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# The New Hungarian Quarterly

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# TRENDS IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE HUNGARIAN PEASANTRY

by

IMRE KATONA

In Hungary, as in other countries, history posed the problems of "whence" and of "whither" on the eve of bourgeois development, quite a long while ago. Sámuel Tessedik, the Lutheran pastor of Szarvas—characteristically writing first in German, in 1784, and only two years later in Hungarian—asked "Of what kind and manner might the peasant man be in the Hungarian Land?..." But neither he, nor others were able to obtain a reassuring answer, least of all, the peasants themselves, who were most directly concerned. This *leitmotiv* of historical and social development in Hungary, the peasant problem has thus persisted unsolved till recent times, and, in the meanwhile, ever more additional problems were posed. Even in the period between the two wars a question of remarkable similarity was put, when Péter Veres, an author who was originally a peasant, entitled one of his works "What is a man worth, if he be a Hungarian?" (By "man" the author, as he himself points out, means, in the first place the peasant—a member of the then numerically major portion of the Hungarian nation.)

These questions we are now endeavouring to answer. The fact that this is happening just now and in just the way it is, is a consequence not only of the present situation but also of our past. However pleasant or unpleasant it may be personally to each of us, history prescribes the development of society with what amounts to the force of nature's laws, and though nature may have been gracious to us in some respects, our history has been all the harsher. This harshness has caused most suffering to the oldest, the most populous and "lowest" social group, the peasantry.

## The historical past

The peasantry of the Western nations had a certain initial advantage over the Hungarians. The Hungarian serf class evolved relatively late and in a short space of time. The older clan and kinship traditions and those

of the pastoral community did not disappear completely, and the new ones were not so well established and varied as in Western feudalism. There was also hardly any urban development, in that the mass of the inhabitants of the Hungarian towns (Debrecen, Szeged, Cegléd) were peasants, not artisans and tradesmen. These opening keynotes to Hungarian history continued to be characteristic throughout, though the lag with respect to Western development was not fatal and irreparable, and it would "only" have needed an even process of historical development for Hungary to catch up. However, the attempt to make up for lost time was at first undertaken at a forced pace which resulted in hybrid, transitional forms, and these in turn grew rigid and were slower to change to new ones. With the exception of the most recent decades, they, nevertheless, always managed to do so somewhat in advance of the countries to the South and East of Hungary. All this was ominously repeated in the course of bourgeois development, whose extreme tardiness is sufficiently explained if, beyond the abortive Hungarian peasant revolutions, we also take into account the 150 years of Turkish subjection and, after it, the German oppression, with its accompanying semi-colonial status. At the very time, when, in the sixteenth century, the Western serfs became free peasants and expert farmers, Hungary—and all the countries East of the Elbe—witnessed the beginning of the so-called second period of serfdom, which was worse and more rigorous even than the first. The Western serf was by now free in his person and firmly in possession of his plot of land. He discharged a large part of his obligatory services by paying in cash and became the mainstay of commodity production (in France), or else the peasantry at an early stage began to give rise to certain increasingly prosperous individuals, the tenant farmers, who made up an important group of commodity producers (in England). In Hungary, on the other hand, the landowners became the main factor in early commodity production, and in their new activities they continued to avail themselves of their feudal powers (e. g., by increasing the *corvée*). Industry, the towns, *etc.* were undeveloped, and early progress soon came to a halt, then stagnated for several centuries. England too had something of the sort, a "new nobility," the gentry, yet in England it was not feudal power that was the decisive factor, but the penetration of capital from without, from the towns, by way of land tenancy or purchase. And simultaneously with this development, capitalist manufactories were established, insuring the expansion of industry. In the Hungarian towns there was no capitalist accumulation, and the backwardness of industrial production also had a retarding effect on agriculture. In fact, the landowners' enhanced powers impeded bourgeois development in village and town

alike, and thus ultimately even their own progress. Manorial estates run by the landowners became ever more frequent, to the detriment of serf plots, and consequently the number of labourers without plots soon came to be double that of the serfs with a tenure of land. In the West, bourgeois development permeated the whole of society. In Central and Eastern Europe, on the other hand, feudalism, complete with all its obsolete trappings, was conserved. The large estates were no more than magnified serf farms, and it was not until fairly late, at the end of the eighteenth century, that they first embarked on up-to-date commodity production. In time, however, the age of feudalism came to an end in Hungary too. For, at the middle of the nineteenth century, we ourselves liberated our serfs, but at the same time had to fight our unsuccessful struggle for independence against the Austrians. For close on five hundred years, social progress and national freedom were thus unable to go hand in hand in Hungary.

Of our bourgeois development we might—*mutatis mutandis*—say much the same, though here attention should rather be devoted to the new phenomena that play a decisive part even in our present life. While earlier, in the period of feudalism, there was no wide gulf between the tenant cotters, labourers and serfs with plots of land, the situation changed after the liberation of the serfs. The serfs became owners of the land they had held and thus turned proprietors, whereas those engaged on the manor lands hurtled to the depths of landless penury. Within the free peasantry, the size and quality of the land which became their property marked out the place of the propertied peasants in society with inexorable precision and almost lifelong validity. At the same time the number of those left without land, but living off it, also increased continually. From this point forward there could no longer be any question of a homogeneous peasantry. As the result of the stratification which evolved in the course of development, there were the landless agricultural labourers and servants; there were, in addition, the poor peasantry, who beside their own little plots held some land in tenure or undertook wage labour, the middle peasants who worked their land with the labour of their own families, and the rich peasants who had others work for them. The gulf between each became ever deeper and the financial and social barriers more rigid. Competition by the large estates and the underdeveloped state of industry bound the peasants to their clod of earth, there was much superfluous manpower and few machines, output grew almost at the pace of a slow-motion picture, and the feudal remnants were slow to disappear. In the second half of the last century all this was not yet so striking, because in comparison to the motionless stagnation of feudalism, peasant production and culture were developing for

all to see. As a strange and contradictory feature, reflecting the belated and half-hearted transformation that had taken place, feudal peasant culture evolved to the full under capitalism. Almost parallel with the spread of the steel plough, the threshing machine, *etc.*, peasant decorative art began to flourish, the new-style Hungarian folk song evolved, new customs were formed, and so forth, Since, however, it was a feudal form that had entered into commodity-producing capitalist relations, a "mongrel" contradiction such as this was unresolvable and in the present century turned into its opposite. After the First World War the political, economic and social situation deteriorated. In the tenebrous aftermath of a lost war and of the defeated Revolution of 1919, with the curtailment of the country's territory, the dearth of land, and unemployment, the previous efflorescence was revealed as having been a mirage. In their desire for bourgeois development and their pathlessness, the peasantry turned against their own earlier magnificent culture.

Despite their fetters and ties, the diligence of the Hungarian peasants led to great accomplishments in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. The stabilization of the barren quicksands between the Danube and the Tisza, the fertilization of $8^1/_2$ million acres of land through flood prevention, the evolution in many places of highly developed regional cultures, changed the aspect of the country and might have served as the foundation of its prosperity. All that was needed was land. But this the large estate owners, who owned half the country, were unwilling to part with. In consequence the peasantry between the two wars were essentially demoralized, and their way of life foundered. All this affected the fundaments of Hungary's entire economic life and of her society, for the majority of the population lived off the land, while the majority of the peasants thus living off the land had no property of their own. In place of industrialization and healthy bourgeois development, there came a period of social stagnation which Ferenc Erdei has appropriately compared to water frozen in a barrel; the hoops and staves had long been eaten away by time, but the warmth of the sun was lacking to melt the ice.*

In 1945 the sun at last began to shine, but what a night it had been! The thousand-year-old law-suit was decided—the lands were distributed. It was all so incredible that many peasants at first dared not even register their claims. There were even cases where, after the orator at the festive meeting of the peasants had recalled the historical example of the defeated peasant

* Ferenc Erdei: "A magyar paraszt társadalom." (Hungarian peasant society), Budapest, n. d., Franklin, p. 60.

revolutions, the earth was almost white with discarded land-claim forms when the meeting dispersed.

### The land reform

Directly or indirectly, the land reform affected every Hungarian peasant and was the starting point of great social ferment and readjustment. True, the peasantry had not been homogeneous before, so that the distribution of estate property and the democratic transformation that accompanied it had a different effect on each of its groups. The new order gave most to the nearly one million estate labourers. They had previously lived out on the farmsteads, leading a subsocial, almost medieval existence. They had cultivated close on half of Hungary's arable land, but there was not a furrow they could call their own. In general they subsisted below the minimum level, while at the same time shouldering the burdens of the big estates, the largest and most modern productive units of Hungarian agriculture. After the liberation almost every labourer was given land and became a small peasant, thus getting a taste of independent farming. It is, however, by no means fortuitous that, apart from their financial difficulties, their unfamiliarity with individual enterprise was one of the factors that placed them among the first to embark on communal farming.

A considerable part of those landless poor and small peasants who had earlier eked out a living through tenancies or wage labour, were also given land, or an acre or two to supplement their midget properties. They thus became smallholders and were all at once freed of the earlier uncertainty of their existence, which had previously depended as much on varying crop returns as on the momentary situation of supply and demand on the agricultural labour market. After the land reform there was no longer sufficient manpower to work the larger peasant properties, so that the economic—and with it the social position—of the rich peasants began to falter, even before they were subjected to restrictions. The situation of the middle peasants did not change significantly. At most they were relieved of the oppressive competition of the large estates, so that they could more freely and boldly produce for the market. It was for them that these first years brought the greatest economic prosperity, and this is one of the reasons why they were reluctant to engage in communal farming.

The medium and rich peasants set out with a relative advantage after the liberation in 1945 and even continued for a while to increase the distance between themselves and the newly landed. The fact is that the new farmers were compelled in many cases to turn to them for draught animals, seed

and other help for their farms, and possibly even to take on favourable tenancies to supplement their own small lands. There was, however, not only an economic difference between the old possessors and the new, but also a change in behaviour and attitude. The old farmers felt that as opposed to their hard-won or inherited property, the new farmers had been *given* the land "as a present," and that, though they did not have the same farming experience, they were nevertheless in a more favourable position. The strata of old and new farmers thus regrettably came to be at odds with one another, frequently regardless even of the number of acres each owned. This had a harmful effect on social and political life as well.

Within the space of a few short years it turned out that, though the far too atomized small agricultural units were able to provide fairly adequately for their own requirements, their produce was not sufficient to supply the market. The myriad small plots tied down many superfluous hands, on whom the developing industries exerted all the greater attraction. Amid such confined circumstances, up-to-date mechanized and rational farming could in no wise develop, and our agriculture produced at high cost and below the required level. Small property ownership drew a magic circle around each peasant, which he would not have been able to cross of his own, without social cooperation and timely State aid. The more mobile, enterprising and economically stronger middle peasants endeavoured in some places to organize groups of various size to form different kinds of producers', consumers' and other cooperatives. These attempts, however, confined as they were to certain groups of the peasantry and even within them to quite a small circle, were already belated. The problems of production and distribution could only be organized in a universal manner. Only a comprehensive settlement could solve the "peasant problem," which in the contemporary sense meant catching up with the relatively more developed industries in productivity, producing at world prices and on a competitive basis, and at the same time filling up the millennial gulf between town and village and demolishing the partition walls within the peasantry, which had grown fairly high in the course of a century. And to do all this, we needed far fewer people, but many more experts and machines. In line with the "basic law" of our historical development, it was at first slowly, reluctantly and with many a setback that *communal* farming began to develop, while subsequently—in the sixties—it became universal and advanced with tempestuous speed and elemental force. It is possible, and indeed necessary, to argue over the methods, the rate and other problems, until a historical perspective has been gained. One thing, however, is certain—a new stage in the lives of the Hungarian peasantry is once more beginning,

a new and more decisive stage than any yet, which will transform the whole way of life and culture of the peasants, so that the peasantry in the old sense will essentially cease to exist. History is now confirming its death sentence over the old type of small farming unit. In the more developed countries science is revolutionizing agricultural production, largely through industry. Mechanization is the main factor, but a similar part is also played by chemization (selective weed extermination, nutrient chemical substances, *etc.*), while biology (hybridization, *etc.*) is applied directly. Through them, expert knowledge is accorded an ever more important role. Agricultural units are concentrated, and agriculture splits into specialized industries, while the number of people engaged in it decreases. This universal process, however, takes place in different senses under capitalist and under socialist relations of production. Factory-like production under capitalism clashes with the private ownership of the means of production and leads to the peasant's becoming either a small capitalist *entrepreneur* or else a propertyless proletarian. Under socialism on the other hand, the path of progress is open, for its society is one of equals. Under capitalist conditions agriculture is subordinated to industry, there is the threat of unemployment or over-production, profits from the farm go to a single owner or to a group of owners, innumerable farm units—no less than industrial ones—are combined, *etc.* Amid socialist circumstances the large agricultural unit is owned in common, its profits accrue to all the working people concerned, and development is influenced in the main not by the particular unit's "profit," but the interests of society. Planned operation and full employment, harmonious satisfaction of material and intellectual requirements, beautification of the people's lives—these are the principles that guide the development of socialist agriculture.

## The great problem

The question inevitably arises, especially on the part of our friends and of curious inquirers abroad, as to how the great change took place and what methods we used to attain this result, what the attitude of the Hungarian peasantry was, and how their lives and culture will develop in the future. Each of these questions has its justification and merits an answer, which we shall furnish to the best of our conviction, with the sole reservation that the delineation of the future course of the Hungarian peasantry must needs be sketchy. The answers follow in part from what has already been said, though in some respects they need supplementing with further aspects.

The course of development in each of the countries with a State system similar to Hungary's is divergent, for though the fundamental trend is the same in all the countries that are building Socialism, the timing and forms differ according to the given circumstances. Hungary's course has so far been most similar to that of Poland, as indeed the past and the social development of the two countries—including their "Reymontian" peasants —have also in many respects been alike. The advantages of up-to-date farming for the whole of society were of course recognized by the leadership before the peasants concerned, the independent smallholders, themselves appreciated them. Numerous measures had therefore to be taken to meet them half-way. For one thing, the training of skilled people began, though not at the necessary rate and numbers, while the education and enlightenment of the masses was undertaken by almost all the social and cultural organizations, the press, the wireless, the schools and other bodies.

The situation had thus matured by the sixties. It is a great pity that the interests of the peasantry had previously in many cases been viewed in a predominantly abstract fashion, on the basis of theoretical considerations, and divorced from the concrete tasks of realization. This led to bringing premature pressure on the peasants to join the cooperative farm, and the drawbacks of this policy were felt not only in the withdrawals of 1953 and 1956, but also by the entire economy. Previous plans for large-scale farming prepared without the peasants concerned, necessarily proved unreal after a few years, however well-intentioned they were, and would have done so even if they had been fully realistic from the technical and financial points of view, which they frequently were not.

After the land reform, the Government introduced a progressive system of compulsory deliveries and taxes. Beside other factors, this resulted in a levelling of the peasantry economically, in that the midget owners and the new farmers who were most favoured began to catch up with the middle peasants, while the rich peasants, who had previously had others work for them, now—for lack of manpower—descended to the middle peasant level, or even lower. However, this system, which had been correctly devised from the point of view of social progress, was distorted in the course of its execution. The rich peasants were subjected to unnecessarily frequent badgering, often to injustice and humiliation, whereas their day was over and they would have had to give up some of their land in any case, because they were no longer able to hire the necessary hands to work it. The situation of the middle peasants became a little harder, though it still did not change appreciably, while the lowest landowning categories became relatively stronger.

In respect to the cooperative (large-scale farming) movement, which got off to an early start, the various categories of peasants responded in differing ways, corresponding to their economic positions and degree of stability. In time, however, their attitudes approached nearer both to one another and to that of the Government. If we analyse the situation from the point of view of communal farming, a spectrum very similar to that following upon the land reform is obtained. The greatest propensity to engage in agricultural cooperation was always shown by the former estate labourers, propertyless agricultural labourers and midget proprietors—in other words, the new farmers. This is understandable, for they did not all become used to their full independence and brought with them from the past very many partly imposed and partly positive communal traditions. In most places, they thus became the initiators, and in the course of the cooperative crises we have mentioned, the fewest resignations came from their ranks. In considerable measure, their behaviour was, of course, also rooted in their political convictions. Though this broad and relatively firm foundation was good for the movement—for they were the absolute majority of the peasantry—it also involved economic difficulties, as they brought into the cooperatives the least land, the most inadequate equipment, and in many cases also the least farming experience. Yet these—alongside large-scale investments—were the things that were most needed at the start. However, even among the former midget owners and those new farmers who had little land, there were plenty who were greater opponents of communal farming than many of the middle peasants, for they had enriched themselves so much that they had caught up economically with the middle peasants and the sense of private property had within a short while become implanted in them. On the other hand these very people were indispensable, for it was they who showed the best example in up-to-date farming.

The frequently made statement that the middle peasantry adopted a vacillating position as regards communal farming has now become virtually a commonplace. Their opinions were divided and, generally speaking, the majority were reluctant to embark on the decisive step. They did not feel at home in the early cooperatives, and in 1953 and 1956 the largest number of resignations occurred on the part of former middle peasants. In 1958-59 the middle peasants "calculated," and seeing from the results of the cooperatives then in operation that their joining would result in temporary disadvantage to them financially, they did all they could to procrastinate their decision. In doing so they followed the dual aim of amassing as much reserve capital for themselves as they could by staying

outside the collective, and of later being able to join a better equipped farming unit past its teething troubles. To put it briefly, they were not prepared to take risks. (Ultimately they in most places formed their own cooperatives as a result of which they kept themselves apart from both the new farmers and the former rich peasants.) Meanwhile, however, the horizon of the middle peasants had broadened, and they were now perfectly well aware that they were producing at relatively high cost and that the problem could hardly be solved within the framework of small-plot farming. In general, the demand for civilized amenities and cultural facilities of all our peasantry increased and outran the output level they had attained. While they had formerly invested almost all their money in land, which they considered the only secure purchase, they now—deprived as they were of an opportunity to increase their landed property—spent their incomes on houses, furniture, clothing, wireless sets, books and other instruments of culture and leisure.

Returning to the cooperative movement, it was most interesting in the recent past to observe the peculiar transition period when the two kinds of farming were still being practised. The socialist large-scale farms operated side by side with the small peasant units. This goaded the spirit of competition, and at the same time each of the two ways of life offered constant "temptations" to the other. A cooperative animal husbandman, of outstanding industry—possibly also having illicit earnings—would, for instance, after obtaining a certain surplus from his income, resign, purchase land and once more become a midget proprietor. There were also examples of the contrary, in that the really good cooperatives gradually attracted the private peasants.

In order to understand what follows, it has now become indispensable to obtain a more accurate knowledge of the various forms of cooperation.

It should be pointed out that in Hungary, as a result of the land reform of 1945, the land became the property of the peasants and only very few state farms were established on the territory of the former large estates. These state farms are under central expert direction, with their employees receiving fixed wages or payment by results. The majority are model farms with a special purpose (experimental establishments, forests, *etc.*). All the rest of the land belongs to the peasants. In order to work the peasant lands in common, the interested parties may cooperate in several ways, so that there are several types of agricultural producers' cooperative.

1. The simplest initial form is the so-called *big-field farm*, in which there is a joint crop plan, but the harvesting is done individually.

2. More developed are the so-called *average distribution groups* (produc-

ers' cooperative groups) where the land is cultivated jointly, the crop gathered in common, and the income divided up in proportion to the land contributed.

3. The most developed and by now almost exclusive form—for the newly formed groups do not go through the lower grades but generally establish a *"type III" cooperative farm* straight away—is where the land, the equipment, the livestock and the work are communal and the greater part of the income is distributed according to the amount of work actually done. The quantity of work is measured in so-called labour units and the payment for each labour unit differs from place to place, according to the lucrativeness of the cooperative farm. All the land is held in common, but a private plot of about $^1/_2$—$1^1/_2$ acres is retained, which each member may cultivate as he wishes, disposing freely over its crop. Many ethnographic research workers consider that the best indication of the firmness of a collective of cooperative farm members is a comparison of the common and private lands; if both are cultivated with equal care, the membership can be considered to have achieved full unity.

The cooperative farms engage in large-scale agricultural production, but may also carry out the purchasing and sales activities connected with it and even have their own processing plants. The livestock is also joint, but each family may retain one cow, one or two calves, one or two sows, three or four fattening hogs a year, five sheep, and an unlimited number of poultry and other farmyard animals. The cooperative farms have agricultural machinery of their own, but most of the powered machinery is in the hands of the State Machinery Stations, whose network extends evenly over the whole country. They undertake to do such work as ploughing and other jobs for the collective farms, on a contractual basis. Recently the aim has been to let the cooperative farms have as many machines as possible, so that in this respect, too, state ownership should give way to that of the cooperative farms.

Within their own sphere of competence the cooperative farms work on the basis of a common production plan and budget, everything is subject to approval by a general meeting of the members, and it is this meeting that elects the executive and the control committee. In order to form a cooperative farm, it is necessary to start with at least 140 acres of land and 15 people (over 18). The greater part of the income of the members is in proportion to the work done by them, but in Hungary—as opposed to the other people's democracies—a certain fund is still accumulated to pay rent for the members' land, and the peasants even receive compensation for the instruments of production, the livestock, *etc.*, which they contributed.

This, then, is the framework which the members must fill with life. It is important to take into account straight away who are the ones that have associated to farm in common. The categories of which we have spoken (the new farmers, middle peasants, *etc.*) like to keep separate, as do the neighbouring land holders. The more homogeneous a group is socially and from the point of view of location, furthermore economically or through ties of blood, and the more united it was previously, the smoother will be the start, and *vice versa*. Most cooperative farms are, of course, heterogeneous from every point of view, for the last ten years have witnessed the largest migration of people in our modern history—a certain span of time has therefore everywhere had to elapse for a healthy community spirit to develop. At first differences also arise from the earlier, pre-liberation conditions. For instance, in the case of a mixed membership the peasants of old will have greater farming experience, while the new farmers are more receptive towards innovations and common ventures and it is easier to maintain discipline among them. Since power in Hungary is in the hands of the workers and peasants, the working class shares its leading role in the villages mainly with the former proletarians of the land and the poor peasants. The former farmers, however, also play a significant part, as their expert knowledge and experiences are badly needed in large-scale farming. The occasional initial tension between the former landless and the "old farmers" is generally allayed in the course of time, and the mutual recognition of the identity of their interests welds them together.

It is nowadays a fairly general practice that, while a particular family may contribute all its land, not every member of the family joins. This is the reason why, though the midget properties had a surfeit of manpower, the cooperative farms have generally to contend with a shortage of labour. What happens to those who do not join? They are for the greater part young people who—if there is to be a change in their lives anyway—prefer to become factory workers, if possible in a town. Industry fares well with them, but agriculture suffers from their departure. The average age of the cooperative farm membership is close on 40 years, while that, for instance, of the workers of Sztálinváros, one of our newly founded industrial towns, is no more than 28! There is especially a dearth of men on the collective farms. This relative predominance of the older age group and of women is for the time being continuing. The young people will at best return to the villages and the cooperative farm together with machinery in the course of the gradual mechanization of agriculture. The villages are now being given very many new machines,

but still not enough to meet the vast requirements. While the old peasantry received machinery with reluctance and aversion, the cooperative farms that have now grown up like mushrooms everywhere, are making such exorbitant demands on industry that, in addition to what our own developing industry can supply them, large quantities of agricultural machinery also have to be imported. But the same also applies to almost everything else. While, for instance, the bulk of the peasantry formerly tacitly despised and would have nothing to do with farming *by book*, all agricultural and other specialized books are now articles of mass consumption. Nor are there as many experts as our insatiable cooperative farms would gladly "swallow up." Formerly artificial fertilizers were both expensive and for the greater part unknown; now it is hardly possible to satisfy the demand for them. In contrast to the earlier one-sided cultivation of cereals, many special cultures are now being established, and the superfluous types of products of the previous smallholders are gradually being displaced by up-to-date mono-cultures.

It should, however, be pointed out that this process, which has merely been outlined in general terms, is only in its initial stage and that the situation is still fraught with very difficult and as yet fairly contradictory aspects. Most of the new cooperative farms are now enlarged peasant farms, in much the same way as the landowners' manor farms at the beginning of commodity production were no more than gigantic serf plots. The main motive force is lucrativeness, based on industrious work. There is not yet enough money for investments, and the initial difficulties, the mixed composition of the membership, *etc.*, may, at times, result in superfluous discussions. For all these reasons many members do not yet sufficiently feel that the communal farm is their own. They may on several occasions even pilfer from it, as the former estate labourers did from the landowners. As things stand, the members would prefer to enjoy its advantages, without making special sacrifices. For a certain period of time it is no use pointing to the example of the well-run cooperative farms, for no farm will suddenly become productive through the sheer force of example. Each cooperative farm has to traverse its own path separately, beginning at the bottom and rising up to the highest level. This is by no means an easy task. The first years are usually spent with organization and the repeated rearrangement of existing forms, during which the members consume even the small amount of private capital which they endeavoured to accumulate, often with feverish haste, even to the detriment of their health, before they were organized into the cooperative farm. This earlier overstrained drive later comprehensibly gives way to a certain temporary

lassitude. A related factor is that while the peasants previously, when they themselves had to cover the cost, only consulted the doctor in the gravest cases, they are now entitled to social insurance in the same way as public employees or industrial workers. Their work and lives are made lighter by free medical treatment, by sickness, accident, disablement, old-age and other benefits, holidays, maternity aid, pensions and many other services. Very many of them now wish to avail themselves of free medical treatment, and the surgeries are therefore excessively crowded. The transitional character of this mass phenomenon will best be understood by our British readers, for a somewhat similar process took place there too, not so long ago.

Truly collective farming will actually involve great advantages for all. Formerly, in the small peasant farms, working hours were unlimited throughout the year—from dawn to dark, as the saying went, almost all the year round,—yet they could never once say they had done with all their work.

The fact that it is no longer necessary to buy land, to maintain a costly, small unit of production, that the member's duties and hours of work are better defined, has already had far-reaching results. Let us flash our spotlight on only a few of these. While previously a lecturer from town could only find himself a village audience if he very carefully chose one of the rare moments when the peasants were able to spare some leisure time in the midst of their rushed lives without endangering their financial interests, now you cannot think of a literary, scientific or other subject for which—with the exception, of course, of the periods of most intense labour—it would not be possible to gather an adequate number of sincerely interested listeners. Earlier, insecurity and the fear of old age egged the peasants on to almost pathological miserliness, but now cooperative farming and the pensions provided for the participants assure them of an ever more secure and pleasant existence, so that they dare, and are increasingly able, to lead a cultured life. The ruthless struggle within the family for "the heritage" has come to an end. Now there are really no more groups of peasants set one against the other. It is no longer the number of acres, but work and expert knowledge, that establish the individual's place in society, and there are no more insurmountable barriers anywhere.

## The transformation of peasant life

There can, therefore, be no doubt that something new has begun on the lands of Hungary. The entire way of life, the education, and also the thinking of the peasantry are being transformed. After the foregoing,

perhaps somewhat extensive treatment of the historical, social and economic aspects of rural development, it will be useful and instructive to sketch the peasant culture (which under feudalism assumed those traits that were regarded in Hungary as most typically peasant in character), because the peasantry's path of development could long be identified—though erroneously—with our national culture. It is true that this feudal peasant culture underwent a change under capitalism, but this took place in an ambiguous manner, breaking it up into individual fragments that no longer reflected uniform peasant features, but those of the various social groupings. There was no genuine bourgeois culture in Hungary. How is all this developing under Socialism, and what is the situation now? I believe these are the questions that require answering.

The life of the feudal village of serfs was directed by laws of nature and of society against which there could hardly be any appeal. This complex, inter-linked, traditional system of conventions, the Hungarian ethnographic research workers called *the order of peasant life*. The apparently unchanging countryside and the regularly changing seasons were the framework into which the serfs fitted their life and which they acquiesced in, and society was but another superior power of the same kind—as Gyula Ortutay so aptly wrote. Bourgeois development, however, began to upset this "order" too, and the relations of man to man and of man to nature changed, for he tried to transform both, while himself also being slowly transformed. Plenty of humble serf peasants remained, but there were many rebels and the camp of bourgeois peasants was also on the increase.* This by no means insignificant change justifies closer examination in its concrete manifestations. A beginning may be made with the most characteristic, the *peasant family*, which has reflected all kinds of change accurately, as a drop reflects the ocean.

Feudalism, in its day, evolved on the ruins of clan society, but it used many of the "ruins" to build foundations for its Gothic social structure. In the case of serfs with plots of land, if the size of the plot permitted or required it, the big family, which included several generations (grandparents, parents, grand-children), was the basic productive organization. With the estate labourers, however, the small family was then already predominant. These kinship groups would live together and farm independently. The omnipotent ruler of the big family was the master, the oldest male member, and the heirs could also only be men. This organization of production, based on kinship, was characterized by a

* Gyula Ortutay: *Parasztságunk élete* ("The Life of Our Peasantry"). Budapest, Officina, 1948, pp. 10—12 and 19.

division of labour according to sex and age, within which there was just as much of a hierarchy as outside it, in society at large. In the period of bourgeois development it was gradually only the independent small families that remained as live and operative social institutions. The big families disintegrated, one after the other, the consciousness of kinship faded and was narrowed down, while there was a strengthening of neighbourly solidarity, but without legal obligations. The small family, living under a separate roof, keeping house separately, and farming independently, at first practically only differed from the big families of which we have spoken in respect to its size. The bourgeois principle of equal inheritance and other similar achievements were rather slow to gain ground in peasant life. Within the family, bourgeois property rights were fairly uncertain and highly changeable. They were at the same time impediments to up-to-date farming. Under the pressure of class interests the extensive system of kinship bonds was naturally loosened and dependence on the family, the authority of the head of the family, and the norms of up-bringing and morals lost much of their force.

Nowadays, in the new, large-scale socialist units the peasant family almost completely loses its independent role in production, its members in most cases do not even work in the same place, but even within the framework of a single large unit, they participate in productive work *individually*. It should be emphasized that twenty per cent of all agricultural workers are employed by large State units or machinery stations (as skilled workers, unskilled workers, technical or clerical personnel); they are thus typically "large-unit workers," and this sets the pattern of their entire way of life. The members of the cooperative farms are developing in the same direction. As a result of all these factors, the social liberation of the women is rapidly being completed, and the young peasants too are taking their places in social rather than in family production. Gradually every type of social, religious and local endogamy is ceasing, and there is no particular obstacle to marriage either within or outside the peasantry. This has led to a crisis in some of the old marriages contracted on the basis of material interests, but the newer ones are also still very unstable. Although it is no longer anywhere the "rule" for couples to have only one child to avoid splitting up the property, the present transitional economic situation also tends to hamper the healthy growth of families. The old bourgeois-peasant norms have lost their force, but the new socialist morals are only now being evolved.

The forms of social contact and the various folk customs have also changed in accordance with what has been said. In the age of feudalism,

the regularly changing course of nature *directly* determined the annual order of *folk customs in farming*, and the biologically and socially determined family customs fitted into their scheme, while the whole had the blessing of the feudal Church. In the period of bourgeois development, peasant life somehow glided out of the hands of the higher powers of nature and society, and there were now more elements of "autonomy" within the customs. A part of the family customs—in particular the wedding feast—became polarized. The poor, at the few great moments of their lives, at these rare instants of relaxation and abandonment, went beyond their narrow financial confines and indulged in the maximum of splendour they could attain; the rich peasants, of course, also indulged themselves, but for them it was no longer a rarely attainable great instant in life, but the apex of the peasant's material possibilities, as Gyula Ortutay* writes.

Obviously, these customs no longer have their former serious roots in living conditions, in other words, in their environment. And amid present social circumstances, the liquidation of the greater part of the traditional customs continues, particularly with regard to those of religious origin. Of these it has only been Christmas carol-singing that has proved capable of survival. The carols may to this day be heard in the courtyards of Budapest tenement blocks and even at railway stations no less than outside the village houses. The earlier profanization of this custom continues, of course, and it now contains much more playfulness than serious elements. Folk customs in general have since a fairly long time slipped down to the children, the "primitives" of society, and in their circles the emphasis is not so much on the ritual or especially the meaningful aspects, as on a performance that promises financial returns and should therefore be amusing or spectacular.

The customs which have remained alive among the adults are also changing and being curtailed. Thus the three-day carneval in the mining districts is limited to one day, but wedding-feasts are also shorter and their date is frequently transferred, while some of their motifs, too, are changed. Characteristic of the latter is that together with the establishment of communal farming the custom of joint wedding feasts has also spread. It is not infrequent for ten or twelve young couples to be married at the same time, and the cooperative farm then not only provides the premises but also the "necessaries" and the entertainment. The old peasant May-day custom has also changed. Previously it was the *famous girls* who were greeted with maypoles, singing, music and dancing; now it is the best

* ibid., pp. 23—25.

workers or other publicly esteemed persons. In general, the peasants' and workers' May-days have become amalgamated.

In the course of long centuries, the aspect of the Hungarian countryside, and within it that of the settlements, has also undergone a significant change. This too shows a constantly accelerating trend. In the period of feudalism the characteristic features were the relatively feeble extent of urban development, and settlement in small agricultural towns and dense villages. A rather special form of settlement was the outlying, isolated farmstead, which mainly arose as a result of the immeasurable havoc wrought during the Turkish subjugation. After the Turks had been driven out, larger country townships developed on the Great Plain in place of the crowded villages of medieval times. The surrounding lands were cultivated not from the closed town or village settlements, but from farm buildings erected on the fields. These temporary quarters were the farmsteads. In time about a million people came to live out in the fields, fairly isolated from all cultural and health institutions. Such was the situation up to the end of the Second World War. After the land reform, not only building in general but within it also farmstead building activity flared up. The aim now was to retain possession of the former landowners' land just as in the case of the serf lands which had previously become private property, and this was one of the reasons for putting up buildings on the land which had been distributed. With the development of the cooperative farm movement and the unification of the small plots, the farmstead buildings are increasingly losing their original purpose. The population of the farmsteads is pouring back into the villages and country towns. The vacant buildings are partly pulled down and the materials used to build others in the towns, partly left, according to need, to become farm team quarters, or pig-breeding, calf and poultry farms.

At the same time the whole picture of the village is also changing, particularly through the erection of new housing and investment projects. In brief, the village is becoming ever more civilized. It is assuming a more urban aspect, with electricity, piped water, transport links, public buildings, *etc.*, to mark the way. A tremendous exodus has started from the villages to the towns, so that now forty per cent of Hungary's inhabitants are town dwellers. In 1920, the corresponding percentage was 20 and only increased by one and a half per cent up to 1949. The problems of rapid urban growth are beyond the scope of this study. In the course of the great transformation, farmstead centres have also developed, and 120 new villages have been built in ten years, some according to architects' plans, others as a result of spontaneous initiative.

With the cessation of individual, family farming, the houses, their environment, and the farmyards are undergoing a change not only out on the farmsteads, but also within the closed village settlements. The use to which the house is put is wholly altered, and many out-buildings become superfluous. In the course of this process the most striking and dominant trend is the increasing emphasis on dwellings, which are now being divested of a considerable part of their farming functions. Tens of thousands of new village homes are being built throughout the country, partly from the peasants' own resources, partly with state or social aid. The type of building that still dominates the village scene is the small, independent family house, which is as yet on the boundary between the traditional and the newer building methods and styles. However, the structures that were previously built of local materials—not infrequently by the owners themselves—are giving way increasingly to petty-bourgeois villas. These new-style houses are copies of rather characterless, urban, petty-bourgeois forms. The desire to change their appearance may be observed in the case of the traditional and the so-called standard houses alike. The porches, at any rate, of those houses which are built according to architects' plans but considered stereotyped, are altered, the white walls are painted in colours, and some over-enthusiastic new possessors even had the flooring painted in gaudy colours! There are also more encouraging aspects revealing an effort to preserve traditions. Take, for example, the marvellously beautiful wall painting of Kalocsa, with its natural, colourful flower ornaments. In earlier times it was a purely local feature; now, in consequence of the higher standards, it has become a popular applied art that is spreading ever wider, and, while previously orders for it were placed mainly by state and public bodies, the folk wall-painting artists are nowadays also working on private orders. Even the old houses that have not yet been modernized are undergoing a slow, almost imperceptible development, and, if nothing else, at least the electric wiring and in some places even a TV aerial mounted on a thatched roof, herald the coming of a more profound change.

In entering the peasants' rooms, we are also greeted by a completely different picture from that of, say, ten or twenty years ago. The old home-made or carpenter's furniture is giving way to modern, factory-made standard furniture, which has also led to a change in the whole arrangement of the rooms. The kitchens now have kitchen-cupboards and enamelled ranges, with electricity and in some places gas, *etc.*, supplied. (The fact that we may everywhere find a wireless set, a chandelier, new kinds of pictures, *etc.*, does not need further elaboration.)

The dwelling and its furnishings now no longer reflect the social difference they once did—neither the size of the building, nor its equipment or the ornaments on it differ to any marked extent according to the peasant categories previously spoken of, though there is a certain phase-lag in their development. Thus the formerly poorer groups of the peasantry have only now attained the level already held by the rich peasants, for instance, in the period before the liberation. This phase-lag, however, is *now* to the advantage of the newly risen groups, for they are able to obtain all the wherewithal of comfort, civilization and culture amid much more modern and highly developed circumstances, moreover more speedily and at a smaller sacrifice.

It is no wonder that clothing is said to be the dwelling a man wears on his body. The metaphor is indeed appropriate, for the laws of change affecting the two do not differ considerably. Folk costume has varied mainly by regions, and within them by sexes, age-groups and occasions. The *regional* character in a particular district was not disrupted immediately, however powerful the class divisions of the peasantry may have been. It is characteristic of the contradictory nature of the development that occurred, that the sudden enrichment of the land-owning peasantry or their change to commodity production could just as well lead to the flowering of *colourful* costumes based on tradition, as when the poor peasantry and the proletarians of the land became seasonal or permanent wage labourers. In the one case, however, the colourful costume was an indication of wealth and prosperity, while in the other it was no more than movable property, accumulated by laborious work and serving to some extent as a substitute for immovable property. Within a particular locality the apparel of the various peasant categories differed not so much in form as in the quality and price of the material and the number of items of clothing. The "divestment," that is to say, the urban, bourgeois development, also took place with a certain phase-lag, though the trend became constantly stronger in respect to the whole of the peasantry, and no amount of romantic good intentions was able to halt its progress. The abandonment of folk costume has become an ever more conscious, nation-wide symptom, particularly under the influence of cheap factory mass-production.

This process is now, in the present period, drawing to a close. We still have some tenacious spots of colour, the so-called costumed areas, but even these old traditional costumes are changing—the weekday clothes are becoming simpler and the more richly ornamented increasingly serve representative purposes only. There are even two-fold (peasant and town) combined costumes. In general *every* item is changed. Thus the ornamented

*szűr* (cloak) which had become coloured under feudalism, has finally disappeared, the *suba* (shaggy fur) has become outmoded, *etc.* On the other hand there has been a relative upsurge in certain—mainly handicraft —branches, such as embroidery in the villages near Budapest, the gift kerchiefs of Tura, the *bekecs* (short overcoats) which became the fashion for some years after the liberation, *etc.* Apart from some items for special, festive occasions, the attire of our peasantry is now essentially undergoing a levelling-process, with the villages coming close to the standards of the towns, not least because their trade supplies are almost completely identical. (Some new types of shop are, indeed, opened in the country ahead of the towns.) Furthermore, requirements, tastes, and the way of thinking have changed, particularly those of the young—the outside observer would find it very much easier to distinguish the town and village people in a mixed group by, say, their *complexions*, than by their clothes.

In the period of rising bourgeois development it seemed that our peasantry had found their place and that they had correspondingly also perfected their forms of artistic expression. In this period—the second half of the nineteenth century—the creative urge among the peasant masses gained in vigour. They brought about such a richness in ornamentation, dancing, singing and other spheres of folk art that it still serves as an almost classical example. This period, moreover, was the last great renaissance of the general rebirth, the enrichment in content and form, of Hungarian folk poetry. We may roughly consider the turn of the century to be the point in time from which both the creators and the "consumers," *i. e.*, increasingly broad masses of the people, became disloyal to their own spiritual heritage and sought from other sources to obtain forms and opportunities for artistic expression which in their own opinion were more advanced and modern. As a result of the distorted society they lived in, they undertook the attempt in an ambiguous way. This spiritual "divestment" (to adhere to the expression we used for the discarding of folk costume) was on the one hand incomplete, while on the other not even its smallest building stones, its elements, were incorporated in the firm fundaments of the edifice of a national culture. Orally transmitted lore, tradition and other characteristic cultural features continued perforce to subsist in the lower, poorer strata of the peasantry, while the upper, richer strata had long tried to adopt a rather heterogeneous, urban and petty-bourgeois pseudo-culture of dubious value. Later, the influx of urban petty-bourgeois form elements was accelerated with varying degrees of intensity in every sphere, and the old, traditional forms were only preserved locally, for a short while, among certain strata and age-groups

of the peasantry. Between the two wars the ruling class attempted to turn the lasting works of peasant culture to its own use, but generally speaking the almost spasmodic striving of the peasantry towards bourgeois culture caused all endeavours at utilization or preservation to founder. Here again, of course, the contradictory nature of the process was apparent. On the one hand, the bourgeois development between the two wars ever more thoroughly liquidated the traditional folk culture, on the other, forced as it was to stop half-way in realizing its aim, it temporarily conserved this culture at its out-dated level.

As regards the various branches of artistic activity, there no longer existed those social conditions for a renascence of folk ornamental art, for example, that could have served as a basis for the people to express the experiences and message of a new life. As in other spheres, here, too, polarization may be shown to have taken place. Characteristic of this so-called "commercial period" in peasant art are partly a tremendous simplification, partly tasteless exaggeration and a concentration on mere form, inasmuch as the ornamented articles were mainly not intended for the makers' use, but prepared according to the requirements of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois customers.

It was easy to foresee that the liberation in 1945 would, on the one hand, terminate a process that had begun earlier, and, on the other, liberate the artistic forces of the people. This was in fact what happened, and the more viable branches of folk art merged with the professional applied arts, thus becoming branches of an industry producing to satisfy the artistic requirements of the entire nation. The path of development was not an easy one, however. Weaving, embroidery and the manufacture of home-spuns, for instance, were for a long time unstable occupations because of difficulties, among others, in supplying materials and in marketing the products. Advances in the potter's art were also hampered by the decrease in the number of master craftsmen available and the lack of successors. After a while, the organization of the home-craft producers' cooperatives and of marketing at home and abroad solved these problems, though by no means solving those of an artistic nature. In respect to the latter, the trend that has so far generally proved viable has been to build on regional tradition, both in content and form, and thus gradually to attempt to satisfy modern requirements. These undertakings are resulting in ever greater demand and turnover. In some country centres folk-art houses have been established, employing as many as a hundred people, and their products are sold not only abroad, but even in distant continents. This shows how rapidly folk art, formerly confined within narrow geographical

limits, was able to expand once it had risen to the "rank" of applied art. Its achievements have in Hungary, too, entered the blood stream of professional applied art.

The enhanced popularity of folkdancing has been the result of similar organizational forms and has followed similar representative aims. Under the influence of the bourgeois dancing schools and urban dances, earlier folkdancing traditions were confined both geographically and socially to the same kind of "closed" circle as the other cultural activities of which we have spoken. After the liberation, the scientific analysis and immediate artistic utilization of folkdances was undertaken in an organized fashion. The success of both endeavours has exceeded all expectations. The rich heritage of folkdances has become a representative treasure of the urban and village youth through their mass cultural movement; it has taken its place on the stage, and is on the way to becoming a national ballet. All this, of course, does not for a moment make us forget that folkdancing as a live practice is eroding and disappearing, or rather being replaced. Among others, the once popular paired dances, such as the Hungarian Csárdás, are also vanishing.

Last, but not least, we must also speak of the recent and the present situation of Hungarian folk poetry, because its aesthetic values are indisputable, but its laws and transformation are somewhat different to those discussed hitherto. To begin with, and to avoid misunderstanding, it must be pointed out that there are plenty of elements in its content and form that have tenaciously survived from century to century up to modern times. With regard to folk poetry as a whole, however, we have also witnessed a great change that began with the period following on the liberation of the serfs. Since then, the role of verbal tradition generally, and thus also the significance of folk poetry, has decreased continuously. Of course in the known "areas of withdrawal" and among particular social groups this has always taken place somewhat slower, and peculiar transitional forms have marked the approach of folk poetry to the written word and to artistic poetry (rhymed tags, yarns, verses heralding events and folk verses).

The importance and capacity for rebirth of the various verbal arts showed rather wide divergence. The most viable, as it turned out, was the short lyrical song, while the folk ballad, which was feudal to the core, has essentially disappeared, having been able only in very small measure to undergo a transformation and adapt itself. Tales, which have assumed new forms in each period, have occupied an intermediate position. The folksong became more or less the dominant form, and, indeed,

the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed the birth and efflorescence of the new-style Hungarian folksong. In later years even the folksong was incapable of renewing itself any more, and now it only lives in the recollections of the older age-groups, as a generally passive art, rarely to be heard. Compared to previous periods, the best that folk poetry could do in the twentieth century was to repeat itself, but it could no longer undergo a full rejuvenation. A further loosening of the link between tune and text, as well as certain distortions of form, were the accompanying features of the process of decay. Only folk music has been able, with the help of great creative geniuses (Bartók and Kodály), to break out of its narrow confines, escape "mortality," and at the same time become an organic part of national music.

It is, perhaps, most difficult to estimate the effects of the advance of people's democracy on folk poetry, for the latter's live artistic influence had actually ceased before the liberation. The examples that can still be heard in their original environment, reflect the past, although we have positive knowledge of recent Bulgarian, Albanian and Rumanian folklore. We too have a few new texts (e. g., a peace-song of Galgahévíz), while others have been transformed (the tractor-drivers' song of Szőreg). New tunes, however, have not been born, and the rhyming chants propagated from above have also been winnowed out by time. This negative feature, nevertheless, does not indicate that the folksong is doomed, for, on the contrary, it is now, through education, the artistic mass movements, the press and the radio, that the finest items have become generally known. Folksongs have perhaps never yet been so widely disseminated and popular as they are now. Among other functions, folksongs are also important bases for the aesthetic and moral education of successive new generations, especially in childhood. The folksongs have found a new home in the towns and have returned, beautified and more brilliant, to the villages where they had almost completely ceased to be heard. The success of the folksong is perhaps the finest example of how a branch of folk art can become the undivided heritage of the entire nation. The fact that this process was by no means spontaneous, but fully deliberate throughout, can detract nothing from the value of the results that have been achieved.

Folk tales and the other forms of folk poetry were also inseparably linked to the previous forms of the peasantry's life. Now that these forms have vanished, they too were for the greater part doomed to extinction. The decay of a particular form of expression has, however, not always necessarily involved the atrophy of creative ability, only its transference to new and more appropriate forms. The oral lore did not change to a written one and

to adoption of the spiritual products of urban bourgeois culture at an equal rate among all the various groups of the peasantry. At a time when folk poetry flowered, the rich peasantry, for instance, had for long been almost exclusively telling erotic jokes and smiling—somewhat condescendingly—at the poor peasants who enjoyed fairy-tales and collective singing. They would on no account take part in these pastimes. Later, this pattern of behaviour naturally extended to almost all the peasantry, involving a certain belittling of folk poetry. It is instructive to note, however, that folk' poetry which preceded this development came most prolifically from the lips of the poor, thus becoming the expression of *their* feelings and desires, whether we consider the folk tales of social significance or the generally plaintive lyrical songs about their own lives, cares and troubles—and then known only to their own circle, though now brought together through the collectors' work.

As the present-day lives of the Hungarian peasants change, as the economic and social foundations and relations of a new society, levelled up in every respect, develop, in the same measure and to the same extent will a new, common culture develop, organically alloying, utilizing and raising to an artistic level the best spiritual heritage of the Hungarian peasantry. This peasant and folk class culture, therefore, is now—amid particular circumstances—becoming a secure foundation for the culture of the whole nation, without social differences. At a moment of history when it appeared to have become wholly of the past it entered the consciousness of the masses, the blood-circulation of our national culture, and the immortality of the best of its creations thus appears to have been secured for all time.

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The illusions of the "eternal" peasant and "immanent" folk culture have been dispersed; and instead we have witnessed perpetual change and a development that, though full of contradictions and despite reverses, has maintained its upward trend. We now have neither the right nor any reason to doubt that our most recent age offers us more opportunities than any hitherto.

Development—in the economic respect, for instance—is much faster than we at first thought. About half of our 4,200 cooperative farms have become consolidated, increasingly modern, large-scale units in the very first year, and some 800-1,000 are rapidly developing and engaged in sound farming. The remainder are contending with greater or smaller difficulties, and only one-fifth has not been able to keep step. Among many other factors the steady growth of Hungary's industry offers every assurance that the peasantry will continue to advance along the road of large-scale cooperative farming.

# LIVES OF THE POOR

## THE JUNIOR MAID

by

LAJOS KISS*

The time that she spends as a maid is the poor woman's preparatory training for life. Women, like other people, continue to acquire knowledge throughout their lives; but the basis will always remain that obtained in their preparatory training. While the men of the farm-hand class, being mostly, in fact almost exclusively, engaged in physical work, are more inclined to impart skill to their children, the women—to the extent that they belong to the domestic servant class—more frequently educate them in the sense that as mothers (to be), they instil spiritual and moral qualities into the next generation. The evolution of the moral standards of every age is based for the greater part on the behaviour of the women. It is with a view to these cardinal truths that we must consider each and every stage in the life of the poor woman's daughter and of the poor woman herself. As the poor woman's daughter, in the course of her life, progresses along the stages of a novice, a junior, a full, a senior and a general housekeeping maid, her practical experiences will enrich her stock of knowledge, stabilize her moral and spiritual qualities, chrystallizing and maturing them, thus preparing her to enter into the order of married women.

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According to the normal sequence, a nursemaid usually becomes a junior maid, but this is not always so. Just as not every girl serving as goose-herd becomes a nursemaid, so the sequence may also change. Some girls have neither an inclination nor the gift for nursing small children, while others, even if they want to be a nursemaid, are unable to find a place with small children and so they are put to work as a maid, or as the Vásárhely people call them, as a little servant.

* A chapter from the author's book *Szegény emberek élete* (Lives of the Poor), 1934, analysed by Gyula Ortutay on pp. 38-48.

It is the daughters of the poor peasant folk who become maids. They are put to a job, not only because there are many children at home and the parents cannot feed them, but also so that the growing girls should be able gradually to acquire all that is needful for the time when they marry—towels, baskets, table-cloths, down, *etc.* The fact that the girl earns her keep is, of course, a help to her parents, and the main reason why they find work for her. A maid receives more wages than one who herds geese and turkeys or even than a nursemaid. She is over twelve by then, and no longer has to go to school. Parents, now as always, consider that it is not for the poor man's child to loiter about aimlessly in the streets all day. She ought to be of some use. There are few parents who are not sorry to let their daughters leave their house, but they put them to work so that they may learn about life, about the lot of the poor, about how to be patient and to suffer.

The girls themselves are also keen to go to work, not so much for the sake of the job but because they see the next girl wearing finer clothes. "What a lovely dress Julcsa's got!" a girl will say to her mother. "I'll buy you one too," comes her mother's encouragement, "once you take a job, because your father's earnings won't pay for it."

In olden times you could never hear of a servant being taken on at the market. In the sixties and seventies they were recommended by the char, or in most cases sought employment themselves. They would also come in advance from the outlying farmsteads, at Christmas time, visiting the farmer's house in the company of their mothers, or, ocassionally, their fathers. In those days no one would engage a stranger. Poor people did not work as day labourers, but went to the houses of the better-off farmers, where they had threshed and earned their bread. There was always something for them to do about the house. They would be given a bushel of wheat or something of the kind. They would pay for it in labour. The daughters of these permanent workers—of whom some farmers employed as many as twenty or thirty—became maids in due time, staying in the same place for six, eight or even ten years on end, until they finally got married. As a girl grew, her mother would give notice at the end of the year and tell the mistress she would stay on the next year, but only if she were given a raise of a few pengős and also an apron. For in those days it was not the money that was important, but the clothes. There was a time when the girls were taken on at the New Year's Day ball, where they went to dance. It was only in the eighties that the habit was formed of engaging maids on the market.

On the first days of the new year, the girls, some bigger, others quite

young, stand about all morning at the edge of the pavement by the first artesian well as you come from the main street. When a girl takes a job, particularly for the first time, her mother is also present. If not, she tells her the minimum in money and clothes she must ask for. Later on, the girl can settle about the job herself.

Maids are taken on by the mistress. If she is engaging a bigger girl, she will also be thinking of her husband, lest the girl seduce him. She will rarely engage a pretty, well-mannered girl. She will look for strength, for one who can carry a pitcher. She will watch her movements, to see whether she is snappy enough. And also whether her speech is intelligent.

"Would you come to our place? I need a girl who can do the cleaning and keep things tidy about the house."

"I can do that alright," the lively girl will say.

"How much do you want?"

"Nine forints."

"Seven'll do."

Finally they agree on eight. She will also get boots, slippers and the feathers of ten geese. She has to make do with the first plucking. But once she has served in the same place for two or three years, she is given the second or even the third plucking. If they agree on less money, it will be evened up by more clothes.

The farmers wives come and go, looking about among the girls who are standing around, noting their ages, their strength and stature, to find one who will meet their requirements. One woman, as soon as she notices a good-looking young girl in a clean dress, straight away accosts her mother:

"Are you setting your daughter to work?"

"Ay."

"How much do you ask?"

"Thirty forints, a dress, boots, an apron, a kerchief and a length of ribbon."

"That's a lot for a little girl like her. She won't work as much as that. She'll have an easy place with us, she needn't milk the cows or the like."

"Ay, but clothes are expensive. She's worn her slippers to bits and she hasn't got a kerchief to put on her head."

"When the weather's better she'll go barefoot. I'll make it twenty-four forints."

"That won't do."

They both yield and strike a bargain. The farmer's wife gives a handsel of half a forint and they agree on when the girl is to go to her place. The mother generally manages to get a day or two to put the girl's clothes in order.

On the agreed day the mother accompanies the girl to the farmer, to see what sort of house her daughter is coming to. She also brings along the girl's bundle. There have to be two each of both underwear and top clothes, for her to be able to change. So she takes two chemises, two dresses, two aprons, one neckerchief, two coverchiefs, a pair of slippers and a pair of boots. There is also a comb, a small mirror, a needle, thread and yarn, and patches for mending. Nor may she lack a psalter and an abridged Bible. Some of them have a picture of Kossuth cut out of a newspaper, or pictures of flowers. An inevitable feature is the coloured fancy paper, the like of which the girl has never yet seen and which is therefore very precious and valuable. On the way she is especially enjoined: "Take care of your clothes, don't dirty them. When you've done the washing up, if there's a bit of hot water left, you should wash your apron. If your dress tears, sew it and mend it, and if you don't know how, you should ask." Once they have arrived, the mother again asks the mistress: "Please keep an eye on her and see that she washes and combs her hair every morning, so she won't be a dirty servant."

"Don't be afraid she'll have a hard place," the mistress reassures her.

"Be good, do as you're told, and don't answer back," goes the last warning to the girl. Then her mother kisses her and leaves her.

The farmer's wife sees the mother out. Even on the way out, the mother voices her concern and asks the farmer's wife to be well disposed:

"Don't hit her hard. If you think she's weak, you'd better bring her back."

Formerly maids were engaged for a whole year, especially at the outlying farmsteads. In town the gentlefolk would also take them on by the month, though very rarely, as is apparent from the wages paid. It is only since 1894 that employment by the month has come to stay, though the law provided for it in 1876. At first the girls were engaged for a year but paid by the month. If the maid neglected her work or skimped it, the master would send her away. In that case the girl would demand the whole year's wages, which actually had to be paid. But if she was engaged by the month, she could only demand her month's pay. After 1894 those who took employment for the whole year received a letter of employment: "I, János Kardos, have engaged Julcsa Szőke to be a junior maid for one year. Her wages are 48 forints, a Miskolc dress, two aprons, a coverchief, a pair of slippers." This was done in two copies, the one signed by the master being taken by the girl's mother, while the one she signed was retained by the master. There was always a letter of employment and it had compulsory force. If the girl absconded, the gendarmes would take her back to her place of service on the basis of this letter.

It was in the towns that the hiring and service of maids first started—on the farmsteads, especially in olden days, it was rare. There is no need in town life for the great strength required on an outlying farm. Some girls take a job in town because they do not like peasant work. In many cases the parents are afraid to let their daughter do hard work, because the girl is of feeble build. They put her to work in town, at a smaller farmer's or a lesser gentleman's home, the house of an official, a craftsman, shopkeeper or publican. A town servant is undoubtedly closer to fancy life, and girls were attracted to urban service by the Sunday afternoon off and the balls in the pubs—particularly when they were growing up. They liked going to a craftsman, because there were plenty of young lads there, and they were glad to become a craftsman's wife, whose life was easier than that of a peasant. Many girls did not like to go to gentlefolk, especially of the lesser kind, because the food was poor there. In general they favoured a job with rich peasant farmers, where there was plenty to eat and where there were handsome farmyard and stable lads. Many parents preferred to have their daughters at a Catholic house, because there they were given something else to eat after their soup, while in Calvinist houses this was not always so. Town servants are stuck up, especially if they have been in service somewhere else before and have acquired a nimble tongue. They will even ask when they are being engaged whether there is a nursemaid and a char and whether they will have to bake or wash? The master answers calmly in the most natural tones, but nevertheless in mockery: "Why, what do you think you're coming for? Of a morning you'll get up, set yourself straight, then take the couch out by the gate, beside the bench, for the bench is hard on your b. . . ! Then you'll sit there until lunch is brought out to you. Afterward, you'll take a noontime rest till evening."

Even the hiring of such a bigger girl takes place in much the same way as in the case of those who are going to work for the first time. Only in their case the mother asks how many members there are to the family. And when she finds out that there is a student or unmarried son at the house, she cautions the mistress with eloquent emphasis:

"Don't let them seduce the girl."

"You needn't worry, no ill will come to her."

She also stipulates that the girl be given a day's leave every month.

*

Whatever the kind of place where the junior maid serves, a day's work will generally be as follows:

In the morning she dresses on getting up. At gentlefolks' homes she

first lights the fire and only then dresses and washes. In olden days she would wash "from her mouth," then dry herself, comb her hair and set about the cleaning. Her first job is to sweep the approach to the front gate. The mistress looks on, and if she does not do it properly, takes it from her hands and explains: "This is the way to hold the broom, look! Don't use the tip, don't wear it down, lay it flat and stroke, so you won't raise the dust. And see you don't hit it against the wall, or you'll have the white-wash down. It's not the earth needs sweeping but the dirt!—There you are, you see you can do it." That is the sort of encouragement she gets, though perhaps the little servant girl isn't any too clever about it. Many young girls do not need to be shown, for they have seen their mothers or someone else do it at home, and they are as good at it as any grown-up. After sweeping before the gate, the maid also sweeps the front of the house. Then she sprinkles the places she has swept. Where there are one or two pigs, she brings them the swill the master has prepared for them. She gives the poultry water. Some of the stronger and cleverer girls even prepare the water for dish-washing, clean the shoes and brush the clothes. While the mistress or the senior maid makes the bed, the junior maid takes the chamber-pots out. In gentlefolks' houses she carries the rugs out and shakes them, if she can manage it. Then she has breakfast. Before breakfast or after it, as time permits, she sweeps the room. The mistress keeps an eye on her, and, if she does not do it properly, says to her: "Don't only sweep where the priests dance (*i. e.*, not only in the middle of the room), but reach in under the bed too. Sweep inwards from the door, or you'll be sweeping the luck out. Don't leave the dirt behind you. Stroke it, don't swipe at it!" After sweeping she dusts the furniture. Then, between 9 and 10 a. m., she takes the rugs in, cuts grass for the chickens and other poultry, and pours drinking water for the pigs into the barrel, which was formerly held by hooked wooden piles. Now there are concrete troughs for the purpose. She weeds the garden, does the watering and, using a pointed knife or a small garden hoe, loosens and airs the soil. If she goes to the market with her mistress, she will carry home what they have bought.

There are some places where, if there is a baby in the house, she has to wash its nappies and clothes too. The mistress shows her how to wash. This is how she explains it to her: "Let the first water be lukewarm, for hot water would burn the dirt into the clothes. Give'em a good washing. Set your nails to it. Don' go wasting the soap but give the clothes a good rubbing. Be angry with them. The second water'll be easier. Make the third water really hot, and when you've poured it on, let it stand a little, so the hot water can get through the clothes. Let'em swell in it." While

the water cools, the girl feeds the chickens. Then she washes the clothes. Finally she rinses them in cold water.

On Wednesdays and Saturdays, in the summer, the earthen floors of the room, the porch and the front of the house are daubed. This is done by the junior maid. In a bad pitcher called daub-bin, or more recently in a wash-basin, she brings in black earth from the garden. She pours water on it, kneels down on the ground, and with a piece of a blue apron or some other rag rubs the floor smooth. She takes care not to splash the walls or the furniture or the chair legs. The front of the house is daubed with a broom or a worn whitewashing brush.

At about 11 a. m. she will bring in fuel and light the fire. In olden times she would lay it under the cauldron, first putting a twist of straw in, then piling maize cobs or stalks on top, and finally setting fire to them. She will replenish the fire and help around the kitchen, peeling potatoes, scouring and cleaning roots and onions. The cooking is not any of her business yet, at best she may be told to stir up a bit of gravy. The mistress will tell her how much lard and flour to put in the pan or small pot and to stir it till it is browned. She will be sent for drinking-water. Previously this was no small matter, for most houses had only shallow wells from whose swampy waters they caught the ague. Good water therefore had to be fetched from afar. At the end of Szentes Street, close on a couple of miles from the centre, at the Korcsik well by the Lóki mill. People fetched water even at night, because their turn had not come before. The well at the market-place also provided water for people from miles around. The water from the dug well in each house could only be used for washing up.—If something is missing of the things necessary for cooking, the junior maid is sent to the nearby shop. Where there is a baby, she nurses it.

At noon she sets the table. Farmers long persevered in the old habit of eating off a combined chair and table with a drilled leg. Of a summer, they ate under the eaves or in the shade of a mulberry tree, but first they had the maid water the place. She took out and set the plate, spoon and clasp knife. In old times they used wooden-handled clasp knives, while gentlefolk had table knives. She takes in the water in a jug, more recently of glass. Formerly glasses were not used for water. Farmers drank from the jug. The servant would eat separately, always in the porch, and if they ate outside, she would draw apart. After the meal she takes out the crockery that she brought in, and sets about washing up. A good housewife will be present when this is done and see to it that the washing-up water is so hot that, as the maid puts her hand in, she will jerk it back, saying "Ouch, the devil, how hot it is!" "Don't be afraid, it's not scalding, it

won't take your nails off," the mistress will say in encouragement. She will warn her: "Skim the grease aside on top of the water, don't smear it on the dishes." But she will add: "See you don't break'em!" The maid then puts the washed dishes on the table, one above the other, upside down. After washing up she dries the dishes, which, you would imagine, requires no particular skill. But the mistress will hand a dish back to the maid as often as three times, especially the glasses, saying they are dull and she must wipe them till they shine. Then she puts the dishes away, cleans out the kitchen, sweeps it and sprays it. She drives the flies out with a cloth and lets down the curtain at the door. There are times at the farmers', when "the cat lies over the cauldron flue," that is, there is no cooking for dinner.

Once the porch and the place under the eaves are tidied up, the junior maid gives water to the chickens and cuts grass for the poultry. Then she scrubs the floor.

In decent houses the washing is done on Mondays. The junior maid helps in the weekly washing. She takes her place at the wash tub, beside the washerwoman. Some girls are so small that they cannot reach the tub, so they bring a couple of bricks, set them down close to each other, lay a board across for standing on, and thus can take part in the washing. Or else they wash from the top of a stool. They potter about by the washerwoman's side. First a girl will wash the corners of the clothes, then the kitchen cloths and finally the linen too. On the day after the washed and dried clothes are mangled. This is only done by the stronger girls.

Her afternoon tasks include cleaning the windows, when the time comes. Then she goes to the well and brings drinking water in a pitcher on her arm. Next, the mistress may tell her: "Sew your apron, don't let it dangle in front of you." Afterwards she plays with the baby or weeds the garden.

Towards evening she gives the pigs their mixture and feeds the chickens. While feeding them, she counts the chickens and the hens to see if they are all there. She also collects the eggs. The brooding hen, tethered on the street or by the straw, must be untied, taken in and set down.

When she has done this, she lays the table for supper. After supper, she washes up, and, as the local saying has it, she does it "with joy in the evening, with nails in the morning," for by next morning the dishes will be caked. She puts the things away. While the mistress makes the bed, she takes the chamber-pot in. In many places it is customary to take the washing water in and also to clean the footwear in the evening. She puts the small children to bed. Then she locks the doors, and—if no one else does it—also the gate, and by ten o'clock she goes to bed. In small farmers' houses she will sleep in a cubby-hole or on a makeshift bed, possibly on a fur-lined

coat spread out on the floor. In gentlefolks' homes she will sleep in the kitchen, with the other maids. Big farmers have a lower kitchen and a room where the servants sleep.

Once every two or three weeks, she is allowed home on Sunday. She has a good wash and dons her better dress for the purpose. They tell her to be back by foddering time or for supper.

The junior maid has little time for relaxation however. Rarely can she manage by some miracle to sit down and do a bit of needlework. Yet a cheerful girl will sing as she works. She also finds it entertaining to listen to what is said. A maid who keeps her eyes and ears open will know more about the family's affairs than the master. Every maid thoroughly enjoys going to the market, the shop or the well, where she will meet the neighbouring maids or other maids of her acquaintance on the street and they will stop for a chat. Mostly they complain about their places, about the master and the mistress; they tell each other whether they are given plenty to eat or only a scrap of bread and milk, where and in what sort of place they sleep, whether they are given good bedclothes, or have to shiver under a threadbare blanket.

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Junior maids who are no more than budding girls (13 to 15 years old), rarely fall into misfortune, though the world hankers after the prettier ones. Some, however, have their eyes opened to things which are not usually put to paper. On rare occasions a rape may occur, or the opportunity may be arranged. Formerly, if the master or the son of the house cast his eye on her and brought misfortune on her, she was in most cases sent away. If she was not sent away, she got some money. If she was, she went home and had her baby there. Her parents may have beaten her for it, but they did not drive her away. They thought: "Others have fared similarly, so what are we to do." The old folk brought up the baby. These children are known as bastards.

The junior maid is given good treatment during her last month, so she should fancy staying on for the next year too. She is called "my girl" and nicely asked to "come here, dear." On a Sunday afternoon she is allowed home. She is asked whether she is staying, in words such as these: "Are you taking all your things or leaving them?" The maid knows that if she tells the truth to the effect that she is not staying, then her treatment will be harsher and the price of what she has broken will be deducted from her wages, so she outwits her master by saying:

"It's my mother who'll decide. I'm for staying."

If she really wants to stay, then towards the end of the year the servant will also be better behaved. For all that, she will be counting the days for weeks beforehand. On the last day, the first day of the new year, the maid gets up early. She ties up her things, making a bundle of them. She hurries to get through her work. At noon she is given a good meal, so she should not complain at home. She is sent to wash and comb herself, so she should look clean and tidy and her parents be satisfied. If a good mistress has taken a fancy to a girl who has deserved it, she buys her a present of an apron, stockings, a neckerchief or a dress. She may give her a worn one of her own, that is still in good shape. The girl may go home after dinner, when she has done the washing up. If she has completed her fifteenth year, she now becomes a senior maid.

# LAJOS KISS THE ETHNOGRAPHER

by

GYULA ORTUTAY

It was only a short time ago that we celebrated the eightieth birthday of Lajos Kiss. He was born in Hódmezővásárhely on March 13, 1881, into the difficult circumstances and great privations of a poor peasant family. After long years of struggle, during which he was misunderstood, neglected and pushed undeservedly into the background, and his valuable works were left unpublished, real recognition came to him only in 1948, after the liberation, in the form of a distinction awarded by the whole nation. Among the first Kossuth Prize winners, he too was distinguished for his life-work, but especially for his volumes entitled "The Life of the Poor Man," and "The Life of the Poor Woman."

Both the father, Tamás Kiss, and the mother, Judit Varga, came from the poor peasants of Hódmezővásárhely (hereafter referred to as Vásárhely—in accordance with local custom), the very people with whom the son's two great works and numerous essays deal. From the life of a poor peasant Tamás Kiss advanced to become a bank attendant.

The young boy's teacher advised the family to continue the education of the talented little boy; thus only the two sisters would share the poor peasant's fate. The family undertook to shoulder the burden and the boy was sent to a grammar-school. Here too he excelled through his talents, studying painting, making frequent appearances at the school literary and debating society, and winning prizes with his recitations. This inspired him to go to Budapest and enter the College of Dramatic Art. Upon completing his studies, he won his diploma. He felt that the world was now his. He observed the great actors at the National Theatre, and it seemed to him that he had found the real calling of his life.

It was at this time that he made the acquaintance of his future friend, the young university student István Györffy, who became the great ethnographer of the century. Györffy persuaded him to give up the theatre as an

uncertain livelihood, urging him to turn his attention to the people and to make their ways his study.

A few words on the status of Hungarian ethnography and folklore will be appropiate at this point. At that time a positivist ethnographical method developed, which paid great attention to details and cataloguing and which investigated the peasantry's forms of settlement and farming, their objects of decorative art, their popular customs, beliefs and poetry. Hungarian ethnography became a science of describing, of listing details. At the same time, great cultivators of the science fortunately succeeded in elevating it, by their employment of historical and comparative methods, to the level of European research. Still, the main force was made up of lonely dilettantes, and ethnography was but an auxiliary domain for researchers interested and trained in geography, history and literature. Some of them left their geography, deserted their literary history, and attempted to pursue their ethnographic researches with the methods acquired in their original branch. In a single fortunate instance this situation, in those very years, brought unpredictable results for Hungarian ethnography; two students at the Academy of Music, Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály, set out to study Hungarian folk music with the method learnt from Béla Vikár, by making phonographic recordings. Much suffering, misunderstanding and struggle still lay before them, but their life-work was to enrich the whole of our culture. Their activities brought out at least in one area everything that our national culture, the culture of our people, has to offer and that ethnographic research is able to save in the sweep of historical change. This same task should have been and still ought to be accomplished in the entire sphere of Hungarian ethnography. Bartók's example also goes to show that such profound disclosure of folk culture does not lead to chauvinistic seclusion; on the contrary, it tends to strengthen the bonds of friendship between peoples;

But we have strayed far from the conversation the two young friends had, when, at the turn of the century, they discussed the choice of a career. Lajos Kiss did not make his decision immediately but went home to think over his future.

The young actor with his diploma but with no contract in his pocket must, while pondering over his own future and observing the ever more difficult days of the poor men and women in Hódmezővásárhely, have at the same time taken part in the reviving cultural life of the town. He spent the winter at home, learning roles, reading literary essays, and taking part in occasional theatrical performances arranged in the town. The following year, 1904, Vásárhely prepared for a grand-scale industrial and agricultural

exposition. The reputation of the artist colony soared at once, and its members, including Lajos Kiss, were chosen to serve on the board of the show. At one of the meetings János Tornyai proposed that the exposition should also have a peasant art and a fine arts section. The motion once adopted, the youngest member of the artist group, Lajos Kiss, was immediately entrusted with the task of collecting the ethnographic objects. There was no need for much advice from Tornyai, nor for much persuasion. Lajos Kiss went to work with great enthusiasm, and in barely two weeks he collected enough ethnographic objects, mainly in the field of decorative art, to fill two large exhibition rooms. With this work his period of indecision came to an end; István Györffy's insight and Tornyai's encouraging words proved right. The objects of decorative art displayed in the exhibition's ethnographic section proved such a success that the municipal council decided to realize Tornyai's old plan: a museum was established with the material of the exposition as its basis. Lajos Kiss was put in charge as the first curator of the collection and entrusted with its further extension.

This sounds like an attractive success story: the unengaged young actor acquires a livelihood in his native town, organizes a museum, and in the course of the peacefully maturing years becomes an ethnographic scholar of nation-wide fame. But in reality it is the account of many bitter years and lonely efforts. It would take long indeed to relate all the petty details of the struggle for the museum's maintenance with municipal councillors, town officials and even the very "patrons" of the museum. Lajos Kiss himself had to canvass for voluntary contributions to enable him to increase the collection. In the first year of its existence the municipality did not help the museum with a single penny, in the next year it contributed a paltry two-hundred crowns to its maintenance. For four years Lajos Kiss received no salary whatever, and after four years of work, in 1909, he was voted an annual salary of 400 crowns, or about 33 crowns a month. Reading the chapters of "The Life of the Poor Man" we may see how poor a rating was assigned to the position of curator of the Vásárhely Museum by the town officials. But by that time Lajos Kiss was already working heart and soul for ethnography, for the museum. He pursued his studies, maintained his contacts with the Ethnographical Department of the National Museum, made the acquaintance, during a month's study tour to Budapest in 1907, of the outstanding personalities of economico-ethnographical research. Wishing to enrich his qualifications for museum work he attended a course in archaeology at the University of Kolozsvár in 1908—later, in Nyíregyháza, he was to make excellent use of his knowledge of the subject. In 1908 his first ethnographic essays on bread-baking and on fire-striking steel appeared,

together with a paper describing the establishment and the material of the Vásárhely Ethnographical Museum.

Whereas the municipality, with the establishment of the museum, rid itself of any further worries, not only the enthusiasm and the work of Lajos Kiss but also his personal problems increased steadily. He got married on a salary that was hardly enough to live on. In addition to his everyday work at the museum he had to earn money through recitations, directing plays, and teaching teen-agers to play the violin. He did some reporting for local newspapers, and occasionally performed the task of an auxiliary librarian at the city library, which brought him one crown on each occasion. Present-day university students engaged in specialized archaeological, ethnographical or literary studies, with scholarships to aid and a whole series of museums to serve them, will hardly be able to imagine this kind of life for a scientific researcher. Until the state reorganization of the Hungarian museums after the liberation, the salaries of the scientific staff in the museums and libraries, especially in museums left to the care of counties, towns and magistracies, but only slightly less so in the small number of state museums, had always been low and their status rather despised. It is no anecdote but a historical fact that the local authorities gave the head of one of our provincial museums the status of stable hand, for want of something better. Lajos Kiss was already on the verge of leaving the Hódmezővásárhely museum and was looking for another appointment, when help came at last. He was offered in 1912 the position of assistant curator at the Nyíregyháza County Museum under the famous ethnographer and physician András Jósa.

The poor man's son of Vásárhely was greeted in Eastern Hungary, in Szabolcs county by a completely different world. After the luxurious wealth and the dreadful poverty of the flat Great Plain town with its rebellious agrarian proletariat, the world of the Szabolcs noblemen, of their lowly and humiliated manorial servants, of the small peasants holding a few acres, represented a great change. In this region, interspersed with different nationalities, the scenes of the old marshy country of Rétköz, the rolling sand dunes of the Nyír country and of the ancient Great Forest were woven together. The archaeologist's spade was constantly finding treasures in the earth, on it there were fine churches in decay, manor houses of the gentry falling to ruins; and here too the peasantry lived in the most dreadful poverty. The gentry were either evil, insolent big landowners, county potentates, or eccentric, starving figures. Kiss's superior, András Jósa, the county physician, was a man famed throughout Hungary, and in his county he was an absolute authority in his field. He too belonged to the eccentrics

of Szabolcs, but of the creative type. A doctor who fought against epidemics, against the diseases of poverty, he was also an enlightened thinker and despised the drinking, degenerating world of the county gentry. His home was always open to his poor patients, whom he treated free of charge. Meanwhile he was an archaeologist and founder of a museum. The Nyíregyháza Museum owes its existence to him.

It was at his side that Lajos Kiss acquired his passion for archaeology. Under Jósa's guidance he became an outstanding archaeological excavator and conservator of historical monuments. The museum researcher of old could not afford the luxury of being one-sided. He had to know everything. And in these years Lajos Kiss really acquired a wealth of experience. He got to know the old world of Rétköz, roamed the villages of the Nyír country, and in the light of his experiences there, he also came to see more vividly, more clearly the life of the Vásárhely people he had left behind. The nine years spent alongside András Jósa were a period of peaceful enrichment, of accumulating experiences—yet throughout he remained in one of the lowest pay categories.

András Jósa died in 1919, and Lajos Kiss took his place. The county gentry looked with disdain upon the museum bookworms, their searching of the soil, collecting of peasant tools, fishing implements and folk "ornaments." In the case of Jósa they somehow had to tolerate these absurdities; being a nobleman he could permit himself such indulgences. But Lajos Kiss had been born out of wedlock, he had no claim here to esteem, to good comradeship. He did not sit at one table with the gentry, had no desire to be their drinking companion, did not long for participation in the hunting and card-playing company. Here too he fraternized with the poor—with landless peasants and ignored schoolteachers; he queried the earth, and the people of the earth, about their life, their past and their culture. So it came about that he did not mind his seclusion too much. He found a few friends with whom to discuss the poems of Csokonai and Ady and took pleasure in good books. With the young painters of the artists' colony at the Sóstó (Salt Lake), headed in the thirties by Gyula Rudnay, he was on the friendliest terms, and they often joined him at his table. Young ethnographic research workers, presenting letters of introduction from Györffy or Ferenc Móra, would come to him for advice and assistance. He would seat them all at his table, give them sound advice and good food, and an ever increasing number of young researchers were launched on their way with his aid and advice.

Indifferent to the disdain of the county squires, to his exclusion from Szabolcs gentry life, his work in seclusion produced ever greater results.

