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The New Hungarian Quarterly

Number 25

Contributions by

Walter Allen, Dennis Gabor, William Phillips,
Chalmer S. Roberts, Lord Snow, Lund Stallaert,
Albert Szent-Györgyi, J. C. Trewin, Arnold Wesker

Hungary and Europe

János Péter

First Hours in New York

Iván Boldizsár

At Work on a Hamlet Opera

Sándor Szokolay

The Third Hungarian Five Year Plan

Péter Vályi—István Hetényi

Poetry Days in Budapest

Contributions by

Roger Caillois, Gyula Illyés, Edwin Morgan,
István Sótér

The New Hungarian Quarterly

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

NUMBER 25

When six years ago the first number of *The New Hungarian Quarterly* was being compiled, we not only did not know if we would reach the first jubilee, the twenty-fifth number, but we were not even sure there was going to be a No. 2. Editing an English-language magazine in a non-English speaking country is a difficult venture involving risks in any case, but it seemed particularly venturesome in Hungary in 1960. We were uncertain of our reception in those countries where English is the mother tongue or the official language. We could not know whether any sympathy would be accorded to the ideas and aims which we put in these words in the first number: "What aim could be more significant than that of promoting mutual knowledge and deeper understanding among the nations? This aim, amidst all the dangers and threats of the nuclear age, implies confidence in peace, attachment to life and respect for man."

In every country which *The New Hungarian Quarterly* reached, and especially in Britain, conditions were ripe for mutual understanding and—to use a now fashionable, almost outworn term—dialogue, just as they were in Hungary. The Ice Age of the Cold War was then receding and now, as we send No 25 to press, the editorial staff entertains the hope that perhaps the existence and the articles of *The New Hungarian Quarterly* have also contributed to making the sheet of ice thinner by an inch or two.

By analysing the problems and achievements of a society in the process of transformation, by examining the past and present history of a nation small but of chequered fate, by seeking its place among all European peoples, by revealing the old and new assets of Hungarian literature, art and music, by giving a candid and thorough account of the reforms, followed with such world-wide attention, of the socialist economy, we feel that we have succeeded in arousing the interest of the intellectuals of many

countries not only towards Hungary but also towards the possibilities of peaceful coexistence. At the same time—overstatement being a stock national trait of small nations—we have sought to guard against an excess of adjectives, to avoid superlatives and generally to show ourselves for what we are. The editing of this periodical obliges us to try and view ourselves from without, through the eyes of the foreign reader. We have gained much useful experience and self-knowledge by weighing everything on a delicate balance before deciding on what should go in to, and what should be left out of, each number. We always ask ourselves whether a particular contribution has anything to say to the world. And, besides, we have profited much from the manifold advice, criticism, requests and inquiries received from our friends and readers. We have been and are aware that, much as Hungary remains the centre of the world for us, we can only bank on the foreign reader's continued interest if we forgo being "Hungarocentric." This means that we have endeavoured to contribute to the discussion of the cardinal issues of our age, whether in philosophy, literature, politics or other spheres that currently engage the attention of people in general and intellectuals in particular in the five continents.

It is gratifying for us to see that we have in several countries, especially in Britain, many regular readers and subscribers whose interest, forbearance and patience represent the most substantial encouragement to the editors, editorial board and contributors of our periodical.

It has been a pleasure and distinction for us to receive contributions of articles and essays from several prominent figures of the international intellectual scene, whose list is headed by UN Secretary General U Thant and includes, in order of their appearance in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, such personalities as Dennis Gabor, C. P. Snow, Robert Melville, J. C. Trewin, Umberto Albin, Hans Hess, Walter Allen, Maurice Lambilliotte, Percy M. Young, Enrico Fulchignoni, Pamela Hansford Johnson, Robert Goffin, William Cooper, Lawrence Kitchin, George S. Whittet, Kenneth Muir, Arthur Miller, Georges Charaire, Nikolaus Pevsner, Roger Caillois, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Neville Masterman, Edwin Morgan.

The interest of these friends of ours encouraged us, on the occasion of the coming-of-age of our periodical, to turn to our foreign contributors and to some international personalities whom we knew were our readers. We did not request articles, even less an assessment of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, all we invited them to do was to commit to paper some of their thoughts and reflections on cooperation in the sphere of ideas, among persons and peoples, on the East-West dialogue, in short, on the humanism of the twentieth century.

The request had its risk because we put it to a group of the busiest people of our age. As anticipated, not everybody has responded to our appeal. It is with all the greater pleasure that we publish below the short statements received, some in letter form, some in that of an article.

In the very first number six years ago we spoke of that initial link which was to bind this new quarterly with the then still imaginary reader. That initial link was the common objective that humanity should never again accept fascism and relapse into the barbarity of a world war. Today our readers are no longer imaginary, and we hope that, despite the cold blasts that rise from time to time, and sometimes—as now in Vietnam—shake our confidence, this is equally true of the common objective. The editors and authors of *The New Hungarian Quarterly* and—as will appear below—its foreign contributors too, are at present more confident of attaining the common objective than six years ago. If we can continue to increase this confidence in the period ahead, the work of *The New Hungarian Quarterly* will not have failed of its purpose.

THE EDITOR

WALTER ALLEN

My warmest congratulations to *The New Hungarian Quarterly* on its attaining its jubilee. I read it always with the liveliest interest, and its existence seems to me a most handsome compliment to the English language and therefore to the English. Whether we deserve it is a question that perhaps I had better not now raise. But the *Quarterly's* true significance goes far beyond this. It lies in the fact that it shows that men of good will, despite differences of belief, can yet talk meaningfully to one another. It stands for intellectual and imaginative understanding and, of the two, imaginative understanding is probably the more important.

Throughout history men have been divided by their beliefs, but this ought not to preclude imaginative understanding of beliefs one does not share oneself. If it did—to take an obvious example—it would mean that I, as an agnostic in religion, would be barred from appreciation of a great part of

Western literature, of Dante, Milton, the Anglican and Catholic poets of the seventeenth century in England, of William Blake, Dostoevsky and François Mauriac, and Graham Greene in our own time, to mention only writers who spring to mind immediately. The deprivation would be enormous, and one's humanity diminished in proportion. But it is a fact of experience that it is not so, and one can only thank possibly God that it is not so.

So imaginative understanding, which does not mean intellectual assent but is all the same more humanly valuable than intellectual assent, is possible. And if this is true of differences in religious beliefs it can surely be equally true of differences in political beliefs. If it is not, then there is little hope for us as a species. The world is in the most appalling mess, as we all know, since we now have it in our power to destroy not only ourselves but the whole of the human race. This is a new situation in history, and it makes the present age essentially different from any that has gone before. For men of

good will, the prospect is terrifying—and one can only hope that it is no less terrifying for men of ill will. In fact, we have to live as men have always lived: as though we are immortal, even though we know that death, in whatever form it takes, will get us in the end.

This entirely new situation in history places a new responsibility, irrespective of the ideologies they profess, on the people we call intellectuals, on imaginative writers, scientists, scholars. The responsibility is precisely that of the imaginative understanding of the beliefs of others and their consequences in the shaping of society. But it does seem to me that, during the last decade or so, perhaps because of the appalling mess the world is in and the general realization that it is a new and vastly more dangerous kind of mess, discourse between men of conflicting beliefs, political and religious alike, has been developing at an unprecedented rate. We know, if we are men of good will, that we have to talk to one another. We know that we have to learn to understand—what I believe to be true—that what we have in common is greater and more important than the differences between us, for the alternative is too awful to contemplate.

It is because I think *The New Hungarian Quarterly* believes this too, and exemplifies in its practice issue by issue, that I am glad to salute it today.

DENNIS GABOR

As you are asking me for my thoughts on the fundamental issues of 20th century humanism, here are a few very rough ones:

The great 19th century humanists, such as John Stuart Mill, have also asked themselves at times whether Man is cut out to be happy, or whether he is such a perverse animal that he is at his best only when fighting adversity? But they only had to look round in their poverty and ignorance-stricken society to be encouraged in their simple faith. Today the intellectuals in two thirds

of the world are still in this position, but those in the rich Western countries are increasingly aware of the new crisis which will arise when the old battle against poverty will be won. To put it in crude Victorian terms, it is now as if the masses were now rising above their natural status, and as if they were not at all happy in their newly found wealth. The battle is still far from won; there is still poverty and insecurity even in the richest countries, we still have an unreliable and irrational economic system which makes it easier for the United States for instance to spend at least twice as much on the Vietnam war than *all* the countries give in aid to *all* the poorer countries. But behind these old-fashioned crises we feel a new crisis arising, of a psychological nature. We see its symptoms in the rising wave of crime (near 10% p.a. in the U.S. and in the U.K.), also in the ludicrous symptom that gambling has now become the biggest industry in Britain. The basically irrational human nature does not fit into a happy, serene world, "man that is born of woman has few days and is full of trouble." Many people feel this, few dare to face it.

Here is a challenge to the 20th century humanists, perhaps the greatest ever. We must invent the new education, which will reconcile the great majority of men and women to peaceful happiness. We must find an answer to the bitter wisdom of the ageing Freud, who declared this last battle as lost in advance. Otherwise it was not worth while to start evolution from the amoeba upwards!

WILLIAM PHILLIPS

For reasons having to do with geography as well as history, American writers and intellectuals have always been very much aware of Europe as a cultural force, and quite nervous about their relation to it. Hence they have tended to swing between one extreme and another, sometimes overstating their

affinity to Europe, at other times emphasizing their self-sufficiency and distance from Europe. But even in their most isolationist moods, American intellectuals were not so much cutting themselves off from Europe as asserting themselves. During World War II, for example, one of the things we suffered from, along with a shortage of sugar, tobacco, and whiskey, was the lack of contact with European writers. And I recall quite vividly our excitement as soon as the war was over at meeting the new European writers, particularly the French, who had grown up during the years of the war.

More recently, the expanding exchange between intellectuals of the East and those of the West has opened up even more exciting prospects. More of one's being is involved—and, of course, more is at stake—when we meet Eastern intellectuals at meetings, seminars, or in informal conversations at home or at a café. One is pushed back to the premises of one's being when talking to people with radically different perspectives. This is not to minimize all the things we have in common—a cultural tradition, a heritage of rationalism and idealism, a respect for everything human, including the perversities of the imagination, and a commitment to a discipline. Perhaps most important is the dedication to a medium, whether it be poetry, or fiction, or criticism, which creates a language and a sense of authenticity and relevance within that language. My own experience has been limited. But I have met a number of Eastern writers and intellectuals of great charm and intelligence, and our exchange has been fruitful when it has been concrete and about some common intellectual or literary concern.

On the other hand, I should say that the exchange has been windy when the meetings have been too official, too formal, too general, and the people too heterogeneous. I do not know enough about writers and intellectuals from the East to know how they are chosen. But I do know that Americans are chosen too haphazardly for meetings in the

U.S. or in Europe. The fact is that we do not in the United States have an intelligentsia in the European sense; if we can be said to have one at all it is a very small one. Many of our writers and journalists belong to a world of popular communication and entertainment. And we have a large number of specialists in various fields whose values and concerns are not those we normally associate with an intelligentsia. Hence these people introduce only an element of confusion and empty rhetoric in an East-West intellectual exchange.

Unfortunately, I have never visited any of the Eastern countries, which is something I want very much to do, for only by meeting writers and intellectuals in their own country, not as intellectual tourists, can one have a lively and exact sense of how they work and think and live.

CHALMERS M. ROBERTS

I am pleased to know that *The New Hungarian Quarterly* is about to issue its 25th number. It is through journals such as yours that a dialogue between East and West, indeed between all rational men, can and must be maintained.

We have lived so long now under the Damoclean sword of the nuclear age that many in both camps more and more assume that the unthinkable simply cannot happen. Alas, it can, as human history has so often demonstrated.

It is my own view that for the foreseeable future the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union will be controlling in terms of the worlds' future. If they work at what Moscow calls "peaceful coexistence" and what President Johnson has recently termed "peaceful engagement," then all the other nations, yours included, can work and live in hope. But if they approach the abyss, as they did over Cuba in 1962, then all others must hold their breath to find out if they are fated to live or die.

Because the power of both Moscow and Washington has been more and more limited by the pressures from friendly states, it is more imperative than ever that the intellectual leaders in all states understand clearly the nature of today's world. In that sense *The New Hungarian Quarterly* plays a role.

LORD SNOW

As you know, I believe that the best hope of the world is that we should continue the East-West dialogue, and do it in greater depth, more frankly, and with as much human understanding as we can command. This seems to me the most important public task of intellectual workers in our time. I have dedicated a good deal of my energies to this mission since the last war. Unless we do it, there is not going to be any 20th century humanism. I should like to say that *The New Hungarian Quarterly* has made a major contribution in precisely this sense. It has given the West—incidentally in the most beautiful English, which is a constant marvel to us—ideas with which many of us are not familiar. It has done this with goodwill and with generosity towards the better aspects of the West. This generosity must work both ways, and is fundamental if we are going to get anywhere. You have shown us how it can be done, and the whole intellectual community is in your debt.

LUND STALLAERT

It is of the small path that I am writing. I find it very hard to do so. Not that this path is insignificant but because I cannot survey its whence and its whither. To help elucidate it to myself, I compare it with the path of nature in the plant and animal world. I observe it; it is winter; I am outside. Yet it is not actually the path followed by nature. I am only making a comparison. But then my word "path" too is only a comparison.

I am helpless. There is darkness in me. Yet I feel that I understand. I feel a certainty in my darkness, as if I were in nature, completely absorbed by her. This dark urge in me is good. In a unique or, rather, "natural" way it links me with, makes me kindred to, animals and plants. And human beings too. In a manner that has become almost unique, I am linked with them not so much organizationally as through nature. I could—if I may continue the comparison a little further and in an unorthodox manner—stand rooted in Hungary or in Poland like a tree. It is this that enables me to understand the small path leading through all of Europe—and beyond it.

The organizational is necessary. We cannot do without it. The more so because we are also outside of nature, almost above her. We are incapable of comprehending all. By organizational I mean the great highway of the systems. It parts and diverges from the small path, perhaps because we want and have to be great. And yet it is precisely the great designers of systems who foresee how the small path and the highway will ultimately unite. For they understand that what is at issue is the individual in his kinship with humanity, in nature. In the end, the big systems will once more be absorbed into nature, a nature that has now become almost perfect.

The good derives not from the systems; on the contrary, what is good in them derives from the dark depths of nature. I experience it through my kinship. That is why, even as the big systems take shape, converge and mature, there must be those who refuse to abandon the dark they inhabit. They are guarding a treasure, an inconspicuous treasure. The moment has not yet come to bring it into the daylight. It is not yet spring for mankind. They remain in the dark, and that is why their path too is a dark one. They follow their path deep below the contradictions of the systems. In man's want, they seek encounter, urged on, as they are, by necessity. Not by the hard necessity that

leads man to fight man inevitably, it would seem, on account of his want. But by the tender necessity they darkly and almost helplessly sense within themselves. It is the urge of kinship—the kinship which is revealed by nature when she lets branches bring forth flowers and fruit, and which is sometimes also revealed in man; in man I call it love. Kinship with whom, with what? With human beings, with plants and animals, even with “dead” matter. Because it represents kinship of the whole. Its meaning is hidden and preserved deep down. Darkly I sense the treasure within me. Only in kinship, by giving myself, can I achieve understanding. It is at the beginning of all big systems: this giving of myself, in kinship with man, with plants and animals, with matter. Let this kinship not go by the board! Let it not be made into a system! For then what is tender, what is good will leave the system, and what remains will be something neutral and cold that has virtually lost all meaning.

The small path leads through the contradictions of the systems. It is within kinship that the mutual comprehension of the kindred takes place. I was in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia, in Poland. I found a spirit of kinship also among leading personalities of those systems. I learned much from them. It arose within me, out of the kinship. On our side also, here in the “West,” there is too little kinship in our systems. I do not wish to speak of this now; it is part of the times we are living. I wish to speak of “the Other.” Cold and untrue images of the others dominate on our side too. Here the task arises out of the good, the true. I call it a true task, because it urges us towards truth. It has several aspects.

The first is *demythification*. It is directed against coldness. Not against necessity, which may also be found in kinship. It is directed against ill will, which erects images that are false, maintains them in order that hardness may survive and lead to conflict. On both sides. It is directed against images

that once may have been true because necessary. Let them now be removed! Let new, more truthful images be set up in one's own country! But how? How can one transform the beliefs of the individual so as to open his mind? It is on what one believes that the images rely. Who still believes them? One lives them, almost without being aware of it. One lives in an image world, composed of newspapers, of reports, originating in one's own system. It would be better to encounter—what comes from the world of the others. Is it too early yet? One prepares for it by going there, by seeing, in order to convince oneself. By “seeing.” For oneself. Not by exchanging images. It is the small path. But the seeing of the few already helps to change the false images.

I turn to the second aspect: *encounter*. It is difficult. It is rather rare. It takes place within kinship, and only there, for it is the source of the true. I had the privilege of encountering—in Budapest and in Vienna, in Prague and in Warsaw. Here is an example: I encountered Ota Šik, far behind the images. And so I came to know the mandate falling to him, his land, my land. I was able to invite him. He spoke to about a hundred export managers. He changed their image of his land. Because they believed him. Because he spoke from kinship, from where the big highway and the small path join. His hundred listeners are still talking about it, because behind the images they “saw” and were moved by their seeing. I know of no other way, no genuine one. Drop by drop the river must emerge.

And finally, the third aspect: *dialogue*. Let me sum up. Man still *desires* truth. He also wants to believe, even in images, provided they are true. To achieve this, one has to see. One prepares for it through encounter, better still, through dialogue.

If we are in earnest when, as human beings, we desire peace and peacefulness, then starting out from the system, let us have the courage to accept the great mission of enabling people to meet, on the small path, as

kindred beings. Dialogue calls for openness, for a readiness to let oneself be informed, to gain understanding of the other's situation—a readiness, when one discovers falsehood, to change oneself as well. Not through reason, not through the system. For the system too relies on belief. Dialogue means to exchange views in a spirit of kinship that grows—and may be “imaged”—in the course of dialogue. Yes, imaged, for it is kinship that designs the images. We are on our way. What expresses the ultimate truth? For not the “images,” not the big systems, represent the ultimate. They change, they cannot but change. They arise from kinship, from the true. In true kinship they seek to ensure man's efflorescence. Let there be openness. May kinship not be confined to closed groups. May we dare to let human beings meet each other “dialogically” ever more frequently: students, small groups, real human beings. There is a need for permanent meeting grounds for encounters, where constant dialogue takes place because our time demands it, so that we may find each other.

This is what I call the small path. In the end, I hope, this path will support the great highway.

ALBERT SZENT-GYÖRGYI

Basic research, that is, research aimed at an understanding of nature, without regard to applicability, is a queer proposition with many contradictory traits. All the great progresses are the result of earlier basic research. So the shortest way to progress is to search for truth for truth's sake, and if research tries to be useful it becomes useless, and is most useful when it does not search application.

Similarly, scientific research is a mixture of two contradictory factors, logic and intuition. Science is very logical, but it is not logic which leads in research to discovery, but intuition, an unconscious feeling which cannot be described in exact terms.

Science is changing the face of human life. One of the important new factors which it brought into man's history is that it opened the way to expansion in an entirely new direction, towards the unknown. Before the present scientific revolution the only possibility for expanding and enrichment, for a nation, was by subjugating and robbing other nations. Naturally, the stronger and bigger a nation was, the more successful it was. Now, in the age of our scientific revolution, every nation can expand towards the unknown, and its success will not depend on the strength of its army, but only on the quality and quantity of its brains and its morals. Not only is there no need to fight against other nations, to the contrary, each nation can expand towards the unknown faster and better if it can collaborate with other nations.

We scientists are always in favour of collaboration and mutual understanding, science itself being the product of the labour of men of different nationalities, creeds and colour. Not only do national boundaries not divide us, even time cannot separate us. Newton and Galileo make part of my daily life though they may have been dead for centuries. Since this spirit unites us, we suffer doubly by the sight of war, hostility and organized manslaughter which can only destroy and not build. Our science has offered mankind a free choice between undreamt of wealth and dignity on the one side, and our extinction on the other, and we find it difficult to understand why we take the road towards the latter, instead of joining hands to build a better future.

J. C. TREWIN

My first editor said to me: “Never mind stating the obvious if the obvious is true.” He meant that one must avoid, in writing, the kind of desperate search for synonyms that a Professor called “elegant variation.” He meant also: “Do not be frightened of the cliché simply because a truth seems to

have been stated too often. That should make no difference. Can you over-state the truth?"

I thought of him just now while beginning to write this note. Primarily, I want to congratulate *The New Hungarian Quarterly* on its coming-of-age, and to wish it very many happy returns for the future. There is no review (and I cannot say it too often) that I respect more: it does infinite service as a link, an interpreter, between two nations with so much to share.

Let me say immediately that congratulation, if it is honest—and mine certainly is—cannot be a cliché. What I had in mind was the phrase, "Art has no frontiers." When I recalled it, I remembered also that a great Cornish writer spoke once of his earliest experience at a play as a look at "a new and unrecognised world, stretching deeper and still deeper as the scenes were lifted—a world in which solid walls crumbled and forests melted, and loveliness unfolded like a rose." He was speaking of a childhood memory; but it is something that all of us who live in and round the theatre know. It is something that transcends politics, the moods of a moment. It is an emotion before which forests do melt, barriers and frontiers fade: the moment when (as the critic Ivor Brown has written), maybe out of the tantrums and tornado of a bad rehearsal, out of frustration and delay and confusion, a play can suddenly "flame amazement."

Nothing can match the pleasure of sitting with a companion, an audience, similarly rapt, at a major play, a major performance. I have shared this corporate experience in various countries beside my own, but never more deeply than in Budapest, and particularly at the Madách Theatre *Hamlet*. Not so long ago the leading actor of that night, Miklós Gábor, sat in our London garden with a celebrated English Hamlet. There was hardly any need to introduce them. They shared an experience. They understood each other. They were friends at once, frontiers forgotten.

I have known the same instant affinity between two writers, two artists, two poets (who would have blushed to remember that poets are the "unacknowledged legislators of the world"). Truths, I repeat, are sometimes neglected because ears are deaf to repetition. Only the other day I was complaining that, in a revival of *Macbeth*, the Macduff blurred the phrase "at one fell swoop." In English it has long been a cliché, used out of context, and the actor perhaps was unconsciously embarrassed. But it came in fire from Shakespeare's mind and pen, and any actor must try to hear it freshly. So must his audience. There is so much we should all seek to hear freshly.

I believe strongly in cultural exchange between two nations—and, it follows naturally, in the value of any friendly meeting. There can be "neither border nor breed nor birth" when those who perform the same tasks, or serve the same arts, meet to discuss them. Then the forests melt, the barriers fall—even the barriers of language: it is astonishing how much the poorest linguist can understand when the matter is close to his heart. In the theatre, in poetry, in the novel and the essay, the meaning comes through. It is (as the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas said) the force that through the green fuse drives the flower.

Everyone (I am persuaded) does seek at heart to understand the next man: we cannot dismiss as roseate clichés all that the poets of every land have written of the nobility of friendship:

I count myself in nothing else so happy
As in a soul remembering my good friends.

Begin with Shakespeare, and we must go on. I daresay one of the most moving scenes is the reconciliation in *The Tempest*, from the depths of Shakespeare's matured wisdom: I recall across the years a few often unremarked lines of Gonzalo that rang out from the first performance I heard (I can reproduce yet the tones of the actor):

O rejoice
Beyond a common joy! And set it down
With gold on lasting pillars!

That is what I feel—and my wife with me—about our own warm, lasting, and intensely-valued Hungarian friendships: the sharing of ideas and experiences. I return to my first editor: "Never mind stating the obvious if the obvious is true." Surely, sympathetic understanding, eager response, the happy candour of friendship—these are the needs of our turbulent twentieth-century world. Artists have no need to be told. They know that forests can melt, mountains crumble. Set it down with gold on lasting pillars: the excitements of the hitherto "unrecognised world, stretching deeper and still deeper as the scenes are lifted." Let us, whoever we are, wherever we are, whatever we do—let us talk and mingle as friends who rejoice and understand.

ARNOLD WESKER

28th September 1966

Dear Sir,

I haven't, at the moment, anything I wish particularly to write under the heading you suggest for the 25th number of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*. But I am very anxious that an Epilogue I wrote for the Penguin edition of my latest play, *The Four Seasons*, should be as widely read and discussed as possible.

The Four Seasons is a love story for two characters, which has been performed to-date in London and Prague. The critics were so startled at what they imagined was a change of style and intention, that the majority attacked the play.

The Epilogue was written subsequently in order to explain and defend. I am sending you a copy of this Epilogue which, by a stretch of the imagination, could come under the heading of "East-West dialogue," or "the fundamental issues of 20th century humanism."

I don't think it is necessary to have read the play or seen it in order to understand what the Epilogue says.

I hope this answers your request.

Yours sincerely,
A. W.

The Four Seasons sets out to explore only the essentials of a relationship with deliberately little recourse to explanation or background; but the dialogue is heightened, the form highly stylized and the metaphor of the play simple: there lay the dangers both for understanding and performing the work. The heightened dialogue invites the "poetic" rendering, the high stylization invites portentous direction, and the simplicity of the metaphor—equating stages of love with the passing of the seasons—tempts one to suspect there must be "more to it than that"—there is not. Adam does not represent "man" nor Beatrice "woman," nor is the deserted house a womb. It is a play neither of allegory nor symbols; the scenes and sequences of events are nothing more than they seem.

Yet conscious that a wilful withholding of certain information might cause an audience to pursue irrelevant questions, it seemed right to present that kind of information which would ensure concentration on the relationship alone. A major problem then: what kind of information? That which seemed inevitable. For instance, neither Adam nor Beatrice mentions to whom the house belongs. Adam could have said that it belonged to his father but such information is timid; it would have jarred and made no difference to their subsequent relationship. Beatrice spends the entire season of winter in silence and immobility; she could have pottered around, attempted the mechanical motions of survival but—such action is feeble; the form would have been cluttered.

In writing the play I confronted one other major problem: how to avoid the trap of creating a pseudo-poetic dialogue; and one major consideration: can one re-

create a love relationship and ignore any recognizable social context?

The first: the words and rhythms of everyday speech are rich and contain their own poetry, but after a time they cease to be adequate. In six plays (*Their Very Own and Golden City* was written before *The Four Seasons*) I have wrung from such speech rhythms all that I was able, at least for the moment, and wanted to create a heightened and lyrical language. Of course pretentiousness had to be avoided, but the problem of using current English dialogue lay in its impoverishment; it is a real and disturbing problem.

Let me give an example. In the rehearsal script of the play and throughout the production Adam told Beatrice that she had "autumn soft skin." For me this conjured up the image of walks through the wind and soft rich colours of autumn landscapes—until someone insisted the image belonged more to a television advert for Camay Soap. I resisted the suggestion at first but finally acknowledged it and deleted the words. Then it occurred to me how much of our language had been abused by such misuse. The suggestion that a box of chocolates brings "eternal happiness," that "love blossoms" with the right toothpaste, that "peace" comes with a cigarette, that "manhood dawns" with a certain kind of beer. And more: not only have words been denied us by misuse, not only have I spent six plays on everyday rhythms but, since *Look Back in Anger*, there have been so many plays exploiting the vitality of current idioms, to say nothing of those endless tales of everyday life turned out by television. This is not to denigrate ordinary speech or attack the plays which followed *Look Back* and *Roots*, I'm simply stating a fact about the nature of artistic development over which the artist has little control, namely this: certain devices as well as certain fields of human behaviour offer only a limited fund of inspiration for the

artist or, nearer the truth, they offer an endless fund for only a limited time.

The second: there is an argument which says that individual or private pain can have no relevance in a society where a man's real tragedies are bound inextricably with his social environment; a story unrelated to and ignoring social and political events is a story that has no truth or validity. To which I make this reply: If compassion and teaching the possibility of change are two of the many effects of art, a third is this: to remind and reassure people that they are not alone not only in their attempts to make a better world but in their private pains and confusions also. The terrible sneers and ridicule that private pain in art has attracted from socialists has helped create the intimidating image of the socialist as cold-hearted and relentlessly chastising, and is perhaps why so many people on the left manifest the same puritanical attitudes towards art and the artist which are shared by a perplexed, narrow-minded bourgeoisie. There is no abandoning in this play of concern for socialist principles nor a turning away from a preoccupation with real human problems; on the contrary, the play, far from being a retreat from values contained in my early writing, is a logical extension of them in that a connexion exists between, for instance, Sara Kahn's cry "love comes first, you can't have brotherhood without love" and Beatrice's lament that "without love I have neither appetite nor desire, I'm capable of nothing."

Deny plays such as this as part of socialist literature and you alienate all men and women who need to know and be confronted by the knowledge that they are not alone in their private pain. You can urge mankind to no action by intimidating it with your eternal condemnation of its frailties. *The Four Seasons* was written because I believe the absence of love diminishes and distorts all action.

HUNGARY AND EUROPE

by

JÁNOS PÉTER

The meaning of the Greek word *Europe* is "far-sighted." As it emerges from the myths of ancient Greece, what the Europeans—at that time the Cretans and no others—wished to indicate by their newly-adopted name was that the root of human culture and civilization had been transferred from Asia to another continent—Europe. National and international class wars, economic and ideological struggles have made Europe a nursery garden extending its fructifying effect over the whole of the globe. In recurrent wars over the centuries their ruling classes have turned the peoples of Europe into enemies of one another; and while the great currents of thought and visions of science, offering prospects of a peaceful and happy future for mankind, were conceived in Europe, it was also certain nations in Europe which introduced one of the most shameful forms of international relationship in history—the system of colonial empires. It was in Europe too that both the wars broke out which set the whole world ablaze. Given the actual international conditions of today, the question whether mankind will be spared a third world war or not, and rid itself once and for all of the causes, dangers and consequences of a thermonuclear holocaust, hinges to a considerable extent on the European countries with different political systems and on their "far-sightedness."

The United States, in participating in the current tug-of-war between war and peace, relies on a comparatively limited body of experience in the field of world politics. The fact that in its employment of nuclear weapons one global power bases itself on insufficient experience in the international arena, on dreams of world hegemony completely ungrounded in any reality, constitutes no inconsiderable threat to world peace and security, and to the future of mankind.

It is the duty of Europe—in some respects the most experienced of all continents—to give a lead, by a joint assumption of responsibility on the

part of the governments of nations with different political systems, in the search for a way to prevent a third world war, that is, a nuclear war.

We here in Central Europe and the Danube Valley found ourselves, we may say, at the very heart of events when the First World War started, and when the Second World War ended, and our countries formed the arena in which they took place. Confirmed by our specific Central European and Danube Valley experience of world wars, we take an especial interest in all steps designed to reduce dangers and tensions in Europe, while at the same time impelled by another consideration, viz., whether developments in Europe help or hinder U.S. aggression in South-East Asia.

Compared with the other continents Europe today appears to be, to say the least, fairly quiet, peaceful and in a state of reasonable equilibrium. Why? Barely a few years after the Second World War, it was in Europe, right here in Central Europe—more precisely in the Danube Valley itself—that a third world war threatened to break out. Today the hazards of international armed conflict in Europe are diminishing.

This is due to a variety of causes. The Central European countries have shown, even in the light of the attempted Berlin *putsch* of 1953 and the 1956 events in Poland and Hungary, that a new social and economic system has become established—and established permanently—in this part of the world, under which these nations, only a generation ago the under-developed countries of Europe, are forging ahead as competent rivals offering strong competition to the countries of the West in the industrial, agricultural, cultural and political fields alike.

Together with the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, the German Democratic Republic has achieved international successes that are extinguishing the illusion—so long cherished by the West German and United States Governments—of a possible annexation of the German Democratic Republic by the Federal Republic.

Changes in the West European scene have equally helped to develop this climate of comparative—one might almost say peaceful—calm in the European situation. The United States has been busy committing its national and international resources to the conflict in South-East Asia to an extent that is permitting both the monopoly capitalists and the progressive movements of the West European countries to intensify their drive for independence, while at the same time the capacity of the United States to counter such moves for emancipation is, as the result of its deteriorating international position, steadily waning. A number of other West European countries have now adhered to the French policy of organizing a “European Europe” which would curb American influence on the European continent, and the first

signs of a similar political tendency seem to be stirring in the German Federal Republic.

The members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization took this general trend into account when, at the 1966 meeting of their consultative body in Bucharest, they put forward proposals to the Nato powers, and to every other West European country, envisaging the preparation of a system of European security. Those proposals were exploratory, concrete and new. The consultative body of Nato met in Paris in mid-December, and the Paris reply to the Bucharest proposals was disappointing. The joint communiqué, it is true, contained references to the peaceful coexistence of European nations with different political systems, and to the peaceful development of the relations between them—and that in itself certainly constitutes some improvement on the past—yet, in the same breath, it proceeds to lay down the principles governing its policy on the arms race as far ahead as 1975. It completely ignores the fact that the Nato Treaty expires in 1969. The joint communiqué makes it clear that the representative of France took no part in drawing up the plans for further military organization and the arms race at the Paris meeting of Nato, which, as far as can be seen, will have been the last Nato meeting to take place in Paris.

In these conditions, the policy of the peaceful coexistence of nations with different political systems is beginning to make headway in Europe, despite the fact that the front line of possible international conflicts that might have the most serious consequences runs across Europe, above all other continents. The activities of the Hungarian People's Republic in the field of foreign policy are designed to further a European détente and the peaceful coexistence of nations in this part of the world. If the countries of Europe succeed in advancing along this course, then the growing menace of a third world war may be banished by, of all countries, those of Europe, the initiators and first victims of the two World Wars.

The establishment of a European system of peace and security is a long and uphill road. The experiences of both the recent and the more distant past may be of aid in the search for a new way, if the governments of present-day Europe will only apply them to contemporary conditions. In the past the Great Powers of Europe tried to establish a balance of power by constructing systems of alliances which were supposed to be an effective means of defeating the enemy in the event of war. And in the past these very attempts to establish a balance of power themselves became the source of fresh conflicts. Both the nineteenth century Holy Alliance of Austria-Hungary, Prussia and Tsarist Russia, and the fabric of such group alliances as the Central Powers, which were instrumental in deciding the start and end as

well as the consequences of the First World War as well as the 'Greater' and the 'Little' Entente, were all brought into being for the avowed purpose of safeguarding peace, yet in the event became the source of new wars.

In the effort to organize the peace and security of present-day Europe it is the trend towards the peaceful coexistence of countries with different political systems, and not the application of the theories of the balance of power of past times, which should prove the more valuable, notwithstanding the fact that the experiences gained through former policies based on the balance of power, also, to some extent, make a contribution. This complicated process may be seen in operation in the current development of relations between France and the Soviet Union—a development of decisive importance in the long process towards the establishment of a European system of peace and security. Today, we must remember, in a world threatened by nuclear war the modern policy which would meet the needs of the hour is not a system of alliances girding themselves up in preparation for armed conflict, nor endeavours to secure a balance of power, but the cooperation of countries with different political systems in finally removing the menace of a third world war and a nuclear holocaust.

In accord with its own historical experience and geographical situation, Hungary is today playing an active part in this task, taking the initiative in all attempts to extend collaboration, in the first place among the socialist countries, and then, on this foundation, among countries with different political systems. In its diplomatic activity and in its foreign policy, it is guided by the realization that the development of collaboration among neighbouring countries—both those with identical and those with different political systems—is slowly and surely leading to the establishment of a European system of peace and security. In the course of our periodic talks with the Austrian government, we consequently look for different ways and means of promoting cooperation among the nations of Central Europe and the Danube Valley. In our relation with the French government we are trying to clarify the concept of a European Europe. We give most careful attention to every proposal that seems to be conducive to the development of a European system of security, and are most happy to take part in every international conference—as for instance the conference of the Foreign Ministers of nine European Countries on the occasion of the recent U.N. session—that appears to us likely to pave the way for an all-European conference on security.

Even today international reaction is trying to exploit the Treaty of Trianon, dictated to Hungary by the imperialist powers, in order to stir up trouble among the peoples of the Danube basin. It is, however, to the common interest of the Danubian nations to foster both the heritage of their common

past, and their present way of life under the new conditions of socialism, through the closest possible ties of amicable and fraternal cooperation.

Cooperation among the Danubian countries, especially those situated along the line dividing the two social systems, may become a factor of considerable value in furthering the development of a European organization of peace and security, in the same way as the relations between such countries as, for instance, the Soviet Union—especially its Baltic republics—and the Scandinavian countries, or Poland and the two Germanies, or the countries with different political systems of the Balkan Peninsula opens up possibilities of a new type of international cooperation.

The Hungarian People's Republic gives its fullest support to this kind of international cooperation and labours to advance it. At the present time, during the period of socialist construction, Hungary has become a force for good in cementing friendship among the nations of the Danube basin. International cooperation in economic, cultural and political fields and in the sphere of communications and transport in this part of Europe may, indeed act as an effective influence towards the establishment of such a European system of peace and security.

The main stumbling block impeding efforts to evolve such a system and find a solution to our problems is the controversy over the German problem, and West German militarism and revanchism. The German Democratic Republic offers the most appropriate basis not only for a settlement of the German problem but, as a result, for European peace and security.

