remaining in a meditative state who had inspired their words. Online source: *https://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Heart_Sutra#Text* (Last accessed 12 July 2023).

3 The *Aspiration Prayer of Mahamudra* was written in the thirteenth century by the Third Karmapa Rangjung Dorje, the head of the Karma Kagyu subschool. The text is about the ultimate nature of the mind, about Buddha nature. Online source: *https://www.shambhala.com/rangjung-dorje-the-third-karmapa-a-guide-for-readers/* (Last accessed 12 July 2023).

4 Mahayana Buddhism means the great, or universal vehicle of attaining Buddhahood, or enlightenment, which serves all sentient beings' liberation from the sufferings of the life cycle. Online source: *https://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Mahayana* (Last accessed 12 July 2023).

According to Buddhist cosmology, everything, i.e. all phenomena, arise and return into emptiness. In *The Heart Sutra*, phenomena are called body, but the text reveals that thoughts and emotions are also included:

> Listen Sariputra,
> this Body itself is Emptiness
> and Emptiness itself is this Body.
> This Body is not other than Emptiness
> and Emptiness is not other than this Body.
> The same is true of Feelings,
> Perceptions, Mental Formations,
> and Consciousness. (*The Heart Sutra* 2014, n. p.)

Thus, reality as we perceive it arises from emptiness. However, Buddhist emptiness should not be interpreted as if there was nothing in a nihilistic way. It much rather refers to an infinite source of potentiality, i.e. empty should be understood as full of endless possibilities. The relationship between emptiness and phenomena can be compared to the ocean and the waves. Their essence is the same, i.e. water, but while the ocean is vast and maybe incomprehensible in its totality, waves come and go in infinite numbers and forms.

The concept of Buddhist emptiness seems to resemble what is called "quantum field" in quantum physics. According to quantum physics, a quantum field is an electromagnetic field from which all matter materializes. This field possesses all potential matter, out of which we only perceive what is observable to us, i.e. we only see the tip of the iceberg, yet there is much more of it under the water that remains unseen to us. Thus, "everything that makes up our reality arises from this electromagnetic field" (Kuhlmann 2023, n. p.).

At a first look, emptiness as the source of all perceivable phenomena is similar to the quantum field, which is the source of all matter, where phenomena and matter are considered to cover the same entities, i.e. our observable reality. Therefore, the next step is to try to define observable reality or matter. According to Albert Einstein, "It seems as though we must use sometimes the one theory and sometimes the other, while at times we may use either. We are faced with a new kind of difficulty. We have two contradictory pictures of reality; separately neither of them fully explains the phenomena of light, but together they do" (qtd in Harrison 2002, n. p.).

Observable reality, at least its tiniest bits, can – according to quantum physics – be viewed either as waves or as particles. If defined as having the characteristics of a wave, then observable reality is something non-material. If regarded as a particle, then observable reality becomes something material. Thus, observable reality can be perceived in a dualistic way. The wave–particle duality theory

refers to the fact that physical entities – light or electrons – possess wavelike and particle-like characteristics at the same time. In 1905, Einstein proved that light also has to be thought of as particle-like in addition to its definition as an electromagnetic wave (*Britannica* 2023). In 1924, Louis de Broglie suggested that, on the other hand, electrons and other tiny pieces of matter are to be considered to carry wavelike properties (*Britannica* 2023). In 1928, Niels Bohr then concluded that a phenomenon can have both wave and particle aspects, and there is a complementary relation between these (*Britannica* 2023). However, we are only able to observe one aspect of the object at a time. If we regard something as solid matter, we are in fact observing just one of its qualities. If we look at the same object as a wave, we cannot locate it anymore in space and time. It can be understood as being everywhere in the universe.

Matter is made up of atoms, whereas an atom is approximately 99.9 per cent space. Thus, all objects surrounding us consist of mostly empty space. These feel solid because the atoms are constantly pushing away from each other, and there is a fluctuating energy around them that keeps them together (English 2020, n. p.). The regions of space where the energy is intense constitute matter. Thus, field is the only reality (Einstein and Infeld 1938). However, this field is empty space, which seems to prove the ancient belief of Buddhism that everything arises from and returns into emptiness.