Thus he supplemented the Museum, which had originally housed only an archaeological collection, with an independent ethnographic departement, in spite of the strict orders of the county sheriff supervising the museum, who had ruled that ethnographic objects, these "worthless rags and bones," should not be brought into the museum. He took particular pleasure in studying the region of the former Rétköz, consisting of thirty villages. This was once a wet, boggy, marshy area, the exact replica of the Ecsed marsh and the Great Sárrét. Such closed, almost inaccessible settlements always preserve a greater wealth of material from an archaic past than do the populations of areas that adopted modern farming at an earlier date. Over a number of years, he unearthed the life story of the old Rétköz clue by clue, tracked down the name and story of every strip of land, and made notes on all the important monuments. He wrote a number of studies about this area and its people, but his large volume: *A Régi Rétköz* ("The Ancient Rétköz") was prepared only after the liberation and is now awaiting publication for the benefit of linguists, historians and ethnographical researchers alike. Meanwhile he excavated and saved valuable archaeological finds. He dug up the gold treasure of Ófehértó, of the graves, dating from the time of the Magyar conquest, at Kenézlő, Geszteréd and Eperjes. The gold-wrought sable of Geszteréd, discovered by him, is one of the greatest treasures of Hungarian archaeology. He unearthed seven medieval churches, and a whole series of other important projects for the protection of historical monuments are connected with these years.

In the course of his archaeological work, Lajos Kiss did not forget about the people. He not only excavated churches and unearthed graves from the time of the Hungarian conquest, but also wrote his excellent study on the earthen hovels of the Nyír, the hovels of the poor people of Szabolcs, dug into the ground, and in his description of the poor people's everyday implements, he visualized the bleak poverty of the region. Here too, in watching their creative talent, he discovered the traces of decorative folk art in its decline and decay. He described the life of potters and furriers, and their works and crafts. Every important milestone in the life of the Szabolcs poor becomes familiar from his writings. Let us not think, however, that amidst all this work (in the thirties they even put him in charge of the 14,000-volume county library for a long time) he forgot about his patrimony. He thought more and more about home. He always longed to be back in Vásárhely, and if it was no longer possible for him to head his town's museum, he wanted at least to conjure up around him the world of his childhood and youth through the ethnographic elaboration of the lives of the Vásárhely poor. He had always intended to write about that first

station on their life-road, the lot of the swineherd boy, and to build up his work on the observations, experiences of his childhood. While writing about the life of the swineherd boy, he corresponded with his old friends at Vásárhely, gathered fresh facts on his subject, and became ever more determined to write a book about the whole life of the poor man, and to let it be followed by one about the life of the Vásárhely poor woman. From the mid-twenties he spent long years writing the "Life of the Poor Man"; the work was completed in 1934, when he immediately set about writing the second volume, dealing with the poor woman.

In the midst of his work Lajos Kiss was not even disturbed by the fact that the first volume lay for years on the desk of the executives of the Royal Hungarian University Press. They did not dare to publish it. It was in these years that a few volumes of a series planned to bear the title "Discovery of Hungary" were issued by Athenaeum Publishers, among them Géza Féja's work of historic value entitled *Viharsarok* ("Stormy Corner") and Ferenc Erdei's volumes. I thought that perhaps Athenaeum should be tried instead of the University Press. György Sárközi the poet who was killed by the Nazis in 1944, was Literary Manger of Athenaeum, and he welcomed the idea with great pleasure and warmth. It was to no small extent his merit that Lajos Kiss rushed the writing of the second volume. "Life of the Poor Man" finally appeared in 1939. A few years later, in 1943, when fascism had degenerated into utter savagery, almost unnoticed officially and without any response, "Life of the Poor Woman" was also issued. Professional circles may have been reserved, but public opinion judged unanimously: Lajos Kiss's books were snapped up within days, they became two of the most frequently read works of our progressive-minded young authors and scientists, two of the most significant "village research" writings. The two volumes were reedited in 1955.

This brief biographical sketch has perhaps been able to convey the picture of a pure life spent in modest, constant work. But what does the life-work of Lajos Kiss mean to the present-day reader, and what is the significance particularly of his two volumes now republished from the point of view of present-day ethnography? What is the essence and the importance of Lajos Kiss's scientific work? It has been said that he embarked on his career at a time when the positivist period in Hungarian ethnography was producing its most eminent works. Let us mention the names of Ottó Herman, János Jankó and Lajos Katona, but around them and following them the cultivators of Hungarian ethnography contented themselves with the narrowest morphological and typological descriptions and comparisons, with the isolated study of objects and economic processes. The folklorists

too engaged more and more in the descriptive or, at best, the comparative examination of the various motifs and text types, without paying any attention to either their social or their cultural aspects and to their deeper social interconnections. In those days more and more people came to consider the description of the individual ethnographic manifestations and their arrangement into chapters as some kind of primitive addition: it was thought that composite description would be suitable for the understanding of ethnic groups, of cultural interconnections, for revealing their laws. In ethnographic research the bare objects and motifs, the texts of popular poetry were increasingly taking the place of the Hungarian peasantry as it lived and worked in its own society. The description of objects and texts, the bare catalogue, obscured man, society, life.

Never in any of his studies or even one of his little articles did Lajos Kiss ever content himself with this cataloguing, descriptive ethnography. This does not mean, however, that he did not describe all ethnographic phenomena and every interconnection with the greatest care! But his is a truly scientific description, even though in his terminology and external forms he apparently does not pay much attention to professional jargon and seems instead to be relating a novel, a narrative.

When—to cite but an example from his smaller studies—Lajos Kiss describes the superstitions of the Vásárhely potters, he does not in the least place the records of individual superstitions side by side in a disjointed, arbitrary order, with the customary inaccurate method of descriptive abstracts. In his essay, the works, the ways of life of the potters appear before us, with their health problems and their diseases, especially those resulting from lead and paint poisoning, and it is against this background that not only the various superstitions but also the causes that of necessity gave rise to them are discussed. This truly scientific presentation at the same time lays bare the inner relationships and at once transcends the scope of simple depiction. The same method is applied in his other works: in his major treatises, like those written about the Vásárhely or the Nyíregyháza furriers' trade, and in the essays published so far about the Rétköz communities, no less than in the smaller studies, e. g., on the Vásárhely bread, on the women laundering without soap, or those written about the earthen hovels of Szabolcs. Or take the observations which unfold before us the real life, the very "career" of various objects, revealing how even the smallest part of an object is made use of in a poor peasant family, be it no more than a small piece of a "suba" (wide sheepskin coat). This kind of objective, of spiritual ethnography gives evidence of a profound understanding of the laws motivating peasant life. Even in the smallest manifestations of life the

author is able to detect those which may serve as the foundation for authentic generalizations and the formulation of general rules. In my opinion this method of portrayal is of fundamental significance in Lajos Kiss's works. It is the more regrettable that he should stand all alone with his method and could not lay the foundations of a new school.

It will be apposite, in conclusion, to say a few words about his two classical works. They are a lesson for all those who would like to forget about the decades before the liberation and prefer to talk about the good old days of Francis-Joseph, extending the concept of the "good old days" to the Horthy era as well. As to what kind of "good old days" visited the poor peasantry of the Great Plain from the Compromise of 1867 till 1944, we may learn from Lajos Kiss's books. The reader should be reminded here that the present tense used in them relates to the years between 1930 and 1940; nevertheless his data are characteristic of the whole of the Horthy era. On the other hand, when he tells of the past, he does not go further back than the days of the Compromise of 1867, thus confining his investigation to the period covered by the reliable recollections of his sources. This is the ethnographer's method of investigation—in this aspect too it is different from that of the historian. We have no intention of repainting Lajos Kiss and of claiming his works for Marxist-Leninist literature. That it is of a different character is evident from the fact that he never wanted to go beyond pure depiction—the calm and still pitilessly accusing portrayal of reality. He offered no program, proclaimed no revolution, and generally avoided analysing direct political action. In fact he does not even mention the great struggles of the agrarian proletariat at the turn of the century. Here—in our judgement—the only defect of his work is perhaps to be sought. But this judgement, being only *a posteriori*, would leave the real facts out of account. Even if Lajos Kiss's work does not make the impression of direct political agitation, it is the profound sympathy and affection for the fate of the poor as expressed in his objective writings that stir our hearts and awaken ever angrier emotions. The various chapters of the lives of the poor man and the poor woman (regardless of whether they belonged to those living amidst difficulties, or to those under easier circumstances) invariably end, like a constantly recurring, frightening and merciless rhyme, with a few closing sentences about an old age spent in begging, in the alms house, in the hospital, or in utter solitude. And in some chapters the final refuge for the aged is suicide. "It is not good to grow old, my dear!" an old beggar-woman exclaims in one chapter. This moving, recurring rhyme at the end of the chapters is as inciting as that resigned peasant saying: "One needs patience to be poor." It arouses impatient anger, and the deter-

mination to change a world in which little girls of six and seven are broken according to the laws of the big farmers and the gentry, and helpless aged people are turned out into the street to perish.

It would be wrong to suppose that Lajos Kiss's portrayals are one-sided. It is precisely when we come to understand the vanity of the poor man's and the poor woman's exertions—despite their best intentions—, the narrow confines of their lives, and the inevitable bleakness of their old age, that the life of the peasant poor unfolds itself in all its shocking grimness. The general picture is not altered even by an occasional kind-hearted wealthy farmer or farmer's wife, nor by the farmer who, having caused his servant girl to be with child, "redeems" his pleasure. No, Lajos Kiss does not give a one-sided picture. Observe but the minute joys, the romping of the little swineherd, or the many delicate episodes—so hard to render in their fine shading—of the poor woman's life. This work depicts Life in its completeness: the former peasants' toil and remuneration, the servants' wages, clothing, all are contained in it just as are the reckless, peddling, huckstering mode of existence forced into fraud and dissipation, the old customs of peasant life, the feast-days of joy and sorrow, the ancient superstitions, the healing no less than the injurious practices. And, spoken or unspoken, it pronounces judgement over the landlords, the big farmers deciding the fate of the poor peasant and fleecing him day by day, judgement over official Hungary, its rulers, its exploiting class. The two books are a description and, at the same time, an indictment. The description alone of the social position of the poor women and girls, of their relegation to a lower status, is an indictment of that world which has since disintegrated. What an accusation is implied in their status, and how delicately Lajos Kiss accentuates their feminine emotions, their great womanly values. His finest pages speak of the industrious, long-suffering, pure peasant women. With deep understanding he traces the primrose path of "those of easy virtue" back to the evils of the ruling social system; without pronouncing judgement, he makes us accept judgement through the inner conviction of his portrayal.

The various ethnographic work processes have often been described, but the way in which every phase of peasant work comes to life in Lajos Kiss's writing is well-nigh unrivalled. Only a society which is building socialism and raising work to its real stature can truly appreciate this description of working processes: a description from which not only the human value of work emerges, but also the revelation of how this work was exploited from childhood virtually to the grave by good-hearted and evil-hearted farmers and landlords alike, without exception. Lajos Kiss is no Marxist, a number

of passages could be cited in his books to prove this, but it is also certain that his scholarly descriptions, his characterizations and dialogues striving for complete ethnographical authenticity, his method of precisely presenting the facts, furnish valuable standards for even the best Marxist analysis. The historical method used by him is also of value to us: his data, the presentation of his material reveal that in the period of declining capitalism, during the Horthy era, the situation of the peasantry in Hungary grew constantly worse, even compared to the "happy" days of Francis-Joseph that had given rise to mass emigration and harvest strikes. And it is also evident that in this pauperization of peasant existence the class antagonisms within the peasantry itself were growing constantly sharper. Lajos Kiss's work remains one of the tremendous scientific monuments of the life of the Great Plain peasantry, one of the great works of Hungarian science.

# THE SWITCH-OVER

by

GYULA ILLYÉS

I

I received an invitation* from the former count, the previous owner of the *puszta* where my father had been born, where my grandparents and even my greatgrandparents had lived and died as estate employees or hired hands.

My family and the count's had thus been in close contact for generations. They had lived under the same firmament and frequented the same countryside, even though members of the one had done so as peers or Dames of the Star-Cross Order riding in foursome coaches, while those of the other were shepherds mounted on asses or shepherdesses and shepherd's daughters walking on their own bare feet, with a bushel for food and (on Sundays) a "butterfly" on their heads, in place of the Star-Cross and diadem.

For a moment, of course, the invitation took me by surprise.

Had I—as the invitation read—"no reason not to accept it?" Indeed I had every reason to accept.

This written invitation was preceded by the kind of verbal inquiry which, as the papers tell us, is customary in diplomacy. This, too, was effected with the—incidentally praiseworthy—aim of assuring that no sting should be left in either the prospective hosts or the invited by a possible "reefooz"—to use the expression, a distortion, naturally, of the French *refus*, brought by the first harbinger from the very lips of those in the castle, together with the message itself. It served as a kind of credential, and despite the change it suffered *en route*, it carried conviction.

All shepherds, and thus all the progeny of shepherds, are relatives. In this sense the courier was also a relative of mine, though so distant as virtually to reach back into Biblical times. He was terribly old, or more

* This very personal sketch deals with the situation in 1948. The first part—of which we here give an English version—was written in 1961 and printed in the April number of the literary magazine "Kortárs."

precisely he made himself out to be terribly old, or—to put it still more accurately—he allowed himself to appear so on that occasion. He had worked for a great number of years at the local stud farm, but since he had once been a head-shepherd—he was a kind of deputy chief, with all the threads and branches of feeding and fodder supply in his hands. During the bullet-peppered days of military operations, he had done the count an insignificant but vitally dangerous favour. This I had been told in company, the narrative spiced with mildly caustic comments. I had retained hardly any personal memories of the old man. For this very reason, that ancestral bond had induced me to defend him, and even praise his deed.

The messenger's task was not an easy one. The old shepherd had shrunk frightfully in stature, as his ancient leather jacket showed. It now reached almost to his ankles, yet he wore it in summer too. It is no small matter to walk six or seven miles in a rig-out of this kind.

For the count and his family, or more exactly the old count and his family, did not live on the *puszta*, but in Ürgöd, the nearest village. Or, to give the more recent name used on the map, at Irged.

There, in the middle of Ürgöd and concealed among the trees of a huge park, stood the real castle, the ancient seat of the family, comprising some thirty or forty rooms, and including also the headquarters of the once so powerful network of vast estates.

There were "castles" on each of the more distant *pusztas* of the estate too, but here the popular conception needs quotation marks, for in its eyes every manor house of any size was a "castle." However, those of the count's family who had been left after the war and the land reform, and who had stayed on here, now lived at the Ürgöd castle. The family had moved out of the smaller castles, or rather had never moved back, for they had left them when the front-line came nearer. They had in fact given them up as residences, too. Except for the "castle" that stood on the *puszta* of my grandfather.

This *puszta* had been managed as his own by the count's eldest son, even in his father's life-time. The son fell, or rather disappeared in the Second World War. The circumstances were such as to suggest merit for resistance; moreover, since this part of the estate was not larger than 1,400 acres, the lower forums of the land distribution committee left 140 acres to the son's widow.* They also endowed her with some sort of rights over the "castle," of which it was now to be decided whether it was to be an aristocrat's residence or a farmer's home.

* According to the 1945 Land Reform 300 acres could be left to the landed proprietor if he could prove some merit for resistance to the German troops or Hungarian fascists.

The young widow, in order to remain "in possession" in the legal sense, had symbolically moved back to the *puszta*. She had furnished a room and a kitchen for her needs, and actually spent two or three nights a week there, accompanied by a maid.

She too played her part in the messenger service.

"Dad was very pleased at the opinion you voiced to old Sebestyén."

"That applied only to old Sebestyén."

"What did?"

"My favourable opinion. It was only about the conduct of old Sebestyén that I formed an opinion."

"Do you bear Dad a grudge?"

Her voice—at this stage of our acquaintance—was always a trifle faster and sharper than it need have been.

It would have taken too long for me to explain the steps that separate a resentment that is, so to speak, merely historical, from that which is also personal.

"I'm afraid I don't know your father-in-law."

I knew no member of the count's family. When I was a child, this *puszta* had temporarily been farmed by tenants and all we knew of the count's family was that they lived somewhere abroad. When the lease expired, we left. My family had had a more favourable agreement with the tenants. When the count resumed the handling of his estate, we would have been retained only under the previous conditions.

"But Dad knows you!" said the countess, of whom I had so far known no more than that she walked with lithe movements. Although I had introduced myself upon my arrival, I really knew her only by sight. She passed before my window several times a day, making her way across the small, tank-trodden park. At one time, there had been a piped water-system in the mansion, with a reservoir in the attic; but the reservoir and the pump, as well as the plumbing of the bathroom and the lavatory, had been disrupted by the frost. The inhabitants of the mansion were forced to avail themselves of the reliable and serviceable privy which had fittingly stood from time immemorial in the courtyard of the steward's lodge.

The count knew me by reputation. "With sincere admiration!" That is why he would formerly too—by this I was to understand the old regime—have considered it an honour to become personally acquainted with me. As soon as he learned that my book about the people of his estates had been published in a language that was accessible to him,* he had

* The "People of the Puszta" by the author appeared in French under the title *Ceux de la Puszta*. (Note of the Editor.)

immediately ordered a copy and read it with "considerable interest." For though he had learned to speak Hungarian intelligibly, he could not yet read it sufficiently well to enjoy it.

"He even felt a touch of pride when he put it down," declared the countess with a smile. The smile and her look held a touch of irony, of which I could not guess whether it was intended for her father-in-law or for me.

"You don't say so."

"The pride of parochialism."

It was an urgent literary job that had made me go down to the *puszta* that summer. I had been invited every year to have a look at the new life of the district and to spend a few weeks there. The observation of life, not for weeks, but for no longer than a day, is something that can only be done if you are present not as a spectator, but with some sort of job on your hands. I had found such a job. I had four weeks to translate that inimitably witty five-act comedy in verse, *Les femmes savantes*, which is, moreover, based partly on linguistic tricks. For this work, I had to tear myself away from the bustling city life I was then leading. How beneficial the solitude, the silence and the spaciousness of the *puszta* would be! The childhood scenes to rest the eye, the home vernacular to soothe the ear. (And between-whiles, the new experiences.)

On the *puszta* I found anything but silence and solitude. It was amazing how life had expanded and how full it had grown. Freedom had here been like blood streaming into limbs hitherto numbed by strangulation, an everyday, corporeally palpable force, tense and ebullient. The farm labourers had fallen into an epidemic of expansion. They had been seized by manias for founding families, breeding animals, and then moving to separate homes. This in a place where even formerly there had been a housing shortage and war had wrought double havoc. The rooms were full of chicken-hatching baskets and suckling-pig crates, and there were even places where a little calf was fed off the bottle in the kitchen.

The leaders of the *puszta* had during the course of the land reform sent me a letter allotting to me our former house by way of a magnanimous bait. In the detached and once upon a time—in my mother's hands—pretty smith's house, the two rooms were now inhabited not by the hoped-for silence and the soft Muse of inspiration, but by four families.

Finally it turned out that there was only one empty room in the whole of the *puszta*—the former great hall of the "castle" wedged in among the stables. The leaders of the *puszta* had earmarked it for a movie or a "hall of culture." But they had not yet received the necessary permit.

Because this too depended on who was to own this elongated, straight, single-storey building, damp, mildewed and unfriendly, from which not only the old furniture but even the nails in the wall had been swept away by the war.

I had on the afternoon of my arrival immediately paid my respects to the countess, said two words to request, and received one word granting, permission to move in, and already I was pulling away at the oars of my galley. I sat in one place from morning till night, shaking my head and flinging my hands about, hunting for rhymes and driving off flies. These too had multiplied like a heavenly scourge. It was the middle of summer, and in the happy anarchy of new possibilities no one thought of taking steps to promote public hygiene. The overfed flies hummed above and especially around me in such dense swarms that they occasionally gave voice to real human words so clearly accented that I turned round in the belief that someone had entered the room and addressed me. Finally, this was how I got the better of them—I offer it as a piece of advice. I shut the Venetian blinds on each of the windows of the large room, except for the one lying farthest from me, which I opened wide. The greater part of the flies hummed away there, fat, lazy and black, like Jesuits assembled from all over the world in the imagination of a Voltairian. Meanwhile, in my corner, admitting only as much light to my paper as was given by a torch, I could enjoy relative peace while I pulled away at the gladdening oars. I came to like this work.

It was here that the young countess came to me with the concluding message of the diplomatic preliminaries. She who stepped through the park before me on her way to the privy with the dignity of those condemned by the Conciergerie, but with whom I had in the few days that had elapsed, as I say, only exchanged politely reserved remarks and mutual nods. We agreed on the time of next day's lunch at her father-in-law's.

"I shall find them in the castle."

"Yes. In the scullery. You must not go in by the main gate. Instead..."

She began to explain.

"I'll find them in time."

"If you wish, we could set out together."

"As you please."

"Maybe it is inconvenient for you to have to go through the village in my company," said the countess with an inimitably superior air.

2

The Hungarian aristocracy, deprived of their lands, have undergone peculiar experiences. They have come close to human kind.

The Festetich family of Dég had a grand stroke of luck. They buried and then recovered intact the full collection of family jewels. When Geraldine Apponyi married King Zog of Albania in 1933, the counts Festetich, who were her close relatives, were invited to the wedding at Tirana. Their formal attire included jewellery. As always, on removing the jewels from the strong-room of the castle, they had them insured against robbery and theft. The insurance company, after consulting its own experts, estimated the value of the jewellery that was taken on the journey at one and a half million pengős.* The insurance premium was based on that amount.

When in their straitened circumstances, the count's family, after recovering this same jewellery, tried to sell it, the very first piece turned out to be a forgery. Not a common forgery but a deliberate and careful one. The heavy gold chain did, indeed, contain some gold, but so little that it was not even worth the cost of smelting. The diamond tiara was not of factory-made glass, but some kind of genuine precious stones, of such poor quality, however, that they did not even figure on the price lists. The second, the third, the tenth piece that they offered for sale, indeed the whole collection, turned out to be similar forgeries.

What had happened was that at the turn of the century, when the fashion of traditional Hungarian dress clothes was revived, the family had had their jewels modernized. This was then the latest vogue, in much the same way as the installation of up-to-date heating in the castles. The medieval pendants and bangles were exchanged for sword-hilts, spurs, broaches and tiaras in the newer, Victorian taste. It was a big Viennese firm that sent its agents to the castles, organizing what became almost a country-wide movement. In this respect too, the breath of new times was felt. And at that time a Court Appointment was a title that still commanded great respect.

Needless to say, considering the restricted field of the business, it was this consortium of court jewellers "by Appointment" that took upon itself the possible resale of the fake jewels it had supplied, for who in twentieth century Europe would want to buy Victorian gold spurs, turquoise plume-holders *style de nouille*, or artificial sapphire-spangled cloak-chains?

* The pengő was the Hungarian currency from 1925 to 1946. In 1933 the equivalent of £ 1 was 16 pengős; one and a half million pengős consequently represented about £ 90 000.

It was, moreover, the same circumspect firm that arranged for the necessary insurance of this special type of jewellery—denoted *ungarische Schmuckstücke* on the international jewellery market—through one of the most prominent companies of the Monarchy.

How did they manage it? It would be going too far to try to unravel all the tangled threads of this old web. Let us merely seize on our own little bit and cut the strings that connect it with the rest. Even so, it will be plenty.

The surprise that awaited our aristocracy in the matter of their bank-deposits at home and abroad was by no means slighter. Nor did they fare better in their dealings with the upper bourgeoisie of big industry and the Stock Exchange—the so-called aristocracy of wealth. But let us here too abandon the more distant threads. What they betray is pretty ugly... Yet let not my pen, a pen that requires shades of colour, be the one to set down such summary judgements. (In the spring of 1945, having climbed to the top of one of those hills of débris which then rose in the streets of Budapest, whom should I behold clambering up on the other side, with a real mountaineer's stick in his hand, which made the shoulder-strapped rucksack he carried at first sight recall not destitution and alarm, but snowy mountains and gay tours on them? It was one of the richest landowners of Transylvania. I deliberately returned the handshake he had given me two years previously, perhaps in a fit of absent-mindedness, and by way of interest I supplemented it with a cigarette, conversing with him for the time it took to smoke it. He did not complain. Only when my eyes strayed to his tattered Bocskay-type fur coat with the braiding missing, and the Rumanian fur cap that went so ill with it but because of his raggedness did not seem out of place now, only then did he say, as though to excuse himself, that the managing committees of all the most reliable banks in the world put together did not have as much human decency in them as his last few coachmen. It was on the tip of my tongue to console him by saying that he need feel no surprise, for the capitalistic materialization or dehumanization of institutions is, among other things, a Marxist tenet and that they are thus condemned to change, but I held my peace and before parting for good, when he went his way and I went mine from the almost symbolic watershed of the mound, I handed him the whole packet of cigarettes.)

Our big bourgeoisie, in fact our bourgeoisie in general, did not betray our aristocracy or abandon them from base human motives. History itself teaches base lessons. Why should it not, particularly when it is let loose?

The peers of England and of France, whenever in the course of history they were overtaken by a crisis, took blood-transfusions from the bourgeoisie at the expense of some sort of concession. The fate of the big Hungarian landowners was different. This class was so anachronistic, so obsolete, that even Hitlerism had no use for its members. On the contrary, it wished to sweep them away in order to seize the vast, but relatively unpopulated areas of the *pusztas* for its own racial expansion. Nor did it lack a pretext. This was that the big landowners were anglophiles and that, having frequently intermarried with the Jewish financial aristocracy, they were'not pure Arians'. When the Soviet tanks appeared across the Carpathians the big bourgeoisie that had been the ally of the Hungarian aristocracy had hardly any power left. They had fled—when flight to the West was still possible—or they were prisoners, doomed to death. Why did the aristocrats not take to flight? With the Germans, to the hell of the last days of Hitlerism? They failed to see in time how their world order would collapse. Nor is it as easy to transfer a big estate as a bank account. This is usually expressed by saying that the land binds its owner.

They could not even flee to Budapest, for those of its inhabitants that could were making a rush for the countryside to escape the air-raids and the siege.

Thus were they left to the people.

Thus did there arise a probably unprecedented, historical moment, a social situation which even in its absurdity brought innumerable truths to the surface and was therefore highly instructive. The Hungarian aristocracy had for centuries harboured a hysterical fear of the very people to whom it owed its prosperity and legendary privileges, of those who worked on its lands. The fear was justified. These people were exploited, oppressed and despised with a ruthlessness hard to find outside the domains of fairy tales. It was treatment worse than had formerly been the lot of their serfs. Not with impunity, however, not without its counter effect. Since the appearance of Endre Ady, the word "count" elicited two responses from Hungarians endowed with intelligence—the one was to spit, the other to cast a fire-brand. A whole generation grew up with these intellectual reflexes, that very generation which throughout Europe was no longer composed of noble progeny, but the descendants of peasants and workers. Our high-brow literature—using the guise of its high-brow character—had as its recurrent themes the burning down of castles and the retrial of Dózsa's case, implying revenge for the burning of the peasant leader on his throne of iron and for the impalement of masses of his followers.

All this reached the peasants themselves.

And then there swept over the country a force that broke the latches off every securable castle door, and annihilated all the weapons of defence which those in the castles might have used.

This change left the lords, whose only reason for no longer exercising the right of the first night was that they had far more comfortable and finer rights to avail themselves of, practically naked in the midst of a mass of servitors who had been subjected to medieval treatment, though they were enlightened in the modern sense.

Not only did it leave the lords in their midst. It even pointed at them, saying: "Do what you like with them"...

"Dad is looking forward with interest to hearing your present thoughts," said the young countess.

I did not answer. Precisely because very many occurred to me.

3

We set out from the *puszta* early in the morning, to avoid the great heat. As we left the pastures, we passed through an artificial coppice, then between firs which had also been purposely planted. Between the trees, the sun, arrayed for full battle, sent down beams of dazzling rays which, though they still came to us obliquely, were already blinding in their intensity. We wore light summer clothes. The shades made the goose-flesh rise on our skins, the light-patches scalded us. There were the usual pleasant forest smells, as of old. It was Sunday, and its atmosphere penetrated among the trees. A Sunday of old-world festiveness. Having crossed a series of small mounds, we arrived above the vast river valley, several miles wide, on one side of which the Sió, on the other the Sárvíz slowly make their way, occasionally flashing looks at each other, hand in hand almost, from the Mezőföld to the lower Sárköz. Colourful groves revealed the region's luxurious fertility, reminiscent of paradise. The mysterious currents of the fresh, moist air wafted the early chimes from as far as the sixth or seventh village, letting them meet again and again in this their own Garden of Eden. They were all good old friends of mine.

"The dawn mass at Borjád."

Then, hardly a moment later, inter-twined with the previous peel, like girls plaiting their hair, came the next.

"The Bikács bells. The Bogárd ones."

"Funny, the names of these villages. Borjád, Kakasd, Tinód, Agárd

and so forth.* Hasn't it ever struck you? There's even one called Tevel.** Surely they didn't all breed cocks in one place, greyhounds in the next, and camels in the third?"

The countess was in a good temper. She enjoyed our walk. When she came to a ditch, she did not even stop to gauge its width but took a swing and lept across it without a run. She was thirty or thirty-five.

Our memories clung to the same hillocks, lanes and wooded nooks. I had spent my childhood here, she her young womanhood. For both of us a happy period, though covering different years Soon we were engaged in informal conversation.

Our way took us across that very clearing where I had had one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. It was here that I had caught a hare bare-handed. I must have been about eight. I do not know why Klári and I had come out so far, trailing the little toy cart which grandfather had made us. All of a sudden, I caught sight of a big hare among the tall grass. I ran towards it for fun, certain that in a moment it would be gone. It took a half-hearted leap or two, then tried to hide. We caught it, put it in the little cart, and piled grass on top of it. Though we were only children, we knew that our kind were not allowed to seize game. We took it home, feeling more worry than joy, lest we be found out. In fact, it was not killed and our mother had one of the apprentices take it back to the fields.

That hare may well have been ill (as its docility would seem to indicate) or pregnant, if indeed it was not just about to give birth.

"That's where it happened."

"About the same place where I nearly fell off my horse. I had fired my gun from the saddle."

"There you have the difference in the quality of our recollections."

"Well, the sort of counts we were..."

The countess' father-in-law had been an army officer. He had served in the non-Hungarian parts of the Monarchy. That was why he had married in Prague. His bride had been a princess.

Making my way towards them, I now realized how much I knew about my hosts, whom I had never seen. All that I knew, however, had been gathered from hearsay, gossip, and the whispered intelligence of servants' quarters, and this now embarrased me. It also must have come to my ears through some sort of cook's chatter, for instance, that when

* Each of the names incorporates the Hungarian name of an animal — the calf, cock, bull, greyhound.

** Teve=camel.

the old countess grew angry, she refused to be called "Your Excellency," insisting at such times on being addressed as "Your Highness"—as behoved her by birth.

"How did your mother-in-law take the new situation?"

"On the whole, magnificently. The Hungarians didn't eat her up, after all! She had been terribly afraid of the Hungarians. Because of her grandfather you know."

I did not know.

The young countess, letting her thoughts leap almost as lightly as her limbs, readily furnished me with information, no longer guarding or picking her words. Without my having to ask questions, or upon the encouragement of no more than an interrogative look, she poured forth a wealth of facts, enriching my knowledge of her family and of her class with details that I no longer had to be ashamed of knowing.

The count had attained a very high rank in the army. He was a Chief of Staff. The Chief of Staff to the Second Army at the Isonzo River.

At that time many princes and aristocrats were made Commanders-in-Chief and Field Marshals, to hold inspections and take the salute at parades. But a Chief of Staff does not merely have to salute; it is he who plans the order of battle and who is responsible for the military operations themselves. He has to know geometry, topography and the science of strategy. The actual operation of an army is a profession.

Under Horthy, however, he did not take a job.

"Why? You'd better ask him. They were on bad terms."

"And that was why your husband had to go to the front?"

The young countess had then been a widow for four or five years. She was past the period when remembering their lost ones touches on live wounds in women's hearts. She had now entered on the period (and was in a situation) when widows are somehow glad to seize on an opportunity to talk of their husbands.

"He couldn't have stopped him in any case. He went off after his team."

"Was he a soldier too?"

The countess smiled at me so tolerantly, that she even stopped in her tracks for a tiny moment to do so.

She had been talking of a football team. In order to requite a spiritual need which we shall immediately explain, the oligarchs of Transdanubia between the two world wars set up football teams.

That period—the one following on 1919—had opened with the age of societies and associations. There were swarms of various secret and

open movements, for the more widespread propagation of ideas, for singing and for marching. These, however—ranging from the "Apostolic Cross" to the "Order of the *Vitéz*" (Valiant)—were mainly organizations of the sullen petty bourgeoisie, which had declared itself to be the backbone of the nation. Hence the counts were neither welcome, nor were they eager to join.

They, the great club-men of the last century, had been left to themselves. However odd it may sound, in their own way they must have felt orphaned and lonely. They therefore did, with slight modifications, what their forebears had done in the Middle Ages, when they organized their chivalrous tournaments.

Was it that they wanted to come into closer contact with the people? Like the count of Dég, for instance, who went furthest in this respect by having his team play in the colours of his crest? Or his colleague of Fürged, who had coaches brought straight from England, labouring under the influence of the typically aristocratic notion that a thing will always remain most perfect in the place where it originated.

I believe the two strapping sons of the count of Ürged merely exploited a chance. They were mere lads when the fashion started. What adolescent lad does not like to run about among twenty-one companions, particularly if—for one reason or another—he may play the leader? Those who have ever played football cannot deny that even with age-ridden ankles, they would gladly descend to the green pitch if a fairy's will would every minute roll the ball to their feet in excellent scoring situations. The two boys organized two teams and even played themselves, becoming more crazy about this hobby, and obviously acquiring more positive human traits of character through it, than their foreign counterparts did through fox-hunting, which, on closer inspection, is based on the passion of the hound. As I have said before, the castle at Ürged was built not among stables and servants' quarters, but in a free village. The two are as heaven and earth. The lads recruited their team from among more or less independent peasant youths, which meant that they knew almost everybody, for it needs quite a lot of inquiry to discover in a village those twenty-two young peasants in whom God has concealed a gift for football. Some weeks the two teams pitted their prowess against each other on as many as three occasions, not counting the training and the "friendlies." On Sundays? Almost all the village was out on the market-place. Rural district, then county, championships loomed in the offing. At the matches, enthroned among the excited parents, there was the entire family of the count.

"I too kicked the ball," said the young widow vivaciously, stopp-

ing, turning, and showing me how she had kicked it (with her instep). On this occasion she stopped before me, at the ridge of one of the deeper boundary ditches. I had to contemplate with admiration (from the bottom of the ditch) her exceptionally trim ankles and calves and her previously mentioned harmonious lightness of gait, verging in style on the artistic.

As I found out on the way, to have contact of this kind with the people was considered by the old count to be a soldierly thing, officer-like, smacking of leadership and nobility. He himself had offered his hand to the peasants with sincere friendliness. He too had been linked to them by something that was of common concern. For at the time—possessing as he did a stud-farm of country-wide renown—he had a craze for horses, and this too he considered as something to do with the people, as what might be called a feeling of proximity to the peasants. However, as we shall see, in other respects too the ideas he entertained about the people and society differed from those of his companions and relatives in Hungary. In Czechoslovakia he had lived in a more cultured and democratic environment, and he therefore linked the two quite reasonably. He had a huge mass of Prussian, and through them of Belgian, Spanish and English relatives by marriage, whose mentality undoubtedly influenced him. Up to 1914 he maintained hardly any other contacts. (With his English relatives, he kept in touch in consequence of his passion for horses, which was highly appreciated in those quarters. The result of this, however, was—according to the young countess—that in the count's heart the place immediately next to the members of the English aristocracy was occupied by old Pál Ugyi the best stallion-breeder at Ürged.)

The count's daughter-in-law, this countess who was walking so gracefully beside me, also appeared to differ from the general run of our home-produced aristocratic ladies, although she did possess a characteristic structural feature of that product. She was able unexpectedly to drop her voice from the ordinary average conversational pitch to a depth that was reminiscent of the way a violin will sound when the bow suddenly glides from the two upper strings on which it has so far been playing, to do a full stroke along the G-string, from which it continues to draw the deepest tones possible. On each occasion I was so much taken aback that I had to turn my head towards her, so strikingly aristocratic did it make her. I told her so.

"But you're wrong there," she answered.

And disclosing her private circumstances with perfect ease in the almost casual manner that has come to be known as a feature of patrician

ladies, she went on to tell me a thing or two about herself. First, that the title of countess was, or had been, hers only through her husband. She was a commoner by origin. *Sine* any *nobilitate* whatever.

She told me her maiden name. This she nevertheless did with an emphasis that anticipated respect. I ought obviously to have known the name.

"Have you never heard it?" she asked with undisguised harshness.

Now I caught on. Many items suddenly fitted together in my head.

She had been a dancer. She had appeared mainly abroad, the "world press" had written of her. She had had a thing or two happen to her before she met her late husband. It had been a love match.

"On his part."

"On my part!"

"You don't say so," I remarked, this time letting my own voice drop, aristocratically.

But she had the better of me. She now mentioned the name of one of the wealthiest young peers of the land. First she had been his wife, abroad. He had brought her home. And here it was she who had left him—that marriage having really been one of love on his part only—for the sake of her second husband, for whom she had abandoned a castle whose magnificence I could imagine, to come to this hell of stenches and flies.

"What was your father?"

"You will laugh. The same as yours. A mechanic. Also on an estate, but working in a distillery."

Strange to say, this did not, here and now, serve to make the conversation any easier between us. Nor did the other discovery that, she being an artist and I too of sorts, we belonged, in a manner of speaking, to the same guild, where even politeness prescribes a certain lack of convention.

We walked on, silently. Were we both intruders?

"I danced at the Opera too."

"Really?"

The twofold opportunity for accompliceship actually served to stress the distance between us. The rank of a count then still retained some of its glamour. Yet we both knew that this rank had in truth become more of a leper's brand. As we passed along the main street of Ürged, it would have been hard to strike a balance as to which of us was doing the other an honour in the eyes of the peasants and the people of the *puszta* who were assembling to go to church.

"I hear that many of the village people still bring His Excellency a thing or two."

"Those from the *puszta* too. They have even dug up a corner of the back yard for him, for potatoes."

"Are you on such good terms with the people?"

"With the football team!"

"Does the count go out to the village?"

"He would like to. It is only now he regrets that he did not do so before. What a loss it was!—There's the potato-field I was talking about."

It was a plot of some eight hundred square yards, properly earthed up, as it should be at the time of year.

## 4

I had good reasons for not looking upon the count's longing for the village as some sort of Rousseauan fancy. By that time everyone in the district knew of the kind of contact one of the count's cousins, who happened to have been his neighbour and was the erstwhile owner of the fifty-six thousand acre estate at Kányád, was maintaining with the common poeple. This count—of the same age as ours, whose distant figure I could now make out—had once been a cabinet minister, a party leader, and a politician of nation-wide fame, if for no other reason than because of the anecdote that was told about him. It was he who, on the occasion of an election speech from his balcony, had addressed the crowd gathered before his house—his sixty-room castle—as "Honoured peasants!"

This count had now moved out of the castle and lived with one of his former servants at the poorer end of Kányád. More precisely, he only slept there, for from morning till night he wandered about in the village. Not along the street, but from one house, one wine-cellar, and particularly one pub, to the next. It had become a kind of suddenly erupted folk-custom to invite the old count to have a glass of brandy or wine of a morning, accompanied by a bun, or a slice of ham eaten from the hand. They would get him to sit down to table for the time which he—according to the ancient rules of etiquette, or maybe of royal receptions—considered it meet to spend there. They would listen to his peculiar ideas, then look at each other over his head and have a good smile behind his back. I don't say this contact lacked human feeling. When the fumes of the home-distilled plum-brandy, the beer and spirits, and the great variety of peasant wines intermingled rhapsodically in His Excellency's

belly, landing him on the edge of the pavement, there was always someone to take hold of him, lift him up and steer him home, either arm in arm or on some occasions even on a handcart.

One glance at my host sufficed to tell me that his contact would not be of this kind.

He hastened forward to receive us. But some little time passed before we could shake hands or even come near each other. The castle now served as a holiday resort for some sort of musical association. From the first we had therefore headed not for the main gate but had approached the house from the back yard, that is, from the stables. Here, however, over a considerable area, there was even now, in summer, some sort of a puddle with bits of brick set a pace apart as stepping-stones. The young countess traversed them with choreographic grace, for she knew how to get the better of their inherent malevolence. I, on the other hand, for the very reason that I also wished to make my way swiftly, kept swaying. The count awaited me with a smile and arms out-stretched at the edge of the offensively stinking, brownish puddle, and he even came a brick span forward, to lead me ashore safely. This greatly helped us to get acquainted. We did not even introduce ourselves.

The count, who was seventy, bore in his appearance the almost standard marks of the aristocracy so completely, that it would be a waste of time to describe him. His figure was like a mason's scaffolding-board, topped by a clever horse-head, a description that does not pass for an insult either in his language, or in mine. He had the kind of animated eyes which are simultaneously curious and suspicious.

"Of course, even as strangers we know each other very well," said the count as he let me pass first into the kitchen, which opened straight from this area with its suspicious puddle.

## 5

How can the colouring and shades of interpretation of any writer of fiction come up to the thirst for detail and outspoken daring of gossip? Unprinted though it was, the story of the count's family was available in more copies in that county than my own which had been printed. All that I had learned from the young countess on the way was only a fraction of what the unpublished story had, in the course of tens of years, communicated to my mind about the three people who now came to face me in person.

This story, as is the case with all the great works both of the imagination and of logical reality, was extremely simple in structure. It was in its details that it became at some moments moving to the point of tears, at others laughably ridiculous.

In the single room into which he led me, the old count lived together with his wife and his former sweetheart, by favour of the sweetheart.

It is with a feeling of discomfort that I take the word "sweetheart" from the unwritten story. In the proximity of a count, even this fragrant word implies a kept woman, a profligate. Yet this woman, young compared to the rest, was neither a kept woman nor a profligate. On the contrary, she was a very serious person, and at that time it was she who was providing for the count and the count's whole family.

This woman, Hedda K., had been a simple little typist in the head office of the estate at the time when the Chief of Staff, left without a job, had decided to go in for farming instead of serving Horthy. The young girl knew German, she was, maybe, of German origin. This was how she came to work straight away for the count, who at the time was unable to tell the difference not only between wheat and rye, but also between a harrow and a drag, or a carriage and a cart.

Those who posses our secrets, possess our very selves. In the count's hands, farming was a success from the first moment. Its progress was so uneventfully smooth as to make the count himself believe after a while that it was he who was managing it—what a paltry business it was to manage an estate!—and that he himself was so well suited to leadership in any sphere. Everything was managed by the secretary.

She combined tact and energy—a rare union that cannot be praised too much. She really soon came to guess all the count's secret thoughts, which, by the way, were rather few in respect to farming. The count was thrifty, but he would have spent his last penny on the stud farm. Well, in the hands of the secretary, even the stud farm turned out to be an excellently paying proposition.

Thrift does not bar chivalrous expenditure. On the contrary. Many people are thrifty so that they can afford to be generous in the right place. After a year or two, the secretary had her own coach and horses and her own living quarters in the castle, with a secretary of her own. Love will never be so lavish with presents as when it believes it is giving, not presents, but what is due. Furniture, jewels, carpets, a small villa in Budapest—these were to be Hedda's New Year bonuses. She fully deserved them. And money of course, bank deposits, abroad too.

She could well have gone to live on her own when their world collapsed. Before they had also lived under one roof, though at a distance of almost a hundred yards from one another—under the roof of a Hungarian castle. No one was surprised that times had now forced them into one room. This lower courtyard room had also been obtained by Hedda, as a former employee.

It was with sincere respect that I bent over her hand when she now offered it, having quickly wiped off the water, but not the odour, of the disembowelling of chickens.

As a gesture in playing my part—and to some extent to spare her feelings—I had first imitated an obeisance to the princess, before greeting the secretary of course. But it was only now that I had a look at her. She was a woman with large, glowing eyes, but of diminutive stature, the kind of old women who never cease to shrink as they grow older, as though time were striving to knead them together, that they might take up as little space as possible in the earth.

The unprinted literature of the county had not treated the princess well. At best, they smiled over her. Not by any means because of her husband's affairs, or rather his one affair; but because of her religiousness.

It is quite fantastic, what intimate incidents of a person's private life local rural society is capable of discussing and making public, with greater thoroughness than if they were a congress of pragmatic historians. What was it that they were after—almost to the very marrow—in the case of the old count's wife? Her creed. The fact that the princess—it was, indeed, her far more snobbish environment that insisted on using the title—was *truly* religious. In the period in which she lived, it was mainly this that exposed her to public ridicule.

I had myself experienced this some years earlier at the home of a family in one of the neighbouring townships. They were so much "better" class as to almost belong to the good families. In the company which included young girls of about sixteen, conversation after dinner turned to the countess, or princess—let us join the snobs for the sake of avoiding confusion. The princess, then, had had many children, obeying the principles of the Church in this respect too. And now it was openly bruited in this company that as often as the count wished to exercise his so-called marital rights, he had to notify his wife of his intentions in the course of the forenoon, for on such days the princess went to special confession and Holy Communion. Since this involved attending mass, the announcement had to be made by 10 a. m. at the latest. The rest of the day she spent in prayer and (this was the expression used) in medium fasting. There had

in fact been a time when she endeavoured to persuade her husband to do the same. The young girls, blushing slightly, giggled at this. The princess was pictured as a model of the type figuring in the fashionable anecdotes about aristocrats that then flourished, as a sort of primadonna of aristocretinism, simply on account of her perfectly understandable and respectable—because, from the religious point of view, very logical—belief that if a new soul should perchance enter her in the course of the night, it ought to be received by a clean soul in her body.

Obviously the count himself could not have been religious in the fully Christian sense, at least not according to the interpretation of the Age of Cluny (or of St. Imre), although that is the *real* thing, involving aye or nay. This is how he must have entered on his double path. The double, or rather treble, path had in this instance, however, led to a very fortunate parallel. Each of the three parties found a sphere of activities, an explanation, and patience. The paths did not intersect.

I looked round with interest in the damp, yet now pleasantly cool room.

## 6

The village had suffered much during the fighting. There was a grave housing shortage. The castle, which had remained relatively undamaged, was subjected from the first to the siege of a thousand claimants, not only from Budapest, but also from the village. I had heard that the count's family had—thanks to the secretary's good offices—been quartered in the rooms of his former butler. But later they were removed to what had once been the outer servants' kitchen. This should be clearly differentiated from the inner servants' kitchen, and even more so from the one which supplied the dining room. In former times three kinds of breakfast, lunch, tea, and dinner were cooked every day; 1. for the count's family itself; 2. for the personnel who were directly attached to them and with whom they came into direct contact; 3. for the servants who did the rougher jobs, who never touched the cutlery or clothes of the count's family, but only handled such objects—brooms, coal shovels, axes, saws—as the family at best tried by way of curiosity to see what they were like, in a let-me-see kind of way. The gardeners, coachmen and yard hands had different fare again—since, receiving their wages in kind, they ate their own wives' cooking.

The kitchen in question was fairly spacious, and, if its window had not been so small and the view from it, though broad, not so dismal,

it would in those days have been among the more favourable solutions. How important good taste and stamina are, even in situations like this, was shown by the way the room was furnished. In one corner, two huge wardrobes had been set at right angles, their backs facing outward, to form a separate little room. What they used for a kitchen was actually the former huge range (built of mud, with about eight rings). It was so big that they could do the washing up on one end.

The cooking was in full progress. But it was still at the stage when every woman's hand finds a job to do.

The young countess who had come with me, also found one. We each drank a glass of cold water, rinsing our hands and moistening our faces, and already she was lifting the lids off the pots. I enjoyed seeing the nimble movements of her hands. What I particularly enjoyed was how natural I now considered her dexterity (her whole person), since I knew that she was not of aristocratic stock. I took the place which the count offered me by his side, on a couch of rare beauty, at the foot of the wardrobes turning us their backs.

"This is our dining-room." said the count brightly, without irony.

"I see."

"And that's the bedroom."

"I thought so," I answered, and glanced in from where I was sitting. There was a magnificent period couch there too, and beside it a *prie-dieu* with an elbow-rest, also a magnificent period piece, of a size that you see only on paintings of cardinals of the Baroque period, represented in their full vestments.

Someone was squatting on the *prie-dieu*, with head bent deep.

It was a young boy of about ten. He felt my glance, looked up, and then hastened to clamber to his feet.

It was not melancholy that had kept him there, but work. He was busy with a kitchen knife mending a water-gun, and doing it so intently that he had his tongue between his teeth.

"Let me see."

"My grandson," the count introduced him.

"Hello."

"He lives in Budapest, but we bring him down here of a summer."

"For the fresh air."

"And the food."

"Can you mend it?" asked the lively-eyed little lad, seeing that I was turning the small elderwood gun about in my hand, smiling at it now and then.

The smile concealed emotion. Even in my childhood, water-guns were no longer made everywhere. At Varsad, for instance, it was I who introduced them. But back home, we had a very special fashion in them —the hole through which the water spurted was drilled not in the middle, but in the upper part of the plug. This one was made in just that way.

I pushed aside a few carrots on the Louis-something-or-other diplomat table in front of us, took the gun apart, opened my penknife and started work, turning my face towards the count as often as manners demanded.

He too shoved aside some carrots, to rest his elbows on the table.

The fact that we were going to talk in a kitchen where lunch was being prepared, gave me a sense of advantage of the kind enjoyed by champions contending against their international rivals on home ground. The frying pans, saucepans, the mound of flour—were just like my mother's. For I had had a feeling that I was stepping on enemy soil, even though the enemy was now... However, might endures longer in the spirit than on earth.

For in my mind I had, of course, brought along a veritable questionnaire. But obviously they too, in extending this invitation, were seeking some kind of favour from me. Better to get it over with. I therefore immediately tried to steer the conversation in this direction. There is nothing more unpleasant than having to refuse your host's request after eating his dinner, your stomach replete with the food swallowed virtually as an advance. Nothing can more easily be put under obligation than the belly—our senses are the most grateful parts in us.

## 7

"How did it take place?"

"What?"

"The... switch-over."

The count smiled.

"Under an anaesthetic."

"When did you come out from in there? And how? Was it not a very painful business?"

I had been thinking of the coloured tableaux, illustrating the provincial scenes of the French Revolution. Burning castles, flame-lit scythes, the Carmagnole.

He understood what I meant.

There had been nothing of the kind here. The overture to the "switch-over" had here been the war, and during wars, from times immemorial, castles have always been occupied by military headquarters. As the fighting approached, the castle was requisitioned for the German Staff. At this, the count left even the village itself.

Precisely because he himself had been a staff officer. He did not want to talk with them about our situation.

He went over to Kányád, together with all his family, to his beforementioned cousin. There too, there were military headquarters, but he was not the host and it was not he who had to have contact with the strangers.

"As for Tudi, he made a magnificent job of that sort of thing."

Moreover, in Kányád they were also more secure against bombs.

"Years before, Tudi had a marvellous armour-plated cellar built for his art treasures."

Tudi or Tuddy (I could not quite catch the pronunciation and almost everyone pronounced it differently—I imagine it must have been the English name Teddy), was identical with the former M. P. for Kányád and the present wanderer through its streets. To be quite certain, I asked if this was so.

"Yes, it is he."

"Who addressed his electors 'Honoured peasants'?"

The count failed to sense how funny that sounded. This was the first time he had heard of it.

"Was that a *gaffe?*"

"By no means. After all, they would presumably have voted for him even if he had addressed them as 'Filthy swine'!"

"Well then? Was it impolite?"

The conversation had so far floundered along in three languages. We had begun in Hungarian, but on coming to the more complicated sentences he switched over to German.

When he mentioned the German army, then suddenly—it would be simple to find out the inner inspiration that prompted him—he changed over to French. But even in French he was unable to appreciate the ludicrousness of saying "Honoured peasants." "This," I thought, "is the first sign of class differentiation—one up for me!"

"Tudi was always a lucky fellow."

Never allude to famous people by their Christian names. I remember when we were in Paris and a fledgling author from home came to join us. He spoke of the eminent Móricz, Karinthy and Tóth as "Zsiga,

Frici and Pádi," the familiar versions of their Christian names. We finished him off by letting him have a volley of Hungarian pet names—Jani, Pali, Karcsi, and even Vili, for Racine, Verlaine, Baudelaire and Shakespeare. It was like swallowing a dumpling for me to have to use the nickname of a statesman, whom the *puszta* labourers of my childhood and the labourers of the Budapest press had only referred to by the title that befitted his rank. But finally I did swallow—and I used it.

"How did Tudi emerge from his castle?"

The count gave a chuckle, in a refined sort of way, but with the naughtiness that spoiled old men have when they laugh.

"Oh, that was angelic!"

Tudi had had an apartment of his own in the armoured cellar. In former times his contacts with the world, with the rest of mankind, had taken place as follows. He would ring for his butler, who would go in to him and receive Tudi's wishes respecting mankind. If, by some miracle, the butler (or the secretary, the chief huntsman or the steward) did not appear in Tudi's room, he finally peered out at the door. If he did not discover anyone there, he stepped right out and went along the hall or the passage until he came across a butler, secretary, or some other representative of mankind. He would then communicate his wishes and possibly his displeasure (in a very calm fashion), with no particular regard as to whom—which specimen of mankind—he was addressing. They were all the same to him.

"A real democrat," I rejoined, in tribute to the count's rather witty story.

"Exactly."

When the gunfire and later the rattle of machine guns had ceased, Tudi stepped through the door of the shelter with the clockwork action of a nervous system trained for seventy years.

At the entrance to the cellar he found no footman. At the flight of steps leading up to the castle there was an armed guard. The street was deserted because shots were still being fired in the distance. Finally, he nevertheless met a member of the populace. He communicated his wishes. He wished to drink, and then to shave. Both his wishes were fulfilled.

"Ever since, as soon as he feels a need of anything, he goes out in the street. Yes, he even goes inside the houses; he doesn't look down on them, he never looked down on people."

"I've heard about that, but..."

The great world of commoners at first waited till Tudi told them what he wanted. He spoke in a distinguished tone of voice, but briefly.

He thanked them for everything. Again, briefly but courteously, as he had once been wont to thank his butler for every service. It was reassuring to hear him.

The first phase of the land reform had then taken place. The peasants reaped their lucerne and their wheat from Tudi's land. They had been given elaborately embellished documents to say that the land was theirs. But, of course, these documents did not carry the signature of the previous owner—Tudi's signature. The drink placed before Tudi was a kind of toast to set the seal on a transaction. That he drank it, was taken as a sign of mute and peaceful assent.

Later, he did not even have to ask. The people asked instead. When he went in anywhere, the host himself would hasten to inquire: "A plate of soup, Your Excellency?" Tudi would nod. A tot of brandy? Another? Another? It was common knowledge that with the years he developed a liking for spirits, including the peasants' home-distilled brand. His palate was also "democratized."

Even when he drank so much that on trying to leave he had to sit down again to gather a bit of strength, he always thanked his host in the same way.

And the count—with a perfection that was an artistic experience to behold—reproduced one of these "Thankyou"-s of Tudi's, complete with his majestic nod.

And as though he had also witnessed his own performance, he laughed so heartily that the tears came into his eyes.

Whether it was the perfection of his rendering or something else, but it sent an icy thunderbolt down my spine.

"They say," continued the count, laughing, "that last week the party secretary—Szmodics—himself stopped him in the street. 'Come and have a drink, Your Excellency!' He took him in to the coop pub. There he had him explain the political conditions in Croatia at the time when Tudi nearly became the *Bán* (viceroy) of that country."

"He has become a popular man at last."

The count turned serious.

"Tudi was always popular. I'm sure there was no aristocrat in the district who had so many contacts with the people as he."

"In his own way."

"How else could he have done it? He strictly kept to the rule of walking through the village before each election, to shake hands with the voters standing in their doorways."

"Was it every four or every five years that there were elections?"

"First five, then four. But he was always the M. P. from here, over at least ten terms. Not even the bishop went about the village as often as he did."

"And is that the only reason why the honoured peasants now keep him? Is it not rather a piece of the farmer's prudence, saying you never can tell what the weather'll bring? Or as penitence for having cut down his ornamental park? Or by way of a burial superstition of some kind? They still put coins on the eyelids of the dead here, don't they?"

"How should I know?" exclaimed the count gaily. "Why do they keep me?"

## 8

"No one keeps Dad! Dad gets parcels from London."

"I get parcels from the other end of the village, with potatoes and a taster of the pig-killing. It's you who organize their providing for me," said the count, pointing his finger at the secretary.

Kitchen air rejuvenates women. When I had come in, I thought the secretary was about fifty and, truth to tell, rather faded. Now she had not only blushed, but also become fuller. She had been transformed into a vivacious Tyrolese blonde of rubbery resilience.

"Not that that needs any organizing," said the secretary with an emphasis that made you look round to see whether she had not put her hands to her waist.

I finished repairing the elderwood gun and handed it over to the bright-eyed little boy. He had inherited his grandmother's glowing look. He had stood by my side all the time watching the movements of my hands, like a clever dog that looks at someone carving slices off a piece of bacon. He twined his arm round my waist.

By the curious play of events, it was the war that had ultimately smoothed the great historical switch-over for the whole of the Central European aristocracy. Through the jolt it had given the entire country.

At dawn one day, the old count, in the passage of his shelter at the castle of Kányád, had noted that the boots overhead were thudding differently from the way they had sounded the day before. This, his experienced soldier's ear told him, was another army. It is a fact that Russian soldiers can be told from German by the way they march.

In the castles—including that at Ürged—part of the Soviet high command now struck up quarters. Many months went by before they left and handed the castle over to the local authorities of the newly organized

State. This was how, throughout the country a situation was avoided where Hungarian feudalism might for so much as a moment have come face to face with what it had once dreaded so terribly—the Undisciplined People.

"We came back here with a single suit of clothes. Without a bite of bread."

"Luckily for you," I rejoined, shouting because some hot fat had begun to crackle like the devil.

9

The saucepans were definitely taking my side. I asked for permission to smoke, and having obtained it, offered my birch-root cigarette case, which I had filled with better quality cigarettes for the occasion, not only to the old count but also to the ladies. Cigarettes at that time still served as currency. The princess took one too. But only the younger (or rejuvenated) ladies lit up. They were unable to hold the cigarettes in their wet, greasy fingers, so I gave them a light straight to their mouths and they smoked them to the end, without removing them, their heads turned sideways to keep the smoke out of their eyes. For in the meanwhile they got on with their jobs.

The young countess was scraping long, very tender stalks of celery, from which a delightful scent arose. A small basket of green peas had been put in the princess' lap to shell; they too emitted a delicious odour. From time to time a lifted lid or two would give off new pleasant whiffs. The secretary struck an egg into a small mound of flour and began kneading, making the table vibrate slightly. Pages might be written about the smell of the raw and half-cooked foods, lulling both the reader and myself into the belief that a survey of this sort represents art. There was to be chicken stew with paprika, but so far only the manure stench of the entrails reached my nostrils.

The odours were now moving about the count and his family ever more naturally, as were the count and his family among the odours.

Through the open windows—for by now it was about eleven—came the unbridled influx of the two summer gifts of the Hungarian provinces: the rivers of flies and the Sahara-like fury of the sun. I have seen quantities of flies gathered together, but not even I have seen so many. Inside, they formed veritable maelstroms.

Even though I had invented a method of defence against them, this does not mean that the beasts did not fray my nerves. The authors of foreign lands have given us detailed and vivid impressions of the curse their

countries endure from mosquitoes, locusts, jackals or tigers. The reign of terror exercised by the flies is now coming to an end, without our indigenous literature ever having given even an approximate idea of the suffering they used to inflict each summer on the inhabitants of much of the country. It sufficed to catch sight of them flying towards me, for me to feel the electric shock of disgust running through me. Every moment they tried to settle on me, and here too my hands were always on the move to drive them off.

Not so the count's.

The count's right hand lay motionless on the corner of the table, from where he had pushed away the ingredients of the soup. The flies grazed on it in thick herds, like sheep, though obviously there was not much for them to find there. They examined his skin with short-sighted thoroughness, palpating each tiny grey hair.

They investigated his face in similar fashion. It was as though they were walking on a face and on hands of marble. Even there, they tormented me. When the count very occasionally drew up his eyebrows to drive them off, it had little more effect than if a statue of stone had made the diminutive movement, so impatiently had I awaited it. Sometimes he nevertheless touched his forehead or his nose—for the purpose of flicking away with his delicately separated and extended middle finger a bead of perspiration that would have started to roll down had he not caught it in time.

The scorching heat of Timbuctoo was pouring in, and as its fellow there radiated the scalding warmth of the huge range, which, though the cooking was now for fewer people, had nevertheless to be heated to the full.

"Couldn't we take a turn in the park?"

The count shook his head.

"Go along!" said the secretary with unmotivated vehemence.

"Let's go," said I, standing up.

"Let's go," chimed in the little boy eagerly. He had already drawn his gun full of water from one of the buckets, but indoors he could let off only small squirts.

"We had better stay," said the count, in the tone of one who is patiently repeating his own point in an argument of long standing.

"There is no reason why you shouldn't go out," said the young countess too.

But we did not go out. I glanced at the princess. And that for the very reason that she did not once lift her eyes from her pea-shelling. The flies were crawling all over her face too, like the bees over the beekeeper's face when they are swarming. Save that the beekeeper wears a wire at such times. But she?

Our paternal grandmother—on the Catholic side—had a hardly noticeable nod, not only when she was sitting alone, but sometimes when walking, even when hoeing, or even in company. Voicelessly she was repeating her Rosary to herself, and she made these little nods on coming to the name of Jesus. Was the princess also praying? Or was it only the peas, passing between her fingers in a manner so similar to the beads of a Rosary, that gave me the idea? The princess swayed, her eyes steadily closed. I started to calculate whether she was dropping her head at the intervals in which a Jesus occurs in the Hail Mary.

The count noticed what I was watching and smiled at me as an accomplice.

"Is she praying?" I asked in a whisper.

"You may say it aloud."

And he pointed to his own ear, then gave an elegant wave of the hand.

We now both of us looked at the princess. We observed her, as you would an object.

"It's Sunday," said the count. Then, bending over my watch: "Now they've reached the Elevation of the Host."

And he chuckled softly.

There was no need to explain that the princess did not go to church because her legs were too weak to carry her. She contrived, nevertheless, to overcome the frailty of her body in this way.

We were silent for a while.

Suddenly the count, as though by perfectly functioning telepathy, began talking of my paternal grandparents. That head shepherd, he had known him himself. He had been here in the count's childhood, before the tenants came, when the estate was still managed by his family. As a young cavalry officer, the count had spent days on end, racing about on horseback—not, of course, over the crop lands, but the pastures. Among the herdsmen, among the shepherds. He had even had them play host to him. They had drunk water out of their hats!

And to my amazement he painted a fairly true picture of my grandfather. With his sheepskin cloak, donkey and "bishop's staff." A round face with slanting eyes.

My own eyes were still fixed on the princess.

"I hear Her Highness faced events with considerable anxiety."

"Yes. So she did. She was afraid of the Hungarians."

"Of the peasants."

"Of the Hungarians! Of the whole nation. Perhaps a little bit even of me!"

"How come? Why?"

I asked him twice what the reason had been, but the count went on as though he had not heard me. He kept reverting to the old generation, and more and more frequently to my own "honourable" grandfather, who, he said "deserved to be even better honoured." The criterion and measure of all civilizations had been the respect paid to the memory of the forebears. Why had China become so great? Because religion, there, was itself nothing but respect for the ancestors.

"China was great all right, but she declined for all that."

"When she turned away from the glorification and even the deification of the fathers. Which is the foundation of all enduring and healthy systems."

"Including that of the aristocracy."

He was taken aback by the unexpected blow. Then he reddened. It was anger and a repressed wave of temper that sent the blood coursing through the prominent capillaries of the wizened face.

"It was not my ancestors that I had in mind at all. It was yours. Whom in your book you accused of a breach of contract."

"Of what? I?!"

"You wrote that your grandfather, whenever he felt like it, had said the sheep were ill and slaughtered them for his own profit."

"I wrote that there were cases like that. That he had sent them to other people's wedding feasts. But why was the princess so concerned about what would happen?" I asked, to drive the flock of words back to their earlier pasture. Involuntarily I cast a glance at the princess, who sat nodding with her eyes closed.

The count also glanced at his wife.

"Because she really only knew the Hungarians from descriptions. From the books of prejudiced foreign authors and the correspondence of her own family. Especially that of her grandfather. He really did have many misunderstandings with the Hungarians... But as far as your grandfather is concerned, it was not I who first boggled at that part about him. Your grandfather's grazing contract was with the tenant at Vámpuszta and... with that what-d'ye-call-him. Now this passage in your excellent work... it was mainly him that it bothered, the tenant at Vámpuszta. In fact he wanted to write about it in the paper of the Farmer's Association. He had really known that head-shepherd very well, whom you called by the letter 'I.' Not a single sheep ever disappeared under his care."

"And has Her Highness now made her peace with the Hungarians?"

The bright-eyed young boy had again filled his gun from the bucket, and, after his grandfather and aunt, now aimed it at his grandmother. Despite his caution, the shot turned out to be too powerful. The jet of water showered on the princess.

"She's very much at peace with them now. She's enchanted by their chivalry."

It was no small matter that I now learned.

The princess had formed her ideas of the intractable Hungarians and of their hatred for the benevolent dynasty, from the biographies, memoires and correspondence of Metternich, the erstwhile Chancellor of Austria. From them she had learned of the implacable lust for revenge which seized these blood-thirsty Huns at the very mention of the great Chancellor's name.

The princess had been a Princess Metternich, a direct descendant of Prince Clemens Metternich. She was his sole living grand-child.

But the count was only interested in the other matter:

"I also hold that the disappearance of one or two sheep is no disgrace. But the tenant at Vámpuszta"—at this point the count paused at last to recall and mention the tenant's name, but finally did not mention it after all—"considered it a grave accusation to say that someone had had a house built and wayside crosses erected, of the money he got for the sheep that had disappeared."

"Was Metternich's correspondence relating to Hungary ever published?"

"I don't know... But to return to respect for one's ancestors and the stainlessness of your grandfather's character..."

"Allow me to say that my transcendental radar-set is warning me of the embarrassment we're causing Chancellor Metternich over yonder, by his having to emerge from the past in such close contact, almost hand in hand, with a big-hatted shepherd."

"And what if it is your grandfather whose feelings are embarrassed?" he chuckled.

"Have others also had a chance to read the observations in those letters?"

"I've no idea... Has grandpa Metternich's correspondence been published in book form?" bellowed the count towards the princess.

She cast a scorching look, not only at her husband, but also at me. But behind the fire, there was also alarm in her glance. From this I concluded that the reason why the princess did not answer was not her deafness.

I reassured her that the Hungarian people, at least those who tilled

the soil roundabout here, were not so intransigent towards the great Chancellor as he had dreamt in his nightmares.

And for the first time the unduly familiar devil of a servant's impudence spoke from me when I said, as an excuse, but certainly *post festa:*

"Grandpa exaggerated things."

The scent of boiling broth is not homogeneous, not like that of a bouquet made up only of roses, but rather like that of a bunch of roses, carnations, lilies and ten more kinds of flower emitting their perfumes together. As time went on, however, the various good smells—those of the broth, of the onions, carrots, and potatoes swirling in it—nevertheless began to adjust themselves to a single whole, which finally matured into the characteristic scent of a Sunday chicken broth, such as a man's nostrils recognize from his plate. I began to await the spread of the savour of cuts of meat, turned in crumbs and then placed into hot lard, the whiff of fried chicken, so uniquely dear to the Hungarian palate. And then the fine, rustic odour of freshly washed and quartered lettuces.

The time was approaching when they would gradually lay the only table in the kitchen, the solid structure which had in its period been built to last for centuries. It was perhaps on this table that the Pact of Tilsit had been signed, where the parsley was now being minced amid the charges of the flies, marching and wheeling in dark battle order.

"We have no wine!" said the secretary in a challenging tone.

"How long will it be before we eat?"

"A good half hour I should say."

"And what about the pie?" intervened the countess.

"Ah, of course. Are you very hungry?"

It occurred to me in a flash that I had an uncle of the shepherd genealogy at Ürgöd. I got up. He would let me have some—a pint or so, at any rate. And it gave me an excuse for getting out of this bread-baking oven for a while.

The bright little boy, having drawn his gun full to suffocation with water, naturally joined me at once. But the old count also rummaged for his head-gear.

"It'll be better if Daddy doesn't go out today," said the young countess.

"Let him go. Why shouldn't he? He can go out whenever he wants," said the secretary.

"But not in the direction of the park."

We would have been crazy to undertake such a big detour. I knew the way.

The fidelity of objects can inspire as many thoughts as that of people. The count put on his head a scarcely used straw hat, but of the 1908-1910 fashion—a so-called Girardi. Obviously this was what had been left to him. But how had it survived, floating across the bloody surges of two world wars?

I knew the direction to take, though I had never been in the park. It had been closed when I was a child. We set out from the side of the castle —going nowhere near the columned entrance hall—and cut across towards the gate facing the village.

I had not been in the park, but when we were children we had so often gazed at it—at the skyward thrusting ornamental firs from distant hillocks, at the ornamental shrubs from close by, climbing up on the stone ledge of the railings—that this was my imaginary semblance of the Garden of Eden. I had written a poem about it.

"There were even ornamental peacocks here," I told the count. Their screeching was still in my ears.

"Really? I never went that way."

He had never had a look round his own park.

I know something about trees. From the acacias, as thick as millstones, and the huge yews with reddened barks it was easy to determine when this small model arboretum had been established—in about 1780. When Rousseau's principles for bringing order into society were accompanied on their long journey by his principles for bringing order into nature. When Ligné had, on seeing her gardens, called Hungary the land of the future. My eye was caught by a steeple-high cork fir. I have only seen one other like it, at the College of Csurgó, which was so perfectly developed that the students—even the members of the People's College—used it for a sparring dummy. I was just about to call my companions' attention to it, lest it be cut down, when a whistle sounded behind us to one side.

Two men and a dog were coming towards us from the entrance to the castle. The former revealed anger even in the way they stepped out, the latter wagged his tail in curiosity and friendship.

"There's no through passage here! Go back!"

The voice was familiar.

"Yes sir."

"Didn't you see the notice?"

"We're sorry."

"Open your eyes next time."

"I kiss your hand."

It was I who replied, as you may have surmised. To my not inconsiderable amazement, the person I was talking to was "Gügü" Melles,

who had ten years previously—on what qualifications, remains a mystery—been the special lighting-effects expert of the National Musical Theatre. A year after the present encounter, he was the special anti-communist expert of a Western broadcasting station. Now, like so many members of the theatre-world at that time, he was wearing a police officer's uniform, with no fewer straps than a Middle-Eastern general.

"Let it not happen again!"

"No, I kiss your hands."

It was no use, he did not remember (his own former way of greeting people).

"Do you know them?" I asked the count as we made our way back.

The count had a sense of humour.

"Only the dog."

But who, in times like these, can know more than a ten-year-old boy? I was given such a surfeit of facts that I immediately muddled them up.

The castle was—and has remained so until quite recently—either the work home of the Comic Opera and Dance Tune Composers, or the holiday resort of one of the comic operas, so that all day long the piano sounded within. On the frontage, a long noticeboard placed over the crest immortalized an eminent composer of popular music by the Christian name of Albert, whose identity may, I am sure, be established, even though I have forgotten it. On several occassions, in order to clarify the new problems of their profession, they organized populous debating congresses here, of the kind that lasts several days. "Here, at Ürgöd of all places, at the back of beyond?" the uninformed reader may ask. "Where there is no railway, nor even a tolerably paved road?" For that very reason! Even then, the places in Hungary where you could find plenty to eat were those which had the fewest roads. Roads are the sap-sucking roots of hungry towns. A very experienced eye indeed had selected this castle. It was, in fact, a sort of feeding station. The composers themselves had probably for the most part regained their suitable weights. The castle and the closed park now lodged mostly their relatives in the ascending line, as we were able to see for ourselves while we strolled back.

"But now there is to be another congress. The notice is out," said the young boy happily.

That was obviously why we were forbidden to cross the park.

"You can't do that at other times either," remarked the count.

"Could people cross it in your day?"

"I don't know. I believe not."

"Well then."

# BARTÓK AND ENGLAND

by

GERALD ABRAHAM

We in England have reason to be proud of the fact that the second performance of Béla Bartók's earliest surviving orchestral work, the 'Kossuth' Symphony, was given in this country only a month after its first performance in Hungary. This was at Manchester on February 18, 1904. With it began a long and friendly association; the English public has accepted Bartók's music more willingly than most contemporary music from the Continent and long acknowledged his undisputed place in the very front rank of twentieth-century masters; on his side, although (as I shall show) his attitude to England and the English was by no means uncritical, he seems to have regarded us generally with tolerance and even warmth.

Bartók was interested in the study of languages, not only for their utility, but for their own sake. As he told his American friend Mrs. Creel, he was particularly fascinated by 'the exotic languages'. But he was a real master of the more familiar ones, and he both spoke and wrote very good English. At what age he began to study English I do not know, but in 1902, when he was twenty-one, he told his mother that 'the English lessons are becoming interesting: we are now beginning to go through the history of English literature'[1]. And his attention was soon drawn to other English products besides books; on January 17, 1903, he writes:

> Dohnányi has recommended a remedy for tiredness: Elliman's Embrocation. This remedy is also very good for all sorts of muscular pains (alleged!), such as: various forms of rheumatism, neck pains, etc. Obtainable of any chemist for 90 kreuzers. English and Hungarian instructions for use enclosed. These begin: Instructions for use of

1 *Béla Bartók: Ausgewählte Briefe.* Collected and edited by János Demény (Corvina, Budapest, 1960). Letter no. 2. Unless otherwise stated, all letters and excerpts from letters in this article are translated by me from this collection.

Elliman's (Royal) Embrocation for muscular complaints of cattle, sheep, horses, donkeys and birds! That made me stop and think! to which group are musicians supposed to belong?

Very soon Bartók was to have an opportunity of putting his knowledge of English to practical use. In June 1903 he was introduced to Hans Richter, then conductor of the Hallé Orchestra at Manchester, who was on a visit to Hungary, and played him the 'Kossuth' Symphony on the piano; according to a contemporary account in the 'Pressbourger Zeitung' (January 23, 1904), Richter was 'so struck by the young pianist's warmth of expression and so surprised by the youthful composer that he immediately put Bartók's truly national symphonic poem in the program of his celebrated concerts at Manchester'. (It should be remembered that Richter himself was Hungarian by birth, his father having been cathedral Kapellmeister at Győr where he was born.) In August Richter wrote that the performance had been arranged for February 18, invited the composer to stay as his guest at his house near Manchester, and promised that the travel expenses should be met although he was unable to offer any fee. Bartók would appear not only as composer but as pianist, playing Liszt's Spanish Rhapsody (in Busoni's arrangement for piano and orchestra) and Volkmann's 'Variations on a Theme by Händel'—both chosen by Richter and not particularly approved of by Bartók himself. Bartók's first letter from England, to his mother (February 12, 1904), is so entertaining that it deserves translation in full:

Address: England
*The Firs*
*Bowdon*
*Cheshire*
B. B.
with the lines of
Dr. Hans Richter[1]

Dear Mamma,

Now that I've safely arrived at Bowdon I should like to tell you something about my journey, etc. The Richters received me kindly. I have a room on the second floor. Anyhow I'm not in Manchester. Bowdon is 20 minutes away. In the afternoon the weather was very bad:

[1] In English in the original.

rain, storm, I couldn't see much of either Manchester or Bowdon. Richter's house seems a very pleasant place. Cheerful fires burn in the open fireplaces (English conservatism).

That reminds me of the awful state of the English railway-carriages. The smallest Hungarian local railway has better carriages than the trains here. Neither heating (instead of which you get a stone hot-water bottle) nor head- or arm-rests, narrow luggage-racks. There are no ashtrays, so the floor of the carriage looks like a pigsty. It surprises me that they bother about lighting and that even—bless my soul—separate brakes are fitted. Some trains have restaurant cars; but naturally one can only go to them and leave them at stations.

I am surprised to find that living here is not so dear. In London the fare for a cab is 2s/2d (= 1.40 Kr) as against 1.20 in Vienna. The porters are content with 30 kreuzers (3d) (d = penny). I've very quickly got used to English money and English reckoning; the big, well-worn copper coins (1 penny) are most peculiar.

Between London and Manchester there are only first and third class. (The comfort is equally 'excellent' in both.) For the latter I paid 16 shillings (10 gulden); the midday meal (or, rather, 'lunch') cost 2s/2d, Hungarian Apollinaris 8d, tip 3d.

I was very amused by the notices in the Dutch carriages: 'verboden te rooken', etc. It's been quite all right about the French cognac, which remains still untouched. The sea-crossing pleased me very much: a pity that, owing to the 'rőf wind'[1], I couldn't stay on deck. So I let myself be rocked only below deck; then I sat down to tea (8d); after that I walked about again: I hadn't the least wish to go to sleep. However I had to (about 1.30 West European time); my travelling companions had long been asleep. About 2.30 I woke up: the ship was rolling quite a bit and the waves banged hard on the cabin wall. A pity that I was travelling alone. (But I don't think it would have done for you, because you like to go to sleep early.)

K(iss).
B.

According to the anonymous critic of the 'Manchester Guardian' (February 19), "Kossuth" was well played and "received with a fair amount of applause" but it is clear that it was by no means to his taste or that of the audience:

[1] Phonetically spelled English: 'rough wind'.