The world is waiting to see whether the policy followed by the new government of the German Federal Republic provides any encouragement for the efforts which have been made to find a solution both for the German problem and for the wider context of European issues; their actions alone can provide an answer to this universal hope. The statements which have been made by the new Government in Bonn have been interpreted in a variety of ways, corresponding to the intricacies of the European situation. In Washington, they are regarded as nationalist in tendency and as a fresh symptom of the political tendencies towards emancipation from the United States. On the other hand, in Europe interpretations vary according to the connections of different quarters with the German problem. In some quarters Kiesinger's policy, on the one hand, and the policies of the former Erhard and Adenauer administrations, on the other, are said to be as like as two peas. In others, the policy of the Grand Coalition is regarded as the old aspirations wrapped in a new form. Elsewhere again it is believed that what we are now viewing is the most sophisticated manifestation that has yet been seen in the entire history of the German Federal Republic. In every speech

dealing with foreign policy that was made at the 9th Congress of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, it was made abundantly clear that the Hungarian People's Republic was ready to cooperate with the German Federal Republic with a view to establishing normal diplomatic relations, given the presence of proper conditions and the existence of the two Germanies. The improvement of the relations of the German Federal Republic with the German Democratic Republic, and in general with the East European socialist countries, should assist in the construction of such a system.

The countries of Western Europe would make an effective contribution to the cause of European security—and of world peace in general—if they would expand their relations, both *de facto* and *de jure*, with the German Democratic Republic, as well as with the other socialist countries in Europe, and if, on the wider international scene, they would make an effort to cooperate with the socialist countries in their effort to curb U.S. aggression in Vietnam and safeguard peace in South-East Asia.

The principal task incumbent on nations today—on the people and government of every country without exception—is to eliminate the threat of nuclear war and banish it for good. Hungarian foreign policy is directed towards participation in all international efforts designed to bring that threat under control once and for all, and is ready to discharge its international responsibilities in a manner consonant with its national interests. All efforts to strengthen conditions leading to European peace and security serve that great task.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

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THE UNIVERSALITY OF POETRY

by

GYULA ILLYÉS

It is a great privilege to have been invited to speak about the Universality of Poetry at this conference.* This theme is the fundamental issue of our deliberations. No doubt because such universality is wanting. Or because it doesn't work—at least not adequately. In other words, poetry is in a state of division, of exclusion, of incomprehension.

For literature—whether that of a nation or of a continent—to be divided into many parts is not, in itself, a sign of weakness. Far from it. A family of many children, though quarrels may abound among them, is undoubtedly healthier and stronger than one where the grandfather, however fine a man he may be, is continued in a single grandson.

However, what we have in poetry today is a scission of a different kind. It is automation, the malady which afflicts human society as a whole, and of which poetry itself is but a symptom. Our exchange of ideas on this subject will be, therefore, a double responsibility for us.

Poets, they say, are of value as long as they have the ability to look at the world with the wide-eyed astonishment of a child. Looking back to the recent past with this in mind, I am led to think—and this observation is not of recent date—that the division of mankind characteristic of this century began with the introduction of a—seemingly rather prosaic—object of everyday use: the bath-tub. It did so due to the very fact that the tub made its appearance in the capacity of a champion of universality. Some people started having baths, others didn't; and from then on these two categories could never sleep in the same bed or eat at the same table. The next monster-instrument of temporary separation, immediately succeeding the bath-tub, is the motor car. It is this instrument that has put—and is putting—an end to the community which used to be established, albeit

* Keynote address at Poetry Days in Budapest, October 18–22, 1966. The following contributions by Edwin Morgan, Roger Caillois and István Sötér were read at the meetings of Poetry Days.

briefly, between strangers in railway compartments and on tram platforms. In the tenement houses of Balzac's novels, the first floor is invariably inhabited by senior civil servants, the second by merchants, the third by artisans, the fourth by minor clerks, and the attics are tenanted by students, artists or prostitutes. In the staircase, these people meet daily, exchanging greetings or at least a glance, as they hasten to the same theatres, same dances, same churches, same promenades and even to the same public meetings. Since then, the tenants have taken up separate lodgings: first they moved—according to their social status—into separate houses; today, they are moving to separate residential districts. The theatre, the church, the public meeting have ceased to be a common meeting-ground having been fragmented into tiny bits: sitting in their beds, people watch those proceedings on a few square inches of screen, lonesome there too, for the diversion separates them even from their love-mates. Alaric's hordes never dispersed the members of communities as thoroughly as have the angelic hosts of Watt and Edison. Precisely because these achievements are beneficial. Their ravages are classically fatal for the very reason that they serve the future of mankind. We have to do our level best to propagate them as rapidly and as widely as possible. At the same time, we could not have a loftier task than to stop their pernicious effects.

Morals and profit, religion and interest alike command the continued raising of material well-being in every corner of the globe. It is an interesting spectacle, this collaboration of the "divine" and the "infernal" designed not only to improve but also to harmonize and level the fundamental conditions of human existence. It is a fundamental truth that world economy cannot prosper unless it prospers everywhere, unless it is universal.

And what about spiritual unity, that intimate community of mortals without which material unity runs idly? As a young man I attributed a logical structure to the fact that, in the famous triple motto, Fraternity comes after Liberty and Equality as their synthesis, their fulfilment. It is through Fraternity that the individual finds his perfect place in the community. And what do we see nowadays? We see both society and the individual moving towards perfection. But the relationship between the two of them? There we are in a fix—and what a fix!

And the poets, we are told in accusation, keep silent. Before attempting to exculpate ourselves, let us draw the picture more sharply still.

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It is not technological progress alone that has separated man from man. True, a million motor cars have made of Paris, and four million of New

York, a swarming, scrambling ant-hill. Now imagine an ant-hill every member of which is turning round and round, encased not only in a small steel cage but in icy indifference—if not inveterate rancour—against his fellow-beings. The differentiation—or, let us say, development—of feelings is pushing us more inexorably still towards solitude. This past summer I visited the United States. In a disquisition on what we believe to be the most sacred and most durable emotion of the human race—Love—a professor argued, as the result not of his own research but of a team's, that increasing psychic awareness—which was leading us to an independence and fastidiousness carried to the point of absurdity—was bound to render a happy relationship even between two people totally impossible before long. Love—all kinds of love—could be no more than a series of insoluble traumata. i.e., tragedies; that being so, prophylaxis—preventive treatment of the disease—was in order. We all know the saying according to which love is a bodily need—the one bodily need for whose satisfaction two people are required. Substitute “spiritual” for “bodily,” and the picture will become even more revealing—because distorting. It will make you wince to hear that a learned dispute is taking place on the subject of the psychological discovery that the form of emotional activity involving the least complications, requiring no partner, and, as a result, leaving the autonomy of the individual unaffected—is masturbation. Here, there is no human relationship, no responsibility. Here too, it is the very logic of it that makes the pervertedness, the lunacy, of the thing truly appalling.

Yet, we are told, the poets keep silent. Or rather, to cite a blame still more severe, they had better keep silent. For who can understand what they are saying?

Yes, this is the charge most frequently levelled by the “broad masses of readers” at the modern poets; the more they are of the present day the more incomprehensible they become; their logic, somehow, is of a different kind.

We are assembled here to give a reply to this grievance; to make ourselves understood by the world; that is, to search for some sort of universality—a common language and a common logic.

Catholicism possesses a mysterious notion: the communion of saints. The majority of readers are inclined to look upon the poets—above all the “modern” poets, the poets of the “avant-garde”—as belonging to a communion of that sort, already removed from Earth. And it is one of our tasks to make it clear that if such a thing as a communion exists among us, it is not—and never has been—removed from Earth.

Certainly, the world could dangerously turn against us the method we have just used in describing it—the childlike amazement of the poet, the cry of “The emperor’s naked!” In appearance, modern poetry also shows more than one symptom that provokes a smile but which is, perhaps for that very reason, profoundly revealing. Take *avant-garde*, the best of titles, and the very first that presents itself—this Homeric epithet of our measurement of value. *Avant-garde* is a strategic term signifying an army detachment, an advance party marching through unknown territory still actually or presumably infested by the enemy; its characteristic is that the bulk of the army is unaware of it (that is why it has penetrated into the unknown) and that it is liable, partially or completely, to be destroyed (as its assignment is to seek contact with the enemy forces). In these days, there is nothing but *avant-garde* art: that is the art we find flourishing in the streets and in the editorial offices of the big world papers. The perspicacious and discriminating reader might reasonably ask: where is the bulk, the reserve, where are the supply services, of this bizarre army? There is no army, no such thing as classic poetry; our time produces nothing but *ersatz*, in no small measure because the medical corps—the critics and the literary historians—as well as those in charge of logistics keep zigzagging solely in the *avant-garde*: Picasso here, Ionesco there. Yet the position of those two—to stick to their example—has, much to their credit, changed long since: as loyal veterans, they run an excellent supply service for the rear-guard.

Or, again, here is the splendid achievement, the result of many years of effort, of our aesthetics: the legalization of the prosodic revolution of the metaphor. Modern poetry is good—that is to say, immortal—only to the extent that it is image-like in conformity with our time. That’s how it is, and we may like it or lump it. Yet the world—that of the readers—may rightly interject that this everlasting marriage of poetry and painting reminds it of another marriage, which poetry not so long ago contracted with music—and as quickly dissolved, not immediately for the benefit of pictorial art.

More numerous still are the contradictions readers can discover between the modern poets’ professions of faith and their practice. “My poetry is the electric discharge of Reason,” one poet says of all that has permitted him to muddle his readers’ reason. “I sing in order to refine your soul,” claims another, deliberately publishing vulgarities accompanied, not by singing, but by such obscene yelling that an animal tamer using it would be raked over the coals for it. “I am a visionary, responsibility for my writings rests with sacred inspiration, not with me,” the lyric poet says, more

deliriously than an inveterate boozier, after rewriting his sonnet a dozen times and having polished, even in the galley proof, an internal alliteration.

I will stop. Unfortunately, M. Roger Caillois, contrary to our expectations, is not in our midst; therefore we have no opportunity to lapidate him, a—I was going to say, quondam surrealist, but I must correct myself—consistent surrealist, who, had he come, would no doubt have enumerated by word of mouth some of the numerous contradictions he has listed on the pages of his *Art Poétique*, which, at the moment, is available only in a Hungarian translation.

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I have enumerated systematically some of the myriads of reproaches the world of poetry addresses to the so-called practical world—in response to those which the practical world heaps upon the so-called world of poetry. Marital squabbles, it is said, are a good sign: they indicate that husband and wife want to make it up. Now, there is no denying the fact that plenty of symptoms point to the absence of any desire of the two parties even to speak or have anything to do with one another. Nonetheless, I am of those who firmly believe that the affairs of our parents can still be straightened out.

This can be done by going to the bottom of the grievances of both parties, and doing so rigorously and scrupulously. Rigorously—in awareness of the danger; and scrupulously—in accordance with the goal. The goal is not just to save mankind; but to assure its welfare as well. We cannot content ourselves with exorcizing the flames of hell—the atom and hydrogen bomb—beyond our walls. We have equally set our aims at the gates of the Promised Land: they must be thrown wide open to admit all human beings.

Of late, there has been too little talk, it seems, of this goal. As if it were no longer possible to contemplate anything beyond the mere defence of this supreme, most ancient, and farthest-reaching objective—this vast enterprise of the human spirit. It is my belief that—even according to the counsels of strategy—we may with perfect confidence undertake a counter-attack in order to conquer—or rather reconquer—the first territories of human universality, the domains of poetry.

I firmly believe that the new path thus to be opened will take us farther than we can imagine, far beyond our present frontiers sanctioned without and within. We may become a veritable vanguard.

No doubt, we shall encounter obstacles; but they may well only be

initial ones. For let us sum things up. Here's what the world is telling the poets: there is no contact between you and us anymore; in the beginning, the poets that eluded us were only those who, so we were told, ranked high—now, we can scarcely understand even those that are alleged to be bad; we are asking questions—and answers that are indecipherable are showering upon us.

And here is the poets' counter-accusation:

The world is saturated with unsolvable problems. Not unsolved problems—mind the difference. With problems for which there are no solutions today because of the current use of ideas and formulations. The problem of cancer will, presumably, be solved, because it is being approached with the aid of appropriate ideas and antidotes, and not with those that would be suited to, say, an invasion of locusts. Man's ominously multiplying hereditary problems of superstitious origin—the symptoms of racial intolerance and, more recently, even in the heart of Europe, intolerance as regards language—are already and still irremediable, because their remedy has long since hardly made more "sense" than those rhymes of our childhood we used to chant in order to persuade the snail to come out of its shell or the ladybird to take to its wings. The language that sways the world's destiny is more abstruse than that of the poets.

A poet cannot and must not be other than original. And an original poet is he who does not rest content with the current explanation of the world; who will regenerate the words of the tribe, and give voice—previously considered unintelligible—to the new realities. Ever since our craft has been influencing society, generations of poets have never stopped boasting of their teaching to their contemporaries not only new words, but new sensations, new *frissons*, as well. And generation after generation of contemporaries rejects this claim as unfounded ostentation. As a matter of fact, the poets ought to be pleased with this rejection, as it would permit them to play freely with words—for which they have a strong penchant anyway. However, the succeeding generation invariably recognizes, amid recantations and hymns of thanksgiving, the truth and immense force of these teachings often bringing about epochal changes. The poets' responsibility is thus established, recognized. These, in turn, are disconcerted. Where is the dividing line between play and responsibility? And between the bad discipline of today and the good one of tomorrow? What is the present-day criterion of a good poem? How are the aesthetic and the moral mixed and united in the criterion?

It is not I that will help you, here in this hell, to extricate yourselves. I believe there is a multitude of new *frissons*, some good, some bad, for

which no name has yet been found. To bring these to light requires a tremendous effort, and the more colossal is the responsibility involved. However, I would also suggest that in conjuring up names of magic power our predecessors have always given vent to their penchant for playfulness in much the same manner as children do in chanting those rhymes designed to charm the snail out of its shell. It is therefore our responsibility to persist in this too.

I have seen poetry undergoing significant changes throughout the world these past few decades. Gone are the days of the empty facetiae of the spirit—and of unsmiling pedantry no less. The new exigency—very nearly vogue—requires us to express with ease, that is to say, with recourse to the most perfect poetical *tours de force*, even the most awkward things.

There are some burdens which you carry for support. The ropewalker carries a piece of lead at either end of his bamboo stick; their balance helps him to run and dance aloft.

But how are we to utilize, as wings of that kind, the ever weightier troubles of our time, so as to be able to perform a “number”—that is to say, win acclaim—the while? For otherwise—if we should fail to walk the rope—we would be unworthy of the title we bear.

If I had the appropriate answers to all these questions, I would not have taken the liberty of coming before you, nor would you have been invited to come here; I could have communicated them to you in a simpler way by employing the means suited to our craft instead of enlisting the aid of guides and waiters speaking an incomprehensible language. If I am here, it is because we must, every one of us, attempt to find an answer to these burning questions—in this burning, pressing and oppressing situation—and, perhaps, hold a consultation of some sort.

I am looking forward to these deliberations full of confidence. The very fact of our reunion is a tremendous argument against the accusation addressed to the poets—our alleged detachment from the world. The poets who have gathered here have travelled thousands of kilometres to come, and I know full well that, incomprehensible though they may be individually, they have excellently understood each other for a long time already.

I hope you will feel at home here. In the name of a much afflicted people—perhaps the most sorely tried nation in Europe—but one that is staunchly loyal to its ideas and ideals, and on behalf of the Hungarian poets, I thank you for your attendance.

POETRY AND TRANSLATION

by

EDWIN MORGAN

I see the translation of poetry as a gradually developing art which still has a long way to go. I see it as a study which requires a great deal of patience, and the avoidance of too easily reached or ready-made conclusions. It is a study which has special interest today, for various reasons. The twentieth century has seen an enormous amount of translation being done, and some well-known poets have been involved in this, as for example T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, W. H. Auden, Salvatore Quasimodo and Boris Pasternak. It is an age that has known more international contact than ever before, there has been a great deal of cultural cross-fertilization, and there is a much quicker demand for information about poets in other countries than there used to be. There is therefore a constant and growing demand for translations of poetry, even from those who have a low opinion of the translator's art. But stimulus for translation, and for the theory of translation, has come from other sources too: from the scientific study of language, from comparative studies in literature and stylistics, anthropology and sociology. And most recently, in the last ten years or so, a stimulus has come from an unexpected quarter—from the theory and practice of machine translation, still of course in its earliest and most elementary stages. In this, there may well be grounds for thinking of translation as a science rather than an art, since the mathematical possibilities of what one can do in a given language, within its grammatical structure, idioms, sound-patterns and vocabulary, are very very large but not infinite. Every human translator knows, indeed, from going through lists of synonyms, or lists of rhymes, in his head, just how mechanical a part of his activity has to be. The question no one can answer yet is how much of the total translating activity is mechanical in this sense. Even if it does nothing else, machine translation has the great value of making us think very hard, for the first time, about what happens when material is translated.

The whole study of translation has therefore had a shake-up, and views on the translation of poetry are changing; they are not static, they are not so dogmatic as they used to be. It would be generally agreed that poetry is the most difficult kind of utterance to translate, but not everyone would go as far as the American poet Robert Frost who said that poetry is "what gets lost in translation." This rather cynical view is one that we may all have felt at some time, after reading some desperately bad version of a poet whom we have no other way of judging, and we may be tempted to say that if the translator gives us a good poem it can't be a close translation, and if it's a close translation it can't be a good poem. The man who knows the foreign text best is quite likely to be a scholar and no poet, and the poet who takes up translation is quite likely to make use of the foreign poet for his own purposes and not be much concerned with fidelity. A famous example of such a poet in the English-speaking world is Ezra Pound, who has translated Latin, Chinese and Old English poetry from a very slender knowledge of these languages, making some absurd and elementary errors, but producing in the result what most people regard as good poetry. In a controversy some years ago over one of his translations, a version of the Old English poem "The Seafarer," one writer called his version a piece of "nonsense . . . based on careless ignorance and misunderstanding," and another said it had "deplorable marks of the literary fake"; and yet one of his defenders called it "a magnificently effective modern English poem." In the end no agreement was reached, and perhaps none could be reached, since the premisses of the arguments were never examined. To ask only for accuracy on the one hand, or only for liveliness on the other hand, is not going to take us very far in understanding what translation is. Ezra Pound is lively but inaccurate, and those who think this is how the thing should be done will argue that somehow the translator must produce the emotional "lift" of poetry, and to get this he has to throw out ballast of various kinds, and the first thing to go, the least indispensable thing, will be literal accuracy. This view, or something like it, has been the main historical attitude among translators themselves (e.g., Dryden and Pope, or the great Elizabethan translators). And it is quite clear that the main fault (and fatal fault) of close translation especially by non-poets is always its flatness, its deadness, its uninterestingness: it fails to meet the very first demand, that it should make us want to go on reading it. What Ezra Pound does has at least the breath of life in it, and that for many readers is enough.

But although some poets are still using this method, writing what one might call adaptations rather than translations (e.g., Robert Lowell's "Imitations" as he calls them of Villon, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Rilke, Montale,

and Pasternak, or Donald Davie's adaptation of Mickiewicz), the trend now is towards a greater accuracy, and towards a belief that the scholarly and the creative powers can be combined. This might be exemplified by the translations of modern German poetry by Michael Hamburger and Christopher Middleton; also by the recent founding in London of a magazine called *Modern Poetry in Translation*. My own work in translation is sympathetic to this trend, and to a belief that a fairly high degree of fidelity is not incompatible with poetic effectiveness. I was interested to read some time ago the remarks of a scholar of the Persian language, A. J. Arberry, on one of the best-known poems in English, the "Rubaiyát of Omar Khayyám" which Edward FitzGerald freely translated from the Persian about a century ago. Arberry brought up the question of FitzGerald's infidelity to the original—a question which people had always said was irrelevant to the quality of the poem. "Take for instance," he said, "the very famous lines:

A book of verses underneath the bough,
A jug of wine, a loaf of bread—and thou
Beside me singing in the wilderness—
O wilderness were paradise enow.

And [he said] the strictly literal version of that is:

If there be available a loaf of the heart of wheat,
And a two-pint flagon of wine, and a thigh of lamb,
With a little sweetheart seated in a desolation—
That is a pleasure which is not the attainment of any sultan.

FitzGerald invented the book of verse, the bough, the singing, and the comparison of the wilderness with paradise; he rejected (no doubt as unpoetical) the thigh of lamb, which gives a very homely and amusing touch in the original, and jettisoned Omar's subtle contrast between the lovers' spot of desolation and the sultan's crowded splendour. . . . Infidelity to the letter and the spirit could hardly be more complete." And later he adds: "I too love my FitzGerald. But what of the true Omar? He also has the right to be accurately understood and appreciated."

This question, What of the true Omar? What of the true Mickiewicz, or Rimbaud, or József? is one that we increasingly want to ask, especially as the study of translation becomes more developed and intense. We do have a better idea now of what the difficulties and complexities are. The easiest things to reproduce are the intellectual part of the meaning, the arguments

or statements, the action or story if any, but even in this we have to decide *how* clear we want the translation to be, since the process of trying to understand the foreign poem always tempts us to make the translation a little clearer or simpler than the original, and this may have weakening effect. Then there are the associations of words to take care of, the connotative fringe or fuzz that so often surrounds words in poetry, the colour that words receive from their neighbours, the slightly new meaning in fact that accrues to a word in a strange and original placing; or a word may refer to a thing or an idea that doesn't exist, or doesn't quite exist, in our own language, in which case we have to decide whether to have an approximation, or a periphrasis, or the original word plus a footnote. There are no general rules, each case has to be decided on its merits within its context. Also, there's the whole range of sound-effects, the so-called music of poetry, both in individual words and phrases and in the overall structure of rhythm and rhyme. We have to decide how important the sound-effects are, how far it is worth straining other elements of the translation in order to reproduce them; and we have to remember that the less well we know a language the more we tend to read into its sound-effects. There may even be a visual or pictorial effect, as in "concrete" poetry, or in E. E. Cummings, or perhaps in Chinese poetry. There is too the poet's characteristic grammar or syntax, which affects the movement of the poem (important in Milton, or Rilke), and behind that the grammar and syntax of his own language; we have to decide whether it is important that an attempt should be made to reproduce any alien effects, or at least to suggest them. And lastly, there is a tone or feeling in the poem which is almost indefinable but which has to be re-created somehow, and which is perhaps the most important thing of all.

I would say that to translate poetry well, you need not only great concentration, but a peculiar mixture of knowledge and feeling. It is a hard art, but it has its rewards.

POEMS

by

ISTVÁN KORMOS

I AM BEING DRAGGED BY RED DOLPHINS

dragged along by scarlet dolphins through a sea of soot in darkness
thrown on the shore I find that shore the shore where my collapsing heart is
blindness couldn't stop me going my dream-built house of you still lingers
but your gate is open-knife-gate light through your window sending signals
and hands hands hands hands hands send me off and don't reprieve me
soundless voice I should release you soundless voice I ought to leave you
you are not the one to return tugged back far into your childhood
wings of my imploring words flutter wasted on your forehead
cannot-be-lights in your glances speak of what cannot be spoken
that you'll not be that I'll not be agonized the laughter's broken
still-born son our future goes floating through the sooty oceans
scarlet horses that once dragged me are devoured now by the dolphins
a solitary dog is barking calling my name but not my being
the sky over my bowed head glitters like saltpetre freezing
the cell of loneliness is here I the son of gods am silent
Paris Marlotte Normandy vanish under my Atlantis

THE LAMENT OF ORPHEUS

I began to play my music and the raven stopped in mid-flight
the foal fell on its knees wildly shaking its neck-bell
the waters lost their anger sun moon ran to me in joy
the outcast figtree wept out its pleasure in grainy pearls
somewhere the gods were frowning listening with folded arms
they drove Eurydice from their feet to follow me and laughed harshly
my ears were full of crying my heart full of iron nails
my eyes full of tears of salt I said no to my twitching fist
I didn't turn! it's a lie! I swear by my mangled music!

Translated by Edwin Morgan

TOWARDS A RENEWAL OF HUMANISM

by

ROGER CAILLOIS

The horizon of knowledge has, in our day, considerably expanded. It has become that of the planet itself. This enlargement of our vision involves the reclassification of the fundamental notions of culture.

Culture, within its fortunately dismantled frontiers, can no longer mean the continuity of a single tradition. Greek and Latin antiquity for a long time furnished the West with the essentials of an intellectual and moral heritage from which it could claim to benefit. This led to the systematic, thorough and amply justified study of a mass of data to which nothing really important or pertinent could by now be added. However, this unchanging material is churned tirelessly over and over. The result of this activity, sometimes more mechanical than conscious, has been a huge accumulation of commentaries, always wiser and more complex, but one whose interest seems to diminish day by day. So much so that it becomes on occasion, imaginary and, what is even stranger and more paradoxical, untrue to the chief lesson of a culture which, ever since the Renaissance, has never ceased to assimilate the most diverse spiritual conquests.

Nowadays the humanities are far from coinciding with humanism, of which they cover a constantly narrowing sector, whose limits are being pushed closer both in time and space by the civilisations of a thousand-year-old Orient and an America in birth.

From Bossuet to Hegel the West believed in a linear development of history, of which it imagined itself to be the pivot, the foundation and the destiny. Yet the excavations of its archaeologists, the travels of its explorers, the translations of its scholars have revealed at the four corners of the globe other empires and independent Gospels, neither related nor rival, but born and developed in a mutual isolation. An isolation that ceased only recently, when the better informed history undertook, for the first time, to list these civilizations, to compare them and to draw up inventories.

If opulence and fecundity are peculiar to the West, it is proper to look for them not in the ancestral treasure chest of a local tradition (which, incidentally, knew how to serve more than one master), but in a universal richness in which it has had a greater share than other more self-contained cultures, from which fewer explorers, archaeologists and scholars, fewer gold-diggers and missionaries, fewer of the all-curious and all-covetous species swarmed into the wide world.

To be sure, it is the constant temptation of the initiated, as soon as they form a corps acting under approved articles of association, to refine their knowledge and researches, and to veer, imperceptibly, towards scholasticism and School men's arguments. This vigilance, this jealousy, this incessant and meticulous coining of an immutable and locked-up patrimony does not, certainly, produce only bad effects. However, it would not be wise to suppose that it invariably produces excellent ones. In any event, a survey with a modern and reformative spirit, one that is dedicated to the necessities of our times, should not be either a fortress or a monastery or some sort of acropolis, and even less a "reservation." It has rather to be a crossroads or, at its worst, a bazaar. In any case a place of welcome, a meeting point for all trades, a signpost pointing towards all the fraternal cultures of which Man can boast authorship.

Several leading works of our age bear witness to this oecumenical concern. This extension of the domain of the humanities to the fifteen or twenty odd homes of civilization from which the man of today has received unequal but equally irreplaceable endowments, dictates that none of them should be granted exorbitant privileges, much less exclusive ones. No doubt, the obligation to assume almost unexpectedly the administration of this huge fortune tempts everyone voluntarily to relax his absorbed and single-minded attention to his older possessions. It is wrong for an investigation deliberately to isolate itself in such a way as to furnish a comfortable refuge for mediocrity and for the vainglorious spirit of secession.

It should, therefore, be one of the major preoccupations of our time to insist, within each culture, not on the ten thousand anecdotal incidents with which memory brims over and which, moreover, defy explanation, but rather on the permanent concerns that may be deciphered in so many interchangeable circumstances and that create the closest kinships between histories whose paths have never crossed: the kinships discovered in the same need for excellence and perfection, discernible beneath the most dissimilar tinsel; kinships which led efforts widely separated by context, aims and thought processes into similar errors, failures or crimes.

This is the kind of lesson a renewed humanism will need.

THE PLACE OF HUNGARIAN POETRY IN EUROPE

by

ISTVÁN SÓTÉR

At a time when Hungarian lyric poetry was still almost entirely unknown abroad, when the translations into French, Russian, English, German and other languages, which today are beginning to give some idea of our verse abroad, were not yet available, I always—in trying to explain to foreigners the peculiarities of Hungarian poetry (a poetry which they had as yet no way of knowing)—had recourse to the parallels that could be drawn with Hungarian music, and mostly with Bartók. I sought to make the unknown known with the help of Bartók's music by using it as a guide, an example, to bring home to my interlocutors the spirit and soul of Hungarian poetry. The analogy did not work perfectly: there are a number of specific traits in Hungarian lyric poetry which Bartók cannot illustrate, and yet this poetry seems again and again to be moving along the same road that Bartók took. The genesis of Hungarian lyric poetry has almost invariably involved an experience, an intuition that radically differs from those that inspired European poetry. This does not mean, however, that Hungarian poetry has been motivated by any desire to become isolated from European poetry; it has, on the contrary, aspired to become amalgamated with it and to take from it whatever it could reconcile with its own traditions and specific, unique temperament. Hungarian poetry—like Hungarian music—has always been inspired with the aim of carrying what it has to say beyond its national bounds, before an international public.

I think the poetry of several other Central and Eastern European peoples was in a similar plight—the paths it followed and the goals it strove for were identical with the aspirations of their music, yet the results were fundamentally different. Similarity of roads could not mean identity of achievements. Setting out from the music of the Hungarian peasantry, Bartók arrived at an intellectual art in which folk music finally became only

a term of reference. Moving away from Russian folk music enabled Moussorgsky to create the Russian national opera. Bartók and Moussorgsky exerted a deep influence on music everywhere by reaching back to their people's music, sometimes diverging from it but never completely severing ties with it. Hungarian poetry does not yet occupy the same place in the poetry of the world that Hungarian music does in the music of the world. Yet in many respects there is hidden in it the same kind of revelation that lay hidden in Bartók's music. I am convinced that not only Hungarian poetry but also the hitherto little known poetry of Central and Eastern Europe in general contain many surprises and many untapped sources of inspiration for world poetry. What Bartók was looking for in the Hungarian peasant's songs he often found in the Rumanian and Slovak peasant songs: folk music like theirs offered him the same kind of reinvigorating stimulus as that provided by Hungarian folk music. In a similar fashion Southern Slav epic poetry came as a revelation to Goethe. Why should we not expect a revelation to come from the treasure of national poetry that grew out of music and folk poetry of this kind? The poetry of Central and Eastern Europe still contains many surprises, and in them a new—or perhaps unusual—aspect of European poetry, but in any case a very different one from what is widely known, awaits discovery. This poetry is both European and yet diverges from it. The various national branches also differ radically from each other whilst concurring on a number of points. They have many ties with Western poetry without being mere reflections of it. Not only do the national features differentiate it from that of the West but also the peculiarities of temperament and even more the "otherness" of the poetic terms of reference that have evolved in the course of time. In form and tone it is generally identical with Western poetry. In feeling it is one with that of humanity. Its ideas and concerns also correspond with the general character of the age—nevertheless, the poetry of Central and Eastern Europe still inhabits a different world from that of its Western counterpart: everyday existence and the social matrices do not diverge to so great an extent in these two parts of Europe as do those worlds which the poets of these respective climates have created for themselves or as do the visions in which they contemplate themselves and the external world.

Many people explain the individuality and uniqueness of Hungarian poetry by referring to its belated development. There is certainly much to commend this view, and there is much in the development of Hungarian poetry reminiscent of the emergence of the Russian novel and the Norwegian drama. Yet what I feel to be more relevant in our poetry is the alternate motion of interruption and starting anew. Hungarian poetry has not devel-

oped in an even, harmonious way. We can trace its beginnings back to the Renaissance, which gave rise to one of our major lyricists (Bálint Balassi, 1554-1594) and then on through the Baroque period down to the end of the eighteenth century, which marked the beginning of an organic, steady progress. Though this poetry from time to time had a few impressive achievements to its credit, they remained solitary, isolated ones. In fact, they fell into abeyance for long periods, to be rediscovered as fountain-heads of inspiration by the new lyric period, the nineteenth century. Much was lost because of these interruptions, many treasures remained untapped—and yet not all was lost sight of. Reading our greatest Hungarian poets I am always conscious of an unmistakable kinship between them and the poet of the Hungarian Renaissance, Bálint Balassi, of whose impetuosity and tragic nature so much has been passed on to his successors. What is most striking is that he created his own lyrical idiom in much the same way as did Bartók in his music; that is, he worked out a synthesis between the poetry of the people (and not just of the Hungarian people) and contemporary European Renaissance poetry. This affords additional proof that in this part of Europe, the creative artists, even though unaware of each other's activities, adopted similar approaches to their problems under the necessities and promptings of circumstance. Owing to its hesitant and incomplete development Hungarian poetry, till about the end of the eighteenth century, could not vie in richness with the poetry of those peoples that entered the road of civilization much earlier. But precisely because of this, since each of our poetic eras had to start again from scratch and since it was virtually forced to create its means and conditions afresh, it set about all its new tasks with a correspondingly more vigorous and single-minded determination.

What amazes me in the best of our Hungarian poetry is its haunting quality; it is often as if a deaf-mute, as a result of some emotional shock, had regained his faculty of speech: every word uttered seems to reveal the joy of speech found at last, a joy he never tires of.

European poetry had a large part to play in Hungarian poetry's becoming articulate. It was the grand chorus of European poets that elicited the desire for poetic utterance from Hungarian poets. Ambition and pride played their part in inducing them to emulate what others were already doing so triumphantly. One of the finest accomplishments of our poetic genius is the narrative poem by János Arany from the 1840's on Miklós Toldi, who—forced to lead a peasant existence—longs to go to the court of the Anjous in Buda and test his amazing strength and prowess in chivalrous contests. This epic poem opens at noon on a summer day in the *puszta*. During the break in the arduous field work Toldi watches the king's

warriors passing along the road nearby and yearns to be one of their ranks. There was a time when the Hungarian poet would have looked with the same craving in his heart at the bold pageants of European culture and with the same desire for participation. Toldi's ambition for a chivalrous life has deep roots in Hungarian poetry.

The relationship of Hungarian to European poetry is characterized alternately by our poets' looking at European verse from the point of view of Hungarian poetry and at other times viewing Hungarian verse from the point of view of European poetry. These points of view have often merged, constituting the peaks of our poetic development. The history of Hungarian poetry could be told by concentrating in each period on whether Hungarian poets were looking out, towards Europe, or glancing back, from Europe, at their themes and poetic craft. Both points of view have had something new to offer, both were significant in their own time. At the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the poet took stock of his art from Europe, and it was because of Europe that he grew dissatisfied with himself. This dissatisfaction brought Hungarian Romanticism into being. Later, in the middle of the century, Hungarian poetry was elated with its own achievements, it looked outward, towards Europe, and was ready to accept from it only what suited its national needs. This justifiable joy, free from complacency, typified the epoch of Petőfi and Arany. Later, at the beginning of the twentieth century Ady and his fellow poets again looked with dissatisfaction at Hungarian from European poetry: the resulting poetic revolution was the birth of modern Hungarian lyric poetry.

Looked at from Europe, Hungarian poetry appears in a different light, just as European poetry likewise shows a quite specific aspect if viewed from Hungary. It is worth while now to compare these two perspectives. I saw Hungarian poetry in quite a new light when, sitting at the Brussels Round Table Conference organized by the Belgian P.E.N. Club, I listened to Guillevic and Goffin, Rousselot and Follain talking about the observations they had made while translating Hungarian poets. I got to know a new Petőfi, a new Arany, a new Attila József from their reports, and I came to see Madách in a new light not only through reading Rousselot's translation but also through hearing the comments he made upon his experiences as a translator.

In a similar way European poetry takes on a very different look when approached from the specific outlook of the various eras of Hungarian lyric poetry. Shakespeare, for example, seems almost a Hungarian author: virtually each of its periods has turned to him for inspiration and guidance. The classical poetic measures and forms still live on in our poetry. It may be

worth mentioning that up to the beginning of the nineteenth century the language of Hungarian public life and official transactions as well as of science was Latin: *Esprit des Lois*, even the *Marseillaise* and *Ça ira*, were translated into Latin. From the viewpoint of Hungarian poetry Goethe represents first and foremost an example of rediscovering folk poetry and only to a lesser degree the author of *Faust*. Byron here served to justify plebeian poetry, while the Hungarian contemporaries of Baudelaire were inspired by the *Nibelungenlied* rather than by *Fleurs du Mal*. Baudelaire only came into his own in the twentieth century. European trends in poetry, moreover, undergo changes when they are naturalized here: Hungarian poetry reads a strongly progressive, social meaning into both Romanticism and Symbolism. French Renaissance and English pre-Victorian poetry did not exert any influence in their lifetime but, again, only at the beginning of the twentieth century. Pushkin's *Onegin* on the other hand seemed to be a mirror of conditions in Hungary, and the beautiful translation was read in country manors as if it were the original work of a Hungarian poet.

The development of Hungarian poetry affords many paradoxes. For a civilized national poetry to emerge in this country the help of folk poetry had to be called upon. At other times our most truly Hungarian poets were those who were most attuned to the inspiration of French poetry. We had to change over from our ancient accentual versification to European prosodic forms and European genres. This had a curious effect. For what appeared as an innovation and modernity when introduced into Hungarian poetry (e.g., the sonnet) became flat and conventional when read in translation, as György Somlyó* recently observed so discerningly; on the other hand, what is archaic or markedly traditional in the Hungarian text has the effect of novelty or modernity when translated into a foreign language. At one time Béranger was admired here by poets who were of an incomparably greater stature than he. Sometimes a period in our poetic history was marked by its remaining insensitive to major poets who were opening up new vistas in Western poetry. Thus Hungarian poetry was unresponsive to Stéphane Mallarmé or Paul Valéry, while it was all the more hospitable to the influence of such poets as Apollinaire and Dylan Thomas. These paradoxes of Hungarian poetry, however, are part and parcel of its very nature—one might almost say that they have done it more good than ill.

