

Richard Papp*

ORCID 0000-0002-6134-5171

Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Hungary

SHAMAN OR SHOWMAN? THE MYTHS OF JIM MORRISON FROM AN AESTHETIC ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The study deals with the concepts of Jim Morrison's art from the perspective of the myths surrounding Morrison, especially his "self-made shamanism".

Morrison created a "personal shamanism" that basically determined his art and image. The study explores how and why Morrison created his own myth and built shamanistic elements into his songs, poems, and performances. The paper also touches on the connections between Morrison's ideas and show business. According to Morrison's self-definition, which is self-ironic, he was, among other roles, both a "shaman" and a "showman". At the same time, these roles also contained one of the unresolved contradictions of his life. In his concert performances he repeatedly reproached his audience, and he repeatedly fell into conflicts within the "games" of show business, including with those who use rock music for political purposes, managers, businessmen, and even his own band-mates. His art divided audiences and critics, and it continues to divide them to this day. With this in mind, the study brings up examples of the "Jim Morrison myth" after his death and tries to place this myth within the meanings of the mythology of modernity.

Keywords: Jim Morrison, The Doors, art, modern myths, shamanism, show business, rock music

"Jim was not a showman. He was a shaman," proclaimed keyboardist Ray Manzarek, referring to Jim Morrison, lead singer of one of the most controversial and influential bands in rock history, The Doors. Then he added: "He was possessed by a rage to live. That was his trip, his gift."

"A gifted shaman", whose life and art were a "journey", and not a star of show business, is how Manzarek, co-founder of the band, who wrote a book and has talked about the life and art of Morrison in many interviews, sees him (Manzarek, 1998).

The quoted concepts alone carry the promise of exciting research opportunities. The question may arise: why does Manzarek use the words "shaman", "journey", and "gift" to characterize his bandmate? How and why was Morrison's art built on "shamanism", and

* Richard Papp, Eötvös Loránd (ELTE), University Department of Cultural Anthropology, Egyetem tér 1–3, Budapest, 1053 Hungary; e-mail: pappriki@gmail.com

what kind of shamanism should we think of when trying to understand the meaning of this concept in Morrison's art? What other components in Morrison's artistic concept relate to this shamanism? Did Morrison have a specific "private mythology", one dominated by his shaman identity? Were Morrison's life and death mythicized by the reminiscences, subsequent evaluations, and the retelling of his art? And why do Manzarek's quoted words reveal a distinctive separation between "shaman" and "showman"? Is this a reaction to the duality of the recognition of Morrison? Does it cover the type of duality which refers to the discord between "show business" and "real art", and between fans and artists, in the evaluation of the performances of The Doors and Jim Morrison?

These questions can be analysed from various perspectives. Shamanism and the mythological aspects alone are questions of cultural anthropology worthy of exploration, the analysis of which can provide possible answers to the deeper meaning of those in the culture of modernity. The myths built into Morrison's art, both his private mythology and the mythical narratives surrounding it, can be analysed as the total, unquestionable existing reality for himself and for his fans. In the same way, we may consider The Doors concerts and the séances of his fans as experiences of the narratives of the above-mentioned mythical reality. Accordingly, for interpretation of the questions raised, my analysis is based on the approach of the anthropology of religion (cf. Bowie, 2006).

The subject of my writing does not, of course, allow the use of the cultural anthropological research method of participant observation. However, the cultural anthropological point of view can still contribute (beyond the analysis of the relationship between modernity and religion) to a deeper understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of the myths surrounding Morrison. If we accept that artworks can be understood as the "eye" of a given sociocultural context (cf. Geertz, 1985, pp. 94–121), which includes and expresses the common sense and experience of a culture and society (cf. Maquet, 2003, pp. 79–90), then we can also get to know the characteristics of the social ethos of the majority, by introducing the "counter culture" and related mythical narratives created, used and represented by Jim Morrison.

In another respect, the audience has projected onto Morrison, as a rock star, its own ethos, "creating" and shaping him during his lifetime and after his death; Morrison "becoming a mythical being", a "symbol", allows further consideration and analysis of the perceivable desires, values, and consumer needs existing in societies under modernity.

It is also possible to view Morrison's work and persona from the perspective of the anthropology of art.