Another central concept of Buddhist philosophy next to emptiness and reality is the true nature of the mind – whereas mind does not have to be mistaken for the brain, or thoughts and emotions, which are merely appearances of the conscience. Therefore, mind in these ancient texts is more of a synonym for essence, nature, and energy. It is emptiness as defined earlier and the awareness of it at the same time (Sogyal Rinpoche 2023, 78–93). *The Mahamudra Prayer* underlines this interpretation:

> All phenomena are projections of the mind.
> Mind is not "a" mind; the mind is empty in essence.
> Although empty, everything constantly arises in it. […]
> Appearance is only mind, emptiness is only mind,
> enlightenment is only mind, and confusion is only one's own mind.
> Arising is only mind; disappearance is only mind. (Nydahl 1991, 24)

Whereas we have previously stated that observable reality arises from and returns into emptiness, now we learn that this emptiness is synonymous with the true nature of the mind, i.e. Buddha nature or enlightenment.

Max Planck arrives at a similar conclusion when he states that matter as such does not exist. Everything originates and exists only due to a force that brings the particles of atoms to vibration and holds them together. "We must assume behind

this force is the existence of a conscious and intelligent Mind. This Mind is the matrix of all matter" (Planck 1944, n. p.).

Nevertheless, until one achieves the true nature of the mind, there can be many obstacles that obscure perception: "Bodhisattvas[5] who practice the Insight that Brings Us to the Other Shore see no more obstacles in their mind, and because there are no more obstacles in their mind, they can overcome all fear, destroy all wrong perceptions and realize Perfect Nirvana" (*The Heart Sutra* 2014, n. p.). Thus, we perceive reality according to the clarity of our mind.

The idea that our perception defines the reality that we see resembles Heisenberg's concept of uncertainty and the result of the double-slit experiment. According to the concept of uncertainty applied to atoms and subatomic particles, the position and the velocity of an object cannot be measured exactly, it remains unpredictable (*Britannica* 2023). On the other hand, when they tested the speed of light, scientists concluded that whether light was perceived as a wave or a particle depended on the fact whether they were being observed or not. When not observed, they took up wavelike behaviour, but when observed, the particles took up locations and acted as solid matter (Wong 2021, n. p.). This point of view can be compared to the Buddhist idea of the mind's role in perceiving reality. Our perception defines our reality, and the clearer our mind and perception is, the clearer we see reality.

The last parallel to be discussed in this paper is that between the concept of oneness/unity of all phenomena and quantum entanglement. In ancient Buddhist texts, the term oneness/unity is closely connected to emptiness and the true nature of the mind. Since all phenomena are empty in essence and are projections of the mind, they are related to each other and cannot, or rather should not, be regarded as separate entities: "That is why in Emptiness, Body, Feelings, Perceptions, Mental Formations and Consciousness are not separate self-entities. The Eighteen Realms of Phenomena which are the six Sense Organs, the six Sense Objects, and the six Consciousnesses are also not separate self-entities" (*The Heart Sutra* 2014, n. p.).

Separation is considered an illusion and is the result of an obscured way of seeing: "The basis of purification is the mind itself in its union of clarity and emptiness. […] It is not the opposites, nor both, nor something else, but rather their union the middle way. May we realize the true nature of the mind, which is beyond extremes" (*The Mahamudra Prayer*) (Nydahl 1991, 23–24).

The equivalent of oneness in quantum physics would be quantum entanglement. This phenomenon refers to the fact that two subatomic particles can be linked to each other and still be separated by eons in time and space. In spite of being

5 Someone who has the compassionate wish to attain enlightenment in order to help all beings. Online source: *https://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Bodhisattva* (Last accessed 13 July 2023).

separated in this manner, they would still influence one another (Emspak 2023, n. p.). The idea of the quantum field from which everything arises and the phenomenon of quantum entanglement suggests that everything in the universe is interconnected and interdependent.