In the Symphonic Poem "Kossuth," which was the principal unfamiliar work played at yesterday's concert, Mr. Béla Bartók declares himself as an uncompromising disciple of the later Strauss, as a musician. His Hungarian patriotism appears in his choice of a subject, but not at all in his musical procedure. Of the national Hungarian melodies which have inspired so many eminent composers—in particular Schubert, Liszt, and Brahms—he shows no consciousness whatever in the course of his elaborate and ambitious orchestral poem. In fact the only previously existing theme to which reference is made is the Austrian national anthem... As to the manner in which that is used we shall have something to say in the sequel. The suggestions of Strauss, and in particular of Strauss's "Heldenleben," are too various and too strong to be accidental. Even the constitution of the orchestra, with eight horns, two harps, and one or more additional tubas, is Straussian. In the preliminary characterisation of the hero the procedure is exactly the same as in "Heldenleben" though there is no trace of resemblance in the thematic material. Passing to the dialogue between Kossuth and his wife, we are reminded of the "Hero's Companion," whose voice takes the form of a recurrent violin solo in the Strauss composition. Then comes the battle, quite as ugly as Strauss's, and open to one definite charge of a kind that cannot be brought against Strauss—the charge, namely, that the travesty of the Austrian Hymn is ferocious and hideous. There is nothing in precise correspondence with the section called by Strauss "The Hero's Works of Peace," Mr. Bartók's composition ending with the patriotic lamentations of a surviving remnant. It is, however, clear that the young Hungarian composer has been very strongly influenced by Strauss both in the fundamental conception of his Symphonic Poem and in his manner of putting it together. There is a slight hint even of Strauss's peculiar vein of musical invention in the dialogue between Kossuth and his wife, but for the rest the detail of the invention seems to be original enough... The mere fact that a young composer should attempt to follow in the footsteps of so tremendous a "Jack the Giant-Killer" as Strauss would seem to betray the consciousness of great powers, and the degree of facility in handling great orchestral masses exhibited by Mr. Bartók would be remarkable in anyone, and is doubly surprising in so young an artist. His themes, too, have life in them, and in certain cases awaken a hope that in course of time, when he shall have enough of the Straussian goose-chase, he may do excellent work...

As a pianist Mr. Bartók displayed powers of a less exceptional kind, but he was more satisfactory on the whole... The solo part (of the Liszt Rhapsody) Mr. Bartók played with technical power fully equal to all its demands, and his rendering did not lack geniality and charm. He afterwards gave two pieces without accompaniment—a very peculiar set of modern Variations, by Volkmann, on the theme of Händel's harpsichord piece "The Harmonious Blacksmith" that scarcely seemed to justify its existence, and secondly, in answer to an encore, a Scherzo of his own, showing some of the same tendency to harmonic extravagance as his orchestral piece, but piquant in rhythm and stamped with genuine if somewhat eccentric talent.

Two days later (February 20) Bartók played again in Manchester, in a concert given in the Midland Hall of the Midland Hotel. According to the "Guardian" critic (February 22),

The Chopin rendering had considerable distinction, though one rather considerable lapse of memory occurred in the course of it, and Schumann's "Aufschwung" from the early Fantasiestücke was artistically played... Mr. Bartók played (the Liszt Étude in E flat)

very effectively on the whole though here, again, there occurred a lapse of memory which compelled the pianist to fall back on improvising for a few bars. His own Fantaisie[1] was a piece in a meditative vein, original in harmony and colouring and decidedly attractive.

Bartók himself afterwards regretted that he had mislaid "the critiques from Manchester": "A pity! There were a few good and interesting remarks in them."[2] It is a pity also that he could not have foreseen that a later music-critic of the "Guardian," Mr. Colin Mason, was to become one of his most penetrating admirers and one of the leading non-Hungarian authorities on his music.[3]

Bartók disliked not only English railway-carriages but English etiquette and English millionaires (dislikes shared, of course, by many Englishmen). Perhaps he particularly disliked Austrians and others who aped English manners. Staying with the Vecseys at Keresztúr, at the very beginning of his folksong collecting in the summer of 1906, he had an Austrian countess as his fellow-guest:

> The Countess is as cold as Franz-Joseph-Land at Christmas: when we see and hear her, the blood freezes in our veins. English etiquette rages at lunch. But I like dissonances, so I appear in the middle of all this frightful order—in summer shirt, without collar and cuffs, in shabby shoes... Woe to anyone at a meal who makes more noise with his food than a fly buzzing! For that sort of thing isn't done in England;[4]

Again in July 1908 at Argentières on the French-Swiss border he rejoices that, in contrast with Lucerne and Zürich, there are

> neither a host of Grand Hotels nor hordes of lazy, idle, good-for-nothing English nor a network of cogwheel railways going everywhere; here (time is money![5]) the poor thirsting mortal gets unspoiled nature. Not of course in dusty Chamonix which Baedaekaer (sic) distinguishes with 38 stars, but in quiet, peaceful dear little Argentières where—"because it isn't the proper thing"—thank God the swarm of English millionaires doesn't come. Really, that's how it is![6]

After the Manchester visit of 1904, Bartók spent six days in London on his way home and the piano firm of Broadwood promised him—"on Dohnányi's intervention"—six appearances the following year, two of them

1 This, like the Scherzo he had played two days before, is one of the "Four Piano-Pieces" (without opus-number) of 1903.

2 Letter no. 19.

3 I am indebted to Mr. Mason's colleague, Mr. Gerald Lerner, for drawing my attention to the article on Bartók's second appearance in Manchester which has been generally overlooked.

4 Letter no. 37.

5 This phrase is in English in the original.

6 Letter no. 47.

in London, and also an evening recital.[1] Nothing seems to have come of this, however, and his next visit to London was apparently not made until 1922. He appeared first at the Hungarian Ambassador's, where a private recital was arranged for him by the Arányi sisters. (He had composed a violin sonata for Jelly the year before and was now writing a second for her.) He then went immediately to Wales to play for the Aberystwyth department of the University of Wales, whence he wrote to his mother and aunt:

*Aberystwyth*, March 16, 1922

Dear Mama and Aunt Irma!

Here I am on the west coast of England, on the seacoast of Wales. The two huge windows of my room overlook the ocean—the waves roar below and the sunshine is magnificent. This Aberystwyth is a little university town of 10,000 inhabitants; I have a concert here this evening. Yesterday[2] in London I had a "private concert" arranged by the Arányis at the Hungarian "Ambassador's" (Consul's?). Although it was not public, there was a notice next day in "The Times"—very favourable. But before that there had been announcements of my visit: in the "Daily Telegraph" and in the "Daily Mail", also in two musical papers. I have been awaited with great interest and received with much cordiality. My public concert in London is to be on March 24, when the financial risk will be the agent's. The day before yesterday's private concert brought in about 30 pounds, then I shall play twice more in family circles (10 pounds each time), and here at Aberystwyth I get 15 pounds (of which 10 will be pure profit). Considering that my journey here and back will not cost more than 15 pounds and that I am living here as the guest of a very friendly couple (up to now I have spent no money at all), and further considering that in Paris I shall get all in all 1,500 francs, it seems to me that I shall bring quite a lot of money back home. . . I go to Paris on Apr. 3. And now I must hurry off to a rehearsal (as I am also playing a Beethoven trio here).

If we assume that "here" means London, not Aberystwyth, the "friendly couple" were Mr. and Mrs. (now Sir Robert and Lady) Mayer, famous for the Children's Concerts they were just beginning to organize in England at that time. Under her maiden name, Dorothy Moulton, Lady Mayer was a well-known singer and an outstanding champion of contemporary music; she gave the first performances in London and (I believe) in Budapest of Schönberg's Second String Quartet with the Hungarian (Waldbauer)

[1] Letter no. 19.

[2] Actually the day before: March 14.

String Quartet, and it was through Waldbauer that she became personally acquainted with Bartók. He stayed with the Mayers at their house, 2, Cumberland Terrace.

Bartók already had a number of influential admirers among the London critics, e. g. Edwin Evans, Cecil Gray, and the French musicologist, M. D. Calvocoressi who had first met him in Paris in 1913 and had now settled in England. (The first Paris performance of the First Quartet was given by Waldbauer and his colleagues as an illustration to one of Calvocoressi's lectures at the École des Hautes Études Sociales.) Nevertheless, being a very modest man, he was surprised to find himself such a celebrity. "It is a great sensation," he told his mother (March 20),

> that the papers wrote so fully about my private concert (the one of March 14). The "Times" has written about it again; I enclose this; try and take it to A(lbrecht); perhaps someone can translate it for you. It's a great thing that the papers treat my visit as an extraordinary event. I really hadn't hoped for that. I have been introduced to a fearful lot of people and my head is absolutely swimming. Yesterday evening I was in unusually "eminent" company (to wit, purely musicians and critics) at the house of a wealthy singer. I also played. Today I lunched with some French. I had to speak alternately French and English (sometimes German); I blunder along as best I can, but this continual change of language makes me quite dizzy... Yesterday I was interviewed for the "Pall Mall Gazette" (an evening paper); tomorrow I am to be photographed for the newspapers.

The "wealthy singer" was, of course, Dorothy Moulton, who sang some of his folk-song arrangements to his accompaniment. He also played some Händel, his own Rumanian Dances, the Piano Suite, and the Improvisations, Op. 20.[1] On a similar, later occasion, Lady Mayer tells me, she

> gave a party for him at which he played some Beethoven and some of his own music, concluding with the "Allegro barbaro." Many pianists were present, and one of them—Benno Moiseiwitsch—commented that he was surprised that the piano was still on its legs. But those of us who listened more to the music than the playing sensed that here was somebody out of the ordinary, and in spite of his reserve and shyness we both felt very drawn to him... He was a very fine pianist, though *unerbittlich* in his demands on the instrument, himself, and the audience.

Other visits to England followed and, again through Calvocoressi, who was now advising the newly founded music department of the Oxford University Press, the project of publishing in England Bartók's collection of

[1] Note to Letter no. 97.

Rumanian folk-songs was mooted. In 1925 Hubert Foss, the head of the music department, visited him in Budapest[1] to discuss the matter. But, despite a long, interesting and sometimes angry correspondence extending over five or six years—which I hope to discuss elsewhere—nothing came of it. Only in 1931 the Oxford Press published Calvocoressi's translation of Bartók's book on Hungarian folk-song.

Two visits to London remain particularly in my memory: one in May 1934, when Bartók came over for the BBC performance of his "Cantata profana" and I had the terrifying honour of sharing his full score while Sir Adrian Boult rehearsed in the concert hall at Broadcasting House. (It was from Bartók that I learned that Holst had died the day before.)[2] The other was in June 1938 when he came with his wife to play the Sonata for Two Pianos. Again there was a party at the Mayers', where he played pieces from "Mikrokosmos," and this must have been the last time I talked to him, for it was his last visit to this country.

The *Anschluss* had already occurred and the Munich crisis was not far ahead. Bartók had no sympathy with Czechoslovakia, which he considered had treated his mother—who lived and worked in Bratislava (Pozsony)—very badly and which had for several years refused him the permission to appear publicly in Slovakia; but he was deeply shocked by Hitler's triumph and the behaviour of England and France. He recognized that it marked the end of a chapter.

[1] Letter No. 105.

[2] The only English composer who seems to have really interested Bartók, and whom he liked as a man (Letter no. 69), was Delius. In 1911 he published a sympathetic article on Delius which was reprinted by Szabolcsi in *Bartók Béla: Válogatott zenei írásai* (Budapest, 1948), p. 76.

# MAN AND NATURE IN BARTÓK'S WORLD

by

BENCE SZABOLCSI

Beginning with the first fruits of his art, the compositions of Béla Bartók have aroused lively attention, commentaries and debates in both Hungarian and foreign musical criticism and musicology. We allude above all to the writings of his great contemporary, Zoltán Kodály, and to the reviews, tantamount to studies, of Antal Molnár, Béla Reinitz, Sándor Jemnitz, Cecil Gray, and Michel Dimitri Calvocoressi. However, the first presentation, as a systematic, comprehensive and coherent view of the world, of Bartók's ideas expressed in his music and writing was probably given by Aladár Tóth as early as the 1920's. In 1927, for instance, he wrote: "To Bartók the people means perpetual freedom, the road into the domain of unaffected primeval instincts. Here the people becomes the threshold to nature..." These words constitute the first summary statement of the four fundamental concepts, the four axes of Bartók's universe, with a clear recognition of their interrelation. They are: the people, freedom, the world of instincts, and nature. The few lines quoted above represent the first endeavour to clarify the position of man and nature in Béla Bartók's intricate world.

In attemptig to trace these postulates, our investigations have to go back to the beginning by acquiring an elemental knowledge of Bartók's world. The first problem that arises, namely, Bartók's relations to nature, will also point the path to the solution.

That Béla Bartók was, from his early childhood, bound to nature by the very closest ties, that he responded with highly susceptible nerves to the innumerable shades of landscapes, of the seasons and of the day, of form and of motion, may be clear even to those who have never heard any of his compositions or read a line of his writings; the perusal of a list of his works will suffice. It is not necessary to know that his "Night's Music" was inspired by the mumbling of bullfrogs in a pool on the Plains, the

overture of the "Wooden Prince" by a forest of the Székely country, the nocturno of "Music" by the sighing of the wind; it is enough just to glance through the titles. The first childhood work of any considerable length was "The Danube"; the orchestral compositions include "Flowering" and "Village Dance," and in the late version of the Second Suite the "Puszta Scene." Among the pieces for piano the reader's eye may run over a multitude of the most colourful visions, from "Dawn" to the "Island of Bali"; among the songs his attention may be arrested by the striking series of poems on autumn, like "Autumn Breeze," "Autumn Tears," "Autumn Sounds," and the strange elegy beginning with the line "Autumn is killing down here in the valley." Should the reader be interested in anecdotes of a personal nature, he may learn from Agatha Fassett's book* how the composer relied for orientation in foreign regions, among men and animals, on an instinct and scent like those of a forest beast of prey; and he may muse over Bartók's remark to Endre Gertler during a performance of his "Music," written for grand orchestra: "Do you hear? This is the sea!"

All this is repeatedly confirmed, acquiring concrete substantiation and biographical authenticity, if the interested reader begins to peruse documents that have a personal bearing on Bartók's life, his letters, articles, studies, and the reminiscences of those who lived near him. The figure of a ceaselessly scrutinizing artist stands revealed, who from his earliest childhood was a passionate collector and student of the living, moving universe: butterflies, beetles, silk-worms, birds, trees and flowers he found no less absorbing than the mountains, oceans, and the movements of the stars, and he even cherished a desire to know the fauna and flora of remote continents. Wherever he went, his eye was caught by nature. His letters and studies are all relevant; here it must be borne in mind that with Bartók's laconically objective, invariably reticent style, the very fact that he mentions these phenomena is significant. Here, for instance, is the picture he gave of the Parc Monceau in Paris in the summer of 1905: "Sauntering aimlessly along the avenues of Paris, I suddenly came upon a tiny paradise. The entire little garden is perhaps twice as large as Erzsébet Square in Budapest. But only the French are gifted with the ingenuity to exploit nature and art in magically turning such a small place into so fairy-like a spot. The lovely trees, flowers and bushes harbour enough statues for a minor spring show... A tiny little lake nestles in the cool shade of the trees, with a row of crumbling, tottering Greek pillars along its shore as though the ruins of some ancient edifice had found their way here. Some of the columns are overrun

* "Béla Bartók's American Years—The Naked Face of a Genius" (1960, 320 pp.)

by creepers... In the Jardin des Plantes I walked beneath cedars of Lebanon..."*

In 1908 he wrote: "Travelling via Lyon, Vienne, Valence and Avignon, at last I attained the peak of my desires, the sea. Only the small Mediterranean, but, nevertheless, the sea... This is where first I bathed in the sea... and first beheld—a mirage!"** In the autumn of 1908 he wrote from Torockó: "Yesterday I walked along the mountain-gorge of Torda, today I am enjoying myself in Torockó, at the foot of Mount Székelykő... Of the Hungarian villages I have seen so far, this one definitely lies in the most picturesque region. And in addition, the yellow-red forests..." (*ibid.* 86). Early in 1911 he wrote from Topánfalva: "The surrounding country is of miraculous beauty; even if I had to leave empty-handed, I would not mind. Among pines, gigantic snow-capped mountains, rapid streams, on carriage, sledge or on foot. All this is so new to me, I have never been to wild woodlands in winter before..." (*ibid.* 92). From the vicinity of Besztercebánya, in 1915: "One gets a view of Liptó County where rocky mountains of rather phantastic shape are to be seen..." (Letters I, 86). From the Welsh seaside, in spring 1922: "The two huge windows of my room look upon the ocean—the waves are rumbling below, the sunshine is marvellous..." (*ibid.* 103). From Los Angeles, in 1928: "I am staying in a private wooden house on the shore of the sea. The Pacific Ocean makes a tremendous noise, booming, roaring, sometimes even shaking my bed at night..." (*ibid.* 115). At Pontresina in 1939, he climbed the peak of Languard which is over 10,000 feet high (*ibid.* 118); his first flight, in 1936, carried him to an almost similar altitude: "At a height of 2,400 metres (8,000 feet), in brilliant sunshine, over infinite stretches of fleecy, curly clouds... well, now I know what it is like!" (*ibid.* 128). Finally, just one picture of Mersin in Anatolia, in 1936: "This was a veritable subtropical region, where during my visit at the end of November the weather was as hot as at the close of August, where dates grow and sugarcane, where we wandered under pepper trees, under flowering and fruit-bearing banana trees, where the temperature never sinks below freezing." (Folk-song Collecting in Turkey).

Innumerable further examples such as these might be cited. They all go to prove that scenery and nature were the first to captivate Bartók's eyes. In his reminiscences, his son Béla wrote: "He loved nature in all its mani-

* *Bartók Béla levelei* (Letters of Béla Bartók, usually referred to as Letters I), edited by János Demény, published by *Magyar Művelődési Tanács*, Budapest, 1948, p. 57.

** *Bartók Béla levelei* (Béla Bartók's Letters, usually referred to as Letters II), edited by János Demény, *Művelt Nép* publishers, 1951, p. 85.

festations; he regularly went for walks and excursions. Whenever possible, at the end of each academic year, he left for the mountains, where he spent a month finding complete physical and mental recreation; the majority of his most significant compositions he wrote when thus refreshed, during the second half of the summer vacation. Among natural phenomena, he was equally interested in plants, animals, and minerals."

A direct connection between experience and work can naturally be but rarely demonstrated. That the "Evening with the Székelys" stems from the first Transylvanian collecting tour, is obvious from the dates (1907—1908); that "Night's Music" was inspired by a trip to the Plains, emerges from the reminiscences of Béla Bartók junior; it is also beyond doubt that the bird-note studies of his last American summer are closely related to the sylvan bird-song music of the Third Piano Concerto. Elsewhere the interconnections have remained hidden, but their actual presence behind almost every composition is becoming increasingly probable, in somewhat the same way as Beethoven's rambles around Heiligenstadt were perpetuated in the score of the Sixth Symphony.

Indeed, Bartók's nature-world is incredibly wide and colourful. Landscape description and illustration may here almost be regarded only as a first phase, a starting-point, even when its emotional content and dramatic significance are in the forefront from the very first; "Flowering" is already of this kind, so is the flower-garden and the pool of tears in "Bluebeard's Castle," and also the fabulous forest and swelling stream in the "Wooden Prince." These pictures display the traits that were to become increasingly characteristic of Bartók's later nature-music: he did not depict, illustrate, or decorate nature, but let it speak for itself, identifying himself with it; he has it speak from "inside" in the language of the river, the idiom of the forest, the dialects of valley and cave. It is, moreover, characteristic that the scenery is immediately peopled by living creatures—here attention may be drawn to the animal world appearing on the scene, from the innocent adventures of the "Little Fly" or the meek domestic animals of his "Spellbinder" and the birds, through the "Bear Dance" and the mythical stags of the "Cantata profana" to the procession of beasts of prey in the "Marcia delle bestie," where the living animal world would seem to conceal the threatening shadows of animal fiends, ready to intervene and destroy. Bartók felt close to these primeval beings; he evinced excited interest when speaking about the legendary world of Rumanian sagas, where the story tells not only of the rivalry of the sun and the moon, but of boys turned into stags and of fights against the mythical lion; "so many pagan memories," he cried, in rapture. In America it was once said of him that he understood

and "spoke" equally well the language of cats, birds and lions, like Kipling's Mowgli.—But from the beginning this scenery includes man, with the immense, virtually unsurveyable range of his being, his fate and his significance.

What sort of man peoples Bartók's universe? The first thing that meets the eye is that this man, the ideal man, is an inseparable part of nature. Bartók was twenty-six when he described his own pantheistic creed in a letter: "If I were to make the sign of the cross I should say, 'In the name of Nature, Art and Science'..." * This point of departure, this classical trinity determined not only his work as a creative artist, but also his scientific activity, his entire human and moral attitude.

At the outset we quoted the observation of Aladár Tóth, the most eminent contemporary critic of Bartók's music, concerning the composer's relationship to the people and to nature. Let us add some further observations made by Tóth seven years later, in 1934**: "The peasant, who in everyday life remains in crude, direct contact with the elements, experiences from year to year the birth, bloom and passing away of life. He beholds them with the same childish wonder and ministers to them with the same simplicity as Béla Bartók." (*Pesti Napló*, Jan. 4, 1934). This, it is clear, will serve as one of the chief, fundamental explanations for what will be said in the further course of this essay. In his art and his studies just as in the people and his own heroes, Bartók always sought the laws of nature; thus he was led in this direction not only by his tours, collecting and reading, but his whole human and creative spirit also served such ideas.***

It has long been observed that Bartók's scientific system, his whole scholarly method, were far more those of a scientist than of a historian. "How did it happen, whence did it originate?" were not the questions to attract his interest; he was drawn by the problems of "what exists, how and why does it exist and in how many variaties?" Times out of number he betrayed that it was in full consciousness of this scientific bent that he lived and worked. It is common knowledge that the discovery of the ancient Hungarian folksong is linked to the names of Bartók and Kodály. Well, Bartók regarded folk music, the folksong, as a natural phenomenon. "We follow nature in our creative work, since peasant music is a natural phenomenon," he wrote in 1928 (Selected Writings, 1956, 213). Three

* ibid. p. 77.

** In "*Pesti Napló*", a daily Budapest newspaper.

*** The ceaseless scrutiny of the process of arising and of passing away belonged to Bartók's method of work, because his whole conception of the world was centred around his belief in natural philosophy. As interpreted by Goethe and Humboldt, life and the world, being organic phenomena, are a concatenation of organic correlations.

years later, in 1931, he said: "We profess ourselves to be scientists who have chosen as the subject of their study a certain product of nature, peasant music" (*ibid.* 315). And in another place: "This kind of music is really nothing other than the result produced by the transforming activity of unconsciously functioning natural forces in people uninfluenced by urban culture" (*ibid.* 186).

Later he went perhaps still further in linking nature and music, region and melody. A statement of his quoted by Agatha Fassett as having been uttered during one of their conversations in America, though apparently presented in a highly stylized form, is all the more believable in respect to its content: "I like to keep in mind all sorts of regions, and I like to clothe them in accordance with the changing seasons. Just as I like to invest songs with the colours of the countryside that has preserved them." In this world of ideas popular tunes come into being like bushes or waterfalls, the human community being little more than a medium for the manifestation of the creative power inherent in the Earth and the Cosmos. It would be easy to point to the survival of Rousseau's and Tolstoi's romanticism in these words and views, compared to which Kodály's folklore teachings may be said to express the concrete and realistic historical approach. However—and here it is necessary, to contradict numerous opinions on Bartók—this romantic ideal formed an organic part of Bartók's personality, imbued with an unequalled passion for knowledge and scientific endeavour. While searching for the laws of nature and striving to come close to nature, he suddenly—like Rousseau and Tolstoi (or among his contemporaries Giono, Ramuz, and others)—came up against conscious civilization, the town, artificial demands on life, the tussle of free competition, and the rootless world of the dominant strata, consisting, in Hungary, of the bourgeoisie and of feudal remnants simultaneously. He thus grew—as we would now say—into a "romantic anticapitalist." Already he united in his person all the contradictions of "romantic anticapitalism," for he was a delicate urban—soon a metropolitan—artist with a sensitive constitution, pampered by and at the mercy of civilization, metropolitan comfort, bustle and solicitude! Yet, at the same time, alert and tense, keen of hearing and sight, his visionary nerves enabled him to detect the approaching destruction of this bourgeois world, to sense the latent smell of death behind its civilization. It is true that research, experiment, publicity, the apparatus of science and art are urban privileges too, and Bartók was willing to accept them, but what he could not accept was the mercenary and warpingly commonplace life of the capitalist city. Since he was searching for natural man, for primitive man, who had remained close to the great laws of nature,

he had to find the sought for and desired type in the peasant. All that was ancient, primitive, all that contrasted with the mechanized world of the metropolis was dear to him; in it he took refuge, held on to it with wild, demonstrative, often desperate defiance; he was determined to find the primeval world in the twentieth century! In an era of lies, delusions, deception and half-measures, he was going to find the *pure spring*, the golden age, the refuge of mankind. "Peasant and primitive," he wrote in 1931, "I employ both words to denote an ancient, ideal simplicity devoid of trash." Hence his personal conclusion that "the happiest days of my life have been those I spent in the country, among peasants..." (1928.) "As far as I am concerned," he wrote in one of his last articles (1943), "I can only say that the time I have devoted to such work (*i. e.* the collection of folksongs) has been the finest part of my life, one which I would not exchange for anything. The finest part in the noblest sense of the word, because I was permitted directly to observe the artistic manifestations of a still homogeneous, but already vanishing social structure. Beautiful to the ears, beautiful to the eyes! Here in the West (*i. e.* in America) people cannot even imagine that in Europe there are still areas where practically every article used, from clothing to tools, is made at home, where one cannot see stereotype, factory-made trash, where the shape and style of objects varies from region to region, often from village to village... These are unforgettable experiences; painfully unforgettable, for we know that this state of the village is doomed to annihilation... It will leave a great void behind it..." And later: "Now that these peoples murder one another on orders from above... it is perhaps opportune to point out that the peasants show no trace of savage hatred against other peoples, nor have they ever done so. They live peacefully beside each other; each speaks his own language, follows his own customs, and deems it natural for his foreign-tongued neighbours to do the same... Among peasants peace prevails—hatred against other races is stimulated only by the upper circles." This is Bartók's picture of the happy village, his fantasy of a golden age. But is it possible—the historian may well ask—that Bartók, one of the most sharp-sighted humanists of the age, should have failed to notice what his contemporary, the novelist Zsigmond Móricz, had perceived long before—that Hungarian villages, like the villages of Eastern Europe generally, were far from happy in the years from 1910 to 1920, that they represented a microcosmos struggling under the stress of mud, misery, and antagonisms in just the same way as the towns? Bartók deliberately idealized this world in order that he might escape to it, that he might say: "There is no one more fortunate than a peasant... the peasant supports gentry and clergy,

soldiers and beggars... If there were no peasants, we should have no bread. If they did not plough, we should all starve... The peasant supplies all his own needs, preparing—and decorating—his tools, home and clothing. Music and songs he knows not from books. He has no need of city rubbish..." As we see, the words of this chorus (Of Past Times, 1937) and the text of the much later article correspond almost word by word. "Music and songs he knows not from books..."—no, they are suggested by nature, by instinct, by the primordial source.

And now let us quote from Bartók's famous creed of 1931: "My true ideal is... the brotherhood of all peoples, the establishment of a brotherhood despite all wars and contentions. This ideal I endeavour... to serve in my music; this is why I shall evade no influences, whether of Slovak, Rumanian, Arab or any other origin, provided only that the source be pure, fresh and wholesome." One cannot but remember that the words "source" and "pure source" had been written down by Bartók shortly before, in a major composition; and just as we recognized above the key to another choral work of his, the true sense of the "Cantata Profana," with its stags that drank only spring water, is bound, here as well, to flash across the mind. There is, moreover, a third great work on the same theme: a strong primitive man who has remained close to nature fights depraved metropolitan crime ("The Miraculous Mandarin"). It should be noted, though, that the metropolis of the Mandarin is in itself a demoniac, elementary natural phenomenon, a jungle fashioned as a metropolis. Reference to another early hero of Bartók's may be even more convincing—the Prince, who overwhelms the misshapen fiends of vanity and human meanness in the name of nature and with the aid of nature. We may note, at this point, that virtually all Bartók's grand works join forces in proclaiming the greatness and truth of man who has remained loyal to nature. Whether he bears the name of "peasant" (remember that Bartók always regards folk music as "peasant music" too!) or that of a Prince, whether he is dressed as a mandarin or appears as a mythical stag, is indeed a secondary issue, which scarcely affects the core of the composer's message.

What then is freedom, and who is free in Bartók's world? Man is free if he remains in close communion with nature and thereby with the great laws of life; in him there remains alive most effectively what it is worth while living for, it is he who has preserved human dignity. The Prince who overcomes nature through nature is free; so is the Miraculous Mandarin who is made invincible by vital strength, by the power of passion, and by independence from brigand society. The hunters of the Cantata Profana, who turn into stags, who will no longer brook the shackling intricacies of

social conventions are also free, as is the peasantry, the peasant of Eastern Europe, happy and creative. It is, indeed, strange to hear this about the peasant of whom Bartók himself has sung "there is no man unhappier," who was rewarded by his masters with blows for every service and every gift, who "is ceaselessly harassed, allowed no respite as long as there is life in him!" The contradiction cannot be explained, but the contradiction itself leads us on to a fuller knowledge of Bartók's universe. Before taking this further step let us note that this peasant romanticism, the romantic and dreamy idealization of village life, also belonged to the tragic process of regression that gradually gained ascendency in the last years of the master's life. Again we have to refer to the records of Agatha Fassett (pp. 134—35, 170—71). In America, when Bartók recalled Hungarian peasant houses or bread-baking in his mother's house, when he joyfully hailed paraffin-lamps instead of electric lights, he was longingly returning to a childhood that had been better, simpler, more primitive, and was nearer to the happy home, the golden age, the native country he had left for ever.

It is precisely in this manner that we can approach an essential feature in the life and creative work of Bartók. The search for the pure source, the primeval spring, primordial nature, the fundamental truths of life, led him to the requirement of pure form, pure structure and pure expression; it led him to the unequivocal musical formulation of *character*. This was the decisive turn which lifted Bartók's universe from among that of most of his contemporaries. As with Beethoven, his flight became opposition, and suddenly the solution appeared: the instincts must be liberated in a creative sense, the contradictions have to be welded into character. Here the word "character" suddenly assumes a double meaning: it denotes the essence of musical representation as well as the musical modelling of human character.

Haydn once told Griesinger, his biographer, that he had meant to draw moral "characters" in his symphonies. He may have expressed his idea hazily, but the sense of his words stands out clearly and definitely. In the period of enlightenment, aesthetes in general liked to avail themselves of the term, ever since La Bruyère—following the examples of antiquity—revived the portrayal of character, and the delineation of human characters began to fire the imagination of musicians too. Our view of Bartók partly corresponds with this interpretation, and partly it does not; in the notion of "character" we propose to include those types of themes and moods that belong together according to their contents and musical attitude. Bartók's "Night" themes, for instance, form such a character, furthermore the "Allegro Barbaro" type (particularly in the closing movements), the groups of dirges and dance phantasies, the peculiar monologue form, the develop-

ment of which may be traced from the string quartets to "Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta." These characters are marked not only by their representation of phenomena and processes but also by the fact that each summarizes the relation of man and the universe in a lasting picture. As with Beethoven, their development in the hands of Bartók took on two forms: elaboration of the basic themes and their "purification" by means of variations. We are familiar with the composer's important statement in 1937 about the significance of the technique of variation. "It is generally found," he said, "that I lay great stress on elaboration, that I do not like to use the same musical thought twice in the same form or repeat any detail unaltered; this explains my special predilection for variation and the transformation of themes. It was no mere game when I inverted the theme in my second piano concerto. The extreme variety, which is typical of Hungarian folk music, flows also from my own nature and aspirations." So much for the technique of variation which connects Bartók with Bach, Beethoven and Liszt on the one hand, and with folk music on the other; it should be borne in mind that variation is the basic creative method of folk music, and thus in Bartók's eyes the natural mode of composition. With Bartók, variation, however, stood also for something else: conception on an ever higher level, hence a gradual purification of the idea, a gradual catharsis, and thus, in the last analysis, a moral idea. We should remember here that from his early youth Bartók's favourite method of composition was to *vary the meaning of the same material*. Following in the wake of Berlioz and Liszt, this was his path to the fullest development of his personality already in his "Kossuth" and in the First Suite built on recurring basic themes. He achieved it in "The Ideal Portrait" and "Grotesque Portrait," which are contradictory elaborations of the same theme in two character variations, furthermore in the single-theme pattern of his works for the stage and his string quartets, and perhaps the most lucidly in "Music" and the Sixth String Quartet, where almost nothing happens but purification of the same material, the basic idea, and its elevation to increasingly lofty regions—as in Beethoven's last chamber music works. This organic unfolding of variation, this "natural" mode of creation, was a method of creative composition peculiar to Bartók and reminds us of his late statement interpreting his whole artistic development as the repetition and solution of problems on an ever higher plane. Obviously, it was here that Bartók attained the deepest and at the same time loftiest union with "nature."

However, only the sharply outlined type, the truly pronounced character, are suitable for varied expression. What matters is that both this variation and that, should be characteristic. Every new clarification, every trans-

formation can only produce a profile which has in essence been lying dormant within. The expression "this variation and that" throws light on a fundamental, specific trait of Bartók's musical "characters": the constant dialectic tension of two poles, the permanent presence of lasting and ephemeral, rising and falling elements, the principles of dissonance and harmony. Beethoven throughout most of his life is supposed to have followed a twofold principle of form, the path dictated by a tendency to impulsiveness and appeasement, to dynamic activity and accommodating contemplation. With Bartók this twofold nature is perhaps still more organic, still more fundamental. In his frequently quoted and much discussed study on Bartók, Attila József made the apposite observation that the dissonant and the resolving principles constantly merge, while at the same time keeping each other alert; they call and challenge each other, lending a ceaselessly undulating motion to the whole thread of thought. This may well be where the chief quality lies hidden, which rendered Bartók different from his western contemporaries, the great and the less eminent experimenters.

However, as has been mentioned before, this dual character, thesis and antithesis, accompanied Bartók's development from start to finish. It is the dual form of matter, expressed in melody and rhythm, in augmentation and diminution, in diatony and chromaticism, or, if you like, in the Ideal and the Grotesque, the Prince and the corporeal Wooden Dummy. Let us recall that with Bartók, contrast and inversion were one of the most outstanding means for developing themes. The dual unity of theme and countertheme extends to this sphere too: they emerge from "here" and "there," from "above" and "below," from the "depths" and the "heights," incessantly arguing with each other, replying to each other, wrestling with each other or embracing each other, soaring upwards and bending downwards, appearing as a self-contradicting structure, assuming the form of a bridge, an arch, or a dome. Here we come upon *the character which, through its contradictions, rises to a higher union*, the Hegelian dialectic in Bartók's art. It is, moreover the "law of nature" itself, which Bartók evidently felt he could also bring to prevail in his works, thereby reaching the "pure spring" of which he had been dreaming all his life.

At this point all that had held Bartók captive at the beginning of his path found its resolution—the enthralling magic and thrill of nature, the concomitants of his affinity and strangeness to humanity: the struggle against space and distance so familiar to those who have travelled much, dizziness, anxiety, great childish fears, the "pavor nocturnus," the presentiment of permanent danger in general, the feeling of exposure to the "jungle" that inspired him in so many voices and works, and which left its mark on his

whole conduct; here he himself became the mythical stag of the Cantata, which has learnt to defy for evermore the dangers not only of the huts but also of the brushwood, and has come to stand firmly on the mountain top.

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The birth of every great work is affected by, and in turn guides, the fate of its genre at a decisive evolutionary moment. In taking shape, the career of every great artist sets in motion and determines the various historical phases of his art, possessing and representing, as he does, the forces that are about to grow into the decisive factors of the age. What is a social phenomenon thus becomes a personal initiative, and *vice versa*. In Bartók's universe, the picture of man and nature is a continuation and a modification of the picture produced by his predecessors. In the music of the eighteenth century, the representation of nature varied between the heroic and the idyllic, from Händel to Haydn; the art of Haydn and Beethoven expressed and brought to flowering the more personal, more humanly related nature of the bourgeois world. Then came the growing contradictions of bourgeois development, the growing distance between town life and village life, between rural simplicity and civilization, until the portraiture of nature, at the close of the nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth, revealed how far man and nature had become divorced from each other. The artist was compelled to wage renewed battles for the conquest of the lost old unity or rather for the acquisition of a new, nascent unity. Some composers (Wagner) transformed nature into symbol and magic, others (Debussy) changed it into an ethereal fluid, which engulfed man's life in murmuring waves and the touch of which caused ecstasy and delight. One of the most astounding discoveries of the twentieth century was that of Stravinsky, in whose works around 1910 nature appeared as a barbarous, misanthropic compulsion at a time when other arts as well disclosed mechanicalness, technics, and demonized, fetishized mass motion as constituting the merciless and compulsory fetters of life. In the years between 1920 and 1940 the issue had already arisen as to whether man would succeed in reconquering and enlisting on his own side the seemingly overgrown, savage, bleakened forces of nature. With increasing poignancy the question was posed whether "human dignity" could be saved from the attack—first insidious then ever more open—of the ghastly forces of inhumanity. Our allusion to "seemingly overgrown" elemental forces is inspired by the fact that, while science and technique were advancing victoriously, the great majority of artists at that time stared with aversion, anxiety, estrangement and perplexity at the

surrounding world that had become alien, a world in which questions were multiplying and answers becoming increasingly nebulous. Bartók saw the answer in an alliance with nature, with the elemental forces among which man—himself filled with elemental forces—must recover his brotherly place. What we call demoniac, elementary, superhuman, must be regulated so as to give it an inner and outer harmony and fitted into the concept of a moral world order. In the last analysis, this world order is but a new balance in which the laws of the inner and outer world are reconciled and become permanent allies.

In the music of the twentieth century, this solution has so far been achieved by the art of Bartók alone; that is why it could become the foundation of humaneness in its broadest sense.

# JÓZSEF EGRY

by

SÁNDOR LÁNCZ

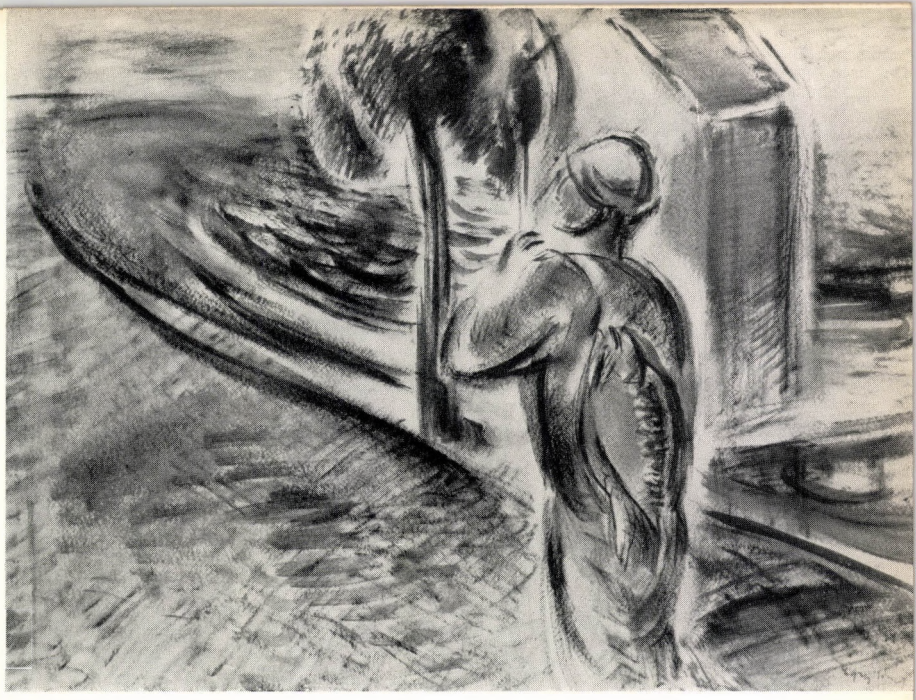
The literature inspired by Lake Balaton has filled many a volume, and the pictures of which it has formed the theme would stock several galleries. It has always occupied a peculiar position in Hungarian life. On one side, the capricious chain of volcanic mountains—once the site of ancient Roman camps—, the tapering peninsula jutting far out into the water and harbouring one of the oldest monuments of Hungarian Romanesque architecture, the eleventh century Monastery and Church of Tihany, while the alternation of plain and hilly country lends a characteristic aspect to the other side. This lake inspired József Egry, one of the most gifted Hungarian painters of the period between the two world wars.

Ten years have now elapsed since he passed away, but in these ten years the pure light of his art has grown ever stronger. Appreciation of his achievement was for a time hampered by the fog of mysticism woven around the withdrawn artist and his works, and also by the circumstance that they could not be rigidly classified as of any known "school." His art has been said to show affinity to Turner's pre-impressionism and later to the expressionism of the German artist Erich Heckel, whose strength lay in the drama of light. Both these attempts at establishing a relationship have failed, for despite some traces of similarity, Egry's art is in essence entirely different. If a kinship is to be sought at all costs, the passionate pathos of the German Grünewald, the fascinating frenzy and deep solitude of Van Gogh may be distantly related to József Egry's work. Fundamentally his art probes into the eternal problems of the relations between the artist and nature, the artist and society.

His background, life and experiences were closely bound up with Transdanubia and particularly with Lake Balaton. The artist himself had this to say about his own life, in a letter written to Antal Németh in 1924:

"I was born in 1883 at Újlak, a tiny village in Zala County. The bent for painting was, I think, born with me, for my childhood experiences were mostly connected with it. At the age of 16 or 17, I tried to get into some kind of art school at Budapest, but failed because they said I had not enough talent and also because I lacked even the meagerest necessary financial resources. After all, my parents were poor day-labourers, so I had no choice, but to content myself with the schooling offered by the street, the country-side, the experiences connected with making ends meet, and the National Museum where I admired Markó, Paál, and Munkácsy. At the age of about 19, I came into contact with the painter I. Korcsek; he acquainted me with the elements of painting.

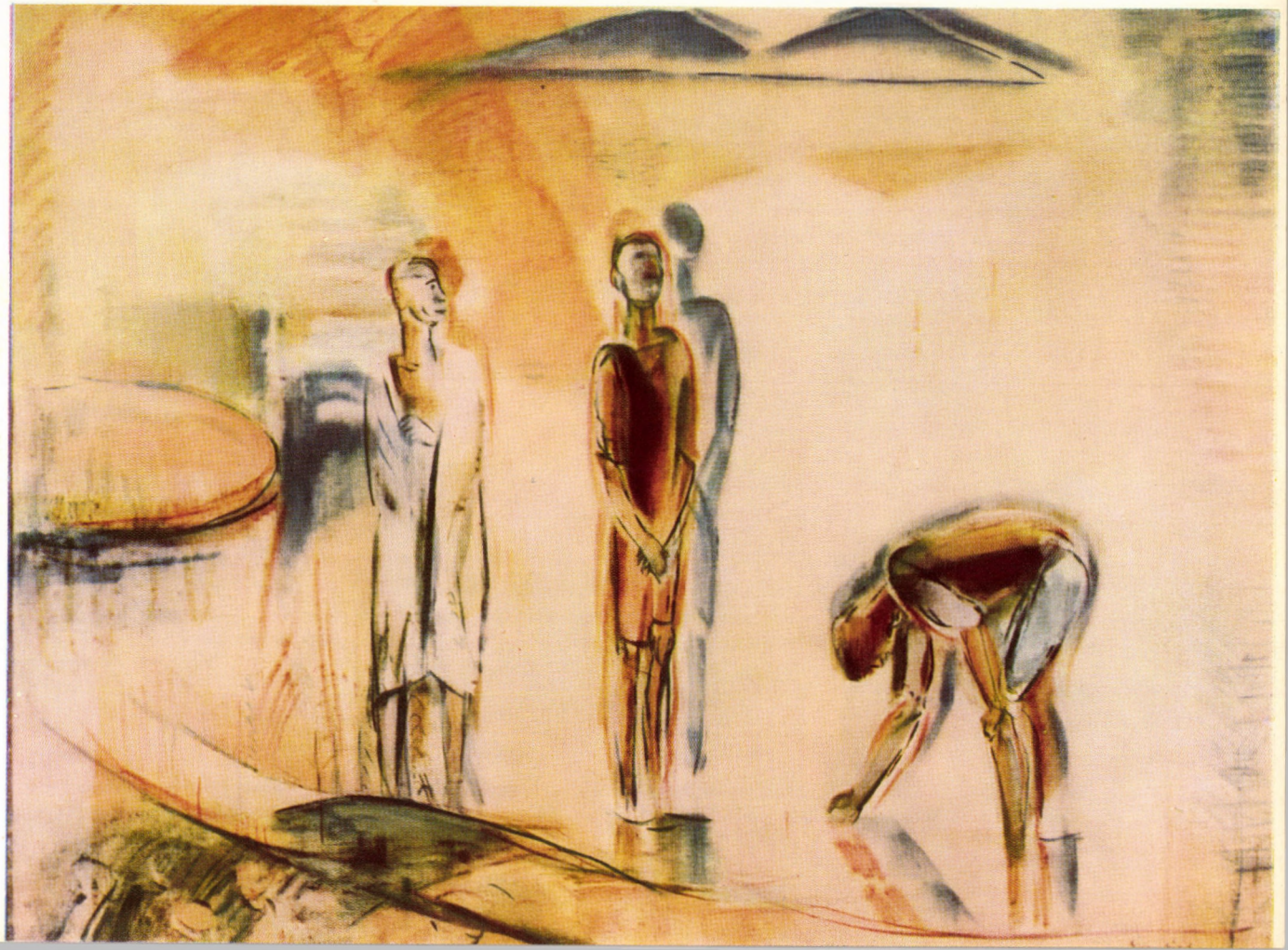
"I must have been 20 or 21 when I set out for Munich in the hope that I could there somehow get into a school or some other place where I might learn without money; it couldn't be done, no one cared a straw about me. Finally, I became ill and shortly returned to Budapest. Not long after, I happened to make the acquaintance of Károly Lyka, editor of the then "Művészet" (Art). I may well say that he was the first to take me seriously. He was the first to count for something in my life, to try and let me have both moral and financial support. Thanks to his efforts, I was able to get to Paris by the end of 1905. In Paris I visited various schools, for brief periods of time, for I did not very much like the Parisian schools, which I thought savoured too much of shops and business. Much of my development I nevertheless owe to Paris where I saw all the values necessary for advance, values that I could not have known before. From my master, who corrected my work, I could learn only what was immaterial, mere personal technicalities. However, I had a great respect for Gauguin, Van Gogh, Puvis de Chavannes, and the Barbizon school. At the call of Dr Béla Jánossy and Pál Szinyei Merse I returned to Budapest at the beginning of 1907; with their support I obtained a place, a studio at the Academy where Károly Ferenczy and Szinyei corrected and visited me for about a year and a half. The fact is, we could not stand each other any longer. I could not endure that dry, scholastic method. At the same time I was awarded a State scholarship for my picture *Before the Night Refuge*, exhibited among my things at the Art Gallery. A scholarship being connected with the Academy, I lost it when I left. I could, indeed, hardly wait to breathe fresh air, as far away as possible from school, trappings, and set phrases. In 1908-1909, I exhibited at the show of "The Young" in the Könyves Kálmán. In 1911, I had a collective exhibition at the group show for the opening of the Artists' House. At Munich I exhibited at the *Moderne Galerie*



1 On the Way Home

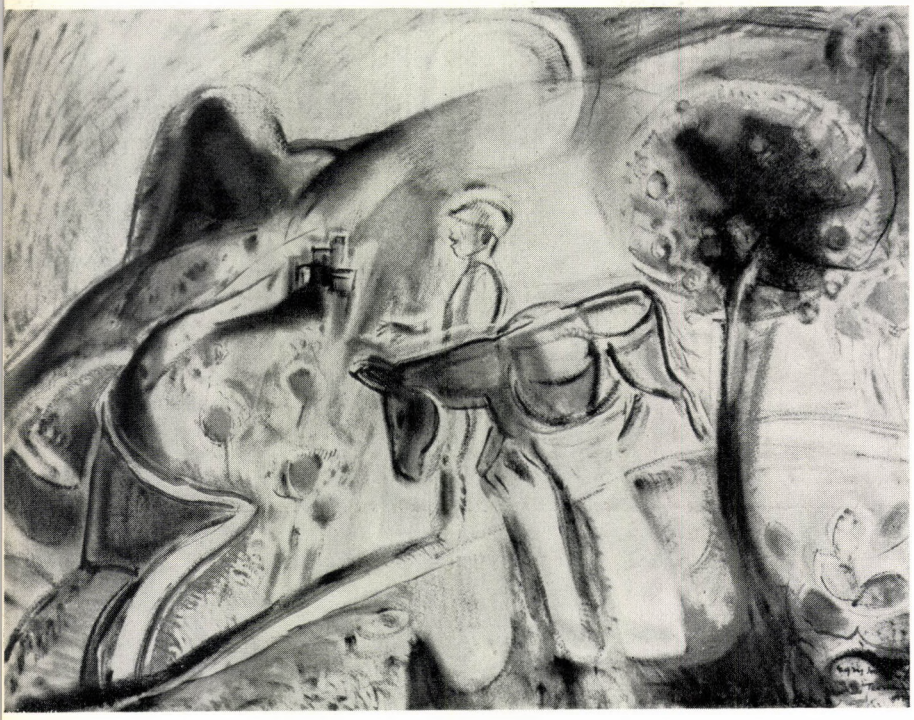
2 Balaton Fishermen

4 St. John the Baptist



5 St. Christopher at Lake Balaton

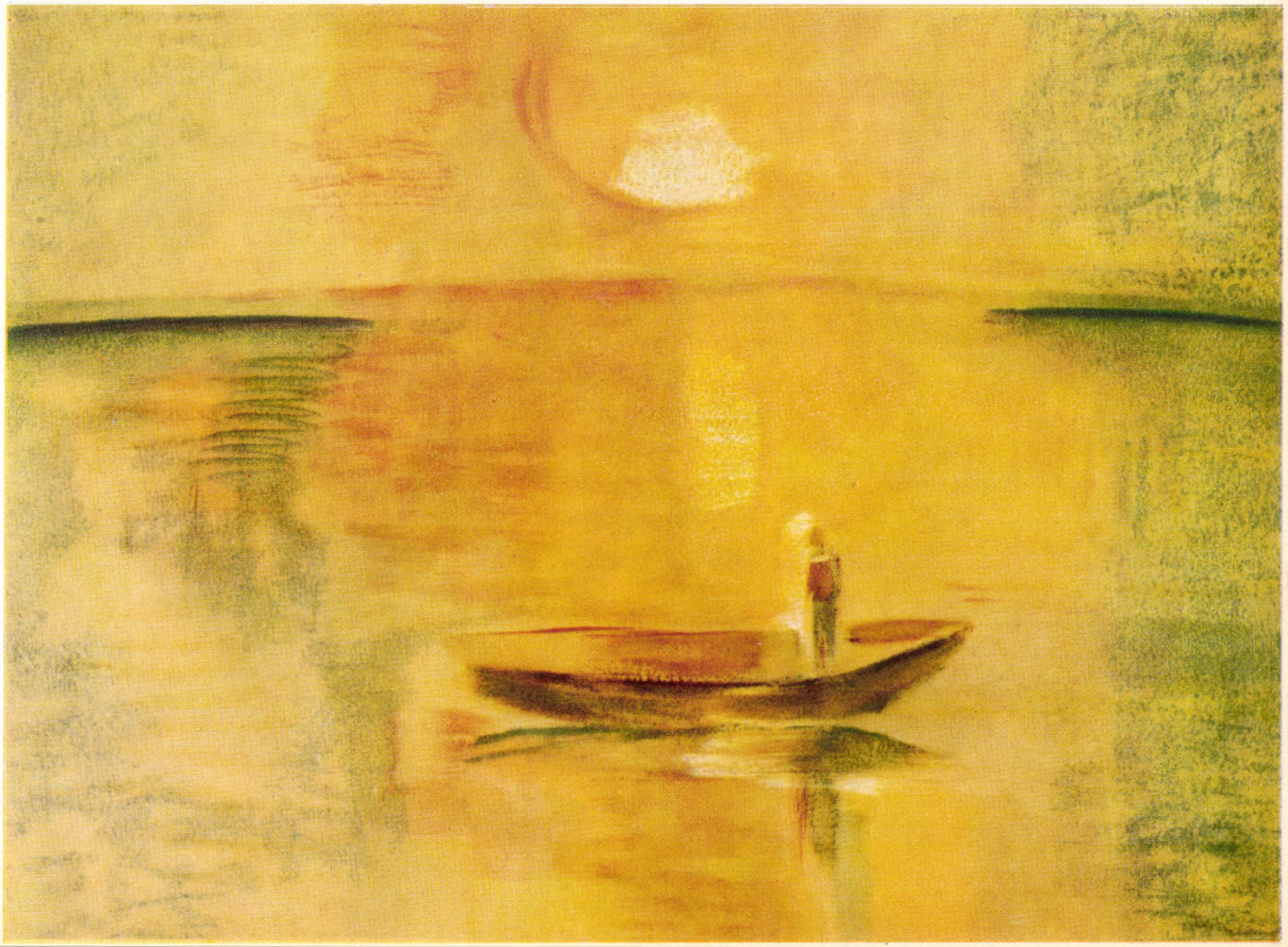
6 Taormina



7 Man Leaning

8 The Barker

9 Play of Lights on Lake Balaton



10 SELF-PORTRAIT

in 1911-12. In 1912, with a monthly allowance of 50 crowns from a gentleman by the name of Lindenbaum, I went to Flanders, Belgium. I was deeply interested in the old Netherlands masters, Memling, Van Eyck, Rembrandt. I made a detour to where I could see Grünewald. In my belief Grünewald was one of the greatest of his age, in that few artists have been able so perfectly to assimilate Christ in their painting, as he.

"In 1912-13, I participated with several of my things in the inaugural show of the Artists' House, where my picture entitled *Symbol* was awarded the Pál Szinyei Merse Prize. At the time of the First World War, like so many others, I had to join the colours in 1915; during this time my development as a painter was retarded a little because I was frequently ill. In 1918, I was demobilized at Keszthely; it was then that I was captivated by Lake Balaton and its marvellous riches, and there began and was purified that part of my development, of my painting, which had before been an agony of suffering wrapped in obscurity; I might also say that I came upon myself in the atmosphere of my native land. In the meantime I married. Ever since I have been living at Keszthely with my wife and my mother.

"I also demonstrated the progress wrought by time in the form of a collective show in 1922 at the Belvedere. In addition, I have presented several of my things at the recent group show held in May, 1924, at the Ernst Museum and arranged by the K. Ú. T. (New Association of Artists) where I won the Ernst Museum Prize..."

The letter also reveals the names of his favourite writers, poets and composers. He mentions Anatole France, Gorky, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, and—among the Hungarians—Csokonai, Petőfi, Ady, Madách and Gárdonyi, while the composers he cites are Bartók, Kodály, Debussy and Beethoven.

The main events of his life from 1924 to his death may be briefly summed up as follows. From Keszthely, he shortly moved to Badacsonytomaj, where he lived for many years in a small house on the side of the Badacsony hill-side. In 1926 his pictures were exhibited at Fritz Gurlitt's show-room in Berlin, and at that of Emil Richter at Dresden; a year later he had an exhibition in Hamburg. At home the newly founded Tamás Gallery opened in 1928 with a one-man-show of Egry's works; in these rooms his pictures were later exhibited on numerous occasions. In 1930 he left for Italy on medical advice; there he received treatment and visited Sicily. In 1936 he arranged a collective show at Fränkel's show-room, and in the same year his works were to be seen also at the *Neumann und Salzer Galerie* in Vienna. He exhibited rather extensive material at the 1944 Hungarian

show in Switzerland and at the January 1948 Hungarian exhibition in London; at the 1948 Biennale of Venice he figured with representative material. Egry's selected works were on view at the Brussels World Exposition of 1958.

Books were written about him, art critics alluded to him as one of the greatest living Hungarian artists—but this did not affect his way of life or his views. He continued to live in his lonely Badacsony home close to his beloved lake. He was never free of financial difficulties, even when he was already a recognized artist. In one of his letters to Béla Lázár he complained bitterly and asked for a reduction of the 7 dollar fee of the agent, because it was too high for him in his difficult pecuniary situation. In another letter, written in 1935, he declared that he was unable to lay hands on 8.60 pengős for the quarterly subscription to the Pesti Napló, although by then he was acknowledged as a successful painter, with several collective shows to his credit.

In 1945 he received a State Grand Prix, in 1947 the Order of Liberty, and in 1948 he was among the first to be awarded the Kossuth Prize.

However, by this time he was seriously ill; he did not change his mode of existence, remaining aloof from artistic life. In June 1951 he closed his eyes for ever.

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As he wrote in the letter previously quoted, the change in his art was bound up with Lake Balaton, and he called the previous period "an agony of suffering, wrapped in obscurity." Roughly, his life-work thus falls into two major eras, the years before 1918, and the time following that date, although within these, several minor periods may also be distinguished. His earliest attempts were drawings and water-colours, which already disclosed the marks of genius, for at Christmas 1903, when he went to see Károly Lyka, it was on their merits that Lyka found work for Egry and then helped him get to Paris. His first important picture, *Before the Night Refuge*, was painted after his return from Paris (1907). The theme was familiar to the young peasant boy; it was the purposeless loitering of the peasants and proletarians, hanging about in front of the night refuge, that was here depicted. The subject had attracted Egry's attention before; an earlier picture (since lost), the *Free Meal*, may be presumed to have been a preparatory study. The picture was rewarded with a State scholarship.

He earned his first real success with the 1909 show at the Artists' House. The public began to notice his work; the critics, seeing his pictures, mentioned Millet and Meunier, associating the young painter's art with them. It was

about this time that the form language of Egry's first period began to take shape, and this was to remain characteristic of his art right up to the change that followed the end of the First World War. His pictures were marked by calm and reserve, large figures, carefully devised construction—scenery, ships, boats and railings, as well as working, moving men and women, dock-workers, peasants labouring in the fields, and scenes from their lives. Egry's works are dominated by the figures, scenery is everywhere subordinate; his labourers are a trifle timelessly monumentalized, inevitably calling to mind the figures of Meunier.

The composition of *Field Work*, on the other hand, is reminiscent of Millet. *Primitive Age* was a product of this period, still betraying much of the form world of late Victorian art. The calm and the closed composition of the canvases permit the inference that Egry was then already endeavouring to create some kind of logical picture of the world for himself, a kind of harmony and perfect order.

These years produced similar efforts all over Europe. It began with Gauguin, whom Egry had met and who found timeless peace and an earthly paradise for himself on the Island of Tahiti. Even the early pictures of the Fauves were imbued with similar strivings, as if the increasingly dangerous storm that threatened to burst over life on earth had been compelling the artist to seek refuge in a serener world. But this illusive calm was soon to be swept away by the tempest of war. Two of Egry's drawings from the beginning of the war have been preserved: *Recruits* and *Before the Fortress*. The first represents soldiers marching with rifles on their shoulders; the second shows a battle scene with disordered, tumultuous masses of men and whirling clouds—a welter of chaos and confusion. Notwithstanding the timeless calm radiated by his picture the *Stretcher-Bearers* of 1916, and the *Funeral* (of a fallen soldier) of 1917, where figures and scenery appear in complete, coordinated unity, the message these works conveyed was the very disruption of that harmony and order. In 1915 Egry himself became a soldier; a year later, having been wounded, he sent a friend a post-card with the sketch of a naked man (the painter himself) carrying a flag and riding a horse stepping over corpses; both this drawing and *Before the Fortress* clearly express the disharmony that disrupted the balance he had sought and upset everything within him. He was overwhelmed by anguish; wounded in mind and body, he fled to Lake Balaton, the neighbourhood of his native soil, to find his artist-self again, for the world concept based on sympathy for and faith in humanity, which had animated the works of his youthful period, had been shattered by the war.

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The post-war years brought a radical change in Egry's art. This stage was the beginning of his second great period and determined his attitude to the end of his days. The causes of this change deserve briefly to be considered. The disastrous situation of the country at the end of the war, the precipitation into, and then the rapid, almost unexpected victory of, the revolution, the downfall of the proletarian dictatorship, followed by the ascent to power of counter-revolutionary terror and bloodshed—first of all in Transdanubia, Egry's narrower home—unsettled the artist, depriving him of the balance he had forced on himself and of his earlier world of subjects. His behaviour was not unique under the conditions that came to prevail in Europe after the First World War and in which it was difficult for the majority of artists to find their bearings. Their revolutionary ardour, confined within the barriers of circumstances, could find no other outlet than breaking up accepted forms. In the "witches' kitchens" of artists weighed down by genuine or fancied disappointment—very many of them driven into exile—the "new art" was boiling over fires heated by discontent and impotence.

In Hungary, the suppression of the revolution elicited an even more profound crisis. Owing to the delay in obtaining full national independence and the failure to solve social problems, this question assumed greater importance in Hungarian intellectual life than it did in Western Europe. Unsolved social problems broke into even the most secret workshops of creative art. Egry too was unable to escape from these problems. He was not, however, a revolutionary character such as Gyula Derkovits*, who contrived to establish contact with the revolutionary movement, and with whom the fight against oppression became a vital source of inspiration. Egry's reserved, peasant nature sought another way out for himself. He was not a revolutionary, but as a descendant of poor peasants and in consequence of his own experiences, he had grown deeply humane. This humanism now became the vital sustenance of his art. His childhood recollections marked out the path of escape for him: he turned to nature in order to discover himself in its realm. He found it at Keszthely, at Badacsony, the world of the Balaton. The lake, the water, the surrounding mountains were but pretexts for him to speak of man. The glittering, misty reality of Lake Balaton he permeated with his tragic emotions and built up a pantheistic universe for himself. He lifted man out of his natural social environment and integrated him into a world of nature composed by the artist himself. The chain of thoughts initiated with the *Primitive Age* now proceeded on another plane. His art was a search for reality, but on the most elementary,

* See The New Hungarian Quarterly, Vol. II. No. I. *Gyula Derkovits, a modern Hungarian painter.*

most primary level. Contemporary critics had much to say about Egry's mysticism. Yet there was no mysticism there—the artist employed a form language created by himself, to express the world he felt within himself and which he could not represent in any other way. The pantheistic experience of the union between man and scene in the atmosphere, the harmony of nature's paradise that gives birth to religious myth, receded before the growing prevalence of this tragic feeling—and the religious themes voiced Egry's anguish and torment. With him, elements of reality were transformed into symbols, exchanging social order for nature's order, and the infinite vastness of space was identified with the endlessness of time.

Nevertheless it was Egry who most profoundly knew Lake Balaton and was the inspired lover of its world. The large lake, with its peculiar moods and colours, served as the source of the new formulation of Egry's art, who followed Bartók's principle of drawing "only on a pure spring"; here Egry found this spring and built up his own, closed world.

The transition from the Lake Balaton pictures to his ultimate style took about five or six years. The *Self-Portrait* (Plate 10) of 1917, still shows the old, calm face with a background of scenery; yet the absence of any connection between man and landscape already points to a break in harmony. The signs of change are also present in his *Shipwright* and in *Play of Light on Lake Balaton*, a mature product of this period. Immense shafts of light pour down from the sky, broken reflexes cut across the space; in the left-hand corner the painter wrestles with this phenomenon of nature. In the *Sundown* the picture is suffused with the splashing beams of the sun's disk, the scenery is broken up into planes. The colouring is dark, the warm ochre yellow of the sun being counterbalanced by the cold blues and greens of the sky and landscape. The same colour scheme dominates the *Storm Over Lake Balaton*.

It was in this period of the first post-war years that Egry's expressionism showed the nearest affinity to the art of the German painter Erich Heckel. The tone of these works is shrill and blaring, all the elements of form fight and clash, the light streams without bringing unity and harmony as in the later works; here it only disintegrates and breaks up.

After a short time Egry abandoned expressionism, and the somewhat fitful flourishes marking the pictures of that period were dissolved into a new tone. *Turf-Fire at Lake Balaton*, painted in 1921-22, displayed the first signs of this change which became more conclusive in 1923-24. His painting was as yet uneven. *Misty Mirage Lights* of 1923 was freer, but *Deep Path* or *Cain and Abel* of the same period were still beset by dramatic contrasts. *Luminous Mirage* in one of the principal works of this period.

The lower part of the picture is dominated by the parallel semicircular range of a hill—embodying the gentle slopes of Pannonia, so unlike the dramatic scenery of the *Deep Path*. This hill is virtually crowned by the tiller of the soil with his raised arms, and the figures of two animals. A distant tree and the vertical line of a church steeple respond to the man. Contour is again assigned an important role, but no longer in the sense of the early pictures; revolving forms in the brilliant light produce prismatic colours; the contours are thus composed of shafts of colour, saturated with atmosphere and light, like the planes and masses which they circumscribe.

The other most significant work of the period is *Balaton Fishermen* (Plate 2). In this close-view picture, space is entirely uncertain, the complete parallel of the two fishermen and their attitude—a veritable repetition, a doubling of a single figure—is lent contrast by the repetition of the waves in a contrary direction. This contrast is accentuated by the colours: the cold blue of the waves is mitigated by the warm sienna of the figures. The background melts and appears to fade away. The impression of space is due to the attitude of the twin figures forming a spatial right angle to the line of the waves. This perpendicular line gives the picture a solid construction; the soaring, vivid design brings firmness to the composition. The remote background is absorbed by the sun, whose rays fall on the water with occasional perpendicular flashes of light.

Hardly any construction is discernible in these later canvases; compared to the compact, somewhat rigid construction of the older works, a new method appears to prevail: these pictures have a very steady, clear, but only most delicately evinced core of construction. The geometrical order of the old pictures has vanished, and with it the contours. Architectonic order reigns in these works, forms and colours, complementing one another and constituting a balance, whether the composition is symmetrical or asymmetrical, while the contours, imbued with light and mist, occasionally thicken, to lose themselves again in transparent lines.

Egry's universe was built up in this compositional order. He reverted to the most elementary stage of the human community, to the most ancient roots of reality, in which there was nothing but scenery and man doing primeval work: fishermen, vine-dressers, shepherds, and great open expanses of water. The project of his Christ series was conceived in this atmosphere. Only a few pieces of the series are known; one of the finest is *John the Baptist* (Plate 4) painted in 1929.

In this work, the apparently infinite space contains three figures: one of them bends down to fetch water; the central, nude figure—that of Jesus waiting to be baptized—is standing with arms crossed. The third

figure, on the left side, looking to the right at Jesus, holds his ample gown with one hand. The figures are connected by the action, or rather the expectant look in their eyes; this connection is deep and intimate, flowing from the content of the painting. The standing figure forms the centre; the look of the man at the left is directed towards him, and so is the action of the stooping figure on the right. The significance of Jesus is emphasized by this marked symmetry, without the addition of any particular attribute. The symmetry is accentuated and strengthened by the double peak of the mountains looming in the background. The peak occupying the centre of the picture rises above the head of Christ, as if crowning his figure. These distant peaks create the impression of space; the painter starts from the two mountain-tops emerging from the deep and proceeds towards the foreground, but all the elements of the picture are referred to the former, ensuring the unity and massiveness of space.

An inspection of the structure of the picture will show that the slowly rising line of the foreground starts from the lower right-hand corner, and is terminated by the semicircular line of the reeds on the left. This horizontal line supports the stressed verticality of the two upright figures, which is of diminished intensity in the stooping figure, and finally dies away in the vertical line of the reeds in the lower right-hand corner. The colour shadings stand out undisturbed in the centre of the picture; in the upper part, the undulating lines of the two conical peaks form a counterpoint and *finale* to the form-world dominating the foreground. In the colour scheme white is for the first time preponderant. The Paris-blue shadows of the sienna-tinted figures are reflected by the water, where they encounter the shadows of the blue mountains; thus the figures and mountains seem to merge, and man is elevated to the grandeur of infinite nature. This immediate juxtaposition of warm and cold colours, this colour harmony, arouse in the spectator a specially pleasant sensation of balance. White streams from the upper left-hand corner of the picture; after being interrupted by the red of the clouds and the semicircular blue of the reeds, it spreads victoriously over the picture, to be broken only at the right-hand edge by the horizontal stripes of blue and red. By virtue of its important message, crystalline clarity of construction and power of colouration, this picture may be regarded as one of the artist's finest works.

The other great picture of Christ from the same period is *Poor Fishermen (Christ among the Poor)*. In its construction the picture is divided into two parts, with two fishermen bent back, pulling a net to the right, and Christ with the two apostles to the left. The connection between the two parts is spiritual only, indicating that "salvation" will come to the poor. The

pictures of Christopher carry similar ideas: *Saint Christopher at Lake Balaton* (Plate 5) and *Christopher in the Village*. Saint Christopher's legend forms part of the myth of baptism, in which the redeeming power of light plays a part. That is why Egry chose Chrisopher, the symbol of light.

Occasionally the painter also showed his own face, letting his tormented self emerge from behind the mask of a symbolism of his own creation. The anguish of his meditating face in the *Self-Portrait in Sunshine (The Painter)* of 1927, the queer, nervous grimace and excitedly raised hand of the *Barker* (Plate 8) of 1929, are open avowals, admitting the uselessness of seeking concealment behind a mask.

The opening years of the 1930's wrought a new though not such a deep change in Egry's art. The more and more open adjustment of Hungary's political and economic life to preparations for war, her joining forces with Italian, then German fascism, induced him to give up the Christ series for the time being. The number of pictures representing figures greatly diminished, while the weight and importance of the "landscapes" increased. The word landscape is here placed between inverted commas because with Egry such works never implied a naturalistic interpretation of the scene. "I am interested in space and infinity," he said in one of his writings. "There is, for instance, the female figure (in his *Echo*, Plate 3) shouting into the distance. This voice, lost in endless space, is what I find captivating. Everyone paints light as dim and blurred. I am excited by light itself. By the atmosphere, which is architectonic. With me light and haze assume form, like the figure itself. They fill space."

The chief protagonist of this period was light, absorbing his search for freedom. In his diary he wrote: "The hazy lights of Lake Balaton transform real forms—objects. Views, perspective undergo ceaseless change and transformation, and lights themselves assume pictorial form." This marvellous unity of the material and phenomenal of light, became the chief coordinating element in the pictures of this period. The process that began in the post-war years carried him still further: now, without hesitation, he replaced society by nature, mostly discarding even the figures and seeking harmony in a complete communion with nature, which is able to obliterate all memory of the disharmony of the surrounding world. The brilliant disk of the sun symbolizes the world's hope, shedding light in the face of stupidity and baseness, and illuminating the world built by himself. Light became the symbol of liberty in the art of József Egry.

At this time the double building elements of his pictures were luminiferous colour and line. Colour conveys atmosphere, interpreting the painter's emotional message—as a theme does in music. Light streams, tumbles,

spreads—giving life and strength to colour, uniting, gathering the picture into a whole—like the tunes and variations that entwine a theme while developing it. The lines, however, bring dynamic tension into the picture, helping light to produce a firm structural scheme, organically united with light and colour. In Egry's painting sienna red is the dominant colour, standing as it does mid-way between heavy, grave browns and gleaming, luminous yellows; in contrast, Paris-blue shot with green is accompanied by white as the third. This trio, where two complementary colours are

## PRESENT LOCATION OF SOME PICTURES OF JÓZSEF EGRY

*Before the Night Refuge.* Hungarian National Gallery

*Field Work.* Owner unknown—auctioned in 1960

*Primitive Age.* Owner unknown—only familiar from reproductions

*Recruits.* Owner unknown—only familiar from reproductions

*Before the Fortress.* Owner unknown—only familiar from reproductions

*Stretcher-Bearers.* Hungarian National Gallery

*Funeral.* Owner unknown—only familiar from reproductions

*Self-Portrait* (1917). Hungarian National Gallery

*Shipwright.* Owner unknown—only familiar from reproductions and a description

*Play of Light on Lake Balaton.* In the rivate collection of László Cseh-Szombathy

*Sundown.* Owner unknown—only familiar from reproductions and a description

*Storm over Lake Balaton.* In the private collection of László Cseh-Szombathy

*Turf-Fire at Lake Balaton.* In the private collection of László Cseh-Szombathy

*Misty Mirage Lights.* In the private collection of Ödön Márton

*Deep Path.* In the private collection of Vencel Fritsch

*Balaton Fishermen.* Balaton Museum, Keszthely

*John the Baptist.* In the private collection of Béla Radnai

*Poor Fishermen.* In the private collection of Henrik Tamás

*St. Christopher at Lake Balaton.* In the private collection of Lajos Fruchter

*St. Christopher in the Village.* Ownership unknown

*Self-Portrait in Sunshine.* Hungarian National Gallery

*Barker.* In the private collection of Ödön Márton

*Echo.* Hungarian National Gallery

*The Painter.* In the private collection of Béla Radnai

*Man Leaning.* In the private collection of Béla Radnai

*On the Way Home.* In the private collection of Béla Radnai

*Christ Among the Torturers.* Hungarian National Gallery

*Ecce Homo.* In the private collection of Tibor Fónay

*The Miracle of the Loaves.* In the private collection of Jenő Kerényi

*The Miracle of the Fish.* Ownership unknown

joined to white, is pleasant and at the same time highly effective. Bright hues of red and pink surge around them, while brownish and greyish shades contribute to complete the colour scheme.

This period also gave birth to a few pictures containing figures and offering, as it were, a summary of Egry's art both from the spiritual aspect and that of painting technique. *The Painter*, made in 1937, once more showed the world in which he lived. At the left, the scene is shut in by a vertical wall, before which the artist, with a cap on his head, stands looking out. Behind him the water and the distant hills of the opposite shore are blurred by mist under a bluish green sky. "Lake Balaton... means everything to me, it is a complementary part of my life. I have been painting it for twenty years. You cannot get tired of it, for it says something new every moment!" The cold, bluish contours of the grounding are counterbalanced by the warm browns of the face and cap and by the brownish-grey colour of the painter's clothes. His hands are raised to his side in a helpless, somewhat tormented manner, while his eyes search the sky.

The other summary work—chiefly from the formal and technical point of view—is the *Man Leaning* (Plate 7), which, owing to its balanced composition and ripeness, denotes one of the highest peaks in Egry's mature period. The vertical line of the man standing in the centre of the picture is emphasized by his attentive face, the counterpole of the hand supporting the waist, the other hand supporting the head, and the upright body, taut between the two contrary triangles. Here too the contours are permeated and softened by colour—the white and blue silhouette connecting the figure with space. The central part of the picture is the attentive, slightly alarmed face, identified with nature, yet engaged in ceaseless combat with it, expressing the alarm of a man who can find no peace.

The third work in question, where the painter abandoned his usual technique of oil-pastel and returned to oil, *Echo* (Plate 3), painted in 1938, was hailed as "one of the most significant, representative achievements of Hungarian painting in recent years." In a manner completely unusual with Egry, he used a female figure to interpret his message. The same year witnessed the session of the Eucharistic Congress in Budapest; presumably this inspired Egry to represent the figure of *Patrona Hungariae*—after his own fashion. The scene is laid in hilly country; the accentuated figure of a shouting woman rises emphatically from among the hills in the foreground. Her head is thrown back lightly, rendering her figure still more slender, while she cries into "endless space" with her hand held to her mouth. The sweeping curve of the bay lies at her feet, beyond its bend a few trees and houses are to be seen. Far away there is sunshine and there are mountains, which

may be supposed to send back the cry—all this grows dim in the whitish pink air. Sunbeams illuminate the picture, light up the figure of the woman standing with her face turned to the sun, sparkle on the water, and glitter on the hill-tops. The picture is a deeply human confession; in the translucent light around the woman's figure and in the receding distance the painter seeks an echo.

In the picture entitled *On the Way Home* (Plate 1) the painter, by then seriously ill, would seem to say farewell to the world. With his back turned to the spectator, a tired man walks with a net thrown over his shoulder. To his right infinite water, to his left the shore, before him the house where he is bound, opposite him the very low horizon. This is the resignation of a tired man, relinquishing all expectations from the world, from art, from everything.

Although the artist's health was improved by a tour to Italy and a cure in the Tatra mountains, he failed to regain his strength. He painted a few more important pictures, including new pieces for the Christ series, as *Christ among the Torturers, Ecce Homo, The Miracle of the Loaves,* and the *Miracle of the Fish. Ecce Homo* was a grandiose protest against the Hitlerite war; his self-portrait as Christ is surrounded by soldiers with German helmets. Several *Self-Portraits* from this period reflect internsifying torment in his face, evidencing the painter's sufferings. After the liberation he only varied his themes and made innumerable sketches, but was unable to get over the loss of about forty important works, destroyed during the war. His health continued to deteriorate, and under such conditions, no further works of art took shape.

# A SCENE FROM THE INFERNO

by

AURÉL BERNÁTH

*From Utak Pannóniából (Roads from Pannonia), an autobiographical novel published by Szépirodalmi Könyvkiadó, 1960, 450 pages.*

The First World War was drawing towards its close. It was summer, and by now well-nigh everything was rationed. From the clothes-presses of middle-class homes, towels and table-cloths began their countryward procession to be exchanged for ducks and hens. Even a few pianos made the trip and found their way into the homes of well-to-do peasants, who took them not for music's sake bust just to "have" them.

Somehow, Egry* had got hold of a large bundle of home-grown tobacco leaves, and we were considering how to swap the lot for some sort of food. At last, I suggested bartering it for fish, and that settled it.

I went to the outskirts of the town where the fishermen had their haunt. I was going to ask them to let us take part in a night-fishing where we figured we might bring off our barter deal. The boss of the fishermen's settlement even promised to lend us a wherry in which we were to follow the gang when they set out in the night.

Fishing at that time was still done from hulking big barges, for they could get the better of the waves. The men used oars as big as those once used by galley slaves. It was ten o'clock in the evening when we got to the settlement and found the fishermen had just left a little while before.

It was dead calm, and a full moon was in the sky. We worked hard to catch up with the group of four big barges and the smaller boats that went with them. I was plying the oars, and Egry, in a time-honoured way, did the steering with his sweep. The hair-weed portion of the shallows was quickly cleared.

"Nice evening, Jóska," I said, but I felt that the space was too great and in it all human voices sounded unnatural. Who would feel like talking half-way between two planets? For that's how it felt, somehow. The reflected

* József Egry, the painter. (See the article by Sándor Láncz on pp. 103—115 of this issue.)

image of the moon, like some planet of the nether world, followed meekly by the side of our boat, as the firmament of stars above turned into a nether firmament, below. Hovering between these two immense celestial expanses, we might easily fancy our boat was gliding along through some medium that had no resistance.

"Fair enough," said Jóska, alluding to the night.