Based on this, Morrison's creative work can be viewed from two aspects: On the one hand, we can consider Morrison as a "myth-teller" artist, who has created his own myth-based repertoire, thus becoming a catalyst primarily for the spread of "modern shamanism" in Western societies (cf. Bowie, 2006). On the other hand, Morrison has expressed in many writings and interviews throughout his career that he sees himself as an interpreter and reflective creator of myths (cf. Turner, 2003, s. 11–51).

These two aspects, the transmission of ancient myths, and the creator of independent, "new" artworks – as we will see – made Morrison's self-esteem and the acceptance of his art complex and often contradictory.

Morrison writes about this in his poem “Road Days”, published in *Wilderness*, which may be considered a summary of his life: “A natural leader, a poet, a Shaman, with the soul of a clown” (Morrison, 1988, p. 207).

Any evaluation of his personality and art, both in terms of his contemporaries as well as that of the succeeding generations, is also complex. This is evidenced, among other things, in the article “Legend or Loser?” in the July 2011 issue of *New Musical Express* on the 40th anniversary of Morrison’s death, in which two critics describe his personality and introduce his work, addressing the validity of both aspects.

In this analysis I do not want to take a stand on the above question, but instead try to provide a glimpse into the possible meanings of socio-cultural context associated with myths of modernity partially shaping, and partially confirming, the works of the rock star and poet.

James Douglas Morrison was born in 1943 into a southern Presbyterian family in Melbourne, Florida. His father was a senior officer of the United States Navy. Jim, according to his biographers, was of exceptional intelligence from childhood; he was also a rebel who rejected his family’s values. For his sixteenth birthday, he asked for a collection of Nietzsche’s works. From the time of his adolescence, after reading *The Birth of Tragedy*, he was preparing to experience and create “Dionysian art” (Haynes, 2001, p. 20). He made several short films while attending UCLA. Morrison completed his undergraduate degree at UCLA’s film school within the Theatre Arts department of the College of Fine Arts in 1965. The summer after his graduation, Morrison founded The Doors with fellow UCLA student Ray Manzarek, making it possible to bring his artistic concepts to life.

As the lead singer of The Doors, Morrison wrote more than one hundred songs between 1965 and 1971, released seven platinum albums with The Doors, published four volumes of poetry, performed about two hundred concerts, and made three films. After his death in 1971, in 1980 he became the subject of the first biography of a rock star of the 1960s (Hopkins and Sugerman, 1980). From the 1990s, at Duke University, then at Yale and Stanford Universities, finally even outside of the United States, universities started to offer courses on Morrison’s art (Davies, 2005, pp. 10, 507–508).

The essence of Morrison’s artistic vision was created by his own artistic mythological pantheon. He drew his inspiration from artists who have become mythical figures in the “art mythology” that was canonized at the beginning of the twentieth century. The heroes of this art mythology are artists who consciously opposed the canonized art forms, styles and academies, and the social norms and values surrounding them. The essence of art mythology is that art is the authentic, uncompromising, and unrestrained exploration of “true life”, to which reality and mission the artist remains committed even if his art is rejected, considered counterculture, or pushes the artist onto the periphery of a society (cf. Dossi, 2008, pp. 97–111).

Morrison’s mythical pantheon was also built on this concept. In his songs, poems, and concerts he consciously developed his aesthetic products, revealing profound human realities. With this, he wanted to create a counterculture that was not only opposed to the majority social ethos, but also to the ideology and art of the contemporary mainstream subculture, the ideology of the hippie movement and way of life.

John Densmore, the drummer of The Doors, who also wrote a book about Morrison (Densmore, 1990), said the hippies believed that the essence of human nature was benevolent

and the purpose of the hippie way of life and art was to uncover and help the liberated ego to reach the Edenic state, while Jim Morrison explored the “true”, “ancient” nature of human nature, and the possibility that these deep consciousness-contents and journeys within would allow to abolish the ego. As Densmore writes: “Jim’s message was endarkenment, not the enlightenment sought by the hippy generation.”

The source and point of reference of Jim Morrison’s ambition was the mythical pantheon he constructed for himself. The dominant figure of his pantheon was the god Dionysus and the followers of his cult. The example of Dionysus and his followers was built by Morrison into his artistic ideas taken from the abovementioned *The Birth of Tragedy* and Frazer’s *The Golden Bough*. Dionysian art, the liberation of consciousness using consciousness-modifying substances, and the use of ritual ecstasy to Morrison meant the possibility of experiencing the “ancient, true” life.