Buddhist Cosmology in the Works of Hamvas and Weöres[6]

Literary texts often mirror and translate ancient myths bringing them closer to the readers again. In this paper, we shall look at how Eastern mythology appears in the works of Béla Hamvas and his disciple Sándor Weöres, comparing the results with quantum theory too.

Béla Hamvas (1897–1968) is considered the first Hungarian writer who measured himself against a universal rather than a local canon. His voice was new within Hungarian culture, it represented a philosophical-traditional point of view, which was radical and multi-layered, not only a mere personal report about exotic things but a completely new spiritual attitude (Péntek 2017). Hamvas's oeuvre encompasses a wide range of works from translations of theoretical and mythical texts to writing essays and literature. Of interest to the present study are his translations of and essays on Eastern mythological texts, especially Buddhist sutras and teachings. For example, Hamvas translated *The Heart Sutra* in 1955 (see Hamvas 2003, 381–382), which is one of the fundamental texts used in this paper too. The translations can be regarded as a kind of interpretation; however, most importantly, their influence is to be felt in the essays and in the whole viewpoint of his literary writings.

The main line of thought in Hamvas's oeuvre is the quest for truth, which, according to him, is possible through creation and arts (Hamvas 2020). One of the characteristics of truth according to the writer is the ability to see beyond appearances (Hamvas and Kemény 1989), to look at what is under the mask that people are wearing and the way these masks can be taken off akin to Nietzsche (Thiel Lőrinczné 1999). Hamvas draws on Greek philosophy and states that the Greek did not look at things on a pure vertical or horizontal level. Their sight was always both vertical and horizontal at the same time, it was sphere-like and three-dimensional (Thiel 2022, 129).

There are at least two striking similarities in this concept to both Buddhist texts and quantum theory. The first one would be that truth appears in connection with totality, undivided, not separated, e.g. is sphere-like, which is close to the

6 I wish to specify that this chapter does not aim at a thorough traditional literary analysis, i.e. prosody, rhyme, etc., but primarily focuses on the ideas, themes, worldviews presented in these literary texts that can be compared to Eastern views and quantum theory.

concept of oneness/unity in Buddhist texts and to that of the quantum field too. In his essay *The Aphaia-Temple*, Hamvas talks about the fact that each point on Earth can say something about what is beyond the earthly since nature can never be separated from the supernatural and the miraculous (Hamvas 1994, 43). Phenomena are to be considered visible signs of the vast unseen, an image which resembles the tip of the iceberg already mentioned in the quantum physics part.

The second resemblance is therefore related to seeing and perception. In his short work entitled *A kínai tusrajz* [The Chinese Tint-Drawing], Hamvas (2006) highlights his concept of unity. Chinese tint-drawings have two elements, namely the black lines and the white space. According to the writer, it is fundamentally wrong to interpret these drawings beginning with the black lines and considering white space as nothing/void. In fact, the white space operates as the field where the black lines can appear. This idea is similar to the way Buddhists think of reality, where everything arises and returns into emptiness the way the black lines emerge from the white space on Chinese tint-drawings or things appear in the electromagnetic field in quantum physics. A key role is played also by the subject, "the place," where reality can be perceived (Hamvas 2006, 246). The Chinese tint-drawing gets a meaning only through the eyes of the I, the subject, who should view it in its totality with the white space against which the black lines receive truth value (Thiel 2022, 131). Thus, Hamvas's text also illustrates the way our perception shapes our reality and reminds us of yet another issue already discussed, i.e. the role of the mind and the nature of the mind.

