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INDEX

VOLUME XXIV 1983

PREFACES

ARTICLES, ESSAYS

ECONOMICS

MIHÁLY BABITS 1883–1941

GYULA ILLYÉS 1902–1983

STORIES AND MEMOIRS

POEMS

IN FOCUS

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

ARTS, ARCHEOLOGY, PHOTOGRAPHY

MUSICAL LIFE AND DANCE

THEATRE AND FILM

ART REPRODUCTIONS

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DANCE

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MUSICAL LIFE

This issue went to press on 17 November 1982
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THE COMMON INTEREST

I take the expression common interest from Imre Hollai's inaugural address as President of the 31st Session of the UN General Assembly. This common interest of people is, naturally, peace. Arguing against armaments and the new weapons of mass destruction, and for peace, Imre Hollai did not merely rely on the full range of terms available to international diplomacy, he also quoted a speech by Mór Jókai, the 19th century Hungarian novelist and contemporary of Zola and Tolstoy. I greatly respect Jókai and reread his fictions time and again but I did not know that in 1895 he took part in, and addressed, the Brussels meeting of the Inter-parliamentary Union, evoking the terrible image of a future war where millions would fight not with rifles and cannon but with truly devilish machines. Imre Hollai's opening address shows once again what this journal is wont to point out, that Hungarian public life and politics again and again immerse themselves in the life-giving fountain of Hungarian literature.

I might mention as it were in parenthesis that Imre Hollai was interviewed by *Newsweek*. They had evidently not read his inaugural address or they would not have put a loaded question to him, asking him if he could be objective as a Communist, as the representative of a country allied to the Soviet Union. Imre Hollai answered well, not only because he is a good diplomatist but also because the answer was not difficult. As the editor of a journal, however, which has raised its voice for over twenty years now in the interests of better understanding and against mistrust, I felt depressed, wondering what *Newsweek* readers might think if a future President, from a NATO country, were to be asked a similar question. The common interest of us all demands that we should place a certain confidence in each other.

For many years now, and with few exceptions, this journal has published

the speech of the Hungarian Foreign Minister to the General Assembly. The 1982 address by Frigyes Puja is a far-reaching and responsible analysis not only of the foreign policy of a small country but also of that anxiety which those feel who dwell in this small country in Eastern-Central Europe in this the age of the nuclear threat. Frigyes Puja argues that the UN has an important role in putting a stop to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, this being one of the most burning issues demanding a high sense of responsibility. The Foreign Minister declared in the name of the Hungarian Government that not only grasping the basic issues of nuclear disarmament is essential, all other opportunities must be seized as well which might directly or indirectly help to abate the nuclear threat. Such include limitations on the siting of launching pads, the declaration of nuclear free zones, and guarantees for the security of countries that lack nuclear weapons. Frigyes Puja concluded that, in spite of the tensions of the international situation and unfavourable developments, he felt confident that the possibilities of peaceful progress were not exhausted.

It is most unfortunate that mutual trust and understanding are not manifest in the writings of certain aggressive groups and persons in neighbouring countries. I write this with a heavy heart since the country concerned is neighbouring Rumania. *Cuvînt despre Transilvania* (A word on Transylvania) appeared in Bucharest in April 1982. The author, Ion Lăncrănjan, is of Transylvanian birth. The Rumanian critical reception was just about universally enthusiastic, in Hungary, however, certain passages aroused indignation and the book as a whole shocked and caused uneasiness. György Száraz answered Lăncrănjan in the October 1982 issue of the monthly *Valóság*. Since Lăncrănjan's wiews received some attention in other countries as well, we saw fit to publish extracts from György Száraz's answer. The article is itself a contribution to relations between Hungarians and Rumanians, both of which have inhabited Transylvania for many centuries.

Ferenc Havasi, Secretary to the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party discusses an important and touchy subject, as both the title "Equilibrium through productivity and saving" and the fact make clear that he starts by referring to there being more troublesome elements in Hungarian home politics than at any time in the past twenty years. The text is based on an address given at the Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest to mark the beginning of the academic year and concentrates primarily on those elements that give cause to disquiet. He points out that

Hungary has maintained solvency and the confidence of creditors over a difficult period, going on to discuss the process of rationalization the need for which was enforced by the more difficult economic circumstances. The most interesting section—perhaps of the whole issue for students abroad of the present situation in Hungary—is the account of the measures taken to ensure equilibrium *and* full employment *and* prevent an unbridled inflation. I cannot resist quoting one figure: in a single year Hungary spends more than $ 100 million on coffee, cocoa, citrus fruits etc., the equivalent of exporting six to seven hundred thousand tonnes of wheat.

NHQ rarely provides a scholarly apparatus for its articles; the present issue offends against this rule in the case of György Lukács's *Gelebtes Denken*. Knowing that his days were numbered, and because he had promised his late wife, he started on an autobiography but got no further than a few sketchy notes which we here publish in an English version which attempts to reproduce the style of the original. István Eörsi, who prompted the recording of much ampler material on tape, once Lukács found the physical act of writing beyond him, provides extensive notes which are largely based on the information contained in these recordings. The text itself is a witness to the man, the notes go far towards painting a portrait of the age and its personalities.

A Hungarian film, *The training of Vera*, travelled the world. I happened to be in Stockholm when it was shown there, under the sensational title "Stalin and Vera." Pál Gábor directed the film, Endre Vészi wrote the script. It is one of the odd aspects of the relationship between the cinema and literature that Pál Gábor's name was on everyone's lips, but Endre Vészi was hardly mentioned, though the film was based on "Chapters from the Life of Vera Angi," Vészi's successful short story. The story appears in this issue, with a brief afterword by the author.

Sándor Maller contributes an obituary of István Gál. Gál, a frequent contributor to this journal, was an outstanding authority on, and practitioner of, Anglo-Hungarian literary and other intellectual contacts. He was a friend of my youth, a coeval, 1912 vintage. Let me quote *The Times* (July 7, 1982): "Gál, born at Bonyhád in 1912, was still at university when he founded the periodical *Apollo* (1934–40), whose contributors included the composer Béla Bartók, the classical scholar Károly Kerényi and the novelist Thomas Mann. The young editor was determined to maintain the permanent values of European civilisation at a time when they were under threat in Central

Europe, and his periodical became a rallying point for a minority of intellectuals who fought the all-pervading Teutonic influence in the *Donauraum.*"

"Gál bravely upheld the traditions of Anglo–Hungarian literary and cultural connexions at a time when the possibility of contacts gradually and inevitably diminished and reached its lowest ebb in the 1940s."

András Fodor reviews three books from Béla Bartók Junior on his father. All three present a perspective on the composer which has been lacking so far; taken together, they are nothing short of sensational.

Finally, a tasty scientific morsel. Endre Czeizel's "New light on the Hungarian genetic heritage," which reports research results that will surprise many.

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The editors of *NHQ* take this opportunity to express their warmest respect and admiration for László Országh, the Grand Old Man of English and American studies in Hungary on the occasion of his 75th birthday. László Országh's name is a household word in this country wherever English is taught, spoken or translated. "The Országh" is that huge dictionary, Hungarian–English and English–Hungarian, which is the most important and indispensable working tool in the *NHQ* office. We are all proud that László Országh has been an active member of our Editorial Board for the past twenty years. A tribute to Professor Országh's work appears on page 128.

THE EDITOR

EQUILIBRIUM — THROUGH PRODUCTIVITY AND SAVING

by

FERENC HAVASI

It is a feature of the present period that, in Hungarian domestic politics there are more disturbing elements than at any time in the past twenty years. Concern has been growing about whether the country will be able to maintain its achievements or whether relapses must be reckoned with. The common wish that things would be all right as long as they get no worse has, not for a quarter of a century, been as much in danger of not coming true.

Let me briefly survey the root causes of these elements of the uneasy atmosphere. Most of them are fed by the outside world, beyond the frontiers. Today those with intellectual authority the world over say in plain terms that the world has never in the past fifty years gone through such an economic crisis as it has to cope with now. Day after day people are told about the growth of unemployment, a reduced working week, inflation, big deficits in the budgets of even the richest countries, about banks and firms going bankrupt, countries becoming insolvent, bank credits, and debts repayment schedules being revised, governments being toppled, the collapse of time-tested coalition governments, the slashing of social services, and compromises between trade unions and governments, things which one seldom heard about earlier.

The global crisis has an effect, of course, also on the socialist world. There is indebtedness, difficulties in ensuring supplies, and a slow-down in the rate of progress.

In short, that golden age which we experienced from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s seems to have gone also in the community of socialist countries. Nevertheless, the mutually advantageous cooperation of these

The text of an address given at the Karl Marx University of Economics on September 13th 1982, to open the academic year.

countries goes on and ahead as usual. This is essential indeed, in isolation, without being able to rely on each other, we would have to pay a much higher price to ride out the storm.

People see storm signals, not only in the economy but also elsewhere in public life. A life-and-death struggle is waged, on the international plane, to achieve a stop to the arms buildup, going on to disarmament. Will détente or tension prevail, that is the issue. Local wars occur with ever increasing frequency. People are alarmed by the news, in particular as they appear on television screens, of the Falklands Islands, of the war between Iran and Iraq, Israeli aggression in Lebanon, the Palestine question. Not only the news in themselves are alarming, but there is a heightening of states of mind, of the tone and actions of those who stir up things who for many a year now have been waiting for the socialist system to be dealt a succession of poor hands.

Those who have kept a low profile biding their time, who think of themselves as insulted and neglected, also make louder noises at such times. They tend to forget that the reason why uneasiness has spread in this country as well is that what the masses want is to go on working hard and quietly for the objectives we set ourselves a quarter of a century ago. The Hungarian people want to work and prosper. That is their greatest desire. The political leadership of the country considers it its highest duty to create and maintain the conditions which such work and prosperity demand.

People are unchanged in the trust they place in the honesty and fair dealing of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party which has stood the test of twenty-five years; their wish is to outstay the problems amidst which they live and work today under the guidance of the HSWP. It is specific to Hungary that people do not want a change, they jealously guard what they have got. They want to make progress by following the beaten track of a time-tested policy. When they criticize they do so with this end in view. Such attitudes tally with the convictions of the Central Committee of the HSWP. The problems must be dealt with by adjusting the line of the HSWP to present conditions.

The Central Committee is determined, despite world economic conditions which changed in a manner that is unfavourable to Hungary, to pursue the economic policy adopted in December 1978 and endorsed by the 12th Congress of the HSWP. We are encouraged to continue this policy by the results obtained in implementation over the past four years serving the major objectives of improving the balance of payments position and safeguarding the established standard of living.

External trade

We have succeeded in slowing down and then stopping the process of indebtedness abroad, the amount of debts has not grown, its growth has come to a halt; it has even decrreased somewhat since the end of 1981. Trade with capitalist countries has essentially come into balance since 1981. Relations with socialist partners are businesslike: Hungary has fully carried out interstate agreements, and obligations under those agreements in recent years as well.

Hungary's financial solvency has been maintained and so has the confidence of creditors. Few countries can claim that these days, and Hungary is one of them. So far we have always and punctually carried out financial obligations, and that though in these years interest payments alone amounted to one year's value in dollars of exports to capitalist countries ten years ago. In the course of 1982 Hungary was admitted to membership of the International Monetary Fund and of the World Bank. In both organizations Hungary has contributed the statutory share of capital and, in accordance with our rights and obligations, we should like to make use of the possibilities. We hope that membership rights will be respected by the leading bodies of the two organizations.

The operational expenses of the economy have been cut; 20 per cent less oil and oil products are used for a national income surpassing that of 1978, to fuel growing industrial and agricultural output and the needed standard of performance of transport.

The growth in industrial production has been realized in spite of a decline of 100,000 in the work force and the use of raw materials has gone down by 1.5 per cent. In the past three years total consumption of energy has diminished in absolute terms as well. The pattern of products and their competitiveness have improved though not at the desirable rate. Non-ruble exports at comparable prices have increased by 20 per cent in three years. At the same time imports have decreased by 10 per cent, in contrast to the preceding years of which a growth of imports in general was typical.

A relative reduction in social policy spending has also helped to balance the budget. These expenses rose by 11.3 per cent annually during the fourth five-year plan period, they rose by 9.3 per cent in the fifth five-year plan, and though we reckoned with an increase of 7.7 per cent at current prices also during the period of the sixth five-year plan, in real values there was minimal growth over two years when additional accommodation for thousands of children was provided by kindergartens and crèches, and a large number of new classrooms and hospital beds have been put into service.

A PROCESS OF RATIONALIZATION

Reduction in the state apparatus has continued. Over the past two years the staff of ministries and of their back-up institutions has been cut by more than three thousand. The new Ministry of Industry, for example, has meant 600 fewer staff, 1,200 together with the reorganization of the back-up institutions. The rationalization, now about to begin, of the regional management apparatus of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Production is expected to result in in a decrease of 700. By the middle of 1982, 26 supra-enterprise organizations were wound up including 10 holding companies and four huge enterprises, and 167 new enterprises were formed, or made independent of larger organizations.

A process of organizational modernization has been started in research institutes. The main objective is not more staff reduction but a more purposeful and more effective use of the financial resources earmarked for research and more incentives for the maximum operation of research institutes.

Of course, all these measures are not meant to economize on personnel in the first place. They have a much deeper meaning than that. We have wished to ensure, and we confidently hope, that the activities of the institutions and their work performance will be improved all round.

The costs of personal transport e.g. for both of state and of public agency officials have been substantially cut. Nearly 2,300 fewer official motor cars are operating than three years ago. All this has resulted in economies amounting to Ft 300 million a year. At the same time there are incentives for those concerned to use their private cars for official purposes. True, there are many abuses, and a revision of the practice of car allowances and mileage money is under way, to do away with payments for work not done.

I should like to say a few words about recent measures or which are about to be introduced. By nature they also serve to create an equilibrium between expenditure and revenue, production and consumption. Bearing in mind the state of the world economy and capitalist markets, with a view to improving economic equilibrium, we have devalued the forint by 7 per cent compared to convertible currencies. This measure makes imports more expensive and stimulates exports. We are convinced that in its own way, this will promote the attainment of economic policy objectives. The foreign exchange policy will continue to be adapted to changing circumstances.

The use made of national income

In the interest of improving economic equilibrium we had and still have to reduce domestic expenditure. The share of the state in the net income must be further increased, and the greater part of the goods produced must be regrouped with a view to improving the balance of payments. In domestic use of national income it is considered right to take different approaches to accumulation and to consumption. We have to cut down on public and enterprise investment, while taking care to concentrate available resources on the most important objectives of production and competitiveness.

We have reduced the sources of accumulation and restricted their use. We have had to curtail the scope of investment credits and to increase the interest rate. The latest rise in the rate of interest alone, adds Ft 6,000 million to the liabilities of enterprises and increases budget receipts.

In stockpiling as well further financial restrictions had to be imposed. A series of programmes aimed at material and energy economy and at the recycling of waste have been initiated.

As I have emphasized, we take a different approach to consumption. More rigorous standards are applied to communal consumption, but only measures consistent with, and serving to implement, the standard-of-living policy can be taken concerning personal consumption. We continue to reduce public consumption and to oblige budget-financed institutions to be more tight-fisted in their management practices. If necessary, further structural reforms and organization modernization will be carried out. Next year a modernized form of the system of wage regulation will be introduced on the improvement of performance incentives and staff-reduction.

If the savings are examined in relation to deteriorating and changing circumstances, to their dynamics, then it must be said also that measures aimed at reducing total public expenditure, cannot compensate for the losses which, within so short a time and in so rapid succession, Hungary has sustained because of the deterioration of the world economic situation.

The Standard of living

At the centre of public interest, especially since the price increases of August 1982, has been whether we still pursue and indeed can pursue the declared objectives of the HSWP Congress. Can the standard of living be maintained? Would it not be better to admit, some argue that this is impossible?

Let me refer to the decision arrived at by the 12th Congress of the HSWP. The 12th Congress set as an aim the maintaining of real wages

established by the middle of 1980, and it defined as a target of the sixth five-year plan an increase of 6 to 7 per cent in real incomes and 7 to 9 per cent in consumption.

What progress has been made in carrying out this programme in the past four years? Between 1979 and 1982 retail prices have risen 33–34 per cent, per capita nominal income has increased by 37 per cent. The real income of the population has thus grown by almost 3 per cent, and consumption has gone up by 6 per cent. In these years many countries have been unable to raise consumption, and most could not even maintain existing levels. Indicative of the growth consumption in Hungary is yearly average sale even in those difficult years, of more than 100,000 passenger cars and 300,000 television sets, 20 per cent of which are colour sets. From December 1978 to the end of this year the stock of savings bank deposits has grown by Ft 50,000 million. An average 82 to 83 000 homes a year, 1,100 to 1,200 general-school classrooms, 3,000 places in crèches and 13,000 in kindergartens, as well as 2,000 hospital beds have become available.

Even in these difficult years the number of Hungarians travelling abroad has reached 5 to 5.5 million. Let us keep in mind that Hungary is a country of ten million inhabitants where, thus, the overwhelming majority of the adult population make trips abroad every year.

Per capita consumption of meat, milk and a series of other important products has not diminished but has grown.

These are verifiable facts. Still, what is the state of public morale? Public morale obviously registers a variety of effects. The maintenance of living standards was here judged on a society wide scale and measured as a national average. It is quite obvious that the living standards of one-third of the population have fallen. Some—it is difficult to divide the population into thirds in this way—have experienced stagnating standards of living, and there are some who have seen theirs rise somewhat. The changes in the standard of living are connected with the modification of family conditions, some family members start to work, others retire, the chances of doing overtime and a number of other factors.

A political issue of high priority is today the preservation of the country's solvency. We have to subordinate many things to this requirement which depend on us and things which we can do here in this country. Much more is at stake than the ability to uphold the achievements, with a difference of one or two per cent, in the standard of living. What is at stake is the preservation of solvency, which could produce a decline not of one or two per cent but a much more considerable drop in production and living standards.

Let me mention a single example which has lately, and rightly created quite a stir. When, in the summer of 1982, owing to the shortage of ingredients imported from a capitalist country, a factory was unable to produce detergents for two weeks, a familiar situation promptly arose. Let us imagine what would happen if the country's entire range of capitalist imports had to cope with such a situation for only two weeks or just a month. The example shows that everyday political measures must be planned and adjusted to the solution of much bigger question, and I think people must be aware of this, otherwise they would have difficulties in judging their own and the country's position. No responsible political party, party leadership or government could look on with folded arms if the country proceeded in such a dangerous direction entailing incalculable consequences. It is their duty to choose the lesser evil and thus to prevent and avoid the greater evil which would jeopardize the attainment of the political objectives.

At the time of the price rises of August 1982 the question was asked over and over again why it was necessary to increase the prices of coffee, cocoa, long-distance fares, etc. All this is understandable, but let me add that, for example, Hungary spends more than $ 100 million on coffee, cocoa, tropical fruits and similar goods every year. To earn $ 100 million in current circumstances we have to sell six to seven hundred thousand tonnes of wheat.

It is only natural that in the country there are also dissenting opinions concerning the price changes and the related new measures. The fact is that for twenty years people have become accustomed to yearly increases of 3 to 4 per cent in real wages, and to an increase of 25 to 30 per cent in real income under each five-year plan. Never, in the course of the past quarter of a century, have we had to back out either under the pressure of necessity or because of failures in our own work. In that time a large section of society has grown up and has now for the first time come to grapple with a situation in which expansion has ground to a halt and the standard-of-living policy is implemented under increasingly difficult circumstances. It makes sense that many want to know the reason why. The reasons must be discussed frankly, since the ultimate overcoming of these anxieties depends on those who ask the questions.

We endeavour to assure that proportionate rewards for performances, higher payment for better work, will be an important element of standard-of-living policy. Consequently to each according to his work, a well learnt lesson but difficult to apply, must be improved in the future. The second basic principle is that supplies must not be restricted under such circum-

stances either. If the leadership of the country has to choose between two ways of progress, whether to proceed with unchanged prices restricting supply or to go on with regulated price rises while maintaining existing standards of supply, the latter is the right way. There is today not a single country which would be able, by keeping prices unchanged, to maintain or to augment the supply of goods. The world has long outgrown illusions that real results can be attained by freezing prices and wages. Hungary has so far been able to keep up supplies of a wide range of goods.

The third element of the standard-of-living policy is that supplying domestic markets is given priority over exports. Few countries can claim to be doing that. One of our principal objectives is to establish external equilibrium, but in the distribution of goods priority will be given to domestic markets in the future as well.

In social policy we invariably have to ensure that the gap in family incomes will be closed. Even if the government had only modest means at its disposal, it must appropriate the available little money to better the lot of the low income groups. Those most in need must be provided for. These are, now as earlier, men and women with low pensions, large families, and those living on grants made by institutions who have no other source of income.

Preventing inflation and unemployment

We want to satisfy two requirements: an improvement of the external economic equilibrium and the maintenance of the standard of living. What this policy is designed to do is much more. While improving the balance of payments and maintaining the standard of living, we prevent an unmanageable inflation and uphold full employment. Not even much richer countries undertake such aims and their implementation simultaneously. The alternatives of full employment or inflation loom as the choices of economic policy in the developed capitalist countries as well.

The general condition of society can of course be improved in many other ways than by financial measures. This is why we have pressed for the introduction of a five-day working week, and we can say that this is a great achievement. This is why we prompt the secondary economy to raise the level of services and the supply of goods. This is why we have to make sure that the change to a five-day working week, Saturdays and not only Sundays off, does not cause a deterioration in medical services, that the most inexpensive holidays are allotted by the trade unions to those with the lowest incomes, that the contact of citizens with authority in council offices and

anywhere else, really serves the advantage of citizens. We do not want to prove the impossible to anybody. If some people see their living standard decline, we do not want to convince them of the contrary. We have done with such methods in Hungary. The question, I think, is therefore not whether we have been able to achieve the two objectives which we have set ourselves, but rather how we have so far succeeded in this endavour and what we shall have to do to this end in the future. This certainly calls for better performance. The sixth five-year plan contemplates not only the creation of equilibrium and the maintenance of the standard of living, but it prescribes also that efficiency be improved in industry and agriculture. Should this fail to materialize the material foundations of consumption would sooner or later be undermined.

Nowadays many argue that we are not sufficiently concerned about the future, being occupied with the business of the day. This is true, but today we probably do the most possible for future prospects if we cope with the problems of the months ahead, only that permits us to take care of the more distant future. The complex further development of economic guidance is of course on the agenda. The Central Committee will discuss industrial policy and trends of development. Long-term planning is invariably in progress.

It is important to know what can be expected from the leadership and what can be explained by the objective situation. When the seas are agitated and the ships of 150 countries sail them, while 140 of them labour under the burden of huge debts, then it is futile to argue about the roughness of the seas. The important thing is to ensure that the leadership, the government, steers the ship of the country properly into the eye of the storm, so that it will not capsize and be able to weather the tempest. Our attitude to the prospects must be interpreted accordingly.

The results of the past three years must be appreciated particularly since Hungary has attained them under very unfavourable international conditions. Suffice it to say that the world market slump and the recession continue unabated, that world trade has ceased to expand, competition on markets becomes keener and keener, price ratios do not favour Hungary and high interest rates, kept up deliberately, have caused big losses to Hungary, not to mention new credit restrictions that weigh on the socialist countries. The results outlined above could be attained in spite of all these.

Let me sum up, expressing confidence, relying on high performance by the whole of society. We shall essentially fulfil our plans for 1982/3. There will be something in the larder in 1983, even if no upswing can be reckoned with and a difficult economic year can be expected.

A POLICY OF PEACE AND PROGRESS

by

FRIGYES PUJA

The 37th Session of the U.N. General Assembly takes place against the background of a contradictory international situation fraught with dangers. Symptoms of threats to peace and security have intensified since last year, and tension has grown in connection with a number of concrete events. The main reason for the aggravation of the international situation is that the extremist imperialist circles are out to upset the balance of power established between the two social systems, hoping to attain military superiority which would enable them to impose their will upon other countries. I could cite a fair few examples indicative of efforts made to deepen existing crises, provoking new ones, encouraging and helping reactionary forces.

The extremist circles of imperialism methodically strive to impair relations between socialist and developed capitalist countries and to undo results achieved in East-West cooperation which are based on mutual interests. They exert increasing pressure on the developing countries and the liberation movements in the interests of their aims. They organize campaigns of slander and propaganda against the socialist and other progressive countries and do not give up attempting, on different pretexts, to interfere in their internal affairs.

It is my conviction that the common interest of the nations is to put an end to such processes. It is an encouraging sign that more and more countries and ever larger masses take a stand against tension-creating actions and oppose the unbridled arms race as well as policies of strength and sabre-rattling.

The government of the Hungarian People's Republic condemns with determination the onslaughts on détente and all attempts at escalating the

Based on an address to the 37th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on September 28, 1982.

arms race. Even in the current situation it holds that a major task of its foreign policy is to contribute as much as it can to safeguarding world peace, to the improvement of the international climate, to the consolidation of international security, to the cause of disarmament, and to the strengthening of friendship and cooperation among states and nations. We shall continue working hard to this end both in international forums and in our bilateral relationships. Hungary insists that every opportunity should be seized to further international cooperation, and that efforts should be redoubled with a view to the constructive solution of problems standing in the way. For this reason we think it particularly important to maintain those bilateral relations which, based on the principle of peaceful coexistence, have been established during the past decade. Moreover, we consider it necessary also to intensify political contacts and dialogue as well as to continue broadening economic and other relations which serve mutual interests.

With a view to attaining these aims the role of the U.N. should be strengthened in order to make the world organization a still more effective instrument in the defence of peace.

The Hungarian People's Republic is a firm advocate of disarmament and of the limitation and reduction of armed forces and weaponry. My government takes an active part in the work of various international forums of disarmament, and it endeavours to further disarmament also in its bilateral relations. We are convinced that not a single one of the major worries of mankind can be solved by rearmament. The arms build-up cannot lead to more stable and longer-lasting security for the world or even the countries that possess those arms.

A balance of strength between the Soviet Union and the U.S. and between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO is characterisic of the world military situation. This applies to both nuclear armaments and conventional forces. The balance of strength is a great achievement on the part of the countries and nations striving for socialism, progress, and peace, and this is the very reason why these countries and nations insist on its continuance. At the same time they endeavour to keep the balance of strength at the lowest level possible. It follows that the socialist countries—along with other peace-loving nations—make repeated efforts in the U.N. and other international forums in order to put a stop to an arms race that is assuming irrational proportions and to achieve tangible and significant results in disarmament. This aim is served by a whole series of resolutions

and draft conventions imposing concrete obligations they have submitted to the General Assembly.

In the present state of rearmament it is only natural that the nations of the world and peace-loving governments should concentrate their attention first of all on warding off the danger of nuclear war. The Hungarian government also attaches primary importance to nuclear disarmament. We call for prompt measures and international conventions which can put an end to the arms race and at the same time constitute concrete steps on the road towards nuclear disarmament.

That the Soviet Union has unilaterally undertaken not to be the first to use nuclear weapons under any circumstances whatever is welcomed by Hungary and considered a contribution of great consequence to the cause of peace and disarmament. If all nuclear powers undertook to do likewise it would mean in practice that the use of the most dangerous weapon of mass destruction would become impossible. Confidence between states could grow considerably, and we could, with well-founded optimism, expect success in the disarmament talks. It is deplorable that nuclear powers which have taken no similar step persist with their plans of manufacturing new types of nuclear weapons, and some continue to propagate the absurd doctrine of limited nuclear war.

Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, including their talks on the limitation and reduction of strategic nuclear arms as well as on the medium-range nuclear missiles planned to be deployed in Western Europe, are of decisive significance for universal peace and the consolidation of security. It is absolutely necessary that agreement in practice, on the basis of equal rights and equal security, be reached as soon as possible in these talks.

An important role could be played in the struggle against the arms build-up by the prohibition of nuclear weapon tests in every kind of medium. Like many another country Hungary was shocked to hear of the U.S. government's recent decision not to resume the three-power negotiations for the general and complete prohibition of nuclear tests. We watch with anxiety that some states have revived their ambition to become nuclear powers. It is our opinion that one of the most urgent tasks, involving great responsibility, is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is the reason why the United Nations also must do all it can to this end.

The objective of nuclear disarmament requires that, besides solving the fundamental problems, all other means should be used which can, either directly or indirectly, lead to a lessening of the nuclear threat. Such include restrictions on the territorial deployment of nuclear weapons, the establish-

ment of nuclear-free zones and zones of peace, the enforcement of nuclear security guarantees for the non-nuclear countries, and greater safety measures to prevent the accidental use of nuclear weapons.

The government and public opinion of the Hungarian People's Republic think it regrettable that the second Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly on disarmament failed to achieve the expected results, owing to the unfavourable world situation and for lack of the political will of certain influential powers. At the same time it is of no negligible significance that the overwhelming majority of member states attending the Special Session gave clear expression to their concern about the danger of war and to their view that the prevention of a nuclear catastrophe is the most urgent and most pressing task of the current period.

The Hungarian government invariably pays special attention to the cause of security and cooperation in Europe. Though Hungary is a small country, it also contributes as far as possible to the practical implementation of the recommendations and the spirit of the Helsinki Final Act. At the Madrid meeting devoted to the questions of security and cooperation in Europe which will be resumed in November this year, the Hungarian delegation will be active in the interests of creating a constructive atmosphere for negotiation and of the adoption of a substantial, balanced, and forward-oriented closing document.

We are interested in a successful conclusion of the Madrid meeting. We think it particularly important for the meeting to decide on the convocation of a European conference on confidence-building, security, and disarmament. What is needed is that all countries participating in the Madrid meeting should be guided by the desire for agreement. The responsibility of the participating countries is very great since the future of the international political situation and the prospects of disarmament depend in many respects on what kind of relationships and cooperation will come about among them.

It has contributed to the growth of international tension that no great progress was made in eliminating the long-standing and recent seats of tension. What is more, in some places the situation continues to deteriorate, and the prospects of settlement appear to be more and more distant. The Hungarian government regards as an urgent and important task the taking

of concrete measures for the earliest possible liquidation of local conflicts and for a peaceful settlement of controversial issues.

It may appear strange that I also mention Europe in this connection. Earlier one could speak of Europe as an area of peace and tranquillity. Events that have taken place in recent years, such as the decision of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to deploy 572 medium-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe, the U.S. refusal to ratify the SALT-2 treaty, Western plans pointing to an enormous acceleration of the arms race, the inadmissible Western interference in Polish events, have all considerably increased tension in our continent as well. We hope that the Soviet-American talks under way will ultimately lead to results which will further the continuation of peaceful cooperation among the countries of Europe.

It gives cause for deep concern that, in recent months, an exceptionally tense situation has developed in the Middle East which has for many a long year been one of the most neuralgic spots on the globe. The government and public opinion of the Hungarian People's Republic most resolutely condemn Israel's aggressive policy of expansion, and their barbarous war waged against the Arab people of Palestine, a war which, coupled with imperialist manoeuvres aimed at gaining exclusive influence over the Middle East, seriously endangers peace and security in that area as well as in the world as a whole. We feel sympathy with the victims of the terrible tragedy in Lebanon. We continue supporting the just struggle of the Arab peoples. It was with indignation that the Hungarian people took cognisance of the carnage in Beirut, and they severely condemn it. The U.N. should take effective measures to curb Israel which continues to disregard Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and systematically violates the elementary norms of international law.

The aggression against Lebanon is the most recent warning and proof that special deals and the unscrupulous use of military means cannot lead to a genuine settlement of the Middle East crisis but instead it further increases tension in the region. The Hungarian government invariably works for a comprehensive, just settlement of the Middle Eastern crisis and for the creation of a lasting peace in that area. With this end in view it continues to insist on the complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli troops from Arab territories occupied since 1967 and from Lebanon, and on the inalienable rights of the Palestinian Arab people, including the right to a sovereign state of Palestine, and on international guarantees for the security and independent existence of all states in the Middle East. In order to promote a comprehensive and just settlement we favour the

convening of an international conference with the participation of all interested parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization. The Soviet seven-point proposal put forward by Leonid Ilich Brezhnev satisfies all these requirements, and we therefore consider it suitable for the solution of this problem.

The shaping of the world situation is adversely affected by the circumstance that factors interested in maintaining and increasing tension continue to keep alive the so-called Afghan and Kampuchean questions.

As regards Afghanistan the Hungarian government continues to hold that the key issue is the termination of interference by international reactionary forces in Afghan internal affairs. We support the proposals made by the Afghan government and by the Soviet Union for a political settlement. We follow with interest the activities of the special representative of the Secretary-General of the U.N. We hope that the states directly interested will find their way to a negotiated settlement, which should include the recognition of the legitimate government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and guarantees of the sovereignty of the country.

It is common knowledge that the government of the Hungarian People's Republic is united in solidarity with the countries of Indo-China. It welcomes and supports the proposals made in July 1982 by the Foreign Ministers of the three countries of Indo-China, proposals which testify that those countries desire peace and dialogue, friendship and cooperation with their neighbours. Attempts to undermine the lawful order of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, undertaken with the assistance of a "coalition government" recruited from the remnants of earlier regimes, are doomed to failure. We are convinced that the only sensible way of ensuring peace and stability in the region is the recognition of established political realities.

The Hungarian government supports the suggestion of the Mongolian People's Republic that the countries of Asia and the Pacific region discuss an agreement to renounce the use of force to pledge mutual non-aggression. The long unsolved problem of a divided Korea, one of the factors hindering the improvement of the international situation, should also be mentioned. Now as earlier the Hungarian government advocates and supports the peaceful and democratic unification of the two parts of Korea without outside interference.

We attach great significance to the restoration of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Cyprus and to the policy of non-alignment of its government. We support the peaceful solution of the Cyprus problem through

negotiations and a settlement which conforms to the interests of both peoples which inhabit the island. We approve efforts to this end in the spirit of the relevant U.N. resolutions.

At the current Session as well a number of delegates will surely express their justified anxiety that imperialism and neo-colonialism, in order to assert their interests, increase pressure on the developing countries and on the non-aligned movement, as well as acting to counter the successes of movements of national liberation.

I should like to confirm in this place, too, that the government of the Hungarian People's Republic supports the popular fight for progress, national independence and self-determination, and against colonial oppression and neo-colonialism. We resolutely oppose racial discrimination and condemn the policy of apartheid. In our view the U.N. must take more purposeful and effective steps for the final liquidation of the vestiges of colonialism so that the right of self-determination should be enjoyed by all nations. The South Atlantic armed conflict concerning the Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) a few months ago exemplifies how serious and far-reaching international problems can be created and what a threat to peace the vestiges of the colonial system stand for. We are of the opinion that this problem also should be solved by negotiations.

In spite of the resolutions of the United Nations and the efforts of the progressive forces of the world the racialist South African regime persists with the occupation of Namibia. The situation in the southern part of Africa is a serious threat to international peace and security. For this reason one of the most urgent tasks is to settle the status of Namibia, and to offer guarantees for the independence of that country. The Hungarian government supports the just struggle of the people of Namibia for genuine independence, a struggle which they wage against the South African occupiers under the leadership of SWAPO, their only legitimate representative. It repudiates manoeuvres aimed at maintaining alien domination in both the political and the economic field and at upholding the influence of the racialist government of South Africa. It urges the implementation of the U.N. plan of settlement. A negotiated settlement can only be based on Security Council resolution 435 which must be implemented without modifications and misconstructions.

In these days we often receive news on pressure exerted on and threats uttered against Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, and other Latin American countries, of the courageous struggle of Salvadorian patriots and of actions

against dictatorial regimes in a number of Latin American countries. We hold the view that the peoples' right to self-determination should be respected in this region as well.

We consider the movement of non-aligned countries to be an important, positive factor in international affairs. We think it alarming that the imperialist intrigues aimed at splitting the movement have strengthened recently. We are confident, however, that the non-aligned countries will, in this situation as well, be able to preserve and cement their anti-imperialist unity and commitment to time-tested principles.

The Hungarian People's Republic is greatly interested in the unhampered development of mutually advantageous international economic, commercial, and financial contacts. I am sorry to state that the growth in international tension already exercises an enduring and unfavourable effect on practically every aspect of international cooperation in the economic, commercial, financial, and technical and scientific fields. We categorically reject the policy of economic sanctions, embargoes, boycotts, and discrimination against the socialist countries. This policy could not, and will not, divert the socialist countries from their plans of building a new society, and the service of progress. Such measures can only result in the continued deterioration of the international climate. All this not only has an adverse effect on East-West relations but also hurts the interests of the developing world and puts off till later the introduction of a new and equitable international economic order based on democratic foundations.

The Hungarian government does its best to ensure that the obstacles to international economic cooperation are removed and that countries, small and large, will, without discrimination, partake of the mutual benefits derived from the international division of labour.

In spite of the increasingly tense international situation and the unfavourable world political processes we believe that the possibilities for peaceful development have not yet been exhausted. This is a dictate of common sense, this is demanded by the interest of all the nations of the world. We are convinced that all political factors and social forces interested in the maintenance of peaceful international relations will ultimately, by taking common action, prevail against confrontation. The Hungarian People's Republic is ready to join forces with all countries which pursue reasonable and responsible policies for this end. It is in this spirit that our delegation will work also at the current Session of the U.N. General Assembly.

DISARMAMENT — THE HIGHEST PRIORITY

by

IMRE HOLLAI

I am fully aware that the confidence you have reposed in my person is addressed primarly to my country and people: to a country which could become a member of the United Nations only as late as 1955, because the international atmosphere at that time was no less precarious than it is now. Though the record of my country's progress is not exceptional, it still looks to the future with confidence even under the present difficult external circumstances. The Hungarian People's Republic and its people owe their achievements not only to their zeal and hard work but to the benefits of committing themselves to cooperation with others rather than to isolation. They are ready to cooperate not only with friendly socialist countries pursuing the same objectives and building the same social system, but with every country that is not seeking advantages at the expense of others. My country wishes to work together with all states that adhere, as she does, to the noble purposes and principles embodied in the United Nations Charter and profess the desire to solve the problems facing the community of nations in that spirit. She is contributing, commensurate with her strength and possibilities, to the common efforts for disarmament and international peace and security, for economic and social progress, and for friendship and cooperation among nations.

The President is rightly expected at the opening of the session to outline his approach to his duties, his views on the functioning of the world organization, and on the items on the agenda. Emulating my predecessors, I should like to share with you some of my thoughts and ideas on the issues before us.

I do not regard the agenda of the General Assembly simply as a mirror reflecting the problems and contradictions of the world today. I should like the mirror to reflect future perspectives as well. This can only be done

Opening address of the newly elected President of the U.N. General Assembly (Sept. 20. 1982.)

if we search together for ways and means to solve current problems with goodwill and faith in the future, doing so in a disinterested and unprejudiced manner. Goodwill must guide our actions and in order to move forward we must show realism when assessing a situation and the tasks ahead.

Here, with your permission, I should like to be somewhat personal. I have been a member of the diplomatic service for over thirty years, during the last ten of which I have been closely and continuously associated with the United Nations. My experience here has taught me once and for all not to believe in miracles. Nor do I believe we are here to discover some sort of panacea, an instant cure for the chronic and acute ailments of the community of nations. Nevertheless I sincerely believe in the noble objectives and principles that are enshrined in the Charter of this world organization. I do believe that by acting in their spirit, the common political will of the Member States can expedite the solution of the items on our agenda. I wish to assure you that it is my fervent desire to discharge the responsibilities of my office in this spirit. I count upon the Secretary-General, the Vice-Presidents, the Chairmen of the Main Committees, and upon all delegations to give me their constructive support so that I may carry out my duties as President towards this end.

We are living in unquiet times fraught with tension. Certain trends in international affairs are causes of legitimate concern. Mankind wants peace, because peace alone can offer a more affluent and meaningful life. Yet tensions of war are increasing. What we need is a deeper understanding of each other to cope with the problems confronting us. Some circles, however, insist on pursuing a policy of strength. The soberly thinking majority is anxious to eliminate the threat of war and to achieve disarmament, yet we are witnessing the arms race gathering new momentum. New areas of tension are added to existing ones that have still to be rooted out. Fresh ills aggravate old ones, troubling the community of nations for which no cure-all has yet been found. In the recent decades steps of historic importance have been taken to eliminate the colonial system, once and for all, but the legacy of the colonial past is still strong enough to flare up as armed conflicts. This makes it even more urgent to find political solutions and not to resort to force when controversial issues confront us. The pages of the history book of mankind since the dawn of civilization admonish us that wars only complicated the issues instead of coming to grips with the crux of the conflicts.

On a memorable day twenty-five years ago the first sputnik was launched into orbit. It opened up new horizons for man and his knowledge of the universe. Some abuse this wider perspective for military purposes and this imperils the future of us all.

Ever since weapons have acquired their frightening efficiency, men of vision have had forebodings for the future of mankind. I quote a countryman of mine, Mór Jókai, a writer of romantic historical novels and a contemporary of Emile Zola and Leo Tolstoy. At the Congress of the Interparliamentary Union held in August 1895 in Brussels, Jókai described his harrowing vision of a global military conflict: "No stretch of imagination can conjure up the aftermath of a future war fought by millions... not with fire-arms but with truly diabolic machines; a war involving all nations, large or small..."

I am persuaded that to listen to our hearts and minds means putting our trust in the power of common sense and doing our utmost to preserve peace. I stand by those who are even willing to undertake unilateral commitments to demonstrate their readiness for peace and who bring with them to the conference table new, constructive proposals for disarmament. I count myself among those who hold that the policy of peace and détente has and can have no rational alternative in our day. Let me quote Albert Szent-Györgyi, our contemporary, a Noble Prize laureate of Hungarian birth, who was the first to extract vitamin C from paprika in my country. This great scientist and humanitarian became aware that vitamin C was being produced not only for human consumption, but for military purposes as well. Speaking in 1962 in Falmouth, Albert Szent-Györgyi expressed a warning still valid today: "If we give up our peace race, then our name may not go down in history as that of the people who prepared the atomic war, only because there will be no history at all—only lunar desolation."

It is evident, therefore, from what I have said, that I place the emphasis on those items on our crowded agenda that are directly or indirectly related to peace and international security. The highest priority in my view is disarmament. The negotiation of these issues has lost much of its momentum recently. I do not think I am wrong when I blame this on the deterioration of the international atmosphere and on the further erosion of confidence and trust. In this situation even an iota of progress would stimulate confidence and help produce a better atmosphere.

We all know that the responsibility for disarmament is shared by the great powers, a responsibility reaffirmed by the Charter. Many are hopefully watching for a change for the better in relations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America, and for a new impulse towards

disarmament. Let me join the representatives of countries that are not prompted by their responsible role as great powers, but who merely answer the call of reason.

There is no need to list in order of priority the problems pertaining to disarmament, arms limitation, and a halt to the arms race. I trust that this session will contribute towards the realization of proposals submitted to the Second Special Session on Disarmament and entrusted to the Geneva Committee on Disarmament for substantive consideration. After the special session last July a number of questions and proposals were left open for our substantive discussion and decision.

The numerous unresolved regional crises on the agenda cannot be brought to a common denominator. Many of them have roots in the far distant past. This forum has already adopted resolutions that provide a key to a solution but the fact that they have still not been implemented has further aggravated the situation and caused even more pain and suffering. In other cases the very existence of a crisis situation is to be questioned. I have in mind the inclusion in the agenda of so-called crisis situations that produced nothing but sterile debates and diverted attention from the real crises threatening the world with an escalation of the conflict. The sterile debates I have alluded to have, in the meantime, been made redundant by these peoples themselves, when exercising their right to self-determination and consolidating all spheres of their national life.

There is but one possible way to do away with the hotbeds of tension. It is defined in Article 1 of the Charter as one of the purposes of the United Nations: "...to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of peace." Interpreting this objective of our organization, I would add for my part that the fate of millions of people may depend on the settlement of disputes. We are, therefore, duty bound to pay regard to the legitimate interests of the nation or nations concerned. I maintain that nothing can exonerate from responsibility those who try to solve a conflict by the extermination of a people, as we have witnessed in the recent past. Similarly, I regard any reference whatsoever to spheres of big-power interest or zones of influence to be an inadmissible line of approach. I am firmly convinced that only a solution acceptable to all parties can put an end to a dispute or conflict, and only if it guarantees the nations involved the right and opportunity to shape their own destiny. We still have to create conditions favourable to just and peaceful settlements.

Our world organization has made a historic contribution to the process of decolonization. Former colonies have won independence. The ceremonial hoisting of new flags in front of the United Nations Headquarters does not mean all has been accomplished, the struggle for political and economic independence goes on, as long as there are territories where the nations are not yet their own masters. The Namibian people are still waiting for independence, even though this organization bears a direct responsibility for their future. The plan of settlement, which all of us regarded as feasible, is still only a piece of xeroxed paper. The legitimate struggle goes on until independence is won. The status of several other territories, some larger, some smaller, still awaits solution on our part. Much remains to be done, and yet progress has slowed down. All of us are familiar with the interests and forces that impede solutions. The responsibility to sweep them aside concerns us all.

The emergence of the movement of non-aligned nations is a major result of the struggle to do away with the colonial system and of the political processes in the post-Second World War period. That movement has a wide spectrum, the newly independent countries have an active presence in the international arena. With its distinctive features and cooperative partnership with other progressive forces, the movement has become an important element of world politics.

In addition to the cares weighing on our minds that I have already mentioned, we are all affected, to varying degrees, by the state of the world economy: the slowdown in the rate of economic growth, higher unemployment, inflation, drastic fluctuations in world market prices, and adverse credit terms.

These symptoms are further aggravated by some that add to political tension by imposing economic sanctions and embargoes. Events have shown this to be a double-edged weapon.

The list of countries suffering owing to adverse economic trends is growing. As the sources available for development continue to decrease, so grows the impatience of the developing countries. This impatience is justified. It is in our common interest to change the obsolete patterns of the world economy which presupposed inequalities and subordination. The objectives motivating a new economic order are indicative of the awareness that the national and political stability of developing countries is conditioned by a stable economy as well. In the process of restructuring international economic relations the developing countries will realize that

unless they also restructure their own economies, ridding themselves of the discrepancies, left over from unilateral dependence in the past, the aid from other countries will not be fully effective.

Some people have qualms about the practicality of strategies for the successive development decades. I see no ground for such question marks. Some public statements and concrete actions in the international sphere have made it evident who is barring progress, and why.

As regards the agenda items relating to the world economy, it would perhaps be most purposeful to establish that negative phenomena reveal with greater emphasis the elements of common interest. An understanding of the common interest in this sphere will prompt us to intensify cooperation in the field of new sources of energy, streamlining the infrastructure, and protecting the environment, to mention but a few, for which our organization provides an appropriate forum.

The history of civilization is the history of social progress, even if marked by pitfalls and setbacks. Our task is to promote that progress by tackling the social and human rights questions on our agenda. As history tells us, the march of universal progress can be temporarily retarded by the crimes of individuals and it can be propelled forward by the deeds of great men, but the course of progress has always been charted by the millions. Today the essential criteria of progress are a definite end to the gross and mass violation of human rights, and end to apartheid and discrimination based on race, religion, or language, and an end to the subjugation of national minorities of whole nations.

Having shared these thoughts with you, I feel it is hardly necessary to detail my views on the functioning of our world organization. This multifarious gathering of nations will live up to expectations if it shows respect for each member's culture and human values. In this deliberation of equals let us give preference to good, positive ideas, whether they be put forward by the represensentative of a small or a large country. This is our way of serving properly the cause of individual nations and the community of nations; the United Nations will be what we make of it.

This is particularly true of the current session. If, during the next three months, we join efforts

— to encourage and facilitate negotiations and to give a fresh impetus to reviving the spirit of constructive cooperation;

— to promote the cause of disarmament;

— to move closer to a just and peaceful settlement of crises;

— to advance the process of decolonization;

— to make headway in establishing a system of economic relations based on mutual advantage; and

— to promote social progress,

we shall have accomplished no small thing and we shall have made a contribution to giving mankind a new sense of security and more confidence in the future in this harassed world.

FROM OUR NEXT ISSUES

HUNGARIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE EIGHTIES
Frigyes Puja

YOUTH AND SOCIETY
István Huszár

TENSIONS OF STARTING TO WORK
János Barabás

ECONOMIC REFORM — FACTS AND DEBATES
László Antal, László Csaba

SMALL BUSINESSES IN PRESENT-DAY HUNGARY
Márton Tardos

SCIENTIFIC-TECHNICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN HUNGARY AND SCANDINAVIA
János Kalanovics

THE HUNGARIAN VIEW ON EAST-EUROPEAN INDEBTEDNESS
János Fekete

OLD HABITS IN NEW SETTLEMENTS
Júlia Juhász

ISTVÁN LAKATOS

POEMS

Translated by Alan Dixon

ATRIUM MORTIS

Midway along the journey of our life,
down to the roots that scrubland burned behind me.
I saw in black relief
a pitiless and shadowed fait accompli.
The tracks of feet were leading me somewhere;
the valley became narrow, cut more deeply—
so did occur
that time whose passage was unmarked, that chipping
horizon, sand; no tears fell there.
What love was left here in the dust-scape, choking!
—So did I pass
through shrieking wilderness,
no words for utterance, no deeds for doing,
and where the wanderer no change expects.
Then, by the fire-source of another circle,
the victim, when the landscape gains its light,
faces the entirety of his own fate,
before me looming up a gloomy gate:
'All ye who enter here...'
I entered there.

"Atrium mortis" was awarded the 1982 Robert Graves Prize for Best Poem of the Year. The prize is given annually by a committee appointed by Robert Graves.—The Editor.

IMAGES FROM A PASSION

(A lyrical diary)

1

Is this like being an explorer near the pole,
fighting dead snow, obstructions of the ice,
finding new fields of ice to pass?
Though pushing onward can he really guess
if he'll return and if he'll reach his goal?
Somewhere, some time ago,
he left the dogsled frozen in the snow.
He too won't know compassion; no supplies
to last beyond the pole. And will he freeze
or starve beyond? What stroke to bring his end?
Silent already is his final friend;
there are no ravens even to be drawn
about his head should he at last go down.
So he must die alone!
Yet he must never drop the sign.
He'll raise his emblem from the highest snow
of a congealed and bleak
mountain's wind-scalloped peak;
and that's how I as well must show
my flag on which is written: I love you.

5

Again a fragile boat. A gale to swoop
upon it as across the sea it sails.
Sky where no sign appeals.
A yellow glimmer fills
a window high upon a coastal slope.
The fisherman, as long as that light burns,
however weakly, will not give up hope.
Hiding a hundred reefs and rocks, the coast
shows as an arc. He knows that he strives close
or how else could he tell
my pitiless love so well?
The arching of an arm
encloses every sunrise I have known;

your eye, a distant lamp, urges me on
to reach my goal beyond the harm
of my own hell. As long as light can burn
or seem to glimmer, my daredevil stops
at nothing in his striving, though you build
a wall of rock or fortress as a shield,
  or I am smashed to pieces on your lips.

8

(This is for you alone.
I loved your face at night.
The sixth commandment's threat
with you. Devotion set
the dusk. Your breasts at dawn.
And it was spring and all the crops were sprouting;
outside, Rogation Day was starting.
The priest, in violet stole, to lead;
behind him all the people. 'Bless it, Lord!'
Slow the procession's way.
'Protect your crops, Almighty God we pray.'
From near your ankle the delirious lip
began its steady progress upward through
the landscape of your body to where a new
fork in your road awaits to make it stop.
With ten more kisses secretly it drew
a circle round each breast.
'The meadow of your hips, may it be blessed.'
Your loins' Y, bless that too.
  There was no mercy left.)

13

Forgive me, darling, for a long time now
what I've been saying I've not said to you.
I should have told of horror stirring through
my body, to my lips. You never knew.
But I expect no answer anyhow.
How could I think you ever were
all my imagination saw?
In adoration I had raised you high;
you were (how should I put it?) measured by

my own collapsing mountain, or, in winter
a green and creeping plant, or frozen water
splashing my creek, a voice from somewhere in
eternal silence, shade of a fallen tree
on my partition-wall; you are to me
my soaring words. You must not be
angry now you have closed all doors upon
yourself. You were as you were possible.
I know how great the loss, but no use brooding
over the you incomprehensible,
as it should be, to your own understanding.

20

Already in this world silence takes grip.
A nothing swept by wind, with walls of water
crushing. Beneath a surface without lustre
dark corals glimmer.
The sunless deep opened a ready lap.
Faces of objects now appear
discrepant. No one listens to you here.
The coast is echoless and dim.
Here one must crash, succumb,
for pain to be at last expressed.
And here the trumpet-call is choked
as the Last Judgement starts.
Here statements must be made alone.
But from the wrinkled words, all grey in tone,
a polyphonic suffering reverberates
in vain. And as for you, what can be done
by your own effort when the bodiless
monsters ascend out of the gloomy depths
of your own heart which you have never known,
and hell, accusing, howls, racks your distress?

CHAPTERS FROM THE LIFE OF VERA ANGI

(A short story)

by

ENDRE VÉSZI

Vera Angi had not intended to stand up and speak at the hospital's closing seminar. She had sat restless on her seat throughout, without raising her hand even when questions were addressed to the audience. Cigarette smoke swirled about her thick dark-blond hair; her thin face, characteristically angular, was expressionless. It was a cloudy, beginning-of-autumn Sunday morning; the lights had had to be switched on in the auditorium, bare and stark without the portraits of its former patrons, magnates and merchants, only recently removed from its walls. Boredom had spread and settled on the facs. A doctor was speaking about the selfevidence of the fusion of the two workers' parties, his speech full of bookish, unfamiliar phrases, interlaced with "we revolutionaries," uttered in all solemnity time and again.

As his last words died away Vera Angi suddenly stood up. She was slim and tall, her waist incredibly slender; her heavy, dark-blond head of hair, framing the thin, angular face, seemed to rest upon a sinewy flower-stalk. Passionate sentences poured forth from her lips, phrases she had never consciously formulated before—she herself was surprised at her burst of anger. Pallid faces, glittering spectacles, sallow skulls were turned towards her in the drifting clouds of smoke, and somewhere at the other end of the auditorium, seated at the chairman's table, the district delegate rapidly began to take notes—a red-faced man whose every gesture she had watched attentively from the start. It was to him that she spoke now, to this man, bent over his bit of paper. She abused the hospital management, the gentleman director who lorded it like a God over the workers, the doctors always on the lookout for a backhander, the private ward system still in existence.

The district delegate had in fact noted down the convulsively blurted-out sentences full of accusation. Like the majority of officials in constant contact

with the lower orders, he too was inspired by the possibilities of discovery. The fusion of the two parties had taken place barely six months ago: new forces were much needed, new blood. As he watched Vera Angi, her white face burning, sucked dry of blood by her transport of rage, he was already writing down a question and placing it before the party secretary: "Who is she?" The answer to his question arrived on a torn-off bit of newspaper. "An assistant nurse. Charwoman until recently."

The world had changed around Vera Angi. The smoke, the murky yellow of the lamps, the dreary decorations all blended into a single mass. She was aware of her neighbour looking at her, warning her to stop with a flash of his eyes—he's right, why does she have to speak?—but she did not stop; these sentences had been burning her tongue for months, for years now; the anger she had so often had to swallow, the bitterness of having had to hold her tongue, and it had not changed even when she had put down her mop and tied the strings of her nurse's apron around her waist.

Vera Angi's speach had unsettled the audience. On the corridors outside the porters with their trollies had begun their clanking and clattering, handing out the more substantial Sunday dinner in the wards; the drastic smell of meat-balls and cabbage penetrated the auditorium but the discussion continued. The district delegate calmly went on taking notes, then wrote Vera Angi's name down on a separate sheet of paper with an exclamation mark beside it.

The next morning Vera Angi entered the director's office anxiously. The stale smell of old leather from the bulging armchairs pervaded the room. The director was a tall, elegantly stooped man, close on sixty, the descendant of an old medical dynasty. His long, flaccid face ended in a high forehead and an egg-shaped skull. A tired sadness softened the expression of his protruding, washed-out eyes.

He told the girl to take a seat and in the cold depths of the armchair she felt as though she had been seated in iced water. Standing beneath the portrait (in oils) of the famous surgeon, his father, the director after a long silence began to speak.

"I hear you were so kind as to allude to me at the party meeting yesterday."

He was not trying to be sarcastic; such was his usual style.

"I wish he'd throw me out! I wish he'd tell me to go to hell instead of tormenting me like this!" thought Vera, tightening her hands, and her anxiety was coupled with remorse. The last time they had spoken to each other like this, in private, was when the director had stopped to tell

her about her mother, still wearing his white coat, the mask slipped off his face. Outside they were still fighting and Vera's mother, whose abdominal wall had been torn to shreds by a shell-splinter, had died half an hour after the operation.

"I do have a peculiar manner, call it gentlemanly if you like," continued the director, stepping out from beneath the picture, "but you cannot say that I am anti-democratic. I know every person who works for this hospital. Not only do I know them, but I am truly concerned with their problems. The problems of no less than two hundred people. You might remember, child, that at the time of the siege, when you and your mother found sanctuary in the hospital, I was the one who authorized your stay here and found you lodgings, work, and food."

"My mother is dead," said the girl, her face expressionless, and another kind of hatred began to grow in her.

"I think that under those circumstances every possible step was taken on her behalf..."

Vera slowly lifted her yes to the director's face. The man returned the open, candid gaze with some surprise.

"Yes, under the circumstances..." the director repeated thoughtfully. "You have been with us for three years now, and, though we have never discussed it, I have always been convinced that you are satisfied with your position here." The girl's hands stirred in her lap, then slipped back onto the cold leather. "I believe you have even been nominated to attend a nursing course," he added quickly. His tone and expression changed.

The girl glanced at the director again and the fleeting impression that had flashed not through her consciousness, but her nerves, became stronger: this man was afraid of her. Of her, one of the most insignificant parts of this enormous machinery.

"Therefore your promotion, to the best of my belief..."

"Who cares," the girl interrupted, "the lousy things that go on here still make me sick to the stomach!"

The director's face became ashen.

"Come now, such impertinence! What are you insinuating? And how dare you use that tone of voice to me?"

"You're all the same, you hold us cheap, don't you? Nothing's changed for you, has it?" cried Vera Angi, her white face blotched red.

Her excitement affected the director. The skin around his eyes became purple with rage.

"I will not put up with such language! On second thoughts, carry on, you little mud-slinger. But not here! Get out of here, my girl. Get the

hell out of here!" He hurried to the door and flung it wide open. The leather padding of the door was beginning to shed some of its horsehair stuffing. "Get out of here!" he repeated chokingly, but the girl had already left the room.

He looked out into the corridor. His mouth tasted sickly-sweet and he fought back a fit of nausea: remorse for having been so harsh, for losing his temper and good manners, for allowing his passion to break through the safety-guard of his nerves. A surgeon's composure must begin outside the walls of the operating theatre and it was on this point that he felt threatened. His fear suppressed the short outburst of pity. He felt that his back had been laid bare, defenceless.

On that same night Vera Angi went to the district headquarters to find the red-faced man who had taken notes while she spoke.

The delegate, comrade Settlinger, greeted her with pleasing surprise. Then he led her into his cold, smokeless room. He lifted his beefy purple face to the girl.

"We have just been talking about you. Just this minute!" he said, with the exultation that an unforeseen but happy coincidence forces out of one.

Vera's thoughts ran wild with expectancy. Her shrewd, intractably attentive eyes were fixed on her man. But he did not continue and so it was her turn to speak about herself. Twenty-six years old, her father lost at the front. Here she stopped and raised her golden-grey eyes to stare at the man with somewhat aggressive candidness.

"The last we heard he was in Debrecen at the front line, then... we haven't heard from him since. We've looked for him everywhere but he's disappeared without a trace."

She recited her biography, word-perfect down to the last comma. Heart-rending poverty, the deceased father a warehouseman, without a vestige of class-consciousness, therefore a drunkard; the mother a typical, much-suffered working woman. Vera skivvies for an officer's family until they move west to escape the front. Mother and daughter then take shelter in the basement of the hospital and are employed to clean the wards, remove the corpses and scrub the bloody floor of the operating theatre. After some time has passed, the mother is fatally wounded and the hospital becomes Vera's permanent home.

"I've always felt that I've nothing much to say, but you know, comrade," she explained, "I never could keep my mouth shut." Then she went on to tell him why she had come to him.

"The director sent for me because of what happened the day before yesterday." As she relived the scene her white skin turned ashen. "At first

he laid it on thick, how good he'd been to me and all that, he even brought up my poor dead mother. But when he saw that it wouldn't get him anywhere, he threatened me. The bully! He's a fine gentleman, he is! They want to get rid of me because I told them the truth."

"They won't be able to get rid of you, we'll take care of that. The director will keep his position for the time being—the forces of reaction are behind him. They say he is an excellent specialist and deserves credit for democratic activities in the past." His lip curled in a mocking smile. "These arguments will lose their glamour some day. Some day soon, perhaps."

Vera stared at the secretary, enraptured. These few words, exchanged in confidence, had formed a bond between them. Her feeling of intimacy was only strengthened when the man added: "What I have said shall naturally remain between ourselves."

By the time they took leave of each other they were on a really friendly footing.

"So long, comrade," said Settlinger by way of goodbye.

And a few days later, after he had given the hospital's party branch secretary a piece of his mind for keeping an intelligent, courageous woman like Vera practically concealed from the district, he took steps to ensure her further career. In the autumn of 1948 she was sent to a town in the provinces to attend a three-month party course.

They waited in the basement, in the dining hall, seated at tables covered with oilcloth. Another trial awaited them: they were to go before a board one by one. What a disgrace to be sent home from here for not coming up to scratch!

The close ranks of people, unsettled by the long train journey and the anxious hours of waiting, slowly began to break up and form small groups. Cigarette smoke drifted above their heads. Some people were kept longer than most by the committee and as the door opened they were met by a rapid volley of questions: What did they ask? What makes the best impression, book-learning—or a resolute bearing? The questions were asked at random, inspired by the bewildering perplexity of the situation. The answers were all different, none of them were honest, it was impossible to make head or tail of them. There'd be a burst of laughter now and then, but it was always brittle, high-strung.

Vera Angi sat on a bench by herself. Everyone called each other by their first names here, and, though she was becoming used to it, she found it hard to return their overt friendliness. Her insides were burning with

fear. What can she expect? Cultured, skilled people surround her, all of them unsure of themselves. Though she had attended a couple of preliminary courses—"What is fascism?" "What is socialism?"—she blamed herself for getting into such a situation. She thought that those who had sent her here were just as thoughtless and absurd. What's the use of all this torture? They're going to find it all out soon enough—that her coming here was a mistake, that she doesn't really want to study, to be one of the chosen. And then she had to think of the director again, of that strange moment of refraction when she had discovered that the cold, self-assured man was afraid of her—of her! The thought calmed her a little, gave her a scrap of comfort.

It was late afternoon, a dirty grey twilight had clouded the wide window-panes, when at last she heard her name called through the smoke and the noise. Clutching her large tan briefcase—a present from the hospital committee—she stepped into the room. At first she could not see any of the members of the board; they were sitting somewhere behind the light, and there were probably many of them.

Questions were fired at her in rapid succession, in a sterile, impersonal monotone, questions that seemed to be lifted, one by one, out of disinfectant with a pair of forceps.

Now she knew exactly what she had to do: she did not answer a single question. She lost all awareness of time and stood, stubbornly silent, freed of everything, even her fear. Then someone stepped beside her, gently touched her arm and led her to a chair.

"Sit down, comrade," said a male voice that belonged to the gentle gesture.

She sat down and her legs began to tremble. The lights were suddenly drawn apart. There were five people sitting behind the table, and beside her the young man who had made her sit still stood waiting. He was modest-looking, slight of build; dark eyes glowed redly at the girl from his wan face.

"There's plenty of time to think, take it easy," said the young man encouragingly. A lock of light brown hair brushed his forehead; his large Adam's apple bobbed in an effort to catch up with his words. "The comrades here all wish you well."

Vera Angi's throat had gone dry but she finally answered:

"I can't answer any of your questions. I've never learnt nothing in my whole life and there never was anybody to teach me. It was always the bread, the bread that had to be got..."

"The party, comrade, the party will teach you," said a short, bespectacled

little man sitting at the centre behind the table, and from this Vera guessed that he must be the chief. He looked stern, and probably had no sense of humour, but now he spoke kindly, his tone civil and warm. Vera was sincerely touched; her head dropped to her breast and she began to sob.

When she walked out of the room, her face blotched from crying, a buxom girl took hold of her arm and led her to a group of women.

"You just stay by us now," she said reassuringly in her beautiful mezzo voice. "We'll get along fine, just wait and see. And we'll be helping each other. My name is Mária Muskát."

By the time they had eaten their supper and their rooms had been allotted—they were eight to a large barrack-room—she felt that everything had become settled, put straight. She had not cried since she was a child but now her tears encircled her, they were her present and her past, her privilege, her shield. And the arch feeling of superiority at having managed to cope with the outside world quite cleverly after all returned to warm her heart with the sweetness of self-esteem.

They continued to talk for some time, until midnight at least, kept awake by their unfamiliar surroundings, by the desire, the compulsion to make friends. Vera preferred to listen to them, to the more educated of them, and thought that no two were alike. She began to place them in her mind. Dawn was breaking, chilly and grey, the others had been asleep for hours, but she was kept awake by the restless feeling of keeping in readiness. She was no longer afraid, curious rather about what would happen next. Something one of the women had said had stuck in her memory like a fish on a hook. "You'll see, we won't be going back to our old places once we're through with this course."

They're all going to new places. Higher up. When buxom Mária Muskát woke them up—she was the liveliest, the most cheerful of them all—she slipped easily from her light doze into wakefulness. The cold, grey morning made her unsure of herself again. She longed to be comforted, to be pitied, so she kept close to Mária Muskát's heels, like a kitten that wants its head rubbed.

The showers faced their room so they just ran across the corridor, threw their wraps on the clothes-rack and stood under the taps. Tight, hard beads of scalding water beat down upon their bodies, reddening their skin and they basked in its comforting heat while soap-suds frothed and foamed under the wooden slats beneath their feet. This was where they truly got to know each other, in the soft, swirling clouds of steam, in the feeling of pleasure that pervaded their whole body, relieving the excruciating back-ache caused by the strange bed, relieving their anxiety, their tension, and

making them forget about caution and prudence. Here, they were women only, in the physical and symbolical sense of the word, nude women who, forsaking their last cover, shrieked and screamed in their enjoyment of the hot water, the shapeless semi-darkness, the exultation of the body. Every now and then the men's cheerful clamour thundered from the neighbouring showers.

"What beautiful hard breasts you have," said Mária Muskát admiringly to Vera, with the best of intentions and some jealousy, "like a teenager's, lemon-shaped!" And she looked at her own full, heavy breasts from which the water splashed back streaming pearls.

A reproving voice sounded from the direction of the door, Anna Traján's voice, standing beneath the last shower:

"Comrades, comrades! Where are your manners? You're acting like a group of middle-class women in the Turkish baths!"

Mária Muskát answered her with mocking amiability:

"Why? Are beautiful breasts an unsuppressed remnant of bourgeois upbringing? An historical category," she cried, her voice happy, rich, "that had best be forgotten?"

Laughter bubbled from some of the stalls but the remark only strengthened Anna Traján's antipathy. She was heavily built, running to fat and her thick hair was densely streaked with grey. Holding her wrap against her body she approached Mária disapprovingly.

"Comrade Muskát," she said dolefully, the soft, blond curls of steam blurring the outlines of her rounded shoulders, "from what I've heard of you I should have thought you would be different. More serious. You've suffered enough in the past!"

"As good a reason as any for having a bit of fun," said Mária, but somewhat abashed.

Vera's breasts had tautened at the praise but Anna Traján's sternness had made her feel ashamed of her feminity and the sight of those rosy bodies, translucent in the steam, filled her with anguish. One mustn't think such thoughts here. One must break with the past, sincerely and ruthlessly, and take things hard and serious, because learning was cracking its grim and awesome whip above their heads. Besides, here they were able to see deep into your heart; better then that the heart, like an imprudent flame, should be extinguished.

"You, Mária Muskát, I would have you know that I am much disappointed with you," continued Anna Traján in a loud voice, and turned her back to them. Thick red weals of flesh rippled across her back and buttocks as she walked to her towel to dry herself.

Mária Muskát burst out laughing.

"Hypocritical old hag! She's the bourgeois, not me," she muttered, her coarse terry-cloth towel chafing her skin bright red.

They were on their way to the lecture hall when Vera felt a light touch on her arm and turning round she heard Anna Traján say:

"You should have put her right."

Anna Traján spoke slowly, breaking her words up into syllables and because of this she was thought clever, judicious. Vera found the broad-faced woman odious and did not believe a word of what she said, but decided she would take her side in public.

They were divided into study groups and Vera was placed in the seminar led by István André, the modest young man who had released her pent-up tears before the committee, released the single force capable of raising her from the monotony of her everyday life into this extraordinary situation.

Whenever she thought of István André her keyed-up nerves relaxed and she was filled with confidence and serenity. He was all modest goodwill. He was human words.

His afternoon seminars brought her release. Fifteen of them sat around him and at the third session Vera joined in the discussion. This was her way of showing her gratitude. It couldn't be by accident that she had been put in his seminar. In quiet moments and especially in the evenings she felt the glow of his brown eyes resting upon her. At times she was seized by an impulsive longing to touch his bony face, to smoothe those light-blond wiskers with her fingers. She was so full of feeling for him that she dared not speak of him to anyone. She knew that he lived here with his wife and children, that his family, along with those of all the lecturers, lived in the neighbouring building. This did not discourage her, only made her more cautious. Stubbornly she repeated to herself: "If he were to stand beside me, if he really belonged to me, then everything, but everything would be changed, would be easier..." Sometimes she was sure that he too was watching her. She pretended not to notice though her blood-stream seemed to suck up his gaze through her pores. On one occasion, walking along the dusky corridor—the sun had set early and the lights had not been switched on—their arms had touched and she hoped it was by intention. His touch seemed to burn a sore into her flesh.

It was hard to keep this secret to herself. She would have liked to speak of it to someone, but dared not open her heart to anybody. Mostly she feared Anna Traján. Her reproachful eyes seemed to follow her everywhere. She tried to keep close to her nevertheless, enmeshed in the magnetic-repelling web of her fear. This woman, with such a romantic-sounding

name, preferred to use a militant pseudonym, as all resolute, determined women who wish to safeguard the limits of their personalities—to safeguard their past from their present. Her broad, toad-like face was always wreathed in a gentle smile: the radiance of experience. With the exception of the scene in the showers she was always cautious and self-possessed. She worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and it was said that she would be made an ambassador after the course—the first woman to hold this post.