He didn't have a lot to do with the sweep, so he turned his face up towards the moon. And as he had a way of often twisting his lips into a grimace, he now looked as though he had something against the moon.

We were headed for the promontory of Saint Michael's Chapel, which jutted out into the water. We heard the clicking of rowlocks in the barges ahead, but the fan-like wake in the churned-up water abated, in front of our boat, into a gentle rocking that ever so slightly tipped the image of the moon here and there.

I started declaiming a poem by Petőfi—

> Idly across the sky amble
> The big moon and the wee evening-star.
> How majestic the night!

But here I stopped, overcome once more with that sensation of space. Jóska continued to stare up at the moon. After a while, he spoke:

"Mind you don't start crying."

"How do you mean?"

"For if you do, I'll get out."

He kept his gaze turned upwards. What might he be looking for up there, in the sky? Constellations of stars, maybe? It was something grotesque, that permanent grin of his, and even the muscles of his neck stood out, taut. Like that picture of Goya's... Yes... a man sitting in the middle of the night... with the moon showing... A real night in Spain. Now at last I understood what that picture said... But that man didn't grin the way Jóska was doing now, face to face with me.

"Goya... Can you bear him, Jóska?" I said.

Slowly, he pulled his head down from the sky and gave a push with his sweep to keep us on the tack.

"The Devil knows..."

Umph! Now I remembered. "The Giant," that was the title of that picture. Psh!... Hardly the right comparison. With Jóska's figure! Still, what was it then? What was the affinity?

"Too much of the powder-puff in that fellow," Jóska said, placing his earlier assessment of Goya on firmer ground.

"Are we on the right tack, Jóska?" I asked.

I gave a jerk at the oars, and looked back over my shoulder to note the distance that still separated us from the fishermen's barges. They were just fanning out. Two of the barges halted. I made for those that were nearest to us.

"Halt!" Jóska commanded; "I feel dry."

"Well..."

"Could do with a spot of wine."

"Where d'you expect me to get some wine for you here?"

"Let's row over to Diás," he said. "Go to The Tulip."

"But... I say, what about the fish?"

"To hell with them. The fishermen haven't yet started to drag anyway. We'll look them up early in the morning."

So we tacked about and made for Diás. Jóska was setting the course. In less than half an hour, we were at the little landing-stage that cut through a reed-bank. I had always adored that little pier; it was hardly more than a yard wide and went straight into the water. Its special charm was the wall that the towering, thick reeds formed on either side. Walking along it, even by daylight, you came into a world that was somehow geometrical and yet exotic, particularly if you approached it from inland. From here, you could already spot the lighted windows of The Tulip. Jóska began to brighten up, for he really liked the water only from the shore.

There weren't many people at the inn—only a few thoughtful drinkers and three gipsies: the violin, the bass and the dulcimer. That was all.

"Get us half a litre," Jóska said to the waitress. Then, while waiting for the wine, we suddenly felt like having a bite of something too. They gave us cold fried bream.

When the fish was served, the waitress remained standing beside our table. She must have been twenty-five, with prominent breasts and fine eyes, but slatternly in appearance. A red kerchief, tied at the back, held her shock of hair in precarious order. Jóska, while carefully dissecting his fish, cocked one eye at her.

"Ever been to Miskolc?" he asked her.

"I ain't yet. Not to that place."

"Nor have I, see?" Jóska said, and began to chuckle to himself. He had a peculiar sense of humour. Sort of naive and unsophisticated, such as is only enlivened by racy delivery. He hardly ever laughed himself. He would only get something like a rush of blood into his face, which planted glittering wrinkles all over it and squeezed his eyes into slanting slits.

"A litre of the stuff, Biri," called one of the thoughtful drinkers, while

snapping his fingers the way one does to dogs. One of the gispies started plucking the strings as though in preparation.

When she had brought the wine, the girl once more came slinking over to us.

"Well?" Jóska blurted at Biri as she came nearer. Maybe he meant to say: "Here again, eh?"

Biri's face registered a mute "Yes." Broadly smiling, she resumed her lounging about near our table.

The three gipsies struck up. They were a primitive village band.

"Stop!" yelled one of the thoughtful drinkers. "Sanyi! I want you to play 'My sheep a-grazing... Ghereghe, ghereghe, ghe'."

The musicians exchanged glances, perplexed. Thereupon the thoughtful drinker picked up his glass, spread his legs and, leaning his back against the table, with a measured rhythm, began to intone the song—

My sheep are a-grazing
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
I hang my head in grief
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
The squire's at home, a-playing
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
Ugh! and so's she, my wife
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
I'll thrash and whack and bang her
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
That cursed slut, so help me!
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*

As the tune consisted of merely a few notes, and as every other—meaningless—line was the same, the band didn't have a difficult job. They soon caught onto it, and when the thoughtful drinker made them begin anew, they put the primitive accompaniment into shape. The bass, playing thirds, and the dulcimer, on the lower chords of the instrument, stressed the monotonous lament of the tag. For the *ghereghe* was intended as a plaint, though this became clear only in singing. Hawking and mumbling, then some rhythmically ejected imitation of barking, linked the words proper.

And as the other two drinkers immediately took up the tag, the pent-up seething and wordless fury of the song became the more palpable.

Biri sat down and stared at the singing men, whence, every now and then, a shout came swishing her way like a hurled rocket. "That's it, ain't

it, Biri?" they would cry, among other things, as though she were to attest that the squire was indeed at home while the poor shepherd, hanging his head in grief, was mulling over his sad plight.

"It is," Biri said with complete indifference.

Even as she said that, she pushed her chair towards us, and rested her left elbow on our table. She even addressed Jóska:

"What are you looking at those dirty fellows for?"

"Hist!" Jóska whispered.

We were indeed listening intently to this ancestral song. Heaven knows how it had survived and how it had been brought to Diás of all places. This was something different from the honeyed imitation folk-songs favoured by the gipsies, with which you could have driven us out of our wits.

"This is fine," Jóska mumbled, while he began to observe the floor between his chair and mine. "Gosh! That's the stuff!... What do you say, Biri?"

The question made her move still closer.

Now the thoughtful drinker broke into the second stanza—

Wish I could once again
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
Go to Kálkápolna
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
My mother's advice, I'm sure
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
I would not spurn this time
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
Nor would I take service
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
To tend other folks' sheep
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
And be like dirt under another's feet
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*
Nor husband to a strumpet
*Ghereghe ghereghe ghe*

"Let's have another half litre, Biri," Jóska said.

But as Biri passed by the thoughtful drinkers with our wine, the choir leader gave her a resounding smack on her hindquarters.

"That's right, Biri, darling, eh?" he cried.

"Go to hell, you dirty swine!" came her snarling, rasping reply.

"Crikey! Look at that fine lady," snorted the drinker. "Putting on side like that... as if I'd believe her..."

Biri placed the bottle before us and sat down close by Jóska's side. She appeared quite put out, and her dark eyes flashed daggers towards the other table. After a while, she turned to Jóska.

"You ain't like that one, are you?" she said.

Jóska looked embarrassed.

"Hell, I don't know," he said at last.

Again the gipsies began plucking their strings, maybe to smooth things out.

"No, you're not like that," she insisted. Meanwhile her angry look softened to imploring.

We drank.

"Won't you have a glass of wine?" Jóska asked her.

"No."

The gipsy leaned forward to the thoughtful drinker's ear, and rocked on his legs as he played the tune:

One penny, two pennies, three pennies—ho!

"Ah, come on!" Jóska persisted.

She picked up a glass from the table next to us. Jóska filled it for her.

"You mustn't be so angry, you know," he said to her the while. "Wipe off those wrinkles from above your nose. They make you look ugly."

Biri cheered up.

"You see," he pursued, "that's the way with men. I once had a friend, Gonzales was his name. And what about him? Well, that fellow—the women simply ate him up. Every week he would take on another. Till in the end he got badly burned. He fell head over heels in love with one of them. 'Look here,' I told him, 'What are you up to? That's no way for a painter to act.' Then he said he'd found the real thing... Well, well, I thought to myself, he's done for all right. A painter who's 'found the real thing'! Ugh!" At this point Jóska very nearly spat in disgust.

"And why couldn't he have found the real thing?" she inquired.

"Enough said: he stopped working, just went steady with that woman. Then one day, it was all up. Jilted him, she did. Had had her fill of the Spaniard. Wanted a Frenchman. My! You should have seen what became of that damn fool!"

Here Jóska gave a poke at the wine-bottle. "He turned all yellow, that crazy Spaniard. Wasted away till he was nothing but skin and bone. I told him, 'Listen, Gonzales, you might as well order your coffin.'"

"Still," Jóska went on after taking a sip, "I was pricked with curiosity

to know what the devil Gonzales had liked so about that woman. So I asked him, and what do you think he answered?"

"???"

"He said she had freckles on her nose! What do you say to that?"

Biri was listening to Jóska as if he were speaking the Word of God.

"Well?" he said, looking at her, but she was quite unconscious of him in the ecstasy of her delight. "Well, don't you want to hear why I told you this story?"

Biri was slow to catch on.

"Well, what is it?"

"Maybe you've got some sort of 'freckles' yourself? What with that fellow over there being so determined... Eh?"

"I ain't got no spots," she said.

"No, not on your nose, there aren't. But maybe farther down, eh?"

"Give you twenty crowns, Biri, if you come and sit on my lap," the drinker was at it again.

"Shut up!"

"Forty!"

"Shut up, you filthy pig!"

"Whew!" the drinker gave his thigh a mighty slap, then, half grinning, half moaning into the gipsy's face, he said, "Last night she came for a tenner, she did. And not on my lap, either, but beneath my full weight."

Thereupon Biri, foaming at the mouth, jumped to her feet and hurled her glass at the man. It hit the dulcimer.

"Ho! Heigh!... Well I... To hell with her!"

For some time, confusion reigned among the gipsies. But then, they had seen bigger and wilder storms in their time. The drinker never batted an eyelid.

"Come on, start up again!" the thoughtful drinker shouted at the band. The gipsies obliged.

> One penny, two pennies, three pennies—ho!
> Maidens have cheeks...

"Don't you believe him," Biri, turning to Jóska, implored. "That brute!... Don't you believe what he says!"

A ringing laughter went up over there.

"What does she say?"

There was no follow-up, however, for the gipsies played ever louder—

. . . like milk
They go to church for prayers
And have a good time at night.
One penny, two pennies, three pennies—ho!

The drinker leaned over the dulcimer, but, his eyes half-closed, was still watching Biri. Meanwhile, the gipsy was plucking out the same tune, "One penny, two pennies, three pennies. . ." always stressing the numbers. The air was hot, as though someone had stoked up a stove.

And then the drinker, like a marksman who takes a long aim so that he might hit the bull's eye, gurgled:

"Every night she has to have another, the slut. . ."

But now Biri was ignoring him. She kept looking at Jóska, who was rolling pellets of bread in growing embarrassment.

"The bill, Biri," he said on a sudden.

"Oh!" she whimpered, "Don't go, please!"

Jóska put a note on the table which must have paid abundently for our supper, and rose.

We left. Like one stricken with sleeping sickness, Biri followed us.

We could hardly find our way, coming from the light into the darkness.

"Oh, oh, oh," we heard her behind us.

At length we found the path. The narrow streak of moonlit water began to show above the reeds.

"Oh, oh. . . Don't leave me here," we heard in our rear. Biri was following us at a distance of two or three steps, perhaps. "Don't leave me, please. I'm going to die right here if you go away. Do you hear?"

Then she quickened her pace and caught up with Jóska. She continued her pleading in a husky whisper.

"You hear me? I've been waiting for you. . . for a man like you, all the time. . . Understand?"

Jóska shook himself impatiently—apparently, Biri had been clutching at his arm.

"No! Let me be."

I heard a whine.

"I'm not a bad girl!. . . You shouldn't believe that man. . . Now—now I could find my life!"

"I've told you to leave me alone!" Jóska said with growing determination.

Bushy-topped acacias lined the road. The blown-up spheres of foliage

printed black circles against the stars and like sinister wayfarers travelled in the opposite direction.

"You shouldn't believe that man! He's always after me... Wants to bring me low..."

Silence.

"Here they think they can do anything they please with me..."

Presently she broke into a sob.

"You don't believe me?... Why don't you answer me? You've got a heart... I know you have... You ain't that kind..."

Jóska said nothing. We were approaching the entrance to the pier. Biri could have no idea that down by the far end of the pier we had a boat waiting for us, and so, perhaps, she still had some hope. She continued her entreaties.

"I'll be your servant... You may hit me and kick me. I'll kiss the earth where you walk!"

"Now go on back, Biri," Jóska sounded a bit touched as he said this. "Go on back, there's a good girl."

"Please get me right. I'll follow you like I was your dog!"

"No!"

"Like a dog!... Do you hear?"

"No!"

"Have mercy on me. I'm so miserable... Oh, my God! Why was I ever put into this world?"

By now we were walking down the pier, between the reed-walls.

"Where are you goin'? Let's go somewhere else... Let's sit down on a bench. Just let me sit down by you on a bench!"

At this point, we reached our boat. When she saw Jóska step off the edge of the pier right into the boat, she seemed to go mad from the shock.

"Oh! Oh!" she screamed. It sounded like the howling of some beast.

"I'm going to die on this very spot. Understand?... Just once... Please, be with me just once!"

I fancied I heard Jóska laugh for sheer embarrassment.

"Right here on this road... or anywhere you like... I'll lie down for you... Just once!"

Then, as she received no reply, like one who is drowning and grabs at anything handy, with a single tear she ripped her blouse open. A pair of wonderful breasts flashed in the moonlight.

"Oh! Oh!... Look at this!"

I was just then pushing the boat off.

"Look!... Don't you see?... Can't you hear me?"

Then she tore her hair, screaming, "Oh! Oh! My God!"

Four or five strokes of the oars brought us to the bend of the reed-bank; there I tacked away at right angles, and the girl soon vanished from sight. Still, I continued to hug the shore as I headed the boat for St Michael's Chapel.

The screaming went on. Now the sound came to us above the crests of the reeds, impersonal. Suddenly, it sounded as though the earth were emitting from its depths the wailing lament of its terrible suffering.

# TOWN PLANNING AT SZEGED

by

KÁROLY PERCZEL

Szeged is the largest town in south-eastern Hungary. It cannot be denoted as large in a literal sense, for Budapest, with its over 1.8 million inhabitants, is the only really big city in Hungary. The next in order of magnitude consists of a group of four towns of from 100 to 150 thousand inhabitants each; one of these is Szeged on the banks of the river Tisza. It is a characteristic town of the Great Hungarian Plain which surrounds it on all sides. The region of Szeged is the warmest in Hungary; it is richest in sunshine and poorest in rain, and therefore favourable for the growing of fruit and other agricultural products that thrive on warmth, though its relative dryness is often harmful. Since the river Tisza, winding through the southern part of the plain, can best be crossed at Szeged, the geographical preconditions for the development of a city have existed for many thousands of years. Moreover, it is here that the river Maros joins the Tisza. The advantage of being an important river-crossing connecting important inland roads is enhanced by the fact that the two rivers make possible the transport and shipping of goods from the north, east and south, with Szeged serving as a centre. The neighbourhood of Szeged, embracing the most low-lying part of the country, consisted of wet marshland over innumerable centuries. The few firm stretches on which Szeged was built rise island-like out of the lowlands, providing relative safety from floods. The surrounding protective swamps gave the settlement the character of a fortress, thus contributing to the advantages enjoyed by the town in the Middle Ages.

Owing to its favourable situation, Szeged, in the course of history, gradually grew into a commercial and military centre, which more than once played a significant role at times of historical crises. It formed one of the key-points in the defence against the Turkish inroads of the 16th century. The town's development was interrupted by the subsequent

Turkish invasion; indeed, it twice was destroyed during the Turkish wars, and the fort had to be almost completely rebuilt at the beginning of the 18th century. However, the restored city was demolished again and again, in 1712 by fire, in 1878 by floods, before it took on its present design and appearance as a result of the reconstruction undertaken at the close of the 19th century. In consequence of repeated ruin the ancient town and fort have perished, and only a few medieval buildings have been preserved. From the 13th century only the Demeter Tower standing in Cathedral Square has come down to us. The monumental and typically rural Gothic church of the upper town built in the 15th century by King Matthias, a small remnant of the ancient castle converted into a museum, a few dwelling houses from before the Turkish wars and the great flood, finally rich excavations dating from the Roman occupation, are further historical relics from the more than one thousand years that have gone by since Szeged first came into existence.

Following the destruction wrought by the floods of 1878, the town was rebuilt after a design based on what were then the most modern principles of town development, with two lines of circular boulevards and a system of avenues. The centre of the town and the majority of buildings belong to the best creations of the eclectic style of architecture that prevailed at the close of the last century. Szeged displays the virtually unique picture of a harmonious centre consisting of streets built according to uniform plans and designs, instead of the irregular, random development shown by other Hungarian towns at the end of the 19th century. Both before and after its reconstruction, Szeged retained the character of a country town, a typical form of settlement in the Great Plain. The town-size concentration of a population engaged chiefly in agricultural pursuits could also be regarded as a huge village with an urban, commercial centre. Fishing on the Tisza has lent Szeged a further individual trait. Apart from the processing of wood brought along the waterways of the Tisza and the Maros, industry, prior to the liberation, was represented chiefly by textile works, clothing factories, and canning plants processing a few agricultural products, especially salami and paprika.

On the whole, the town remained in a rather neglected, backward condition, only slightly counteracted by the cultural advance resulting from the establishment of a university after the First World War.

Progress inevitably came up against insurmountable barriers as long as the town lacked a noteworthy industry. Szeged stepped on the road to extensive industrial development after the liberation. The town-development scheme then initiated provided for the large-scale building of apart-

ment blocks in the vicinity of the Marx Square market; the erection of houses on the empty sites in the neighbourhood of the boulevards; the co-operative building of twin apartment blocks forming new residential districts, which have become a typical feature of Szeged. Flat-building has been accompanied by the construction of modern schools, of which the Municipal Móra School and the Textile Technical College deserve special mention. Since the liberation up-to-date textile works have been built at Szeged. Lately a large-size cable factory has also been established there. The government endeavours to relieve the overcrowded capital, Budapest, by founding new industrial plants in country towns best suited for the purpose. Szeged is one of them and is consequently beginning to develop into an industrial city. One of the biggest chemical works to be set up in the country is planned for Szeged.

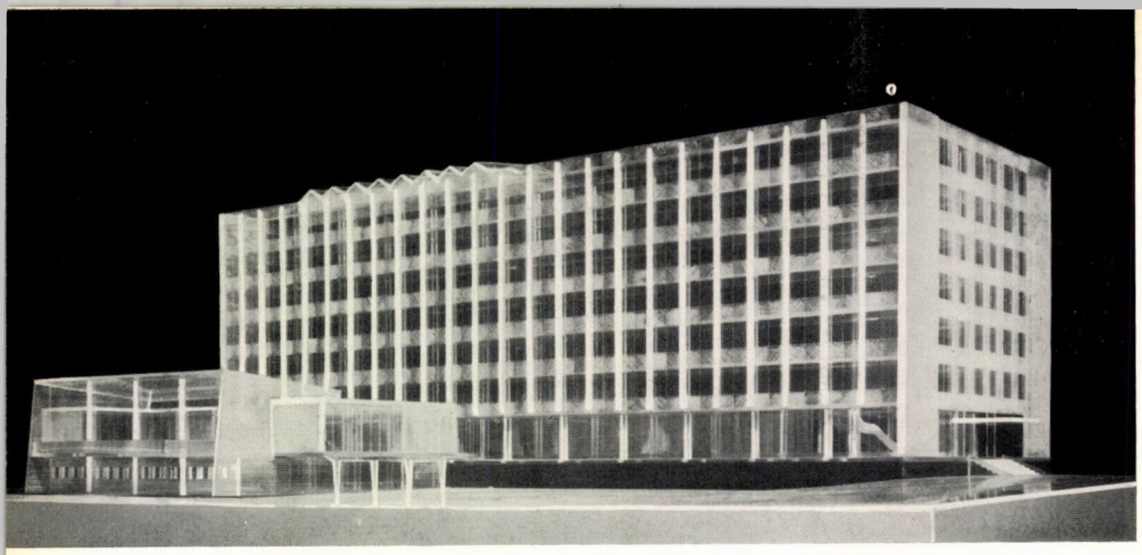
## Foundations of the Town's Development Scheme

Szeged was peculiarly suited for economic leadership in south-eastern Hungary, since it formed a natural centre in the region situated between the Danube, the eastern border, and the Körös rivers. As a result the construction of a spacious, modern county hall was undertaken, housing the county council and county social organizations; the complex of buildings is to be finished before long.

The organizing centre of such an extensive area naturally grows into a large town. If the envisaged growth in population of the four neighbouring villages that are practically contiguous to the town is taken into consideration, the old country town may be expected to develop in about two decades into a city of 180,000 inhabitants. Under socialist economic conditions, development on such a scale is conceivable only in accordance with a planned schedule. Designs for the general development of Szeged and its outskirts have therefore been prepared over a period of years, providing the framework of a scheme covering several decades. The town-building plan is being elaborated by the architect Lajos Füle.

In general, Hungarian town planning is carried out in two stages. The first stage in the comprehensive plan for the development of Szeged has been concluded. The complete designs prepared by the architect for the urbanization of the areas under review are now being discussed by the competent government authorities and institutions, and made available to the local population through meetings and exhibitions. A year later, when the opinions of all concerned have been gathered, the first designs are to be modified with due regard to public opinion and expert criticism, and the

THE DEMETRIUS TOWER IN SZEGED (XIII. CENTURY)



Model of the New County Council Hall at Szeged

Development Plan of the Northern Part of Szeged

final designs drawn up. This process represents the second stage, in which the plan of a single designer is transformed into a collective plan, in which eminent experts as well as local public opinion play their part, and which is ultimately integrated technically and economically by the town-planning architect into a harmonious design. This elaborately prepared plan is then to be submitted by the town council to the Government for final approval.

The fundamental principles underlying the general plan for the development of Szeged deserve attention also because they shed light on the pattern characteristic of the same process in other Hungarian towns. Particular care has been devoted in the first place to a thorough investigation of the existing situation. Accurate studies have been made of all technical installations of the town, every building, flat, *etc.* The research embraced traffic questions, the water situation in the low-lying parts with special regard to the danger of floods, the distribution of the city's inhabitants, and the present density of population. The plan, conceived of as a continuous progression from the present situation, envisages the growing requirements of the town and the most suitable means for satisfying them, stating the exact purpose and function of various areas. The drawing up of town-development plans has been greatly facilitated by the parallel fifteen-year country-wide housing scheme which determines where and in accordance with what time schedules the construction of dwelling houses is to be undertaken, with the objective of letting every family have an appropriate flat of its own by the end of the period. In Szeged, this scheme provides for the building of approximately 10,000 new flats. The share thus allotted to Szeged has contributed to a clearer definition of the dimensions and location of the areas to be utilized as residential districts within the framework of town development.

At present the situation in Szeged is that on one bank of the river Tisza there is a rather small city nucleus consisting mostly of two- or three-storied buildings, surrounded by a huge area of one-story houses, except for the apartment blocks around Marx Square. This thinly populated area of one-story houses is incapable of exploiting economically the public utilities built on a rather generous scale during the reconstruction after the great flood. The density of the population between the two lines of boulevards is therefore to be increased by raising the height of the houses, by filling in empty sites with up-to-date housing and by other measures of modernization. The increase in the height of the houses is to be carried out in a belt filling the whole area supplied with public utilities between the two lines of boulevards, as well as along the radial avenues inter-

secting them. Here the exploitation of existing canalization renders building more economical. Outside this area one-story houses will be allowed to remain, but a belt of new-type two-story houses with several flats, possessing their own gardens and fully supplied with economical public utilities, is to be set up.

This scheme naturally involves the demolition of obsolete one-story houses. These old buildings accommodate relatively large numbers of people, who have to be given flats before the houses can be pulled down. Arrangements have therefore had to be made to avoid a disproportion between the necessary demolitions and the new housing space. A completely new residential district is therefore to be constructed on the empty area —known as Makkosháza—north of the built-up sections of the town, on the basis of the most up-to-date principles of housing and supplied with new public utilities, but without requiring any demolition. Half of the population allotted new flats will become denizens of entirely new residential districts, the other half will remain in the old part of town to be reconstructed. The flats destined to house nearly 20,000 inhabitants in the new residential quarter are to be supplied with heating from a central heating plant built for the purpose. A country-wide competition for the best designs for the new residential quarter was organized, in which the best architects took part. The first prize was awarded to a young architect, Sándor Darnyik. In the best plans, the public buildings of the new residential quarter form a centre which includes the council hall, the cultural centre, a cinema, an open-air theatre, and—possibly—a building containing a dispensary and shops, all of them forming a complex undivided by the main road. Detached apartment houses are to face the neighbouring park, thus enabling their inhabitants to enjoy the fresh air and the green of Nature. Another park area is to comprise schools and cultural buildings in a quiet corner of the quarter.

The quarter is to be divided into three large so-called "neighbourhood units," separated by roads in such manner as to protect them from the noise of traffic. Pedestrian communication is to be kept safe from the traffic of the roads. The apartment houses standing detached around the small central park of each neighbourhood unit, will encircle the schools, nursery schools, and nursery homes, required for the children. In addition to the central stores catering for the entire quarter, each neighbourhood unit is to have its own small shopping centre. The buildings will generally be four or five stories high, but at carefully selected spots the aspect of the settlement is to be diversified by buildings of from ten to twelve stories, including bachelor's flats and a hotel.

At present there is only one bridge across the Tisza from Szeged to Új-Szeged (New-Szeged) on the other side of the river, where there are only few and far-between houses of one story at some distance from the bank. In general, the Tisza is not adequately exploited; therefore the plan devotes particular attention to extending the embankments on both sides of the river and contemplates the building of two new bridges across the Tisza to connect Új-Szeged with the respective ends of the two boulevards running down to the river bank. A third bridge is to serve railway communications. South of the city an extensive harbour will promote shipping. The Tisza has a promising future as an important waterway, because it connects Szeged with the Black Sea by way of the Danube, and adequate regulation will make the coal-mining and industrial regions of north-eastern Hungary accessible to shipping. Szeged may well become the principal port of this new waterway.

The town-development plan furthermore provides for a new residential district on the Új-Szeged bank of the Tisza. The broad stretches of the river are to be lined with eight to ten-story houses which will present an attractive skyline to the opposite bank. Between the row of houses and the river, there will be a number of bathing-pools, lidos, hotels, recreation centres, boat-houses and promenades, stretching to the northernmost bridge. The extension of existing buildings on the western bank and the fine river-side parks will convert Szeged into a twin city, with the river flowing through the centre instead of along its edge.

### City Centre and District Centres

Present-day Szeged, though covering a vast area, has only one commercial and administrative centre with public buildings, cultural institutions, and places of entertainment, situated in the district enclosed by Széchenyi Square, the Tisza bridge-head, and Cathedral Square. The plan is devised to protect and develop this centre, retaining and elaborating the aspect created in the last century. This nucleus is to grow into the duly expanded centre of the enlarged town. In the heart of the town lies Cathedral Square, surrounded by university buildings, where for several years open-air performances have been held every summer during the Szeged Festival, one of Hungary's main cultural events. This beautiful square is eminently suited to the occasion, owing to unusually favourable acoustical conditions and a scenery rendered picturesque by the two lofty steeples of the Cathedral and the 13th century Demeter Tower. Further development of this centre is in progress on the basis of a design by Béla Borvendég, a Szeged archi-

tect, whose tender was awarded first prize at the competition. Oskola Street, leading to Cathedral Square, and a part of the Tisza embankment are being reconstructed in accordance with his plans, which also provide for the erection of new university buildings. The realization of this design is intended to create an even more splendid background for the Szeged Festival which attracts many foreign visitors to the city.

Since a single centre is by no means enough, the plan provides for three district centres: one at Új-Szeged on the opposite bank of the Tisza, the other in the planned new residential district to the north, and the third in the south-western "lower town" in the neighbourhood of the above-mentioned Gothic church and of the future railway station. Each of the new district centres is to include a corresponding administrative centre, headquarters of social and trade organizations, a cultural centre, library, cinema, stores, and a dispensary.

It is noteworthy that each of the three district centres is to be linked with a park. A ring of parks is to run around the entire town along the circular dyke destined to protect Szeged from the danger of floods; within this ring, the three district parks will improve the air of the densely populated centres and offer the population rest and entertainment.

The existing big park near the Új-Szeged town centre, the Népliget (People's Gardens), will be retained. The principal town park is to be laid out around a lake situated directly opposite the centre of the new northern residential district. A new park for young people in the vicinity of the "lower town" sub-centre is to comprise, among other things, an amusement park, sports grounds, a pioneer camp, a pioneer railway and a circus.

## Villages in the Outskirts and New Industrial Quarters

The comprehensive town plan includes the development of the four villages lying outside the present boundaries of Szeged but closely adjoining the built-up areas. The majority of their inhabitants work in Szeged, do their shopping, find entertainment and receive medical care there. A common framework of communication lines has consequently had to be planned between Szeged and the four villages. To satisfy everyday requirements, each of the four villages is to have its own small, well-equipped centre. The plan provides for adequate modern local schools, kindergardens, shops, and cinemas, while local administration is to function as a branch of Szeged. The development plan of the four adjacent villages forms an inseparable part of the general town-planning scheme of Szeged.

Industry is to assume increasing importance at Szeged. This requires

the establishment of extensive industrial quarters for the building of new plants and for the absorption of small workshops now scattered in the interior sections of the town and lacking scope for growth. These industrial areas are marked out beyond the railway line running around Szeged, chiefly in the western and southern parts of the town, separated from the residential districts by a belt of parks. The location of the industrial areas in relation to prevailing winds will render the residential districts secure from air pollution.

### Communications

The general town plan devotes particular care to solving the problem of communications. The contemplated structure of the town rests on a framework of main roads and railways. The present chief communication lines of the town may be denoted as relatively modern. Plans for the future are consequently based on existing lines. The main boulevard is thus to be continued at both ends by bridges over the Tisza to Új-Szeged; these two bridges are to be connected by a new boulevard running through Új-Szeged. As a result, the outer boulevard will encircle the whole inner town, thereby ensuring efficient transport and communications.

The existing chief radial avenues will continue as principal lines of communication in the city; however, the plan envisages their elongation, correction, and enlargement to meet the needs of increased traffic. The avenues are to connect the city centre with the three large district centres, the three industrial regions, the three extensive parks, the planned new railway station, and finally the main cross-country roads, including the central highway connecting Szeged and Budapest, which forms part of the London-Istanbul motor-road marked out by the UN.

In place of the present inadequate suburban railway station the plan provides for a new central station in an environment rendered imposing by the avenues leading there from the centre of the town. At the same time, the scheme also embraces the construction of a spacious shunting yard, so located as not to hinder the development of the town.

The plan also calls for the expansion of the aerodrome situated relatively near to the city.

### Coordination of Local and National Planning

A relatively short time has gone by since the town plan was prepared; it is still awaiting approval, and further modifications are probable. How-

ever, in Hungary the law prescribes that prepared plans for town development have to be taken into account even prior to approval, lest new building operations should hamper their realization. Building permits, without which no important new project can be carried out, are consequently granted only upon the expert advice of the town-planning architect. Planned development of the town is thus assured through constant co-operation between the Town Council and the designer of the town plan. Final approval of the plan invests it with statutory force and assures its subsequent realization. But this alone would not be enough.

The preparation of the town plan of Szeged runs parallel with the elaboration of a 20-year long-term national economic plan and a 15-year national housing plan. Coordination of long-term national plans, embracing a perspective of 20 years, and local town-development schemes makes it possible to utilize state investments in Szeged, with due regard to the objectives of the town plan, for the realization of a part of the plan. This is promoted by the practice of marking out sites intended for the construction of major buildings, particularly of residential buildings, five, or in the case of more far-reaching schemes, even fifteen years before the date of realization, in harmony with the town-development plan.

Socialist planning thus insures that every advance in this field should be in line with the rapidly growing demands of the city population; beyond this it even provides the means of foreseeing and satisfying the demands of the neighbourhood, and of the region surrounding the municipality. The backward, still partly rural country town of Szeged is growing into an advanced, up-to-date industrial city and is becoming the regional centre of a vast area.

# THREE CUPS OF TEA

*(C'est la guerre!)*

by

MIKLÓS HUBAY

*(This one-act play inspired the composer EMIL PETROVICS to write an opera, based on the text. The first pages of the score are reproduced in a special supplement to the present issue)*

## CAST

THE MAN OPPOSITE
THE CONCIERGE
THE HUSBAND
THE WIFE
THE FUGITIVE
1st, 2nd AND 3rd OFFICERS
TWO GENDARMES

*In front of the curtain*

(*The* MAN OPPOSITE, *an ugly, gnome-like oldster in an ancient pair of officer's breeches, a silk dressing-gown and slippers, with military binoculars at his side, is sitting in a wheel chair, a gramophone in his lap. He is wheeled in by the* CONCIERGE)

CONCIERGE *(who stops with him at the centre. Pointing at him):* The spider!

MAN OPPOSITE: That'll do now! You'll have time enough to do all the talking you want. Your legs are all right and you can go where you like. Just hold your horses now! The trouble is that I'm pinned down here. By tabes. But I can see everything for all that. *(Looks back at the concierge)* Do you know how many pretty women there are, who dress and undress in the house opposite?

(*The* CONCIERGE *shrugs her shoulder*)

MAN OPPOSITE: I can see into sixteen flats from here. Quite enough for a lonely old man. See these fine military binoculars? At first some of them complained to the police. Then they gave it up. I know too much about them. You don't go complaining to the authorities about people who know a lot about you, do you? "A harmless old dotard," that's what they call me. Yet—if only they knew... You see, they can have no secrets from me. I have plenty of time and I can put two and two together. When they draw the curtain across a window, it tells me more than if I could peer freely into their room. *(Turns back)* That's right, isn't it?

(*The* CONCIERGE *nods)*

MAN OPPOSITE: She knows all about everything too. She's the concierge over

there. She's not a clever woman. I might even say she's primitive. But she knows how to hate. Jealousy and hate make the walls transparent. Of a morning, when she comes to do my rooms, we pool our observations. You see, she can't sleep at night. She just lies in her bed, down in the basement, and thinks of her two sons...

*(The* CONCIERGE *starts crying)*

MAN OPPOSITE: They died in the battle of Voronezh. Her husband in the other war, at Doberdo... She just lies there and looks up at the ceiling and sees through all the six floors. As though a flash of light had cleft the house from cellar to attic. The next day, from flat 2 on the second floor, the tenant's nephew is carried off. I'll wager there's a pretty young girl weeping for him somewhere. A pity I don't know her address, I'd be only too glad to console her. *(Chuckles)* You see, my line is to give spiritual succour to lonely ladies. First I just play them a song or two on the gramophone, then the concierge gets them to come over, by telling them I've some pull in the Ministry of War... I have my eye on flat 3 on the fourth floor right now. The situation's ripening, to be sure. They're always a-pulling their curtains. Is the husband in love then? Who knows... You'll see how pretty the woman is. All I've done so far has been to play her the records I thought appropriate... A little light music, a bit of opera, as the situation seemed to require. I'd like to discover what she fancies. She's bound to come my way sooner or later—bless her heart. *(He puts on the gramophone and the music continues to play for some time after the curtain has gone up)*

*(The* CONCIERGE *wheels him out)*

MAN OPPOSITE: To work!

*(Off.)*

*The curtain rises*

*(Scene: a spacious room. The entrance is from a vestibule on the right. Backstage, a glass door opens on a balcony, with a heavy curtain, which can be pulled across it. The walls of houses to be seen opposite show that we must be on the fourth or fifth floor. On the left a glass door opens into the next room. There is a translucent curtain on the door. In the right-hand corner there is a broad couch, beside it a small table with a glass on it. In the middle a round table with chairs. On the table a tray, with an electric kettle, a teapot and cups. In the lefthand corner there is a dressing table with a mirror.*

*Time: the second half of 1944)*

## SCENE 1

*(The* HUSBAND *is asleep on the couch in his shirtsleeves. The* WIFE, *in a light house frock, sits by the dressing table, humming. She stops short, leans back, then turns towards the door on the left. Beyond the door, through the curtain, a figure keeps appearing and disappearing. There is someone walking about in there)*

*(Silence)*

*The* HUSBAND *(half asleep, restless):* What's up... Who rang?

*(The* WIFE *crosses over to him and sits down by his side, stroking his forehead)*

HUSBAND: The light!... Put out the light!

WIFE *(quietly, soothing him):* No one rang... The light's not on.

*(The* HUSBAND *sits up and looks about him)*

WIFE: The sun's shining.

HUSBAND: Yes.

WIFE: I'm here by your side.

HUSBAND: Yes.

WIFE: Well then. There's nothing the matter.

HUSBAND: All right, all right.

WIFE: What did you dream?

HUSBAND: I don't know.

WIFE *(taking the glass from the small table):* Why do you take sleeping draughts? That's what makes your dreams so oppressive.

HUSBAND: And *this?* Isn't this oppressing? To be awake?

WIFE: You know you can only sleep when I hum to you. As soon as I stop, you wake up.

HUSBAND: Then why do you stop?... It would be best to sleep right through the next month or two.

*(He puts his arm round his wife's shoulder)*

*(The* WIFE *continues quietly to hum something)*

HUSBAND: Why don't you come and lie down a bit?

WIFE *(shakes her head and nods towards the left-hand door):* Not now.

HUSBAND *(softly):* He's asleep too.

WIFE: He's up. He was walking about a few moments ago. *(Aloud)* I've put the water on for tea. *(She gets up and goes to the kettle)*

HUSBAND *(irately, softly):* Mustn't do this, mustn't do that... Can't do anything.

*(The* WIFE *continues to hum. Brews the tea)*

HUSBAND: But you're feeling fine, aren't you?

WIFE: Go on with you.

HUSBAND: Like a brooding hen, with cocks under your wings, instead of chicks.

WIFE: What are you getting all het up about?

HUSBAND *(continues in a muffled voice):* Cluckety cluckety cluck, come here my little cocks, don't let the horrid fox catch you.

WIFE *(goes up to him, looks him in the eye and very quietly asks):* Did I ask him to come here?

HUSBAND: No... But you enjoy it.

WIFE: What do I enjoy?

HUSBAND: What? What?... Why, this whole business. That's what! *(Gets up)*

WIFE: I've only tried to make it tolerable. *(Finishes brewing the tea. She stops with the kettle raised in her hand. From outside the sound of Germans singing a marching song breaks in)*

HUSBAND *(shouting):* Tolerable! This? This?!

WIFE: I'll close the window, shall I?

HUSBAND: Will it be tolerable then? Eh? Shan't I hear it then? Do you think I shan't? *(Yells)* I always hear it! I even hear it when there's silence. I hear it in my dreams.

WIFE *(stands motionless before the window):* It'll soon be over.

HUSBAND *(sarcastically, but quieter now):* Over? *(They both stand silently, waiting for the song to end)*

## SCENE 2.

FUGITIVE *(entering from adjoining room):* I can't bear this any longer.

WIFE *(looks at him and quickly draws the curtain to. Then—):* Are you mad? Why don't you call before coming out?

*(The singing fades away)*

FUGITIVE: Forgive me. You're right .. May I smoke?

HUSBAND: As long as you don't want to puff at your cigarette out on the balcony... Take one. *(Offers him a smoke)*

FUGITIVE: I hardly know what I can do and what I can't. *(Lights up)* In order to live, I must not give the least sign of life. *(To the husband)* How did you guess that I'd like to go out on the balcony?

WIFE *(laying the table):* It's only natural. The sun's shining as though it were summer.

FUGITIVE: Aha... So that people should see me. Here am I, for all to see! People live in order to be able to demonstrate their existence. Like tourists: "I was here in 1944..."

HUSBAND: Even a beetle becomes motionless when it is in danger.

FUGITIVE: A beetle, yes. *(Perches on the edge of a chair)*

HUSBAND: Do you want today's papers?... The wireless?

FUGITIVE *(shaking his head):* All they say is that deserters will be executed on the spot. That's all they have to say to me. I neither hear nor see anything else.

WIFE *(gravely):* We are all in God's hands.

FUGITIVE: We're in hell. Not in God's hands.

HUSBAND: Hell, hell. Out there. But here, with us, you're only on hell's porch. That's the least you can vouchsafe your host.

FUGITIVE: Just because I've come out, you needn't play the cheerful host.

HUSBAND: All right then, I won't say a word. It's hell here for us too. *(Sits down)*

FUGITIVE: So it is. And it's me that brought it on you. *(Suddenly)* Why did you let me come? Why are you hiding me?

WIFE: Try asking a harder one, won't you? Because we like you. You're our friend, and that's all there is to it.

FUGITIVE: If they come for me, you too are done for, if they find me out, you're done for too, if I'm taken away...

HUSBAND *(shouting):* And if a brick falls on our heads we're also done for. We too!

FUGITIVE: You know very well that I am right.

WIFE: Your tea'll get cold.

FUGITIVE: *(quietly):* Those who harbour deserters will also be executed on the spot.

*(Silence. They have tea)*

HUSBAND: That's a good strong tea you've made.

*(A sentimental tenor aria is heard from the house opposite. "I long for you, lady..."—or something to that effect. Upon this they all start smiling)*

HUSBAND: Your admirer.

WIFE: He's probably angry because we've drawn the curtain.

HUSBAND: When he sees you, that's one excuse for him to put on some music, and when he doesn't that's another... And at night he plays soft serenades.

WIFE: If he's got nothing better to do...

HUSBAND: And he's not at all put out by my being at home all day now. Doesn't he wave to you?

WIFE: I don't pay any attention to him.

HUSBAND: Or expose himself, like the satyrs in the park?

WIFE: Go on with you... The concierge says he's got field glasses and watches to see what everyone does.

FUGITIVE: A fine hide-out I've found in your flat then. Under the binoculars of a peeping Tom...

HUSBAND: I'll go over and smash his gramophone. I'll crack it on his head.

WIFE: You mustn't quarrel with him.

HUSBAND: Why not? What does he know about us?

WIFE: Isn't it enough for him always to see you at home here?

HUSBAND: I'll put that paper in the window, where it says I've been given leave because of my rheumatism. I haven't had any leave for three years. It's not in the state's interest to have me collapse completely. Everyone knows that.

WIFE: Of course.

HUSBAND: But if the man opposite does not know, he'll be able to read it through his field glasses. A proper document, with a rubber stamp on it.

FUGITIVE: You were lucky to get that paper.

HUSBAND: Because they owed it me. After all, it does make a difference... At any rate I think my being on leave just now is far more agreeable for you too.

FUGITIVE: We can play more chess and have more quarrels.

HUSBAND *(not disposed to let the purport of his remark be passed off with a pleasantry):* After all, you couldn't have moved into the flat of a lone lady, by just coming and saying: "May I, Madame? I'd like to hide here."

FUGITIVE *(laughing):* Yes, to be in mortal peril is no more than a mortal peril. But good form remains good form. Eh?

WIFE: I'd rather you both showed some

gratitude that this war's going to be lost without you.

*(A ring at the door)*

(All stand up after a moment's hesitation.)

FUGITIVE: I'll take the rest of my tea inside. *(Takes his cup and goes out)*

HUSBAND *(to his wife):* Go and open the door. *(Sits down)*

WIFE *(looks round to see whether everything is all-right. Draws the curtains apart half way. Strokes her husband's head):* Don't be afraid. There won't be any trouble. *(Off)*

*(From the gramophone opposite comes a "snappy" song—something like the "Light Cavalry...")*

*(The* HUSBAND *sits rigidly, then suddenly stands up, takes the plaid from the couch, wraps his knees in it, and sits back)*

WIFE *(enters. To her husband, softly):* It's you they're looking for.

## SCENE 3.

(1st, 2nd *and* 3rd OFFICERS *enter in the wake of the wife. They are noisy and full of the pleasantries they learned at girls' parties when they were military school cadets. Except for the 3rd Officer, who does not say a word throughout the scene. He simply stares at the woman)*

ONE OF THE OFFICERS: Ah, the Chief Engineer himself! How do you do, sir?

HUSBAND *(standing up):* How do you do?

1st OFFICER: I'd ask you not to inconvenience yourself, but unfortunately that's just what we've come for.

2nd OFFICER *(trying to flirt a bit with the wife):* Madame surely will forgive us. For beautiful women are always vindictive.

HUSBAND: Excuse me for receiving you wrapped in a blanket. It's my knees, you know. *(Unwraps them)*

1st OFFICER *(his brusque tone is mingled with an attempt at wittiness):* A good thing it's not a wet blanket. *(Laughs)*

WIFE: His rheumatics have come on again, and he hasn't been on leave for over three years now...

1st OFFICER: Nevertheless we shall now have to rob you of your husband.

WIFE: You can't. The doctor's orders... very strict orders...

1st OFFICER *(taking hold of her hand):* So are ours. Only stricter still.

WIFE: I won't let him go.

2nd OFFICER: It must indeed be hard to leave such a charming young lady.

HUSBAND: There's my deputy. He knows about everything.

1st OFFICER: He's there, but he knows about nothing.

WIFE *(changing tactics):* But do sit down for a moment.

2nd OFFICER: We'd be glad to stay but... *(He waves, as much as to say "no")*

WIFE: Do stay.

HUSBAND: Don't delay the gentlemen... It's probably urgent if they've come for me themselves.

WIFE: Are you going?

HUSBAND: Yes.

WIFE: For how long?

1st OFFICER: That depends only on your husband, Madame. *(The gramophone now blares a heroic bass aria)*

HUSBAND *(embraces his wife and, talking with increasing loudness, addresses his remarks to the left-hand door):* Take care of yourself. Don't let anyone in. Whatever reason they give... While I'm away, stay by yourself.

*(The* OFFICERS *smile with an understanding grin)*

WIFE *(suddenly):* I shan't stay at home. I'll come with you.

1st OFFICER: The days of heroic amazons have passed, Madame.

2nd OFFICER: Do you find it so hard, Madame, to be by yourself?

HUSBAND *(annoyed):* You can see she does.

1st OFFICER: Take a coat with you.

HUSBAND: It's out in the vestibule. *(Starts off, letting the two officers pass through the door first, then goes off, together with his wife)*

*(The* 3rd OFFICER *stays behind and*

*stops in the doorway. Puts his brief-case down on the couch and continues to stand there)*

WIFE *(returns and looks at him):* What about you?

3rd OFFICER *(impertinently staring at the woman):* I put my brief-case down somewhere, that's what I'm looking for... You've got lovely eyes, you know. *(Bows)* Au revoir, Madame. *(Off. The* WIFE *follows him out. A door slams)*

## SCENE 4.

*(The* FUGITIVE *enters from left, but he only comes as far as the curtain gives him cover. In his hand there is a teacup in which he nervously swirls the slops. The* WIFE *returns)*

FUGITIVE: You'll allow me to finish this cup of tea first, won't you?

WIFE: The things you think of asking... *(Draws the curtain)*

FUGITIVE: Why? Do you think I don't know who that "Ta-hake ca-hare of you-hourself" was addressed to?

WIFE: Why are you being so sarcastic?

FUGITIVE: The gallow-bird's humour, you know. Before I run into the arms of the military gendarmes.

WIFE: You needn't run anywhere. That's your room and this is mine. That's all there is to it. *(Sits down)*

FUGITIVE: But, but... I must. The poor old boy's being jolted about somewhere in a ramshackle cross-country car and speculating all the while over what you and I are doing here, at home... Are we keeping the three paces' distance between each other? He's having nightmares. And what nightmares! I wouldn't be surprised if he were to blow up the gun-factory, he'll be that nervous.

WIFE *(snappily):* Maybe he'll blow up the gun-factory, but you can be sure he won't inform against you. Whatever happens.

FUGITIVE: Of course he won't. Only his dreams will be worse each day. Because he'll dream he's informed against me.

*(A short silence)*

WIFE *(suddenly):* 'Sh!

FUGITIVE: What's up?

WIFE: Someone's coming.

*(A ring)*

FUGITIVE: The traffic's growing. *(Reluctantly goes to his room. Stops on the threshold)*

WIFE: It'll probably be the concierge, come for the rent. *(Snatches up her handbag, takes money from it, hastily counts it, and is about to go and open the door. She looks back from the right-hand door and affectionately says):* Go and hide, like a good boy.

FUGITIVE *(quietly):* Don't be angry with me... for what I said.

WIFE: Good heavens, no! *(Makes a sign for him to hush and goes out into the vestibule. The sounds of a door being opened outside)*

WIFE *(in a somewhat affected tone of surprise, by way of warning):* How do you do?

*The* FUGITIVE *(catches on and quietly withdraws to his room)*

## SCENE 5.

WIFE *(entering):* You may have left it here, I didn't look.

*(The* 3rd OFFICER *follows in her wake)*

WIFE: Here it is. *(Takes the officer's dispatch-case from the couch and hands it to him)* Here you are.

3rd OFFICER *(quietly drawing closer):* Why doesn't someone with such beautiful shoulders wear her dress cut out deeper? *(Suddenly tries to kiss the woman's shoulder)*

WIFE *(somehow managing to free herself, while the money in her hand is scattered on the floor):* You ought to be ashamed of yourself!

3rd OFFICER *(insolently):* How lovely you are when you're so angry.

*(Starts towards her)*

WIFE: They're waiting for you downstairs.

3rd OFFICER *(shaking his head):* We came with two cars. Your good husband's a long way off by now.

(The WIFE *suddenly draws the curtains apart to look down. The gramophone plays an agitated opera duette)*

3rd OFFICER *(behind her):* Don't be so obstinate.

WIFE *(speaking for the Fugitive to hear):* I could shout for help, but I've no need to do so.

3rd OFFICER: Of course you haven't.

*(A short silence)*

WIFE: I warn you that we're not alone.

3rd OFFICER *(starts):* Is there someone in the flat?

WIFE *(who now has the upper hand, taunts him):* Who knows?

3rd OFFICER: Is there, or isn't there?

WIFE: Try and guess.

*(The* 3rd OFFICER *looks at the door on the left. Is about to start)*

WIFE: Cold, cold!

*(The* 3rd OFFICER *stops)*

WIFE: Do you see that window there? There's a man sitting there, loking at us through field glasses.

3rd OFFICER: Who is that impertinent ape?

WIFE: We'd better not talk about impertinence... He happens to be a retired colonel. Or he may not be retired... At any rate he's now going to be my chaperon. *(Even waves to him, with a small movement)*

3rd OFFICER *(grunting, withdraws to the right):* You're a very clever woman. *(Sits down on the couch)* But he can't see me here.

WIFE: There? *(Casts a glance at the glass door, on the left)* That's where you're most visible.

3rd OFFICER: Why? Are these walls transparent?

WIFE: Like glass.

3rd OFFICER: And does that worry you?

WIFE: Very much.

3rd OFFICER: It doesn't worry me. *(Comfortably lights a cigarette)*

WIFE: And what if he breaks in on us? He's capable.

3rd OFFICER: That'll be too bad for him.

WIFE: Maybe. *(Takes the officer's dispatch-case and plays with it. Suddenly):* When will my husband come home?

3rd OFFICER: Not before we're through with him.

WIFE: Why did they call him? Is there something wrong?

3rd OFFICER: Maybe there is and maybe there isn't. At any rate a bit of a journey by car won't do his rheumatism any harm. If, indeed, he is a rheumatic.

WIFE: A tidy bit of organizing you've done. *(Her eyes are on the man, she is smiling and quietly backing away from him)*

3rd OFFICER: Strategy's my job.

WIFE: I'm afraid there's a slip in your strategy.

3rd OFFICER: I don't think so. By the time I get to the end of this cigarette, you'll come over to me nicely.

WIFE: You're as optimistic as the war communiqués in the papers: "Final victory is imminent."

3rd OFFICER *(brutally):* Tell me, have you got a lover?

WIFE: What if I have? Will you eliminate him too?

3rd OFFICER: The object of war is to secure victory for the stronger contestant.

WIFE: Because you've robbed me of my husband, because you've broken in here... brute force is not the same as strength.

3rd OFFICER: But of course it is. Just as war is war.

WIFE: How many puffs have you got left?

3rd OFFICER: It's nearly singeing my fingers.

WIFE: I'll go and see whether my husband's coming. *(Runs out on the balcony)*

3rd OFFICER *(shouting):* You needn't worry about that.

WIFE *(entering, without the dispatch-case):* Oh dear, how clumsy I am... I do hope you won't be angry.

3rd OFFICER: Why? What's happened?

WIFE: It slipped from my hand. Accidentally.

3rd OFFICER: What?

WIFE: That pretty dispatch-case.

3RD OFFICER: Dropped? *(Stands up)*

WIFE: Dropped... into the street.

3rd OFFICER *(furiously):* "Accidentally?" And you even dare lie to me? Do you know what confidential papers it contained? *(Snatches up his things and starts off)*

WIFE *(innocently):* They're not military secrets I hope?

*(The* 3rd OFFICER *has rushed out. We hear him slam the vestibule door behind him)*

## SCENE 6.

FUGITIVE *(entering, from left):* My congratulations.

WIFE *(putting out the officer's cigarette):* He didn't get to the end of his cigarette after all.

FUGITIVE: And what if he comes back?

WIFE *(more elated than he):* Not this one. Perhaps together with the rest. But he'll be as dumb as a doornail then. Because he's been insulted *(She laughs)* He has!

FUGITIVE *(sits down on the stool in front of the dressing table on the left. This permits him to stay in the shade, invisible from outside):* How you made that man lose face! He stalked in here like Caesar—*veni-vidi-vici.* And then he ran off as though he had had an attack of Ukrainian dysentery. Perhaps at this moment he's brawling with a gang of street urchins to retrieve the minutes of the Supreme Defence Council.

WIFE *(sitting on the right, on the corner of the couch, gives a silent chuckle):* "Strategy's my job"—is that how he put it?

FUGITIVE: I feel like putting on a record myself, in his honour. The one that goes like this: "No angel's guidance will he need—for he's led by his trusty steed—That sorry, silly figure of a man."

WIFE: Nevertheless, you must have been a bit frightened in there. Just a little bit.

FUGITIVE: I'd have defended you.

WIFE: That's what I was afraid of... Not of him. *(She pulls the dress aside a little on her shoulder to see whether there is any trace of the attack)*

FUGITIVE *(quietly):* You really have got beautiful shoulders.

WIFE: You see what propaganda can do. It makes you notice them too.

FUGITIVE: That boar got further in one minute than I have in five years.

*(The* WIFE *begins, mockingly, to hum)*

FUGITIVE: So I'm the "sorry, silly figure of a man" this time?

WIFE: I didn't say so.

FUGITIVE: Look at this ray of sunlight between us. The sharp blades of curious eyes glisten in it. It lies here on the ground like the sword between the lovers of old. In the legend... You can't cross it.

WIFE: Nor should you. We fit in so well as we are, it's as though there was nothing wrong at all.

FUGITIVE: Like old times, when I first came up to you for a game of chess or a cup of tea.

WIFE: And you always kept saying the war couldn't reach us, whatever happened. Do you remember? I believed you.

*(A ring)*

FUGITIVE: You see. We mustn't even remember. There's that bell again. There's war. There's hell. Death's here. *(Gets up)*

WIFE: I shan't open the door. *(Gets up too)*

FUGITIVE: And what if he has come back? The sorry figure? The other one.

WIFE: In that case I certainly won't.

FUGITIVE: I shan't hide any longer! I've had enough of it!

WIFE: 'Sh!

*(A ring)*

FUGITIVE: Like a dog that's been beaten. Get moving! To your place!

WIFE: You just stay here. I'll go and see. *(Off. Her voice from the vestibule)* Who's that? *(Returns. Waves to the fugitive to disappear. Then, speaking aloud in the vestibule):* I'll open in a moment, I'm just looking for the keys.

*(The* FUGITIVE *has in the meanwhile slowly got to his feet and taken cover behind the curtain that was drawn back)*

## SCENE 7.

WIFE *(enters hurriedly):* Wait a moment please, will you? I know I put the rent out somewhere. *(Looks for it nervously on the table, in her handbag)*

CONCIERGE *(has moved into the doorway on the right and is shifting her eyes about, hither and thither):* I see you've got plenty of money to throw about here. *(Comes in and bends down, picking it off the ground)*

WIFE *(in confusion):* You see, I told you I'd put it out... But please don't bother. One's rolled over here—there you are.

CONCIERGE: It's one pengő short. *(Walks about, looking for it)*

WIFE: I'll give you one. *(Looks for one in her handbag)*

CONCIERGE: It can't have disappeared. *(Ferrets and searches everywhere)* I've good eyes... Your husband's gone, I see. *(Looks around)*

WIFE *(nervously):* Yes... Here's the pengő.

CONCIERGE: Just you leave it. I'll find it... My husband didn't come back when he went off in the first war. And my two sons haven't come back either. Do you call that justice?

WIFE: There's no justice there.

CONCIERGE *(bending down, mutters):* How easy it is for them as have no troubles. *(Gets up)* But for me to see how other men are lolling about at home and being hidden in lavatories and larders... *(Opens the door o the next room)*

WIFE *(petrified):* It didn't roll there.

CONCIERGE *(returns):* But every man's turn will come. That's what the postman said when he brought the telegram. Though the postman's still doing his rounds, for all that he's a young man. Why doesn't he go and defend the country?

WIFE: Someone has to bring the letters, you know.

CONCIERGE: To say your son's dead, Madame. The telegram. *(Confidentially)* Though I've written to the German commandant, to tell him about the kind of postmen we have here. Spies! And that great lout of a man in flat 2 on the third floor. *(Cheerfully)* But they've taken him off.

WIFE: The piano teacher?

CONCIERGE: Piano teacher? Did you believe that, Madame? Who knows what he was... They've taken him. This morning. How his wife cried. I could hardly manage to console her. She wanted to jump out of the window.

WIFE: Here's five pengős, dear. You can keep the change.

CONCIERGE *(puts it away):* Everyone gives more now. Before? "I've no change, I'll give it you next time"—and off they were, scurrying upstairs. But war teaches people all sorts of things. Yes, indeed! But what's the use of the money to me, tell me? Couldn't it have rolled under the couch?

WIFE: No, no.

CONCIERGE: Didn't you go out to the lavatory with it?

WIFE: That's a good idea. Have a look there.

CONCIERGE: No... I think it must be here... You know I said to my younger son, "Jóska," I said, "I'll hide you in the coal-cellar. No one'll find you there." But he went as soon as the first call-up paper came. Because it had "immediate" stamped on it. He's right, that postman is, Madame. Every man's turn will come. I'm as lonely as my little finger. Two sons left me, and now I've nobody. Did you know them?

WIFE: Of course I did. They were fine lads, both of them. Especially Jóska.

CONCIERGE: Ay. *(Stands and stares in front of her. Painfully):* Jóska!

*(The* WIFE *puts her arm round her shoulder, consoling her)*

*(Silence)*

CONCIERGE *(comes to. Slowly turns to look at the table. Looks at the three cups. Very calmly):* Did you have a guest? *(Stares inquisitively at the wife's face)*

WIFE: Why? Oh... Of course, one of the officers came back a few minutes ago. *(Puts the cups hither and thither)*

CONCIERGE: I saw him.

WIFE: You see he had left something here.

CONCIERGE: I thought so.

WIFE: He asked for a cup of tea.

CONCIERGE: My son told me it was only the lower ranks that drank tea. The officers, he said, why, bless me, they drank champagne. Out of silver buckets. Champagne only. And champagne with soda.

WIFE: This one drank tea.

CONCIERGE: The Russian officers drink tea, and the English. Hungarians only drink champagne with soda.

WIFE: I can assure you that this one was neither Russian nor English.

CONCIERGE: They drop a lot of them now, you know, by parachute. Didn't you read about it? ... In the paper.

WIFE: No.

CONCIERGE: I read it to the last letter. *(Growing more and more cheerful)* And the posters in the street. *(Starts off)* Goodbye then. I'll write it in the rent book.

WIFE: Don't you think we should try and find that pengő?

CONCIERGE: I haven't time for it. What do you think? I've got enough things to attend to. I'll slam the door. *(Off)*

*(Door slams outside)*

SCENE 8.

*(The* WIFE *remains standing in the middle of the room. The* FUGITIVE *steps out from behind the curtain and goes up to her)*

WIFE *(alarmed lest he be seen from outside):* Look out!

FUGITIVE: It's all the same now. Whatever we do.

WIFE: And what if you fled?

FUGITIVE: She's keeping watch downstairs.

WIFE: Then stay here.

FUGITIVE: For your sake though, it would be better. For all that. *(Makes a move toward his room. Stops)* I shan't take any parcels. God bless you.

WIFE: I won't let you!

FUGITIVE: I must.

WIFE: She couldn't have seen anything. She couldn't have heard anything. It's just our nerves.

FUGITIVE: I felt her feel me, from top to toe.

WIFE: She wasn't anywhere near the curtain.

FUGITIVE: She had long tentacles. My face, my body... through my clothes. I can still feel her. *(Moves his hands about him nervously)* Here...

WIFE *(snatches his hand and strokes it, as she says):* It's not true. Not true...

FUGITIVE: I always only loved you. *(The gramophone plays a wild love-song)*

WIFE: Why do you say this now?

FUGITIVE: Is even that too much? After five years' silence. I hid it, like you hid me, that's how I hid my love.

WIFE: What's to come of us now?

FUGITIVE: I've told you. I'm going.

WIFE: No, I won't let you!

FUGITIVE *(embraces her):* My love!

*(Outside, someone bangs on the front door)*

*(The* WIFE *and the* FUGITIVE *stand there, embracing one another, and since they are kissing, perhaps they really don't hear anything. The gramophone suddenly stops playing)*

SCENE 9.

CONCIERGE *(comes in, a master key in her hand. With it, she points to the* FUGITIVE): He's not registered here!

(TWO MILITARY GENDARMES *appear, and remain on the threshold)*

WIFE *(standing by the man):* What do you want, here?

CONCIERGE: Every man's turn comes. *(Makes a circuit of the room, then goes into the room on the left, whence the sound of doors being opened, may be heard)*

SCENE 10.

*(Voices from the vestibule)*

1st OFFICER *(from the distance):* What's this? Are we being received with open doors?

*(The* TWO GENDARMES *look back, stand aside, and salute.* 1st, 2nd *and* 3rd OFFICERS *enter)*

HUSBAND *(coming in after them):* What's up here?

WIFE: It's a misunderstanding. This man... this... *(She falters)*

CONCIERGE *(in the left hand doorway):* This man is living here, without being registered. *(Disappears again)*

1st OFFICER: Is that true?

HUSBAND: No, it isn't.

1st OFFICER: Then how is it he's here?

HUSBAND: I don't know. I don't know him.

1st OFFICER: Then maybe we'd better ask Madame for an explanation.

WIFE: This man...

HUSBAND *(interrupting her):* It seems what my wife's trying to say—and as I look at them it's quite obvious—is that this man is my wife's lover.

OFFICERS *(View the situation a little suspiciously, a little sardonically. They say a word or two):* Oh... We've come at the wrong moment?... Well, well.

HUSBAND: Please treat the matter with discretion. This is only our concern. *(Silence. Turns to the Fugitive)* Get out of here! *(And as the* FUGITIVE *starts off, he looks at him as if to say "we've made it")*

CONCIERGE *(enters from left, bundle in her hand):* It was under the bed. *(She shakes it out—it is a military uniform)*

1st OFFICER: Whose is this? *(Silence. He yells)* Whose is it?!

FUGITIVE: Mine.

1st GENDARME: Shall we take him? *(A short silence)*

HUSBAND: You see, actually...

1st OFFICER: The man who harboured him, too.

WIFE *(with a soft cry):* No.

*(Gramophone music from outside)*

*(The* FUGITIVE *goes out. The* 1st GENDARME *follows him. The* HUSBAND *silently kisses his wife and slowly starts. The* 2nd GENDARME *follows him. The Officers nod to the wife and go. The* 3rd OFFICER *stops in the doorway)*

SCENE 11.

CONCIERGE *(goes up to the wife, with sympathy):* That's a woman's fate, you see. I'm as lonely as my finger myself...

3rd OFFICER *(stepping forward):* That'll do old girl... *(motions her to disappear)*

CONCIERGE *(understandingly):* I knew what officers like you like, sir. Champagne with soda! *(Chuckles and goes)*

SCENE 12.

3rd OFFICER *(makes himself at home and draws the curtain, then):* I'll do all I can to console you. You can count on me. *(Draws a chair to the front part of the stage, facing the audience. Takes out a cigarette)* I hope this time I shall be able to finish my cigarette. *(Lights up)*

*(The* WIFE *who has so far stood silently, now begins to sob)*

3rd OFFICER: I understand you, dear. It's a bit too much to loose two at once.

But you know these were not real men, because...

*(Two shots outside)*

*(Silence)*

3rd OFFICER: I'm sorry, I'd better not speak evil of them now *(The gramophone plays some infinitely passionate music)*

*(At the sound of the two shots, the* WIFE *stops crying. As though she hardly knew what she was doing, she turns and quietly goes out on the balcony. The curtain conceals her)*

3rd OFFICER *(continues, meanwhile, to chat away undisturbed):* But you see, Madame, war is war. Or, as the French say, with their accustomed wit: "C'est la guerre!" Oh Paris, Paris! What a grand time the German officers must be having there. All those little war widows. There's nothing to it, Madame: "C'est la guerre..." *(The gramophone music suddenly breaks off, as though the needle had been struck, and keeps madly repeating the same bars)*

3rd OFFICER *(his attention aroused):* What is it? Where are you? *(Leaps up. Pulls the curtain aside. The balcony is empty)*

3rd OFFICER *(stops for a moment. Obviously, he does not wish to look down into the street. Then he turns back and stubs out his half-smoked cigarette):* What lovely shoulders she had. *(Snaps his fingers)* Damn!

CURTAIN

*In front of the curtain*

MAN OPPOSITE *(as the curtain falls, he rushes in on his wheel-chair):* Idiot! Idiot! Idiot! What an idiot that major was! Did you see him?

CONCIERGE: Captain.

MAN OPPOSITE: Never mind. I was an idiot too. For all that I'm a retired colonel. I played Wagner for her. Why on earth did we need such an operatic ending. I've got a bad heart, I can't stand these bloody tragedies. I should have played her "Mary," rum-tum-tum, or "Mother's heart," where it says "and down he trod upon it," or the "Black eye's night." Syrup for the widows. That still gets'em. *(Looks back)* You're glad of course now, aren't you? For three days this'll be the most famous house in the street... But to work! Let's have a look at number 3 on the fifth floor. There's a sweet young thing lives there... *(Starts singing "Mary." Is wheeled out.)*

THE END

# GORSIUM

by

JENŐ FITZ

Some four years ago, regular excavation work was initiated on the site of what will ultimately grow into the largest open-air museum in Hungary, approximately 10 miles from Székesfehérvár, among the ruins of ancient Gorsium. It may be expected to take about thirty years before the area covering about 250,000 acres is completely exposed and the whole of the settlement itself, with its buildings, roads, wells, aqueducts, burial grounds, and thousands of other relics from its past life, made accessible.

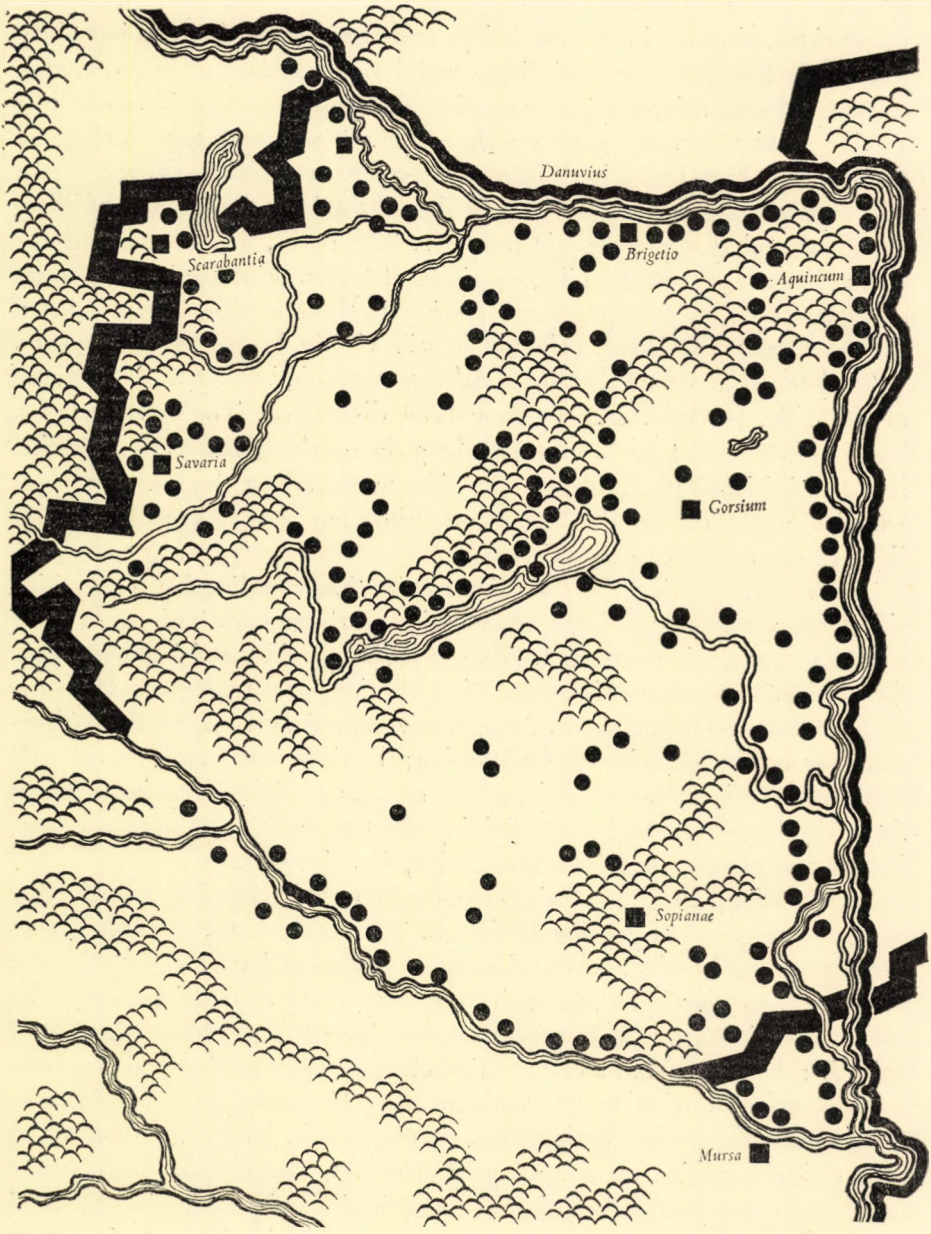
From the middle of the last century this area has been a renowned mine of ancient relics. The pioneers of Hungarian archaeology, János Érdy and later Floris Romer, wandered all over the place and recorded their findings. With the intensification of agriculture at the turn of the century, numerous beautiful stone relics, mythological reliefs representing Aeneas, Icarus, Achilles in Skyros, among others, were brought to light. At the same time, many graves were dug up by vine planters at the confines of the settlement. The size of the latter may be conjectured from air photographs, furthermore from the rubble, fragments of vessels, and coins, covering the whole area and brought to the surface in the course of ploughing.

The dimensions of the area involved and the abundance of the finds furnish convincing evidence that *Herculia sive Gorsium*, a road junction mentioned in *Itinerarium Antonini*, was on this site and not beneath the buildings of Székesfehérvár, as assumed initially at the suggestion of Theodor Mommsen. His hypothesis, based on the Roman inscriptions and carved stones built into the great medieval cathedral, was abandoned when later research ascertained that these had been transported to the spot as building material at the order of King István I. In the *Itinerarium Antonini*, Gorsium was mentioned as the junction of two important roads which lead to Sopianae (Pécs) from Aquincum and from Brigetio (Ószőny), respectively.

Archaeological research has since traced the lines of several more roads that traversed Gorsium. The most significant of these was the road running along the south shore of Lake Balaton through Poetovio towards Italy, while another led to Arrabona (Győr) through the valley of Mór. The settlement by the crossing-place of the river Sárvíz, at the natural junction of the ancient roads leading from south-west to north-east and from north to south, was the most important centre in the north-eastern part of Pannonia, under similar but more favourable geographical conditions than its historical successor, Székesfehérvár, in our days.

The scientific investigations were started in 1934 in the neighbourhood of Tác, at the site of two villas (Villa Amasia, Villa Leporis) and the burial ground. The unearthing of the large villa (Villa Amasia) was continued in 1936, and resumed again in 1939, first under the guidance of Tibor Horváth, later under that of Aladár Radnóti, both archaeologists of the Historical Museum. As luck would have it, the first to be exposed were the three huge apsidial halls on the northern side of the villa which, owing to its impressive dimensions, was for several years taken for an early Christian basilica. Only in 1939 did Aladár Radnóti clarify the origin of the building by digging exploratory shafts into the unexplored parts. The exposed northern third of the villa was placed under the custody of the National Monuments committee in the early 1940's and the results of the excavations were published by Edith B. Thomas in 1955. Exploration of the minor villa and the burial ground was resumed by the writer of the present article in 1954. Continuous excavation having been started in 1958, the unearthing of both buildings was completed by 1961. The exploration of further buildings has been undertaken in the excavation season of 1961.

Research in recent years was concentrated on the large *villa urbana*, the Villa Amasia, whose dimensions (62 by 54 yards) make it one of the biggest Roman buildings known in Pannonia so far. Along the south side a street led up the gentle slope near the foot of which this imposing building once stood. From the street it was shut off by a broad portico, the bases of whose columns have been recovered almost complete. The gate—presumably in the axis of the building (the traces disappeared in the 13th century when the walls of the villa's southern part were carried off to be used for building elsewhere)—opened into a spacious vestibule whence doors led to the *peristylium* and to the bath on the left. The huge *peristylium* surrounded a large inner courtyard with a minor fountain in the middle. Various chambers opened from the *peristylium*. Those in the north wing with their vast dimensions, underground heating, and fine installations (statues), formed the richly furnished part of the villa. The smaller quarters of more room-like




THE ONE-TIME ROMAN PROVINCE OF PANNONIA (NOW WESTERN HUNGARY) WITH PRINCIPAL POINTS OF SETTLEMENT.

(The narrow line along the Danube represents the Roman Limes. The boundary of present-day Hungary — except where it follows the Danube in the North and the Drava in the South — is indicated by the broad line.)

proportions, situated in the east wing, and the courtyard stretching along the whole length of the building, served the purposes of the domestic economy. From this courtyard and the adjoining space on the south side a wide chariot entrance gave on the street. A series of tubs for use in farming have been found in the central courtyard as well as in the *peristylium*, which supports the inference that in the villa's later period the building was used mainly for economic purposes. The baths, which occupied the lower, western part of the villa, consisted of four rooms, all showing traces of *hypocausta*. The best-preserved section is the *caldarium*, where part of the floor borne by basalt columns is still visible in one of the corners.

On both sides of the broad, paved street running along the south side of the villa, several buildings have been discovered. The contours of a longish large house have been traced along the southern end—its exploration is to be initiated in 1961. On the side commanding the street it must have had a portico, for the base of one pillar has already been brought to light in the course of excavations.

To the east of this villa, a smaller longitudinal building lay on the hillside with a remarkably large apsis at its northern end. This must have served an economic purpose. Inside the building wide, serial holes of pile foundations have been discovered side by side, and under the floor the skeletons of horses and cattle. An extensive paved well (3.6 yards in diameter) was at the east side of the building; the little water tank on the wall belonged to this well. Excavations have brought to light many iron clumps from the large well and the adjoining ditches, which supports the conjecture that there must have been a smithy in this place.

Surface discoloration and air photographs of the probable continuation of the street point to further buildings. These traces may be followed to the top of the hillside; all the identified roads leading to the settlement converge there, justifying the claim that the centre of Gorsium should be sought at this spot. The houses of the settlement must have lain around this hill: densely within a circular line of some four- to six-hundred yards, more scattered farther away; remnants may be traced to a considerable distance on the surface beside the emerging roads. The second excavated villa (Villa Leporis), about 550 yards from the large *villa urbana*, must have stood among other buildings, though its immediate vicinity was used as a burial ground as early as the 4th century. This villa contained two large halls, one of them surmounted by an apsis, and both heated by a system operated underground. A number of corridors and smaller rooms were connected with the two spacious halls.

One of the three known burial grounds of Gorsium, with earthen and

brick graves from the 4th century and a sarcophagus carved of red stone, begins directly below the west wall of the villa. The other burial ground lies left of the western road, beyond the Sárvíz; the third is in the opposite direction, in the region around the road leading to Aquincum.

Research to date, as well as the finds amounting to approximately 60 thousand pieces, would seem to support the view that at the time of the Roman occupation and during the 2nd century A. D., there was an extensive and populous settlement of the Celtic Eraviscs on the site of Gorsium. The earliest Roman relics are from the middle of the 1st century. With reference to the two brick stamps of *Ala I Scubulorum*, it has been assumed that in the 50's this mounted force of 500 men may have occupied the crossing-place of the Sárvíz and that this strategically important junction may have constituted an inner link in the elaborate structure of the Roman defence line. In the 60's this mounted force already appeared in Moesia, hence its stay at Gorsium cannot have been a lengthy one. This, however, does not imply that the military occupation of Gorsium had ceased by that time. The 1st century tombstone of the *Cohors I Alpinorum Equitata* found at Sárpentele was removed from the Tác region in the 18th century; this auxiliary force, which appeared in Pannonia in the 60's, may have taken the place of the *Ala I Scubulorum* and been stationed here until the age of Domitianus or Traianus, *i. e.* up to the establishment of the *limes* along the Danube, when this camp, together with the other inner-Pannonian forts, ceased to exist.

