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Commission for European Standards: Literary

(Draft 1)

The Hungarian Writers' Union has been informed by a source in Brussels that, after a series of confidential conferences, an agreement is imminent on obligatory literary standards for all EU member states. Our correspondent has been able to obtain this draft copy of the chapter relating to the novel only.

Chapter CVIII. Prose Fiction (The Novel and Related Genres)

The formal criteria for narrative forms called Prose shall be understood henceforward as follows:

- 1) A volume of text not less than 116 pages and not more than 367 pages should be called a Novel. Any such text shorter than that is a Short Story, and as such, will not be supported by the European Union. Anything longer than such a text will cease to exist.
- 2) For Font Size, see also Paragraphs A and B of Chapter LXIII. Use of fonts over or under 12 points will result in the exclusion of the Novel from European Union support. Formatting more than 25 lines on a page and more than 60 characters in a line is prohibited.
- 3) For inseting, paragraph spacing and margins see Sub-Sections 234 and 235 of Chapter XVII. Any work failing to meet the requirements as laid down in Items 2 and 3 will not qualify as a Novel even if it should fulfill all other criteria.
- 4) The Novel must be arranged through an Action, namely into a beginning, middle, and an end, and this arrangement is obligatory. This trinity is defined as Action-Bow. In the absence of an Action-Bow, a Novel is not allowed to be published, distributed, or written in the territory of any Member State of the European Union.
- 5) The Novel must contain Dialogue and Author's Text. A work lacking either of these will not qualify as a Novel and will not be supported.
- 6) The ideal ratio between Dialogue and Author's Text is 2 : 1. A maximum divergence of + or - 12 per cent is tolerable. Any divergence of a larger order will result in the disqualification of the work from European Union support.
- 7) The words used in a Novel must conform 99 per cent to the Common Word Stock of the language concerned. (For the definition of Common Word, see Family Standards of the European Union, Chapter on Mother, Sub-Section on

Mother Tongue.) Every European Union Member State is permitted a maximum of 5 000 Common Words. The determination of these falls within the competence of the Academy of Sciences of every Member State of the European Union. By 31 December 2004, these Common Words will be published by the Member States at their own cost in a minimum of half a million copies, and are to be made available also on CD-ROM. If the total of words other than those contained in the Common Word Stock thus determined does not exceed 1 per cent, the Novel is to be tolerated; an excess of 2 per cent will disqualify the Novel from support. A divergence of 1.5 per cent will be judged by an International Literary Committee of Arbitration whether it is tolerable or not; the decision of this Committee is subject to the approval of the Supreme Language Court (SLC) of the European Union (the SLC is to be composed as follows: two members from each of the States whose membership of the European Union dates from before the 2004 current enlargement and one member each from the states acquiring membership in 2004, with the exception of Poland which, in recognition of the importance of its agriculture, may have three members). Rulings of the SLC are final.

8) In content, a Novel is required to describe an Action begun, developed, and completed in any of the languages of the Member States of the European Union, subject to the restrictions detailed above.

9) A Novel may be Historical, Social, or Extreme.

10) A Historical Novel is one that deals with the past-time circumstances of individuals (as defined under common European Law), and its morals are Humanist in the sense that this term is determined by the relevant Standards of the European Union (see Paragraph 7, Chapter CVL). In an Historical Novel, a so-called "post-modern" or "interventional" procedure is inapplicable.

11) A Social Novel is one the Author of which describes contemporary society (societies). Positively presenting the work of the official bodies of the Union is preferred.

12) An Extreme Novel is one that falls outside the fields defined under Sub-Sections 10 and 11, but meets all other criteria. The support provided to an Extreme Novel must not be higher than 20 per cent of the support provided for Historical and Social Novels.