Every afternoon between classes Vera sat in one of the lecture halls and tried to fill the gaps in her notes. Her clumsy letters danced before her eyes and though they had had a special course on taking notes quickly and efficiently, with a list of clever abbreviations, her notebooks were full of half-sentences she had skipped and had now forgotten; she could not make head or tail of the incomplete passages and dreaded the day she would have to present them to her lecturer. She was not the only one to have difficulties. A miner had run away on the third day, unable to cope with all the note-taking that had to be done—and when he finally returned, accompanied by the party secretary of the mine, he made a vow before the whole class that he would try again if it broke him; it was his duty, he must not turn back now, he had stuck it out in situations much harder than this. The big, boyish-faced man had then broken down and cried, rubbing his eyes with his coarse red knuckles. Vera felt that she must speak. Jumping up as if pulled by some invisible string she fought down her stage-fright and her shame and declared before the whole class that from now on she would be studying with the comrade, look over his notes and help him in every way she could.

"How *do* you know what to say?" asked Anna Traján, amazed, with not a little respect.

It was their fourth week. During the course, such was the rule, no one was allowed to leave the grounds, but on Sunday afternoons they had permission to go into town in groups and have a coffee in a patisserie. On these occasions the miners would disappear collectively, probably boozing, but no one was ever able to prove it.

In the darkness after lights out small-talk flowed more freely. All the male students were discussed in turn; the remarks of some of the more coarse-mouthed women were rewarded by great gales of laughter. Anna Traján never joined in these frolics, but sometimes, after long entreaties, she would speak about the movement, would relate some of its romantic events. She was never the heroine of these tales; she evaded the subjective parts with impersonal rigorousness. On the festive eve of November the 7th beer was served with supper by the permission of the directorate of

the course. After lights out something surprising happened. Anna Trajáan, continuing her story-telling where she had left it off the night before, was speaking about one of the celebrated figures of the movement. Her voice became heated; her usual slow articulation quickened. "He was no statue, believe me. You can't imagine what a cheerful, passionate man he was," she said, entranced, "a handsome young man, tall and brown, full of laughter and good-humour... his marriage wasn't a happy one, and..." she stopped. After a long silence she continued, her voice dying down to a banal sigh: "He loved someone else." The room was silent. "We spent the morning together the day he was arrested. We went to the cinema, we saw *Boys' Town* at the Palace..."

So it was her he loved, they all thought to themselves.

This was the sentence that opened up the flood. They all had something to tell. Vera's body shook with excitement. The time had come to share a secret with the whole room, the time for them to become sisters, for her to be pitied, to be comforted, the time for crude tragedy to give way to eternal goodwill. She wanted to say something terrible, touching, and thrilling. Fretting about what she would tell them made her veins contract convulsively, excitement rushed from her heart into her throat... And then she had it. She was an errand-girl at a dressmaker's specializing in morning dresses and negligées... a little chit of a girl, thin, undernourished, but her boss had taken a fancy to her and one evening, when they were alone in the shop, he became violent... Satin tea-gowns, ready to be delivered, hung down from the ceiling and she took shelter between their lustrous, rustling folds, like a little animal in the forest.

As she imagined the scene her body was bathed in sweat but she continued to spin the tale to herself.

The tea-gowns fluttered, reflecting the light, but the big, fat man caught up with her and pushed her to the floor.

Her mouth burned with feverish excitement, she had almost begun to speak. But in the sudden silence she shuddered when she thought of the trouble she had almost brought upon herself—they would not have taken pity on her, they would have thought her disgusting, loathsome.

"Vera, you wanted to say something," a voice prompted.

She lay, her limbs slack, her muscles tensed so as not to shudder.

"Vera!" the others called.

In her fright she lay deathly still, holding her breath, motionless.

"She's gone to sleep," someone said.

The unexpected disturbance did not discourage them in the least. Mária Muskát's bright mezzo voice broke the silence and they all listened to her.

"What I have to tell you has nothing to do with the past. It happened the day before yesterday, on Sunday."

"When you slipped off, you mean," someone giggled.

"Exactly!"

Vera's heart began to beat more regularly. She still lay unmoving, but she was content. She had stopped herself just in time from getting into a real mess. She listened to Mária, her body tingling with curiosity from top to toe.

"Well, when I disappeared it was to meet Franci. He took the noon train down, he'd been travelling since dawn."

Franci, or Ferenc, was her fiancée, as everyone knew. He was a foreman like Mária, in the same factory.

"Franci found us a room—there's a trashy old place down by the station. He put us down as husband and wife, just like that. We didn't stick our noses out of that room until night-time. He's a great guy, tall and strong. We'd really missed each other."

"And?" said somebody from the corner. "Give us some details!"

"Shut your dirty mouths!" Anna Traján screamed. Her voice was choked with tears. "And I spoke of him to these... to these..."

The sound of her crying came up distorted, muffled in her pillow.

Much later, Vera Angi got off her bed. She spoke gently.

"Can I bring you anything? A glass of water?"

Her hand slipped lightly to Anna Traján's forehead. She could feel the woman's sour-smelling, coarse hair under her palms. She didn't understand herself how she had come here. Her sympathies were all with Mária Muskát, with her adventure which had brought the strong odour of love into the room, into the darkness turned cold.

"Go back to bed," said the woman, repulsing Vera's compassion. "I said go, what are you waiting for? I'm allright!"

The next morning she took her belongings and moved in with one of the women lecturers.

Mária Muskát was ordered to see the director of the course, the short, owl-eyed man, Vilmos Sas. When she came out of his room two hours later she was not upset but a new trait had appeared on her friendly, cheerful face: the grimness of defiance. No one asked her about what had happened, some for fear of being associated with the spirit of immorality.

"I explained to the old man that there is such a thing as a body in the world, and that we did not take a vow of chastity. That the difference between us and the nuns is that we aren't hypocrites. He wanted to stop

me from going out on Sunday afternoons. I've sat upon my bicycle for the party more often than he's sat down to breakfast!"

In 1945 she had had to cover hundreds of kilometres on her bicycle, accompanying land distributors and agitators; she had had to live like a man, sleep in her clothes, grin and bear exhaustion, poor-quality food, hostility. But she always thought of that time as the best period of her life.

Vera heard her own voice as if coming from afar.

"How can you talk like that about comrade Sas?"

It was as if an alien force had goaded her again, squeezing the words out of her.

"You again? Sucking up again, are you?" Surprise, not anger had made Mária Muskát speak. "Do you know, my girl, that you're a pretty rotten sort of person? What are you trying to prove? Let me tell you, sweetheart..."

"Respectability, that's what I want," Vera answered, serious, sitting up in her bed. Her eyes were full of tears. Oh, if only the directors could hear her now! If only István André were here! How easy everything would be!

Mária burst into laughter.

"Is that how you want to be respectable? Get on with you, you little monkey!"

Many of the girls spoke up for Vera. They spoke as if into a microphone, as if someone were standing listening behind the door. Their words were meant for a larger audience.

The next afternoon they had to go on a canvassing campaign in town. They were to speak about the situation following the fusion of the two parties and about the approaching Popular Front elections. They split up into pairs and on the directions of the town party organization went from home to home to meet new people, new views. Vera asked to be paired off with Anna Traján. Vilmos Sas approved of her choice. The girl no longer laughed to herself with supercilious exultation, she did not consider herself simply clever or smart. She was afraid of Anna Traján and attracted by her, but the attraction was the stronger.

They set out to walk the grey, smoke-hazed streets of the industrial town. It was late autumn, dusk was growing quickly. Slowly the houses turned from smoky-grey into sooty-brown. In the holes among the cobblestones puddles of mud had formed to make their path more difficult. The feeble glow of the street-lights seemed to spread hopelessness around them. Many times they had to ask for directions to find the addresses on their list, crossed muddy yards, walked up staircases that stank of urine. The ironworker they were looking for was not at home; after a prolonged

and hopeless drumming on the door his neighbour finally appeared, a decrepit, bent old man, his thin, bony legs ending in a pair of slippers. He invited them in from the cold, drizzly evening to wait for their man in his kitchen. Things had not changed there for fifty years at least, everything was crumbling, rotting away.

"I'm an ironworker myself, a core-maker," said the man, peeling potatoes, "it's just that I'm off sick right now."

The coincidence enlivened Anna Traján. She squirmed on her seat until she found a comfortable position for her large body.

"Or rather"... the man wrinkled his brows, "they can call it off sick if they like. The truth is that they want to chuck me out."

Anna Traján slipped forward on her seat, the skirt tight on her heavy thighs.

"Of course it all began when they expelled me from the party. When they fused." He stopped, his eyes narrowed. "Where did you say you were from?"

The tension left Anna Traján's face. She tried to smile.

"Your neighbour and my husband—they were good friends. I thought we'd come and see how he's doing on our way through." She pointed to Vera. "And this is my little sister here."

"Anyway, I used to be a social democrat," continued the core-maker, "I joined the party in thirty-eight, when those fascists in the Arrow Cross had fifty members in parliament and they had quite a few voting for them round here, too."

Anna Traján asked him something so he'd keep to his subject.

"What the charge was? The charge was incitement to strike in 1946, and that I was against the fusion. I only opened my mouth because of a nazi rat—he's still our foreman—that's all. But then he joined the communist party and used it to root out the workers. When my mates wanted to have him chucked out of the factory, I testified against him too, and when they stopped working, I followed them. But I didn't say a word against the fusion."

"What did the comrade say his name was?" asked Anna Traján, momentarily dropping her mask of casual disinterest, but soon realizing her mistake.

The big-boned man suddenly stood up, his voice heated with passion.

"Who are you anyway? And who sent you? You're spies, aren't you, out for what you can get... I've only got one more thing to say to you and one thing only... Get the hell out of here, fast."

The two women rushed out, terrified. By the time they reached the stairs, Anna Traján had regained her composure.

"Right-wing social democrat," she said, "a real enemy."

In the doorway she looked for the worker's name on the grimy list of tenants and when she found it she made a note of it in her little book.

"You've learned something today. Worth a whole seminar, that."

She took Vera's arm, spoke to her gently. Gratitude whined up in the girl who felt the happiness of the homeless who suddenly find themselves part of a family.

"What a rotten little swine he was!" she cried.

"A rotten swine, that's true. But not for long." She led Vera towards a lighted doorway. "Come on. I'm wet through."

They entered a patisserie. The sweetish smell of vanilla and gingerbread assailed them. As they opened the door a little bell tinkled and a woman with raven-black hair walked out of the cosily old-fashioned Biedermeier interior. They sat down on the red plush settee and the woman bent over them, listing her wares with a pleasant, serene smile on her face. Anna Trajáns broad face was wreathed in a smile; her beady eyes, set in deep layers of fat, gleamed with a yellowish lustre. Her strong, imperious hands reached for the porcelain bowls of cakes.

She ate greedily, energetically hacking at her Mocca cake with her fork. She concentrated entirely on the sweets in front of her, utterly oblivious of her surroundings. She was onto her fifth cake when she finally raised her head and began to laugh.

"We deserve this little treat, don't we? Stopped at your second? Wait a minute, we'll have a liqueur."

She ordered a Hubertus. Seeing Vera's timid face, she lifted her glass in a toast.

"I'm no drinker but it tastes good all the same. We don't drink for *that!* Cheers, comrade!"

They got home late that night. The next morning Anna Trajáns showed the report to Vera. It was consecrated almost entirely to the core-maker who had been expelled from the party. Her conclusion ran as follows: "In our opinion he is a conscious enemy."

And Vera signed her name to it with her battered old fountain-pen.

After the strain of the first few days, which had made her thinner and had paled her skin, a calmer period followed, devoted to familiarization. Her own artful fancies made her laugh to herself, and those little victories, those small triumphs, malicious joys and secret grimaces brought back her self-confidence. Anna Trajáns maternal or, rather, claustral friendship infused her with new hopes. Timidly presumed possibilities, unhoped-for

prospects! The heavily built, but educated woman did not promise anything; she spoke of objectives, of duties, but the future gleamed rosily through her words.

"First you must complete your education, take a specialized matriculation examination. It won't be difficult, we shall be helping you. It won't take longer than two years. Of course you must forget about everything else, frivolity and so on. One needs all one's strength for studying, but it's worth it. And you must take care never to disappoint those who are looking after you. The degree of their support depends on it."

With such support behind her she could afford to relax. She not only grew accustomed to her new surroundings, she had even got to like them. She slept well and woke up feeling fresh and fit. In the past two weeks she had put on almost three kilos. Her skin lost its pallor and glowed with health, her light-grey eyes were full of feminine serenity, her thighs and breasts had rounded. She noticed that the men around her appraised her with renewed interest; restless eyes followed her wherever she went, heads turned to watch her pass. She lived in a state of continual excitement. But from the beginning she cared for only one man, István André. She could not define just what she found attractive in him: his troubled eyes, his husky voice, his Adam's apple, or his gentleness? She stared unpretentiously into his eyes, long and wonder-struck; she stopped him in the courtyard, on the corridors, whenever she could. "There's something I've simply got to ask you," she'd begin, and she'd always find something new to discuss. She was afraid of exposure, of humiliation, and she didn't really trust her man, but she decided nevertheless that she would get him. It was just that she didn't know how to go about it. The whole thing was a secret, a very special secret, deeply hidden, carefully entrenched. Anna Traján thinks she can tell everything that goes on in people's heads, let her think so! She was no longer afraid of her, she knew how to defend herself.

"Yes, yes," Anna Traján repeated every day in her slow, slurred voice, "the specialized matriculation examination is very important."

"The matriculation examination," echoed Vera reverently, her eyes innocently wide, and she thought of István André. She was so sure of herself that she no longer listened to Anna Traján's words. The mechanic play of her facial muscles served as a substitute for her attention. Thus she had gained ascendancy over the women, without showing the least sign of her superiority.

Sunday afternoon the miner she had been helping with his studies according to her promise joined her on her way into town. He was a man of about thirty-five or so, close-mouthed, word-bound; whenever he had to

speak before a public he seized up and his face would be bathed in sweat.

They went to the patisserie as usual. Anna Traján was not with them; she had gone to Budapest for two days with special permission from the directorate. It never crossed their minds that this may be irregular, unfair.

"Abandoned your friends, have you, comrade Neubauer," Vera Angi teased the clumsy, hesitant miner. She had even rediscovered her sense of humour. "Who's going to drink your share, then?"

The man answered morosely, tight-lipped; he didn't like to be made fun of, but perhaps he was only embarrassed.

In the tea-shop he ordered a glass of rum. It was brought to him in a coffee-cup.

"I ordered the same for you, comrade," he said apologetically, and his furrowed brows flushed.

"You shouldn't have done. I never drink brandy and you know right well the comrades don't like us to drink at all."

"This isn't brandy, it's rum." He was trying to be funny but succeeded only in being gawky as usual. "Please taste it, if only for my sake, you've gone to such trouble for me."

Vera gave up and drank off the cup of rum. She licked her lips; she liked it.

"Us miners have got used to it. Because of the danger, you know. And because it's good, it tastes good."

Their companions went for a walk in town; they stayed behind and ordered a second round.

"It's true that I ran away, but I did come back," explained Neubauer diffidently, wringing his hands. "It was my duty. When the Germans wanted to flood the mine at the retreat, twenty-two of us stayed down there to stop them. We stayed below for two weeks, mostly without food or drink, and the water got higher and higher because the pumping plant had broken down and there wasn't any electricity either. We had to be sparing with the lamps too, so we were mostly in the dark."

He looked at Vera with his washed-out blue eyes, touched her hands with his own coarse red ones.

"If I had a wife like you!" he sighed unexpectedly. "She'd carry me along with her, I'd be developing alongside her." He made a groan, his face lit up. „Why can't you be my wife, comrade? Don't I deserve that from life?"

Vera did not answer him. Her heart felt heavy and lost. What does this childish, clumsy oaf want from her? And she, why is she sitting here

with him? What have they to do with each other? They have nothing in common, not a single sentence they can share. What kind of lie is this whole situation?

"Don't drink anymore, comrade," she said bitterly.

"I've never seen such a beautiful girl... all my life I've liked blondes, but my wife is brown-haired. Not blond, not black, just mousey."

Vera collected herself. The drink had checked the flow of her thoughts but now she had to answer quickly, firmly. She wanted to answer the miner in such a way that she could recall it if anything should happen. But the door opened, the bell tinkled, and István André stepped in. His face was crimson from the cold, in the way that only the face of an anaemic is flushed, cheekbones and nose glowing to emphasize the paleness of the skin around the eyes. His face lit up, his eyes shone when he saw them sitting there and he sat down to their table, rubbing his hands together happily.

"I've just taken the wife and children to the station. They're going up to Budapest for a week."

He glanced at Vera. Her soft, blond hair glowed with a burnished sheen. He stared at her, forgetting himself, but she flashed her eyes at the miner to warn him that he had a little too much to drink.

"Ye-es, the trouble is," muttered Neubauer to himself, looking down at his yellowish, split nails, "the trouble is, comrade, that one gets married first and then sees what beauty really is..."

"It often happens... It can happen to anyone," said the lecturer, and his reddish-brown eyes were full of pity, of an almost unreasonable compassion.

"And does it have to stay that way for the rest of my life?" asked Neubauer loudly, so that some of the customers looked up and began to listen. "If one is a communist, can it never change?"

André's eyes narrowed.

"That's a difficult question to answer, comrade."

Vera bent her head close to his.

"He should be sent home. He doesn't even know what he's saying."

The lecturer looked at the girl in surprise. He found her reaction ruthless and much too matter-of-fact.

But the miner in his heightened sensitivity felt that he was in the way. A mournful sulkiness washed over him, he mumbled something under his breath, crowning his blunders, then paid and left, politely nodding goodbye.

The lecturer watched him go thoughtfully. The bell tinkled and was silent.

"We should go after him. I've seen it before. He's going to make a round of the pubs and get as drunk as a lord. And that will end in another course conference." He glanced at his watch. "We'd better be going too if we want to get any supper at all."

Vera did not answer him immediately; she was silent for a while, as if faced with a difficult decision. Then she lifted her eyes slowly to his face.

"Let's stay a little longer," she said recklessly.

The soft drone of the small patisserie, the mellow lighting formed a gentle cocoon around them. The girl's hair gleamed. The exterior world had gone hazy, dim.

"I've wanted to speak to you so often, comrade André, I've wanted to tell you something so much..."

The man's face had regained its usual paleness and it had made him beautiful again.

"I always stop you, comrade André, to ask you a lot of silly questions, I'm sure you're sick and tired of it, you probably think I'm a bit hysterical... Isn't that what you think?"

"Of course I don't think that, of course not."

"What must people think when they see me stopping you, standing in front of you, looking at you and forgetting what I wanted to say when you look at me... In the seminar I only speak so as to speak to you... so you'll speak to me. So you'll answer me. You see, I'm telling you all this though I know it can get me into trouble."

István André fingered a lace doily and did not look at Vera.

"When I was standing before the committee and suddenly you were there beside me... I've known since then... since then that the most important thing... I never hear when they speak to me, I never see them, I can't think of anyone else..." Her lips were burning. "I love you, sir." It was the only way she could say it.

The man's bony knees touched her own; he clutched the edge of the table with both hands.

"Didn't you notice? Didn't you notice that I was always staring at you—sir?," the girl asked aggressively. The man did not answer. "When we are just the two of us, I shall always call you sir. D'you know why? For us it'll be as if we called each other by our first names." But the man still did not reply and she was suddenly terrified: she had delivered herself up to him, had given herself away and might now lose everything, everything she had hoped for. She shouldn't have been so weak, so childish, this man was planning something, or is he too much of a coward to speak, but then what was it all for? All because of two glasses of rum, just two little glasses

of rum! Her heart was in her mouth and her lips seemed about to burst from the fever within her.

István André lifted his face, his hands slipped from the edge of the table.

"But I did," he said, in his gentle, husky voice, answering one of her questions, "I noticed everything. And you could have noticed too. You should have." His eyes were smiling.

"That you love me, is that what I should have noticed? That you love me?"—Vera had forgotten to call him sir—"that you love me too? Have you the courage to say it? Say it!" She squeezed his hands tight, her nails dug in his flesh.

"Yes, little one, that I love you too. That I'm always saying silly things because I can't pay attention to anyone else. That I think of you when I am with my wife and children. That I haven't the courage to look into the director's eyes." His cheekbones flushed bright red. "It's very hard for me. And besides... another six weeks and the course will be over, you'll be going home... and I... I'm never going to see you again."

They paid and walked out into the ash-grey night. The drizzling rain drew a web of spun silk around the street-lights.

"I am sorry for you, comrade André," Vera said, and was herself surprised by the gentleness of her voice.

"Call me Pista."

The girl changed the sentence playfully.

"I am not sorry for you any more, Pista, I just love you." She slipped her arm around the man's thin shoulders and they walked out of town towards the school which was based farther out than the airport even, in the old anti-aircraft gunners' barracks.

The road was deserted, surrounded on both sides by wide, open fields, and lights would flicker only rarely in the quietly misting rain. Vera had never felt so calm, so poised. All her life she had had to be ready for attack or to defend herself. That convulsive tenseness now left her body and, as one who has completely abandoned himself to total quietude, she now snuggled close to the man's rough, damp coat without the slightest feeling of reservation or mistrust. She could feel the strong, bitter smell of tobacco that pervaded his whole body. They walked silently, one with the dark, sharing the same thoughts. The dark blocks of the buildings loomed before them. Vera held on to his arm. All of a sudden she felt menaced. She stopped him, encircled his neck with her arms, stood on tiptoe to reach his lips with her own wet cold ones.

"I'll come to you tonight," she said breathlessly, "I want to come to you."

How strange it was to tear themselves out of the protective rainy darkness, to sit at the oil-cloth covered table and tear at the tough, cold sausage served for supper, to talk about foolish trifles with their mouths full!

The lecturer sat at some distance from her at the other end of the table; a large crumb danced drolly on the tip of his moustache.

After lights out, when the last careful joke had been cracked and the blankets had become rumpled around the bodies of the sleeping women, Vera's eyes became more sensitive than usual and she lay listening to the motionless silence. The last steps echoed down the corridors outside, the far-off clamour slowly died away, replaced by a strange, rubbery, congested silence. Vera lay under her blanket without a night-dress, her body burning as if on fire, shaken with shivering spasms of excitement. She tried to make out if the others were sleeping or not. They had to be really deeply asleep. Mária Muskát slept with her rounded, golden-brown arms spread wide; ten to one she had spent the afternoon with her fiancée in their hotel room. Her shoulders had slipped out from under her night-gown, her forehead gleamed with satisfaction.

She didn't care about the rest of the women in the room; she despised them and thought their nervous system probably functioned on a lower level. They slept deaf and blind to the world, sunk in a torpor, heavy with the food they had eaten for supper and the thoughts they kept hidden even from themselves.

The luminous dials of the clock on her neighbour's bedside table showed a quarter past two when she slipped out from under her warm blanket. The unexpected cold made her gasp and sent shivers up and down her body; she threw on her hated flannel wrap and glided across the room, catching the last of some rather unfeminine snores. She turned the doorknob and stepped out into the corridor. The single light-bulb glowed feebly, behind her all was darkness, shapeless, glooming dark. Leaving the protective, stuffy closeness of the room behind her she was assailed again by her fears; she stood helpless, paralysed, in the middle of the corridor, laying herself open to discovery. And will the door be open? István André seems to be a coward, his love is as trembling as a hunted bird—will he be brave enough to leave his door open? Will he be able to face the consequences of what is surely going to happen? Shouldn't she turn back and slip back into her cold bed, suffer the tortures of another barren night? She has achieved what she wanted, István André has declared his anguished, shuddering love for her. The sound of snoring struck her ears again and it seemed so comical that it cheered her. She started down the corridor, the

draft striking her legs and making her flat, girlish belly shiver but it felt good, so good. She imagined André waiting for her behind his door. She opened the door, completely assured of herself. And there he stood behind the door, who knows how long he had been standing there in his double-breasted brown suit and mustard-yellow tie—he stood and stared incredulously at the opening door, at the girl who brought a warm scent in her loose blond hair into the room.

"Put out the light," whispered Vera.

"No. I want to see you." Then he repeated almost the same words that the miner had said to her that afternoon. "I've never seen... I've never had such a beautiful girl in my life before."

He was thin, waif-like, his cheekbones flushed.

"Put out the light," Vera urged, "I'm ashamed to in the light," she added quickly, guilelessly and without shame.

"No, no, I want to see you!"

When she slipped out of his room towards dawn she thought she saw Anna Traján on the corridor. It couldn't be her, she thought to herself, she went to Budapest two days ago. But in the morning they ran across each other in the doorway of the lecture hall. She had arrived in the night, someone had given her a lift in their car. From that moment Vera could not be sure whether the woman had seen her or not as she had stepped out of André's room. The consequences were incalculable.

In the next few days István André watched for every opportunity to be alone with the girl, running the risk of discovery to the point of ridiculousness. It was he who now ran after Vera in the courtyard, on the corridors, whispering incoherent, hurried words in her ear. He was awkward and absurd. "I'll be waiting for you tonight, don't forget," he whispered. And the next day: "I waited for you all night, but you didn't come..." The girl never answered. Anna Traján had confused her. She didn't know how she stood with her, so she was extremely wary. She mustn't take any risks. In another couple of days they'll be half-way through the course; there will be a discussion of what they have achieved so far, what they must strive for in the future. The criticism and auto-criticism session will be like a limbo, that much they had guessed, but they did not know anything for certain. These days they were going over the material they had covered so far: Leninism, according to Stalin's popular summaries. Students and lecturers alike thought only of the day of reckoning to come. In the seminar István André questioned Vera just to speak to her, to hear her voice, to be able to look into her eyes.

"What's the matter with you? Have I hurt you in any way? Were you disappointed in me?" the man asked irritably, tiredly, by the volley-ball courts as they stood and watched the match. "They're coming home tomorrow. You've got to come tonight."

The director, who was standing in the midst of the other spectators, flashed his owlish eyes at them. It was impossible to continue the discussion. But the girl had decided anyway that she would end the affair. She must not go to him again, she could not, dared not. Never again! she said to herself, her lips pursed tight together when she saw the thin, tormented face. She thought of Anna Traján.

But that night she too was unable to sleep.

She was sorry for having been so mean. "He's just like a little boy," she thought sadly, "a little boy who's had his treat taken away from him..." She sat up and looked around her. A wide shaft of moonlight shone in from the window. She was ready to slip off her bed when she heard a voice beside her. "Better stay where you are, kid," Mária Muskát whispered. She huddled back under her covers. "So they knew something after all." The thought flashed through her mind like a bitter judgement.

The day of the criticism and auto-criticism session arrived. A wintry fog misted the windows and the corridors; the lamps had had to be lighted in all the rooms. The radiators were taking their time to heat up. They sat grimly ceremonious in the lecture hall, pencils and notebooks before them. They did not dare break the severity of the expectation even by speaking to each other. They stared straight in front of themselves, restless on their seats, waiting for the lecturers to arrive. Vera was overwhelmed by an undefinable anxiety. She felt vulnerable. These faces are all masks, who knows what they may hide? Their words are symbols only, their worth unmeasurable by everyday logic. People exchange roles. One must be wary of everyone, they are all cells of a huge observational organism. She felt surrounded, walled in. The time has come to atone for her sins, all of them, even those of her childhood. She shall chant them, every one, the times she has lied, the times she has stolen, the times she has violated the rules of society. These sins are burned deep into her skin, there is no denying them, they can be shown up histologically any time. Now.

She felt a heavy, unflinching gaze upon her. She did not return it but she knew that it was Anna Traján who was looking at her. Anna Traján—she was the fear that lived within her. When she thought of it she looked up and smiled at the woman with all the warmth of her heart, but Anna Traján's face remained rigid, stern. Her eyes were serious, but not unfriendly.

The lecturers walked in one after the other. The Budapest delegate was with them. They were all dressed in black except István André, who was wearing his customary double-breasted brown suit. Bluish shadows encircled his eyes and the cheekbones of his pale face. His eyes were lustreless, empty. "He's afraid, he is frightened too!" thought Vera, seized by an unexplainable exultation.

The lecturers sat down, bent their heads close and whispered among themselves. Then Vilmos Sas, the director, stood up to make a speech. He cleared his throat several times, his face pompously determined, as of one who was about to start something off and thereafter be without influence on its course.

The criticism and self-criticism session, he explained, must be allowed to run its free course, therefore its duration shall not be limited. The timeless and the inevitable were brought together on this morning, in the half-light of flickering faces and flickering intentions.

The students were divided up into four large groups, according to their seminar assignments. The first to stand was the group steward, who characterized those under him as had been previously agreed upon according to collective opinion. These characterizations were not worded so as to form judgement and their restraint evoked excited opposition. Perhaps this was their primary psychological role.

The first four or five people got off lightly. In the strange stillness a few people only dared to contribute to the excitement of the debate.

Outside a billowing sulphur-yellow fog stormed the windows. The radiators were becoming warm.

Vera rested her head on her notebook. Her hands were shaking, but she was the only one to know it. She could see Anna Traján's motionless face looking back at her from her notebook, as if from a mirror. She was certain now that the woman had seen her that dawn on the corridor. Had seen her and kept silent because the rest of it has nothing to do with her.

A slim, good-looking young man with a perky moustache had stood up and was speaking. He was a captain of a frontier guard unit. His left hand was raised high, a cut-stone signet ring on his little finger. It was a neatly manicured, sweet-scented gentleman's hand. An offensive hand. An alien hand. And many people must be feeling the same way at this moment. "If they're going to torture me like this!" thought Vera shuddering, and did not care to finish the thought.

The delagate from Budapest, a bright blond young man with an offhand manner, was speaking in polished, elaborate sentences.

"Yes, comrade," he told the captain, his tone cool and ruthless, "we feel that you are not being completely sincere."

The signet-ringed hand flew high; lamplight gleamed on the octahedron stone.

"I can only say... I strive to be completely sincere."

"No, no, comrade, you are not sincere. You do not speak of your faults, or if you do, you try to minimize them. There are some things you prefer not to mention."

"If they're going to torture me like this!" Vera scribbled on an empty sheet with her fountain-pen. She never wanted to see Anna Trajáan again.

"There is one thing I have not spoken about..." the masculine tenor of the officer died down to a whisper, "I serve in a little village near the frontier, where I have some influence over the villagers. When a resolution to be passed against the Tito clique was brought before the local party organization, I did not give the central delegate my wholehearted support and so... the resolution was not carried."

"If you had not spoken of it we still should have known about it, comrade. But it is not enough. I must tell you, comrade, that we still do not trust you."

The commander sat down and covered his face with his hands.

"If they're going to torture me like this, I'll scratch their eyes out!" Vera shut her notebook. She was full of anger, of hatred.

Questions, answers. Broken sentences ending in whimpers. A woman's sobs. And above them all the slick blond young man, who can tell good from bad for sure.

"But I'm not arrogant," someone cried, "And I don't look down upon the workers!"

The darkness outside thickened. Words drifted, shapeless, amoeba-like.

"The root of your problem is your attitude towards the party... cynicism of the highest degree."

"His attitude towards the workers is questionable."

"A critical type... his criticism is superficial, unsystematic... still governed by the oppositionary sentiments of the trade unionists during the counter-revolutionary period..."

At last they sat by the oil-cloth covered table, eating their lunch silently. Vera spooned her soup into her mouth with determination. She did not want to belong to any of them.

In the afternoon it continued. Vera felt Anna Trajáan's heavy gaze resting on her again. She returned the look but did not smile, braving her destiny. On the dais, as if absorbed by his paleness, sat István André, silent and sick.

She wanted to catch his attention and offer him up some of her anger, her revolt, but he was looking far into the distance. "If we two, together... together..."

Words, voices, cries buzzed and swarmed around her.

It turned out that K. did yoga exercises behind a tumble-down garage every morning. What could be at the back of that? The main problem with Mrs B., a worker from Újpest, was that she could see no perspectives in store for herself. Why ever not? S.'s relation to the party is marred by a certain fear, he is always careful not to show his true colours in a debate. He is frightened of losing his job. M. thinks his relationship with the workers is superficial. F.'s uncertainty is due to his Zionist past.

We must be transformed, reformed, changed, relaxed. The past is raw material, the raw material of a giant forge.

The clear, inexorable words of the central delegate were:

"If a peasant or a labourer has an inferiority complex today, it is a relic of his past."

"If a party member is afraid today, he must have committed grave omissions in the past."

A white, fog-like light transilluminates their bodies; the bars of their skeletons show up black.

Vera is still trying to catch István André's attention. He is still looking far into the distance.

A thick-set, pudgy faced man is standing before them. His head is as round as a ball, his moustache thick. He commanded a battalion during the 1919 proletarian dictatorship. He often refers to this fact.

He takes off his thick-lensed glasses, peers around him bleary-eyed; the light breaks upon his coarse, thick hair.

"I will do my best," he says like a beaten child.

"You must fight your pride, comrade. You must revise your past."

"Please," the old man lifts his face high, "you can see I do my best to adapt, I even play volley-ball with the others."

"Formalism!"

"My room-mates can tell you that I do my share of the collective work... after lights out I often tell them about undercover activities, about life in prison."

"And don't you feel that by doing so you draw attention to yourself? That you place yourself before other, excellent comrades? Before the leaders of our party?"

Vilmos Sas speaks these words in a soft monotone. The blond young man takes over.

"It is no secret, comrade, that you were sent here because... you are the oldest person here... you are to recognize your faults with the aid of the community. You have stopped developing, comrade, that is the truth. And he who stops goes backward, withdrawing himself from the general tendency of development."

The round-headed old man's hands drop to his sides, knocking on the bench; his wide, round shoulders are shaken with sobs.

"Perhaps this isn't the right way to treat an old, experienced comrade!" says Mária Muskát, her words amplified by the sudden silence.

Vera was terrified by her interjection. She wanted to shout to Mária that she must not contradict them, must not anger them. Her revolt, her stubbornness had been stamped out.

Early next afternoon her turn had come. She had thought things over and knew exactly what to do. She searched André's empty eyes with her unyielding, bitter ones. "He's become as small as this," she said to herself, raising her little finger.

The character study her group had prepared was affectionate and indulgent. She is diligent, grapples with the material passionately, is a stern judge of herself and others; her education is incomplete and though she is sincere towards the party, she is still inhibited in some respects... Some people put in a word or two, one of the lecturers volunteered his opinion, but István André remained silent, sunk between his companions. Some of the students searched Vera's eyes with longing, jealous glances. How happy she must be! She got off lightly. Words babbled in her ears agreeably but her anxiety grew nevertheless. Around her grown men sat, their faces red and wrinkled with humiliation. Men with morose brows and unsteady eyes. And she...! After coffee-break she had drifted to Anna Trajáns side to no avail; her patroness had hardly said a word to her. Because she knows everything, and is waiting. Her silence is heavy, meaningful, expectant.

She must stand up and answer them, acknowledge some of her minor faults, negligences. Their faces are relaxed, she is no longer a problem, two sentences will suffice. But they do not know that the star witness is listening and waiting. They do not know that what is happening here is nothing but an infernal trial. When she stood up, Anna Trajáns looked at her with encouraging eyes and that almost made her cry, made her want to bask in the warmth of her benevolence. Only the great are endowed with true magnanimousness! She was seized by a vague feeling of nausea; she was lightheaded, giddy with determination. The desire to revolt, to stand up to them

had long left her heart. No, she would not abuse their confidence, their bounty, she would not push away the hand that reached out for her own, she would not lie. She felt free for the first time since she had stepped over the threshold of this house. She heard the long, drawn-out whistle of a train, rapidly receding; it seemed to be whisking her along, that train!

Her eyes were raised to look past the heads towards the dais. She spoke calmly, in a clear voice, with the intractableness of a believer.

"Thank you, comrades, for your interest in me," she said, "if I've counted right, I've never had so many people looking after me in my life before. I've never had the chance to study, and be fed, and get my pay too."

She was deeply moved, carried away by her emotion. People began to sit up because the tone of her voice suggested that this was only a prelude, more was to follow.

"Something happened here that I mustn't try to hide from you. On Sunday night I went into comrade István André's room. When his wife was in Budapest."

She looked around her; all the faces in the hall were turned towards her.

"I went into his room," she repeated, "I'm terribly ashamed of myself."

"The dirty bitch," Neubauer, the miner, muttered to himself. "Make a good wife? A good whore, more likely!" His heart was full of anger but also full of avid yearning.

"He did not threaten or force me, I don't know why I did it," continued the girl. "I am not wicked."

Anna Traján stood up and banged her fist on the table. Her breath came in short, heavy gasps.

"Shut up," she cried, her voice breaking. "Shut up! Typical hysterics! Hallucinations! Psychoanalysts know them well!" She resorted involuntarily to her Freudian past. "Sit down, comrade!"

People began to fidget on their seats, the clamour grew. Vilmos Sas bent his head close to the delegate's behind one of the lecturers' backs and whispered something, nodding his head rapidly several times.

István André drew circles on a piece of paper and saw the girl's body before him, her skin the colour of melted butter, sweet-scented, warm. His head began to swim; Vera Angi stood nude before the unwieldily garbed crowd and she was speaking, speaking. She was speaking of that night to him, to him only; of the light that had been left switched on, of the man who looked upon her in child-like wonder, who had never seen such a beautiful body before. "You're beautiful," he whispered, dazed, and saw no one else around him.

"Shut up!" cried Anna Traján with the full force of her voice, her assurance regained.

"No," said the girl, "it has to be said." André slowly came to from his happy daze; as he stood up and made room for his legs the chair squaked unpleasantly.

"Vera Angi is telling the truth. What she has said is true, all of it," he repeated feverishly.

"This is all beside the point," Anna Traján cried.

"It is not," the lecturer repeated like a stubborn child, "it most certainly is not!"

The delegate scribbled something with rapid, angular gestures on a bit of paper and slipped it before Vilmos Sas. The director nodded, cleared his throat and stood up, clumsily knocking over a pot of primroses as he did so.

"I think," he began, "I think..."

A low murmur rose from the audience. They had never experienced anything like this before.

"I think," he began again, "we'll be finishing for today."

Some people shouted: "Let's hear comrade André!"

Others cried: "We want to know!"

Vilmos Sas tugged at André's coat sleeve. "Enough," he whispered, a grievous expression on his face. "Shut your mouth."

"Romeo and Juliet," someone laughed in one of the benches.

Vilmos Sas tugged at the old-fashioned brown suit again. "You'll ruin yourself."

"You see, we," continued István André calmly and uncontrollably, "Vera Angi and I, we love each other. And the truth has to be told once. Because what has been happening here for two days... Comrades!" His voice was not raised rhetorically, but the grim determination of it could be felt. "I am twenty-seven years old and have been a communist since my first year at the university. In the second year legal proceedings were brought against me; after my time in jail I was put in a chain-gang and it was from there that I managed to get over to the Soviet troops. My life is—nothing. But the movement, comrades..." his voice broke down with the excitement. He could not speak and felt again the strong tug on his coat that rocked his shoulders.

"What is happening here, comrades, perhaps I've chosen the worst moment to say it, and I have no right to say it now, but what is happening here is not humane... it is positively... positively inhuman."

Anna Traján marched out of the room noisily.

István André felt Vilmos Sas's elbow digging into his ribs.

"I am a communist because I feel that I am a humane man. We, comrade Angi and I, we love each other. And I know my duty. We do not want to make masochists out of people, we do not want to make sick and habitual liars. Its out of the question! I know, yes, I certainly know my duty."

Broken, jumbled sentences rushed to his lips in childish confusion. His eyes were full of tears and he felt he was atoning for the past two days single-handed.

"Yes," he said, broken and happy, "I love Vera."

Vera Angi looked at the delegate. She had noticed Vilmos Sas's distress. She appraised István André, bending his thin shoulders forward in the dim light, his cheekbones flushed with the crimson circles of consumptives. She took stock of it all coldly and with precision. She knew, once again she knew what she had to do.

"No," she said, in her attractive, husky voice, "No! Comrade André is mistaken. I am not in love with him at all. It was because of his prestige... because he was head of my seminar." She cast her eyes down demurely. "I lost my head."

The delegate slipped another piece of paper before Vilmos Sas.

The criticism–self-criticism session had come to an end after all.

Translated by Eszter Molnár

VERA ANGI: FROM STORY TO SCRIPT

Sitting at the desk in my fifth-floor flat in Budapest I can see Vérmező (the Field of Blood) from my windows. Now domesticated into a park, it was at one time a parade-ground, and about two hundred years ago a group of Hungarian Jacobins were put to death here on the orders of the Court in Vienna. Hence the park's historical name, which luckily no longer arouses sombre associations in the public mind. This is where I live; this is the point around which my daily orbit revolves. All this comes to mind from the task at hand: on the occasion of publishing a short story of mine, "*Vera Angi*", in English. The New Hungarian Quarterly has kindly requested me to outline the history of the work, the story of its genesis from published short story to film. Another reason why my room above Vérmező has a symbolic meaning for me is that it is here I wrote *Vera Angi* between 1959 and 1960.

What I had to transform into literature was no less than history as it was lived, the shock and nightmare experienced by my contemporaries—in the light of realistic truth, but without resorting to a simplifying naturalism. Apart from two highly significant and truly pioneering pieces by Tibor Déry, there were few precedents for describing the "personality cult" period. After the tragic and dramatic outburst of

1956, the responsibility that rested with the Stalinists was formulated, but the more extensive artistic and historical analysis of the period was still to come.

I do not consider myself a spiritual heir to those years even though I was a survivor of them. But I have felt and still feel that they must be spoken of in the language of art as well, so that the generations to come shall not suffer for their naiveté. When I thought out the story of the career of Vera Angi, this gentle yet determined young woman, it was my conscious purpose not to descend into the inferno of terror, torture and forced confession; what I wanted to do was to portray the very beginnings: in biblical terms, the moment of the fall—that is, the psychological preparation for the great manipulations. This is why the story of Vera Angi begins in December 1948, in the fanatically cloistral world of a party school, enclosed both in time and in space.

When I had finished the short story I tried my luck with an adventurous magazine; though enthusiastic, the editors decided that the time was not yet right for its publication. As one in a collection of short stories submitted for review, it was taken amiss by a literary adviser. However, at the express wish of the chief literary editor of the publisher's (himself an excellent writer) it finally came out in 1962. There was no great hue and cry. It seemed to have escaped the attention of the critics, they neither praised nor attacked it—it appeared to have been smothered in the cotton-wool of silence. As the years passed, as life changed, slowly critics began to take note, to write about it with the wonder of first discovery. True gratification came with the film. By a stroke of luck it so happened that responsible persons were also in favour of adapting Vera Angi to the screen.

Because of the sensitivity of Pál Gábor, the film's director and now with a world-wide reputation, the psychological and aesthetic world, the dramatic and ideological elements of the original short story were preserved with complete fidelity. At the same time, expanding the short story to the large and specific dimensions of a film, Gábor enriched the material through his visual sense and psychological delicacy. I feel that our association was a happy one: it has proved to have had a stimulating effect in other joint efforts.

Finally: remembering my own past, the turns in my own private fortune, I am inclined to believe not without a little self-irony, that one must not die too soon. Not if there is a chance one might live to see the realisation of at least some of one's dreams.

ENDRE VÉSZI

"GELEBTES DENKEN"

An autobiographical sketch

by

GYÖRGY LUKÁCS

All autobiographies: subjective; not moving from social towards personal development—but, how, in the framework of a given development, a man finds or fails himself.

Objectivity: the correct time sequence. Memory: tendency towards antedating. To check by the facts. Youth: Benedek;[1] 1914, Simmel[2]—letters to Marianne Weber. But attention only to facts when correcting. Eliminate: (a) bourgeois presentation. Example: Zitta[3] 101. (b) Party history: Trotsky (also true for me.) That connected ignorance may be bona fide:

Victor Serge[4] 213; Memory (written later). Contradiction in practice (date also later). V[ictor] S[erge]: (a) Date (p. 213) not right (not 1928/29—I wasn't in Russia). But also [concerning] Vienna: (b) Big unpublished books (p. 212). Then "author of *History and Class Consciousness:*" only book of that period, published 1923 (211). (c) Landler, 213 and 214. Kremlin. V. S[erge]'s general tendency: what happened later he puts earlier—such checking wherever possible.

In this framework, inner development as well as that in practice; as it subjectively was. Intention: to represent *my* development in a direct way. The objective: reacting *how* to *what*. Task: be what you are[5]—present that properly. The characteristics of the man from here on is to hope: to present things *also* in an objective manner, without pretentions to an overall historic characterisation. Right when hit on certain *essential* traits.

Not my life in *strict* sense. Only how (how in human terms) from living, this trend of thinking, this way of thinking (this attitude) about life emerged. Today, in hindsight: not individuality as either starting-point of final goal. But: *how* personal traits, inclinations, tendencies, given maximal

The genesis of this work is briefly explained in the introduction to the Notes on p. 92.

development in the circumstances, became socially typical, in my present [mode of thinking], generic, trying to flow into the generic.

No poet. Only philosopher. Abstractions. Also memory so directed. Danger: premature generalization of the spontaneous. But a poet: recollection of concrete feelings, primarily situations in their manifestations. Through this already: at the right place in the process of time. Above all: childhood. However, since there a tendency of lasting importance—must be reckoned with.

Autobiography: intention, here concrete: correction of certain attitudes to social life. Timeliness, manipulation: the particular person as central problem. The apparatus breeds these (Gauloise cigarettes[6]—extending to the question of artifical stimulation). The struggle against this: in objectivizations as before: both aesthetically and also generally philosophically.

To live here: over eighty—kept subjective interest in reality—at a time when contact with early youth is often lost. A long and undeniably still industrious life—the right to try to justify this attitude. Connected with this the struggle for Marxism. Individuality and the problem of genericalness. Precisely here clash of particularity and practically lived genericity. (Hence, never a transition from the contradictory to the transcendental [attitude to everything religious negative, pure down-to-earth this-worldliness in overcoming particularity]). Also in this respect—in which practical positions on the intellectual trends of the period are included—completion of and commentary on all that has been accomplished in the way of writing.

Subjectiveness of autobiography, as completion of and commentary on one's own literary activity. In this respect subjectiveness cannot be overcome. (Of course, only for presentation. In the last resort: history. Verdict not subject to appeal, i.e. appealable only in the further course of history itself.) To such judgements even this kind of subjective presentation subjects itself with conviction.

I. Childhood and School

Of purely Jewish stock. Precisely for that reason: ideologies of Jewry no influence whatever on intellectual development. Father: Consul in Budapest.[7]

Otherwise as well: episodes of etiquette influence on childhood life: social participations at weddings, funerals, etc. of acquaintances, participation in ceremonies. Since no importance attached even to learning Hebrew, for a child all this without content, purely "etiquette." (Hat in

synagogue, never thought that the texts there spoken or sung there could make sense.) Thus, integrating religion into normal social life: whether one should respectfully greet an (unknown) visitor, should one politely (and seemingly with interest) reply to his—in most cases totally senseless in the eyes of a child—questions and utterances: all the same. Such formal and senseless compulsory reactions already integrated in a normal child's life, already characteristic of the early years of childhood.

Spontaneous revolts. No direct memories. Already after adaptation (about 5–6 years), mother's quoting me (how naughty I had been earlier): "I won't greet unknown guests, *I* didn't ask them to come." First resistance —but conscious submission: none of my business; if I want to be left alone by the grown-ups, then submission with the feeling that the whole thing does not make sense; whether, and if, how I formulated it at the time, I have no idea. Only certain: no violently rebellious child, no spontaneous—blind—revolt against any kind of order or obedience. Story with nurse[8]: remembered to this day, also of having obeyed, tidiness of toys, later books, exercise books. Saw its sense; no revolts. No rebellion even against "senselessness" any longer; only clear consciousness; one has to submit, although the thing itself makes no sense (formally, though, have forgotten formulation in the meantime). Memory: Paris–London, visit to galleries.[9] I: demanding the zoo. The battle scene at Versailles.[10] So, distinct contrast: between what really concerns and helps me—and the formal submission to stupidities of grown-ups, the "etiquette." (Guerilla war with mother: dark closet around eight, released by father without apologizing [etiquette v. etiquette]).[11]

On the whole: on very bad terms with mother. Clever and what at the time was called educated in terms of our social life (a later observation), but lacking any interest in how things really are, in what way needs are genuine. Utterly conventional, therefore; and since she could cleverly, at times even with inspiration, carry out what I here call etiquette, she was respected in her own circles. Also my father (as a self-made man) honoured her greatly; as a child, I thought fairly highly of him (work and brains), but was indignant because of his high estimation of my mother, so I sometimes despised him because of that (blindness). I only came to be on really good terms with him when—perhaps not always without my help in some cases—he began to be more critical towards my mother. (But this happened much later.)

In childhood, my mother dominated the atmosphere and ideology of our home. Part of this was almost as the focal issue—that my brother was seen to be a very promising child at the side of whom I was completely in the

background. Here once again *classification* into real and etiquette important. For this evaluation never affected me: all the facts contradicted: learning to read.

Learning to read[12]: extending reality beyond the nursery. But here: from the outset: criticism on the basis of the etiquette-outlook. First of all, writings about childhood. Great scepticism towards *Cuore.*[13] Here I found much etiquette (school!), but also in the historical stories (such as heroes of the Turkish wars); particularly in heroism much mere etiquette. The bravery of the heroes of the Turkish wars reminded of the mental dominance of "aunts" and "uncles" in life. But right here: extension and intensification. When nine, shrewd position (Hector and Achilles) about the *Last of the Mohicans*[14]. Both against the *Weltanschauung* at home (including father): success as criterion of what is right. Especially Cooper: the vanquished is in the right, is the genuine one, is the real victor against the merely etiquette-victors. This intensified, one or one and a half years later: Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. Important extension: the genuinely real is not a general pattern, but individual: one's own way towards the real. Highest step—learned English at the time—*Tales from Shakespeare*: immeasurable, for me unsurveyable, wealth of genuine reality and recognition of it. Read Shakespeare himself much too early to be able to approach him with real understanding; later, better reading matter—no rejection, but continuation in the direction of genuine understanding.

Naturally: all this was hovering in the air (reality at home—and the Mohicans), approximation of real criticism of existing state of affairs, bound up with perspective of own correct action—later. Now and then reading classics. Not without being impressed (but: anti-Schiller), but no real relationship. Mainly: Auerbach's poor story about Spinoza: here the subject: decision against convention in favour of a reality that I can grasp; against religion, intensification of this effect.

Hurried ahead: when not yet nine, school. Relief: not at home all day; together with others my age who, I took it for granted, were made of better stuff than my brother and the boys whom I met socially at that time. Hope—despite scepticism derived from reading—in the poor. This proved itself, although at school (disappointment in the poor) hardly even one deeper friendship. For much etiquette also here, partly foreseen—but, as I correctly suspected, more relaxed, with more elbowroom than at home. Foreseen; proven. Without fear: experience of learning easily; in all subjects at the time. Even where I was and stayed completely untalented (such as mathematics) this lasted till the end of *Gymnasium.* So I was without any effort at the top of my class. School took up the morning, but homework

for the next day hardly an hour of the afternoon. So I could easily do my own reading in the afternoon, take bike-rides, go skating, etc. After about an hour of studying, I was free. This increase in freedom at home, especially since the first good reports. Yet home "ideology" remained unshaken. My mother engaged private tutors—for me, as according to her my brother required no help; when, in a few weeks' time, things changed and my brother swotted with the tutor till night and always found it difficult to avoid repeating the year, the legend of his laziness and my hard work was born. The facts were stark enough repeatedly to give the lie to this legend and to make it ineffective.

Yet for me: school too as etiquette. Spontaneously: I became what was called a good student. Social problem: to be considered teacher's pet—to be despised.[15] Slow solution: solidarity in practice with mediocre and bad students. Gradual formation in the course of school years. Lastly: had the advantages in the teachers' eyes of the good student (bad answers considered "accidental"), without standing apart from everyday community as teacher's pet. Small sacrifices: e.g. later, form of translation—saving of work even.

All in all, *Gymnasium*-period between childhood and youth already tuned to production filled in rather than essential and concrete advance. The way: from childish rejection of etiquette to criticism of society becoming concrete, slow, scarcely conscious and with long interruptions. Turning-point only around fifteen. Found Nordau's *Entartung* in father's library. A "mere" 180-degree turn had to take place to discover: Baudelaire, Verlaine, Swinburne, Zola, Ibsen, Tolstoy as guiding figures. Criticism: etiquette-convention and therefore necessary element of present societalness (to be fought against.) The self-defence of childhood harmony through experiences of this kind, through a comprehension of this sort—true at first rather abstract—of the social environment, can act as guide to social practice, and grow into a guiding principle of man finding himself in this process.

This radical process of tranformation was—even if at the outset very abstract and replete with false tendencies—brought about by such reading. Surely no coincidence that now: first friendships worthy of the name. More later of the most important (Leo Popper[16]) its significance being more comprehensive and more profound than this initial transition to my initiating actual productivity. In this first transitional stage: (a) a schoolmate (M[arcell] H[ammerschlag]), from a family of musicians, then going through a somewhat similar transitional phase. Facing the problem of R. Wagner, (b) more comprehensive and lasting: M[arcell] B[enedek]. (Father[17]: not

as author—and (yet) as model of unflinching subjective moral decency.) With the help of this friendship: transition from opposition become. "conscious" to production. Our alliance: that of young beginner authors. (My high esteem of his stylistic [verse] technique, with the simultaneous feeling: I am superior regarding a sense for conflicts.) (This undertone played hardly any part; no question of "competition": limitation: "the thing" itself.) A double beginning: criticism—already in public: not without success. Bródy[18]. Unexploited: dogmatism (Mereshkovsky[19]) more important—after matriculation—Thália.[20] First "movement," and first "leader" (Pethes).[21]

II. Literary Beginnings

Thália showed the way beyond half-childish beginnings. Not our merit: initiative of stage director Hevesi[22] and actors: real impact in the clarification of theatrical issues as starting-point of a transformation never brought about. Only its contours showed.

For me—this to be repeated!—first participation in a movement. And yet, permanent misgivings. But even after greatest activity as a writer, never again fulfilment as long as the framework remained bourgeois.

Two important concretizations of my career in literature: (a) with Benedek, even before Thália, Bánóczy (characterization; later career), background (L. Popper). Realization that I had no genuine talent as a writer. Not long after *Gymnasium*, destroyed *all* manuscripts. Hence, spontaneous standard: where does real literature start?[23] (b) Crumbling of illusions regarding theatre. Precisely Thália-practice demonstrates: no talent as director. Particular form of transposition here—criticism and theory. Clarification similar to (a). Through this, preparation for becoming critic, theoretician, literary historian: greater impulse. Steadily increasing knowledge: Germany. (French–English positivism propagated by radicals without substantial effect). Germany: disappointment in literary history, already short visits to Berlin University. (From Erich Schmidt downwards: Lotte's eyes[24]—the science of what is not worth knowing).[25] As against this: Dilthey, Simmel—some authors sporadically writing critiques: Paul Ernst. Simultaneously also Marx. Superficially justified by Simmel—substantially distorted. Despite everything: theoretical analysis of literature never entirely left the social basis. Social democratic theory: negative—and to a great extent Mehring as well. Powerful influence: Lessing, Schiller–Goethe correspondence, romanticism of the Athenaeum. Reading: Schopen-

hauer and Nietzsche. Relegated to the background by Kierkegaard (known through Kassner—who also influenced me in that direction). Thus: first attempt at literary theory on the basis of fundamentally stated *Gesellschaftlichkeit* (M[arx]'s influence visible), but the actual categories are based to a great extent on conservative literary history and aesthetic theory.

With all that: this development: yet continuation of earlier ones. Notwithstanding all new methods of mastering thought—yet continuity: hatred of remnants of Hungarian feudalism, all forms of capitalism evolving on these foundations. (1906: Ady's[26] "New Poems"). Powerful impetus for me: principles of what has to be considered as really "new." So revolution of form: means of expressing this. Much less clear in German literature. But (a) it dawned upon me that the peak of German classicism was closely linked to the French Revolution and Napoleon, (b) that the present is a miserable compromise state in all important human problems. Hence: admiration for radicalism of Scandinavian and Russian literature (beginnings of Tolstoy's impact). Remaining within oneself faithful to the ideal of the human (*Peer Gynt*, and Peter Martensgard). Against "superficial" positivism, even if radical—an "inner" revolution (even if outer forms are not revolutionary). These are initial tendencies only. Without participation in Hungarian literary movements, without unconditionally approving Ady's revolution: no doubt, a blind alley. This double aspect in "Thália", the friendship with B. Balázs[27] (from 1908 onwards). At first perhaps contradictory, confused motives, but an inherent tendency in all of them: searching for new form of revolution (later Tolstoy and Dostoevsky).

Few studies in transition period—thus: as a summing up: a book on drama[28] (written 1906–7) completed January 1907. While attempting a summing up: Marx-tendency very much in the foreground. Sociological theory: the drama as product of the decline of classes (the past—especially Renaissance), much schematic abstraction; Greece—the *polis*, although without thoroughgoing specific research, etc. Being bourgeois: synthesis of problems originating in childhood and youth: a meaningful life impossible under capitalism; striving for it: tragedy and tragicomedy, the latter playing an important part in analyses; as a consequence, that modern drama is not just a product of crisis, but in all its elements and relationships also directly—artistic: the complex of problems becomes more extensive.

Book entered in a competition of the K[isfaludy] Society and won prize in February 1908.

Given profound disdain for the leading men, I had not counted on a prize; wanted—*à la* Schopenhauer—to publish it as "also run." Victory

under flattering circumstances: with brief crisis of despair afterwards[29] (L[eo] Popper the saviour). Reception: respectfully lukewarm (with the sole exception of Feleky's[30] critique). Despite this: favourable impact on my literary standing; above all at home: my father—his development in that period to be outlined briefly—became my patron. Need for wisdom and culture (desire when young for such a career) but completely atheoretical: suggests I become Tisza Party deputy. Ridiculed. Not offended. Continues patronage—successes, of course, necessary—but approval of important personalities sufficient (Max Weber, Th. Mann). Continues even past dictatorship.

Otherwise at home complete alienation. Principally, mother; hardly any communication, with brother absolutely none (death)[31]. Letter during last illness.[32] Only father and—peripherally—sister.

More important: together with prize, the period of essays begins. Need: many-facetedness of phenomena (not to be grasped through abstract theories). Feeling for the simultaneity of the universality of individual phenomena in the case of non-mechanical link-ups with general great functions (totalities). In order to grasp this: romanticism: Kierkegaard, Meister Eckhardt, oriental philosophy. Most frequently arbitrarily chose what happened to suit me (Kierkegaard an exception). With all these: the general line (up to Marx) not given up. An illusion to find a new kind of synthesis here (again: Kierkegaard).

Thus *The Soul and the Forms* came into existence in this period. First essay (Novalis) almost simultaneous with prize (drama book). Yet that period of essays in no way a getting closer to the prevailing (of course largely positivistically oriented) impressionism, predominating at the time, on the contrary, a sharpening, since here final objectivity (laws much more accentuated). Importance of Cézanne, parallel with old Italian painting (Giotto). Speech at first exhibition of such an already Matisse-oriented Hungarian painter[33]: openly against impressionism (i.e. modern subjectivism). Thus: tendency towards absoluteness of great art (rejection of all kinds of "historically" oriented conservatism).

Kierkegaard period: not without Regine Olsen. Irma Seidler[34], to whose memory *The Soul and the Forms* was dedicated. As in the case of the model—spontaneous, certainly not deliberately intended: framework of strictly bourgeois conventions: (break: *outcast.** The Zalai[35] case. At the very most: young divorcées tolerated—if no child born of the liaison.) So marriage would have been the only possible sexual-erotic solution in this case. As opposed to this in my case—independence *vis-à-vis* production,

* In English in the text.

absolute and precisely therefore mute rejection. So that "great love" was played out in the narrowest frame of the prevailing social "decency." As for my attitude to life in that period: working out of an "essayistic" mode of life; as for her: justified dissatisfaction with halfway solution. Hence (at the end of 1908) marriage with a painter colleague that later proved to be a failure. Break—an important motive in this essay period—goes to show unity between dissolution of mechanical system directed towards the individual and the perspective of a new dogmatism. This only immanently present in the first essays. After her suicide (in 1911) (unhappy marriage, failure in attempt to build up new love life—not with me) termination of essay period (1911). Dialogue "On the Poverty of the Spirit:" attempt at ethical reckoning with my complicity in the suicide. Background: differentiation of the possibilities of ethical positions as the spiritual revival of the caste system. Blind alley clearly visible here.

III. Prospects of Philosophy

Such was—and not by chance—the termination of the essay period. Ernst Bloch's[36] most important part in this. Contradiction: decisive—and yet without influence that can be put in concrete terms. The encounter in Budapest. Correcting the unsuccessful outcome of the first conversation. Good relationship. My experience: a philosophy in the classical (and not in the present-day epigone academic) style justified through Bloch's personality and thus opened up as a life-path for me too. At the same time, however: final content and structure without any influencing effect. A few years after the encounter, confirmed by Bloch himself (*Traces*, 246). Here already: rejection of any—humanlike—consummation (also of problems) in the anthropomorphized reality of nature. Here the programme of *History and Class Consciousness* already expressed. This is of course still far from Marx's genuine historicism (retreat of natural limitations as principle of evolution). For Bloch at the time philosophy of nature the centre of interest.

A natural consequence of this: despite all fascination—always a certain demarcation on both sides. And this—in different ways—came to stay. Doubtful, however, whether without Bloch's impulse I would ever have found my way to philosophy. A philosophy that certainly came into existence under his impact; though no direct or concrete influence. Respect—precisely in philosophy—keeping one's distance. Regarding character and personality, no reservations, however. (Bloch in the Stalin period,

and today.) Precisely where Adorno's philosophy is one of compromises—with Bloch it is the old, classic type. First impression: correct. External manifestation: turning from the essay towards aesthetics. (Winter 1911/12, Florence: first draft.[37]) Remarkable that the very slow and contradictory process of development (often with relapses) which, in my case, meant that logical and epistemological considerations were suppressed in favour of ontological ones, commenced immediately, totally unconsciously as yet. Variation on Kant: "There are works of art—how are they possible?" Instead of judgement—germ of ontology. (It seems to me, of course, that—though in a primitive and distorted way—this tendency was already the basis of the essay period.)

Together with Bloch to Heidelberg with such plans. That, under his impact, the ontological motivation of the aesthetic factor turned into metaphysical criticism of it (the Lucifer principle), is characteristic of this transitional period: only the return to Marx, the building up of a historical world view in his sense made it possible to safeguard the correct tendency in this fantastically false one, the well-intentioned core (the concrete particularity of the aesthetic in social existence). The concrete transformation came only after overcoming *History and Class Consciousness:* Marxism's own aesthetics (in contrast to Plekhanov and Mehring.) So: rectification of the historic role of art only became possible through the universality of Marxism. (A later stage of my Marxist development.)

At the time still very far from that. Way of thinking at the time still purely ideological. Of course, for consistent struggle against the remnants of feudal ideology (Lenin: the Prussian way) was the starting-point, precisely as a consequence of developments at home in Hungary, and Russian literature (Tolstoy and Dostoevsky above all) was always the guide-post. On this basis, however, it was impossible to arrive at a well-founded homogeneous philosophical position. On the one hand (there are works of art)—immanence, the immanent substance of art, as a basis, impossible to evaluate with alien standards. (Sharp distancing from) (a) mere existence, mere subjective experience—against modern subjectivism and naturalism; not a preliminary stage, preparation for artistic realism—but *the* opposite; (b) rejection of any kind of a "metaphysicalization" of art—e.g., Schopenhauer. Kierkegaard: rejection of art as a life principle in the name of a morality constituting itself gradually and full of contradictions. Against "art of living" (already in essays). Now, the "Lucifer" quality of such a world outlook in the name of a moralizing revolution that is called to bring about real "salvation" (the first metaphysical formulation of man's becoming really human).

All this, together with a few partly correct statements (homogeneous medium of quality in art—extension of L. Popper's ideas[38]), absolute immanence, inherent completeness of each and every work of art. Ranking within a higher context (genre theory) is methodologically different and independent of mental abstractions (genericity in sciences). While the genre—epistemologically—stable, within which the unit is ranked, the phenomenon in art (epic, drama, etc.) is a generality the determinants of which are modified in each true realization—without having to lose their general validity (Shakespeare and Greeks up until Lessing).

Inasmuch as I was here seeking new forms of generalization that accord with the material, a certain productivity—without radically surpassing the ideas of the essays. From real generalization to completely false principles (precisely the luciferian). That which in it is in accord with the facts cannot be evolved within this system (infertility of aesthetics as a life principle). So that here I manœuvred myself into a theoretical blind alley. No direct way out. So that at best I might have become an "interesting"-eccentric *Privatdozent* in Heidelberg.

IV. Towards the Turning-Point

But the perception thus come about not followed up: with the war, society set radically new problems. As it will soon be apparent: even these did not show a way out of the insolubility of the foundations. As they posed questions—existential ones—of a quite different sort, and thus smashed at least the normal systematics of existence—without my really having grasped the significance of this turn—forced the whole current of grappling with problems in a new direction. This was, seen in itself, likewise a blind alley of theoretical contradictions. Yet it was of such a nature that the ever more acute social situation compelled me to take up new positions. (Relationship to Hungarian ideology before the war.) That was the War. It unmasked the false and inhuman in that static state that threatened to rigidify into a system within me: for the anti-human as the central motive force of our lives, that unconsciously influenced me in my initial phases of building up a philosophy, acquired in them such a commanding and all-pervading shape that it was impossible to avoid an intellectual confrontation. All the social forces that I had hated since early youth and that I had tried to annihilate intellectually, united now to bring about the first universal war that was, at the same time, universally devoid of ideas and hostile to them. And not a determining moment of life but as universally determining

factors of life in its extensive and intensive totality. One could not exist any more *at the side* of this new reality of life, as at the time of wars of old. It was of a universal nature: life exhausted itself in it, whether one affirmed or denied this process.

From the first moment, I was on the side of the rejectors: the intention was to force upon us a life running over with inhumanity in order to approve in all their aspects and preserve those life-forces which, in their inhumanity, had seemed despicable. My country, the Habsburg monarchy, had seemed to me—in normal circumstances—a human senselessness destined for destruction. And now we were expected to risk our own lives in order to participate in universal murder so that this obstacle in the way of becoming human should be further preserved with the help of the severe, mindlessly-severe, order of the German empire. We were expected individually to become murderers, criminals, victims, etc., in order to maintain this in existence in this way.

Vehemently rejecting all this, this radicalism nevertheless had nothing to do with any pacifist inclinations. I never regarded violence, abstract violence, as an evil *per se* hostile to mankind. Without Marathon, without the Great Migration, without 1789 and 1793, the best which is human in present mankind could never have come about. Not violence in general, but reactionary violence, that of Wilhelm II and his kind, violence as an obstacle to becoming human, ought to be annihilated, if necessary by violence. And one had to be aware, at the same time, that the Western form of capitalist democracy could not be that countervailing force which was relevant here. Yes: Jaurès against Wilhelm II—this sounds almost rational—but what of Jaurès's murderers? The Dreyfus affair, its covering up, etc., was carried out with more modern means than were at the disposal of the Hohenzollern—or Habsburg—regime. But were they not, in themselves, just as vile and anti-human?

So even if I did not reject the war in a pacifist or a Western-democratic way, but in judging our age of wars I turned back to Fichte's "age of consummate guilt," I remained more faithful to the views professed up to then as if I had taken up the antinomies of the ways of life and action widespread at the time. War as the now appearing central negative characteristic of the existing: the contents of this hatred: continuation of position taken on feudal Hungary as a young man (Ady's influence). The only change in perspective was that now the Tolstoy-Dostoevskyan "revolution" constituted the utopian perspective and by this very fact the moral standard. Therefore: reaching back to Fichte did not lead to this conclusion. This perspective, however, not influenced: representation of phenomena them-

selves: geisteswissenschaftlich. Left-wing ethics together with right-wing-epistemology: this the nature of my Marxism attained at the time.

Theory of the Novel as expression of this eclectic philosophy of history.

Life: staying outside. More protest than *Theory of the Novel* was impossible for me then. Sympathy for Jaurès and Liebknecht without the faintest possibility of going their way. Heidelberg: Jaspers's[39] help (much against his own position) not quite successful. Budapest: not frontline: censoring letters; after a year, release[40]—back to Heidelberg.

In private life in consequence of war: similar confusion. E. Grabenko,[41] summer of 1913 (Balázs's friend. Being in love + friendship. Both basis of good—always subject to notice [relationship]).

Free life of a *littérateur:* a proper basis. Heidelberg situation: marriage necessary. War. E. Gr.: Russian, sole protection: Hungarian citizenship. Financial basis: [one] year. The foreseeable (E. considered it an acute [?] possibility even in this form): her love affair with musician. 3some cohabitation: put to the test loyalty of union. Inner divorce concurrent with marital relation. Real solution: friendly divorce only after the war. [This paragraph in Hungarian in the original.]

Given all the friendly ways and means of this coexistence during the war: concurrently dissolution of that modernist construction with the help of which we had striven to set the foundation of our lives in an at once humanly genuine and "modern" way. When after separation from musician Lena visited me during the Dictatorship, a friendship based on understanding existed between us, which however did not touch any of our own central existential problems. Respect and sympathy, without belonging together down to the cores of our lives. Always appreciated her acute and clear-sighted intelligence, her ability to grasp the essence of a man with one glimpse. (B. Kun—Vautrin,[42] etc.) But the core of life: placed differently.

Opposition to war: centre of interest shifts from aesthetics to ethics (Budapest lecture, spring 1917). Circle in Budapest (Heidelberg, since Bloch, almost completely isolated. No common ground on these questions even with M[ax] W[eber]). Also Budapest circle ideologically very motley: most general basis: the old opposition (Ady, attitude to war: very convergent). Predominance of morality: B[éla] B[alázs] and war: for ethical reasons (solidarity with human victims): he himself to the trenches (In background—rejected adjustment; reconciliation with Habsburg monarchy). Such differences still no obstacle. Private society. Later appeared as free school of Humanities.[43] (In harmony with XX. *század.*[44] Significance overdone—because of role—much later, of Mannheim, and even later, of Hauser in emigration.)

At home: the year 17/18 decisive: relationship to Russian revolution. Own way: contradictory fascination, with relapses: 1918 C. P.