In 1968 Morrison spoke about it in an interview published in *The Eye* magazine:

I think there are a lot of images and feelings in us that can hardly move freely in our everyday life. However, when they do come out, they often manifest in perverse forms. It’s the dark side of things. The more civilized we become on the surface, the stronger is the other side’s demands. Think of it (the Doors) as a séance in an environment that has become life-threatening: cold, limiting. People feel dead in this bad countryside. We collect them for such a séance to recall, reconcile and expel the spirit of the dead. With chanting, dancing, singing and music, we are trying to heal the disease, trying to bring harmony back into the world.

Sometimes I think of the birth of rock and roll as the Greek drama that was born in the stack-yard in a critical harvesting season, and at first it was nothing but the worship of a dancing and singing group. Then one day an obsessed one jumped into the middle and began to imitate the god. At first there was only singing and rumbling. As the cities evolved and more and more people dealt with making money, but somehow, they had to keep in touch with nature, they used actors instead. I think this is the function of rock. (Davis, 2005, p. 272)

Here we can see how Morrison identifies the actual social reality with the world of the “dead”. The opposite of this today is the mythical-ritual play, the drama of the ancient world, which makes it possible to experience the “true life”. He thus connects the Dionysian cult with the art of the rock and roll he represents. An essential element of this interface is that both ancient Greek and rock and roll rituals are at the same time created and spontaneous acts, in which connections with nature and the true reality can manifest without a boundary. The ancient drama can thus become alive in the present, making this relationship experience-able once again.

Morrison, drawing from European and American art, built the work of those into his art mythology, which crossed the norms of social boundaries and placed the experience of “ancient”, “free”, and “true” life at the centre of his artistic concept.

During his studies and in preparation for his future artistic creations, Morrison incorporated the poetry of Charles Baudelaire and Arthur Rimbaud into his work. From English literature, William Blake, Oscar Wilde, Jack London, Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, and the literary

movement of the Beat Generation (Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Gregory Corso, Lawrence Ferlinghetti) influenced Morrison's art.

In addition to literary influences, Antonin Artaud's concept of "theatre of cruelty" was also incorporated into Morrison's "pantheon". In the modern theatre, Artaud tried to create a sense of "ancient", "ritual", "chaotic" experience by liberating the senses, with the help of which the participants of the performances could encounter "true reality" (cf. Göbölös, 1991, pp. 18–31).

The decisive source of the art of Jim Morrison and The Doors, apart from those mentioned above, was Aldous Huxley's *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell*, in which Huxley explains that if we want to stay "healthy", we probably cannot do so without directly perceiving the inner and outer worlds – the more irregular, the better it is – into which we were born. This existing reality is so infinite that it is incomprehensible, and yet it allows us to understand directly and – in some respects – completely. This is transcendence, different from human perception, yet it can appear to us as immanence, an experienced participation. "Enlightenment" means being always aware of the full reality, its inherent variability – being aware while remaining in an animal-like state in order to survive, thinking and feeling as a human being, and, whenever necessary, having recourse to systematic justification. One's goal is to discover that we have always been where we need to be. We make this task very difficult for ourselves. In the meantime, "we have free grace" in the form of "partial and passing ideas" (Huxley, 1997, pp. 89–90).

To be able to live with this grace, that is, to experience "transcendence different from human perception", to reach the "Artificial Paradise", it is essential to break through the gates/doors of perception (Huxley, 1997, pp. 69–70).

The Artificial Paradise (with the help of drugs, art, and rituals) allows one to satisfy the ever-universal desire of the soul so that the individual can go beyond oneself, cross the gates and doors of perception.

The quotation introducing Huxley's writing was taken from William Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*: "If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite".

Jim Morrison chose the name of his band based on these quotes; The Doors refers to the gates of perception and the artistic concept that aims to disclose these gates to the experience of the infinite.