Traces of settlement during these decades have been discovered only in the environment of the Villa Leporis; they consist of the earliest coins —Vespasian's *denarii*—and the graves belonging to the rural settlement of the Eravisc population. The earliest indications of human life in the northern part of Gorsium, e. g. around the Villa Amasia, may by assumed to date from the turn of the 1st century. The site of the large villa was then occupied by a row of rural houses. Their traces have been observed at the bottom of the cultivated layer (some 12 to 14 feet thick) as thin little walls embedded in the original humus, with remnants of mud buildings, fire places, and wells above the ancient street level. The finds reflect signs of Celtic Eravisc character, the typical grey vessels of *La Tene* origin but moulded after a Roman pattern, often with stamped designs imitating *terra sigillata*, furthermore bronze ornaments conforming to Celtic taste, and particularly early tombstones perpetuating the figures of men, women and children in native costumes. The most remarkable of these is the strikingly fine white marble tombstone found under the floor of the Villa Amasia in 1961. It had been erected by the *municipium decurio* of Aquincum, P. Aelius

Respectus, for himself, his wife, Ulpia Amasia, and their daughter, Aelia Materio, who had died at the age of ten. In the space over the inscription, between two inward-turned *hermea*, Ulpia Amasia and the dead Aelia Materio are seen in sumptuous Celtic attire with *fibulae*, torques, medallions, ear-rings and bracelets. In three pictorial recesses below the inscription a couple, dressed in native fashion, is offering a sacrifice amidst dancing satyrs and nymphs. The tombstone, produced by a Pannonian or Noricum master, was carved in the first half of Hadrian's reign.

This extensive, densely populated native settlement was almost completely destroyed by the great Marcomannic war in the second half of the 2nd century. The grave of the mounted Langobard warrior found in the outskirts of Káloz south of Gorsium, off the road to Sopianae, has given grounds for the supposition that the settlement may have been ruined in the winter of 166/167, when Langobards and allied Teutonic tribes crossed the Danube and penetrated deep into Pannonia, until they were annihilated by two Roman armies in the vicinity of Káloz. If it was not swept away by the Langobard attack, the greater part of Gorsium was burnt down in the Sarmatian onslaught of the following years. Notwithstanding the terrible ravages—traces of fire can be detected everywhere on the walls and on objects above the street level—life did not cease even in the most arduous years of the war. This may be concluded in the first place from the coins: various large bronze coins issued by Marcus Aurelius in the years following 170 furnish incontrovertible proof that money circulation did not suffer any interruption.

Destruction must nevertheless have been extensive. The native graves mentioned in the area of the Villa Leporis and the adjacent burial ground from the 4th century have yielded no evidence of post-war life. It must be assumed that this part of the settlement was not only destroyed in one of the barbarian attacks of the great war, but not rebuilt either until the 4th century. A similar devastation may be observed in the earliest layers of the Villa Amasia. During the long decades of reconstruction after the war, the remaining walls of the old buildings were removed, the ruins were smoothed over, and a new settlement without any connection with the earlier one, was built on the site.

In the lower layers of the Villa Amasia and the building east of it, wall remnants of this period have been found which in proportions and particularly in quality widely differ from the more primitive, rural remnants of the houses built in the first century of the settlement. Among the architectural relics belonging to the period, the foundations of the great temple exposed by the excavations of 1960 in the eastern part of the later Villa

Foundations of the Villa Amasia in Gorsium (Partial View)

Fragment

Lead Tablet of Equestrian Gods

Achilleus
on the Island
of Skyros
(Fragment of Relief)

Altar of Liber Pater with Representation of Mainas and Satyros

Bronze Statue of Venus

Amasia are of outstanding significance, owing both to their completeness and dimensions. The temple was 27.7 yards long, 12 yards wide, divided on each of the long sides by eight pillar bases, and by two on each of the narrow sides. It was a pseudo-peripterial temple, as used in the Roman age; the pedestal of a half-column has been discovered in its original place. The powerful, excellently laid walls rested on remarkably deep foundations: the thick foundation walls, 40 inches thick, descended 80 to 100 inchesbelow the red *terrazzo* floor, which covered the whole inside of the temple. Later the northern, western, and southern walls of the temple were removed to a certain depth below the floor, so that no information could be obtained concerning the entrance. In all probability it was on the south side where charred panels have been found inside the wall, perhaps remnants of the door. A fragment of a fairly large-size limestone statue of Minerva comes from the site of the temple; it displays the scaly armour of the goddess with a Medusa head in the centre, while in her uplifted right hand she held her spear. A Medusa head may also be seen on a silver disk, another find stemming from the temple. These pieces dispel any doubts as to the relationship between the temple and Minerva. The inscription material collected so far contains no allusion to Gorsium's having risen to the rank of a *municipium* or a *colonia*, and it is therefore unlikely that this building represented a Capitolian temple, but rather that a temple in honour of Minerva was erected after the Marcomannic wars, presumably already under the reign of the Severian emperors.

The reign of the latter brought a period of powerful upswing to Gorsium, as well as the whole of Pannonia. The most important undertaking in the sphere of building was undoubtedly the reconstruction of the Jupiter Dolichenus temple, commissioned by the Emperor Septimius Severus himself and inaugurated most probably during his visit to Pannonia in the year 202. The temple has not yet been excavated, but the building charter, perpetuating the memory of its reconstruction, and an altar raised by priests of Dolichenus assembled for the inauguration were found at the close of the last century. In the course of the 1959 excavations, carefully concealed material was brought to light from the hill rising in the centre of the settlement, consisting of four iron bells of varying size *(tintinabula)* and a sacrificial knife. It is not impossible that these objects may have belonged to the Dolichenum and were interred at a later period.

The walls around the Minerva temple belonging to this age, the aqueducts in front and north-west of the temple, and paved sections of streets permit the inference that reconstructed Gorsium must have been a settlement of urban rather than rural character. Not only did the aspect of the settlement

alter in the period following the war, but its population also suffered a change. The remnants of folk culture characteristic of the Evariscs—vessels, articles of attire, burial customs—cannot be traced beyond the close of the 2nd century. To replace the eradicated or severely thinned population, considerable masses of settlers were brought in from elsewhere. The presence of Thracian immigrants from the Balkan peninsula has been demonstrated by the names figuring on stone finds. Religious relics of Thracian character from this period may also be linked with them, e.g., the cult of Liber, whose stone monument (Satyr and Mainas) was later used in the burial ground to cover a stone grave, or the Danubian equine deity whose lead tablet was brought to light during the excavation of the Villa Amasia. Under the reign of the Severians there may also have been a considerable number of immigrants from the East, just as in other urban settlements in Pannonia. This assumption would seem to be confirmed by the impressive Jupiter Dolichenus temple as well as by the finds of oriental character, the most typical of which is a small vessel decorated with a Syrian head and face.

This time too the prosperity of the settlement was short-lived. Excavation of the Minerva temple has produced material justifying the assumption that the temple was ruined by fire. In addition to the charred door mentioned before, traces of fire encountered all over the terrazzo floor evidence the extent of the destruction. Not only was the temple burnt down, but the contemporary ground level was covered everywhere by a more massive layer of ash, charcoal, and gutted rubble than that resulting from the age of the Marcomannic wars. We have no means of identifying the barbarian invasion that swept away the greater part of the settlement in the war-ridden decades following the Severian era. It may have been the Roxolanic attack in 260, which practically left Pannonia in ruins.

At all events it appears certain that this demolition was not followed by any reconstruction. Decades went by before Rome recovered sufficently to think of reorganizing the province and to start rebuilding the ruined settlements. Gorsium was not deserted in this period either. Makeshift stone and mud buildings glued to the temple ruins bear witness to the survival of the settlement. These houses had hardly any foundations, their walls were made of earth, clay and stones salvaged from the ruins of the temple and other buildings.

These buildings were of so transient a nature that in the last years of the 3rd century and the first two decades of the 4th, when new construction was begun, the houses that had survived the vicissitudes of war were pulled down and levelled to the ground, together with the still existing ruins;

completely new buildings included the Villa Amasia, dating from the opening of the 4th century, and the Villa Leporis, which was raised towards the end of Constantine's reign on a site uninhabited for over 150 years. These villas, with their adjoining farm premises, wrought a radical change in the picture of Gorsium. The urban settlement of the Severian era now gave place to a more scattered settlement of villas marked, for all their luxury, by a strongly rural character.

The change of Gorsium's name to Herculia in honour of the Emperor Maximianus Herculius took place in the decades of reconstruction. Despite large-scale building, the earlier flourishing life did not return. Finds are few in number, the graves yield poor material; apart from simple articles of attire, glass and pottery are rare, only a few coins occur occasionally. Exploration of the burial ground has not advanced far enough to offer conclusive data concerning the ethnic composition of the inhabitants. However, it would not be surprising if the population, reduced in the second half of the 3rd century, was replenished by new settlers.

As generally all over Pannonia, construction of buildings can be traced only up to the time of Valentinius I. It was then that the Villa Amasia underwent alterations, and the extent of money circulation offers proof of animated economic life. The brick vats sunk into the earth, which came to light in the western and eastern wings of the *peristylium* and also in the central courtyard, were used in this period.

The graves within the building, in the large eastern courtyard, presumably date from the time of the rapid decline that set in during the following decades. Above the 4th century level no extensive layers of burnt material are discernible; thus the settlement appears to have sustained no devastating attack. It may rather have decayed as a result of gradual desertion by the population and of disuse. No evidence has so far been obtained of Herculia having been one of the fortified Pannonian towns surrounded by a wall, therefore it met its fate sooner than did the walled towns. In the second half of the 5th century the Villa Amasia already lay in ruins; only a part of its walls rose over the ground. The Teutonic tribes living there used its site as a burial place. Their graves, pointing east-west, cut across the floor of the villa and the *terrazzo* paving of the temple; the south-eastern corner of one of them had to be excavated from a buried wall.

Thus the destruction of the settlement did not involve the departure of life. Continuity can be detected, though only in traces. Various Teutonic tribes—including the Langobards, whose memory has been preserved by two beautiful one-sided bone combs—were followed by the Avars, who also left behind a few relics pointing to local settlement: several black mugs,

fragments of vessels, and the grave of a woman from the end of the Avar period. Medieval Föveny, which should be sought at this place, was mentioned in charters from the time of the Hungarian conquest, while allusions to its bridge, customs and church occur in various later documents. The excavations at the Villa Amasia and the minor near-by building have clearly shown the top layer (16 to 24 inches thick) to be full of early medieval remnants.

As mentioned before, many of the Roman stone relics (and other building materials) were utilized for the construction of the great Székesfehérvár cathedral erected between 1016 and 1038; this debris was collected from the ruins of antiquity still extant in the region. Earlier research had concluded that part of these stones were transported to the spot from Aquincum; however, it appears more probable that the bulk came from Gorsium, which was much nearer and similarly rich in stone material.

The excavations at the Villa Amasia assist in solving another problem. At the site of the missing south walls of the villa a remarkably high number of scattered Slavonian provincial *denarii* have been dug up which could hardly have been buried so deep under other circumstances. No information is available as to the building for which these stones were required, most likely they were used for the local church.

Coins and other finds can be demonstrated up to the second half of the 16th century. Föveny must have been demolished by the wars of the Turkish era. The new 18th century settlement was established in another place. Life in the form of an inhabited settlement thus finally ceased here about four centuries ago.

The last ruination and present desertion of the settlement make it possible to expose antique Gorsium by excavations aimed at bringing to light the entire treasure chest of its relics.

# MORNING AT THE CINEMA

by

IVÁN MÁNDY

I remember her wearing a veiled hat, a long cigarette-holder between her fingers, her chin cupped in her palm."

"I remember him in tails and a top-hat. He had on an opera-cloak even when he was chasing the burglar over the house top. He was carrying a silver-headed stick, and out of the head of that stick he would spring a sort of stiletto at you. Could even shoot with it if he liked."

"Renata Polster," the woman with the grey scarf nodded. "Yes, that was her name. I went to see each of her pictures, and I've got all the titles written down in a notebook. Also the names of the men that played opposite her."

"Ben Lunda," the bus conductor said. "He was the first film detective. Harry Holmes was nowhere in sight yet when Ben Lunda was tops." He looked at the woman. "You know, he once riddled a burglar with bullets from his silver-headed stick."

They were sitting in small black easy-chairs, in the dark lobby of the cinema. The place looked like the inside of a garage: you half expected to see some door behind their backs fly open suddenly and a car roll in slowly, majestically. There was a rustle of paper by their side. A distant, clear voice, as of someone talking in his sleep, spoke up:

"Morning performance is the thing. You can always get tickets for it."

Outside the street formed a grey patch; from time to time you could see a tram passing, or dark figures slim as sticks.

The woman clutched at her scarf. Long hairs dropped from under her flower-pot hat and continued in the wrinkles of her face. "There'll never be a filmstar like Renata Polster."

"What about Taylor?" said the conductor, passing his fingers over his close-cropped white moustache. "Anita Taylor made a name for herself, you'll agree."

An usher went across the lobby. She was eating a pretzel, and it was raining crumbs where she passed.

"Peanuts," the conductor said. "I'd always eat peanuts in the cinema. And not only me—why, the whole place'd be strewn with peanut shells." He stopped for a moment. "Always used to get their patchouli in the neck. During the intermission, you know, the usher would sneak up to you with that spray of his, and in a jiffy you'd be smelling of scented water."

"Taylor!" The woman with the grey scarf looked at the conductor as though awaking from slumber. "You may not know it, but that woman actually made her first appearance in one of Renata Polster's pictures. But she only got a wee bit of a part then. Just an insignificant, trifling part."

"Harry Holmes had a checkered cloth-cap," the conductor said, nodding. "Not the real stuff, that. Anybody can have a checkered cloth-cap, but to lower oneself down the chimney in a top-hat, it took a Ben Lunda to do that."

"It took a big fool to do that."

The conductor did not reply immediately. He eyed the refreshment bar, now empty, the cold glass shelves. Then he turned to the man in the green coat.

"Ever seen Ben Lunda?" he asked.

"I had a narrow escape," the man in the green coat replied. "The idea of anyone's prowling about on a roof in tails and top-hat!"

Two kids were hovering about them. One of them now raised two fingers in guise of a pistol.

"I am Ben Lunda and I'm going to shoot you."

"That was the stuff," said the conductor.

"Completely unrealistic."

"Once,"—a quiver ran through the grey scarf around the woman's neck—"yes, Renata Polster once jumped out of the window of a dungeon. She was being chased by Pali Kertész, who used to be in the Municipal Theatre here and later played a robber knight in that film."

"Umph!" The man in the green coat made a gesture of impatience.

"Renata Polster went rolling all the way down the cliffs, then—the door opened, and in walked Renata Polster."

"Well, she has my respect and admiration!" The man in the green coat puffed out his cheeks, glowering like someone who has shot his bolt.

"I believe I saw that film," the conductor said. *The Night of Mysteries* they called it."

"*Night of Revenge*. It's written down in my notebook. With Ronald Norman as the Prince, and Pali Kertész as the Robber Knight."

The boys gaped at her. Suddenly, one of them poked a finger-tip at the other's chest.

"You're the Robber Knight!"

The ushers opened one of the side doors. Empty rows of seats loomed in a cadaverous light. The kids rushed towards them; a satchel swung... copybooks and text-books tumbled onto the floor.

"Sorry, you can't go in yet." The door swung to.

The woman with the grey scarf gazed at the door.

"There was a ball," she said.

And as the others just sat there in their easy-chairs without asking any questions, she spoke rather to herself:

"Once they gave a ball here."

The silence around her continued. Then, slowly, they turned toward her. First the conductor, then a stoutish elderly woman who was munching an apple, and finally the man in the green coat.

"A ball?" asked the bus conductor.

"What! Here? In this cinema?" The plump woman held the apple hesitantly as if about to give it to someone.

"Couldn't imagine a better place," the green-coated man said, pouting his lips.

The woman with the grey scarf waved her hand through the air.

"The orchestra was up there in the gallery," she said. "All the regular patrons of this cinema had been invited, and gifts were handed out."

"What did you say?" the man in the green coat inquired; and the conductor asked her once more:

"A ball, you say?"

"An evening entertainment, with the collaboration of noted artistes." She paused. "When *she* entered, the orchestra greeted her with a flourish. We had known she was coming, yet could not believe it. Then, as she was standing there, before your very eyes, you could hardly recognize her. At least not at the first moment—she looked so different in real life from what she looked on the screen."

The bus conductor leaned forward. The stoutish woman dared not bite into her apple. A girl was standing in front of the woman with the grey scarf, but she did not speak, either.

At last, the conductor asked:

"Who did you say was here?"

"Renata Polster."

The conductor got up: "No! You shouldn't say things like that, you know." He glanced around the lobby—beyond the door marked "Exit" one could see the partition-wall of the house next-door.

"I recognized her from her smile. No one else had a smile like hers—the

famous Renata Polster smile! Remember? There was a time they said of Irene Irving that she was Renata Polster Number Two. What rubbish!"

"You mustn't say things like that." The conductor was still standing. "Here! In this very cinema!..."

"Why not?" said he of the green coat, with the face of one who has got his teeth into a lemon. "Where should she have gone to? The *Vigadó*, perhaps? Or the Legation? Or... the Csongor Cinema, no less! They brought her straight here."

"Yes," said the woman with the grey scarf, nodding her head several times. "Renata Polster had asked to be brought here herself. It was her express wish."

"To be brought here?" The green-coated man winced. "Here, into this stuffy little place?"

"Her most devoted audiences came here—and she knew it. Each of her pictures ran for weeks and months, and they told her about that. No, she wouldn't have gone to any other place."

"Or she wouldn't have come to Budapest at all, would she?"

"She had made that reservation in advance, through her secretary. He was here too, her secretary. He drank claret-cup and went upstairs to the gallery, to the orchestra. They were afraid he might fall off, for he had had a drop too many. But he didn't fall off, just sat there astride the balustrade, with one leg dangling over it."

"Renata Polster!" the old woman said and bit into her apple.

"She danced. I remember, she danced quite a lot."

"Sure. With König & Co., hatters. They had a shop next-door." He of the green coat gave her a look. "She also danced with Ede, gentlemen's and lady's hairdresser, Renata Polster did. With Ramocsai of Ramocsai's Cook Shop too. Want to hear any more names—just to mention some of the better-known?"

The bus conductor sat down again and gazed in front of him. "Renata Polster? In this here place?" He thrust his head up. "If so, Ben Lunda ought to have been here too!"

The green-coated man slapped his knee.

"'Course he was here—same as Pola Negri, Nils Aster and Ramon Novarro."

The conductor looked at the woman with the grey scarf.

"How come Ben Lunda was not here?"

"I don't know," she said. "But Renata Polster *was* here and she *did* dance a lot. She scattered flowers among the multitude and gave autographs. She smiled, but I saw sadness in her eyes."

"You did?" That was he of the green coat again. "Good job you saw it. And may I ask what it was that made the actress sad?"

The others too were leaning forward towards the woman, eager to hear her tell what was troubling the great Renata Polster, the night they had given a ball in her honour in this cinema.

The usher opened a door in the rear. An iron stair-case was revealed in the garish electric light.

The woman with the grey scarf turned her head that way. As though Renata Polster had ascended those stairs that night, to disappear under the roof.

"They had cancelled her contract. A contract for a great historical picture."

"Oh, the poor darling," the old woman said, and took another apple from her bag.

The green-coated one pressed his palms against his knees as he said: "She told you that, did she? I expect she sobbed out her grief to you in a corner. 'Oh, my dear... My film's off...'"

"Her secretary spilled it."

"Oh, I see," said he of the green coat, tapping his forehead. "Her secretary, of course."

"They ought to have invited Ben Lunda too!" The bus conductor looked around him indignantly. "Why, he too had his most devoted audiences here!"

"And," the woman continued, "it was on account of that same Anita Taylor that they had cancelled her contract. Anita was given the Queen of Sheba's part—she had wangled the lead from the studio people." She stopped; then, after a brief pause: "When Renata Polster returned from here, she was a fallen star. And who did she have to thank for it all? Anita Taylor! The girl she had taken out of the gutter and who had at first played such trifling parts in her pictures."

She stopped speaking, and the others were silent too. Only the stoutish woman ventured to remark:

"How could she be so heartless!"

"For some time afterwards, Renata Polster managed to hold her own yet," the woman with the grey scarf said. "But she was getting smaller and smaller parts. I went to see each picture she appeared in. I even went to see the one in which all she did was to bring in a platter as parlourmaid. Then I spotted her as a passer-by. She just ran across the street, from one side to the other. After that—nothing."

The man in the green coat turned his palms outwards.

"Not a thing," he said.

A boy and a girl came ambling across the lobby. For a moment, they shot a glance at the woman with the grey scarf, then walked to the rear.

"It's time they opened up," someone said.

"Same thing happened to Ben Lunda," said the bus conductor, nodding. "They cut him out completely."

"Renata Polster disappeared from Movieland. She came home."

"She did what? Came home?" The green-coated man's eyes popped from his head.

"Her father had a consulting-room here, in Lövölde Square."

"I see. Thank you!" The man in the green coat jumped up and dashed off to the box-office. Presently he was back, planting himself in front of the woman with the grey scarf. He bent forward over her. Suddenly, he whipped out a notebook from his pocket, tore it open, and held it under her nose.

"Here!" He stood motionless, notebook in hand. Then, as she still said nothing: "Give us an autograph!"

Once again the conductor got to his feet; other people rose from their easy-chairs too. There was quite a cluster of people around the woman. At last she spoke.

"Please..."

"Put your name down in there!" A tremor passed through the notebook. "Write down 'Renata Polster'!"

Someone whistled. The conductor, his head swimming, pointed at her.

"What! She...?" He sat down in a chair farther off, as if thunderstruck.

"I never said that." The woman raised her face and repeated, "I never said that."

"But you should! Why don't you say it."

She got up and started towards the exit.

The notebook after her.

"Ho! Miss Polster!"

The children gambolled around her, howling in unison: "Miss Polster! Miss Polster!"

She pressed herself against the wall, and raised her bag as though attempting to hide her face from the newsreel cameras.

The doors were opened.

For a while, the man in the green coat continued to stare at the woman, then stuffed the notebook into his pocket and started for the entrance. He was followed by the conductor, while the woman with the grey scarf brought up the rear. They filed in through the side door.

*Translated by István Farkas*

# IN A STRANGE HOUSE

by

KÁROLY SZAKONYI

Houses like this can be seen in British films. It was a thick-set, strong building, with Corinthian columns on either side of the front door and the number of the house in the angle of the tympanum—a figure eight painted on crystal glass that shone like a cat's eye at night, when the rays from the street lamp fell on it. The light van halted adroitly, so that its rear was in line with the front door. The driver got out straight away and asked whether he could help, but the lads rejected his offer before I could say anything. "Not likely. He'd have the nerve to ask for a hundred-forint tip," muttered Nándi between his teeth. We jumped down on the pavement, while Regina got out of the driver's cab and went upstairs to tell the landlady that we had arrived. It was a Monday, early in the forenoon, and the autumn sun only shone on the windows of the top floor in the narrow street. The weather was on the cool side. We let the back flap of the van down, and I helped from the ground. Márer and Nándi tugged the heavy, carved wardrobe and the couch with the hole in the middle along the floor of the van to the edge. Then Márer jumped down and first we lifted the wardrobe off, lugging it in under the dark, draughty gateway, then the couch. That meant we had the bigger pieces clear. All that was left was a few baskets, some packed cardboard boxes, a spindly-legged card table, a suitcase, and bedclothes stuffed into a grey plaid.

Márer and Nándi busied themselves as though they were carrying their own kit or working to a norm, so the van should not cost too much. "Go and pay him," said Nándi as soon as the van was empty. The driver filled in his form behind the steering-wheel, surly for having missed some earnings. He rested a piece of aluminium sheet against the wheel and spent a long time fussing over the carbon copy. I gave him a thirty-forint tip and he thought it was too little. I did not mind much, but it was a bit annoying.

He put the money away, only just muttered a gruff good-bye, then drove off. I had given him the thirty forints in good faith, and I did not want to let myself be bothered by the driver's not having thanked me for it, yet it nevertheless put me a trifle out of sorts.

"You have to be careful with them," said Nándi. "They'll rob you in cold blood." He jerked his thumb towards the house. "Quite a palace, eh? Right in the centre—couldn't find a better."

"Did you have to do a lot of running about to get it?" I asked, passing a glance over the tall grey building as I spoke.

"It did take some running around," said Nándi. He was a stocky lad of my own age, fair, stubbly haired and strong. He was the centre forward in the factory football team, and always as nimble and quick in the workshop or on the street as though he were chasing after the ball on the field. Regina had just come back, her turquoise mac glinting in the doorway. It had a belt below the waist according to the latest fashion, and her hair still had the stiffness of her wedding hair-do with only a tress or two loose here and there. That was just how I liked it. She had a light, fluffy little scarf fluttering about her neck, and her knees flashed out beneath the short skirt and coat. She was maddeningly pretty.

"We can take the stuff up," she said.

I put my arm round her shoulder, and there, in front of my friends, kissed her. They laughed. Márer laughed too, in the curt way he had, and the only furrows on his face were the friendly wrinkles round his eyes. I was glad that he also laughed and that he was happy about Regina. At first he had not been happy about her. When I first introduced them to her at the end of our shift one day, at the Little Dice Café, he had had one good look at her and hardly said a word. Nándi had been quite different, talking to Regina, telling her pleasantries, almost courting her, though of course it never occurred to me to be jealous, because ours was a very strong friendship. I was glad that Nándi also liked the girl whom I loved, but Márer's silence annoyed me. The next day in the workshop I asked him what was wrong. I had to ask him three times, finally bellowing into his ear—not that that is anything out of the way in our workshop, because of the screaming row the machine saws, grinders and planes make. At long last he blurted it out. "I don't know, Sanyó, whether that girl's the right sort for you," he said. I was very surprised, but I couldn't say anything like "what business of yours is it" to him, because Márer was almost like a father to me. He had taught me to work on the machines, he and Nándi had accepted me for a friend, and for three years now we had been like a family, working in the same team, whether it was in the workshop, on

outside shop-window jobs, building exhibition stalls in the City Park or out on the former horse-racing tracks. I could not say a thing, only it hurt me a great deal, and I wondered what he had against Regina, considering how beautiful and charming she was and how we loved each other. Nándi must have told him, because after a while he came over to me—not the same day, of course—and jocularly shoved my beret down on my forehead. "You know Sanyó," he said, "love's the concern of two people. Don't you worry about me." It did upset me all the same, for quite some time. Particularly the thought of what he might be driving at, what it was that I should not be worrying about, and why Regina was not the right sort of girl for me. He tried to make me forget the whole business, and he was friendly whenever he met Regina, except that they would say very little to each other. As far as I was concerned, however much I thought about it, I always came to the conclusion that we were well-suited to each other after all. We agreed over everything, we could kiss for hours on end, or just sit beside each other on a bench in some out of the way place, having exactly the same thoughts about life. Later, when things took a serious turn and we became engaged, the two of them, Nándi and Márer, bought Regina a fashionable, longhandled umbrella. Márer handed it over at the Little Dice, and it was he who treated us to ices with whipped cream.

So now I kept a close watch on his expression, to see whether he was happy about Regina, and I thought he was happy about both of us. I said: "You're wonderfully decent." My tears nearly brimmed over. "They're wonderfully decent, aren't they Regina, what with getting us this room and with the moving..."

Nándi kicked at a piece of paper to hide his confusion. Márer gave a grunt and said we had better get the stuff up to the flat because it would be noon in no time. Márer was older than we, a family man with two children, but the age-difference never told in our friendship. He was thin and greying, always wore a checked, peaked cap, and smoked half-cigarettes in a cherry-wood holder.

"That's right boys," I said, "you've got to go to work at two. Just leave the things where they are, I'll see to the rest with Regina. You've carted yourselves to death."

"You and Regina?" said Nándi, laughing. "A fine sense of humour you've got. Shall we take the wardrobe first or something else? You give the orders, you're the boss now."

So Regina stayed down at the front door to look after our things, while we seized the wardrobe.

"Hey, half a mo' there! Haven't you ever heard of straps?" said Márer, pulling a piece of knotted webbing from his voluminous coat pocket. They did not let me set my shoulder to it, so all I could do was help them balance the thing up to the third floor. It was an old, carved colonial-stlye wardrobe with mirror inlays. Nándi heaved a great sigh at the first turn of the stairs and shouted down to Regina: "A pity your dad didn't have the darned thing carved of marble!" It was meant as a joke, pure and simple, you had to get used to things like that from Nándi, but I saw that Regina pulled a sour face. Nándi, of course, was heaving again and did not notice. The boys knew we had been given the furniture by my father-in-law. "I'll buy another as soon as I can," I said to Nándi.

"Nuts," he answered, grunting as we reached the second landing. "We'll have carted this one up to the third floor by then."

The job made us sweat copiously. The elderly landlady stood in the vestibule, with a shawl over her shoulders, because we had opened both wings of the door.

"The wall!" she said anxiously. "Do take care, I had it painted this summer..."

She pottered about, like town pigeons do, and she was not unlike one in her greyish-blue dress, full-bosomed and constantly blinking with her tiny eyes. The entrance to the maid's room was through the kitchen. This was the first time I had actually seen it because my friends had only told me what it was like at the wedding dinner, when they announced the whole thing as their wedding present. It promised, though small, to be a pleasant place. The floor had been painted dark brown and the window looked out on the yard. Nándi stopped in the middle of the room when we had put the wardrobe in its place, panted, wiped the perspiration from his face, and with the happy smile of those who give gifts, asked: "It'll do you, won't it?"

By that time I knew something, in fact I had known it earlier, all day, even before the wedding, but I had tried not to think about it. I had no desire at all to think about that certain thing, because whenever it came to my mind, I again and again kept saying to myself: "Nothing's happened yet, I'll see to it somehow." Yet I knew that I could not see to it, and that was exactly why I drove the thought from me. As Nándi now stood there before me, sweating and cheerful, the thing that hurt me seemed very improbable anyway.

"You're the best friends I have in the world," I said. "I'll never be able to repay you..."

Nándi turned serious and said:

"I'll give you a kick in your hindquarters if you fuss... Of course it isn't a two-room self-contained flat, you know," and he spread out his arms.

"Two rooms and self-contained?" I said. "Are there such things?"

At this we all laughed. Nándi put his arm round my shoulders and we set off downstairs for the rest of the stuff. It occurred to me once more, what a fine friendship ours was and how much I had to thank Nándi and Márer for—they had secured me a trade, after all. And those three years...! It had been Márer who had first taken me to a decent tailor, and I had spent the first Christmas with them... The Sundays on which we had cheered Nándi at his matches, the quiet evenings with a glass of beer... and now this business of finding us a room. I was just about to say something about this to my friend, beside whom I was running down the stairs, but again I suddenly could not help recalling what I had known for several days and which had become an absolute certainty during the last two. I had to stop, something gripped my throat, and I felt awful.

"What's up mate?" asked Nándi, stopping short, to look up at me from the foot of the stairs.

"This," I thought, "is when I ought to tell them, or him at least. But Márer too. Every minute makes it worse, and every hour makes it more disgusting if I don't tell them." But then I saw his smiling face—the kind he had when he would come out of the dressing room after a match, with Márer and me waiting for him at the side entrance by the hand-painted poster, and we would say to him: "You were a wizard, Nándi!" We always said that to him, whether he was a wizard or not, and there was no deception or pretence about it, for we always thought him to be a very good player. He would wave his hand and say: "Don't be idiotic!" But a few minutes later, in the factory club, he'd ask: "It was good, wasn't it?"

"Nothing," I now said to him, as I saw his smiling face. "Nothing's up, I just fancied there was someone shouting from upstairs." I suddenly broke off there. I became very frightened and stopped talking. "Why did I tell a lie now? I shouldn't have lied to him. Instead of telling him, I even lie to him." I did not dare look at him, but took a spurt and whizzed past him on the stairs. I remember I became very talkative, saying we should not take the chairs next and complaining about the amount of small junk, and that we would burn the legs of the card-table when we ran out of fuel, and things of that sort, very loud and unnecessarily fast, with many a gesture. But no one noticed, though I kept watching Nándi's face and Márer's and I would not have minded if one of them had asked me and made me tell them what was bothering me, though I was also afraid of it. I became very

strange to myself. Soon we had everything upstairs, and Regina could come up. Nándi went up to the old woman and said:

"Well ma'am, we've brought you these nestless sparrows here." At this he lit a cigarette, but being an amateur smoker he was very clumsy at it and immediately began coughing. "I think they're much like what we told you, aren't they? You won't have much trouble with them. Everything's all right then?"

The woman smiled and looked at me, then at Regina. Her glance halted a moment as it came to Regina's coat and her flashing knees, then she adjusted her shawl and nodded. "Of course it's all right. The rent's paid for three months."

"What?" I asked in amazement. "But I haven't paid anything yet."

"The gentleman's paid it," said the woman.

Nándi flicked his ashes into a matchbox. "Not I. The team. It's part of the wedding present."

"Shall we go, or are we to spend the shift here?" said Márer to Nándi.

"A glass of wine," I said quickly. "Let's have a glass of wine somewhere. Come on Regina."

"You go along," said Regina. "Go and have a drink while I tidy up here." Her face became frigid. It wasn't the first time I had felt annoyed, wondering why her face occasionally became so frigid in the company of my friends.

"You'll tidy up later," I said, taking her hand. I saw that Márer had turned, gone out through the vestibule door, and was now leaning against the bannisters on the landing.

"No," said Regina. She could annoy me a good deal on these occasions, but I was also afraid of making her angry. Her eyes grew large, her face became even narrower, and she let her lower lip droop a little. Her contrariness beautified her. "The boys won't be angry, will they?"

"Good heavens, no," said Nándi, but I saw that he wouldn't have minded if Regina had come with us. He would always have liked to make friends with her, but Regina treated him a little superciliously. I told her so once, but she laughed at me. "That's the treatment Nándi needs," she said. I did not argue with her, though I knew that it was only for my sake that Nándi put up with Regina's superior airs—he was a very sensitive lad at heart. Now he bowed a little to my wife. "A kiss upon your little hand, madam," he said, laughing. He liked to have his joke. Márer, out on the landing, swung away from the bannisters, said good-bye through the door, and put on his cap. I kissed Regina and anxiously said to her: "I'll be back as quick as I can, dear." She nodded. We ran downstairs. At the second floor Márer stopped.

"It'd be better if you were to stay as well," he said.

"What's the idea?" I answered. "My throat's dusty too."

It was really dreadfully awkward. As the stairs ended and we finally came out on the street, I knew that I must make a clean breast of it. At the pub at least. If it was not I who told them, it would be worse than if I abducted Márer's wife or stole the purse from Nándi's pocket.

We found a pub nearby. I paid for three glasses of wine at the cash-desk. They had "Ezerjó" of Mór written on the price-list, but their wine was more like cabbage-juice. The room was unfriendly and shabby. A one-legged beggar with crutches was leaning against the tiled wall as he drank, while round the counter some whitewash-bespattered painters were having beer. We went up to the circular buffet table. We clinked our glasses.

"Well then," said Márer, "lots of luck, once more."

We were just about to drink, when Márer took the glass from his mouth.

"You know, Sanyó, I don't like to sermonize," he said. "But I've lived to see a thing or two. Things'll be quite different with Regina than when you were alone."

I caught my breath, for I felt as though Márer had seen into me, which would not have been surprising as we had got to know each other pretty well during those three years. I suddenly raised my glass higher, to cover my face, and said:

"I know what you're thinking. But friends'll be friends for all that."

"To our friendship!" said Nándi, raising his glass. He took a good gulp of the wine, but it sent a shiver through him. "I've got used to drinking Vita-Cola."

Márer drank, then wiped the mist from his glass with the palm of his hand. "Friends," he said. "Yes, of course." He drank again, took out a crumpled packet of Kossuth cigarettes and offered them round. He broke his own in half and inserted the broken end in his cherry-wood holder. When I offered him a lighted match, he did not take it immediately, but held his cigarette-holder between two fingers. "Look Sanyó, the most important thing now is for the two of you to get on well, you and Regina." At this I forgot the match, so that it singed the tips of my fingers. I hissed with pain and dropped the match in a puddle of wine. Sputtering, it turned into a thin fibre of carbon. Márer waited till I lit another match, swallowed his first draught of smoke, then looked round. "Couldn't we eat some salted crescents? This lousy wine's griping my stomach."

I asked for five salted crescents at the counter. While I stood there, with my back towards them, I had a feeling they were saying something to each other. I suddenly swirled round, but immediately became very ashamed of

myself because Márer was looking out at the door, while Nándi was appraising the one-legged beggar. "If I don't tell them, this business will completely poison my life," I thought. I put down the little basket with the salted crescents among our glasses and waited for Márer to take one, bite off the end, and start crunching it. "Now," I thought, "now's the time to tell them." My heart began to thump wildly, and thick, hot waves surged up and down my body. "Márer!" I began, but he would not so much as look at me. I realized that only my mouth had been moving, but that no sound had issued from it. "Márer!" I was about to say again, when Nándi, dipping his crescent in the wine, turned to me laughing.

"Didn't your mother-in-law curse us when the guests were gone?"

"My mother-in-law? Why should my mother-in-law have cursed you?"

"Well, we were some of the loudest at the wedding-feast."

"Oh," I said, "no, my mother-in-law didn't say a thing."

I did not know why he was asking about my mother-in-law, and I could not really pay attention to him. What I was thinking was: "If I don't tell them now, we'll start chatting, then set out for home, and I shan't be strong enough to let them know. Then one day they'll find out, in fact they'll find out within a week, and it'll be disgusting of me not to have told them. Very disgusting indeed."

"You yelled like a choir leader," said Márer to Nándi. He chuckled. "You kept starting to sing Avanti Popolo."

Nándi giggled and rubbed his forehead with his fist.

"That's what I felt like doing. Did your in-laws have anything to say about me when we left?"

"Nope," I said. "Nothing." I did not quite understand what he had asked. "Why on earth don't I start?" I thought to myself.

"And Márer?" asked Nándi.

"What?"

"Márer. He behaved decently, did he?"

"Of course."

"Avanti Popolo!" said Nándi, giggling. He was pleased as Punch at having done something of which he had no clear recollection. "And did I go on all night?"

"You mingled it with all sorts of marches," said Márer laughing.

"Which?"

"All sorts. You even sang the Artillery March."

"The Artillery March!" At this he roared with laughter, bent forward and put his hand to his side. Márer also thought it amusing, but I only saw them as though through a thick glass wall. I just looked at the way

they moved and how they shaped their mouths for speech and laughter, but the sound hardly reached me at all. As though I had already ceased to be one of them. They were two good friends, I was thinking, who had no thoughts to conceal from one another. This was what they had been like when I had come to know them, only later I had myself been one of them, because they had drawn me in. What should I have done? When my father-in-law first told me what plans he had for me after our wedding, what should I have said?

"Sanyó," said Nándi thrusting his finger at my chest. "What are you day-dreaming about? Is it true that I sang the Art... hahaha... hee... hee... the Artillery March?"

"Yes," I answered. For a moment I recalled the wedding dinner and Regina's populous family, which formerly had a workshop of its own. The dining room, with its great clumsy pieces of furniture stained to a dark cherry colour—more like a museum; Regina's father, the greying, ceremonious head of the family; her mother, fussing with the cutlery; and Nándi, who kept singing songs of the labour movement.

"Your mother-in-law isn't all that keen on you, you know," said Nándi.

"Not very. But Regina doesn't mind."

"And your father-in-law?" asked Nándi.

"Now," I thought. "Now I must tell them." My throat went dry. I shrugged my shoulders.

"His father-in-law's keener," said Márer. He took his glass and held it between his two palms, as though to warm the wine. "Is it true that he's taking you into their cooperative?"

I looked at Márer. Then at Nándi. He had not grasped anything yet, he was not really listening. But Márer's look frightened me.

"My father-in-law's got a plan..." I said. Márer interrupted me.

"So it's true."

I did not say anything.

"I thought is was just the old boy talking nonsense after dinner," said Márer. "I thought you'd have told us."

"You see...," I began. But I could not continue. I felt that it was no use. All the arguments vanished in a moment. I began rotating my glass in the puddle of wine, lifted it, put it down a little further, then further again, forming a chain of small rings on the table. Then I noticed that they were waiting for me to speak. "You see," I continued, but it was very hard to concentrate my thoughts. "When matters between Regina and me turned serious, the old boy stayed out in the kitchen with me one night and told me that, seeing how things were, he had a plan for me. I was to leave the

Works and join their cooperative society. They've got a machine saw too, and they'll pay nine fifty an hour, plus the dividends on profits. It'd all be fine. All right, I thought, why argue, nothing would come of it anyway, and he'd forget it. I hadn't the vaguest intention of going to work there. Then Regina mentioned it a few times, and on Saturday, before we went to the Council, she said it was all right, they were waiting for me... And Regina wanted it very much too."

"Where are you going?" asked Nándi, who had not really understood the whole business yet.

"You see," I said, "actually..."

"He's going away," said Márer. "Leaving us."

"What?" Nándi asked. He did not want to believe it.

"Leaving," said Márer. I looked at him. He was very calm, and there was nothing strange about his expression.

"You didn't say anything about it," said Nándi, amazed.

"I didn't really intend to go," I replied.

"That doesn't make any difference," said Márer. He blew the fag end out of his cherry-wood holder and trod on it. "What you intend makes no difference. It's what you do that counts."

"I didn't want to fool you," I said. I felt most pitiable. I knew what I was doing was far from all right, and that I was going to do it for all that. "Don't imagine..."

"I never imagined anything of the sort," said Márer. "I understand you, really. It'll be better. Nine fifty's more than seven twenty."

"I can't believe it!" Nándi kept repeating. "Sanyó! You mean to say you'll simply not come to work any more?"

"Our friendship'll remain, though," I said. Now that we had begun to talk about it, it did not really seem as awkward as when I had it all cooped up inside me. Nothing had happened. We were able to continue standing around the buffet table, talking. I became a little calmer. "Just because I'll be going to the cooperative is no reason for our not remaining friends."

"That's a fact," said Márer. "A friendship is not the sort of thing you forget from one day to the next."

"The devil," Nándi muttered. "That was unexpected, I must say."

"We'll go on meeting as we did," I said. "On Sundays we'll go out to Nándi's matches. And you'll come to see us."

"The devil," grunted Nándi, glancing at me. I looked the other way.

"Everything will continue as it has been, only we just won't be working together," I kept saying. I was feeling a little relieved by now, I had been too frightened before, and now I saw that nothing dangerous had happened.

"Well," said Márer, "we'll have to be going."

"Of course nothing will change. I had to take this job, for the sake of family peace. Maybe we'll have a kid soon... you get me. But believe me, nothing's really happened."

We went out on the street. At the corner we turned to face each other.

"I wanted to tell you," I said, quietly.

"All right," said Márer.

"The devil," muttered Nándi. He was put out.

"You're angry with me, I s'pose."

"Ah!" said Nándi with a wave of the hand.

"And rightly so," I said. Out here in the street the whole thing again assumed a different aspect. It became incredible and very uncomfortable.

"No," said Márer. "We can't be angry with you. You're not doing it for yourself. And the way the whole business shapes up, it looks as though you were right."

"You say I'm right?" I asked, gratefully.

"I said it looks as though you were right. Well, we'll be off..."

"When shall we meet?" I asked.

"I'll be playing on Sunday," said Nándi. He held out his hand. He smiled wrily. "At three, on the small pitch."

"At three," said Márer. We shook hands.

As they set out, I shouted after them:

"Wait!" They stopped and turned back. I asked them: "Tell me, do you think badly of me?"

"You're a fool," said Nándi. And Márer said: "We don't. We'd tell you if we did."

I waved after them and set off for home. Outside the house I stopped for a moment." I've got over it," I thought, "and nothing's happened." It was a large, grey building, the sort you see in British films, with columns on either side of the front door and the number of the house in the angle of the tympanum—a figure eight, painted on crystal glass, that lights up in the evening. It was cool, and the wind brought the smell of fresh pastry from a nearby baker's. "This is where we shall now live—Regina and I. In number eight." I waited for a feeling of pleasure to come over me. "Nothing special's really happened," I thought. I waited for this to reassure me. Then I went in at the front door. The staircase was very strange. The whole house was very strange. "I'll get used to it," I thought. "One day it'll be as though I had always lived here." I could not really believe it. though.

*Translated by József Hatvany*

# DOCUMENTS

## THE JERUSALEM TRIAL, ITS ACHIEVEMENTS AND ITS FAILURES

### I

### FROM HITLER TO HERZL

"I wash my hands. I feel like Pontius Pilate!" This utterance of Eichmann's made the whole audience, including court president Landau, look up in astonishment.

"Perhaps I misunderstood you. Did you really say Pontius Pilate?" asked the president.

"Jawohl!" replied Eichmann with a brazen face.

It was at this point of the proceedings —on the morning of July 27th, to be exact —that most of the assembled press correspondents, irrespective of nationality, came to realize that the Israeli judicial authorities had fallen victim to their own tactical manipulations: they had brought about a situation in which Eichmann could impudently and without any obstacle not only deny the charges, but even assume the role of having—as he put it—"served throughout his life the cause of the Jews." He was but one step removed from posing as the pupil not of Hitler and Himmler but of Theodor Herzl, founder of the Zionist movement.

Servatius, counsel for the defence, stood with his back to the audience; to this day I regret that I could not see his face when Eichmann made the statement quoted above. No doubt, the simile about Pontius Pilate must have been something of a shock for him too.

Later on, in the press room, amidst the buzzing and rattling noise of the typewriters, correspondents from many countries tried to analyse the causes that had shunted the trial onto the wrong track. The opinion increasingly voiced was that the Israeli judicial authorities, for reasons that were not entirely clear, had tied the hands of the attorneys and limited the prosecution's range of action. Kol Haam, the organ of the Israeli Communist Party, was the only newspaper to reveal that Attorney-General Gideon Hausner and his assistants were compelled to comply strictly to the government's standpoint to the effect that no accomplice must be named in the proceedings who might at present be holding an official post in Western Germany.

The prosecution was thus coerced into the position of having to prove that Eichmann alone was responsible for everything. Not the forces which had helped nazism to power, but Eichmann exclusively. This narrowing down of the responsibility for the ghastly mountain of crimes to one person has, of course, proved utterly unrealistic; moreover, it suggested an obvious tactical line to the defence. If a single person is to be held responsible—Servatius reasoned —this single person cannot be Eichmann; it can only be Hitler; and the responsibility of the latter could only be shared by such

men as Göring, Himmler, Kaltenbrunner, Heydrich, but hardly by such an "insignificant clerk" as Eichmann. Consequently, all Servatius had to do was to scrape together from the archives at the Wilhelmstrasse and other nazi offices a number of documents which, though treating the Jewish question, did not mention Eichmann's name.

Eichmann, in his glass-box, was quick to learn the part which this blunder of the prosecution offered him and refused to take responsibility for anything more than the "arrangement of time-tables." At the same time he changed his behaviour. Towards the three judges of the court he was civil, even courteous, posing in the role of a German officer of the Potsdam school—which, by the way, he never belonged to. Hausner, on the other hand, he treated as an equal. In the absurd situation thus created it was not Hausner and Servatius—prosecution and defence—facing each other within the framework of the legal proceedings, but the mass murderer and the attorney-general. Here is a characteristic example of Eichmann's insolence: when Hausner, with ironical intent, repeatedly called him "Herr Obersturmbannführer," Eichmann began to address him in an equally ironical tone as "Herr Generalstaatsanwalt," whereas earlier he had not used any title in his answers. President Landau finally had to intervene and put an end to this unparalleled situation.

Eichmann's denials led to some quite incredible scenes. When, in connection with his mission to Hungary, Himmler's remark, "the master himself now enters the stage," was held up to him, he dismissed it as "a jovial SS jest." When a document implicating him and signed in his own hand was presented to the court by Hausner, Eichmann declared: "I must insist upon this document being examined by handwriting experts." After the perusal of a gravely incriminating document, he changed his spectacles and sternly addressed the court: "I have got no magnifying glass, only two pairs of spectacles, so I am unable to discern the name of Eichmann on this paper."

Despite all this, he could not, of course, make anyone believe for a minute in his having been but "an insignificant clerk" taking and executing orders. Yet Hausner was unable to break Eichmann's stubborn attitude of negation. Ninety-five hearings were needed to make him admit that "the murder of seven million Jews was the most horrible crime in the history of mankind." This he recognized, however, only in the abstract, while invariably maintaining his claim to innocence. Moreover, to the repeated questions of Hausner as to whether he would call Höss, the commander of Auschwitz, guilty, he invariably gave an evasive answer.

The inappropriate selection of the witnesses was also a distorting factor in the trial. A case in point was that dubious character, Joel Brandt, who was brought in as star witness when the trial turned to events in Hungary. Thus, instead of pronouncing judgement on fascism, the Eichmann trial was reduced to an Israeli affair, or, more precisely, to an Israeli-West-German affair. Only now and then was some light cast on the obscure economic and political interests hovering in the background—for instance when Kol Haam, the newspaper previously referred to, called attention to the fact that hardly had the name of Globke been mentioned in the proceedings when West Germany, allegedly for technical reasons, suspended the talks on the extension of indemnity payments to Israeli citizens.

## II

## THE "HUNGARIAN CHAPTER"

On July 4, after Eichmann had taken the stand as a witness for ten days, there was a sudden and complete change.

The general picture remained what it had been before. The same black-gowned

judges sat facing the audience. The back of Servatius' head reflected the same reddish violet hues; his secretary, with her pony tail, continued arranging the files in her usual impersonal manner; the attorneys, leaning towards the platform, were watching the same man who for three months now had been listening in his bulletproof glass box to the most monstruous accusations a human being was ever compelled to face in the world's history. And all the translators, stenographers, policemen were the same as before.

Yet, all of a sudden, everything was utterly changed. The court-room, which had shrunk for ten days, now widened again and within its walls there reappeared scenes of Dantesque horror: trains rolling towards Auschwitz, rows upon rows of those condemned to death, dragging themselves along in the mud of the road to Vienna. For the atmosphere in the court-room had become that of a committee room and the subject of the investigations seemed to be the negligence, the contradictory measures, the dust-covered bureaucracy of government departments rather than the piling up of criminal deeds. It was Hebbel, I think, who said: "What is the best thing for a rat in the trap to do? To go on nibbling at the lard." Something of the kind had been going on in court for ten days. The accused transformed himself into an expert in the complicated machinery of the nazi bureaucracy, and the monstruous realities of blood, horror, suffering and death faded into rustling paper, into files between brown covers, while a dry and weary voice delivered detailed opinions on various measures of that bureaucracy. Among the files Eichmann felt at home again and went on "nibbling at the lard." He behaved as though he had been called as an expert in his own case. More than once, in labyrinthic sentences, he would seek to instruct the court. He would say: "I think my answer to this question must be identical with that given in connection with the document bearing the number 464, which was submitted to this court by the prosecution." To his department, the Reichssicherheitshauptamt IV/B/4, he would always refer as "Roman four b by Arabic four." (What a meticulous chap—the correspondent of The Times remarked at my side.) While the papers rustled, he would at times evoke memories more pleasant to him. "After the Wannsee conference [where the final solution of the Jewish question had been decided upon], Eichmann told the court, "Heydrich drank cognac and smoked cigarettes for the first time in his life. We were in high spirits, drinking and singing till late in the night." (Incidentally, this same story was also told in the abridged autobiography published in Life.)

This went on and on for ten days. One after the other Servatius read out the documents, piled up at his side, on which he based his repudiation of the charges. Typing errors cropped up frequently in the documents and gave rise to lively controversies between the court and counsel for the defence. The translators, exhausted by the official style of the mass of nazi documents, often made mistakes which the president or one of the judges would put right.

Then, on July 4th, after the midday recess, Servatius closed one of his files and said:

"Now I pass on to the Hungarian chapter."

Those with a transistor wireless set swinging from their neck heard these words clearly in various parts of the building. In a few seconds the court-room became crowded again; the atmosphere, after days of apathy, again became loaded with tension. Behind the bullet-proof glass wall Eichmann grew restless, and began licking his lips—a habit he acquired after his teeth had been removed to prevent him from doing harm to himself, and had been replaced by a false set. On his table the heap of documents relating to the "Hungarian chapter" reached almost up to his shoulders.

I could understand his nervousness. It was in Budapest that his group was given the name "Sonderkommando Eichmann," while his earlier activities had never been defined so plainly in the official documents. In this case he could hardly disclaim all responsibility. In addition, he had already a knowledge of the evidence received by the court, of the eighty-page statement by Höttl, of the records signed by Winckelmann, von Thadden, Jüttner, Becher, *etc.**

He thus knew: those whom he had expected to give vindicative evidence had all, without exception, testified against him. While the statements of Höttl and Becher were being read out, he often shook his head in irritation, changed his spectacles, and made notes almost incessantly—his scraps of paper were carried to his counsel by a policeman in khaki—and when he was given leave to speak he declared: "I'm filled with holy wrath (von heiligem Zorn) against Becher." Eichmann's bitterness could be easily understood, for in 1944, in Hungary, Becher had outmanoeuvred—or, to put it plainly, cheated—him, both in the negotiations with Kastner and Brandt concerning the ten thousand motor-lorries, and in the Manfred Weiss deal. Moreover, Becher was an intimate of Himmler's and had sole charge of all matters relating to the latter's illegitimate child. It was therefore in vain that Eichmann tried to influence Himmler by counteracting Becher's intrigues. Finally, Becher is at present a millionaire trader in agricultural produce in Bremen, while Eichmann is sitting here in the dock at Jerusalem.

Though Servatius made an attempt at the impossible task of reducing Eichmann's responsibility, his reading of the documents only succeeded in—involuntarily—making the audience acquainted with the nature and the mechanism of nazi-fascist rule in Hungary. From the statement of von Thadden, it became clear that Horthy had consented to the deportation of the Hungarian Jews already at his meeting with Hitler at Klessheim on March 17, 1944; and that, although Veesenmayer had a decisive word in all questions concerning Hungary, Eichmann worked independently of the Reich's plenipotentiary, and in conformity with a strictly determined plan. According to Höttl's statement, Kaltenbrunner, who was second only to Himmler, attached so great an importance to the action in Hungary, to the arrest of the progressive politicians and the paralysation of the anti-fascist forces there, that he stayed in Budapest for weeks, personally directing the activities of the Gestapo and the Reichssicherheits-Hauptamt.

In his statement, Höttl not only gave a true portrait of the frightened and nervous Eichmann, who after the collapse of the Rumanian front—and after consuming six or seven glasses of brandy—was beginning to realize that he would hardly escape his fate; he also again branded Eichmann as "the greatest supplier of death." Becher's statement was, in my opinion, the most revolting of all. While Eichmann gave his orders to murder in cold blood, Becher, the present-day millionaire, was at that time already mainly interested in money, or, more exactly, in trading blood for money. The robbing of the Manfred Weiss steel works, Hungary's most important industrial concern, was linked with his name. Of this he gave a cynical account in his statement: "A man named Dr. Billitz brought me together with Dr. Ferenc Chorin, a top executive of the Manfred Weiss group. One day, in the course of friendly talks, he suggested that Germany should

* Höttl was the agent whom the SS secret service under Schellenberg had sent to Hungary; he is at present the principal of a school at Alt-Aussee. General of the SS (Obergruppenführer) Winckelmann was the commander of the SS troops in Hungary. Von Thadden, a counsellor at the nazi Foreign Ministry, headed the department in charge of Jewish affairs there. Jüttner too was an SS general. Becher was detailed to Hungary in the capacity of chief economic adviser to the SS.

take over the Manfred Weiss group, at the same time enabling the Weiss family to leave the country. Himmler assented to this proposal, whereupon the members of the Weiss family were released from concentration camp and left Hungary by aeroplane. I was entrusted with the representation of Germany on the board of the Manfred Weiss Works."

Becher also acted as middleman in Himmler's ransom deals. He set his prices ever higher and higher. Of Becher's business methods Eichmann said: "There was a time when he pressed for an acceleration of the evacuations [this was the term used by the SS for the death transports] in order to create a tense deportation atmosphere in which he could get hold of the great Jewish fortunes in the quickest and most elegant manner."

Over and above all this, Becher's statement contained a most interesting admission. "The seizure of the Manfred Weiss group," he said, "was not only an economic transaction. It was also of political significance. We had to think of keeping the thirty thousand workers at Csepel under control."

With all its weaknesses the "Hungarian chapter" constituted a most instructive part in the Jerusalem trial. In spite of Eichmann's customary denials—he pretended not to remember the death-march to Vienna, or having said to Brandt that "the mills of Auschwitz will grind again" and to Höttl that he had destroyed six million people, *etc.*—the world has, at a distance of seventeen years, again gained an authentic insight into the details of the nazi occupation of Hungary, the annihilation of 450,000 Hungarian citizens, the persecution of progressive forces, the plunder of the people and the country. And, notwithstanding the intentions of the court, it has also been demonstrated to the world that a great part of those responsible for the Hungarian tragedy (Globke, Veesenmayer, Winckelmann, Bach-Zelewski, Skorzeny, von Thadden, Höttl, Jüttner, Becher, *etc.*) did not receive the punishment they deserved, while many of them hold posts of importance in present-day Western Germany.

The presentation of evidence has now come to an end; following the statements of the prosecution and the defence the court has adjourned for several months.

It cannot be denied that the trial has brought to light many a staggering detail of the greatest crime ever committed in history. However, owing to the attitudes of both the prosecution and the bench—who or what had tied their hands is another question—it has failed to develop into that general indictment of fascism which it was logically expected to become by virtue of its very nature. It has failed to reveal the causes and the circumstances which inevitably lead to fascism and to expose the personalities in the economic, military and political life of Western Germany who, as the accomplices of Eichmann in the preparation and execution of his crimes, ought to share his responsibility.

In our opinion the tasks of the Eichmann trial should, in the first place, have been to cast a light upon every detail of the tragedy of European Jewry; in the second place, to call the attention of mankind to the fact that the criminals, just as previous to the arrest of Eichmann, are still at large; and, thirdly, to show that in a number of countries the revival of neo-fascism is gaining momentum and that the forces which had at the time brought fascism into being and helped the fascist regimes to power are again vigorously organizing themselves. Of this three-fold task only the first was accomplished in the trial —and not even that completely—while the remaining two were almost entirely neglected.

The historic trial has thus in many respects failed to discharge its debt to history.

TIBOR PETHŐ

# EICHMANN IN HUNGARY

## *A DOCUMENTATION*[1]

### STATISTICAL TABLE[2] OF HUNGARIAN JEWRY AND ITS CASUALTIES BEFORE AND DURING WORLD WAR II[3]

| | Budapest | The country | Total for Hungary |
|---|---|---|---|
| Israelites according to the census of 1941 | 184,453 | 540,554 | 725,007 |
| Not of Jewish faith, but regarded as Jews (Act IV, 1939; Act XV, 1941) | 62,350 | 37,650 | 100,000 |
| Total number of Jewish people in 1941 | 246,803 | 578,204 | 825,007 |
| Died in labour service from 1941 to March 19, 1944 | 12,350 | 29,650 | 42,000 |
| Deportation of non-Hungarian Jews in July 1941 | 3,000 | 17,000 | 20,000 |
| Massacre at Novi Sad | — | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Reduced number of Jewish people on March 19, 1944 | 231,453 | 530,554 | 762,007 |
| Murdered or died of those deported by the Eichmann Command during the German occupation | 105,453 | 512,554 | 618,007 |
| Escaped to foreign countries during the German occupation | 2,000 | 3,000 | 5,000 |
| Liberated as labour-service men | 5,000 | 15,000 | 20,000 |
| Liberated in Budapest | 119,000 | — | 119,000 |
| Number of Jewish people at the time of the Liberation of Hungary | 124,000 | 15,000 | 139,000 |
| Expressed as percentage of 1941 figure | (50,25) | (2,59) | (16,84) |
| Returned from deportation by the end of 1945 | 20,000 | 101,500 | 121,500 |
| Total number of Jewish people on December 31, 1945 | 144,000 | 116,500 | 260,500 |
| Expressed as percentage of 1941 figure | (58,35) | (20,15) | (31,57) |

### DEPORTATIONS FROM HUNGARY

*Extract from report by Eberhard von Thadden, deputy department head of Abteilung Inland II in Ribbentrop's Foreign Ministry, then serving as Counsellor of Legation in Budapest*

...4... Next morning I visited Eichmann's headquarters. A survey revealed that till noon, on the 24th[4] some 116,000 Jews had been dispatched to the Reich.[5] An additional

[1] Extracts from "Eichmann in Hungary, Documents Edited by Jenő Lévai," Pannónia Press, Budapest, 1961, 294 pages. (In English, French and German).

[2] First published in Lévai, J: *Fekete könyv*, Budapest 1946; and Black Book, Zürich, 1950. The author compiled this table in 1945 on the basis of data from the Central Bureau of Statistics in Budapest and of the official Hungarian deportation figures supplied by Ferenczy. The figures have been checked and accepted as authentic by the Budapest Statistical and Press Bureau of the Jewish World Congress.

[3] The data refer to the territory of Hungary as temporarily enlarged by the Vienna award.

[4] May 24, 1944.

[5] Code-name for Auschwitz.

200,000 more were concentrated, awaiting their entrainment. The majority of these Jews come from North-East Hungary. Concentration in the South, South-East and South-West districts has, moreover, been carried out within a frontier zone 30 kms. wide. On June 7. concentration in the provinces north and north-west of Budapest is to begin. Here some 250,000 Jews are to be reckoned with. At the same time ghetto confinement in the parts south of Budapest is to be concluded. By the end of June it is hoped to reach a stage where ghetto confinement of the Budapest Jews may begin. The number of Jews to be seized will presumably be ultimately 1 million or more, about one third of them fit for work to be received by Sauckel, the Organization Todt, *etc.* for work in Upper Silesia. Some 80,000 able-bodied Jews only are to be left behind under custody of the Hungarian military forces, to be employed in the domestic armament industry. The entire action including transport should be completed by the end of July.

Eichmann urgently asked for further assistance, in the form he had hitherto received, from Hezinger. He said that, taking into account the toughness, in itself desirable, of the Hungarian Gendarmerie and the undeniable stubbornnes of his own local commands, help of this kind was the only security against the risk of committing too heavy blunders in the matter of dealing with foreign citizens. Eichmann was greatly taken aback when I told him that Hezinger would immediately be recalled. He then declared that if this took place, he could guarantee nothing and that he would at once discuss the matter with the Minister. He expected grave complications, especially in carrying out the Jewish campaign in Budapest. I informed him that Grell would probably take over the task. To this he replied that no matter how efficiently Grell was going to set to his task, he was nevertheless worried about the work, since campaigns like this only go right if harmonious co-operation has been established. Hezinger had achieved this, and every newcomer would need much time to re-establish it. Would it not be possible at least, he asked, again to delegate Hezinger for 10 to 14 days while the concentration work in Budapest was put through?

At lunch I was the guest of Eichmann and the gentlemen connected with him.

(Berlin, 25. V. 1944.)

*Further report by Eberhard von Thadden*

Berlin, 26. V. 1944.
Inl. II. 286. 6 Rs.

As far as I could see during my short stay in Hungary, the Jewish problem is nearing its final solution at a quick pace, with most lively assistance by László Endre and László Baky, Hungarian Under-Secretaries of State. The detailed situation is as follows:

The Hungarian Government has approved the deportation into the eastern region of all Hungarian citizens to be considered as Jews according to Hungarian law. There is a possibility of keeping back 80,000 Jews to be employed in Hungarian firms engaged in war production and to be kept in the custody of the Hungarian army.

On the basis of the Hungarian definition of a Jew, the total number of Jews in Hungary is thought to be 900,000 to 1,000,000. About 350,000 among them live in Budapest.

A detailed anti-Jewish Act is under preparation, aiming at the aryanization of the political and economic life, *etc.* The Act is to comprise further spheres as well.

Simultaneously, the concentration of Jews into ghettos has been carried out all over the country, with the exception of Budapest.

These arrangements have been practically finished. Budapest itself has been surrounded by a police line in order to check, as far as possible, the illegal emigration of Jews.

On the south and south-eastern frontier, a borderland 30 kms. wide has been entirely evacuated, and the concentration of Jews in the huge camps of the northern regions has also been started.

These concentrating actions have gathered 320,000 Jews, from among whom a transport of 12,000—14,000 persons is being sent daily to the Generalgouvernement since May 5. Till noon on May 24, 116,000 Jews have been transported.

The fact that transportations are being carried out has caused considerable excitement, especially in Budapest. It was for this reason that, in spite, of the planned radical solution[1] to be expected in the near future, the legislation process is being continued with full vigour, and it has been made public through the Jewish Council in Budapest that measures have been taken only in the eastern regions and concern only Jews who have preserved their Jewish character and have not become assimilated as Magyars like the Jewish population of other regions. It has been explained that the drafting of bills clearly shows that in other regions of Hungary different measures will be taken, otherwise it would be quite superfluous to go on with legislative work. It is hard to discover whether it is due to this propaganda or other reasons, but Jews in other regions of the country seem to be calm in spite of transportations having started. SS-quarters, however, anticipate some difficulties in the future, as soon as concentration and transports have begun in other regions, too.

On this subject a meeting of high sheriffs, gendarme commanders, *etc.*, of the north and north-eastern regions has been convened, presided over by the Minister of the Interior himself, who has shown a certain restraint in matters concerning the Jewish questions till now, and it is now for the first time that he openly appears in the foreground in this respect. The task of the meeting is to give the administrative bodies concerned the necessary orders relating to concentration measures to be taken within their sphere of activity. On June 6, concentration will be started also in the above regions, followed by similar measures in the south and south-east, too.

About the middle or the end of July action is supposed to be taken in Budapest as well. For this purpose a one-day general action has been scheduled with participation of strong Hungarian gendarme forces from the country, of all special commandos of the police, besides whom also all Budapest postmen and chimney-sweeps will be employed for tracking down Jews. All kinds of traffic, transportation by tram or bus, will be suspended on this particular day, in order to use all vehicles for the transportation of Jews. They should be gathered on an island of the Danube, north of the Capital. It is supposed that the forces amassed will be strong enough to take hold of every Jew and to hinder a major trend to go into hiding. It is estimated that by early September the transportation of all Jews, with the exception of the above-mentioned 80,000, will have been completed.

The selection of foreign Jews has been sufficiently secured by Central Commando regulations. Local gendarme authorities, however, are so extremely ardent in fulfilling their task that they make it a point of honour not to report any foreigners at all. Charged by Inland II, Hezinger has made some unexpected inspections in the camps and noted the presence of a considerable number of foreign Jews whom he ordered to be separated from the rest. Special pressure is laid on the authorities charged with the supervision of foreigners to continue the work started by Hezinger in the same way, as the offices of the Regent reckon with an exceptionally great number of foreign Jews in the northern regions and as it

[1] For the sake of camouflage further exemption-laws are devised and passed, though the final action (Endlösung), *i. e.* the extirpation, is quite near. Since May 15, 1944, a daily transport of 12,000—14,000 Jews has been sent to Auschwitz and gassed there.

is desirable to avoid difficulties as far as possible. Unfortunately, because of a shortage in staff, Inland II cannot let Hezinger stay in Budapest any longer. Minister Veesenmayer intends to entrust Counsellor of Legation Grell, whose arrival has been announced, with the task.

The concept of "Jew" differs somewhat in Hungary from the definition set down in the Nuremberg Laws. According to Hungarian legislation there are no half-bloods, only Jews or non-Jews. A more detailed, closer definition of the concept "Jew," as laid down by the Nuremberg Laws, has been disregarded, as it would have resulted in taking a great number of Horthy's friends and those of the gentry under the measures executed against the Jewry. This, however, is not considered advisable by any German quarters in Budapest, at least not for the present. On the other hand, steps have been taken to supervise the exemption of so-called legally exempt Jews, that is Jews who have been considered Aryans because of special merits. In closest co-operation with Under-Secretary of State László Endre, charged with heading the control committee, and the SD Commando, it has been ensured that exemptions should not be misused in the future.

The anti-Jewish action receives propaganda assistance from the anti-Semitic journal Harc (Combat) established recently.[1]

*Affidavit of Dr. Wilhelm Höttl*

November 26, 1945

I, Wilhelm Höttl duly, sworn depose:

My name is Dr. Wilhelm Höttl, SS *Sturmbannführer* (Major of the SS). My occupation till the collapse of Germany was that of an official and deputy Group Leader in Dept. VI of the Central Reich Security Office.

Dept. VI of the RSHA was the so-called Foreign Office of the Security Service and dealt with information service in all countries of the world. It is something similar to the British Intelligence Service. The group whose member I was, was concerned with the intelligence service in South-East Europe (the Balkans).

At the end of August 1944, I had a talk with SS *Obersturmbannführer* Adolf Eichmann, whom I had known since 1938. We had our talk at my flat in Budapest.

At that time Eichmann was, as far as I know, head of a department in Dept. IV (Gestapo) of the Central Reich Security Office and hence was charged by Himmler with seizing the Jews in all the countries of Europe and transporting them to Germany. At that time Eichmann was deeply impressed by Rumania's default from the war that had occurred a few days before. It was just for this reason he had come to me to get information about the military situation. I used to receive information every day from the Hungarian Ministry of Defence and from the commander of the Waffen SS in Hungary. He expressed his opinion that Germany had now lost the war and he himself had no personal chances any more. He knew that the United Nations considered him one of the chief war criminals as the blame will fall on him for the lives of millions of Jews. I asked him how many that could be, and he replied that though the figure was a highly confidential state secret he would nevertheless tell me as I, being a historian, would be sure to be interested in it and as it was most probable that he would never again return to Rumania from his Command Unit. Some time

[1] NG-2, 190, Nuremberg Staatsarchiv.
* PS-2, 738 (USA 296).

before he had prepared a report for Himmler, as the latter had wanted to know the exact number of Jews killed. Based on his information he had come to the following conclusion:

About four million Jews had been killed in the various annihilation camps while another two million had met their death in other ways. The majority of these were killed by shooting by the Special Operation Commandos of the Security Police in the course of the campaign against Russia.

Himmler was not content with the report as he was of the opinion that the number of Jews killed must be above 6 million. Himmler declared that he would send a man from his statistical department to Eichmann to prepare a new report on the basis of Eichmann's material and to work out the right number.

I have to believe that this information given to me by Eichmann was correct, as he, of all persons who could be considered, certainly had the best general view of the figures for Jews who had been murdered. In the first place, he "delivered" so to speak the Jews to the annihilation camps through his special squads and therefore knew the exact figures, and, in the second place, as head of a department in Dept. IV. of the RSHA, which was also responsible for Jewish matters, he surely knew better than anyone else the number of Jews who had died in other ways.

In addition, Eichmann was at that moment in such a state of mind, as a result of events, that he certainly had no intention of telling me something that was not true.

I myself remember the details of this conversation so well, because I was, naturally, greatly impressed, and already previous to the German collapse I gave closer information on this matter to certain American quarters in a neutral country, with whom I had established contact at the time.[1]

I swear that I have delivered the above testimony freely and without pressure and that according to my best knowledge and conscience the above data correspond to the truth.

Dr. Wilhelm Höttl

Sworn and signed by his own hand in my presence on November 26, 1945, in Nuremberg, Germany.

Frederick L. Felten
Lieutenant U.S.N.R. + 253, 345

### *Eichmann Organizes Gassing With Cyklon/B*

*Report dated Oct. 21, 1941, by SS Gruppenführer Dr. Ernst Wetzel to Reichskommissar Heinrich Lohse, then in Riga*

With reference to my letter dated October 18, 1941, I herewith let you know that Herr Brack, head of the Führer's Chancellery, has declared himself inclined to co-operate in the establishment of the localities required as well as to the gassing apparatuses... I am in a position to notify you that *Strurmbannführer* Eichmann, the specialist for the Jewish question in the Central Reich Security Office, is in accord with this. According to what Eichmann has told me, camps should be set up for Jews in Riga and Minsk, which will eventually

[1] Höttl here was making a veiled reference to Mr. Allen Dulles, who was at this time in Berne in charge of American intelligence there.

be ready to receive Jews from the territory of the Reich proper. For the time being Jews are being evacuated from the Reich proper, who are to be transported to Litzmannstadt (Lodz), but also to other camps, in order later on to be deployed for labour, so far as they are able to work. As the situation is, there are no objections to the liquidation of Jews with the Brack method if they are incapable of work.

In this way there would be no possibility of repeating the procedure which had been resorted to at Wilna when Jews were shot and which, considering that these executions were public, can hardly be approved of.

*Testimony of SS Obersturmführer Dipl. Ing. Kurt Gerstein concerning the Eichmann—Globocnik gas experiments*[1]

In January 1942, I was appointed Chief of the Sanitary Techniques Section and received at the same time an assignment in the same sector with the Head Physician of the SS and the Police. In that capacity I took over the entire Disinfection Service, including disinfection with highly poisonous gases.

In that capacity I received the visit of SS *Sturmbannführer* Hans Günther from the Central Reich Security Office, Kurfürsten-Strasse, Berlin W, on June 8, 1942.[2] Günther arrived in civilian clothes. He commissioned me to procure immediately, for a very confidential task from the Reich, 100 kg. hydrocyanic acid and to travel with this in a car to an unknown place, the destination only known to the driver of the car, and a few weeks later to travel to Prague...

... So we went by car to Lublin, where we were received by SS *Gruppenführer* Globocnik. In the factory in Collin, I deliberately dropped a hint to the effect that the hydrocyanic acid was meant for the killing of human beings...

...Globocnik turned to me and said:

"It is your task to switch over our gas chambers, which operate at present with Diesel exhaust gases, to some more efficient and quicker method. It is hydrocyanic acid I have in mind in the first place. The day before yesterday the Führer and Himmler were here. It was their command to take you there myself, as nobody is to have written passes or admission permits."

At that Pfannenstiel[3] asked: "And what did the Führer say?"

Globocnik answered: "He said the whole action was to be accomplished much more quickly."

His escort, Ministerialrat Dr. Herbert Linder[4], had thereupon asked: "Mr. Globocnik, do you consider it right to bury all of the corpses instead of burning them? There might come a generation after us which would not understand all this."

Globocnik had answered: "Gentlemen, if there ever came a generation of such weaklings and spineless persons that they would not understand our great task, then indeed, National Socialism would have been created for nothing. I am, on the contrary, convinced that we ought to bury bronze tablets there on which it would be perpetuated that we had the courage to accomplish this great and necessary task."

[1] From typed statement handed over by Gerstein to the Americans at Rottenweil on May 24, 1945 (original in French).

[2] Hans Günther was Eichmann's most confidential commando-officer and the chief of his office in Berlin.

[3] SS *Obersturmbannführer* Dr. Pfannenstiel /M. D./, Professor at the University of Marburg/ Lahn.

[4] The correct spelling of the name is: Dr. H. Lindner, ministerial counsellor in the German Ministry of the Interior, a subordinate of Globke's.

The Führer had exclaimed: "Well said, Globocnik, I profess the same opinion!" However, later the other opinion was accepted. The corpses were burnt on large grills, improvised of rails, with the help of petrol and Diesel oil.

## EICHMANN SUPPLIES SKULLS FOR A SKELETON COLLECTION

*Extract from Proposition submitted to Himmler by Dr. August Hirt, Prof. of Anatomy at Strasbourg University, in 1942*

Re: Securing the skulls of Jewish-Bolshevik commissars for scientific research work at the Reich University in Strassburg

Ample collections of the skulls of almost every race and people are available. The number of the skulls of Jews, however, is much too limited to obtain unambiguous results in scientific research. The present war in the East affords a good opportunity to fill this gap. The securing of the skulls of Jewish-Bolshevik commissars—those representatives of a repellent but characteristic sub-human species—will put us in the possession of tangible scientific documents.

The best way of securing the smooth acquisition of this skull material is to instruct the *Wehrmacht* in the future to hand over immediately to the military police all Jewish-Bolshevik commissars captured alive. The military police, on the other hand, is to be given orders to report continually to a certain authority the number of these Jews as well as their place of detention; and to keep them in custody till the arrival of a special emissary. The emissary in charge of securing the material (a young doctor, or a medical student, belonging to the *Wehrmacht* or the military police, with a car and a driver at his disposal) has to perform a pre-determined series of photographic and anthropological measurements and to ascertain, as far as possible, the origin, the date of birth, and other personal data. After the subsequent death of the Jew brought about without inflicting any injury to his head, the doctor has to separate the latter from the trunk, and to send it, embedded in a preserving fluid and shut in a tightly fitting tin box of special construction, to the place of destination. Here the comparative anatomical research work and the investigations regarding racial classification, pathological features of the skull, form and size of the brain and a great number of the aspects may be started on the basis of the photographs, measurements and other data of the head and, finally, of the skull.

The new Reich University of Strassburg would, in accordance with its mission and its tasks, provide the most suitable place for the keeping and the evaluation of the material of skulls thus gained.[1]

Himmler thought this an excellent idea, and gave orders to SS *Obergruppenführer* Dr. Rudolf Brandt, his chief expert on medical matters, to contact SS *Standartenführer* Sievers, the head of the Scientific Institute for Genetic Research, Berlin-Dahlem. At the same time, he also urged Eichmann to assist Sievers' efforts to realize Dr. Hirt's scheme.

In September 1942, Eichmann agreed to supply the necessary numbers of Jewish men and women from Auschwitz. This matter was also discussed several times by Sievers and Eichmann personally. Finally, the assignment was given to SS Hauptsturmführer Dr. Bruno Beger, who took with him to Auschwitz Eichmann's order for the consignment of prisoners. Here, again, we have a written record of the developments that ensued.

[1] Prozess I, NO-185.

*Report to Eichmann by SS Standartenführer Sievers, head of the Scientific Institute for Genetic Research, Berlin-Dahlem*

Ahnenerbe

Inst. f. wehrwissenschaftl. Zweckforschung
(Institute of Military Object Research) G/H/6 82/He
Berlin-Dahlem, 21. Juni 42[1]
Bücklerstr. 18

Secret Reich Affair
G. R. Z. I. A. H. Sk. Nr. 10. Abl. Re.
To the Central Reich Security Office IV B4
Prinz-Albrecht-Str. 8
Berlin SW 11
For SS *Obersturmbannführer* Eichmann
Re: Establishment of a skeleton collection.

With reference to yours of September 25, 1942, IV B4 3,576/42 g 1,488 and to the personal talks on the above matter which took place in the meantime, you are to be informed that SS Hauptsturmführer Dr. Bruno Beger, the collaborator of this Office entrusted with the carrying out of the above special task, has, in view of the danger of an epidemic, finished his work in the Auschwitz concentration camp by June 15, 1943.