The I, the subject is regarded by Hamvas (2006, 195) as both finite and infinite. It is the place where you can best see from; however, it is non-seeable itself. It is the place wherefrom one can see the whole at once. This constitutes the paradox of life, similarly to the way black and white act on the canvas. Reality is not mere appearance which may be experienced through our senses, it reaches far beyond the boundaries of the I (Thiel 2022, 132). I would call it an *entangled* relationship – borrowing the term from quantum physics on purpose. Since, according to Hamvas, it is not the form that shapes space but vice versa. The individual who understands that the colour white on these drawings, emptiness, space, and the infinite subject do not represent the outside but the inside has the optimal view (Hamvas 2006, 247). Thus, we and our reality are defined by the matrix of the mind both in the sense of what we think, we become and of the true nature of the mind.

In Hamvas's view, the aim of any individual's life should be to become or return to the authentic human state. Therefore, in his writings, the author always tries to give practical advice to every theory he takes over from any religion, mythology, or philosophy. One of the key terms to cover this process used by Hamvas himself is *realization*. In one of his best known writings, *Mágia szutra* [The Magic Sutra] (2001), he enlists one hundred points that he considers essential in putting the theories which stem from tradition into practice. Tradition for Hamvas spreads

from the New Testament to Chinese, Hinduist, and Buddhist texts, but also Hebrew, Arabian, Greek, and Egyptian ancient writings, as well as European philosophical and literary works since "[…] the sacred tradition of mankind is the same everywhere" (Szakolczai 2005, 110). Though due to this plurality of sources Hamvas's oeuvre seems eclectic at first, he is guided by the sole principle of choosing texts, which lead him and anyone reading him to achieve the authentic human state, i.e. to the realization of an authentic existence (Thiel 2014, 198). The endeavour for this basic authenticity resembles in my opinion what in Buddhist texts is called the realization of the true nature of the mind, the Buddha mind.

The hundred points focus around the concept of freedom. According to Hamvas (2001, 245), the only moral to keep in mind is freedom. Freedom is an ontological notion for him, which is obtained only by those who live life in unity with existence without any restrictions to the rules of society, history, or physical reality, which lead to a misinterpretation of liberty (Hamvas 2001, 245). Thus, realization can be reached by a free person, and it is an individual task. You can share your experiences so that the others can learn from them, since the goal is common, yet everyone has to walk on the path by him- or herself (Hamvas 2006).

The way Hamvas interprets freedom resembles the concept behind the nature of the mind. Hamvas's freedom is a state which is free of hindering obstacles, just like in *The Heart Sutra* discussed earlier. It requires a state of alertness, which is transparent and is void of any obscuration. Like in Buddhist philosophy, Hamvas considers that ancient texts belonging to tradition are meant to awaken people to set out on the journey towards their authentic state, towards freedom, i.e. self-liberation.

According to Hamvas, everyone is capable of reaching this state by willing to change one's life. In *Mágia szutra* [The Magic Sutra] he summarizes this concept in the axioms "existence is always and fully there in every human being; reality has to be accepted and recognized in its totality; all possibilities have to be taken into possession" (Hamvas 2001, 240).[7] These three axioms constitute the starting point of realization.

In essence, all people are equal, which again is a thought present in Buddhist sutras and in quantum physics as well. "[T]he true nature of being is always the Buddha essence" (Nydahl 1991, 25) equals the line in *The Mahamudra Prayer*, whereas quantum physics establishes the existence of energy and empty space as common factors within all matter living and non-living, which in my opinion resembles the reasoning of Hamvas too.

The second axiom refers to reality, which for Hamvas does not only encompass the apparent world but also the transcendent one – it means totality itself, the unity of existence (Thiel 2014, 201). As mentioned before, this illustration of

7 All quotes from works published in languages other than English were translated by the author of the present paper.

reality can be compared to Buddhist views that consider space-like emptiness as the source of all phenomena. In quantum physics, reality stems from the quantum field and is also a practically infinite container of possibilities.

Hamvas's third axiom indicates that there is a vast number of possibilities which have to be taken into possession, i.e. they have to be activated (Thiel 2014, 201). However, in order for the right choices to be made and the right possibilities to become reality, the I/the subject has to find him-/herself in a place in-between, in the centre of one's inner self. The middle position resembles superposition in quantum physics – connected to wave-particle duality and the double-slit experiment. It refers to the state when we do not know yet which of the possibilities is going to be or become real, e.g. Schrödinger's cat (Bernstein 2023). The superposition or middle position is reached once one eradicates the boundaries between body, soul, and spirit (Hamvas 2001, 255).