To achieve this, in one of his most popular poems, "An American Prayer", Morrison wrote:

Let's reinvent the gods,
All the myths of the ages
Celebrate symbols from deep elder forests
[have you forgotten the lessons
Of the ancient war]
We need great golden copulations
The fathers are cackling in trees
Of the forest
Our mother is dead in the sea

Do you know we are being led to
Slaughters by placid admirals
and that fat slow generals are getting
Obscene on young blood
Do you know we are ruled by T.V.
The moon is a dry blood beast...
We have assembled inside this ancient
and insane theatre
To propagate our lust for life
Flee the swarming wisdom
Of the streets...

In this poem (as in *The Eye* interview cited above), Morrison paints the actual, current social reality as a “dead”, hopeless, and cruel world. In contrast is the opportunity to “escape”, the “proclamation of joy of life”, whose scene is the celebration of the “ancient and crazy theatre of rituals” and the symbols coming from the ancient, old forests. “True life”, the “gods”, can be discovered in the myths whose reinvention is the call of Morrison’s poem and summary of his artistic aspirations.

This is how “Break on Through”, the first song on the first album by The Doors, addressed the audience:

You know the day destroys the night
Night divides the day
Tried to run tried to hide
Break on through to the other side

We chased our pleasures here
Dug our treasures there
Can you still recall time we cried
Break on through to the other side...

Made the scene, week to week
Day to day, hour to hour
The gate is straight, deep and wide.
Break on through to the other side...

The significance of the door and the gate is clearly shown in the lyrics as the possibility and condition of the breakthrough to the other side. The repetition of “Break on through to the other side” as a refrain between the verses, and at the end of the song, is a call and music and lyric poetry that allows traveling to ecstasy, and transformation.

The mythical foundation of the passage to the other side, and the technique of transferring it to a ritual experience in concert, was attempted by Jim Morrison by adapting from and building on shamanism.

But the question is, what did The Doors frontman mean by “shamanism”? How did he view the role of shamans and did he identify with this role? The next section looks for answers to these questions.

Searching the internet, we find that many fans clearly identify Jim Morrison as a shaman. On one website (<http://articles.waiting-forthe-sun.net/>) we find a description of Morrison's life that chronicles its stages as the steps of becoming a shaman.

According to the definition from the anthropology of religion, the word "shaman" refers to someone who can enter into a state of transcendence to communicate with "spirits", transcendent beings with the help of whom one can influence nature, promote fertility, prevent problems, heal diseases, and maintain connection with the souls of the dead.

The word "shaman" originates from Evenki, a Tungusic language of northern Asia, so it is problematic to apply this concept to diverse places around the world (from the Brazilian rainforests, through Inner-Asia, to the modern Western "urban" shamanism) to people with similar characteristics but culturally different and associated ritual practices. "Shamanism" as an "-ism" makes it even more difficult to deal with this phenomenon in general. The best solution is to see how specific cultures and individuals live the cultural-ritual practice we call shamanism based on the above definition and examine the persons and communities that identify with the shaman or the practice of shamanism (Bowie, 2006, p. 175).

For example, Morrison's concept of shaman differs from the above definition from the anthropology of religion. In his collection of notes of artistic vision and worldview, *The Lords: Notes of Vision* Morrison writes about shamans as "professional hysterics" who are chosen by their community as "heroes" for their mental illness, who live for the people and are "punished" by people (Haynes, 2001, pp. 19–20).

This is how Morrison writes about the "wild child" he envisioned in the lyrics of The Doors' song "Wild Child": "Wild child full of grace / Saviour of the human race."

The Wild Child's "ancient" shaman-reading is emphasized in the 1985 video clip for The Doors "Dance on Fire" video clip, in which a Native American boy's shaman-dance accompanies a recording of the band's performance.

Considering what has been described, it seems that Morrison saw the shaman as a redeemer with psychedelic abilities, living for the people, helping them, but also as a victim of his own activity and the adoptive host environment, that of the audience.

This is what Morrison said about his "personal shamanism" in an interview:

The shaman is actually a kind of mythical creature. As an actor-singer, I can adapt to this role. People's lives are shaped by their own fantasies they want to bring these dreams to life. But if that doesn't work, they're looking for fantasies elsewhere. Maybe that's why my audience pays attention to me and feels what I feel (Morrison, 1999, p. 141).

