

University of Pécs, Faculty of Art, Doctoral School

Béla Fűkő

A world view encoded in sculpture

*Energetic relationships that build up the visual in sculpture
in the context of the I Ching's energetic structures and interpretations*

Theses of DLA dissertation

Supervisor

Colin Foster DLA sculptor, university professor

2022

Contents

The foundations of my doctoral research	3
A theoretical approach to the hypothesis	4
Understanding the ancestral images of a dynamic world order and an analysis of the internal structure of the <i>I Ching</i>	4
The subject of research: the relationship between sculptor and cosmic meaning.....	5
A method for decoding cosmic meanings	6
I. An interpretation of the flow of the currents inside the units of six	6
II. A interpretation of the relationship of trigrams to each other.....	6
III. An interpretation of change as manifested in temporality.....	6
<i>III.1. The creation of the statue-faced basic sign.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>III.2. Recognition of the shifting lines of our intuitions evoked by the world of phenomena</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>III.3. The direction sign or the possibility of weighing the future taking shape in our consciousness.....</i>	<i>7</i>
The power relations constituting the visual in the context of my sculptures	7
A synthesis of the transmutation of primordial forces	8
Conclusion	9
Selected sources.....	10

The foundations of my doctoral research

My dissertation is based on the hypothesis that sculptures (as living organisms that convey a metaphysical message) can be interpreted in the context of the energy structures of the *I Ching*. The system of ideas that I refer to while mapping my sculptures that represent a spiritual vitality beyond the realm of conscious thought, simplified to the extreme and transcending the senses, presupposes a familiarity with ancient Oriental world views and philosophies which are different from their European counterparts. Consequently, it is essential to understand the ancestral images of this specific system of symbols and to interpret their content and how they were created. I believe that in the clear light of living philosophy it becomes easier to see and interpret the meaning of the existence of our sculptures. The foundation of my hypothesis is that the ‘sign code’ of the living material, imbued with creative forces and manifested as a sculpture, can be mapped by the intuitive faculties of the human being. I am convinced that the existence and the future of my excess energy enveloped in a shell may be mapped based on the knowledge of the hexagrams of the *I Ching*.

The purpose of my thesis is far from understanding divination. For me, the only guidelines are those offered by a symbolic description of the fundamental power relations hidden in the phenomena, sculptures and objects that can be cognised through the systems of the world view or philosophy known as Taoism. Primarily, my dissertation is intended to draw attention to the fact that it is possible to detect in sculptures the energy manifestations of a seemingly obsolete worldview that requires time and reflection. In my view, a sculpture must not be treated as an object created from inanimate matter. My works are not intended to copy the synthesis of natural phenomena as manifested in archetypes, but rather to penetrate reality through their energetic intensity. As a sculptor, I can make this tangible only if I prove my hypothesis discussed above with my own sculptures. For that reason, I treat my sculptures – works of extremely simplified forms endowed with transcendental content to be grasped intuitively – as energy models.

To embrace trigrams and hexagrams, we must distance ourselves from the cultural context and outlook of 21st-century Europe. However, this does not necessarily mean that we need to see the sculptures through the eyes of an oriental person; still, we must have a knowledge of the internal structure of the *I Ching* and the intellectual roots of Taoist spirituality in the relevant relational system, and this knowledge must go beyond our intuition.

A theoretical approach to the hypothesis

A sculpture in itself is a real entity. For me, in order become able to observe a three-dimensional object or set of objects from a different perspective, I must give up repeating well-established narratives and the clichés of established formal approaches of art history. In this case, I had to abandon the type of concept generally held by modern man, namely that the material is a product of creation which, in itself, is unquestionable and immutable. The foundation of my theory is my belief in the certainty of sculptures thriving with spiritual vitality. Throughout my dissertation, I refer to my sculptures as excess energies enveloped in a shell – and this is a basic attitude rather than a hypothesis of my dissertation.

This means that, in the context of our approach, we must reach the point (at least here, when observing my sculptures) where we understand that what appears to be a solid, unquestionable and unfeeling mass is, in fact, like a volcano thought to be quiet and dead which then is realised as a form before our very eyes. Yet the interior is nothing but flames, vortexes and energy flow. The seemingly calm and solid body is pervaded by a never-ceasing flutter of change. In fact, the tension of changes is realised in the consciousness of the intuitive receiver. It is only the code (or the significance of cognition) that is unfathomable. Given the context of the flow of the current hypervisual age, which makes everything superficial, only a few creators and recipients are interested in the creative power and evolutionary programme of thoughts. A sculpture is the sum of a dynamic process. It is worth paying special attention to the message of the thought domains that transcend the play of forms in sculpture and to the possibilities of the stimuli arisen in the beholder. The core of ancient Asian thought (that is, the philosophy of relations) is undeniably present in these sculptures of mine, as well as in the patterns of their interpretation.