Life: lecture 1918 (ethics: Gertrud[45]), our earlier acquaintance (Lena's account of meeting). 17/18: coming into existence of new bond: not seen in the round, but feeling that at last—for the first time in my life: love, completion, firm life basis (control of thinking)—not opposition. Immediate subject of conversation: secondary. Content always: whether what I think and feel is real, i.e., whether it expresses my real individuality (subjectively: genuine, objectively: generic). This control, that at the outset manifested itself only in spontaneous gestures and stresses on words, has gradually become a new way of life: doubled, permanent control of the genuine.

I don't know whether the inner transformation of my way of thinking (1917–19) would have been realizable without the help of this control. Not only because now—for the first time in my life—ideological decision—change of entire way of life, but simultaneously ideological alternatives of a totally different kind. Above all, ethics (guidance of life) no longer prohibition keeping one's hands off all that one's own ethics condemn as sinful, but a dynamic equilibrium of practice in which the (individually) sinful can sometimes be an inevitable part of correct action, and sometimes an ethical restriction (recognized as generally valid) becoming an obstacle to correct action. An antagonism: not simple: general (ethical) principles versus practical requirements of concrete action. This although general background, is never strictly of necessity. In later depravation (down to bureaucratization) motif often: consolidation of—exceptionally—permitted behaviour as general guideline for action. (Very often with some totally abject mechanized bureaucrats such a consolidation as background of human depravation. And on the other hand the uniqueness of choice in a crisis situation can become the basis of cynical depravation.)

Naturally, in 1918/19, all this visible only as a—seemingly far off—perspective on the horizon, in no way to be concretely experienced as a dilemma of basic positions and perspectives by someone on the way to transformation in this direction. (Nevertheless, sometimes visible on the horizon as background to decision in cases of actual alternatives.) Thus: precisely because decision directly (entails) grave social consequences, the thinking through, differentiation of individual resolve, the individual-practical-theoretical attitude following in its wake is greater and more gradual than in decision before this crisis. The social phases are naturally: clear, robust. But transposition in changing personal life through such specifications.

However, even with these: direct interaction with personality. For me: culture. Continuation of the Ady line (Significance of false solution of peasant question—realized later in Vienna. Important about this: no real knowledge of Lenin [whole question of exile. Importance of stay in Vienna]. As against this, culture: L's + action + appropriate continuation of the Ady line; sufficient.)

G's importance in this transition: the first time in my life. Difference in comparison with the earlier (Irma, Lena): my line always firm / relationship—also love—within given line of development. Now, in every decision G. powerfully participating: particularly in the most human and personal definitions. Her reactions to these often decisive. That is: not that without her I would not have made my way to communism at all. This was, as before, given by my own development; but precisely here, the most complicated and, in their consequences, most important personal nuances of the specific "how" would surely have taken quite a different course without her. And with that many most essential things in my life.

And long before the evolvement of a spiritual bond between us, this irresistible need to harmonize, to be approved by her, was a central question of our relationship. Since I met G., to be approved by her has become the central problem of my personal life. And because in things intellectual as well—not to mention those ethical—she possessed an instinctive rigour that can be found sometimes in G. Keller's women, there were from time to time moments of estrangement between us. Yet my relationship with her differed from all earlier ones insofar as these moments were unbearable for me. (Earlier such differences of opinion, even in questions that were humanly important, were part of the thrill of that relationship: we were after all different people whose differences were part of the mutual attraction.) In Gertrud's case either, I do not think of tendencies towards complete identification. For there is no such thing, and it could not be implemented without moments of deviating from the facts themselves. The real issue for me was rather to successfully grapple with current world problems, with the help of my intellectual and practical aspirations (and not only in a way that was correct objectively and practically, but also that was favourable for my human development). The new situation grew into something qualitatively new: the choice between two world systems. Noone—with the (in a certain sense) exception of Lenin—had recognized that in the last resort the two processes—in terms of world history—are identical, i.e., that the social coming into existence of the new man is a factual synthesis of each and every individual aspiration to grapple in an honestly revolutionary way with the new reality. Although taking part in

the upheaval in Hungary there were many who had participated in the Russian revolution in relatively (locally) leading positions, my efforts to obtain a picture of him proved to be fruitless. All revered the "infallible" political leader, but even B.[éla] K.[un] told me in private that, all things considered, he believed Bukharin to have been the actual theoretician of the revolution. Only in Vienna did I at last have the possibility of really acquainting myself with Lenin and of becoming aware with increasing clarity of the importance of his intellectual, practical, and moral features.

Amid such circumstances in Budapest, even taking account of her modest passivity—i.e., her alleging that she had never before considered these these questions—[G's position] was all-important in fateful decision (whether to go over to the Communists or stay in a "left-socialist" position). In our conversations of that time there were no passionately vehement theoretical discussions (precisely because of the modesty of one who as a bourgeois stood apart) in face of the scholarly theoretician. Yet when she said evasively, in her (disapproving) passivity, something like, you must know this better, I have hardly thought about the question, and in fact took a passive attitude to the individual changes in my position, then a sort of human rejection was so clearly palpable that I always felt compelled to reconsider the actual problem. In cases where her silent and modest solidarity became manifest, I always acquired a strong impulse to proceed. (That these influences were extensively stronger in the first phase than later: decision to adhere to communism, originates most of all from the nature of the crossroads. That I found an intellectual and moral connection to my early ideological attacks against the remnants of Hungarian feudalism, and that for this very reason I encountered the possibility of good cooperation with these democratic trends without drawing close to "liberalism"—already hated and despised at that time—was, although never explicitly stated, an important constituent of the increasing harmony between us.)

Growing into being a Communist was really the greatest turning point, the greatest developmental achievement in my life. Where there had been, up to now, at best—as in the fine arts—the possibility of a loose ideological cooperation only, there came into being an alliance in which the practical preparation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the realization of the requirements set by democratic reforms, constituted the basis for cultural fulfilment within the dictatorship of the proletariat. An extended field of activity: in the first place by movement of educational reform. Sweeping away all remnants of feudalism: self-evident precondition for reforms. Through this, not just participation of the broad masses, definition of

concrete forms of transition. As a result ensured: (a) broad participation of masses, (b) connection with revolutionary past, out of this socialism: not foreign, not "imported," (c) its historic character, (d) anti-bureaucratic; in the name of development, no "official" art (Kassák group).

This stand alien to (a) average—Communists, (b) Social Democrats. I was considered a radical Communist—without having had anything to do with their dogmatism. This is why cultural reforms not much defended, they asserted themselves unofficially. (The Social Democratic people's commissars were indifferent towards reform work.) For me, precisely here: connection with old radical mass aspirations. Concentrated on culture. Did not admit faults. Agrarian question: even though I had much to do with it in army (briefly about Army Commissariat), understood central importance only in Vienna.

V. Apprentice Years in Living and Thinking

After the collapse: Korvin and I[47] (presumptions about Kun) underground work, flight to Vienna. Grappling with Lenin's teachings. For me: the proper study of Marx. M's philosophy: while rejecting every kind of revisionism (Kant, etc.): Hegel. This course: uniform philosophical basis of Marxism (no "completion" necessary). Revolution as essential element of Marxism. Hence, at the time, ultra-left: radicalism, continuation of the November days. Stalling of revolutionary movement not inwardly admitted, keeping hope alive through "actions." At the same time, suspicion of bureaucratic dogmatism of Comintern (Zinoviev—Kun taken to be his pupil and supporter). Journal: *Kommunismus* (Lenin's criticism accepted).[48]

The Hungarian crisis. Relationship to Landler.[49] Theoretical importance of "small" reasons [?] for party split. Attention moves from "great" problems (their existence perhaps only a requirement) to real questions of the movement—here: effect revolutionary. Politics educates for behaviour (importance of reality)—theoretical double life: example of March action (1921) versus Hungary's policy. Its growing importance, M.Sz.M.P. [H.S.W.P. — the Ed.] republic—democratic dictatorship. (Both still intertwined in *History and Class Consciousness.*)

Spring 1920, Gertrud in Vienna. Living with children at her sister's in Hütteldorf, I in Vienna for the time being. Only together on days off; only later: me too in Hütteldorf. In this way her way of life (family, 3 children) dominating for me too. Taking part in bringing up children (with her): daily encounter with certain human realities. Had considered

this sort of life impossible for me, now Gertrud, (a) no disturbance in work concentrating, not "lost" in everyday affairs. Isolation. (b) shared meals as talks with children. Taking note of their problems, attempt at answering them. (Ethics, much of it in a new light.) Gertrud, unity of tolerance and intolerance; far-reaching human tolerance together with hatred for everything base. New positions: against ethics of Kant's type; no less severe now as regards alternatives, yet overcoming the inherent tendencies towards an abstractly motivated inhumanity: therefore for me, new and direct relationship to problems of childhood (entirely free discussion).

This, naturally, a small part only, precondition only of harmony with Gertrud. Her impetuous development in Vienna, "adaptation" to comrades-in-arms (Gábor[50], Lengyel[51]), reading Marx, never a beginner, straight to centre of economics. Unbelievably fast: accumulation (Luxemburg–Bauer–Bukharin). Already as a result: intimate knowledge of theoretically most important problems. Though clinging to her own specific position in the transformation—failure of attempt of normally synthesizing the economy, character of individual "adventure" remains, (a) not Varga Institute, to acquire routine and overcome it, (b) even in note-taking individuality maintained. For me often: the bungling of a dilettante—in reality: lively for life essential appropriation of the most important interrelationships—without need generally communicable, scientifically and methodologically organized systematization. (Relationship with Ferkó,[52] painlessly renouncing own production: realization in son.)

So the economy had become the carrier of the social extension of her judgement of the world, without ever getting subjectivized and, at the same time, without generalizing the individuality of particular judgements. So the control exerted on me by her being there and by her thinking became increasingly intensive. Although, in a few important practical discussions, precisely because of her sharp sense for economics, she proved to be right—this was not of the essence (otherwise it would only have been a stimulating friendship). In reality: the more my thinking became ontologized, often unconsciously, the more important was the genuineness of starting-points and inclination. (Mimesis is never photographic): if something partakes of true being: involves the authenticity of the subjective impulse ("being" never reached via untruth). Hence emphasis: the first appearance often in a form that is barely expressible by language. Here: importance of authenticity. But also this is human and live; rejection not necessarily sign of absolute negativity, but often only intrusion of false (not authentic) nuances into first grasping. Correction—again with her help

—possible. In addition: same interest in (same criticism of) total representation (the latter grew gradually more important and weighty in aesthetics than in *History and Class Consciousness*). Important for the whole: methods and content of struggle between Hungarian factions. Landler: the other lucky event in this transition. Personality. Political influence on me. Again: living interrelatedness between the individual and the general. Reality as principle. (Slogan of republic according to Landler.) The two together: in philosophy: striving for totality: a generality that—historically (therefore: in reality)—incorporates traits of individuality at the same time.

This gives the point where theory, policy, and history appear as manifestations of the same animated existence. Theory and history: general tendency of what the majority of people (resp. the decisive section) will do (direction of action).—Politics—on such a basis—how the direction, the intensity, etc., of this foreseeable activity can be influenced quantitatively and qualitatively. In all cases: conclusions about future drawn from processes established *ex post facto*. This impossible on a purely scientific basis; only if the powers operating could be extrapolated, in *ex post facto* recognition, for future-presuppositions. To do this—100 per cent—is impossible on principle: historical change—always simultaneous (even if concretely often hardly discernible) with structural change (change in man as basis), and with that also change in content. Conclusions from developments stated *ex post facto* (which therefore do not necessarily have to be recognized in their real causality) always *also* include changes in the content of development; in relation to the general tendency—individual deviations. Important: proportions.

Thus correctness of theory, history, and politics growing out of personal position—but surpassing this in the direction of the self. (Rejection of the not authentic, though authenticity is no guarantee of correctness.) So, a new attitude towards reality: gradual overcoming of long-standing (still epistemologically directed) positions. In this redirection of intellectual attitudes: the development of the 1920s. Decisive: life with Gertrud—touchstone: Hungarian politics. This in struggle against general (abstract) sectarian tendencies: *History and Class Consciousness* a mixture as yet. But of importance: radicalism (ultra-left) continuation of Marxist line: problems (of present-day society) raised, not to be solved within it. Lenin: this became manifest in 1914. Weakening of acute revolutionary tension no proof that this foundation no longer functions. This was the theoretical foundation for opposition against Zinoviev's Comintern policy. (Back to merely bourgeois—revolutionary only in theory—politics: basis of my opposition.)

VI. The First Breakthroughs

Starting-point practical: republic or republic of councils as prospect for Hungary. The first: real dilemma: compulsion to act, in practice and on principle, against fundamental principles of the Horthy era. The second can be a general prospect, recognized yet without inherent obligation to act. Opposition to bureaucratization: such prospects from which any way of action can be "deduced" at will, lost their—subjective and objective—authenticity. This—in a negative way—*History and Class Consciousness:* the negation of the way of being "nature dialectics" (at the same time model for comprehension of the working of the economy): *History and Class Consciousness* attempt at releasing necessities of the world for real action. Inasmuch as it has been accompanied by a radical turn in the political attitude, the "Blum theses" mean the completion of these tendencies. Written for the 2nd Congress of the CP, their essence is that, in such a profound crisis of the Horthy system which opens up revolutionary perspectives, their social contents is not proletarian dictatorship, but what Lenin called in 1905 the "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants." (Caution: e.g., 6th Congress of the Communist International, other analysis)—scandal. Period of consequences (my political annihilation; Manuilski[53] in Berlin. Dissolution of the Landler faction. Révai[54] on theses). Double effect: politically: crushing defeat. Danger of exclusion from C. P. Korsch's[55] fate. Impotence at time of crisis brought about by Fascism. On the other hand: impulse to develop theory on higher level and to make it more effective. This doubleness: first, abandoning [political work], second, building up [ideological work]. Reason for reaction to period of consequences; doubtless there: Kun's intention and chance to annihilate me (to silence me). Everything else only eschewing (localizing) this without clarity: as to how much truth there is *de facto* in hopes (theoretical prospects).

Principle: period of consequences can be biologically necessary (e.g., cancer today).[56] Socially: tendency with very high negative probabilities. The question only: are these not to be influenced yet—within definable limits—(Lenin, 3rd Congress: there is no hopeless situation). In this case: objective optimum: question remains internal Hungarian party problem. (Objectively: precisely here the maximum of practical futility.) So if I wanted to preserve my (greatly changed, no more directly political but essentially ideological) scope for action, then the way: to attempt restricting inevitable criticism to Hungarian party line; not as a line that had come into existence in Hungary with general theoretical pretensions. Hence:

unconditional surrender as regards Hungarian line (practically without any prospects, anyhow): then Kun has no further interest in forcing the issue within the Comintern—the more so: new problems (problems of power). For me: disappearance from Hungarian movement: to be forgotten there makes continuation, expansion, etc. of criticism unnecessary. Circumstances facilitating this. So criticism of Blum theses gradually dying away. When Kun's fall in 1935 (7th Congress) made cooperation with Hungary again possible, it had sunk into the past long ago.

Positive: to re-think once more *History and Class Consciousness*. Result: it is not anti-materialism that is important in it, but consummating historism in Marx and through this, in the last resort, universality of Marxism as a philosophy: debate on philosophy (anti-Deborin). Against Plekhanov's and Mehring's "orthodoxy:" these two also revisionist inasmuch as Marxism—e.g., in aesthetics—"supplemented" by bourgeois philosophy.

Here alliance with Lifshitz.[57] Sickingen debate (he: Marx's youth); aesthetics an organic part of Marxist theory, evolving purely out of its theses on reality. Hence: universality of Marxist theory (in the thirties: "Literaturny Kritik" an important trend in the theory of literature; anti-Rapp, anti-modernism, etc.). As for me, still further: tendency towards the general (in the last resort integrated, but otherwise most differentiated) ontology as real philosophical basis of Marxism.

Hence: precisely through the philosophic unity of Marxist theory the way towards its universality. So, in new contexts: old tendency: direction towards ontology came into being. Old epistemological way of raising the question: "there are. . .—how are they possible?"—thought through is: "there are. . .—what historic necessity called them into being?" What was and is real function in the historic development of social being?

Only from here: contradiction between epistemology and ontology—the exclusion of every kind of idealist questioning. If for Marx ideology ≠ false consciousness (more precisely: epistemologically sought after), but to answer questions posed by the economy as to being—then everything takes place as a form of development of being. Feasible only if *(German Ideology)* universal basis: history. The so-called dialectics of nature no longer the (in *History and Class Consciousness* rejected) parallel to dialectics in society, but its prehistory.

Programme when born certainly not yet clearly thought through. For the time being—limited to aesthetics—only an attempt to prove that Marx's theory of social development was, *at the same time*, the theory of the coming into existence, the evolvement, and the effect !?!, the essence of

aesthetics; and in this way it is—existentially— present; it can (if understood) be properly developed, but never manipulated. Simultaneously against "modernism" and Stalinist manipulation.

VII. Extension of the Field of Conflict

In the direct sense: social genesis in the foreground as trends of interpretation of essence and value (importance of mimesis in this context; teleological positing as its precondition meaning of partisanship in mimesis (everyday).

When passing on to further fields (beginning: *The Young Hegel*), the question is formally still "scientifically" limited: to show that the most subtle mental reactions of philosophy to the world spring—in the last resort—from the appropriate generalization of primary life-reactions (to the economic field). This is why, already with Hegel: demand to put in the foreground the general method of genesis in the history of thought. (Genesis here means more than mere coming into existence, the first awakening to consciousness.) The *Destruction of Reason* is yet again the social history of a typical degeneration into the perverse of thinking. Proceeding from there: to the universality of history. Recognition of essence and historical recognition: most profound convergence (genericity historically). Art as genericity (the permanent reproduction of the tragic in the history of the ideologies). Self-awareness of universal historicity. Through this already at that time: opposition to Stalinist ideology universal, and not restricted to aesthetics. (Of course most of it—such as the Hegel—could not be published at the time.)

Odd: this isolation (Lit[eraturny] Kritik ceased; Internationale Literatur often highly problematic) after 7th Congress of Comintern: Hungarian possibilities: people's front trends also in Moscow literature—trend towards correct evaluation of intellectual directions within the Horthy regime and in the ideological defence against Fascism. Possibility of Marxist form of renewal of older democratic trends (Ady), criticism of dispute between "urbanist" (bourgeois-democratic) and "populist" (peasant-democratic) trends; continuation of opposition to feudal remnants likely to see absence of identity between democracy and merely bourgeois as real difference of strength between [. . .] Expansion of field of activity: expansion of conflicts happens almost unnoticeably, and is in no way as yet a direct and conscious turning against the Stalinist system, though the bureaucratic narrow-mindedness and rigidity of the latter had become evi-

dent with increasing clarity in the debates (article: People's Tribune or Bureaucrat)—beginning: Leninist differentiation as opposed to Stalin's mechanical uniformity. Equally: increasing emphasis on Engelsian "Victory of realism"—against regulation of ideology from "above." There is—in art, for art—no such absolute directibility: the decisive factor is not the choice or intention of the authors (who can be regulated), but formulation which remains subject to the "victory of realism". So ideology can influence —in most cases indirectly—the mode of attitude.

This is the reason: research into genesis, mimesis—and, consequently: what? how? With the genesis of mimesis, the "victory of realism" loses all irrationalistic nuances: it is precisely the truth of history that breaks through it. The genesis problem: beyond literature: general ideology: Hegel and the French Revolution (more concretely: and capitalist economy). Real ideological doctrine: ideology (Marxian definition): culmination of (contrary) effect of the economy on life, way of acting, consciousness of people. Truths of action: inner unity of individual and historical evolution of men. Significance of Goethe–Hegel period. Balzac already: prologue only to Marxist philosophy. Later development right up to: *Destruction of Reason.*

Antagonisms more acute: works on philosophy not published any more. (Meantime also literature. End of *Lit[eraturny] Kritik.*)

Period of the big extermination of cadres. Position (parallel: Bloch). Luck in period of catastrophe: (α) Bukharin–Radek 1930; (β) Hungarian movement, (γ) Flat[58]. Still lucky for 1941 situation.[59]

Inner unevenness of this period: period of great trials—at the same time 7th Congress of Comintern: people's front. Great antagonisms side by side (even merging with one another). Objectively: beginning of dissolution of crisis period.

Possibilities: Hungarian (7th Congress) analysis of the democratic movement (for people's democracy—criticism of liberalism). Criticism of Blum theses disappeared.

Personally: not without difficulties (2 arrests[60]). In spite of this: personally the most harmonious: relationship to Gertrud. No "beautifying," and none of that "optimism". But the feeling is: not only approaching the correct road (that I really had in mind): Marxism as historical ontology, but at the same time also: perspectives—ideologically—to realize something of this tendency.

VIII. Attempts at Self-Realization at Home

Return home with hopes. Their well-foundedness (very temporary): Rákosi's and Gerő's tactics. This made possible for some years principled and successful propagation of democratic transition. (Their ideological indifference—freedom for me.) Favourable consequences for adjustment: return home in the proper sense of the term (though—objective reasons—few old friends and comrades; Gertrud: yes, with a few, superficial, alliance-like cooperation).

In spite of this, return home. Again: as Gertrud with me, too. Very important: connections and conversations. The first pupils. A finding of myself in teaching relationships (Gertrud's influence). Of a seminar character: official opinions (not decisive at that time). So, gradually: promising young people. Standards always higher—its basis in life: Gertrud, teaching (seminar). Possibility of—of course much modified yet rooted in fundamental principles—continuation of inclinations of youth. (Marxism: qualitative change, yet no break in development as with many.) (Many intellectuals [take] *my* Marxism as [subjectively] genuine, not crash course or adopted.) Hence the possibility of fruitful dialogue. Good relationships with the most important ones: Déry and Illyés.

Toleration (silence): only political-social connections important (i.e., harmony with C. P.). Individual participation, etc., here: position on literary problems: to put up with. Here even discussions—given the necessary caution—possible.

Although I could in political life (e.g., agrarian reform, distribution of land) already observe trends of an antidemocratic kind yet I believed in the reliability of the cultural policy that was—tactically—allowed to me. Even the real turning-point (merger of the workers' parties) was no real warning to me at the time (Révai's notice of the Rudas article). Beginning of the Rajk-case: clear turning-point towards Stalin's period of trials (why even worse?[61]). Discussion of these circumstances determines: endeavour: to be able to withdraw without becoming victim of Rajk period. (Error. Understandable.) Withdrawal. Remain only ideologist—but only personal by now, not as an office. No social function. Academy: cooperation with Fogarasi; he as mediator. Thus full freedom for my person: even rejection of official currents possible.

IX. "Only an Ideologist"

Double development (unity: Gertrud), (a) increasingly resolute opposition to the Rákosi system, increasingly clear awareness of (and connection with) early tendencies towards a democratic Hungary, (b) through this: in the same way against Rákosi as up to then; but also against all who sought the renewal through the introduction of a bourgeois democrary. This is why independent (yes, even isolated) position in relation to the opposition of that time, too. Expected little of Imre Nagy[62]. In the first short premiership—no contact with him at all (lacking a programme). This true after 20th Congress, too.—Already first public appearance: essentially: not "personality cult." (The principles of which, as it turned out later, can remain effective in a collective as well.) Important: break with (autocratically-)tactically directed domestic and foreign policy. Principles of Marxism: democratic reorganization of production (immanent correlation of qualitative production and democratization). Capitalism effective within certain market trends where it is impossible to manipulate centrally the entire production. But it would be an illusion: to think that such elements of the market could direct socialist production onto the right, democratic path.

Therefore, clear position: against Rákosi, against illusions of a narrow, immanent "reform" of his regime, and also against bourgeois liberal reform tendencies. (Also widespread in Imre Nagy's immediate circle. Switch-over to this also within orthodox Rákosists.) Nagy: no programme. Therefore position: purely ideological. This demand of 20th Congress as a postulate towards public opinion so that an atmosphere could come about to carry this into effect politically, too.

This position maintained throughout entire Nagy-era. No rapprochement, only in the days of late November, yet in him (his popularity) was the force to keep the spontaneous (most heterogeneous) movement still within socialist framework. (This is why e.g., I accepted membership, even ministerial office—to be able to help in this. Attempt at reorganizing party (Donáth[63]–Szántó[64]). Overwhelmed by events. Question of guilt (without any programme—perspectives). This is why finally a great concession: Warsaw Pact.[65]

Yugoslav Embassy: a brutal mistake. Period of consequences; adherence to position turns out to be way out. Return home (relationship to Party). Prey of sectarians. Maintenance of line. In publications abroad (impossible at home): continuation and concretization, criticism of Stalin. At first positive stand towards economic reform: change of situation. (Positive =

possibility of democracy and return to Marxism.) Hence—despite acceptance by Party (details)—possibility: general support of tendencies (realized inconsistently): polemics against continuity. This maintained—expression different. (Today optative instead of indicative.) A trend, relatively manifesting itself, towards democratization, as approval of trend (as a trend, with all obstacles and inhibitions) as a basis: no opposition, but reform. But reform this function: fundamental questions of democracy: real solution. Always repeated example: trade unions, Lenin versus Trotsky. (Indifference or wildcat strikes. Poland as a symbolic danger for all the people's democracies.) The problem everywhere: transition to real, socialist democracy (democracy of everyday *life*) or permanent crisis. Undecided so far (decisive: Soviet Union). This the world's future perspective—precisely because in capitalism: initial signs of crisis. (Stalinist priority of tactics: obscures real problems, moves them further away from being solved: Arabia, Israel.)

Both great systems: crisis, importance of *genuine* Marxism as the only way out. Therefore: in socialist countries: Marxist ideology as criticism of the existing, as support for reforms becoming increasingly necessary.

Subjectively: attempts at formulating principles of Marxist ontology: *principal basis* for this: (autobiography, subjective completion, illustration, motivation, etc.). Of course: individual-human preconditions for correct comprehension of ontological problems. Therefore: convergence: genericity of man as solution of the great contemporary problem (individuality as a consequence of increasingly pure social relationship of the individual to society. Pseudoimmanence; in reality: genericity). Autobiography, subjective tendencies (in development) towards practical realization of own genericity (=*genuine* unfolding of individuality).

Herein the deepest truth of Marxism: man's becoming human as content of historical process that realizes itself—in great variation—in each and every human life. So each and every human individual—no matter how consciously—is an active factor in the overall process whose product he is at the same time: approaching genericity in personal life is the real convergence of both indivisible ways of development. Direction and result: direction (role of individual decision; historically + [indivisible] profoundly personal). Result. Talent: also not simply "given." Relation of direction—decisive whether real talent *can* develop. Way of life as struggle of (genuine!) curiosity and vanity—vanity as major vice: nails people down in particularity (frustration as stopping at level of particularity).

*

(A sketch on a separate sheet in Hungarian)

1. The psychology of the beginning. Last years at school. (Nordau–school essays) Kerr. Magyar Szle. Background!?! plays

2. Thalia. The end of the play. Studying. German education (Kant–History of literature)

3. Drama book. The Soul and the Forms. Relationship to *Nyugat* and XX. *Század*. Ady. Béla Balázs

4. From war—to revolution. Fight of idealism and Marxism. Dictatorship (:chance elements:): new relationship: Hungarian reality, Hungarian life.

5. Exile in Vienna. International sectarianism—Hungarian reality. Landler. HSWP. Blum theses.

6. Moscow turn. Marx and literature. Berlin. Moscow. (Lit. Kritik)

7. *Új hang*. Choice: Hungarian

8. 1945–49

9. After the Rudas debate. The new meaning of internationalism

NOTES

When, in December 1970, György Lukács was informed that he had lung cancer, he summoned all his strength to hurry the revision of *The Ontology of Social Being*. The deterioration of his health, however, made it impossible for him to do work that accorded with his own high standards. When handed the hurriedly typed 400 pages of the Prolegomena which he had added to the Ontology, he was forced to observe that he was no longer competent to judge the MS. At that time, in March 1971, he started to make notes for an autobiographical sketch. This required less concentration, and it also satisfied the wishes of his late wife. By the time he had finished the sketch, in April, it became obvious that he lacked the strength to add flesh to the skeleton. Research in libraries, to control his memory, was out of the question and the sheer manual work of getting it down on paper even more so. But he could not live without work. He therefore continued the series of interviews, based on the outline sketch, and answered questions put to him by Erzsébet Vezér and the present writer. The interviews, and Lukács's own sketch, were first published by Suhrkamp of Frankfurt am Main in 1981 as *Gelebtes Denken*. (The sketch in Hungarian in: *Curriculum vitae*, Magvető 1982.)

Lukács's German text is very difficult to decipher. The handwriting was, after all, that of an 86 year old terminally ill man. It was typed in his lifetime, he was therefore able to help with disputed passages. Lukács died on June 4th 1971. When arranging his papers it was discovered that the typescript still contained a fair number of puzzles. The present reading—not beyond dispute on some points—is based on the joint work and opinion of Lukács's relations, friends and students, and members of the staff of the Lukács Archives in Budapest.

1. Marcell Benedek (1885–1970), writer and historian of literature; the reference is to his autobiography *Naplómat olvasom* (Reading my journal), Budapest, 1965.

2. Georg Simmel (1858–1918), German philosopher and sociologist. His letter to Marianne Weber, dated 14. 8. 1914, is the earliest evidence of Lukács's hostility to the war.

3. Victor Zitta is the author of *Georg Lukács's Marxism, Alienation, Dialectics, Revolution*. The Hague, 1964.

4. Victor Serge (1890–1947), a Communist revolutionary who sympathized with Trotsky. Lukács here refers to *Mémoires d'un Revolutionnaire 1901–1941*. Paris, 1947.

5. A reference to Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*.

6. A reference to the association with sexual potency exploited by Gauloise advertisements.

7. A turn-of-the-century Budapest joke had it that Cohen supported a Jewish state in Palestine so he could be its consul in Budapest.

8. "We had an old nurse who kept an eye on us while we played. I once asked her where this or that toy of mine was. She answered: 'It is where you put it.' This 'where you put it' made a profound impression on me, this being the first time that someone—an adult—did not say something stupid to me, like you have to say 'I kiss your hand', to Auntie Irma." (From an interview, see Georg Lukács: *Gelebtes Denken*. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1981. p. 40.)

9. "Our parents took us children on a tour of Europe, we went to Paris and London as well. They took us to all the picture galleries. I thought that the height of hypocrisy, as nothing on earth interested me about galleries. But I knew that there was a first class zoo in London." (Interview, pp. 40–41.)

10. To his parent's surprise the boy Lukács discussed a battle-scene with other visitors in the Palace at Versailles.

11. "I fought a partisan campaign against my mother. She was very strict with us. It was one of her punishments that there was a closet for wood in our flat, a very dark closet, and she locked us into that until we apologised. My sisters and brother immediately apologised I, however, differentiated. If she locked me up at ten in the morning I apologised at five past ten, and everything was in order. But my father came home at half past one, and my mother did not want him to be met with tension on arrival. Therefore, if she locked me up after one I would not apologise for all the world since I knew she would let me out without having apologised at twenty-five past one." (Interview, op. cit., p. 41.)

12. "My brother was a year older than me, and he learnt to read all right, taught by a private tutor. I also joined them at the table, sitting opposite my brother, and I too learnt to read, but from an upside down book. I learnt to read before my brother, but with the book upside down, and they stopped me. They only let me read in the normal way a year later." (Op. cit. p. 47)

13. Edmondo de Amicis (1846–1908): *Il cuore*. A sentimental Italian children's book.

14. Lukács mentioned in the course of the interviews that he was on Hector's side when he first read the *Iliad*, and always on that of the Indians when reading James Fenimore Cooper (op. cit. p. 42)

15. Lukács mentioned in one of the interviews that he once told on a boy who had punched him in the belly and felt ashamed of it to the end of his days. (op. cit. p. 43)

16. Leo Popper (1886–1911), Hungarian writer on aesthetics who mainly used the German language.

17. Elek Benedek (1859–1929), writer, author of tales for children.

18. Sándor Bródy (1863–1924), novelist and playwright. Lukács's in the January 1903 *Magyar Szalon* was the only favourable notice of his *Királyidillek* (Royal idylls). Bródy got in touch with the schoolboy critic and suggested that he contribute to *Jövendő* (Future), a paper Bródy was just starting.

19. Bródy was very enthusiastic about Mereshkovsky's *Leonardo da Vinci*, a novel which Lukács despised. When asked to review it, Lukács quarrelled with Bródy.

20. The Thália Society was founded in

1904 and it survived to 1908. László Bánóczy (1884–1945), Marcell Benedek and Lukács founded it, aiming to revive the Hungarian theatre.

21. Imre Pethes (1864–1924), an actor.

22. Sándor Hevesi (1873–1939), writer, translator, critic, director, theatre manager.

23. Lukács was persuaded by his activities in the Thália Society that "Real literature was something I could no longer write."

24. One of the problems discussed by Erich Schmidt (1853–1913) was the real colour of the eyes of Werther's Lotte.

25. *Die Wissenschaft des nicht Wissenswerten* is the title of a book the Hungarian critic and historian of literature Lajos Hatvany (1880–1960) published in Leipzig, 1908.

26. Endre Ady (1877–1919), the great Hungarian poet of the age.

27. Béla Balázs (1884–1949), poet, writer, playwright, critic, film-theorist.

28. *A modern dráma fejlődésének története* (The history of the development of modern drama), Budapest 1911.

29. Lukács was in despair because respected members of the Academy thought that work of his worthy of the first prize.

30. Géza Feleky (1890–1936), essayist.

31. His brother died in the Second World War, on compulsory labour service. He neither wished to hide, nor to defend himself, claiming to be innocent. (Interview, op. cit. p. 55)

32. "My mother was seriously ill (she died of cancer of the breast) and when she fell ill I wrote to her following prompting from home. When she received the letter she said: 'I must be very ill for Doctor Georg to write to me.'" (Interview, op. cit. p. 55)

33. Title of the talk given at the exhibition of the paintings of Károly Kernstok (1873–1940) was "The parting of the ways."

34. Irma Seidler (1883–1911), a painter, the sweetheart of Lukács's youth.

35. Béla Zalai (1882–1915), the philosopher, would not marry his common law wife and was therefore ostracized by Budapest society.

36. Ernst Bloch (1885–1977), the German philosopher.

37. First published only in 1974 as *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst* (Luchterhand Verlag, Darmstadt and Neuwied).

38. Leo Popper argued in 1910 that Breughel took light, colour and materials, that is everything that made up his pictures and kneaded them into a dough. Lukács generalised this idea arguing that a genre could only develop once a homogenous medium was created. Within a genre every important artist realised a specific and characteristic variant of this homogeneous medium.

39. Karl Jaspers (1883–1969), the German philosopher who, as a doctor, tried to help Lukács to get exemption from military service.

40. Lukács's father obtained a directorship in his bank for an important politician who then got Lukács exempted from military service.

41. Elena Grabenko (1889–?), Lukács's first wife, a Russian painter and revolutionary who went into exile after the 1905 revolution. Their marriage, in 1914, soon ended in practice, divorce was however out of the question since she would immediately have been interned as a Russian subject.

42. Elena Grabenko compared Béla Kun to Vautrin, one of Balzac's characters, an escaped convict and criminal.

43. The Budapest Circle was better known as the Sunday Society. It was founded in 1915, around Lukács and Béla Balázs. Members included Anna Lesznai (1855–1966), the writer and painter, Frigyes Antal, the art historian (1887–1954), Károly Tolnay, the art-historian (1899–1981), Karl Mannheim, the sociologist (1893–1947), Arnold Hauser, the sociologist of art (1892–1978), Lajos Fülep, the art historian (1885–1970). The Circle regularily met up to 1918.

44. *Huszadik Század* (Twentieth Century)—a radical liberal journal of the social sciences (1900–1919).

45. Gertrud Bortstieber (1882–1963), Lukács's second wife. They lived together

from 1920 up to her death. Her first husband was the mathematician Imre Jánossy.

46. Lajos Kassák (1867–1967) the poet, novelist, painter, and editor formed a group of revolutionary avant garde artists.

47. After the suppression of the Republic of Councils in 1919, Béla Kun (1886–1939), the leader, suggested that Ottó Korvin, a hunchback, head of the Political Section of the People's Commissariat for Home Affairs, and Lukács, both his opponents within the Party, should stay and work underground at the time of the White Terror. "I looked very cynically at this commission. I said at the time that Korvin and I were suitable for martyrdom." (Interview op. cit. p. 109)

48. Lenin attacked the ultra-left line of *Communism*, the paper of the Comintern, in an article.

49. Jenő Landler (1875–1928), a Social Democrat, later a Communist, headed the group opposed to Kun in Vienna, in exile.

50. Andor Gábor (1884–1953), satirist and political journalist.

51. Gyula Lengyel (1888–1941), Communist economist and politician.

52. Ferenc Jánossy (b. 1914), the son from the first marriage of Lukács's second wife, an economist.

53. Dmitry Manuilski (1883–1959) was, at the time, a leading Comintern official. At a 1929 executive meeting of Comintern, Manuilski praised the Hungarian CP because of the democratic-popular front aspects of the Blum theses. The next morning he denounced the Blum theses as "liquidatoristic" and revisionist. (See Interview, op. cit. p. 126)

54. József Révai (1898–1959) the Communist politician, was a member of the Landler faction, after Landler's death he however rejected the Blum theses and supported Kun's line. (see Interview, op. cit. pp. 128–129)

55. Karl Korsch (1866–1961), the philosopher, was expelled from the CP since he would not retract his *Marxismus und Philosophie* (1923), though it was severely criticized.

56. Lukács was informed by his doctor in December 1970 that he had cancer of the lungs. Lukács asked for how much longer he would be able to work, and to what degree, and said no more about the subject. Some of his disciples believed that he had forgotten his cancer, especially after it became evident that he also suffered from sclerosis. This reference shows, however, that he was well aware of his condition.

57. Mihail Lifschitz (1905), Soviet philosopher and writer on aesthetics.

58. Lukács felt he owed his escape from arrest in the 'thirties to three factors: a) he had been evasive when Bukharin and Radek had approached him in 1930, b) following the failure of the Blum theses he had little contact with the Hungarian CP, c) his flat was not good enough and nobody was after it.

59. "I lived through one of the world's greatest campaigns of arrests. At the end, when the real motive forces were no longer at work, I was arrested for two months. That can only be called luck." (Interview, op. cit. p. 160)

60. Lukács was only arrested once in the Soviet Union, the second arrest must surely refer to that of Ferenc Jánossy.

61. According to Lukács, the Moscow trials already took place in the shadow of the Second World War, which makes the position of those understandable who showed no opposition to the trials. They did not wish to weaken the Soviet Union vis-à-vis Hitler. In 1949, however, there was no threatening war to justify the show trials. (See Interview, op. cit. p. 190)

62. Imre Nagy (1896–1958) was first appointed Prime Minister in 1953.

63. Ferenc Donáth (b. 1913) Communist politician, economist.

64. Zoltán Szántó (1893–1976) Communist politician.

65. Lukács here refers to the fact that the Imre Nagy government decided in favour of leaving the Warsaw Pact.

ISTVÁN EÖRSI

HISTORY

AN ODD SORT OF BOOK ON TRANSYLVANIA

by

GYÖRGY SZÁRAZ

A book appeared in April 1982 published by Editura Sport-Turism, Bucharest. It is an inexpensive paperback. The manuscript went to press on the 15th of March 1982 according to the colophon. It contains a number of sketches, grouped under three chapter headings, and a longish essay: *Cuvînt despre Transilvania.* It is difficult to translate the title accurately. It could mean ideas, or a discourse on Transylvania, but also has overtones of a promise or pledge, a commitment to the same.

The author is Ion Lăncrănjan, a 54 years old writer who was born in Transylvania. Before publication, he stated, as reported in the literary supplement of the 11th April issue of the youth journal *Scînteia Tineretului:* "...I have written in the name of good neighbourliness and fraternity in the country; that is that neighbourliness and fraternity can exist only where respect is mutual, where truth and justice are held high."

The wash produced by the book splashed over Rumania's frontiers. Some of its aspects astonished and shocked Hungarians who heard about it, others sniffed a sensation in the making. The critical reception in Rumania was enthusiastic, a good reason, if reason were needed, for taking notice. I shall only deal with the eponymous essay here, and only with some of its aspects, even that only in the spirit of the above quotation. The author's attitude to history and the way he builds up his argument could well be the subject of a longer study; I refer to them only when it is necessary from the point of the essence.

The author starts with a declaration. Transylvania, he says, means not merely his native country to him, but also a "great and unquenchable love," a "tumultuous and dramatic past," and above all "some of our great forebears," the Rumanian peasant who was one with the soil out of which

he was taken, "crucified many times over, hanged and shot dead, broken on the wheel" and "resurrected in tales, legends, songs of longing, and laments." "In the beginning he was Dacian, after that Roman, later still Rumanian, as a natural continuity," and whose garb and manners, "excess-free piety" are all indisputable proof or "primevalness and true nobility." At the back of the continuity-ensuring "peasant hearth" is the landscape, "where tears are more weighty, and saltier." Transylvania, "the darkly murmuring shell, inside of which the spirit of place resounds and cries out, sings or seethes angrily," "an eagle of fire which lept from the age of Gelu" ... "over the dreams of Michael the Brave, later fanning the flames of Horea's rebellion with his wings, stopping once again, not even a century later, over Transylvania which had then been made to rise by the Revolution of 1848."

Myth and reality are mixed up in the text, but it would be regrettable to smile about the pathetic exaggerations, even if a reader might consider them anachronistic. The literary past of East Central Europe teems with such exaggerations. We, Hungarians, should remember Dezső Szabó's* "tragic" and "continuity-ensuring" village; but also phrasemonger doggerel, the ranting literature of platitudes, the generalizing pseudo-objectivity of school-books of yore, according to which the "proud bearing, dignified movement, colourful costume" of the Magyar "instantly betrays the truly noble race." One must remember the Evil sprung out of myths: "rootedness in the soil," "blood-sod reality."

Transylvania's rich and tragic past has always produced romanticism, and myths in abundance. The Transylvanian Saxon** writer, Adolf Meschendörfer, in one of his novels, published in 1935 assembles a Rumanian priest, a Hungarian doctor, and a Transylvanian Saxon teacher, bibbing wine under a starry sky sometime before 1914. The priest dreams about Rumanian youth, which "will be raised high by a new age; countless thousands will spill forth from the mountains, the dark forests... and these boys grown into men, will rule from the River Tisza to the Black Sea." In the soul of the doctor "centuries old wounds gape, a nation breaks up its chains and steps in blinding light before the world... but a tempest blows across the puszta, and a nation that came from Asia wastes away again, lonely in the heart of Europe." The Saxon does not day-dream: "Without Germans, you, my Hungarian and Rumanian brothers, would be

* *Dezső Szabó:* Transylvanian-born Hungarian writer, who lived in Budapest (1879–1945).
** *Saxons:* German ethnic group in Transylvania living in three separate areas.

children even today... We are the teachers of nations, Europe speaks to you, when we speak." The picture is oversimplified and perfect: it recalls phrase-ridden, romantic day-dream worlds which still shaped the fates of nations, turning them against one another: it is not a Nazi Superman ideology that finds expression in Meschendörfer, himself a headmaster, but the self-pity of the cultural missionary, the teacher and writer is just as romantic a soul as the other two.

But Lăncrănjan says he does not wish to slither "down the slippery slope of exaggerations," nothing is further from his mind than to idealize; but, he adds, self-restraint does not commit him to any sort of pseudo-internationalism or neo-cosmopolitanism, he has no desire to appease "scum of the domestic or foreign variety." "Let him who is like them seek their favour, but not me!" he raps out in a sudden show of anger, and then he regains his composure: yes, there is "poetic ardour," there are "emotional arguments," and he is well aware that he lives in a socialist country, where "the national minorities enjoy equal rights." A mysterious passage follows about a "new (Hungarian) irredentism" which emerges "in a subtle and perfidious form," which "rekindles old enmities, and brings grist to the mills of the imperialists, and damages the interests of Rumanians as well as of all those who live and work with them in this free and proud country." Then he gets into a temper again perhaps owing to his own words: "...only those will dispute the continuous existence... of this nation... in this God-blessed land who have got used to living in an eternally pernicious relationship not only with us, but with the whole world, which they so often tricked by pretending to be something they have never been and never will be."

After some time he switches to a more objective tone once again. Transylvania, he states, has always been an arena of grim social and national struggles: still, "natural social unity has continued to strengthen in the course of time" in the lower classes of the different nations, "first among the peasants, then among the workers." It is advisable to nurse "these sound germs of the past," he says, and "to remain faithful to the ancient Rumanian heritage, tolerance." But "the noble feelings of one nation for another come to nought" if "response based on mutuality" fails to appear; for, he adds, there are some, who "talk about unity and fraternity face to face, but brandish the dagger of perfidity behind their backs."

It almost occurred to me that something published by Hungarian fascist exiles in South America came into the hands of Lăncrănjan, and had aroused his justified ire.

But surprising things follow.

Lăncrănjan states that "the present situation, social and political differences notwithstanding, resembles in certain ways to the post Great War era, especially the years after 1930, when almost the same absurd slogans used to be emphasized, and when they always used to point a finger towards Transylvania." In order to leave no doubt about the point here, he recognizes that: „... there is no doubt that the political regime of contemporary Hungary is completely different compared to that of the past, today's Hungary being a socialist country, just like Rumania." I am compelled to quote the text which follows in full: "It sounds strange, for that very reason, that words of this sort should have been spoken at an important forum which took place in 1966, in Budapest: 'The Treaty of Trianon was an imperialist dictate, which dismembered Hungary, and awarded Transylvania to Rumania'. The same idea, which is not right in the least, was taken up later, by the same speaker, who said, within the framework of the Helsinki Conference: 'In our century, after the vain sacrifices of the time of the Great War the territory of defeated Hungary was reduced to* one-third of its former size'—referring this time to other countries as well not only to Rumania, but without saying that Hungary—Greater Hungary, or thousand years old Hungary—ruled at a given time over foreign territories whose inhabitants—Rumanians, Slovaks, Croats, and Czechs—exceeded the Hungarian population in the strict sense of the term..."

A little later, the author says that in 1918 "an artificial state formation was broken up." Well, if a state formation, that stood for a thousand years even without ironical quotes, can be described as artificial, then it is difficult to fathom what he regards as natural in the course of history. It might appear to be almost nit-picking in the context of what is of the essence —and the more so because an abundance of slips, consequences of obvious ignorance—to draw attention to Lăncrănjan reckoning the Czechs who did not live there among the national minorities in Hungary of yesterday, while leaving out the Serbs and the Germans.

It is more important that the person quoted—and this becomes clear only by the reference to Helsinki—is János Kádár, the First Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. Since the train of Lăncrănjan's thoughts leaves no room for doubt, it is worth checking his quotations. I searched press archives for the first one. I should add, I did so only to help me translate back a text quoted in Rumanian, since these statements recording facts contain no untruth... It is worth quoting this part of the text. One is in an interview given to the American UPI agency on the

* Lăncrănjan wrongly quotes "by" *(cu)*; it was of course "to," and that is what János Kádár said. *(Translator's note)*

1st of August 1966, where János Kádár was asked: "Has the Hungarian People's Republic any territorial problems?" and answered:

"It is interesting what sort of problems occur to you in the present far from enviable foreign policy situation of the United States. This brings to my mind that the chief inspirer of the Versailles and Trianon imperialist dictates, the latter of which truncated the territory of Hungary, was Wilson, President of the United States at the time. The aim of the territorial re-alignements of the imperialists has always been robbery, sowing discord among peoples, dividing the nations, and playing them off against one another. We, communists, on the other hand, fight to make this impossible for the imperialists once and for all."

The other statement was made at a really important forum at the 9th Congress of the HSWP. "Nationalism and chauvinism are not unknown in Hungary. Our country and our people were for centuries oppressed by foreigners, and the Hungarian ruling class in turn oppressed the national minorities which lived on the country's territory. The imperialist Trianon dictate after the Great War served as an excuse for the ruling classes to stimulate to the utmost nationalist and chauvinist passions and hatred for the neighbouring nations."

Let us look at Lăncrănjan's second quotation. This sentence was spoken in 1975, at the closing session of the Conference on European Security in Helsinki. There is nothing wrong even with the fact that the sentence is taken out of context, since the speaker communicates facts here as well. But I still feel a more complete quotation to be in order, mainly because of Lăncrănjan's train of thought. János Kádár said: "We are taking part at this conference of historical importance as delegates of that Hungarian people, which having founded a state has lived for 1,100 years in the Danube–Tisza region, in the middle of Europe, thus our past and our present are equally tied up with the fortunes of the nations living there. We are convinced that the most important wish of all of the nations of Europe is peace. If it is at all possible, this is even more valid for the Hungarian nation, which has lived for centuries at the crossroads of war, suffering much blood-letting to survive and to safeguard the state against threatening destruction. In our century, after the vain sacrifices of the Great War, the territory of Hungary was reduced to one-third of its former size, and in the Second World War, shedding blood on the wrong side owing to the crime of its masters, the country was reduced to a heap of ruins, losing 8 per cent of its adult population." Well, this was it. Since we have got this far, let me go on quoting János Kádár: "We have drawn the necessary consequences from our history. I want everybody to understand that the peace, security,

friendship, and cooperation of the nations of Europe mean not merely words to the socialist Hungarian People's Republic, but also a long-term policy based on firm principles, and the weighty experience of history."

János Kádár did speak about the dictate of Trianon, and I believe we have no reason to disagree with Lenin, who branded the peace system of Versailles cruel violence against weak nations. But János Kádár said something else as well at that certain Helsinki conference, and that evidently escaped Lăncrănjan's attention: "Respect for and assertion in practice of the principles governing the relations of states—such as sovereign equality, abstention from violence, the inviolability of borders, and other basic principles—accord with the interests of the thirty-five countries participating here and guarantee peace. By observing them, we can ban war and armed conflicts from our continent. The Hungarian People's Republic is ready to comply consistently with these principles."

Let me make it clear before going on: knowledge of the facts of history and responsible quotation is no action programme. But a high-handed attitude to history, failing to distinguish between facts and myths, distorted evocation of memories are dangerous even if not taken to imply the definition of present duties.

György Száraz goes on, arguing persuasively, to show how Lăncrănjan evokes the tragedies and crimes of the past in a way which implies, implicitly or explicitly, an extrapolation to the present, this method, however, does scant service to "good neighbourliness and fraternity within his country," and yet that was what Lăncrănjan had engaged himself to do in his introduction. One cannot and should not remain silent about the crimes of Hungarian fascists or chauvinists, nor are Rumanians who think clearly and soberly likely to act any differently concerning their own fascists and chauvinists. "Should we dig up the dead and set on each other the bloody shades of a hundred and fifty years?" Száraz' answer to his own question is an emphatic no, *and the same goes for Lăncrănjan's efforts to apply differences between the Hungarian and the Rumanian attitude to history to the present.*

It seems that Lăncrănjan is a bit biased in favour of royal Rumania. He quotes the full text of the 1st of December 1918 resolution of the Gyulafehérvár meeting, including the 1st point of paragraph III, which guarantees vernacular education, autonomy, independent administration to the national minorities. He comments with an air of refinement: "We would exaggerate in the direction of idealizing matters if we said that the guarantees of rights and obligations were one hundred per cent implemented." But he is quick to add: "Newspapers were published in Hungarian...

schools operated, and the freedom of the use of the vernacular was not restricted in any form." Lăncrănjan, perhaps, does not know that there is not a trace of that certain Clause 1. in the 1st of January 1920, Act, which ratified the Gyulafehérvár resolution. Neither, perhaps, that the Hungarian University of Kolozsvár no longer existed in 1930, nor any of the Hungarian state secondary-schools and teachers' colleges; that 472 Hungarian denominational schools closed in ten years* and not one Hungarian secondary-school survived in Székely** land. Perhaps he does not know Order No. 98405/1926 of the Rumanian Minister of Education, which states that "the declarations of parents"—regarding the mother tongue of the child—"must not be respected, but they will be subject to strict revision." But he must know about those not in the least friendly notices, which were displayed in public offices in districts inhabited by non-Rumanians and which had to be taken seriously: Speak Rumanian only! I cannot judge, whether he knows what was most important: how splendidly the logic of vicious circles was asserted at the time, that this bad minorities policy shocked Hungarian public opinion, providing support for the nationalist-chauvinist, irredentist propaganda of the Horthy regime; that the growing irritation on the Hungarian side led to further anti-minorities measures across the border, which in turn further fed anger in Hungary.

I do not think Nicolae Ceausescu had the Lăncrănjan way of thinking in mind, when he said at the Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Rumanian Communist Party in June 1982: "...we respect and honour the glorious work and struggle-filled past, everything that was and is good in the centuries-long progress of our people. At the same time we can definitely clarify actions and situations, which did not accord with the spirit of our people, and particularly when we talk about national pride and socialist patriotism, this must in no circumstances be interpreted in a way that establishes opposition to other nations, or this or that minority."

I have no right to speak for the Hungarian minority in Rumania, neither do I think that this is necessary. But the political aspects of Lăncrănjan's arguments concerning history become really clear in his views regarding the national minority. I quote: "For that very reason one cannot approach in the same way the situation of the Rumanians in Transylvania at the time of the Hungarian and Austrian occupation, and the situation of Hungarians in Rumania after the Union (and, naturally, today). The 'minority fate' of

* There had been a number of Calvinist Colleges and schools run by Catholic religious orders which catered to the educational needs of the Hungarian minority.

** *Székelys:* A Hungarian ethnic group living in an unbroken block in South-Eastern Transylvania.

Hungarians did not start when they said, and still say, after the 1918 Union, but much earlier, about the time when they came here to Transylvania, where an autochtonous majority population existed... This qualification is needed, since treating things as equal in this way produces a conclusion that is false and provocative: if the situation of Rumanians in Transylvania under foreign occupation, and the situation of Hungarians in Transylvania after 1918 (therefore in Rumania) were equal then this means that Hungarians, who lived in the Rumania of yesteryear, after 1918 (and of today) have the right to fight for the separation of Transylvania from Rumania which, let this be said in passing, is dangerous and deviant."

I quote a passage from the end of the essay, which closes a chain of thoughts, before making any remark: "If a Rumanian citizen ostracizes another, because he is of another nationality, he ostracizes himself, he works against the fundamental laws of the country, tearing himself out of her most ancient traditions, kicking humanity, shutting the gate that leads to his own complete human self-realization. The same happens, of course, when a citizen of Hungarian, German, or Jewish ethnic origin makes an enemy of another, merely because he is Rumanian, and loves his country; but the complications are nevertheless more numerous in such cases. This is so because such an attitude assumes enmity towards, and denigration of, the country in which you live and work."

Well, briefly: Lăncrănjan does, what I would not do, in the first passage quoted: he treats as equal the old and the present Rumania as regards minorities policy. Furthermore, he states that if a Hungarian in Rumania denounces the national minorities policies of both Austria–Hungary, and the Kingdom of Rumania, he can be charged with a seditious act, because he treats them as equal. But the other passage is no less staggering: according to that, an ethnic Rumanian citizen is morally guilty, if he manifests intolerance towards the national minorities; but if a Rumanian citizen of some other ethnic origin were to dare to find fault with the views of a patriotic Rumanian—Lăncrănjan's perhaps—that is a crime, indeed, a seditious act. But something else also lurks in this historic argument: that the late-comer, who came as occupier, what's more can have no right to equal rights, even if his presence in that part of the world goes back centuries. His equality before the law can rest at best on the magnanimity of the autochtonous majority. I do not say that Lăncrănjan articulates this; but his logic guides the thinking of the reader in this direction, whether intended or not. On the other hand, Nicolae Ceausescu emphasized at the June 1982 plenary session without making distinction: "All citizens have identical rights and obligations in our country, independent of their ethnic origin."

Furthermore: "Whoever attempts to strike against the cooperation and unity of the citizens of our country, inevitably enters into the service of the enemies of the country, the enemies of the building of socialism. "

Speaking of the 1948–1958 period Lăncrănjan argues that at a time when the class struggle was becoming more acute large numbers of Hungarians occupied positions of authority in the Party and State apparatus, and that they used these to oppress the Rumanian majority. Száraz's answer to this charge is sober indeed. "No doubt there were Rumanian as well as Hungarian officials who did not merely make the mistakes of the leadership but also abused the power entrusted to them. To turn this into a general proposition, however, with reference to the Hungarians only, is hardly honourable."

Száraz's conclusion includes the following telling passage:

In my eyes Lăncrănjan represents something, that would be good to overcome quickly. I fear he would also declare the line by Attila József* — The struggle our forebears waged is dissolved to peace by memory—an attempt of "artificial creation of balance." He is in no mood to untangle the Gordian knot of common anxieties with gentle patience, he prefers the solution of Alexander the Great. He says that Transylvania has never been, neither will it ever be the "Switzerland of cantons," because "that could be the ideal of only those permanently wedded to restlessness and aggressivity." I say, and I have in mind not only Transylvania: the Switzerland of cantons is unlikely to have been the dream of just the haters. For if it symbolizes something—and I think Lăncrănjan refers to it as a symbol—then it is the symbol of racial peace, the opposite to unrest. Thus he does not see Switzerland as ideal and this is understandable. But I fear that socialist Rumania is not his ideal either. Considering the whole of his writing, all I can extract from it is that his ideal is some kind of ethnocratic state, whose power is not based on the unity of the *demos*, the people made up of classes, races, but on the unity of the *ethnos*, of the race of the same blood, in which the *străin*, the foreign element, has no place. It is based, therefore, not on acceptance, but on exclusion.

* *Attila József:* Hungarian poet (1905–1937). He wrote his poem "By the Danube" in 1936, when the flames of national hatred shot up high. "*My mother was Cumanian, my father / half Szekler, half-Rumanian, or whole [. . .] I am the world, all that is past exists, / Men are fighting men with renewed anguish / Dead conquerors ride to victory with me / And I feel the torment of the vanquished.* The final summary of the poem is: *The great battle which our ancestors once fought / Resolves into peace through the memories, / And to settle at last our communal affairs / Remains our task and none too small it is.* (Transl. John Székely. In: Attila József: *Poems.* Ed. Thomas Kabdebo. Danubia Book Co. London, 1966.)

IN FOCUS

VISIONS OF HEAVEN

In Heaven, virgin girls who died when children sojourn in a special place and sing. Those from individual villages are grouped together and all wear their own costume: those who came from the Hungarian village Lészped in Moldavia can easily be recognized by the embroidery of their long shirts. Some of them are sad: these were only children of mothers who keep mourning them. Others are joyful: these have several brothers and sisters still living on earth, thus their mothers have not got much time to think of them.

In the section of Heaven reserved for men, those who gave the funeral feast, who "laid the table" for the dead sit along long tables. They have been given such a good place because when living they were thanked with the words "May God reward you." If they gave out the food with a true heart, then each expression of thanks became a step towards heaven and they, the good hosts arrived easily in Heaven since several hundred guests are present at such a feast.

The above is taken not from a medieval manuscript, but from a tape-recording made in the 1980s.

It is possible today to carry on such folklore collecting among those Hungarians who live in linguistic islands among the Rumanian population beyond the Carpathians, in Rumanian Moldavia. The oldest part of this Moldavian Hungarian population had moved beyond the Carpathians in the Middle Ages. Later several waves of Hungarian refugees from Transylvania were added to them. In 1410 the persecuted Hussites fled to Moldavia, as did the Székely Hungarians of 1764 who rejected the frontier guard organization imposed under Maria Theresa. Isolated from other Hungarian-speaking regions, the Moldavian Hungarians maintained numerous archaic traditions in their language, folk music and folklore which are no longer found in other Hungarian-speaking areas.

The Moldavian Hungarians are Catholic, as are also a minority of Rumanians, remnants of the ancient Cumanian bishopric of Milcov, the majority being Orthodox. Under their official religion they have kept up to this day traditions of popular religion going back to the Middle Ages. It still happens that a village community honours as a "saint" one of its members who has visions about heaven and hell and who is able from time to time to make contact with the dead. The article here described also publishes the biography and some visions of such a "girl saint."

This article by Rozália Kóka ties in with two trends in ethnology in Hungary and Rumania. There is an increasing interest

in the ancient culture of the Moldavian Hungarian linguistic islands, as is witnessed by the volume *Moldvai csángó népművészet* (Moldavian Csángó folk art) published by the Kriterion Publishing House of Bucharest in 1982, the work of three Transylvanian Hungarian ethnographers Károly Kós, Judit Szentimrei, and Jenő Nagy. There is also an increased interest among Hungarian ethnographers in the apocryphal texts and religious customs which have survived alongside the official religion. For instance, three editions have been published in quick succession of a collection made by Zsuzsanna Erdélyi from apocryphal folk prayers, entitled *Hegyet hágék, lőtöt lépék* (I mounted the mountain, descended the slope), Budapest, Magvető, 1976.

Kóka, Rozália: *A lészpedi 'szent leján'* (The holy girl of Lészped). *Tiszatáj*, No. 8, 1982. pp. 29–44.

T. H.

EASTERN HUNGARIANS

"When war broke out between the Turks [the Hungarians—Á.N.] and the Patzinaks who were then called Kangars the host of the Turks was defeated and broke up into two parts. One section moved east and settled in the regions of Persia..." The others, i.e. the Hungarians who entered the Danubian basin, "keep on sending agents and visit them and frequently carry answers from one to the other." The Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus thus reports, in mid-ninth century, on the separation of the Hungarians and their maintaining contact with each other. Even three hundred years later King Béla IV sent friars to his kinfolk in Asia aiming to Christianize them or else invite them to settle in his kingdom. The advance of the Tartars, however, made it impossible to find their villages.

Only scattered data are available telling of their later fate. These suggest that they joined the Bashkirs, who were not related to them, and lived between the Volga and Kama rivers in what is now the southern Soviet Union. The word *madzhar* occurs in a number of contexts in Bashkir and Chinese and Persian chroniclers refer to the Hungarians as Bashkirs. Two at least of the tribal names of the early Hungarians correspond to those of Bashkir tribes: Jenő–Yeney and Gyarmat–Yurmati.

The history of the Yurmati tribe has recently become accessible. It was written at the time the Russians conquered them, in the middle of the sixteenth century, to justify the exemption from taxes of the ruling clan. It contains the history of the tribe, the story of the hopeless fight against the cold and against enemies and of great warriors, the fragments of myths, from Genghis Khan to Russian domination, back to the limits of tribal memory.

It is striking that they use a different name for themselves and the other Bashkirs. Who knows, perhaps the separate name, still used in the last century, refers to the Eastern Hungarians.

The last news of the Eastern Hungarians is taken from a letter written by a Hungarian monk, a prisoner of the Tartars. "In the same place (all one can tell that it was not far from China) he met people who spoke the same language as the Hungarians—they were—very likely those from whom the Hungarians had become separated earlier." A mere 300 years before.

Róna-Tas, András: *Őstörténetünk és a baskír kérdés* (Our ancient history and the Bashkir question). *Tiszatáj*, No. 8, 1982 pp. 52–61.

Á. N.

WANDERING COINS

Dirhem coins have been at the centre of interest of numismatologists for three hundred years. These coins have also been found in graves dating from the time of the Hungarian Conquest and the mystery is why the quantity and weight of the total of

some fifty dirhems found in the Carpathian Basin is so small when compared to that of the 40,000 pieces found in distant Gotland, an island off the coast of Sweden, bearing in mind that in area it hardly equals a Hungarian county and that the conquering Magyars had ties with Arab traders.

The archaeologist Csanád Bálint draws up a balance based on recent literature and the Hungarian finds. His main findings are that dirhems flowed to Europe primarily from the ninth to the eleventh centuries, mostly from the Samanide caliphate, whose silver came from Central Asian mines. The Arab coins were used mostly as ornaments and their owners may have included people of medium wealth. Most arguments have been around the geographic distribution of the dirhems, including the argument that the East European dirhems are evidence for the presence of Eastern Slavonic (Kiev) money. Bálint supports the latest Soviet critique of this view (1978) basing his arguments on logic, the sources, linguistics, metrology, and economic history. He comes to the conclusion that the Eastern Slavs during the ninth to eleventh centuries were hardly likely to use Arab coins as a regular currency. At the same time it is still unclear what the reason for hiding the coins may have been. What is certain is that large-scale burying of treasure was not characteristic where there was considerable commerce (along the Kiev–Mayence route) or where a lively market for goods had been developed at a relatively early stage (the Carolingian empire and the parts continuing to develop after its dissolution).

Bálint, Csanád: *Az európai dirhem-forgalom néhány kérdése* (Some questions of dirhem-trade in Europe). *Századok*, Vol. 116. 1982. pp. 3–33.

G. G.

THE REVENUES OF KING MATTHIAS IN 1475

The large exhibition arranged at Schallaburg in Austria—"Matthias Corvinus und die Renaissance in Ungarn"*—contains such a wealth of material that it prompts the question as to how the ruler was able to provide for all this financially.

Fügedi has analysed a source disregarded until now, the journal of an employee of the Milanese chancellery. This is a report on the royal revenues of 1475 as it was known then by the court functionaries. In 1475 the largest source for Matthias's regular revenue was a tax of one golden florin on each house. A tremendous share of the tax was borne by the contribution levied on the serf annually at most, which was collected by the counties. To this was added the tax on the towns and the tax paid by the privileged Transylvanian Saxons and by the Jews. Another important source of revenue was the "thirtieth" duty, which was collected on the goods exported or imported and which amounted in certain cases to 5 per cent of the value; there was also the royalty collected on the production and working of precious metal, the revenue obtained from copper, and that from salt. The revenue for 1475 is set out below:

Taxes	
On serfs	300,000 florins
On towns	20,000 florins
On Saxons	22,000 florins
On Jews	4,000 florins
Thirtieth	50,000 florins
Precious metal, coinage	60,000 florins
Salt	80,000 florins
Copper	26,000 florins
Crown estates	50,000 florins
Total	612,000 florins

This revenue is far beneath that which was usually cited by historians. Fügedi emphasizes that revenues were not constant but were greater when the need arose, for Matthias did not raise loans but increased his revenues. This was the case after he

* See Miklós Mojzer's article on pp. 165–167.

organized a mercenary army and had married Beatrice of Aragon. While at the beginning of the 1460s he could have received hardly more than 250,000 florins annually, twenty years later his regular annual revenue probably amounted to 700,000 florins. However, according to Fügedi, the twenty thousand mercenaries alone may have cost him 500,000 annually.

After detailed description of the revenues with an examplary critique of the sources, the monograph closes with some comments concerning social history which do not seem to be entirely satisfactory. It would for instance have been worthwhile to compare the items of Matthias's revenue with the revenue policy of other rulers, such as that of the Dukes of Burgundy. This would have made it clearer whether the regular revenue of the king was large or small. However, we may engage in some primitive comparisons. By dividing the revenue by the numbers of the population, the annual per capita royal revenue in France in the mid-fifteenth century would correspond to 0.06 florins, in England and Wales to 0.18 florins, and in Hungary to 0.03 florins; but in the Hungary of 1475 it came to 0.15–0.17 forints. Are such mathematical operations justified? And if not, what are the questions to which we may expect an answer from the itemized analysis of revenue?

Fügedi, Erik: *Mátyás király jövedelme 1475-ben* (The revenue of King Matthias in 1475). *Századok*, Vol. 116. 1982. pp. 484–507. "I diarii di Cicco Simonetta." (Acta Italica I). Milan, 1961. pp. 201–203.

G. G.

PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF PROTECTING HISTORIC MONUMENTS

There have been several recent studies of work being done in Hungary towards preserving historic monuments. Some of these have been theoretical.

Writing on the Viollet-le-Duc centenary Miklós Horler examines the concept and relative value of historic monuments within the entire culture; he emphasizes the connections between history and the continuity of a society's consciousness. Accordingly he argues that there is a hierarchy of values involved in which the historical is not necessarily the dominant. He is also concerned with the complex problems of protecting the recent past, the entity of urban environment as developed since the industrial revolution.

"The social and economic values immanent in the architecture of traditional settlements have become increasingly clear and they have opened up new perspectives on the evolution of the human environment." He examines what has to be done for protection, the actual notion of reconstruction and its purposes and the contemporary arguments involved (for instance, on the problems of value in presenting a sequence of periods). He also deals with methods of restoration, theoretical and practical questions in research, and associated restoration, conservation, and utilization. He is surely justified in finding that when everything is taken into consideration, practical utilization or assimilating historic monuments into the life of society must be subordinated to the cultural interests of society as a whole.

Gábor Winkler essentially agrees with Horler's principles. He analyses the problems and tasks facing the specialist in the reconstruction of inner cities; he indicates how protection has moved in this direction and points out the necessity and opportunities for developing urban planning. Winkler's proposals have been discussed by the Commission for Architectural History and Theory of the Academy of Sciences, which has recommended their adoption in practice for the protection of monuments in Hungary.

Horler, Miklós: *Műemlékvédelmünk elvei és módszerei* (Principles and methods of the protection

of our monuments). *Építés-Építészettudomány*, 1981. Nos. 1–2. pp. 63–84. Horler, Miklós: *Viollet-le-Duc egy centenárium távlatából* (Viollet-le-Duc from the perspective of a century). *Építés-Építészettudomány*, 1981. Nos. 3–4. pp. 221–241. Winkler, Gábor: *Történeti belvárosok rekonstrukciója* (The reconstruction of historic inner cities). *Építés-Építészettudomány*, 1982. Nos. 3–4. pp. 535–538.

F. V.

HUNGARIAN HOLOCAUST

Élet és Irodalom, a literary weekly has published a review by György Ránki of Randolph Braham's important work on the destruction of Hungarian Jewry.*

To the thorough and detailed description of the American author the Hungarian historian adds some important remarks on the background and consequences of the 1944 tragedy in all its complexity.

The fate of West European Jewry was intertwined with the nation to which they had belonged for a long time, while Eastern Jews, who had lived virtually in a ghetto, may have felt that it was some sort of eternal Jewish fate that had befallen them. The assimilation of Hungarian Jewry resembled that of their Western counterparts in that Hungarian Jews had declared their Hungarianness consistently from the nineteenth century and had wanted to share in the fate of the nation. But the nation indifferently or even actively consigned them to Hitler's *Endlösung*. This at a time when other East European countries (e.g. Rumania) had rejected Hitler's instructions and tried to change earlier, anti-Jewish policies. In contrast, the Hungarian authorities who until then had been able to sustain a relative independence and the relative security of the large number of Hungarian Jews, at this decisive moment became accomplices by actively collaborating in the mass deportation which was essential for the genocide. They thus destroyed what had been until then the country's good image, internationally isolated the nation, and pushed it into a moral crisis which has not been completely resolved even now.