In the above-mentioned *The Lords*, he writes about the role of the shaman, which, as we learned, he experienced and passed on:

In the seance, the shaman led. A sensuous panic, deliberately evoked through drugs, chants, dancing, hurls the shaman into trance. Changed voice, convulsive movement. He acts like a madman. These professional hysterics, chosen precisely for their psychotic leaning, were once esteemed. They mediated between man and spirit-world. Their mental travels formed the crux of the religious life of the tribe.

Morrison's shaman is a mythical creature that brings the dreams and fantasies of human beings alive, who can share using his movements and dance the journey that makes it possible to find a "new source of life" and the experience of it.

He identified with this role, but in another part of the interview quoted above, he also mentions that he is not sure that people would consider him as their redeemer: "The shaman is a healer – like a doctor. I don't think they would be more respectful of me because of it. I don't see myself as a redeemer" (Morrison, 1999, p. 140).

In his "personal shamanism", identification with the role of the shaman is evident, as is a distance from that of the "redeemer". Nor during the interview does he categorically distance himself from the role of the shaman; instead he relates to the characteristics of the shaman (as in the anthropology of religion and – ethnography) by identifying with the shaman's role as a "healer". His lack of respect for, and rejection of, the role of redeemer role seems to be more of a reaction to the passivity of the audience. It also implies that Morrison did not fully identify with the shaman's image, as he himself defined it. All this allowed him to include other roles in his identity and art (as quoted in his self-assessment at the beginning of the study): "natural leader, poet, clown".

However, shamanism takes on overriding importance in his personal-life narrative, as he wrote in the childhood "calling-story" in *Dawn's Highway*:

He was travelling through a desert with his father, mother, and grandparents. Their car passed the victims of a car accident. The injured and dead were Native Americans. The young child had his first taste of fear, along with the feeling that "the souls of one or two Indians" had moved into his own soul (Morrison, 1991).

In his later recollections, he returned to this story again as a decisive event of the course of his life and career (cf. Davis, 2001, pp. 20–21).

His evaluation of the shaman's role is thus coupled with the story of his childhood "calling", adopting then incorporating the "souls of dead Indians" into his identity.

According to Stephen Davis, Morrison dug himself into the study of shamanism in 1964. Carlos Castaneda, who he had met while studying anthropology at UCLA, had a significant impact on Morrison. Morrison himself also wanted to meet personally with Yaqui *brujos* (shamans), one of whom Castaneda wrote his doctoral dissertation and a book about (its credibility later was debated). This encounter never took place, but elements of shamanism, including wizards, the shaman's journey, and snakes and dragon lizards as the shaman-singer-poet's helper spirits repeatedly show up in Jim Morrison's art, songs and poetry.

Morrison characterized himself as the "Lizard King" in his works. The choreographies of his concerts also reveal how he accompanied his songs with Hopi shaman movements; with the help of narcotics, he tried to play his role on stage as in a trance-like trip. The Celebration of the Lizard, a stage production composed as a series of poems, including musical sections, spoken verse and passages of allegorical storytelling, is another example. Morrison presents the Lizard King and his companion journeying through a desert wilderness. Dreams, visions, and images of shamanism (blood, death, travel, snakes, lizards) appear continuously throughout the performance. The Celebration of the Lizard was presented as a ritual, as in the

closing sentence of the first scene Morrison announced it as the beginning of a “ceremony” (Davis, 2004, pp. 66–67, 267–268).

In summary, Jim Morrison in the role of a shaman (even as he distanced himself from the shaman’s “redeemer” image) determined the course of his life and art, penetrating both his verses and his stage act, which he played consciously, as he identified with its “traveling-helping, healing” aspects, linking it to his “calling” and co-existence with the souls of the Native Americans that entered his consciousness during childhood. This has also contributed to the construction of a private mythology that, after his death, could have contributed to the creation of the “Jim Morrison Myth”.

To answer the question that remains: How authentic is Morrison’s shaman mythology? In the traditional or ethnographic sense Jim Morrison cannot be called a shaman.

I think Jim Morrison’s “personal shamanism” fits into the process that began in the 1960s when, among other things, Timothy Leary in his psychedelic healing the beat poets in their art began to consider the culture of Native Americans, shamanism included, as a model. To them, the culture of the Natives and shamans were the essence of the “ancient”, “natural”, and “true” life, as it was for Morrison. The “western” or “neo-shamanism” that arose at this time also rejected the practice of “playing Indian”. The shaman’s activities and shamanic myths and rituals were perceived as universal, since the human mind, heart, soul and body are universal, only the cultures are different. Accordingly, shamanism can be experienced in various forms and is a spiritual practice that any individual can learn (Harner, 1990; Bowie, 2006, pp. 179–180).