Understanding the ancestral images of a dynamic world order and an analysis of the internal structure of the *I Ching*

When unfolding the energy of a sculpture, we must be aware of the fact that the flowing potentialities of being are shifting into light and dark forces. The forces then become elements which can be represented with lines; the lines become form and then are manifested in the world of changes through form.

In this case, we set up line structures through a system of existential potentialities. We construct trigrams or ancestral images, which are in fact basic archetypes realised through straight and continuous lines. The eight trigrams (*kua*), multiplied by themselves, give the sixty-four hexagrams, which result in a form that constitutes of a web of existential potentials. The images of six lines (hexagrams) build up in human consciousness the clear realisation we can accurately create when beholding a sculpture. In my dissertation, I explore the state of the energetic phenomenon of sculptures as manifested in human consciousness, along with the possibility of their potential changes and the direction of their fatefulness. A sculpture is an entity, inasmuch as it is nature created, and has a specific destiny that is in harmony with its creator. The interpretation of the phenomena in sculpture calls for a certain humility from us who interpret and behold a sculpture. It urges the beholder to make a paradigm shift, which means that it presupposes a new way of seeing that enables understanding the ancestral images of three-dimensional energetic structures/sculptures. There is only one way to understand that which cannot be either proven or refuted: to get to know it. The subject I raise is like that. As clearly shown by the millennia of Far Eastern philosophies, the most obvious way to do that is to try and become one with the phenomenon.

The subject of research: the relationship between sculptor and cosmic meaning

As a sculptor, I consider it important to call attention to artefact culture (or, to be more specific, to new aspects of the interpretation of sculptural phenomena) within the framework of the parameters of contemporary art, which had changed by the beginning of the 21st century. While doing so, I do not ignore the traditional approaches of art history either. Even my early works are characterised by a curiosity that has not diminished since: a curiosity about how the ancestral images that emerge from the human unconscious and the myths that live within the human being relate to me and my psyche, and, more generally, to the universal consciousness. I have discovered interrelations between the object I have created and the events that are taking place within me or my consciousness. The more I focussed my attention on the collective unconscious, the more important it became for me to observe that invisible domain which lies beyond the horizon of traditional and modern science.

The projections of human consciousness create an aura of swirling energy around themselves. These can be described by combinations of the six variables of the sixty-four

ancestral images. As alluded to above, it is in the process of transformations or change that regularities become most evident. According to the world view presented in the *Book of Changes*, nothing is at rest. Rest is nothing more but a transitional phase between two changes. There are processes hiding behind solid formations.

A method for decoding cosmic meanings

The code through which the nature of cosmic intelligence can be intuited is the 64 signs of the *I Ching*.

I. An interpretation of the flow of the currents inside the units of six

In the movement within the sign, interaction is manifested by the fact that between the trigrams (*kua*) that make up the six-line symbols there are systems of relationships, too, which then shed light to further interrelations. That which they represent is of paramount importance for deeper interpretations; still, when interpreting the sculptures, I make but reference to them.

II. A interpretation of the relationship of trigrams to each other

The movement created by the interaction of the three-line ancient symbols partly come from the fact that two trigrams can relate to each other in five different ways. To become able to understand the form that constitutes of a web of existential potentials, it is important to illustrate possible interactions in the light of the sculptures I mention in my dissertation.

III. An interpretation of change as manifested in temporality

The energy web represented by my sculptures is best interpreted in terms of changes that manifest in temporality. The changing lines point, in a most definitive way, to the meditative image that is supposed to unfold in our consciousness. If a line of a hexagram changes, then it is transformed from a basic sign (often called a 'root sign') into another sign (called either a 'direction sign', or, in harmony with the nature-related metaphor of the tree mentioned above, a 'bud sign'). In fact, these are three states which stand clearly distinct in time.

III.1. The creation of the statue-faced basic sign

The basic sign is the hexagonal unit drawn behind an energetic phenomenon. It is the structure which we supposed and which is realised as a sculpture in our consciousness.

Apparently, the basis sign is the past itself. But this statement may lead to many misunderstandings. In the present context, the energetic phenomenon realised as a sculpture is a consequence of choices forced by chains of inspiration. The basic hexagram created by ourselves is in fact nothing else but the present determined by past choices.