Ránki argues that Prime Minister Kállay, who had showed tactical ability from 1942 to 1944, "calculated that at the appropriate time it would be easy to deflect words in the direction of deeds, but in the end deeds became realigned to words."

Consequently, the Horthy regime bears a grave responsibility for what happened to Hungarian Jews and to Hungary in 1944, despite the fact that the deportation of Jews from Budapest was ultimately and primarily prevented by Horthy. For it was through the regime's policies and propaganda that had been created earlier "in which then the population of the country assisted not in the saving of the Jews but in their destruction, or at least viewed their mass murder passively." By so doing, it caused at least as much harm to itself as it did to the Jews; the courageous minority who consciously fought against the stream, rescuing and hiding the persecuted, were fully aware that they were not only trying to save Jewish friends and acquaintances, or even strangers, but also the honour and moral standing of the nation.

Ránki, György: *Magyar holocaust* (Hungarian holocaust). *Élet és Irodalom*, June 18, 1982.

G. L.

* The Politics of Genocide. The Holocaust in Hungary. I–II. New York, 1981, Columbia Univ. Press, 1269 pp.

THE REDISCOVERY OF OSZKÁR JÁSZI

For many years little has been said in Hungary on Oszkár Jászi. He was one of the most influential social thinkers of the first two decades of the century, a pioneer of Hungarian democracy, one of the leading figures of the 1918 revolution, and then, in exile, a proclaimer of democratic ideals and of peace among the peoples of the

Danube region. He died in 1957 after his retirement from Oberlin College in the United States. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his death, the Historical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences held a commemorative meeting, during which a long and wide-ranging academic, political, and polemical career which does not deserve neglect was recalled. The periodical *Világosság* has now published four of the papers delivered at that commemorative meeting.

Endre Nagy presents the sociologist Jászi, at the time when the young pioneer of this young science, the editor of the first Hungarian sociological periodical, *Huszadik Század* (Twentieth Century), came across modern sociology during a 1905 trip to Paris. After this earlier, theoretical *Sturm und Drang* period, he ran the periodical, the sociology workshop grouped around it, directing it towards the exploration of social facts, "The discovery of Hungary." It was in this way that Jászi became an expert on the nationality question in Hungary and, later, in south-east Europe.

Károly Irinyi analyses the frequently discussed and controversial *Mitteleuropa* concept accepted by Jászi in 1915–16, and throws light on Jászi's motives and perspectives: the solution of nationality problems within the framework of a large Central European confederation and its defence against Tsarist imperialism. After the Russian revolution Jászi immediately dropped this idea, but maintained—and even developed concretely—the idea of federalizing the Monarchy. After the collapse, as the Minister for Nationality Affairs in the government of Mihály Károlyi, an opportunity to realize these ideas arrived too late.

F. János Varga discusses the anti-fascist position and activity of the exiled Jászi who, after some politically active years in Vienna, settled in America. He presents a defender of Western democratic ideas, who himself felt that "the times are against him," and increasingly alone "in this bolshevized and fascisized world"; but in the years when Hitlerism was on the advance, he no longer emphasized his former and unambiguous anti-Marxist and anti-communist position, and joined the anti-fascist united front. Yet he remained faithful to his democratic ideas inasmuch as that, although he did not want to exclude conservative elements opposed to Hitler from this united front, he consistently argued—and tried to influence American foreign policy in this direction—that victory over fascism must lead in Central Europe to radical social changes.

Finally, Péter Hanák presents that new kind of patriotism which was found among Hungarians at the beginning of the century, particularly in Ady and Jászi, and which the exiled Jászi consciously broadened to a Danubian patriotism.

It is a cause for pleasure that Jászi's unknown or forgotten writings are also beginning to be published. A collection of his political essays are soon to appear along with a Hungarian translation of his book (in English) on the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy. The periodical *Kritika* has published the section on 1919 of a diary of eight and a half thousand pages (now in Columbia University's Butler Library); it contains extremely interesting information and commentary on a year which was one of the stormiest and most dramatic in the history of Hungary.

Nagy, Endre: *A Durkheim-sokk* (The Durkheim shock). *Világosság*, No. 7/1982. pp. 414–418. Irinyi, Károly: *Jászi és a közép-európai államszövetség terve* (Jászi and the plan for a Central European federation of states). *ibid.* pp. 418–22. Varga, F. János: *Jászi antifasizmusa* (Jászi's anti-fascism). *ibid.* pp. 423–426. Hanák, Péter: *Jászi hazafisága* (Jászi's patriotism). *ibid.* pp. 427–428. Vezér, Erzsébet and Litván, György (Editors): *Jászi Oszkár hagyatékából — Napló* (From the posthumous papers of Oszkár Jászi—Diary) 1919. *Kritika*, No. 8/1982. pp. 2–8.

G. L.

PROGRAMME FOR A REFORM

The Institute of Economics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has set up a priority research programme to investigate the structure of institutions bearing on the Hungarian economy. The purpose is to draw up detailed proposals for the reform of the system of economic control. The author, who is in charge of this research, sums up his ideas on the reform. A continuation of the economic reform started in 1968 is inevitable, but without this qualitative change a true and stable balance of payments and a balanced state budget cannot be achieved. To further constrict the reform would lead to such a large reduction of domestic demand that the stability of society would be endangered.

The reform means, among other things, that the economic tasks of those participating in the economy must be defined clearly. For instance, the central economic control organs must define the main targets of the strategy of economic policy, they should influence the short-term—cyclical—fluctutations of the economy and determine the regulators necessary in order to exert this influence. This means that problems arising from a conflict between supply and demand should not be solved through direct intervention by central economic control but by the market mechanism itself.

The existing economic system attributes a subordinate role to the conflicts of social interests and does not provide adequately for institutions to protect them; consequently a much greater future role must be given to the mechanisms and institutions which assert these interests. It is also necessary to provide for the regulation of clashes of interests (for example, by re-examining the role of the trade unions).

In Márton Tardos's programme competition and freedom of enterprise are given important roles. It cannot be decided by a resolution that the enterprise managers should have autonomy of decision on questions of production, purchase, sale, and investments. According to Tardos, it is possible to be rid of some constraints on competition and enterprise only if we prevent the dependency of the state enterprises and cooperatives on the conventional organs of the state administration. It would be expedient to do so primarily in the competitive sphere, in all of the economy outside the budgetary institutions and public utilities. It would be relatively simple to abolish the dependency in the case of the cooperatives, and here the author especially argues for the strengthening of the institutions of cooperative democracy. The situation is more complicated in the case of the state enterprises. Today the power of managers and of enterprise management in general and their job security depend on their status in the upper levels of the government and of the party bureaucracy, they are dependent on the confidence of these upper circles of the hierarchy, circles which are not sufficiently interested in economic efficiency. However, the interest of the state is not unequivocal in respect of the management and functioning of the individual enterprises. Enterprise management cannot find its way through the many —and often sharply conflicting—interests represented by the state in a way that they end up by meeting every social expectation. It is safer for them to be told what to do, and carry out those instructions. On the other hand, this means that enterprise management becomes much more interested in long-term profit only if its accountability and responsibility has set unequivocal requirements. For this purpose, enterprises in the competitive sphere should be controlled by institutions exercising socialist ownership which make the position of enterprise management unambiguous where there are various kinds of conflicts.

While Tardos recognizes numerous positive features of worker self-management, he nevertheless sees a greater potential in the capital holding companies which ope-

rate without restrictions on their activities and are interested in profit. He is of the opinion that these organizations would not only successfully prevent hidden retro-arrangement of the hierarchic power system, but that this form would also offer an opportunity for the regrouping of capital according to the profit principle. The managers of the holding companies would be appointed by the legislature, and thus their relative independence would be ensured. While they would be interested in increasing the assets entrusted to them, no direct linkage would be needed between workers' income and enterprise profit.

Implementing this programme would be hampered considerably by the structure of present banking. He considers that the decentralization of the banking system and the separation of the functions of issue and of commercial banking are all essential measures. The National Bank, as the bank in charge, would maintain connections with the commercial banks.

Tardos finally stresses that his programme is meant for the longer perspective and should be considered as a package which would help solve the present problems of the Hungarian economy.

Tardos, Márton: *Program a gazdaságirányítás és a szervezeti rendszer fejlesztésére* (A programme for the development of the system of economic control and organization). *Közgazdasági Szemle*, No. 6. 1982. pp. 715–730.

M. L.

CHEMICAL ENGINEERING SCIENCE, COMPUTERS, EDUCATION

Computer simulation is an efficient method in the design, erection, and operation of chemical plants. Risky and/or expensive industrial experiments can often be replaced by simulation.

Since computer-based methods are very widespread in R&D institutes of chemical engineering, it seemed to be reasonable to teach the principles and methodology involved to university students.

Professor Pál Benedek, who is at present the head of the Laboratory of Chemical Cybernetics at Budapest University, started in the mid-sixties to organize an informal group of Hungarian chemical engineers, computer programers and other experts to set up a program-system capable of solving problems arising from industrial practice. This computer program-system (called SIMUL) developed by about 50 contributors can simulate many complex processes used in different chemical plants. The original version of the program was purely technology-oriented, in the mid-seventies the system was extended so that it could assess investment cost, production cost, and economic risk, too.

Based on the experience from the use of the SIMUL system it was possible to generate a new flowsheet program package that should be useful in the eighties. FORSIM—a third generation program package which is more flexible then SIMUL—is being established by a group directed by Professor Benedek.

Recently a project has been initiated by different departments of chemistry and chemical engineering, coordinated by Iván Pallai at the Institute for the Organisation of Scientific Research. The most important elements in this project are how to apply computer techniques of chemistry and chemical engineering at universities and how to produce and make available for the student a user-oriented program-package which assists in the learning of theory and practice in chemical engineering.

Computer techniques should deeply penetrate chemical engineering since university students of the near future will be well acquainted with computer practice.

Benedek, P. (Ed.): *Steady-state Flow Sheeting of Chemical Plants*. Chemical Engineering Monographs, Elsevier, Amsterdam–Oxford–New York, 1980.

P. É.

INTERGENERIC GENE TRANSFER MEDIATED BY PLANT PROTOPLAST FUSION

Researchers at the Institute of Genetics and Plant Biology of the Biological Centre of Szeged have succeeded in introducing an efficient fusion technique by which plant protoplasts of any origin can be fused. A protoplast is a plant cell deprived of cellular membrane. The matrix, including the protein-synthetic ribonuclein acids to be found in it, the energy-producing mitochondria and the chloroplasts which transform the sun's energy into organic compounds all make up part of the protoplast. What is even more important for the present experiments is that plant protoplast also contains the entire nuclear mass, including the hereditary material (dezoxyribonuclein acid) contained in it. Consequently, when there is a successful fusion of protoplast prepared from two different plants, the two types of hereditary material display their effects within the common cell-membrane, within the common cytoplasm. Methods of tissue breeding also make possible full plant regeneration out of the fused protoplasts, and thus genetic variation brought about on the level of the cell can be transferred to the plant. The Szeged researchers have succeeded in creating and growing hybrids of parsley and carrots, and of carrots and some phanerogamous plants. The experimental transfer of properties and property-combinations between species that are taxonomically distant from each other, promises virtually unlimited opportunities for agriculture in the coming decades. At present the Szeged team is studying the genetic, biochemical, and morphological characteristics of the newly created hybrids, and is planning the development of new hybrids.

Dudits, Dénes–Olga, Fejér–Hadlaczky, Gyula–Koncz, Csaba–Lázár, B. Gábor–Horváth, Gábor: *Intergeneric Gene Transfer Mediated by Plant Protoplast Fusion. Molec. gen. Genet.*, 179, pp. 283–288 (1980), Springer Verlag, Heidelberg–Berlin–New York.

J. H.

BASIC NEUROMORPHOLOGY DISCOVERY LEADING TO NEW PAIN-RELIEVING CLINICAL TREATMENT

One of the most intriguing questions in basic neuroscience is the intrastructural signalling within the nerve cells, or neurons, the basic units of the brain. It is well known that the nerve cells possess long processes, called axons, which convey information from one part of the body to the other, and transmit information to the next neuron in the chain by means of specialized junctions called synapses. This ostensible function is the basis of information processing in the brain. In addition, however, in order to keep in operation this specific function of the nerve cell, another, less conspicuous but not less important, system keeps the cell body informed about the events that happen at the terminals and in the processes themselves. Signals of this humble infrastructural system are carried to and fro in the nerve cell processes at a much slower rate than the conduction of the nerve impulses proper. Infrastructural signals are vitally important for the maintenance of the processes since these are trophically dependent on the cell body. Problems in neuronal infrastructure have been studied in the last ten to fifteen years, using cytochemical, electron microscopic, and electrophysiological methods, in the Department of Anatomy of the Medical School in Szeged, Hungary. Some of this work has been carried out in collaboration with other institutions, notably the Department of Neuropathology of Harvard Medical School, the Section of Neuroanatomy of Yale Medical School, the Institut d'Anatomie of the Université de Liège, and

the Max Planck-Institut für Neurochemie, München-Martinsried.

One of the best models in which to study this infrastructural signalling system is the primary sensory neuron. Cell bodies of such nerve cells are located in tiny enlargements called ganglia, alongside the spinal cord. The cell has two long processes, one to the periphery, where it terminates in the form of a sensory nerve ending, and a second which terminates in the dorsal horn of the spinal cord. Professor Bert Csillik and his wife, Elizabeth Knyihár, in Szeged found that a prerequisite for the maintenance of the central process is that the peripheral terminal takes from the skin and continuously transports to the cell body a polypeptide, called the nerve growth factor. If the transport of the nerve growth factor is prevented, the central terminal undergoes atrophy, and as a consequence synaptic transmission in the spinal dorsal horn is seriously impeded for several weeks or months. The prevention of the transport of the nerve growth factor can be brought about through applying an antiserum to the nerve growth factor, or through the drugs known as microtubule inhibitors (such as the Vinca or Catharantus alkaloids), around the peripheral nerve.

Perhaps what is even more important, however, is that Vinca alkaloids block transport of the nerve growth factor and induce atrophy of central sensory terminals also if applied to the skin by means of iontophoresis. This latter discovery raised the possibility of clinical application. Therapeutical trials to alleviate intractable pain with Vinca alkaloid iontophoresis were started two years ago in the Pain Control Unit of the Szeged Medical School.

In a recent survey, Csillik, Knyihár, and Szűcs reported that Vinca alkaloid iontophoresis had beneficial effects in 48 out of 51 chronic pain patients who could not be cured by conventional forms of pain therapy; 40 patients, suffering from post-therapeutic, trigeminal, diabetic, alcoholic, and other neuralgias were completely relieved of pain; in 8 patients, relief was partial or temporary; only 3 cases were refractory to treatment.

Pain clinics throughout the world use a wide variety of treatments to relieve patients of pain. Symptomatic pain is a useful device warning the individual of dangers resulting in tissue damage. In contrast, chronic, intractable, and terminal pain (not infrequently climaxing in suicide attempts) is an immense burden to the patient, his family and to society; the "cost of pain" has been estimated to exceed 50 billion dollars annually in the United States. It seems that modulation of the infrastructural signalling system of primary sensory neurons, as suggested by the research carried out by this Szeged group of neuroanatomists, may add a powerful new technique to the battery of methods used by clinicians in fighting pain.

B. Csillik, E. Knyihár-Csillik, and A. Szűcs (1982): *Treatment of chronic pain syndromes with iontophoresis of Vinca alkaloids to the skin of patients. Neuroscience Letters*, 31, 87–90 (Elsevier Publishers Ltd.).

J. H.

OXYGEN INSUFFICIENCY OF NEW-BORN BABIES

New-born babies are endangered by any disturbance in the oxygen supply. Early oxygen insufficiency of the new-born baby has been researched everywhere in the world and attempts are made to prevent it, since in addition to the direct consequences of lack of oxygen, serious later damage to the physical and psychic development of the individual may also be caused.

At the paediatric clinic of Szeged Medical School, Professor Domokos Boda and collaborators, drawing on their own and foreign experience have been using "exchange of blood," a method, which has

been used since the twenties to prevent the pathological consequences of blood group incompatibility, though recently this application has become less and less common.

They have treated term and prematurely born babies in this way against oxygen insufficiency (high bilirubin blood level). As a result of exchange of blood the oxygen linkage of the blood and its blood transportation functions are improved, particularly with mature new-born babies and more moderately with premature; they become complete by the fifth day. At the same time they have also found that the usual blood preparations available are not very effective as an entirely fresh blood preparation of high oxygen saturation drawn by a special stabilizer is needed for achieving a more definite effect. To this end, experiments were carried out on exsanguinated new-born piglets, transfusing blood of super-normal oxygen saturation (an inozin-piruvatephosphate mixture). Through this form of transfusion it was possible to overcome oxygen insufficiency in the piglets; the researchers have already applied this method on humans with promising results.

However, introducing this treatment on a wider scale still faces some unsolved problems. First, insufficient ideal blood preparation is available, and second, the blood loses biological value during storage, nor is a really reliable stabilizer as yet available despite ongoing research. Consequently, research into other methods is also important.

The Szeged Paediatric Clinic and the Gynaecological and Obstetric Clinics have together examined the effect of vitamin B-on blood oxygen transportation in infants. In 1980 and 1981, 36 women giving birth to their first or second babies were examined, identical in body weight and age, and were divided into three groups. Twenty-four women were administered 100 mg vitamin B_6 before giving birth. Twelve women were given no vitamin B_6 and were used as a control group. Analysing the blood oxygen transportation of the new-born babies it was found that the blood oxygen saturation in babies of the women pretreated with vitamin B_6 was substantially better than that in the control group, and had became complete by the fifth day. This method is much less risky than transfusion and because of its simplicity it may become normal practice. Its importance appears to be inestimable in the adaptation of the newly-born baby. Further research is being carried out on both improving transfusion and on new methods which will increase the immediate and long-term survival chances of the new-born through influencing blood oxygen supply.

Boda, Domokos: *Változó célkitűzések az újszülöttek vércsere kezelésében* (Changing objectives in the blood exchange treatment of new-born babies). *Orvosi Hetilap*, 1982. Vol. 123. No. 21. pp. 1271–1276. Temesvári, Péter–Szilágyi, Imre–Eck, Erna–Boda, Domokos: *Antenatálisan alkalmazott B_6 vitamin hatása az anya és az újszülött véroxigén transzport funkciójára, valamint szérum prolactin szintjére.* (The influence of the administration of vitamin B_6 before birth on the blood oxygen transportation function of the mother and of the new-born baby, and on the serum prolactin level). *Orvosi Hetilap*, 1982. Vol. 123. No. 36. pp. 2213–2215.

L. I.

PÉTER ÉRDI is a research chemist at the First Department of Anatomy of Semmelweis Medical University... GYÖRGY GRANASZTÓI is the author of a book on medieval Hungarian towns... JÓZSEF HÁMORI is professor of neurobiology currently studying the establishment of neural connectivity in the developing brain... TAMÁS HOFER is editor-in-chief of *Ethnographia*... LÁSZLÓ IVÁN heads the Gerontopsychiatric Section of the Psychiatric Department of Semmelweis Medical University... MIHÁLY LAKI is an economist on the staff of the Research Institute of the Federation of Cooperatives... GYÖRGY LITVÁN's recent

work is on the opposition movements in Hungary around the year 1900... ÁRPÁD NAGY is an archeologist on the staff of the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest... FERENC VÁMOSSY is the author of a book on the architecture of our times.

Tiszatáj—a literary monthly published in Szeged

Századok—the journal of the Hungarian Historical Association

Építés-Építészettudomány—a quarterly of the Technology Department of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Élet és Irodalom—a literary weekly

Világosság—a philosophical monthly

Kritika—a critical monthly

Közgazdasági Szemle—the monthly of the Committee for the Economic Sciences of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Orvosi Hetilap—a weekly for medical practitioners

FROM OUR NEXT ISSUES

CHANGES IN THE PATTERN OF HUNGARIAN SETTLEMENTS

György Enyedi

THE NEW CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA

Árpád Prandler

PEASANT HUSBANDRY IN HUNGARY: 1800–1945

Péter Szubay

PEASANT ART IN THE 19th CENTURY

Tamás Hofer

SÁROSPATAK REMEMBERED

Geoffrey Tier

HUNGARIANS IN ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

George Gömöri

SURVEYS

IN MEMORIAM ISTVÁN GÁL
(1912–1982)

I first met him when we were both university students through the good offices of our common professor, Sándor Pesti. He was a very fair, bespectacled young man who knew everybody who counted and read everything he thought important to read. There was good reason that his closest friends had nicknamed him "The Reader." He spoke in an undertone, passionately and with inspiration, but also with the impatience of one who never has enough time; who has eighteen to twenty hours of work to do each day, work which often has to be got through without food or drink—he spoke fired by the role which had been waiting for a long time, though he was still training for it. Then he would leave, his briefcase stuffed with books and manuscripts, as befitted the editor of the *Apollo* magazine.

He was born in Bonyhád and was educated there—at the school which had sent János Lotz, future Hungarian linguist in America, on to Eötvös College. The postmaster's house had seen Gyula Illyés as a boarder within its walls; Szekszárd, the birthplace of Mihály Babits, the poet, was only a stonethrow away. He chose Babits as the subject of his first article, written when he was just nineteen and published in the local paper. It was followed by several articles about Gyula Illyés, one about Dezső Szabó the writer, as soon as they became acquainted, and one about his first trip to England, in 1929. By the time he became a university student with English and German as his main subjects, Hungarian and History of Art his supplementaries, he was well versed in the art of writing.

As a university student he lived for a while at László Németh's;* the short stay was enough to infect him with the spirit of Europe, especially with that of Danubian Europe, and he came to regard Németh's talk of humanistic youth, presenting a new image by the beginning of the thirties, as referring to himself and his contemporaries: youth to whom "writing comes by instinct, science and philosophy through curiosity, and which may be most pertinently compared to the humanists of old." Eastern Europe is populated by nations, he heard Béla Bartók explain, which number ten million or fewer than ten million; what is more, their borders present no impenetrable geographical boundaries or obstacles—here melodies may freely be interchanged, with a continual fertilization and cross-fertilization that has been going on for centuries. Hungary, with its national minorities, seemed like a miniaturized Eastern Europe in the years before the Great War, wrote Bartók. The interrelations between the folk-music of the nations of Eastern Europe can only be clarified if the collection, classification, and publication of material is carried out according to a uniform method an with the same object

* Writer and dramatist, 1901–1975. *NHQ* 1, 2, 5, 13, 21, 26, 44, 59, 67, 72.

in view. This, thought Bartók, can most effectively be accomplished by an Eastern European Institute of Folk-Music, to be established in Budapest. László Németh had similar ideas: Central Europe does not exist —it must be created, he said, and intended to entrust István Gál with a planned magazine, to be called *Central Europe*. István Gál accepted: he was twenty-two at the time.

Thus *Apollo* came into being in December 1934, to serve as a mouthpiece for the "comparative arts," in fact for comparative literature and historiography. It was not a family almanac, nor the official gazette of any party, society, or circle. Its founders and early contributors were all young people of twenty odd, who met every Monday night, prepared, as one of them, László Cs. Szabó, recently wrote, to endure poverty, privation, abuse, and persecution in the common hope of redeeming their country spiritually and economically. Among their ranks were László Bóka,* Gábor Halász, essayist, András Hevesi, the writer and critic, László Cs. Szabó,** Antal Szerb***—they were the founders. *Apollo*, as the young editor put it, also planned to express the Central European humanistic image of the Hungarian literary spirit, as humanism meant for his colleagues "the existential experience of the most noble European traditions; the Central European reconciliation to fate being in our case a recognition of our position as Hungarians, the result of a strict self-examination." It is therefore our duty, he continued, "besides clarifying the sense and reason for the existence of humanism today, to discover and to examine the phenomena and personalities that bind together the different periods of the history of Central European intellectual life. It is naturally our duty to safeguard the frontiers of humanist, latinist Central Europe, which has been a synchronous intellectual community for so many centuries."

All this has been the dream of many young men of past generations—the creation of a democratic Sodalitas Danubiana, one that will harbour nations, not—as was the custom of old—a small company of humanists within its boundaries. The contributors of *Apollo* were probably thinking of the "Eastern European Motherland" of Endre Ady, Mihály Babits, Oszkár Jászi, Dezső Szabó, and Attila József. In the editor's definition: "Our autochtonous virtual Central Europe and our virtual Hungary within it make up an indivisible and complete, wholly intellectual globe. Could there be a more worthy, a more noble venture for man in an inhuman world, for a young writer or scholar today than to sacrifice his life for this intellectual globe?" Their programme, in the young editor's phrasing, defined *Apollo*'s ideal Central Europe as identical with Béla Bartók's conception of Eastern Europe. We could not in any case choose a finer ideal than Béla Bartók among the intellectuals of our world, one who is the most important European, Central European, and Hungarian figure, as a man and artist alike." Let us not forget that these words were uttered in the middle of the thirties!

Besides Bartók's example the university lectures of János Horváth, the literary historian, served as an inspiration for the elaboration of humanism in general, and for the new evaluation of Central European humanism in particular, while the help of Sándor Eckhardt's comparative literature course on Central Europe led to a broader approach to the nations of the Danubian basin, in fact to the more thorough examination of the neighbouring nations rather than of national minorities—as István Gál was to phrase it several years later.

More gratifying than the favourable reception at home was the sympathy of Central Europe, wrote the editor, showing that Central European humanism was no longer

* 1910–1979, writer and politician. See *NHQ* 1, 2, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17.

** b. 1905, Hungarian writer now living in London. See *NHQ* 87.

*** 1901–1945, writer and literary historian. See *NHQ* 36.

the personal business of a few Hungarian writers and men of letter, but of "public interest to our neighbours as well, a cause in the interest of a more human, a juster future... Central Europe is the land of glorious promise. In the age of the all-inundating anti-intellectual barbarism surrounding it, Central Europe serves as a reservoir, a refuge for the most noble European ideas." Thomas Mann, visiting Budapest early in 1935, agreed with him: "I am convinced," he declared, "that at this very moment the intellects of Europe are secretly at work, creating a new humanism. It may not be as optimistic as the original; the influence of modern science may have changed it beyond recognition. It will be gloomier perhaps, but it will encompass humanity in the broadest sense. From the heights of the intellect it shall offer a new perspective of all that which is human... Will Central Europe take part in this task? Most certainly it shall. There is no longer a difference in standards between Western and Central Europe today. The imperceptible work of intellectual reconstruction is going on regardless of borders, and it is not more noticeable in the West than it is here. I know that young Hungarians, scholars and students have launched a periodical which is trying to define the outlines of a Central European humanism."

*

After such beginnings it was only natural that Béla Bartók's lecture on ethnomusicological field work and Thomas Mann's lecture at the Budapest congress of the League of Nations Intellectual Cooperation Committee should be published under the title "Europe and Humanism" in the second volume of the *Apollo* in 1936, as the result of the editor's sound judgement and sense of timing. Thomas Mann in actual fact was elaborating an earlier statement: "Europe is a concept closely and inseparably bound to the events linked with humanism. It is a militant humanism that we need today, one that is encouraged by the recognition of the fact that a brazen and unquestioning fanaticism must never be allowed to exploit or oust the freedom, patience, or doubt; the recognition that this humanism has not only the right, but the duty to defend itself... Speaking of humanism, we are speaking of the foundation of Europe, of the conditions of intellectual life, therefore I thought it necessary to point out the connection that the natural goodness inherent in every humanistic thought must establish with firm resolution if Europe is to continue." The *Apollo* crowd would have preferred to replace militant humanism by active humanism and said so.

Apollo had developed into something new, an an experiment in a new genre which, according to the editor, was more mobile, more lively than an almanac, but which was not as ephemeral as a weekly or monthly. Among the contributors, besides the founders, were such figures as Mihály Babits, Gyula Illyés, Dezső Kerecsényi, Károly Kerényi,* Zoltán Kodály, and the four Lászlós: Gáldi and Hadrovics, the joint editors of a standard Russian–Hungarian dictionary, Mátrai,** and Sziklay, a literary historian, who all embraced the broader geographical region of Central Europe, spreading their nets wider than they had before. They touched upon past and present with equal respect, always keeping the same object in view: that which is important for the present and the future. Directly or indirectly, they expressed the same ideas in the ten volumes published up to early 1939: change is unavoidable, humanity is unconquerable, the course of development uncheckable. Immediately after the publication of the first volume, the Apollo Library and the Apollo Pamphlets were launched: these were offprints, signs of adaptability. The Apollo workshop issued 32 pamphlets in all before it ceased publication on the eve of the Second World War in compliance with a press law that insisted on publication at least ten times a year.

* Classical scholar. See *NHQ* 71.
** Philosopher. See *NHQ* 49.

In the meantime István Gál continued his studies, but was present wherever something was on. With a store of energy which seemed inexhaustible he kept up his writing in the midst of the editorial duties requiring much diplomatic tact. He was either on his way back from Czechoslovakia, as the Budapest editor of the *Új Szellem* of Prague, off to Transylvania, as a contributor to the *Független Újság* of Kolozsvár or *Brassói Lapok*, or returning from Vienna after eighteen months there to write articles for *Magyar Nemzet* to which he contributed almost from the time it was founded up until his death. Between 1935 and 1937 he worked as copy-editor and reader for Révai, the publishers, learning how to transform a manuscript into a book. Three years later he made good use of this knowledge working on foreign-language book and periodical publication for the cultural section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was at home everywhere: at student haunts and in editorial offices, at demonstrations and in bookstalls, and he found the time to present his contemporaries in a successful series, "An hour's conversation with..." on the radio. He was often ill but it seemed he could stand up to everything if he felt it was worth it. *Ex post facto* others agree: Magvető Press are preparing a selection of articles that appeared in *Apollo*, almost forty-five years after the magazine ceased publication.

Neither the subject nor the cause came to an end with *Apollo*. Three years later, in 1942, a collection of essays edited by István Gál was published, in Hungarian, under the title "Hungary and the Balkans: the role of Hungarian scholarship in South-Eastern Europe." A year later the same volume appeared in German. An enlarged edition followed in 1947. István Gál was the editor of *Ungarische Städtebilder, Ungarn im Donauraum* and the *Ungarischer Mikrokosmos;* the second of these was published in Leipzig, the third ni Vienna; the first in 1942, the other two in 1943. *La Hongrie et l'Europe Danubienne* as well as the publication of the earlier plans of federation, *Föderierte Monarchie und Donaustaatenbund in 1848–49* and *Kossuth's Danubian Confederation* as well as the *Ungarische Donaukonföderationspläne*, which all appeared in 1944, also had their roots in *Apollo*. The Franklin Press intended the latter for book-day publication in June 1944—a single made-up copy survives. Baron Miklós Wesselényi's "Appeal in the Cause of the Hungarian and Slavic Nations" expressed its kinship with *Apollo* already in the title, and was issued also in 1944, on the centenary of first publication. But the subject as a cause continued to stay with István Gál to the end, and it was through no fault of his that no new volumes, possibly with a new approach, were published.

*

Though handicapped by the national and the international situation he devoted himself to what was to become his second, always exciting, field of interest: the study and elaboration of Hungaro–Anglo-American relations. Together with Professor Sándor Fest* and others, later László Országh, he joined the company of those who had become conscious of national tasks through familiarization with the intellectual conditions of more developed societies. He turned to the past without losing interest in the future, without forsaking his responsibilities: for him the two interests blended, and became one. That he settled for the Hungarian reform era, the beginning of the nineteenth century as his main area of research was at the instigation of a secret inner bidding—this was the period when modern European thinking was firmly implanted in Eastern Europe. In Hungary as in neighbouring countries progressive liberal ideas became the tools to combat feudal reality. The presentation of the history of the reform era served as a proof for the present that the scorning of human rights, the mockery of the inquiring intellect, the silencing of

* 1883–1944, literary historian.

humanity, the disfranchisement of certain peoples are pursuits that the best minds successfully fought against a hundred years ago, and not only in Hungary. All this was the continuation of the *Apollo* idea—with different methods and on another level. István Gál continued the battle throughout the war, perpetually coming up against signs calling a halt, running the ever growing risks with great courage. Almost two hundred articles and essays testify to this, among which several appeared in the *Hungarian Quarterly*, in *Studies in English Philology*, *Danubian Review*, and the *Nouvelle Revue de la Hongrie*, all of which he served as a literary editor; and in *Donaueuropa* and *Ungarn*, of which he was the assistant editor, as well as in dailies and periodicals such as the *Erdélyi Helikon*, the *Pásztortűz*, the *Külügyi Szemle*, *Magyar Szemle*, *Az Ország Útja*, as well as a number of Hungarian papers published in America.

He wrote a great deal and he wrote rapidly, always finding something new to interest him; for example, he rediscovered the Western European travelogue of Sándor Bölöni Farkas, written between 1830 and 31, and forgotten for seventy years. He was at his best when there was something to be discovered through examining the intricacies of economic, political, and cultural relationships. The extent of his knowledge enabled him to unravel and bind together events and hitherto undiscovered facts lost in the labyrinths of time; but everything, even the most insignificant-seeming detail, found its place in the whole, was a step towards the preparation of the synthesis. The slim volume of "Anglo–Hungarian Historical Relations" (1942) was followed by the richly illustrated *Hungary and the Anglo-Saxon World* in 1944, later reprinted four times. The bulkier volume of essays "Hungary, England and America: Sketches of International Affairs" was set up in 1944, and the miraculously preserved lead was used to print the book, in 1945, with the added subtitle: with special respect to the Slavic world. A year later the series which he co-edited, "Our Country and the World", was advertising a comprehensive study of his, "Hungary and the British Empire," which unfortunately he did not find the time to finish, and there has been no one to complete this much-needed synthesis. True, he intended to make use of earlier and later articles to compile a study with a similar theme, but this did not get beyond the planning stage either.

His third field of research was the work of Mihály Babits; he was the first to take note of the poet's posthumous papers and undertook to study and eventually to publish them. Babits, like Bartók, fitted easily into the *Apollo* concept. Dezső Keresztury was the first to recognize that they used similar sources, strove for similar goals, were fired by the same passion for work and high standards, and above all, shared the same views on Hungarian cultural policy and on the nature of art. István Gál first worked on Babits for his Ph.D. dissertation, entitled "Babits and English Literature." The study of the poet's posthumous papers resulted in a number of essays and eleven volumes including the publication of many unknown works, letters, and drafts, for example for a "European Reader."

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At the end of the war his field of interest broadened. He became a research worker for the Preparation of Peace department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; a seminar lecturer in Professor Gyula Szekfű's history department, the secretary of the Anglo–Hungarian and the American–Hungarian societies and that of the Hungarian Balkan Institute. In September 1945 he was appointed English literature and language lecturer at the faculty of arts of the university at Szeged; in December he became the official in charge of foreign books in the National Library Centre, and its director from May 1945 to September 1949. The new start and revival of the international exchange of books and periodicals by Hun-

gary is coupled with his name, as well as the introduction of microfilming in libraries. Naturally amidst such activities his articles diminished in number, and for a time, due to the untimeliness of his work in 1948, he was silenced. Between 1949 and 1972 he was a librarian, cultural adviser, translator, and lecturer at the British Embassy in Budapest. Many Hungarian authors, artists, and scholars owe their trips to England to him—and perhaps this is the best place to cite the words of Michael Halsted, who had taught at Sárospatak and directed a performance in English of *Julius Caesar* at Sárospatak and in Budapest, published by *The Times* on the 8th of July, 1982: "I am sure that many British like myself who were in Budapest soon after the Second World War remember István with affection and gratitude. He was a tower of strength to us in the British Council and probably to the Embassy as well. His advice in a tricky situation was invaluable. He was a staunch and brave friend. He stood out fearlessly for what we all believed."

As his illness tied him more and more to his home so articles, essays, and books multiplied after 1957. With the patient help of his family he recommenced where he had left off. Since he could not go out to meet the world the world came to him in the shape of visitors and publications. He wanted to know about everything and did not lose contact. He wrote about all that he thought important and his articles appeared in periodicals like the present journal, the renewed *Studies in English* Philology, in daily papers, and as broadcast lectures. He did not lose his capacity and willingness to undertake several things at the same time, and the interconnections he thus discovered served as a basis for the comprehensive and intensive understanding of ever-widening fields, nevertheless he remained true to his ancient loves. His inquisitive intellect, paired with an excellent memory, led to a rare kind of versatility, a comprehensive knowledge: everything interested him, his inquisitive-apprehensive curiosity was exceptional. He was full of plans up to the end, burning to fulfil the tasks and duties awaiting him, disinterestedly helping others, often younger than himself, with advice and material. He was sincerely happy to learn of the revival and enrichment of Central European comparative studies, the extension of research into Hungaro–Anglo-American relations, its decentralization through the contributions of Hungarians and those of other nations. He settled for the role of a kind of intellectual telephone exchange, transmitting personal and written messages. Work seemed to enliven him, but also burned him up, though he was never discouraged, never seemed to tire while suffering agonies that would have broken three Jobs—as László Cs. Szabó wrote in his letter of condolence to the family.

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In the last twenty-five years he wrote over four hundred short articles and essays—even the shortest can be ranked as a literary work. In his book "From Bartók to Radnóti" he told all that only he could tell about his generation, his old colleagues, bringing them back to life. Two years ago a rich selection from Sándor Bölöni Farkas's complete Western European and North American travelogues was published in German with his introduction. Many of his articles were published in English, French, Polish, German, Russian, Serbian, and Slovak. The demand that his articles about the past make the present, that they address the present, is what ensures that what he wrote stays alive.

Miklós Borsos the sculptor made a beautiful plaquette of him at fifty: a book-shelf on one side, an Apollo-head in front of it, with the inscription "Apollo's blessing." Several articles on him were published when he was sixty; he died at the age of seventy, and since then many appreciative obituaries have appeared, in *The Times*, and broadcast by Hungarian Radio. His true memorial is the purity of his intentions.

SÁNDOR MALLER

OTTÓ CSIKY

CHILDREN AFTER DIVORCE

A general feature of the Hungarian law—as of socialist law in general—is that it intervenes in processes that endanger a child. In case of divorce, either when pronouncing the marriage dissolved or at some other time, a court of general jurisdiction decides on matters of custody. That is when the court decides on whom the right and duty of bringing up the children of the broken family devolves. The court may have to perform both the duties of reconciliation and of dissolution.

The dissolution of the marriage can have a twofold effect on the position and life of the child. The divorce may put an end to the domestic crisis situation, but it may also give rise to a crisis. Being aware of the twofold effect, the Supreme Court of the Hungarian People's Republic, in its Directive No. 9 on the dissolution of marriage, defines the child's interest as follows: "In case the child is attached to his parents and the parents also love their child and feel responsible for him, even when the marriage has come to a crisis there can still be hope of restoring married life, of eliminating the circumstances that have destroyed the matrimonial union, remedying the wrongs done. To awaken parental responsibility is therefore an important duty of the court."

All this does not mean, however, that the interests of the child require the maintenance of a completely and irreparably broken down marriage. The directive points out that "cohabitation in a hostile and poisoned atmosphere can be more unfavourable to the child than the new situation, which saves the child the harmful impacts of the serious faults of upbringing which usually occur in the course of the ongoing quarrels of the parents. At such times, however, it is the parents' duty to protect their children as far as possible, by exercising proper self-control, from the consequences of the break-up of their marriage. The dissolution of the marriage must not result in the child's losing the parent who will not directly raise it; that is why it is desirable that a marriage which can in no way be maintained should be dissolved with as little shock as possible."

This aim of upholding the child's interest is promoted in Hungarian law, among other things, by what is called "divorce by agreement" based on voluntary accord, but this solution is conditional on the parents' agreement as to who shall have the care of the child and the court's approval of such an agreement. The same purpose is served also by a general provision of the law which says that the court shall decide on the custody of the child in default of an agreement between the parents.

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The implicit legal meaning of this rule is that voluntary accord of the parents can help a child to live a more untroubled life. This solution adds importance to the accord of the parents, but it still does not consider it as the private business of the parents. The parents' right of disposal can extend only as far as it does not interfere with the child's obvious interests. The agreement concluded in court by the litigating parents is subject to judicial revision pursuant to sect. 290 of the Code of Civil Procedure. If the parents' agreement on the custody of the child—as interpreted by the Supreme Court's recent Directive No. 17—is plainly inconsistent with the child's interests, the court proceeding in the matrimonial case can, on condition of agreement, decide *ex officio* in a manner that suits the child's interests best. This solu-

tion can be applied also in the case of an action brought solely for the custody of the child but when the parents' agreement does not tally with the child's interest.

The possibility exists also for the procurator or the guardianship authority to intervene in the lawsuit in progress between the parents and put in a cross-claim requesting the child's placement differently from the parents' expressed will.

The question can arise how far the parents' right of disposal extends and where is the limit beyond which the revision proposed by a higher court must be enforced even against the will of the parents. If the parents' agreement in respect of the custody of the child is an appropriate guarantee of the child's upbringing, there is no cause for setting aside that agreement. This is where a limit is set to the legal arrangement which is applied against the parents' will only when placement as planned would be contrary to the child's interests. Glaring circumstances are involved. It must be ensured that the child is not placed in the direct care of a parent who is an unfit person for the purpose.

There occur cases when neither of the parents is qualified to bring up the child directly, when neither can be appropriately awarded custody of the child. According to Hungarian law, when the placing of the child under parental care can jeopardize the child's interests, the court may decide to place it elsewhere in the very interests of the child. (Family Code, sect. 76, para. 1.)

Placement elsewhere implies two possibilities. One is for the court to give custody of the child to a third person. The second is for the court to propose that the child should be placed in an institution or accommodated as a public charge in a foster home.

Placement in the care of a third person depends on two conditions. On the one hand, a person is needed who is willing to take care of the child; on the other, this person should really be qualified to secure the child's development. According to experience in Hungarian judicial practice it is a relatively rare occurrence that neither of the divorced or separated parents can properly ensure the continued upbringing of the child, but even in such cases there is usually nothing in principle to prevent either some more distant relation, regardless of the degree of relationship, from undertaking to bring up the child, or the child from being placed in the charge of foster-parents who are not even related. What plays a decisive role in this regard is not blood in the first place, but the substance of the undertaking. The case most likely to occur—although not over frequently—is that the continued upbringing of the child is assured by one of the grandparents or one set of grandparents. Experience in Hungary shows that especially grandparents who have already retired can render parents in employment considerable assistance in bringing up the child or children, and the child often feels closely attached to the grandparent taking care of him.

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Accommodation of a minor child as a public charge falls within the competence of the guardianship authority, meaning that the court, when awarding the custody of a child, cannot rule that the child should be given foster-home placement. In the same manner, the placing of the child in an institution is also within the purview of the guardianship authority. According to a ruling by the Supreme Court, however, it is possible for the court to propose accommodation in an institution; moreover, in case prompt action is needed, the court may, with temporary effect, propose that the minor child should be placed in the nearest county (or municipal) home for the protection of children and youth.

Such measures, as well as the placing of the child outside the parents' scope of

authority, are, as mentioned above, rarely resorted to in Hungarian judicial practice; the most typical case taking place often enough is when the court has to decide which of the two quarrelling parents should be given the custody of the child.

According to experience in Hungary parents separating, in nearly two-thirds of the cases, agree of their own accord as to which of them should continue the child's upbringing. All these cases apply to minor children only; what is more, it is worth mentioning that a child over sixteen may, for good reasons, quit the parental home of his own free will, thus at such times the child chooses his place of accomodation practically on his own.

In about two-thirds of the cases the parents engage in a fierce battle for the custody of the child, and this battle is occasionally sharpened by the fact that, when it comes to the use of the former matrimonial home, a decisive fact is which of the parents has been given custody of the child.

What points of view underlie the court's decision in such cases?

Factors of decisive importance before 1945 were the guilt of the parents in respect of the break-up of the marriage as well as the age and sex of the child, but already at that time judicial practice inclined to ascertain which of the parents was the more qualified to bring up the child, and it paid less attention to which party could be blamed for the divorce.

The first socialist Family Code, Act IV of 1952, explicitly made it a duty of the court to decide on the custody of the child. Its provisions still formally admitted that the age and sex of the child could be of decisive importance in awarding custody, but the court might deviate from this rule in the child's interest. The judicial practice established by the Supreme Court really regarded the child's interest as the main point of view and described age and sex as being of secondary importance only.

In the course of the 1974 reform of the Family Code the provisions of law already dropped reference to the child's age and sex. Sect. 76, para. 1 of the Family Code reads: "In default of agreement between the parents as to which of them shall retain custody of the child, the court shall decide. Custody of the child may be asked for by the parent. In the interests of a minor child the guardianship authority or the procurator fiscal may institute proceedings. The child shall be given into the custody of that parent who can ensure the more favourable physical, mental, and moral development of the child. If placement under parental care jeopardizes the child's interests, the court may provide for placement elsewhere in the very interest of the child."

The action brought for placement can be decided clearly enough in cases when only one of the parents is fit for the continued direct upbringing. On the other hand, in cases when either of the parents, examined separately, would be qualified for custody there is need for a complex examination and detailed consideration of all circumstances in order to decide which of the two, qualified in principle, is the more qualified, which of them will be able to take better care of the child.

The Family Code does not state anything in more detail from this point of view, but it is emphatic in mentioning at once all three elements important to the development of the child's personality, to its physical, mental, and moral well being, thereby making possible a separate examination and collective consideration of the multiple requirements of the support of children. This principle is confirmed by Supreme Court Directive No. 17 issued in the spring of 1982 and containing direct instructions for awarding custody of the child to the effect that the basic, decisive point of view is protection of the child's interests. To this end the court shall take its decision after the disclosure and collective consideration of all the circumstances con-

cerning the child's life. Overestimation of specific circumstances and disregard of other points of view can prevent the child's interests from being properly enforced.

In such cases, therefore, complex examination and proof are needed, physical and psychical, internal and external factors alike have to be taken into consideration. Although it is important to establish which of the parents is able to afford the child better financial care, accommodation, and schooling, yet the interest of the child cannot be reduced merely to better financial and more comfortable accommodation, but an extremely important requirement is the parents' personal qualification for bringing up the child. With a view to deciding this, Hungarian judicial practice examines, besides the parents' living conditions, also their personality and manner of life, their other attributes and the way they behave in the family, at the place of work, and in different fields of life. It is important to find out how sincere their attachment to the child is, but also to ascertain how the child's feelings towards the parents have developed. Only if both parents are fit to raise the child, and only if both are able to ensure the child convenient living conditions, does it matter to which of them the child is more strongly attached.

The Supreme Court's above-mentioned Directive No. 17 answers the question arising in many countries whether fathers are under a handicap when bringing an action for custody of the child. There are some who raise this question by claiming that the rights of motherhood as well as the protection of the mother should be enforced by the court. This is obviously decisive in the case of a child who is breast fed and has not been weaned yet. Experience also shows that today—and this is a sociologically established fact—it is the mother who, mostly by voluntary agreement in the majority of cases, continues the upbringing of children because most mothers are more directly involved. In disputed cases, however, what should prevail is nothing else but the protection of the child and the child's interest, this is the principal, the decisive point of view. This is the very reason why the directive enunciates that the spouse, whether wife or husband, who proves to have selflessly fulfilled the tasks of taking care of the child is qualified to attend to it and can claim custody of the child. The directive connects this idea with the consideration of the child's sex and age, and thereby emphasizes that neither age nor sex can play a decisive role that would contradict the preceding principle. It must therefore be examined concretely which of the parents displays better skill in bringing up the child, how far he/she is willing to make sacrifices, what circumstances he/she is able to secure for the child. This concrete examination cannot be replaced by a generalizing about a boy requiring a father's firm hand. It is not at all certain that firmness alone is of decisive significance from the point of view of bringing up the child, nor is it certain that firmness is necessarily a male prerogative.

When pointing out therefore that the parents, in case they bear equal burdens, have equal chances to claim custody of the child, the directive defines the limits, the scope, and possibilities; it does not become partial towards the father but remains, in conformity with the spirit of the law, partial towards the child.

The directive settles also the much-debated question as to what significance is to be attached, in respect of the custody of the child, to responsibility for the dissolution of the marriage.

The directive takes up a differentiated position. On the one hand, it does not consider the awarding of the custody of the child to be a sanction against the guilty party, because the decision, when seen from different points of view, might grossly violate the child's interest. On the other hand, however, just in cases when minimal differences between the two parents decide

which of them is more qualified for the continued direct upbringing of the child, a sense of responsibility for the unity of the family can be of prime significance.

At the same time the directive calls attention to the examination of processes, so it is necessary to bring to light also the antecedents which have led to the disruption of married life. Of importance in weighing the parties' responsibility for the dissolution of the marriage are not only violations of conjugal fidelity but at least to the same degree also selfishness disregarding the common interests of the family and neglect of the duty of support.

In connection with continuity, however, the directive again takes a differentiated approach. Only an environment can be really convenient for a child in which continuity means at the same time permanently favourable or at least appropriate upbringing. What is at issue here is not the passing of time in itself, therefore the parent using violence and acting arbitrarily cannot, merely by reason of the requirement of continuity, apply with success, e.g. for a change in the custody of the child, but in this situation the demand for continuity is not the only salient point of the action brought for placement either.

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In the case of several children it matters also what relationship exists between the children as a consequence of their age and the circumstances of their upbringing, whether or not the likely separation of the children causes a further break between members of the family. The directive points out that the separation of siblings is usually contrary to their interests. The community of siblings is generally an important bonding instrument. But this does not mean that in certain cases examined with circumspection there would be no possibility of placing the children separately under the care of the two parents, e.g. owing to a considerable difference in age between the children or for other particular reasons.

The child's development can be adversely affected if the child has to change its accustomed and convenient circumstances for a different environment. For this very reason, as is stressed in the Supreme Court directive, continuity of custody should be aimed at as far as possible, it only seldom occurs that the change of environment does not create a crisis in the child's emotional life.

In virtue of sect. 76, para. 2 of the Family Code a modification in the placement of the child can be requested if the circumstances on which the court had based its decision have considerably altered in the meantime and the child's development is no longer guaranteed in its actual environment. The legislator intended this solution to ensure that an action brought for the modification of the child's placement does not in practice give an opportunity for resuming the earlier dispute. This can be a solution to unforeseen rare circumstances under which the child's position and development are in danger either as a consequence of some objective external cause or because the parent who has been awarded custody of the child is unable to cope. Emphasis must therefore be given to the examination of the child's position. The possibility of bringing an action for a change in custody must not give hope to parents to enter into an agreement on the future development of their child, as it were, in order to facilitate the dissolution of their marriage.

For a change to be effected in the child's placement it is not enough merely to refer to the fact that the financial and personal circumstances of the parent requesting modification of the child's placement have improved so considerably that they enable the applicant to ensure the child better conditions than the parent who had for a long time been effectively in charge of the child, if the latter parent takes care of the child

conscientiously and properly and satisfies the requirements of its upbringing. This solution provided for by the Hungarian law, in addition to aiming at the well-known psychological effect of continuity, is meant to reduce the frequency of further lawsuits on the placement of children. Systematic litigation over the future of the child is extremely disadvantageous to the child's development.

It is to be hoped that the freshness of the rules providing for the future placement of the child of a broken marriage and the effective, high-standard application of these rules, can considerably alleviate the harms children suffer because of family conflicts.

THE MAN WHO HAS BUILT BRIDGES

A Tribute to Professor László Országh, C.B.E.

László Országh retired as professor of English at Kossuth Lajos University, Debrecen, in 1969. It was in that same year that I matriculated at his university. The English Department he left behind enjoyed national prestige but, of course, I could not gauge if it had any international reputation. My professors were all former students of Országh's so I might be called in a way a grandson of his. But later I worked my way up to the status of son as I benefited greatly from him while studying for my doctorate under his supervision in the late 1970s.

Now that he has turned seventy-five, Professor Országh might, perhaps, feel some satisfaction with what he sees around him. He has compiled dictionaries, an indispensable tool for communication between his nation and the English-speaking peoples. He has had an important role in developing English studies and has founded American studies in Hungary. He has assisted in the movement of English all the way from its being a language of minor importance in Hungarian education in the mid-1920s to becoming the second most important foreign language in the country.

As a student in the 1920s László Országh studied English language and literature in a country where traditionally German culture was given priority, French was a good second, and English took the third place. The English culture that did reach the Hungarian middle class and the intelligentsia at the time, was mostly that of England rather than America.

Over fifty years ago, when Országh applied for a scholarship to an American college, he recalls the then dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Budapest starting to shout at him: "Mr Országh, you must be out of your mind if you've applied for an American scholarship. How can you go to the land of gangsters instead of to Shakespeare's England? There is no culture in America, no civilization and there's not even a decent language. Their English is corrupt, Mr Országh, you don't want to learn bastardized English, do you?"

Nevertheless he went to study at Rollins College in Florida. Ever since then he has been involved in building bridges between Hungarians and the English and the Americans respectively.

Bridge-building for Országh has meant, among other things, producing English–Hungarian and Hungarian–English dictionaries which, according to his English

adviser, Professor N. Horton Smith of Nottingham, "stand unashamed among their peers, the great bilingual dictionaries of the world." These dictionaries (the large, the concise and the pocket editions of his English–Hungarian and Hungarian–English dictionaries) earned Professor Országh the gold medal of the Institute of Linguists, London, in 1970. Several English and American dictionaries have him on their editorial advisory committees, the most prestigious of them, perhaps, being Barnhart's Dictionaries of New English.

Dictionaries, however, are made for public consumption and the public often likes to think it knows better than the lexicographer. With more than one million copies of his three bilingual dictionaries sold, Professor Országh still has to field weird questions from Hungarians and, to a much lesser extent, from Englishmen and Americans.

Occasionally Hungarian translators of poems, fiction or drama phone or write, asking him to clarify a puzzling piece of the latest South Side Chicago slang or of British military parlance, World War II vintage, not to be found even in Partridge. Just a few weeks ago, some Hungarian scientist phoned him to complain about what he considered a much too complicated set of rules of English word-division. Couldn't he simplify them in his pocket dictionary?

Országh interrupted his bridge-building activities in 1950 when English studies were severely restricted as a result of the Cold War. He was forced to make an unplanned excursion into Hungarian lexicography proper. He became director of a project that was to result in the creation of the seven-volume Dictionary of the Hungarian Language. Among other things, he was in charge of the compilation of Hungarian entry-words. While working on the words beginning with *b*, he thought it advisable to avoid the possible conflict that might arise from the unfortunate but inevitable succession of the word *bolond* ('fool') by *bolsevik* ('Bolshevik'). Somebody who read the galleys of the dictionary vertically, rather than in the slightly more usual horizontal fashion, might have found *bolond bolsevik* treasonous. So Országh had to find a word which could be inserted between these unhappy neighbours. And he did: *bolonyik*. A dialect word of Slavic origin, meaning some kind of umbelliferous waterplant and a word barely known to Hungarians other than professional botanists, *bolonyik* is now to be found after *bolond* and before *bolsevik*. The word has stayed in monolingual Hungarian dictionaries ever since —a lexicographic memento of Cold War paranoia.

Professor Országh resumed building those bridges in 1957 when he once again became Professor of English Language and Literature at Debrecen. Starting from scratch for the second time (the first was in 1946), he created an English Department with an extensive library and a highly qualified faculty competent in both research and teaching. At least one in four English teachers in Hungary today are graduates of the department Országh established. Some of his former students have since become leading lights in the English departments of several Hungarian universities and teacher training colleges.

The dictionaries completed and the department rebuilt, Országh wrote several textbooks and monographs: *A History of American Literature* in 1967, *An Introduction to American Studies* in 1972, *English Words in the Hungarian Vocabulary* in 1977, and others.* The last of these books reveals that he is a historian at heart: he traces the paths of over 1,000 English words into Hungarian, succinctly sketching the cultural significance of every single act of linguistic

* See also: László Országh: "The Life and Death of English Words in the Hungarian Language," *NHQ* 31, and "The Difficult Birth of 'USA' in Hungarian," *NHQ* 62. — The Editor.

borrowing from *puritán* in 1612 to *disc jockey* in 1968 and beyond.

In the 30s and early 40s, László Országh taught English at a secondary school in Budapest. The lack of adequate textbooks, dictionaries and grammars prompted him to try his hand at writing all three. His *Rendszeres angol nyelvtan* (A Systematic English Grammar), co-authored with Sándor Kónya, has been the English grammar most widely used by Hungarians for nearly forty years.

Lexicographer, professor of English and importer of English and American culture into a more and more receptive Hungary, László Országh has been trying to build bridges carrying traffic in both directions. He was instrumental in setting up the exchange programme whereby the Department of Uralic and Altaic Studies at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, has received a native Hungarian instructor since the mid-1960s. British and American scholarships for young Hungarian university teachers being relatively few, Országh has helped create an additional means of training Hungarian scholars in English and American studies while providing Indiana University with native Hungarian teachers. What began as a Hungarian teaching assistantship in the 60s, has recently grown into an endowed chair of Hungarian Studies at Indiana University.

One lifelong but still unfulfilled ambition remains, however. American literature is still part of the curriculum of English departments at the three Hungarian universities where English is being taught today. No departments of American Studies exist. But, at 75, Országh is still active and, sooner or later his great influence and professional weight will help clear away bureaucratic and financial obstacles so that American Studies can take their proper place at Hungarian universities.

MIKLÓS KONTRA

GÁBOR PAPP

THE AGED IN HUNGARY

Aging, particularly the psychology of old age, and the complex of physical and health impairments that accompany aging, is a perennial subject of discussion. What used to be the problem of individuals, families, and clans for thousands of years, and that of charity organizations, and social policy institutions for some time later, is now increasingly emerging from the sea of problems of minorities swelling into a general social problem, that affects the whole of mankind.

The figures showing a substantial change in the age-tree of humanity are well known, particularly now, after the World Assembly of Aging in Vienna in August 1982. There is no doubt that we are witnessing a demographic phenomenon that turned into an explosion, the antecedents of which are of an earlier origin, yet whose explosive power was sparked off only twenty–twenty five years ago and will continue for decades. There were, at the outside, 200 million people on Earth in 1950, who lived past their sixtieth birthday. The number of these exceeded 300 million twenty years later, and is estimated to reach 600 million by the year 2000.

The population tendencies indicate unequivocally that the proportion of the over

sixty age group is increasing the fastest. If we take a life cycle of 75 years as a basis—and this is already taken as almost the rule in developed countries—then while the population of the Earth will treble—according to estimates—between 1950 and 2025, the number of those over sixty will increase five fold and that of those over eighty seven fold. Because of the small starting platform, this take off will be the most startling in the third world. Demographers predict that the number of over 60 year olds will increase seven fold in this group of countries between 1950 and 2025, and aging will be particularly fast in the last third of the cycle. In countries where the population is growing as vigorously as in Bangladesh, Brazil, Nigeria or Mexico there will be fifteen times as many people over sixty in 2025 than in 1950.

The age composition of the population of the US is a good example for the tendency of aging of societies in developed countries. According to the *Humanist* (July–August 1981), the population of the United States increased five-fold over the past hundred years, while the number of people over 65 increased eighteen-fold. At present 50 million Americans are aged over 50, of whom about 23 million are over sixty-five. Should the current tendency continue, every second American is expected to be over 50 by the end of the century, while one quarter of the population will be past 65. According to forecasts, every second American will be a member of the older generation by 2025.

Let me mention just one problem posed in the *Humanist*, and the inference they draw: the more we know about the biological, psychological and social aspects of aging the more obvious it becomes that people not only live differently than they used to a few decades earlier, but aging and death are also due to different causes. While infantile mortality and infectious diseases used to be the principal causes of death before, diseases connected with stress have shown a dramatic increase in the second half of the twentieth century. Even the most conservative estimates suggest that 80 per cent of the diseases which strike Americans are related to nervous tension, and to the manner of living.

Hungarian data

The process of aging follows world trends in an extreme fashion in Hungary. According to the data of the 1980 census, there were 1,830,100 people over 60; 17.1 per cent of the 10,709,500 Hungarians. Some 14.6 per cent of the male, and 19.4 per cent of the female population are over 60. These percentages are high by international standards. Even higher ones are found in some industrially highly developed countries, but the proportion of the over sixty population is highest here among East European countries except for the GDR, where the age composition of the population shaped in a special way for historical reasons. The demographic data indicate that the proportion of the aged will increase further, and will reach the very high level found today in the industrially highly developed West European countries. (At the same time, the numbers of the whole of the population are also expected to decline by some 470,000 compared with 1980.)

Pensions and other social policy expenditure involved in the aging of the population burden the economy particularly heavily in Hungary, since the retirement age has been among the lowest in the world since the pension system was introduced in 1952: women become eligible for old-age pensions at 55, and men at the age of 60 generally, while people in certain walks of life—those doing heavy manual work, or work that may impair health or such in special occupations like policemen—become eligible even earlier. If one wishes to continue working, and this is acceptable to the employer, retirement can be, and often is, postponed.

Pensions vary in Hungary depending on

The proportion of 60 years old and older people in some European countries by age group (in 1976–77) in per cent

	60–69	70–79	80 and older
Austria	10.4	7.4	2.4
Bulgaria	9.4	5.2	1.4
Czechoslovakia	10.1	5.8	1.5
Federal Republic of Germany	10.1	7.4	2.3
GDR	9.9	8.2	2.5
Hungary	9.6	6.2	1.8
Poland	7.6	4.7	1.3
Rumania	8.3	4.6	1.2
Sweden	11.2	7.2	2.8
Soviet Union	7.9	3.9	1.3
United Kingdom	10.7	6.7	2.5
Yugoslavia	7.6	4.1	1.0

income in the last five years before retirement and the years spent at work. The pension paid is 33 per cent of final earnings after 10 years of work, 63 per cent after 25 years, and 75 per cent after 42 years of employment. Holding certain high decorations entitles one to retire on full pay.

More than three-quarters of those past retirement age are pensioners, while 9 per cent remain active earners. One quarter of the women over 55 are still dependants. The number of people past retirement age has increased by 70 per cent since 1949, while that of pensioners is nearly four times as high as in 1952, owing to the increase of employment and of average life spans, and to the widening coverage of social security insurance.

The overwhelming majority of pensioners or annuitants receive retirement benefits in their own right. A further 300 000 receive pensions as a derivative title (widows, parents, and orphans allowances), while 66 000 receive disability pensions, or some provisions of an allowance nature (disabled serviceman's relief, family allowance, personal allowance for the blind, etc.). About 15 per cent of the pensioners has not yet reached retirement age.

At the beginning of 1981 a total of 2.1 million pensioners lived in Hungary, 19.4 per cent of the total population. Their number will keep on increasing during the next decade, and it is estimated that it will exceed 2.3 million in 1990.

Although the costs of social care for people past retirement age are vast in relation to the economic capacity of the country —they absorbed 8.5 per cent of the budget, and 5.4 per cent of national income in 1970, and 13.9 per cent and 10.3 per cent respectively in 1980—they provide only a modest living to pensioners as a rule, particularly to those who retired long ago. The average monthly pension or annuity was 2,300 forint in 1980, which was only 58 per cent of the average wage. The situation of women is less advantageous than that of men reflecting the difference manifest also in the wages of those in employment and partly their qualifications.

Although pensions determine the incomes of pensioners in the first place, about two-thirds of their income being derived from them, their standard of living still depends to a considerable degree on the size and composition of their household, and family, on the ratio of those in employment and dependents, other incomes, and possible wages earned by them. The latter two provide about 30 per cent of the total income of pensioners on a national average.

The most common form of working for pay among pensioners is part-time employment. The general rule is that people receiving a pension may engage in gainful employment for 1,260 hours a year. Some 406, 000 pensioners, about 30 per cent of those receiving a pension in their own right, carried on gainful occupations in 1979. Working pensioners supplemented their pensions with wages earned generally to the tune of 1,200 forint per month, which is more than 50 per cent of the average pension.

Nearly half of the pensioners employed belong to the 60–69 age group, but the number of people employed at seventy and even later is also considerable. This means that nearly 30 per cent of the pensioners between 60–69 years of age, and about 12 per cent of those of 70 and over worked part-time. Recently retired people have the best chance for part-time employment, therefore they supplement relatively higher pensions by working. Others, who retired earlier, and receive lower pensions, as a rule have not much opportunity to supplement them.

The intergenerational relationship

Family relations fundamentally determine the general well-being, material situation, even the state of health of the aged. It follows, therefore, that one of the key problems of caring for the aged is the state of the intergenerational relationship within the family.

In recent years social scientists have attached increased importance to the analysis of inter-generational relations in family research. The traditional forms of intergenerational relations disintegrated to a considerable extent with the emergence of the urban, nuclear family, increased transstratification between generations, and extensive internal migration. The weakening of the economic basis of the forced dependence of the generations parallel with the loss of importance of small family farms accelerated this process. The younger generation did not have to fall into line with the ideas of parents and grandparents. Since they usually did not carry on family farming of the preceding generations, their economic independence increased as a result of the transstratification of occupations. Thus the older generation lost its economic dominance over the children; only the emotional dependence survived on a weakened economic basis, and this asserted itself in a changed form compared to the multigenerational families of yore, under the effect of widespread internal migration.

One of the consequences of the disintegration of the traditional intergenerational relations was a growing indifference between the generations. The health, psychological and social problems of younger people, and the growth in numbers and proportion of the aged called attention to the necessity of dealing with intergenerational relations, according to the requirements of modern life. Caring for the aged, particularly for the very old, came to be of particular importance.

The key problem of a healthy relation of the generations—which includes caring for the aged—is the development of intergenerational relations within the family. Sociology, demography, and even futurology has passed the phase of absolutizing the nuclear family paying increasing attention to families with two adult generations which also have important socio-political functions.

The multi-generational family provides incomparably more roles to older people than a nuclear family. Taking care of grandchildren and taking part in household chores all offer older people opportunities for action but it is also true that these roles also contain the seeds of conflict. Conflicts in themselves are by no means catastrophic even for the old, they become difficult, or impossible to put up with only if no suitable routine of conflict management is found. In recent decades socio-gerontological enquiries in Europe and in North America have generally shown that living under the same roof and in the same household does not offer an optimal solution in modern industrial societies either to the newly marrieds or to their parents. For this very reason town planners and architects are asked by Western sociologists and gerontologists to locate homes for different generations close to one-another, thereby creating the possibility of a modern coexistence of the generation, not necessarily under the same roof or the same household.

Two or more adult generations live together in one-fifth of Hungarian households, and about two-thirds of the aged live in common households with their adult children. The necessity of living in the same home is due principally to the housing shortage. Young couples able to start their marriage in their own home are exceptions. Their most frequent type of accommodation is a room in the home of the parents of one of them. This necessarily leads to a situation in which the parents, who accepted their son-, or daughter-in-law in their own home, want to lead their lives according to the routine they worked out over the years. This attitude often clashes with the desire of the young couple to be independent. Naturally, two adult generation households, consisting of two married couples, are not unknown even in countries which do not suffer from a housing shortage. Living together generally begins there not at a time immediately after the marriage of the young couple but later, prompted by financial necessity, or illness. Young people may be forced to give up their independent home at times of economic crises, having no choice but to move into the home of the parents of one of them. Coming to share a home may also be motivated by ill health. Living together for reasons of ill-health calls attention to one of the important family roles of the aged, that of nursing sick members of the family. They fulfill this role not only for those living in a common household with them, but also when they nurse their children, or other relatives not living with them and—with increasing frequency—care for their extremely old parents.

Even though the living together of generations is not conflict free the situation of the aged who live alone is even graver. Their proportion is relatively high in Hungary: about 15 per cent of those over retirement age have no relatives and more then one-fifth of pensioners live alone.

Of course, women, as everywhere else in the world, make up the vast majority of the aged living alone. The fact that, in developed countries, the proportion of women and men above 60 was 100 : 74 was frequently mentioned at the Vienna world convention, but women outnumber men by more than two to one in the over 80 age-group. This is manifesting itself in Hungary from the aspect of caring. The aged men rely first of all on their wives, who are usually younger, since the wives of 62 per cent of men 75 and over are still alive, while only 16 per cent of women of similar age can still rely on their husbands.

The division of the aged by marital status showed the following picture in Hungary, broken down according to age-groups:

Marital status of the aged, 1980

Age-group	Married		Widowed	
	male	female	male	female
	as a percentage of the relevant age-group			
60–69	86	52	7	37
70–79	74	29	19	61
80–84	56	12	40	79
over 85	40	4	56	87
Total:	78	38	15	52

The environment

Social gerontology research in developed countries invariably shows that the best form of social care for the aged is to maintain the environment they are accustomed to, their own home and home environment (neighbourhood), and the continuity of an independent life developed in earlier phases of their lives. The importance of an accustomed home and environment increases parallel with the narrowing of activities in the

way of life of the aged. Old people's homes are regarded as very important in the care of the aged, but only as a last resort. Their importance—together with the significance of gerontological hospital care—increases mainly in respect of the very old. Therefore district social and health services based on their own home, and their own family, must have the prime role in the care for the aged. Owing to the relatively sudden extension of the general life span, demand for these services increased equally suddenly. For these reasons as well as the general advance of public health, and naturally the free medical services available to everyone, the number of the aged requiring medical treatment and care increased to an extraordinary degree.

According to surveys carried out by the Central Statistical Office, almost two-thirds of pensioners suffer from some chronic illness; about ten per cent of pensioners need hospital care. An earlier, 1976 representative statistical enquiry found that about ten per cent of pensioners who were hospitalized spent more than two months in hospital. Undoubtedly, most of them really needed lengthy hospital treatment, but a significant proportion really did not need skilled medical care and hospital facilities, but there was noone to nurse them at home. One of the gravest problems in Hungary as in most countries—the nursing of sick—is due precisely to the fact that families are increasingly unable to carry out this traditional function. The general spread of female employment is largely responsible.

The proportion of working women among females of working age already exceeded 70 per cent in the early eighties. The burden of home nursing therefore falls increasingly on those past working age.

This is the result not only of the inability of younger women restrict their regular employment, as women of earlier generations had done with their household chores, thus they are not available over a considerable portion of the day. The frequency of the need for home nursing also increased in spite of the greater number of available hospital beds.

Hungarian social policy puts the decisive emphasis on the network of social workers, based on local government councils, not only because there is a relative shortage of hospital beds, but also, and mainly for gerontological reasons.