From this perspective, Morrison’s art can be regarded as the “catalyst” of modern “neo-shamanism”, since as a popular singer communicating his “personal shamanism”, he projected the example of a modern “self-made” shaman to his audience. However, often even his own band did not support Jim Morrison in his artistic ideas related to his shamanism (cf. Davis, 2005, pp. 276–280).

Jim Morrison struggled with the obstacles standing in the way of expressing his artistic ideas. He left The Doors to write poetry and moved to Paris in 1971, where he died in the same year under unclear circumstances, leaving fertile ground for the myths surrounding him to grow. A vivid example of this myth, along his own personal myths, is provided by his poem “Indian Magic Man” (Morrison, 1999, p. 96), in which his imminent Parisian death is combined with the spirits of his “shamanism” in a vision:

In my torpid sleep last night
I was dancing, the moon glowed bright.
My throat was mumbling with a voice
Ghosts haunted me without noise

Embers burning ‘neath my tongue
Miracles last three days long
I wanted my daunted face to hide
Cold sweat was sneaking down my spine

On my shoulders perched the wraiths
I looked them straight in the eyes

They were silent long, except
Murmuring two words: Paris, End.

In another verse, “Vision” (Morrison, 1999, p. 189), this is how he summarizes the essence of his own art and personality:

Like the angels
they dance over the room.
Through the air
us a company of mine
follow me like ghosts.
If I just stop for a moment
all of them would die.

He expresses the artist’s “private mythology”, re-creating in this verse the poet-lyricist who presents his “companions” as spiritual beings following him in the image of “angels,” “spirits,” and living within him. All this is more than an internal inspiration for the musician-poet, for if he paused creating even for a moment, he would kill his “spiritual companions”. We can see that Morrison also has committed himself to the “art mythology” in the “pantheon” of which the artists who were “unable to act differently”, the ones who continued creating even if they became socially excluded from the accepted, institutionalized world of art, and thus pushed to the periphery of their society, taking on the way of life, stigmatized as self-destructive by the social ethos surrounding them. Morrison and his “mythical” predecessors knowingly committed to the consequences to receive and provide an insight with their life and art into the essence of “true life”.

The spiritual legitimacy of “cannot act differently” has given it a narrative of fatality and made their aspirations mythically grounded.

Thus, this is how the myth of Morrison fits into the art mythology of modernity.

Art mythology is a characteristic aspect of the myths of modernity. Its roots go back two centuries and it still influences the discourse on art and – as we can see in Morrison’s case – the career of artists.

In this mythical system:

The artist’s vocation in the 19th century becomes a spiritual dedication and art is at the forefront of cultural value. Art-cult is born and together with it the sacred aura is created that surrounds it still. This is a sign of the transitional endpoint of the triumphant crusade that sets the modern art system as a new faith and the artist as an earthly redeemer. Art becomes a civil religion, and the artist becomes a genius whose creative activity involves the civil ideal of the autonomous subject. The public admires on the stage of the art, the beauty, the truth, the good, the desired utopia, the long-awaited abolishment of taboo, the unknown reality shown from an unknown perspective. Feeling elated by this consciousness-altering drug, which can be either an aphrodisiac, a narcotic or an antidote, it escapes for a moment from the state of collective trance of conformism. Artists are still expected to fulfil these promises with their works: seeing the world differently, shifting focus, breaking away from patterns, tasting of simplicity, and experience the taste of individuality. (Dossi, 2008, p. 111)

Ultimately, if the artist is currently being excluded from the system of values and norms of the given society, or feels that way, looking at it from a general perspective, he serves the existing socio-cultural needs, and this need mythicizes the artist's role and his or her person. This is what Morrison and his career is about. At the same time, it allows the artist to consider his vocation a true calling, a sacred-mythical mission fulfilling a destiny. This way, Morrison did not create a distinct, peculiar myth, but rather tied himself and his art to the more general cultural characteristics of the above-mentioned art mythology by combining his "artistic mythology pantheon" with his own private mythology and artistic concept.