A total of 115 persons has been considered, of which 79 were Jews, 2 Poles, 4 Central-Asiatics and 30 Jewesses. These prisoners are at present separated according to sex, men and women being placed in quarantine, each in one hospital building of the Auschwitz concentration camp. To continue the processing of the selected persons it becomes now—in view of the menace of the outbreak of an epidemic—urgently necessary to transport them to the Natzweiler concentration camp. A list with the names of the selected persons is attached hereto.

Appropriate instructions are now requested. With regard to the fact that the transport of the prisoners to Natzweiler is connected with the risk of spreading the epidemic, we ask for immediate instructions to have clean and disinfected clothing for 80 men and 30 women prisoners sent from Natzweiler to Auschwitz.

At the same time short-term accommodation ought to be secured for the 30 women at the Natzweiler concentration camp.

Sievers
SS *Standartenführer*[2]

Copies sent to
a) SS *Hauptsturmführer* Dr. Beger
b) SS *Hauptsturmführer* Prof. Dr. Hirt

[1] An obvious error! It is clear from the context that the correct date is 1943.
[2] Prozess I, NO-084.

# OLD AND NEW HUNGARIAN TOWNS

## I. Geographical and Historical Foundations

From an economic standpoint the building of socialist society in Hungary, just as in every other country, is based first of all, but not exclusively, on the development of industry; but industrialization in Hungary—this again applies to all countries—involves, primarily but not exclusively, the development of the towns. The old towns grow, their population increases, new urban sections come into existence alongside the old ones, in fact new towns are born in place of the earlier villages—at times, indeed, practically out of nothing. Industrialization diverts the development of the towns in new directions, gives them new content, adds new colour to their social life, enriches the old city-scape with new forms.

In Hungary this new development has a special character because the Hungarian towns (at least a greater part of them) differ in many respects from the customary average Western and Central European types. This is partly due to the special geographical situation of the country and partly to peculiar features in its more recent history.

Hungary's socio-economic development kept pace with the development of Western and Central Europe. Along with the growth of the urban citizenry, of guild manufacture and of commerce, the towns grew and strengthened as the points of concentration of the whole economic, political, social and cultural life of the country.

The formula according to which certain cities developed from the fortified towns of the burghers, where settlements grew around the castles built on a hill or mountain top, is well known. Others developed and became rich on the basis of opportunities presented by river-crossings, like Francfort, Lyon or Dijon. Still others grew at the meeting of hill region and plain, as a gateway to mountain passes and crossings, like Turin, Milan, Verona and Padua at the entrance to the southern foothills of the Alps; in the north, Linz, Munich, Stuttgart; at the northern fringes of the Vosges, Nancy and Strasbourg; in the south, Basle and Mulhouse. Other towns took shape and developed in the course of centuries on prominent points of land protected and surrounded by marshes.

In Hungary too the towns originated and evolved in a similar manner until the end of the 15th century.

Hungary's specific geographic location in South-eastern Europe compelled her to take up the struggle against the encroaching Turkish power, and at the same time to fight Austria for her independence. While in Western Europe manufactories developed, and tremendous capital was accumulated by industrial capitalism with the help of commerce, Hungary became a battleground for more than a century and a half.

The central sections of the present country fell under Turkish occupation, and only the northern and western territories of the country remained free of fighting and of the Turkish invasion for a time.

Following the defeat of the Turks, the struggles for the country's independence at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries hampered the peaceful development of the towns. When industrial capitalism arose in Europe and after the industrial revolution had taken place, that is, in the second half of the 18th and the first half of the 19th centuries, Hungary, as a province of Austria, had a colonial status, and its task was to supply Austria, Bohemia and Moravia with raw materials. In this period the competition of Austrian and Bohemian industry prevented any swift growth of industry and of the towns. Only in the third quarter of the 19th century, nearly 200 years later, did the development of industry begin, and together with it that of the towns. But this development was obstructed even between the two world wars by feudal vestiges in the economy, the system of great landed estates, lack of capital, and the general backwardness of the country.

As a consequence of all this, there are only few towns, and the urban population is small (36 per cent of the total in 1949, and 40 per cent in 1960).

Up to the Second World War two types of Hungarian towns took shape. While the western and northern towns, which had escaped Turkish occupation and were in close touch with the West, developed similarly to the Central and Western European cities, agrarian towns became characteristic of the central and eastern sections of the country.

The growth of the towns after the liberation in 1945 was also contrasting and specific in character. Statistically we may obtain a closer picture of this from the censuses of 1949 and 1960.

## II. The Statistical Picture

The census of 1960 in Hungary, 11 years after the previous one, shows interesting data regarding the distribution of the country's population according to types of settlements, data which even purely numerically well reflect the development that has taken place since the beginning of planned economy.

Although not confined to industry and to the towns, still it is their growth which is primarily expedited by the building of socialism. The country's whole population increased from 9,200,000 to 10,000,000 in 11 years, that is by 8.4 per cent. However, while the rural population grew only by 5 per cent, the urban population augmented by 18.1 per cent, despite the fact that the natural increase in Hungary's urban population is considerably slower than that of the villages.

*Growth of Town Population*

| | Population | | Increase | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1949 | 1960 | | |
| | 1,000 persons | | 1,000 persons | % |
| Budapest | 1590.3 | 1807.0 | 217 | 13.6 |
| Miskolc | 109.1 | 144.0 | 35.0 | 31.8 |
| Debrecen | 111.0 | 129.0 | 18.0 | 16.1 |
| Pécs | 88.3 | 115.0 | 27.0 | 29.9 |
| Szeged | 86.6 | 99.0 | 12.0 | 14.0 |
| *4 towns of about 100,000, together* | 394.0 | 487.0 | 92.0 | 23.3 |

| | Population | | Increase | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1949 | 1960 | | |
| | 1,000 persons | | 1,000 persons | % |
| Győr | 57.3 | 70.8 | 13.5 | 23.6 |
| Kecskemét | 57.3 | 66.8 | 9.6 | 17.1 |
| *2 towns of about 70,000, together* | *114.6* | *137.6* | *23.0* | *20.1* |
| Nyíregyháza | 48.4 | 56.9 | 8.5 | 17.6 |
| Székesfehérvár | 41.5 | 55.9 | 14.4 | 34.7 |
| Szombathely | 47.2 | 54.5 | 7.3 | 15.4 |
| Hódmezővásárhely | 48.7 | 53.5 | 4.8 | 9.8 |
| Tatabánya | 40.2 | 52.0 | 11.8 | 29.4 |
| Békéscsaba | 42.1 | 49.5 | 6.4 | 17.5 |
| Szolnok | 34.0 | 45.6 | 10.4 | 33.9 |
| Kaposvár | 33.5 | 43.5 | 10.0 | 29.6 |
| Sopron | 35.6 | 41.2 | 5.6 | 15.8 |
| *9 towns of about 50,000, together* | *371.2* | *452.6* | *81.4* | *21.9* |
| Cegléd | 35.3 | 37.9 | 2.6 | 7.5 |
| Eger | 29.4 | 35.4 | 6.0 | 20.5 |
| Nagykanizsa | 28.8 | 34.2 | 5.4 | 18.8 |
| Ózd | 24.8 | 34.2 | 9.4 | 37.8 |
| Kiskunfélegyháza | 31.5 | 33.2 | 1.7 | 5.5 |
| Hajdúböszörmény | 30.3 | 32.2 | 1.9 | 6.3 |
| Orosháza | 30.4 | 32.1 | 1.7 | 2.1 |
| Szentes | 29.9 | 31.2 | 1.3 | 4.4 |
| Sztálinváros | 3.9 | 31.0 | 27.1 | 786.6 |
| Baja | 27.9 | 30.4 | 2.5 | 8.8 |
| Jászberény | 27.5 | 30.2 | 2.7 | 9.8 |
| Makó | 32.0 | 29.9 | —2.1 | —6.5 |
| Gyöngyös | 22.0 | 28.7 | 6.7 | 30.5 |
| *13 towns of about 30,000, together* | *353.7* | *420.6* | *66.9* | *19.0* |
| Salgótarján | 22.1 | 26.7 | 4.6 | 20.9 |
| Kiskunhalas | 24.3 | 26.5 | 2.2 | 8.9 |
| Karcag | 25.1 | 26.1 | 1.0 | 4.0 |
| Nagykőrös | 24.4 | 25.9 | 1.5 | 5.9 |
| Pápa | 21.8 | 25.6 | 3.8 | 17.5 |
| Veszprém | 18.2 | 25.5 | 7.3 | 39.9 |
| Komló | 7.0 | 24.8 | 17.8 | 357.3 |
| Vác | 21.3 | 24.7 | 3.4 | 16.1 |
| Gyula | 23.3 | 24.6 | 1.3 | 5.7 |
| Zalaegerszeg | 16.0 | 23.7 | 7.7 | 47.9 |
| Törökszentmiklós | 22.8 | 23.6 | 1.2 | 3.4 |
| Mezőtúr | 23.5 | 23.6 | 0.1 | 0.7 |
| Esztergom | 20.0 | 23.6 | 3.6 | 15.1 |
| Várpalota | 11.1 | 21.5 | 10.4 | 94.4 |
| Mosonmagyaróvár | 16.7 | 21.2 | 4.5 | 26.8 |
| Csongrád | 20.6 | 20.7 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Hatvan | 16.5 | 20.0 | 3.5 | 20.7 |
| Hajdúszoboszló | 18.5 | 19.6 | 1.1 | 6.0 |
| Szekszárd | 16.3 | 19.3 | 3.0 | 18.6 |
| Hajdúnánás | 18.2 | 18.4 | 0.2 | 1.0 |
| Mohács | 16.1 | 18.0 | 1.9 | 12.2 |
| Tata | 13.2 | 17.3 | 4.1 | 31.3 |
| *22 towns of about 20,000, together* | *417.0* | *500.9* | *83.9* | *20.0* |

| | Population | | Increase | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1949 | 1960 | | |
| | 1,000 persons | | 1,000 persons | % |
| Sátoraljaújhely | 15.1 | 16.2 | 1.1 | 7.5 |
| Ajka | 8.3 | 15.4 | 7.1 | 85.0 |
| Kazincbarcika | 5.1 | 15.3 | 10.2 | 302.1 |
| Keszthely | 12.0 | 14.9 | 2.9 | 24.1 |
| Kisújszállás | 13.9 | 13.8 | —0.1 | —1.0 |
| Kalocsa | 11.5 | 13.7 | 2.2 | 15.4 |
| Oroszlány | 3.7 | 13.1 | 9.4 | 349.6 |
| Túrkeve | 13.3 | 12.5 | —0.8 | —6.0 |
| Balassagyarmat | 10.8 | 12.5 | 1.7 | 15.0 |
| Szentendre | 9.3 | 10.3 | 1.0 | 11.2 |
| Komárom | 8.3 | 9.9 | 1.1 | 12.1 |
| Kőszeg | 8.8 | 9.8 | 1.0 | 11.8 |
| *12 towns of about 10,000, together* | *120.6* | *157.4* | *36.8* | *30.0* |
| Total | 3356.0 | 3963.1 | 607.1 | 18.1 |
| Smaller communities | 5849.0 | 6015.0 | 166.0 | 5.0 |
| Entire country | 9205.0 | 9978.0 | 763.0 | 8.4 |

The bare figures alone show that the expansion of the towns, the increase of their populations, was uneven, certain towns having grown rapidly, others, slowly or not at all, while in some instances there was a decrease.

Among Hungarian towns the capital, Budapest, occupies a peculiar position; it is not only the political, but also the economic (industrial, trade, transport) and cultural centre of the country. Even before 1918, when Hungary numbered 20 million inhabitants, Budapest had already grown into a city of a million people, its population having come to the capital from the whole historical territory of the country. By reason of its own position and kinetic energy, such a large city, however, harbours within itself the tendency to rapid growth amidst all circumstances, even when—as in the case of Hungary—the territory is reduced to one third and its population to less than one half its former size. Despite the reduction of the area from which people were attracted, there was no reduction of the attracting force of the capital, in fact, it exercised a greater effect on the smaller territory. This was the case both between the two world wars and after the liberation. The country's capital and greatest industrial site (containing nearly half of its whole industry) grew to more than 1,800,000 people, according to the latest census. During the past 11 years the increase was only 13.5 per cent; thus it was not particularly rapid, but in absolute figures, it was greater than that of the 23 largest provincial towns combined. Taking into consideration that from the near-by suburban communities and villages about 200,000 people commute to the city's factories, shops, offices, *etc.*, the day-time population of Budapest approaches two million, that is, 20 per cent of the country's total population.

In addition to Budapest, the combined rate of increase of the populations of four cities numbering more than 100,000 each—Miskolc, Debrecen, Pécs, Szeged—was 23.3 per cent, that is considerably higher than the average rate of urban growth. The one that developed most rapidly was Miskolc, the centre of the country's greatest mining area and that of metallurgical industry. Not far behind it was the large town of the

eastern half of Transdanubia, Pécs. This town is the centre of Hungary's hard-coal mining, and more recently, of its uranium ore mining. The two large towns of the Great Plain, Debrecen in the north and Szeged in the south, are not particularly industrial in character, though they are undergoing industrialization. Their rate of growth has thus remained below the average of Hungarian towns.

Close to the towns exceeding 100,000 inhabitants are Győr, the swiftly expanding, diversified industrial centre and transportation junction of the northern and western part of Transdanubia, and Kecskemét, the economic and administrative centre of the intensive agriculture of the region between the Danube and Tisza rivers.

The next nine towns in order of size, with populations of about 50,000, are, with one exception, county seats (the one exception, Sopron, was formerly also a county seat). Aside from two of them (Tatabánya and Békéscsaba), they underwent a long historical evolution. Their rate of growth also surpasses the average, but is not connected exclusively with industry.

Among the thirteen towns of about 30,000 inhabitants each, we find very great differences. The population of some of them increased only slightly, while that of others multiplied. This category contains the site of the country's newest and greatest heavy industrial plant, the Danube Iron and Steel Works, the recently established modern city of Sztálinváros with 31,000 inhabitants. It was set up on the outskirts of the village of Dunapentele, numbering barely 4,000 people. In this instance the term "growth" is hardly applicable. Among them are industrial towns (Ózd), cultural centres (Eger) whose development was speeded up in the era of the People's Democracy, and others whose growth slowed down (Orosháza, Kiskunfélegyháza, Szentes); in fact the population of one of them (Makó) declined considerably.

We find similarly contrasting rates of development among the towns of 20,000 inhabitants. Among these too there are towns whose development has stopped or become stagnant, especially those of an agricultural character on the Great Plain. A sharp contrast is formed by the mining settlements (Komló, Várpalota), which are growing by leaps and bounds. The group as a whole is developing more swiftly than the average.

And finally the 11 smallest towns, whose population at the time of the latest census was between 9 and 16 thousand, show even more contrasting tendencies. The population of two increased more than three-fold, that of one nearly doubled, while that of two declined. The former are mining and industrial towns, the last are agrarian. These are extreme but understandable instances, to be discussed later. The combined growth of the smallest towns is considerably below the average.

This diversity in the rate of growth is not peculiar to Hungary, nor is it of recent origin, but at any rate it justifies three conclusions. First we may conclude that the towns are developing generally more rapidly than the villages; secondly, the larger towns are growing faster than the small ones; and lastly, the greatest rate of growth may be seen in the case of towns that have been systematically industrialized.

It is interesting to compare the rates of growth of the most rapidly and the most slowly growing towns, and the proportion of people working in the industrial plants of each town to the whole population of the town.

*Towns with the greatest and the smallest increases*

| Greatest | I | II | Smallest | I | II |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sztálinváros | 786.6 | 30 | Hajdúböszörmény | 6,3 | 2 |
| Komló | 357.3 | 37 | Hajdúszoboszló | 6,0 | 2 |
| Oroszlány | 349.6 | 48 | Nagykőrös | 5,9 | 10 |
| Kazincbarcika | 302.1 | 24 | Gyula | 5,7 | 7 |
| Várpalota | 94.0 | 31 | Kiskunfélegyháza | 5.5 | 5 |
| Ajka | 85.0 | 39 | Szentes | 4.4 | 2 |
| Zalaegerszeg | 47.9 | 18 | Karcag | 4.0 | 2 |
| Veszprém | 39.9 | 12 | Törökszentmiklós | 3.4 | 4 |
| Ózd | 37.8 | 38 | Orosháza | 2.1 | 4 |
| Székesfehérvár | 34.7 | 21 | Hajdúnánás | 1.0 | 2 |
| Szolnok | 33.9 | 18 | Mezőtúr | 0.7 | 2 |
| Miskolc | 31.8 | 27 | Csongrád | 0.1 | 3 |
| Tata | 31.3 | 10 | Kisújszállás | —1.0 | 1 |
| Gyöngyös | 30.5 | 11 | Túrkeve | —6.0 | 0.2 |
| Tatabánya | 29.9 | 34 | Makó | —6.5 | 3 |

I. Growth of towns in percentages between 1949 and 1960.
II. Percentage of workers in state industry compared to the total population of the town.

The relationship between the rates of growth and industrialization is very obvious. After 1945 the first six towns in the column on the left without exception became towns not only *de facto* but also *de jure* because of the swift development of the large industrial plants located there, or the establishment of new ones. The rest of the towns in the left-hand column are also characterized by more or less rapid industrialization after 1945 and by a relatively high proportion of industrial workers. The right-hand column, however, contains the group of the most slowly developing, or even declining towns, but at the same time shows that the proportion of industrial workers to the total population is insignificant. A glance at the map also reveals that, whereas the towns in the left-hand column lie in the northern or Transdanubian range of medium hills, *i. e.*, in the industrial regions, the towns included in the right-hand column are without exception in the Great Plain.

The figures show that the centuries-old rural exodus or *Landflucht*, that is, the flow of the village population towards industry and the towns—so familiar in other European countries—also took place in Hungary and is continuing in the phase of socialist construction.

In the age of feudalism the village serf fled from oppression and injustice to the town, which offered legal security and possibly—but only possibly—a higher living standard. The characteristic German proverb, "Stadtluft macht frei," obviously had in view not so much the urban living conditions as the security the towns offered.

Under capitalism it is less legal injustice than the longing to flee from the backward village and backward agriculture that drove and is still driving people townwards.

During the building of socialism, in the course of the collectivization, mechanization and chemization of agriculture, a tremendous mass of labour is liberated in agriculture and in the villages. Whereas before the liberation, under the system of capitalist production, the tens and hundreds of thousands who fled from the village swelled the ranks of the reserve army of unemployed, forcing down the wages of the industrial workers, they now ensure an indispensable

supply of labour power for rapidly developing industry. Whereas, in the past, unemployment was one of the most important economic problems in Hungary too, the problem today is one of inadequate labour supply. Labour released by agriculture can without exception find employment in industry, and, since in Hungary more than 80 per cent of those employed in industry work in the towns, we can safely say that it is there that they can find jobs. The higher industrial wages even draw away from agriculture the labour power that is needed there. Among other things this fact too is a force working for a more intensified mechanization of agriculture.

## III. Types of Hungarian Towns Today

Without disregarding the size of population, the dynamics of growth and the characteristics of historical development, yet laying stress on the main functions they fill today, four main, easily recognizable types of Hungarian towns may be distinguished, which, on the basis of a deeper analysis, may be subdivided still further. These four main types are:

*a)* the administrative centre
*b)* the transportation centre
*c)* the industrial town
*d)* the agricultural town

### *a) The administrative centre*

This is the oldest type of Hungarian—and perhaps not only of Hungarian—town. A large part of the towns was originally a county seat, possibly the seat of some supreme ecclesiastic authority—an archbishopric or episcopacy—or in many instances both. But whether the town was formed and developed as a centre of secular or of church authority, it also had, in addition to its public administrative function, a transportation and cultural function. Eger, for instance, lies at the entrance of a valley leading towards a mountain region; another took shape around a castle built on a hill top, like Veszprém; a third, like Székesfehérvár, provided security for its citizens on higher, prominent ground surrounded by protecting marshlands; a fourth, like Győr, developed as a junction of north-south and east-west traffic, owing to its geographical location.

A few towns originated not as state or church administrative centres, but as the centre of certain vast landed estates, such as Tata, the centre of the estates of the Esterházy princes and counts, or Keszthely, the centre of the Festetich princes. The exclusive function of county or episcopal seat was not enough for the further development of a town. Only those could subsequently develop into large cities, real centres, whose growth was promoted also by various socio-economic and geographical factors, such as the presence of mineral resources, the junction of roads, waterside location. In such instances, however, the town changed in character, it turned into an industrial or possibly commercial centre. Therefore only smaller towns can be included in this category; Nyíregyháza, Kaposvár, Veszprém, Zalaegerszeg, Szekszárd, Keszthely, Kalocsa and Balassagyarmat are still largely—according to their main function—administrative centres. Eger and Pápa may be regarded as cultural centres because of their schools and colleges.

### *b) The transportation centre*

Part of these towns, owing to their frontier location—on the border between hill region and plain, or on the border of the country—were able to become important settlements with a geographical division of labour and a large-scale growth of trade. An advantageous trade location was instrumental more than once in making commerce play such an important role in the life of

towns originally belonging to the previous category that this function has determined their character. Particularly since the construction of the railway lines, that is, towards the end of the 19th century, did the role of such transportation centres become important in the economic life of the country.

To this day, Győr, Komárom, Budapest, Mohács and Baja represent important transportation centres along the Danube; along the Tisza there are Szolnok and Szeged; and along the southern fringes of the Northern Hill Region we find Sátoraljaújhely, Miskolc, Eger, Gyöngyös and Hatvan. On the western frontier Mosonmagyaróvár, Sopron, Kőszeg, Szombathely, and somewhat further to the east, Győr and Pápa, developed into commercial centres owing to the westward trade. These towns played a similar role in the country's life to England's seaports—they were a gateway to the world.

Numerous towns which had turned into transportation centres from administrative centres, later still became the site of a large number of industrial plants precisely because of their advantageous transportation situation and thus entered the category of industrial towns.

*c) The industrial town*

Part of the industrial towns, as has become evident from the above, developed from administrative centres and part from transportation centres, when towards the end of the last century Hungary entered the process of large-scale industrialization. Since the liberation in 1945 and especially since the beginning of the First Five Year Plan, their industrial character has gained added weight. In these industrial towns 25 to 40 per cent of the population are engaged in industry. The dominant role is played by heavy industry.

In this group of industrial cities that have undergone a long historical development we now find Miskolc, the centre of the country's leading region of heavy industry; Pécs, the centre of the Southeast Transdanubian hard-coal and uranium mining region; and Győr, the transportation centre in Northern Transdanubia, which had developed from a county and episcopal seat and has become an industrial settlement with a considerable heavy, textile and food industry. Székesfehérvár, Szombathely and Eger had likewise first been county and episcopal seats, then important transportation centres, but today, as regards their chief function, they are industrial cities.

The constant growth of industry makes new functions necessary. In towns like these novel administrative, economic, social and cultural institutions come into existence.

As the new functions grow up alongside the old, the town itself becomes transformed. The history of the evolution of such towns can be clearly read from their aspect, their buildings and their network of streets.

Despite the fact that since the liberation large-scale construction has been going on in these towns, the character of the old quarters is still recognizable today.

Alongside the old urban quarters, new sections of town have come into existence since 1945, differing from the other sections not only in function but also in external aspect. Large newly built or reconstructed factories or even industrial complexes were already built in a modern functional style, according to uniform principles of city planning, taking into consideration not only up-to-date technical requirements, but also striving for a harmonic, balanced style in their exterior. Beside the new or rejuvenated plants, in place of the earlier periferic and chaotic residential quarters, uniformly arranged rows of modern blocks of flats now rise, broken up by green areas, parks and playgrounds. Such is the picture presented by the industrial town that has developed from the old administrative and transportation centre, where four or five historical eras meet in the present.

*The newer industrial towns* originated only at the end of the past or beginning of the present century, when the exploitation of the country's mineral wealth began. These towns—sometimes no more than mining villages—grew rapidly and haphazardly into a welter of factories established for the production and processing of local raw materials and surrounded by their residential quarters.

Whereas in the earlier type of town, there is, besides the industrial workers, a high proportion of those engaged in commercial, transportation, social welfare, cultural and administrative work, in the towns now under consideration 60 to 70 per cent of those gainfully employed are to be found in the local industrial plants or mines. Numerous new industrial towns like these became cities *de jure* after the liberation.

With the development of industry these towns were completely transformed. The development of industry means not only the building of new plants but also necessitates the construction of administrative buildings, warehouses, and department stores. The increased population and the increased tasks require new institutions, as well as new buildings for the state authorities. A new municipal hall, hospitals, cultural centres, cinemas, schools, kindergardens and crèches are necessary concomitants of progress. The various buildings for economic, social welfare and cultural purposes are built mostly according to uniform principles of city planning and contribute to the development of a new, homogeneous and harmonious townscape. Up-to-date residential quarters gradually replace the old working-class slums. Especially characteristic of these newer industrial towns (but not only of these) is the fact that the workers of the large local factories live, not in blocks of flats of several storeys, but rather in their own family houses, where there is a possibility of keeping a garden or animals.

Among these belong Tatabánya, where a brickyard, cement works, aluminium smeltery, power stations, were established on the basis of Hungary's highest quality soft coal mines; Ózd, one of the oldest and still one of the most important sites of Hungarian metallurgy; and Salgótarján, where soft-coal mining is the basis of steel, ferro-silicon, glass and brick production.

*The new socialist industrial towns* occupy a special place among the industrial towns. Planned economy has created them practically out of nothing. At those sites, where towns with 10, 20 or 30 thousand people and with the most up-to-date industrial buildings and residential quarters rise today, only ten years ago there were at best but a neglected little mining village, like Komló, or possibly a couple of residential areas established for the officials and the staff of the works, like Ajka. The uniting of the administration of two or three villages and settlements may have laid the foundations for a new town, like Várpalota. This explains the fact that in Table 2 the population of Sztálinváros, at the head of the list, has increased eight-fold, and that of the next three towns (Komló, Kazincbarcika, Oroszlány) more than threefold. Despite their slower rate of growth, Várpalota and Ajka, whose population nearly doubled during the past eleven years, should also be listed here.

Sztálinváros was built a little more than 40 miles south of Budapest on a loess plateau rising on the right bank of the Danube, at a time when it became clear that the Northern Hungarian bases of heavy industry (the foundries, steelworks and rolling mills of Miskolc and Ózd) would not be able to meet Hungary's needs. The plants have not yet been completed, but already the Danube Iron and Steel Works is equal in importance to the corresponding works of Ózd or Miskolc; like them, it produces 400,000 tons of pig iron and steel annually, and will shortly surpass their output. The city was essentially completed already in the course of the First Five Year Plan (between 1949 and 1954).

Komló, centre of the previously mentioned hard-coal region around Pécs, was originally a neglected little mining village, which was completely rebuilt during the 1950's and has developed into a large town.

Várpalota had been the site of high quality lignite mining already in the past. Close by, at Pét, what was once the country's largest nitrogenous chemical fertilizer factory had been built, together with its residential areas, before the Second World War. One of Hungary's largest electric works, the November 7 Power Station, was also built between 1949 and 1954 in the neighbourhood of the village of Inota, and, close by, the biggest aluminium smeltery. The uniting of the three villages and the residential areas of the above mentioned three large works into a single town was an uncommon task, partly because of the relatively long distances, and partly because the coal deposits run under the town.

Ajka was an insignificant little mountain village until coal mining was begun in its vicinity, at the end of the last century. Beside its old factories—a brickyard and glass works—the country's most modern power station was built during the Second World War, and next to it the combined aluminous earth and aluminium works. The combining of the old village and the great works laid the foundation for the settlement that was declared a town in 1960. The development of its various structural elements into a homogeneous city—like Várpalota—is still continuing today.

Oroszlány, near Tatabánya, grew into a mining village in a few years. At present one of the country's largest thermal power stations is being built here.

Kazincbarcika* is a modern city established in the vicinity of two united villages in the Northern Industrial Region as the site of a coal classifier with a daily capacity of a thousand waggonloads, a thermal power station, and the country's largest nitrogenous chemical fertilizer factory to date.

The new socialist industrial town differs from the rest of our urban communities in that the workers and employees of the future factory or factories built not only the great industrial establishment but also the city itself within a few years, according to uniform plans.

The planners of the new socialist cities, built according to uniform plans, naturally applied the experiences of the Soviet Union in this sphere, but they also took into consideration the positive features of Western European and American city planning and building.

The residential area of the city is generally sharply divided from the complex of industrial plants, which is also constructed on the basis of uniform plans. In some instances, like in Sztálinváros, there are only a few hundred metres of space between the residential area and the factory quarter, while in the case of Kazincbarcika the distance is as much as two or three kilometres. In most instances the green belt which is intended to protect the city from the dust of the region is unfortunately missing. In some cases, among them Sztálinváros, the creation of a forest belt to separate the city from the iron and steel mills was started at the beginning of the whole construction. Whereas the old towns gradually merge with their environment, there is no transition to speak of in the new towns. Nor do these latter manifest those differences to be found in the historically formed cities between the inner region, the residential quarters of the bourgeoisie, and the miserable settlements of the workers. In the socialist town there are no sharp contrasts between the material and cultural standards, administration, public health, and cultural amenities of the inner city and the suburbs. Naturally these towns too have their subdivisions, and there is a definite order in

* See Volume II, No. 2, of The New Hungarian Quarterly, article by Iván Boldizsár.

which the administrative, cultural, social welfare and shopping centres are arranged.

As regards their inner structure, the socialist towns also have an "inner city" with its administrative buildings, *etc.*, along the main street and the surrounding squares. The residential quarters are not crowded, the streets are wide and there are many large squares and parks.

The rapid building of these towns, which came into existence out of nothing in less than a decade, also had its negative aspects. Partly for the sake of uniformity, and partly in order to exploit the advantages of cheaper mass production, the overwhelming majority of the dwelling houses were built according to a few standard plans. This standardization, in which there is little room for diversity, gives the town a uniform appearance, which gives an impression of cheerlessness. In the early years, as a consequence of the swift construction, the building material used or the application of the material was not always of the necessary quality, and more than once after one or two years the paint or the plaster began to peel off. After these experiences the building was done more carefully. There is now a far larger number and diversity of standard plans, yet they still make possible cheap mass construction, while at the same time giving far more attention to the quality of the material used and to workmanship.

*A residential quarter* of a factory is not yet an industrial town, but may in most instances form its future nucleus. The examples of Ajka and Várpalota, or rather their parallel development, justifies this assertion. The factory residential quarter is a novel type of settlement in Hungary. Already before the liberation certain large enterprises established residential settlements for their engineers, leading employees, officials and the so-called main body of workers in the vicinity of their large plants set up in the countryside, chiefly in a village environment. Such residential settlements ensured a permanent working staff for the factories. After the liberation, especially after the beginning of the First Five Year Plan, together with the more intense development of heavy industry, the building of residential quarters for the large works established near the sources of raw materials and energy became a vital necessity. These new modern settlements often have a larger population than the villages near which they are established.

We find residential settlements beside almost every one of our large power works: at Lőrinc, Tiszapalkonya, Tiszalök, the oilfields of Zala, *etc.* Along the northern course of the Danube, following the country's frontier, the residential settlements of Nyergesújfalu (Viscosa Factory and Asbestos Slate Factory), Lábatlan (Cement Works), Almásfüzítő (Oil Refinery and Alumina Works), and Szőny (Oil Refinery) are strung out in single file, and with the development of other groups of settlements we are justified in the assumption that here, along the course of the Danube, the process of unification—the linking of the old communities and the new settlements—will result in the formation of a peculiar, extensive new town.

*d) The agricultural towns of the Great Plain*

The agricultural towns of the Great Plain differ from the previous types, partly in consequence of natural and geographical features and, even more so, of historical development, but primarily owing to their specific function and structure.

In these towns agriculture rather than industry or trade is predominant. The spreading of the towns built on the plain has been hampered neither by the presence of fortress walls, nor by the slopes of hills or mountains. Consequently the towns sprawl widely, their streets and squares are roomy, and even the down-town houses are surrounded by gardens. Only the most central parts, consisting of official buildings, pub-

lic institutions and amusement places, are urban in character. Around this inner kernel there is already a broad zone of single-storey houses surrounded by gardens. From the centre outward, this zone is less and less built up, and gradually only occasional houses can be found in the middle of the ever larger gardens or ploughlands. Beyond these, only farmsteads consisting of a lonely family house and farm buildings dot the land.

This specific type of settlement is the result of historical development. During Turkish rule, in the course of the constant destructive wars, the people of the villages fled with their livestock to the nearest town for protection among their relatively secure walls. The towns attached to their own territory the area of the villages whose people found refuge within their walls. Thus the area of certain towns increased to tremendous size and frequently became large enough to pass for a district, for example in the case of Kecskemét, Hódmezővásárhely or Debrecen. Other towns of this character on the Great Plain are Nagykőrös, Cegléd and Békéscsaba, as well as the characteristic Great Cumanian towns of Túrkeve, Mezőtúr, Karcag, Kisújszállás, *etc.*

After the end of Turkish rule and the wars of independence, peaceful development once again ensued. But the destroyed villages of the peasants living in the towns were not rebuilt. However, as a result of the primitive nature of the productive forces, but particularly because of backward road conditions and transportation difficulties, it was out of the question for farmers living in the towns to go 8 or even 10 miles every day to work on their lands. So at first—in the second half of the 18th century—temporary quarters primarily for the men grazing their animals were built in the fields far out from the towns. When, alongside livestock breeding, crop farming took on importance, out of the temporary men's quarters permanent residences were built for the whole family, together with the necessary farm buildings—stables, granaries, *etc.* This was how the farmstead system consisting of scattered houses and farm buildings around the agricultural towns developed.

The question may be asked whether these agricultural communities, whose populations are engaged primarily in farming, can properly be regarded as towns? The answer must be in the affirmative, since their population is relatively large and in their inner territory, which is of urban character, administrative, cultural, and social welfare institutions of a high order are functioning. The thousands of individual, isolated settlements surrounding the towns may be regarded as atomized villages, since historically speaking that is just what they are. In recent years efforts have been made to end the isolation of the farmsteads by the establishment of farmstead centres consisting of cultural, health and administrative centres.

Naturally the building of socialism is not restricted to the development of industry, but is also revolutionizing agriculture. With the unfolding of cooperative farming in Hungarian agriculture, machines and chemistry are coming to the fore. The individual plots of land of the farmsteads have become obstacles to progress, they block the way before the tractors and combines—so they will have to vanish. And since mechanization is releasing a tremendous amount of labour, industry is also entering the agricultural towns, here too new industrial plants are being built. The increased requirements of the industrial workers and of the cooperative peasantry demand the establishment of new institutions. The Hungarian agricultural town in its old form will disappear, but as a special type of settlement it is being enriched with new functions and as a result is also undergoing an external transformation.

GYÖRGY MARKOS

# WORKERS' ACADEMIES IN HUNGARY

The change wrought in 1945 not only meant that a path was opened to the children of workers and peasants towards a "higher schooling," but also that an opportunity now arose for the parents to satisfy their own desire for education and knowledge. Not only the children of the "lower classes" began to besiege the various sanctuaries of learning, but the adults too—and by no means only those of the classes alluded to—hastened to make up for the deficiencies of their education. The visitor to Budapest in the first months after the liberation must, as he walked the streets hung with thousands of advertisements and posters, have been struck by the mushrooming multitude of lecture-series, courses and extra-mural university programs. And at least as striking was the manner in which the people went from one lecture-hall to the next, to quench their ardent thirst for knowledge. Once the State power had become socialist, it gave its full backing to this spontaneous movement for making up deficiencies and satisfying requirements, channelling it in a planned manner. The children of the working classes now not only have better opportunities to study, but these opportunities have become institutional and guaranteed. Similarly, the regular education of the older generation or, to put it more precisely, of those beyond the school age, was gradually given definite forms at the lower, secondary and university levels.

All this contributed, as a democratic and educational task, towards transforming the structure of the whole educational system, and to extending the circle of "pupils" in an unprecedented measure. Industrialization and the rate of industrial progress, moreover, advanced considerable requirements in respect both of further changes in pattern and the numbers of those that should participate in education. All these are circumstances that have arisen from Hungary's special conditions, *i. e.*, from the requirements and deliberate politicies of a country engaged in building socialism. At the same time the new technical revolution of our age, which has throughout the world made the problem of education a central one, is advancing its universal demands in Hungary too, or—to mention a more distant similarity—"child-consciousness" is as big a force in Hungary as in Western countries. Our changing world thus requires more knowledge, in East and West, in the small and large countries alike. In Hungary and the socialist countries, moreover, the individual makes greater claims on society and society on the individual. This is why ever new forms of acquiring knowledge are arising in Hungary, and it is of one of these that the following is intended to be a brief account.

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At the evening and correspondence courses of the general, secondary and higher schools, tens of thousands of working people acquire the knowledge that is indispensable for their everyday work. Inevitably, however, only a small portion of the working class is studying at the schools. Progress, on the other hand, requires that as many working people as possible should enter the ranks of the multitude of "cultivated brains" (Széchenyi). If a worker wishes to have his say in the formulation of production plans and to play his part in putting the plans into practice, he must acquire a knowledge of all the fundamental features and laws of the natural and technical sciences, whose application leads to a modernization of technology, an increase in productivity and decreasing costs. He must at the same time come to know something about the arts, for without them he cannot properly formulate his world outlook.

One of the centres of extra-mural education in Hungary is TIT (Tudományos Ismeretterjesztő Társulat), the Society for the Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge, founded 120 years ago. Teachers, doctors, engineers and artists, thousands and thousands of intellectuals, deliver lectures in the factories and villages as collaborators of TIT. In recent years, TIT has endeavoured to extend its activities to more and more workers. Nothing is more illustrative of this effort than the fact that 69,286 workers attended 1,318 lectures in 1957, and 660,489 attended 10,995 lectures in 1959, while in the first half of 1961 the number of lectures delivered rose to 40,000.

After 1956 the method ever more frequently applied was that of delivering entire series, consisting of several lectures, while in respect to content, the number of demonstrations, excursions and factory visits was increased. This, however, could be no more than a beginning, for the subject-matter of the lecture series was not yet able to provide coherent and interrelated knowledge, while the organizational framework was also too loose. The lack of regular attendance was a further deficiency, and the acquisition of knowledge was not recognized by the award, for instance, of a certificate. The circumstances amid which the lectures took place were also frequently unworthy of their subject. A member of the audience of a lecture delivered during the lunch-hour, for instance, characterized the situation by saying: "We are served culture with bacon." New paths had therefore to be sought, where the curriculum would include a suitable proportion of scientific subjects, the scientific fundamentals of economic policies and of planning, and the peculiar problems of Hungarian social development. And—a most important point—all this in a form, within a framework and with methods that would arouse the workers' interest. A form had to be found which would represent a higher and more coherent system of study, providing more extensive and thorough knowledge each year, and participation in which would be honoured, among other things, by the award of a certificate.

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Three years ago the Budapest organization of TIT announced a new form for the dissemination of knowledge, under the slogan: "Enrol in an education course!" They were genuine courses, mainly in respect to their subject-matter, for within each branch of science the short, inter-dependent series of lectures were made to cover only one particular field of knowledge each. When the experiences thus gained were collated, two grave problems emerged. One was that the choice among the rich and varied programs was made completely freely, irrespective of the local political, economic and technical problems, and an "order" was placed for the series that promised to be most interesting. The second difficulty came, when it turned out that in the majority of cases the getting together of an audience took place separately lecture by lecture, so that the aim with which the programs were drawn up could not really be carried out, since the majority of those who attended consisted of different persons on each occasion.

A more advanced form, better adapted to the requirements and based on the same regular audience, had therefore to be evolved. The correct methods were sought almost simultaneously throughout the country, at Szombathely, Székesfehérvár, Miskolc and Pécs. In the autumn of 1960, director Károly Horváth, head of the Ózd Metallurgical Works, called a conference of the Party and Trade Union committees of the Works, and of those in charge of technical training and the local TIT leaders, to discuss the forms, aims and methods of the workers' academies that were to be organized. Following this, several factories, having asked a great number of workers for their opinions, decided that it was a

good idea to have the workers' academy become the higher educational forum that would spread the many different types of knowledge in a particular industrial centre.

In the first half of 1960, of the nearly ten thousand factory lectures 1,711 were delivered within the framework of the workers' academies. It is a particularly noteworthy achievement that 704 of these lectures were held in Budapest, or that in Borsod County, for instance, there were 32 workers' academies with 81 faculties. The success of the 8 workers' academies in Vas County, also testifies to the soundness of the new form.

What, then, are these workers' academies?

*The majority are coherent systems of lectures, worked out for 1-3 years, offering inter-related knowledge, with registered and therefore permanent audiences.* The curricula show a most varied picture, almost from one county and one academy to the next. The organization on whose initiative they take place and the factory or Trade Union that organizes them, decide according to the local resources and requirements whether to start a workers' academy containing only one series of lectures (aimed at raising the general education of the participants), e.g., at Székesfehérvár and Pécs; or whether to establish a comprehensive system for the dissemination of knowledge, such as that developed in Borsod County. Here there are 8 faculties on works economy, 32 technical ones, 3 scientific, 3 arts and 30 foreign language courses. A problem still encountered as regards the subject-matter of the workers' academies is that in many places, e.g., in Budapest, the necessary ratio of technical lectures is not attained. It is rare to find such rich and well-compiled curricula as that of the instruments and automation faculty in Borsod County, where, beside paying attention to the workers' wishes as to the choice of subjects, the concrete technical development requirements of the Works were also considered, and lectures on physics, biology and the history of the labour movement were held. In many places the reason given for the lack of lectures on technical subjects is that these are provided by the enterprises themselves. In this respect it is interesting to note the experiences of the workers' academy organized at the Motor Transport Enterprise No. 23, of Kaposvár.

Here a special workers' academy series was started for fitters, skilled and semi-skilled workers, to extend the workers' knowledge. The 12 specialized lectures, held at fortnightly intervals, were very advantageous from the technical point of view, because the workers were able to obtain a wider view of their trade. They were, beyond the strict confines of their trade, given information on the development of transport, of Hungarian vehicles and the Hungarian motor industry, *etc.* There were, however, also lectures on fuel consumption, faults in brakes, and similar subjects. According to the findings of the heads of the enterprise, the increase in performance since the completion of the series, compared to the previous year, can be shown in percentage value. At the request of the management, the lectures on technical and economic subjects were supplemented by such titles as "The effects of intoxication and exhaustion on motor vehicle drivers," "The effects of the climate on driving motor vehicles," "Socialist morals and devotion to work."

The number of subjects concerned with economics in the curricula of the workers' academies has increased considerably. Of the Budapest lectures on works economy, those dealing with wage problems and with works and labour organization were received with particularly great interest. The audiences asked very many questions, and frequently contributed observations to the lectures. The majority spoke of problems within their factory, criticized bureaucracy and waste, spoke of the various problems of exports and imports, inquired about details of the country's economic development, and advanced a large number of suggestions for

the development of their own factories. Here, for instance, are some of the questions put, after a workers' academy lecture, at one of the workers' hostels in Csepel: "How will the situation regarding power and materials develop in Hungary?" "What does the growth ratio of the national income and of the social product depend on?" At the Lőrinc Spinning Works, one question was: "Will not the present development of heavy industry again impair the standard of living?"

Lively interest is also shown in literary and historical subjects. At the workers' academies at Székesfehérvár, for instance, the literature lectures discussed Hungarian literature from the Enlightenment to Attila József. Students at the workers' academy of the Székesfehérvár Textile Works declared that they had so far only sought entertainment in literature and had never thought that it was possible and worth while to read authors and poets according to such coherent points of view.

At Pécs, eight lectures at the workers' academies, entitled "Modern man's view of the world," helped acquire a basic education in the natural sciences.

A correctly formulated curriculum is not in itself sufficient to ensure the success of a workers' academy, yet experience has shown that the great majority of the workers' academies was very fruitful. A good curriculum can only achieve its aim if it is in harmony with the schooling and capacity for concentration of the audience and if the lecturers use appropriate visual aids. An elderly worker at the Kőszeg Bedspread Works said to the head of the local workers' academy: "What we liked best was that it was not just all talk, but we were also always shown something—a film, experiments, a performance—for instance when the schoolmaster who delivered the lectures on literature brought along his young pupils to recite and sing."

The decisive conditions for success are suitable subjects and good lecturers; but it is also important that appropriate methods be found that will ensure successful organization at the start and, what is at least as hard, continuous attendance of the audience. The practices evolved differ from county to county. Nevertheless, there is one circumstance which may be found everywhere —the framework of selective participation.

Those older organized workers, who under the Horthy regime attended series of lectures arranged at workers' homes and in trade union premises, have not forgotten what an experience it was for them to have the progressive intellectuals of that period come to them and speak of the many interesting and new features of the scientific world. Recalling this, they gladly welcome the start of a "school" for the dissemination of knowledge, to which only those are admitted who do their work properly and undertake—for 1-3 years depending on the plan of the academy—to attend the lectures regularly. A new feature, moreover, is that the workers' academies not only have and require registration, but that the studies persued there are recognized and a "certificate" is awarded. In many places this is taken so seriously that it is given consideration in deciding on promotion and on qualifying people as skilled workers. At the Budapest Tramways, for instance, it is one of the conditions for qualification as a supervisor. At Gellénháza, participation in the workers' academy is a condition for winning the distinguishing title of membership in a Socialist Brigade.

The more formal organization has born fruit. But many things are needed for this—the maintenance of continuous records of the students between the opening and closing sessions, installations (premises, furniture) worthy of the academy, visual aids. As in all collective communities where people engage in work for a common aim, it is necessary to have people who manage the affairs of the community. In some places the presidium of the workers' academy is appointed from among members of the

management. More correct, perhaps, is the practice of having the workers themselves elect fellow students to the posts of director and officers of the workers' academy (this was the case in Vas County, for instance). The organization of a workers' academy, however, in every case requires moral and financial support from the works management.

In order to give some idea of the lectures at workers' academies, here are the curricula of two academies:

A) A Science Academy (in a mining district):
Festive opening of the academy.
Evolution of the Earth.
Buried forests.
Hungary's useful mineral resources.
Work underground. The history and development of mining.
Finding the hidden treasures underground. New means of prospecting in mining.
Film discussion. "Look out! Mining danger!"
What is rock pressure?
What the miner must know about water. The physics of water.
Physical principles of ore processing.
Mechanics of air in the mine.
Coal as raw material for the chemical industry.
Discussion on the protection of the miners' health.
Labour morals, labour discipline.
Visit to a mine, exchange of experiences.
Summing up, quiz, puzzles, *etc.*

B) An Arts Academy:
Festive opening of the academy.
Art and society.
An introduction to contemporary world literature.
New statues.
Modern pictures.
Hungarian music from Liszt to Bartók.
The modern theatre.
The new Hungarian literature.
New paths in filming.
Artistic photography.
Contemporary architecture.
Applied art.
Tasteful, modern homes.
Summing up.

It is characteristic of the great popularity of the workers' academies that in the 1960/61 season over 600 series of workers' academy lectures were delivered in 400 factories.

GYÖRGY BARBARICS

# BOOKS AND AUTHORS

## HUNGARIAN LITERATURE AS PORTRAYED IN A BRITISH ENCYCLOPEDIA

Let me begin with a confession. I am a passionate and indefatigable reader of dictionaries and encyclopedias. I have a bad memory which often deserts me when I wish to fall back on it, and is prone to astonishing view-points in selecting what to retain and what to drop. To my regret, I often have to look up well-known historical and biographical data, but I know, for instance, that our great king Matthias, who reigned in the 15th century, had a luxurious pleasure-boat on the Danube, named *Bucentaurus*, and I can still recite almost faultlessly the hundred lines of the 6th canto of the *Aeneid* which I had to learn by heart, as an extra task, when I was fifteen, because I had played with a pin during Latin class. On the other hand, there are no more than one or two poems of my favourite poets that I can recite correctly, though I have read them hundreds of times and they have come to form a part of my daily life.

However, I love and esteem the best encyclopedic works too much to take them down from the shelf only when I lack some date or to bridge over a painful lapse of memory. No, our relations (although somewhat one-sided) are friendly, and I turn to them not only from selfish motives, but because I have a real and altruistic interest in them—I love them for what they are. Indeed, they are my favourite reading, these records embodying the inexhaustible wealth of the material and spiritual worlds, of the dazzling achievements of human knowledge (and at the same time of my ignorance), of evanescence and immortality, conjuring up before my eyes the intoxicating illusion of unattainable omniscience and completeness. On their pages the malicious and inexorable logic of the alphabet creates a strange democracy that ranges insects and kings, continents and human limbs, cheeses and generals side by side, snapping its fingers at dignity, consideration, scales of value and politeness. I scarcely know a more amusing and more profitable pastime than that of browsing in a volume of an encyclopedia, thumbing through it from cover to cover or skimming its pages like those of a thriller in which the story provides a ceaseless variety of surprises, as does life itself, and in which one can never tire of the characters, for their number is infinite and the scene of their activities the endless universe, the macro- and microcosmos, on the immense co-ordinates of history.

I wholly agree with Mr. Aldous Huxley who—as I have been told—usually takes with him on his travels a copy of a special pocket edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* printed on India paper. He is quite right; a son of the century of science could hardly venture into the unknown with better armour. The devotee of the Encyclopaedia

can experience no particular surprise anywhere in the world. In my own case I discovered the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* somewhat egotistically, as an undergraduate. I had to prepare for a Hungarian literature class and needed some particulars on the life of Mihály Vörösmarty, one of our leading 19th century poets. I was sitting in the reading-room of the university's English Institute and, having no other source at hand, I looked up Vörösmarty from sheer curiosity in the respective volume of the *Encyclopaedia*, which, by the way, was some 25 years old. I remember my astonishment at finding an excellent article of several columns, with exact data, on Vörösmarty. All his most prominent works were listed and reviewed, sources indicated, and I even found the particular detail I had been looking for. Ever since I have a great admiration for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and cling to the hope that some day I too may become the proud owner of such a pocket-edition. It is, however, very likely, that that pocket-edition will be printed not on India paper but on some synthetic material.

In writing about such works for our own public, or for English readers, I cannot omit a salute to our good old worn-out *Révai Lexicon*. Its twenty-one bulky, gilded volumes, with the supplementary twenty-second have stood on the shelves of all higher- and lower-middleclass homes of the country. It was published after World War I, but its style—and I believe its substance too—at least in the thirties, when as a child I began to delve into its volumes, was as venerably antique as that of a bearded academician. And yet successions of generations had been nurtured on it, an indispensable work for many decades; *Révai's* became a household word, eclipsing its rivals, the *Pallas*, the *Új Idők Lexicon* and others. We have to use it even now, whenever it becomes necessary to look up some detail of a finally and ingloriously vanished past, of which its proud and modern successors have no cognizance, or which they deliberately ignore. However, for me the orang-utan (Simia satyrus or Pongo Pigmaeus) will always seem exactly like its semblance drawn by the illustrator of Révai's, although I have often observed its photograph since, in the large edition of Brehm's, and have seen it alive in the various Zoological Gardens of Europe. And I must not forget to praise the unforgettable services Révai's rendered by offering learned and patient information on sex to many successive generations, furnishing abundant material, spiced here and there with illustrations, to the avid phantasy of adolescents, as soon as they had learned the proper or even the medical or legal terms, not used in colloquial language and which concealed the forbidden, sweet fruit of knowledge.

Sooner or later everybody builds up an individual method for finding out right away what any new encyclopedia is worth. During the first superficial browsings, here and there, one goes in at random for reading up particular subjects, according to a set of principles. Methods and requirements are naturally different when probing into an encyclopedia published abroad or into one issued at home. In the first instance, I for one am on the look-out for certain Hungarian references. My first test is generally Bartók (and that, I must say, is a sign of benevolence on my part, for no new encyclopedia is published nowadays anywhere in the world which fails to mention Bartók, so this first step counts only as a polite, tentative gesture). The second test is the entry "Hungarian History"—if to be found at all. The third is our literature, poetry and art, which in my humble opinion should be vouchsafed some coverage in every encyclopedia with some pretensions to completeness. And so on.

Is that a mania of mine? It certainly is. But being a solitary people without kith or kin, we Hungarians are apt to fling our arms round the neck of any strange compatriot met while wandering through the world. There are few of us, therefore we

take note of one another. We harbour passions unknown to the sons of great nations, or known to them only from books. Our great men have invariably been great patriots and all of them feel a passionate (and just) anxiety for the fate of their nation. Some of our poets have probably written as many patriotic poems as are to be found altogether in English poetry. All this, of course, has well-known and understandable historical causes and profound roots in the hearts and the deepest recesses of the soul, among the shadowy passions where lurk the memories of real and imaginary injuries. Most probably this is what the English briefly and somewhat ironically call "small-nation talk." But even small nations have a right to talk. It is our natural and strong desire that the world should at long last know about our modest but solid assets.

Our relations to world literature are particularly close and as old as Hungarian culture itself, but nearly entirely one-sided, although Hungarian literature still has in store a few surprises for the world. Since it is socially, politically and emotionally the inherently "committed" literature of a small nation which in the course of its history has suffered many humiliations, it may bring home to great nations thoughts which they have never had any occasion to fathom. Whether it interests them is quite another question; *ignoti nulla cupido.* The history of our nation, after an initial epoch of grandeur, followed by the superlatively noble but doomed experiment of our great Renaissance King Matthias, consists—until the recent past—of an incessant, mortal struggle against the merciless pressure of immense external forces, which at all times found their involuntary and voluntary collaborators within the country. Hence all the pain and bitterness of "small nation talk" which, by the way, is not quite unknown in English-language poetry. I recall Yeats' lovely poem which might figure as a motto to an article on Hungarian literature in some imaginary encyclopedia:

Out of Ireland have we come.
Great hatred, little room.
Maimed at the start.
I carry from my mother's womb
A fanatic heart.

People are touchy regarding the few things they may really and truly be proud of. Today anyone who does not know the name of Shakespeare counts as uneducated in every part of the world, while, even among educated people, there are few who could name a single Hungarian poet. And that is still often considered natural, though I think this attitude will soon be a thing of the past. After the Russians and other neighbouring nations, the French, the Italians and now lately the Germans have discovered the poetry of Attila József, and are beginning to enjoy Petőfi and Ady. These three names represent not only the summits of Hungarian poetry, but also its "most European moments." All this is only the beginning, however. The world at large scarcely knows Hungarian literature; the small world of literary experts has only just become aware of its existence but has not yet admitted it. One still meets at every step such grotesquely unacceptable and ignorant or even malevolent articles on Hungarian literature as that published lately in the French *Pléiade* series on world literature. This survey, while presenting our classics on the whole correctly, exhibits an amazing ignorance as regards modern Hungarian literature. Frigyes Karinthy (1888—1838), our brilliant humorous writer, who would be appreciated in any country, is confounded with his son, the novelist, Ferenc Karinthy. Lajos Nagy, one of our best modern writers of short stories, who died in 1954 at the age of seventy-one, is mentioned as a young writer, along with a few really young authors whose works thus far published would hardly justify their mention in any Hungarian history of literature. The list of modern poets, however, includes a number of names which are unknown to us—the

names of young abscondees who have never had a line published in Hungary. M. Pierre Barkan's article in the deservedly respected *Pléiade* series makes sad reading. He may have had few and incompetent sources at his command, but the high international reputation of his publishers and of the series should have compelled him to gather his material and information from trustworthy sources and at least to have his data and list of names supervised by experts. No Hungarian authority or expert would have refused to collaborate.

From this aspect, going through the three volumes of the European history of drama by the distinguished West German scholar Paul Fechter (Das europäische Drama, Bibliographisches Institut, Mannheim, 1958) was a similarly appalling experience. The index of this work contains at least a thousand names, without including a single Hungarian dramatist, not even the name of Ferenc Molnár, despite his extensive popularity in Western Europe. That a work of such dimensions, written with such erudition, pretensions and positivist methods (an excellent work in many respects) should fail to mention at least the classic masterpieces of József Katona and Imre Madách, which have had several editions in German translation, is a grave fault or reprehensible prejudice, both equally unworthy of this long-needed, important reference work. I might continue the list *ad nauseam*, pointing to reports on Hungarian literature that would better not have been printed, for even nothing is better than ignorant, harmful nonsense. There are, furthermore, the pioneer translated anthologies, with their still more painful errors and lapses. The anthology issued by *Avanti*, an Italian publishing house, and representing the first foreign-language collection of Hungarian poetry, for instance, contains the erroneous information that *The Song of a Hungarian Jacobin*—one of Ady's most famous poems—was written by Petőfi, which is about the same as if one were to say of a poem by Apollinaire that it was written by Victor Hugo.

There are, however, some examples illustrating the contrary. One of them is the summary in *Chamber's Encyclopaedia* (George Newnes Ltd. 1955), which was, in fact, written by the outstanding professor of English literature at Budapest University, Miklós Szenczi.

I might also mention the studies by Mr. G. F. Cushing on the history of Hungarian literature in *The Slavonic Review*, which would hold their own in any Hungarian literary review. Recently Mr. Cushing has written a long and comprehensive study on the work of József Bajza, a poet and critic of the last century scarcely read in these days in Hungary. I could not sufficiently admire his erudition until I later learned that he had studied at Budapest University and Eötvös College. I even seem to remember his face. I do not know how many students there are in his Hungarian classes at London University, but they seem to be in good hands.

One of the pleasant surprises in this field is the carefully revised, modernized, concise and well-appointed *Everyman's Encyclopaedia*. This surprise is all the more gratifying in that, due to its relatively low price, this encyclopedia is bound to appear in large editions and to be accessible to many readers. Its articles on Hungarian literature show a great erudition, objectivity, and knowledge of facts, while the proportions of the articles indicate sound judgement. The anonymous author must certainly be an excellent scholar, who knows Hungarian and can not only list names and data, but—what is much more difficult—also knows how to select and evaluate within the modest possibilities of a genre. I know how hard his task must have been, for a few years ago I had to write twenty typed pages for an Italian encyclopedia on the history of Hungarian literature up to the present. For a week I suffered agonies until I contrived to condense (at least in

the form of notes and references) all that I considered indispensable into one article, so that the line of development should remain visible and not be covered up entirely by a multitude of names and data. It is exceedingly difficult to write on a scholarly level, without bluffing, for readers in whom the most brilliant names of Hungarian literature evoke no memories. The author of the articles on Hungarian literature in *Everyman's Encyclopaedia* (assuming that all entries on this theme have been written by the same author) has on the whole contrived to do so, and that is no small matter. He has an unerring taste, a concise style, his facts are mostly correct and his judgements nearly always sound, although there are a few half-truths or part-truths among them. He looks at facts from a different angle and selects according to standards that differ from our own, which is only natural; but on the main issues we agree with him. His articles show that he not only knows but also loves Hungarian literature and endeavours to do it justice in the relatively small space at his disposal. If I nevertheless criticize his work by our inevitably more exacting standards, I do so chiefly because I have some claim to competence in this field; I am, indeed, glad to know that there is at last some—however short and sketchy—information in English on Hungarian literature, easily available to the public and worthy of being criticized and rectified. I do so, moreover, because there is a lesson to be drawn from it for us Hungarians. For some time past we have not only lamented over the world's being unacquainted with our cultural values, but we have also been trying to do something to mend this state of affairs. We have discovered that it is up to us to step out of our distressing linguistic isolation. Until we do so it will be no wonder if foreign encyclopedias present our literature in the light of obsolete view-points that dominated foreign summaries published some twenty to fifty years ago. It is for us to supply new, modern, concise and attractive summaries in the languages that are spoken the world over and to see to it that our former literary exports, which we had no reason to be proud of, should at last be replaced by works bearing the genuine hall-mark of Hungarian genius.

The collaborator of *Everyman's Encyclopaedia* has written a summary of two and a half columns, under the entry *Hungary*, in which he gives a short survey of Hungarian literature. The authors he considers important (altogether sixteen) are then dealt with at the respective places under separate entries. The survey falls short mainly at the beginning and at the end. However, it mentions the names of thirty-three Hungarian writers and poets, elucidates the course of development and its peculiarities correctly, and it is doubtful whether he could have done more in that limited space. True, he deals rather unfeelingly with Hungary's literary past (13th to 18th centuries), declaring that due to unfavourable historical development "there was before the end of the 18th century comparatively little Hungarian literature." On the whole this is valid until the middle of the 17th century, although the *Hungarian Electra* by *Péter Bornemissza* written in 1558 would have deserved mention. An adaptation of Sophocles' play to Hungarian conditions, it is full of allusions to contemporary political problems (e. g., should one fight tyranny?) and represents the only noteworthy dramatic experiment for a long time. The same applies to *János Apáczai Csere* (1625-1659), who wrote the first Hungarian scientific and philosophic work, the Cartesian *Hungarian Encyclopaedia* (1653), mostly on the basis of English examples. His great pupil *Miklós Bethlen* (1642-1716) would also have merited mention as the best representative in the field of memoirs. His work is that of a widely-travelled, scholarly, enlightened, patriotic politician and thinker, a fascinating, forceful confession written in prison, which may be compared confidently with such

classics of the genre as the writings of Saint-Simon, Chateaubriand or Evelyn. *Balassi*, *Zrínyi*, *Gyöngyösi* and *Pázmány* are dealt with briefly, though the author acknowledges their importance as the greatest names in Hungarian poetry and prose before the 18th century. We miss only two names from the report on the period up to 1821, those of *János Batsányi* (1763-1845), the great poet of the Hungarian Enlightenment and an enthusiastic adherent of the French revolution, and of *Mihály Fazekas* (1766-1828), who wrote one of the most popular comic epics of Hungarian literature, *Ludas Matyi* (1815), written in a concise and extremely humorous folk style.

The miniature picture drawn in the article of the period closing with the end of the 19th century, gives a correct, though proportionally diminished, view of that rich and turbulent century, as if seen through the wrong end of a pair of field-glasses. It was a period of superb flowering of Hungarian literature, marching suddenly at several points in the vanguard of world literature. After the soil had been prepared by the great language reform at the beginning of the century, Hungarian literature, supported by Csokonai, Berzsenyi and Kölcsey, suddenly skipped centuries and with Vörösmarty, Petőfi, Arany and Vajda reached the summits of European literature. True, prose-writing lagged half a step behind lyrical poetry; we nevertheless consider the author's summary condemnation of Mikszáth rather unjust when he states that "his humorous novels are often marred by poor construction." This is true only of his first period; in his later great novels there is no more of that jovial humour and primitive anecdotic construction, only genuine, unswerving realism. Perhaps *Sándor Bródy* (1863-1924), the excellent naturalistic novelist, ought to have been mentioned too, for having accomplished unaided the tremendous task of creating modern, urban prose after the mostly romantic realism of the preceding century. *Margit Kaffka* (1880-1918) would also have deserved mention as a pioneer and as our greatest woman novelist; in her terse realistic prose striving for utmost accuracy and in her individual romantic style she described the modern woman who breaks through the close barriers that shut in the world of the county nobility, to go her own difficult way.

Although the article recalls the most important literary review, *Nyugat* (1908-1941), and a few of its collaborators, as Ady, Babits, and Kosztolányi, we miss some very prominent names belonging to this circle. With his intimate, delicate, and beauty-loving modern lyrics, *Árpád Tóth* (1886-1928) represents one of the summits of Hungarian poesy. Incidentally, Tóth was an enthusiastic admirer of English poetry—especially of Keats—and the brilliant translator of Milton, Keats, Shelley and Wilde. The poems of *Gyula Juhász* (1883-1937) struck a new chord with their soft, tragic tone imbued with melancholy. "I am the poet of Hungarian grief and of human compassion," he wrote about himself. He was indeed the poet of the poor and at the same time one of those who wrote the finest lyrical verses on the Hungarian countryside. *Gyula Krudy*'s (1878-1933) poetic, impressionistic prose, his dreamy narrative technique of free association, his nostalgic longing for the past, and his uncommonly spicy style should assure him a place in world literature, but unfortunately his writings are difficult to translate, chiefly because of their marked linguistic and stylistic peculiarities. Simultaneously with Proust, Krudy anticipated Virginia Woolf and Aldous Huxley in turning time into a subjective factor of the novel. *Frigyes Karinthy* (1888-1938), with his humorous, satiric prose, enriched our literature by innumerable sketches, cabaret-scenes, caricatures of fellow-writers full of brilliant flashes of wit, and philosophical short stories, which, in carefully arranged selections and really good translations, could easily acquire a world reputation. Karinthy was also an outstanding

poet and thinker, and his turbulent, rebellious personality was one of the most thrilling phenomena of our literature between the two world-wars. *Lajos Nagy* (1883-1954) wrote novels and short stories in a seemingly detached manner and with sociographic exactness, producing the most accurate and unsparing portraits of social conditions in bourgeois Hungary. The spicy, picaresque prose of *Józsi Jenő Tersánszky* (b. 1888) paints the underworld at the beginning of the century with fascinating charm, humour, animation and novel literary methods.

To round off the picture, a few further names should be added. *Lajos Kassák* (b. 1887) and *Milán Füst* (b. 1888) have been the first to write free verse in Hungary. The former is a poet of the proletariat, the latter's work is imbued with a peculiar mysticism, a bizarre medieval atmosphere. Both are also eminent prose writers. The pessimistic, modern, urban poetry of *Lőrinc Szabó* (1900-1957) is characterized by extreme individualism, anarchistic rebelliousness, a great sensibility to nature, and an individual attitude regarding love. His concise style, exalted philosophy and highly accomplished poetic form make him unique. His translations of several hundred English, as well as of French, German, Russian and other poems are of outstanding quality.

The death of *Miklós Radnóti* (1909-1944), a victim of German fascism, was probably the saddest loss Hungarian literature suffered during the war. His last poems, found in his coat pocket after his death, were protests of classic conciseness and astouding force against war and inhumanity, and voiced his longing for his home and his wife, revealing a marvellous confidence and will to survive, at the door of death.

*László Németh* (b. 1901), is one of the most interesting and most versatile writers and thinkers of our period. His oeuvre contains about a dozen volumes of studies, a great cycle of novels, several historical dramas and dramas of manners, besides a periodical which he wrote singlehanded. His works are beginning to find their way into other European countries and have recently scored a great success in West-Germany. He has written about every important social, political, philosophical, artistic and scientific problem of our century. His talent for theorizing and analysis, the wealth and elasticity of his thinking, his encyclopedic learning and methodicalness are equally captivating. His belletristic works deal with the most important historical and social problems of Hungary, treated always from the viewpoint of European and universal human progress and ethics. He is doubtless the greatest figure in present-day Hungarian literature and would merit a prominent place in the European literary hierarchy.

Further critical remarks could be added in connection with both the summary here dealt with and some of the entries in *Everyman's Encyclopaedia*. It is, for instance, surprising that the greatest Hungarian prose writer, *Zsigmond Móricz*, has been completely omitted from the summary; he does have a separate entry, where, however, he is promptly and disparagingly dubbed a naturalist, on the ground of earlier works of his that had been translated into English. Such a classification cannot be rightly applied to his magnificent life work. *Endre Ady* is not an impressionist but a symbolistic and revolutionary poet. *Gyula Illyés* is not only the author of "The People of the Puszta," but in the first instance one of our best poets. There are furthermore a few incorrect dates and apparently inevitably misspelt names, but it is far from my intention to cavil. The summary seizes the essential by showing the upswing of Hungarian poetry beginning with Bálint Balassi in the 16th century, the more thorny path of prose-literature, and the peculiar, regrettable poverty of the Hungarian drama. For Hungarian writers and readers the lesson to be drawn from this relatively good and thorough account is that it devolves on ourselves to take the next step. Where it

is possible, the author of the articles refers to the English editions of the works of our writers. How deplorably few there are and how poorly done in most cases. I know, for instance, every English and American edition of Petőfi, Ady and Arany. With few exceptions they are the zealous but inadequate, inaccurate, stammering efforts of dilettants. As for the works of our great prose-writers, there is next to nothing in English. The author is often obliged to quote titles of German or French translations, for he is writing for the great public and cannot pack his text with untranslated or untranslatable Hungarian titles; yet titles have to be given, after all. These intolerable and unfortunate conditions can be remedied only by Hungarian publishers, who may undoubtedly rely on the interest of the English-speaking public.*

MIKLÓS VAJDA

## AN AID IN PRONOUNCING HUNGARIAN NAMES

Readers unfamiliar with the Hungarian language are likely to find difficulty in pronouncing Hungarian names and as a result their enjoyment of literary works in particular may be impaired. This is notably true of certain consonants, of which we here give some of the most easily mispronounced with an indication of their correct pronunciation.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| c | is | pronounced | like | ts | in | arts |
| cs | » | » | » | ch | » | church |
| gy | » | » | » | de | » | hideous |
| ly | » | » | » | y | » | lawyer |
| s | » | » | » | sh | » | she |
| sz | » | » | » | s | » | see |
| z | » | » | » | s | » | these |
| zs | » | » | » | s | » | leisure |

* In the first quarter of 1962 a prose anthology in English will be published, embracing a selection of works by outstanding Hungarian short-story writers from the middle of the nineteenth century up to 1945. An anthology in English of the lyrical poetry of Hungary covering a period of seven centuries, is to appear in 1963. Both volumes will be published by Corvina Press, Budapest.

# OLD HUNGARIAN DRAMA

*. . . when a new planet swims into his ken . . .*

Occasionally you come across a book which strikes you with the joy of surprise and discovery. The outlines of the subject may be vaguely familiar, but the whole thing was half-forgotten, tucked away in some dim corner of your mind. Suddenly something unexpected happens: fresh light comes flooding in, old forms are clothed in new significance, things deemed dead come to life.

This is the sort of experience one has when studying Monuments of Old Hungarian Drama, issued in two large volumes by the Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy.* It is the first up-to-date collection in this field, comprising forty-nine shorter or longer dramatic texts from the 11th century to the end of the 17th.

The first thing which strikes you about this work is the wealth and completeness of the material. The previous collection of early Hungarian dramatic texts, by Zsolt Alszeghy, is nearly half a century old; it includes half a dozen dramatic texts from the 16th century (its starting point) and only one or two from the 17th.

Since 1914, when Alszeghy's pioneer collection was published, much research has been done into old Hungarian drama. To give one example: a fragment of printed text of a pastoral play by Bálint Balassi, the 16th century Hungarian poet, had been known for some time and has been reprinted repeatedly since 1900. On the basis of this fragment it was established in 1937 by Prof. József Waldapfel that Balassi's work is a free translation of an Italian pastoral play, viz. Castelletti's *Amarilli*. But a manuscript containing the full text of Balassi's first draft was only discovered in 1958 by a Slovak scholar, Dr. Ján Mišianik, and was printed in the following year, in collaboration with two leading Hungarian experts, Prof. Sándor Eckhardt and Dr. Tibor Klaniczay.

It is on the basis of such preliminary spadework, which has been going on for decades, that the imposing structure of the present work has been erected. Its main architect was Prof. Tibor Kardos, an authority on the culture of the Italian and Hungarian Renaissance, assisted by Tekla Dömötör, a specialist in folklore and the history of Hungarian drama, and Gyula Szilvás, a young scholar whose premature death cut short a promising career. Szilvás did much devoted work in collecting and establishing the texts, supplying notes, giving sensitive poetic translations of many Latin works, and selecting the rich illustrative material. Tekla Dömötör's share was the editing of fourteen 17th century texts which constitute the material of Vol. II. She is also the author of the chapter in the General Introduction (pp. 195-237) which deals with the history of Hungarian dramatic texts in the 17th century. But the lion's share in this great undertaking fell to Tibor Kardos. The editorship of the whole work is his, together with the preparation of all texts dating from before the end of the 16th century and, equally important, of the introductory chapters dealing with the history of dramatic texts during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (pp. 7-192). The definition of dramatic texts, the principles of their selection, the integration of dramatic activity into the larger life of society: these are some of the points, often highly controversial, which have been tackled by Prof. Kardos with his usual vigour and impetuosity, features which give the whole work its distinctive, individual character.

* Régi Magyar Drámai Emlékek, I—II, 950 and 593 pages, resp. Budapest, 1960, Akadémia Kiadó.

According to the working definition offered by Prof. Kardos, drama is scenic representation of action and speech, in the form of monologue or dialogue, is essentially mimetic in character, and involves conflict. Such a view of drama is clearly broader than for example Prof. Hardin Craig's insistence on the simultaneous presence of certain criteria* and is more akin to the attitude of such scholars as Sir Edmund Chambers, Prof. Allardyce Nicoll, J. Gregor, Carl Niessen, Heinz Kindermann and many others who stress the presence of the mimetic instinct in all civilizations and the close connection between dramatic activity and the primeval arts of singing and dancing. Such a view of drama enables the editor to cast his net wide and, by employing a complex method of investigation and utilizing the results of historical research, folklore, musicology and the history of fine arts, to supplement the picture derived from the study of literary texts.

Another important corollary is that actual scenic performance is not regarded as an essential criterion. Prof. Kardos justly refers here to the dramatic novel *Celestina*, one of the most remarkable products of the Spanish Renaissance. As he points out, *Celestina* was originally meant for reading and was probably never performed in its entirety, yet nobody would exclude this masterpiece from the history of Spanish, or indeed of European drama. On this analogy the editor makes it clear that the dramatic quality of the texts and their suitability for performance were the guiding principles of his selection.

Such a conception of the dramatic cuts across conventional categories and opens the door for the inclusion of works usually considered as belonging to other literary forms. The beautiful *Planctus Beatae Mariae Virginis* (about a. D. 1300) has been praised as one of the triumphs of early Hungarian lyric poetry. Of course it is—but at the same time, Prof. Kardos reminds us, it is a typical example of a new kind of devotional drama, more colourful and emotional than the liturgical *Quem quaeritis* trope, since it concentrates on the human relation of the Mother and the Son and tends towards psychological realism. The structure of this lyric monologue is eminently dramatic; the extant melody shows that it was meant to be sung, probably accompanied by mimetic gesture.

Another instructive example given in the Introduction is that of the dramatic sermons dealing principally with the Easter passion. In its Italian original the dramatic sermon was freely interspersed with dramatized lyrics, so-called *laudas*, going back for their inspiration to the lyrical genius of Jacopone da Todi. In their Hungarian counterparts, whether in Latin or in the vernacular, the dramatic scenes embedded in the sermons were always in prose, yet in a style of high emotional tension, viewing the tragedy of the Son again with the eyes of the Mother. Thus the subjects of these Easter sermons were largely akin to those of the *planctus*, but the manner of their delivery necessarily differed. Prof. Kardos has most enlightening remarks to make on the various ways in which dramatic sermons used to be delivered. The simplest way was when the actor-preacher himself recited the passion scenes as monodrama, illustrating the salient points of action by paintings, statues and similar visual means. The second method involved the participation of mimes or actors who either enacted scenes like the flagellation and crucifixion of Christ in dumb show, to illustrate the words of the preacher, or else took over to perform the inserted playlets, while the preacher stopped his sermon. The final development came with the transformation of the sermon into a devotional play, when

* "The medieval religious drama came about more or less by happy accident in the fortuitous union of action, impersonation and dialogue. No one of these may be absent." Hardin Craig: English Religious Drama of the Middle Ages. Oxford. 1955, p. 20.

the separate dramatic scenes were united into a continuous whole, while the explanations and admonitions of the preacher were reduced to the prologue and epilogue, with short appearances between the acts.

Such a broad interpretation of the dramatic enables Prof. Kardos to accomplish a large-scale reconstruction of the growth and development of drama in Hungary, to fill in the gaps by conjecture, and to trace a convincing pattern. He has the qualification of a picturesque historian: the capacity to feel the sweep and surge of events, to sense the great movements of history and to show their manifestations in concrete artistic embodiments or literary works. European drama, especially in its medieval phase, is noted for its international character, for the free wandering of subjects and forms from one country to another. It needed a scholar of Prof. Kardos's wide erudition, particularly in the culture of medieval and Renaissance Italy, to follow the foreign affiliations of Hungarian drama and place it in its European setting.

To draw legitimate conclusions from parallels, to reconstruct tendencies or works from minute details is especially necessary in the case of old Hungarian literature, where so much has been lost or left in fragmentary form after the cataclysmic upheavals, the age-long struggle with Turk and German at the dawn of our modern era. The most definite evidence, for instance, of the existence of biblical passion plays in the 15th century is a playbill from the town of Bártfa; it gives a list of *dramatis personae* from which the probable course of the action has been deduced. There are also some other references to the acting of mystery plays in German and Hungarian, with certain indications of their subjects, but the first known full cycle of plays dates only from the opening decades of the 18th century, viz. the cycle of 48 plays acted on Good Friday at Csíksomlyó in Transylvania.

In his chronological survey of the development of dramatic activity in Hungary, Prof. Kardos pays equal attention to the general European characteristics and to specific features deriving from the peculiarities of Hungary's social structure. Western forms of drama were acclimatized in Hungary almost without any time-lag; the 13th century, for instance, saw the appearance of the wandering scholars and Goliards, the institution of the Feast of Fools, and the first traces of satirical plays, followed later by secular comedy, farce, the morality play, religious debate, and classical tragedy. But several of these dramatic *genres* acquire a special significance, an individual character, in Hungary. The native variety of the European farce, the so-called "*trufa*," becomes a weapon in support of King Matthias' centralizing policy; the Hungarian translation of Hrotswitha's *Dulcitius* is given an anti-Turkish twist; and Péter Bornemissza's *Electra*, published in 1558, similarly acquired topical significance for his contemporaries. The powerful figure of Clytaemnestra was presented as a warning against the "monstrous regimen of women," while the central conflict was interpreted by the author as a dilemma; whether, in the country's dark state of servitude, the tyrant should be resisted by force, or whether it was safer to wait for time to bring remedy and relief.

The impact of Sophoclean tragedy on Bornemissza's passionate mind produced the most intense creation of 16th century Hungarian drama. It is equally fascinating to watch the gradual transformation of the religious dramatic tradition. The end of the 15th century still rang with dramatic sermons and devotional plays, but in *Inter vigilantiam et torporem dialogus* ("The Debate of Vigilance and Torpor") written in 1517 by Bartholomeus Pannonius, a schoolmaster of Buda, we have the first example of an allegorical drama or morality. This short Latin play, Prof. Kardos is careful to point out, contains nearly all the constituent elements of Hungarian drama at the time

of the Renaissance, from the popular Carnival tradition to the influence of Plautus, with a generous admixture of Erasmus and of Italian humanists like Pier Paolo Vergerio and Pandulfo Collenuccio.