About 35,000 people were attended by social workers in the early eighties. This amounts to 25 per cent of the number of over 75 year olds living alone and 60 per cent of the number of those 80 and over. These two figures indicate that the development of the social worker network is far from satisfactory yet, since their help is really necessary also for some who living with their families, where the family is unable to cope unaided. At the moment some 16,000 do this work, of whom 14,600 are voluntary workers; their number increased fast in the past 10 years, but a similar increase seems to be necessary also in the coming decade.

Day centres for the aged play an increasing role in social care. These institutions provide day-time accommodation, meals, and entertainment for people unable to work owing to their advanced age, or disability, yet able to move about. Fifteen years ago there were only 75 such day centres, but now 835 cater to the needs of 24,000 people. These institutions are primarily not means for financial assistance, and care, their purpose is really to provide company for the aged and to simplify catering for them.

The task of old people's homes is to provide full care for people unable to look after themselves owing to advanced age, disability, or their social situation. The old people's homes operating at the moment in Hungary can do this only to a limited degree, varying in efficiency from district to district. A total of 32,400 people in need were given full care in 269 old people's homes at the end of 1980. This is substantially

less then the number of those who should be accommodated in such institutions. Hungarian social policy regards accommodation in old people's homes as the right solution only if there is no other way out. The fact that a considerable portion of the currently operating old people's homes are old buildings, built for different purposes and therefore unable to meet present requirements, causes anxiety.

The extensive locational mobility in Hungary has damaged the living conditions of some of the aged. The village population has grown older because of the migration of young people. Older people left to themselves can count on little help in coping with everyday problems. The constant withering of the territorial organizations and service network of villages with a declining population adds to the difficulties of the aged.

Most of the speakers at the Vienna world conventions mentioned that nowhere in the world were sufficient preparations made for the increase of the average life span, for the rapid increase of the proportion of the aged, for the extensive aging of society, and for the social and public health, and also social policy, consequences.

The consensus of the responsible authorities in Hungary and of gerontologists is that the old need first of all help in their own home, care given by their own family, and when they become very old, institutional care. Those in charge of social policy are also aware that the demand for social and public health services is about three times as great among the aged, as among younger people. Thus the continuing increase in the proportion of aged people faces the social and public health services of the state with a task they cannot completely meet even when they are given priority.

The limited satisfaction and future growth of the demand for institutional accommodation is obvious when it is considered that 5 per cent of those over 60, and 50 per cent of those over 80 need institutional care, according to social gerontological estimates. This figure presupposes that the demand for local care of the aged in their own home is met. But when this is not the case an increasing number of the aged have to apply for admittance to old people's homes, nursing homes, and hospitals.

Family care, based on the family home, still has a fundamental role in caring for the aged, but this basic role has not yet become part of public knowledge in Hungary. (About 90–95 per cent of the aged do not live in old people's homes or in other institutions in more developed countries but in their own, or their relations' homes.) Total care for all of the aged cannot be expected from centralized state measures. It is simply impossible to find a solution without the help of voluntary work. Increased efforts by the enterprises, cooperatives, institutions, social organizations, associations, social movements in the interest of providing social assistance to some sections of the aged, besides the activities of state (council) agencies, seems justified also in the opinion of social policy experts and of social scientists. Increased participation of families and local communities is particularly needed in voluntary help and care at home. In Hungary today it is argued that the old should remain in their own home as long as the state of their health allows, and receive differentiated care according to their needs.

The most widely accepted standpoint today is that the extension and upgrading of caring for the aged in their home, and the extensive growth of the network of social workers and social care at home, are of pivotal importance. Increasing the numbers of professional social workers working under the supervision of the district medical officer, and district nurse—is planned, and also of semi-skilled paid helpers. It is also planned to organize a movement for voluntary help to the aged in their own homes. No difficulty is seen in recruiting a number of uni-

versity students, older people (between 55 and 65), neighbours etc. to work 2–8 hours daily for modest remuneration.

The rights of the aged

There are five major fields of legal regulations concerning the status of the aged in Hungary. One of the most important of these is the law of social security. Under the provisions regulating pensions women may claim old age pensions at the age of 55, and men at the age of 60, provided they have been employed for at least 10 years. The amount of the old age pension depends on the years worked, and on the monthly average income of such three of the five years before retirement which were the most favourable from the point of the pension. Thus pensions may reach 75 per cent of the income earned previously.

Widows whose husbands became eligible for pension before their death, or who die as pensioners, are eligible for a widows' pension, provided they were 55 years old when their husband died. The amount of the widow's pension is half of what the old age pension of the deceased would have been. (Divorced wives, *de facto* wives, and husbands may also be eligible for widows' pensions in certain cases.)

Parents and grandparents, whose child maintained them and who are disabled are eligible for a parent's pension provided their bread-winner reached eligibility at death, or died as a pensioner.

Pensioners are eligible to receive an allowance for a spouse living in their household, provided that the spouse reached retirement age, or is disabled, and his or her pension, earnings, income does not exceed the limit stipulated by law.

Members of agricultural cooperatives are eligible for old age allowances at the age of 70 (or 65 in the case of women), if they have not been in employment long enough to become eligible for the old age pension.

The amount of minimum pensions, and the order of annual increments is regulated by law. The law also stipulates that the employment of people who have not yet reached retirement age, but need no more than 5 years to become eligible for the old age pension, can be terminated only in special cases which have to be justified.

Pensioners receive the difference between the original and the increased rent as a rent contribution, when rents are raised. Pensioners' homes, the distribution of dwellings in them, and the rents payable, are also subject to legal provisions; people who reached retirement age, or who are already pensioners and surrender their right to their state-owned home, may become tenants of pensioner's homes provided that they are able to look after themselves, yet need help. Nurses are always on duty in these houses for pensioners.

Family Law details the responsibilities for the aged of their kin. Members of the family of people unable to maintain themselves are responsible for their upkeep. The prime responsibility is placed on children and grandchildren. People unable to maintain themselves wholly or partially have the right to claim maintenance from their offspring. Failure to comply with the obligation to maintain relatives unable to maintain themselves owing to their age is punishable by law, if such failure exposes the person in need of care to hazards of life, limb, or health.

Maintenance may also be based on a contract which provides appropriate maintenance by one party in his or her own household to the other party. Obligation of maintenance includes looking after, nursing, providing medical care, and burial.

The state provides maintenance in various forms for those who are not compulsorily maintained by any one. One of these is a regular allowance payable in the first place to people incapable of work, but every woman above 65, and men above 70 are regarded as such for the purposes of the

law. The size of the allowance depends on the social situation and state of health of the recipient. Aged people unable to look after themselves are helped by social workers in their homes, when this is warranted by their social situation. Others, whose state of health enables them to take care of themselves only to a limited degree, are eligible to be cared for in day centres for the aged.

People past retirement age, whose state of health does not require regular hospitalization, but who cannot be taken proper care of in the daycentres for the aged, or by home care, may be placed in homes for the aged, where they are given permanent board and lodging and nursing.

Apart from the above there are also special legal provisions for the aged for example eligibility for free medicine. On the basis of the latter pensioners get certain medicines and therapeutical equipment free, but they also receive numerous other advantages, for instance half-price railway tickets.

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A comprehensive revision, and modernization of the system of state pensions, which already benefit the vast majority of aged people, and the system of social allowances supplementing them is on the agenda in Hungary at the moment. It is understood, naturally, that no giant strides forward can be taken, indeed, the meagre resources already committed to many purposes must be prudently handled. Advance in Hungarian social policy aimed at improving the living conditions of the aged must therefore be gradual, step by step, often limited only to the most urgent problems.

The problem of the system of state pensions, which forms the major pillar of the care of the aged, and the very old, is twofold. On the one hand, the absolute numbers, as well as the proportion of this age-group relative to the total population, are constantly growing, therefore the number of people eligible for old-age pensions is also growing. Thus pensions absorb an increasingly large share of the state budget. On the other hand, the difference between pensions earned years ago, or just recently is increasing more than originally intended owing to the increase of wages, and the decrease in the purchasing power of money. Although a 2 per cent annual increase in pensions has already been built into the pension system, pensions are being increased by fixed sums faster than this rate in respect of the majority of the pensioners. The pensions in the lower categories are supplemented from time to time by fixed amounts. Efforts are also increased to find suitable earning activities for those pensioners, who are still more or less able to work.

The other major pillar of taking care of the aged is, naturally, the free health service, which is the right of every citizen of Hungary. The interests involved are so complicated here that it needs to be cleared up how the interests of individuals (including aged people of various age-groups), groups (families, working collectives), and society could be adjusted, and how their influence can be optimalized in social policy.

It will be impossible to meet the requirements of caring for the aged merely by public health measures, even if they are dynamically developed. Thus it is necessary to revise which are the fields where the bearing of the burdens may be changed. The fields where the participation of individuals, collectives, organizations can be secured must be delineated by coupling interests with responsibilities, and their contribution, even if only as a supplementary source, needs to be included to make the distribution of burdens more just.

Of course, there are no universal recipes. There is much to be done in developing urban and rural home and settlement patterns, the transport and communication network (the supply of telephones as well as

the mass-media), public administration, legal protection, and the administration of justice, education and culture, social and economic activities. The country is facing a situation without historical precedent, in which the aged are turning from a small group into a large one, rivalling the young and adult workers in size.

NEW LIGHT ON THE HUNGARIAN GENETIC HERITAGE

Among mammals, mother's milk is vitally important in feeding the young. Milk is an ideal nutrient capable of sustaining life alone, which is true of only a very few other foods.

With the domestication and breeding of goats, cows, and other animals milk became available to adults. It seems however that our species was not well prepared for this. Mammals including men, at least our ancestors, were unable to decompose lactose in adulthood because of the absence of lactase-enzyme in their small intestines. If lactose progresses through the alimentary tract at an unchanged state it will absorb great quantities of water from the intestinal cells through osmosis. Furthermore, the intestinal bacteria decompose a part of the lactose in the process by breaking it down into organic acids and hydrogen. The organic acids increase intestinal movements; the inconvenience caused by the ensuing gases and the large quantities of liquid naturally tend to discourage people from drinking milk.

However, it seems that Europeans, especially North Europeans, and some Beduin tribes, are exceptions: they are able to break down lactose in adulthood and are thus able to drink milk. The explanation may be a gene-mutation which, for its advantageous effect, has become predominant in some regions by means of selection. In Europe the duration and intensity of solar radiation is relatively weak and so not a great deal of vitamin D is produced in the organism. (This is why children are given vitamin D since its lack used to cause ricketts, a disorder in bone development.) The gene-mutation enabling milk-digestion in adults has allowed for the intake of more calcium and thus offered protection against ricketts: this could have had a determining role in the survival and reproduction of the peoples of Northern Europe. In the case of the Beduin tribes in the desert, for several months of the year the only food available was the milk of their livestock, so those who were unable to consume milk did not survive.

According to population genetic studies in recent years, only 2–19 per cent of Scandinavians and West Europeans are unable to decompose lactose. In all the other ethnic groups which have been investigated (Mediterranean, African, Asian, etc.) problems in lactose-absorption, which is called lactose-intolerance or malabsorption, appears in higher ratios. Among Greek Cypriots, Arabs, and Ashkenazi Jews the ratio is 60–80 per cent, among American Negroes 70–90 per cent; more than 90 per cent of the African Bantu and the populations of Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines are lactose-intolerant. Among the native Indians of America, Peru, and Colombia, the Eskimos of Alaska and Greenland the proportion of malabsorption is practically 100 per cent.

In recent years a technique has been developed with which it is possible to test large numbers of people for lactose absorption. The method is based on the fact

that in case of malabsorption, the lactose decomposes into carbon dioxyde and hydrogen in the large intestines. The hydrogen is carried by the bloodstream into the lungs, and is then exhaled. The hydrogen content of the exhaled air, as determined by gas chromatography, is proportionate to the activity of the lactase enzyme. A special feature of the method is that taking a sample of the exhaled air and analysing it by gas chromatography can be separated in time. The samples are taken compressed from an inflatable balloon into a small aluminium flask, under a determined pressure; they can be collected anywhere, stored for weeks, transported easily, and worked on in a central laboratory. An automatic gas chromatograph linked with computer and data recording apparatus can quickly provide exact information. For evaluation it suffices to sample people two or two and a half hours before and after being given lactose. Thus, three trained technicians are able to test 100 persons per day. The advantage of the procedure compared with earlier blood testing is that it is not painful, it is relatively cheap and can be used for handling large numbers.

No such examinations had been performed in Eastern Europe until now. Recently Professor Gebhard Flatz, chief of the Human Genetics Institute of the University of Hanover, and his assistants came to Hungary. Five hundred university and tertiary level students were tested, and the result showed an unusually high ratio of lactose-intolerance in Hungary: 36.2 per cent. This means that every third person is incapable of digesting milk.

The question is what is the cause of this phenomenon? Is it caused by exterior, and environmental factors or by genetical factors? It seemed obvious to try to find an answer by testing twins. The genetic material of twins from a single ovum is 100 per cent identical whereas the genetic material of non-identical twins is only 50 per cent identical. The concordance or discordance in the lactose digestion of non-identical twins, that is, the difference between the two types of twins might provide an answer. The Laboratory of Human Genetics of the National Institute of Public Health undertook the examination of twins. Press, radio, and television asked twins to come forward. From 500 pairs of twins offering themselves, 50 identical and 50 non-identical twins of the same sex were selected. The results of the tests unambigously proved the significance of genetic causes.

The genetically determined high frequency of lactose-absorption problems is interesting also from the viewpoint of the origin of Hungarians. The ancient Hungarians of European, Finno-Ugrian, origin, before arriving in Hungary, were probably joined by the Kabars, and after their arrival certainly by the Avars, Petchenegs, and Cumanians, all ethnic groups of Eastern Asian origin. So a historical feature of Hungarians was the crossing of the Finno-Ugrian ethnic group living on the eastern border of the big European race with Turkic ethnic groups appearing on the western border of the big East Asian race. Physical and anthropological examinations also show that the Hungarians were an amalgamated population with a high ratio of crossbreeding surpassing even the high proportion of crossing in Europe. Recent genetic methods make possible a deeper analysis of the interbreeding of peoples. I mean here primarily the evaluation of genetical markers in population genetics. These characteristics can be examined easily and unambiguously, their manifestations are in general not influenced by environmental factors; so they are a reliable help in the study of the genetic structure, the gene-frequency of populations.

The distribution of the A, B, O blood-groups in Hungary is the following: A=42.4 per cent, B=17.9 per cent, O=31.0 per cent, AB=8.7 per cent. In the European big race the ratio of A is higher, in the East Asian big race the ratio of B is higher; accordingly, a characteristic geo-

graphical trend can be perceived in the Eurasian countries. The values in Hungary show the intermediate position of Hungarians between the two big races. (Paleo-serological examination of bodies found in ninth-century cemeteries show an even higher ratio of bloodgroup B: it is 25–30 per cent.) In Hungary the proportion of Rh-negatives is 16.1 per cent. This is lower than the ratio in the East European populations deriving from the big European race, but higher than in the populations belonging to East Asian big race. The new lactose tests are in harmony with these findings. The frequency of 36 per cent is also intermediate between the low European ratio and the almost 100 per cent ratio of absorption problems in Asia.

So the scattered values of genetical markers confirm the conclusions from historical data and from the analysis of physical anthropological characteristics: Hungarians of European origin have much interbred with the East Asian big race.

ENDRE CZEIZEL

THEODORE SCHOENMAN

ÁGOSTON HARASZTHY, THE FATHER OF CALIFORNIAN VITICULTURE

The gold rush and its aftermath produced the legendary figures of California's history, Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins, C.P. Huntington, Charles Crocker, the big four of the Central Pacific Railroad, as well as Jim Fair, Jim Flood, Lucky Baldwin, George Hearst, Billy Ralston of the Mother Lode and Comstock Lode fame. They have all amassed vast fortunes and exerted enormous influence on the social, economic and political development of the Golden State. Yet, today, Sutter's gold and the silver of Comstock Lode fade into insignificance compared to the impact and value of the huge wine and grape industry, and when speaking of wine and grapes, the name of Ágoston Haraszthy is indelibly inscribed on the pages of its history.

This Johnny Appleseed of grapes did not accumulate wealth or political influence and in fact sank into oblivion until 100 years later a grateful legislature in a joint resolution honoured his deeds and officially acknowledged him "Father of California's Viticulture." His legacy is over a half million acres planted in grapes and well over 500 million gallons of wine produced yearly in the Sonoma valley. No unsung pioneer contributed more to the future prosperity of his adopted country and none merited it more to be rescued from a century of undeserved neglect. The recognition of his inestimable services was long overdue.

Not as well known as his flamboyant career in California was the impact of his multifarious activities in Wisconsin where he founded the present day Sauk City and helped to gain statehood for the territory. Last but certainly not least, he planted there the first hops thus laying the foundation for the giant breweries of Milwaukee.

Heraldic records indicate that the Haraszthys belong to the ancient nobility of Hungary. One chronicle states that the Haraszthy family received its patent of nobility and coat of arms from King Sigismund in 1405. The ancestral estates

were at Mokosa in the County of Ung and at Mező-Telegd in Bihar County, later in the 17th century also in the Bánát just east of the Danube, in the southern part of Hungary. The Haraszthys were continually involved in the historical struggles against the conquering Turks and later the oppressive rule of the Habsburgs. Yet, the family's fame and fortune was not gained on the battlefields but on its orchards and vineyards. Cultivation of fruits and prime grapes was a family tradition for many centuries. It was an essential part of Haraszthy's heritage to be preoccupied with the development of improved vines and the making of fine wines. The Haraszthys also pioneered the cultivation of silkworms in Hungary.

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Unfortunately only the sketchiest documentation exists about Ágoston Haraszthy's immediate background, his childhood, adolescence and youth. Most of the dates cited in the family chronicle are unverifiable but existing records confirm that Haraszthy was born on August 30, 1812 at Futak in the province of Bácska on the family estate. He was the only son of Károly (Charles) Haraszthy (later in America known as General Haraszthy) and his mother née Anna Halász. He was probably their only child as there is no record or mention of brothers and sisters.

As was customary with Hungarian nobles, Haraszthy received the traditional education in the classics, Greek and Latin, after which he studied law and received a thorough training in public administration and the management of the family estate. At the age of 18 he was nominated by his province to be a member of the Royal Hungarian Bodyguard of Emperor Francis I, nephew of Marie Antoinette and Napoleon's father-in-law. This select corps was composed of the youth of the Hungarian nobility. It was founded by the Empress Maria Theresa who with skill and artifice lured the rebellious Hungarian nobles to the Court of Vienna.

Many of the young officers of the guard spoke several foreign languages and developed scholarly and literary interests. Others turned to economic and or political studies. They were among the first in Hungary who familiarized themselves with the progressive ideas of the West.

The French revolution gained many adherents in Hungary and despite of the repressive rule of Prince Metternich's police regime, Hungarian intellectuals, not only of the nobility but also of the middle gentry, were deeply inspired by the democratic egalitarian principles emanating from the West. The County or Comitat assemblies which were simple and however imperfect organs of self-government, were particularly susceptible to the advocates of what the Court in Vienna considered subversive and dangerous ideas. It is in this milieu young Haraszthy returned to his native country from his service in the Guard and assumed the office of lord lieutenant. Returning at the same time was Haraszthy's friend and fellow Guard officer, Count Lajos Batthyány, the future Prime Minister of the revolutionary regime in 1848, who was executed by the vengeful Habsburgs when the revolution was defeated in 1849.

Ex-officio Haraszthy was a delegate of his county to the Diet in Pozsony (Pressburg) where he quickly formed a close association and friendship with Baron Miklós Wesselényi, a brilliant and daring Transylvanian who was the leader of the radical reformists, and also with the spellbinding firebrand, Lajos Kossuth.

The great republican experiment in America was the subject of animated discussions among the younger political activists. Alexander Bölöni Farkas's *Journey in North America*, published in 1834 and almost immediately put on the censor's proscribed list, was avidly read and discussed. The book

made a deep and lasting impression on Haraszthy. It fired his imagination and planted in him the determination to see the New World for himself.

In 1831 the Polish revolution was crushed and many unfortunate Poles, driven from their country, sought refuge in Hungary. Among them was an old noble family, the Dedinskys. Haraszthy fell in love with their daughter Eleonore. They were married in 1834, and in the following year their first son was born. He was named Géza after the father of Saint Stephen, King of Hungary. Géza was destined to become a cited and decorated hero of the American Civil War. In 1835 Haraszthy became the private secretary of the Palatine, the Archduke Joseph, a man of considerable ability and of deep affection for his adopted country but who was quite ineffective against the intrigues and despotic measures of the Cabinet in Vienna.

The terror with which the revolutionary spirit of 1830 frightened the courts of Europe had begun to subside. Germany and Italy were silenced, Poland was subdued, but in Hungary the spirit of liberty, so eloquently championed by Wesselényi, Kossuth and their supporters, was still flickering. To Metternich this constituted an intolerable threat. He was determined to have this spark extinguished. Charged with treason, Kossuth, Wesselényi and some of the young secretaries and clerks of the Diet were arrested and thrown into prison. The two leaders were held in solitary confinement for two years without a trial and in 1839 both were condemned to four years of imprisonment.

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Various biographical notes on Haraszthy theorize that his participation in the reform movement made him a marked man and caused his ultimate flight in 1840. It is difficult to credit the validity of this, in view of the fact that in 1837 Haraszthy was still acting as county magistrate. Why should have he been persecuted in 1840 when even Kossuth and Wesselényi were already freed? Haraszthy himself in his book makes no mention of any political motivation for his flight, although later in Wisconsin he often stated of being forced to flee political persecution. "For many years I had an irresistible urge to visit foreign lands and to further my knowledge through that experience. ... Now, in spite of all obstacles ... with some sacrifices I have managed to arrange my affairs and left home on March 27, 1840," are his own words in his *Travels in North America.* (1844).

He embarked on the packetboat "Samson" and, after a tedious passage of 42 days, landed in New York in June 1840. His friends Messrs. Whitlock and Hislip who were his guests with Capt. Bennett on his estate at Futak the previous year, received him with great fanfare. His hosts now included Hamilton Jackson, the brother of President Andrew Jackson. He was wined and dined and entertained in high style during his stay of a few weeks in New York, but he was anxious to push on, to see as much of "this fabulous continent" as possible. His friends gave him a boisterous farewell party at the luxurious Hotel Clinton and, armed with many letters of recommendation, he set out on an odyssey of two years, visiting most states and territories. First he followed the footsteps of his precursor, Alexander Bölöni Farkas, up the Hudson Valley and the Erie Canal to the Great Lakes. He stopped and described most of the fast growing cities of the continent all, the while making detailed notes of his observations on the economic and social conditions. He covered much more than the civilized eastern part of the continent, he pushed on deep into the unknown wilderness of the West. He criss-crossed Wisconsin Territory, explored Iowa, Kansas, Arkansas, Missouri, Louisiana, Florida and the eastern seaboard.

In Washington he was received with great courtesy by President Tyler who expressed much interest in Haraszthy's plans to establish commercial relations between Hungary and the U.S.; Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, Lewis Cass and other notables were also his patrons.

Haraszthy was an inveterate traveler. Accompanied by Lord Malgred, an Englishman and a Dr. Rogers, his traveling companion on the "Samson," he spent fifteen weeks among the tribes of the Prairie Indians, he joined them in their hunting and fishing expeditions. He studied their customs, their lifestyle, their social organization and described them in fascinating detail in his book.

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To a man of Haraszthy's adventurous temperament and humanist sympathies, the new untamed country, the fertile prairie overlooked by gentle, wooded hills and the mighty Wisconsin River flowing by, brought visions of thousands of Europe's land hungry peasants cultivating the rich soil and creating a hopeful future for themselves and their families. In hiw own words: "Pelted by heavy showers we had to cross many swollen brooks and creeks. We were still in good humour when after two days of difficult and hazardous trek we reached a high hill opposite Prairie du Sac. As our eyes beheld the panorama unfolding before us, all three of us exclaimed in unison "Oh, how magnificent!" Truly it seemed to us more beautiful than anything we have seen in all our travels anywhere in Europe or America... The following day we crossed the river, proceeding through meadows edged by thousands of acres of dense forest. We found many icecold springs of excellent water. My God— I thought—how many people are in utter misery in Europe, unable to cover their meagre needs, wheras here nature offers just for the taking millions of acres of rich black soil which just needs to be turned over to produce a bountiful harvest..."

Haraszthy, ever the man of action, lost no time to translate his admiration for America into deeds. He bought a small parcel of river frontage from one of the earliest settlers. Following his acquisition he returned to Milwaukee for supplies, determined to clear his paradise for a townsite. While there he made the acquaintance of an Englishman, a recent immigrant, Robert Bryant—a man of social standing and some financial resources. Intrigued by Haraszthy's eloquence, Bryant wanted to see for himself the proposed townsite. He accompanied Haraszthy and was thorougly captivated. A partnership was formed. They bought 10,000 acres for $ 1.25 an acre from the government and, despite the fact that Haraszthy lacked the capital to pay for his share, Bryant put up his share as well, interest free. The partnership covered a wide range of enterprise but building of a town was the principal undertaking of their joint effort.

Haraszthy by now was determined to seek his fortune in America. "Originally I came to America for one reason, namely to see this blessed land for myself. The thought of acquiring property and settling here never crossed my mind. I must admit that I had hopes to establish commercial relations between my homeland and North America..." But Haraszthy was persona non grata with the Austrian authorities and his family was still in Hungary. His wife, his three sons, Géza, Attila and Árpád, all named after great historical figures, and his father and mother. According to the family chronicle his return was arranged throughthe intervention of General Lewis Cass, Secretary of War under President Jackson and later Democratic candidate for President in 1848. Haraszthy was supposed to be in possession of valuable state papers which the Austrian government was anxious

to recover. In return for the documents Haraszthy was guaranteed safe-conduct and permission to stay one year. On January 8, 1842 Haraszthy arrived in Vienna and four days later he rejoined his family. He was unsuccessful in recovering his confiscated properties but he persuaded his father to liquidate the ancestral estate and join him with the entire family in the venture in the New World. By selling his wife's dowry he managed to amass substantial capital to carry out his promotional plans.

Before his return to America in the fall of 1842 Haraszthy arranged with the publisher Gusztáv Heckenast at Pest the publication of his *Travels in North America* which was published in 1844. The book created quite a stir. It was extensively reviewed in the leading journal *Pesti Hírlap* (Gazette of Pest) and in the periodical *Életképek* (Sketches from Life). Haraszthy's portrait of America depicted its phenomenal opportunities to venturesome Europeans willing and able to undergo the harsh pioneer life of the western frontier, in return of which ultimate wealth and democratic freedom not to be found anywhere else was to be the reward. Its clarion call triggered the immigration of thousands of not only Hungarian, but German, Austrian, Czech, Polish, even Swiss peasants and artisans. Entranced by Haraszthy's lyric description of Wisconsin, many of them settled there.

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Returning to his primitive backwoods settlement, Haraszthy plunged into hectic activity. He initiated so many diverse enterprises that he must have been the personification of perpetual motion. The town builder first constructed roads, built bridges, operated a sawmill, a gristmill and a brickyard. To supply the burgeoning population he opened a general store and imported not only the necessaries of life, tools and implements, but also luxury items. Aside from his varied commercial and industrial ventures, he experimented with various branches of agriculture. His cultivation of grapes, however, proved to be a failure. The unsuitable terrain and climate defeated his best effort. He scored a very significant first, however, by successfully growing hops. His first hopyard produced a two million dollar crop within a decade. He also planted the staples, wheat and corn on a large enough scale to contract with the government to supply Fort Winnebago with grain. Animal husbandry was not overlooked either. His extensive operation in livestock was another first in Wisconsin. Later he turned his attention to sheep raising which he introduced in the Territory.

He named the rapidly growing town "Széptáj" (Beautiful View), so enchanted was he by the physical beauty of its environs. Its location on the Wisconsin River soon focused his attention on the transportation facility offered by the waterway. He began by the operation of the first ferryboat across the Wisconsin. Later he expanded this operation in an extraordinary fashion. He foresaw the great potential of steamboating down the Wisconsin and the Mississippi all the way to St. Louis and to the great port of New Orleans. Action quickly followed inspiration. He bought a steamboat in Pittsburgh on which the original buyer defaulted and he put it into service to haul passengers and freight between Fort Winnebago and Galena, Illinois, the great lead mining center. Written recollections by contemporaries make frequent mention of the adventures of Haraszthy's packet the "Rock River," which steamed as far as St. Paul, Minnesota, on the Upper Mississippi.

Haraszthy's educational background, his experience in public administration and his unmistakable promotional genius inevitably marked him for leadership role. He organized and headed the first Immigrants' Association of Wisconsin to assist the stream of German, Irish and Scottish settlers whom he persuaded to undertake the arduous trek to

Wisconsin by circulating large numbers of flamboyant pamphlets and extravagant advertisements. He prospered by selling them land and supplies but he was also keenly conscious of his social responsibility for their welfare. He founded the Humanist Society in 1842 which made Sauk City (the ultimate name of Széptáj) known all over Europe as the "Freethinkers Heaven," and attracted such nationally known speakers as Robert Ingersoll, Carl Schurz and Franz Siegel.

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The fireside tales about Haraszthy in Wisconsin are almost heroic in character. He was universally known as Count Haraszthy. Stories in the archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society abound about his personality. He was an arresting figure. A large active man, very dark with black hair, wide black mustache and full black beard. His dark eyes reflected the moods of a dreamer and a doer. He loved to ride hard and hunt game. His prowess as a hunter was legendary. Wearing a green silk hunting shirt with a wide silken sash of flaming red he was seen many times riding through brush and bramble, laughing while the thorns tore at his expensive dress. As his town rose from the mud of the prairie, he always moved about wearing a stovepipe hat and carrying a cane, giving orders in command, yet his friends found him generous to a fault. He was described by contemporaries as of a poetic disposition and a brilliant conversationalist.

More than other political refugees, Haraszthy kept in close touch with events in Hungary and Europe, and in 1848 he eagerly responded to Kossuth's appeal for funds to buy arms. There is a touching description of a patriotic rally in his house in the fall of 1848. Speaches supporting the revolution in Hungary were made in English, but Haraszthy became so impassioned and carried away that he lost control of his adopted tongue and finished his speech in his native Hungarian.

With all his diverse ventures, Haraszthy made a great deal of money, yet by the spring of 1848 he found himself in difficulties. His holdings were heavily mortgaged and his creditors were pressing. His famed generosity in helping his neighbours and the free hand with which he extended credit and his inability to collect debts owed him, led to his financial undoing. This was most likely the principal reason for his decision to pull up stakes and to get a fresh start in the Golden West. Then again it may have been his never abandoned vision of successfully growing grapes and making fine wines which was a dismal failure in Wisconsin.

In 1848 Wisconsin attained statehood. Haraszthy's spectacular exploits in his eight years of stay contributed much to that development. Not unmindful of his services, the Legislature honored him with a public dinner in the capital before his departure.

The village of Széptáj was renamed Haraszthyville within a few years but when the German majority of the population had difficulty pronouncing it, it was renamed Westfield and finally Sauk City. Haraszthy's pioneering activities in territorial Wisconsin is romanticized in several historical novels. The best known are *Restless is the River* by August Derleth, and *A House Too Old* by Mark Schorer, both authors native of Sauk City in California. His living memorial are the prosperous vineyards.

CONGRESS ON COMPARATIVE LITERATURE IN NEW YORK

"You always think operations like this are a mechanical bringing together of people, but in this particular case you really see the interactions of cultures," remarked Alexander Coleman, professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature at New York University. He added: "Many of the people here would never see each other in their lives unless the organization did it first."

Professor Coleman said this about the New York congress of ICLA (International Comparative Literature Association) as quoted by *The New York Times* of August 26, 1982.

As well as Professor Coleman, a good number of specialists in literature dislike big international conferences although, when one comes to think of it, the attendance of five to six hundred at a literary congress is certainly modest in size as compared to other international congresses. Their dislike is not entirely unfounded: sometimes one has the feeling that it is impossible to choose among the great number of sessions like the section, round-table, and workshop debates, that at times it is difficult to listen attentively to the papers read out in different languages and with different accents, and eventually one may have missed precisely the most essential things.

At this congress the difficulty of choosing was increased by a fact which meant a change from earlier similar functions: the omission of lectures in plenary session which conventionally brought to the focus of attention the subjects and the lecturers judged to be important by the organizers. Nevertheless, even at this congress it came to spontaneous plenary sessions which attracted audiences of such size that some of those attending had to stand. Such a crowd assembled to listen to René Wellek, the grand old man of comperative studies, who talked about the much-debated problem of literary value and evaluation, and very many were curious to hear the views of Yuri B. Vipper (Moscow) and Tibor Klaniczay (Budapest) on the baroque and mannerism.

But, to come back to Professor Coleman's words, an attraction of the congress held on the campus in Washington Square was the opportunity for scholars from 62 countries (including China for the first time in ICLA congress history) to meet and to renew old friendships. One of the principal aims of ICLA is to establish and foster personal contacts between scientists, and nothing can prove the success of its efforts better than its actual membership of 2,500.

Twenty-seven years have passed since the first congress held at Venice in 1955, and the congress organized by New York University is already the tenth in the series. Each congress had a different agenda. Thus, for example, while the Budapest meeting of 1976 concentrated upon three great periods of the history of European literatures (the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the early twentieth century) and thus covered the most conventional domains, the agenda item eliciting the greatest interest at the Innsbruck congress in 1979 was "Literary Communication and Reception," one of the most modern subjects of research in literature, discussed under the chairmanship of Hans Robert Jauss (Constance) and Manfred Naumann (Berlin).

The New York congress took up both conventional and modern themes: the lectures on the theory of literature fitted in well with all three main items discussed at the congress. Thus, in the sessions summarized under the title "General Problems of Literary History" (with Professor Douwe Fokkema, Utrecht, as chairman) the speakers dealt with fundamental questions of literary studies such as the nature and history of literary development and the problem of

literary value, but this main item included also the afore-mentioned lectures on the baroque and mannerism delivered in the section "Tradition and Innovation in the Seventeenth Century and Recent Views."

The main item "Comparative Poetics," under the direction of Professor Claudio Guillen of Harvard University, likewise covered theoretical and historical questions: the lectures dealt with, *inter alia*, theories concerning poetic forms, the connection of poetry and ideology, the international implications of surrealism, and the relationship of modernism and other literary trends.

Finally, the third main item which, judged by its title: "Inter-American Literary Relations," could have rated as American business, owing to the progress made by Latin American literatures and to the traditional and contemporary values of North American literature, invited considerable interest also from the non-American audience, so much the more so since the comparison of northern with southern literature and literary criticism gave rise to theoretical questions of general importance. Such generalization was made possible by the sub-item entitled "Coincidences and differences on the evolution of narrative form in American literatures," but similarly universal in character were also the problem areas relating to regional and national identities or the history of American genres. Co-chairmen for the item "Inter-American Literary Relations" were Alexander Coleman (NYU) and Mario J. Valdes (Toronto).

The picture would be incomplete without mentioning the round-table debates and workshops. These small gatherings touched upon widely varied topics, from comparative literature as a subject taught at universities to translation, and this was where the growing demand for interdisciplinarity prevailed most of all: in the workshop "The nature and function of the image in literature and the other arts," for example, contributions to the debate dealt with the photographic and cinematic arts as well.

Eleven Hungarian scholars—university teachers from Budapest and Szeged as well as fellows of the Institute for Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences—went to New York to attend the large meeting of comparatists and deliver lectures or speak at the different sessions. One of them has returned as president of ICLA: Professor György Mihály Vajda of Szeged was elected for a three-year term. Professor Vajda, who has for more than ten years been secretary of the coordination committee for the ICLA publications relating to literary studies, succeeds the outgoing president, Professor Eva Kushner of Montreal.

In 1979 at Innsbruck it was Anna Balakian, an internationally known student of symbolism and surrealism, who undertook the hard but thankful task of organizing the congress. At the closing banquet of the New York congress in 1982 Professor Balakian as well as New York University were acclaimed by the vigorous applause of scholars in appreciation of their work of organization. They really deserved it: with its high standards and its atmosphere of friendship alike, the meeting of scholars in Greenwich Village, which was formal and informal at the same time, was of service to the cause of comparative literature and of scholarship in general.

JUDIT KARAFIÁTH

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

THE YOUNG RÁKÓCZI

Béla Köpeczi: *Döntés előtt. Az ifjú Rákóczi eszmei útja* (Before the Decision. Young Rákóczi's ideological path). Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982, 288 pp. 82 illustrations

There is a great deal of literature on Ferenc II Rákóczi, that charismatic figure of Hungarian history. The tricentenary of his birthday inspired yet further contributions and so at first it seems unlikely that only a few years after this climax of historical writing, an original and significant book could be written on him.

Béla Köpeczi is an authority on the period in question; he has not aimed at synthesis but rather to examine closely the development of the young Rákóczi's character up to the moment when (in 1701) he finally made his split with the Vienna court.

Dramatic events in a turbulent life formed the character of the young man in an almost spectacular way. Rákóczi's ancestors had been reigning princes who had lost their throne.

As a child he witnessed Imre Thököly's rebellion against the Habsburgs (1678–99); it was thus in his formative years that he became aware of increasing popular reaction against that movement, since Thököly had, even if under pressure, sought alliance with the Turks. The child was almost literally swept into the centre of the Catholic-Protestant storm; religious conflict became shattering personal experience when the revolutionary Thököly, a Protestant, became his step-father on marrying his mother, Ilona Zrínyi, a Catholic.

How complicated this relationship was can be seen from an episode related in the prince's "Confessions." One night a snake crept up to the little boy. Slowly coming awake his mother in her immediate panic had grabbed not him but his younger sister and fled from the room. The little boy was thus left alone with the snake, which did not harm him.

This incident, not necessarily particularly significant in itself, is given a remarkable illumination in Rákóczi's retrospective interpretation. The snake would symbolize his step-father, a threat to him and, through his person, to the whole of his family, its wealth, and political power. "It is obvious," says Köpeczi, "Rákóczi feared the loss of his mother's care and affection to Thököly—and thus filled his emotional state with political content." Almost Hamletian reminiscences of anxiety, jealousy, and political aspects are mirrored in this little episode, while the snake had at that time been a meaningful and often referred to symbol.

He lived at his mother's side through a fortress siege of three years between the ages of ten and twelve. After the capitulation (1688) the Vienna court plucked him out of his environment in order to make a loyal subject of the Kaiser's out of him.

A childhood of trouble and strain then, out of which a person was to grow who would later lead a revolt of the serfs while he was one of the most powerful of landowners; he was to lead a revolution against those very Habsburgs whose court life he

had once been so anxious to be assimilated to.

Köpeczi's most important sources are Rákóczi's library, the two main works written in exile, "Memoirs" and "Confessions," * the huge correspondence and various other documents and sources of an iconographical nature.

These texts are examined with enormous care and an especial emphasis is put on those features of his personality which carry psychological clues. Often Köpeczi tracks down the tiniest reference in a seemingly unimportant document to Rákóczi's reading and analyses the influences his reading might have had on him.

He even put the first attempts at writing as a small child under the lamp. As a result of this research, based as it is on an admirable familiarity with philosophy, philosophy of religion, history of culture and literature, our image of Rákóczi has been altered and enriched.

It is obvious to us now that, as opposed to the old, rigid view, Ferenc II Rákóczi was not a born "freedom-fighter," that he was not predestined to lead a war of independence. Quite the opposite: as he was growing aware of the world he was doing his utmost to become a loyal subject of the Kaiser, "a man of the court." His whole schooling was directed at just that, his ambitions arose therefore not out of a well-observed self-interest, but out of his very personality. How then did Rákóczi become a revolutionary after all?

Köpeczi's excellent analysis shows that Rákóczi's distaste for the Kaiser's policy was the result of a slow and gradual process. This process had as main causes his forced removal from his family, anger over not being treated in accord with his rank, the humiliations undergone because of his marriage, and various insinuations by cliques of the court in Vienna. But the chain leading to the final, drastic break was accompanied throughout by a desire to conform. Köpeczi justly remarks in this context that it had not been an overriding sense of vocation that made Rákóczi so very sensitive of, for instance, the "plots" around his social status, but because he was extremely conscious of his own feudal rank, precisely because of the education he had received.

His awareness of his own dignity was—apart from family traditions and his environment—furthered by that Christian stoicism, the forms of which he knew so well, both as it was understood in the Renaissance and in the forms already coloured by Descartian rationalism. All this fits well with his deeply felt religiousness, into the mysticism of a *devotio moderna*, which determined his whole sense of morality. Rákóczi judged himself as well as others by standards of impartiality, fairness, and moral purity.

My impression is that it was the first period of Rákóczi's education which is typical of the contradictions and confusions of his ideological path, that period which came to an end in 1690 when he commenced his university studies.

At the age of five Rákóczi was taken out of the "hands of women" when his mother appointed a chamberlain for him. The latter was a member of the minor nobility who taught him riding, fencing, how to dress and to behave, all the rules of etiquette; in other words, he made him aware of rank and the obligatory forms of conduct.

His religious education was also given by his mother into the hands of someone from the minor nobility, a Franciscan friar. Köpeczi presents this friar as someone of a practical, Christian stoicism—not uncommon in Hungary at that time. Rákóczi's spelling book too has been preserved, containing religious texts followed by a small "dictionary" of colloquial Latin and

* In French: L'autobiographie d'un prince rebelle. Confessions et mémoires de François Rákóczi II. Choix des textes, préface et commentaires par Béla Köpeczi. Editions Corvina, Budapest, 697 pp.

Hungarian words. There is a song-book, *Cantus Catholici*, to strengthen his emotional religiousness.

In 1682 another tutor was employed, again out of the minor nobility who followed the Jesuit curriculum for seven years, mainly in the subject of Hungarian and Latin.

What was the child's environment? Essentially fortresses, castles, manor-houses in the north of Hungary. In his family's famous fortress of Munkács the inventary lists 42 rooms, 15 arched halls, 99 doors, 12 cellars, 42 fireplaces, at the time when the Kaiser laid his hands on it. At the time living quarters were mainly decorated by carpets and draperies and the aristocracy living here wore richly decorated and colourful clothes. His mother's jewellery was worth more than 70,000 forints, equivalent to some 250 kg of gold. An integral part of the aristocratic lifestyle and Rákóczi's upbringing were political and military events. To these had he been regularly taken by his mother and his stepfather. At the age of seven he had already witnessed atrocities. In his "Confessions" he writes: "I remember with horror, as if it it was a nightmare, how the Turks and Tatars dragged away the Christians not far from Vienna, how they plundered them to throw them into jail."

In 1683, the retreating Turks one night trampled through his father's camp knocking over his tent, an incident in which he was nearly killed. Still, the "real proof of courage" came in November 1685, when the family retired to the fortress of Munkács, where in the following spring a siege by Habsburg troops was to last until January 1688.

At the age of ten Rákóczi was given the title "commander of the fortress" and began to study seriously the military sciences. He insisted on having the events of the day reported to him and the various means and methods of building fortresses explained.

His most beautiful experience is one of human example; first of all the courage of his mother, who despising danger, actively helped to look after the sick and wounded. "His mother's resistance in the Munkács fortress made him realize that the Vienna court was in fact a great enemy both to his country and himself."

In Köpeczi's view the Munkács experience can be looked upon as existentially significant and not only because it had strengthened his sense of vocation, but also, because—through the final surrender of the fortress—he had learnt how to deal with failure. After the capitulation there came a great turning-point in the life and, of course, the education of the twelve-year-old boy. Cardinal Lipót Kollonich, prince primate of Hungary, a leading figure of the Counter-Reformation and one of the principal opponents of Hungarian anti-feudalism, was appointed guardian to the Rákóczi children. It was the Archbishop who quickly separated the young Rákóczi from his mother and sister in order to send him to a Jesuit college in the Bohemian town of Neuhaus.

In accordance with the Emperor and King Leopold I's personal instructions, he was to board and lodge in the college itself; all Hungarians were banned from his side "in order to make him learn the sooner how to respect divine and human majesty as one of the loyal subjects of the Kaiser." He was not to meet either his mother or his sister, his tutor was dismissed, he was called "count" and had to share a room with three others. He did not like company nor the strange food but most of all he was deeply humiliated by the unfair treatment to someone of his rank.

Jesuit education was aimed at forming a worldly person who unconditionally followed the Church. "A man of court" had, according to the opinion prevailing at that time, to learn how to feign and pretend in order to realize himself. For this, the correct use of the tools of the language were indis-

pensable: verbal adroitness in Latin first of all, selectness, and a voice full of pathos. In this Czech monastery these aims could only be realized at a provincial level at best; yet, by the time Rákóczi had absorbed the classes in syntax, poetry, and rhetoric, his Latin has reached a remarkable level. From then on the expressed his most personal emotions in that language, the knowledge of the classical authors was to become one of his main strengths.

His faith too deepened around that time, to a large extent because of the emotional cult of Mary. At this time, he hardly kept contact with the outside world, in his summer holidays even preferring to visit Jesuit monasteries, he was seldom in touch with his family. Professor Köpeczi seems to be able to prove that the Jesuits in Neuhaus were convinced that their view of life, their religious and political ideals had been fully planted into the young Rákóczi and that their pupil had thus been formed exactly according to the Kaiser's intentions.

In fact, a shy withdrawn young man had left them who failed to learn German and had almost forgotten how to speak Hungarian, and who, as soon as there was a chance, would return to an aristocratic way of life. When in 1690 he entered university in Prague he already had a coach and a coachman, a butler, a secretary, took lessons in wrestling, enjoyed travelling and hunting.

These details I have selected hopefully to illustrate the value of Köpeczi's book: he gradually unwraps an inner development of contradictions and set-backs in this man whose extremely complex fate was of ups and downs; the education of Rákóczi, the future leader of the rebellious Hungarians, was identical to that of other Viennese and Western European aristocrats. His cultural background proves a tendency towards conforming, though some of his French reading (Montaigne, Fénelon) shows that someone familiar with this had the chance to look critically upon Hungarian and Viennese court life.

French historians have regarded Rákóczi as a man of the seventeenth century, viewing him through his writings. But if we look at him from the Hungarian and Central European point of view of the seventeenth century, we can risk the assumption that he had overtaken his own age by at least fifty years because of the wideness and diversification of his culture, and his progressive and stoic humanism.

Köpeczi's book is indispensable to a better understanding of the seventeenth century as it provides a large cultural and historical fresco. What is fundamentally new in it is the point from which the author views Rákóczi, and how the "one-dimensional political animal," the hero on a pedestal is turned into a flesh and blood human being.

GYÖRGY GRANASZTÓI

THE BREAKTHROUGH TO MODERN ART

Magyar művészet 1890–1919 (Hungarian Art 1890–1919) Edited by Lajos Németh, Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1981. (The History of Art in Hungary 1890–1919) Volume VI, 687 pp., 213 illustrations, 32 colour plates. Volume VI/a, 1222 illustrations

This volume on one of the major periods in the history of Hungarian arts is edited by the art historian, Professor Lajos Németh. It is the first volume of a new series which is to present, in eight volumes, the complete history of Hungarian arts.

Although art history is by no means a neglected field in Hungary, not all the periods have as yet been subjected to the same intensity of treatment. This also accounts for the publication of Volume VI as the first in the series, as it covers the period which has had the greatest treatment in depth so far. The preface outlines the concept behind the series as a whole and tells us that the appearance of further volumes depends on the progress of research.

The period discussed in Volume VI (1890–1919) is one of the most valuable in Hungarian arts. Even though some of the practitioners often felt stifled by a sense of lagging behind, a wish to break free seems to have spurred them on to the production of significant work. Dozens of men of genuine though limited talent worked alongside the few of outstanding talents to make this an era of high achievement in the arts in Hungary.

The period saw the construction of buildings in the style of the day; it is these which have given today's Budapest its visual character as it developed into metropolitan proportions virtually overnight. The Fishermen's Bastion in the Castle District in Buda was built as a Neo-Romanesque watchtower and promenade by Frigyes Schulek: Imre Steindl followed British models in producing a Neo-Gothic building for Parliament, while Miklós Ybl designed the Budapest Opera House and St Stephen's Basilica in a Neo-Renaissance style. The ancient royal palace in Buda's Castle District was rebuilt to Alajos Hauszmann's designs in Neo-Baroque. Eclectic painting and sculpture, though they tended rigid showed excellence of technique, a high degree of knowledge and was well up to European standards of the time (Bertalan Székely, Gyula Benczúr, Károly Lotz, János Fadrusz and Alajos Strobl). These well-known artists who believed in a realistic portrayal of man and nature (Mihály Munkácsy and Pál Szinyei Merse) were joined at the time by some new groups of artists, which slowly grew to schools in their own right (at Nagybánya, Szolnok, Hódmezővásárhely, Kecskemét and Gödöllő). It was also the period when great works were produced by some individuals (László Mednyánszky, Tivadar Csontváry Kosztka and József Rippl-Rónai); Art Nouveau and the avantgarde in Hungarian arts made their appearance in the period as well. All these trends and groups gave us significant works within short spans of time, something which has had no parallel before or since in Hungary.

In Hungary too, the turn of the century was characterized by the eclipse of academic art. This volume opens with the years around 1890, although the traditional, and now almost compulsory, limit to the period sets its beginning in 1896, the launching of the Nagybánya artist's colony which did so much to introduce a modern presentation of nature. (Of course, the process could not originate in a void, and when taking architecture into consideration, it seemed more correct to select an earlier starting point.) Nor is the closing of the volume with the year 1919 at all surprising. The fall of the Hungarian

Republic of Councils was a serious blow to all progressive trends, including those in the arts, and those associated with modern trends were forced into inner or actual exile. The group called 'The Eight', who used a formal idiom resembling that of the Cubists and the Expressionists, and which included Róbert Berény, Béla Czóbel and Károly Kernstok, found it very hard to live with a public taste that had suddenly turned conservative. The Activitists (led by Lajos Kassák), who followed on from 'The Eight', for whom the revolution in arts was closely connected with the social revolution, saw no realistic prospects for the fulfilment of their hopes after the Republic of Councils was overthrown. In addition some great Hungarian painters died around 1919: in sum, there was a sudden break in the arts. (Among the major artists who died around that time, or more precisely between 1917 and 1920, can be numbered Károly Ferenczy (in 1917), Simon Hollósy (1918), Tivadar Csontváry Kosztka, László Mednyánszky and Frigyes Schulek (1919) and Gyula Benczúr, Béla Lajta and Pál Szinyei Merse (1920).

The justification for stressing here the assigned limits is that they provide a good illustration of the author's intentions; shifting the conventional beginning to the period and retaining its end, they have tried to write a new kind of art history. In so doing they have employed what are unusual approaches and changes of emphasis without neglecting the traditional valuations. They methodically and thoroughly work through the trends and artists of the period, putting perhaps a somewhat greater emphasis on those who can be termed "modern" in the 20th century sense. They do display perhaps less understanding for the better productions of the eclectic and the Academic than has been customary in the writings of West European specialists in recent decades, even if one allows that the combatant or at least disdainful tone of the past has ceased and that these critiques are now much more characterized by objective and detailed analysis.

The introductory chapter provides an overall picture of the decades in question, with a close look at their arts. It includes a sub-chapter "Central European Art at the Turn of the Century", which indicates a healthy broadening of the earlier approach that was oriented solely to the West and especially to Paris. The next chapter, "The Place of Architecture and Fine Arts at the Turn of the Century", discusses the social relationships of arts and artists, their function, role and social determinant features. The authors examine fourteen types of building (treating separately even those with functions as closely related as museums, libraries, universities and schools), they devote ample space to the development of traditional themes in fine arts (historical painting, religious painting, portraiture, and so on and deal in minute detail with the central problem of that time in Hungarian art: that of a "national art". In discussing the role of the arts in shaping the environment and the changes in the culture, the authors also deal with, as a novel feature, interior decoration and fashion, and they present the achievements in photography, stage sets and industrial design of the period.

This is followed by the substantial subject of the volume, "Artistic Trends, Schools and Creators." The parts of this treatment go beyond the limits of individual schools and deal with groups of artists connected by, let us say, common attitudes; this is done by a brief characterization of the groups and their direct precedents, and then their painting, architecture or sculpture is introduced one by one. The history of the various groups and artist's colonies is always given separately and followed by a description of their work and short accounts of the individuals; of the minor figures, several are summed up in subchapters.

Naturally these short "monographs" differ widely according to the artist treated and even more according to who has written them. They are usually essays in form, for instance on Károly Ferenczy (though there

are also shorter, reference-book items) on the members of 'The Eight'; sometimes they can either be much too short (as on József Rippl-Rónai) or indeed much too long (on Adolf Fényes). The sub-chapters which try to treat a number of artists together do not entirely succeed: that on Art Nouveau typographic art offers lists of names, while the portrayal of the members of the Kecskemét colony lacks distinctive features. The same is also true for the presentation of Pál Horty and Lajos Kozma, the main representatives of the applied arts.

This chapter takes up two thirds of the volume and is followed by two shorter yet significant parts. One closes the period with a description of the arts of the Hungarian Republic of Councils, and the other attempts to place the Hungarian arts of the period in their European contexts. Treating the Republic of Councils in a separate chapter may be excessive as it makes the reader feel that this period had been a completely isolated phenomenon within the development of Hungarian arts, and the close links with the past appear here weaker than they ought to be. The final part wrestles with the problem of whether or not Hungarian art inevitably follows Western European development with a time lag. Although this lag is taken for granted, attention is drawn to the fact that among the works created during the period can be found "pieces that need not be hidden in the store-rooms of the imaginary museum of the period's universal art."

The volume closes with a bibliography. The pictures to accompany it fill a separate volume. An interesting feature is that illustrations depicting contemporary life and environment are included rather than concrete objects d'art (bus, telephone centre, the livingroom and kitchen of a working class family, folk costumes). Even so, the extraordinary size makes for a richer than usual presentation of the traditional valuations.

JÁNOS VÉGH

CHOOSE YOUR PAST

Péter Horváth: *Sosemvolt aranykorunk* (Our Golden Age that Never Was). Szépirodalmi, 1982, 247 pp.; Péter Dobai: *Vadon* (Wilderness). Magvető, 1982, 598 pp.; János Székely: *A nyugati hadtest* (The Western Army Corps). Magvető, 1982, 244 pp.

Sosemvolt aranykorunk (Our Golden Age that Never Was) is the first novel from 31-year-old Péter Horváth and follows several collections of short stories. The story (autobiographical in inspiration) takes place in the early sixties when the author entered his teens. Through nostalgic flashbacks these years become golden, they appear in the memory of the adult as the timeless golden age of a lost paradise. Since *Le grand Meaulnes* and *Swann* this evocation of the dream world of the remembering writer's secret adolescence has become a ritual. The teenage of Péter Horváth is also seen across this distance of the "never was" but here this "never was" has a double meaning. It is the imaginary emotional dimension of that age, and the adjective of "golden" never did exist for the author, as it did for many others.

At the moment it is both appropriate and fashionable to look at the early sixties

nostalgically. Politically this was the beginning of the thaw in Hungary, the beginning of those changes which matured into fullness in the seventies. These were the years when, *inter alia*, youth began to change its life-style radically, partly under the Western influences which were seeping in. This important period is the subject of Péter Lengyel's *Mellékszereplők* (Extras) reviewed earlier;* it is also the topic of *Megáll az idő* (Time Stands Still),** an excellent film by Péter Gothár. Lengyel's novel dealt with those years from the viewpoint of university students, Gothár's film saw them through the eyes of secondary-school students. In Horváth's novel the hero is the writer's ten-year-old ego.

The style of Gothár's film does not for one moment conceal the nostalgic gesture of evocation, and in Lengyel's novel the functioning of the mechanism of memory is the principle through which the form is shaped; Péter Horváth's novel is also a novel of recollection in which the writer's present attitude is latently present. In fact, this explains the title: Horváth seeks the golden age of childhood, the time which, according to recollection, was the never-to-return age of happiness but this golden age seems to have existed only in the imagination of the young hero. Not only was it not a golden age but in reality it was a time of ordeal, deception, a time of blows and losses which have left their mark for ever.

"We learned the twelve rules of the pioneers but never did we believe for one moment that they could be observed. Our own words and deeds laughed in our face—but still, we were happy; little boys in satin pants, we were full of zest for life." Maybe this was what subsequently seemed to have been happiness: perhaps their zest and vitality were their source for the strength they needed to endure the world of adults. In their innocent passion of childish vitality they had to become aware of an adult world in which everybody only wanted to survive from one day to another for the rest of their lives.

Besides being a writer Péter Horváth is a talented actor, the son of an actress and a director. In "Our Golden Age that Never Was" the adult world is mainly made up by these parents (or their shadows if we are to believe the book's jacket which says that the characters in the book are fictitious). The father was jailed in 1956. (In the film "Time Stands Still" there are also two adolescent boys, a few years older than Horváth's hero, whose father left the country in 1956, and their foster-father to be, a former companion-in-arms of their father, will be released from prison at the beginning of the thaw.) In the novel the boy's mother divorced the father under the pressure from the authorities so as to pursue her career and she put her smaller son into a boarding school. For a long time the boy believes that his father is in hospital and he vegetates in an almost non-conscious existence in this god-forsaken boarding school. Instinctive alarm signals reach his mother in whom, as with many depressives, motherly and womanly *élan* and self-sacrifice alternate with periods of total moral disintegration. She removes him from the school and tries to put him up with her grandparents who live in the capital. They, however, are in a state of Becketian decrepitude and poverty, and will not hear of it. Thus she is compelled to take him along with her to a provincial town, the current stage of an up and down career. There she shares a miserable rented room with her partner and her elder son. The partner turns out to be an embezzler and is jailed. The father is by now out of prison and has established a new family; when his sons visit him, they realize that he is a hopeless alcoholic. From this point on the mother spends days at time in the lodgings of one of the theatre's musicians, in a bed surrounded by empty bottles.

This is the background to the boys'

* See *NHQ* 82.
** See *NHQ* 87.

teenage years. Neither the school nor the theatre or the neighbours are any better than their own derailed parents, the adults are disgusting, crazy and scheming, yet, nature, the seasons, their dreams, the bodies of young girls, their mysterious prospects and alliances conjure up a golden age or the will to live.

The novel is a freely rambling, sometimes rapturous confession of an adolescent. This is both its strength and weakness. The entire work is imbued with the sweetness of remembering and a tender affection for the small boy in satin pants. The horrors of the boarding-school, the parents' tragic failure, the narrow-mindedness of the school, the anguish and humiliation suffered become almost grotesque eccentricities and tolerable unpleasantnesses. Within certain limits this is what is captivating about the book. However, this truth is not always supported by a convincing originality of formulation; the continuous changes of the angle of recollection become empty mannerisms and Horváth occasionally resorts to school-boyish bombast. When this happens, the emotional tone peels off from the narrative and the sketchy characterization and lack of structure are revealed. Indeed the novel consists of a number of short-story-like scenes and situation reports: they are held together by the consistent passion and *élan* of the narration and on the best pages by the strength of the monologue's flow.

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If Hungary ever had if not a Golden Age at least an age that held out the promise of leading to one, this period was the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century, the Reform Age. What happened later, however, was anything but Golden. With the assistance of the Czar, the Habsburg Monarchy suppressed the Revolution of 1848–49; what followed was a period of reprisals and despotism. Execution or imprisonment was the fate of all the functionaries and officers of the short-lived independent state except for those who managed to escape into exile. Péter Dobai's new novel, *Vadon* (Wilderness) deals with this emigration, which spread itself from Turkey and Syria as far as the USA and Cuba. The novel is concerned with one of the branches, those exiles who sought refuge in the early fifties in the Ottoman Empire and, trapped there, gradually disintegrated and perished. Dobai has already written one novel on the fate of these exiles, *Csontmolnárok* (Bone Grinders), which attracted much attention on its appearance. The present book is set a few years later, in 1859, at the time of the Franco-Piedmontese War against Austria. The setting is Italy where a Hungarian Legion awaits its deployment alongside the Italian and French armies. The stakes in the war were Lombardy, Veneto, and Venice, provinces of the Habsburg Monarchy and now the objects of Italian irredentism. Napoleon III had his own interest in the Northern Italian provinces, and marched his armies onto the plain of the Po. Encouraged by Cavour and Napoleon III, Kossuth, the former leader of independent Hungary now in exile, hoped that if the Habsburgs could be driven from Northern Italy it would be possible to extend the war to the Danube Basin and thus resume the independence war in Hungary. The opportunity was good since this time the Czar would not come to the aid of the Habsburgs after being abandoned by the Austrians during the recent Crimean War. As a clear token of Hungarian Legion was formed whose regiments, advancing with Italian-French support, would have served as the nucleus of any future independent Hungarian army.

This basic idea was not unsound from the military viewpoint: after the Austrians' heavy defeat at Solferino it would have been possible to push the armies of Francis Joseph back even as far as Vienna. In poli-

tics, however, Kossuth proved to be naive and did not anticipate that he was to be used by Napoleon III as a mere tool; the moment Napoleon was in the position to dictate terms to Francis Joseph he would conclude an agreement with him. This is precisely what happened with the Peace of Villafranca and Kossuth's plans, not for the first and not for the last time, went up in smoke. Of course in his position he could not afford the luxury of seeing clearly: he had to cling to every chance and hope if he did not want to renounce once and for all the cause of Hungarian freedom.

It is remarkable that two new Hungarian novels have been published within one year on Kossuth's political dilemmas: *Én, Kossuth Lajos* (I, Lajos Kossuth) by Tibor Cseres, recently reviewed in these columns, and now Dobai's "Wilderness." The hero of Dobai's novel is not Kossuth although he, and the other leaders of the Hungarian emigration in Piedmont, appear quite often in the course of the story. The real hero is a captain Kristóf Batiszy who is ordered by the staff of the Legion to cross into Hungary with a commando. Their orders are to prepare the way for a national uprising and the entry of the Legion through terrorist and diversionary actions, and the creation of bridgeheads. Batiszy charters ships and smuggles arms into Hungary from the Danube delta; he starts his diversions in the area selected, the former wilderness south-west of Lake Balaton and the swampy tidelands of the river Dráva. Batiszy is no wild revolutionary nor an impulsive suicide who has lost all faith: he is a man who lives a full and meaningful life and who happens to be a competent and level-headed soldier. He believes in the cause he represents, believes that it will succeed, acts with circumspection but nourishes no illusions about the risks involved. Although he does not give up easily and will not sacrifice himself spectacularly, he has no wish to survive failure at all costs. The undertaking fails, of course, Batiszy waits for the Legion in vain, his detachment is isolated, encircled, and finally slaughtered.

Much in the make-up of Batiszy brings to mind the guerrillas and terrorists of contemporary liberation fronts. His closest relative in literature is Robert Jordan in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Indeed the previous "Bone Grinders" had its own topical overtone: the decline and aftermath of a great revolutionary upswing which was characteristic of the early seventies. Apart from this, Batiszy and the wearing away of the emigration have no political topicality. "Wilderness" is a more conventional historical novel which wants to describe a concrete historical situation in an extreme and fatal detour.

The novel has a certain topicality which is not political: even more than in "Bone Grinders", it records a public feeling. Batiszy and his mission express a nostalgia for a full life. Indeed, to write a big historical novel, a genre now thought obsolete, is in itself an expression of literary nostalgia. Dobai has set out deliberately to write an exciting adventure story, and he has mobilized a huge apparatus to do so. He has digested an enormous number of sources and contemporary documents; the book does not organize itself around systematic research but moves, almost at random, from memoirs to regional archives, to technical books on navigation, ethnography, and arms. This comes over quite clearly since he pours out his acquisitions rapturously, without inhibition, sometimes even delighting in the verbosity of their natural, rough state. "Wilderness" can also be read as a collection of historical rarities. This can annoy the reader, who feels that the characters do not discuss things relevant to the story, things they would have discussed in the hypothetical reality of the book. There is a sense that they are discussing things which the author has just read about and which he has made them to discuss; there are things which they could not have said in this particular way for reasons of conspiracy, psychology,

or style—they are, in fact, a monologue of the author's. Elsewhere, especially in the second part of the book, where we have become used to Dobai's techniques of juxtaposing the incongraous arbitrarily and unexpectedly and of heaping up this material, we begin to understand and appreciate Dobai's method of opening up strange vistas.

In fact "Wilderness" is one long interior monologue, a monologue on the part of an author who pretends to be writing a romantic adventure story with the normal ambition of captivating his audience. Throughout he uses first person singular and for by far the larger part of the novel he adopts an essayist's tone. His coupling of the romantic historical novel and the historical essay does not sit everywhere easily, and the shadow of bluff sometimes falls on the book; yet one is fascinated by the luxury of the material and spiritual arsenal of revolutionary life of those days. On these points the abundance of factual material becomes a function of content: Dobai describes the world of objects, the medium of cultural history with the same nostalgia and the same perspective as he does Batiszy's mission. Is such a life possible today, it is possible to condense in an individual the infinity of the age, is it possible today to experience to such fullness the world into which one is born? Through its somewhat anachronistic presentation of Batiszy and through its rambling imagination, "Wilderness" asks precisely these questions.

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János Székely is a writer from Transylvania. In *A nyugati hadtest* (The Western Army Corps) he evokes an age even more baneful in memory than that of Habsburg despotism. Dobai may turn with a certain nostalgia to a time which contained the unpleasant and the bitter but still allowed full and true lives. Péter Horváth may be emotional over and adolescence which, although hard, still held out the promise that everything was possible. But János Székely has to apologize for writing on the experience which marked him for life: the Second World War. "The basic experience of the present generation (and at the same time the basic element in our contemporary history) was the war," says Székely in his dedication. "The truest model of our past, of our world, is the military. Those who do not understand this can never understand us. Therefore ... accept the mustly smell of obsolete method and squeezed-out themes, in the full knowledge that not everyone today will follow attentively the obsessive repetition of the experiences of a bankrupt generation; all this I know and acknowledge. Nevertheless allow me to add to a few variations to the chorus of my ageing contemporaries, and report on the journey I made as a truly poor man."

This journey carried the fifteen-year-old Székely from Marosvásárhely in Transylvania to a prisoner-of-war camp in Westphalia as part of the Hungarian "Western Army Corps," which retreated westwards before the oncoming Soviet Army. During the war years János Székely was at a cadet school on Hungary's eastern border in Transylvania, which had been temporarily returned to Hungary by the Vienna award of 1940. The first chapters recounting his experiences as a cadet recall a great Hungarian novel based on a cadet school at the western frontier: Géza Ottlik's *Iskola a határon* (School on the Frontier). "The Western Army Corps", although calling itself a novel on its sleeve, is the combination of a memoir and a sequence of narratives.

Two appalling stories stand out: one happens on the Eastern front near Transylvania, native soil for most of the soldiers, probably in the Eastern Carpathians. By this time desertion has become widespread in the Hungarian Army, which is retreating

along with the Germans. One day a deserter is captured, sent back to his unit where the court-martial's death sentence is to be executed. However all the soldiers in the battalion come from the same small town and are related or know everybody else; they have been made soldiers in spite of themselves. Each officer passes on the responsibility on to another, until finally one of them takes on the task. But the firing squad refuse to obey orders, they will not shoot their companion. The officer, fearing that the battalion will be decimated for disobedience, finally has to shoot the deserter himself because in this way only one of his men has to perish, not several. "So he became a war criminal" and was condemned to prison after the war. János Székely, who is well known for his historical plays, relates this tortuous event with tension and moral sensitivity.

The other story is set on a snow-covered plain somewhere in Poland. The mounted cadet school of Marosvásárhely rides at the rear of the units retreating westwards. Their retreat itself is excruciating but even more terrible is the slow and painful progress ahead of them: an SS officer on a motor bicycle and militiamen are escorting a group of prisoners. The number of the latter diminishes from day to day, they perish in their dozens. One day the cadets witness the officer, accompanied by his dog, shooting a prisoner who had dropped behind. They suddenly understand how all the other bodies strewn along the road have met their fate. But they also understand something else: why the officer is engaging in this apparently futile slaughter of those who fall behind. On these snow-filled wastes the prisoners would have died anyway and there was no one to call the officer to account because after them come only the Russians. "We are the last, the very last in the beaten army, nobody comes after us. But some people are coming after those prisoners, we are the ones who are coming after them... Not discipline, not duty, not even obedience but *fear* compels him to butcher those men: we force him to do it through our mere presence..."

A feeling of self-accusation and disgust, even nausea, descends upon the cadet who has been retreating unsuspectingly, with the sole concern to save his own skin. "Let us forget what can be forgotten. Our chance is the unforgettable," says the motto of the book. The image of the slaughtered prisoners the disgust and self-reproach are unforgettable. Székely tries to make them unforgettable also to the reader, in the hope that we will learn our lesson for good.

MIKLÓS GYÖRFFY

POETS' WORLDS

Gyula Illyés: *Táviratok* (Telegrammes) Szépirodalmi, 1982, 150 pp.; Kamil Kárpáti: *Erotikus kánikula* (Erotic dog's days) Magvető, 1982, 91 pp.; István Kovács: *Ördöglakat* (Puzzle-lock) Szépirodalmi, 1982, 99 pp.; Simon Serfőző: *Büntetlenül* (Getting away with it) Magvető, 1982, 91 pp.; Zsuzsa Kapecz: *Tükrös* (Mirrored) Kozmosz, 1981, 63 pp.

Gyula Illyés is now eighty but his latest book includes a form new to his oeuvre. The hundred and fifty or so poems in *Táviratok* (Telegrammes) have the concision of carefully composed telegrammes. Laconic, they have been purified of every incidental element.

The obvious ancestors of what is, for him, a new form are Greek and Latin epigrams. Some years ago Illyés translated "Odi et amo" and another one of Catullus's fulminations on the occasion of the death of a Roman politician. He has also written versions of some of Voltaire's sharp epigrams, including the famous one on Frénon.

Much of Telegrammes deals with usual subjects of the traditional epigram. These are the bad poet, the injudicious critic, the dishonest politician, the unfaithful friend, the time-server, the vain, doubting woman. Many pieces, also in the traditional spirit, pay homage to the artistic and ethical achievements of friends, dead and alive.

But the book is not simply a set of virtuoso variations on the always topical themes of epigrams of the past. This is a volume diverse in form: there are puns, grimaces, philosophical jokes, polemics, solemn addresses, landscapes, diary notes, parables, fables, letters, epitaphs, meditations. Occasionally Illyés uses rhymes that are excellent, almost painfully so. These only add to the irony and sharpen the reader's attention. Elsewhere his ideas are conveyed through the use of classical metres or through free verse; once or twice he uses the prose poem.