13) Content criteria of the Novel:

A) The Novel must have Characters partaking in its Action. A maximum of 33.33 per cent of the Characters may be Negative ones; the remaining 66.66 per cent must be Positive. The percentage must be calculated on the basis of each Character's occurrence per page and per length of mention. External or internal monologues of whatever length must be included in the percentage calculated for the given Character. The following are accepted as Negative Characters: Islamic Fundamentalists, Suicide Bombers, Extraterrestrials, Nazis, Fascists, Bolsheviks, Murderous Armed Robbers, Mass Murderers, Desecrators of Dead Bodies, Paedophiles, and Anti-EU Demonstrators. Characters not included in the above list are Positive Characters.

B) Main Characters (or Protagonists) are Characters occurring in more than 50 per cent of the Action. Characters occurring with a lesser frequency are Secondary Characters. The ratio of Negative Characters among the Main Characters must not be higher than 25 per cent. The ratio of Negative Characters among the Secondary Characters may be higher than that; however, it must not exceed 40 per cent.

C) The Novel, whether Historical, Social, or Extreme, is obliged to include the motif of (1) reconciliation; (2) agreement; (3) peace between the peoples of a minimum of two (2) European Union Member States. In the absence of any one of these motifs or of the combination of all three, the Novel must not be supported even if it meets all other criteria.

D) Positive Main Characters recommended exceptionally strongly:

a) A grandmother who underwent many terrible tribulations before the advent of the EU with her spiritual and moral integrity remaining intact, and who now educates her grandchildren single-handedly in such a manner that they become upright, law-abiding citizens of the European Union who meet the challenges of business life.

b) A scholar of Jewish origin who suffered Nazi and/or Bolshevik imprisonment, but was redeemed by the ideas of Free Market and Christianity, who adopts at least two African or Asian orphans and educates them to become law-abiding citizens of the EU successful in business.

c) A young man or woman originating from an ethnic minority of an EU Member State who succeeds in having his/her minority accepted by the dominant ethnic group of the given Member State, thus contributing to the relief of latent ethnic conflicts. Especially recommended to the states joining the European Union after 2004 is the portrayal of young, upwardly mobile, optimistic members of the Roma minority. In this type of novel, the rappers and folk singers of Roma descent 2004 accession countries should have dazzling careers and should be subjects of admiration, especially on the part of the youth of the majority group in the countries concerned.

d) Erotic or Sexual Novels must have as their Positive Main Character prostitutes who as children were forced by violence, beatings, and torture to provide sexual services, their passport was taken from them, but who succeed in escaping their tormentors and in helping the police imprison them, while liberating their fellow sufferers from captivity. An additional 20 per cent support is due to the Sexual Novel whose Main Character is an Asian, African, Latin American, Russian, Ukrainian, Kazakh, or Turkmenian immigrant. It is mandatory that such Novels have detailed instructions on protection against AIDS. A failure to meet this condition means that the Novel must not be supported. In Novels with an Erotic or Sexual content, the description of any sexual position other than those described in the Kama Sutra is strictly prohibited.

E) An EU–Supported Novel may deal with non–EU topics without limitations as to its contents but only as long as it does not offend the sensibilities of any nation outside the European Union. As an example: the Novel must not provoke anti–Russian or anti–American sentiments. In such Novels, a total of 5.6 per cent of the non–EU Characters may be Negative Characters. Recommended Positive non–EU Characters are, for example, Presidents Kennedy and Lincoln, Leatherstocking, Louis Armstrong, President Gorbachev, General Suvorov, Tsar Peter the Great, etc. Examples of Negative non–EU Characters: Lee Harvey Oswald, Ivan the Terrible, Stalin.

14) EU support of Novels for the Young may cover as much as 75 per cent of their total cost if they take a stand against (a) child labour; (b) drug abuse; (c) juvenile crime; and (d) childlessness (see Anti–Single Law, Chapter CVI). Support for a Novel for the Young may reach 100 per cent if it portrays the process in which the child characters of the Novel simultaneously learn at least three EU languages foreign to them, two of which must be the language of an earlier Member State, and one the language of a new Member State of the EU. The electronic publication on CD–ROM of such Novels, if suitable for language teaching, is supported by the EU in full even if the Novel itself receives only partial support.