Popular tradition reasserts itself in the *genre* created by Mihály Sztárai, the comedy of religious controversy written in the vernacular. A former Franciscan friar, he utilized elements of the devotional play in his two racy comedies dating from the middle of the 16th century. Discussion of topical problems like the ordination and marriage of priests, and the scorn poured on unworthy clerics, mingle here with a revolutionary tone voicing the religious demands of a free peasantry.

But the highest development of this type of comedy, with the most caustic comment and most outspoken criticism, is to be found in the dramatic work of the Transylvanian anti-Trinitarians, the Kolozsvár circle of Ferenc Dávid. Of the three extant plays, two are religious debates, while the *Comœdia Balassi Menyhárt árultatásáról* ("Comedy of Menyhárt Balassi's Betrayal"), written in 1566-67 is a powerful satirical portrait of contemporary morals and manners. There is grim humour in the ruthless self-exposure of the eponymous hero, a representative of the decaying feudal nobility, a traitor, desecrator of churches, and matricide, matched in villany only by his son, the product of the evil side of the new Renaissance morality. The example of the two Balassis is presented as a warning, as a symptom of general decay. Unless a radical change comes about, the country is bound to perish: this is the lesson inculcated by the anti-Trinitarians of Transylvania.

An altogether different atmosphere pervades Bálint Balassi's pastoral play based, as we have seen, on an Italian original, a Petrarchan work full of elaborate conceits. It was the first piece of poetry on a purely amatory subject published in Hungary, and this in itself was a bold step. Another of its merits is the rendering of the difficult conceits in a beautiful flexible artistic prose prepared for, no doubt, by the impassioned meditations and mystical aura of the devotional and passion plays.

Balassi's pastoral (1589) was the furthest advance into the field of purely secular poetic drama, yet, as Prof. Kardos insists, the refined melancholy and lyrical exuberance of the pastoral force the dramatic quality into the background. After the vigorous initiative of the 16th century there is an ebb in creative originality, a kind of arrested development, at the turn of the 17th century. This is attributed by Prof. Kardos and Tekla Dömötör partly to physical and social causes—the partition of the country involving the occupation of its capital, the lack of a permanent Hungarian theatre and theatrical public, the increasing opposition of the Churches to secular drama (cf. the closing of the theatres in London in 1642)—partly to psychological reasons, such as the bewilderment of a people at a complex political and social situation which baffled all rational explanation. Poetic energy found expression in lyrical outbursts or in romantic stories providing escape from an irrational universe.

Nevertheless, there is an interesting body of 17th century Hungarian drama, and this is most competently reviewed by Tekla Dömötör. She draws a useful distinction between the theatrical life of countries which had entered the phase of capitalist development, with their permanent public theatres, professional actors and playwrights, and the semi-feudal stage in Central and Eastern Europe, supported by the aristocracy and the Church. In Hungary it was the school play, under the thumb of the Churches, that became the predominant type of drama. The chief aim of these plays was naturally educational; aesthetic, literary merits were of secondary consideration, the choice of subjects was limited and directed by the school authorities. Hence a comprehensive portrayal of society becomes rare, the voice of bold satire is no

longer heard. Tekla Dömötör distinguishes two main types in 17th century school drama: Latin Jesuit plays of a baroque character and Protestant humanist plays, often written in the vernacular.

Smaller in number but of greater intrinsic interest are the plays meant for dramatic occasions outside the school. There were the court of Transylvania and some aristocratic seats in Pannonia where amateur performances could take place, where masques and wedding pieces could be acted. Towards the end of the century there is an attempt to found a bourgeois theatre; meanwhile, plays were sure to be performed in the market place, in town halls, at village festivities.

Tekla Dömötör proceeds to discuss the main types of 17th century drama. The amatory-pastoral trend initiated by Balassi was continued in Zrínyi's idyll *Titirus és Viola* ("Titirus and Viola") and in two love plays, one of which, *Constantinus és Victoria* ("Constantinus and Victoria") 1648, belongs to the most pleasing compositions of the century. The simplicity of its plot, the delicate analysis of emotions, the author's noble moderation, are features that recall contemporary French tragedy. By contrast, there is a hardly concealed vein of licentiousness in *Florentina*, the other amatory play, though the author shows dramatic skill and a sense of the stage.

Of the other types of drama, the comic offered the only opportunity for portraying the life of the common people, with a corresponding tendency towards realism. There are one or two interesting dramatized satires and a number of comic interludes, usually called "intermedia," inserted between the serious scenes of school dramas, and of amatory and historical plays.

Popular religious drama is represented by several Franciscan plays that foreshadow the 18th century Csíksomlyó mysteries. The origin and antiquity of popular religious plays in Hungary have been much discussed during the past century. The three 17th century plays discovered in the last twenty years have to a considerable extent cleared up outstanding issues.

After discussing the remaining types, such as disputes, dramatized didactic poems, *etc.*, Tekla Dömötör gives a brief chronological survey of her material and summarizes her conclusions. The chief of them is that, because of the predominance of Latin plays, Hungarian drama written in the vernacular does not form a continuous tradition in the 17th century; it appears rather as a series of new starts, of sporadic experiments. There was no permanent play-acting in Hungarian to serve as a stimulus; nor did the dramatic authors avail themselves of the opportunities provided by the printing-press. After the conscious literary programs and printed works of Sztárai, Bornemissza and Balassi, most 17th century drama consists of anonymous works, extant only as manuscripts. It forms, in Tekla Dömötör's words, a bridge between the powerful Renaissance drama of the 16th century and the new type of Hungarian drama beginning with the end of the 18th century, serving as a testimony that even under the most unfavourable circumstances, Hungarian authors did not give up their efforts to create and establish a national drama in the vernacular.

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Such a sketchy account cannot do justice to the wealth of the material included or the scholarly adequacy of the treatment. In the case of Latin texts, the edition is bilingual; when necessary, sources are given in the original. The concise notes to the texts are full of valuable data indicating the history of the question concerned and acting as a guide to further research; the same purpose is served by the copious bibliography. The numerous illustrations are organically linked with the argument of the book. In brief, we have here an outstanding achievement of contemporary Hungarian scholarship.

MIKLÓS SZENCZI

# ENGLISH RENAISSANCE DRAMAS IN HUNGARIAN

Ferenc Kazinczy, the main organizer of Hungarian literary life towards the end of the 18th century, was arrested in 1795 upon orders from Vienna on his estate in Eastern Hungary and sentenced to death together with other writers and Jacobin intellectuals. During the first months of the imprisonment to which his death sentence was commuted (he was to spend six and a half years in jail), Kazinczy devoted himself feverishly to revising and polishing his translation of "Hamlet," because, as he declared in his diary, the national stage, then in its formative period, had urgent need of a real play. Here, then, in the Austrian prison fortress of Kufstein, the initial step in the Hungarian interpretation of Elisabethan dramatic literature was taken. Today, when all of Shakespeare's plays have long been translated several times into Hungarian, and when a new, representative selection in three bulky volumes, entitled "English Renaissance Dramas," * has been published of the plays of Shakespeare's contemporaries, it is perhaps not untimely to honour the memory of the prisoner. In attempting to place oneself in his position and to evoke the heroism of his labour, it will become plain why we Hungarians attribute greater importance to literary translations than does the West.

There are, however, other differences as well, between the Western and the Hungarian conception of literary translation. In an article entitled "Attar of Racine," the November 25th, 1960 issue of *The Times Literary Supplement* reviews Professor Kenneth Muir's translation of Racine. "The main difficulty remains the choice of medium," writes *The Times* reviewer. "The English couplet is too bombastic and too crude, as Professor Muir shows. Blank verse, on the other hand, tends to become loose and prosaic, and the absence of rhyme is an immense loss." In order to illustrate this loss the critic of *The Times* compares three generally known lines from *Berenice* with Professor Muir's translation:

*"Que le jour recommence et que le jour finisse*
*Sans que jamais Titus puisse voir Bérénice,*
*Sans que de tout le jour je puisse voir Titus?"*

The English interpretation is as follows:

*"— — — — — that the day begins,*
*That the day ends, and Titus cannot see*
*His Berenice, nor all the livelong day*
*Can I see Titus."*

The Hungarian reader—without doubting the value of the rendering—is nevertheless at least as nonplussed at the sight of this solution, as Englishmen are at the sound of Shakespeare translated into French prose. His amazement becomes all the greater, when he reads in the critic's note that this solution is "the nearest perhaps that English can get to it." Far be it from us to venture into a discussion of British translating habits; we would merely insist that our ideals are hardly met by Professor Muir's interpretation. There was a time in Hungary too, when some people said that Racine should be translated in blank iambics, because the actors are not used to conveying the caesura of the French Alexandrine by a breething pause. The practice of translation has, however, long disproved this contention. The complete plays of Racine, published in 1947, are, with the exception of only one older translation included for tradition's sake, all naturally true to form. Like the originals, they are in French Alexandrines, with alternately masculine and feminine rhymes.

* Angol reneszánsz drámák. Válogatta és bevezette Szenczi Miklós. Európa Kiadó, 1960. (English Renaissance Dramas. Selected and introduced by Miklós Szenczi. Europa Publishers, 1960.)

The example may serve to illustrate the generally known, yet so frequently neglected, fact that in our vocabulary literary translation is never taken to mean prose interpretations or adaptations that have been changed or modified as to form. Our great poets of the past did actually make a few attempts—intended as individual experiments—to render a form once favoured in another age with different tastes, in the popular forms of their day. Horace, for instance, was translated not into the metre of the odes, but into rhymed trochees. These endeavours, however, clearly showed that a change in form alters the poem itself. One of the instruments of the poet, the image, may be conveyed by this means as well, but the music of his verse, which determines the atmosphere, can not. Faithfulness to form has, therefore, for close on half a century now, become an indispensable requirement in our literary translations. In the last twenty or twenty-five years this has been accompanied by a rejection of all romantic insertions and a demand for accuracy in content.

Readers who have for the most part encountered a different practice in literary translation may well ask how this is possible. The answer again is a simple one. It is possible on the one hand because the Hungarian language is flexible and equally suited to verse both in quantitative and stressed metre, for in contrast to the Western languages it renders the quantitative metres not by stresses, but by the alternate use of long and short vowels. On the other hand, it is made possible by the fact that the art of translation has become a tradition, a national obligation, as it were, on the part of the greatest of Hungarian poets. If we may perhaps be pardoned for an immodest comparison, it is as though to improve British cultural standards, Goethe had been translated by Shelley, Ronsard by John Donne, Villon by Burns. In our complete Shakespeare, for instance, the British reader may discover the works of the three greatest lyricists of nineteenth-century Hungarian poetry (Petőfi, Arany and Vörösmarty), and also those of two representatives of the lyrical renascence at the beginning of the present century (Babits and Kosztolányi). Those familiar with contemporary Hungarian literature will, moreover, encounter alongside them all the most eminent names of present-day Hungarian poetry, with very few exceptions. This peculiar tradition, which undoubtedly imposes a burden on the poets' own work, has set the standards of literary translation so high, that the work of non-poets, of philologists or industrious and enthusiastic schoolmasters, cannot be taken into account at all. There is a golden rule that no one can be a greater translator, than he is a poet. How can anyone take part in such a competition unless he is a poet? Saint John Perse was translated by Rilke, T. S. Eliot and Ungaretti. Unquestionably this is the ideal means of exchanging poetic values among the peoples. Indeed, it is generally only at this level that the poet and his translator can meet in the manner described by Goethe in his letter to Nerval, after reading the French version of his "Faust:" "Je ne me suis jamais aussi bien compris qu'en vous lisant."

Our object has not been to boast of our literary translations (they are, after all, hardly more than the private concern of the literature of a small nation), but rather to stress the tradition from which the volume of "English Renaissance Dramas" has sprung. This volume of twenty-one translated plays is just as much a common work, as the complete "Hungarian Shakespeare," and in just the same manner. Of the participating translators, it should not only be noted that they have many volumes of literary translations to their credit, but also that their independent lyrical works are a significant part of contemporary Hungarian poetry. (Their translations include István Vas's volume of English Baroque Poetry, and his renderings of Villon and Shakespeare;

Zoltán Jékely's Faust I, Molière and Shakespeare; László Kálnoky's Faust II; István Jánosy's classically mature Aeschylos; Ágnes Nemes Nagy's translations of Corneille and Racine; György Rónay's French Renaissance and Modern French Poets; and, among many other works, the colourful translations from Chinese and Hindi by Sándor Weöres.) The work is fittingly supplemented by the experiments in poetic literary translation of Magda Szabó, who started as a poetess but has become known as a prose author through one of the most successful novels of recent years, and of the prose and essay writer László Németh. Ben Jonson's prose play appears in András Benedek's version, an outstanding expert on dramaturgy. It is evident from this significant, though by no means complete list—we might also mention the literary translations of György Somlyó, László Lator, Gábor Görgey and others—that Hungarian literature has undertaken the translation of English Renaissance drama with the devotion merited by the greatest classics. Bearing in mind, moreover, that the plays in the volume were selected and introduced by so thorough an expert on English Renaissance literature as professor Miklós Szenczi, professor of English Literature at the Budapest University, and that each of them is accompanied by voluminous explanatory notes and a biography of its author—almost all our scholars in English literature took part in the work of compilation—it is possible to form an idea of the importance which Hungarian publishers attached to the first Hungarian-language edition of these dramas.

As far as the original plays themselves are concerned, the volume of "English Renaissance Dramas" is a selection of works written over a period of about a hundred years. The first of the published items, "*Ralph Roister Doister*" by Nicholas Udall, is an "interlude or comedy" that has only just emerged from the framework of the school plays. The last, James Shirley's social comedy, "*The Lady of Pleasure,*" is a swan song of Elisabethan dramatic literature. All the more significant species in the jungle of dramas that flourished between the two are represented by a play each. They include John Lyly and Robert Greene, Thomas Kyd, Fletcher and John Ford, while Marlowe, Jonson and Massinger are each introduced through two plays. This may surely be regarded as quite a fair sampler of the bountiful crop. Since, however, the analytical literature that has appeared on the whole dramatic product of the period would fill a library, we are left merely with the task of recounting the impressions of a new reader, as gained from this sampler.

The first impression is an ignoble feeling—that of jealousy. No matter how stereotype our amazement may be, we cannot help voicing it: what treasures lie hidden in Britain's past, overshadowed by the brilliance of her universal geniuses! But it is not the treasures alone, this or that magnificent play, that arouses our jealousy—after all, our own literary past also has its solitary masterpieces—but rather the presence of an organic and coherent literary life as evidenced by the body of Elisabethan drama as a whole. An English writer would probably find considerable difficulty in comprehending the nostalgia his situation arouses in us. For if a language has been developed by a great literary tradition reaching far into the past, it is as much of a handicap as it is a treasure, offering, as it does, ready formulations for all the feelings and thoughts of man. From time to time, a revolution of sincerity, such as Herbert Read speaks of, is called for. Yes, but on the other hand, what an inestimable asset, just to *have* an organic tradition that can be cast aside in a revolutionary manner, or carefully infused with new life. Literature, like farming, is a continuous art, passed on from one generation to the next. No one knows better than we, Hungarians, what a waste of energy it is every half century or century again and again to turn up the virgin soils of language and expression!

It is only now that the Hungarian reader is in a position to discover the continuity, the workshop preceding Shakespeare and behind Shakespeare. We are impressed, moreover, by the very magnitude of this workshop and of the immense variety it could accommodate—or rather by the wide divergence in development, according to the positions, deeper intentions and moral views of the authors, for which it prepared the way. The classical and the romantic drama, the bourgeois play and the popular stage—the germs of all were present. The affected wit, the elegant moralizations of John Lyly might well have developed into the French classical drama. "*The Maid's Tragedy*" of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, or even more "*The Revenger's Tragedy*" of Tourneur, on the other hand, could have been regarded as precursors of romanticism, of a Victor Hugo. It was by no means fortuitous that Heywood's excellent play, "*A Woman Killed with Kindness,*" was discovered at the beginning of this century by Copeau's "Vieux Colombier" movement and inscribed upon its banner for the purpose of breathing new life into the French bourgeois theatre. Thomas Dekker's "*The Shoemaker's Holiday*" is something of a popular comedy, which—with its artisan characters and its disrespect for rank and privilege—points even beyond the bourgeois drama. In all this variety, the mark of unity, the period's special distinguishing feature, was a heightened feeling for dramatic situations. Apart from the Greek tragedists, the playwright's vision had never yet been concentrated so sharply and intensely on the conflict. No conflict moreover—and here we have a clear manifestation of the Renaissance—had ever yet been developed with such hurtling speed to its tragic climax. Thought and deed, crime and revenge, love and hate, lust for power, and murder are not so much the outgrowth one of the other as twins. As though the whole of life were bred in the magnetic sphere of tragedy and the individual's career in it could be no other than a swift and ever swifter involvement in violent death. For all that the dramatic structure is complex or composite—the five-act length of the plays was an almost compulsory feature—the fateful, conflict-laden situation is always naked, raw, poster-like (in contrast to the bourgeois drama), and its development—even in the comedies—gallops ahead, from one explosion to the next. We are familiar with this from Shakespeare's plays. What occasions surprise is that the ultramodern speed with which the conflict is perceived and the emotions find their outlet is characteristic of the workshop, that it represents a feature of the period, applicable to both the small and the great, to the play manufacturers as well as to the geniuses of the drama. This would seem to imply that in this flowering of the art there were, as far as we know, no dilettanti among the playwrights. A drama is a drama, even if it is bad. Quality does not depend on the failure to comply with formal requirements. Rather, it is a matter of structure, psychology, and the messages that is conveyed.

Having arrived at the question of quality, or to put it more simply, of the reader's likes or dislikes, let us also consider the impressions gained in this respect. The broader Hungarian public has so far mostly known only Marlowe and Ben Jonson among the dramatists of the Elisabethan age. "*Doctor Faustus,*" together with the original German folk book, has recently also appeared in another translation, and a transcription of "*Volpone*" has been shown on the stage and even in the cinemas. The collection of "English Renaissance Dramas" also includes Marlowe's "*Tamburlaine the Great*" and Jonson's "*Bartholomew Fair.*" Although we know that Marlowe and Jonson were, alongside Shakespeare, the two greatest figures of the age, their works nevertheless are not conspicuous among the others in the collection. The familiar folk book of Johann Spies shows only too clearly how improvised "*Doctor Faustus*" was, how

rigidly it at times adhered to its source, becoming no more than a dialogue version of the text. And what is most disappointing, Faust's revolt, the power of the scholar, merely provides the occasion for cheap stagetricks. In the earlier piece, in "*Tamburlaine the Great*"—however important it may be for the history of literature—there is too much artificiality, and the drama disintegrates into a series of loosely connected, bloody episodes. The romantic, poetic fire of Marlowe's language, which might serve as justification, is unfortunately only conveyed in the translation of "*Doctor Faustus.*" As far as Ben Jonson is concerned, though the "*Bartholomew Fair,*" with its presentation of the life of the people, may well be the harbinger of novel forms and though the translation is brilliantly resourceful in its rendering of puns and verbal contortions, the colourfully realistic and even full-blooded portraits of life cannot overcome the lack of action in the play. In the Hungarian collection therefore, neither Marlowe nor Jonson possess the radiance they are associated with in the history of literature. For us the most prominent plays in the collection are those which strike us as rising closest to the Elisabethan peak, notably, Thomas Kyd's "*Spanish Tragedy,*" or Heywood's "*The Woman Killed with Kindness,*" a play whose bourgeois-popular approach points even further into the future; and especially Dekker's "*The Shoemaker's Holiday.*"

Kyd's play comes close to containing all the features that we so much admire in Shakespeare: the diction, crowded with the voluptuously rich imagery of Elisabethan poetry, the characteristically Shakespearean, emotionally overcharged monologues, the romantic, blood-steeped story of revenge, the feverish interplay of derangement and common sense in the ultimate avenger, and even the play within the play as one of the instruments of revenge. It is notorious that Shakespeare simply plundered this piece both in his Hamlet, and beforehand. Kyd's play, moreover, possesses something that goes beyond even these elements and is more mysterious still—the power of great tragedies to rouse our innermost selves. In Dekker's play, on the other hand, we sense—and this constitutes the second surprise in this collection—something that is common to our own ideals, the truths of a new era striving towards a new life. The craftsmen characters of "*The Shoemaker's Holiday*" manage with the help of gentle deception, and if need be with common force supported by cudgel blows, to bring about an extreme mésalliance. All this they do with such ebullient gaiety, the richly flavoured wit of their workaday lives, and with so superior a rejection of social prejudices, that the play brings to life the full-blooded reality of an artisan life of times long past, in all its sparkling good cheer and all the brilliant richness of its humanist obligations. It is rumoured that one of our theatres has already decided to stage the play.

The volume of "English Renaissance Dramas" will now make it possible to extend the traditional Shakespeare cult to his contemporaries and their masterpieces. The English reader should not be taken aback at this or be puzzled at our picking plays from the meadow of English literary history, though at a distance of three or three and a half centuries even great works acquire a touch of archaic flavour—if for no other reason than because of the intervening development of the language. But translation can only be done into a live idiom. The author of old also wrote in a living tongue. The Hungarian public is therefore now enjoying the works of the English Renaissance as though they were refurbished old jewels. The patina has been removed from them, no doubt causing a measure of loss, but enabling the pure, precious metal to shine all the brighter.

BALÁZS LENGYEL

# MUSICAL LIFE

## THE MAN WHO COMPLETED MOZART'S REQUIEM

*Unknown finds in Süssmayr's Autograph Legacy*

Among the judgements of cultural history perhaps the most merciless are those which decide rank, elevating to immortality or relegating to oblivion, granting a lease of lift to certain works, while allowing survival to only the titles of others or letting the master's name alone become common knowledge; sometimes even the name is banished to the hidden pages of encyclopedias. Rarely have two extremes in this scale of evaluation found themselves in each other's company in so characteristic a manner as in the case of the two classical musician friends: Mozart and Süssmayr. While Mozart is still a living treasury of music-loving mankind, the name of Süssmayr is mentioned only by the small number of experts concerned with the professional literature on his activities. Yet Süssmayr was more than—indeed, something quite different from—Mozart's most talented pupil, collaborator and famulus; he was not just the man who finished one or two of Mozart's compositions (particularly the Requiem). It is true that Mozart's world left its imprint, at least partly, on the activities of the pupil, who was fated to follow in the footsteps of his master as regards his Bohemian way of life and early death, his hasty productivity and cheerful music even in times of adversity, as well as his style and handwriting. Still Süssmayr was not the mere shadow of Mozart, not only the recreator of *The Magic Flute* in his opera, *The Mirror of Arcadia*. Süssmayr was one of the fashionable opera composers of declining Vienna classicism, a few of whose operas (besides the one mentioned above, particularly *Soliman the Second*) drew packed houses, and whose art embraced every genre, from the various shades of stage music to sacred compositions, including songs, cantatas, chamber music, and symphonic music.

Franz Xaver Süssmayr (1766-1803), having set forth from Schwanenstadt, and having passed his candidacy as an artist at Kremsmünster, became a pupil of Mozart's and then of Salieri's, and by his 28th year had already ascended the opera conductor's rostrum before the Vienna court. As an organic reviver and creative element of the atmosphere of Vienna classicism, who used and constantly reanimated its musical idiom, he was one of the *Kleinmeister* of the era, whose first-class musical style was fashioned by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert. To some extent, he remained a pupil to the end; he did not live to enjoy the privilege of becoming a real master, for even the oldest giant among the Vienna classicists, Joseph Haydn, outlived him by more than half a decade. But indirectly he played a part in the lifework of the great; the same Schikaneder was his opera librettist and sang on his stage, who a few years earlier had been Mozart's co-composer and singer; the same Johann Michael Vogl sang Süssmayr's arias under his direction,

who about a quarter of a century later was to inspire Schubert's genius and introduce his songs; and the same youthful Beethoven composed variations on a fashionable aria of his, who in these very years composed similar variations, for example, to Mozart's operatic themes.

The student of music history, particularly when given the opportunity of browsing at will among autograph manuscripts of past centuries, can sometimes indulge in the luxury (for which school and life mostly leave no time), of pitting himself against the above mentioned rigid standards of history. As a result, he may pursue and sometimes even bring back to life compositions buried in row upon row of archive shelves as second, third or fourth-rate works. Such an undertaking may be especially stimulating when autographs of completely unknown or previously never analysed works are revealed to him. The first hastily compiled list prepared by the writer of these lines and published in the 1959 *Mozart Jahrbuch*, served this purpose. It listed the Süssmayr autographs found in the Music Collection of the National Széchényi Library. A more accurate and more elaborate thematic catalogue is now under preparation, which is intended to provide a more convenient and handier starting point for the examination of these autographs from the point of view of style and melodic history, as well as of a more extensive elucidation of Süssmayr's creative role.

This brief article is not intended to prejudge these investigations; it only aspires to offer information regarding the recently discovered and catalogued Süssmayr material available to researchers in the Music Collection of the National Széchényi Library. The use of the word "discovered," although apparently exaggerated and pretentious in the strict sense of the term, is doubtlessly appropriate in a partial and indirect sense. The truth is that professional literature has knowledge of these autographs, or at least of the greater part of the works included in them, though, for the most part, it hardly goes beyond mentioning the works and sometimes publishing incorrect data about them. Of the Süssmayr literature most relevant to our autograph material, the liveliest interest may presumably be claimed by the extract from Walter Lehner's dissertation published in 1931 and entitled *Süssmayr als Opernkomponist* ("Süssmayr as Opera Composer"), and Johann Winterberger's typewritten dissertation *Franz Xaver Suessmayr. Leben, Umwelt und Gestalt* ("His Life, Environment and Personality"), Innsbruck, 1946, II, 162 pp. Lehner's attention, however, was limited to the complete operas and a few operatic arias; one or two errors in the data suggest the conclusion that he did not study the autographs. (A good example of this is *Das Hausgesinde*, the music of which Lehner only acknowledges as a composition "ascribed" to Süssmayr, without mentioning that the title page of the score carries Süssmayr's own notation: *in Musik gesetzt von* —put to music by—*Franz Xaver Süssmayr mpr. 1802*. Instead, he too, like the rest of the literary sources, refers to Anton Fischer's *Singspiel* with a similar title, first performed in 1808.) It is to Lehner's credit, on the other hand, that he also deals with the music of Süssmayr's operas at least in the framework of a short analysis, mainly of form. This may be considered a rare exception in the meagre literature on Süssmayr's independent compositions. Winterberger himself, the writer of a Süssmayr monograph which appears to be the most thorough so far, refrained from musical evaluations; part of his list of works he also drew from the literature on the composer.

This unmusical or indifferent attitude of professional music literature, quoting published data instead of drawing on the original sources in studying Süssmayr's to some extent independent artistic achievements, is undoubtedly due to the circumstance that a considerable portion of the original sources now under discussion (autographs and contemporary copies) were not

accessible to public research. In this sense disclosure of the authentic sources of this music amounts to a discovery or rediscovery if you like—a find which, examined and criticized, may now be added to the great historical inventory comprising the treasures of Vienna classicism.

Our Süssmayr autograph material came into the possession of the National Széchényi Library in the years following the Second World War from the material of the Esterházy ducal archive. It constituted a part of that valuable manuscript collection which contained the autographs and contemporary copies of old works by the baroque and classic representatives of European music, like Johann Joseph Fux, Johann Georg Albrechtsberger, Georg Joseph Werner, Joseph and Michael Haydn. Regarding dates of origin, appearance and contents, the composition of the Süssmayr material is rather varied. These autographs date largely from the decade following the death of Mozart (1791-1802), that is, the last decade of Süssmayr's life. The artistic value of these compositions is extremely uneven, which may be readily explained by the composer's circumstances at the beginning of this decade, when he was admittedly still a student, who composed his first operas under the patronage of Salieri. Thus, on the title page of the copied score of *Priamo e Tisbe* with the signature Ms.mus. O-Drama 27, the following may still be made out under the deletions: *Scritto sotto il Signore Ant. Salieri, Primo Maestro di Capella della Corte Imperiale di Vienne* ("Written under the direction of Signore Ant. Salieri, first Kapellmeister of the Imperial Court of Vienna"). By the end of the decade he was *Kapellmeister und Compositor*, struggling against a fatal disease, yet composing almost to his final days and urging the theatre to produce his opera. Our autograph material, therefore, is an outline reflection, so to speak, of the last eleven or twelve creative years of an artist who passed away young, of the artistic "growth" and "arrival" of Süssmayr, from the age of 26 to 37. It reveals simple, sketchy notes which may be regarded as composition exercises; the student will come upon a hastly written song boldly entitled *Lebensweisheit* ("Wisdom of Life"), above the score of which the new opera conductor, in a jocular mood, perhaps in the first joyful days of his appointment, wrote *Von Hrn. Kapellmeister Süssmayr m. p.*

One of the most interesting items in the collection is a two-page manuscript offering data concerning the problems connected with the authenticity of Mozart's Requiem, which after more than a century and a half are still unresolved. We know that Mozart's untimely death prevented him from finishing his Requiem himself, although the delivery of the work was being urged by Count Franz v. Walsegg zu Stuppach, who had cloaked his identity in secrecy; he had even paid an advance to confirm the commission. The dying Mozart already knew that he was in reality writing his own requiem. He sang the finished parts of the work together with his friends, who had gathered around his sick bed. Among them was Süssmayr. Mozart died on December 5, 1791, and it became the lot of Süssmayr to complete the unfinished work. As regards the end, Süssmayr's well-known letter of February 8, 1800, to the Härtel publishing firm contained the following passage: "*...nur hab ich mir erlaubt, um dem Werk mehr Einformigkeit zu geben, die Fuge des Kyrie bei dem Verse cum sanctis etc. zu wiederholen.*" ("... to render the work more uniform, I have taken the liberty to repeat the fugue from the *Kyrie* at the verse *cum sanctis, etc.*") At the end of Mozart's Requiem not only the Fugue returns from the beginning of the work, but also 28 bars from the *Introitus*. Thus, in the *Agnus*, the section from "Lux aeterna" to the end of the work (bars 54-133 of this movement) corresponds to the section from the "Te decet hymnus" to the end of the *Kyrie* in the opening movement (bars 21-100 of the first movement).

Now, the newly discovered manuscript contains precisely these 80 bars, written on two systems of staves, transcribed for organ. Friedrich Blume was right when he gave this witty and apt title to his leading article in the April 1961 issue of The Musical Quarterly: *Requiem but no Peace.* For the recently unearthed four-page manuscript now adds new problems to those swirling around the Mozart Requiem for a century and a half. The only thing certain is that this two-folio manuscript without title and signature comprises just those 80 bars of Mozart's Requiem with which Süssmayr is generally known to have rounded off his master's work, so as to complete the composition with authentic Mozart music and ensure its stylistic unity. This historical fact in particular leads us to conclude that our manuscript stems from the hand of Süssmayr. Another basis for drawing this conclusion is that (although unmarked) our find came to light among the Süssmayr autographs. In the knowledge of these circumstances it is difficult for an investigator of miscellaneous Süssmayr autograph material to abandon the claim that this transcript from Mozart's Requiem is a work in Süssmayr's own hand. This assumption is supported by the external appearance of the manuscript: the clefs used at the beginning and inside the rows of notes, the characteristic way of writing certain letters, the general appearance of the notes—all correspond to what is to be found in authentic Süssmayr autographs. It still remains an open question when, on what occasion, for what purpose this manuscript may have been written, and how it came about that an organ transcription was made exactly of these returning bars. It is conceivable that our manuscript was the first score written by Süssmayr of the above mentioned bars to Mozart's Requiem; nor can the idea be ruled out that this manuscript may have been prepared in connection with an early performance. Perhaps we shall come closer to clarifying these questions sometime in the future when as complete a register as possible of early copies and performances of Mozart's Requiem will be available for research.

So much for the early manuscripts. But the scholars of Süssmayr the composer will obviously be particularly interested in that crop of compositions which are beyond the line of demarcation defined by the direct influence of Mozart and Salieri, *i. e.*, the works composed without the close proximity of these masters (although, generally, not independently of their influence).

The Süssmayr manuscript material consisting of about fifty items (more than half of which are original manuscripts, and the lesser half fragmentary, copied, or doubtful manuscripts) comprises 11 operas or musical works for the stage, 18 operatic fragments, arias and songs, 10 cantatas, parts of cantatas and other secular vocal pieces, three sacred works, 10 instrumental compositions, and two Süssmayr autographs resulting from alien works. Among them, the operatic material is the most extensive and most uniform. It was even given a uniform external appearance at the time of its original filing in the archives: similar folders with blue and yellow backs enclose these opera autographs (as well as the two large Süssmayr cantatas), like those which preserved the considerable autograph material of the former Esterházy opera repertoire. But although their placing and the cover colours of their folders are identical with the filing system used for the operas produced under Joseph Haydn's direction, Süssmayr was too late for the Eszterháza opera performances (1779-1790), and he did not live long enough for those of Kismarton (Eisenstadt—1804-1812) conducted by Hummel. His operatic activities fell right b e t w e e n these two periods: the two Italian operas of our collection (*L'incanto superato* 1793, *Il Turco in Italia* 1794), were first heard by the public in Prague, and his German operas (about 1794 to 1802) in Vienna. As to the uniformity of the operatic manuscripts, it may be stated

that with the exception of a doubtful, untitled opera, all of them are entirely or predominantly autograph scores, with the general features of Süssmayr's handwriting hardly changing in the course of a decade. This operatic material is especially significant, because it is here that the research worker may best study the characteristics and development of Süssmayr's musical style. Naturally, to formulate a portrait of the creative composer, it will be indispensable to undertake a study of the separate operatic pieces and arias, the cantatas and vocal works composed for various festive occasions, the sacred musical compositions. German and French songs, as well as individual examples of the sinfonias, overtures, concertos and dance pieces.

In conclusion we would only wish to say that the examination of the Süssmayr manuscript material in the National Széchényi Library will no doubt contribute to the emergence of a new artistic portrait of Franz Xaver Süssmayr, and a new definition of the role that Süssmayr's music played in the history of Vienna classicism.

István Kecskeméti

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# THE BARYTONE

## *Rebirth of an old instrument*

One of the outstanding events from the viewpoint of music history which marked the festivities in Hungary to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Joseph Haydn's death was that the so-called Esterházy barytone was played again after more than a century's silence. The 210-year-old instrument, which has been preserved in the Hungarian National Museum, was built in 1750 by the eminent Vienna instrument-maker Johann Joseph Stadlmann at the order of Miklós, Duke Esterházy, and tradition has it that Haydn himself frequently played on this instrument during the thirty years of his employment at Kismarton and Eszterháza. It is generally known that the Duke himself, who was Haydn's employer, was a passionate barytonist for whom Haydn, during his stay in Hungary, but particularly between 1767 and 1775, composed close onto 200 different works for the barytone. These have since then, to the present day, been shrouded in oblivion, as there has been no one to play this strange instrument. The overwhelming majority of these works are trios for barytone, viola and cello (generally divertimentos, *i. e.*, music designed for entertainment, both in name and character), but they also include a duet for two barytones, a barytone-harpsichord sonata, and even a concerto written for barytone and string orchestra.

The barytone, otherwise *viola bardone*, was originally developed some time in the second half of the seventeenth century as an improvement on the string instrument called the *viola da gamba*. There is a story that the name comes from its alleged English inventor, who had landed in prison for some offence, but was pardoned on account of having invented this instrument. In all probability the story is no more than a pleasant anecdote, though the instrument is occasionally referred to in musical literature as the "parydone." Mozart's father Leopold, in a book of violin studies published in 1756, had this to say of the barytone:

"The tenth kind of string instrument is the Bordon, commonly called the Barydon or Parydon, whose name stems from the Italian *Viola di Bordone*. Some call it and spell it the *Viola di Bardone*. *Bardone* is, however, as far as I know, not an Italian word, whereas *Bordone* is. It may mean a tenor voice, a thick string, a wild bee, and the soft humming of the bees. Those who know this instrument will agree that the word *Bardone* very appositely expresses its sound. Like the *gamba*, this instrument has 6 or 7 strings and its neck is very wide, with an open cavity along the back, where 9 to 10 copper or steel strings are spanned, which may be plucked with the thumb of the left hand in such a manner that, while the tune is being played on the upper strings with a bow, the bass is simultaneously plucked with the thumb. Accordingly, pieces have to be specially adapted to this instrument. This is, incidentally, one of the most charming of all instruments."

The barytone is thus actually a combination of the *viola da gamba* and the harp, in that the seven front strings are, both in their tuning and the way they are played, identical with those of the tenor *gamba*, while there are a further nine or more steel strings under the instrument's neck, diatonically or chromatically tuned, similar to the harp. These are all active, "playing" strings, unlike, for instance, the *viola d'amore*, a contemporary viola-like instrument with similar tuning and arrangement, but with the additional strings included only for resonance and not to be played.

Lion Feuchtwanger, in his novel "Goya," several times mentions this elegant and princely instrument, so highly favoured in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially in court circles. "The prince himself played an instrument which is nowadays seen and heard ever more rarely—the barytone, the so-called *Viola di Bordone*. This is a many-stringed knee-violin, not too large, with an appealingly hard, yet mellow, deeply resonant tone. The members of the trio tuned up, nodded to each other and struck up one of Haydn's divertimentos... They were talking of music and Doctor Peral, the physician, in his calm, by no means loud, yet far-sounding voice, made an erudite digression on the barytone—this lovely instrument which is unfortunately steadily going out of fashion—and on Senor José Haydn, the Austrian composer, who had written much for this instrument."

Parallel with the growing popularity of the cello in the eighteenth century, the barytone, together with the viola da *gamba*, gradually disappeared from everyday musical practice. The present world-wide renaissance of ancient music and of the instruments which played it, has, however, once more brought to life this interesting instrument, with its peculiar tonal qualities, combining the intimacy of a string instrument played with a bow, with the peculiarly metallic sound of the harpsichord.

The barytone that was sounded after nearly two centuries of silence at the Haydn festival in Budapest has 7 strings for the bow and 10 for plucking, and at the upper end of the instrument, in place of the helix, there is a beautifully carved figure-head—the head of a Venetian *gondoliere*. The exquisitely fashioned body of the instrument is decorated with ebony and ivory inlay work. Its tone is outstandingly beautiful and refined, of very intensive power, due in part to the double function of the plucked strings. These, even when they do not themselves play an active part in the music, produce so rich a resonance of aliquot tones by constant vibration that the sound of the barytone becomes almost as colourful and compact as that of an orchestra. When the strings are plucked, all this is further augmented by the characteristic tones of the harpsichord.

The demonstration of the instrument in the course of the festivities was, at the request of the Haydn Festival Committee, undertaken by the cellist János Liebner.

Since the technique of the barytone differs radically from that of the cello in the holding of the bow, the formation of the tones and intonations, and particularly the manipulation of the plucked strings, the artist had to devote close upon six months of thorough study and practice to his preparations for this unique "première."

The first concert took place at the Budapest Academy of Music in a program of Haydn's chamber music, where a trio composed by Haydn at Eszterháza for barytone, viola and cello was performed. A feature of special interest is that the original manuscript of this work, in the composer's own hand, is in the possession of the Széchényi Library at Budapest. The highly successful first night was followed that same week by two more concerts, this time at Eszterháza—now called Fertőd—in the chamber-music hall of the Esterházy Palace which the Hungarian State has renovated at a cost of many millions of forints. This was the place where, two hundred years ago, these works had been played for the first time, on the self-same instrument, presumably with the personal participation of Miklós Duke Esterházy, and even of Haydn himself. The Hungarian and foreign musicologists who took part in the festival, including Professor H. C. Robbins Landon (Vienna), Tamara Livanova (Moscow), Heinrich Bessler (Jena), Horst Seeger (Berlin), Antonin Horejs (Prague), C. de Nys (Épinal), Paul Mies and K. G. Fellerer (Cologne), E. F. Schmid (Augsburg), Hermann Keller (Stuttgart), Zofia Lissa (Warsaw), Walther Siegmund-Schultze (Halle), Antonin Sychra and Milan Postolka (Prague), Jacques Chaylle (Paris), Zeno Vancea (Bucharest), Walter Salmen (Freiburg), Josef Chominski (Warsaw) and Carl Geiringer (Boston), all voiced their pleasure and interest at this unique barytone performance. So far most of them had at best seen the barytone in the glass cases of museums, while many had not even had that opportunity, as there are only about two dozen barytones in the world, to be found in the museums and collections of Paris, London, Brussels, New-York, Vienna, The Hague, Leningrad and Stockholm.

The success among both specialists and the general public of the concerts at Budapest and Fertőd transcended all expectations. This induced the Hungarian Records Company to record the music of this rare instrument for the gramophone. A 30-minute long-playing record has now been made of Haydn's trio in G major (No 53) and his Variations in D major (No 81) for barytone, viola and cello, as well as of the G major duet for two barytones. This is so far the first and only recording of the latter work, a feature of special interest being that both voices of the duet were played on the same instrument by the same person.* The two voices were, of course, not recorded simultaneously, but one after the other, applying the so-called play-back system. This record has aroused great international interest and it is to be followed by recordings of further Haydn works for the barytone.

JÁNOS LIEBNER

* None other than the author of this article, who "discovered" the forgotten instrument, and was the first to play on it. *(The Editor.)*

# ECONOMIC LIFE

## HUNGARY'S ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH THE UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES

The problem of the underdeveloped countries is one of historical origin and of social significance in the broadest sense. Gunnar Myrdal points out these socio-political aspects of the problem in his book *"Economic theory and underdeveloped regions"*: "...the peoples in the underdeveloped countries," he writes, "are becoming increasingly aware of these huge international inequalities and the danger that they will continue to grow; and these peoples and their spokesmen show an inclination to put part of the blame for their poverty on the rest of the world and, in particular, on the countries which are better off—or, rather, they attribute the inequalities to the world economic system which keeps them so poor while other nations are so rich and becoming richer." *

The prospect, however, is not hopeless. In our days the political and economic conditions enabling the backward countries to accelerate their progress are brought about by the iron laws of social development. The social revolutions which have taken place in the Soviet Union, China and the People's Democracies are historical examples of how, in countries with a markedly underdeveloped economy, backwardness may be overcome, an up-to-date industry set up, and the living standards of the formerly poor and ignorant masses in town and village considerably raised in only a few decades, almost within years.

It may be claimed without exaggeration that assistance to underdeveloped countries with the aim of raising their standards of living constitutes one of the most important international problems of our time. Like all people and all countries of good will, Hungary, commensurate with her resources, is also ready to contribute her share in the achievement of this goal.

Hungary today is considerably stronger economically, and more advanced as regards industrial techniques, than she was before the war. The structure of the economy has been transformed, the living and cultural standards have been significantly raised. The changes are best indicated by the growth in national income which by 1959 amounted to twice that of 1949, surpassing the prewar level even more considerably.

The rapid growth of industrial production is a decisive factor in the development of the national economy. Hungarian industry is at present producing nearly four times as much as prior to the Second World War. Progress has been most marked in engineering, particularly in the electrical equipment and the instruments industries, as well as in various branches of the chemical industry. The production of Hungarian-made machine tools, lorries, motor coaches, diesel engines and diesel locomotives has greatly developed,

* London, Gerald Duckworth and Co, Ltd. 1957, p. 7.

and these products have gained a high reputation not only at home but also on foreign markets. In addition, the traditional branches of industry—the manufacture of strong-current and telecommunications electrical equipment, of agricultural machinery and of pharmaceutical products—have also shown rapid growth. The advance of light industry—with textiles, shoes and furniture in the lead—and of the food industry has also been important.

This industrial development on a broad scale forms the basis of Hungary's foreign trade relations. The rapid progress in industrialization has made it possible, and indeed imperative, for Hungary to participate to an increasing degree in the international division of labour. The share of foreign trade in the country's national income is at present 25 per cent in terms of value, and this proportion is steadily increasing.

Today Hungary maintains trade relations with about seventy underdeveloped countries overseas. Of these, eighteen countries have commercial or payments agreements with Hungary. Among the factors which foster trade relations between Hungary and the overseas countries and exert a beneficial influence on them, tradition may be mentioned first of all. A number of Asian, African and Latin-American countries carried on a brisk trade with Hungary already in the inter-war period. As early as the 1930's, India, Egypt and Argentina were important trading partners of this country.

In the course of the past decade Hungarian deliveries of electrical trains, diesel locomotives and railway carriages to Argentina, Uruguay and Egypt, motor coaches and lorries to Egypt, Burma, Iran and Brazil, played an important part in the development of transportation in these countries. Hungarian industry is represented by power stations, bridges, ships in the Near East, by machine tools, telecommunications equipment and installations, complete industrial plants and a wide array of light-industrial products in sundry countries of Asia, Africa and Latin-America.

Hungary is importing cotton from Egypt, the Sudan and South America, rubber and tin from Indonesia and Malaya, hides from Argentina and Uruguay, tea, iron ore and haematite from India, coffee from Brazil and Columbia, cocoa from Brazil and Ghana, oilseeds from a whole row of African and Asian countries, citrus fruits from the Mediterranean region and Africa; these imports may be termed traditional as well.

Traditions, however, constitute only one factor—and not even the most significant one—in the development of trade between Hungary and the countries overseas. The role of mutual economic advantages is more important by far. The reciprocity of these advantages is based, on the one hand, on Hungary's willingness to furnish (and interest in furnishing) the underdeveloped countries with the goods—particularly with the investment goods—they most need, and, on the other hand, on her willingness to buy (and interest in buying) from them raw materials, agricultural goods as well as manufactured products.

Over the last decade the volume of Hungary's exports increased by about 150 per cent. At the same time her exports to underdeveloped countries increased in considerably greater proportion, *i. e.*, 200 per cent. More than half of the latter consisted of machines, mechanical equipment and precision instruments. It may be pointed out at this juncture that over 40 per cent of Hungary's total exports in 1960 was made up of machines, mechanical equipment and precision instruments.

Over the Second Five Year Plan period (1961 to 1965) industrial production in Hungary is scheduled to increase by about 48.6 per cent, with a considerably greater rate of growth envisaged for the engineering industries. Part of this rapidly increasing production will have to find a market abroad. The export orientation of the Hungarian

engineering industries will thus conform to the requirements of the countries which wish to expand their economy and are interested in importing foreign machinery.

The machine import requirements of the underdeveloped countries may be divided into three main groups: communications equipment, power engines, machinery needed for the modernization of various industries and for expanding their capacity. Hungary is greatly interested in the export of both individual units and complete plant equipment falling under any of the three headings.

The export of Hungarian motor vehicles —motor coaches, lorries, motor-cycles—has undergone particularly rapid growth: between 1951 and 1960 it increased sevenfold. The export market for Hungarian motor coaches and lorries comprises 17 countries, that of motor-cycles 38 countries. The increase in rolling-stock exports was slower and the number of markets also more restricted, but the directives on further development permit us to conclude that by 1965 the export of diesel electric trains, locomotives and coaches to overseas countries will increase severalfold.

The export of complete industrial plants —among others of food processing and chemical plants—has also seen vigorous growth, and the trend in the export of power-plant equipment, telephone exchanges, incandescent lamps and radio tubes is also an upward one. In the course of ten years the export of machine tools has trebled, while the number of types exported has also increased considerably. As far back as 1955 the Hungarian machine-tool industry exported 36 different milling and non-milling machine types, while by 1960 the range of exports included 66 types. The broadening scale of Hungarian machine-tool exports is also manifested in the steady and rapid increase in the number of markets. As a result, Hungarian firms in 1960 exported lathes to 43 countries, radial drills to 35, and milling machines to 34.

For advancing countries it is a question of primordial importance, of course, how they secure the necessary means to finance the import of investment goods. In this respect Hungary follows the practice of aiming at a balanced exchange of goods, insofar as the commodities the country concerned is able to supply meet Hungarian import requirements. Thus Hungary strives to enable her underdeveloped trading partners to settle their balances in their own goods. For backward countries this mode of financing machine imports is in many cases equivalent to, or even more advantageous, than outright credits.

Yet Hungary has since 1958 accorded or offered credits of varying duration to a number of Asian, African and Latin-American countries—for instance to the United Arab Republic, India, Indonesia, Ghana, Guinea, Cuba—under the most advantageous conditions, at an annual rate of interest of 2.5 per cent. These credits are used by the countries availing themselves of them to finance their purchases of various investment goods, of which complete plant equipment is not the least significant item.

Underdeveloped countries are in great need of scientific and technical assistance from those industrially more advanced. Hungary has also begun to extend assistance of this kind in recent years. Her relations with India are a characteristic case in point. Hungarian firms concluded cooperation agreements with state-owned and private firms in India, covering the manufacture of electricity meters, fluorescent tubes, geodesical instruments as well as organo-therapeutic products. Under these agreements the Hungarian firm is to submit the relevant technical documentation, and will undertake to provide components and to place its experts at the disposal of the Indian partner. Furthermore, India and Hungary have agreed in principle to cooperate in the field of aluminium production. Beside the handing over of technical documentation, plans are

now under discussion for Hungary to construct in India an alumina plant with a capacity of 50,000 tons and of an aluminium factory with a capacity of 25,000 tons.

In addition to technical aid agreements of the type concluded, for instance, with Guinea and Cuba, the conclusion of technical-scientific cooperation agreements has also come under consideration lately. Hungarian government authorities have already expressed their readiness to enter into such agreements. The possibility for their realization exists as regards Indonesia, Ceylon, Iraq, Ghana, the Mali Republic, Togo, and a number of other countries.

The problems of economic and technical cooperation which arise in the case of countries without any substantial industry —especially in the absence of heavy industry—are rather different from those posed in connection with countries that have already achieved some results in industrialization, notably in the setting up of an indigenous heavy industry. As regards these countries the import of finished products is being increasingly supplemented by cooperative agreements which shift the emphasis from the simple import of machinery to the establishment of new home industries and the utilization of those already in existence. The point is to develop gradually, over a number of years, certain industrial branches—e. g., the production of diesel engines, machine tools, or instruments—with the complex aid of some industrially advanced country. At first the products are shipped to the importing country unassembled, to be assembled there. Afterwards the independent home production of some parts and gradually that of the whole product is initiated. The assisting country not only furnishes the necessary machinery but also passes on the corresponding licences and technical "know-how" and trains local technical personnel.

This form of assistance is being rendered by Hungary to several underdeveloped countries. In addition, the number of foreign engineers, technicians and agronomists visiting schools and taking extension courses in Hungary is growing steadily. Foreign specialists are also receiving training in Hungary within the framework of the country's contribution to the extraordinary and technical assistance funds of the UN. At the same time a large number of Hungarian engineers and technicians in overseas countries are giving aid in the operation of machinery and equipment of Hungarian origin, by training local personnel and furnishing expert advice.

It has already been pointed out that Hungary's readiness to purchase raw materials from the underdeveloped countries was one of the most significant factors promoting the development of trade relations with them. About 60 per cent of Hungary's imports are made up of raw materials of industrial or agricultural origin and, as a consequence of the rapid development of the Hungarian processing industries, the volume of raw material imports is steadily increasing from year to year.

Yet the import of raw materials from underdeveloped countries is not devoid of problems. At present, potential possibilities are still far from being fully exploited. The reason for this, in the view of a number of Hungarian specialists, is that the direct import of, say, rubber, wool, some types of oilseeds, and other commodities, from overseas countries, is more costly than contracting for their delivery at one of the Western European exchanges or buying them through shipping houses.

It is, of course, difficult to determine the extent to which these arguments can in each case be substantiated. The measures, on the other hand, which producer countries are taking to promote the sale of their raw materials, to raise the standards of their quality, to guarantee delivery terms and, in general, to increase their competitiveness on the world markets, create a favourable impression. It should perhaps be possible to develop some form of cooperation in

this field too. The exporter should become better acquainted with the requirements of the purchaser and seek to comply with them when consistent with mutual interests. Hungary could then strive to increase the proportion of direct imports of hides, jute, rubber, timber, oil, cocoa, *etc.* from the producer countries. This would be the more reasonable since Hungarian exports to the countries participating in the European Common Market are threatened with discrimination, whereas the trade with overseas countries, based on respect for mutual interests, is as a rule free from discriminative elements.

The demands for the stabilization of raw material prices, put forward more and more frequently by the raw-material producing countries, are entirely justified. Fluctuations in world demand for raw materials, the decline in raw-material prices and the consequent adverse trend in terms of trade have in recent years seriously damaged the economy of the producer countries.

Like all countries with a planned economy, Hungary too is realizing a long-term program of economic development which also covers the field of foreign trade. A system of long-term trade agreements ensures the steady flow of the annually increasing volume of imports and exports. More and more frequently Hungary is now concluding long-term agreements with underdeveloped countries as well. These agreements—containing as they do not only provisions for the exchange of goods but also the most-favoured-nation clause, programs of technical and scientific cooperation, *etc.*—place the raw-material exporting countries in a position of being able to plan the sales of some of their export commodities for years ahead. Thus the long-term agreements tend to add to the elements of stability in the economy and in the development of both contracting partners.

The reason for confidence in the socialist countries, with their planned economies, on the part of the underdeveloped countries, are numerous. One of them is the knowledge that the socialist countries—including Hungary—far from being colonial powers, have, on the contrary, been compelled to lead a long struggle for the achievement and the consolidation of their political and economic independence. The underdeveloped countries know, furthermore, that economic relations with the socialist countries, based on full equality of rights and respect for mutual interests, is free from any open or disguised element of exploitation. It is obvious that this example, this truly democratic form of economic contacts, which serves the cause of the underdeveloped countries, necessarily exerts a positive influence on the mutual relations between all countries, both those with identical and those with differing social structures, the world over.

ANDRÁS RÁBA

# INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL CONFERENCE IN BUDAPEST

In June 1961 Budapest was the scene of an international statistical conference. In addition to scientists from the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies a number of representatives from Western countries also attended. More than one of the problems which came up for discussion is at present in the foreground of international investigations. The conference also gave a fairly clear picture of the extent to which the new tools becoming available to statistics with the development of applied mathematics and the modern methods of computation are being utilized in Hungarian statistical practice.

In present-day Hungary statistical science has important tasks to fulfil. The processes of social and economic change, having shifted into the focus of interest, had to be given adequate treatment in statistics too. Statistical work thus became filled with new content. At the same time both economic administration and economic planning are making new demands on statistics. Nowadays statistics are no longer confined to observations of the traditional type and to the systematic supervision of methods previously introduced. With the application of novel methods and in close contact with economic life, up-to-date statistical work is apt to draw attention to phenomena, tendencies and relationships which would otherwise have emerged only considerably later.

Statistics are thus required to employ "novel methods." In his opening address György Péter, President of the Central Bureau of Statistics, pointed to two circumstances which justify these requirements. One is the increasing application of mathematical methods in planning, the other the growing demand for international comparison.

Present-day differentiated economic guidance is hardly conceivable without the application of mathematical methods. The tools afforded by elementary algebra are not adequate to express the interrelations of economic phenomena in their complexity. These call for the application of higher mathematics, the calculus, matrix algebra, *etc.* All this makes the collection of new data as well as novel-type processing of the statistical data imperative.

The concept of statistical method has itself changed. Input-output analysis presupposes the construction of certain "models," the collecting of factual figures referring to the variables and to the parameters of these models, and, finally, the planning of the variables and the determination of their values for the plan period. These processes thus comprise the methods both of statistics in the strict sense of the word, and of economics.

The second characteristic feature is the need for international comparison. The problems which are making their appearance in the West in connection with economic integration are well known; in their wake international comparisons based on statistical data are increasingly gaining ground. Higher forms of economic cooperation between the socialist countries—the coordination of long-term planning, the development along rational lines of the division of labour and of cooperation—are also inconceivable without a firm statistical basis. In these fields statistical and economic methods overlap, and the concept of "statistical method" must also be given a broader interpretation under this aspect. In addition, international comparison also requires the application of "novel methods." The old index-number methods are no longer adequate, and special methods will have to be worked

out with the introduction of higher mathematics. As the problem of comparing countries with different social structures also arises in many cases, indices must be developed which are independent of the indices belonging to countries with different economic and social systems, of the variations in consumption, *etc.*—in other words: which, regardless of differences in form, are identical in contents. This is of particular importance in comparing living standards in different countries, when the comparison of the standard of living in the individual countries is based on valid statistical data.

In conformity with the viewpoints outlined in the foregoing, the meetings of the international statistical conference took place in two sections: one discussing the problems relating to input-output analysis, the other having as its subject the question of living standards and their international comparison. The significance of the problems alluded to in the foregoing was fully recognized in both sections, which devoted detailed attention to the individual subjects and strove to clarify a whole range of questions as well as to work out new procedures.

*Discussion of input-output analysis*

Several papers were delivered in the section dealing with the problems of input-output analysis, and there were further numerous contributions in the course of the debate. The papers and the debate covered in great detail the questions relating to the practical application of input-output tables, which were examined under many angles. Some hitherto unknown methods and results of computation were also presented.

The work of the section bore testimony to the fact that in all participating countries input-output analysis is coming to play an increasingly important part in the system of balanced estimates for the national economy. Positive experiences gained in the practical use of the tables, in their utilization for the purposes of planning and analysis, are accumulating. The discussions have shown that many problems in this field are common to various countries and that much research work of an identical character is being carried out in them simultaneously. A systematic exchange of experiences is thus called for and promises to be extremely fruitful. In countries where problems of external trade play a fundamental part—as for instance in Hungary, Poland, Great Britain—an analysis of foreign-trade relations with the greatest possible minuteness and exactitude is vital.

There was a general consensus that the division of the economy into sectors must vary with the tables serving different purposes. This problem of classification has, in general, emerged at the conference as one of fundamental importance. It will prove expedient to arrange the tables according to industrial branches, administrative units, or products, depending on requirements. Some very interesting remarks were also offered on the connections between the tables based on quantitative data and those set up in terms of value; on the ways of establishing exact relationships between the tables based on differing divisions into sectors; on the order of magnitude of the tables required for the solution of various problems. Comparison of the tables expressing relationships of production was extensively discussed, as were the problems of the treatment of imports and exports in input-output analysis. Both the papers and the oral remarks covered in great detail the question of creating the necessary statistical basis for setting up input-output tables. The need was stressed for international comparative tables which would be helpful in clarifying a number of questions now under investigation, *e. g.*, the comparison of productivity in different countries.

By its thorough treatment of the sub-

ject, the conference made a most positive contribution to the many-sided question of the practical application of input-output tables.

A number of papers and remarks pointed out that even without further mathematical elaboration input-output tables may prove a substantial help towards a more thorough understanding and a broader survey of the interconnections and relationships within the national economy. As an example attention was drawn to the examination of the process of production from the viewpoints of consumption and allocation.

It was convincingly demonstrated at the conference that with the aid of input coefficients derived from input-output tables, the methods of calculating profitableness may be considerably improved. Input-output tables may—it was agreed—constitute an important tool in analysing costs of production and in the investigation of certain proportions within the national economy, independently of the specific features of the price system.

Extensive use may be made of input-output analysis in economic planning. Not only can the concordance of the drawn-up plans be checked with the help of input-output tables, but the plan indices may also be determined with the help of the system of equations set up on the basis of the tables.

Besides the opportunity provided for reciprocal information, it must be registered as a positive feature of the conference that, in the course of the exchange of views between statisticians, planners and economic research workers, a number of problems emerged which require further investigations in each of the participating countries.

*Questions relating to the standard of living*

The section of the conference that dealt with standard-of-living statistics also paid much attention to the problems of international comparison. It was brought out that investigations on this subject may be divided into two parts: one giving a comprehensive picture of the differences between standards of living in the various countries, the other dealing with the detailed comparison of the individual components of these standards, with a separate comparison of each domain. In the first case comparative indices are expressed mainly in terms of value, while the indices used in the second case are expressed in physical terms. When considering all factors of the standard of living both methods must be used simultaneously.

The discussions at the conference tended to prove the usefulness of working out a coherent system of index-numbers in which the general and particular indices, *i. e.*, those expressed in terms of value and those in physical terms, would—in their appropriate place and in line with their due weight—reflect the evolution of the standard of living. However, this system of index-numbers cannot be independent of time and place, and it thus becomes clear that a uniform system, applicable in all cases, is inconceivable. Advanced countries will be served by a different set of indices than underdeveloped countries. Different methods will be required for comparisons between socialist countries and for comparisons between socialist and capitalist countries. Even in the observations relating to different socialist countries it will not be possible to employ uniform methods, because the new elements continually being added to the standard of living in the course of progress must also find statistical expression.

As regards the practical problems of the international comparison of standards of living, the conference, basing itself on the report submitted by Otokar Turek, member of the State Planning Board of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, studied the experiences gained in the course of the bilateral international comparison of

consumption funds carried out in collaboration with the German Democratic Republic and the Hungarian People's Republic. The comparison covered only one part of the consumption fund, that of direct consumption of the population. The experiment proved the necessity of making the computations in two different monetary units, owing to the divergencies in productivity, price level, and structure of consumption in the individual countries.

The section also clarified a number of theoretical problems, in particular those relating to the respective roles of use value and of value in computating the standard of living. The standard of living is measured in aggregates of use values and is not connected with the concept of value. It must, nevertheless, be expressed in terms of value because of the impossibility of adding up use values. These contradictions manifest themselves in the case of newly introduced commodities; their quality cannot be valued and it is impossible to ascertain whether their initial price is, or is not, correct. The valuation of the home-produced articles consumed by the peasants poses the same problem; it is generally based on retail prices, a method that is widely questioned. The valuation of work performed within the household is equally problematical.

The conference took the position that standard-of-living computations must not be based exclusively on wage income in the narrow sense of the term. Leisure time, income other than wages as well as goods and services provided free of charge are also to be taken into account.

The use of mathematical methods was discussed in this section too. There were two subjects in this field which deserve particular attention: the so-called index debate, and the use of the "lognorm" function. The essence of the former is the claim that index-numbers, owing to the debatable character of the basis of weighting, are inadequate in dealing with complicated problems and must therefore be supplemented by methods of higher mathematics. The other particularly interesting contribution was that which established empirically—on the basis of the Hungarian census of 1960, which covered 18,000 households—the conformity of workman and employee income distribution with the "lognorm" function. This fact enables the carrying out of investigations which may reveal new relationships in the economic structure of society.

Household statistics were also the subject of many-sided discussions at the conference. Thus, several papers stressed the usefulness of the data provided by household statistics for the purposes of economic policy, and dealt with the relationships existing between the trends in consumption, on the one hand, and income, on the other.

The problems of demand analysis are closely related to those of living standards, bearing in mind the aim of devoting productive capacity to the production of commodities that will satisfy a given demand. It is here that *time* becomes a significant factor. Its role was analysed by Professor József Bognár from the angles of both demand and supply. Rising standards of living tend to render the satisfaction of demand more differentiated, which, in turn, requires the coordination in time of the processes involved. Seasonal fluctuations also play an important part in meeting demand—an aspect which is not yet taken into consideration sufficiently in this country, where household statistics, for instance, have so far not been used for the computation of seasonal indices, as they are, among others, in France. On the supply side, the part played by the time factor is expressed in the adjustment elasticity of any given branch of production to meet shifts in demand. The elasticity of supply must thus be related to the elasticity of demand.

RÓBERT HARDI

# OUR CONTRIBUTORS

KATONA, Imre (b. 1921). Acquired a diploma as secondary school master and a degree in ethnography at the University of Szeged. For a short time taught at a secondary school, but since 1949 has been lecturing at the Folklore Faculty of the Loránd Eötvös University of Budapest. The field of his activities includes folklore and social ethnography (social anthropology). Has published numerous studies and several books and has edited various collections of essays.

ORTUTAY, Gyula. Ethnologist. Rector of and Professor at the Loránd Eötvös University in Budapest. One of the founders of the Association of the Young Artists and Writers of Szeged, which did pioneering work in exploring village life. Conducted extensive ethnographic research in the thirties. Between 1947 and 1950 was Minister of Education. Since 1946 has headed the chair of Folklore. General secretary of the People's Patriotic Front. Main works: *Székely népballadák* ("Transylvanian Folk Ballads"), Budapest, 1935; *Nyíri és rétközi parasztmesék* ("Peasant Tales of Nyír and Rétköz"), Budapest, 1935; *Fedics Mihály meséi* ("Mihály Fedics Tells Stories"), Budapest, 1941; *Magyar Népművészet* ("Hungarian, Folk Art"), Vol. 1—2, Budapest, 1942; *Parasztságunk élete* ("Life of Our Peasantry", also in English), Budapest, 1947; *Magyar Népmesék* ("Hungarian Folk Tales", in German, *Ungarische Volksmärchen*, Berlin, 1957, English edition under preparation). See his "The Living Széchenyi" in The New Hungarian Quarterly, Volume I, Number 1.

ILLYÉS, Gyula (b.1902). Poet, writer. Leading and influential personality in modern Hungarian literature. Joined the movement of the "populist writers" in the mid thirties and wrote his most outstanding works during the radical phase of the movement: *"Puszták népe"* ("The People of the Puszta"), a literary sociography; and a biography of Sándor Petőfi, the greatest Hungarian poet. Since the liberation, besides poetry and prose works, Illyés has also written several plays on the problems presented by various decisive phases of Hungarian history. See his "Rácegres Notebook" in the New Hungarian Quarterly, Volume II, Number 1.

ABRAHAM, Gerald (b. 1904). Musicologist, Professor of Music at the University of Liverpool. Specially interested in Russian music, on which he has published several books and numerous articles. Prof. Abraham conceived and acted as general editor of a history of music on gramophone records, *The History of Music in Sound*, intended as a companion to the *New Oxford History of Music* of whose Editorial Board he is the secretary and several volumes of which he has edited. His other books include *Chopin's Musical Style* (1939).

SZABOLCSI, Bence (b. 1899). Musicologist, professor at the Budapest Academy of Music, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. An outstanding figure of Hungarian musicology, Prof. Szabolcsi is a member of the staff of editors that is preparing for publication the volumes of Corpus Musicae Hungaricae, originally begun by Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály and now directed by Kodály. Has published numerous monographs and essays on the most varied questions of music history: *Mozart*, 1921; *A 17. század magyar főúri zenéje* ("Seventeenth Century Music of the Hungarian Nobility"), 1928: *Tinódi zenéje* ("Music of Tinódi," Critical edition of Songs of Tinódi, the Hungarian "Minnesänger"), 1929; *A 18. századi magyar kollégiumi zene* ("18th Century Music of the Hungarian Colleges"), 1930, *etc.* Out-

standing among his works are: *A melódia története* ("A History of Melody," in German too, English edition now in preparation); *Liszt Ferenc estéje* ("The Twilight of Franz Liszt"); *A zene története* ("A History of Music"); *A magyar zenetörténet kézikönyve* ("Handbook of the History of Hungarian Music," German edition now in preparation); *A magyar zene századai* ("The Centuries of Hungarian Music"); *Beethoven*. In recognition of his scientific work the Hungarian government has awarded him the Kossuth Prize. He is a member of the Editorial Board of our periodical. See his "Liszt and Bartók" in The New Hungarian Quarterly, Volume II, Number 1.

LÁNCZ, Sándor (b. 1919). Historian of art; took his degree in history of art at the Loránd Eötvös University of Budapest. Arranges shows at the Budapest Art Gallery and is the art critic of the journal Élet és Irodalom (Life and Literature).

BERNÁTH, Aurél (b. 1895). Painter, writer and art critic, professor at the College of Art, and holder of the Kossuth Prize. Studied at Nagybánya, then worked for a while under the influence of German expressionism, finally to develop his art in the Nagybánya tradition. His post-impressionistic landscapes (Stahrenberg Lake, Morning) are studies in solitude, while his figural paintings seek to express the beauty of a simplified vision in the poetic interpretation of this reticent artist. Bernáth has recently written an autobiography whose first two volumes are *Így éltünk Pannóniában* Life in Pannonia 1957, and *Utak Pannóniából* Roads from Pannonia 1960.

PERCZEL, Károly (b. 1913). Architect; head of the department for urbanism in the Hungarian Ministry for Building Industry.

BARBARICS, György. Grammar school teacher. Acquired a degree in natural sciences at the Loránd Eötvös University, Budapest, in 1956. Deals with questions of education, staff member of the National Secretariat of the Society of Scientific Education.

HUBAY, Miklós (b. 1918). Dramatist. His first play *Hősök nélkül* ("Without Heroes") was staged in 1942 by the Little Theatre of the National Theatre. In that period Hubay was working on the editorial staff of the Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie and the Hungarian Quarterly. After the war his drama entitled *Coq d'Esculape* appeared in Paris. Up to 1949 he was the head of the Hungarian Library in Geneva and a full-time delegate to the Bureau International d'Éducation. His film *Bakaruhában* ("Sunday Romance"), the scenario of which he wrote on the basis of a short story by Sándor Hunyadi, has been shown in a number of countries. His plays include *Egy magyar nyár* ("A Hungarian Summer"), *István napja* ("Stephen's Day"), *Egyik Európa* ("One Kind of Europe"), and several one-act plays. Hubay has translated plays by Musset, Sartre, Marceau, Miller and Sheridan. See his "An Evening on the Island of the Young Ladies of Brunswick" in The New Hungarian Quarterly, Volume II, Number 1.

PETROVICS, Emil, (b. 1930). Composer, music director of the Petőfi Theatre in Budapest. His work entitled "Yugoslav Songs," for chorus and orchestra, won the second prize at the 1955 World Youth Festival in Warsaw. His String Quartet won third prize at the international competition of 1959 in Liège.

His one-act opera "Three Cups of Tea" (C'est la guerre), part of whose score is given in an appendix to our present issue, is his first opera and has been accepted for the 1961—62 season of the Hungarian State Opera in Budapest.

FITZ, Jenő (b. 1921). Historian of antiquity and archaeologist. Director of the István Király (King Stephen) Museum of

Székesfehérvár. While engaged in studies on the history and relics of Pannonia, Fitz also conducts excavations of remains from the Roman era around Tác. His important works are *Székesfehérvár*, 1957, "Hercules Cult in the Eraviscus Region", 1957; *Zur Frage der Kaiserzeitlichen Hügelgräber in Pannonia inferior* ("Contributions to the Question of the Burial Mounds from the Imperial Era in Lower Pannonia"), 1958; *Der Besuch des Septimus Severus in Pannonia im Jahre 202. u. Z.* ("The Visit of Septimus Severus to Pannonia in the Year 202 A. D."), 1959, and *Corsium*, 1960. Editor of the scientific year-book *Alba-Regia*.

MÁNDY, Iván (b. 1918). A writer whose first short novel appeared in 1943 under the title *A csősz kunyhója* ("The Field-Guard's Shelter"), dealing with life in the Budapest suburbs—the chief theme of his later works. Two volumes of his short stories have been issued under the titles *Vendégek a palackban* ("Guests in the Bottle") 1949, and *Idegen szobák* ("Strange Rooms") 1957. His short novel *Fabulya feleségei*, ("Fabulya's Wives") appeared in 1959.

SZAKONYI, Károly. Writer and journalist. Published several short stories and essays.

PETHŐ, Tibor (b. 1918). Is a journalist writing on foreign affairs. He is the author of several volumes of political journalism. *Magyarország a második világháborúban* (Hungary in World War II"), 1946, *A Kárpátoktól a Balti tengerig* ("From the Carpathians to the Baltic Sea"), 1955, *Szuez* ("Suez"), 1958, and others. See also his article "Hungary in the Second World War" in Vol. I. No. 1. of the New Hungarian Quarterly.

MARKOS, György (b. 1902). Economic geographer. Studied at the philosophical faculties in Budapest and Vienna. In emigration during several years of the inter-war period, he worked in Berlin and Paris as a journalist. After 1945 Markos followed the same profession at home. From 1948 to 1958 he headed the Faculty of Economic Geography at the Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest. At present he is a member of the economico-geographic research team of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

VAJDA, Miklós (b. 1931). Essayist and literary translator. Studied English and Hungarian Literature at Budapest University. Has translated into Hungarian Jack London, Irwin Shaw, and H. E. Bates. Recently transcribed the medieval alliterative poem of chivalry "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight." See his "English Verse (Adventures of a Hungarian Anthologist among the English Poets)" in The New Hungarian Quarterly, Volume II, Number 1.

SZENCZI, Miklós, (b. 1904). Professor of English at the Loránd Eötvös University in Budapest. For several years lecturer in Hungarian at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at the University of London. Author of the articles on Hungarian language and literature in Chambers' Encyclopedia. Prof. Szenczi, whose main lines of research are English Renaissance drama and the theory of literature, has recently edited a three-volume collection of English Renaissance plays in Hungarian translation. See his "The English Department at Budapest University" in The New Hungarian Quarterly, Volume II, Number 3.

KECSKEMÉTI, István, (b. 1920). Musicologist, scientific collaborator of the Music Collection of the National Széchényi Library. Publications to date: *Eine unbekannte Musikhandschrift von Johann Joseph Fux* ("Autograph of Unknown Score of Johann Joseph Fux"), Nat. Széchényi Library, 1958 Year-Book; *Süssmayr-Handschriften der Nationalbibliothek Széchényi in Budapest* ("Süssmayr's Auto-

graphs at the National Széchényi Library"), Mozart-Jahrbuch 1959; *Beiträge zur Geschichte von Mozarts Requiem* ("Contributions to the History of Mozart's Requiem"), Budapest 1961, Studia Musicologia, Fasc. I, No. 1—2.

LIEBNER, János (b. 1923). Professional 'cellist, musical aesthete and critic. Soloist of the Hungarian State Opera House, the Budapest Philharmonic Society and the Hungarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and 'cellist of the Hungarian String Trio. His latest concerts abroad took him to Italy, Switzerland and France. On the occasion of the Haydn Festival in Budapest, he revived the *barytone* or *viola di bordone*, an eighteenth century instrument.

RÁBA, András (b. 1921). Economist. Filled various posts in foreign trade, he heads a group investigating market conditions on behalf of the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce.

HARDI, Robert (b. 1915), Economist, lecturer on commercial techniques and organization at the Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest and deputy manager of KONSUMEX (Commodity Trading Enterprise). Since 1945 has organized and headed a number of organs and enterprises in the fields of foreign and domestic trade. See his "Rural Self-service Stores" in The New Hungarian Quarterly, Volume II, Number 3.

# A SHORT ENCYCLOPEDIA

*of some places, historical events, personalities and institutions mentioned in this number*

BADACSONY Mountain, 1445 ft. high, on the northern shores of Lake Balaton. The basalt lava that poured on its base of Pannonian sand in the Levantine period protected it from erosion. Characteristic column-like formations add interest to its steep and craggy slopes. Its flat crest is covered by woods, while on the gentler sandy slopes are to be found the vineyards that supply the world-famous Badacsony wine.

BLOOD ALLIANCE OF THE PATRIARCHAL CROSS. A secret extreme right-wing organization. It came into existence at the time of the revolutions following the First World War. All the known right-wing, racist politicians, including Gyula Gömbös, were members of the alliance. This alliance exerted considerable influence on Hungary's policy between the two world wars.

BORSOD COUNTY, or more accurately Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, is the northernmost county in Hungary, with Miskolc as its seat. With its brown-coal and metallurgical ore resources, it is the most highly industrialized part of the country, outside of the Budapest area. In the period between 1950 and 1957 one-eighth of every forint invested was spent on Borsod County. Its siderurgical plants (Diósgyőr, Ózd) are the oldest bases of Hungarian heavy industry. A high-capacity thermo-electric station and a big chemical plant have been established at Kazincbarcika. Rumanian natural gas, piped to the Chemical Fertilizer Factory at Tiszapalkonya and to Diósgyőr, provides the region with new power resources. The newly established Technical University at Miskolc is expected to make an important contribution to the further development of Hungarian heavy industry.

CONTRACTUAL PRODUCTION. In order to ensure a steady supply of foodstuffs and agricultural raw materials for the public and for industry the state concludes contracts with the producers. Under the terms of the contracts the state assumes the obligation of purchasing the goods produced, and the producer undertakes to deliver the agricultural goods by the stipulated date. In this manner the state may always rely on receiving the goods it has contracted for, and the producer may be certain that his goods will be purchased at the highest prevailing state price. In recent years the system of contractual production has been extended to all kinds of agricultural produce, including industrial raw materials and foodstuffs.

DÓZSA'S PEASANT REVOLT. Large-scale peasant insurrection which broke out in 1514 and was led by György Dózsa, a member of the lesser nobility of Transylvania, who had won distinction for himself earlier in the anti-Turkish wars. In this sanguinary peasant war waged in the Great Plain, the peasant troops were finally defeated by the united army of the nobility. The nobility avenged Dózsa's deeds in a terrible manner: he was seated on a red-hot iron throne, three times a red-hot iron crown was set on his head, and a fiery sceptre placed in his hand, and he was finally beheaded and quartered. His figure has inspired a number of fine literary and artistic works.

ECSED MARSH, a moorland of approximately 400 sq. mi. in the Nyírség District, North-East Hungary, drained in the 19th century and so a fertile area today.

ELECTRIFICATION OF THE VILLAGES. At the end of last year 92.3 per

cent of the Hungarian villages were linked with the national grid. According to plans 21 additional villages will receive electric lighting in 1961, and thus the number of communities without electric power will be reduced to 156. Before the Second World War there was no electricity in half of the Hungarian villages.

EÖTVÖS, JÓZSEF (1813-1871). Writer, poet and statesman, the first great personality of Hungarian critical realism. Was Minister of Religious Affairs and Education in the Batthyány Government formed in 1848 after the March Revolution, but left the country not much later, frightened by the course the Revolution had taken. Was again appointed Minister of Religious Affairs and Education in 1867 and framed a law on compulsory universal public education and on the emancipation of the Jews. As a writer Eötvös believed that literature should express the author's political creed. His novel *A falu jegyzője* ("The Village Notary"), 1845, is a great realistic work and, both in its plot and characters, a ruthless exposure of a feudal county and its nobility. *Magyarország 1514-ben* ("Hungary in 1514"), 1847, deals with the peasant revolt led by Dózsa, which initiated the development of the modern realist novel. His great work entitled *A XIX. század uralkodó eszméinek hatása az álladalomra* ("The influence of the Ruling Ideals of the Nineteenth Century on the State"), 1851-54, designates liberty, equality and internationalism as the main ideals of the century, but sees an insoluble contradiction in them.