If we could recognize the compulsions of a development by fits and starts at the beginnings of its history, we now have to add that later on Hungarian lyric poetry voluntarily fell in with this constraint. The traditions of the great schools of the past are remorselessly swept aside by the newly arrived:

* A Short Introduction to Contemporary Hungarian Poetry, The N.H.Q., No. 23, p. 108.

for the last hundred years or so Hungarian poetry has constantly sought to make a new start. This has given rise to the heterogeneous character of Hungarian poetry, and this very heterogeneity is somehow proving necessary and healthy. It is from this heterogeneity that the contemporary poetic scene can best be understood and that is why I shall have to dwell on some of its causes. But beforehand I have to point out that with each successful new departure the innovators always pause to look back with amazement and discover their ancestors in the poetic past, establishing their links with some great but forgotten predecessor and, as it were, adapting themselves to him. The innovator—early twentieth-century Ady, for instance—discovered the poetic tone of the seventeenth century and identified himself with it.

The welcome heterogeneous character of Hungarian poetry is explained by its history and, in addition, by its attitude towards this past and towards Europe. For the heterogeneity occasionally gives way to synthesis, and to bring about a synthesis is just as exciting a poetic task as it is to break it up.

Hungarian poetry, about a century and a half ago, was still trying to make up its mind whether to accept the classical tradition as a basis, choosing Horace rather than Goethe as its model, or "modernity", that is, Victor Hugo and Heine. That was the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* in Hungarian literature, which was finally decided in favour of a third solution: towards the middle of the century Hungary adopted folk poetry as its starting point and created out of it a national and modern poetry. Later, the same was done by Bartók in music. The vacillation proved fruitful insofar as the rejected possibilities of antiquity and modernity continued to exist by the side of the folk tradition. Petőfi and Arany, in the middle of the nineteenth century, created a national poetry using folk motifs as their starting point; but the former went beyond it by giving voice to the revolutionary ideas of the age, while the latter sought inspiration in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But just as Bartók did not shut himself up in pentatonic folk music, so they did not want to confine themselves to the folk idiom. Petőfi, by establishing a synthesis with revolutionary ideas, succeeded in embracing Europe. Arany also turned to European poetry: he assimilated and incorporated Homer, Dante and Shakespeare into Hungary's traditional folk poetry. Out of heterogeneity and diversity a synthesis came about, but at the same time the further possibilities of variety and heterogeneity were preserved. It was thus a synthesis of specifically Hungarian elements and of European elements in a twofold (revolutionary and classical) sense. The poets who helped to bring the synthesis into being turned partly to contemporary Europe, partly to those representatives of the European heritage whom they selected. Petőfi turned to the contemporary

European poets, his friend Arany to the greatest of the European past. Hungarian poetry needed both Europes.

Hungarian poetry has thus chosen from Europe those examples, those strivings which at a given stage it most needed. This is how every literature meets its own needs, and this explains why the poetry treasures of various nations have sometimes more, sometimes less intimate relations with each other; sometimes the poetry of one nation inspires another, sometimes it does not.

During the twentieth century new attempts at a synthesis have asserted themselves in Hungarian poetry, the most significant of these being that of Attila József. Here the problem confronting the artist was different from what it was a hundred years ago: the synthesis had to be worked out among the ideas of socialism, the techniques of modern poetry and the traditions of Hungarian national poetry. In the works of today's Hungarian poets this synthesis is, to a large extent, coming into being, and the need for it is being posed again and again.

I vividly remember a remark made by Guillevic to the effect that a particular characteristic of Hungarian poetry was its concreteness. While all good poetry is concrete, in a direct or an indirect way, there can be no doubt that Hungarian poetry has at all times been closely allied with the strivings of individual periods and has always expressed the conditions of an age even when it was not directly political. An age, a society, may find expression in love lyrics, and the most subjective personal poetry may give vent to the general feeling of the age. This is true of most of Hungary's lyric poetry, though naturally it cannot lay exclusive claim to this quality. The impulse towards concreteness has enabled Hungarian poets to find their bearings in European poetry and to select for their use such models, techniques and aspirations as are relevant and valid in their concrete situations and endeavours.

It was translation that helped to make such choice possible. The art of translation has centuries old traditions in this country; it has almost always formed an organic part of the Hungarian poet's practice, and our greatest poets have always been at the same time great translators. But translation is also a mode of assimilation: through the very act of speaking in Hungarian it becomes in a sense part of the Hungarian poetic consciousness. With us translation means the concrete link with European poetry. It converts world poetry directly and concretely into our own poetry.

Perhaps never before has the art of translation been so varied and extensive as it has become in the past decade. Volumes of translations are sometimes given greater importance, meet with greater interest, than volumes

of original work. *Nagyvilág* (The Wide World), the most popular literary monthly, devotes its space to translations. This endeavour of Hungarian poetry to infuse Hungarian literature with an awareness not only of European but also of the whole contemporary poetic world is a phenomenon so important that we must recognize in it a fundamental characteristic of the current poetic scene in Hungary.

We may say that Hungarian poetry has never been as open as it is today to the most diverse poetic climates. If at one time folk tradition was the inspirational source for Hungarian poetry, universal poetry now plays this part. The ability to assimilate essentially dissimilar elements also means that the national character of Hungarian poetry must have deep roots. New possibilities of synthesis are now in the offing. In Petőfi's age folk poetry was gathered into collections serving as the foundation on which to build up national poetry; today translations from world poetry fill the same role. All this, it is true, may still be likened to the arrival of the builders, materials and equipment on a huge building site. For the time being only the materials are being amassed, the tools piled up. Building itself has not yet started, but the firm foundation of national poetry has been chosen and laid. I think we need not fear cosmopolitanism or eclecticism: the disposition of Hungarian poetry toward the concrete is a guarantee we can rely on.

Meanwhile, however, the outlines of a great enterprise begin to appear in world poetry too. New territories outside Europe are entering the scene, and the poetic world picture of our age is thereby undergoing a transformation. It is as if the change in the physical world picture were proceeding hand in hand with changes in the poetic world picture. The disjointed, independent realms of national poetry are beginning to be replaced by some kind of "universal human poetry." The process has just got under way, rather tentatively, but one can already sense that it is moving in the right direction.

A new phase is taking shape in one section of European poetry, namely in French, English and Italian poetry, where, I feel, a new note has been struck, a new vision found since about the mid-sixties. It is here, I feel, that a new "universal poetry" is probably emerging most conspicuously. The change affecting world poetry today is more complex, hidden and latent than the one brought about by the poetic revolutions of a few decades ago. Apollinaire and T.S. Eliot are still obvious turning points. The change in today's world poetry is, however, partly more deep-seated and slower to evolve than the changes of the 1910's and 1920's. Meaning (*signifier*) has been replaced by suggestion (*suggérer*), with a tremendous expansion of the poetic domain attendant upon the change. It would be seriously to mis-

construe contemporary poetry if one were to see in suggestion an incursion of the irrational. To suggest reality is often the most powerful means of representing it. Nor does suggestiveness necessarily mean a withdrawal from the concrete. The renewal of poetry can only take place against the background of national traditions, involving a break with some traditions and the singling out of certain others. This applies chiefly to national poetry that is too much concerned with itself and too little with that of other nations. French poetry was once of this kind. But today it is fully alert to the poetry of the different nations. Contemporary French poetry will perhaps be able to prepare the great synthesis of universal poetry, the transformation of national into international poetry. An excellent book has convinced me of this (though it did not aim at presenting this possibility): Robert Goffin's *Fil d'Ariane pour la Poésie*. This work traces with an exceptional power of discernment—and, as it were, from within—the changes that have taken place in French poetry in the past one hundred years. The sketch of the changes from Chateaubriand to Guillevic virtually sets up a formula valid for all modern poetry. These two poets represent two characteristic types of world poetry, two stages of its development. The formula is in some ways valid not only for French but for all the poetry of our age. But if the function of *signifier* is increasingly taken over by that of *suggérer*, we still have to reckon with revolts of direct lyricism that may supply new colours and do not necessarily represent a return to romantic rhetoric and narrative-anecdotic tendencies. Hungarian poetry, for example, inclines to suggestiveness as much as to direct lyricism. In the middle of the last century Arany's objectified poetry really signified the former, still fused with the picturesque and with eloquence. Attila József was often a follower of the suggestive, while Gyula Illyés generally took the line of direct lyricism.

I believe the interest shown by poets abroad in Hungarian poetry is neither a consequence of the search or straining after the exotic and the strange, nor a mere gesture of sympathy and good will. And the fact that Hungarian poetry is following the poetic developments in the world with greater attention and curiosity than hitherto can by no means be interpreted as snobbery. What I think we have to see in both cases is an expression of mutual need: the current trends in world poetry offer new sources of inspiration to Hungarian poetry, while poets abroad can draw certain lessons for themselves, in their present stage of development and in their current aspirations, from the poetry of Hungary as well as of other Central and East European countries. And that, perhaps, in the very interest of applying and enriching the formula suggested by Goffin.

All this, however, also means that the poets in a similar situation but

speaking different tongues are getting closer to each other and that from now on their individual development will also have much more in common. The poetry of one nation will not merge with that of others—I cannot imagine such a contingency ever happening at any stage of historical evolution, but each will come to know about the others in the same way that poets of one and the same nation now know about each other's work and aims, whether in agreement or in disagreement with each other. (Poetry itself can only benefit in either case.) The poetry of the various nations and languages will not exist in the same isolation as hitherto, and there will also be common aims and principles. This is what I understand by that future stage of "universal human poetry," the approach of which is already foreshadowed by a number of signs.

Hungarian poetry, hitherto forced behind linguistic barriers, is now beginning to make its appearance on the international scene. The translators who have made this possible are not only our friends but also our closest collaborators, having identified themselves with something that is inherent to our life. Through them Hungarian poetry enters into the great formative process of "universal poetry."

Recognition of this process explains the present translating endeavours of Hungarian poetry. This gives importance to the initiative of our Belgian friends at the Knokke Poetry Days. We are living in the age of the development of a great supra-national poetic movement. This does not mean the end of national poetry, just the opposite: it means its strengthening, a consolidation promoted by mutual interest, acquaintance and mutual use of the achievements of each. Poetry can never be a collective venture, creative differences can never be evened out, but poetic consciousness may expand, become both more stimulating and more receptive. And this means nothing less than to overcome the threatening crisis in poetry, to reinvigorate national poetry, and to renew the poetry of the whole world.

IN SEARCH OF A SYNTHESIS

by

ÉVA KÖRNER

The Sculpture of Erzsébet Schaár

Erzsébet Schaár is an exceptionally curious and restless personality. Her attention focuses on the most varied phenomena of life, on the smallest and greatest alike, on the tender embrace of love as well as on the frozen rigidity of death. All things excite her, the trivial and transient sense data of the street as much as the stirrings of the heart which she contemplates with childish awe as unalterably preordained by personal destiny. She is excited by the present and topical as well as by the indelible impression retained in the memory.

If a range of experience such as hers finds outlet in sculpture, that sculptural expression cannot help being anomalous. Erzsébet Schaár continually surpasses her own achievements, transcending one stage after another, time and again questioning the relations of matter, nature, life and form; she reaches no point of equilibrium because her real being lies in always starting anew.

In its desire to get a grip on reality her plastic art appears to have a certain kinship with pop-art. Admittedly her aim is not to fix certain human situations in the traditional forms of plastic art. She tries rather to grasp the real by disordering and exploding the abstract communicative system of man and his environment, of man and the world, resorting to the more pungent impact of the immediately real. This immediacy no doubt has much in common with pop-art, but her fundamental assumption about art is diametrically different: Erzsébet Schaár does not cast doubts upon the *raison d'être* of art *vis-à-vis* reality. She is not self-assertingly aggressive or agnostic or bitterly skeptical in her attitude to the intellect. She is out to find a synthesis of the real and abstract but at an extreme, unexplored, unfixed point.

Her art contains irony too, and it is never murderous or embittered, but of a shrewd and tolerant kind. Hers is a profoundly feminine art. She does not get involved in intellectual and social problems. Man and man's predicament are her chief concerns and she has her own personal experiences, her father's lingering death, her motherhood, her vicissitudes, as a scale against which to match human destinies. It is also a feminine characteristic that she does not cast romantic glamour over even the most moving and painful of facts, but has the courage to face them as a woman more at the mercy of biological existence. Nor does she sublimate them into some inherited symbolic configurations; she is venturesome enough to try to get a grip on things, to come into direct contact with them.

Erzsébet Schaár, now in her mid-fifties, began her career as a sculptor at the rather unusually early age of fifteen. It was then that by some evasion of the regulations she was granted admission to the Budapest Academy of Art which she attended for only a year. She then went to study in Paris where she fell under the spell of Greek sculpture, Gothic art and the influence of Despiau among the moderns. At that early time she began to struggle with matter not

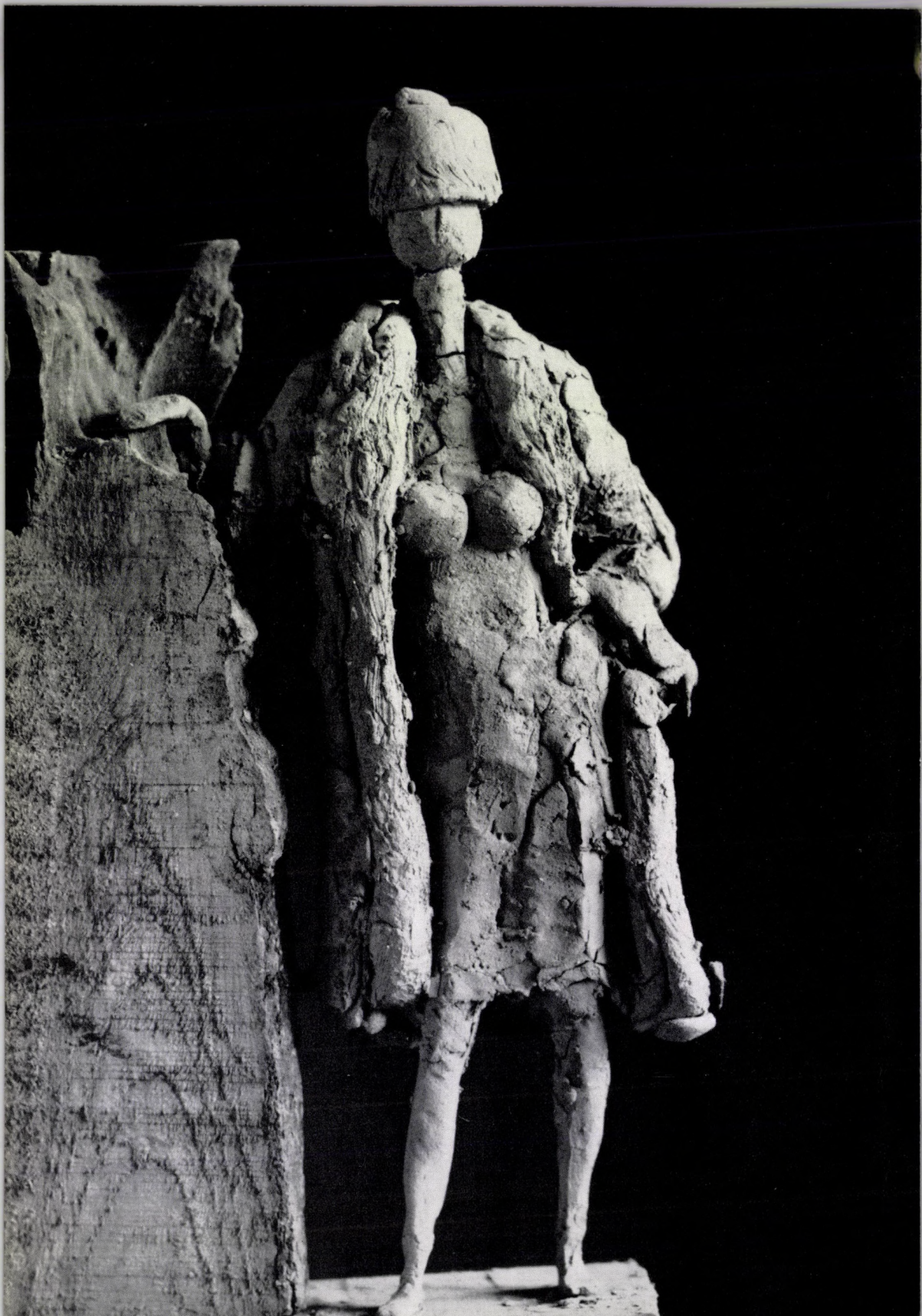
Sequence of illustrations on following four pages:

- In the armchair (life-size; plaster of Paris)
- Dead soldiers (30 × 50 cm, terracotta)
- Recumbent figure (30 × 40 cm, terracotta)
- Woman in fur coat (30 cm, plaster of Paris)









in any manual sense because in that she was exceptionally well-endowed, but with the substance of life to be moulded, and with art's relationship to reality. She was fascinated by the welter of events and objects around her and was attracted to naturalism. A good deal of her admiration for Gothic art too arose from the fact that Gothic art conveyed transcendent truth by naturalistic means.

She did not become a portrait sculptor by accident. Portrait sculpture had, among other things, the practical advantage that she could earn an independent living and devote more time to her other plastic ideas. So it came about that, although she was well-known for some time as a portrait sculptor, the most important development in her plastic art had almost no publicity.

She made her *début*, still as a young artist, in the Budapest Tamás Gallery in 1932, and the next time she met the public was in the Múcsarnok Gallery in 1960.

Yet that too was not a real introduction since mainly her smaller works of an early date were put on display and generally those that did not do full justice to her efforts.

Then at last the 1966 Exhibition at Székesfehérvár opened a sizable window in the wall behind which Erzsébet Schaár's real work had been done. This time again she did not present to the public a complete *oeuvre*, displaying instead her more recent work, mainly her productions of the past two or three years. Among these too she emphasized only a few of the problems that had kept her engaged, and arranged the works on exhibit around them.

One of her major concerns is to find the adequate plastic expression of the relations between man, material surroundings, movement and space. Getting one's bearings in the world, assigning the fixed points of reference, the daring penetration into the unknown and the anguished withdrawal proceed through several phases. The history of this inner struggle is revealed in the series of metal figures crowded among metal walls

and metal furniture or standing lost in the openness of metal and space.

The light-hearted moments of the artist are to be seen in those sculptures that are now lyrically tender, now grotesquely humorous metaphors of the similarities of the human and the natural shapes, of the ambiguities of phenomena, materials and forms.

And whatever has passed and now lives an eternal existence in the growth-rings of memory, what was once physical reality and now is disembodied living essence—these phantoms of figures and situations, these thronging, ever multiplying shadows from the past are given physical form in Erzsébet Schaár's series of compositions of standing relief-like figures. This is anti-sculpture: queer, dimensionless figures file past like so many negative projections of physical existences, created by the free and automatic working of brain and hand. The impressions of forms afford a double chance for the accidental to come into play: the elusive, the almost unshapable has here been perpetuated in silver and bronze.

What Erzsébet Schaár has to say of the present moment has the same evanescent and eternal aspects. The postures of the ladies of fashion are graceful and grotesque, and the grotesquerie is very much enhanced by the "ordinary" subject's being rendered into noble substance.

The living moment, the occurrences that have just happened, the gestures just made, the crease that has just fallen there, are explored also in the reclining figures: the lovers, sleepers, dead soldiers. The eternity of the moment, the momentary chance character of the irrevocably definitive, life and death, vibrate in these themes with a terrifying ambiguity, and the ambiguity is intensified by the terracotta now made egg-shell thin and fragile, now modelled soft and thick, which evokes startlingly and in a bizarre way the fragility of things and the final oneness of materials, and re-discovers, and makes us re-discover for ourselves, the transience of all human forms.

FIRST HOURS IN NEW YORK

by

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

Prologue and apology for the genre, all in one

I stayed exactly four months in the United States, from March 14 to July 15, 1966. To stay four months is a long time indeed. But if I say I lived there—and this squares better with the facts—it is rather a short time. Still I prefer the latter verb because, after the first days spent in getting my bearings, I used the Ford Foundation's flattering invitation—"scholarship" somehow does not fit my grandfatherly status—to live there as if I were a resident of the country.

This venturesome undertaking of mine concerned in the first place the way of life, its day-by-day rhythm. I tried to adopt the style of the Americans, I endeavoured to see them from inside. At the same time I wanted to find out as much as possible about their way of life, their mode of thought, their human relationships, the functioning of their society, their arts, and the position of their artists and writers in society. I was out to see as much as I could of their cities, townscapes, mountains, oceans and roads. (It was of the latter — and of the airports— that I saw most.) In short, I said to myself on the flight there, still on the plane... but what I said you will be able to read presently below. Beforehand I owe you some explanation and an apology for the form in which this journal is cast.

As the circumstances of my trip would have it, I went by a Hungarian plane only as far as Frankfurt, where I had to change to Air France for Paris, from where I started next day for New York. So I had an hour or so to spend in the duty-free, enticing paradise of the Frankfurt airport. The Devil appeared not in the shape of a snake but in that of a pocket-size tape-recorder. I had already heard of it and seen it advertized in French papers: "Want an electronic notebook?" "I do," I had said and then, seeing the forbidding price, I had angrily turned the page. Now there it was again

before me, flaunting all its airs and graces. It was smaller than I had thought. It could really slip into a pocket, like a small camera. It was addressing me in German: "*Wollen Sie mich nicht haben?*" It told its price, and then Satan's perennial accomplice, cash, began to stir in my pocket. (If, at this point, I were to say dollar, the sentence would have a political overtone, although what I want to say is strictly something universally human.) My hosts had supplied me with fifty dollars to go with the air ticket, for, as they put it in their letter, "incidental expenses on the journey." Reading it I had been shocked. Perhaps there was not much sense in going to study a country where fifty dollars counted as pocket money. During these four months I was often reminded of those fifty dollars as pocket money with varying minus or plus signs.

For the time being, there it was, untouched, in my pocket and began to raise its head. I took the dear little tape-recorder in my hands. I was already fondling and petting it. It introduced itself. Its family name was Grundig, and it had been baptized EN-3. The 3 is only there to make it sound more mysterious, while EN stands for *Elektronisches Notizbuch*. The same push-button serves for recording, playing and winding back. I tried it. I knew I was walking the primrose path. I was already telling myself how I would slip it into my pocket and how, wherever I went in America, I would confide my observations to it. On my other foreign trips I had been scribbling into my notebook late at night against the heavy odds of sleepiness, and it was always nature that had got the upper hand, and then on the morning of the next or the third day I had desperately and with a bad conscience tried to catch up with notes that increasingly remained in arrears. All this was going to be different now. I purchased the little creature. (I even got some cash back from the fifty.) And it really made a difference.

My apology for the genre has something to do with this difference. I myself find it hard to believe, but it did happen the way I had decided. During the day I used every opportunity to talk into the taperecorder. At night, comfortably stretched out in bed, I chatted freely about my day. What follows is a transcript of these "electronic" running commentaries and of the personal news summaries of the day. I have made parenthetical additions only when it seemed necessary for comprehension or when I could not resist the temptation to anticipate an experience that was only to come later, or to couple a later recognition with some initial impression.

The text is accordingly a bit messy here and there, but I do not offer an apology for that. It is both a peculiarity and a windfall of the genre, coming as it does from the directness and freshness of communication. The chronology is no more topsy-turvy than any contemporary short story or novel.

I would like to add to this that in addition to the *viva voce* notes I also kept a journal, but do not fear, I am not so inveterate an experimenter in form as to thrust that too upon you. Maybe it will get published in the book one always has in mind but does not always write.

March 14, afternoon, on the plane

Take-off punctually at one o'clock from Orly airport. When I first look out we are already flying over the Atlantic. The Ford people have been generous: they got me a first-class ticket. So as soon as the plane stops mounting and levels out, the hostess comes with a trayful of drinks. No, thank you. She takes me for a backwoodsman—I only wish I knew how I was caught out—for she adds: "It's free of charge, sir." I apologize, mumbling that I do not like to drink on an empty stomach, but she keeps on mothering me: "If you go to America, sir, you'd better get used to drinking Scotch before lunch." All right, let's have a go. From then on I am served something to drink or to eat every ten minutes.

I've just had a three-hour doze. Wherever one looks it is still the same: the sky above and the sea below. But it might just as well be upside down: everywhere the same greyish blue tint. I have to chuckle from time to time. If anyone had told me ten years ago that I was going to travel to the States first class at the expense of the imperialists (I hope you hear the inverted commas), I would have telephoned for an ambulance and asked them to take him urgently to a lunatic asylum. "Politics repels physics." This saying now comes to my mind. I heard it from an old peasant somewhere in Hungary at the time of the land reform back in 1945. "But it doesn't make any sense," I told him. He nodded understandingly. "Well, that's just it." Physics and repulsion up here suddenly acquire a pungency all their own.

And when I consider what politics is going to do with that poor physics, once I start to write about America, even odder thoughts begin to stir in my mind, which I then and there mutter into my little tape-recorder—without exposing myself to curious stares, for I have the twin seat all to myself. That's why I shall try to live, and chiefly to see, in America as if I were an American writer, well on in his fifties, who dabbled in sociography in his younger days (well, of course this Latino-Greek word does not mean anything in English, but it means a lot for Hungarian ears: a literary movement in the thirties that tried to combine sociological research with literary means of expression in an attempt to discover the living conditions

of the poor peasants; something Oscar Lewis is doing nowadays in Mexico but in a variety of literary genres) and who now is touring the country, incog., talking to people, keeping his eyes open, and writing down exactly what he has seen and heard, no more, no less. The good old intention of sociographers; or of writers in general?

Now we are flying over Newfoundland at an altitude of thirty thousand feet. Down below all is snow and ice. White patches of snow like spilt milk amidst the black, craggy peaks. Nowhere a house to be seen. Here not even a seal's life for me.

From high up, Boston too is just snow, but baking in brilliant sunshine. Already we are losing height. The hostess comes to check whether I have fastened my belt. I tell her the little tale by Kálmán Mikszáth, the Hungarian story-writer, about his own child who stood up in his cot. His mother warned him: "Take care, sonny, hold on, for you may fall out if you don't." The child replied: "But I am holding on, mummy. Don't you see? To my shirt." The hostess laughs. "When did this writer of yours live?" I assure her that he lived before the age of airplanes. She flits away, returns with another drink, luckily orange juice this time, and remarks that the parable I told her isn't quite apposite. If the plane were to crash it would come to the same thing, but, if on landing the plane has to pull up suddenly, the belt may prevent passengers from lurching forward. And I should tighten the belt anyway, and would I please put away that machine I was talking into.

March 14, evening, at the hotel in New York

Terribly odd. It is quarter to ten p. m. local time but quarter to three in the morning back home, and I'm no more sleepy than usually at ten in the evening. I just feel a bit giddy and as if the bed were resting on the legs of a rocking chair and swaying back and forth from time to time.

We started at one p. m. and arrived at half past two, so I was in the air for six hours and a half. The sun was shining. Before landing we flew over a wide, bay-like river. On either side there stood little low houses with shining rooftops in a row so straight and regular that I first thought them to be car parks. We flew in from the sea, the plane gliding some one hundred feet above the water's surface for quite a while, the runway reaching as far as the water's edge, and then, of a sudden, there we were. Kennedy airport. A poem occurred to me, its lilt rather than the words. Who wrote it? Robert Lowell was my first guess. (Two weeks later in New York I heard it recited by its author, Voznyesensky. Oddly enough, Lowell was with

him on the rostrum, as the translator of some of his poems.) A multitude of planes. At first glance, I counted eleven halls, each as big as the one at our Ferihegy airport. Every airline company apparently has its own building, something completely new for European eyes.

The plane taxied about on the runway for quite a while, it even went in reverse for a stretch, giving me a weird feeling. The Immigration Officer frowned when he caught sight of my passport but relaxed on seeing my visa; it seemed he knew the meaning of the bold-type cryptograms J-1: P-111-6. He wished me a pleasant *séjour*. I see it must really be three in the morning in one half of my brain, and I am feeling tired. For, of course, he did not say it in French, and yet it is the French word that occurs to me. All he said in English was: "Have a good time!" I'm puzzled as to just what he had in mind, but anyway I thanked him.

I walk a good quarter of a mile all by my lonely self through a five-storey-high hall; not a soul to be seen; I have no idea where the other passengers—almost all of them Americans—have disappeared to. The first American advertisements on the walls, the very first one offering creaseless pants. Then, at long last, the inscription "Customs." Twenty customs officers, one each behind what appear to be twenty long, low counters but are actually conveyer belts. The passenger puts his luggage at one end, the customs officer presses a button, and the luggage travels up to him within arm's length. But *my* luggage—where has it got to? Behind me the wall suddenly opens its mouth and vomits forth my suitcases from a slanting, revolving tray. I transfer them to one of the conveyer belts. In front of me there is a married couple. The officer has them open each of their three suitcases and rummages in them with expert hands. Then he has all, literally all, their contents placed on the motionless part of the counter. I turn aside, embarrassed by this forced exhibitionism of lingerie and cosmetics. The customs man picks up each item one by one. My first half hour in the States is thus spent inspecting the average American's travelling outfit. The man must have been pessimistically inclined, because he carried with him an ordinary safety razor in addition to his electric razor. And the woman. . . but I'd better wipe that from the tape.

In my mind I went through the veritable bazaar the customs man would find in my suitcases and I clenched my teeth at the prospect of having to repack the stuff. It was then that he called me. It sounded to my nervous ear like: "Next patient, please!" He looked at me and asked for my passport. I hadn't opened my mouth; what can there be in my face, coat, clothes to stamp me as the country bumpkin from Europe who never fails to be instantly spotted? I gave him my passport. There,

now he would discover those cryptic letters and numbers. But he didn't even open it, just motioned me on. I was taking my pieces off the counter when he asked me, as an afterthought, whether I had brought along any meat? "Eighty-five kilogrammes," I said. He didn't get it. "A hundred and seventy pounds of it," I corrected myself. I could hear, for the first time, that broad American laughter with the head tilted back, the whole body rocking, which I had seen so many times in old films.

At the exit a pleasant, very Italian-looking young lady of very American gait and smile and dress, an official of my host institution, caught hold of my hand and kept on squeezing it. "Until the very last minute I'd thought we were going to receive a cancellation telegram instead of you." "Oh dear, politics raising its ugly head again," I thought, but I managed to keep this thought to myself and thanked her for meeting me.

We went to the entrance and waited for a cab to appear. It was then that I realized the airport was circular in shape, and though plenty of cars were passing round and round, not a cab to be seen. "You are the first Hungarian guest of ours," the lady remarked, "not to ask where the institution car is." Making a reference to my age and chin that had grown gray in travel, I began my American study tour by giving a short talk—while waiting for Taxi-Godot—about the distribution and function of automobiles in Hungary today.

At long last Noah's self-propelled motor vehicle drew up in front of us, and for my first ride in the land of cars I sat in a dilapidated 1932 Chevrolet. My guide chucked and apologized, but I assured her that I had had the opportunity of meeting the car's aunt in Chile when I had been taken from Santiago airport into the city two years ago. (At the time I hadn't yet realized how immeasurably important it would be that I had made the acquaintance of South America before North America; that I could see all my experiences in the United States filtered darkly through the eyes of Latin American people and poverty.)

We started off, and with all due excitement I was straining my eyes to see New York, but nowhere could I find it. My hostess told the driver to go across "the bridge," and he nodded. We had crossed four or five or even eight smaller bridges, but *the* bridge was the Triborough-Bridge linking three parts of New York, as my guide was diligently explaining, but I didn't grasp a single word of what she said. In my mental vision New York had always lived as a city of skyscrapers, but now for miles and miles and miles on end we had been driving through a town of one- and two-storeyed houses. *Through* a town? Rather *above* one: the four-lane expressway almost always rested on piles. The number of cars in both directions seemed inconceiv-

ably great even to someone who had just experienced Parisian traffic for a week. Four o'clock. I asked if that multitude of people were coming from work, or from the suburbs in search of amusement in New York. My hostess had never before thought about that. She laughed. "Americans are always on the move." (At that time I let that remark escape my attention. Today I realize that I got to know then the most striking feature of the American way of life.)

Leaving the expressway we drove between the houses. My breath stopped. I never would have thought that my very first impression of New York would be like that; good Lord, how ugly! The low houses grimy with soot and dirt, the wind whirling about shreds of newspaper, empty cans and cigarette cartons, and goodness knows what else.

My nice companion, seeing me pull a long face, put her hand comfortingly on my arm: "There! Look. Is that how you imagined it?"

Through the brownish, sunny mist of a late March afternoon I caught sight at last of the skyscrapers. They seemed to be swimming above the city and were still a long way off. We had to sit in the car for nearly an hour yet before entering the canyons formed by them. They thrilled and captivated me, like the pyramids. There as here, standing at their feet, one strained the head back in vain to get a glimpse of the top.

But for another hour the line of houses running past the car kept darting up and down, houses of one, six and again two storeys, then an empty lot followed unexpectedly by a little garden, then a gas tank; close by, a modern school, and Georgian-style imitation English mansions a little further on, and everywhere fire escapes like gigantic wire cobwebs adding ugliness to ugliness.

"Is this still a suburb?" I asked the nice lady. "No, this is already New York," she replied. Somehow I felt everything to be random and provisional. After a little hesitation I gave vent to this impression of mine.

"Of course, provisional. You're in America, Mr. Boldizsár!"

Rush hour in New York

We were still going along the riverbank. "Which one is this," I asked, "the Hudson or the East River?" The driver turned round and stared in my face. The nice lady from the host institution—let's call her Helen, chiefly because that's not her name—began to fidget. I knew what she was thinking: the same as I usually did when accompanying a guest from Ferihegy airport and, on reaching the pond in the Municipal Park, he inquired

whether that was the Danube. Now smile a little—I would tell myself—not superciliously but kindly, honoured by the foreigner's interest. There, that's better. . . . And now patiently explain to him that Pest is on the left-hand side of the Danube and on the right-hand side. . . . Sorry, yes, I am paying attention. . . . Yet I wasn't really. I would have liked to tell Helen that I didn't give a damn what the river was called and it didn't deserve a name anyway, considering how ugly the other side was. Docks, wharves, warehouses, factories built early in the last century, houses standing incomprehensibly slantwise to the river. (Days later I realized that it was the giddiness of the first days, a sort of tipsiness that all foreigners arriving here went through but which they were unaware of until they got used to the city. The cause of it is the organism's chafing against the other side of the world: we don't like to stand on our heads, we don't like the changed atmosphere, the different weather and chiefly the six-hour time-lag. When later I wanted to explain this to Americans, at some party, I made the mistake of turning for help to Frigyes Karinthy, the household humorist of every Hungarian. "It is like a convertible bed in reverse," I remarked. "Bed in the daytime, arm-chair at night." "And what," they asked, "is so funny about that? You just turn it back. So what?")

That river was not the Hudson but the East River, this side of New York being the East Side. "This is the more fashionable, the more expensive quarter," Helen added at once. It was not her intention to initiate me into one of the secrets of American life, the correlation of one's address and social standing; yet that was just what she did, because it had slipped out involuntarily. Address in America is as important as the number of stars in the army. Tell me where you live and I'll tell you who you are. It could even be improved to: . . . and I'll tell you how much you earn. (It took a few days for me to discover what, of all places, had made that bleak East Side the more fashionable quarter, considering that for decades the West Side had had this honour, and not without good reason: it offered a view of the other riverside, on to New Jersey, and even though it did not match the panoramic view of the Buda hills from Pest to my besotted eyes, it could measure up to the townscape of Pest seen from Buda. And when I was first told that the reason why the West Side had fallen into disfavour was, partly at least, the Americans' peculiar antisemitism, quite different from that in Europe, I stood aghast for a while. But right now I am, of course, not just repeating what my little tape-recorder tells me; I am jotting it down as a reminder, to come back to later on.)

So on the left it was the East River, and the road we were speeding along was the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive. A fine urban highway, no red lights

at all. There was a drive on either side of Manhattan Island, Helen said, then asked me, considerably overestimating my powers of comprehension, if I was beginning to understand the lay-out of New York. When I said no, the driver, this time correctly assessing my IQ, turned round and stuck out his tongue at me.

The cab-driver's tongue and a lesson in geography

"Do you see my tongue?" the driver asked me while he was working two wonders at a time. He was speaking with his tongue hanging out and driving with his head turned round. The first filled me with amazement, the other I tried to put up with like a man, seeing that my companion did not as much as bat an eye. "My tongue is Manhattan, I mean it would be if I could take it out of my mouth. See? Because Manhattan is an island. On either side" and now he took one hand off the wheel, "my gums, my lips are what hang around Manhattan: Bronx, Brooklyn, Staten Island, Queens or what have you. See? This here" curling up the tip of his tongue a bit, "is the southernmost tip of Manhattan, that's where Wall Street is, that's Downtown. See?"