Another concept in Hamvas's oeuvre closely connected to this middle position and to making the right choices is that of imagination, or imagining life (Thiel 2014, 202). We have already seen that Hamvas highlights the importance of thought and perception in shaping reality. Nevertheless, when interpreted together with the three axioms, imagination becomes the central metaphor in the process of realization. Creation and realization are successful depending on what occupies the central position of one's imagining life. In that position, the individual is always free, no one can tell him/her what s/he may or can think of or not. Thus, in order to reach the authentic human state, one has to recognize the power of imagination, i.e. the matrix of the mind, and strive towards the true nature of the mind.

Sándor Weöres (1913–1989), poet, writer, literary translator himself, also published in the fields of literary theory and philosophy. His deeply philosophical works include *A teljesség felé* [Towards Completeness] (prose poem, 1945); *A szerelem ábécéje* [The Alphabet of Love] (poems, 1946); *Elysium* [Elysium] (poems, 1946); *Gyümölcskosár* [The Fruit Basket] (poems, 1946); *A testetlen nyáj* [The Disembodied Flock] (prose poem, 1947).

Sándor Weöres visited many places in the East (India, China, etc.); he was a great admirer of Eastern cultures. Taoism and Buddhism had a great influence on him. He translated the Chinese philosophical poem *Tao Te King – Lao Tzu's Book of the Way and of Righteousness*. In addition to these personal experiences, he was greatly influenced by Béla Hamvas's personality and oeuvre. Thus, Eastern views came to him as filtered by Hamvas too, especially in the 1930s and 40s. He was also acquainted with the philosophy of Heidegger and Jaspers due to Hamvas (Loboczky 2007, 136–137).

Similarly to that of Hamvas, Weöres's aesthetic worldview is built up of the most diverse philosophies and sources varying from Greek to Taoist and Buddhist mythology, as well as European existentialist philosophy. Accordingly, his oeuvre is a multi-layered and multi-faceted synthesis of these. He focuses on

the peculiarities, which strive towards the universal, timeless character of all phenomena, highlighting the important role of reflection. In his thesis paper on the birth of poetry, for example, Weöres calls the genre he writes in meditation and confession (Loboczky 2007, 136) – terms borrowed from Eastern and Christian mythology, but nevertheless proving once again Hamvas's influence on him –, while meditation is a kind of reflective process.

One of the guidelines in Weöres's poetry is the idea of *All is One*, the unity of existence and non-existence. In many of his poems, there appear a set of antithetic notions next to each other, whereas these dual pairs underline the non-dual character of existence, the permanent change and cyclicality of the world (Loboczky 2007, 137). In his prose poetry volume entitled *A teljesség felé* [Towards Completeness] – which he dedicates to Hamvas, who he names his master – Weöres writes:

> Ten Balconies[8]
>
> Total existence: life-less.
> Total eternity: time-less.
> Total functioning: change-less.
> Total power: power-less.
> Total knowledge: data-less.
> Total wisdom: thought-less.
> Total love: feeling-less.
> Total goodness: direction-less.
> Complete happiness: joy-less.
> The full sound: sound-less. (Weöres 2000, 137; my translation)

Paradoxically, totality seems to be defined by the lack of the very things it should include; however, interpreted from the perspective of Buddhism, we know that this emptiness is in fact the source of all phenomena. Moreover, the play with words in the poem also illustrates the idea of unity and oneness, which is above duality, i.e. is non-dual. The corresponding lines from *The Mahamudra Prayer* would be:

> It is not existent – for even Buddhas do not see it.
> It is not non-existent, being the basis for samsara and nirvana.
> It is not the opposites, nor both, nor something else, but their union the middle way.
> May we realize the true of mind, which is beyond extremes. (Nydahl 1991, 24)

8 All poems by Weöres were translated by the author of the present paper.

Dualistic perception is based on extremes and is considered to be illusory in Buddhism because it does not acknowledge emptiness and oneness. It hinders individuals to reach the true nature of the mind, which is limitless. Duality is a misconception according to views in quantum physics, too, if we think of the quantum entanglement theory, which dismantles the idea of separateness on the subatomic level.