Telegrammes is one more synthesis of Illyés' great themes. The telegraphic style expresses the lasting concerns of sixty years of writing poetry: work, world, nation, poetry, progress, love, reason, death.

Attention has been always the key word and key concept in his ethics. Now he writes: "... to progress with attention always | until the grave." (Prose translation.)

Illyés has written a great deal about what poetry can do and of the poet's responsibility. He has always been very exacting, his poems demand the utmost attention, they have never lead to facile intoxication. He has always rejected fiercely the formula of l'art pour l'art, ecstatic complaint. Another key word and key concept is accuracy. Two lines of his *Ars Poetica* sum it up neatly:

"Artist!—the hardest in the test is | whether your genius is all there"? (Prose translation. In the original, the mock-seriousness of the phrasing enhances the statement.)

His conception of love has perhaps nowhere been formulated better than in a prose poem here. *Egy szenvedő szerelmesnek* (To a Suffering Lover) is characteristic of the abiding views of Illyés.

"Sexual union does not mean happiness to animals. They prepare for it in dread, suffer from it, and afterwards—look at what the dogs have to endure afterwards.

"Man is the only species which has sought a remedy after a fashion, even in his animal period. It is possible that he owes his human career—his development as a rational being—to this. In opposition to the dismissal that he should reproduce with pain and nourish himself by the sweat of his brow."

Even at the age of eighty, Illyés still has surprises for us.

Kamil Kárpáti matter-of-factly calls imagination a 'sister:'

"My sister Imagination has painted a daisy on one of your breasts | and a sunflower on the other, | and at dawn we took a drive to the seaside."

This is from *Volna* (As if) which is addressed to Gi, his wife, the inspiration and protagonist of many of his pieces. We are in Ravenna, a stopping point on an Italian journey hoped for from the age of 18 and finally realized after thirty-one years. The collection is *Erotikus kánikula* (Erotic dog's days), his sixth book of poetry.

The collection is permeated with a joyful sense of the erotic and a memory of the seven and a half years (1949–1956) the writer spent in gaol. Eroticism creates a world—and the "roads become always shorter," says the fifty-year old Kárpáti. In his *A szerelmes szolipszizmusa* (Lover's Solipsism) he says:

"By now my hand too only lives where your fingers have held it." And adds:

"Off I go. But until the grave I am responsible for making this century habitable." (Prose translation.)

Kárpáti's imagination is free-ranging. An early poem deals with a 1947 surrealist exhibition in Paris. However, he uses details which are as accurate as the "crouching, earth-gripping" wind.

Most of Erotic dog's days is related to the journey in Italy: scenery, towns, museums, monuments, and artists. But they are not traditional descriptions, more meditation and confrontation. In Arezzo "It is not Petrarca but Berzsenyi whom I hear," Berzsenyi the Hungarian poet who, in the early 19th century, wrote *A Közelítő télhez* (To Approaching Winter), a great poem on transience.

Kárpáti writes in regular strophes, and to a set syllabic count though he also writes prose poems. Some of his rhymed poems contain extraordinarily long lines. As one reviewer remarked, their prosody matches the crudeness of the spoken language. Inserted explanations in prose and images built on extreme associations alternate in them.

Illyés and Eliot have probably exerted the greatest influence on his work. Kárpáti's descriptions and imagery are always life-like but it is the dreams and experiences that make his lyricism hermetic.

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Simon Serfőző (born in 1942) found his voice early and over the past fifteen years he has made it more flexible and richer without becoming monotonous. The titles of his books: *Hozzátok jöttem* (I have come to you); *Nincsen nyugalom* (There is no peace) 1970; *Ma és mindennap* (Today and everyday) 1975; and his latest, *Büntetlenül* (Getting away with it), 1982, indicate the openness of his poetry, the naturalness of his tone. "The inspiration behind his poetry is diligent interest"—said a reviewer of his second volume and this still holds today. Serfőző is primarily a witness and poet of change in life-style. He narrates the experience of the rural man become urban, he speaks of the changing village. His other interest is how the past survives within the human nervous system. His poems are usually brief, giving a story or a record of a state of mind. His metaphors, subordinated to narrative or mood, are mainly drawn from nature and peasant life. After the story his chief concern is with forms of behaviour. He speaks of the "intimidated" people who lived "on sufferance" and who were sent by their lords to foreign parts in two world wars, to Galicia and the river Don. "... our revolts dared not even stand in the door," he says of history. In *Büntetlenül* (Getting away with it), the title poem of this new collection, he speaks of a country where "hiding-places were only in the soul." One of the book's heroes is his father who "worked away his life." Of him, he says casually but sadly: "I cannot help him." His poetical credo is "I defend joy," his ideal a man who works with tools. The fact that work is still not always appreciated produces his indignation.

István Kovács says on the sleeve-notes to his book, *Ördöglakat* (Puzzle lock):

"I have written countless dictionary articles on Polish poets and writers, mostly in six lines. So I had to sum up in six lines the fate of those who in general already have been forgotten in their lifetime even if anything ever was known about them. As an encouragement to them, here are my own six lines:

"Born in 1945 in Budapest, he graduated from Budapest University in Polish and History. The poets considered him a historian, the historians a poet. When poet and historian met they considered him a literary translator. It is a fact that he figured in the anthology *Elérhetetlen föld* (Unattainable Earth). His first book of verse appeared in 1973 under the title *Havon forgó ég* (Sky Turning on the Snow)".

Elérhetetlen föld (Unattainable Earth) was an anthology, published in 1969, to introduce nine young poets. In general the critics received most of the young poets with sympathy but István Kovács was hardly mentioned. One reviewer mentioned him in passing with the words that "his beautiful formulations made the psalm-like heaviness of his words float." Thirteen years later the floating and the beautiful formulations have ceased. From time to time Kovács is almost inarticulate. But this inarticulateness is also disciplined and conscious. A high degree of craftsmanship is hidden behind it. One of his longer prose poems could be both a description of a dream and a film-script. The dramatic events of Hungarian and Central-European history permeate each other: 1848, 1919, 1944, and as in a dream or film, the transition from one event, one story into another and back, seems quite natural. In free verse (though the lines and stanzas are regular) he speaks of himself now in first person, now in the third.

It is characteristic of this collection that he projects images of sickness onto the world. "The eye in the calcified lung-cavity," the city's blood is "non-coagulant," "the tonsillitis of the chimneys" are examples. The eye-sockets "are the nests of pushing wasps," and "the sky's pimples have all burst open." Or in *Térkép* (Map) where "pus is absorbed by the pericardium and the brain cells." The adjective for music is "suicidal." In the same poem, *Utazás IV* (Journey IV) he writes: "we recognise as human speech only the yell, not the whisper."

"Dreadful guardsmen are marching" in the world. The indices of "historical times" are "ever so many swords." In his cycle *A Csönd fokozása* (The Intensification of Silence) he speaks about killed or exiled poets, Balassi, Petőfi, Norwid, or K. K. Baczynski. It was he who made the selection and wrote the notes to Norwid's recently published first Hungarian volume. Poet? Historian? Literary translator? Kovács feels and thinks in terms of history. It is our over-specialized age that feels poetic and historical vision exclude each other; history was once one of the Muses and there are some who argue this even today. In the case of Kovács, historical knowledge is his Muse: "We cannot take apart | the puzzle-lock of history. | It's loops | press close against the knuckles | and neck | and strangle the soul in their net..." (Prose translation.)

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Zsuzsa Kapecz's first volume of poems is both informal and solemn. Long, almost short story-like prose poems alternate with pieces that are sometimes rhymed and broken into stanzas and lines. There Kapecz uses the traditional means of folk poetry: the effect is rhythmical, melodious, sweet, and evocative. A young woman speaks and remembers. The school frightens her even in her dreams, even if her hands have changed into "wings." On Saturday afternoons she is especially in love. In a recurring picture of a summer memory, the wildness of horses symbolises freedom for her. She wears brogues or down-at-heel shoes. She explains why she does not tell somebody who bores her terribly.

The accessories of living, the instruments

and objects of everyday life recur in her poems: the underground, the post-office, the laundry, the telephone, desks, trams, the tv-set. She has a deft touch in joining the lyrical to the everyday, she is good at creating an atmosphere. A stanza of *Kút* (Well) may give an idea of this, even in prose translation:

"The city swims in the smell of chestnuts. Five cost three forints. You look at the brown globes but you don't buy. Neither do you buy any on the next corner. Why? Too much trouble with their shells. Rain. Some light shines through the clouds, you smell the wind. Another minus day."

Despite this informality Kapecz hides herself. In notes to the volume she says only hat "I was born in the sign and in the hour of the witches in a year cursed by many." Then she adds: "I put up with school, the compulsion to learn with difficulty but nevertheless I remained a student..."

The word in the title *Tükrös* (Mirrored) is seldom used and then mainly in combinations. This sixteen line piece in irregular rhyme is where she takes the collection's title from. It could refer to a particular variant of the "I and Thou" relationship, or possibly also to the alternation of prose and verse in the book. The book is the sovereign world of someone who takes herself and her everyday events seriously. And who says to Harlequin: "You made off with all my dreams | and I am mending your threadbare cap."

László Ferenczi

ARTS

KING MATTHIAS AND THE RENAISSANCE IN HUNGARY

Exhibition in Schallaburg, Austria

In 1485 Vienna surrendered to the Hungarian armies of King Matthias Corvinus. The King spent most of the next five years in the city where he died in 1490. The greater part of Lower Austria came under his rule. An historian appraised him recently: "Machiavelli could have modeled his *Il Principe* on this purposeful and ambitious renaissance ruler." In folklore Matthias has survived as a sovereign who kept order and dispensed justice. At the time the King himself tried to create this image in the towns and villages of Austria. His entry into Vienna was accompanied by large quantities of food which he donated in a spectacular gesture to the starving city. He confirmed the privileges of the capital including the right to maintain a university; in Vienna, as elsewhere, he approved the existing forms of local government and even those who held office under them and on occasion he rendered them assistance.

The exhibition in the castle of Schallaburg in Lower Austria, "Matthias Corvinus and the Renaissance in Hungary", forms part of a series of exhibitions named after Austrian rulers; Matthias is in this since he was a Hungarian king who also ruled in Austria. (So far there have been exhibitions on the Emperor Frederic III in 1966 in Wiener Neustadt, on the Emperor Maximilian in 1969 in Innsbruck, and one on Maria Theresa and Joseph II in Vienna and elsewhere in 1980.)

Matthias did not inherit the throne, he was elected king. His father János Hunyadi had been for a time Regent of Hungary, and had won a famous victory in 1456 at Nándorfehérvár (Belgrade) against the Turks.

His son was raised in the spirit of humanism. Matthias maintained a renaissance court in Buda Castle and through what he had built, through one of the finest libraries of contemporary Europe, and through the large group of early Italian and Hungarian humanists around him he became a renowned patron of Italian arts and sciences and their practitioners. His taste, interest and political aims all had their part in this, and his new form of patronage underlined his right to the throne, and enhanced his role as a ruler.

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The contents of the exhibition surpassed the promise of the title. After the death of King Matthias in 1490, the Hungarian Renaissance continued to flourish, although deprived of both strong power at the centre and a firm ruler. It continued to flourish during the reign of the Jagellonian kings nor did it come to an end immediately after the battle of Mohács in 1526. The period closed only in 1541 when the Turks finally took Buda. So Hungarian museums and libraries

did their best to present the cultural panorama of almost an entire century, and to present it in its Renaissance context. Through the unstinting cooperation and help of their Austrian partner, American, English and European museums and libraries also contributed material. The catalogue, compiled by Austrian and Hungarian experts, presented almost 900 exhibits in black and white and colour reproductions.

The castle of Schallaburg was a fortunate choice for the exhibition. This had also been used for the 1974 exhibition "The Renaissance in Austria", and for an exhibition in 1976 on small bronzes and drawings of the Italian Renaissance. Thus the Hungarian Renaissance was a natural sequel.

Up to now there was a general belief that transporting and exhibiting large numbers of beautifully carved stones was all that was needed to present the ancient cultures of the Near East. The Hungarian Renaissance exhibition in Schallaburg has disproved this. Barely two centuries after Matthias the walls of his castles and villas, the castles of the Hungarian noblemen and the majority of Hungarian towns were more thoroughly devastated and looted than many ancient buildings have been in the course of several thousand years. What remains are all fragments, almost without exception found on excavation sites. Visitors could see for the first time the faint remnants of gilding, lapis-lazuli blue or purple paint on the stone torsos from Diósgyőr or Sárospatak. Sixteen tons of stone travelled to Schallaburg, including the original curb-plates of the splendid red marble Hercules Well of Visegrád. The quantity of red marble relics exhibited is unparalleled either in Hungary or abroad—and they are all in the same style. This red and liver-coloured stone lends itself well to carving although the operation needs care. The material evokes the porphyry and purple often used for high-quality works this side of the Alps—it is also exported to the North.

The other focal point of the exhibition was the Corviniana, the Royal Library. Contributions from eleven European countries provided a magnificent succession of Renaissance book-decoration, book-binding and MSS illumination. Only around one-tenth of the king's library has survived but even the material remaining includes unique ancient and early medieval copies; the original library had many Greek authors. Some volumes bear miniature portraits of the persons who commissioned them and books from the library are adorned with the royal coat-of-arms. There are also many finely ornamented noblemen's coats-of arms and town patents which are sometimes closely related to the illuminated MSS. These decorative documents were paid for by their recipients; the court artists tried to do their best to satisfy their tastes.

There were many portraits of King Matthias in his time. We have a virtually complete iconography for him based on original works. His face and figure appeared on reliefs, paintings, sculptures, coins, medals, miniatures and plaques. He was not tall but he radiated energy, his nose was prominent, his hair fashionably combed; before his untimely death he seemed to have put on some weight.

The finest chasubles to survive in Hungary also come from this period. Most of them were made of Italian fabric and embroidered in Hungary: the plastic, embossed embroidered figure-paraments merit special notice. With the passing of time the tapestries of the king's throne were all transformed into chasubles except for one. The originals must have been in the finest Florentine textiles probably made to the designs of the workshop of the Pollaiuolos. More of these splendid textiles could have been exhibited if there had been more time to carry out the necessary and painstaking restoration. Since this could not be done many relevant objects were not appearing on view in Schallaburg.

The Italian *all'antica prisca* style existed

naturally in the court of Matthias and throughout the country, side by side with late Gothic. So the exhibition did not feature many early examples of the renaissance goldsmith's art. The characteristic and easily recognizable late-Gothic Hungarian goblets became so much the rule for the Hungarian goldsmith that it was not until the 17th century that the Italian forms could gain ground. In coins however the Italians found followers earlier. It was interesting to see how early and how often Renaissance elements became decorations on Gothic works. The Renaissance was not only a style but also a fashion, especially for city craftsmen, and later for village masters. This happened in every craft: an example would be the beautiful group of glazed Dutch tiles. Their popular versions were the painted wooden ceilings—the two earliest from 1503–18 and 1526 were exhibited at Schallaburg.

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Relatively smaller ensembles represented wood sculpture and painting, or rather altar-pieces since very few have survived. The marquetry was more remarkable. There exist still a few memorable pieces of the art: the Hutter votive-picture of Eperjes, or the panel "Mary on the Throne with Saints" from the Slovak National Gallery of Pozsony, a local version of an Italian altar-piece which had reached the Danube region. It is interesting that in that age and region there was almost no delay in taking up styles even in the provinces. In the large cities the humanist prelates set the pace and, although somewhat at a distance the nobility also followed. In the village church of Csíkszentlélek in Eastern Transylvania the patrons, the Czakó family, had installed a winged altar in 1510 which —at least as to style—would have been up-to-date in any German region where painters followed the Nuremberg circle. Incidentally, this was the only complete winged altar in the exhibition.

The exhibition was also a just tribute to the major role of the Hungarian humanists who have studied in Italy from the middle of the 15th century to the 16th. A glimpse was provided of the advance the Hungarian language and literature had made towards an increase in importance after the first quarter of the 16th century. Codices written in Hungarian, encouraged by what had happened in Italy and German-speaking regions ultimately led to the printing of books in Hungarian.

If the legend is true that at a horse race in Vienna King Matthias and his escort cheered on a Hungarian rider by shouting his name: "Czuk... czuk...! and that this gave birth to the Viennese *tschucken* which meant to run faster", then the Hungarian museums should be encouraged similarly. It would be good if this exhibition could be seen as a move towards more joint ventures between museums. Hopefully the exhibition at Schallaburg has been an initiative in this sense. This spring sees the exhibition at the National Gallery of Budapest for a long stay.

MIKLÓS MOJZER

KÁLMÁN CSOHÁNY — A LYRICIST OF GRAPHIC ART

Two years after Kálmán Csohány's death in 1980 a retrospective has now been arranged. About twenty-five years ago something new and striking appeared in Hungarian fine arts: the unfolding of graphic art. Earlier reproductions of drawings became visual experiences only when they accompanied literature; the second half of the fifties saw an interesting turn. What happened was not simply an increase in the number of people visiting exhibitions, but also in those buying at them. This public was however primarily interested in paintings, more decorative than graphic works, to embellish their homes. The only advantage black-and-white graphics had over colour pictures was their lower price. Graphics had however a task to solve, that of creating though its own means, within a more modest scope, an attractive, independent art form of real quality.

The condition for the achievements of some talented young artists was a mastery of drawing acquired from some outstanding instructors at the Academy of Fine Arts. (First among them was Jenő Barcsay, who is well-known at home and abroad). In addition to its aesthetic quality and the technical mastery it displayed, the popularity of this new branch was much helped by the authenticity of their message. These young artists spoke from personal experience and had a fresh and original way of looking at things; several strong individuals created both an individual pictorial world and a style appropriate to it.

Kálmán Csohány's art is entirely dominated by poetry, making him the most intimate and lyrical of graphic artists. Most of his themes evoke the rustic memories of his childhood and youth—in spite of being bound to Budapest by his career, he was never truly a city man. His drawings were not conceived in a studio atmosphere, based on studies executed between four walls; his abstractive imagination and formal vision were inspired all along by the living and open spaces of nature.

The need to identify with the whole universe, and the perception of grand dimensions seems to have been associated in Csohány with an inherited peasant characteristic—coming from a family which for generations had been dependent upon the earth and its fruits, he accepted the final authority of natural law. He discerned within the change of seasons the rhythm of passing and beginning, and was thus able to soften the thought of death succeeding to life.

It was not the tearing away from life but a farewell to that which is beyond recall; this nameless sorrow lurks behind all his motifs. Csohány was in fact amazed at the miracle of existence itself.

This longing to express what is barely conceivable feelings and thoughts which seem to have made him determined to the stage in the expansion of the human mind, our inner mysteries, through the minimum number motifs and means.

In spite of the unusual formal language, the suggestive power of his works has gained for him a widening circle of admirers; it is conceivable that the astonishing depth psychological truth and wealth of nuances had much to do with this. In another respect the almost artless simplicity of situations and gestures, and even the occasional awkwardness of his figures' attitudes create a kind of peculiarly Csohányesque atmosphere, best described as the pathos of awe.

Csohány's artistic imagination, the rhythm of his composition and line are inherently popular and musical; they suggest most old folk ballads. In his drawings this characteristic is emphasized by the melo-

dious bending, slanting, ornaments, loops and camouflage of his lines. In his copper engraving, on the other hand, he often creates harmonies out of the contrasting black and white, building surfaces richly shaded for a hard or soft tonality, as if seeking the mood effects of the major and minor keys.

His mournfulness is no mere attitude, nor is it a meek nostalgia, and least of all is it a romantic caress of memories. The horror of the historical past is dramatically registered in the face of György Dózsa, the leader of the 1514 peasant uprising.

His empathy with the crises of Hungarian history made him receptive towards the historical tragedies of other peoples. He created an inspired series of copper engravings dedicated to the memory of Albrecht Dürer and his Apocalypse cycle.

In the name of life his pictures always fought against rigidity; with the quiet but deep humour he occasionally immersed himself into a full-blooded grotesque depiction of old drinking songs of fierce Gypsy dances.

About a hundred of the best of his last period depicted the wooden headboards of a rural cemetery in the form of living creatures, liberating them from their dead immobility.

In the course of his long inner struggles, Kálmán Csohány wrote the story of his thinking in the form of visions. His handwriting touched ancestral forms, while his spirit and feelings watched over the fate of humanity.

MAGDOLNA SUPKA

VISIONS OF FUTURE HORRORS

Drawings and Water-Colours of Imre Ámos (1939–44)

This small exhibition in the Budapest National Gallery of forty-three drawings and water-colours, *Memento*, does not only evoke the artist, born seventy-five years ago, and dead now almost forty years; it also evokes the age when these works were produced and in which men's lives were destroyed like that of Imre Ámos. Those who do not know what happened to him have only to turn to the last sentences in Mária Egri's monograph—"in the autumn his forced labour unit was dispatched to some camp in Germany. His artist colleagues saw him in Ohrdorf in Thuringia. The place of his grave is not known." The cruel data, the tragic life appear in the works exhibited. Inescapably we are reminded of another Hungarian artist, the poet Miklós Radnóti, who shared the same fate and who, like Ámos, had a premonition of the sufferings to come.

The first drawing, *A sárga folt* (The yellow patch) evokes the marking of the Jews after the German invasion of Hungary on March 19, 1944. The picture evokes the dark ages which, one would have thought, had long been over and done with. The drawing shows a bird's nest with a knife in it; this crude instrument of murder is a recurring motif with Ámos; another is the ladder which here starts out from the eye-socket of a skull—the human figure leaning on his elbow is the artist whose tearful face melts into a tree. It is an overwhelming confession from an individual in which is condensed the experience of millions.

In these drawings one of the tragic elements is that a man alone—albeit a sensitive artist like Ámos—has seen the fate of millions clearly right from the first moment. In *Látomás koporsóval* (Vision with coffin) the

rope-dancer projects this knowledge about himself. *Álom* (Dream) and *Álmodozás* (Dreaming) also show this future. In one a sword ready to fall hangs from the neck of a piglet leaning on the horned moon. The spring of death is almost released because the sword hangs above a sleeping figure. The second drawing is also full of tensions through its crowdedness, and the blood-sniffing dog is also a premonition of the bloody events of 1944. *A háború démona* (The demon of war) is a vision of the actual historical moment summed up in a drawing: on the hand-held shawl the flying crosses seem to break forth from the Apocalypse, with the cock as the symbol of fire, the aggressive, hoofed, and iron-armoured man with the snake-head crawling out of his mouth and the blindfolded Man with the twig sprouting from his skull symbolizing the hope that life may still arise, perhaps.

Sötét idők (Dark Times) is a recurring theme with modifications such as *Sötét látomás* (Dark Apparition), *Szörnyű idők* (Horrible times), all with the permanent motif of fire, the eternal symbol of the age, in which houses, homes, and books are burning. We see upturned tables and the Chagallian grandfather clock signalling time, a chair floating in the air, a helpless human figure. All these are the apocalyptic images of the artist's present. *Kompozíció* (Composition), from 1942, seems less weighty in comparison, but its concreteness makes it as emphatic as the others: a blindfolded man—signalling the helplessness of the artist or a real man condemned to death—with a blindfold that has slid from his eyes so that he sees everything that hypocritically they wanted to conceal; it seems that Ámos himself is present in this vision and now looks at his own fate. Under the cruelly ironic title *Ukrán emlék* (Ukrainian Souvenir) appear a tormented man, human pain, and a world in commotion; from the carriage we see only the pole, the horse, and the farmhouse.

Oddly, or rather naturally, Ámos tries to dissolve the visions of horror again and again. What Radnóti called "the world of my faraway rocking childhood" in one of his memorable poems on the war, is present in *Tavasz* (Spring), in the peaceful, harmonious women's heads, in the *Múzsa* (Muse) and in the *Kompozíció* (Composition) of 1944, this colourful image of his native landscape; it is to be seen too in the coloured *Festőpár a kőhegy előtt* (Painter and paintress before the Stone Hill). The same apparent idyll is shown in *Emberpár* (Human couple) with the male and female figure nestling to the tree; this idyll is clearly illusory: the barbed wire is there behind them.

These drawings and water-colours offering a glimpse of momentary respite only enhance the suggestiveness of the visions of anxiety because they seem only to be momentary detours. The *Kakas* (Cock) conveys the same anxiety as *Sárga angyal* (Yellow angel), perhaps the finest of the coloured aquarelles where the angel leans his elbow on the church spire or the *Kompozíció* (Composition) of 1944 in which the artist wants to make obvious his latent anxiety to others. Who has seen, who could have seen these drawings of Ámos at the moment of their birth? Could they see them as accurately as we try to see them now? The answer is no. This exhibition is also a memento of that failing.

EDE TARBAY

PAINTING—TEXTILE—PHOTOGRAPHY

Works by Piroska Szántó, Erzsébet Perczel, László Sáros

Piroska Szántó's* latest show took place at the Szentendre Gallery as she spends the summer in that town. Her collection, impressive even in quantity, can only partly be considered as a presentation of her oeuvre. The art historian Ferenc Hann, who set the show up, has selected from the artist's various creative periods between 1949 and 1982, exhibiting some of the cycles in detail, barely indicating others through a few pieces. Piroska Szántó's most recent works have naturally been most heavily selected from. The cycle, the series as such, has an unusually important place in her art. When one looks through her oeuvre, or even through a single show, it is hard to believe that all the pictures have been painted by the same hand. She alternates techniques as well as forms and ideas. She is a different artist every summer. I once wrote, echoing an advertising slogan, "new summer—new Piroska Szántó"; the ad is long forgotten, but her attitude is still there. This variety in her art is nearly always radical, sometimes explosive, deriving only from itself, it is never forced or declarative. Consequently there is no such thing as a Piroska Szántó style, there are only styles in the plural. This is why the different stylistic groups have been arranged in separate rooms, or at least on separate walls. The ingenious arrangement does not follow any scholarly chronology: it has been arbitrary where necessary, as regards time sequence. (This review, on the other hand, will not be complete: I will omit things like the series Moths, Horses or Lovers, which I have written on earlier issue in the *NHQ*, when reviewing a Szántó exhibition of seven years ago.)

Sunday (1952), a painting of a peasant woman dressed in a silk-decorated national costume, meets the visitor at the entrance to the first room; inside are pastel paintings from the *Pictographs* series (1977–81). This leap across a quarter century of time causes no break in thought: in 1944, during the German occupation of Hungary, the artist hid in Bajót, a small mountain village, and these paintings are a memory of that village and its women. Red, pink, magenta, and orange-coloured pastels, together with charcoal crayon, women or groups of women in severely triangular compositions. These pastel drawings are cubist stone sculptures or, more precisely, carved reliefs; the shapes are separated by contour lines—most often negative contour lines—at the edges of the frame. There is a structural hardness to them, yet a softness at the same time, but it is not the softness of pastel. Perhaps Piroska Szántó has grown nostalgic for the sculptural tradition, a vital influence in Hungary between the two world wars, of the two German expressionists, Käthe Kollwitz and Ernst Barlach.

Cantata Profana (1969–72), a tapestry of eight square metres, is an entirely different matter. It was designed for a music school, and its subject is Béla Bartók's composition of the same title, its text the folk ballad about the boys transformed into stags. Piroska Szántó did not intend to illustrate this work—an impossible undertaking—but she did want to let Bartók speak. She feels at home in the monumental scale, in the fabric of the gobelin: the language of montage, which she employs here, is her mother-tongue.

Both subject and transposition are different in the series *Hungarian Christs* (1968). Religious art has not only been the theme of the classics, but also that of spontaneous folk art, of the naives in every age. Piroska Szántó has collected, just as any ethnographer, the village crucifixes, the "tin Christs" to be found in the Balaton hill country. She has looked at these relics of a

*NHQ 35, 40, 51, 67

different area, of different stylization, with an eye nurtured on the Orthodox art of Szentendre. This is no calvary in its own iconographic sense, and yet it is that too, as symbols of suffering. In addition to identification with the sacral object, there is comfort in the playful association of red and silver, gold and black, or red and gold combinations, almost gay in their gloominess.

After stone reliefs expressed in pastel and folk crucifixes transposed into painting, we are not surprised by the *Pictures from a Lost Album*, photographs transposed onto conventional canvas with thinly applied oil colour. These are greatly enlarged paraphrases, on monochrome brown panel, of the palm-size brown-paper photographs from the nineteenth and early twentieth century. They have nothing to do with either photo-realism or hyper-realism. True, their starting-point is a photograph, a family souvenir or even an imagined *déjà vu*, born at the moment of reminiscing. Their models are gentleman, ladies, children, babies, dressed up for the photographer. "Madam, look at gentleman, sir, look at camera!" as the old photographers used to say when diving under their black cloth. But the commentless detachment of hyper-realism is missing here. The pictures from the lost album are filled with passion. The emotions are mixed: caricature blends with nostalgia, irony with identification, self-derision with pain. This photo series closes, or rather, completes Piroska Szántó's Szentendre exhibition.

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The show at the Miskolc Gallery is in fact a collection of Erzsébet Perczel's forty-five years of textile design and weaving; it is supplemented by a few previously undisplayed pieces. She has woven most of the works in exhibition herself, but there are a few factory-made pieces made to her design. She is first and foremost a weaver, her *ars poetica*, confession of faith, and almost all her works are inseparable from her loom.

She graduated from the Textile Industry School in Brno and moved to Paris in 1938, where she wanted to become a factory designer. When she failed in this, she started working at home on a simple weaving frame. She accepted orders from the most celebrated dressmakers, she told us, who always allowed her to see—though never introduced—the lady who had ordered the garment; only then did she start working. (In much the same way today she inspects, sizes up an apartment, an interior, before making decorative textiles.) In Paris she studied painting as well as weaving, with no less a personality than Fernand Léger. She came back home in 1946, becoming one of the first Hungarian hand-weaving artists.

She uses natural fibres exclusively, wool, cotton, linen yarn; she avoids synthetics. She weaves dress materials, upholstery fabrics, screen textiles, curtains and transparent window-curtains, bed covers, and even pillow-cases. I would still classify Erzsébet Perczel primarily for her dress materials as these are the most luxurious, representative, and attractive: in fact, serious and heavyweight. These thick, occasionally knotty, or bouclèed fabrics are suitable for evening gowns and cocktail dresses, or sometimes for summer skirts. For everyday wear the thin, mostly striped Perczel fabrics are more suitable. The ground is white—eggshell and so on—more often black, and in most cases dark, deep, muted, restrained tones, and the rare intensive peasant pink or magenta shines through, glows from the deep sonority of the background. Rare, but not foreign to this, is the moderate use of metallic threads to achieve new effects. Next to the texture, colours, proportions, stripes, they appear almost like appliqué—though the Perczel motifs are woven. Direction is given by the technological process, whether the pattern be linear, herringbone, or concentric, as it is shaped in the slow, unhurried process of weaving.

One of the reasons why dress materials are to me the characteristic product of Per-

czel's art is that the others are more restrained, their laws are entirely different. The samples and series of home fabrics are different in pattern and in colour harmonies, they are more closely connected to function, to the whole of the home or communal premises, since they must avoid all shrillness and must serve the environment.

The basis of the ancient technique of weaving is the warp and the weft (thread and yarn) and nothing more. It is hard to imagine the breadth of weaving. The basic stance of the artist is the respect for the rules of weaving, while being quite aware of the exceptions which prove the rule, and flexible, if moderate, in their use. One of the sources of this craft is the Bauhaus and the new architecture, but if seen from the point of view of "orthodox modernism," there is some heresy to be found in each piece. Another vector of the Perczel material is folklore, but in her case this is a sort of "interdisciplinary" folklore; it has more to do with its creator than with the formal treasury of the different peoples, countries, continents in all their different degrees of development.

As a person she is disciplined of strong character, elegant in presentation—and attitude. At the time when she began in her trade there was really no trend of handweaving she could have attached herself to, she could not have become an epigone if she wanted to. If there is any school she is following, it is her own. It has an extensive history, important traditions, periods, stations, turns, but never reversals; the inner laws of its development are clearly traceable. Her mark is easily discernible, but I would not recommend imitating her, since any achievements adopted ready-made would pale at once. This is because—and what a rarity it is in our time!—Erzsébet Perczel works with faith.

*

When it comes to unravel the stylistic development, spanning half a millennium, of the sculptural and architectural ensemble made up by the tombstones in the old Jewish cemetery in Prague, then I am no longer a critic of photography, or an ethnographer, or a historian of religion, or even an art historian. There is one thing I can do, though: decribe the string of associations aroused in me by the series of photographs on the Jewish cemetery in Prague, made by László Sáros and exhibited in the Gallery of the Vác Library. This cemetery was part of the Jewish ghetto. Within its narrow confines the cemetery became more crowded, individual graves are located up to eight metres down since the Jewish religion forbids disinterment and the recycling of old tombs in order to preserve the peace of the deceased. When I first saw this cemetery I did not know the reason for the narrow limits of these tombs and I thought that tombstones from other cemeteries had been brought over for the purpose of an exhibition. Crowded cemeteries are a recognized problem in any great city today.

In the Jewish cemetery of Prague my ability to attribute styles fails; could anyone say which third or what century the structures belong to, how much is the Gothic, how much Renaissance or Baroque in each tombstone, whether the Egyptian-looking lotus capital was placed on the tapering column in the romantic period? And it is interesting that we cannot see any orientalizing piece or element. Or how much there is for the calligrapher to gather from the development of the Hebrew letter shapes, maybe these earlier ones are so angular, pointed because of the influence of the black letter type? And why are the late ones rounded? Nothing but questions. The foreign visitor to Prague must always recalculate when it comes to architecture, the historical periods of style have always made an earlier appearance there, including Art Nouveau and Bauhaus. But in the cemetery one has to count style backwards, just as the clock in the tower of the Jewish town hall has backward-moving hands. In contrast to the creations of high art, for tombstones—just as

with peasant furniture—we must consider the phenomenon of retardation, of obsolescence. These stones were carved by minor craftsmen, manufacturers, people with conventional ideas, lacking a feeling for the new, the fashionable. And their customers had obviously similar tastes. Conservative customers—backward stone-carver; they gave not what was in the air but yesteryear.

About twenty years ago I visited the Jewish cemetery in Prague in the company of Ignác Kokas, the artist. It exerted a suggestive effect on both of us, and later left a mark in Kokas's art. There is a relationship in subject-matter—and only in subject-matter— between László Sáros and Lili Ország, who died so young and who was also attracted to the historical layers of architecture, to religions, to epigraphy, and who also shared his nostalgia of the "odi et amo" kind. But here the similarity ends, and the dissimilar elements are of greater importance, decisive even, in László Sáros's photos. We must first of all praise Sáros's choice of subject, and I always savour shows which are developing a single idea, where the whole thing is one series. In these pictures the tombstones are lined up like the desks in a classroom, the extreme contrast, this new-fangled treatment of *clair-obscur* is striking, my eyes trained on paintings can recognize the masterly cuts, no need to translate them from the photographic language, and I can also appreciate the construction of the pictures, even though these cannot be arbitrarily changed by the photographer. I would not have known without the artist informing me that the pictures were shot in an icy winter sun, giving them another valuable effect. Here, the sounds of silence are no cliché. And there is no sentimentality, no feeling, no mysticism in Sáros's cemetery pictures, even though his subject lends itself to these. This musical piece, easily susceptible of a lyrical intonation, he has chosen to interpret with a heavy touch, with Brechtian hardness. Sáros's attitude is impassive.

In these photographs Sáros has made the ineffable concrete, has in fact depicted the undepictable. His undisguised purpose in choosing the cemetery theme was to honour the fundamentalist, cardinal sternness of the former rabbis and community leaders, to praise their freely assumed duty toward observance.

I must add that this fine photographic show is first and foremost an allegory. In his *Dedication* hanging on the showroom wall László Sáros openly declares that in bringing up the category of observance (preserving), he is mainly thinking of the protection of the environment and monuments of Vác, his baroque hometown on the banks of the Danube. The photographer is also a distinguished architect, a master of setting a building against the landscape; few are able to boast of so many accomplishments—buildings dreamed up, designed, and executed—at such an early age. He is among the boldest among his generation, looking for the untrodden paths, for that which is new, but without seeking to destroy. He confesses that the province of the inherited monuments of architecture is equivalent to the newest in that art—including his own ideas. They are two sides of the same coin.

JÁNOS FRANK

IRONY AND UNDERSTANDING

János Miklós Kádár at the Csók Gallery

János Miklós Kádár (born 1939) graduated from the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts, where he studied under István Szőnyi and Aurél Bernáth. As well as being among the outstanding Hungarian painters of the thirties, they exerted a great influence on their students through their erudition and their personality. They taught their students the use of colour in the spirit of late post-impressionism. Deviations were only tolerated if made in the direction of the expressionist outlook—as a result Budapest exhibitions of the sixties were flooded with Bernáth imitators. It was hard to escape the influence of the master. It was at this time that the Young Artists' Studio was founded, with the intention of safeguarding the interests of artists—and a few craftsmen—under 35 through the provision of studios, a graphic studio, a showroom and regular group exhibitions. One of the first to head this organization was János Miklós Kádár, who did so at a time when many suspected that the newest trends of fine arts contained time-bombs. By now we have learned that it is not worth fighting "isms", which pass away quietly on their own.

This writer did one of his first interviews with János Miklós Kádár for a periodical with an odd name—Art(istic) Worker—published by the trade unions covering various branches of the arts. What the critic heard of the artist from his acquaintances did not necessarily endear him to the critic: they emphasised his fair and kind nature. Which carries the unspoken assumption that his art is not his chief virtue.

Kádár's outward appearance was far from the traditionally unkept romantic artist, far from today's version of the velvet jacket and ruffled neckerchief, the loose sweater and jeans. Kádár looked rather like an English official, with his lean features, unusually well-cut jacket and unruffled calm. He doubtlessly needed all that in order to fill the position he had in the Studio. Distributing studios, trips, helping craftsmen who were crossing over to the fine arts—these tasks drew more on the education he had acquired growing up in a lawyer's family than at the Academy of Fine Arts.

The early pictures of Kádár reflected the influence of his masters. They were characterized by a strong, almost gaudy colour; not the manner of Aurél Bernáth, who usually displayed an aristocratic discipline, but more like Bernáth's disciples. The use of strong colours was by that time no mark of boldness; it took more daring for János Miklós Kádár to paint a portrait around 1975 though, at a moment when it counted as an outrageously passé (outmoded) thing in the unofficial value-scale of the artistic world. An excellent portrait of the Hungarian master of the grotesque in drama and fiction, István Örkény, was a product of this period. Among the newer works today we cannot find the portrait of a particular individual. The human face and figure however are still his subjects, but in a form which is generalized and assumes the viewer's assumes learning and his associations of ideas based on it. János Miklós Kádár follows no teachers today; he is a teacher himself at the Institute for Arts and Crafts. This latest show, received by the collectors with considerable interest, shows that after a few expressive landscapes and portraits he has found his own, attractive voice.

It is the voice of intellectual irony, a voice that does not indicate that he learned how to paint from his masters. His teachers were serious about the way of the world, whereas Kádár's generation has seen to many changes over a short time to have an unconditional belief in ideas.

European learning is apparently one thing that Kádár, a painter who reads in several

foreign languages and who is well-travelled, has few doubts on. A list of the titles of his pictures (and two-thirds sold) would be sufficient to prove this. His buyers, who paid one-and-a-half to five times the average monthly Hungarian income for each painting, needed to be familiar with Dante, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Allan Sillitoe, Swift, Andrzej Wajda, the Bible, ancient mythology and English history, in order to understand the allusions in the titles and the contents of the pictures. The viewer needs to know that the title "Magician Breaking His Magic Wand" refers to Prospero; that one has to bear in mind a modern English short story—when viewing a picture on the "unloneliness of the long distance runner"; that "hero after the battle" refers to the title of an Andrzej Wajda film, and Sir William Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh—who appear in another painting—are not obvious headings in the encyclopedia of liberal education carried in the average Hungarian's head. One needs more than average learning in order to place the Queen's pirate within the maze of information. In addition, the viewer needed an affinity with irony for an understanding of the more hidden message of the pictures in addition to all the mere literary-historical references. Irony has always had a public in Hungary, particularly in literature and graphic art. It is new in painting, where intimacy and heroism have more often been sought. János Miklós Kádár however is not walking this path alone—quite a number of his fellow-artists have joined him. But they are all careful to avoid giving too much weight to the element of caricature in their pictures, afraid—and with good reason—that it would upset the inner unity of the painting as a work of art built primarily on colours and shapes and on line and association of ideas only incidentally. This is why they use the surrealistic distortion or the transposed irony of primitive painting, for instance.

We do not sense a preponderance of graphic elements in Kádár's paintings, we never feel that this picture would have been complete if it had been simply sketched in ink. The colours—a deep, red-hot beard, or a fiery orange background—have individual significance, and they fits precisely thin the whole composition. It is a rare and happy case Kádár has turned from his masters in such a way that he has enriched what he had learnt and has preserved enduring values.

ANDRÁS SZÉKELY

HUNGARIAN TOYS THROUGH THE AGES

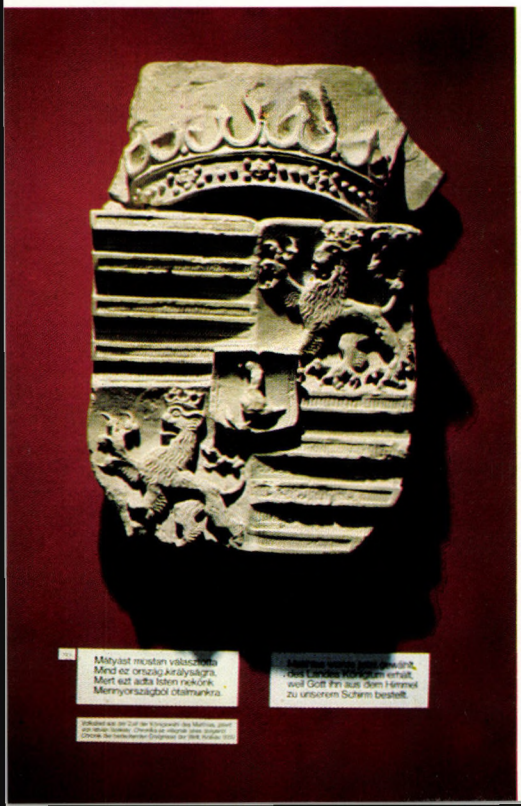
A Toy Museum and Play Centre opened in Kecskemét last year. This comprehensive exhibition, displaying toys through the ages, is the first of its kind in Hungary. It took years to build and its architect was József Kerényi and the interior design was by Lajos Udvardi. Both the exterior and the interior of the building act together to meet the building's function; the best examples of this harmony are the circular gallery and the central space on the ground floor, where the shape of the glass cases are in the same rhythm as the windows and the parquet pattern on the octagonal ground-plan follows the structural principle of a cobweb. Together with the railing running round the corridor upstairs, they repeat the polygon of a roof which tapers off into pyramids.

*

KNOWN PAINTER: JOHN HUNYADI.
27.4×18.2 CM. C. 1570–1580.
ienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

UNKNOWN PAINTER: MATTHIAS CORVINUS.
89×71 CM. EARLY 16TH CENTURY. Vienna,
Kunsthistorisches Museum
UNKNOWN PAINTER: PRINCE JOHN CORVINUS.
TEMPERA ON CANVAS, 60×45.5 CM. 1487. Bayerische
Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich

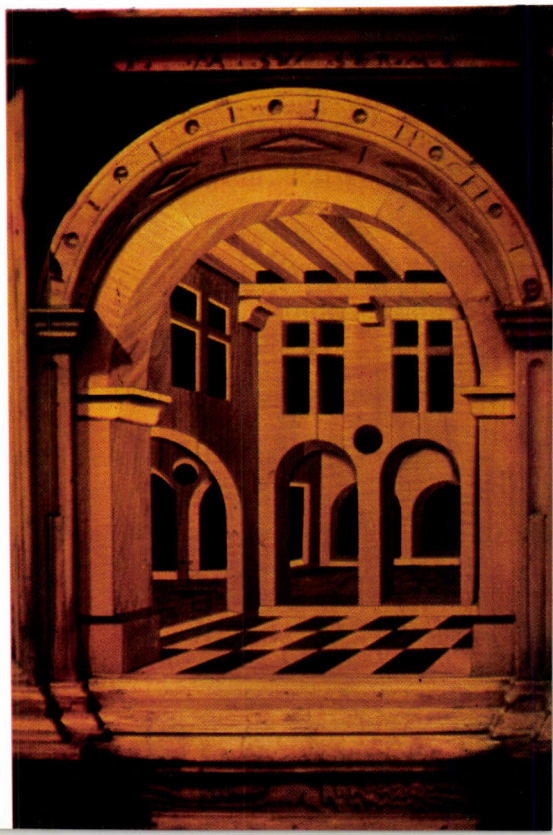
THE ROYAL ARMS. SANDSTONE.
OWN 1453. Budapest, Historical Museum



HIGH ALTAR FROM *Csikszentlélek*. DETAIL, 1510. Budapest National Gallery

MARTIN BYLICA'S GLOBE AND ASTROLOBE. 1480. Martin Bylica was King Matthias' Court Astronomer.

CHRISTOPHORUS LANG: PRIE-DIEU. 1544. PINE WITH WALNUT, ASH AND MAPLE INLAY. Késmárk, Castle Museum



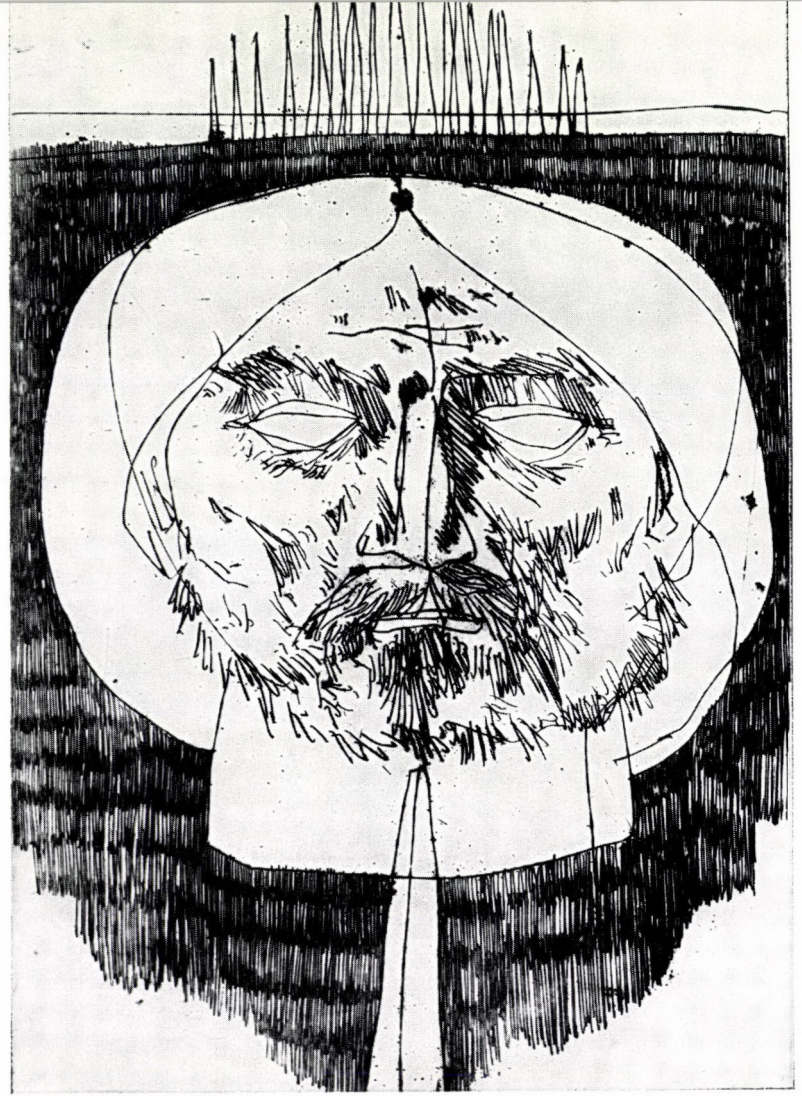
Wolfgang Zulinger?: The Corvinus cup. 1487. silver guilded in parts, height 81 cm.
Wiener Neustadt, Town Museum

Unknown Hungarian Craftsman: Bishop's crook. silver guilded, 187 cm long. 1490.
Esztergom Cathedral Treasury

Woodcut from Johannes Thuróczy: Chronica Hungarorum printed by Erhard Ratdolt, Augsburg for Theobaldus Feger, buda publisher who dedicated it to king Matthias. 1488.
Budapest, National Széchényi Library

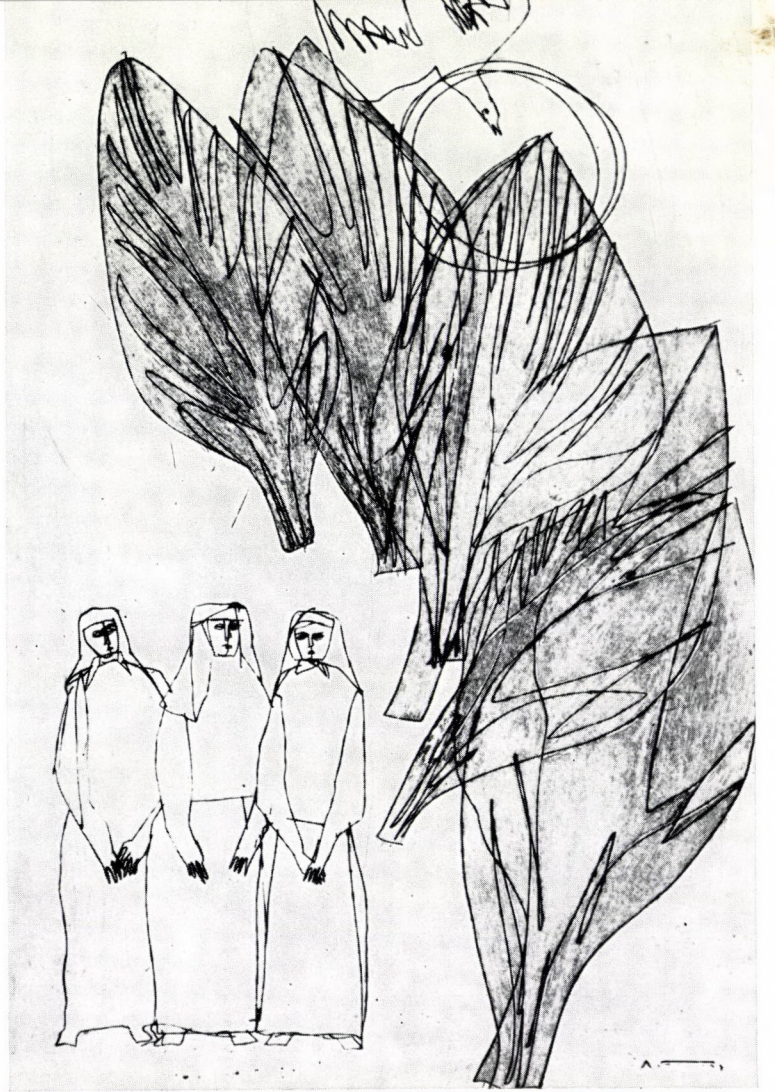
CHASUBLE, FLORENCE: CCA 1476. HUNGARIAN EMBROIDERY. DETAIL. 136.5 CM. Esztergom Cathedral Treasury

VENETIAN CHASUBLE. DETAIL. SAINT MARTIN OF TOURS AND THE BEGGAR. 1480–90. Budapest, Museum of Applied Arts



Zsuzsa Berényi

KÁLMÁN CSOHÁNY: GYÖRGY DÓZSA. COPPER ENGRAVING, 290×200 MM, 1972



KÁLMÁN CSOHÁNY: WAILING WOMEN. COPPER ENGRAVING, 297×192 MM, 1967

Tibor Mester

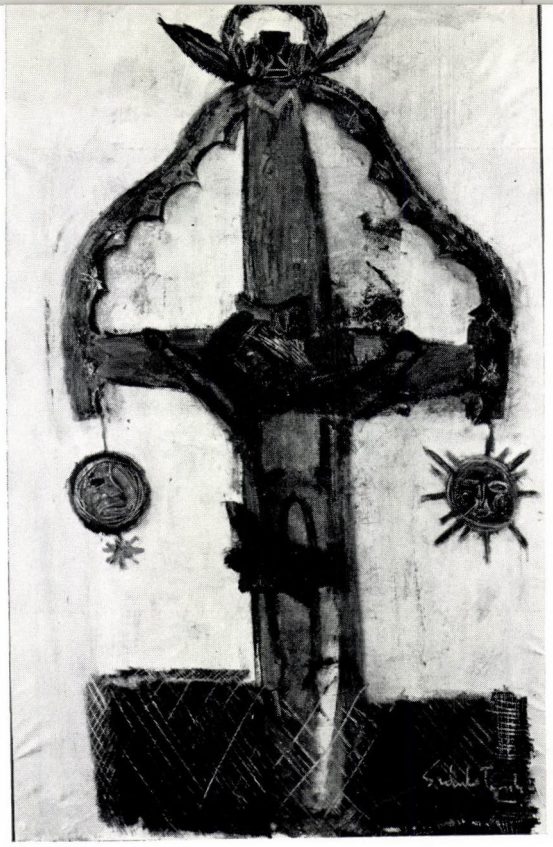
IMRE ÁMOS: COUPLE IN FRONT OF THE KŐHEGY.
INDIAN INK ON PAPER 227×294 MM

IMRE ÁMOS: VISION WITH COFFIN. INDIAN INK
ON PAPER, 588×455 MM, 1939

Ferenc Kovács, Jókán Gajzágó

PIROSKA SZÁNTÓ: FAMILY PORTRAIT. OIL, 100×100 CM, 1980

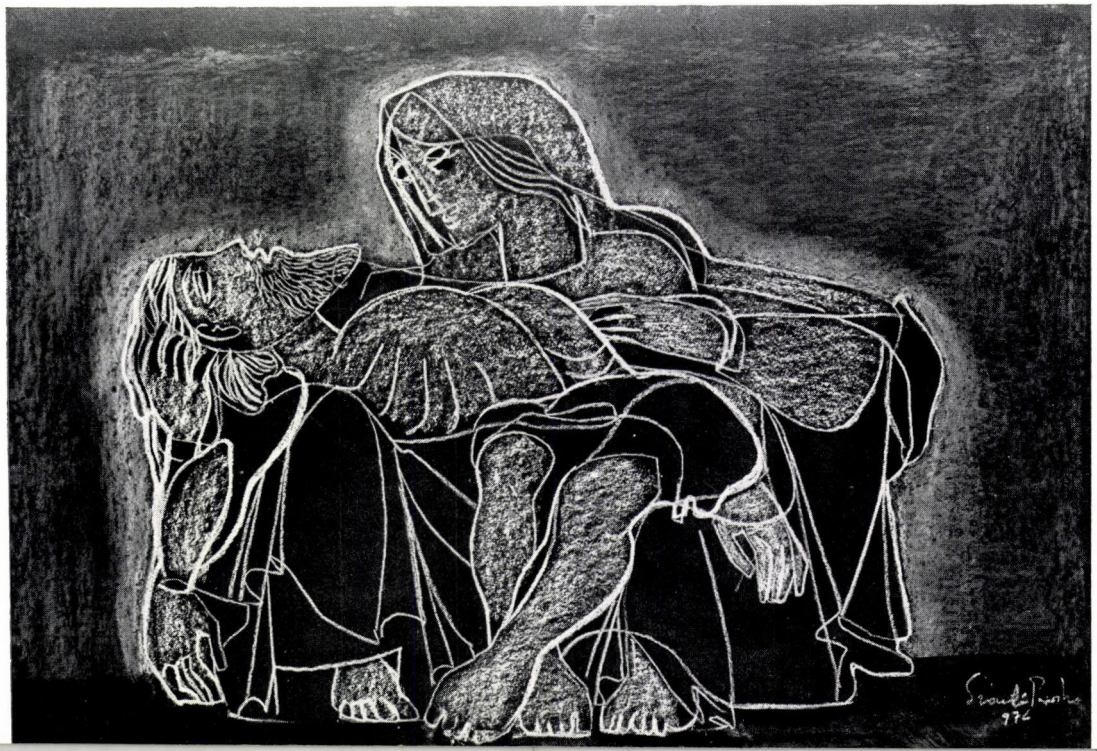
PIROSKA SZÁNTÓ: MY SISTER IN COSTUME. OIL, 100×37 CM, 1980
Both paintings belong to the series: "From a lost family album"



PIROSKA SZÁNTÓ: CHRIST ON THE HILL.
OIL, 100×60 CM, 1968

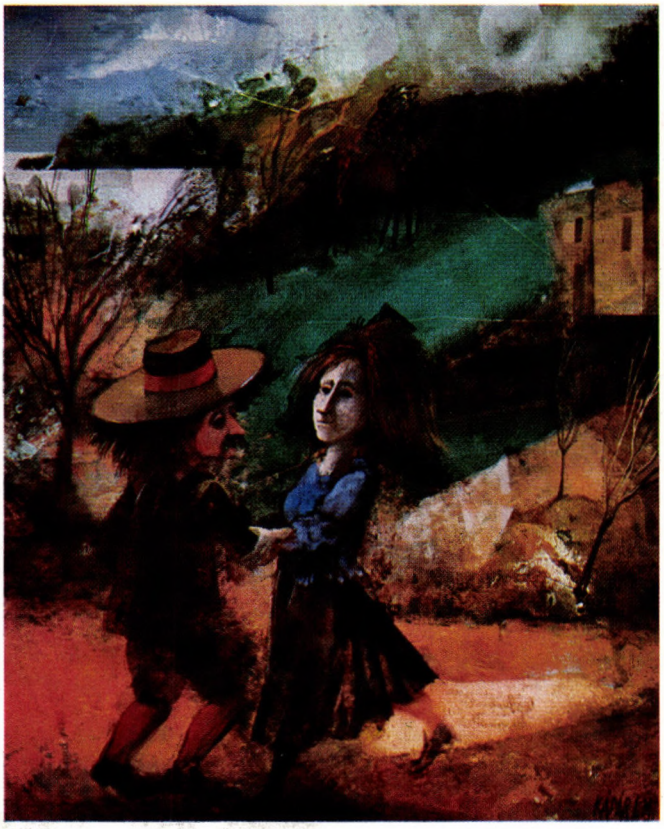
PIROSKA SZÁNTÓ: CROSS WITH ROOKS.
OIL, 100×60 CM, 1968

PIROSKA SZÁNTÓ: PIETÀ IN BLUE, PASTEL, 1976

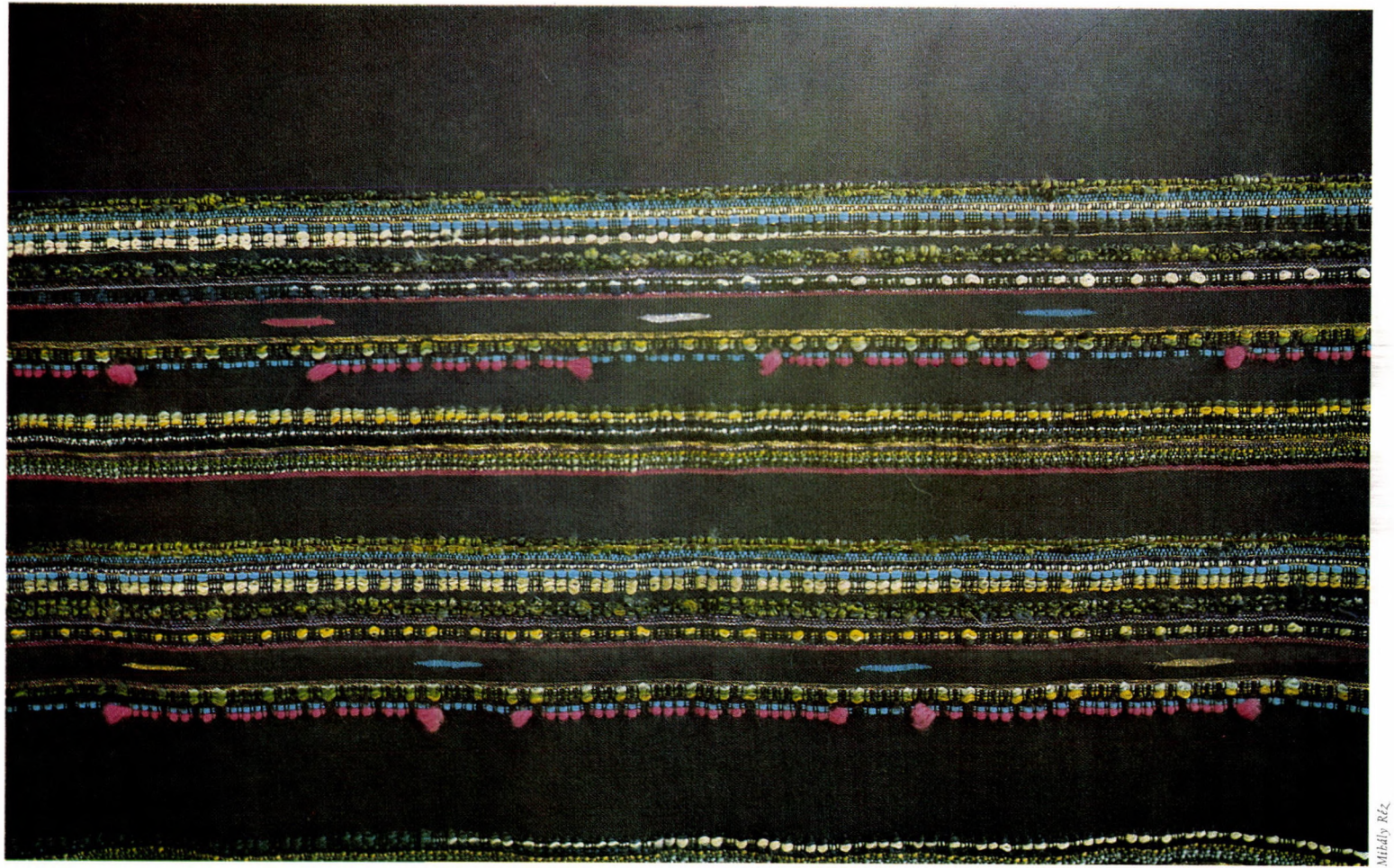


JÁNOS MIKLÓS KÁDÁR:
WE SEE EVERYTHING.
OIL, 60×60 CM, 1980

Photos by the artist



JÁNOS MIKLÓS KÁDÁR:
DANCING COUPLE. OIL,
60×50 CM, 1980



Mihály Réz

ERZSÉBET PERCZEL: MATERIAL FOR A COCKTAIL DRESS. WOOL, LUREX, HAND WOVEN, 1981

Szórakaténusz
Detail of the interior

István Sonjai

Toy and play-house in Kecskemét.

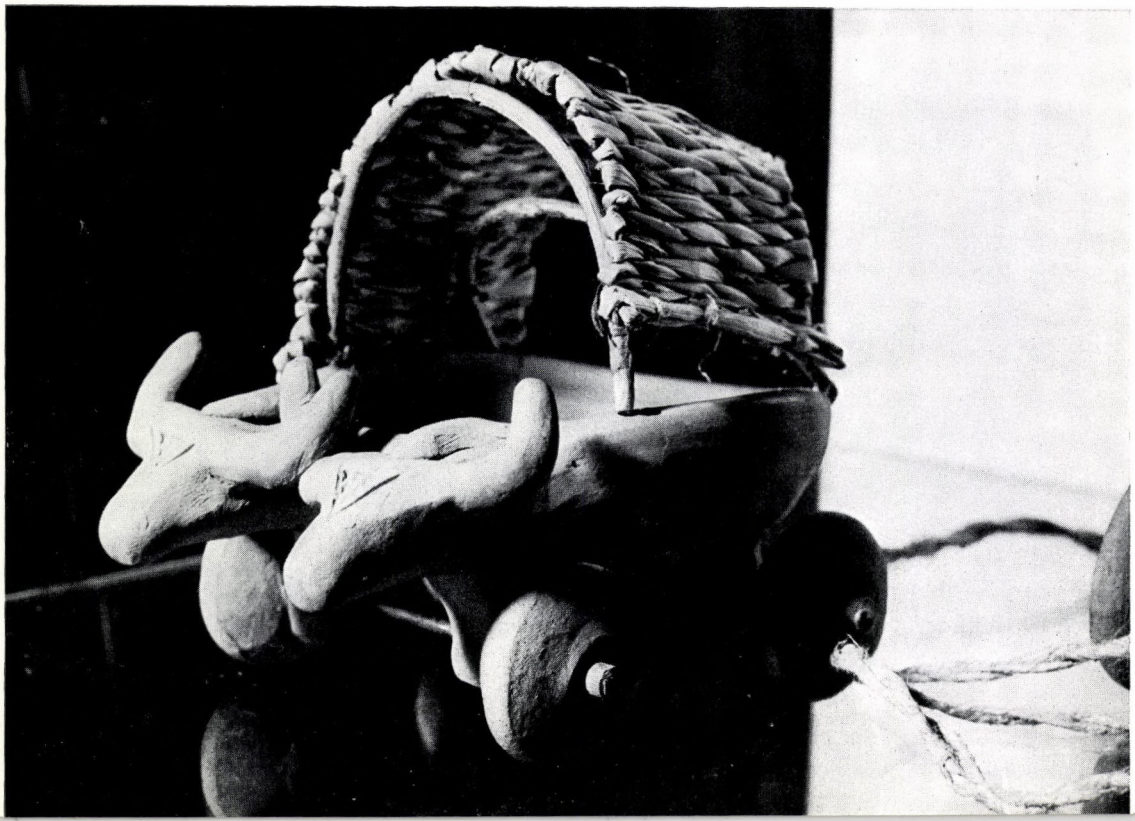
Peasant children's
toy miniature copies
of household objects

Early 20th-century grocery
and kitchen

István Somfai

Bronze age clay toys from excavations near Kecskemét.

Miniature bullockwaggon, the work of children, clay and maize leaves



István Somjai

Ferenc Gelencsér

MARCUS AURELIUS
HEAD OF THE EQUESTRIAN STATUE IN ROME. ▲

THE DUNASZEKCSŐ HEAD ▶

The Szórakaténusz* Toy Museum and Play Centre has been established with a double purpose. It displays various types of toys and their dissemination both in time and in society. This is an undertaking which is more difficult than would appear, as toys dating back some hundred, or indeed thousand, years can now only be reconstructed at best from descriptions and references. There is no need to go back so many centuries: many children today have no idea of the toys their mothers, let alone their grandmothers, played with. This can partly be explained by changing demands—most parents buy their children those toys considered to be more up-to-date and attractive; it can also be due to the limited ability to store toys to be handed down from generation to generation.

This collection has been mounted with the assistance of and with loans from various museums and private collectors; and it has been arranged by Edit Haider, a specialist on the staff of the Hungarian National Museum, who is an expert on the subject. The material on display is to be augmented through further collecting.

Children's Centre

The other purpose of the institution, to provide activities for children, is at least of the same importance. The staff of the museum have many plans for group activities. They would like to give children some skill to make their own toys; they also intend to organize literary and musical get-togethers, discussion and educational groups. The children learn how to make toys from industrial designers. The main aim is to help creative abilities to develop in many ways. There are fine products of children's imagination and of their ability to reproduce and invent on display in the corridor upstairs; some of these also make use of ideas taken from the toys on show.

* A line from a Hungarian children's counting game.

The History of Toys

This exhibition is divided into two major sections. The first room displays the toys played with by royal, aristocratic and middle-class children, from the earliest times to the beginning of the twentieth century; it is arranged chronologically. The other room presents toys created by traditional peasant culture. While those of the first group are the work of craftsmen and, later, of factories, and thus children received them ready-made, peasant children most usually made their toys themselves. In the first case it is precisely the emphasis on aesthetic quality that fascinates the child (often at the expense of the toy's practicality) and he takes pleasure from manipulating while playing. In the other case it is the action of creation that inspires the child to make a toy, so much so that he is often no longer interested in what he has made and sets out rather to make something new, to invent something more attractive and better than his previous effort. The difference between the two has been well described by Balázs Csete when speaking of the children of Jászság 25 years ago: "When a child is making a toy, the deepest-rooted joy of his mood springs primarily from the fact that he is able to make it: the joy of creation. Another source of joy is that he can use his toys in a manner that corresponds to the purpose and nature of their models: the joy of purpose and nature of their models: the joy of purposeful activity." (Balázs Csete: "Jászkiséri gyermekjátékok" [Toys of Jászkisér] in *Jászkunsági Füzetek*, 5, Szolnok, 1957, p. 9.)

Reconstructions

On entering the exhibition hall, one first encounters genuine and reconstructed examples of prehistoric and ancient toys. The clay animal figurines from the Bronze

Age, found during excavations near Kecskemét, still stir the imagination of the children, as we can see from toys they themselves have made. An Egyptian mechanical toy, reconstructed by the Hungarian National Museum, is an early ancestor of those contrivances which imitate motion, the reconstructed Greek doll is the archetype of those dolls which can be traced back to the eighteenth century and which correspond to the ideal of man of the relevant age and location. Other exhibits here include bows made of bone from the Migration Period, glass and pottery vessels from the Roman age.

The medieval battle toys were for the education of the youth of the nobility, preparing them for warfare and festive occasions. From the second half of the sixteenth century there are exhibited children's armour, a cross-bow and spurs.

From the eighteenth century on, the main types of modern toys appear. The toys exhibited from that period belonged to royal and aristocratic children. Their war toys include the gun used in childhood by Emperor Joseph II in the second half of the eighteenth century. The French doll's wardrobe, the Rococo commode and the pair of dolls in Rococo garments reflect the tastes of the period. The tiny ornaments on the commode deserve special attention because of their extraordinary delicacy and the minute worksmanship of involved. These expensive toys were made on commission by guilds.

Dolls

What comes next illustrates one of the most characteristic type of toys, the doll. The various types on display include the eighteenth-century German wooden doll, the doll with porcelain head and leather body which came into fashion in the mid-nineteenth century, French dolls popular from the end of the last century and dolls with wax faces. A visual display shows the formal changes that took place between 1770 and 1925 leading to the present-day form.

Doll's kitchens with stoves and furniture form a separate unit. They are complete with all their utensils ranging from porcelain and glass dishes to pots and pans, scales and mortar. This section also includes sewing machines and typewriters, those technical wonders from the late nineteenth century.