I did, and I never did forget the lesson. The taxi driver was satisfied and asked me what was my nationality. I told him. "All right but where do you live?" I told him in Hungary. He flew off the handle and turned on his fellow-countrywoman. No one should try and make a fool of him. No one could come to the United States from Hungary. But they could, Helen said. But they couldn't, the driver insisted; he should know if anyone did, because he had brought lots of people in from the airport and heard what they talked about. He shook his head and said between his teeth that there was something fishy about it; but why the poor colloquial fish should be suspect was a mystery I could not unravel during the four months of my stay. (But in the fifth month I received an answer when this diary was published in a Budapest literary weekly. A reader, a Hungarian scholar, reminded me that Chaucer already mentions the "righte fishie tricke" of a cunning friend of his; and the fish is "fishy", that is, suspect, because it is a more perishable food than meat, so the housewife does not trust the vendor when he claims it is fresh. I hope this is not a fishy explanation.)

"Look here," the driver said a little later, very good-naturedly like all Americans, and with paternalizing solicitude like most of them—which he was fully entitled to, being at least twenty years my junior—"look here, wherever you come from, and whatever your reason for telling me lies,

you're in need of good advice. Listen"—Americans, in contrast with Englishmen pronounce it something like lissahn, with a drawled stressed *a* at the end—"never tell a New York taxi driver to hurry, and never tell him to go slower. He doesn't like it. Understand?"

Apparently I was in good form today: I understood. Helen visibly enjoyed the conversation. These, by the way, were his last admonitions, for then, turning right, we left the F.D.R. drive, and now I really arrived in New York—or thought I did, because the next couple of days I had several times the sensation that *this* was the moment when I actually arrived in New York, not only physically but beginning to grasp the hard core of this ungraspable city. We turned right somewhere round 50th Street. It was easy to tell, because there were road signs along the drive as large as those on our Budapest-Vienna motorwaylet. We turned the corner and stopped right away. "The rush hour is on," Helen explained. That was clear enough. Rush hour when nobody can rush but everybody would like to. We stopped some twenty yards from a red light. It changed to green without going amber first, the queue of cars lurched forward, we went five yards ahead and then stopped again. We could only get over the crossroads at the fifth go.

Glass giants

It was worth proceeding slowly, by fits and starts, for at one corner (I later recognized it as Park Avenue) I met with the beauties of New York. Our car had tried, but failed, to cross when the green light switched. The driver grumbled, but I was delighted at the chance to look round. At the four corners of the crossing stood slender, glittering, eerily graceful skyscrapers. I stuck my neck out of the window in a vain effort to get a glimpse of their tops, but it was their gracefulness and poise rather than their height that captivated me. Here contemporary architecture has created something which the human mind and hand, in their striving for height combined with grace, had not been able to achieve since the Gothic cathedrals. I was particularly fascinated by the way the buildings play with each other's reflected image. Mirrored in the glass façade—sometimes translucent, sometimes whitish green, in one case even sombre dark—looms the silhouette of the opposite skyscraper. As the car started again, I looked back and to the west—oh, yes I know, from the "Buda side," from the Hudson River—I caught sight of the broad red disk of the setting sun reflected in the body of that dark skyscraper. If New York can be so breathtakingly beautiful, why is it so ugly?

Thanks to the slowness of the next hour I had time to observe the sidewalks. They gave me an odd impression; at first I didn't know just what it was. Maybe it was those awnings stretching from almost every house as far as the curb and resembling the canvas of our old-time Hungarian *diligences*—or, rather, the covered waggons of the American pioneer days. But how did they get here from the prairies? They protect the inhabitants of the apartment-houses and the patrons of restaurants from the rain and snow while they go to and from their car or cab. Under the door end of each awning stands a rear-admiral. From time to time he hops to the edge of the sidewalk and blows a whistle for a cab. (I was soon to learn that the uniformed whistlers performed the duty not only of alluring cabs and foreign visitors' eyes but primarily of guarding the houses from unwanted guests.)

Yet the strange feeling I had while we were waiting to move on was not so much caused by this sight as by something that was lacking. There were hardly any people to be seen in the street. It seemed to be easier to get ahead by walking. Then why didn't people walk? "It's not done in New York," Helen enlightened me. (Within two days I found out that my New York friends whistled or had someone whistle for a cab—the rear-admirals would halt cabs for a quarter not only for the residents of the houses—even when they had only three blocks to go. Walking was so unusual that a silhouette memorial had been erected at the drive along the Hudson River to commemorate John Finley, the editor and educator, who was fond of strolling in the town on foot.) This is a rush hour with crawling cars and empty sidewalks.

"If we were to stop here and get out," Helen said, "and you hired an apartment in a residential hotel and got a job nearby, you might think for the rest of your life that the New York streets were empty. There are quarters in the city, uptown—German, Polish, Czech and, forgive me, Hungarian ghettos—whose inhabitants do not leave their immediate surroundings for years on end. But wait a little."

I waited, and then we turned into an avenue whose name I have forgotten. Parallel with the longitudinal side of the cabman's tongue run the avenues, and crosswise the streets. That is how the chessboard comes about. Helen looked at me quizzically. "Did you know that a Hungarian engineer is supposed to have invented it?" I had heard so, but I have not been able to track him down by name before or since.

The avenue we were now driving along, around the wasp waist of Manhattan, in midtown, may be compared to our Rákóczi Street. (Warning to the Reader: this not very elegant but bustling commercial street, or rather avenue in the centre of Budapest, takes its name from the eighteenth-

century leader of a War of Independence and not from a political personality of our century whose name begins with the same four letters, but ends with *si*. I mention this because the editorial office of *The New Hungarian Quarterly* happens to be on this avenue and many visitors wonder how it is possible that there is still a big street named after that small Brother.) Shop crowding on shop, but of people one can see less in the streets than, not to speak of Latin Paris, in chilly London or our nicely ugly Rákóczi—you see—Street.

“Wait a little longer.” I waited, and then suddenly we plunged into such a thick mass of people that the cars got lost amidst them. It was Sixth Avenue. We cut through a side-street where my eyes fell everywhere on basement restaurants, all of them with French sign-boards and all of them with awnings. Then we took another turn, and Helen said in a solemn voice: “This is Fifth Avenue. Have you heard of it?”

At a question like that the backwoods European is entitled to a free kick. He assumes an innocent face and answers: “No. Never. Why should I have?” I was immediately stung by compunction as Helen apologized and in embarrassed confusion said she did not mean I really should have, it was just a turn of speech. She went on to explain what I already knew—that this was the most famous of the avenues, because here were the nicest and most expensive shops. Moreover, she added, this was the longitudinal axis of Manhattan and as such it divided the city into an eastern and a western half.

I hadn't known that, but why was it so important? The driver shook his head in disapproval of all Europeans. (In our small continent there may be varying kinds of Europe, with national, ethnical, social and linguistic differences, but for the average American we are all one and the same lot, take it or leave it.) It was important because each street number had the words East or West before it and one knew that East and West must be counted from this or that side of Fifth Avenue.

That was the moment when my mind went shut. No, this was beyond endurance. The mercilessly straight lines of the avenues and streets intersecting at right angles turned all geometry upside down; for me they would now intersect only in infinity. I can remember nothing, just nothing, of my first impression of Fifth Avenue, and the only thing I have a vague recollection of is that it was from here that we turned into a park.

(When I recalled my first hours to my American friends in New York much later, they clutched their heads. “A park? To you it's just a park? That was Central Park, for Chrissake!” I am very sorry, and I offer all due apologies for my lapse, but I really couldn't find anything to attract me in Central Park except its tree tops seen three weeks later from the fifth or sixth

storey windows of very expensive apartments overlooking it. But even they lack the originality, the charm, the genuineness that make our Margaret Island and, lest I be suspected of chauvinism, London's Hyde Park so intimate.)

I sat back in my seat. I had had enough of New York for one go. Half conscious of Helen's saying, "this was Pennsylvania Station," I sat up and looked out: why *was*? Because it was being pulled down. (Now a big leap forward: by the time I left for home not a stone of it remained, yet the traffic inside it had not stopped for a day.)

One recognition, which is in fact two

We were jogging along so comfortably that soon I felt sufficiently rested to cast another look out of the cab's window. We were going through a poor district, and now the streets were really full of people, as becomes a city of ten millions. (I am always shattered when I say or write down this figure. The city of New York has as many inhabitants as the whole of Hungary. To understand the Americans I have to digest this fact. With what eyes must they look across the ocean or down, towards the southern half of their own continent, where a number of countries have a population less than that of New York or Chicago? The often adolescent sense of self-importance of a young nation, its misunderstandings and misassessments may in part be explained by these numerical disproportions and differences, particularly when one discovers how much they like to express everything in numerical terms.) I was looking at the passers-by; it was early spring, the air crisp, yet quite a few of them were wearing no overcoat. Surely not because they couldn't afford one but because. . . I didn't know. I still had to explore that.

I was looking at the people in the street, and for the first time I realized that I could hardly see any black faces. I told Helen so. She was surprised, genuinely surprised. What? What did I say? I should look once more, the streets were full of Negroes. "Look, look, look." I did not argue. We were seeing the world through different eyes, although Helen, as it later appeared, was what might be called a liberal American. Three blacks among a hundred people were few in my eyes, they were many in hers. There must be a light-sensitive emulsion in American eyes, accentuating the black as some films do the blue or the yellow.

"This is 23rd Street," Helen said. "Are you sure you want to put up at the Chelsea Hotel?"

I answered in the affirmative and was a little surprised. (In twenty-four hours I was to understand Helen's question only too well.)

"All right then," she said for the time being. We got out. She pointed towards the entrance. "It is really a writers' hotel."

By the side of the entrance on the wall were three plaques. Here Thomas Wolfe had died. It was from here that Brendan Behan had set out on his last journey. Here Dylan Thomas had spent his last night.

"Do you think," I asked Helen immodestly, "if I should die of a heart attack here, I could count on a little plaque like those?"

A bit flurried, she reassured me with a "no." I wish I knew what she meant by it—the heart attack or the plaque?

First steps in another world

While my luggage was being carried into the Chelsea Hotel, I turned my back on the entrance with the twin mementos of transience and immortality. The taximeter indicated seven dollars and ninety cents. I asked Helen how large a tip I was expected to give and how much I ought to give. In the daytime ten to fifteen per cent, at night twenty at least. If the indicator showed less than a dollar I should not for the life of me ask for change, because if I did, I might find myself introduced into a section of New York's linguistic underworld that had not found admission even into Salinger's or Norman Mailer's novels. (Once I tried it. I had been living in New York for a month, and I took a cab from Lexington Hotel to Rockefeller Center. The indicator stood at 55 cents, I added a quarter and wanted to walk away. The driver let loose a flood of words. His text brought back touching recollections of Helen, and of Sergeant Radák when I was a recruit; and a feeling of gratitude too. Partly because my vocabulary was being enriched with such picturesque linguistic inventions, my imagination had such daring physiological possibilities opened before it on account of the missing twenty cents, that the sergeant might have gone to the New York taxi driver's nursery; partly because later on I could dumbfound the male members of the parties I attended in America with my power of expression in their language. I could not, after this, hand the man the missing twenty cents, if only for principle's sake. The driver waited a quarter of a minute and then, in a quite different voice, rewarded me with the praise of a true sportsman: "You're a tough guy.")

After Helen's explanation I was just wondering whether to ask one dollar back on the ten-dollar note when the cabman turned to me with a grin:

Helen had settled the fare while I had been poring over the plaques. (I thought with my back-at-home mind that, of course, she would charge it to my expense account at the Foundation, but later, after many such incidents, I realized I had been mistaken. The Americans keep their lunch and dinner bills because they are entitled to deduct them from their income tax returns as "overhead expenses"; but quite aside from this, they are very generous when it comes to their own pocket. Nice large pockets they have. An American may be ready to fight for twenty cents if he thinks he has a right to it, but he will throw out ten dollars without batting an eye when he is entertaining someone. The American is the most hospitable person in the world, so kind, so helpful and unselfish towards his friends, and particularly towards foreigners, that you are thoroughly overwhelmed. You decline, you protest that you cannot accept, that, after all, it is you that are imposing yourself on him, that. . . Meantime your American friend has already paid for your fare, got you the tickets, taken you to his apartment instead of the hotel, bought you the article you so much admired in the department store, and has alerted a friend in another town that you, YOU, HIS FRIEND, will arrive there, that you should be met without fail at the airport, be wined and dined, with bed thrown in. Naturally—or rather not at all naturally—one also learns that this inconceivable kindness, so divergent from current concepts about Americans, does not mean, a few exceptions apart, the warmth and durability of personal relations that a similar degree of hospitality in Europe, especially in Hungary, would entail. Yet, after having so frequently enjoyed this unique hospitality, I feel it is my duty—and my pleasure—as a guest of many months to insert this grateful recognition right at the beginning of my American journal at the point where I had my first foretaste of it. (Or, better said, the second one, for the first foretaste—in fact, group of them—had come across the ocean to meet me while I was still at home. Professor H. sent me a cable saying he had learnt I would be arriving in America on the 14th and asking whether I would be free on the 16th to lecture at his university, have lunch with the faculty afterwards and take part in a seminar class in the afternoon. And could I make myself free that same evening—he asked in the long telegram I received in Budapest early in February—because he would like to have me for dinner at his home. Professor R. cabled to Budapest that she invited me for the first Saturday night, she would ask a few friends; reply paid, letter en route. The letter came, giving me advice on how to spend the first afternoon in New York. I right away made a note of it under the date of March 14. O.R. and his wife, with whom I had spent a nice day the previous year on the banks of the Danube between Visegrád and Esztergom, kept writing

me fortnightly letters after they had learnt of my being invited to America. "And, of course, you come and stay with us in Lexington." C., with whom I had spent barely an hour in a Budapest restaurant, wrote me that he had arranged for me to give a lecture at the local club and another at the city's university, and that he had invited his friends to a club to meet me on May 16. I was reminded of all this when the first American I met in New York made a gesture of hospitality, but I did not take it too seriously. I was soon to discover that they took kindness in deadly earnest to their own and the guest's exhaustion. And beginning with the second or third day my mind was increasingly troubled by the question: All this is fine and dandy, but how does it rhyme with Vietnam? And the Negroes? From the second or third day on, for a hundred and twenty days in America, I was trying to get at the bottom of it. To give a full answer will require a book. Or just one sentence? Perhaps like this: In the United States you meet not only with inconceivable kindness but with inconceivable violence too. Of this I learned also on my very first New York day: I have only to continue to listen to my faithful little tape-recorder.)

The taxi driver made a joke by way of farewell. "Can you drive?" he asked. I nodded. "Then you can make a living here." It begins well, I thought to myself, if already the driver wants to talk me into staying in America. (During those four months he was not only the first but also the last to drop any hint in that direction. . . .) ((I am using a double parenthesis here, for now that I'm home again I'd like to insert the question: Why, in the name of Washington, Lincoln and Roosevelt, do my Hungarian friends not want to believe this?))

A quaint hotel

Behind the receptionist's desk a man threw up his arms and received me enthusiastically: "Why do you come so late? Mr. Gross has been waiting and waiting for you! Mr. Gross is my partner, and he is Hungarian." Whereupon he added in somewhat odd Hungarian: *Én is tudok még magyarul beszélni.* "I still know a little Hungarian!" Then thinking it safer, he continued in English. Fortunately he did not let me put in a word edge-wise, and so I was not forced to confess that I had not decided to put up at this hotel for the sake of the Hungarian proprietor. I had not had the slightest suspicion that the hotel had anything to do with Hungarians. I had made a mental note of the name of the hotel when, at the Bled P.E.N. Congress, Arthur Miller mentioned that he had his New York apartment

there. Mixed into my decision there had been a little snobbery too, but even more so the fear of not knowing anybody in New York and that if I went there I could at least knock on neighbour Miller's door one day. Then I had hesitated. Wouldn't he take it as an intrusion? But I finally clutched at the moral excuse when a letter from Lewis Galantière, the president of the American P.E.N., recommended the same place. "A bit old-fashioned, but the writers like it."

For the time being I saw little of the old-fashionedness. In the hall were sitting a bearded young man and a dandified, grey-haired old amoroso. The bearded one was reading the *Christian Science Monitor*, the old dandy fixed his gaze on the gold-blond beard. The dark-suited, enthusiastic co-proprietor followed my look and said proudly: "Our lodgers. The young man is a well-known poet, the old fellow is a famous composer. Would you like to make their acquaintance?"

I modestly remarked that as yet I was not a resident of the hotel. We started for the lift: he would show me a few rooms. In the hall, amidst the paintings, there was a framed-in, glass-covered display of well onto a thousand aluminium combs, hung up, stuck together and on top of each other in some indecipherable and strange design.

"The man who made this, is he still living in the hotel?" I inquired. The co-proprietor regretted to say that he had moved out, but if I wanted. . . I thanked him and went to see the rooms with a sense of relief. The co-proprietor was holding forth on reduced prices for a compatriot; I would have accepted them, but Helen protected me and fought for me like a guardian angel. The first room he showed me was to my liking. It overlooked low rooftops from a nine-storey height. To the left loomed a few skyscrapers indicating that I *was* in New York, while to the right the Hudson glistened. All very good, but eleven dollars a day. . . my heart sank. He took me to other rooms, upstairs, downstairs. He recommended a room with a kitchenette. They were surprised to see that I did not pounce on it at once. It was very comfy. One could cook one's breakfast and supper. Surely I must be joking when I said I didn't like the idea. The American lady and the American gentleman had been having little arguments about room prices, but now they seemed in complete agreement. Their intonation seemed to imply the question: what sort of a male are you if you don't like to cook? (Or maybe I am just hearing this overtone into it now, aftré having seen so many American households?)

At last we again mounted up to the ninth floor and climbed down to eight dollars fifty. I have hated bargaining all my life, I have always accepted any price. Nor could I feel any gratification at the bargain price now. I was

overcome by mounting nervousness. As if the air had become poorer in oxygen. Or was it the oppressive heat in the room? I reached for the radiator to turn it off, but I snatched my hand back immediately, for on touching it I received an electric shock.

"You have to get used to it," the co-proprietor smiled. "New York is full of static electricity."

When I couldn't turn the knob of the radiator, I began to feel at home in the country of technical perfection despite the steaming heat. I tried to pull up the window. Touching the metal handle gave me another shock. The co-proprietor took a comb from his pocket. "First you should touch any metal object with this." I began to suspect what may have inspired the one-time resident to perpetrate that masterpiece in the hall, perhaps even induce him to leave.

Meanwhile a uniformed Negro bell boy had brought up my luggage. I looked inquiringly at Helen. How much am I supposed to give? She stretched one finger behind the bell boy's back. One dollar for two suitcases by lift? That was thirty forints, if one went by the dollar exchange rate applied to gifts received by Hungarian from relatives in America and called "Ikkalese" in Budapest parlance, because the gifts are shipped through the intermediary of an enterprise called I.K.K.A. that became a household abbreviation, so much so that nobody knows anymore, the writer of the present diary included, what the four initial letters stand for. My breath stopped. (And from then on for four months I compared neither prices nor salaries—to protect my health.)

Alone at last

Taking leave from Helen I thanked her for getting my initiation ceremony started. The co-proprietor also danced out of the room with an *Egészségére!* which is Hungarian for "cheerio" or "chin-chin," though he obviously meant to say good-bye. I looked out of the window. I was all alone in New York. I felt my situation as unreal and as menacing as I did years ago at the front when the first bullet whistled past my ear. Could it be that this was the end of me? I wasn't really afraid, I didn't quite believe it. Such things happened to others. Now I was that other man.

(I never really wanted to go and see the United States. I must add that I had travelled the last three or four years so often and in so many countries, and written two or three books with the aid of my diaries, that even close friends of mine believe I was a globetrotter before I could walk. The truth

is that in my childhood, my young years and the first half-time of my manhood I longed so strongly for France and Italy that the desire almost burst my chest, but I was already thirty-four when I first saw Paris and forty-six when my foot first touched Italian soil.)

America never haunted my dreams, perhaps because it always appeared so improbable, financially as well as politically, that I could ever get as far as that. Now the political situation was not the best, and as to dollars I had the same plenitude of cents as at other times; yet here I was on a ninth floor in New York as a guest, with four months before me, and I felt terribly a stranger. Never before had I felt this anguish on arrival in a new country or town I hadn't seen previously. Even in Brazil and the Lebanon I felt at ease in comparison. Possibly because the New York that I had just had a hurried glimpse of did not square with the image I was familiar with from films and novels. Perhaps it was because I found it difficult to wait for and take in the impressions as impartially as when among the French, the English, the Italians, the Swedes or the Uruguayans. I was angry with the Americans for letting the great opportunity of my trip to them coincide with the war in Vietnam. Before starting on my journey I had decided to try to live the way they lived. But how was I to set right the cold war distortions in my own mind and in that of those people at home who might be interested in my impressions of America, if now I had to see everything through the prism of a shooting war?

I shuddered. Perhaps I had come at the wrong time. But maybe I was just cold. The window had been left open. For the first time I became conscious of the New York weather. The cab had been heated, there was brilliant sunshine outside, I had thought it was spring. Tomorrow the Ides of March. This meant Julius Caesar to those here who read Shakespeare—it would be good to know if public opinion tests included aspects like these. Suddenly I felt richer: we had Petőfi and the steps of the National Museum, and that day, March 15, 1848, when after so many centuries we had drawn abreast of history. Amidst these lofty thoughts I became more and more aware that I was shivering. It was cold out there. My nice guide Helen had told me in one of her letters that I should not bring winter things with me, March would already bring a breath of spring into New York. Fortunately I trust poetic notes only in verses, and therefore I had travelled in a winter coat.

I quickly got out my comb, tapped it against the handle of the window; a small flicker, and I could pull it down. I started unpacking, but suddenly I felt like going out. I took out my diary to test what Professor R. had recommended. Go down 6th Avenue as far as 42nd Street, turn left as far

as Broadway, then turn right . . . no, this made me dizzy. I would go down and take a stroll in 23rd Street. It was five o'clock, with some luck the shops might still be open.

In the hall of the hotel there was a glass cubicle with a desk behind the receptionist's counter. When I stepped out of the lift—yes, thank you, I know the Americans call it elevator, three syllables instead of one, although they prefer to shorten everything when speaking—from behind the glass partition there came an elderly man in a dark suit, slim, with a thin face and jovially twinkling eyes. I asked him when the shops closed. He pushed the broad-rimmed spectacles up on his brow, winked and replied in flawless Hungarian: "The man who received you is only a second generation Hungarian. I'm genuine." He gave his name: Z. Then he melted the icecrust that was about to envelop my heart by telling me that he had read a book of mine sent to him by his brother-in-law from somewhere in Nográd County. "And that I should now have the honour of receiving you, of all places, in this old hotel of ours . . . It's a small world. But you'd better hurry. You'll find the shops open for just another hour. There's a good bookshop a stone's throw from here. That'll interest you."

I went out into the street. A cold wind was blowing, my hat almost flew off. The Chelsea Hotel too had one of those awnings reaching to the curb, and right next door there was another awning and under it a Spanish restaurant by the name of El Toreador. I studied the menu posted outside. Broiled chicken, six dollars. Lobster, nine sixty. I'd hardly be a regular customer there. The next shop had a door so narrow that it barely allowed one man to enter the aperture, and that too was blocked by a home-painted poster saying: "Your jumbo-sized grilled chicken—here at 95 cents." I walked on and suddenly stopped. What was happening to me, was I again being seized with the giddiness of arrival? I was back at Fegyvernek, a small village in the Hungarian Plain, during the summer vacation, at the age of ten, staring at the window of Moses Epstein's grocery shop and my mouth watering for Saint John's bread. That grocer's of four decades ago, here it was again, here the Saint John's bread and Old Epstein too, with that strangely shaped, square, rimless felt hat never missing from his head. So now I already knew where to get Saint John's bread in New York. Hard by the village grocer's a dazzling neon-lighted flower-shop and next to it a button shop with a million buttons displayed in its window. I should have liked to find a drugstore. I had heard there was one in every block. This block seemed an exception. Thrown stones also seemed to fly further in this country, for I was unable to locate that bookshop either. Perhaps it was in the other direction.

An even quainter bookshop

I turned round, and sure enough, there it was, just beyond the corner, with some of the books put out on the sidewalk in boxes. I hurried up so as not to have the shutters pulled down before I could enter. Only now did I realize how near my hotel was to Seventh Avenue. Twelve hours before it wouldn't have meant anything to me, nor did I quite know why it gave me such joy: perhaps because it was a fixed point I could call by its name and number in this unknown world. I didn't stop to look at the windows but went straight into the shop, and the dry, dusty smell, the crammed shelves, the old and young people browsing there and the unusual and yet so familiar silence tranquilized my nerves.

The place must have been fairly large, but I could not see the other end because the shelves were arranged not only along the walls but also jutted out, filling most of the space and leaving only narrow little lanes through which I made my way with difficulty. The shelves were all tallish, but I could reach up to the top ones. Mounted on them were boards directing the people just like the traffic signs in a big city—arrows pointing to story streets, science avenues and picture-book squares. A particularly big one directed me towards the paperback quarter. I went down two steps to find myself in another room, another city, with a population of 38,750 paperbacks; at least, that was the number published so far for 50, 75 or 95 cents. (During my four months in America they never wanted to believe me when I told them that with us cloth-bound, nicely illustrated books cost at best a few cents more and that copies of our homely little Cheap Library only cost ten cents there.) The owner of the shop boasted of having all the thirty-eight thousand odd volumes in stock. AND NOTE THIS: PAPERBACKS WITHOUT FRONT PAGE COVERS ONLY 25 CENTS. I took mental note of this and did a little calculation as I walked up to them. I could get four books for a dollar, and if I managed to save up a hundred I could take home quite a tidy American library. My apathy began to leave me, and I even found myself planning to buy one every day and to read as much of them as I could of an evening or rather after waking up in the morning with a fresh head. In this way I would enter America through two doors at once.

I began browsing among the twenty-five cent coverless books and I had my first disappointment and lesson too. I found only trash, treacly love and sex stories, whodunits and westerns. At last a better one: *Revolution in Berkeley*. The name rang a bell, it was at this university in California back in December 1964 that the students had staged a demonstration. But that

it should have been a revolution? Picking up the volume, I went back and was about to pay for it when the owner, a man with aquiline nose and in shirt sleeves behind the cash register, shook his head and said I should pay later for the whole lot together. I returned to the paperback world and got lost among the titles. There was Norman Mailer's *American Dream*. I had read about this American anti-dream and therefore I quickly took it out. I picked up Elia Kazan's *America, America*, more for its title than anything else, then two books by Saul Bellow for their author. I had been told that after Hemingway and Faulkner he was the greatest American novelist, and back home I had read only half of his *Herzog*, sent to me by a friend three weeks before leaving. I thought the *American Dream* was well matched by Jessica Mitford's *The American Way of Death*. *Call to Greatness* was the next book I selected. Its author, Adlai Stevenson, whose career as an American intellectual has been so checkered, had always had my admiration. I could barely manage to hold this stack of books under my arms, and the heat was beginning to be more than I could bear, when my fancy was caught by yet another volume of some four hundred pages and of a corresponding price—one dollar ninety-five, but here offered for one fifty-five. It was called *The Life and Death of Great American Cities*. I had never heard of the author (Jane Jacobs), but somehow it fitted in well with my other random choices.

Suddenly a big hullabaloo, thuds, yells. I went to the front of the shop, and there the owner was pulling about a bearded, bespectacled young man with his left hand, while with the right he was wielding a rubber truncheon and beating the young man's back and shoulders, shouting something that I could not make out. The young man tried to make for the door, but the owner blocked his way, coshed him on the head with the truncheon and pushed him against the counter. He ordered him to empty his pockets. A soiled handkerchief and a few banknotes fell to the floor and a lot of coppers rolled in all directions. Then he spun the man round, kicked him in the back and beat him out of the shop with his stick. The other customers and I looked on in silence, the only difference between them and myself being that they all smiled as if they had been watching a circus show. At first I thought the young man had stolen a book, but the owner, still brandishing his long rubber truncheon, told us that in an unguarded moment the fellow had made a grab at the till and taken out a handful of money. The other customers went back to their shelves, the shopkeeper put the truncheon back in its place behind the counter.

This diary was and is being published, as I already mentioned, in a Budapest literary weekly in shorter installments. One of them ended with the preceding paragraph. The story related sounds like a thriller, and I used—with the ulterior permission of the readers—the method of detective story writers by interrupting it before the end. For the text on my little tape-recorder continues like this:

“It is very difficult to add, and I really don’t know how to write it later: the bearded boy was a Negro.”

If I were to end on that note I would, however, leave the reader in the same mood I was in on that 14th of March, freshly arrived in New York. I therefore prefer to stop listening to my tape for a while and instead to dwell—by hindsight—a little longer on that startling first impression. I cannot promise to tell at one go all that I learnt in four months about the Negro question. By dwelling on that first experience I should like, on the contrary, to bring home to my readers the infinite complexity of this excruciating issue, the emotional and political complications of which we in Europe can do little more than take note of, without full awareness of its depths, its contradictions, and its countless thorns that prick both ways.

I remained standing in that bookshop staring in front of me, without noticing that I wasn’t looking at the titles any longer. The voice of the bookseller struck me (how physically appropriate a metaphor can become!) out of my reverie. “Anything wrong, sir?” “Oh, no, not at all, everything’s all right, thank you, I’d like to pay.”

That wasn’t true. I’d have liked to ask him why he kept a truncheon under his counter. I’d have liked to tell him that I had—and still have—many a bookseller friend, especially in the Budapest of yore when I was the age of the bearded young man beaten out of the shop just now, yet none of them ever kept a truncheon under the counter. I’d have liked to ask him how he got the idea of taking the law into his own hands and of applying such strong-arm methods as the use of a truncheon in self-defense. For a while he went on pottering about the till, counting the bank notes over and over again, while two other customers stood beside him, watching. Suddenly he burst into laughter and muttered something about his having found a surplus. “Serves the scoundrel right!” His discovery was hardly surprising, considering he had turned the lad’s pockets inside out and seized all the money in them.

I realized later that I could easily have put my questions to him without his resenting them and without any risk of his driving me out with the

truncheon. On the contrary, he would obligingly have offered an explanation of the whys and wherefores of his behaviour. At that moment, however, I was still quite a greenhorn in American ways and could not comprehend that rubber club, nor did I know that the bookseller would change back into a gentleman at the drop of a hat and be only too glad to enlighten me on the customs of his country.

I wandered out into the street. The wind was blowing even stronger than before, and I did not appreciate as yet that this too was part of New York and that one of the reasons of the steady draught is . . . but of this another time; now I was searching for more important causes. I was down in the mouth. Gone was the tipsiness that seizes me on arriving in a new town and makes me feel younger for a while, as does heady wine. The devil take it, I thought, I have come here to look for and find the real life and the genuine thoughts behind the slogans, clichés and myths, the propaganda and the Hollywoodisms. Instead, on the very first day, in the very first hour, I find myself confronted with two simple-as-a-slap theses, whose patent oversimplicity makes me reject their veracity out of hand. The one: Negroes are beaten up. The other: the blacks steal.

The perennial American debate

But is it really they that are beaten up? Was it on account of his being a Negro that the young man was mauled with the truncheon of a bookseller who had probably never heard, and would never believe, that the greatest of Hungarian poets had dedicated a poem to . . . a bookseller? Would he have beaten up the man if he had been white? I searched for the answer during the following days, and the opportunity of doing so offered itself again and again. Every evening I was invited to dinner or a drink after dinner. Everywhere I was unfailingly asked the question which no Englishman or Frenchman would put to his guest, but we Budapestians certainly would: "How do you like New York?" I always gave a sincere answer—and what that was my tape-recorder will later duly relate. Then, with a candid face, not as if I had been seeking a reply, but eager to observe their reactions, I recounted my experiences in the bookshop, but at first without mentioning the bearded man's colour.

Each time there was silence for a while, then one of the company would speak up: "Tell me, wasn't that fellow a Negro?" When I answered in the affirmative, they all gave a sigh of relief: "Aah, that's different!"

I need hardly add that I was not taking part in a meeting of the New York

branch of the John Birch Society or at a nocturnal orgy of the Ku-Klux-Klan, nor at a champagne revelry, if such existed, of the conservative diehards of the Republican Party. My hosts were mostly somewhat left-of-centre professors, authors, doctors, all of them opposed to the war in Vietnam and supporters of the civil rights movement.

Why should it be different? "Wouldn't he have struck a white man?" I asked, eagerly awaiting the answer. I had to wait long. They began to debate among themselves. Soon they got up one by one, gathering in a group and turning their backs on me as if I hadn't been in the room. I sat in an easy chair but couldn't feel at ease. Some insisted that a white boy would not go into a bookshop to steal. So in your opinion only Negroes steal?—another of the company pounced on him. No, no, he would not say that, but mainly Negroes. Then they hurled statistics at each other, from which it appeared that the criminal record of the Negroes was no worse than their proportion in the population. So what do you suggest by claiming that? Only that in that neighbourhood. . . . What do you mean by *that* neighbourhood? The statistics reflected the national ratio, in New York it was to the disadvantage of the Negroes. Yes, but why do the Negroes steal? What? *The* Negroes? The Negroes do not steal, only some Negroes. All right, why do more individual Negroes steal than individual white men? Why? Because they live in ghettos, because they lead a miserable existence, because we look down on them and treat them with scorn.

My head was swimming. (I confess that, sitting there in the easy chair, I took out my little tape-recorder and, even though I could not record on it the conversation because it was not sensitive enough for that, I whispered into it a few of the more characteristic remarks that were being made.) They acted as if I had vanished into thin air, deeply engaged as they were in the perennial American debate.

At last they took note of my presence—I am here condensing my first three evenings, which I can do the more freely because all three were so similar that they might have been directed by one and the same person—and they announced the conclusion of the debate: the bookseller had not manhandled the boy because he was a Negro but because he was a thief. And what was interesting and characteristic of the United States in the whole business, they insisted, was not this aspect in any case, but the toughness of the American male and his disposition to take the law into his own hands.

My aim had not been to overcome them in debate but to learn as much as possible of the American way of thinking, yet now I felt that they had passed me the ball and left their goal unguarded. All right, I said—or rather, if I remember rightly, I said O.K., which amused them very much—but

if the decisive circumstance in the case was not the fellow's black skin, then why was their very first question whether the thief was a Negro and why especially did they say "ah" with so much relief upon hearing my affirmative answer? There must be something in the American public mind—I went on provoking them—which automatically associated theft and beating up with the Negro, or the Negro with theft and beating up.

I had this argument with intelligent and honest people. First they were astonished, then they admitted I was right. Yes, that was so. They too found it hard to get rid of their prejudices. Perhaps it was even more than prejudice. It was a fact arising out of the nature of American society. It was a sort of unconditioned psychological response whose springs are seated deeper than consciousness. And now they called on me half jokingly, half very seriously and defensively, to imagine how those people felt who did not support the civil rights movement. What might their unconditioned responses be like? In the coming months I was to learn a lot about that too. I don't think I am being cynical when I affirm that I owe a debt of gratitude to that poor, cudgeled young man, for it was his case that enabled me to set this debate going again and again. (He must have been a complete novice as a thief if, of all places, he chose to go into a bookshop to steal.)

Petőfi and the bookseller

Once more I led the conversation back to the bookshop by regaling my evening company with a translation, into unsatisfactory English prose, of four lines from Petőfi which I had failed to recite to the bookseller: "Never swerve from honesty, neither out of passion nor for prize, Love your neighbour truly, Do not draw up the bridge between yourself and the other man. . ." And lest they should think that Petőfi was some rhymster of keepsake platitudes—although I could see that "neighbour" and "bridge" went home—I added the closing couplet containing the "twist": "Love God above all, And sell my poems fast." I think that with the help of Petőfi I restored the pleasant atmosphere of the company which had fallen into quite a blue mood on account of the painful topic I had introduced. Still I could not keep myself from pursuing it. I myself had been shocked, I said, not by the fact that the bookseller had assaulted the Negro boy but rather by the fact, the idea, the absurdity of his keeping a truncheon in the shop. "I hope you won't take it amiss," I added, "if I seem to discover here a peculiarity more characteristic of American society, and less known to us abroad, than the Negro issue?"

Self-administered justice

Yet that was exactly what they had been referring to a moment or two ago when I scored against them. The American male. Taking the law into his own hands. I had to bear in mind what Europeans were only too frequently inclined to forget—and they would not be Europeans if they didn't do so—that the history of the United States had only begun a relatively short time ago. "I beg you," a very beautiful woman turned to me, "to bear in mind that two hundred years ago there was nothing here, and a hundred years ago even the Wild West hadn't begun yet. Twenty-second Street, where we are now sitting, was the northern boundary of New York fifty years back, and now it already reaches beyond 157th Street. Why didn't the bookseller call a policeman? Because he has inherited from his father the notion that a man settles his own affairs. A generation or so ago people went for each other with their fists in the street, and to this day they don't like a policeman to meddle in their disputes." This is a pioneer people. Again and again throughout my stay I was to hear this declaration as, standing on soft carpets in luxury apartments, I conversed with families owning two or three cars and pampered by every gadget of technical comfort. "We are a pioneer people and are used to taking the law into our own hands."

"By the way, I may tell you," the husband of the very beautiful woman told me out of his wife's earshot, "your bearded guy got off easy. If he had been handed over to the police he would have had his genitals scrambled before being incarcerated for a couple of days or weeks."

The little European devil—one felt oneself not only a Hungarian but very much of a European too in a miraculously short time—was now whispering into my ears: "Ask him, would they also scramble them if the man was white?" but I waved the little devil aside. I didn't yet know my hosts well enough, nor did I want to abuse the rules of hospitality. But today I know that they wouldn't have taken that question amiss. Thanks to their excessive national consciousness they relish criticizing themselves and being criticized by others.