15) The adaptation or revision of popular earlier novels will, in recognition of the fact that the history of the EU nations itself is being rewritten by the European Union, receive a support of 90 per cent. For example: in the revised version of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Napoleon will be sympathetic to the Russian people; Moscow will not be set on fire, nor will it burn down. The French defeat will be attributed exclusively to the extreme temperatures of the Russian winter. The work of revision of earlier Novels should be entrusted to writers who have won the Nobel Prize in Literature. An EU Member State which has not produced a Nobel Prize author may substitute a winner of the Herder Prize.

16) Picture Novels of a Humanist content combined with music will be financed 100 per cent by the European Union, in so far as they may not only be read but also viewed on a screen while listening to music. Fifty–eight per cent of the revenue coming from the sales of such Novels must be paid to the European Novel Support Court (ENSC). In the case of Erotic Musical Picture Novels with a Humanist content, 85 per cent of the revenue is due to the ENSC, which must be financially self–supporting. (For the distinction between Eroticism and the Sex Industry, see Chapter VI.)

17) Member States will delegate one Commissioner per 5 million inhabitants each to the ENSC. Member States with a population of less than 5 million will be represented by one Commissioner. The base salary of a Commissioner cannot be less than the salary of a Cultural State Secretary of the delegating Member State, plus expenses allowance and an extra payment for foreign language skills if, beside his or her mother tongue, the Commissioner speaks the language of at least one pre–2004 Member State to a standard level (only the Official Language Test of the European Union may be accepted; tests will be organized by the ENSC). Extra payments may be received up to a maximum of four languages; a fifth language entails no further payment. In the case of related languages (examples: Estonian and Hungarian; Slovenian, Czech, and Polish; or Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, German, and Dutch), only

50 per cent of the extra payment is due. The total amount of the full extra–language–skill payment will be 7.9 per cent of the Commissioner's current base salary. The expense allowance will be determined relative to the distance of the Commissioner's home country from the spiritual centre of the European Union, calculated at a rate of EUR 1.6 per kilometre.

18) Applications for support submitted must include a synopsis of the Novel (to a maximum of 2 pages), a description of the Characters (to a maximum of 4 pages), and a summary of its Positive Message (to a maximum of 3 pages) written in any of the official languages of the EU. The costs of translation to all other languages of the EU must be covered by the applicant. In 2004, the total translation costs cannot exceed EUR 35 000. A copy of the document certifying payment must be attached. Granting of the first 15 per cent of the support will be decided on the basis of the Synopsis, the Character Description, and the Message. The full amount will be paid to the Publisher upon approval of the complete manuscript. The Author's share of the full payment must not be less than 5 per cent. Unsuccessful Applicants will not be reimbursed for the translation costs. If, for any reason, the complete manuscript is rejected, the Applicant will be obliged to return 9 per cent of the 15 per cent received. Failing to do so, the Applicant will be sued and excluded from any future possibility of applying for EU support.

19) Applications must include the following Appendices: (1) birth certificate of the Author(s) and the Publisher; (2) document certifying their citizenship; (3) their highest education diploma; (4) certificate of good character; (5) a max. one–page summary of the Author's previous work; (6) the twenty most important reviews on his/her previous activity in three official languages of the European Union (two of them in the pre–2004 languages); (7) a document certifying the Author's marital status, working place, and sexual preferences; (8) a certificate of the citizenship of the Author's spouse or the person, if any, living in a common household with him/her; (9) his/her authentic fingerprints; and (10) a handwritten declaration that he/she has never been a member of a Nazi Party, Bolshevik Party, Assassins' Group, Fundamentalist Church or Religious Group, or appears on any proscribed list of football hooligans. Lack of any of the above Appendices will result in the automatic disqualification of the Applicant.

Published 2005–10–03

Original in Hungarian

Translation by *The Hungarian Quarterly*

First published in *The Hungarian Quarterly* No. 173, Spring 2004 (English version) and *HVG* 2004 (Hungarian version)

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