Similarly to Hamvas, Weöres does not only speak on an abstract level but brings his macro-observations down to the level of the individual. In *Who Are You?* he writes:

> If you abstract yourself from all that you know to be your being:
> that is where your being actually begins.
> Do not mistake your body, your mind, your person for your being.
> It is only your auxiliary; it is only a bat, a guardian of your needs
> and a stooping burden.
> Your body is not you, for it is only matter, ever changing:
> at forty, you have not a single part of your twenty-year-old body.
> But neither are you your emotions and your intellect, for you are not the person
> You were when looking from the cradle. Who art thou? the boundless,
> That which at thy conception appeared within the bounds.
> If you consider your delimited person as yourself, perform a
> a Copernican inversion: consider the boundless wholeness as yourself, your person
> as a temporary bound, a mere apparition, a "not-me."
> Where feeling, numbness, thought, thoughtlessness,
> change, immutability cease to exist; where you would think there was nothing:
> there your very being begins. (Weöres 2000, 29; my translation)

The poem touches upon science with the ever-changing nature of body cells; thus, technically speaking, we are not the same at either point in our lives even if we perceive ourselves as such. Our bodies are constantly changing, and so are our thoughts and emotions. These have an impermanent character and can therefore be named illusory; they cannot be grasped. The verses can also be interpreted from the viewpoint of the relation between emptiness and form, while existence is the infinite play of the way these phenomena arise and return into emptiness. The terms *emptiness* and *form* may also be paralleled by the quantum field and matter.

The last concept to mention here is that of the imagination, which, as we could see above, is linked in Hamvas's works to perception and the matrix of

the mind. In my opinion, Weöres uses the term in a similar way. In the poem with the same title, he defines imagination as the only way of restoring reality in the sense of truth:

> Earth is the purgatory of lies; here everything is a lie around us:
> the pseudo-reality of space, the pseudo-reality of things,
> the pseudo-muchness of ourselves. And
> in the human mind even truth dances: all is true and
> nothing is true at the same time.
> The only way out of the flood of lies is precisely that: imagination.
> In the midst of all this fake reality
> it is up to your imagination to restore the true reality. […]
> On earth, all that comes into being and passes away is called reality;
> it is only imagination that seems to create its creatures out of nothing.
> The pseudo-nothing from which imagination draws is reality; and
> in the many separate pseudo-realities, only that is real which seems nothing
> and imaginary inside us: the imperceptible, common essence, the changing
> the unchanging existence behind the changing manifestations. (Weöres 2000, 15; my translation)

Thus, again, these lines highlight the recurring idea of what we think we become and that our perception needs to be clear in order to be true and real. These are the attributes needed to live a complete life.

Conclusions

The paper started with the hypothesis that there are meeting points between ancient Eastern, especially Buddhist cosmology, literature, and quantum physics. The direct comparison between Buddhist terminology and quantum physics seems to have proven that the concepts of Buddhist emptiness and the quantum field, the nature of the mind and the matrix of the mind – which both refer to the way we perceive our reality and to the fact that all phenomena are projections of the mind –, as well as oneness and quantum entanglement are used in similar ways. They denote the same essence. Thus, we can return to the introduction of the paper, where myth and science were thought to describe and explain the same reality, and we could see that they actually do so in a resembling manner. Today's quantum research has arrived at comparable results to what is being said about the way our universe works in Buddhist texts stemming from more than 2000 years ago. Scientific reasoning gives back the truth value of these so-called myths.