And I know also that in these first nights I just touched the surface of that great American problem: race, which itself is a part of a greater complex, that of violence, and my hundred and twenty days were hardly enough to learn a little more.

*

Next time I shall return to my tape-gadget, listen to it and resume my hour by hour, day by day journal where I left it.

FRENCH-HUNGARIAN CULTURAL RELATIONS

by

THOMAS SCHREIBER

The books and papers devoted to the history of French-Hungarian cultural relations would fill a library.¹ It is impossible to reduce the—often stirring—history of the contacts between the two countries to a single formula.

The French and Hungarians differ profoundly in race, temperament and civilization. Divergent, if not conflicting, interests, a world of difference in feeling and manner of life and, at least in the past, the great distance between the two countries—these might have made French-Hungarian contacts infrequent and not very friendly.

Yet, just the opposite has been the case since the tenth century. History from the Middle Ages until our own times has been marked by meetings between the people of France and Hungary. It is as though at each important stage of their history, in difficult as well as in happy times, the French and Hungarians have felt the need to get in touch with one another, like friends who although living far away, never fail to keep each other up to date on the great events in their lives. At such times they feel the need to share their emotions and ideas; they are friends who like to “take bearings” together, and mark the important turning-points of their lives by a token of friendship and a symbolic handshake.²

It was from Pope Sylvester II, himself of French descent (Gerbert d’Aurillac), that the first king of Hungary, St Stephen, received the Holy Crown and the title of “apostolic king.” The connections of the Hungarian sovereign with Odilon de Cluny permitted the Benedictine order to spread over the country from 1000 A. D. onwards, and the foundations it created

¹ István Sötér: *Francia szellem a régi Magyarországon* (“French Spirit in Ancient Hungary”), 1940; *Magyar-Francia kapcsolatok* (“Hungarian-French Relations”), 1946. We have equally consulted the chronology of Franco-Hungarian relations by J. Györy, the papers of S. Eckhardt and the small volume entitled *Les efforts culturels de la Hongrie* (Budapest, 1935).

² cf. R. Dupuis: *Le problème hongrois*, Paris, Les Éditions Internationales, 1931, 215 p.

remained in contact with the abbeys in France up to the end of the Middle Ages. Let us not forget that the first Benedictine abbey in Hungary, that of Pannonhalma, was built, on the instructions of St Stephen, in honour of St Martin. Other religious orders also came from France; the ancient castles and chateaux of the country were built by French monks of the abbeys of Cluny, Villers and Clairvaux.

In spite of these first indications of a "rapprochement" between France and Hungary the Court of Buda remained under a certain German influence. Nevertheless, towards the end of the eleventh century one can note the presence of bishops of French origin, and the first French-Walloon colonists coming from the neighbourhood of Liège. The latter, mostly farmers, were to contribute to the economic development of the country for several centuries. The worldwide renown of the Tokay vineyards undoubtedly owes a lot to these colonists. These, in turn, were much indebted to the kings of Hungary, who gave them lands, franchises and privileges which—together with their idiom—they were to preserve until the fifteenth century.

French merchants and artisans joined this band of colonists, forming separate districts in many Hungarian cities.

Hungarian historiography too owes its beginnings to the arrival of the French friars. In the reign of King Coloman, the chancelleries started to adopt the French usage in the appellation of Hungarians—*Hungari*—instead of the German forms. Incidentally, King Coloman's marriage with Busille, the daughter of Roger I, Count of Sicily, of the house of Hauteville, inaugurates a long series of matrimonial alliances between the Árpád and French dynasties.

The end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries mark the apogee of French-Hungarian relations. At that time a direct link was established with the very home of French *esprit*, that is, Paris. The Sorbonne, newly founded, welcomed the first Hungarians among its students.³

In the period of Humanism several Hungarian scientists played an outstanding role in the intellectual life of France. A whole series of French books issuing from the Reformation were dedicated to a Hungarian bishop, János Gosztonyi, whose advanced ideas inspired the French humanists. If proof is wanted of the impact of French thought on sixteenth-century Hungary, it is sufficient to recall that among the various protestant denominations it was in actual fact Calvinism to which the majority of Hungarians turned.

In the seventeenth century, when the Cartesian movement indirectly

³ cf. J. Hankiss: *Vestiges hongrois en France in Visages de la Hongrie*, Paris, Plon, 1938.

penetrated into Hungary (via Vienna), political relations between the two countries began to develop. Certainly, for Louis XIV, and even other kings of France, the principal benefit from Hungary lay in its usefulness in the fight against the Hapsburgs. On the other hand, however, there must have been a great deal of sincere sympathy in the support the Sun King gave Hungary in Ferenc Rákóczi's War of Independence. The latter settled down in France after his defeat, first at the Court of Versailles and later with the Camaldulian order at Grosbois where he was greatly influenced by Jansenist doctrines.⁴ It is also from Rákóczi's residence in France, where the king commissioned him to organize a cavalry regiment, that certain terms of French military language take their origin. Incidentally, Hungary gave France several field-m Marshals and generals, and quite a few Hungarians residing in France even fought with the expeditionary forces of La Fayette in America.

With the eighteenth century a new era began.

Hungarian aristocrats who frequently resided in Vienna—the Hapsburg capital—imported a taste for French culture: in various schools they learned French and polished their education in the theatres, in the literary salons and at the Court where French language, literature and customs were cultivated.

The libraries built up by the aristocrats in Hungary were crammed with French books. Many Hungarians started to read Montesquieu, Rousseau and Voltaire at the same time as the French. György Bessenyei, the outstanding literary figure of the beginning of the Age of Enlightenment, thought highly of Voltaire and translated his works.

The great personalities of Hungarian national poetry followed in his footsteps: e.g., János Batsányi not only possessed a profound knowledge of French poetry and philosophy, but during his years of exile in Paris he also translated these works.

Encouraged by the French Revolution, a handful of Hungarian intellectuals created the "Society of Liberty and Equality," but the movement of Martinovics and his friends was to founder.

French influence played a preponderant role in the formation of the intellectual life of the National Reform period in the nineteenth century. József Eötvös's novel "The Carthusian" and the first works by the great romantic writer Mór Jókai—which remain "bestsellers" even today—reflect the influence of French Romanticism. Sándor Petőfi, the greatest Hungarian lyric poet, translated numerous poems by Béranger and Lamartine. Was it by

⁴ B. Köpeczi recently devoted a large volume to French-Hungarian relations at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. ("The Independence War of Rákóczi and France," Budapest, Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1966, 480 pp. in Hungarian. French translation in preparation.)

chance that Petőfi, who inspired the Hungarian Revolution of 1848, confessed that the history of the French Revolution was his every-day reading matter.⁵

On the whole, in the second half of the last century there was hardly a literary movement that did not find its reflection in Hungarian writing. Zsigmond Kemény was influenced by the relentless realism of Balzac; Sándor Bródy by the works of Zola, and Kálmán Mikszáth by the novelettes of Daudet. As to Maupassant, he was literally the model for the Hungarian "feuilleton" genre of the turn of the nineteenth century. French *esprit* made its fruitful influence felt also in other domains of art. Among the painters Mihály Munkácsy had his studio in Paris, László Paál joined the Barbizon school and József Rippl-Rónai became a member of the Nabi Group.

A Hungarian musician—Ferenc Liszt—conquered France, just as Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály were to conquer it at a later time. Many of Liszt's motifs show an affinity with French romantic music. And it is in Hungary that Berlioz found the sweeping melody of the Rákóczi March for his *Damnation of Faust*.

Thus we arrive at our own age.

In the field of politics the relations between the two states tend to be rather strained.

During the First World War the two countries were in opposing camps. The Treaty of Trianon, signed in 1920, deepened the antagonisms between the Danubian nations, and the initiatives of French diplomacy were not always particularly helpful.

Throughout the inter-war period the "blow of Trianon" gave Hungarian politics of the Horthy era a desperately revisionist character that placed re-acquisition of the lost territories above all other considerations. Mussolini's Italy and later Hitler's Germany had an easy time exploiting Hungarian resentment while the Western democracies, especially France, were staking everything on maintaining the status quo and strengthening their own defence systems. As Hungary aligned itself with the Axis Powers, Budapest drew away from the Western countries, the protectors of the "Little Entente" considered by Hungary an enemy alliance.⁶

Of course, the errors of the Third Republic's East-European policy did not fail to leave their imprint on the development of cultural relations. Nevertheless, the contact between French and Hungarian culture was never severed.

⁵ Extract from an interview given by Prof. Gyergyai to the French Radio and TV.

⁶ See our preface to the special issue of the *Revue d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale*, Paris, April 1966 ("Hungary and the Second World War"). We intend to take up this subject in another paper soon.

In fact, the world of art and literature still looked towards Paris. The evolution of the Hungarian theatre closely followed the style of the French stage; modern Hungarian painting and music, in their turn, absorbed fruitful ideas from Paris that helped them in their efforts to develop their own personalities and the national genius—both increasingly threatened by German influence. Even before the First World War Hungarian literature and poetry followed the same trend as painting and music. The *Nyugat* (West) movement which brought to the surface so many literary talents and a brilliant poet, Endre Ady, drew from the climate in Paris its ideals of free inspiration and essentially artistic expression. Other Hungarian intellectuals later came to Paris to forge cultural links between the two countries.

During the Second World War the Hungarians continued—as far as circumstances permitted—to take an interest in French culture.⁷ Political vicissitudes could not wipe out the traditions of French culture in Hungary. The attachment to the value of French thought amounted to a protest against Hitler. This fact lends a particular importance (going beyond the boundaries of literature) to the great anthology of French Poetry edited by Gyula Illyés in 1939.

Following the liberation there was a renewal of relations manifesting itself in countless translations of French works, in the adaptation of numerous plays, and in large-scale imports of French films. Finally, we should mention the reopening of the Institut Français of Budapest and the Hungarian Institute in Paris.

Unlike similar institutes in the Eastern countries these two Institutes never ceased their activities even during the difficult years of Stalinism. Nevertheless, the consequences of the sectarian cultural policy—now denounced in Budapest—were to have a detrimental effect on French-Hungarian relations until 1956. However, even in those years the classics of French literature were being translated into Hungarian in large numbers, although the cultural authorities of that time limited the translations of contemporary French writers to a few works only. Even these were sometimes of a doubtful literary worth, but their content seemed to meet perfectly the political requirements of that era.

After the vicissitudes of cold war a happier chapter began. A climate ever more favourable to relations with the West—especially with France—permitted the “normalization” of cultural exchanges. The period of isolation, artificially maintained by the former leaders of the country, appeared to be at an end.

⁷ See in particular the volume “The French *esprit* in Hungary,” in Hungarian, *Officina*, 1943, which contains many anti-German allusions.

From 1956 on the literary review *Nagyvilág* fulfilled an important role in acquainting the public with contemporary world literature and more particularly French literature. Translations increase; to the classical authors succeed such writers as Camus, Sartre, Schwarz-Bart, Vailland, Vercors, Gray, Kessel and even Sagan. In the years to come even more "à la mode" French writers will be made available to the Hungarian reader.

At the same time the French public has an opportunity to get acquainted with modern Hungarian literature, which fortunately has replaced the propaganda pamphlets formerly listed in the catalogues destined for the foreign public. The translations published by "Corvina" find a favourable reception abroad. At this point, we must take the opportunity to pay homage—unfortunately a posthumous one—to László Gara, that "ambassador *in partibus* of Hungarian culture" in Paris, who died tragically in May 1966 after having offered the French people the best features of the literature of his country. Hungarian prose and poetry were "discovered" thanks to his Anthology and translations. Let us add that several Paris publishers—Le Seuil, Gallimard, De Noël Payot and others—publish Hungarian works translated into French.

Ten years after the fresh impetus given to Hungarian–French cultural relations, twenty-one years after the end of the Second World War it seems appropriate to draw up a balance sheet of these relations.

The figures are eloquent in themselves.

More than 1,500 French works printed in approximately 20 million copies have been published in Hungarian since 1945. In order to assess the real significance of this figure we must remember that Hungary has 10,180,000 inhabitants.

Sixteen specialized publishing houses are engaged in the translation of foreign books including religious works. For instance, a considerable selection of the works of Theilhard de Chardin is under preparation.

According to official statistics, among the contemporary authors whose works were published in Hungary last year we find François Mauriac (one book printed in 55,000 copies), Roger Vailland (two books in one volume, printed in 46,000 copies). In 1965 French literature was represented by three poetry collections (22,650 copies); 53 novels and collections of short-stories (1,392,200 copies); four dramatic works (88,830 copies), and so on.

Of course the figures relating to this single year are more telling if placed in the context of the evolution since the liberation. For instance, between 1945 and 1963, 58 novels by Balzac were published in 1,032,890 copies; 37 books by Anatole France in 508,100 copies. Jules Verne remains the favourite writer of young people: 52 books in 2,078,150 copies. Zola,

Stendhal and other classical writers also occupy high places on the "best-seller" list.

The "Európa" Publishing House makes every effort to follow even the most recent developments of French literature. For example, only a few months after the publication of Sartre's *Les Mots* the Hungarian version was printed in a first edition of 22,000 copies—and sold out within a few days.

Personal contacts between French and Hungarian intellectuals contribute in an important degree to the development of cultural relations. Returning the visits of Hungarian writers to France, French writers often stay in Hungary, delivering lectures at the P.E.N. Club, the Writers' Association, meeting the specialists of publishing houses, and above all having discussions with their Hungarian colleagues on all sorts of problems—including the most delicate—that are of interest to humanity. It even happens that French authors will personally write dedications to the Hungarian editions of their books in Budapest, as Romain Gary, Vercors and Robert Escarpit whose *Littératron* has been one of the outstanding successes of the season, have done recently.

It is well-known that the French theatre occupies a prominent place on the Hungarian stage. Classical works (Racine, Molière, Corneille, Beaumarchais, Victor Hugo, etc.) as well as the repertoire plays (Bizet, Feydeau, Mérimée, Rostand, etc.) have been permanently on theatre programmes for a long time both in Budapest and in the provinces.

But contemporary French dramatists are played even more frequently than their illustrious predecessors.

During the 1963/64 season the Hungarian public saw 32 plays by 25 French playwrights (as against 26 English and eight Soviet plays). *Colombe* by Anouilh scored a great success. Sartre's *Les séquestrés d'Altona* and Cocteau's *Machine à écrire* have also been produced. Hungarians are well acquainted with Achard, Merle, Planchon, Breffort, Jeanson, Giraudoux and Pagnol. The list of writers whose plays are produced in Budapest is long and varied. Moreover, sometimes the Hungarians will stage the plays of certain Western authors before they are staged in Paris, for instance Peter Weiss' famous *Marat/Sade*.

If we were to give a more comprehensive picture covering also dramatic operas, and oratorios we could cite the productions of *Jeanne au bûcher* by Arthur Honegger, *L'Heure du berger* by Ravel, *Péléas et Melisande* by Claude Debussy, as well as several works by Darius Milhaud and, finally, operettas.

In the field of the cinema, the presence of French films is impressive and the great Paris stars are not unknown to the Hungarian public. In-

cidentally, the film magazines carry extensive accounts of the activities of these stars. In 1966 Hungary presented ten new films from the greatest successes of French cinema art of the year. Hungarian films are regularly entered in the French film festivals and a short film *Overture* was even awarded the Grand Prix at Cannes, in 1965.

I can only touch upon the tours of the Comédie Française in Hungary, and those of the Budapest University Theatre and the Hungarian Folk Ensemble in Paris, to say nothing of developments in radio and television.

In the domain of art the great Hungarian exhibition of 1966 in the Petit Palais will remain a milestone in the history of French-Hungarian relations. The exhibition devoted to Ten Centuries of Hungarian Art scored a success as well-deserved at that of the Exhibition of Contemporary French Art in Budapest, in May. Other artistic events took place under the Franco-Hungarian Cultural Agreement initialled in 1965. This agreement as well as an agreement on Technical and Scientific Cooperation were officially signed during M. Couve de Murville's visit to Budapest, in July 1966. Both agreements provide for the intensification of exchanges in all domains.

Altogether the balance sheet is rather healthy looking. Of course, the influence of French culture cannot be compared with the popularity of the French language, where the results are decidedly less favourable.

Certainly, if one can believe the press,⁸ most of the students enrolled at the moment in language courses for adults in Budapest are studying French. Also, the activities of Budapest's Institut Français, which has about 2,000 students, are constantly developing. There is a similar increase in the number of teachers of French trained in Hungary (about 370) and in the number of secondary-school and higher education students learning the French language. Nevertheless, only about 23 per cent of Hungarian pupils learning a second language—the first being Russian, which is compulsory—have chosen French. A slightly higher proportion of these pupils study English and the majority German.

In primary education the experiment started in certain schools in 1964 is being continued. Szeged (an important town in Southern Hungary) envisages the creation of a primary class where all the subjects would be taught in French.

In secondary schools the number of specialized classes where French is taught intensively six to seven hours a week is constantly increasing.

The French Government annually grants 51 scholarships to Hungarian students. Hungarian engineers are given the chance of spending two to six

⁸ E.g., *Hazai tudósítások* ("News from the Country")—the bulletin of the MTI Hungarian News Agency destined for the Hungarians living abroad, Oct. 1, 1966.

months in French industrial establishments; film directors enjoy similar benefits, etc., etc.

As stressed by the latest Report of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "French-Hungarian cultural relations in 1965 followed the regular progression initiated in previous years."⁹

Currently, it appears that France is in a strong position in Hungary, and above all has numerous friends. General conditions are favourable to the development of cultural, technical and scientific relations. During the visit of M. Couve de Murville last July, both sides showed a desire to strengthen these contacts in the future. One hopes that some of the provisions of the recently signed agreements will be considerably improved upon.¹⁰

Of course, we experience certain difficulties since we are dealing with two countries of differing political, economic and social systems. Nevertheless, the progress made in the last few years and the popularity of France in Hungary permit us to view the future prospects of cultural relations between the two nations with optimism.

⁹ *Direction Générale des Affaires Culturelles et Techniques. Rapport d'activité. 1965*, Paris, April 1966, p. 67.

¹⁰ The French-Hungarian Commission on Cultural Affairs held a conference 17-20 October in Paris. During this session programmes were drafted for cultural, scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries during 1966-67.

The plan makes provisions for development of the exchange programmes between Hungarian and French universities, the arrangement of a Hungarian ethnographic exhibition in Paris and an Exposition of French Graphic Art in Budapest and for the development of publishing ventures of mutual interest.

The two parties have also decided to establish a French Scientific and Technical Documentation Centre in Budapest.

ALIEN IN THE VILLAGE

(Story)

by

ERZSÉBET GALGÓCZI

On August 20th the cooperative headquarters in the village was set on fire. The heat wave was in its third week. The flames caught on with the speed of thought and, before the four men having a conference in the office room became aware of the fire, the roof had gone up in a blaze and even the window frames were glowing. There was no loss of life but the headquarters with all its furniture and files of papers was gutted and destroyed, and the shed in the yard together with the wooden parts of all the machinery inside it was burnt to ashes. The man who committed the arson gave himself up to the police of his own accord.

Now he was sitting in the district attorney's office to make his deposition. He was forty, broad-shouldered, bursting with energy, his hair, eyes and stubble of beard black as coal, his face indignant and angry. The tall, thin-faced attorney looked spare and slender in comparison.

"Your name?"

"László Vangyia."

"Your age?"

"I'm forty. . . I had my birthday the previous day."

The attorney did not understand it, nor did he see how it touched on the matter. All the same he inquired:

"Yesterday?"

"No. The day before the fire."

"Ahm. . . Your trade?"

"I'm a fitter in the Wagon Factory."

The attorney slackened in his bearing and looked at the culprit in expectation.

"Tell me why did you set the office on fire?"

The big, strong man seemed to have been waiting only for this. He was anxious to speak. But he held himself back.

"Why I set it on fire I can't say exactly. I think because I felt I had to do something."

"I don't follow you," the attorney said. "Better start right from the beginning."

"It will take too long," the accused said looking at the attorney with some anxiety. He was uncertain whether he was willing to listen to his long story. But the attorney reassured him.

"Never mind. That's what I'm here for."

Vangyia took a deep breath and began to speak.

I was a fitter in the Wagon Factory, a party member, and back in 1950 I was appointed council president in this accursed village. . . . Actually, to observe formalities I was not appointed but elected or rather they had me elected, but you know as well as I how elections were run in those days. I saw at once it had got everybody's back up. They were hostile to me and things. I first noticed this when none of the farmers, not even one of the council members, had any rooms to spare to put me up for a short while, because you know there was at the time no official residence to go with the post. I seemed to read in their eyes: who in hell asked you here?—I lived in the storeroom of the fire brigade and ate whatever there was to be had at the grocer's. I had wafer biscuits for supper so often that my stomach turns every time I see them in the shop window. . . .

The kulak list spoilt the relation between the village and myself for good and all. The farmers, or rather their representatives, the council members, wanted no one to be put on the list except the former notary, the mill owner and the innkeeper. Now it was my duty laid down by law to put everybody on the list whose net income from his land holdings was estimated at more than 350 gold crowns. On the instruction of my superiors I excluded from the council all those who would be regarded as stooges of the kulaks and wealthy peasants, with a young farmer called Sándor Máté among them. I mention him by name, right now, because he was to become the cause of all that followed later. . . . It was also in those early times that we had to expropriate a couple of kulak houses. We wanted to start a brewery, you know, and we organized a work brigade out of the former estate labourers, so they needed a house for headquarters and then an official residence was also needed for anyone who happened to be the president of the council. I had three kulaks served with official council writs to the effect that their houses had been expropriated for public purposes and they were to move out in eight days. There was a big uproar of indignation in the village, and the people were saying that there hadn't been anything like that since the deportation of the Jews. But you see

I didn't pass that law, and it was everywhere the same up and down the country, and in that village I happened to be entrusted by the party to execute the law. The three kulaks, who felt the misled masses of the peasants behind them, sabotaged the law and did not move out. When the eight days were over I was compelled to take steps to enforce the law. Eviction is not a pleasant thing to assist at, but as a soldier of the party—as they said then—I had to carry out unpopular tasks too. One of the kulaks, Mihály Tar, was very old. He could only walk about with a stick which he now shook in my face and said he had given two sons for the country, both of them had been killed in action in the great battle of the Don, and was this how the country showed its gratitude? And he said too that if his sons had been alive he would long ago have divided his land between them and now he would not be reckoned as a kulak. . . . Later I told the old man that his sons had not died for the same country but for foreign imperialist interests. But at the time I'm speaking of now I didn't say a word about this. I was afraid it might pour oil on the fire. We stood in the yard, and I couldn't help noticing that the whole street had come to watch the events over the fence. . . . One of the removal men we had picked up at the timber depot to help remove the furniture came and stood before me.

"Have you finished?" I asked.

"A wardrobe with mirror is still in there."

"Bring it out."

"We can't because Cséri won't let us yet. She's dressing."

"Who's Cséri?"

"The old man's daughter."

I went in. The wardrobe with the mirror stood at the far wall opposite the door. A girl of about twenty was dressing before it, quite forgetful of what went on. She was just taking off her dressing-gown and reaching for her clothes on a chair nearby—she was just standing there with nothing but a pair of small white pants on, and since they were nylon pants they suggested everything. Believe me I never saw a more beautiful woman. She was standing with her back to me, but her reflection in the mirror faced me, so I saw her in front and from behind all at once. She had a superb body, she had, and I felt like biting into it as one does into a ripe peach. . . .

Vangyia's face reddened with the recollection, and his look began to wander and fill with melancholy. Slowly, with difficulty he resumed:

Comrade, if you meet my wife now. . . . she's only a shadow, a wreck of her former self. Then, she was a real beauty. . . . I've ruined her. . . . As soon as she saw my face beside hers in the mirror she stiffened. She didn't

scream. She didn't snatch at her clothes to hide herself. No, she just stared me in the face. For long seconds we stared at each other in the mirror. I was seized by a desire to possess that woman! I shall possess that woman, I told myself. And I didn't think it impossible, as I could see I had made a strong impression on her, so strong that she couldn't take her eyes off me. . . . At least so I thought at the time. . . . Then somehow I got the better of myself and I muttered, sorry, and left the room.

A month later I married her. I had previously moved into her family's house, which in this way became my official residence. I had brought her back there and I really couldn't forbid her to take her mother and father to live with us. I thought that with this step I had managed to put right the moral order that had got knocked out of gear, but it wasn't so. One report after the other was sent from the village denouncing me for marrying a kulak's daughter and at the same time carrying on as the president of the council. I was summoned all right to see my superiors, but I told them that my father-in-law was a kulak through no fault of his own, because if his two sons had been alive he would have divided his land between them and so he would not have been put on the kulak list. This was accepted since it was after all the truth of the matter. . . . They didn't want to antagonize me or lose me anyway, because I was rated as the best man in getting the deliveries organized and my village overfulfilled the plan targets even in the year of the big drought in '52, and that's saying a great deal.

We were happy, Cséri and I. I was thirty, she twenty-three, both of us healthy and fit as a fiddle, tireless, and I hoped we'd be having a baby soon. . . . In short, "the present was prosperous and the future full of promise," as the slogan had it.

And then. . . and then I got a parcel. A small, thin cardboard box used to sell fancy handkerchiefs in. I opened it. It contained my wife's pants. Those very same small white nylon things. I recognized them because. . . well, I recognized them. My first thought then was how lucky I was alone in the office, for if anyone had been there to see it. . . . Then the stupid question occurred to me: how had that more than intimate article of clothing got into anyone's hands? But I didn't have to think about it for more than a second: it was as easy to guess as it was hard to believe.

When I had got over the first rush of anger, jealousy and shame, I looked closely at the parcel to see if I could discover any betraying sign. It had been posted at the district centre and the address typed. Without the name of the sender, I needn't say. Well, I wasn't any the wiser for looking. Still I was pretty certain it had been sent by someone in the village and sent out of revenge.

I didn't say a word to Cséri, but suddenly I realized how little I knew that woman, if I did at all! All I knew of her past was that she had been brought up as a lady by her parents—they had sent her to a good school, but for some reason or other she had no final school certificate. And now this started me wondering why she had not matriculated.

I kept her under close watch for some days, but there was no change in her as far as I could see. She was as usual: lazy, dreamy and making up to me, rubbing like a cat at one moment, only to sizzle and sparkle with lust the next.

One Saturday night I took a bottle of wine home—we hadn't got the vineyard yet—and after supper I got her to drink, half expecting the wine would loosen her tongue and she might blurt out something about herself and her past, and possibly about her present too. The wine worked on her. She became tipsy quite soon, and I did my best to get us both into the right mood for talking, but she didn't lose her head and never said anything she wouldn't take responsibility for when she was sober again. I made a few more attempts with the wine, at first only on Saturdays, later on weekdays too, but I wasn't anywhere nearer knowing anything than when I started. The only effect was that—months afterwards, of course—we both of us noticed that we had got addicted to drink step by step.

...Now you may well wonder, comrade, why I didn't ask her about it straight out in the first place? To tell the truth, I've wondered a lot myself why I didn't. I didn't dare to, I suppose. I was afraid I might lose her that way. But what I was even more afraid of was that I might learn something about myself it would be too early to know even when I was a hundred.

A few weeks after the "parcel affair" I had a visitor at the Council House. He was a young man, stylishly dressed, clean-shaven. He had clean hands and nails, intelligent but wicked eyes. He introduced himself: Vince Salakta. The name rang a bell but I couldn't remember having met him previously.

"What can I do for you?"

I didn't offer him a seat—on principle I never do that to visitors on business—but he sat down all the same, crossed his legs, lighted a cigarette and fixed his impudent look on my face.

"How much is it worth to you if I let you know who seduced your wife?"

You may well guess, I suppose, what was uppermost in my mind: I wanted to kick him out. But he didn't go; instead he assured me that my wife's beauty, which, he added, was beyond dispute, had got nothing to

do with the matter; it was a crude piece of revenge, all planned long beforehand. He told me, too, that the person who had thought up the whole idea commented to him on the plan with a play on words. . . . Pardon me, comrade, if I tell it now but I still remember it after ten years, and it still gets my dander up.

And now Vangyia recalled the old wisecrack, with his face all red: "This Vangyia is invulnerable, neither knife nor bullet can get him. Just like Achilles, the hero of legend. He was vulnerable at one point only, where he would wear his sock. Vangyia was vulnerable too, and that was on his. . . , and the man repeated the word, but this time not with *s*."

For a long time he did not say a word. He lighted a cigarette. His hands trembled. After a few eager draws he pulled himself together and continued the story:

That pun decided my fate. I knew I would destroy that unknown man, I would kill him, and I knew too that no price was too high for me to pay to learn his name. He had seduced my wife in cold blood, and now the whole village was having the laugh on me.

"What do you ask me to do for you?" I inquired of the informer in my quietest and politest tone, though I had a big mind to spit on him and to kick him, because I hate informers, and I always did, and I hate even those informers and spies who do service to us, the party.

The informer told me that he was a fourth-year student at the Agricultural University, but a few weeks before he had been expelled. All the village thought, the man added, that I had a finger in the matter, because I really did have a few kulak lads thrown out of the universities and the military college. Why should they be allowed to take the places of the workers' sons? Now this Vince, when he was at the Piarist grammar school and still an irresponsible boy, for love of adventure had enlisted in 1944 as a volunteer in the fascist armoured corps misnamed after the national hero Hunyadi. After the war, when he returned from American captivity, he thought it better in all the short biographies that accompanied his applications to pass over this little escapade in silence. He had been feeling secure, had almost got within reach of his diploma and was already thinking of himself as the chief agronomist in some state farm, when up cropped a former army mate who had spent some six years in a *kolkhoz* in the Soviet Union and had never since been able to get a better job than that of an unskilled worker. Then a photo had been found on his former mate, showing them together in that black unmistakable incriminating SS-uniform. Well, it happened like that. I could imagine, couldn't I, he said, that he had no desire to rot on his father's farm, especially not now when

taxes and compulsory deliveries made living on that eight-acre holding a miserable existence. After his expulsion the confidential report about him had been sent by the University to the village council. All he asked me to do, he said, was to tinker with the cadre file. He did not ask to be helped to a job suited to his capabilities. He would find himself a job all right. In fact he had already got a position. All he asked me to do was to make out a report about him, if one was required, in which he appeared as an unobjectionable, "blameless" character. I should alter the awkward passage to read that he had left the university on his own account in order to help his aged, helpless parents.

Comrade, I knew right then that I should not enter into that bargain. It was illegal, immoral, against all rules and the party, but my temper got the better of my common sense. I asked who the man was.

The informer told me. Sándor Máté.

Sándor Máté. I was unable to recall the face though the name sounded familiar. He used to be a council member, but together with so many others he had been branded a stooge of the kulaks. I had him served with a summons ordering him to appear at the Council House. I had no ready-made plan yet, and I had not decided what I wanted to do with him. All I was clear about in my mind was that I would hound him out of the world.

A handsome, neatly dressed, clever-looking peasant lad presented himself and his good looks made me all the more angry. Could this fellow appeal to my wife? He had seduced her in cold blood—the woman happily giving herself to him? He was my exact opposite in everything: slender, tall, lightly built, with light-brown hair and a girlish mug. He came into the office with an unconcerned look, but all the same he must have noted something strange about me because I could see a small flicker of irony, triumph and malicious joy in his blue eyes. That light didn't last a second but long enough for me to notice it. All at once I knew what I would do with him.

I didn't offer him a seat—it's a rule with me not to play up to anyone on business—I just left him to stand in front of my desk. I was sitting.

"You are behind with deliveries," I began. "If you don't do something about it, and quick, I'll report you for sabotage."

He didn't seem frightened. He screwed up his eyes a bit, but his voice stayed quiet and determined.

"That isn't true, comrade president. We've fulfilled our quotas to the last ounce."

"Have you got the receipts?"

"I have. I have them from you."

"Show them to me."

"I haven't got them on me. How could I have known what it was about when you called me here."

I came down on him hard. "Get along home with you and fetch them. But be quick, because I haven't got the time to be bothered for days with the likes of you."

His eyes flashed with instant recognition. He knew that I knew. Everything. It was not about the deliveries or the account papers, but about my wife.

He stared at me for a few seconds. Then without saying or doing anything he turned on his heels and went out. He didn't even say good-bye.

I rang up the police station. The chief, a narrow-minded corporal, was the son of a poor landless labourer in the old regime, and his father was beaten up a few times by the gendarmes after the revolution in 1919. Maybe because of memories of this kind he was unsparing of slaps if he could get his hands on anyone for a good or even a not very good cause. He hated the farmers of the village to a man, because when he was a young yokel—he always raked up this thing after a couple of pints—the village lassies refused to dance with him. He was one of my good men though. We both of us served the same state power if with different means. Still I was higher in authority, and to some extent he depended on me for his job.

"Look here, Comrade Köteles," I said on the phone. "Take another man with you and come over here to the Council House. There's something going on against me, and there's no harm if you are armed."

In ten minutes' time they came. I got them to sit down in the room next to mine and told them to come in if they heard anything suspicious.

Half an hour later Sándor Máté returned. His good-looking face wasn't anything like as quiet as before, and you could tell that anger had been working up in him to the bursting point. He must have repeated I imagine a hundred times in his mind the humiliating command, "Get along home with you!" He, the middle peasant. The farmer! No one, I expect, had ever spoken to him that way since he was a child.

With an effort he pulled out from his pocket a thick pad of papers and dumped them on the desk before me with such a bang that you could say he threw them down with contempt.

"Here you are, the accounts and receipts. Why on earth did you have me bring them? You too have copies of them."

I got up so I was near enough for him to lay hands on me.

"You want to certify with these papers that you've fulfilled your deliveries?"

"That's right."

I bundled up the papers and threw the whole lot into the wastepaper basket.

"Now prove it!"

I knew he would not swallow that. I knew spoilt, conceited farmer lads like him well enough to guess as much. The blood blinded his eyes, and he lurched out with his fist into my face. I had expected the blow and had planted my feet firmly so I didn't even reel over. I didn't hit back but went for him. Apparently he was unprepared for that and we both fell on the floor.

At the thud the two policemen came rushing in. They separated us and pulled Máté up and held him fast by the arm on either side. Máté struggled at first to get free, but the corporal kicked him in the shin and that quieted him.

"What are we to do with him, Comrade President?" the corporal asked.

"Hand him over to the Security Police," I said, still out of breath. "Sabotage of the deliveries and assault on officers of the law."

The peasant lad shot a look at me that still comes back every so often in my worst dreams. Then they dragged him out of the room.

He came back six months later. I didn't meet him, but they said he was very thin and his right arm dangled inert by his side. Some nerve or other got snapped in it.

There was calm in the village, calm and quiet as in a cemetery . . .

Vangyia stopped. He pulled out a handkerchief and mopped his sweating neck and chest. The heat wave had been going on then for three weeks and two days.

The district attorney raised his pencil off the sheet of paper on which he had been scribbling some notes. He was anxious not to show any opinion, not even by his look, but in the corner of his mouth a wrinkle appeared betraying pity and disgust.

"Are you tired?" he asked the accused.

"A glass of water, please . . ."

The attorney indicated the tap with a jerk of his chin. Vangyia got up and eagerly drank two glasses of water. Then he held his wrists under the tap for a while. The next question caught him there:

"When were you relieved from your post?"

"Oh, that came much later!" The man took his seat again. He did not dry his hands but let the evaporating water cool them.

After '53, when new winds began blowing, I was myself afraid the village would revolt against me, but it had not had time to come out of its daze. It couldn't very well have yet, since there was no straight line of policy in those years. There were features that consolidated democracy and others that weakened it. I knew Máté's case could not be used to break my neck or get me removed, because to begin with I had witnesses and he hadn't. There hadn't been a court trial on the basis of which he could have requested a retrial. There wasn't any record of the matter. There couldn't possibly have been either, for in those days they saw to it that no trace was left of disciplinary cases like his. . . . No trace, that is, except in the mind. . . . and possibly in the right arm. . . . To cut it short, I stayed put and continued to carry out whatever orders there were to carry out, punctually and to the best of my abilities.

But I can't say I felt secure or happy. My marriage went from bad to worse. That young man stood between us and with his crippled arm pushed us further and further apart. Perhaps it would have done some good if we had talked it over once frankly. Every night as I was walking homewards with the wine in my brief case I decided firmly that I would raise the matter. Then I never had the courage. . . . When Cséri was already drunk and I had undressed her and put her to bed, I felt again I was strong enough to ask her, but she fell asleep in a moment. . . . Perhaps it would have helped, too, if we had had a baby. But Cséri could not bear a child. Not that she wanted to have one really or missed not having one. All women are either mothers or prostitutes deep inside, my wife was not the mother type. As a small girl she had never played with dolls. She then already went to play with the boys. . . . And so we were living together as two strangers. As two drunkards at the same table in a pub without the will or desire to get up.

In 1956, when the backwash of the counter-revolution reached our village, I was certain they would want to settle accounts with me at long last. I didn't hide with my relatives in County Zala like Comrade Köteles, the police corporal, who was by then promoted to the rank of sergeant. I first didn't go in to the Council House. I stayed indoors, and I was waiting with a pistol in my pocket for them to come and knock my brains out. I wasn't too much worried by this thought though. . . . Don't think I'm putting it on when I say that this was not the first time in my life I was in danger. It was during the last months of the war when right under the nose of the German guards we'd been cutting away the floor planks of railway wagons to prevent the machinery of the Wagon Factory from being shipped to Germany. I wasn't frightened now either. I was certain the first man to die would not be me and the thought reassured me.