III.2. Recognition of the shifting lines of our intuitions evoked by the world of phenomena

If we believe to discover the presence of variables in the structure of our basic sign (which, by the way, was also drawn by us, or to be more precise, is perceived by us at the level where the actual events are supposedly taking place), then we need to examine the interpretations of the lines and the interconnections between the levels that constitute the energy structure.

III.3. The direction sign or the possibility of weighing the future taking shape in our consciousness

The result of change points towards to a future taking shape in the womb of the present. In our case, however, ‘the future existing in the present’ points to the consequences of the movements of those mental functions that interpret the basic IDEA of what is seen, and, as it were, remove it from the sediment of ancestral images in the depths of consciousness to build up essential knowledge. This is how the future image of the metaphysical message is created.

The power relations constituting the visual in the context of my sculptures

The sculptures that fall in line with the meaning of my name (‘fü’ meaning ‘grass’ and ‘kő’ ‘stone’ in Hungarian), albeit they indeed refer to the fact that the materials denoted by my surname are literal and omens, are not necessarily and at all times in the ideological focus of my creative activity.

Experiencing the reciprocal (and often mutually dependent) power relations between bamboo and stone had already aroused my interest even at the time when I was still unaware of its significance related to my surname. I have never regarded *stone* a static, solid material, but as an embodiment of a momentary phase of a dynamic process. Stone is a true entity, thriving with events and changes, and condemned to silence by natural laws. Of course, I did not construct the sculptures related to my surname in order to perform experiment in statics but in order to demonstrate the system of ideas of a philosophy of relations through the purest geometric structures. The balance between *grass* and *stone*, the organic and the geometric, the ideal and the real are all substantive contents/phenomena that I examine in my dissertation as meditative objects or as realised mental models. From the perspective of the analogies to the dynamic world order of the Taoist system of ideas as presented by *I Ching*, I consider it important to interpret the philosophy of relations through the example of the sculptures related to my surname. If we are convinced that changes are laws, then identification with the idea is absolutely necessary for an Orientalist or a for sculptor to become able to interpret an oriental text or perspective authentically for an artist/ reader with a typically Western taste.

A synthesis of the transmutation of primordial forces

I think that my theoretical research brought about not only a clearer understanding of my own sculptures, but also a capability for me to experience, even in the case of works created under the aegis of spiritual vitalism, the substance which is the source of the ancestral images of *I Ching*. The cosmic meanings are present in the creations and their projections. I also considered it important to analyse the energetic structure of sculptor Sándor Kigyós's work *Gömb és Hasáb* (Sphere and Prism, 1971–72) in terms of *interpreting change as manifested in temporality* and in terms of *interpreting the process of flows taking place within a sixfold unit*. Undoubtedly, the philosophical meaning of *Gömb és Hasáb* is self-evident; still, besides the spiritual and formal aspects, a theoretical approach of my hypothesis may bring us closer to the creator himself. This further confirms what we are already certain of: that the creator, wittingly or unwittingly, is always present in his creations and projections.

Conclusion

What I offer is a by-no-means-comprehensive picture of the coded manifestation of the nature of the transcendent domains. The code through which the nature of cosmic intelligence can be intuited in sculptures is the 64 signs of the *I Ching*. The fundamental idea and my starting point is that if a sculpture has a real destiny, then its power to transform fate must be manifested in the observer's consciousness.

Getting to know this new way of looking at a sculpture will not result in a better, more efficient or more successful mapping of a sculpture or a set of sculptures in terms of art history or cultural history, but indeed will help observers and the experts in the construction of the artistic visuals understand the processes of an ever-changing world through Taoist teachings. This new vision may contribute to connecting intuition with rationality. Paying attention to the law of change will necessarily help connect spirituality with science and art.