The last part of the paper showed through the oeuvre of the Hungarian writers Béla Hamvas and Sándor Weöres how Eastern myths are present and presented in literature as well and can be compared to the enlisted concepts from quantum theory too. They can ease the comprehension of these phenomena by using a more accessible language to the audience. They bring ancient traditional texts into the focus once again, underlining their current viability, but also the fact that literature is a continuation of myths. These kinds of literary texts invite the readers to embark on the quest for truth and stay open to mythological views and find them in today's world, for example, in modern sciences. These texts make us think out of the box, go beyond the boundaries set by the different systems, to recognize the matrix of the mind.

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Appendix:

TÍZ ERKÉLY[9]

A teljes lét: élet-nélküli.
A teljes öröklét: idő-nélküli.
A teljes működés: változás-nélküli.
A teljes hatalom: erő-nélküli.
A teljes tudás: adat-nélküli.
A teljes bölcsesség: gondolat-nélküli.
A teljes szeretet: érzés-nélküli.
A teljes jóság: irány-nélküli.
A teljes boldogság: öröm-nélküli.
A teljes zengés: hang-nélküli.

KI VAGY TE?[10]

Ha elvonatkoztatod magadat mindattól, amit lényednek ismersz: tulajdonképpen lényed ott kezdődik.
Testedet, értelmedet, személyedet ne cseréld össze lényeddel, önmagaddal. Csak segédeszközöd; csak batyu, mely szükségleteid őrzője is, görnyesztő teher is.
Tested nem te vagy, hiszen csak anyag, mely folyton cserélődik: negyvenéves korodban húszéveskori testedből egyetlen parány sincsen.
De érzelemvilágod és értelmed sem te vagy, hiszen még nem volt, mikor te már a bölcsőből nézegettél. Ki vagy? a határtalan, mely fogantatásodkor a határok közt megjelent.
Ha elhatárolt személyedet tekinted önmagadnak, végezz copernicusi fordulatot: a határtalan teljességet tekintsd önmagadnak, személyedet pedig ideiglenes kötöttségnek, puszta tüneménynek, „nem-én"-nek.
Ahol megszűnik az érzés, érzéketlenség, gondolat, gondolattalanság, változás, változatlanság; ahol azt hinnéd, hogy semmi sincsen: tulajdonképpeni lényed ott kezdődik.

A KÉPZELET[11]

A Föld a hazugság tisztítótüze; itt minden hazug körülöttünk: a tér ál-végtelenje, a dolgok ál-valósága, önmagunk ál-sokasága. S az ember-

9 Sándor Weöres: *Ten Balconies*.
10 Sándor Weöres: *Who are you?*
11 Sándor Weöres: *Imagination*.

agyban még az igazság is táncol: egyszerre minden igaz és egyszerre semmi sem igaz. A hazugság-áradatból az egyetlen kivezető út éppen az, amely leghazugabbnak látszik: a képzelet. A sok ál-valóság közt képzeletedre van bízva az igazi valóság helyreállítása. Nem a hegy és nem a völgy a valódi, hanem a szépség, melyet képzeleted a hegyek-völgyek formáin élvez; és a jelenség világ ál-végtelenjéből képzeleteden át vezet az út a benned rejlő igazi végtelenbe.
Más a képzelet és más a képzelődés, ahogy más a beszéd és más a fecsegés. A képzelődés az élet törvénye szerint működik és az éhen maradt vágyakat köddel eteti; a képzelet a lét törvénye szerint működik, és amit megteremt, műalkotást, tettet, gondolatot: valódi és igaz.
A Földön mindaz, ami keletkezik és elmúlik, valóságnak neveztetik; csak éppen a képzelet tűnik olyannak, mintha teremtményeit a semmiből húzkodná elő. Az ál-semmi, ahonnét a képzelet merít: a valóság; s a sok külön-lévő ál-valóságban csak az a valódi, ami bennük semminek, képzeltnek rémlik: érzékelhetetlen, közös lényegük, a változó megnyilvánulások mögötti változatlan létezés.