But nothing happened.

Through my mother-in-law—she was then still alive and kept up relations with the neighbours and acquaintances and the villagers were not angry with her—well, through her I was being informed about everything that was going on. I can say on the strength of my experience that the peasants were reluctant to take sides with the rebels, not because they were not completely fed up with the Rákosi regime and no change was in their interest but because the peasant is always cautious: They waited because they wanted to see which way it was going and to find out who was against whom and for what aims and who was likely to come out on top. As I could gather from my mother-in-law's hearsays it was of all people Sándor Máté with the crippled arm who was calming down passions, using the wise saying he had picked up from *Life and Science*:* "Where two elephants are having a fight the grass is the worst off. . ." They just didn't want to be present where two elephants were fighting it out.

After November 4th I went back to my place at the Council House and continued to carry out everything there was to carry out, punctually and to the best of my abilities. Forced deliveries were abolished; at the same time the redevelopment funds grew in importance. We built school-rooms, a nursery, roads, ditches, pavements; we even purchased an ornamented hearse. I couldn't complain that I had less work to do. I didn't feel any hostility or hatred against me from the peasants either. The atmosphere—as I try to think back now—had not eased much, but I was so well used to it that I didn't notice it really.

My superiors confirmed me in my post: I really hadn't compromised the party in '56. I felt secure.

I had a lot to do at home too: we planted the garden with vines, and on Sundays we had to spray and hoe. In the evenings my wife and I got down to drink. We couldn't go to sleep without drinking six to eight pints of wine. Six or eight pints each, I mean.

In January 1959 we organized the cooperative. You can imagine, comrade, that I put my heart and soul in it, talking the people into joining, and I had no little share in getting everybody in in a week's time. The date of the first statutory meeting was set for February 1st. By right, I should have been the chairman of the meeting, and I had already got my opening speech prepared; but the day before the meeting I was called upon by Károly Szabó, the president of the district council.

Comrade Károly Szabó had been appointed to head the district council after '56; up till then he had been a department leader at the county

* Popular science weekly in Hungary.—Ed.

council, but where he had worked previously I'm unable to say except that he had been in the state apparatus ever since 1945.

He was ten years older than I, a good speaker, educated, a party activist with long experience, but two things I didn't like about him: I had often seen him drunk during office hours and he was a proper scrounger. I myself was drinking fairly heavily those days but never in work time, not a drop, comrade. The villagers never saw me drunk during the nine years I was president. And that any of my subordinates or any of the taxpayers should have stood me a glass of brandy or a litre of wine I would never have permitted. If I had done so, they would at once have started the rumour that I was bribable. Comrade Szabó was not bothered at all that when he came to see me at home he drank my wine or that the manager of the Coop Shop had one glass of brandy after another sent to his table. Now this Szabó came to me before the meeting to tell me that the village was dead set on electing Sándor Máté president of the cooperative. But Máté had said that he would only accept on condition that I was replaced.

Here was the revenge coming I thought. And it couldn't have come at a worse time! And so unexpectedly! When I had already begun to feel secure. At any other time, in '53, '54, '56 or '57 I would have been better prepared to accept the challenge. But now! This was like being stabbed in the back.

"And what's your line about it?" I asked the district president, and no sooner had I said it than I was ashamed because I heard my own voice sounding hoarse.

Comrade Szabó started to praise my work at length. He spoke of my "merits" which no one called into doubt and which would do me credit as long as I lived and beyond. While he was saying this he fixed his eyes on me and maybe because of that I detected a false note in his voice. But he went on and urged me to understand that bigger things were at stake. Bigger than what he did not say, but I could take the hint: bigger than my life. What was at stake was the whole village, what's more the whole socialist future of the village. The first steps were decisive and no false steps must be permitted. According to the foundation charter of the coop farm the president was to be elected by the membership. If we did not let the will of the members have free play, and if right at the outset we violated the democratic principles of the coop movement, then people would become distrustful and unwilling to embark on their new course of life, and no good coop, no good collective could ever come of it. Or at least not within the foreseeable future. And as a good comrade, an old comrade, I could really appreciate that.

I did. I was unable even to argue. If they had sent me packing because I had compromised the cause of socialism, I could have thought of asking: Hadn't I always followed the policy that had been the party's policy? I would have certainly asked: Hadn't I adhered to and carried out the party's policy after it had been changed just as before? But now it was not a matter of principles. I was to be dropped because of the wish of one man. And that one man was more important than I was at the moment.

"And what's your plan for me?" I asked.

Comrade Szabó was drinking my wine and avoided my look.

There wasn't a vacant job in the district at the moment which would suit my capabilities. Therefore what they thought fit was that I should go back to my former work place. Where had I been promoted from? The Wagon Factory. Well, there. He promised on behalf of the executive committee of the district council that they would put me back into the state apparatus in a post I deserved according to my merits.

"Isn't there a job somewhere else? I don't insist on its being in the district."

Maybe there was a place somewhere outside the district they could put me in, but now they had no time to look after me as the apparatus was completely occupied with the work of coop organizing, meetings and drafting of plans and such things. Within a year... I should be quite sure. I knew, didn't I, the party's cadre policy: there was always a need for a man like me whose whole life was proof of his worth.

The next day the coop held its assembly meeting and the assembly elected Sándor Máté president, and I went back to the Wagon Factory.

The car machine shop, where I had worked before 1950, had meanwhile been transferred to some other town, perhaps to Csepel. I was taken on at the wagon unit. I didn't know anybody and wasn't known by anybody there and I didn't want to be known so that my story should start circulating, and anyway I regarded my position as temporary like a journey. After work was over I threw back a mug of beer with rum in the station restaurant and took the last train home. By the time I got home my wife usually was asleep completely drunk. I either found some food prepared on the range or I didn't. If I didn't she apparently hadn't felt like cooking. Her mother had been dead then for two years. Cséri had never had any friends in the village, and since I had married her the neighbours wives kept away from her in fear and didn't share with her even the most innocent gossip. She didn't belong to the community but she didn't have a world of her own either, which may be complete for a woman if only one child fills it. Since her mother was no longer alive, there was no one to keep

her life within certain bounds with silent reproaches. She was falling to pieces. I was away during the day, and in the evening from certain signs I concluded that she hadn't got up the whole day long. She had gotten fat, or rather bloated, and lost her figure. Her features had become smudgy. Her eyes were permanently swollen and dimmed with tears. . . . I hate speaking about it, comrade, but perhaps if I had found in her a real partner I shouldn't be where I am. . . . For me there was nothing outside public life.

The months went by and I was becoming impatient waiting for the promised transfer. One day I read in the paper that Károly Szabó had been driving his car while drunk and had killed a three-year-old child, and the police had arrested him. I became alarmed: it was he who had promised to find me another job. What was to happen now?

I lost no time in going straight to the district council. Szabó had naturally been suspended. The woman secretary was also a new face. (It's strange but true that if a leading man is demoted his secretary too becomes incapable overnight.) I wanted to see Comrade Pardzik, the council secretary. He was not working there any more, the woman told me bluntly. The head of the Administrative Department, Zempléni? Transferred. Could I speak then to the deputy president? Comrade Varga was at a meeting. I wanted not Comrade Varga but Comrade Török. Comrade Török was no longer deputy president; in Room No. 10, by the way, if I insisted on seeing him.

Comrade Török worked in the agricultural department, sharing a room with eight people; he was in charge of plant protection. (On my way out I overheard he was nicknamed Doctor Super-Phosphate.) He was an ageing man, going fat, and he stared despondently into a more and more incomprehensible world through his small pig's eyes. He had been deputy president for ten years, doing everything to keep up with the changing times, and he had been attending the first form of the technical college for the fourth year then. And yet he was transferred from his room with the sound-proof door, where the cupboard had always hid a flask of vodka and later a bottle of brandy, to this miserable overcrowded hole of a room as Doctor Super-Phosphate. I had never had any respect for the old fellow: he didn't know the first thing about the simplest administrative procedures but, now that I no longer knew anybody in this completely shaken-up district council, I told him about my present trouble.

He stared past me for a while despondently.

"Look here, Comrade Vangyia," he began slowly, "I'm a nobody here now. I must be grateful I have not been sent off to be deputy council president in some village. They considered my age and appreciated the difficulty of travelling back and forth. I have three years till the pension

and I'd like to tide over that period," and he patted his well-worn, ink-stained desk.

"But what am I to do?" I asked.

"Try to see someone at the Party Committee."

"Is there anyone left there of the old guard?"

"Not many. A completely new guard has been put in since the coop organization started. . . . We can no longer cope with the increased tasks."

When I was out in the street again I thought of all the functionaries that had dropped out around me in the past ten years. I had "survived" three county council presidents and four county party secretaries. The district was wearing out and tearing up the fifth council president and the seventh party secretary. . . . It also occurred to me then that, though these people had really been removed from the leading posts of the county or district, did I know anything certain about their present whereabouts? It was not unlikely that they had been put in charge of another county or district. Or maybe they had been "demoted" upwards, to some national institution? I'm not an old woman to take an interest in intrigues. I have never done. . . . How many of them did I know for certain had been chucked out? Altogether, only a few.

Some of us, it seemed, had been caught up in a machine, some huge mass production chaff-cutting machine that cut us up into small pieces and vomited us out.

And still. . . how well off we all were, how secure it felt to have been ground in the cogwheels of that machinery! It felt like sitting on the palm of God. Anyone who has not sat on God's palm, comrade, does not know what it is like to fall off from there. . . . And those who are still sitting there. . . well, all of them are happy people.

For all that I went to the Party Committee after a few weeks. They didn't even seem to know who I was, and it took some time before they began to understand what I wanted to see them about. "Comrade, this is not a Labour Exchange Office."

I hated everything in the workshop. Any man who was once the first man in a village hardly finds pleasure in riveting.

After work I would go to the station restaurant to drink a few mugs of beer with rum and then take the last train home. I didn't want to meet anyone. The village was asleep with only the street lamps throwing a pale, unfriendly light around them.

One night I noticed that the light was on at the gipsy shepherd's opposite our house. I noticed it, but I didn't give it more than a passing thought at the time. What could that Lajos, the gipsy, be doing around

midnight? Cséri's parents' house stood in the oldest street of the village—it was called Old Street—and in '50 when I moved there it had been full of old, battered thatched cottages. But these ramshackle cottages had been pulled down one by one, and new modern houses with tile roofs and wrought-iron fences around them had been built in their places. That one old thatch-roofed cottage had been left in its mouldering state because it was village property and whoever happened to be the village shepherd was given it to live in; they thought it good enough for him.

The next day as I was going home I saw the light at Lajos' again. The third day again. What could Lajos be doing at midnight? Was his wife in labour? Was one of his children ill? I stood a while in the street wondering, wondering. I even thought of knocking at their door to ask if there was anything I could do for them—and it was then that I caught sight of the board nailed to two posts over the gate. I stepped closer, but it was too dark to read the letters, so I had to strike a match: *New Life Cooperative*.

As I made out the inscription the blood rushed to my head. I couldn't say what it was. Was it because it was right opposite the house of the fallen functionary, a challenge thrown right into my face like a malicious laughter? (Up till then the coop had been given one room at the Council House as its headquarters.) Or was it because they had chosen just that old dilapidated thatched hut too bad even to qualify as a museum piece? Wasn't it ridiculous that a coop with 3,000 acres of land should have its headquarters in a ramshackle hovel like that? They wouldn't have thought it fit to put their cows in, but to run the administration, to talk with representatives of banks and the Ministry they had thought it good enough.

Such thoughts passed through my mind while I was standing there under the sign board. But then the window was opened and a dense cigarette smoke streamed out and muffled voices could be heard from inside. There was one louder sentence that I could pick out: "Tomorrow we concentrate all the available energy on the sugar beet!"

I moved away quickly like someone who'd been caught eavesdropping. Cséri was already asleep. She hadn't taken off her dressing-gown and she hadn't made the bed—she must have been overcome by drunkenness so suddenly that she hadn't time for either. There was no supper. On the table stood a bottle of wine, and very little of it had been drunk. The air in the room was heavy and sour. This state of affairs, which I had really got used to, now made me mad. I pulled off her dressing-gown, put her under the coverlet, drank half the wine and then pulled up the blinds. (Cséri always drank in a dark room, perhaps she couldn't stand herself in daylight.) The light in the opposite window hit me in the eye—the shep-

herd's house has only one window—and I seemed to hear that sentence: "Tomorrow we concentrate all the available energy on the sugar beet!"

I hadn't felt good before, but from that moment on my life was hell, I can assure you. That window opposite me was lit every night like a sanctuary lamp or like a blazing furnace. I could almost sense the throb of life, the rhythm of struggle behind it. That life and that struggle from which I was excluded. The little servant boy I once had been again was staring from a distance with hatred and hopeless longing at the shining windows of the express train rolling past the farmstead where I had lived. There, behind that, real life was pulsating and rearing—what I was living was a wretched substitute.

And I could not forget about it for a moment. The window warned me: from now on you are going to be the one who dies of boredom on a Sunday afternoon because you have nothing to look forward to but Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

Every now and then I went to see Doctor Super-Phosphate at the district council. I didn't expect anything from him. He didn't promise anything. He couldn't have possibly helped. It simply was good to be sitting by his ink-stained, mouldering desk, because—I can't explain why—it reminded me of the times when . . .

He told me confidentially how his boss Károly Szabó, whom I had never liked, had been caught at his little game. (Since he had failed to fulfil his promise to me I had hated him and I shouldn't have minded if he had been hanged for reckless driving.)

"It happened last summer and the affair is on the way to being smoothed over. Comrade Szabó (he still said "comrade") has a small weekend cottage on Cikola island. They drove out on Saturday round noon with the chief judge and the chief judge's wife. That woman—her maiden name is Irén Homonnai—you may have heard of her, she had been his secretary when he had been head of the agricultural department of the county council. The judge later married her. Now that Saturday they went on drinking till Sunday night, and when they were coming back through Győr by car they ran over that three-year-old child in a village. They took him into the car and off to hospital, but it was too late. The doctor, who by the way is one of their crowd, forgot to make an alcohol test and by the time the police dealt with the case drunkenness could not be established. All the same a trial was arranged, but there wouldn't have been any hitch. And the county paper would have said the child's parents were responsible. But then an unexpected turn took place. The chief judge's wife admitted that they had all been drinking and had been completely drunk when they

started back from the island. She had even warned Comrade Szabó not to drive at sixty miles an hour through the villages. You may well imagine what a to-do followed when that woman gave the lie to the depositions of the district council president and the district chief judge. Comrade Szabó said it was mere revenge, because at one time there was . . . well . . . a kind of intimate relation between himself and the woman and when he had got tired of her he had passed her on to the chief judge. Then the woman retorted: 'Only last week you were still besieging me to go with you to Cikola island and leave that softy behind—that is, the chief judge. The trial lasted for several days and the details that came to light were more and more sordid. Letters and things were produced, and the woman went into a fit of hysteria and cried: 'I've had enough of it, because you drove not only over that three-year-old child but over everything and everybody. . . .' Comrade Szabó was forced at last to admit that he had taken a little alcohol. . . ."

"How many years did he get?" I asked him, feeling a certain satisfaction.

"Years?" Török stared at me with his pig's eyes. "He got six months—suspended. He was transferred to the coop at Rétalap as agronomist. Chief agronomist. Paid by the state. Three thousand forints more salary than before." Török added with resignation: "Man, you can't drop out of God's palm just like that!"

Yet I did and how easily! Almost by chance.

On a hot July afternoon Török received me with excitement.

"Come let's go into an empty room."

We sat in the cool council chamber.

"I'll tell you something, Comrade Vangyia, which I oughtn't to tell you, because it's an official secret. If it comes to an inquiry you know—you didn't hear it from me, you understand me, don't you? I'm telling it to you because you're a good and old comrade and our lot has also a little in common, and you're still young and can look forward to better things in life than the pension. . . ." And then he told me under his breath that the coop president, Sándor Máté, and the village party secretary had been seeing the district council president (the new one) and demanding that the council president, who had been foisted on them two years before, should be recalled because, they claimed, he was doing nothing but spying on them and taking his information to the district and the county authorities. At first they had been unable to imagine how the most confidential matters of the coop were known the next day by the whole county, by every brief-case bearer who entered the village, but now they had the proofs. The upshot was that they were unwilling to cooperate with that man.

"And did the district give its approval?" I asked with a dry mouth.

"There's no decision yet. But you know Máté. If once he gets it into his head he will get the man removed at whatever cost. And then . . ."

"Has the village a candidate?"

"I don't know if they do. I am not supposed to know what I've just told you either. The rest is up to you . . ."

Up to me! If only it really were!

And still, for the first time in many months, I felt pins and needles in my fingertips at the possibility of taking my life into my own hands again.

On Sundays I always spent the day working with my wife in the vineyard. On those days Cséri didn't drink so much, because I didn't let her start in the morning. But now I put on not my working clothes but my Sunday best and went to Sándor Máté. (Since the two policemen had dragged him out of my office I hadn't seen him at all.)

It was a fine August morning, the pavements swept clean, the children scrubbed clean, the men's faces blue from fresh shaving. It was ten o'clock in the morning—when had I ever gone down into the village at that time? They stared after me as if I were an ambulance blowing the siren.

Sándor Máté was sitting half-naked on the vine-covered porch, his head tilted back a little, a woman standing between his knees, shaving him with devotion. In front of the porch a boy of about three was playing with a red fire-engine in the mud he'd made in the sand. From the kitchen came the piquant smell of meat broth with celery. It was all so cheaply familiar like an oil print showing the Holy Family. (Maybe it was only my envy that made me see it like that.)

They were taken by surprise, but they showed no embarrassment. Máté held out his hand—his left hand. His right arm dangled inert by his side. I could see from his look that he did not hate me any longer . . . Or should I say, he didn't even hate me any longer. He didn't think it worth his while to waste a rare feeling like hatred on a vanquished enemy.

They made me sit down so the woman could finish with the shaving.

"I've learned to do everything with my left hand," Máté said almost apologetically. "I've learned even to write. But not to shave."

He hadn't changed in the ten years that had passed. His tall, slim form had not gone to fat; he had not become heavy; his face was still clear and comely like a girl's. My opposite in everything. But to be frank I no longer felt any of my former anger towards him either.

His wife was homely rather than beautiful, but she was a nice and healthy peasant woman. A cook.

She helped her husband slip into a white shirt and then we went to sit

in the cool, half-dark room. The woman put wine and soda water before us on the table.

How should I set about it?

"I'd like to be nominated as the council president."

Máté screwed up his eyes a little, and for all I could tell there was irony in them. He didn't speak.

"I have nine years' experience. I've always done a good job of my work. I've got several decorations." My voice had something like a note of apology which I couldn't help: "I'm not to blame that I was sent here to carry out the party's policy just in '50. I'd have carried out an honest policy just as well as I did Rákosi's."

"It's all very well, Vangyia, but why do you come to me of all people?" Máté asked, finding it all rather peculiar.

"Who should I see about it? You are the coop president. The village heeds your opinion."

He grinned.

"I have you to thank for that. You made a martyr of me."

"What would you have done in my place then?"

"I certainly wouldn't have done what you did," he said calmly. "If the husband is wronged, is it right that the council president takes revenge?"

"The wrong was done to the council president."

He looked at me a long time, with a little contempt.

"The presidency must have gone to your head in those days."

I was angered and hurt by this injustice.

"You were quick to forget," and I told him the witticism about Achilles.

"Achilles?" He wondered. "I don't even know who or what he is."

"I didn't know either but looked it up in the encyclopaedia," and I told him about the cardboard box with the nylon pants. "You still don't remember, do you?"

He looked at me surprised and embarrassed.

"The only thing you remember is my having you taken away? Nothing else?"

He got up suddenly and began to walk round the room.

"Wait . . . That little . . . er . . . article, I don't really know where it got to. I put it in my pocket, for the grass was wet . . . Next day I didn't remember whether I'd given it back or not . . . True I was half seas over . . . and I'd gone on drinking with my pals afterwards too . . ." He stopped—
"Who do you know this from?"

"Vince Salakta."

Máté's face became cold and disapproving from one moment to the other.

"You're lying, Vangyia!"

He sat down at the table again and looked directly into my eyes.

"You're lying! Achilles' sock and the parcel are both lies. Your wife told you, and you used your power to take revenge. A lasting revenge."

He seemed to have raised his crippled arm a little. He added with contempt:

"It was a mean and a cheap thing to do. Unworthy . . . of a man . . ."

"I'm not telling a lie! Bring him face to face with me!"

"With a dead man?"

The impulse with which I'd come, which had lasted till now and forced out the words I'd been saying, the temper which had hidden from me my humiliating condition—these went from me now as if the nerves had been cut in my limbs. I became inert like that dangling right arm.

"Dead?"

"Don't try to make me believe you didn't know! Where are you living?"

"How do you mean where am I living?"

"Where's your residence, now?"

"Here in the village."

"And you didn't know Vince was shot dead?"

"Shot dead?"

"He was my best friend." He filled the glasses and we drained them. Till then I hadn't been conscious of drinking although the bottle was now empty. Máté's eyes were a little dimmed. I don't know what it was, the wine or something else. "He was shot dead," he repeated.

"I didn't know . . . When? How?"

"Vince was the commander of the Kővár barracks. Late in October . . ."

"Wasn't he an agronomist?"

"Yes, he was, but he was more fascinated by a uniform . . . Already as a young boy he joined the Hunyadi armoured corps. He wanted me to join too, but I've always hated uniforms even if I see one on a fireman . . . To cut a long story short, he was already lieutenant-colonel and barracks commander in '56. In that town too the people demonstrated in front of the barracks, demanding that the Rákosi officers should be discharged, that arms be distributed among the people, and in general that power should be handed over to them. Vince had been getting contradictory orders from Budapest, that is to say, he was completely thrown on his own authority. He didn't succeed in dispersing the crowds, so he ordered his men to fire on them. He ordered an anti-tank gun to be fired at a bus full of people. A few days later the population—mostly miners—held another demonstration. In the meantime the situation had changed in Budapest, and it was

no longer a question of firing on them but of having to talk with their representatives. A deputation of about a hundred was allowed to enter the fortified barracks. By then the party secretary of the county was there seeking asylum. They sat in the great hall, on one side of the table Salakta, his officers, the party secretary, on the other, the members of the deputation. What did they want? The usual items and the demand that Salakta be handed over to them so they could punish him for ordering the shooting of the people. Identity cards and papers lay in a heap in front of the party secretary. Did they know who were the people Salakta had fired on? The party secretary snatched up an identity card: So and so. He looked into the papers: this one was an SS during the war; and so on and so forth. He showed all the dead to have been war criminals, Arrow-Cross men, SS men, gendarmes, factory owners, landowners, top county people. And because many *déclassé* elements were working in the mines in those days he managed to disarm the deputation completely. . . Vince went up to Budapest the next day to get further orders. At the Ministry of War he was told to 'have another cup of coffee, Comrade Salakta'. This meant that the best thing was to wait and see and not do anything—except drink another cup of coffee. Then he got into contact with Maléter, whom he had known for a long time and who explained to him that the struggle now was for an independent Hungarian socialism. That was not against Salakta's own ideas, and then he was also afraid that if 'these' were to win he would be hanged for the firing at Kővár. So he went over to their side. He was given the job of building an anti-tank defence line round the capital and this he accomplished. . . On November 3rd, however, the high command was captured. Vince saw there was nothing further to be done, and so he asked permission to issue a telephone order to his troops to stop resistance. Certain units of the armoured corps, however, went on resisting, probably because the cease-fire order had not reached them in time. Salakta was sentenced to death and executed."

After a slight pause Máté added:

"A young man who had been with him in the prison came here and told this to his father."

I was silent for a while. That execution extinguished the life not only of that double-dealing, treble-dealing, hundred-dealing turncoat ruffian, but mine too. That my blood had not yet been spilled? That the flesh had not yet rotted away from my bones? That was only appearance. I had no more future than a dead man.

"You know, Vangyia," Máté continued almost in a friendly way, "if you had come to me and said, 'Listen, let bygones be bygones, we've both

of us paid for it, let's forget it and try to work together,' that would have been different. Then I'd have considered the matter. If only because you would in the future have done what we wanted. That would have been in your interest too. . . . But you haven't changed in the least."

He politely saw me to the gate, held out his hand—the left one—and I went home.

A few weeks passed. I can't remember anything from those weeks, because I was always drunk; yet it wasn't drunkenness really, for I did my work as usual, only some mist lay on my mind. But some time must have passed, because then it was August 19th. That's my birthday.

We were fitting the washroom of the seventh sleeping-car to be exported to the Soviet Union when I realized that I was forty that day. It was hot and stuffy in the car like in a tin coffin. Yet the grimy sweat on me felt like an ice sheet. It occurred to me that a man, a MAN, begins his life at forty: at forty he is appointed minister; at forty he receives his university chair; at forty he is promoted to the rank of general—and I. . .

In the station restaurant I drank a couple of mugs of beer with rum. It tasted bitter like gall thrown up in the mouth. By the time I got home by the last train the village was asleep. The heat wave was in its third week. The shirt stuck to my body. It was sticky and wet. I would have liked to have torn it off—together with the gloomy, rotten village around me.

My wife was lying drunk on the bed. The wine must have knocked her out from one minute to the other, because she again hadn't had time to undress or make the bed. One leg was on the floor, the dressing-gown slipped aside exposing her thighs—it was all disgusting and hateful. I had got her to drink. I had ruined her—but I hated her all the more for that. I kicked her ankle—she didn't flinch. In my impotent anger I kept kicking her dangling foot until she woke up. She stared at me with swollen, muddy eyes.

"I'm thirsty. Give me a glass of wine."

I gave her a glass of water. She drank it without noticing the difference. She wanted to lie back, but I didn't let her.

"Why did you marry me?"

She had already got over the worst part of her drunkenness; she understood the question and looked at me wonderingly.

"A good time to ask me that."

"Answer me! Why did you marry me?"

I could see she was frightened and fear was good for her dizzy head. She sat up in bed, pulled her dressing-gown together over her breasts. Just like a woman.

"What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing is the matter with me. I just want to know."

"Do you want to divorce me? Have you got somebody else? You can go, my little boy. That wouldn't make any difference to me either way." With that the light went out in her eyes, and she sank back into apathy.

"Cséri! I only want to know why you married me?"

"Who should I have married?" She sounded bored.

"I don't understand you. . ."

"You were the best match in the whole village."

"Ahm."

"And I thought you'd be somebody one day."

"And I haven't become anybody!"

"No," she said indifferently and lay back, closing her eyes. She was beyond and outside everything.

I was choking, I wanted to strike. But that eleven stones of indifference? Like a sandbag which deadens not just the blow of a fist but even a dum-dum bullet.

I became conscious then of how horribly stuffy the air was in the room. I flung the window open and then. . . that light opposite me. . .

I can't give an account, comrade, of what happened in me then. How long had I had that shining window glaring into my face? It seemed to me ever since the beginning of time. And how long would I have to have it? For ever, now?

A league should be formed for the fallen cadres. On the pattern, say of the Partisans' Federation. Or aren't there really any fallen cadres? Only me? Alone? Only I have been shut out from life?

I was looking at the window. I'm forty. I'm strong as an ox. A litre of brandy can't knock me down. It makes no difference to me how many hours I sleep—one day's work has never taken enough out of me to make me tired. How long had I yet to live, I wondered. When was the war going to break out? Because then I should be needed too. I would be fit for cannon fodder.

I was looking at the window. The party members and the non-party people had monopolized for themselves the building of socialism and refused to let me have anything to do with it.

A bottle of wine stood on the table. I drank it all, then I went across to the office and jabbed the glowing end of my cigarette into the low thatch roof. . .

Vangyia was breathing heavily. His forehead and neck were running with sweat. His shirt was dark with perspiration. The heat had gone on for three weeks and two days.

"Yes," the district attorney said putting down his pencil.

"I'd like a glass of water," the big, strong man broke the silence. The attorney nodded. Vangyia went eagerly to the tap. While he was cooling his burning stomach and wrists with the water, the attorney called out to the prison officer in the corridor.

"You can take him away."

Then he turned to the accused:

"We'll make the record tomorrow."

When he was alone, the attorney sat at his desk again and looked into his notes. One line held his attention longer than necessary. He had some difficulty in deciphering the strange phrase: *mass production chaff-cutting machine*.

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

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THE THIRD HUNGARIAN FIVE YEAR PLAN

by

PÉTER VÁLYI—ISTVÁN HETÉNYI

I

In June 1966 Parliament discussed and adopted the Hungarian national economy's Third Five Year Plan covering the period from 1966 to 1970. The drafting of a five year plan and its enactment are important events in the internal policy and economic life of socialist countries, for the government renders account on such occasions of the results and problems of the economy during the previous five years and outlines the concepts of development on which economic management will have to concentrate in the years to come. Neither the report on the preceding period nor the plan itself represent mere compilations of statistical data and plan targets; they are also an evaluation and summing up of the policy of economic development, and consequently, in several respects, of the policy of building socialism.

At the June session of Parliament the government could give a favourable account of economic development. On the strength of the results achieved it established that the general trend of economic development was sound, though several problems remained to be solved. It found it expedient to envisage for the coming years a consistent continuation of the economic policy of the past, at the same time, of course, modifying a number of concrete tasks in view of the changes that have occurred both in world economy and in Hungary. The Third Five Year Plan is primarily based on the developments that have taken place in the last few years, and on the present economic situation of the country. In recent past there has been uninterrupted progress, the targets envisaged for the years 1961-1965 have been essentially fulfilled, and the growth rate of the economy makes it possible for Hungary to keep up with world economy.

From 1960 to 1965 socialist industry, in accordance with the Second Five Year Plan, advanced by 47 per cent, while labour productivity increased by 26 per cent. These figures do not only show that the Plan was

fulfilled as a whole; they also indicate a change in so far as the growth in labour productivity played a greater part in the increase of production than in the previous period. Due to the increase of industrial production, industry has come to play a more prominent part in the national economy; indeed—as regards the proportion of gainfully employed persons—it now plays a similar role in the economy of Hungary as in a number of developed industrial countries.

The general increase of industrial production is, of course, not the only yardstick for measuring the development of industry, but the structure of production also has to be examined. There is an essential difference between the industrial structure of developing and of developed countries. Characteristic of the latter is the continuous growth in importance of mechanical engineering, electronics, the chemical industry and electric energy as compared with mining, light industry, foodstuff processing and several other branches. During the last five years the structure of industry has also reflected progress as shown by the fact that the growth rate of branches characteristic of modern industry increased far more quickly than the average growth rate—47 per cent—of industrial production as a whole; crude oil production, for instance, increased by 50 per cent, that of natural gas by 340 per cent, instrument manufacturing by 90 per cent, telecommunications by 130 per cent, artificial fertilizers by 146 per cent, the pharmaceutical industry by 200 per cent and the production of plastics by 210 per cent. All this greatly contributed to supplying the national economy with up-to-date materials, to a higher degree of mechanization and automation, and last but not least, to an increase in labour productivity.

One of the main aspects of our economic development in recent years was the rise in agricultural production. Socialist large-scale farming became predominant in Hungary some five or six years ago; the increasing demand for agricultural produce and the new organizational forms of intensive farming required a more rapid development of the material and technical basis of agriculture. Compared with 1960 tractor capacity in agriculture increased during five years by 90 per cent, and the supply of fertilizers by 110 per cent. The material and technical supply, together with professional training on a large scale, brought about an average annual increase of 2 per cent in agricultural production. This must be regarded as a positive result, even though the original plan targets for agricultural products were somewhat higher.

In the main, the investment programme was also carried out; on the whole, the volume of investments exceeded the plan figures. This was achieved in such a way as to assure, at the same time, a steady increase in

the real income and the consumption of the population. During five years the per capita real income of wage and salary earners increased by almost 19 per cent and the real income of the rural population grew at an only slightly lower rate. This rise was supported by a 25 per cent increase in the national income. The advance of secondary and higher education is particularly noteworthy. In 1965, the number of first-grade students enrolled in secondary schools was higher by 42 per cent and that of first-term students at universities and colleges by 70 per cent than in 1960.

Several conclusions could be drawn from the development of the past years about the economic policy to be followed in the future and the drafting of the new plan. Our economic targets, it appeared, were essentially sound, and no basic change in trends was called for. At the same time, the experiences gained indicated in what respect the direction of the economy needs to be modified in order to attain the set objectives more efficiently. They also indicated that new methods have to be sought for in order to step up technical development and the rate of labour productivity, to adapt production more quickly to demand, and to increase the efficiency of investments. These requirements have to be taken into consideration in elaborating the economic structure embodied in the next Five Year Plan and improving the methods of directing the economy.

An analysis of our social and economic conditions leads to the conclusion that, in the present stage of our social evolution too, it is indispensable to increase the national income at a rate that is abreast with, or slightly ahead of, the world average. This growth should, however, be constant and steady and be accompanied by a regular increase in living standards. This involves the rejection of any plan concept that wishes to achieve the called-for growth rate through a one-sided raising of investments, or such variants of national income distribution as would permanently reduce the growth rate of the national income to a minimum. Taking into consideration the rate of employment, the steadily expanding social allocations and the wage incentive, it may be regarded as a social necessity that the plan should ensure a minimum 2 to 3 per cent increase of real incomes per annum and that the annual growth rate of the national economy should exceed 3 to 4 per cent. The general policy of the building of socialism leads to numerous conclusions concerning the structure of the economy. This does not mean that socialist states evolve their economic structure in a voluntarist way, guided by general political considerations.

Mention should be made of further research work and studies which also represent the foundation of planning and, in addition to the aspects mentioned above. These become main elements of the plan. The subjects

of this study include an examination of whether the present experiences and tendencies will continue to manifest themselves or whether new tendencies will have to be taken into account regarding some key questions of economic development, and in the latter event, what inferences may be drawn as to the nature of these possible changes in tendency.

One line of study, concentrating on long-range market research, surveys market trends and their characteristics. What is involved is not a simple analysis of the market situation of certain commodities but a study of the changes that have taken place in world economy, in the proportions of international trade and in the relations between groups of countries—changes that greatly affect our entire national economy, which is closely dependent on foreign trade and, in general, on international cooperation. This intricate research work is made somewhat easier through the fact that the socialist countries belonging to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon)—and which account for more than half of Hungary's foreign trade—have coordinated their plans, so that we are able to gain an insight into their demands and their capacity to meet our demands. The results of these consultations were finally laid down in foreign trade agreements.

In assessing market effects mention should be made of changes in the characteristics of the internal market. This means, in essence, that in the period to come, we must reckon mainly with a qualitative change in the demand for foodstuffs; as regards durable consumer goods, including cars, flats and holiday houses, there will be a growth in the demand both for quantity and for a more diversified assortment. Our economic development will have to show due concern for these requirements.

Investigations devoted to the long-term assessment of our resources are of no less importance, since they show the necessity of a continuous revaluation of the country's natural endowments and resources. There are several reasons for this. First of all, technical development itself is constantly reshaping our concepts of the country's raw material resources. On the one hand, it opens vistas regarding new production possibilities; on the other hand, it reduces potentials that once were considered efficient. A case in point is the revaluation of the hydrocarbons versus coal relation in the course of time, and the changed importance of iron compared with new construction materials. The results can be summed up by stating that in spite of Hungary's continuing lack of industrial raw materials, the application of modern technology permits the realization of several remunerative development projects in different sectors of the production of raw materials and semi-finished goods—for instance, in the field of semi-finished metal products and in the chemical industry. Thus, the prospects for the de-

velopment of the processing industry become more and more auspicious not only regarding finished goods but several intermediate products as well.

Another area of prospective change—to be discussed later in more detail—is the changing structure of labour resources. We have to reckon with a decrease of the rural population's migration into towns. To meet this, steps will have to be taken that will affect the future methods of industrialization in so far as new technologies will have to be applied and physical labour mechanized to an ever increasing degree.

From this short, general survey it is evident that, whether we approach our tasks from the market aspect or that of material or labour resources, further technical development is a *sine qua non*. Therefore, in elaborating the pattern of production, priority—within realistic limits—is to be given to branches that draw on new technologies; on the other hand, an acceleration of technical development will be considered a basic issue in the course of the pending reform of economic direction and the preparation of rules governing the activities of the enterprises.

II

In outlining the principal features of the new Five Year Plan, we shall concentrate our attention on the chief problems of economic advance. Nevertheless, for the sake of a better understanding, we include a table carrying the most important targets.

Major Indicators of the Third Five Year Plan

1. Development of some important aggregates and other comprehensive indicators

	1970/1965
National income (1966-70/1961-65)	119-121
Per capita real income of population	114-116
Industrial productivity	124-127
Gross industrial production	132-136
of which: Engineering	140-145
Building materials	125-130
Chemical industry	155-160
Light industry	120-124
Food industry	128-132
Building and Construction	124-128
Gross agricultural production (1966-70/1961-65)	113-115
Retail trade turnover	119-121

2. Major proportions of the economy

	percentage share 1966-70
Distribution of national income:	
Accumulation fund	22-24
Consumption fund	76-78
Total investments (socialist sector): 250-260 billion Ft	
of which: industry and construction	46-50
agriculture	16-18
transport and communication	14-16
non-productive branches	16-20

3. Production of major articles and other indicators

	Unit of measurement	1965	1970
Coal	million tons	31	32
Crude oil	million tons	1,80	1,75
Natural gas	million cubic metres	1300	3300
Crude steel	million tons	2,5	2,9-3,0
Alumina	thousand tons	275	450-470
Fertilizers (effective substance)	thousand tons	262	550-600
Man-made fibres	thousand tons	6,4	11-12
Plastics	thousand tons	31	95-100
Rubber tyres	thousands	590	850-900
Cement	million tons	2,4	2,7-2,8
Paper	thousand tons	175	290-300
Canned fruit and vegetables	thousand tons	301	580-600
Flats to be built	thousands 1966-70		300
Average annual first-year enrolment in higher technical colleges (secondary, full-time)	thousands		4,5-5,0
Average annual first-year enrolment in universities and other institutions of higher education (full-time)	thousands		9,5-10,0

We shall attempt to characterize the Five Year Plan by presenting it in two cross-sections:

the pace of development and its quantitative and qualitative inter-relations;

the structural proportions embodied in the plan and their relations to our main economic objectives.