ERNST MUSEUM, exhibition hall founded by the art collector Lajos Ernst in 1921. Served as rallying point for a good many outstanding representatives of Hungarian progressive art, who held their one-man shows in this hall.

FÉJA, GÉZA (b. 1900). Writer, publicist, member of the "peasant" group of writers. His sociographical book *Viharsarok* ("Stormy Corner"), 1937, is an indictment, on the part of the peasantry of the Great Plain, of the official circles of Hungary between the two wars, and as such it is an important document of the "Village Research Movement" of the 1930's.

FERENCZY, KÁROLY (1862-1917). One of the major figures of 20th century Hungarian painting, whose individuality left a strong mark on the important artists' colony of Nagybánya. His art, which took its departure from plein-air painting and impressionism, pointed to a new path in late 18th and early 19th-century painting. Began to study art in Paris, worked in Munich in the 1890's, and became a professor at the College of Art in 1905.

FOREIGN TRADE. Hungary's foreign trade turnover has considerably increased since 1945, and in 1958 it was three and a half times as high as the pre-war level. The structure of foreign trade turnover has also changed radically. In 1938 foodstuffs made up 57 per cent of Hungary's export trade, machines and equipment made up only 9 per cent, and industrial consumer goods accounted for 10 per cent. In 1960 machines and equipment constituted 38 per cent of exports, 18 per cent were industrial consumer goods and not more than 18 per cent foodstuffs. In 1960 raw materials and semi-finished goods made up 60 per cent of imports. This structural change reflects the large-scale industrial development that has taken place in the country's economic life. More than two thirds of Hungary's foreign trade turnover is carried on with the socialist countries and 32 per cent with the capitalist countries.

GÁRDONYI, GÉZA (1863-1922). Writer. Came from a poor family, and after completing his studies worked for a long

time as teacher in a village school. Later became a journalist. Following his literary successes Gárdonyi led a retired existence in the picturesque little town of Eger. First attracted attention through his portrayals of peasant life and his affectionately drawn peasant figures in *Az én falum* ("My Village"), 1898. Of his historical novels the best known is *Az egri csillagok* ("The Stars of Eger"), 1901, which brings to life Hungary's struggles against the Turks and is still widely read. In his novels of manners he celebrated the sweeping power of love.

GYÖNGYÖSSY, ISTVÁN (1629-1704). Baroque poet who wrote narrative poetry according to the taste of the nobility of his time. His best known work is *A Márssal társalkodó Murányi Vénusz* ("The Venus of Murány Conversing with Mars"), 1664.

HERMAN, OTTÓ (1835-1914). Polyhistor, natural scientist, ethnographist and progressive anti-clerical statesman. Founder of Hungarian anthropological research on primitive man.

JÓKAI, MÓR *(Maurus)* (1825-1904). One of Hungary's greatest novelists, who developed the Hungarian idiom of romanticism. Jókai came from a noble family of smallholders and civil servants. In March 1848, he was one of the leaders of the revolutionary youth of Pest. Later he gave up his opposition and became an M. P. He was a novelist of unique fecundity, with a wonderful vein for story-telling. Except for a few vigorously drawn episodic figures, his characterizations are often weak, but his descriptive passages and imaginative plots are masterful. His major novels are: *Erdély aranykora* ("The Golden Age of Transylvania"), *Török világ Magyarországon* ("Turkish World in Hungary"), *Egy magyar nábob* ("A Hungarian Nabob"), *Kárpáthy Zoltán* ("Zoltán Kárpáthy"), *A kőszívű ember fiai* ("All the Baron's Sons"), *Aranyember* ("Timár's Two Worlds"), and *Fekete gyémántok* ("Black Diamonds"). Along with Sándor (Alexander) Petőfi, the poet, he was for some time the most widely read Hungarian writer.

JÓSIKA, MIKLÓS (1794-1865). The first important Hungarian novelist. In 1848-49, during the Revolution and the War of Independence, he was a member of the National Defence Committee. After the failure of the struggle he emigrated. A military tribunal sentenced him to death and had him hanged in effigy. He died in Dresden. Jósika regarded Sir Walter Scott as his master. Both critics and the reading public gave an enthusiastic reception to his most important novel, *Abafi* (1836).

KISFALUDY, KÁROLY (1788-1830). Poet, playwright and literary organizer, one of the initiators of romanticism in Hungarian literature. Stemming from the nobility, he took part in the Napoleonic Wars and then left the army. In his most successful comedy, *A kérők* ("The Suitors"), 1819, Károly Kisfaludy made fun of the Latin culture which earmarked the manners of a large part of the nobility. He started the literary almanach *Aurora* in 1822, and rallied the younger generation of romanticists under it.

KRUDY, GYULA (1878-1933). Writer with a highly individual style, a representative of modern Hungarian prose. Came from a well-to-do gentry family. In his early short stories, he portrayed the moral and material disintegration of the Nyírség-District gentry: *A podolini takácsok* ("The Weavers of Podolin"). His later works are filled with nostalgic lyricism and Bohemian self-confessions. His favourite figures are passive observers devoting themselves to their melancholy remembrances and whose only realistic experience is the aimlessness of their existence. Krudy was not only attracted, but at the same time also repelled by the past, and so sometimes became submerged

in the stylized world of Victorian imagination—*Tótágas* ("Head-Stand"), 1919,—while at other times he escapes from his age, so barren of ideals, in the guise of make-believe figures. The Sindbad novels, *A vörös postakocsi* ("The Red Stage Coach"), 1913; *Aranykéz utcai szép napok* ("The Beautiful Days in Aranykéz Street"), 1916. Though besides resignation, they still show a search for the idyllic, his later writings also reflect the realistic atmosphere of his time. *Asszonyságok díja* ("Ladies' Prize"), 1920; *Hét bagoly* ("Seven Owls"), 1922; *Boldogult úrfikoromban* ("When I was a Lad"), 1928. In addition to the marks of romanticism, his prose style displays some novel features, such as the dissolution of chronological sequence, the expression of moods through lyric pictures, and a free flow of similes.

LYKA, KÁROLY (b. 1869). The nestor of Hungarian art historians, who already in the reviews he wrote before the First World War turned against official academicism and fought for the recognition of modern trends. From 1914 to 1936 Lyka taught at the College of Art, which he headed for several years. Wrote several monographs, in which he presented the development of art with an extensive knowledge of his subject matter. *A táblabíróvilág művészete* ("The Art of the Early 19th Century"), 1922; *Festészeti életünk a milleneumtól az első világháborúig* ("Hungarian Painting from the 1896 Millenary to the First World War"), 1953, *Festészetünk a két világháború között* ("Hungarian Painting between the Two World Wars"), 1956.

MÓRA, FERENC (1879-1934). Writer. Came from an extremely poor family of the Great Hungarian Plain, had a very difficult childhood and youth and was thus closely acquainted with the miserable lot of the peasantry of the Great Hungarian Plain. In Szeged, the largest town of the Great Plain, Móra worked as a journalist and was also the curator of a museum there. He perpetuated the heritage of Hungarian dialect literature, the narrative-anecdotic manner of Hungarian prose, but with a sensitive social conscience, a thorough knowledge of folk life and a point of view that was free from illusions. His works were imbued with warm humanism; they include: *Ének a búzamezőkről* ("Song of the Wheatfields"), 1927, *Aranykoporsó* (Golden Coffin), 1932, etc. His writings for young people—*Dióbél királyfi* ("Prince Nutmeat"), *Rab ember fiai* ("Sons of the Captive"), etc.—are among the finest in this category.

PENSIONED PEASANTS. The old-age insurance scheme under which the workers receive pensions, has been extended to cover the peasants organized in cooperative farms and those working on state farms. Since 92 per cent of the country's peasantry belongs to the social sector of agriculture, for all practical purposes the whole peasantry receives old-age pensions. The pensions of the peasants are smaller than those paid to insured workers belonging to other work categories, but the cooperative farms also assist the aged pensioned farmers through their welfare funds: they provide them with bread grain, fuel and money, and some of the more advanced cooperative farms even ensure them recreational facilities through their "Oldtimers' Clubs." At the same time the old pensioned peasants also have the opportunity to take on some light work on the cooperative farms, and naturally they are credited with the proper number of work units accomplished.

SÁRKÖZI, GYÖRGY (1899-1944). Writer and poet, editor of the *Válasz* (Reply), one of the major literary and political periodicals of the 1930's. His poetry reflects a subtle sense of form and deep humanism. His novels *Viola*, *Mint oldott kéve* ("Like Unbound Sheaves"), are realistic, though with exaggerated emphasis on detail. Sárközi was carried off and killed by the fascists.

SÁRRÉT. The Great and Little Sárrét (Mud Meadow) is situated at the confluence of the Rapid Körös, Black Körös and White Körös and the Berettyó River. Once a marshy area stretching over more than 180,000 acres, it was drained when the above rivers were regulated.

SECOND SERFDOM. After the peasant insurrection of 1514 the serfs were bound to the soil by law. Later the development of farming strengthened this more recent system of permanent serfdom, with its restriction of the peasants' free movement, a system which was connected with the feudal conditions of production. This process was more or less characteristic of peasant development throughout Eastern Europe.

SOCIALIST SECTOR OF AGRICULTURE. In the spring of 1961 over 95 per cent of the total tilled area of Hungary belonged to the socialist sector, *i. e.*, state farms and cooperative farms. Seventy-nine per cent of the fertile area was tilled by cooperative farms. The membership of the cooperative farms was more than 1,200,000.

SZABOLCS COUNTY, in the north-eastern part of the Great Plain. The Tisza, second biggest river of Hungary, cuts across it. The Nyírség District, a characteristic area of sand dunes with birch, poplar and acacia groves, is in the territory of Szabolcs County.

TERSÁNSZKY, J. JENŐ (b. 1888.) The *enfant terrible* of the generation of contributors to the "Nyugat"—both in his works and his attitude. He attracted attention with his war novel *Viszontlátásra, drága* ("Au revoir, Dearest"), 1917; the outspokenness, the spontaneity of his novels and short stories, his manner sometimes tending to naturalism aroused interest. His most significant work is the so-called *Kakuk Marci* cycle. Kakuk Marci is a vagabond beyond the pales of the community, who suffers privations and want. All the same, he is a cheerful figure, who through his vicissitudes and adventures sees society from below, but does not rebel against his lot. He has no other aim, but to live.

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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO
VOL. II. NO. 4
OF
THE NEW HUNGARIAN QUARTERLY

# THREE CUPS OF TEA

(C'EST LA GUERRE)

OPERA IN ONE ACT

BY

EMIL PETROVICS

TEXT BY

MIKLÓS HUBAY

BELOW IS A TRANSLATION OF THE HUNGARIAN TEXT REPRODUCED AS PART OF THE SCORE, WITHOUT ANY ATTEMPT AT FOLLOWING ITS PROSODY

*IN FRONT OF THE CURTAIN*

*Concierge:* The spider!

*Man opposite:* That'll do now! You'll have time enough to do all the talking you want. Your legs are all right and you can go where you like. Just hold your horses now! The trouble is that I'm pinned down here. By tabes. But I can see everything for all that. Do you know how many pretty women there are, who dress and undress in the house opposite?

I can see into sixteen flats from here. Quite enough for a lonely old man. See these fine military binoculars? At first some of them complained to the police. Then they gave it up. I know too much about them. You don't go complaining to the authorities about people who know a lot about you, do you? "A harmless old dotard," that's what they call me. Yet – if only they knew... You see, they can have no secrets from me. I have plenty of time and I can put two and two together. When they draw the curtain across a window, it tells me more than if I could peer freely into their room. That's right, isn't it?

She knows all about everything too. She's the concierge over there. She's not a clever woman. I might even say she's primitive. But she knows how to hate. Jealousy and hate make the walls transparent. Of a morning, when she comes to do my rooms, we pool our observations. You see, she can't sleep at night. She just lies in her bed, down in the basement, and thinks of her two sons...

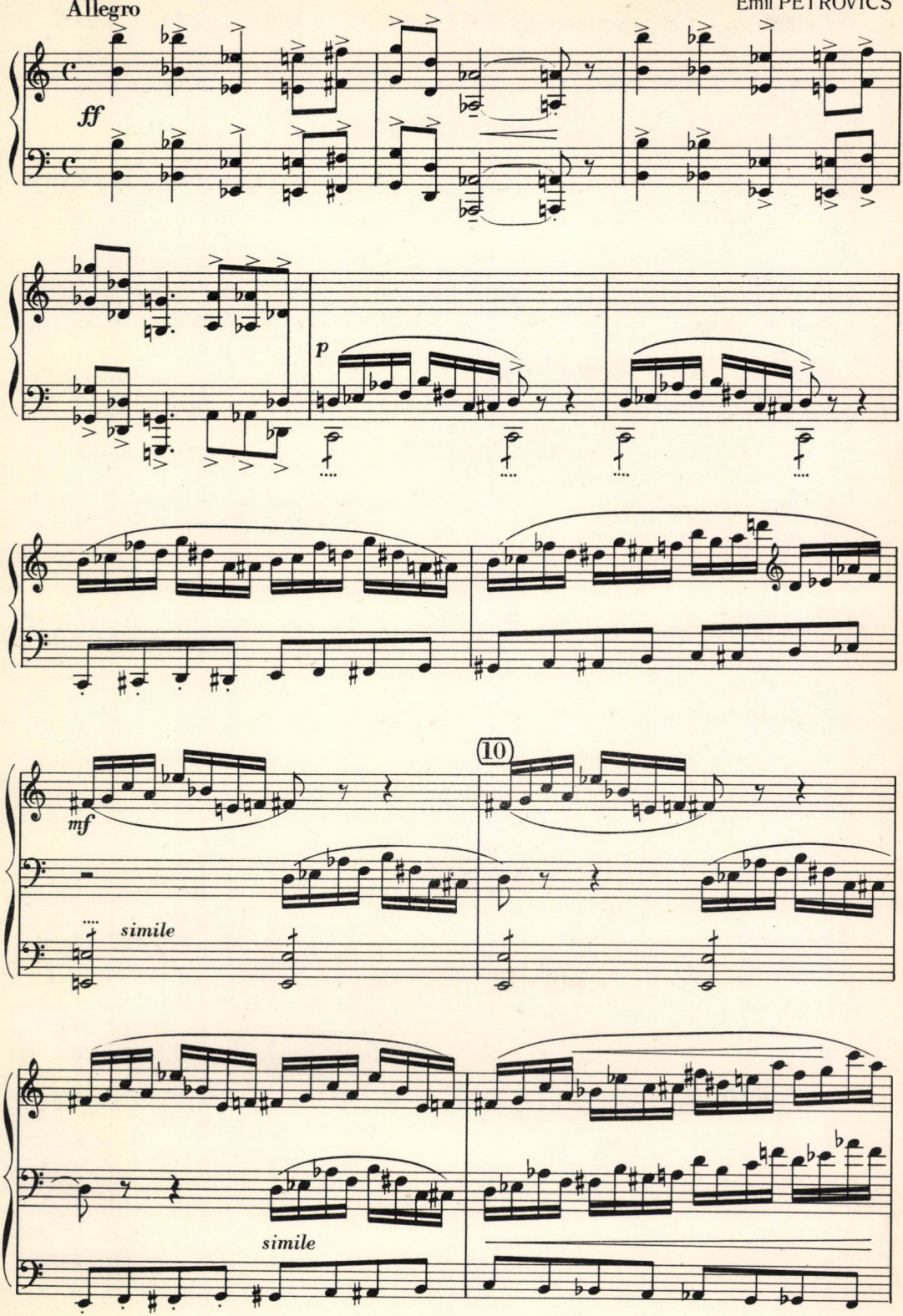
*The Concierge:* Oh!

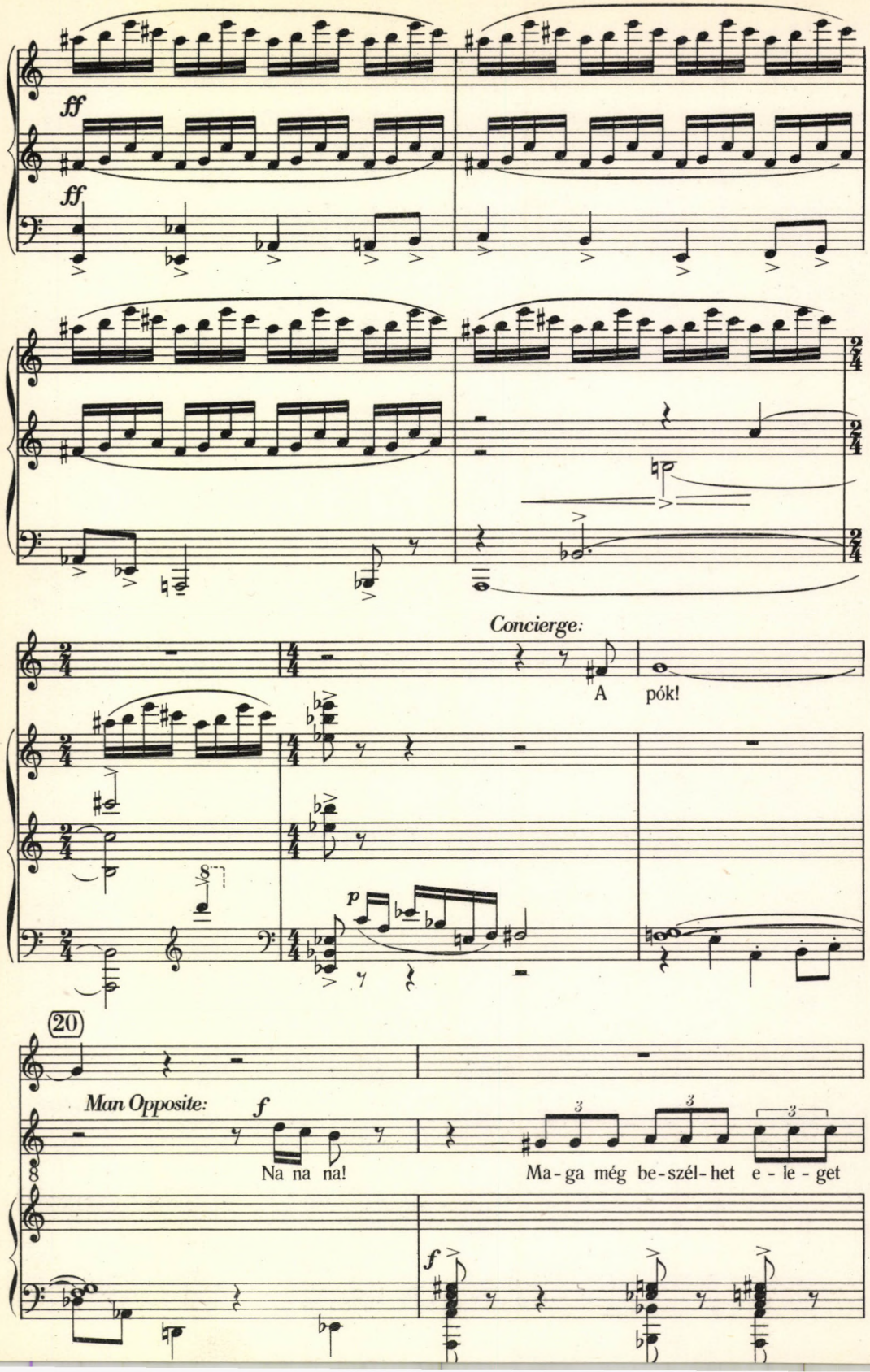
*Man opposite:* They died at Voronezh. Her husband at Doberdo... She just lies there and looks up at the ceiling and sees through all the six storeys. As though a flash of light had cleft the house from cellar to attic. The next day, from flat 2 on the second floor, the tenant's nephew is carried off. I'll wager there's a pretty young girl weeping for him somewhere. A pity I don't know her address, I'd be only too glad to console her. You see, my line is to give spiritual succour to lonely ladies. First I just play them a song or two on the gramophone, then the concierge gets them to come over, by telling them I've some pull in the Ministry of War... I have my eye on flat 3 on the fourth floor right now. The situation's ripening, to be sure. They're always a-pulling their curtains. Is the husband in love then? Who knows... You'll see how pretty the woman is. All I've done so far has been to play her the records I thought appropriate... A little light music, a bit of opera, as the situation seemed to require. I'd like to discover what she fancies. She's bound to come my way sooner or later – bless her heart. *(Etc.)*

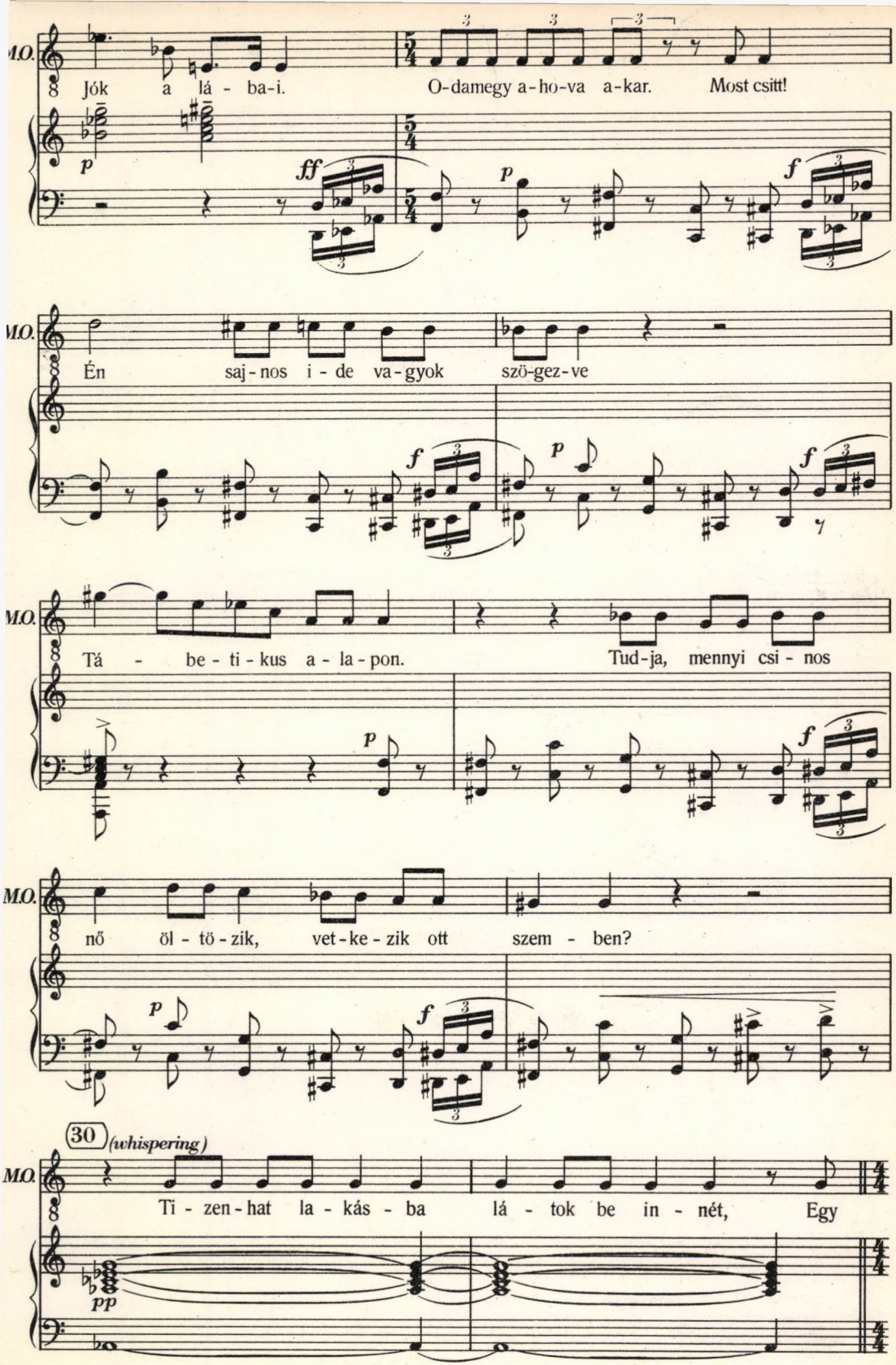
*(In front of the curtain)*

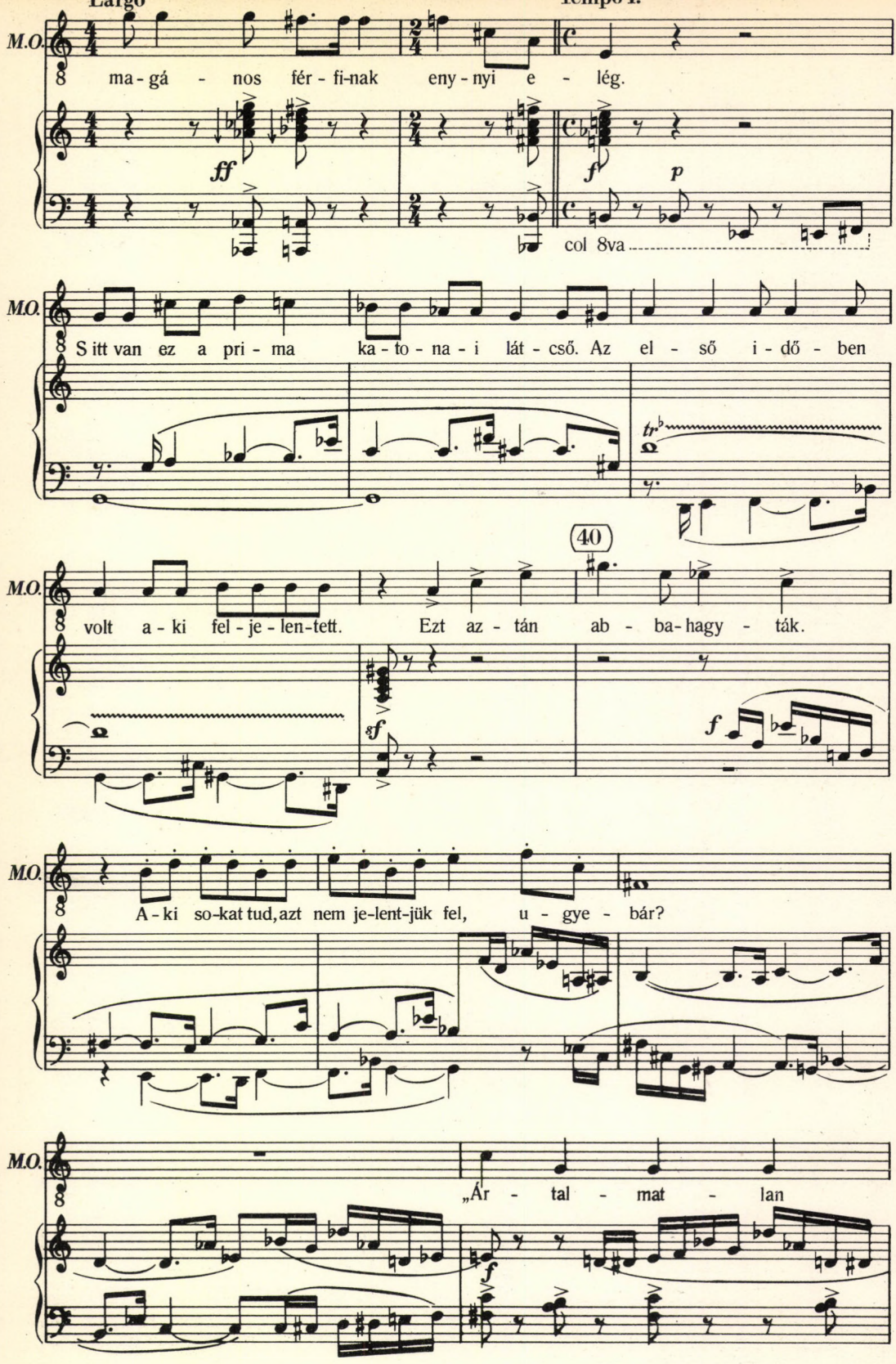
Allegro

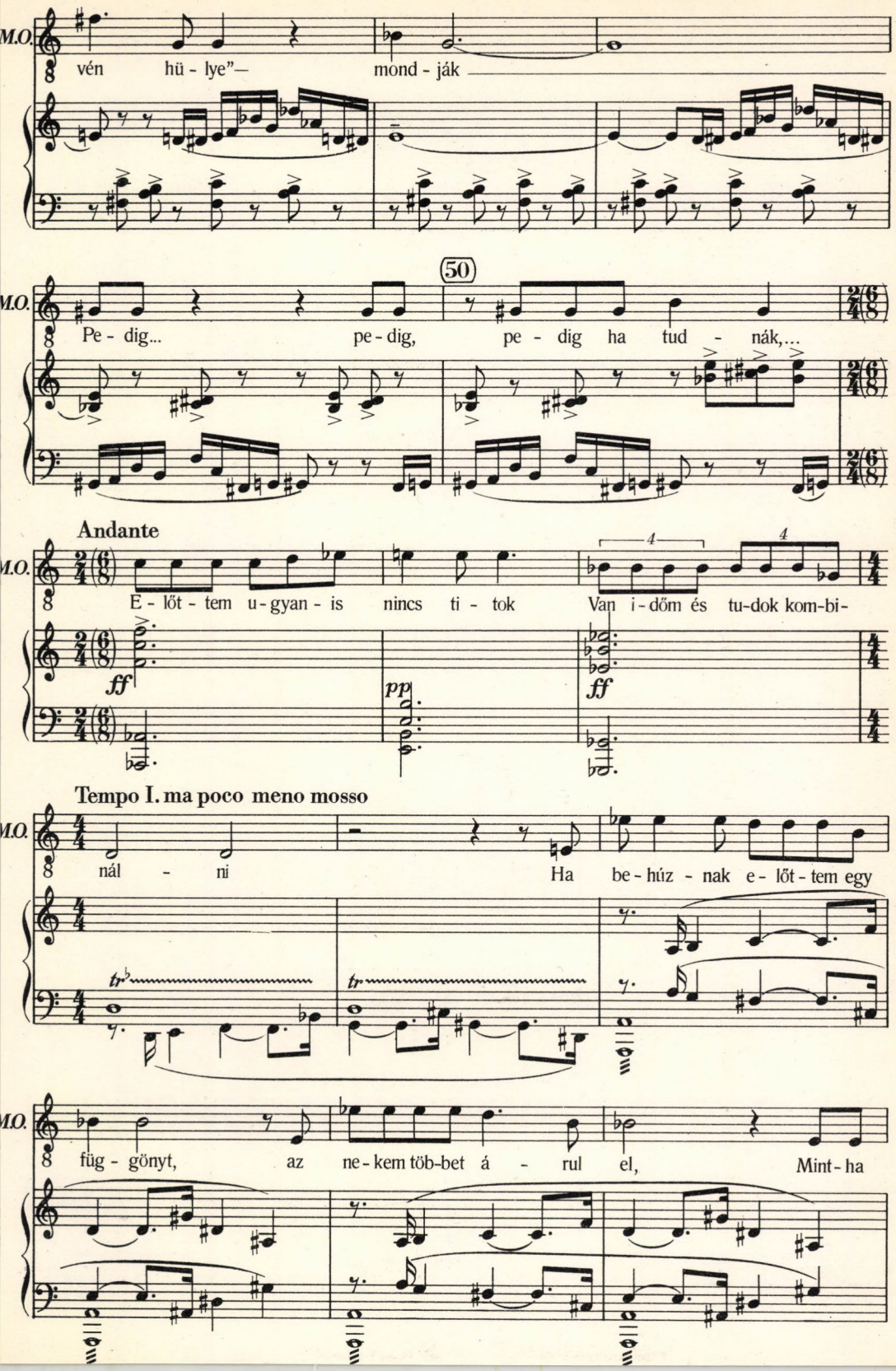
Emil PETROVICS

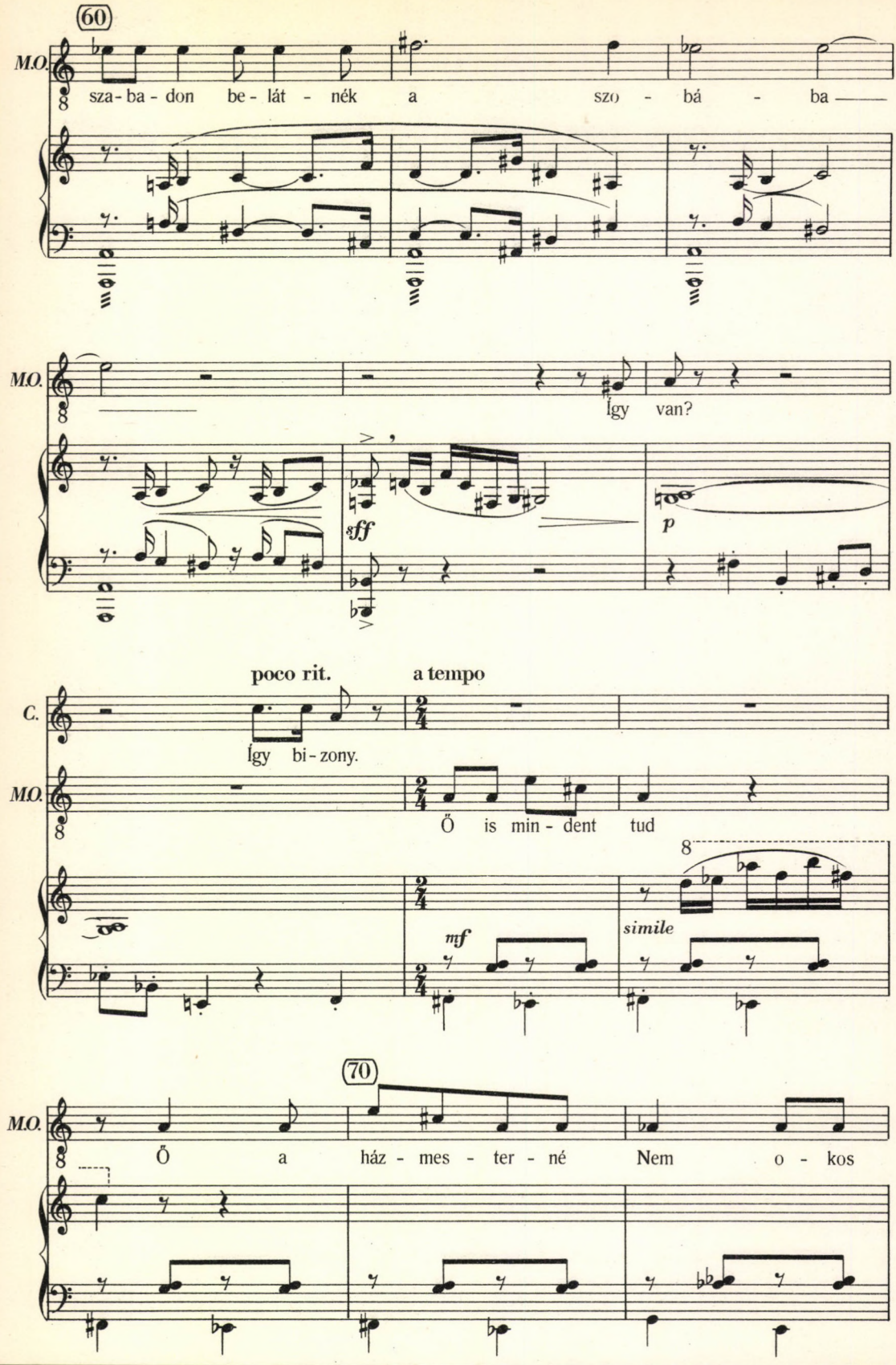


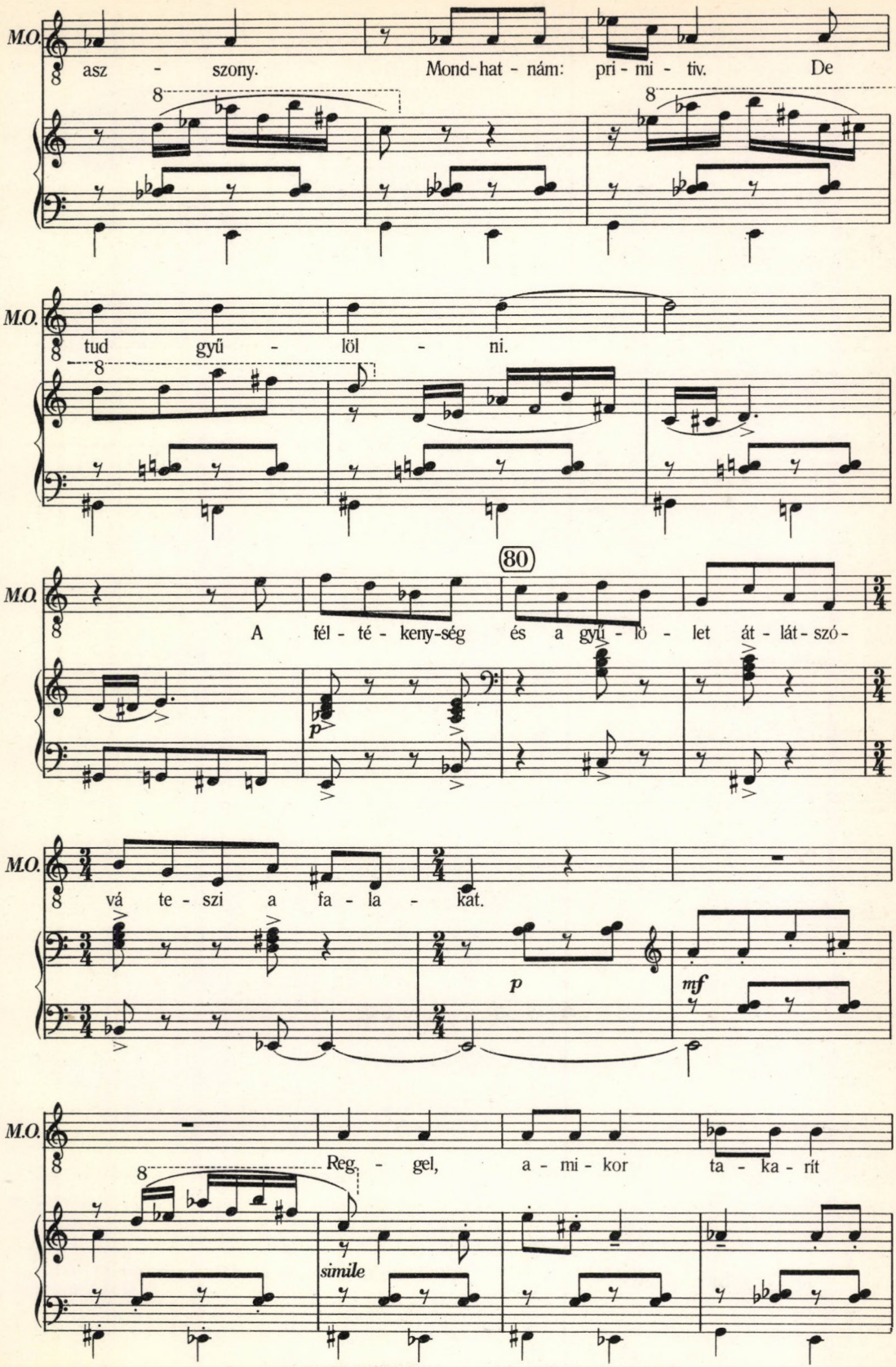

ff
ff
Concierge:
A pók!
p
20
Man Opposite:
f
Na na na!
Ma-ga még be-szél-het e-le-get
f

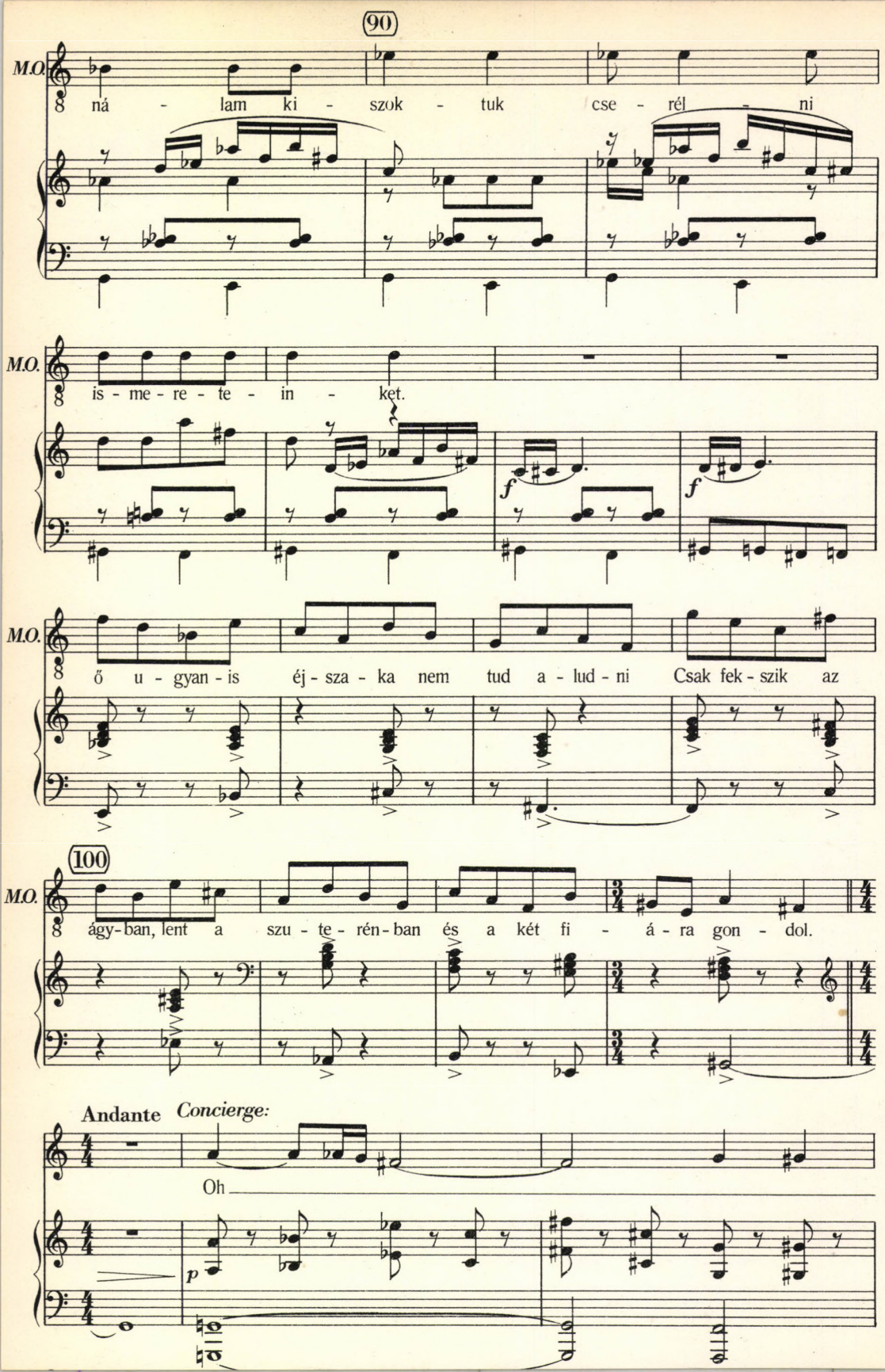

MO.
Jók a lá - ba-i.
O-damegy a-ho-va a-kar.
Most csitt!
Én saj-nos i-de va-gyok szö-gez-ve
Tá - be-ti-kus a-la-pon.
Tud-ja, mennyi csi-nos
nő öl-tö-zik, vet-ke-zik ott szem - ben?
30
(whispering)
Ti-zen-hat la-kás-ba lá-tok be in-nét, Egy

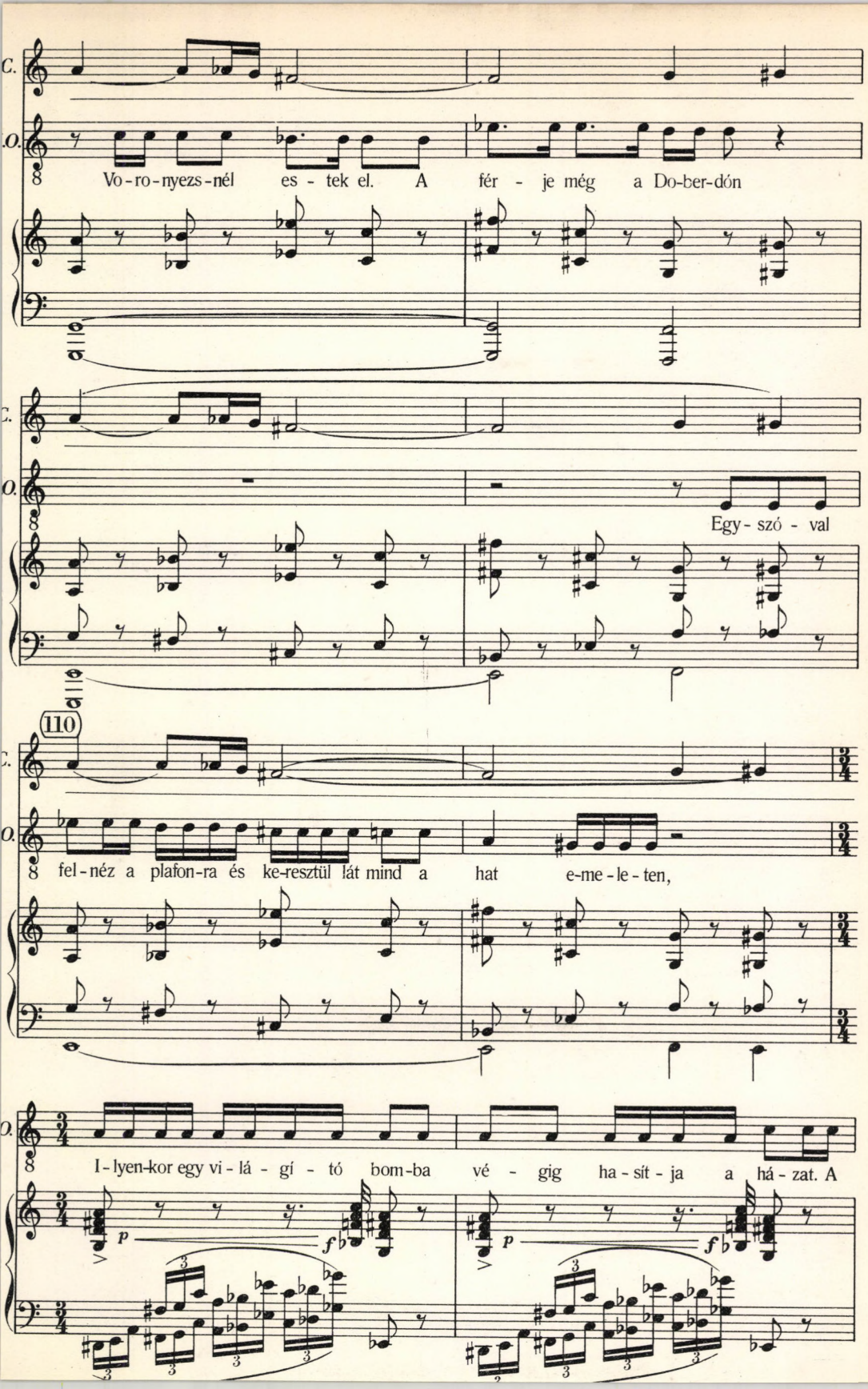

Largo
Tempo I.
M.O.
ma - gá - nos fér - fi-nak eny - nyi e - lég.
ff
f
p
col 8va
M.O.
S itt van ez a pri - ma ka - to - na - i lát - cső. Az el - ső i - dő - ben
tr
40
M.O.
volt a - ki fel - je - len-tett. Ezt az - tán ab - ba-hagy - ták.
sf
f
M.O.
A - ki so-kat tud, azt nem je-lent-jük fel, u - gye - bár?
M.O.
„Ár - tal - mat - lan
f

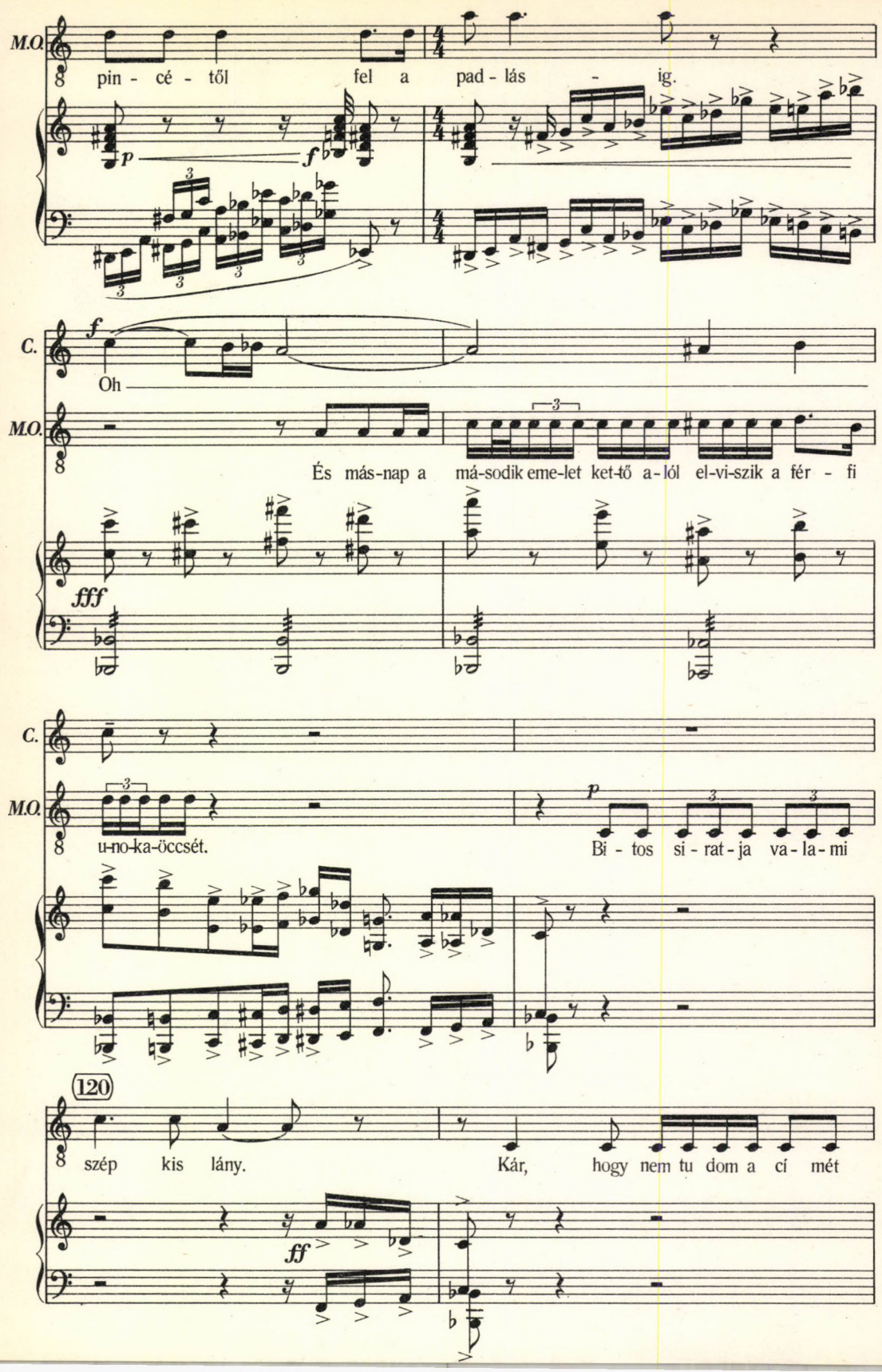

M.O.
vén hü - lye"— mond - ják
50
Pe - dig... pe - dig, pe - dig ha tud - nák,...
Andante
E - lőt - tem u - gyan - is nincs ti - tok Van i - dőm és tu-dok kom-bi-
ff
pp
ff
Tempo I. ma poco meno mosso
nál - ni Ha be - húz - nak e - lőt - tem egy
füg - gönyt, az ne - kem töb-bet á - rul el, Mint - ha

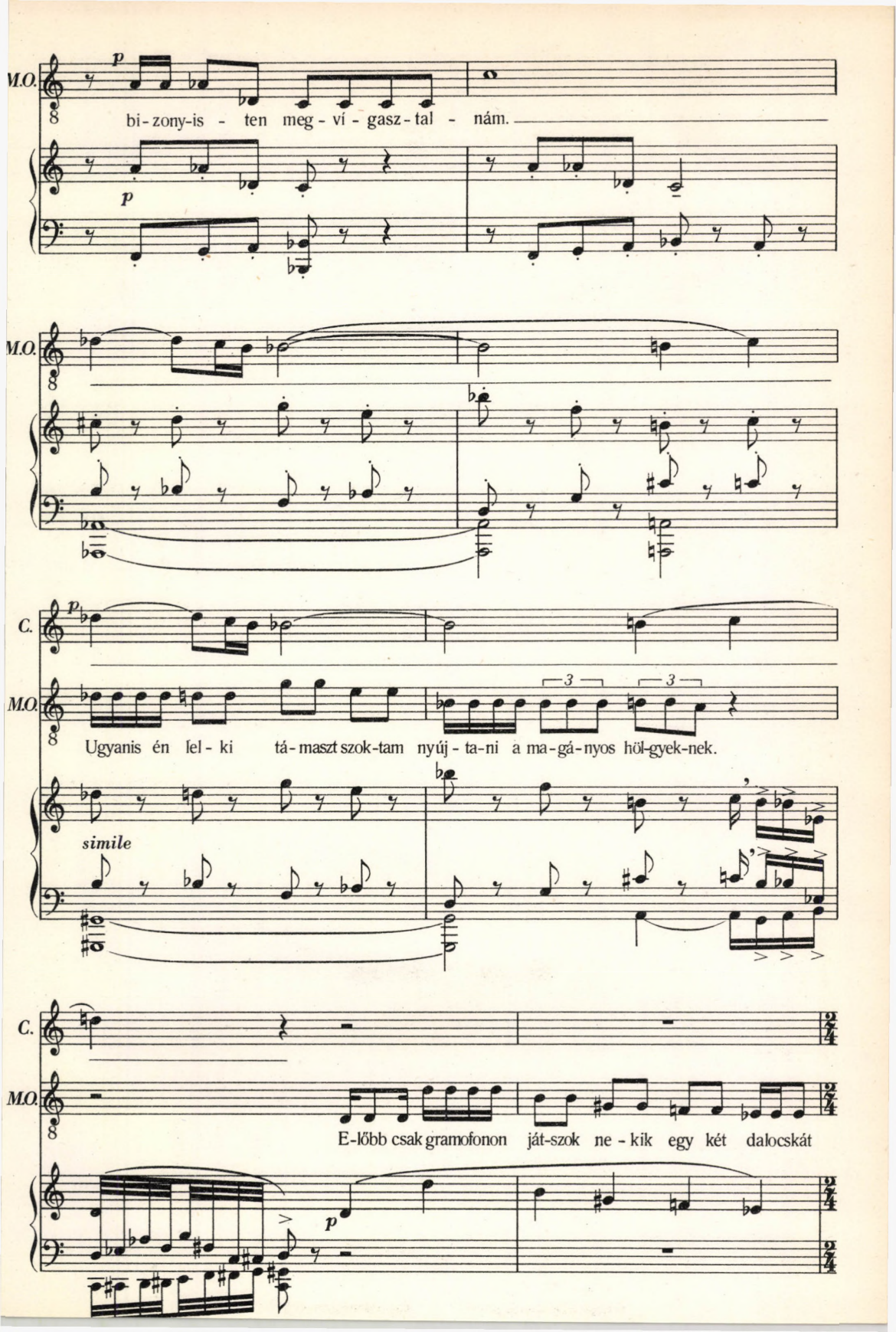

60
M.O.
sza - ba - don be - lát - nék a szo - bá - ba
Így van?
sff
p
poco rit.
a tempo
C.
Így bi - zony.
Ő is min - dent tud
8
mf
simile
70
Ő a ház - mes - ter - né Nem o - kos

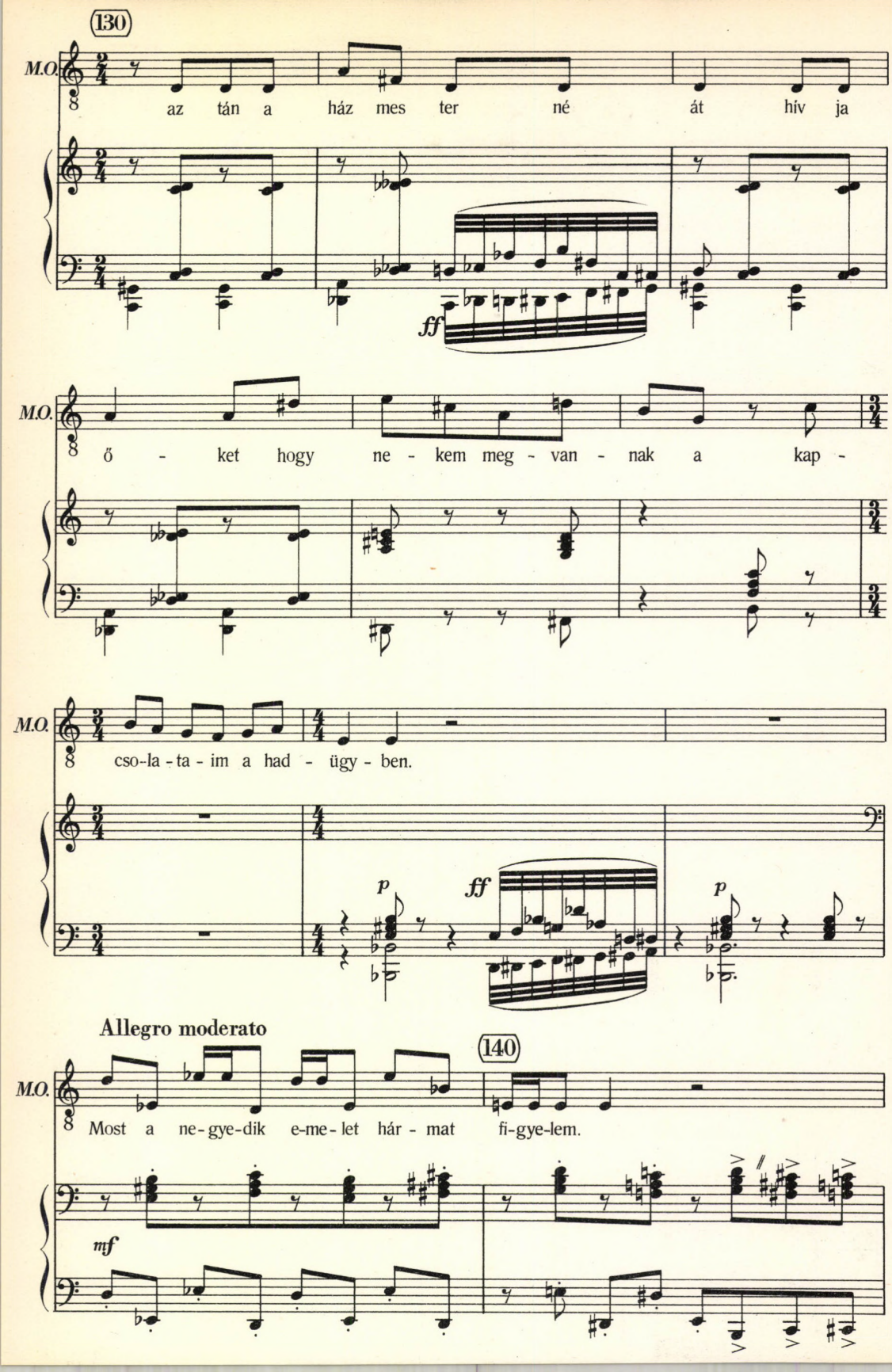

M.O.
asz - szony. Mond-hat - nám: pri - mi - tiv. De
M.O.
tud gyű - löl - ni.
80
M.O.
A fél - té - keny-ség és a gyű - lö - let át - lát - szó -
p
M.O.
vá te - szi a fa - la - kat.
p
mf
M.O.
Reg - gel, a - mi - kor ta - ka - rít
simile

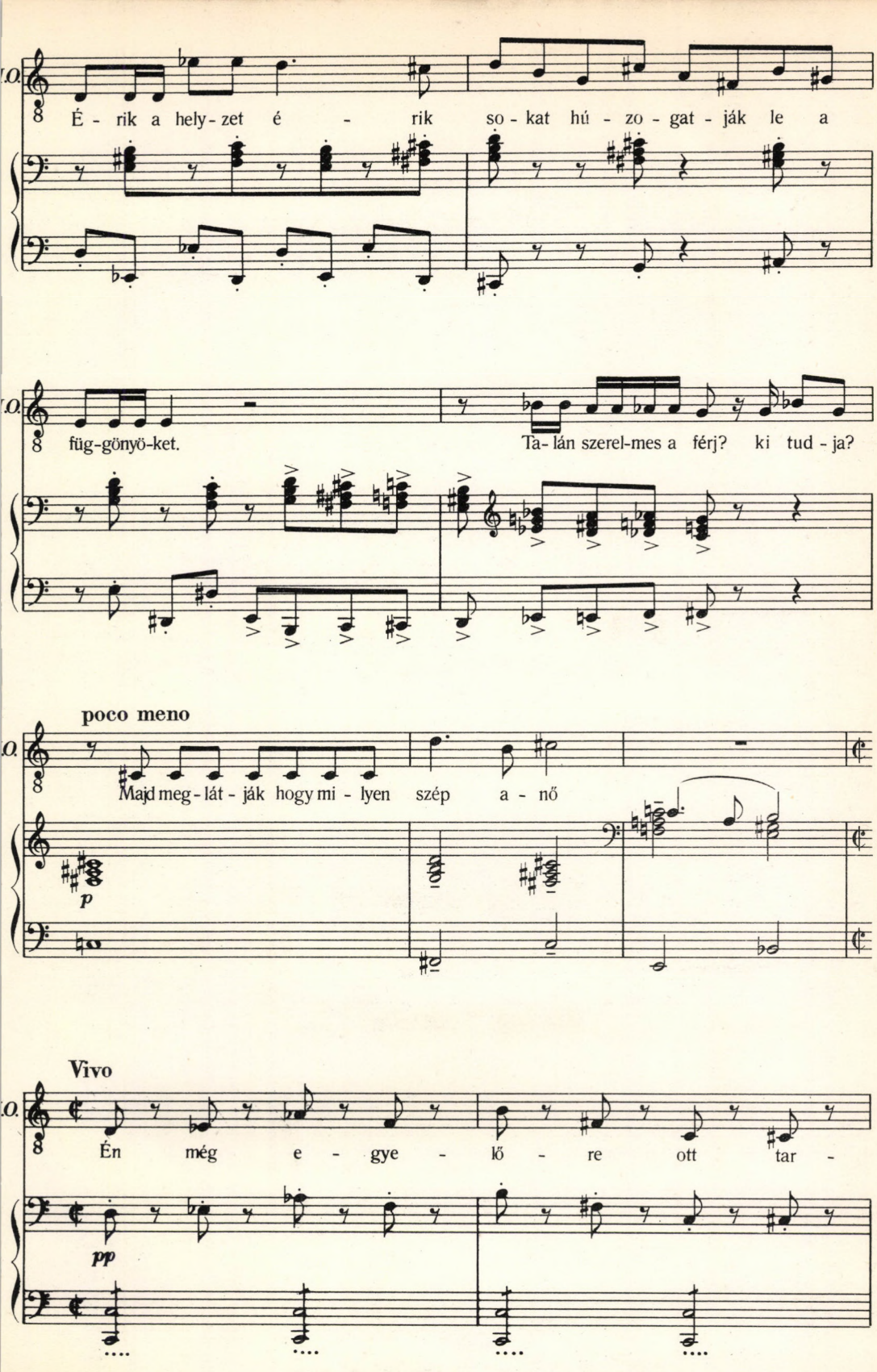

M.O.
ná - lam ki - szok - tuk cse - rél - ni
M.O.
is - me - re - te - in - ket.
f
f
M.O.
ő u - gyan - is éj - sza - ka nem tud a - lud - ni Csak fek - szik az
100
M.O.
ágy-ban, lent a szu - te - rén-ban és a két fi - á - ra gon - dol.
Andante
Concierge:
Oh
p

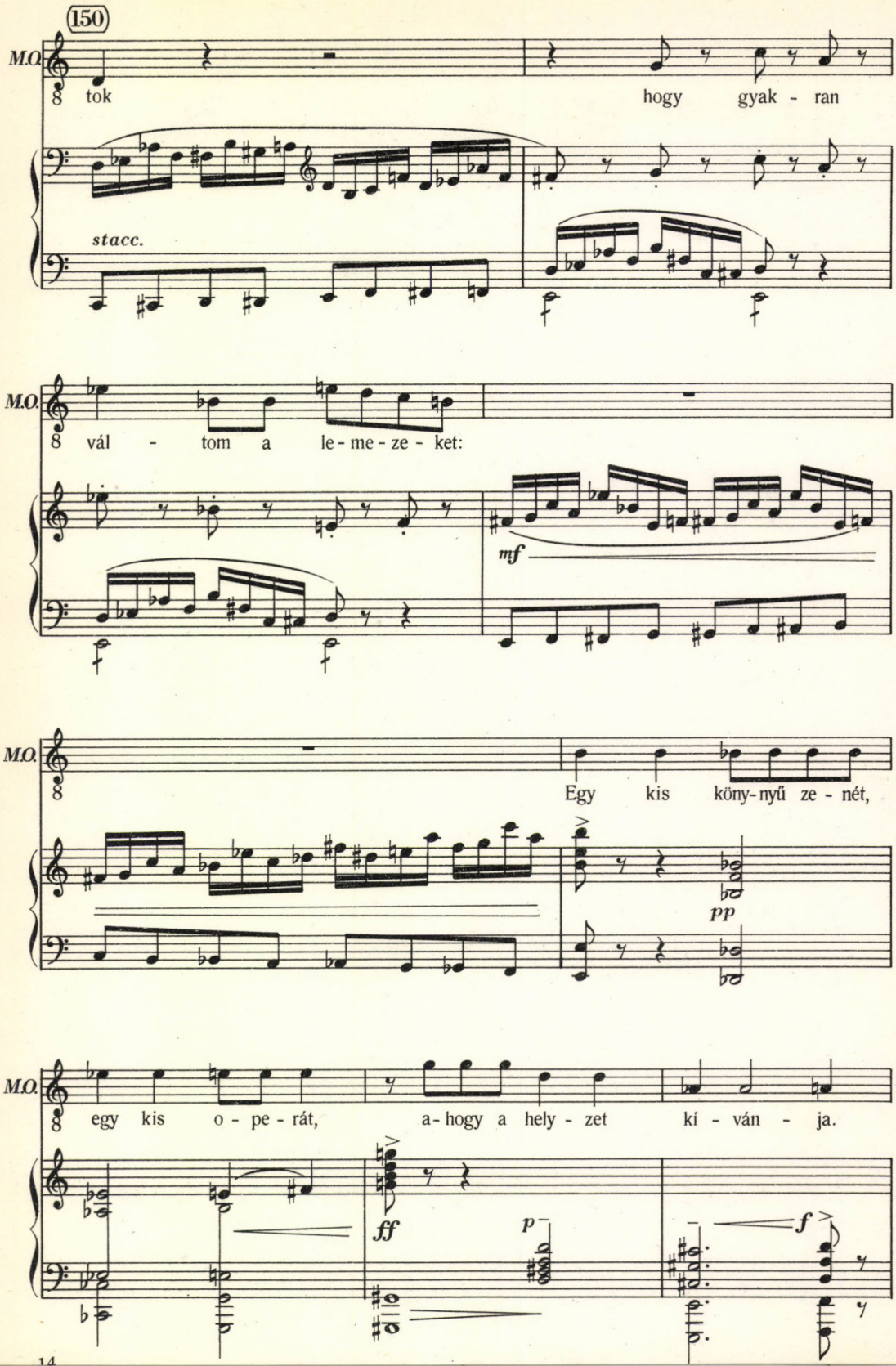

Vo-ro-nyezs-nél es-tek el. A fér-je még a Do-ber-dón
Egy-szó-val
110
fel-néz a plafon-ra és ke-resztül lát mind a hat e-me-le-ten,
I-lyen-kor egy vi-lá-gí-tó bom-ba vé-gig ha-sít-ja a há-zat. A

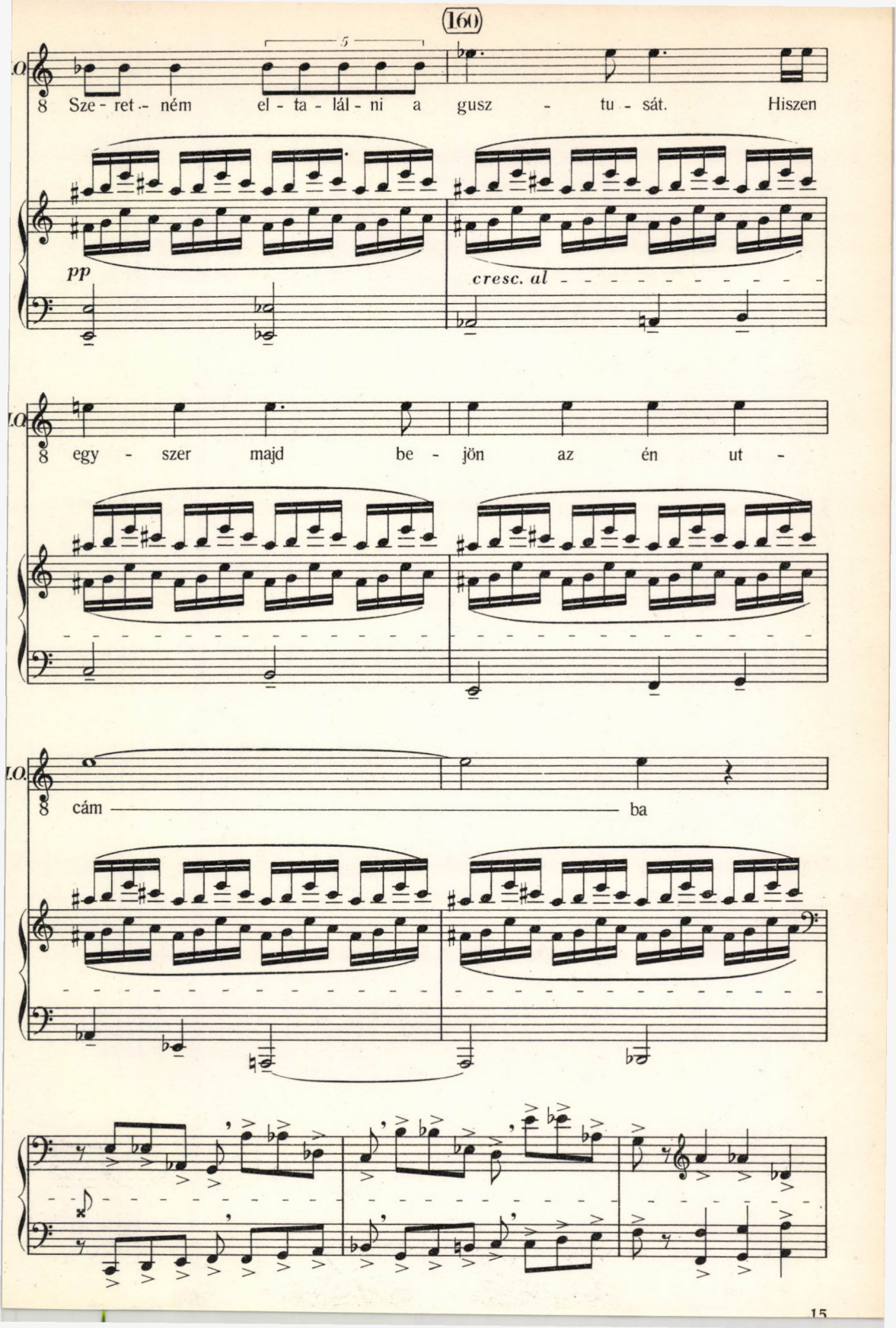

M.O.
pin - cé - től fel a pad - lás - ig.
p
f
C.
Oh
M.O.
És más-nap a má-sodik eme-let ket-tő a-lól el-vi-szik a fér - fi
fff
C.
M.O.
u-no-ka-öccsét.
p
Bi - tos si - rat - ja va - la - mi
120
szép kis lány.
Kár, hogy nem tu dom a cí mét
ff

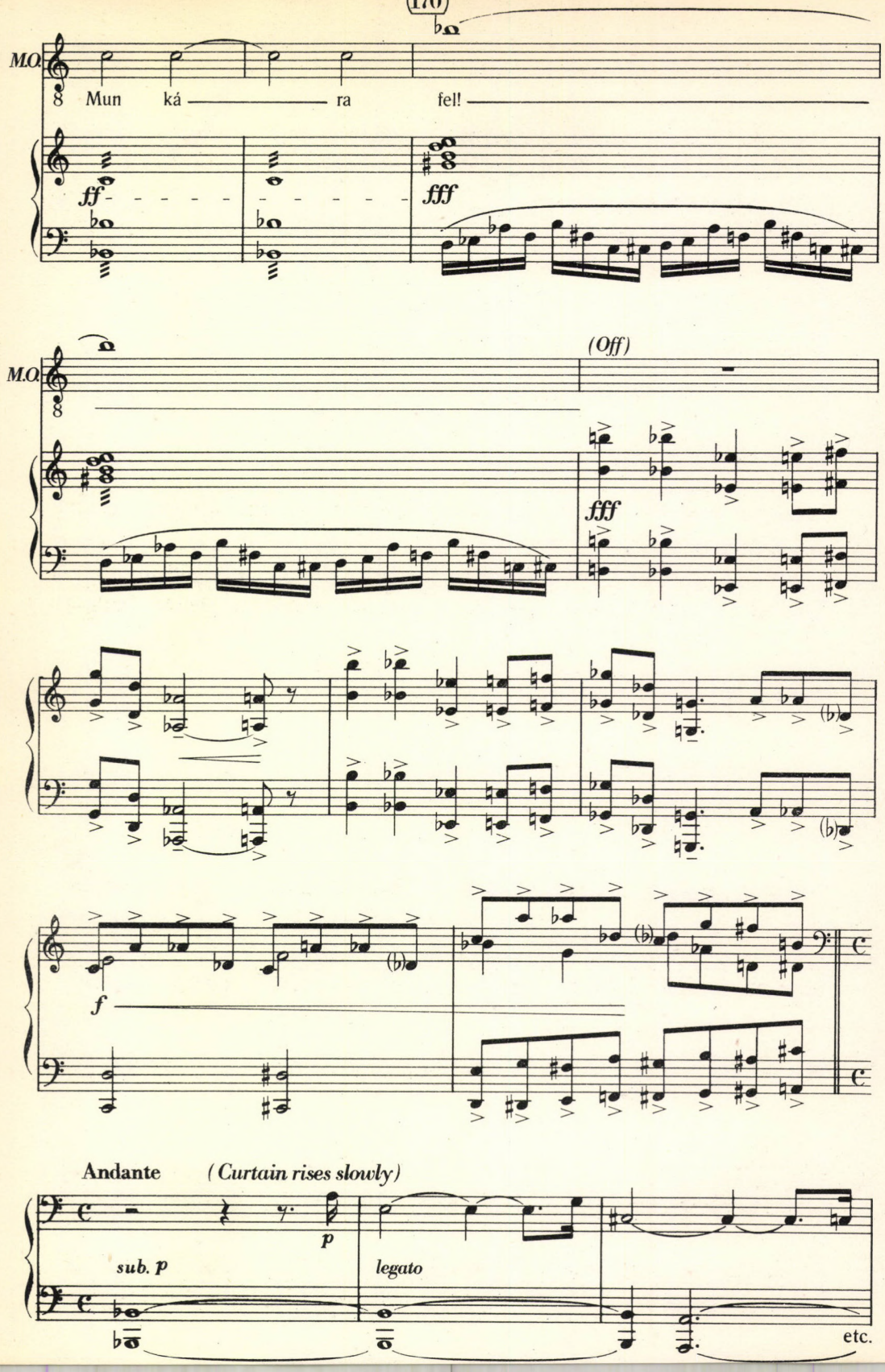

M.O.
p
bi-zony-is - ten meg-ví-gasz-tal - nám.
p
M.O.
C.
M.O.
p
3
3
Ugyanis én lel-ki tá-maszt szok-tam nyúj-ta-ni a ma-gá-nyos höl-gyek-nek.
simile
C.
M.O.
E-lőbb csak gramofonon ját-szok ne-kik egy két dalocskát
p


130
M.O.
az tán a ház mes ter né át hív ja
ff
M.O.
ő - ket hogy ne - kem meg - van - nak a kap -
M.O.
cso-la - ta - im a had - ügy - ben.
p
ff
p
Allegro moderato
140
M.O.
Most a ne - gye - dik e - me - let hár - mat fi - gye - lem.
mf


É - rik a hely - zet é - rik so - kat hú - zo - gat - ják le a
füg-gönyö-ket.
Ta- lán szerel-mes a férj? ki tud - ja?
poco meno
Majd meg - lát - ják hogy mi - lyen szép a - nő
p
Vivo
Én még e - gye - lő - re ott tar -
pp


150
M.O.
tok
hogy gyak - ran
stacc.
M.O.
vál - tom a le - me - ze - ket:
mf
M.O.
Egy kis köny-nyű ze - nét,
pp
M.O.
egy kis o - pe - rát, a-hogy a hely - zet kí - ván - ja.
ff
p
f


5
8 Szer - ret - ném el - ta - lál - ni a gusz - tu - sát. Hiszen
pp
cresc. al
8 egy - szer majd be - jön az én ut -
8 cám ba


M.O.
Mun ká ra fel!
ff
fff
M.O.
(Off)
fff
f
Andante
(Curtain rises slowly)
p
sub. p
legato
etc.