Children have always been fond of various forms of building blocks. From the second half of the nineteenth century, toys made of wood, or stone, and, later, mechanical metal toys, have been made with educational goals; they can be assembled according to instructions provided or not, as the case may be. These toys include puzzle plays, Anker stone blocks and Märklin metal blocks.

Toys for Boys and Girls

Toys for boys include traditional wooden toys which were very popular, tin soldiers, castles and farm-yards. The small machines worked by steam from the end of the nineteenth century appeared simultaneously with the toy sewing machines and typewriters. Clockwork-driven toys are more recent.

The middle-class children's corner adds a dash of colour to the exhibition. Most of the display is of specimens imported from Germany and Austria around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the Hungary of this time toys were still hand-made on commission. The animal figures in velvet and felt, first produced by the German Margaret Steiff, soon won over Hungarian children, as did story-books and books of verse.

This abundance of parlour games and paper-toys, dolls, soldiers, castles, and theatres to be cut out, coloured and glued

together, becomes larger and larger during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At first they were hand-painted, but from the second half of the last century, they gradually became lithographs. The small grocery shop on show here was inscribed in two languages, Hungarian and German: "Founded in 1878. Mechwart-Nagy and Brothers. Gegründet 1878." Even the pattern of the pavement before it copies that of the grocers and sweet-shops of the time. The kitchen with its furniture, complete with side-walls, is of similar origin.

The next room houses folk toys. Unlike the industrial toys of city children, these were home-made, made by parents, sometimes by the child himself; only rarely were they made by local craftsmen. As would be expected the former games of village children can only be represented here by objects, since the many intellectual and movement games cannot really be shown in a museum or, if at all, only through their rules.

Folk toys recall objects of daily use, the working tools and agricultural implements used in village life.

In this section of the exhibits it is impossible to demonstrate historical and chronological order, a path of development if you like, as is done in the previous room. Peasant society formed a closed, tradition-bound world, and the toys faithfully reflect the prevailing conditions and way of life. Later the products of technology and industry met a response in the village too; these take the form of mechanical devices fashioned after what had been seen.

Folk Toys

Toys for girls form a separate unit within the thematic grouping of folk toys—doll's furniture, kitchen utensils, pottery, all of which were modelled on the adult world as were the chairs and beds woven of maize-fibre, glazed pottery, pots, and jugs.

Typical toys for girls are the dolls made of a wide variety of materials: grass, maize-fibre corn-cobs, twigs, wood, and rag. They were usually made by the girls themselves, the smaller children sometimes being helped by their parents. "We took a small stick of about 20 cm, and added another one to it, one about the length of our fingers. That we fastened to the stick, some two inches from the top. Then we took the most worn rags, rolled them up, making it round, as grandmother always said the head should be round and not longish. We adjusted it, kept tapping it so that it should be round. Then we stuck the stick into that doll's head and fastened it with thread, winding it over and over again to the stick. Then came the hands. We also wrapped the hands up in white cloth so that they shouldn't be the bare stick. And that made the hands. When the hands were ready, we began making little dresses. We took all the coloured rags we had and made her a long chemise, panties, a skirt, a blouse, and an apron." (*Gyermekjátékok* [Children's Toys], Hévízgyörk, collected by László Hintalan, Szentendre, 1980, pp. 128–9.) The time for school came and put an end to rag-doll making. But it did not put an end to the playful mood of the children: the husking of corn provided new material for their fancy. The cobs were covered in cloth, painted and dressed up and were used as dolls; dolls were also made of husks, which called for greater skill.

Along with these home-made dolls, the end of the last century brought a fashion for dolls with papier-maché heads, dressed in ornate folk costumes. These were mostly made by craftsmen. The toys for girls are worth special attention for their decorative necklaces and bracelets which were made of various materials; these were actually worn by young girls on festive occasions. The toys for boys include various noise-

making devices and weapons. A favourite type was the popgun, which was made by boring out a piece of elderwood and shoving a piece of wood into it, which launched the bullet, shaped out of hemp-tow.

For the folk toys involving groups, typical exhibits are whip-tops, rag balls, paw-sticks, and tip-cats. Whip-tops were usually used by smaller children; the whip and the cylindric top tapered to one end an usually with two rings fastened to it, were made by their father. The children coiled the string fastened to the whip-handle, and by pulling the handle, the string wound off and the top was spun into motion (*Gyermekjátékok*, p. 153).

The tip-cat is a 10 to 12 cm long piece of wood, tapering at both ends, which had to be struck with a stick and hit in the air. It was always struck by the player who started the game, from a hole dug into the earth. It was a game widely played, although it was not without danger.

Another scoring game similar to tip-cat is pawing, also known as "bowling." The name comes from the wooden bowl that had to be struck and was called the paw. The game was mainly known in northern Hungary. There were two forms to the game, depending on whether the bowl was struck with the stick or driven into the hole. The pawing sticks were usually ornately carved or engraved, as some fine examples on show bear out.

Peasant girls used material they found in their environment. This called for imagination and ingenuity in order to make machines, articles of daily use, and working animals out of material to hand. A bull carved from the breastbone of a goose and a horse of corn-stalk are on show in the museum. The children also imitated the sound typical of the relevant device or mechanism to make the toy resemble the original even more closely.

Adults helped to make the toys that repuired greater skill and experience. Miniature copies of traditional farm-tools and implements form a special section a the exhibition. The making of these toys presupposed familiarity with and the day to day use of the originals and so they were usually made by the parents. They were often sold at country fairs and bought as presents for children. The hackle, the stemmed distaff, the reel, the mangle, the winnower, and the shaving-horse were all objects that familiarized children with work at an early age.

Close to this group are model vehicles. The cart was for use in summer and the sledge for winter. Various types of skates are also displayed: those of wood and bone and mule skates were used on ice, while stilts were for walking in mud.

Mechanical Toys

Traditional toys were later added to by imitations of modern technical invention. Such mechanical devices were made both by older boys and adults. They are extremely ingenious mobile machines, such as reels, steam engines and grinders, and rattles. Making them called for a keenly observant mind to ensure that the result was not merely a copy but a device in working order. Sometimes the children could draw on their direct experience of their environment, for example, when making tractors. In making such machines the first stage was to sketch the parts. They usually did not work on a rough estimate, and generally used their father's tools for toys that required more work; the materials employed were usually tin, iron, wire, and wood.

This section on mechanical toys finishes the permanent exhibition. But the cases along the circular corridor provide some marvellous ideas on how the museum may be enriched—they contain toys made by the children from the circles which meet at the Play Centre serve to further develop this innate flair.

MARIANN ALMÁSSY

THE MARCUS AURELIUS BRONZE HEAD OF DUNASZEKCSŐ

On September 12, 1974 a bronze head turned up during digging on Castle Hill in Dunaszekcső.

The head is half life-size: it shows the features of the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius. This is not the first find in Dunaszekcső. For over a hundred years, ruins of buildings, everyday and cultic objects, and coins have strayed from here into the hands of collectors and then into public museums. In the eighteenth century archaeologists had identified the area of Dunaszekcső as the Roman Lugio, one of the *castra* along the Danube in antique Pannonia. The camp was built on the high loess range on the right bank of the Danube, on the site of the present Castle Hill. The other military fortifications were similarly sited on the Danube banks. The high loess plateau is washed by the Danube at flood time and so its steep edge is constantly crumbling. Even in the Roman period the collapse of the banks forced the camps to be moved further back from the banks. Half of the site of the Lugio camp has entirely collapsed by now, everything preserved in the earth has been carried off. What remains of Castle Hill is some 800 to 1,000 metres long and 20 to 50 metres high. Below, on the left bank of the Danube, stood the fortification of Contra Florentiam, the Roman military port. Its remains are still visible at low water. Lugio was not a legionary camp, only auxiliary troops were stationed within its walls. However it was more than a simple strong-point because a road led from the fortress on the left bank through Barbarian territory to the Roman province of Dacia. This road was extremely important for commercial, and later for strategic and defence, reasons. In the past century six socles have turned up at low water in the fortification on the left bank. They were excavated, and four of them sent to the museum. These socles are important because they bear inscriptions all made by the soldiers stationed here for Septimius Severus and his son Caracalla. Nothing has survived of the statues but the inscriptions determine accurately their place: under the regulations in Roman military camps they had to be erected in what was called the *principia*, the camp's main square. These socles prove that in Lugio, as in other camps of the empire, stood statues of the emperor.

Even if we do not take into consideration the inscribed stones, several fragments of statues of emperors have been found in Pannonia both at civilian sites and in former military camps. One of them, a limestone head found in Aquincum, is of the emperor Marcus Aurelius. In Intercisa (today Dunaújváros) a small fragment of a statue of Caracalla indicates that statues of the emperor stood there once. Gilded bronze fragments of sculptures found in several places also indicate that they were statues of emperors; some of stone, some of bronze. As far as we know bronze statues were not made in Pannonia. The local workshops produced smaller, cheaper goods of lesser quality, or possibly made repairs, but customers whose demands were greater made their purchases elsewhere, particularly from the Eastern provinces; the fine bronze goods and everyday objects produced in Italy and the Western provinces also had a market in Pannonia.

Most of the bronze goods were articles for everyday use which, being small, were often mislaid and have thus survived relatively easily. The large bronze statues have had a poorer chance of survival; their number was relatively small, and given the fact that bronze was expensive, the cost of producing them and their prices were much higher than those of stone statues. Pannonia was certainly not Rome, nor can it be compared to the rich Eastern provinces.

Emperor statues disappeared easily. The faster the emperors or dynasties changed, the more new statues had to be erected. This may be one reason for the use of exchangeable heads. Probably many statues fell victim to the *damnatio memoriae*, the destruction of monuments to rulers and their families who had fallen from favour. And, especially in the border areas, the increase in warfare and the Barbarian incursions destroyed statues of emperors as their first victims.

Stone statues did not always disappear without trace. Pieces of them were used as building material and so they have survived at least in fragments. Bronze statues, however, perish easily: they are melted and used again as raw material.

The portrait of the emperor

For all the above reasons, the bronze portrait found in the Lugio camp is one of the small number of such portraits from the Roman Empire.

The emperor has a moustache and a beard arranged in ringlets and thick locks of hair frame his brow. Beneath the arched eyebrows the eyes are almond-shaped. The nose has a characteristic ridge, the asymmetry of the face appears chiefly at the line of the moustache. The beard extends towards the chin on both sides of the face. The portrait shows a young man of 28 to 30 years with a smooth and full face with only two horizontal furrows on the forehead which became the characteristic features of later portraits of Marcus Aurelius. The most suggestive feature of the well-proportioned head are the eyes, which emphasize the subject's intellectuality: they look a little upwards and at the same time far away, and thus convey seriousness and humanity. The asymmetry of the face does not disrupt the intelligence of its bearing; it eases the portrait's stiff frontal position.

Five small rectangle-shaped holes are on the crown of the head: inside vertically traced finger-marks are visible. The average thickness of the bronze is 3 mm., at the end of the rim 4 to 4.5 mm. The head can be considered intact, apart from a gap at the neck, or rim. Most of it is covered with beautiful dark-green verdigris; the deeper parts such as the eyes and the hair-roots are coated to a greater or lesser extent. There are traces of burns at the front part of the neck and the rear part of the head.

Type three sculptures

For a closer examination of the Marcus Aurelius of Dunaszekcső we had first to study its place among the portraits of Marcus Aurelius known to date. A hundred and ten in all have been recorded; only two are made of metal.

The obvious method was to compare it to the best-known Marcus Aurelius, the equestrian statue on the Capitol in Rome, especially as, according to the usual scholarly classification the two should belong to the same type. I am grateful to Eugenio La Rocca, on the staff of the Capitolium Museum, for having made this comparison possible by providing an opportunity to study the head closely from a platform. I found that although the two heads were not wholly unrelated, they could not be considered as identical in type. They have nothing in common neither in their global nor in their detailed shapes, and they are also very different in technique. The statue on the Capitol is a characteristic sculpture in the round with the head bent a little sideways and forward. The statue of Dunaszekcső is positioned frontally.

Other Marcus Aurelius portraits related to the head of Dunaszekcső were examined, in particular those characteristic of type three, and in the first place the fine head in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek of Copenhagen. The connection between the two is clear: the frontal angle, the form of the head, and the detailed shaping are identical. The Dunaszekcső head has another twin:

the statue in the Villa Hadrian of the Therma Museum in Rome, although here the beard is shorter. A close relationship exists also with a Marcus Aurelius in the National Museum of Athens, also belonging to type three; altogether twenty-five belong to type three. I do not intend to determine the connection of the Dunaszekcső head with all the others, I wish to demonstrate only, with the help of the best items, that it is a portrait of type three although the beard is longer and the shaping of the ringlets slightly different to that in other portraits of this basic type.

Coins help to determine the date of Marcus Aurelius portraits of type three: they stem from the end of the rule of Antoninus Pius or from the beginning of the period of joint rule by Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus; these coins remained tender up to the death of Lucius Verus. This means the year 160, or from 161 to 169.

This type is a continuation of the traditional portraits or rulers; the new emperor, Marcus Aurelius, also continued in the footsteps of his predecessor, Antoninus Pius. This type was made to represent the new ruler as young, radiantly intelligent, a thinking man but not yet as a stoic emperor.

Lost wax method

In my description of the portrait I mentioned the roughly sketched rear of the head and the small holes. Many Roman portraits have this characteristic feature of a roughly shaped back of the head: they may have stood in front of or inside a building and they were not seen from behind—so they economized on work. The small holes are because of the technology of bronze casting. In bronzes cast with the lost wax method they used to fasten the outer cover, the wax layer and the core with sticks to prevent them coming apart. In the process of casting the bronze took the form of the wax; therefore, at the places where the sticks pierced, on the edge of the small holes, the bronze bulges a little just as the wax retreated a little in the direction of the point of entry. We do not know why they did not smooth away these holes in keeping with the general custom; perhaps they remained invisible when the statue was erected. There are 14 similar holes on the bronze portrait of Severus Alexander in the Museum of Thessalonica.

The Marcus Aurelius head ends under the neck in a little rim. This proves that this is not a fragment but a portrait-head; but in the second century heads were not sculpted independently, they were always parts of a bust or statue.

There were two ways to put up the head. In the natural vertical position the rear part of the rim is not horizontal, it juts out a little. If we place the rim into a horizontal position, the head tilts a little backwards. A similar carriage of the head can be observed on the Marcus Aurelius of the Villa Hadrian in the Therma Museum. A horizontal position is necessary for a good fit, so this position must have been that of our portrait too. With the somewhat raised, backward-tilted head the shortening of the back part of the neck is understandable and justified because with this carriage of the head the back part of the neck is shorter in reality.

In theory the head could be part of an equestrian statue because we know of fragments from provinces north of Rome which could have been parts of fine equestrian statues. In our case, however, this possibility must be excluded since one cannot ride if you carry your head like this. Even among the rare metal busts which look stiffly ahead none has this particular raised position of the head.

The far-seeing look and proud carriage of the head match only a standing statue.

There remain several unanswered questions in connection with our portrait. The first question is on the workshop where it was made; for the moment we can only say that the portrait of Dunaszekcső is one of the

finest Marcus Aurelius portraits. Its significance is not only sculptural: the bronze technique is also excellent. Perhaps the metal examinations which are being carried out will help to determine the workshop where it was made. These tests have already revealed the component parts of the bronze but we would like to have answers to several more questions.

Restoration is also connected with these answers: so far the portrait has been only cleaned of earth without using chemical agents. In the work of restoration we want to use the newest methods and in particular to apply the experience gained in restoring the Marcus Aurelius equestrian statue.

VALÉRIA KOVÁTS

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THE AGE OF LOUIS THE GREAT

Pál Engel, Ernő Marosi

THE DRAWINGS OF LAJOS GULÁCSY

Judit Szabadi

A VICTOR VASARELY RETROSPECTIVE

József Vadas

WORKS BY HUNGARIAN ARTISTS LIVING ABROAD

András Székely

POST-WAR MUSIC IN HUNGARY

Margaret P. McLay

KODÁLY METHOD — KODÁLY CONCEPTION

Ernő Lendvai

DANCE

CSONTVÁRY'S PILGRIMAGE TO THE CEDARS OF LEBANON

The cedars of Lebanon are famous trees revered since antiquity. They have been mentioned again and again, throughout the ages, occurring in literary works, on canvasses and so on, being used as a motif or symbol. They occurred in Hungarian art and literature as well, and these pictorial and literary representations as it were culminated in two masterpieces painted early in the twentieth century which have the cedar of Lebanon as their central motif. These Hungarian paintings, historical landscapes of symbolic meaning, were produced late compared to works of a similar theme elsewhere, and yet their totality in content and form is of singular importance. The artist is Tivadar Csontváry.* His writings as well as the two paintings themselves put it beyond doubt that he uses the cedar with the intention of conveying a message.

The years around 1900 in art saw not only the beginning of something new in Europe but also the last stage of an age-old artistic mode of representation, a shared Eurasian pictorial communication system and store of ideas. Starting as early as the end of the eighteenth century with the Romantic movement the horizon of European art extended both in space and time, bringing nearer symbols, motifs, literary and pictorial, of remote cultures and periods, occasionally fusing and integrating what was of disparate and diverse origin. In the nineteenth century great artists recreated these by direct perception and rendering of nature, simultaneously incorporating the crucial problems of their own place and times.

The cedar was present in Hungarian literature as an image as early as the Middle Ages. It occurs as a metaphor for Christ, the Virgin Mary, or for princes, especially for the canonized kings of Hungary in medieval hymns; later, it became a motif in profane Renaissance–Baroque poetry, recognizable also in the text of folk-songs that derived from the former.

The cedar had, naturally, an eminent place in the herbals of the Renaissance and the Baroque, translated into Hungarian, which appeared first in manuscripts and later in books; in architectural tracts dealing with the material of Vitruvius and other ancient sources along with biblical architecture; in poetical and prosaic descriptions of Paradise; in Hungarian sermons, theological tracts, and works of a moralizing character. In all these the signification of the cedar does not differ from the contemporary European image.

In the early stage of Romanticism a peculiar Hungarian meaning came into

Based on a chapter in the author's *Cedrus Aeternitatis Hieroglyphicum. Iconology of a natural motif*. Budapest, 1981, Acta Historiae Artium. 127 pp.

* *NHQ* 7, 14, 42.

being and the cedar acquired overtones that differed from what was current elsewhere. In Mihály Vörösmarty's epic poem "Tündérvölgy" (The fairy valley) written in 1825, Prince Csaba in a cedar wood, fighting dragons, is not a late offspring of the heroes of Greek myths, but of the romantic Hunno-Hungarian legend circle, evolved from medieval sources.

At the time of Vörösmarty, the romantics writing on Hungarian prehistory, language and etymology, or the history of religion linked up biblical geography and ethnology with the story of the early Hungarians. The historical painter Bálint Kiss published a book on Hungarian antiquities in 1839. In the introduction he states that in spite of the dense fog that shrouded the origins of the Hungarian people, there is proof that "our ancestors lived in the proximity of Medes, Jews, Parthians, Persians, and Hindus, and were connected with them; later they left the western part of Media, adjacent to Assyria, for the oriental part of that country." According to Bálint Kiss many Hungarian personal or place names can be explained with the aid of "words in Jewish or Chaldean texts." Among them there is *almyggim*, a name for the cedar, once accepted, but rejected by J. Ch. Trew as early as the eighteenth century. Knowing nothing of Trew, Bálint Kiss identified the tree almyggim, i.e. the cedar of Lebanon, with the name of Prince Álmos, the great leader of the Hungarians on their way to the Danubian basin.

This etymological derivation was heraldically and iconologically persuasive as the most ancient tree of the Oriental landscape, connected also in the myth of Adam with the image of a family tree, was connected with the name of the Great Prince, honoured as the glorious ancestor of the Hungarians and the father of Prince Árpád himself, the ancestor of the first kings of Hungary.

In the second half of the nineteenth century travellers were led by similar longings. Many readers were keen on reports of Oriental travel in illustrated magazines. Descriptions of Mount Lebanon, its inhabitants, and, above all, its cedars occur frequently. In the 1850s Antal Ligeti, Hungarian landscape painter of a neoclassical romantic sort, travelled, with the financial support of Count István Károlyi, to the Holy Land, sketching on Mount Lebanon, at the Acropolis of Baalbek, and, naturally, in Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Bethlehem. Ligeti, relying on his sketchbook, then painted historical landscapes for many years; most of them were also published as engravings, in magazines, or to illustrate Bibles. In the 1860s the Society of Fine Arts published several art reproductions with orientalized landscapes of Antal Ligeti.

In the drawings and paintings of Ligeti however Lebanon cedar groves appear as a sober, naturalistic description. They are not given an allegoric-symbolic form.

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Tivadar Csontváry (1854–1919) was one of the last important artists to paint historical landscapes. He started to paint in the 1880s. A young dispensing chemist, he first produced successful sketches of landscapes. Mystical visions followed, insisting that he become an artist, that he was destined to be an artist of great importance. First he had to earn some money to maintain himself during his studies.

In the 1890s Csontváry attended German and French art academies and private art schools as well visiting the great public collections. At the academies he learnt to draw and tried to make himself a master of the art of composition; in museums he studied Greek sculpture and vase painting and the great masters of the Renaissance and Baroque, particularly the way Raphael, Leonardo, Velázquez, and Rembrandt represented air and light. Then romantically exalted knowing that he was among those called, he decided that he would outdo

all these great masters with a more perfect visualization of Nature. Csontváry tried to approach, in his own way, the problems of plein-air painting. He attributed extraordinary importance to carefully chosen natural motifs of his paintings, something that was not characteristic of European plein-air painting. Csontváry sought for these motifs in many parts of Europe and the Near East, primarily in the Holy Land, as the historical landscape painters had done around 1800. Ancient ruins, architectonic details of towns, items evoking the historical past of a landscape, play an important role in his paintings. He always travelled with a determined preconception to reach his chosen motif and was motivated by ideas based on acquired notions of the loftiness of the landscape and its historical role. Literary and historical works, religious *topoi*, itineraries with engraved illustrations or photographs, later slide projections, awoke his interest in a particular landscape. His choices were more carefully made than those of most nineteenth-century painters of historical landscapes. It was not some strangeness in a landscape that attracted him, but qualities of an aesthetic and historical character.

Csontváry had moral aims. He was determined to create an absolute landscape painting, where a multitude of messages, embodying the past and present, even the future of a landscape, appears as an independent integrity. Csontváry intended to raise Hungarian art to the heights of European art with the help of absolute historical landscapes. He wanted, on the other hand, to make evident, in the totality of aesthetic and moral meanings of a landscape, the message of a particular locality which integrated the environment, social features, and race.

Just like the painters of panoramas, Csontváry tried to use the widest angles possible. In his Baalbek he presents the full view of the Baalbek Acropolis, with the Anti-Lebanon in the background, lining up the houses of the small town, on the opposite side of the valley, in the foreground. The view is not like a copy of a photograph, taken with a wide-angle lens, but is a picture evolved by methodically condensing the activity of the human eye and intellect. A large stone, in reality at a greater distance, called by Csontváry in his writings a sacrificial stone, a cedar, and the figure of a rider play an important role. The cedar is absent from other drawings or photographs of Baalbek, this makes it likely that Csontváry placed it there considering it essential for the message. If we consider the cedar and the traveller apart from the picture, we obtain a pictorial type, familiar from illustrated Bibles and other nineteenth-century representations, e.g. in the paintings and drawings of Antal Ligeti, not of Baalbek but of Mount Lebanon.

Csontváry composed motifs of differing origins in order to demonstrate ideal-historical connections. In his later writings he explained that he considered the Sun Temple of Baalbek in its ancient, original form, prior to the Hellenistic period, as a cult place of the Huns, the presumed ancestors of the Hungarians. The sacrificial stone, "where our ancestors offered sacrifices," was for him the central object of this cult place. The ancient cedar, witness of great times, the object of an ancient cult, also has to be present in the painting. Though Csontváry does not place the cedar in the centre of the Acropolis, as John Martin did previously, painting it on the terrace of the Babylon ziggurat, its appearance in the historical panorama of Baalbek no doubt belongs to a similar ideal-historical reconstruction.

The motifs of a sacrificial stone and cedar are again composed together by Csontváry in a smaller painting. In this he places the sacrifical stone in the horizontal axis aligning seven cedars behind it. The seven trees allude most likely to the seven tribes of the Hungarians, the message can be traced back to nineteenth-century beliefs

on ancient Hungarian cults. For Baalbek the material was evolved from less emphasized motifs, like the multiplying of trees. After a few years this motif material became the most important part of Csontváry's experience of the Near East. In spite of the fact that this picture suggests a solution to the plein-air problem, as given by Csontváry, the principal message originates from the addition of historical motifs with symbolic meanings.

The picture was painted, in all likelihood, years after his visit to Baalbek, even later than the most famous Csontváry pictures, representing cedars. The date of these two are known: in 1907, after his Paris exhibition, Csontváry travelled to Mount Lebanon, painting cedars there; his two paintings were shown by him in Berlin, accompanied by commentaries in the catalogue.

One of the paintings shows a young cedar. In the Berlin catalogue the painter gives its exact geographical location, a height of 1,800 m, above Tripoli, on the slopes of Mount Lebanon. The solitary cedar is not part of the forest that has stood there for thousands of years; it is a wayside tree, adapting itself to the ways of the wind, to the defence of the slope, the boughs reach out on one side, on the other they are mutilated. It holds fast to the ground with its shallow roots, laid bare by the wind. The crown did not develop into a regular cone, like those of cedars in a grove, but spreads as if the wind had hindered its growing. The masterful painting of the tree and its surroundings, the slope and the sea, and the visualization of the movement of the air cannot make one forget the cramped clinging of the tree, the tragedy of its fragile trunk, its weather-beaten boughs, that express the struggle against the forces of Nature. It seems as if Csontváry had found on Mount Lebanon a real, natural archetype of the 29th Psalm, "The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon."

In another metaphor in a letter, he compares himself to a tree, menaced by storms. His notes have permitted the identification of the 1907 "A Cedar from Mount Lebanon," re-named The Solitary Cedar, as Csontváry's spiritual self-portrait.

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Csontváry did not strive to condense merely one personal meaning in a picture. In 1907 he painted another giving it the title, according to the German catalogue, *Gebet bei den uralten Zedern im Zedernwalde des Libanon. Abendröte.* The German title emphasizes the cultic significance, in the Hungarian title *Zarándoklás a cédrusbo͡z Libanonban* (literally Pilgrimage to the cedars in Lebanon) the word "pilgrimage" emphasizes the distant countries where the admirers of the tree came from.

The artist places the bifurcate trunk of the monumental cedar in the vertical axis of the picture, which in medieval and Renaissance paintings illustrated the similes of the Song of Songs. The bifurcate trunk is the fruit of Csontváry's autopsy. In nineteenth and twentieth-century cedar-woods similar bi- or trifurcate old cedars survived, which had not been cut down for timber. The figures of two horses—one white and one black—appear near the tree, almost like true cult objects.

In the background a roundelay materializes, like a vision. A group of virgins, clad in white, hold each other's hand and dance around the tree. The music is provided by a figure, clad in a robe of indefinite time, playing a simple pipe. Pilgrims and travellers of different countries, both Oriental and European, stand in the foreground, some of them turn towards the onlooker, some watch the action in the picture. In the background the ridge of Mount Lebanon shows as a bare cliff, resplendent in pinkish-white shades. A sky at sunset spreads over it in blue, green, and orange tints. In spite

of its wealth of natural details the picture is far from being a mere representation of a Lebanon cedar-wood, shaped into a simple landscape. For the artist the suggestion of the cultic significance of the mount, the tree and the scene around the tree, have a much greater importance. The time scale of scene widens since the artist did not intend to collect cultic survivals but to evoke an original or allegedly original ritual act.

When travelling in Lebanon Csontváry may well have heard rumours of ancient cults that survived in Christian ritual. It is possible that he had read descriptions by Deslongchamps or other travellers of the Feast of the Transfiguration. His representation does not, however, follow the known sources, but is a vision of his own.

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For years I searched in vain in nineteenth-century pictures and engravings for immediate pictorial sources used by Csontváry. Paintings by Böcklin, Moritz von Schwind, Puvis de Chavannes, etc. show that subjects of a similar type were in vogue; in the early twentieth century, however, German or French works of romantic-symbolical inspiration could not have been immediate prototypes for Csontváry, neither from the stylistic, nor the conceptual aspect. He may have seen pictures by John Martin on his trip to England but the biblical Martin, basing himself on Milton, must have been alien to Csontváry, who interpreted the Bible in his own way.

What then was the source of these young women in classical attire? Were they reviving Greek vases where, perhaps, in a less ecstatic form and with a more majestic rhythm there are similar movements and steps? The girls, taking one another by the hand, are not arranged in defined groups on the vases, according to their movement phases; they do not meander, but follow the shape of the vase, usually forming a circle or semicircle; on several vases the figure of a musician is in front of them. In the pictures of Csontváry the attire of the girls, their movements, and the rhythm of their dance are at the same rime archaic and yet point to the years around 1900. This dance, though of primeval simplicity, at the same time turns back to Nature in a studied way, making the process cultically revealing and intentionally symbolic. Their movements are surprisingly precise, the dynamic movements of the arms, of the raised legs, of heads and hips, follow a defined rhythm. There is no trace of expressive deformations of movements as in other pictures by Csontváry.

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Observing all these characteristics I was led to assume that we have to look for the antecedents of Csontváry's dancing girls in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century photographs, illustrating dances or movement phases. Neither the collected material, nor the known attitude of Csontváry to photography and real events contradict this hypothesis.

Csontváry had the opportunity in Paris to see the motion photographs of dancing girls by Edward Muybridge. He could have known several varieties of films, taken of moving figures, he might have seen many photographs showing the new *fin de siècle* dance fashions and he could have witnessed such dance productions as well. The choreography of his time, aiming at a revival of the dance and ideas of nature of the Greeks, was not alien to his own ideas. The great dancers and choreographers of the period, striving, at the same time, toward total transformation of life, wanted to recreate the dances of Artemis Cariatis, in open-air exercises of a callisthenic sort. These exercises were recorded by photographers and published in magazines, on posters, etc. The writing of Lucian on the

world-shaping power of the dance, present at the beginning of every culture, were revived by Isadora Duncan and her circle, who were influenced also by Ruskin and Morris. Greek art revived in the dance of Isadora Duncan became a living energy, assuming at the same time a modern, twentieth-century form. The tales of Pan and Echo, Dionysus and Ariadne gained a new timeliness, though not in a historizing form but as a re-created symbol.

Isadora Duncan appeared in the early 1900s in Budapest, where she gave several performances in the Urania theatre, which Csontváry attended. She danced to the poems of Petőfi and performed a pantomime, written by her in collaboration with Oszkár Beregi the actor. She performed in several Hungarian towns all the way from Budapest to Arad, and she knew of, and revived, events in Hungarian history.

We may suppose that Csontváry had seen her in Berlin, perhaps he visited her callisthenic school near that city which was founded in 1903. Her pupils danced in the Greek manner, barefoot, according to her precepts, in the open, clad in brief white tunics. Even if Csontváry never saw them in the flesh, it must be stressed that photographs of girls exercising were so common at the time that Csontváry must have seen them.

Isadora Duncan was not the only one. The three Wiesenthal sisters, temperamentally moving in an archaic manner, were often photographed in Vienna; the photographic material of Jaques-Dalcroze, a follower of the Duncan school, contains pictures of girls dancing in woods or on the beach.

An abundance of photographs of archaizing dances was available to Csontváry when composing his picture. It was not necessary to translate a whole composition, as the copiers of previous ages did; he was able to study different phases on photographs of single or group dances. He could have adapted them as he did in his landscapes. The composition, based on several observations, is determined by an intellectual coherence of the vision.

*

The dance, as a primeval ritual, often appears together with a worship of trees, stones, or other natural objects. A sacred dance also takes the form of encircling a sacred object. The Arapaho Indians know a ritual chant, describing a dance around a sacred cedar. In the *temenoi* of Artemis and Cybele, in the grove of the Byblos local goddess, there are dances functionally similar to the above. An analogous dance is described by Bálint Kiss and imagined by Csontváry in connection with the ancient cult of the cedar. Thus the tree in his work is not only a personal symbol but a variant of the communal symbol with several layers of meaning.

In notes, written some years subsequent to the Pilgrimage and the Solitary Cedar, the following ideas appear: (1) The cedar is, in nature, the personification of endurance in time, of late blossoming, of late but lasting creation of values. (2) The cedar is a philosopher. Its dwelling-place is the birthplace of the idea, its form expresses the perfection of the Universe, and as such it is the object of ritual reverence. (3) The cedar is the symbol of the Hungarian nation, symbolizing the historical past and the possibility of a future flowering, a historical role.

The first circle of significations is based on the natural properties and cultural role of the cedar, of its timber and oil, transforming the traditional ideas and adapting them to the life of the living tree. Csontváry drew such ideas from his study of botany, both antique and modern. The source of the second significant group is the Bible, Csontváry is known to have read the Scriptures regularly almost from childhood; though influenced by the nineteenth-century historical school, his reading was critical and not

literal. Both the language and the ideas of the Bible made a powerful impression on his imagination. Pictorial representations of biblical scenes could well have been among the starting-points of his works. Csontváry was also influenced by a romantically tinted Neo-Platonism as well as his reading of Hegel and Bergson.

The antecedents of another line of thought connected with cedars can be sought in the Hungarian nineteenth-century attitude to the national myths though analogous aspects are found elsewhere as well. Myth offered an evasion from Hungarian social conflicts of the time. Romantic poetry anticipated the death of the nations. With the creation of a symbolic significance of cedars and using their image Csontváry attempted to give an example to his people and also offered hope for their survival as a nation.

The cedar has ever been a symbol of endurance and eternity. In Christian culture it symbolized Resurrection; in recent times it turned into the hieroglyph of a more abstract Eternity, expressing also the greatness of the times of historical existence. In the personal, peculiar myth of Csontváry it became the avatar of immortality, both personal and national.

JÚLIA SZABÓ

A CHOREOGRAPHER'S CATECHISM

Interview with Aurél Milloss

When, after several decades of absence, Aurél Milloss returned to his native country in 1981 as guest at the centenary celebrations of Béla Bartók's birth, many of us not directly concerned with the world of dance all of a sudden became aware of the existence of this giant in the history of twentieth-century ballet. Our ignorance was not perhaps entirely our own fault: for some inexplicable reason, Milloss's choreographies have not been performed at the Budapest State Opera House for a great many years although they include such classics as The Miraculous Mandarin *of 1942. Another reason may have been that the fame of the* Ballets Russes *and of the choreographers associated with it—some of them active to this day—has tended to outshine that of artists of the same generation who are not Russians (Balanchine, for instance, born in 1904 is two years older than Milloss).*

Aurél Milloss has, however, succeeded in creating a world entirely his own—a style, a vision of ballet which he sees as taking up where Diaghilev left off. Highly regarded by Bartók, Stravinsky, many Italians including Casella, Dallapiccola, and Petrassi, as well as such French composers as Albert Roussel, his ideas have exerted an influence transcending the immediate effect of his choreographies.

Milloss granted me about an hour of his time and my problem was of course that of choosing among those questions that had occurred to me prior to our conversation as well as among those that arose in the course of it.

The first group of questions was of a general nature, the answers adding up to a miniature catechism of the ballet.

Q: Music can exist without dance whereas dance rarely manages without music. Does it make sense to wonder which came first?

A: My teacher, Curt Sachs, author of *Eine Weltgeschichte des Tanzes* (1933) often told me that the history of music cannot be

written without some knowledge of the history of dancing.

Dancing has existed on its own since time immemorial, without music. In many instances, dancing gave birth to music. I had some direct experience of this when I accompanied field workers to Indian villages in Brazil. The Indians danced without singing but now and again they would clap or utter sounds.

As far as ballet is concerned there are quite a few choreographers who do not base their work on music. Léonide Massine, for instance, knew very little about music, and his work shows as much. His training was entrusted by Diaghilev to Larionov and Picasso—that is why he was interested in the non-musical aspects of ballet. At one time a great deal was written of the "manierisme Massinien."

Many choreographers, myself included, would prefer to work without music and, indeed, have done so. Jerome Robbins, for example, created the famous music-less ballet, *Moves* (1959, Spoleto). Its structure was somehow reminiscent of a Mozart Divertimento even though its style was fundamentally different.

Q: Why do you prefer to work without music? Do you find music limiting?

A: That's right. One may have ideas one cannot find music for. Music is needed for technical reasons—audience noises, such as coughs easily throw dancers off the beat if there is no music to drown them out. If the choreography employs a large group of dancers, a conductor is necessary to make sure each dancer can keep to the same tempo. Telepathic exercises would be necessary, as well as enough time to train each dancer separately, to dispense with music and a conductor. I have experimented with such exercises and so did Rudolf Lábán, a very great man indeed. He went in for them until 1925 while still an advocate of expressionism. If he was not particularly successful ,the reason was that he lached the necessary patience and allowed himself to be carried away by new ideas that kept cropping up and leading him astray. Eventually he realized that a universal technique of dancing had to be developed and he devoted himself to questions of theory, rarely creating new ballets. Of course, one lifetime is too short to accomplish the goal he set himself and his work was never completed.

Q: Is there music that cannot be danced to?

A: In my view, any music can be danced to if there is rapport between the composer and the choreographer. Anything can be turned into a ballet—but of course not the way Béjart choreographed Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. He is of course a genius but if you work with the Ninth, you have to build up your ballet the way the music is built up.

Q: One often has the impression that there is no connection between the dance and music whatsoever—a different composition would have done just as well.

A: Yes, this happens many times, alas. Talking of Béjart—there is his *Sacre*. His choreography is so breath-taking, the viewer is dazed and delighted to such an extent that he forgets that the message of Stravinsky's music is exactly the opposite. I am against things like that. I maintain that if the choreographer wants to stick to his ideas, he is welcome to do them but he should look for a different composer.

Q: How does a choreographer's mind work? Obviously, music gives him visual ideas—he has visions.

A: Naturally, he has visions, just as musicians do.

Q: But perhaps those of a musician are more abstract.

A: A choreographer does not necessarily have concrete visions either. He thinks in terms of movement, counterpoints of movement. These are similar to the way a composer's brain functions.

Q: Are the visions of a choreographer in colour?

Alfréd Schiller

TIVADAR CSONTVÁRY: PILGRIMAGE TO THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.
1907. BUDAPEST, PRIVATE COLLECTION

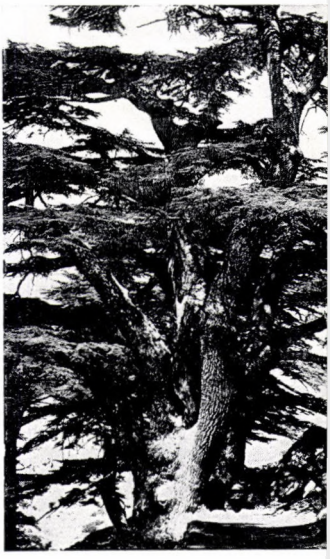
TIVADAR CSONTVÁRY: PILGRIMAGE TO THE CEDARS OF LEBANON. 1907. (DETAIL)

Petrás István

ANTAL LIGETI: CEDAR-GROVE IN LEBANON. 1857. (DRAWN IN SITU) NATIONAL GALLERY

Makky György

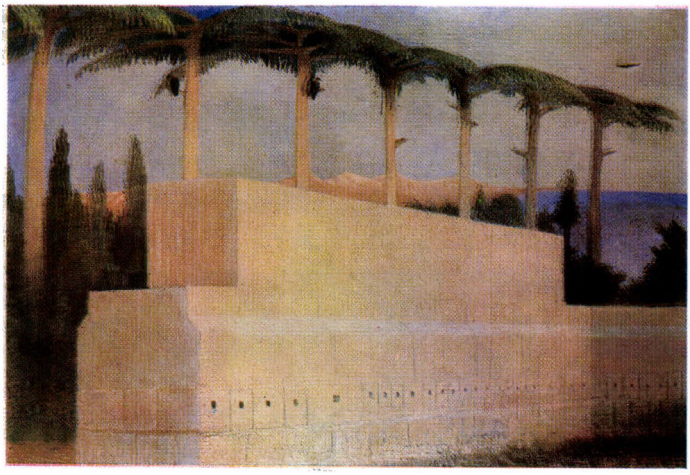
UNKNOWN ARTIST: THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.
AN ILLUSTRATION FROM A MAGAZINE, BUDAPEST, 1867



CEDAR TREES ON THE
MOUNTAIN OF LEBANON
1971 PHOTO

Alfréd Schiller

Tivadar Csontváry: Baalbek.
(The Sun Temple in Baalbek)
1906. (detail).
Csontváry Museum. Pécs



Tivadar Csontváry:
Sacrificial Stone
in Baalbek. 1906–7.
Budapest, private collection

Tivadar Csontváry:
A Cedar Tree
from the Lebanon.
(The Solitary Cedar). 1907.
Budapest, private collection

Vilmos Bertalan

JOHN MARTIN: THE FALL OF BABYLON. (DETAIL). 1828.
LONDON. BRITISH MUSEUM

János Szemicsák

MORITZ VON SCHWIND: FAIRY ROUND DANCE. FRANKFURT AM MAIN.
STADELSCHES INSTITUT

ARNOLD BÖCKLIN: THE SACRED GROVE. 1886.

Pierre Puvis de Chavannes: The Sacred Tree and the Muses. 1884–89. (Detail). Chicago. The Art Institute

János Szerencsés

Isadora Duncan dancing. The technique of Isadora Duncan.

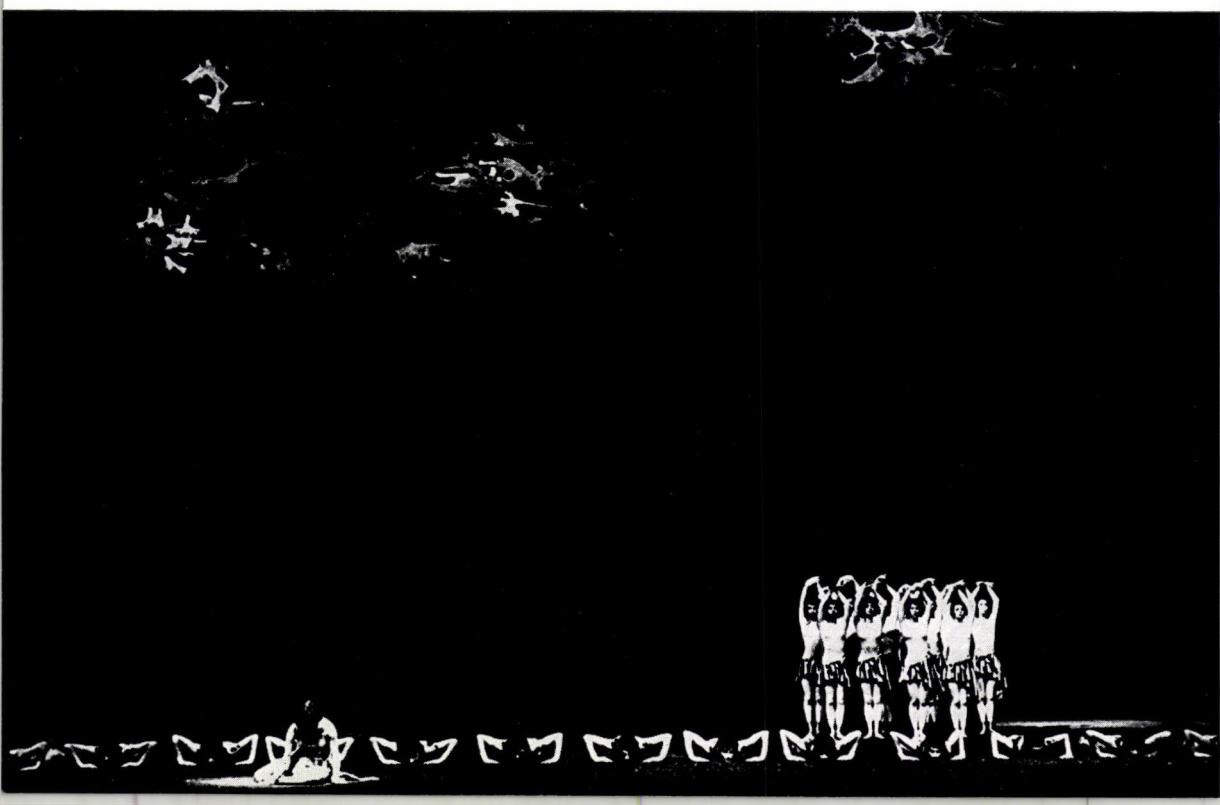
Makky György

Dancing figures
in new Attical Relief-fragments.
(from Fritz Wege:
Der Tanz in der Antike.)
Halle an der Saale, 1926

Isadora Duncan
in Colonos near Athens.
(After Isadora Duncan Memoiren.)

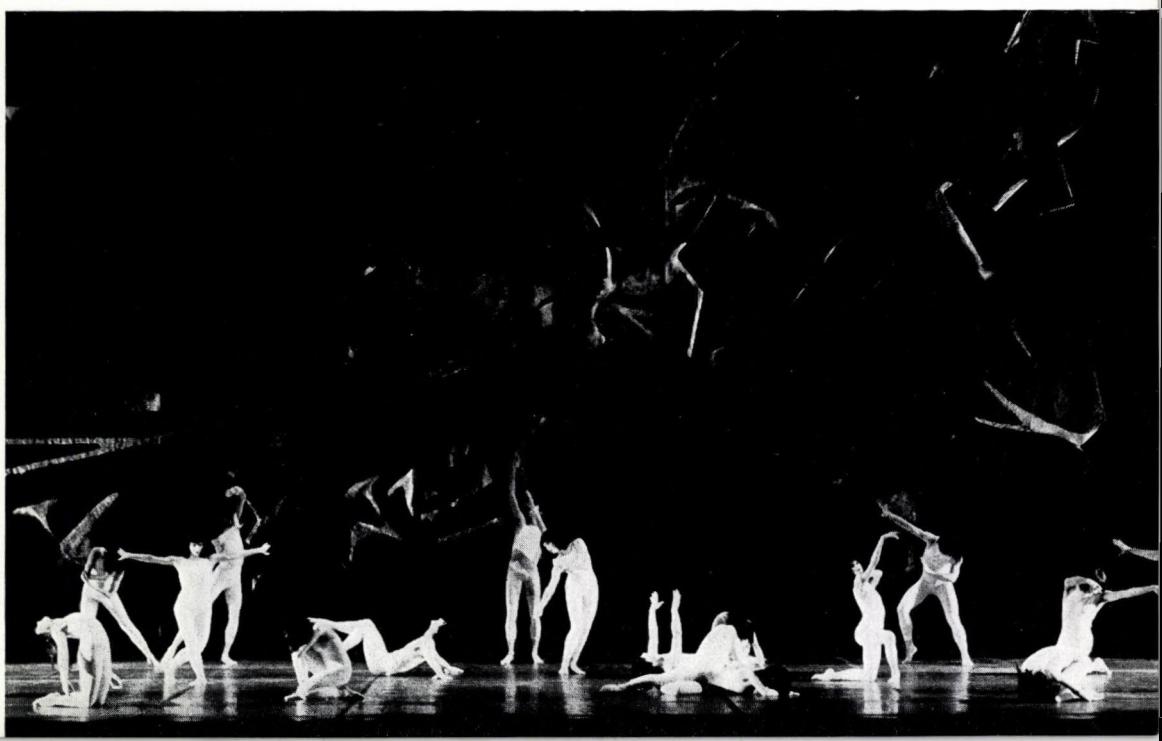
Hungarica. Aurél Milloss's dance poem to Béla Bartók's Dance Suite, with Toti Scialoja's sets and costumes. (Rome, Teatro dell'Opera, 1956)

Estro Barbarico. Aurél Milloss's concertante ballet to Béla Bartók's 2nd Piano Concerto, with Fabrizio Clerici's sets and costumes.Cologne, Ballett der Bühnen der Stadt, 1963



Gezeiten. Aurél Milloss's Ballet to Igor Stravinsky's three movement symphony, with Hubert Berke's sets and costumes. Cologne, Ballett der Bühnen der Stadt, 1960

Coro di Morti. Aurél Milloss's dance-poem to Goffredo Petrassi's dramatic madrigal, with Umberto Maistroianni's sets and costumes. Rome, Teatro dell'Opera, 1979



Marcos Zimmerman

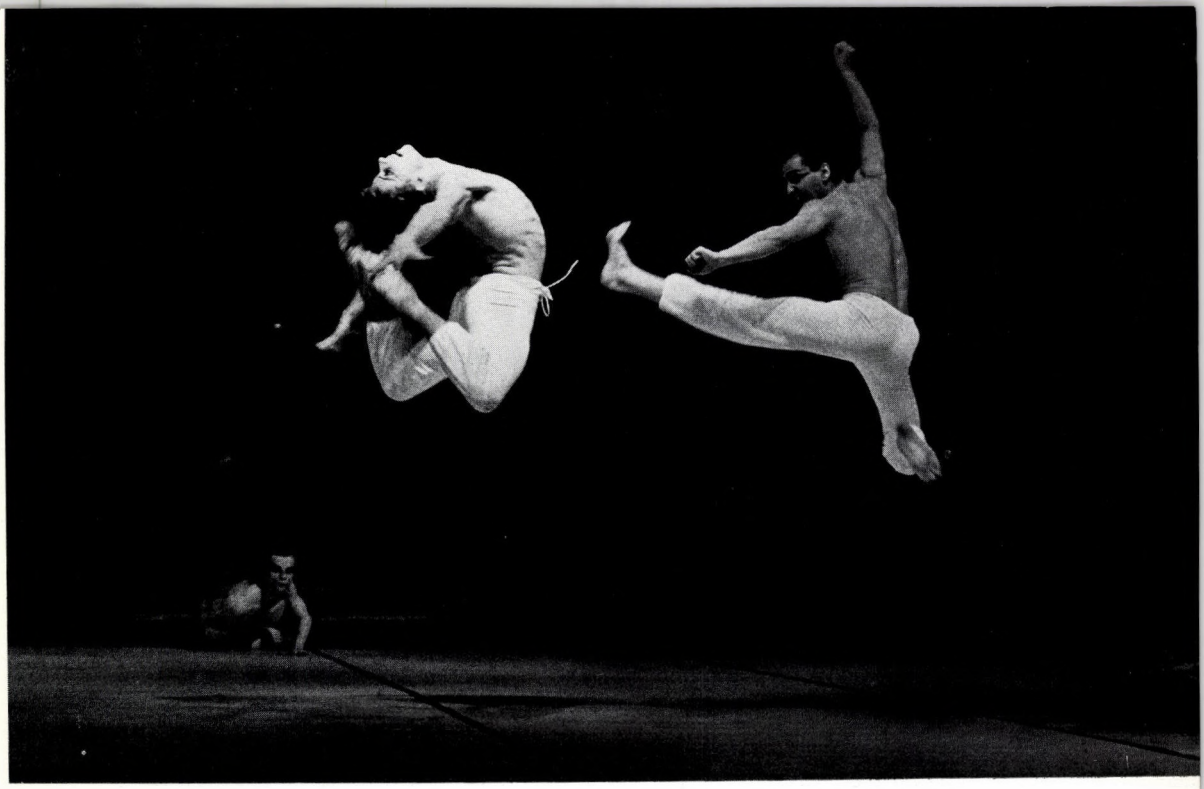
▲ The Miraculous Mandarin by Béla Bartók. Choreography by Aurél Milloss who also danced the title role. Milan, La Scala, 1942

Béla Mezey

The Samurai. Choreography: Iván Markó. Sets and costumes by Judit Gombár. Győr ballet. Viktor Fülöp in the title role.

Viktor Fülöp, Iván Markó and Aurél Milloss in Venice (17. 6. 1981.) ▼

Béla Mezey



THE SAMURAI

LOVERS OF THE SUN. CHOREOGRAPHY: IVÁN MARKÓ, TO MUSIC BY CARL ORFF.
SETS AND COSTUMES BY JUDIT GOMBÁR. GYŐR BALLET

Benkő, MTI

Melinda Király in The Moment of Truth. Choreography: Iván Markó,to Spanish folk music and compositions by János Vajda. Sets and costumes by Judit Gombár. Győr ballet

Benkő, MTI

Don Juan's shadow is over us. Choreography: Iván Markó, to music by Richard Strauss and János Vajda. Sets and costumes by Judit Gombár Győr Balett: Andrea Ladányi, Iván Markó and Barbara Bombicz

A: Often. If the music possesses colours, too. Balanchine's is an interesting case in point. He is a highly talented choreographer who has accomplished more in neo-classicism than many musicians and painters. However, he is a graphic artist, his choreographies lack colour. His ballets are always black and white, even when he uses colourful music. Rather than work in blood, he works in lines—but that he can do wonderfully. I respect him all the more because he happens to be my exact opposite.

Q: Kodály maintained that tone-deaf people do not really exist: everyone is musical to some degree. Does the same apply to dancing?

A: Lábán held that everyone had the gift of the dance slumbering deep within, it only had to be awakened. I think this is also true of music and of talent in any other field. Habit plays a major role and it can influence several generations. Of course, I have encountered hopeless dancers who never made it professionally.

Q: Are there nations more talented in dance than others?

A: Healthy nations such as the Russians, Hungarians, or Spaniards where folk art is not yet defunct have a more noticeable flair for dancing. Whether they have any special talent for ballet is difficult to ascertain, for ballet is a peculiar thing. If one wishes to develop a perfect technique, one has to start at a very early age. However, at that stage there is no knowing whether one is sufficiently gifted.

Those who have not been to a ballet school and realize later that they have talent for the dance, are no longer in a position to start from scratch in classical technique, it is too late for that. So they opt for what is called the modern technique. That is why the latter boasts many more interesting talents than do classical schools. Children of some agility, in good health and with the right looks are enrolled in ballet schools and are made to work hard. But we have yet to arrive at the right method of discovering real talent at an early age. There is no such method at the moment.

Q: What is the ideal build of a dancer?

A: You cannot lay down the law. In singing there are sopranos and baritones, in ballet, too, you need different kinds of dancers. Certain roles require slight figures, others well-built ones. I had a ballet on the *Marsyas* theme, with music by Luigi Dallapiccola, where the contrast between Apollo and Marsyas is based on just that. It was interesting for me because I had to solve the problem of achieving unity between two different techniques and two different styles. I do not mean a synthesis—the challenge was to preserve the homogeneity of the ballet despite the coexistence of two different techniques. For Apollo, I needed a very tall dancer with a figure like Michelangelo's David, whereas Marsyas had to be somebody like Puck. It is a question of personalities and colours.

The art of the dance is highly complex—after all, it is realized simultaneously in time and in space. Unlike music, the system of harmony is not vertical—it is three-dimensional. Another reason for its complexity is that the human body has so many parts that a single body corresponds to several instruments.

Some people regard the dance as the mother of all art. There may be a grain of truth in that—but there is no escaping the fact that this mother is still in an embryonic state. It is also a huge labyrinth. No wonder there is so much misunderstanding connected with the dance and why so many people do not take it seriously. I do believe that a great deal remains to be exploited from the many possibilities inherent in ballet. Bartók helped me considerably by forcing me to think differently.

The tragedy of the *Mandarin* was that it was treated as a pantomime even though Bartók's music was to be danced to. I told him so and he agreed. He had called it a pantomime, he said, because he had never seen a dance drama to his liking. To show

him what I had in mind, I improvised for him in his house in Csalán utca in Budapest. We then conducted a highly interesting conversation which was to be followed by several similar talks. For instance, he said he had never in his life composed a single phrase without an element of dance to it. Such was his recently composed Sonata for two pianos and percussion. He played a wax cylinder recording of a rehearsal for me, and pointed out that it was in fact thoroughly suited for ballet. Indeed, it has dramatic accents and processes which make one think of a plot. I asked him if he had one in mind. No, he said, he had composed it to express our anguish. That explains everything, I replied.

Many years later, in 1954 I created a choreography based on the Sonata. I called it *La Sonate de l'angoisse.* The première took place in Rio de Janeiro and in later years it was performed in many countries using the same title, in French.

My conversations with Bartók, but even more his music, were to be of great help in my development. He addresses the subconscious and invokes the superior powers. I am going to use ugly, hackneyed words: physics and metaphysics. Sometimes you cannot avoid using them, for they best express what one means.

The other counterpole of twentieth-century music was of course Stravinsky. An altogether different world. All his music in phosphorescent; unlike Bartók, he is hardly ever subjective, even in a masterpiece such as *Les Noces.*

Q: How about the *Symphony of Psalms?* Don't you think that subjective?

A: Even less so than *Les Noces.* I may be wrong, of course, after all, one does hear music with different ears from time to time. I used to regard the Octet as the epitome of Stravinsky and valued it more than any other of his works. I still think it is important. But to talk of subjective things—the later religious pieces, including the *Symphony of Psalms,* do have subjective traits. So does *Orpheus.* I was responsible for the first performance in Europe at the Venice Biennale in 1948. It was not exactly easy. After all, while the beginning and ending are mystical and profound, the twenty-five minutes in between are playful as only Stravinsky's witchcraft could make them. It was quite a challenge to try and coordinate the two levels.

In choreographing Bartók, I never encountered such problems, with one exception: I have not been able to tackle his Divertimento. The folksong elements of the music would demand similar elements in ballet, but then, it is not just Hungarian folk art but also Bulgarian as well as some others and I simply could not cope with the stylistic problems this entails.

But let me tell you how I came to do Stravinsky's *Orpheus.* I was working in Buenos Aires, working on *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus* and Roussel's *Padmâvati* at the Teatro Colón. Dr Ernst Roth wrote me (he was a director of Boosey & Hawkes) advising me that Stravinsky wanted me to do the first performance in Europe of *Orpheus.* Dr Roth added that he—Dr R. that is—wanted an early decision and a performance that very year, 1948. He was also anxious that a theatre be found which was acceptable to me.

I telephoned Ferdinando Ballo, director of the Venice Biennale, and offered him the European first performance as well as the world première of my *Marsyas.* Igor Markevitch was to be the conductor. Ballo immediately agreed and I rang Stravinsky at his home in Beverly Hills.

Q: Your contacts with him must have gone back quite a few years if he had complete faith in your ability to do justice to *Orpheus.* When did you first meet him?

A: We first met in 1939 when Rossini's *Guglielmo Tell* was performed at the Maggio Fiorentino. The conductor—the great Marinuzzi—left all the ballet scenes uncut, and there are quite a few. Stravinsky was also in Florence at the time for he gave a

concert at the festival. After the first act of *Guglielmo Tell*, the Intendant, Mario Labroca, came to tell me that Stravinsky was in the audience and he liked my choreography. After the third act he returned with the message that Stravinsky wanted to meet me. (The third act includes the grandest ballet scene of the opera.) So that is how we first met.

Stravinsky must have been particularly receptive to Rossini having composed a few years before, in 1936, *Jeux de carte* which uses quotations from that composer.

In the course of our conversation, it turned out that Stravinsky had seen my *Petrushka* choreography in Budapest in 1933. The dialogue went something like this:

"I am so pleased you like my Rossini ballet. After all, your *Jeux de carte* has something to do with Rossini's music."

"Oh, so you know my *Jeux?*"

"Of course!"

"Are you interested in my ballets?"

"Tullio Serafin and I agreed yesterday to do a new *Petrushka* next season in Rome."

"I saw a *Petrushka* in Budapest a few years ago. It was very interesting for it managed to solve the large group scenes better than Fokine. (Stravinsky criticizes Fokine in his *Chroniques de ma vie*).

"Who did *Petrushka* in Budapest?"

"I cannot remember. It was a young Hungarian." Stravinsky produced a handkerchief, tied a knot in it as an *aide-mémoire*. "I shall write to Budapest and ask for a programme."

"Why, when was that?"

"Oh, in 1933. I was visiting Hungary and Rumania incognito and *Petrushka* happened to be on at the Budapest Opera on that particular night."

I then told him that I had been responsible for that Hungarian *Petrushka*... Needless to say, he was quite taken aback.

Q: How did your *Petrushka* choreography of 1933 actually come about?

A: The director of the Budapest Opera, Miklós Radnai, had seen me in that role in Klemperer's Kroll Oper in Berlin. The programme included the first stage performance of *Oedipus Rex* (the Paris performance had been a concertante one) and *Mavra*. Oedipus was sung by a Hungarian—I think it was Imre Palló—and Radnai had gone to Berlin to hear him. Anyway, he saw and liked my *Petrushka* and invited me to dance it in Budapest. I replied that I preferred to choreograph it myself since I did not like the one I was appearing in. And Radnai let me have my way.

Q: I should imagine that a ballet dancer and choreographer of your generation yearned to be associated with Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*. Did you make any attempt to join it?

A: Of course I did! I auditioned for him in 1929, shortly before he died. It happened in Berlin when Diaghilev was doing *Le Bal* at Bruno Walter's Charlottenburg Oper. Also on the programme were Massine's version of *Sacre* and *Apollon*. At the same time, in Kleiber's theatre *Chant du Rossignol* was on, in Balanchine's choreography and with Matisse's sets, as well as Prokofiev's *L'enfant prodigue*, *La Chatte* to music by Henri Sauguet and Borodin's *Polovtzian Dances*. Many of these ballets I had seen in Paris or Monte Carlo for I made a point of going anywhere where anything of interest was happening.

But to get back to Diaghilev: I approached him and he was ready to see me dance at one of the ballet rehearsal rooms. He was interested in two or three of the compositions I showed him. I made it quite clear that we belonged to different worlds but he said he was attracted to mine.

You see, he was aware of the need to make a change. He had solved all the aesthetic problems and now felt the urge to probe deeper. *L'enfant prodigue* was the first step in that direction—and it was also to be the last production of his *Ballets Russes*. His painters—Picasso, de Chirico, Braque, Gabo, Pevsner—may have been different but they did belong to one line. Diaghilev had not

invited Kandinsky yet—or Paul Klee. None of his musicians came from Central Europe. I was keenly aware of that and was looking for something different.

Q: A great pity he died before he was able to proceed further in that new direction.

A: He had achieved perfection, he had to finish his life... If often happens like that. You never know what he would have accomplished, had he lived longer. There is a superior truth... Of course I knew what I had lost owing to his death, I was greatly disappointed. He had told me to write him at the end of August to Venice. When I was about to put pen to paper, I heard of his death on August, 19, 1929.

Q: You eventually settled in Italy. Having worked in South America as well as in many European countries, why did you pick Rome as your home?

A: Rome is the centre of the Mediterranean and that world had always attracted me. My father had also taught me to think in terms of Classical humanism. I was interested in everything that stems from Greek culture. I prefer Aeschylus to Sophocles—the latter is too concrete. This is just to illustrate what I mean—it is terribly difficult to talk about my own work.

Another reason for choosing Italy was that it was the cradle of ballet. It was in the Italy of the Renaissance that the first treatises were written; the courts of Ferrara, Florence, Mantua, and Rome had a great deal to offer in the way of ballet performances. In fact, one of the very first ballets was put on by a cardinal at the Papal court in the early fifteenth century. These things interested me and I studied in some depth all the related literature. It made fascinating reading also from a scholar's point of view. After all, the terminology they used centuries ago was completely different from ours. Who would undertake to translate into contemporary terms, for instance, the title of Domenico da Ferrara's *Danzare per Fantasmata?* Fantasmata... it sounds so modern somehow, doesn't it! Italian painting also means a great deal to me and so does poetry.

Q: As well as music, of course. You have been in touch with most of the composers of this century.

A: That is right. And I owe it all to Albert Roussel. He had seen one of my concertante ballets and liked it so much that he confessed: had he known me before, he would have asked me to do his *Aeneas* in Brussels. An interesting subject!—I remarked. Whereupon he sat down at his piano and played it for me and even sang it, for the piece includes backstage choruses. On seeing my reaction, Roussel said he would suggest my name as a choreographer for the first performance in Italy of *Aeneas*. Plans were afoot to stage the piece at one of the state subsidized theatres the following season. I was duly invited and the performance took place in Naples. It was seen by Tullio Serafin, the youngest-minded of the old generation of Italian conductors, and a year later I was invited to take over the post of ballet master at the Rome opera from Boris Romanov who had joined the New York Metropolitan.

That is really how I came to settle in Italy. My first contact among the composers was Alfredo Casella and he introduced me to Luigi Dallapiccola, Goffredo Petrassi, and others.

Q: I hope you will get round to writing your memoirs...

A: I am old enough to do so. Not so much my personal recollections as a detailed discussion of my work. But that will, of course, include all that we have been talking about.

BÁLINT ANDRÁS VARGA

CLASSICAL AND MODERN — THE GYŐR BALLET

A new scheme for the engagement of artists, a contracting system, was introduced in Hungary in the middle of the 1960's, and with it the question of where to work became the function of an agreement between the artist and the theatre. Choice was widened for both parties. The state gave up an earlier paternalistic policy, one in which artists were allocated and of ne-necessity with an element of compulsion. Thus, if the State Opera House had offered a contract to students graduating from the State Ballet Institute in 1979 (as it indeed did) and the young artists had voted in favour of an already established force, the Győr Ballet would never have appeared. But this was not what happened, because the graduating class—eighteen in all—had already decided in their final academic year not to pursue a familiar road, but to take an entirely different and indeed still unfamiliar one, one which precisely they would have to trail-blaze, leaving the capital for a town with 130,000 inhabitants. True, a new theatre built at tremendous cost—one of the finest establishments of its kind in Eastern and Central Europe—awaited them. For this they were rewarded by having as associate and a director, Iván Markó, who by that time had already earned a name, as founder of the Győr Ballet and its present artistic director.

The ensenble made its debut on November 3, 1979 with enormous success. The launching under the banner of modern ballet was romantic; a richly, exuberantly emotional mode of presentation is characteristic of them even today, and quite likely a reason for their favourable reception abroad. As far as the professional foundations and the profile of the troupe are concerned their dance technique stems from classical ballet. After all, each of them took his diploma at the State Ballet Institute. Their daily conditioning is made up of classical ballet exercises. And at this point the troupe could even be accused of inconsistency, since it relies on classical technique while not keeping any of the classical pieces in its repertoire. Presumably it will not have *Giselle* or *The Nutcracker* on its programme in the future either. According to Iván Markó the classical ballet system still provides the most versatile preparation even for modern dance. Accordingly the Graham technique developed in the United States and used by troupes in Holland and England is used by Markó rather as a supplementary, colouring element, and not as the basis of training and expressing the body. It is essential however—because this is one of the fundamental aesthetic principles behind policy—that the troupe regards classical ballet as the foundation for training and expression only, and not by any means as the sole and absolute form of expression. Markó regards freedom of expression as more important that the assertion of the canons of a school.

The now 35 year-old Iván Markó, who as a soloist at the Hungarian State Opera House at the end of the 1960's danced a number of leading roles of the Opera House's repertoire had a contract with the *Ballet du XX^ème siècle* of Brussels headed by Maurice Béjart for some seven years. He danced the principal role in the *Firebird* throughout, as well as other important roles and, of course, came to know Béjart's principles and creative methods. It is well known that Béjart is no advocate of l'art pour l'art in dance, since he professes that dance is suitable for mirroring social phenomena and processes, for conveying personal attitudes and philosophies.

A high degree of animation is typical of Markó's works also, we may even perceive a mobilizing purpose in his compositions. But it is worth underlining two more Béjart effects without speaking of direct adoptions, as these effects are at work in the existence

of the Győr Ballet more in the form of methodological ideals. One of them is dance language. From the fact that the choreographer regards dance as primary communication, that which he desires to convey, it follows that he does not see stylistic uniformity as indispensable; moreover, in the interest of certain aims he deliberately mixes dance styles, even within a single work. This is true of both Béjart and Markó: beside the elements of classical ballet, allusions to American modern dance and Far Eastern cultures, deliberately distorted or explicitly gymnastic types of movement make their appearance. The enormous success of Markó's company shows that the audience which makes a pilgrimage from the capital to Győr accepts what might well be described stylistically as eclectic. They make the journey both because of Markó as a dancer, and because of the perfection and technical standards realised in productions.

Markó has been a talented student of Béjart, and makes bold use of stage effects, although scenic effects supplement, rather than compensate for any possible deficiencies in the dancing. [It is not simply production values. In contrast to the poor standard of dancing of many modern companies the Győr ensemble is marked by its dynamic dancing]. Markó always seems to exploit the excellent technical potential of the Kisfaludy Theatre of Győr with astute perception, evoking an effect rich in colours and images and gives his audience a vivid experience of the dance theatre. For his aspirations he is able to rely on associates such as the costume designer, Judit Gombár, and the lighting effects designer, János Hani.

Even if Markó has assimilated certain influences, in the final analysis the texture and the mode of expression in his works are his alone, and he himself is independent of European classical and modern schools. The many premières of the past three years have already delineated the outlines of a few creative trends.

One group of works shows man living in nature, struggling with it and finding peace within it, virtually in a purely natural state, abstracted from historical and social relations. An example here is the piece the troupe first introduced, *Lovers of the Sun*, which is still very popular. In this ballet, whose choreography is set to selected movements from Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Markó puts on stage the first, imagined days of the development of mankind, the joyous and troubled toilsome moments of awakening to self-awareness and of growing self-reliance. Interestingly this link with nature reappears once more, three years later, in Markó's most recent work: the company premièred *Haydn getanzt*, connected with the oratorio *The Seasons*, at the Wiener Festwochen in the spring of 1982. Here appears man awakening from his winter slumber, who lives his laborious existence amidst the joys and fears of the cycle of the seasons, and returns again to his winter rest.

These two works are more lyrical in tone and the dominant element is rather pure dancing. Another group of his works consists of pieces dramatic in nature and characteristically large in form; in these the scenic elements are given a more substantial role. This group the same time probes the various aspects and problems of social existence.

This series of works of a dramatic character began with *Stages*, which also embraces autobiographical moments (based on *Also sprach Zarathustra* by Richard Strauss). A work introduced in December 1980, which takes up a full evening, *The Moment of Truth*, is based on the poems and tragic life of Federico Garcia Lorca; it has achieved great popularity. The dances are accompanied by a musical montage, the direction implies a desire to attain a kind of "total theatre." In his series of pieces of great ambition and large form Markó most recently introduced, in January 1982, a three-act ballet *Don Juan's Shadow is Over Us*. The composer was

again Richard Strauss, but his symphonic poem, *Don Juan*, is used without change only in the first act; in the other two quotations or transcriptions of the score are used, montaged with other musical material. The spectacle on the stage, too, only in the first act evokes Don Juan's doomed adventures; the second act takes its theme from the Faust, Mephisto and Margaret triangle while the third act presents the downfall of K, Franz Kafka's defenceless hero in *The Trial*. With a reference to Don Juan, therefore, the ballet evokes a chain of efforts and failures.