During the plan period industrial production will increase by about 6 per cent and that of agriculture by 2.5 to 3 per cent annually. As a result, the national income as a whole may show a 3.5 to 4 per cent growth per annum. This is a sound rate of development: it involves a maintenance of the industrial growth rate of the past three years and, at the same time, calls for a slightly higher rate of increase in agriculture than that achieved since collectivization.

Hungary occupies a medium place among the neighbouring People's Democracies as regards the growth rate of national income. The growth rate is quicker in the less industrialized countries, while it is somewhat slower in the industrially more developed German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia.

It seems appropriate to ask at this point: what are the principal objective causes that determine the growth rate? In this context, two factors of decisive importance should be emphasized: (1) the pattern of manpower sources and employment; (2) the quality of production and the marketability of products.

In Hungary the main proportions of employment have developed as follows (the figures relate to the beginning of the year in question):

	1949	1960	1965	1971 (planned)
Industry and construction (<i>percentages</i>)	20.7	32.8	38.0	39.6
Agriculture	55.2	39.6	32.1	29.0
Other	24.1	27.6	29.9	31.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Since the liberation of the country the two major developments in the labour market have been, first, the liquidation of large-scale unemployment and the growing participation of women in production. The second has been the migration of a considerable portion of agricultural workers—consisting chiefly of young people—to other sectors of the economy, mainly industry. Both processes represented an abundant source of labour; the first process took place mainly from 1945 to 1955, while the second lasted all through the last 16 to 18 years, though not always steadily. The first process reached a certain degree of saturation ten years ago, the second in 1964–1965.

The influx of the rural population into industry was, of course, only made possible by a considerable increase of farm labour productivity, by the mechanization, chemization, modernization of agrotechnics, and by the socialist reorganization of agriculture. In the course of the last five years the gross production value per agricultural labourer increased by over 20 per cent. On the other hand, per capita income in agriculture could not keep pace with this quick rate because the expenditures devoted to raising productivity were greatly increased in recent years and because total output, too, has grown by only 9 per cent.

The townward migration of the rural population brought about a grave manpower shortage in some places, which hindered soil cultivation and farming in general, especially in spring and autumn, despite the technical advance in agriculture. As a result, this movement could subsequently continue only at a much slower rate. Due mainly to the influx of the agricultural population, the number of workers in industry and construction increased annually by about 62,000 persons from 1957 to 1960, and by about 50,000 persons from 1960 to 1964, whereas the increase in 1965 was no more than 13,000.

Since the growth of industrial production derives from two sources—new labour supplies and rise in productivity—and since the first of these has for a year or two been feeding the growth of production at a far slower rate, the importance of stepping up productivity in industry has increased to the point where it has now become the chief precondition of an accelerated rate of development.

The situation on the labour market is one of the reasons for the prominence of methods of intensive development, such as modernization of equipment, improved production efficiency, labour saving and higher degree of processing. As a result 80 per cent of the production increase in industry must fall to the share of labour productivity. This is a hard task, indeed, and in the history of the Hungarian economy 1965 was the first year in which over 80 per cent of the growth of industrial production was due to increased productivity.

It is a similarly tough job to “reconcile” production goals and manpower in agriculture. Here the task is to retain a large part of the young people, who will enter work in the coming years in agriculture; at the same time, mechanization and work organization will have to be improved to such a degree that an annual increase in production shall be assured despite the gradually decreasing labour power.

III

There is a close causal relationship between the development of Hungary's economy and that of its foreign trade. In the present state of the national economy foreign imports have to increase at about twice the rate of the economy. The same applies, of course, to exports. This interrelation has to be considered as an indispensable precondition also in the coming plan period.

On the world market a keen competition of producers is going on for sales and we have to take a part in it. Hungary's production and marketing prescriptions are not binding on its trading partners, whether socialist or capitalist enterprises. Competitive prices, up-to-dateness and quality of products, as well as reliability and agility in business operations, are decisive factors of success on the international market where every transaction involves a struggle. From the planning aspect the socialist market, which relies on agreements valid for several years, provides a secure foundation by covering two thirds of Hungary's foreign trade. It would, however, be a mistake to think that agreements with socialist countries involve qualitative requirements. All this goes to show that an accelerated growth of the planned national economy necessitates a considerable speeding up of exports too.

The question now arises whether and under what conditions it is possible to quicken the development so as to meet the above requirements. The answer, we think, is contained in the following:

a) In all probability the technical facilities and potential capacities for increasing the quantitative production of industry are available. The plan targets of agriculture have to be considered as optimum targets, given average weather conditions.

b) Increased industrial production does not depend chiefly on an extensive expansion of the capacities of fixed capital or on a simple over-fulfilment of production plans; what is mainly needed for that purpose is an over-fulfilment of two qualitative tasks, i.e., the productivity target on the one hand, and the exportability of commodities, on the other.

IV

A sound proportion between accumulation and consumption is of capital importance in every long-range plan, both politically and economically. The Third Five Year Plan also starts from the basic principle that a continuous

and steady rise of the working people's living standards must be ensured. This principle, however, holds good also in the long run, not only during a span of a year or two. Therefore, accumulation can only be increased to an extent enabling consumption to be regularly raised from year to year. On the other hand, the increase of consumption is limited by the necessity of an accumulation that will lay the foundations for an increase of living standards over a period of five to ten years.

A study of the Third Five Year Plan reveals that the ratio now established within the national income takes account of this basically important principle. At present, the consumption fund represents 78 per cent and accumulation 22 per cent of the national income, and there is no need to change this proportion essentially. This means that in case of a 1 per cent increase of the national income the consumption fund can be raised in the same proportion as in the previous plan period, i.e., out of each unit increase of the national income, 78 per cent are devoted to consumption.

The plan, however, aims at a significant change of proportions within the accumulation fund of the national income. While total accumulation will increase by about 17 per cent in the course of five years, resources allocated to investments will increase, within this target figure, by 30 per cent. This will be attained through a relatively slower growth rate of working capital.

The consumption fund embodied in the Five Year Plan enables the per capita real income of workers and employees to be increased by 14 to 16 per cent. The per capita real income of the peasantry may rise at a somewhat quicker rate, probably by 18 per cent. The benefits of better living standards will accrue primarily to workers of higher labour efficiency. This will be made possible through the new system of material incentives to be introduced in connection with the reform of the system of economic direction.

In connection with the realization, pattern and efficiency of investments we once more come across the contradictions of intensive and extensive development and the question of how to solve this problem. Beyond certain limits the quantitative increase of investments is unable to solve the difficulties; indeed, it would probably deteriorate the effectiveness of invested resources. We must consequently strive—within the available range—after qualitative changes, in our investment activities, e.g., by reducing the time of execution and by applying modern, simple and inexpensive solutions. Manifold tasks in this sphere will face planners and technicians working under the new economic mechanism.

V

The most difficult economic and technical problem facing the Hungarian national economy is the supply of energy. Of all European countries Hungary has the smallest energy resources per capita. Due to the geological conditions of Hungarian coal mining, the cost per calory of using coal for generating energy is extremely high. A further consequence of these conditions is the relatively large ratio of manpower employed in coal mining as compared to other countries. The planning of power economy has always been a central economic and political issue in Hungary. The main principles of energetics may be summed up as follows:

maximum efforts to meet requirements from domestic production in an economically efficient way;

development of an active energy import policy in conformity with the situation of the country;

transformation of the pattern of domestic energy supply with a view to greater energetic efficiency;

modernization and rationalization of energy consuming and converting equipment.

More than a third of the industrial investments of the Five Year Plan are allocated to the improvement of the energy supply. Particularly great efforts are to be made to boost mineral oil and natural gas exploitation. Thus, natural gas production, which at present amounts to 1,300 million cubic metres, will be raised to 3,300 million cubic metres by 1970.

The country's fuel needs will increase by 22 per cent during the current five year period. Since the average calorific content of Hungarian coal production shows a declining trend and the efficiency of coal heating also has an unfavourable prospect, there is to be no increase in local production, excepting lignite, which will be exploited by open-cast mining for the new, big thermal power station at Gyöngyös. Nor will mineral oil exploitation grow significantly, since hydrocarbon research in the last six to eight years managed to increase mainly natural gas resources to an appreciable extent and has only recently raised our hope of discovering larger crude oil reserves.

The growth in gas consumption will greatly increase the productivity of the power economy as regards both industrial consumers and power stations and will, of course, also contribute to a better supply of the population, for it enables several hundreds of thousands of new consumers to join the gas service. The utilization of natural gas by the chemical industry and the advantages resulting from it are also factors of no mean importance.

While Hungarian mineral oil production will not increase considerably under the Five Year Plan, mineral oil imports will double as compared to the present level thanks to the long-term agreements concluded with the Soviet Union.

From the aforesaid it is evident that favourable and important changes will take place in the pattern of fuel consumption in the next five years. The proportion of mineral oil and natural gas—which are, as is well-known, of higher efficiency than coal—will increase from 28 per cent in 1965 to approximately 38 per cent in 1970. This change in pattern plus the measures planned in the field of energy rationalization will produce fuel equalling several million tons of coal and savings of several thousand million forints in costs. One of the main sources of savings in production costs will be the building of new power stations as well as the modernization of existing ones. As a result the heat quantity needed for the generation of one kwh of electric energy will decrease from 3,630 cal. to about 3,200 cal. In addition the rapid development of electric and Diesel traction is of great importance; e.g., the ratio of steam traction on the State Railways, which still amounts to 65 per cent, will be reduced to 20 per cent.

In order to meet higher electric energy requirements, the import of electric energy will be further increased. The high-capacity 400 kilovolt power line which runs from Budapest to the border of the Soviet Union serves this purpose.

One of the chief aims of the Third Five Year Plan, then, is to boost the efficiency of energy production. This will improve the economic efficiency of energy production. This will improve the economic efficiency of every sector of the economy and of every branch of industry.

VI

The nature of Hungary's mineral resources makes it necessary to subject long-range plans to a thorough analysis regarding the raw material situation—both exploitation and utilization—and to work out suitable concepts designed to secure an adequate raw material base. Aside from sources of energy, construction materials are of greatest importance, for not only are they produced in large quantities, but their qualitative parametres also determine fundamentally the quality and up-to-dateness of the engineering and building industries. Non-ferrous metals that could be remuneratively developed are not available except for aluminium. Neither can the large-scale expansion of ferrous metal bases be planned in view of their uneconomic

character. Finally, Hungary is dependent on large-scale timber imports. The line to be pursued in the manufacture of construction materials is, therefore:

to increase considerably the production of those construction materials that can be produced economically from Hungarian raw materials;

in the sphere of semi-finished goods to stress the production of a more valuable choice of articles that can meet higher technical requirements.

It follows that there should be no large expansion of basic equipment in iron metallurgy; instead, a number of measures will be taken to modernize and complete existing equipment and provide for its more intensive utilization. Our aim in iron metallurgy is to develop a more advantageous product composition consisting of commodities of higher value. Accordingly, production will increase by 24 per cent during the next five years and, within this, that of cold rolled steel by 30 to 35 per cent, of alloyed rolled steel by 65 to 70 per cent, and of welded tubes by 58 to 62 per cent. Stepping up of electro-steel production as well as the modernization of the manufacture of semi-finished goods and of the finishing process also serve to meet higher qualitative requirements. An extensive raising of the manufacture of secondary products (drawn steel rods, steel wires, tin-plates and tin-coated tubes) also point to a qualitative development in iron metallurgy. Due to their excellent mechanical qualities, aluminium alloys are the construction materials of the future. The Soviet-Hungarian agreement on aluminium cooperation will result in doubling the quantity of aluminium available in the next five years. Growth and modernization of processing methods as well as better organization of an economical utilization of aluminium are increasingly coming to the fore. In order to boost aluminium processing, a large-capacity broad-strip mill will be put into operation at Székesfehérvár by the end of the plan period, and aluminium processing at Inota and Tatabánya will also be increased. In line with this, measures are planned to enhance the use of aluminium, chiefly in construction, electrical engineering, machine industry and packaging technology. This will represent a great stride in raising Hungary's aluminium culture.

In our century plastics are the most rapidly developing among the new construction materials. Due to their characteristics their application is gaining ground quickly, because they not only replace other construction materials but meet diverging and higher requirements as well. Under the new Five Year Plan the per capita consumption of synthetic materials will increase from the present 4,1 kg per annum to 10 kg; this provides a modern production basis for the engineering and the building material industry, beside

permitting the manufacture of consumer goods. In the furniture and building industry timber will be replaced by different sorts of synthetic panels and boards of Hungarian make and of improved technical quality. From deciduous trees unsuited to other industrial purposes and from the by-products of hemp and flax processing, furniture panels and boards will be made on a large scale.

VII

The processing branches of industry—viz., the engineering industry, light industry, food industry and chemical industry—are the backbone of industrial activities in Hungary. It is in this sphere that long-range concepts taking account of international cooperation and technical progress are of utmost importance. In this field the Third Five Year Plan continues the industrial policy adopted by the Eighth Party Congress. This policy calls for concentration, in future economic development, on the production of commodities of small raw material content but high technical value and easily marketable even over a long period, and, as a corollary, on the industrial branches producing these commodities.

The conditions for realizing the principles of high technical value and easy marketability may change in the course of time, and this, of course, may result in a shift of emphasis from one plan period to another. In the Second Five Year Plan the importance of telecommunications and of precision engineering was particularly stressed, and the development which took place in these branches proved, on the whole, the soundness of the decision. The significance of these development trends has not diminished since, and the production of large, up-to-date telecommunication equipment, and vacuum engineering instruments will be greatly promoted in the future too, in harmony with the new plan. However, the most important task in the period of the Third Five Year Plan is to step up the production of vehicles and—as part of it—the modernization and large-scale development of motor bus production: more than one third of the development resources of the engineering industry will be devoted to that purpose. In 1970, it is planned to turn out 7,000 modern motor buses compared to the present production level of 2,800 buses yearly.

From the aspect of industrial policy, motor bus production is of utmost importance, since by applying the most modern production technology it will help to develop, in cooperation with other socialist countries, an—even on a world scale—economically efficient and large-series production. At the same time we expect that through implementing this programme the

quality in other branches of engineering will also improve, chiefly as regards the technology of preparatory processes.

In the previous Five Year Plan the development of the chemical industry was mainly centred on nitrogenous fertilizers, and on the pharmaceutical industry. The new plan foresees no decrease in the importance of these branches: the pharmaceutical industry continues to be the most promising field of industrial research and will still have the largest share in chemical exports. The production of the nitrogenous fertilizer industry will more than double by 1970, and it is planned to expand its production on a large scale as well as to reconstruct its plants. In addition, the production of plastics and synthetic fibres and the processing of synthetic materials will achieve equal partnership with the nitrogenous fertilizer industry.

The development ratios in the light and food processing industries depend entirely on the requirements taste of Hungarian and foreign customers. The production of fashion goods and modern, durable wearing apparel and the degree of food processing will be increased; to insure the latter the manufacture of tinned food and the capacity of the cold-storage industry will be developed considerably.

In addition to the problems already mentioned, the development of agriculture continues to be fundamental to our economic progress. In the Second Five Year Plan period we strove, primarily, to lay the foundations of large-scale farming. Today the foundations are firm, but every effort will have to be made in the future too to strengthen and expand the basic instruments of production, especially in the cooperative farms. At present, the development policy is more and more aimed at realizing an up-to-date, economically efficient and well-organized agricultural production and at completing the basic fixed assets of agriculture and establishing accessory projects designed to promote economically efficient farming.

Among the principal tasks are those of meeting the country's bread grain needs through a 15 to 17 per cent increase of plant cultivation and of providing fodder reserves for modern and intensive animal husbandry. It is of vital importance to develop stock breeding and increase meat production so as to satisfy both domestic demand and exports. The Five Year Plan seeks to realize this in the field of pig breeding and poultry raising without increasing the breeding stock and solely by applying intensive farming methods, i.e., improved fodder utilization and shortening of the fattening period.

VIII

Today, the Third Five Year Plan is a law of the Hungarian People's Republic; its spirit, its provisions are a guide to action for every directing body and collective unit engaged in economic activities.

In the last three years of the Five Year Plan the new system of economic direction will come into full effect. The plan will thus be implemented in a new economic environment, stimulated by new moral and material incentives. The targets, the limits and the requirements of the plan will not be determined by numerical prescriptions broken down all the way to the enterprise level, but by the coordinated and purposeful application of economic means. The complex of price, credit and fiscal policy and of investment and foreign exchange regulations has to ensure the optimum realization of the objectives embodied in the plan. We expect that this improved and, at the same time, more adaptable and flexible method of planned economy will help to realize our economic and political concepts more efficiently.

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BRAKES AND BOTTLE-NECKS IN HUNGARY'S ECONOMIC GROWTH

by

IMRE VAJDA

Hungary belongs to the group of countries that entered on the process of industrialization at a relatively late date. It is true that, prior to the Second World War, Hungary for two decades profited from its system of protective customs; yet the social structure of the country and the political attitude of the ruling classes discouraged rapid industrialization and put a brake on it, even where the generally unfavourable circumstances that hindered or retarded development between the two World Wars might still have provided an opportunity to boost industrialization. The dominant classes made every effort to maintain the agrarian character of the country, and this conservative trend found support in the peculiar situation existing in Europe and in world economy. This support was political in the sense that the counter-revolutionary system of 1919 had—in the eyes of the West-European countries—adequately mastered the revolutionary waves by applying a method for choking revolutionary movements that had proved its value ever since the revolt in the Vendée, viz., to submerge the towns—and with them industry as well—in the sea of the peasantry. Already in the seventeenth century, during the English civil war, it was almost a matter of course that the royalists, the followers of King Charles I, tried to mobilize the countryside against the towns—the instigators of revolution. The conservative-agrarian orientation in Hungary, however, also relied on such unforeseen factors as the hitherto greatest recession of world economy, on Europe's disintegration, and on the spread of doctrines that anathematized the very concept of "progress" and rendered its elements meaningless. It was, indeed, a tragic turn of history that Hungary's political system and economic endeavours became synchronized with Europe in the thirties at a time when European progress had gone into reverse gear. Hungary's masterminds and visionaries cherished the hope that by catching up with Europe they could overcome all the

failures resulting from the fact that the country's independence had been interrupted for four centuries, a considerable part of its population dispersed, and its cultural development silenced for a long time; history, however, did not justify these dreams; its brutal denial seemed to say: Europe is declining to the level of its most backward parts.

Concomitant with the disintegration of the world economy in the thirties, the rise to power of German fascism had a particularly strong influence in shaping the situation in Hungary, where it not only maintained conservatism but fortified and stabilized it. In preparing for war and finally unleashing it, Germany needed foodstuffs, and in its sphere of power it could rely on large deliveries only from Hungary—and even there only if the pattern of Hungary's economy remained unchanged, with neither a reduction of the labour potential of agriculture nor an increase of mass consumption. In the world-shaking crisis of Europe only agriculture seemed to rest on firm ground; the consumption of foodstuffs cannot drop to as low a level as that of industrial products; moreover, the nature of rural unemployment is not identical with that of the industrial areas. If ever there was a complete bottle-neck in the modern history of Hungary, this term should be applied to the years from 1930 to 1940; the years that followed brought about utter rack and ruin. The origin of this bottle-neck has to be sought in the sphere of political institutions: the retrograde forces manifesting themselves there left their mark on the economy, hindered its autonomous dynamism, and the regressive social structure brought about by them remained effective even after they had disintegrated. As a consequence, a contemporary Hungarian observer cannot deal with the concepts of development and of brakes on development with the same distant, scientific objectivity as can his western colleagues, since for him both concepts represent a concrete, emotionally charged reality. Backwardness and development each represent two historical periods of different content and can clearly be separated from each other. In the first of these periods Hungarian economists had no possibility of playing a role, in the other their ideas could be converted into deeds.

THE NEW CENTRE OF MOTOR FORCES

After 1945 new trends of development evolved in Hungarian society. The forces inhibiting or promoting development changed place. As always happens in the case of great social shocks, here too individual strata and groups replaced each other. Some groups, satisfied with the initial phase of

the transformation, merely sought to consolidate the situation that had evolved temporarily and to safeguard it through a corresponding organizational framework; other groups strove to achieve farther changes. Nevertheless, the fact that the political superstructure, that is, the newly established social institutions, became the centre of the progressive forces in contrast to the retrograde and conservative role of the former state, represented a fundamental change.

The general picture of the postwar years does not reveal any general phenomena that could be classified as brakes. As a result of an accelerating currency depreciation, the state—even after inflation had been checked—was able to raise savings and investments to a level unprecedented in Hungary's history, so that the rate of growth was an extremely quick one. True, the all-absorbing state activity counteracted the inclination of private persons for saving and, together with it, their spirit of enterprise and readiness to innovate; this lack, however, was not felt. Conscious of its new responsibilities, the state, setting out from the existing level of backwardness and possessing abundant means, not only replaced entrepreneurs and innovators but proved to be bolder than the ideal type created by Schumpeter, because short-range profit expectations did not hamper the assumption of risks and the introduction of innovations. The state could think in structural terms covering a long period; it had to consider social preferences; it had to reconstruct the state apparatus from top to bottom, setting aside every retarding routine and, for a short transitional period, even the solidarity of the apparatus, which tends to resist and denigrate outstanding talents, achievements and conceptions lest scales of value foreign to it should break its ranks. The ideas and aims of the new *élite* stood at an incomparably higher level than those of the former *élite*—not, it is true, as regards expert knowledge and even less so as regards acquaintance with the laws of motion and the efficiency of the state apparatus: the former was underestimated while the latter, as a rule, was overestimated. Nevertheless, it was certainly proved that when great social changes take place—provided they are brought about by autonomous inner forces—a new entrepreneurial *élite* and a reserve of highly gifted individuals comes to the fore, of whose existence the former conservative *élite* was unaware and which it was incapable of mobilizing. This new *élite* is not motivated by the scramble for profits but inspired by ideals and illusions and by ethical standards. It marches in the vanguard of the state and acts in its name, it is the incarnation of progress, and its impact is for a short time tremendous, but, alas, its tragedy is that society is not able to keep level with the speedy progress the new *élite* would like to impose on it. For this reason, if for no

other, it must succumb, though its debacle is usually brought about by other forces—in Hungary as elsewhere.

The new élite should be scrutinized from another angle too. Schumpeter, by declaring that, under capitalism, entrepreneurial talents do not issue exclusively from a particular class, seeks to limit the social significance of inherited positions, though common experience decidedly contradicts this view. The new élite, which took the lead in Hungary due to changes that were revolutionary in content though not in form, derived from a large variety of classes and strata, and its energy, inventiveness and self-confidence resulted from the very fact that the continuity between the old and the new was broken and the burden of conceptual heredity reduced to a minimum. Despite its heterogeneous composition the new élite represented the working class—the labouring masses—as against those who only wanted to rule but not to work.*

The period outlined above was followed by a decade where growth and brakes on growth were intertwined and went hand in hand. There is no doubt that the contrast of maximum and optimum** is discernible here too; however, an analysis of this phenomenon surpasses the scope of the present article. We shall concentrate our attention on the development of the past few years.

It is obvious that Hungary's economy as a whole has continued to advance, if the aggregate indices are taken into account. National income, rate of employment, consumption per capita and private savings have increased, and industrial production has grown particularly in those branches which Prof. Perroux calls modern branches of industry—i.e., power generation, chemical industry, synthetics, instrument industry, manufacture of transport equipment, telecommunications—while the role of the "entirely new industrial branches" such as electronics (including automation and the production of control gears) is very limited and space technique is still in the stage of laboratory research. Agricultural production has also grown, though by no means at the planned rate. Finally, mention should be made of the continuous growth of commodity exports. Progress in modernization is most evident in the shift that has taken place at crucial points of production, in the realm of culture, and in the transformation of thought processes and

* Some years ago, the author had a personal experience that may prove the truth of this seemingly bold statement. He happened to meet the offspring of a princely family under circumstances in which "work" would have meant immense advantages—more food, the society of fellow-beings and mental refreshment—as compared with those who were deprived of the possibility of work. The prince, however, turned down the opportunity that was offered him by saying that he had never yet worked and was not willing to do so voluntarily even in prison.

** Rudolf Bicanic, *Comment ne pas développer un pays*, *Tiers-Monde*, April-June 1966.

ways of living. There are, of course, phenomena and sectors of social life which fiercely resist modernization. Political structures and theoretical superstructures corresponding to them have proved far more resistant to change than other areas infiltrated by the dynamism of society; this has led to new contradictions. In addition, we can witness such peculiar phenomena as that the "new" conservatives are far closer to the "old" conservatives than to modern trends. *Les ennemis de mes ennemis sont mes amis*. (The enemies of my foes are my friends.)

In what follows we shall, however, by-pass these aspects and confine ourselves to the narrower sphere of social economy. In this context we wish to emphasize two phenomena, viz., the links between growth and accumulation and the division of labour between socialist countries. In both fields various braking factors can be observed within the achieved growth that are important from the aspect of both theory and practice and represent obstacles that will have to be faced. Though both problems will be analysed exclusively in relation to phenomena to be met with in the Hungarian economy, we believe that economists and those dealing with economic policy in other countries, primarily in the Third World, may draw some useful conclusions from our experiences. Unfortunately, a sceptical attitude prevails in the sphere of economics regarding experiences gained elsewhere—a peculiar attitude hardly to be met with in other branches of science; the sceptics at times justify their attitude by saying that we cannot learn even from the mistakes of others, let alone from their achievements; however, such scepticism is just as unacceptable as any other form of agnosticism. For an attentive and conscientious scholar there is no other possibility of obtaining a deep insight than through comparing, analysing and cross-checking experiences gained under different circumstances, at different times and places.

KEYNES' GROWTH MODEL AND LIMITS TO ITS APPLICATION

François Perroux, in an article* written on the occasion of an *enquête* devoted to the elucidation of brake phenomena, introduced Keynes' model of growth and pointed to the over-simplification of the quasi-mechanism inherent in the model and the illusions connected with it. Hungarian experience fully confirms his reservations.

To begin with, Keynes' model does not explain the dual character of investments, i.e., their distribution between productive investments and

* *Tiers-Monde*, April-June 1966.

growing stocks. (In this context, I think, productive investments cover not only new projects that directly boost production but also investments that expand the social infrastructure, such as transport and communications, home-building, urbanization, public health service and education, which are indirectly effective over a fairly long period and increase the productive capacities of society.) The ratio of capital to output is, of course, modified by the composition of productive investments, a problem which is exhaustively discussed in economic literature. From the aspect of the utilization of the social product, however, growing stocks, i.e., the increase of material stockpiles plus unfinished production, can only be considered as accumulation, whose laws of motion are often disregarded. The growth of stocks is, partly, a simple consequence of the increase of production, in which case a linear connection can be assumed. In addition, however, the expansion of the social division of labour leads to a growth rate of stocks exceeding that of productive capacities, since large stocks are inevitably piled up at many places because production processes are broken down to numerous productive units and independent firms. This growth rate is also enhanced by automation and the resultant desire to insure a steady production flow, which in turn calls for the accumulation of larger stocks. I leave out of consideration the formation of commercial stocks, because here we are obviously in the presence of contradictory tendencies which tend to neutralize each other. The enhancing effects issuing from the general growth of the third sector are presumably compensated by savings due to concentration of the commercial capital (e.g., the spread of supermarkets and department stores). Thus, modern techniques, erected on the socialization of working processes, increase the demand for capital accumulated in stocks; on the other hand, the larger its share is in comparison to productive capital, the lower is the efficiency quotient of production in total accumulation. In this case too, it is a question of relative magnitudes; it is necessary to locate the optimum limits, but the effect—maybe a braking one—of the composition of the accumulation on production increase must be clearly seen. The data relating to Hungary given below will help to throw light on this issue.

Another experience, which modifies the validity of Keynes' model of growth and confirms the charge of simplification, is the variation in the efficiency quotient of investments. This quotient depends upon several factors, i.e., the actual structure of the economy and the structure to be developed, the ratio of short- and long-term investments realized and put in operation, the rationality of investments, the market situation and, last but not least, the social ratios of consumption and accumulation. I now

leave out of consideration the relation between marginal profits on invested capital and interest rates; I do so only because, under conditions prevailing in Hungary, interest rates do not depend on the money market, nor are they determined by the propensity of capitalists to save and invest. In the purely hypothetical case of a lack of adequate investment opportunities offering returns of a minimal value embodied in interest on capital utilization (and admitted also under socialism), social preferences—formally similar to Keynes' assumption though fundamentally deviating in their content—may conceivably lead to a restriction of investments by way of increasing global private consumption, or possibly by way of a reduction of productive effort. However, experience to date indicates that we need not worry about investments coming to a standstill in the near future.

The indices below illustrate the development of the national income and accumulation in Hungary from 1958 to 1964:

<i>Year</i>	<i>National income</i>	<i>Accumulation</i>
1958	100	100
1959	106.6	117.7
1960	117.8	158.8
1961	124.9	167.0
1962	130.8	186.9
1963	138.2	211.3
1964	144.7	219.3

During the six-year period accumulation thus more than doubled while the national income increased by 45 per cent. The efficiency quotient of accumulation decreased visibly—particularly from 1960 on—but its ratio within the national income increased (1960—26.0 per cent, 1964—28.2 per cent). It can be assumed that the decrease of the efficiency quotient is due to the increasing share of agricultural investments (1958 to 1960—17.8 per cent, 1964—21.0 per cent), which belong, as a matter of course, to the category of investments with a slower rate of return and, in addition, for the most part served to replace the labour force which left agriculture. This assumption is supported by the statistically proved fact that, in contrast to the increasing ratio of agricultural investments, the contribution of agriculture to the national income decreased relatively during the period under observation (industrial index 1960 to 1964—137.9, agricultural index—105.3). However, the validity of the statistical data is diminished by

de-synchronization of the price structure at the expense of agricultural prices; this was—and will—only be corrected in subsequent years.

The decreasing efficiency quotient of investments has also been examined from the angle of unfinished investments. In the period from 1958 to 1960 it already became obvious that the stock of unfinished investments took a turn for the worse: the ratio of unfinished to finished investments increased considerably. In 1960 investments put into operation amounted to 34,000 million forints besides unfinished investments worth 24,000 million forints at the end of the same year, a ratio of 100 : 70. The ratio was most unfavourable in 1961–62, when it amounted to 100 : 82. In 1964 it was 100 : 72, a considerable improvement, though compared to the lowest level only. In the long run the large amount of unfinished investments, is, undoubtedly, one of the factors checking economic growth.

COMPOSITION AND QUALITY OF ACCUMULATION

Now let us pass on to an examination of the two components of accumulation—investments and stocks. The following table of indices is based on statistical data* relating to the period from 1960 to 1964.

Year	Total accumulation	Increase in investments	Increase in stocks
1960	100	100	100
1961	105.0	87.2	138.5
1962	117.8	96.2	154.7
1963	130.2	107.6	181.4
1964	138.3	117.4	169.2

There is no doubt that the increase in stocks became detached from the tendencies analysed above, which systematically accompany the extension of the division of labour and specialization and have become an independent braking factor. The following calculation will give an idea of its magnitude.

Let us assume that stocks plus investments must grow in such a way that stock values should amount to 25 per cent of invested capital values at the initial level of the division of labour and that this ratio should then

* The source of all data in this article is the Statistical Yearbook of 1963 and 1964, Hungarian Central Statistical Bureau, Budapest, 1965.

increase by 2 per cent annually with due regard to the increasing stock-requirements of the expanding division of labour. We consequently estimate the "normal" stock ratio as amounting to 25 per cent in 1960 and 33 per cent in 1964. (It is obvious that such a maximum growth rate is too quick, but we have assumed the kind of transitory period unfailingly needed for adjustment). In this case the "normal" increase in stocks which took place from 1960 to 1964 consumed a round 20 per cent of total accumulation—a sum amounting to a larger value than that represented by the excess of imports over exports. In other words, the established total increase of the national income became embodied in an "abnormal" surplus of stocks.

Nobody can truly think that the anomalies in the utilization of accumulation are autonomous phenomena, independent of the economy's inherent laws of motion and of its mechanism; thus our conclusion that the relatively low efficiency quotient of investments gives rise to the braking forces in the field of growth, may also require correction, since here we have to do with consequences rather than causes. Nevertheless, I stand by my opinion, because if in the course of development originally secondary consequences—such as the illogical phenomena in the sphere of accumulation here referred to—manage to achieve such overwhelming importance, this means that they have acquired what amounts to an independent existence, advancing from a secondary role to the rank of a principal protagonist. Though it was the functioning of the economic mechanism that led to the described mode of accumulation, the phenomenon which obtained primary importance must be the starting point for removing the bottleneck, because, taken together, the many partial phenomena composing it make up the mechanism as a whole.

THE RELATION BETWEEN MACRO- AND MICROECONOMICS

The exhaustive investigations that have been carried out in every sphere of the Hungarian economy over recent years have revealed the basic inter-connections that frustrate a considerable part of the social efforts and, in the last resort, put a brake on growth. These investigations, in which several Hungarian economists took part, have been brought together in a separate symposium. I must confine myself to what I consider the key question, viz., the relation between macroeconomics and microeconomics.

The theory and practice of capitalism developed in the field of microeconomics while macroeconomics came into being only later, as a summing

up of microeconomic phenomena. It is to Karl Marx's lasting credit that he was able to recognize and analyse, in the realm of microunits, the functioning of capital as an aggregate, a process taking place without the awareness—and independent of the will—of the individuals involved. It is equally to his credit that he discovered the class content of this unrecognized macroeconomic functioning and the antagonism inherent in it. In socialist economics macroeconomic views prevailed from the beginning. Soon after Lenin's death, and particularly under the rule of Stalin, this led to a virtual refusal to admit the very existence of microeconomics, to an attempt at eliminating it and to the belief that this target would be automatically achieved by means of planned economy.

In recent decades macroeconomic thinking has found its way into capitalism, which has been considerably transformed as a result. On the other hand, an inverse motion has got under way in socialist planned economy, whose policy had relied exclusively on macroeconomic orientation. Since 1957, and partly even earlier, there has been a steady growth in the number of Hungarian economists who profess that, contrary to prevailing theories, the elimination of microeconomics—despite a quantitative increase—has diminished the efficiency of the planned economy in the period now drawing to a close; they maintain that it restricts initiative, inhibits adaptation to changing conditions, puts a check on the economy and, with it, on the dynamism of society, and concentrates decisions within the competence of bodies that lack the comprehensive information needed for decisions. Within macroeconomics contradictions have arisen between the existing—though disregarded—interests of individuals, groups and firms, on the one hand, and central directives, on the other hand—directives said to be in the interests of the national economy, though often misinterpreting them. On the basis of experience gathered with great scientific care and sense of responsibility, a process got under way that sought to reconcile macroeconomics and microeconomics also in the sphere of economic policy. However, despite some initial successes, it soon became clear that a more comprehensive and general reform of the economic management system was needed to realize the most important results and advantages of the macroeconomic outlook inherent in planned economy. Our investigations confirmed the fact that modern productive forces and production relations as well as the superior requirements of modern society embodied in socialism can be satisfied only by consistent, overall macroeconomic planning and a corresponding mentality. The victory of macroeconomics and of socialist planned economy—the great accomplishment of our century—is not diminished but rather buttressed and strengthened if the resources that can be

derived solely from the sphere of microeconomics are made available to macroeconomics as well.

The meaning of microeconomics under socialist property relations, however, differs from its meaning under capitalist property relations. Microeconomics under capitalism means privately owned, profit oriented economic units, often opposed to macroeconomics, and markets functioning microeconomically, whereas under socialism the means of production are socially owned and the organizational units built up accordingly. However, we cannot ignore that, here too, individual and group interests (interests of firms) are present even if we try to deny their existence; moreover, the initiatives and actions induced by these microunits and microspheres of interest are indispensable elements of a rational functioning of macroeconomics. In both systems the consumer falls within the conceptual range of microeconomics, and his decisions and preferences are the more sovereign the larger his income is. In a socialist economy too the market relies on this phenomenon and on commodity production and money relations; for, although the market is, in one respect, a macroeconomic phenomenon, it is also here that microeconomics asserts itself and has a levelling effect.*

It would, indeed, be an interesting task to reveal step by step how central planning, the incoherency of plans imposed on the firms, automatic financing that denied the function of money, and, finally, the "underground economy"*** of firms have led to unwanted and originally unplanned results that were, nevertheless, accepted as "empirical facts" by established planning practice—which had become an end in itself and were tacitly incorporated in the expenditure balance of the national income. Such an analysis must, however, be omitted due to limitations of space.