However, this was basically determined and made unique by his personal shamanism, which gave him a special place in the modern art mythology and the world of show-business. The uniqueness of his art, "seeing the world with different eyes" – quoting Dossi – lay in, among other things, how he tried to make the "ancient", "true" myths and rituals he envisioned experienceable in music, concerts, and poems. He attempted to bring myths of shamanism into a comprehensive synthesis of the myths of modernity (both the surviving and later myths) starting from Greek mythology to the myth of Freud. A striking example of this is "The End", one of The Doors' best-known songs, in which shamanic symbols and visions of the shaman's voyage are combined with the Oedipus complex and put on display.

"The End" played a central role in almost all The Doors' concerts, with Morrison singing "Father, I want to kill you, Mother, I want to fuck you..." as he tried to make it experienceable with dramatic breaks, long delays, and often accompanied by a shaman-dance with up-tempo music.

Morrison tried to synthesize the myths that are alive and define modernity according to his artistic aspects. And the realization of this synthesis and "mythical-artistic" mission created the myth of Jim Morrison, which he shaped, and which began to form in his life. The myth of Jim Morrison was boosted by the unclear circumstances of his death, and since has been amplified (and kept alive) by the books, recollections, and films published about him (cf. Davis, 2004, pp. 501–512).

Out of these, one of the most important films is Oliver Stone's *The Doors*, released in 1991, which features Morrison's "private mythology" accepted as reality and introducing his myths. Accordingly, we can see in the film the call of the child Jim, the souls of the Native Americans penetrating his mind, those who several times appear in the film as Morrison's companions. The film also includes Ray Manzarek's recollections of a visionary scene when the band's keyboardist saw Jim Morrison "dancing with Indian ghosts" on stage during a concert. Oliver Stone also refers to the identification of Jim Morrison with Dionysus, presents the ritual-ecstatic-transformational features of The Doors concerts, and the conflicts between the independent-minded, conscious artist and his band, show-business, and the society. The film continued to tell and make available "The Myth of Jim Morrison" to those who became interested through the film in the art of The Doors and Jim Morrison.

In addition, performances of The Doors tribute bands have made it possible to experience the Jim Morrison "myth".

At last, we can ask the question, was Jim Morrison a shaman or showman?

If we turn to the words of the poem "Road Days", quoted at the beginning of this paper, we can see that Morrison saw himself as a "natural leader, poet, shaman, and clown."

According to his self-definition, which is not without self-irony, Jim Morrison was, among other roles, both a shaman *and* a showman. At the same time, these roles also carried one of the unresolved contradictions of his life. He repeatedly reproached his audience during his concerts, got into conflicts again and again with the “games” of show business, including those who use rock music for political purposes, the world of managers, businessmen and even his own bandmates. His art divided his audience and his critics, and it has been doing so to this day (cf. Göbolyös, 1991, pp. 123–129, 227–248).

However, this has also contributed to the globalization and shaped by the media of the “Jim Morrison Myth”, and thus his “shamanism”, his artistic concept could survive and live to this day.

This is how Jim Morrison’s “myth” is summarized on the sixty-sixth anniversary of day of his birth by a Hungarian online essay by József Nemes Takács (www.rockvilag.hu): “What would he be like at sixty-six?” Look for the patriarchal images of Francis Ford Coppola today, for example – they used to be classmates at the UCLA Film School in California. But no, we want the pop-icon, the self-destructive, eternal rebel, whom forever we can only see as a young rock star, after joining the 27’s afterlife club thirty-eight years ago.”

27’s afterlife club, with the death of Amy Winehouse, revived the myths of mythical blues and rock stars died at the age of 27 (Robert Johnson, Brian Jones, Janis Joplin, Jimmy Hendrix, Kurt Cobain). As the “star of the 27’s afterlife club, everlasting rebellious, forever young pop icon”, Jim Morrison also depicts the character of a “mythical hero” in the world of modern myths, whose “art mythology” allows consumers to gain insight into the “other side”, to whom his life is not an example to follow in the everyday life, as this “mythical role” leads to “burn-out” and early death.

Jim Morrison, as “shaman” and “showman”, and only with these two roles together, satisfied and continues to satisfy this consumer demand, thus contributing to the incorporation of his “myths” into the mythological system of modernity.

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