Selected sources

- Balas, Edith – Passuth, Krisztina: *Brâncuși és Brancusi [Brâncuși and Brancusi]*. Budapest : Noran, 2005.
- Bencsik, István: *Bencsik: [munkák] = [works]: 1953–2010: [Pécsi Galéria, ... 22 October – 21 November 2010]*. Pécs : Pécsi Galéria és Vizuális Művészeti Műhely, 2011.
- Bodrogi, Tibor (ed.): *Törzsi művészet 1–2. (Tribal art 1-2)*. Budapest : Corvina, 1981.
- Changeux, Jean-Pierre: *Agyunk által világosan: A neuronális ember, avagy az agykutatás keresztmetszete. [Hungarian translation of 'l'Homme neuronal']* [Budapest]: Typotex, 2000.
- Dempsey, Amy: *A modern művészet története. [Hungarian translation of 'Modern Art (ART ESSENTIALS)']* Budapest : Képzőművészeti Kiadó, 2003.
- Dürckheim, Karlfried: *A nyugalom japán kultusza. [Hungarian translation of 'Japan und die Kultur der Stille']*. Budapest : Szenzár, 2000.
- Festing, Sally: *Barbara Hepworth: a life of forms*. London ; New York, N.Y. : Viking, 1995.
- Fűkő, Béla: *Fűnek hamva, kőnek pora. [Ash of grass, powder of stone]*. Pécs : [S. n.], 2013.
- Héjjas, István: *A keleti vallások filozófiája és világlépe: A kínai, a védikus és a buddhista bölcseségek üzenete [The philosophy and worldview of oriental religions. The message of Chinese, Vedic and Buddhist philosophies.]* [Budapest] : Anno Kiadó, 2007.
- Ji Csing: *A Változás Könyve : Egy ősi kínai jóskönyv. [I Ching. The Book of Change. An ancient Chinese book of divination]*. Translated and compiled by: Beöthy, Mihály – Dr. Hetényi, Ernő. Budapest : Háttér Lap- és Könyvkiadó, 1989.
- Ji king I–III*. Translated and annotated by: Karátson, Gábor. Budapest : Q.E.D., [2003.]
- Ji King : A változások könyve I–II. A Richard Wilhelm változat [I Ching. The Book of Change. A version by Richard Wilhelm]*. Translated by: Pressing, Lajos. Budapest : Orient Press, 1992.
- Jung, Carl Gustav: *A nyugati és a keleti vallások lélektanáról. [Hungarian translation of 'Zur Psychologie westlicher und östlicher Religion']*. [Budapest] : Scolar, 2005.
- Keserü, Katalin (editor and author of Introduction): *Kigyós*. Pécs : Baranya M. Kvt., 1989. (Pannónia könyvek)
- Lao-ce: *Tao te king*. [Budapest]: Cserépfalvi, 1990.
- Liu Ji-ming: *Taoista Ji king [A Taoist I Ching]*. Budapest : Szenzár, 2006.
- Marzona, Daniel: *Minimal art*. Cologne: Taschen; Budapest : Vince Kiadó, 2006.

- Mireisz, László: *A taoizmus és a Ji King [Taoism and I Ching]*. [Budapest] : Vizsom, 2006.
- Moore, Henry Spencer: *A szobrásatról. [Hungarian translation of 'On Sculpture']*. [Budapest] : Helikon, 1985.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm: *Emberi, nagyon is emberi I-II. [Hungarian translation of 'Menschliches, Allzumenschliches']*. [Budapest]: Cartaphilus, 2008-2012.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm: *A vidám tudomány : "la gaya scienza". [Hungarian translation of 'Die fröhliche Wissenschaft („la gaya scienza“)]*. Máriabesnyő : Attraktor, 2018.
- Ni Hua-Ching: *I CHING: A Változások könyve és a változatlan igazság. [The Book of Changes and the unchanging truth]*. Budapest : Lunarimpex, 2006.
- Ni Hua-ching: *TAO : A leheletfinom, egyetemes törvény. [Tao. A subtlest and universal law]*. [Budapest]: Lunarimpex, 2004.
- Read, Herbert: *Arp*. [Budapest]: Corvina, [1973].
- Read, Herbert: *A modern szobrászat. [Hungarian translation of 'A Concise History of Modern Sculpture']*. [Budapest]: Corvina, 1968.
- Sári, László: *Dilettánsok történelme: Honnan ered nyugat és kelet elhibázott viszonya? [History of dilettantes: Where does the misguided relationship between West and East come from?]*. [Budapest]: Corvina, 2019.
- Sciola, Pinuccio: *Pietre sonore = Sound stones = Zenélő kövek*. Szentendre : Művészetmalom, 2002.
- Spinoza, Baruch de: *Etika [Hungarian translation of 'Ethics']*. Budapest : Osiris, 1997.
- Szun-ce: *A háború művészete. [Hungarian translation of 'The Art of War']*. Budapest : Helikon, 2015.
- Swaab, Dick: *A kreatív agy: Hogyan hat egymásra az ember és a világ. [Hungarian translation of 'Ons creatieve brein. Hoe mens en wereld elkaar maken']*. [Budapest]: Libri, 2017.