Two one-act ballets have a place of special importance in the troupe's repertoire. *The Samurai* shows us a choreographer receptive to conflicts of morality and conscience and who applied here the forms of movement and posture of the Far East for the first time. His version of *The Miraculous Mandarin*, introduced in March 1981 made use of arrangements of almost visionary force. Markó discarded Menyhért Lengyel's original libretto, and developed a completely new text to Bartók's music. (The girl writhing in the grip of a gang of the city's suburb, in her agony and vision gives birth to her liberator, the mandarin, who fights the savage cutthroats.) This ballet of extraordinarily evocative force caused heated controversy among certain professional circles because of its change of libretto.

It would be difficult to give a generalisation for Markó's choreographic attitude; the fact is that he consistently holds himself aloof from ready-made formulas. He does not avail himself at all of the known librettos of dance, and frequently treats scores sanctified by music history with irreverence, making use of them as he sees fit. In Hungary he stages most of the performances of the Győr Ballet at its headquarters, although the troupe has had highly acclaimed guest appearances in Budapest. In a period of scarcely two years the troupe has performed on several occasions in Italy and Greece, appeared in both the Federal Republic of Germany and the GDR, Austria and Czechoslovakia. The company took part in the summer of 1982 in Sofia at the Theatre Festival of Nations; this autumn they are preparing for their first visit to the Soviet Union.

László Maácz

THEATRE AND FILM

THE CLOCK DOESN'T TELL THE TIME

(Machiavelli: *Mandragora*; Euripides: *Bacchae;* Jenő Heltai: *A Néma Levente* (The Dumb Cavalier); József Katona: *Bánk bán;* Bulgakov: *A félnótás Jourdain* (Jourdain, the Half-Wit); Miklós Hubay: *Késdobálók* (Knife-Throwers)

The summer of 1982 had critics grumbling because the record-breaking number of open-air productions had almost all their premières in July. Even those who restricted themselves to those which seemed most promising found themselves rushing from one end of the country to the other by car or train.

The ever-improving Szolnok company deserved their summer theatre sited in the courtyard which lends itself to this purpose. They opened with Niccolò Machiavelli's ever-fresh renaissance comedy, *Mandragora.* It was directed by Gábor Zsámbéki, formerly chief director at the Budapest National Theatre and now with the Katona József Theatre. Unfortunately the high hopes were not met as Gábor Zsámbéki allowed his actors to scamper up and down; after the first half-hour the whole production disintegrated into isolated cabaret turns. Indeed only depth, collective playing and with in projecting character could have kept Machiavelli's comedy, going especially on that set. Nicia's stupidity and superstition his longing to father a child still has resonances today—but in Szolnok it was his ugly, ridiculous exterior that was emphasized to the extent of caricaturing his bowleggedness. What was not presented was the deformities of mind and spirit. Callimaco the seducer was not the young man in whom limitless love was coupled to carnal desire: he was a petty lady-killer continually snatching at his trousers to signal his readiness to act when he met Lucrezia.

Still one could sense vaguely that Gábor Zsámbéki had wanted to criticize goal-oriented human behaviour, that concerned only with ends. He wanted to criticise the idea of the end justifying the means. Where it does, the "time is out of joint". A huge clock high up in the courtyard signaled all this through crazy movement. Its hands moved and turned in fits and starts but always stopped on twelve. The speed varied but they always sought to end in an erect position, rigidly towering...

The hints, intimacies and leers which proliferated left no doubt as to their meaning. All the same the performance was not in bad taste but since Zsámbéki directed his company with an uncharacteristic listlessness, it did not convey much of the satirical force of *Mandragora*'s. The hands of the clock did not show the time today—so the clock did not tell anything.

József Ruszt, our busiest director had the large courtyard of a beautiful chateau (the former Zichy-Chateau in Óbuda) as the setting for his version of Euripides' *Bacchae.* Greek tragedy is rarely performed nowadays even by the permanent theatres; the Hungarian stage has rather ignored this marvellous period for many years now. And in the last ten years almost all endeavours in this direction have been signal failures.

So unfortunately, was Ruszt's attempt. A mere two hundred to four hundred sat scattered among the 1300 seats every night. Mild boredom and stifled giggles accompanied the uncoordinated and often incongruous acting of the cast (though it included some fine actors): The setting, intended to be spectacular, was shabby, and did not allow the play to come alive. The disappointed spectators found no comfort in recognizing that a really strong personality such as Ruszt's left its mark even on such a scamped, sketchy and conceptually uncertain performance. József Ruszt's ritual show-piece theatre, using almost extreme metaphoric images, eclectic and dynamical musical effects suggested its sovereignty even in this rudimentary form. Ruszt meditates mostly about the relationship of power and man, and *Bacchae* would have been very suitable for this purpose since it deals with a blind and arrogant revolt against the gods and man's revolt against idols. It is regrettable that the production at best managed only to delineate the contours. In the present confused and arhythmic stage of his work, Ruszt has left us with half-completed production.

One reason might have been that he had hardly finished this production when he had to take up the post of artistic director at the newly-founded Zalaegerszeg Theatre. Here he staged Paul Foster's *Tom Paine* (again in a beautiful castle courtyard, at nearby Egervár). I shan't report on this because after a few summer evenings the production will transfer to Zalaegerszeg to open their first season. This idea has not been confined to the Zalaegerszeg company. For reasons of convenience and economy more and more companies look upon open-air summer performances as a form of dress-rehearsal and then transfer the plays. Beside *Tom Paine*, *Vak Béla* (Blind Béla) a play by János Székely, a member of the Hungarian minority in Rumania, put on during the summer at Gyula will soon have another première. Corneille's *Cinna* had its first ever staging in Hungary at Pécs the summer theatre and will continue in the chamber theatre. The Budapest Theatre-in-the Round has been squaring its summer productions for several years: in autumn Károly Kazimir adjusts the production to the requirements of the Thalia Theatre. This time the play is G.B. Shaw's *Back to Methusalem*. These productions—or some of them—will be reviewed later: in general they came off better the second time round.

The most elegant of Budapest's summer theatres is in the splendid medieval cloister of the Hilton Hotel. This was the first season when they performed a play here in addition to one-act operas and musical works. Jenő Heltai's comedy in verse, *A néma levente* (The dumb cavalier) is an evergreen. The principle characters are a noble knight of the Renaissance and a proud, widowed lady. After being permitted to kiss her the knight obeys the command of the lady and pledges to remain mute. He keeps his word, or silence, and thus wins her hand not without first teaching her a lesson for her arrogance. The Hungarian renaissance provides a bright frame for light drama: even the most popular Hungarian king, Matthias the Just appears with his crown slightly askew.

From out of all this they managed to create a soulless, simpering production aiming at an easy response. Naturally it came across for just this reason.

Perhaps it was the wish to forget quickly a not very successful summer season (one critic said that it had grown to "hydrocephalic proportions") the new regular season started earlier than usual. In many theatres they waited for the ouverture with plays formed the previous spring (eventually even tested on the stage), previews, guest premieres, irregular premieres followed each other. Among all this a production of *Bánk bán*, the greatest of Hungarian classical tragedies, deserves close attention.

This was produced at the birthplace of the author. Sándor G. Szőnyi, artistic director of the newly transformed theatre com-

pany of Kecskemét has directed television drama and, although he is over fifty, *Bánk bán* is only his second work for the stage. His formulation has resulted in an interesting performance which has some good details though it sometimes creates the impression that one is sitting in front of a television screen of stage dimensions.

Bánk bán was written in 1818: or rather, written three years before, its final version was completed in 1818. It deals with an episode from Hungarian history of the 1200s. In the absence of the king, a foreign queen, a princess of Meran, promotes her own friends in high positions and curtails the rights of the Hungarian lords. Banus Bánk, the king's deputy, returning from a journey across the country sees all this but is ready to shut his eyes out of loyalty to his king; however, upon learning that the queen's younger brother has disgraced his wife by means of a vile trick, high words are exchanged with Queen Gertrudis and finally Bánk stabs her to death. The Hungarian king returns home to see the bier of the queen but forgives Bánk who mourns his own wife.

Both popular and literary opinion regard *Bánk bán* as a classic. Those working in the theatre have their doubts: it presents certain difficulties in staging (the uncertainties in the eavesdropping situation, a certain clumsiness in joining private and public life). A few years ago Gyula Illyés carried out a long-nourished plan and adjusted the text; he embroidered and sewed up the unstitched parts of of the play's fabric but then, almost by a law governing masterpieces other cracks appeared. The play's guarantee is valid only for its original form. The Kecskemét theatre based their production on the non-adjusted original version. They set out with the ambition of offering the complete and faultless Bánk; to appropriate the drama as fully as possible. The success has been only partial: the play still guards its secret.

Sándor G. Szőnyi tried to present the drama unambiguously as a conflict between individuals; he started out from the fact that the avalanche of action begins with "Bánk's resentment". This pushed the historical elements into the background and psychological aspects dominated the performance. In general Queen Gertrudis is played as cold and cruel, here she wants to disarm even Bánk with her mysterious smiles and womanly attractions. The leader of the conspiracy of Hungarian noblemen is here not the usual, pathetic orator but a man with a logical mind and logical arguments. Other characters have been also shifted from the emotional towards the intellectual.

The single exception was Bánk himself. The guest actor playing the role, the youthful and virile Gábor Koncz (who excels as a "tough" hero), simply does not go with the interpretation because of his essentially rougher style of acting. Moreover, the director seemed to forget that the scenes centered around Bánk where he, used to television, "emphasized" certain elements usually, are on the stage parts of a complex and open effect system whose accents are very different. Thus the fine and symbolic settings at one corner of the stage remain unseen when an audiences' attention is claimed by movement or action at another. The lesson to be drawn from this is not new: an interpretation is only so if it is consistently carried out in every detail. Of course, some excellent passages produced well-merited applause.

The well-known Soviet screen actor and director, Oleg Tabakov, was responsible for a production in Veszprém where again the high expectations were not entirely met. Mihail Bulgakov's *A félnótás Jourdain* (Jourdain the Half-Wit) had never had a professional staging before; it became clear that the play is only a by-product of the writer's career. In the early thirties Bulgakov had studied the life and career of Molière passionately, had written an essay-like biography on him and had made him a hero

of a play, centered around the strange relationship and necessary opposition between the writer and Louis XIV. Compared to these masterpieces *Jourdain The Half-Wit* is a mere finger-exercise: a slightly shallow adaptation of *Monsieur Jourdain*. The spectator familiar with Bulgakov expects every minute the twist which will reveal a deeper meaning in a play constructed on the play within the play. But nothing happens: Louis Béjart who is Jourdain in the play makes his last retort and retires overcome with shame of being an upstart bourgeois and drinks deeply from the bottle of Muscatal he, as an actor, has been thirsting for since the beginning of his performance.

Oleg Tabakov's brisk and jovial direction leaves no doubts about his professional skills but in his interpretation all that is at stake in the play is the Muscatel. Since in the rest of Bulgakov's plays everybody stakes his head, this playing with the glasses is rather too insignificant. The production has neither a political nor a deeper psychological content. If, instead of this Bulgakov world premiere, Tabakov had staged the original *Monsieur Jourdain* for the umpteenth time, it would surely have conveyed a message even today.

Miklós Hubay's *Késdobálók* (Knife-Throwers) was also produced in Veszprém, in the small hall of a new cinema. The conditions were certainly unfavourable because the stage is too small, and the outside seats were all marked with the inevitable "Restricted View".

It was certainly worthwhile getting a good seat. This is a two-hander, something of a *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* It is a squabble between husband and wife set in 1957 (written in that year, and thus four years before Albee's masterpiece). Their child has been lost in the stormy Hungarian autumn of 1956 (dead, missing, in another country?) and although they do not openly blame each other are like knives. The duel is fought out in a virtuos—sometimes too literary—dialogue, revealing all the bliss and hell of people dependent on each other. History lies behind the psychology; Hubay speaks poignantly of the turns of fate, the temporary loss of illusions and the torments of beginning again experienced by a whole generation—the intellectuals who started their career directly after the Second World War. The two characters are played by Zsuzsanna Hőgye and Gábor Csíkos—they are talented, enthusiastic and flexible though not always suited temperamentally to their roles. Ferenc Sík (who, like József Ruszt, works a great deal) has directed with much ingenuity. He had his own individual version to express but failed to develop the play's cruel choreography so that the play gives the impression of not being yet ready. Two or three more weeks of conscientious rehearsals would make it "real". The number of summer productions which will never mature to completion have taught us to be grateful sometimes for those that at least have been half-finished.

TAMÁS TARJÁN

MARKING TIME

Péter Gothár: Time Stands Still *(Megáll az idő)*; Ferenc András: The Vulture *(Dögkeselyű)*; László Vitézy: Red Earth *(Vörös föld)*

The three films under review here differ from each other in style and message; yet they have more in common than simply coming to our screens more or less at the same time. All three come from young directors making their second feature films; their differences may well indicate an enrichment of the Hungarian cinema's dimensions and concerns.

Some two years ago an extensive polemic was conducted on the awareness and knowledge of history that the young have in Hungary. Historians, writers, critics and political scientists took part. A well-known literary and film-historian, who happens to be the head of one of the film studios, contributed the following story: "Péter Gothár, who is about thirty, won a gold medal for direction at last year's Venice festival with his first film, "A Priceless Day" *(Ajándék ez a nap)*. This autumn he came to me with the proposal of making an historical film. 'You've got bored with the problems of the present very soon', I thought. 'Which historical period are you interested in?'—'The sixties'—said he. I looked at him openmouthed. We started talking and I learned that he had taken his final secondary school examination in the early sixties, and for him that decade was history. Not only history in the sense that he had not been taught it but also in the sense that he experienced those years as history. I said: 'Okay, go and make that historical film but I would like to know what its historical message will be.' He replied: 'That those were the years when the world around us started to expand.' 'How do you mean 'expand'?' Then I realised that what he meant was that what we today call consolidation in the healthy sense of the word started at that time. So this was his fundamental conscious experience of the world. And whatever we think now we must recognize that this is his view and accept it."

I am citing this not simply to give the genesis of the film but also to underline something particular to Hungary or, rather, to East-Central Europe: the unity of individual destiny and history in this region of the world where private life depends so much upon historical events. A film like *American Graffiti* is very similar in theme and mood and treats the same era but nobody would ever think of calling it an historical film. (We might call it nostalgic; it belongs certainly to the films concerned with social or psychological description.) So, in the case of *Megáll az idő* (Time Stands Still) the adjective "historical" seems to be absolutely justified.

The opening sequences lead us straight into the most tragic and dramatic events in modern Hungarian history. The time is November 1956. Among the ruins of Budapest an insurgent is burying his sub-machine-gun: this is the father of our heroes. He then runs home to his wife and two small children and urges them to flee the country. His wife refuses to go with him, so he leaves alone; the family remains but without a father. The film now jumps to 1963 where the real story starts. The children are now adolescents at secondary school, leading the ordinary teenager existence. It is the representation of this which is, however, far from ordinary. The beginnings of love-affairs, disappointments, first stirrings of that mystery, sexuality, problems at school, sympathetic and antipathetic teacher, justice and injustice, rock music, adventures at dancing-class, revolts against the family and the adult world—it is all apparently just like everywhere else in the world. But only apparently because the adult world floats above this adolescent world and casts

its shadow in a historical as well as a social sense; the adult world determines the world of their children. Distorted and refracted though they may be, the crimes of their fathers, are present in their lives. Their lives contain a vanished father, a mother raising her children alone, a step-father released from gaol who beings again as an unskilled worker to be suddenly raised back to a high position, his bitter practical philosophy of compromise; there are also the headmaster, a politically vigilant pusher and slave-driver, Piggy, the form-mistress who combines understanding and liberalism with just a shade of hypocrisy, and ex-form teacher suddenly dismissed for clericalism. (Not to mention Piggy's husband, formerly a high-ranking functionary, now a raving nervous wreck living on a generous pension.) The list of these mythological figures could be continued. Although mythological, they are very real, and although alien and incomprehensible to the heroes, they determine their lives. Their children's advantages or lack thereof can be laid to them, as can the realisation of ambitions or dreams, as for instance, being admitted to university. Similarly, their human and political conflicts, their traumas and grievances which have nothing to do with the youngsters also filter through to their lives.

Freud wrote somewhere, in a letter if I remember rightly, that human life is judged on two big commonplace lies: peaceful old age and happy childhood. In Gothár's film both are unmasked. Generation conflict is revealed in the special dialectics of generation-interdependence. What is seen through the eyes of adolescents or, as in the film, through the looking-glass of its magic castle, reflects the world of adults from a very concrete position, one whose morality and material position is that of the fatherless hero.

Nevertheless the sixties, the years of 'consolidation,' have gone down in Hungarian history as a most positive period of two-sided reconciliation and social development. This view is quite justified but the wounds of so tragic an event as 1956 cannot be healed without pain. Neither Hungarian films nor literature have had much to say so far on these pains. I think that Hungarian cultural policy has shown the democratisation of public life in helping Péter Gothár make a film which did not represent the contradictions, difficulties and problems from the point of view of those who directly benefited from the changes of the sixties, but which puts itself in the position of those who were once described as enemies and counterrevolutionaries. Without doubt this is a one-sided point of view and contains only a partial truth, one which is hardly the most important element in the complete historical truth. But it is certainly a part of the truth and we cannot expect a work of art to perform the tasks of historical monography.

With his two feature films—*A Priceless Day* and *Time Stands Still* Gothár has become perhaps the most promising film director of the generation after that of István Szabó *(Mephisto)*. His style, his clearly-defined imagery (the reference above to the distorting mirror of the magic castle was deliberate), his expressionism, his handling of colour sometimes recall Fassbinder or Werner Herzog. They reveal a thoroughly individual way of seeing the world which, here with the sensitivity of cameraman Lajos Koltai, amplifies the interior motifs and traits of the film's heroes and the world behind the story, and creates an atmosphere which expresses the essential. Also contributing greatly to the success are Géza Bereményi who jointly wrote the script from his story which is to appear in *NHQ* 90 and György Selmeci, who composed and compiled a contemporary score—and in a film about youth music plays a great role. Last but not least we should mention the cast—especially the numerous débutants, who have given us such splendid "teenager waxworks."

Ferenc András takes us into another

world, that of the Hungarian thriller. Frankly, it must be admitted that the Hungarian film has never excelled in this genre—mainly for reasons which have nothing to do with film-making. The fact is that the big stake which makes the Western thriller so compelling simply does not exist in our society—there are no enormous fortunes, jewellery worth millions, no drug industry, no mob, no Maffia; petty thefts, small-time embezzlements, brawls in pubs, breaking into second homes and hooliganism are not the stuff of the genre. The rare Hungarian thriller usually has one of two plot-lines: an artificial spy-story—here too, it is rather difficult to find the big stake—or plans by criminals from abroad to rob the national treasures of our museums.

Ferenc András has broken away from these idiotic patterns; in his first feature film, *Veri az ördög a feleségét* ("It's Rain and Sunshine Together") he presented himself as a renovator of Hungarian film satire. *The Vulture* is based on a successful novel by Miklós Munkácsi; some critics have hailed the film because they see it joining the thriller to a critical commentary on Hungary today; for them it is almost a pioneer work of social and psychological realism. Although there is some truth in that statement, I find their reactions a little exaggerated. Ferenc András' film moves in the stylized world of the thriller, applies its well-tested formulae with skill and some originality, and essentially conforms to the genre.

The central character is a Budapest taxi-driver, József Simon, an engineer by profession who has taken up cabbing in the hope of making more money. This in itself is the first element in the social criticism. Two of his passengers steal his money; it turns out that these two old women, former professional thieves, managed to disappear during the years of consolidation into respectability as modest (forint) millionaires. In my view the rest of the social criticism is by far not so realistic because neither Simon's bosses nor the police believe that his money has been stolen: indeed they suspect him of having appropriated the firm's money and invented this tale as an excuse. Simon is unable to produce the missing ten thousand forints (incidentally not an exorbitant sum in Hungary today) and so decides to track down the thieves alone, recover the money and exact punishment on those who make money out of robbing the ordinary man.

I have nothing against this as the structure for a thriller. The script-writers, Miklós Munkácsi and the director, Ferenc András, have found an old source of tension which has been with us from *Monte-Cristo* and *Ben Hur* onwards and their use of it is quite ingenious. They set this element of revenge and the personal dispensing of justice cleverly in the frame of contemporary reality. But for all that this remains a conventional thriller and I feel that it is here that we must look for the real virtues of the film.

Simon becomes obsessed with the idea of revenge. From the conversation he remembers overhearing in his taxi, he knows that one of his passengers has lost a pet dog and has been trying to trace it through a newspaper advertisement. Through this he manages to learn the identity of the thief; he then kidnaps the dog—which had been returned—and tries unsuccessfully to blackmail her with it. His next step is to kidnap her daughter. From here on the film leans heavily on its qualities as a thriller. The action is brisk and well-handled: the police are cleverly outwitted and the ransom obtained. It finishes in keeping with the modern thriller: the hero, driven to crime by his offended integrity and sense of social justice, kills himself.

Let me say again that *The Vulture* is a good thriller, a first step in a new and useful direction for the Hungarian cinema. Trying to find more meaning in this well-directed, professionally made film would be trying to make too much out of a work which is a good example of its own genre. At the

same time, it would be an underestimation of the role of the thriller as the fairy-tale of our times.

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László Vitézy's *Red Earth* belongs to a third category, one which is characteristically Hungarian. A few words on its antecedents are therefore in order.

"Document and fiction in the Hungarian cinema" was the title of an international symposium held last year in Budapest. Its topicality stemmed from the trend in Hungarian cinema which we label documentary feature-film, pseudo-documentary, document-drama, for which examples would be István Dárday's *Film Novel*, Ferenc Tarr's *Family Nest*, Vitézy's *Peacetime*, among others. A separate studio has been set up within the Mafilm organisation with the aim of serving and developing this trend.

Like everything new in the arts it has polarized public opinion and provoked passionate argument. What some see as its chief merit is condemned by others as a fatal weakness. By this they mean that its emphasis on a sociological approach causes the creative imagination to stagnate in a form of naturalism and, while coupling document and fiction, it erodes the border between them. At one time I ventured a remark to the effect that the trend, a revolt against an increasing abstraction in the Hungarian feature film and thus an antithesis to and even a declaration of war against the traditional feature film, would paradoxically be very beneficial to the feature made in the traditional manner; that quasi-documentary methods would ultimately develop a new realism in Hungarian films. My view was that the main aesthetic significance did not reside in its methods so much as in transfusing the blood of reality into a cinema which was clinging to the past or escaping into the symbolic world of parables. (This description is not meant to imply a negative judgement).

Time has justified my expectations. The building of the bridge has been started from both banks. Rezső Szörény's *BUÉK* (Happy New Year), from the side of conventional feature films, and *Red Earth* from that of the documentary drama, signal this rapprochement. The latter has a conventional script—by István Dárday—and the actors deliver a written text instead of improvisations based on their own experience. To have a fiction based on a real event or on a news-item has scarcely been new since the time of Gogol. Visconti, De Sica, and the Italian neo-realists also worked with civilians, types taken from life. So *Red Earth* belongs to the category of traditional feature films; it must be judged on the basis of such traditional criteria as the power and significance of its theme and message, the authenticity of its plot, the level of its realisation, its acting, and soon.

What I would praise most in Vitézy's film is that it preserves the genre elements: its endeavours to set it in an authentic medium, the world of miners, in contemporary Hungary. The central figure is a bauxite miner, László Szántó, whose piglets dig up a find of tremendous importance: rich layers of high-quality bauxite on the hillside near his village. From this point on two conflicts emerge: the first is Szántó's battle with his superiors in the mining enterprise who see only inconvenience and problems coming from the discovery and would prefer to sit on it until something makes them change their mind. It emerges that mining in the neighbourhood is endangering the thermal springs which bring the region a lot of foreign exchange. The second conflict springs from the fact that members of the local research institute are not willing to admit that this discovery was made by a pig rather then by them. They use their social connections (including

television) to deprive Szántó of the moral and material benefits of his discovery.

Here the story is both original and authentic, and raises a problem which rightly concerns us because it may reveal a weakness in the democratism in our lives. The problem is one of false prestige, of the hierarchy and cult of prestige which may be inherent when castes are developing; the film gives a suggestive demonstration of this danger in the struggle between Szántó, concerned with the interests of the national economy, and scientific and industrial bureaucracy, which represent their own particular interests. The other conflict, though less original, has also some basis in reality. It turns out that there are bauxite deposits under the village, the walls of the houses are found to be cracking and the interests of the national economy demand the evacuation of the entire village. Such actions—even if they happen out of the public interest—involve personal dramas and in the film the evacuees also come to grief financially. The apartments and the compensation they receive for their lost homes are inadequate. The abuses in compulsory purchases and compensation during the recent past are proof, by the way, that this element is not purely fictional. In the film, however, the people blame Szántó for all their troubles, they cast him out and even beat him up.

I think this is a little too much. Not from the viewpoint of social criticism because all of this is feasible but because the occurrence of so many negative events together creates the impression of artificial structuredness. The sheer amount of social criticism weakens its own quality and deprives the film of its authenticity, reducing it to the status of an "ordinary" feature film. This seems to be a case where less would have been more, at least for the film's "documentary" authenticity.

Nevertheless, Vitézy's film merits attention and its lessons are worth considering. Its professional qualities are high although this time the explosive dramatic quality of *Békeidők* (Peacetime) is not attained, despite the dramatic possibility in the original story. The film's best feature is its ability to render the trivia of life; its non-professional actors are convincing, especially Imre Németh who plays the lead. The director his cameramen, Máté Darvas and Ferenc Pap, remain true to a vision of the world whose stark puritanism has been evolved in the documentary-feature-film.

ERVIN GYERTYÁN

MUSICAL LIFE

BARTÓK — THE FAMILY DOCUMENTS

Bartók Béla családi levelei (Béla Bartók's Family Correspondence). Edited by Béla Bartók, Jr. Editio Musica, Budapest, 1981, 652 pp.; Béla Bartók, Jr.: *Apám életének krónikája* (The Chronicle of my Father's Life). Editio Musica, Budapest, 1981, 328 pp.; Béla Bartók, Jr.: *Bartók Béla műhelyében* (In Béla Bartók's Workshop). Szépirodalmi, Budapest, 1981, 472 pp.

When in 1947 Zoltán Kodály, as chairman of the Hungarian Arts Council, chose János Demény to compile a volume of Bartók's correspondence, his idea was motivated first of all by an intention to bring his composer colleague closer to the public, to liven up the image of Bartók, which had been engraved in the public's mind as a withdrawn figure, almost a statue.

As little of value had appeared in Hungarian on him, for a considerable time the volumes of correspondence revealed most about Bartók's personality and personal aspects of his life. Three years after the first volume, published in 1948, containing one hundred and twelve writings, Demény succeeded in publishing a nearly three times larger number of letters. By 1951, however, Bartók was officially ignored in Hungary. The time of Zhdanov in music had arrived with overt, or semi-official restrictions often enough using police methods. The Opera House revived neither of Bartók's two ballets. *Új Zenei Szemle* (New Musical Review) remembered the 70th anniversary of Bartók's birth in only thirteen words. Under such circumstances even the new collection of letters published with an apologetic-explanatory preface was a great event. It revealed important documents of the young artist's ideological and emotional problems, of his folk-music collecting and concert tours, of his attitude to the growing fascist influence, and of his years in America.

It should not go unremarked that the cultural policy of the time unscrupulously manipulated these texts. It represented the composer as a consistent atheist, a materialist, and an anti-fascist, in propaganda pamphlets intended for the West, but did not acknowledge that in his own country he did not enjoy official esteem, and that his works—here and there even the letters under discussion—were censored.

And yet it was this collection issued in 1951 that pushed the matter of the publication of letters out of its impasse. The impulse helped to create a more favourable climate for the appearance of the following volume in 1955 and—concurrently—the publication of the letters abroad could begin. This was how an Italian selection could appear in 1969, and an English one in 1971, between the German editions of 1960 and 1973. It would be illuminating to study the reviews judging how differently, in the light of these personal writings, critical opinion in the West sees Bartók in comparison with the past, from the aspect, say, of a single sphere of his activities, such as folk-music research. One of those most intimately associated with Bartók in the United States, Tibor Serly, of Hungarian birth, who gave the posthumous viola concerto its final form, remarked in Budapest, in 1948, that he was profoundly moved by the many small slips of paper. He observed the resolute efforts of the ethnomusicologist with sincere respect,

but he was incapable of fully grasping what the composer's constant occupation with folk-music must have meant to him. In 1971 G. Larner, in the *Guardian*, wrote about the English collection selected from Demény's five volumes of letters: "the many letters, which... are connected with his heroic research activities, show how profoundly he was absorbed in folk-music. We were aware of this, of course, even in the past, but until we had read his letters we did not appreciate this obsession, in truth we did not even understand the music either that inevitably grew out of it. Through this we came closer here to Bartók than in any of his biographies."

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The combined publication of the 1,088 Bartók letters compiled by Demény occurred in 1976 in Budapest. Five years later, as one of the sensations of the centenary publications, Bartók's older son who lives in Budapest, Béla Bartók, Jr., published his father's family correspondence consisting of 919 letters, as a supplement to the earlier collected volume. The letters first published in 1948, comprising hardly more than 10 per cent of the total, but serving as important links in the chain, sometimes with completions and amplifications, were included in this publication in their proper chronology.

In his preface the editor gave as his reason for the prolonged delay that the past 35 years had already become history and the time had arrived for the publication of the writings in the possession of members of the family. These did not contain intimacies or skeletons in the cupboard but useful facts and data relating to the composer's work and life, "colourful descriptions of his concerts and recitals, his folk-song collecting field work and numerous characterizations of people about whom a mistaken image had evolved in the mind of the public."

A reading of what Bartók the private person wrote refutes a good many assumptions and prejudices. Taking into account the informal character of their tone and the variations of mood Kodály could be satisfied now with the revelation of Bartók's directness of manner. Above all the view that Bartók was a poor correspondent, who reached for his pen only when he had to or when the dictates of duty made this unavoidable, proved false. There is no doubt—as his son also confirms—that he devoted enormous energy to writing letters. "It is unbelievable how much of his time this activity consumed, often at the expense of his work," but many times in information intended for the family we can sense the elemental joy of communication, the unrestrained lightness and rich variety of style, that is, an unmistakable talent for correspondence. The younger Bartók also permits us to conclude what the source of this talent was. His father's widowed mother, née Paula Voit, in the thirty-five years she lived apart from her son and her daughter Elza, regularly wrote to them twice a week, no less than a total of 6,000 letters. (According to our present knowledge her son also must have written at least 3,000–4,000.)

Bartók's deep attachment to his mother runs through his family correspondence mostly in a cheerful, lively and always a devotedly warm tone. He was not ashamed to display his enthusiasm before her, or to boast of his own successes. "The instrumentation is incomparably beautiful," he wrote about Richard Strauss's *Zarathustra*. One year later (in 1903), he noted about his own examination at the Academy of Music: "My success was brilliant." In 1907 he also sent her the news: "I shall be the first mortal being to play the piano publicly in the large hall of the new Academy of Music." As part of this affectionate tone he sometimes even engaged in controversy with his mother over Dohnányi, or the emancipation of women, or patriotic education.

Some still maintain, including surviving friends, that the taciturn, withdrawn Bartók had no sense of humour. There are countless examples to the contrary in the letters. The bright jesting can be sensed not only in his

student-like jibes ("Nothing but flappers at the Academy, fat or skin-and-bones flappers with black-heads, pimples and parchment faces! And parchment dry Bach performances by the ton"), but the later father of a family also constantly spiced his lines with playful details. He described (for his small son he even drew a picture) squirrels he saw frolicking on an old tree trunk, snatching at each other's tails. An amateur entomologist, he told stories like the following: "On Sunday we gathered a tail-kicking chrysalis. It went into the box where in the evening it already crawled out as a butterfly. It was carefully covered up with gauze. Well, by morning there were three of them! Two of them love each other, and the third sulks in the corner."

This tone, of course, is close to that of the texts of certain folk-game tunes, or his bitter-sweet experiences of folk-song field work. We find splendid accounts of evocative force (this is also a new feature of the book!) about his field work in Maros-Torda County, Transylvania, in 1914, and about Idecspataka or Felsőoroszi, for example, the source of the *Cantata Profana*'s original *colinda* text. What makes these communications particularly eloquent is that nowhere does their writer gloss over the conditions under which he was working: "There was a bit of trouble with the first singing: some six women gathered for it, one of them struck up a tune and the rest followed her with confused mumbling. It took me no little time to find out that the other five, who came there to sing, had absolutely no hearing and were incapable of any kind of musical performance."

In the course of these accounts besides his evocative talent Bartók's exceptional responsiveness to nature is also constantly in evidence. "How lovely it is here! I have never dreamt of such beauty. Just imagine: great mountains covered by black firs, branches trembling with snow, and water running: snow everywhere, on the high plain, on the new growth of timber." It is obvious that of nature experienced on the Great Plain, in the Up Country of northern Hungary, and in Transylvania by the composer of the *Dance Suite*, *Out of Doors*, the *Cantata Profana*, and the *Music for String Instruments, Percussion and Celesta*, that of Transylvania made the greatest impact on him. Of the various nations amongst whom he collected the Rumanians thrilled him most. When after the outbreak of the Great War he felt that this would be his doom as an ethnomusicologist, he mentions among his unrealisable wishes: "I would go among my dear Wallachians to collect." However this sincere emotional attachment was undermined again and again in the later, more orderly conditions by the ambiguous conduct of Rumanian officials. For example, in the autumn of 1924 "quantities of newspaper articles herald" his journey, but the advertised Bucharest "festival" shrinks to two recitals, and the handing over of the decoration that was planned for the ceremony never took place. "At first sight he appears to be very honest," he wrote of the responsible impressario there, "it only turns out later that he is a cunning, tricky rascal."

What an unshakable advocate Bartók was of a radical solution of social and nationality problems within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy is precisely shown by his outburst at the Haupt-Stummer château in Nyitra County in 1916: "I must reflect: with what enormous influence such an alien, illustrious family finding itself here in Hungary Germanizes. Here everybody, down to the last servant, speaks German—... this is a German island among the Slovaks. And I wonder: how is this possible? Isn't it a finer thing to join the oppressed? If I, let us say, were a Russian count and I found myself in Finland, to be sure I would help the Finns against the Russians. This is the explanation of my Slovak and Rumanian sympathies, here they are the oppressed."

A similar, straightforward attitude without diplomacy characterizes Bartók's opinions at critical turns in Hungarian political

affairs. On April 5, 1919, after the proclamation of the Republic of Councils, in a lengthy letter to his sister giving an account of the situation, taking issue with reactionary rumour-mongers he declares: "This much is certain, the communist governments provide the greatest possible support for the arts and sciences. It is self-evident that this means only genuine art: it will no longer happen that an Imre Kálmán or an Ödön Mihalovich are exalted, and an Endre Ady is crucified." But in this same letter which contains this remark: "this new order will be better for every working man than the old order" he also tells frankly, how he persuaded Kassák not to print the International, its melody being "the most worthless German *Liedertafel* music."

Unbiased opinions render the character sketches of notable personalities interesting, from his girl friend of his youthful years, Etelka Freund, to Mrs Emma Gruber, the later Mrs Kodály, from Thomán and Dohnányi through the conductor Egisto Tango to Kodály and Stravinsky. The way he describes the latter to his first wife, Márta Ziegler, in his account from Paris in 1922 is characteristic: "He is a thin and perhaps a somewhat smaller man than I, his lips and his nose are a bit brutal, his eyes slightly bulge, his hair is a dark shade of blond, thinning at the back. He dresses floppishly and spreads a delicate fragrance around him. He speaks a little brutally, and he detests the Germans (who are 'perfect in everything'), and calls them boches. He is not exactly a modest man—but an interesting one who, I believe, cuts and bludgeons as much with his words, as he does with his music."

Kodály is the most positive figure. Ditta Pásztory, Bartók's second wife, writes revealingly to her mother-in-law on March 18, 1926: "Kodály's night took place yesterday. Oh how wonderful it was! ... Enormous success, applause... Zoltán had to come up front several times to acknowledge it. And aside from Emma's company there was yet another very, very happy man, and this was Béla. I might say that Béla is perhaps more pleased when Zoltán is fêted than when he himself is."

In a more than 600-page collection even the unstressed communications can be important, when they add features to the genius which had remained hidden. We find out that as a student he was so poor that he wore an overcoat he was given by his teacher, Professor Thomán. Once in a château, being served by footmen in white gloves, he was plagued by fleas he had collected amongst peasants. There are many interesting facts that are important as history. For example, in 1937 Bartók expresses his irritation in Basle over the fact that he did not receive a letter from his wife in Budapest in two days. (In 1923, when he wrote a postcard to Calvocoressi in London on May 2, he could already go to see him the following morning, in those days there were several deliveries of mail every day.)

The correspondence clears up a number of points. The younger Bartók has consistently maintained for a long time that his father travelled to America in October 1940 not with an intention to emigrate, but for a prolonged stay. The letters written from there bear this out. The Bartóks maintained their last home (in Csalán utca) in Budapest until May 1941, and they extended the validity of their passports year after year. (According to the last validation Bartók could have returned home as a Hungarian citizen up to August 7, 1946.)

In letters to his son, who managed his affairs at home, there is a remark in one dated as early as November 4, 1940 that if he does not succeed in extending his permit to stay, then contrary to his will he might have to "take steps towards settling here for good." On January 11, 1941, he urged his son to get back a book from Kodály which he had loaned him. (Why, one wonders, if he had not intended to return home?) One month later (two days after the arrival of his stray luggage!) he informed his son that

they have already taken steps to request an Italian visa for their trip home. To his aunt, Irma Voit, whom he adored as a second mother, he wrote on March 19: "We still do not know how long we must stay here, and all we wish is that you should not worry about us, we are very well here, and healthy; and we'll get home eventually in this topsy-turvy world." On May 7, complaining of the deterioration of conditions, he admitted to his older son: "I guess there is not much hope that I shall be able to return soon."

Arrangements were under way for the younger Bartók boy, Péter, to join them in America, but it is evident from a letter dated June 20 that his parents were thinking of staying there for one year, then returning home with him. "The only hitch is: will it be possible to travel home a year later?" This letter, which Demény had already published in abridged form, contains the memorable words: "... if things are already bad everywhere, then one would rather be at home."

The further developments are familiar. Béla Bartók, Jr. received four more letters, but by the end of the year the mails between the continents ceased. (Péter Bartók left Hungary on December 22, 1941, and was united with his parents on April 20, 1942.)

One more thought-provoking indirect proof that in the early stage Bartók did not go to the United States with the thought of settling there is the fact that he corresponded only with the narrower family circle. But his conscience bothered him for neglecting the friend who was closest to him. "So far I have not yet written to the Kodálys, mea culpa!..." he remarked on June 20, 1941. "I ask you to ring them or send a card that I intend to write to them in detail within a week." But instead of an exhaustive account he ended his lines a month later: "I have not written to the K's either, of course. Perhaps later—"

Is it truly negligence? Is it not rather an inner resistance of the soul, an intentional non-comment? If after the many, many delays in the growing hopelessness he had spoken in all sincerity to his friend who remained at home, he would inevitably have had to declare that he had separated from his country. Bartók—it is enough only to listen to the middle movement of the Concerto, or the Sonata for Solo Violin—did not wish to sanction this with words.

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After the publication of the family correspondence the younger Béla Bartók added to the available documentation by two more publications. Within the series "The Day to Day Chronicle of Great Composers" he made public 4,800 collected data of the 23,561 days of Bartók. Of these altogether one hundred refer to the first eighteen years, his adult life can therefore be followed in succession of events at virtually three to four days intervals. Though every verified fact may not be included, future biographers are certainly given an important source. To quote the compiler, "I have endeavoured to make Bartók, the man, as familiar as possible, and to offer as secure a foundation as possible for the further work of Bartók scholars."

The volume's conventional editing and form is suited above all for bringing into relief certain events. If one had not known it already, one would be surprised that Bartók and Kodály—although they attended the Academy of Music at the same time—never met as students. Bartók's pupil, Mrs. Henrik Gruber, introduced them to each other on March 18, 1905. And it was also in her home that Kodály gave an account of his folk-song collecting work up to then, on January 4, 1906, inspiring his colleague. We learn, moreover, that Bartók finalized the middle movement of his String Quartet No. 2 in 1917 taking Kodály's advice.

It is open to debate whether it is important to know when Bartók first had a drink, when he bathed for the first time in the sea, which tailor made his dinner jacket, and that on June 20, 1912 he took out fire

insurance; nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of the notes are interesting. Sometimes the communications following each other in succession, uncommented, also have unusual significance. For example, on November 15, 1909 he visited Etelka Freund, the following day, November 16, he married his sixteen-year-old pupil, Márta Ziegler. It is an odd fact that Bartók, who was always sensitive to political events, makes no reference whatever to the assassination in Sarajevo in his letters, and that in 1931, converting the worth of the earlier inflated currency, the crown, in return for repossessing the score of *The Miraculous Mandarin* after the repeated postponement of its first performance, and for the advance payment he was given for the work, he paid back to the Opera House 2 pengő and 40 fillér. It sounds news that in March 1920 Max Reinhardt offered Bartók the chance to set Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* to music. (Bartók would have done the job, in the absence of the promised working conditions, and because of the unacceptable demands of the Universal publishing firm he declined the offer.) It is also news that in July 1924 he wrote to Edgar Varèse, the conductor of his work *Two Pictures* a few years earlier, that in April 1929, he was very likely in the company of Alban Berg in Vienna, and that on February 20, 1930 he was Nadia Boulanger's guest in Paris.

Truly new items in his private life are a few guiding dates and explanatory letter details that relate to Bartók's divorce from Márta Ziegler in the summer of 1923 and his marriage with Ditta Pásztory. Márta, in her farewell letter to her mother-in-law, summed up her standpoint with incomparable magnanimity: "When I look back on my life I can bless fate, bless it a thousand times, even if it marked out a rough and stormy road for me, because it was a road that led high, very high, to Béla's friendship." Bartók reassures his mother with similarly elevated spirits that the situation will be better, "except that it will be much worse for Márta; this is the only thing that saddens me." His friendship with Márta Ziegler was so enduring that they mutually helped each other even after that. Márta copied the score of the *Dance Suite*, and Béla taught his former wife the material of the piano faculty—"with unbelievable conscientiousness"—his pupil claimed.

The compilation of facts tells us that Bartók made preparations twice to go to Bulgaria. Because of the helplessness of the organizers there the journey never took place. We can trace his attitudes with Czechoslovakia, and even more the fluctuation and deterioration of his relations with Rumania. When in 1934 a Rumanian conductor was rudely attacked (and later driven to suicide) for performing Kodály's *Psalmus Hungaricus*, and a recital there by Bartók was banned, he expressed his indignation not only by leaving for home at once, but also by writing a letter two days later to the Minister of the Interior in Bucharest, referring to his Rumanian folksong collecting and his two Rumanian decorations, denouncing the proceedings.

In contrast to the almost fair tone of the more recent Bartók biographies regarding the years in America this chronicle contains surprisingly many negative facts. Up to now, at least, the gesture of ASCAP (Association of Composers and Publishers in the United States) had appeared unblemished, because even though Bartók was not a member it sent him to Saranac Lake for three months for medical treatment. It is true that this made possible an improvement in his leukaemia, and the completion of the Concerto for orchestra there in fifty days. But until now we had not been informed that simultaneously with the completion of the score Bartók irritably bade farewell to his supporters. "ASCAP, about whose generosity legends have been written," the younger Bartók notes, "had the costs of Bartók's free medical treatment deducted from the copyright royalties after his death." On February 20, 1944 Bartók himself remarked: "I have to pay tax on ASCAP's charity, I was not prepared

for such a crude hoax... Everybody ought to know what I have already known since the autumn of 1941... That I am not able to live in this country. In this country... *lasciate ogni speranza.*" In April he made the following bitter remark about the icy windstorm: "The weather is mad, just as the Americans," and at the end of October his comment regarding the "Philharmonic Society players of New York" who were boycotting his works was the sharpest that could have come from him: "they are playing nothing by me this year after my great success last year, and their embraces and kissing of hands. What a gang."

If anyone should suspect that perhaps Bartók's negative reflections about America selected by his son might be tendentiously dramatized, I could quote proofs of his son's lack of bias in which, in contrast to the legends glorifying his father as a pillar of consistency, he honestly relates how many times his father altered his earlier inflexible decision. To Mrs. Müller-Widman in Switzerland he wrote in the spring of 1937: "My detestation of Italy has recently become so unnaturally great that I simply cannot commit myself to setting my foot in..." (Nevertheless—the younger Bartók continues in parentheses—he performed on eight more occasions in Italy, and he also gave his last recitals in Europe, outside Hungary, in that country.)

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Compared to the two documentary volumes *Bartók Béla műhelyében* is a more personal venture. His compilation—which is filled for the most part with still unreproduced illustrative material—was made possible by the fact that the Bartók family—as he remarked in the introduction—carefully preserved every material relic and piece of writing. "Bartók never threw away anything; he kept his notes, his manuscripts, and their sketches, letters he received, personal documents, passports, railway tickets, hotel and other bills, his objects of use down to the last pencil stub."

These surviving documents and the many thousands of letters allow one to reconstruct Bartók's everyday life. The son, a civil engineer, who inherited from his father the reluctance to throw away anything and classifying ability, did not choose a literary or essayistic form, but reviewed Bartók's life and activities under classificatory chapter-headings. (Descent—Studies, teachers—Work—Places of residence and homes—Principal fields of his activity—Field trip and other journeys abroad—Personality, world outlook—Health and physical condition—Artistic and other contacts.)

The almost sociological classification is only apparently dry, it affords an opportunity to gain an insight into the more hidden moments of the genius's life, and within the separated themes the statistical comparisons are also useful. We thus learn that Bartók busied himself with thirteen languages, that he lived in twelve places in five countries, and leased altogether twenty-eight apartments... and summing up everything he changed places of residence forty-five times. The lists published as supplements which show performances in Hungary and abroad giving the year and place of residence, and the diagrams indicating the folk-song field work are most graphic.

It turns out that as a pianist he played on 576 occasions in 19 countries, of these 267 times in Hungary, 82 times in the United States; and most of the time (117 times) he played works by Kodály. (Among the foreign contemporaries works by Stravinsky rank first.)

Although the volume relies on events, it faithfully informs us of the torments of prolonged idleness also (there was no Bartók opus between 1923 and 1926), it attempts to meet the so often voiced contentions of reservedness and unsociability. His early illnesses, his weak constitution, and his complete absorption in his work, his repulsion of intruders must have indeed prompted even a semblance of surliness, but towards those whom he held in esteem, and permitted to

come close to him, he was always accommodating and open.

His overly thrifty nature (he never subscribed to a newspaper, he even made use of the blank reverse sides of paper sheets, he wore his suits—of otherwise good quality—for twenty to twenty-five years, he travelled only second or third class and he stayed in cheap hotels...), according to the younger Bartók, was inherited from his mother who was left a widow and had to bring up her children under difficult circumstances.

The following sounds an authentic opinion: "A very important aspect of Bartók's nature—known or acknowledged only by few people—was his keen sense of humour. He was particularly fond of puzzles (of his own invention), and farcical situations especially appealed to him. When a journalist asked him which of a group of ladies standing near him at his inauguration to the Academy of Sciences (his mother, his wife, his daughter-in-law) was Mrs. Béla Bartók his repartee made with gusto was: All three of them."

The earlier opinion that unresolved tension existed between Bartók and Dohnányi is not borne out by the documents. Moreover, mutual esteem between them constantly increased. When he received news of him in the United States in July 1945, he put into quotation marks, that is he questioned, Dohnányi being declared a "war criminal."

Kodály naturally assumed first place among his musician colleagues at home. From him he even accepted advice on his clothes. "Our home is his home," Mrs. Kodály remarked already in 1917. It was a touching moment, on October 10, 1940, when at Bartók's last visit to the Kodály's Emma handed a red-white-green ribbon to their friend, "that he should never forget Hungary; Bartók carefully preserved this ribbon."

His relations, among foreign composers, were untroubled and good with Busoni, and cordial with Ravel and Honegger. He approached Delius with quite sentimental, almost exuberant intentions of friendship, but his initiative was not reciprocated.

Among writers he was drawn most to Ady, Móricz, and Babits, and he was not aloof to Kassák's approaches either. As for those abroad he was closest to Thomas Mann. They met several times, on the first occasion at the home of György Lukács's parents.*

In conclusion, as regards Bartók's position, affinities as well as rejections in society, a family member offers newer and newer evidences that with members of the gentry class, alien to the people, he was always ill at ease, and that he felt free only in the country, among peasants. "How many lusty, perfect young bodies, how many faces radiating joy; how much naiveté, and how much unaffectedness."

The last lines of the book inform us laconically in a manner worthy of his father that in his years in America, despite the selfless helpers who bustled about him Bartók died lonely and friendless. "Only a few attended his funeral." Yet the events of the centenary proved in the United States, in Europe, and throughout the world, that it is his work among that of the century's great composers, that is the most alive.

Since the radiating force of his music and his posture have lost nothing of their value we read these books with unflagging curiosity. They render his features more discernible, and speak the facts and the truth both about his life and his work.

ANDRÁS FODOR

* See *NHQ* 84

GREGORIAN CHANT IN PRINT AND ON RECORDS

Benjamin Rajeczky: *Melodiarium Hungariae Medii Aevi.* I: *Hymni et Sequentiae.* Second edition. Editio Musica, Budapest, 1982, xii, 328 pp.; Benjamin Rajeczky: *Melodiarium Hungariae Medii Aevi.* I: *Hymni et Sequentiae.* Supplementary volume. Editio Musica, Budapest, 1982, viii, 112 pp. in Hungarian and German; J. Szendrei, L. Dobszay and B. Rajeczky: *Magyar Gregoriárium — többszólamú tételekkel* (Hungarian Plainsong—with polyphonic movements). Cantus Gregorianus ex Hungaria. Editio Musica, Budapest, 1981, 84 pp. in Hungarian; *MAGYAR GREGORIÁNUM* (Gregorian Chants from Hungary) 1–6. Scola Hungarica. Conducted by László Dobszay and Janka Szendrei. Hungaroton. SLPX 11477, 12048, 12049, 12059, 12169, 12170.

Gregorian chant was the monumental, monophonic music of medieval Europe. It came into existence in the service of the Catholic Church as an integral element of the liturgy.* In its origins and spread—as more recent research has revealed—it moved along the borders of folk and art music, and nourished European art music for centuries. In the recent past, owing to the use of vernacular languages in the Catholic liturgy, the Latin vocal culture entered into crisis. In fact, it lost its original function, became ownerless, so to speak. The obvious questions therefore are whether these tones will fall into disuse or will prove viable outside the framework of the liturgy.

The question seeks a two-sided solution. The identification, collection, classification, and preservation of this melodic treasure-hoard is a scientific undertaking *par excellence.* It is similar to the work of collecting, investigating, and classifying folk-music that was carried out in the first half of this century in Hungary by Bartók and Kodály and by dedicated musicologists in other countries virtually at the last moment. The essential difference with folk-music research however is that Gregorian research is dependent on written sources, and not on a melodic stock surviving through living oral tradition. The gathering of melodic material of codices and records preserved in different geographical areas, from various times, the classification and publication of the texts in critical editions constitute the most important stages in this work. The effort is widespread and Benjamin Rajeczky's melody collection published in 1956, which presented medieval hymn and sequence melodies from Hungarian sources, *Melodiarium Hungariae Medii Aevi,* was significant even by international standards. In its time the volume did not excite the response on the international level and in professional circles that it merited, even though no comparable comprehensive hymn or sequence collection has seen publication anywhere in the world since then. It was issued in a small edition (not a copy has been available even second-hand for years) and because of inadequate export channels of the time only a small number of copies went abroad. Therefore it did not become the reference-work it should have been.

In 1982 a second edition was published by Editio Musica Budapest. In effect this was the book's real première. Since the first

* See Benjamin Rajeczky's comprehensive "Gregorian Chant in Hungary," *NHQ* 86.

edition of 1956 newer sources have been discovered containing further melodies. For this reason a supplement had to be brought out with the original book; the supplement sums up and organically complements the melodic material of the main volume.

The title promises a series, a collection of melodies of Hungary in the Middle Ages, of which two genres are represented in the first volume. These genres, the hymn and the sequence, constitute the youngest or most modern strata of Gregorian chant. They are not even closely linked to the liturgy. The religious poetry of the Middle Ages unfolds in these relatively freer genres, and although this lyricism drew directly on Christian mythology (biblical scenes, lives of the saints, and so on) a large part of the chants —particularly those of the sequences which were enormously popular in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries—were ousted from the liturgy.

This melodic material, embellished with melismata and repeats, is particularly suited for suggesting local characteristics which diverged from the international. Naturally, to seek out a typical Hungarian character in them would be useless. Gregorian chant was an international musical language—it was perhaps the only truly international language in the thousands of years of European history. The basic language was the same in Rome, Limoges, Paris, Sankt Gallen, or Buda. Yet certain local traits are evident in the melodic material unearthed and published. These include the lesser variations in the melodies known in the international repertoire, new texts to familiar melodies, and the few chants unknown in the international repertoire.

The *Melodiarium* contains the melodies of 105 hymns, which are complemented by 17 melodies in the supplementary volume. The number of melodies of sequences in the main volume is 94, to which a further 50 are added in the supplementary volume. The collection of melodies is introduced with a study by Rajeczky, in Hungarian and German; the hymn and sequence melodies are followed by detailed critical notes in German. The supplementary volume follows a largely similar arrangement of material, with the difference that it achieves more uniform principles in the editing: all of the textual sections are to be found in two languages, in Hungarian and German.

The melodies are written in the traditional notation of Gregorian chant. This is not very well known today. In the practice of church music earlier this century attempts were made to rewrite Gregorian chant into modern notation; but none of the various modes of transcription proved satisfactory. It became evident that modern musical notation is unsuited to this music, and that the contemporary, apparently primitive, plainsong notation returns these melodies most authentically. Today there are very few engravers at home in this mode. The notation material of the main volume was prepared by such a master engraver, now dead, with great artistry. The visual appearance is an aesthetic experience in itself. The reader will be abundantly rewarded for the relatively painless effort needed to familiarize himself with the principles of this straightforward system. The notation material in the supplementary volume was not engraved. It is drawn with a sensitive hand, following the symbols of the main volume, and its standard of execution is not a bit inferior.

Methodical Gregorian research has a considerable history, nevertheless publications of source value are being but slowly added to. The first volume of Rajeczky's *Melodiarium* is an important and essential link in the chain of international research whose continuance both in Hungary and abroad would be only welcome. The second problem which we have posed, namely, how can this material be made to live again, remains unresolved. It is well known that Gregorian chant was an applied and an occasional art. It was intended for a given function, and this function—ritual—represented its true and only natural

medium. Ritual, as any other cultic act, is a drama with a given structure. The music is only a part of the process, one of the elements, interrupting the prayers, the actions, the text. If Gregorian chants are heard one after another from a record, or in a concert hall, they will inevitably tire the listener within a short time, who will find them monotonous and unsophisticated.

Is it possible at all that the Gregorian chant, ousted from the churches, will be able to find its place in another medium, that is, in the contemporary concert hall? Attempts in this direction have already been made, with greater or lesser success—too often the latter. A solution which is in many ways new has been offered by the Schola Hungarica led by László Dobszay and Janka Szendrei on a series of records called *Magyar Gregoriánum* (Gregorian Chants from Hungary). That their concept has proved itself is shown by all of the first four records winning awards; they were so much in demand that Hungaroton released two further records in quick succession in 1981.

The Dobszays' method was largely the following. They did not wish to follow the order of the ceremony, therefore, departing from the fixed tradition, they put together smaller or larger cycles themselves based on the melodies. Naturally this arrangement was not entirely arbitrary. An important requirement was that the succession of the melodic material should show development and diversity. At the same time the chants were grouped according to a given thematic tsructure, within which the church traditions prevail. The cycles thus evolved are linked, for example, with the major events of the church calendar: Christmas, Holy Week, Easter, and Whitsuntide. But other themes are used to group chants around, for instance, the historical and/or legendary Hungarian saints, the Marian chants, or community events such as a funeral. In this latter case an independent musical cycle is made up of chants attached to a funeral, and thus meaning and mood are interrelated.

For variety the series of strictly monophonic Gregorian chants has from time to time small (two or three) voice inserts added. (Very properly the 5th and 6th records in the series came out under the more accurate title of *Gregorian and Polyphonic Chants from Medieval Hungary*.) These pieces fit very well into the whole of the cycle. As with most of the polyphonic music of the Middle Ages, they are based originally on Gregorian chants, and their texts link them with the thematic structure of the given cycle. They represent an early stage of polyphonic music, when vocal music had not diverged from the source, Gregorian chant, and had adopted its inflections and breathing virtually without change.

Up to now six records of the series have appeared, each with a thematic grouping: I. Medieval Christmas Melodies; II. Advent—Christmas—Pentecost; III. Holy Week; IV. Easter; V. The Hungarian Saints; VI. Chants of the Blessed Mary—Funeral Chants.

The performance of the Schola Hungarica follows the trend which interprets the Gregorian notation more liberally. The most debated question in Gregorian chant is rhythm. Plainsong notation does not indicate rhythm, only pitch. There is a symbol for the prolongation of a note, but apart from this there is nothing which refers to the rhythm. When the Benedictine monks of Solesmes in the last century undertook the first scholarly investigation of this monophonic body of music, then the way it was sung at the time in church unfortunately no longer provided a reliable guide. Finally they sanctioned the simplest and most rigid procedure: every written note—unless some kind of prolongation mark indicates otherwise—must be of equal duration. This principle prevails in what is called the traditional, equivalist approach. The Dobszays have departed from this rigid practice to some extent. Both conductors are engaged in scholarly activities, and like Benjamin Rajeczky, they represent the

historical comparative school. They regard the musical practice of the Middle Ages as an indivisible whole; in addition to Gregorian research they are actively engaged in the study of folk-music and they therefore have a knowledge of the *parlando* style which preserves archaic strata of folk-music and which very likely stands closest to Gregorian chant. In their performance of Gregorian chant they apply the devices of this sensitively swaying folk-song speech, filtering it, using moderation.

The Schola Hungarica is not a closed ensemble, the conductors sometimes alter its size and composition, the balance of voices so that a diversity of sound quality is achieved. Naturally the performers take into consideration contemporary performing practice (chants which were sung in the liturgy by a children's choir, are also heard on the record in children's voices; in the several voiced movements instruments are added, a contemporary practice of delivery). The leaders of the Schola Hungarica are thus suggesting a solution for the modern performing practice of Gregorian chant.

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The publication of the score of *Magyar Gregoriánum* (Cantus Gregorianus ex Hungaria), however, is intended not only for those who enjoy listening to sacred chant of the Middle Ages but also to make available the material and the method for performance. The publication offers the material of the first four records in the record series in a rather complete form. It contains the five cycles of Advent, Christmas, Holy Week, Easter, and Whitsuntide. The principal aims are two in number. First of all it offers ready-to-use material to choirs, which in this form and arrangement (with minor alterations, deletions where necessary) may be presented in concert performance. Secondly it offers choir conductors a method which they themselves may use to compile from available collections —according to their needs, tastes, and opportunities—cycles of chants in a similar manner.

As regards notation, a compromise had to be made. The notation is handwritten, because a well-versed music engraver could not be found and because of economic considerations. The result is a sort of intermediate solution, offering something between the original plainsong notation and the modern five-line notation. It makes use of a five-line staff, with modern clefs (treble, and in a few instances bass clef); in other words, it reckons in absolute pitch, which is entirely contrary to the musical ideas of the Middle Ages. Moreover, it even makes use of key signatures, in places two or three sharps, which again is alien to this music. The notes are indicated by little balls (round noteheads without stems) with which the editors have endeavoured to approximate the original plainsong notation. This mode of script is actually a makeshift arrangement quite well known in professional circles though not much outside them. Mastery in reading this—taking into account the difficulties in deciphering clusters of minute noteheads—is hardly any easier achieved then the interpretation of the orginal, historical Gregorian chant notation.

All the same, this publication does a great service. It usefully complements the record series, offers an opportunity to listen in a more absorbed manner to the music, and provides incentive and a device for its live performance. Last, but not least, it makes available an important stock of melodies to the general public.

István Homolya

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

ALMÁSSY, Mariann (b. 1952). Teacher, journalist. A graduate in Hungarian and ethnography of the University of Debrecen. Has published numerous articles on various aspects of ethnography.

CSIKY, Ottó (b. 1928). Deputy Chief Judge of the Supreme Court. Graduated in law in 1951. Specialized in family law on which he has published books and articles. These include *A modern házasság problémái* (Problems of modern marriage) 1965, and *A gyermek családi jogállása* (The legal position of children in the family) 1973.

CZEIZEL, Endre (b. 1935). M.D., geneticist, heads the Human Genetics Laboratory in the National Institute for Public Health. Has done research into the genetic parameters of the Hungarian population as well as the genetic background of congenital defects. Reorganized the National Register of Congenital Defects in 1970 and established a Register of Identical Twins in Budapest the same year. Has worked on the seven-nation WHO-sponsored International Congenital Defects Monitor network and other international projects. See "Genetic Counseling in Hungary," *NHQ* 79.

FERENCZI, László (b. 1937). Our regular poetry reviewer.

FODOR, András (b. 1929). Poet, translator, essayist. Vice President of the Hungarian Writers' Association. Studied at the University of Budapest and Eötvös College. Since 1959 on the staff of the National Széchényi Library. In addition to several volumes of his own poetry, has also published translations of Chaucer, Longfellow, Pushkin, Nekrasov, and others. Has published a volume of essays on Béla Bartók and a biography of Stravinsky.

FRANK, János (b. 1925). Art critic, one of our regular art reviewers.

GRANASZTÓI, György (b. 1938). Historian, a graduate of the University of Budapest. A Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Historical Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and on the staff of *Történelmi Szemle*, a historical quarterly. Has published on medieval urban history including *A középkori magyar város* (The medieval Hungarian City) 1980.

GYERTYÁN, Ervin (b. 1925). Our regular film critic.

GYÖRFFY, Miklós (b. 1942). Our regular reviewer of prose fiction.

HAVASI, Ferenc (b. 1929). Member of the Political Committee and Secretary of the Central Committee of the HSWP. First Secretary to the Komárom County Party Committee (1961–66). Member of the Central Committee of the HSWP since 1966, represents the constituency of Tatabánya in Parliament since 1980, Deputy Prime Minister between 1975 and 1978, when elected to his present office.

HOLLAI, Imre (b. 1925). Deputy Foreign Minister. President of the United Nations General Assembly for the 1982–83 session. He entered the foreign service in 1949. Head of the Department for Foreign Relations of the Central Committee of the HSWP (1960–63), Ambassador to Greece (1964–70) and Deputy Foreign Minister 1970–74. Permanent Representative of the Hungarian People's Republic to the United Nations 1974–80.

HOMOLYA, István (b. 1940). Musicologist, a graduate of the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music. Since 1969 an editor on the staff of Editio Musica, Budapest, at present

in charge of early music publications. Has published books on Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso, and Bálint Bakfark, a life of Ede Zathureczky the Hungarian violinist, and edited the Valentini Bakfark Opera Omnia. See his obituary on András Pernye in *NHQ* 80.

KARAFIÁTH, Judit (b. 1943). Literary historian. Graduated in English and French from the University of Budapest. Works at the Institute of Literary Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences where her main field of research is value orientation in fiction.

KONTRA, Miklós (b. 1950). Assistant Professor of English Linguistics at Kossuth Lajos University, Debrecen. From 1978 to 1981 he taught Hungarian at Indiana University, Bloomington. For the past several years he has been doing research into American–Hungarian bilingualism.

KOVÁTS, Valéria (b. 1925). Archeologist. A graduate in archeology of the University of Budapest. On the staff of the Janus Pannonius Museum in Pécs. In charge of excavations at Szigetvár and other sites in County Baranya. Has published widely on her work.

LAKATOS, István (b. 1927). Poet, translator. Published his first volume of verse in 1949. His latest book of poems appeared in 1982. Has translated Virgil's *Aeneid* and works by Horace, Ariosto, Tasso, Goethe, Heine, etc. See his poems in *NHQ* 52. Original titles of poems in this issue: *Atrium mortis; Egy szenvedély képei (Lírai napló. Részletek).*

MAÁCZ, László (b. 1929). Journalist, editor-in-chief of *Táncművészet*, a dance monthly. A graduate in museology and ethnography of the University of Budapest. Author of *Magyar néptáncok, táncos népszokások.* (Hungarian folk dancing, and dancing folk customs) 1958.

MALLER, Sándor (b. 1917). Was headmaster of the English College at Sárospatak and lecturer in Hungarian at the University of Aberdeen, later lecturer in English at the University of Debrecen. He was a senior librarian at Debrecen University and the National Széchényi Library of Budapest. Became a staff member of the Unesco Secretariat, Paris (1957–68) and was Secretary General of the Hungarian National Commission for Unesco (1963–1978). See his previous contributions in *NHQ* 39, 56, 57 and 83.

MOJZER, Miklós (b. 1931). Art historian and museologist. A graduate of the University of Budapest. For years on the staff of the Museum of Fine Arts, for the past eight years on that of the National Gallery, with special responsibility for Hungarian late Gothic and baroque paintings. Works: *Genre Painting in the Hungarian National Gallery*, also in German, Corvina Press, 1974: *German and Austrian Paintings of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Corvina Press, 1975.

PAPP, Gábor (b. 1943). Historian and journalist, a graduate of the University of Budapest, now on the staff of *Népszabadság*, the daily of the HSWP. His main field is the popularization of science.

PUJA, Frigyes (b. 1921). Minister of Foreign Affairs. Held various posts before becoming Minister Plenipotentary to Sweden (1953–55), and later to Austria (1955–59). Between 1968 and 1973 first Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. His works include: *A békés egymás mellett élés problémái* (The problems of peaceful coexistence) 1967, *Szocialista külpolitika* (Socialist foreign policy) 1973, *A magyar külpolitika* (Hungarian foreign policy) 1980. His most recent contributions are "Maintaining and Improving the Results of Détente," *NHQ* 81 and "The perils of the Arms Race and the Countervailing Power of Détente," 85.

SCHOENMAN, Theodore (b. 1903). Chemist of Hungarian birth, he was forced to seek political refuge in Paris for his part in the Hungarian Republic of Councils in 1919. Studied chemistry at the Sorbonne and at the University of Pozsony. After a long career in the US as a researcher on fungi and fungicides, as consultant on wood and fabric preservation, and as a manufacturer, he worked for years as West Coast Director of Studies in the Third World Foundation. In collaboration with Helen Benedek Schoenman shared a lifelong interest in the exploits of those political refugees of the 1848 Hungarian Revolution who went to America in the years preceding the Civil War. The Schoenmans prepared John Xantus's *Travels in Southern California* for publication in 1976 (Wayne State University Press.) Another book by Xantus, *Letters from North America*, appeared in their translation in 1975. See also "Sándor Bölöni Farkas, an Early Hungarian Traveller in America," (With Helen Benedek Schoenman) in *NHQ* 63.

SUPKA, Magdolna (1914). Art historian, a graduate of the University of Budapest. Was on the staff of various Hungarian museums including the Hungarian National Gallery. Her main field of research is painting and graphic art in the 19th and 20th centuries in Hungary. Published a number of books on Hungarian art.

SZABÓ, Júlia (b. 1939). Art historian, on the staff of the Institute of Art History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Her field of interest is 19th and 20th century Hungarian art. Besides studies on Douanier Rousseau and Kandinsky, she is the author of *A magyar aktivizmus művészete* (The art of the Hungarian activists), 1981.

SZÁRAZ, György (b. 1930). Essayist, critic and playwright, editor of *Kortárs* a Budapest monthly. Has written plays for stage and televison, a selection of which, *A Rókus templom harangjai* (The bells of Roche church) appeared in 1979. Author of the pamphlet *Egy előítélet nyomában* (On the tracks of a prejudice), 1976, on the roots of antisemitism.

SZÉKELY, András (b. 1942). Art critic, a graduate of the University of Budapest. Worked for years as reader for Corvina Press, now on the staff of *Új Tükör*, an illustrated weekly. Author of "Spanish Painting" (in English, 1977); "An Illustrated History of Hungarian Culture" (in German, 1978); a life of Kandinsky (in Hungarian, 1979). See his "Amerigo Tot Retrospective," *NHQ* 87.

TARBAY, Ede (b. 1932). Author and critic. Graduated from the Academy of Theatre and Cinematography. Worked in several theatres and for television. Free lance since 1974. Works include volumes of tales for children and plays for the young. See "Puppets as High Art," *NHQ* 73, and "Open-air Sculpture Workshops," 74.

TARJÁN, Tamás (b. 1949). Our regular theatre reviewer.

VARGA, Bálint András (b. 1941). Music critic, a graduate in English and Russian of the University of Budapest. Head of promotion at Editio Musica and regular contributor on music at Hungarian Radio and Television. Has published two volumes of interviews with prominent musicians, as well as individual volumes of conversations with Witold Lutoslawski (in English: "Lutoslawski Profile," Chester, 1976), Iannis Xenakis, and Luciano Berio.

VÉGH, János (b. 1936). Art historian, heads the Department of Art History at the Academy of Applied Arts in Budapest. Works include: "Sixteenth Century German Paintings in Hungarian Museums" (1972), "Early Netherlands Paintings" (1977), both

from Corvina Press, Budapest, and also in English. See his reviews on "Renaissance North of the Alps, by Rózsa Feuer–Tóth," *NHQ* 73, "The Art of Master M.S., by Miklós Mojzer," 75, "The Origin of the Hungarian Crown, by Éva Kovács–Zsuzsa Lovag," 82, and "A Concise Art History of Hungary," 84.

VÉSZI, Endre (b. 1916). Poet, novelist, story writer. An engraver by training, he first published poems while still working in his trade in the 30s. Has published over 35 volumes of short stories, novels, poetry, and plays for the stage, television and radio. See his short story "The Provider," in *NHQ* 70.

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18.—

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