BRAKES WITHIN CMEA

As regards the division of labour between the socialist countries and its role in the growth of the Hungarian economy, I have treated this subject more exhaustively in a study*** published in the volume previously mentioned. Here, I merely wish to emphasize a phenomenon that has a braking effect not only on Hungarian economic growth but also on that of all those CMEA (Comecon) members whose foreign trade sensitivity and dependence is similar to that of Hungary.

* See Author's article: "Economic Science in Hungary," *Acta Oeconomica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, I, 1966.

** Rudolf Bicanic, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

*** See Author's article: *Division internationale du travail réforme de l'économie. Cahiers de l'I.S.E.A.*

In recent years there has been a slackening tendency in the growth of exports of the CMEA countries, manifesting itself in a slight decrease of their share in world trade. In this connection, a few comparative data will be revealing.

Average rate of growth of exports per annum

	1950-1955	1955-1960	1960-1962	1962-1964
CMEA	13.5	10.3	9.9	8.4
OECD	10.0	8.4	5.4	11.0
CEE	14.6	10.1	7.2	11.5

Intra-trade between integrated economic organizations similarly presents an unfavourable picture if its growth is compared with the growth of exports within the CEE:

Average rate of growth of CMEA and CEE intra-trade

	1955-1960	1960-1962	1962-1964
CMEA	10.3	8.0	10.6
CEE	12.6	15.1	16.5

This arrhythmy is remarkable even if we take into account that

- (a) since 1950 intra-trade between CMEA countries amounts to more than 70 per cent of their total trade; in more recent years their trade with countries outside the CMEA has at times developed at a quicker rate than CMEA intra-trade;
- (b) the development of the countries of the European Economic Community and their economies became closely interrelated already some decades before the CEE was founded;
- (c) exports of the CEE to third markets are far greater than those of the CMEA countries.

It is obvious that, here too, we are faced with a complex phenomenon in which a number of interdependent factors play a part. It is possible—though this assumption is not yet fully established in every detail—that autarkic tendencies inherent in planning led to a saturation point in the

very areas that ought to develop most dynamically in the realm of the international division of labour, i.e., in the modern and entirely new branches of the economy, in sectors requiring a high degree of research and development, and in the sphere of vertical specialization. On the other hand, raw material and agricultural exports are far from developing vigorously enough to compensate for anti-labour-division trends in industrial production. I, for my part, am not inclined to accept this assumption, because I do not believe that these phenomena—though they undoubtedly exist *per se* and are supported by many experiences—represent the main forces acting as a brake on the integration of domestic production.*

In my view the primary factor operating as a brake on the further development of economic cooperation between the socialist countries taking part in the CMEA is the lack of *real* money. Mutual deliveries within the CMEA are, of course, settled in money form by bank credit entries. However, the credit balance resulting from exports does not *per se* make it possible to meet the creditor's needs and demands through the purchase of commodities or services, even if the state rather than an exporting firm is the creditor. And if the assets in question have proved to be unserviceable at the time they were produced, they are not likely to form suitable reserves in the future either. Only goods included in the mutual import quotas may be purchased; yet such purchase is not only a "may" but a "must," since the quotas are, theoretically, binding. However, quotas represent a rather primitive form** of goods exchange—barter of one commodity against another—and what inevitably ensues is the discrimination between "hard" and "soft" commodities, the former being usually overestimated, the latter underrated. It is clear that the category "hard commodities" is not an everlasting one and will not be able to resist structural changes and modernity. For a purchaser interested in "hard commodities" it seems preferable to substitute them from domestic sources; this, in turn, inevitably leads to a distortion of rational accounting and to a

* There is no need to discuss in detail my theoretical standpoint regarding integration; however, in order to avoid any misunderstanding, I wish to make it clear that I see in integration a very important—though by no means the sole—factor in international economic relations; I also think that the idea of using integration as a means of dissolving the separate national economies is a utopian wish and, for the time being, no more than an unpleasant dream.

** Barter in kind is partly an historical category but, in part it is also based on the dogmatic theory of money *esse delendam*. It was a historical category—though an obsolete one—as long as the economic structure and development level—and the resultant import interests—of the individual countries brought about an exchange of complementary commodities, independently from the inflexibility of the quotas, i.e., as long as the ancient model of the international division of labour—raw materials (and foodstuffs) in return for industrial products—predominated. This phase, which included a very limited range of goods and revealed the more or less homogeneous nature of the countries concerned, is gone forever, though its influence still subsists.

squandering of resources. On the other hand, "soft commodities" are, as a rule, "soft" only from the angle of the purchasing country but not from that of the seller; their degree of "softness" is not determined by physical properties, but by the difficulty of acquiring commodities in great demand (i.e., "hard commodities"), the efforts expended for this purpose, and the system of tie-in sales that inevitably arises from such exchanges.

Let me add that in recent years the quotas have in practice become less binding and a somewhat more flexible mobility has developed within them, which, however, may not transgress the strict boundaries set by their quota character. A hard quota may replace a soft one for delivery only if unforeseeable circumstances have modified conditions within the country making the purchase and the commodity that was considered a soft one has "hardened" since the quota was agreed upon. The delivery of "soft commodities" can be mutually increased, but such transactions give rise to irrational temptations (the surmounting of "softness") and often result—sometimes, presumably, even mutually—in stockpiling.

Thus, in the bilateral relationship of two countries money is only one means of keeping a record of accounts, but it is not a *sui generis* means of payment or of credit. It is even less so in the field of multilateral trade, because the balances resulting from bilateral relations are usually not transferable to other trade relations (within the CMEA), and, therefore, balances requiring transference do not come into being.

The reader will surely have apprehended that a further criterion of "real money" in socialist countries could be its general convertibility to the same extent, at least, as it has been introduced in the majority of West-European countries since 1959. For the moment this seems to be a maximal stride that cannot be realized without first bringing about several preconditions; the economic reforms now underway also seek to further this aim. One reason for my not making the lack of convertibility my main point of criticism is my conviction that its introduction without thorough preparation would be a disastrous venture and do more harm than good. The consistent introduction of convertibility is, doubtlessly, a task of the more distant future and requires immense efforts on the part of CMEA member states, and not on their part alone. It is my firm conviction that mutual convertibility is a global task, one of the bases of peaceful coexistence, and that all nations throughout the world have to take part in establishing it.

The decisive criteria of real money can be realized within the CMEA by gradually freeing the markets, introducing rational prices, instituting international bank and credit organizations—all this on the basis of the previously discussed blending of the macroeconomic and microeconomic

spheres. The introduction of multilateral payments and of money as a real means of payment would not curtail any fundamental social and ethical features of the socialist economy; indeed, it would speed up their development in the direction of a more perfect society. It is, consequently, not just a means. Today it is an essentially institutional task the preconditions for the realization of which have matured. To delay it would permanently maintain the existing brakes on growth.

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A series of articles recently published in "Tiers Monde" led me to write this study and review the inherent problems; this series mainly investigates the factors acting as a brake on development in countries that are either seeking to undertake industrialization or are now in the process of doing so or have already achieved it. We are accustomed to dealing exhaustively with the positive aspects of economic growth but the brakes are treated incidentally only, though the latter appear at different levels of development in diverging forms, with deviating content and degree of efficiency, and are important enough to call for special investigation. The introduction to the series of articles published in "Tiers Monde" was written by Prof. François Perroux. In addition to a detailed analysis of the institutional elements the study emphasizes the importance of the mental attitudes and social conventions in the phenomenological research of brakes and bottle-necks. Professor Perroux appeals to economists to direct their attention to this sphere.* The reader may think that we have disregarded this warning. Prof. Albert O. Hirschmann of Harvard University writes in the same series of articles that his study does not say anything about the ability of responsible persons in the underdeveloped countries to perceive these possibilities;** his self-criticism, we believe, also applies to us. The emphasis here evidently is not so much on the level of development as on the perceptive ability of those in responsible positions. This deficiency in our study does not mean that we disagree with the authors quoted and attribute less importance to the changes in social consciousness and to the

* "The bottle-necks in or brakes on (blocages ou freinages) development we have described... all possess a common characteristic. They are to be found precisely at the level of mental attitudes and social habits that are neglected in analysing aggregates and their mutual interactions. Consumption, investments, savings, labour, innovations—in the end, it is *human beings* that act and decide... The economist who does not refuse to understand is led by aggregate growth to inquire into the level of aspiration, a concept of analysis requiring rather lengthy, precise and minute explanations."—François Perroux: *Les blocages de la croissance et du développement: Tiers Monde*, Paris, April-June 1966.

** Albert O. Hirschmann (University of Harvard, Cambridge, Mass.): *Classification et quasi-démantelement des obstacles au développement*. Loc. cit., p. 300.

political institutions embodying them than to economic structures in a narrower sense. We profess that there is the closest possible interrelation between them. The author of the present essay declares with a clear conscience that any omission on his part is due exclusively to the fact that he does not feel himself competent to perform a sociological analysis, and this is the obvious reason for his not having accepted the challenge. At the same time, the author realizes that in the socialist system insufficient attention has hitherto been devoted to sociological and psychological factors, to mental attitudes and social conventions. The primacy of institutions was emphasized unduly and with unfounded certainty, and the study of the inner laws of motion governing them was neglected. Research work on this subject started recently, and it can be assumed that despite the obstacles sociological advance will, sooner or later, catch up with the standard of knowledge that has been acquired in the sphere of economy. However, there is a further reason for the one-sidedness of the present study. The author identifies himself with the state, because he considers it the embodiment of a society for which he—being a part of it—assumes full responsibility. He is inclined to regard the witty aphorism of the Marquise de Merteuil, quoted by Albert O. Hirschmann, as proved—inversely. If we agree with the beautiful heroine of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* when she says that *on acquiert rarement les qualités dont on peut se passer* (“one rarely acquires the qualities one can dispense with”), then let us also hope that *on acquiert plus aisément les qualités dont on ne peut pas se passer* (“one can more easily acquire the qualities one cannot do without”).

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OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS AND SKILLS OF WOMEN

As a result of the rapid socio-economic development of the past twenty years, women have become increasingly aware of new opportunities. They have stepped beyond the narrow bounds of housekeeping to look for jobs and, more and more frequently, employment in the professions. As a result, there has been an unprecedented increase in the rate of employment of women in nearly all fields of the national economy.*

These changes can be seen in the population data for 1960 and 1963, which show a marked difference from earlier years both in the total number of employed women and in the proportion they represent of the female population. In 1960 of a total population of about ten million, the number of gainfully employed women was 1,711,000, and in 1963, 1,737,000—73 per cent more than in 1930. From 1930 to 1960 the total number of earners increased by one million, and 70 per cent of this increase was due to the employment of women.

* A paper submitted by Dr. Egon Szabady at the World Population Conference (Belgrade, 1965), "Demographic aspects of changes in the economics structure of the population in Hungary," gives a comprehensive evaluation of the shifts that have occurred in economic activity of women.

The present author previously dealt with the main features of the employment of women in her article, "Some questions concerning the employment of women" (*Demográfia*, 1965, No. 2, pp. 180-200; the present article is an extract from a paper published originally in Vol. 9, 1966, No. 2 of *Demográfia*).

This widespread employment of women began under conditions which did not allow every woman to enter an occupation that was best suited to her. Before the liberation, the educational level of women, both in general and in occupational or professional training (comprising a few branches only), was far below that of men. Thus, at first, women sought employment for which there were no qualifications (unskilled work, work at home, etc.). In 1960 only 14 per cent and in 1963, 13 per cent of female manual workers (wage-earners and members of cooperative farms) were skilled labourers, whereas more than half of them (53 per cent) worked as completely unskilled or as farm labourers. Among the men at the same time, one third of the manual workers were skilled labourers, and from 40 to 46 per cent were unskilled workers or farm labourers, etc.

Such data provide a background for the many occupational shifts (including dependents becoming earners and vice versa) that have occurred in connection with the increase in the number of gainfully employed women by 26,000 between 1960 and 1963.* The turn towards professions and white-collar occupations** is particularly interesting. At

* For full particulars see "Changes in employment between 1960 and 1963." Publication of the Demographic Research Group of the Central Statistical Office, No. 8. Budapest, 1965, p. 63.

** Hereinafter, professionals will be considered as covered by the term "white-collar workers."
—Ed.

the time of the latest population census (1960), 30 per cent of employed women including members of cooperative farms were white-collar workers; the figure for men in this group was 17 per cent. These persons are mainly in the younger age groups, which is in line with the increase of education; nearly three quarters of the female white-collar workers and 56 per cent of the men were under forty years of age.

In addition to the increase in the number of women in gainful employment, their occupational pattern has been gradually changing. The best proof is the fact that in 1960 only 16,000 women (not quite one per cent of the employed women) were domestic servants, as against 167,000 (17 per cent) in 1930.

There are, of course, many aspects to this subject. In the present paper only two will be considered: the occupational pattern, and occupational skills.

THE OCCUPATIONAL PATTERN

This line of investigation is based on the character of women's occupations.* It must be noted that data for comparison are rather limited, since a comprehensive break-down of occupations was not made before the 1960 census. While data on some occupations and professions are available for earlier years, neither the figures for 1949 nor those of former years allow of a complete analysis of the occupational pattern.

At the time of the population census of 1960, nearly four fifths of the 1,700,000 women engaged in some form of gainful employment were in manual and one fifth in white-collar occupations. Over the next

three years the number and proportion of white-collar workers increased considerably.

MANUAL OCCUPATIONS

Among the various types of manual occupations there are naturally great differences in regard to whether and how many women are employed. Many jobs in the building trades and other industries are physically burdensome as compared, for example, to commerce and services.* In 1960, somewhat more than half the women in manual occupations were employed in agriculture and 22 per cent in industry. By 1963, this proportion had changed to 43 and 26 per cent respectively, partly as a result of retirement among agricultural workers and partly because the number of women in industrial occupations had increased (Table 1).

If employment of women is examined from the aspect of what proportion they form within each occupational group (Table 2) it appears that, in 1960, it was highest in the commercial and catering trades and second in services and in agricultural occupations. Of all persons employed in industry, about one in every three was a woman, and in the building trades, about one in fifty.

If we now survey the distribution by age group, we will find some important differences. Among women 40 to 54 years of age and even in the next younger group, 30 to 39 years of age, agricultural work predominates, while the proportion in industry is low (ranging from 16 to 26 per cent). Women 20 to 29 years of age tend to enter non-agricultural occupations, primarily the industrial, service and commercial ones. Only 35 per cent of those aged 20 to 24 years and 39 per cent of those aged 25 to 29 years are employed in some branch of agriculture; in industry the figures are 36 and 32 per cent respectively.

* Cosmeticians, hairdressers, photographers, cleaners and similar services, but not including caterers, communications, etc.

* For present purposes, gainfully employed persons have been classified as manual or white-collar workers, regardless of whether self-employed, employed in a family business or employed in some other firm, organization or producers' cooperative.

Table 1. Distribution of manual workers by occupational group and sex, 1960 and 1963 (in per cent)

Employed in	Women		Men	
	1960	1963	1960	1963
Agriculture	50.7	42.8	35.1	29.1
Industry	22.1	25.8	26.3	29.9
Building trades	0.4	0.2	8.6	9.4
Other	26.8	31.2	30.0	31.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 2. Proportion of women in manual occupations, by occupational group

Occupational group	Women as percentage of occupational force		Number of women per 100 men	
	1960	1963	1960	1963
Agriculture	41.7	42.5	72	74
Industry	29.3	30.3	41	43
Building trades	2.1	1.2	2	1
Services	48.2	33.2	93	50
Commerce and catering	57.9		137	
Transport and communication	4.8		5	
Other	33.7		51	
Total	33.1	33.5	50	50

There is also a great difference among the age groups in the proportion of the total number of workers in a given occupational category. In industry, of the workers aged 20 to 24 years more than one third are women, while in the group aged 50 to 54 years only one fourth are women. In the service trades women make up 70 per cent of workers under 25 years of age, 50 per cent of those between 25 and 39 years of age, and only one third of those between 40 and 54 years of age. In commerce and catering, where women outnumber men (58 per cent), the proportion of women in the 20-24-year-old group is well above the average.

In 1960, as in earlier years, the number

of women was particularly high in the "traditional" female trades—the textile, clothing and food industries (Table 3). Of the gainfully employed women in industrial occupations, one in seven was a tailor, one in nine a weaver and preparer*, one in nineteen a spinner and one in twenty a worker in the food industry. Thirty-six per cent of the women employed in industry were working at one of these four trades. If we now add the number of those employed in other branches of the textile and clothing industry, hosiery-makers and industrial packers, almost half the women in industrial

* Twister, winder, warper, etc.

Table 3. Principal manual occupations of women, 1960

Occupation	Total number of persons employed	Women	
		number	percentage
Tailor, dressmaker, underwear-maker	69,616	47,542	68.3
Weaver, preparer	37,188	34,184	91.9
Spinner, preparer	17,402	15,943	91.6
Food-industry occupations	48,434	14,550	30.0
Other textile-industry occupations	13,567	12,280	90.5
Hosiery-maker	12,675	10,905	86.0
Industrial packer	12,758	10,776	84.5

occupations are accounted for. In these trades (except the food industry) both the number of women and their proportion of the occupational force is very high.

Since the national census of 1930 the number of female hosiery-makers and confectioners has increased eighteen times, that of weavers five times, that in the shoe industry nearly four times, while that of tailors only about 13 per cent. It is noteworthy that at present women are employed in several trades in which they were not all or only rarely employed in the past. For instance, since 1949 the number of woman metal turners increased more than forty times and that of welders and iron workers twelve times—though even so, they form but a small proportion of workers in these fields. In 1960, there were twenty times as many female millers, borers and precision-instrument makers as at the time of the previous census in 1956; in the case of the millers and borers they formed 23 per cent of the total number of workers, and among precision-instrument makers, 13 per cent.

Apart from those in industrial occupations, the majority of women work as saleswomen and managers of shops (51,000), cooks (14,000), and hairdressers and cosmeticians (11,000); their proportion among the total number of such workers is also considerable.

Eighteen per cent (nearly 240,000) of the

women with manual occupations work as cleaners, material conveyors, office-messengers, house-porters, unskilled labourers and the like, i.e., jobs for which no special skill is required. These are mostly older women, and their proportion in these jobs is considerably higher than in other occupational groups (industry, service occupations, etc.). Thus, while women over 40 years of age make up 32 per cent of the women employed in industrial and service occupations, they constitute nearly half of the women working as unskilled labourers.

PROFESSIONS AND WHITE-COLLAR OCCUPATIONS

In 1960, there were 360,000 female white-collar workers, of whom three fifths (58 per cent) were clerical workers and nearly one third had high-level positions or were professionally employed in the cultural and health spheres. A far smaller proportion of women is to be found in similar positions in the technical sphere (8 per cent) and in the top levels of public administration and economic management (1.5 per cent).

More than half of the total number of persons employed in the first two occupational groups, and 16 and 13 per cent, respectively, of those in the latter two groups, were women (Table 4).

Table 4. Distribution of white-collar workers by occupational group and sex, 1960 and 1963
(in per cent)

Employed in	Women		Men	
	1960	1963	1960	1963
High-level and professional positions in technical sphere	8.0	7.7	35.4	38.3
High-level and professional positions in cultural and health spheres	32.2	29.6	22.0	20.1
Leading positions in public administration and economic management	1.5	1.7	8.1	11.0
Clerical positions	58.3	61.0	34.5	30.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 5. Proportion of women in white-collar occupations, by occupational group

Occupational group	Women as percentage of occupational force		Number of women per 100 men	
	1960	1963	1960	1963
High-level and professional employees in the technical sphere	15.8	15.9	19	19
in the cultural and health sphere	54.6	57.8	120	137
in public administration and economic management	13.0	12.3	15	14
Clerical	58.2	65.0	139	186
Total	45.2	48.2	82	93

A higher ratio of women in non-manual occupations as compared to manual occupations is not found in all categories (Table 5). The number of women is far less in jobs for which a university education is required than in those white-collar jobs for which it is not. It is true that in all of the white-collar groups the number of women employees under 40 years of age is higher than

the number over 40, but this fact does not greatly alter the finding that, among the white-collar occupations, most women choose clerical work or some job in the field of public health (nurse, doctor's assistant, welfare worker, etc.).

The numerical majority of women can be found among accountants, stenographers and typists, teachers, cashiers, pay-roll

clerks, nurses, and kindergarten teachers. Nearly half of the women in white-collar occupations can be included in these groups, and in them the proportion of women is also, generally, very high (Table 6).

The proportion of women among draughtsmen and librarians is also high. In professional fields, in 1930, 14 per cent of the pharmacists and 9 per cent of the physicians were women, while in 1960, 50 per cent of the former and 21 per cent of the latter were women.

Little information is available on occupations of women in other countries. Data on some white-collar occupations in Great Britain (1951) and Sweden (1945) show that, as in Hungary at the time of the present survey, the proportion of women among nurses and teachers is very high. On the other hand, the proportion of women in the other white-collar occupations dealt with here—except librarian—is lower in Sweden and lower still in Great Britain than in Hungary (Table 7).

Table 6. Principal white-collar occupations of women, 1960

Occupation	Total number of persons employed	Women	
		Number	Percentage
Accountant	49,463	35,029	70.8
Stenographer, typist	26,189	26,070	99.5
General-school teacher (grades I-IV)	33,343	24,927	74.8
Cashier	22,449	18,521	82.5
General (grades V-VIII) and secondary-school teachers	35,523	16,709	47.0
Nurse	17,859	16,389	91.8
Pay-roll clerk	19,533	14,333	73.4
Kindergarten teacher	8,973	8,973	100.0

Table 7. Proportion of women in selected white-collar occupations in Hungary, Great Britain and Sweden

Occupation	Women as percentage of occupational force		
	Hungary (1960)	Great Britain (1951)	Sweden (1945)
Veterinary surgeon	2.6	7.5	...
University professor lecturer	19.9
Dentist	27.0	7.3	23.0
Pharmacist	50.3	19.0	30.0
Librarian	66.5	73.0	42.0
Designer	66.7	10.0	...
Physician	21.1	16.5	7.5
Legal professions	9.2	2.5	4.0
Chemist	36.2

Table 8. Age distributions of women in selected white-collar occupations, 1960
(in per cent)

Employed as	Under 40 years of age	40 years and above
Technician	99.3	0.7
Engineer	96.9	3.1
Laboratory assistant	92.1	7.9
Chemist	91.7	8.3
Draughtswoman	87.9	12.1
General-school teacher (grades I—IV)	72.0	28.0
Librarian	70.0	30.0
Nurse	69.2	30.8
General (grades V—VIII) and secondary-school teacher	68.2	31.8
Forewoman	53.7	46.3

Over and above the well-known fact that, now as in former years, women prefer office work among the white-collar occupations, a new trend towards occupations hitherto little sought after—such as technical professions—cannot be overlooked. The change that has taken place in this respect is characterized not so much by the present number as by the age distribution of women in the technical professions. In some professions the proportion of women under 40 years of age is well above the average for all occupations. Thus, for example, almost all female technicians and engineers and nine tenths of the chemists, laboratory assistants and draughtswomen are under the age of 40 (Table 8). It is interesting to compare the age distribution in the professions women have turned to recently with that in the occupations they entered formerly.

It appears from these facts that the nature of employment and the occupational pattern for women is not set either in manual or in non-manual occupations; these data reflect transition. During the past few years the number of women attending secondary schools and universities has grown to such an extent that a further increase in gainful employment and a wider distribution among the occupations must be anticipated.

Skilled labour

There are considerably fewer skilled workers among women than among men, and no major change has occurred in the past few years. In 1960, of persons who qualified as skilled labourers—by training and/or being certificated—only 16 per cent (200,000) were women.*

However, not quite three fourths (145,000) of the female skilled labourers were working; of the rest, about 5 per cent were pensioners and 23 per cent dependents (Table 9). There is also a smaller proportion of skilled labourers among women than among men. In the age group above 14, only one tenth of female manual workers and 9 per cent of all gainfully employed women are skilled, while one third of manually employed men and 31 per cent of all employed men represent skilled workers.

This phenomenon may be attributed to two fundamental causes. The first is related to the trend already noted: the rising level of education among women in recent years and, as is seen in the occupational pattern,

* Data on skilled labourers in this sense were for the first time elaborated in detail after the 1960 national census.

Table 9. Proportion of female skilled labourers by economic classification, 1960

Economic classification	Age distribution of skilled labourers, per cent	Skilled labourers among women aged 15 and over, per cent
Manual labour	64.6	10
White-collar workers	7.9	4
Total active earners	72.5	9
Pensioners	4.7	4
Dependents	22.8	2
Total	100.0	5

the preference of women with appropriate schooling for some intellectual occupation. Another reason for the low proportion of skilled persons among women is the fact that, historically, there were a number of trades for which manual workers were not specially trained, and among them were some that women are well able to enter. Capitalist practices did not provide for training of women in the traditional female trades, though their participation in production was required. Before the Second World War skilled workers were trained chiefly for jobs in heavy industry; in some of the characteristically female trades (spinning, weaving, etc.) the training of skilled workers has been realized only in the past few years.

Of those women who perform manual labour, the highest proportion of skilled workers is found in the service trades (61 per cent). Next are industry (29 per cent) and commerce and catering (24 per cent). Within these three groups, 58, 23 and 20 per cent, respectively, have training corresponding to the occupation.

There are no great differences among age groups in regard to the proportion of skilled workers; about 5 to 7 per cent of the total in each group have had training in one or another skill.

In spite of the fact that women now have had training in all sorts of skills, the distribution of skills has remained very much the

same. Of all who are skilled, 45 per cent are tailors and dressmakers, 6 per cent are hairdressers and 5 per cent are spinners—a total of 56 per cent—while another 8 per cent include milliners, cooks and stitchers. Yet the distribution among currently employed persons and dependents is completely different. For instance, 66 per cent of dependent women with some skill and 37 per cent of those currently employed are tailors, and 10 per cent of those in the former group and 12 per cent of those in the latter are qualified hairdressers or spinners.

This difference suggests that currently employed women more and more often have training in trades which were hitherto not entered by women, in addition to the traditional trades. However, the great number of the "non-traditional" trades has not yet changed in any basic way the pattern of skilled labour among women. An instance of this is that more than 12,000 women obtained skills in trades that are not at all suited to women, such as mining, metallurgy, machine tools, and other jobs in the iron and metal industry, also in the building trades and tractor-driving. One fifth of them became dependents, and a great part of the remaining four fifths, though they are gainfully employed, do not actually work at the job for which they were trained. Of the 9,600 gainfully employed women in this group, only 4,200 have continued with the

trade they learned. The proportion, however, varies from trade to trade. None of the deep-borers and lift mechanics, only one fifth of the smelters and 22 to 27 per cent of the hardeners, bricklayers, toolmakers, plumbers and gas-fitters have continued with their skill, but more than half of the women trained as rolling-mill operators, metal polishers, welders and metal engravers, grinders, smiths, electricians and house-painters still work in these trades.

There is also a difference in the age distribution of women with different skills. Women trained in the traditional trades are considerably older than the average. The proportion of those under 40 years of age is 45 per cent for tailors and dressmakers and 27 per cent for milliners, and of those between 40 and 54 years of age 42 and 55 per cent respectively. They are much younger in the trades for which the training of women did not take place on a large scale until a few years ago. Ninety per cent of the women trained as metal turners, mechanics and locksmiths and 83 per cent of the spinners are in the young, productive age group of under 40; the proportion of those who are 55 years of age and over is only about one per cent or even less.

In tabulating the proportion of skilled

female labourers by occupation, account has been taken only of those skilled in the jobs they actually occupy. Of the trades practised by a relatively large number of women, hairdressers, cosmeticians, photographers and bookbinders are the main ones in which training and present occupation correspond; the correspondance is lower among cooks and hosiery-makers (Table 10).

It is another matter whether women utilize in their practical work the skill they have acquired, i.e., whether they stick to the trade they have learned or choose another occupation, or become, perhaps, dependents. The situation is, in this respect, rather unsatisfactory in regard to the various skills, taken either singly or in the aggregate. Only 45 per cent of all women trained in some skill are actually working at the trade they have learned, and the spread between the individual skills is wide.

Disregarding those trades in which women have obtained skills but not in significant numbers or proportions, we can divide the skilled occupations into two groups.

The first includes those in which at least 50 per cent of the workers have continued with the skill they originally learned. The highest proportion of these is found among waiters, cooks, leather-workers, confection-

Table 10. Proportion of women with training corresponding to occupation, 1960

Occupation	Number of women employed (excluding apprentices)	Women with training corresponding to occupation	
		number	percentage
Hairdresser, cosmetician	8,267	6,587	79.7
Photographer	1,264	943	74.6
Bookbinder	2,386	1,536	64.4
Tailor, dressmaker, underwear-maker	42,822	26,368	61.6
Milliner	1,014	582	57.4
Mechanic	3,403	1,791	52.6
Stitcher	5,535	2,268	41.0
Weaver	15,596	5,574	35.7
Cook	13,870	3,207	23.1
Hosiery-maker	10,698	1,700	15.9

Table 11. Skills with a high proportion of occupational correspondence, 1960
(per cent of total in each skill)

Skills	Manual occupations		White-collar occupations	Pensioners	Dependents
	Trained in same skill	Pursuing another skill			
Waiter	65.1	17.6	5.2	2.0	10.1
Cook	63.2	13.6	1.5	12.3	9.4
Leather-worker	59.0	17.6	9.9	2.2	11.3
Confectioner	52.9	21.4	6.9	2.6	16.2
Weaver	52.7	22.5	5.5	3.2	16.1
Cosmetician	51.2	12.0	13.9	3.8	19.1

Table 12. Skills with a low proportion of occupational correspondence, 1960
(per cent of total in each skill)

Skills	Manual occupations		White-collar occupations	Pensioners	Dependents
	Trained in same skill	Pursuing another skill			
Tractor-driver	7.0	48.9	3.6	0.2	40.3
Milliner	11.0	35.8	15.1	8.3	29.8
Bricklayer	16.0	46.6	7.4	1.3	28.7
Typesetter	18.6	36.0	10.1	17.7	17.9
Locksmith	27.7	41.4	7.7	1.0	22.2
Metal turner	28.3	38.9	10.4	0.9	21.5
Furrier	28.9	28.1	10.8	7.1	25.1
Tailor, dressmaker, underwear-maker	29.2	21.4	10.0	6.0	33.4

Table 13. Proportion of women employed in jobs corresponding to their skills, in 1960
(in per cent)

Skilled as	Employed in corresponding job	Other occupation	Pensioners	Dependents
Waiter	65.1	22.8	2.0	10.1
Cook	63.2	15.1	12.3	9.4
Leather worker	59.0	27.5	2.2	11.3
Confectioner	52.9	28.3	2.6	16.2
Tailor, dressmaker	29.2	31.4	6.0	33.4
Typesetter	18.3	46.1	17.7	17.9
Bricklayer	16.0	54.0	1.3	28.7
Milliner	11.0	50.9	8.3	29.8
Tractor-driver	7.0	52.5	0.2	40.3

ers and cosmeticians (Table 11). However, it is to be noted that even among these skilled workers the proportion is high of women who have become white-collar workers or dependents or who are employed in manual occupation outside the one they learned. Thus, for instance, more than two fifths of the women trained as confectioners, weavers and cosmeticians, have become dependents or follow another occupation.

Among photographers, hairdressers and precision mechanics the proportion of women with skills corresponding to their occupations is also high (about one half of the wage-earning women).

In the other group of skilled occupations—and, among them, in the traditional female trades—the proportion of those whose occupations correspond to their skills is far

lower (Table 12). Thus, for instance, 7 per cent of the tractor-drivers, 11 per cent of the milliners and one fifth of the typesetters and bricklayers work in the trade they learned. This proportion is somewhat higher in the case of tailors, furriers, smiths and metal turners but still falls short of 30 per cent.

If—besides the ratios—the absolute figures relating to non-utilized skills is also examined, the result is unfavourable indeed. More than half (some 106,000) of all women trained in particular skills are included in the above-mentioned trades. In 1960, of women with similar skill 34,000 were dependents and 36,000 engaged in another manual or white-collar occupation.

At present, then, about 70,000 women have skills not being utilized, exclusive of pensioners and dependents.

ENRICO FULCHIGNONI

NATIONAL STEREOTYPES

Tensions between nations are not only the most important of all social tensions, they are also the most complex, since they are the highest superfunctional, and at the same time global, expression of the human group. In their present form, these tensions are symptomatic of the disappearance of an epoch during which peoples living at great distances could ignore each other and engage in autonomous psycho-social activity. The integration of these national groups into another, larger unity, is a result of two main factors: the development of technical means of communications and transportation, and the growing need to integrate individual national economies, which technical progress has made ever more interdependent. The national groups realize their integration into an organized whole is inevitable, but formulating a constructive plan to transform the existing structures presents so many dif-

ficulties that we can hardly say we are witnessing an effort in this direction, either by economists and political scientists, or by sociologists and psychologists. Or even the first steps in this direction...

The proof of these difficulties can be recognized in the daily succession of international tensions, whether they are caused by traditional misunderstandings or created artificially. In both cases, they follow in quick succession before our very eyes with never a pause.

These international tensions are paradoxical in that they seem to have the most artificial construction of all the psychosocial antitheses, because of a very limited psychological basis. Since they have such apparently limited individual psychological foundations it follows that they should be the easiest to overcome. But the truth is, in most cases, that they feed on false images

of other peoples, produced by an inventive activity which in itself is one of the most vulgar things in the history of civilization, and whose functional characteristics we must now analyse, in order to underline its emotive factors.

These collective images—or stereotypes—seem, by their very nature, destined to cause a radical deformation of the real character of each group in question. This traditional abuse of symbolic images and emotional mythology—which is evident, for example, in primary and secondary-school history books, as well as in the international news items of almost all the large newspapers—is one of the most serious problems in interhuman relationships.

Let us add right away that the development and spread of these structures in contemporary society is mostly due to the parallel development of two very different technical categories which, over the past few years, have progressed to a degree hitherto unknown in the history of social relations.

First of all, there are the mass media, with mechanical techniques such as radio, cinema, television, and their extraordinary, new and ambiguous powers of persuasion, which afford direct communication with most of the elements of the group.

The second category is the ensemble of psychological techniques—simplification, repetition, message conditioning, etc.—which were developed as more and more experience in propaganda techniques was gained and have found in mass media an excellent vehicle that has led to the weakening, and often the disappearance, of our critical capacity to distinguish the true from the false, the false from the apparent, and the apparent from the illusory.

A great deal of research has been carried out in the last few years on how mass media work, what kinds of groups can or have been influenced by them, and to what extent variations in attitudes can be attributed to them.

ORIGINS OF THE STEREOTYPE

The history of the various concepts which have prevailed regarding the stereotype has been given in many sociological and social psychology works. Let us mention in particular the long essay by Museser Sherif (1948) or the treatise on social psychology by Klineberg in its latest edition. The stereotype itself has also been analysed by Allan Edwards and especially by Schoenfeld. But here we are mainly interested in everything that has to do either directly or indirectly with the national stereotype, those "pictures on our heads" as Walter Lippmann defined them thirty years ago.

Our definition of the national stereotype is the following: the sum-total—for each group—of the beliefs that have been acquired by one people with respect to another, leaving aside for the moment the question of whether these opinions correspond either wholly or partially to the characteristics of said groups. We have to differentiate, in the first place, between collective stereotypes, belonging to the public in general, and individual stereotypes. The former, as we have seen, correspond to the zone of action of mass media—the cinema, press, radio and TV—whereas the second are dictated by the culture, opinion and judgment of each individual.

We are especially interested in the latter, which have been studied more often and with methods more in conformity with those usually employed in psychological research.

Here is one of the simplest and most widely used analytic methods: a list of qualifying adjectives is submitted to a group of subjects who are asked to underline the most characteristic traits of the social or national group in question. This is how the individual stereotype is established.

One of the first experiments of this kind was carried out in 1933 by Daniel Katz and Kenneth Braly on students of the University of Princeton. Out of 700 subjects, 78 mentioned the "scientific spirit" of the Germans,

70 designated the Italians with the adjective "artistic," 84 defined the Negroes as "lazy," 60 qualified the English as "sportsmen," the Jews as "clever," the Turks as "cruel," the Chinese as "patient." By regrouping into triads the qualifications of each national group we see that the Germans are defined as scientific-minded, diligent at work, excessively sentimental; the Italians are impulsive, thoughtless, passionate; the Negro is superstitious, lazy, dirty; the Englishman is fond of sports, intelligent and conformist; the Jew clever, a good businessman, diligent at work; as for the Americans, they are defined as materialistic, ambitious, with a high scientific development.

These answers are surprisingly constant throughout several Anglo-Saxon tests. Students from the University of Columbia, questioned six years later, in 1941, by Nathan Schoenfeld and Mayton, gave more or less the same answers, as did English university students questioned in 1948 by Brown.

Another completely different method is that of the "incomplete phrase," well known to any psychologist who has dealt with intelligence tests. In the sphere which interests us, research was carried out with school children from 12 to 16 years old in England, France and Germany.

The sentences to be completed were the following:

"What I admire in the Americans is their..."

"The trouble with Americans is..."

"When I think of America, I think of..."

"If you invite an American to your house you can..."

"America is a country in which..."

These sentences were to be completed in five different ways. It is interesting to note that all the English children associated America with the United States, without ever mentioning South America or Canada. In general their answers reveal a friendly attitude, while at the same time judging the American soldiers and the contrast be-

tween rich and poor very severely. All the children underline the material and technical characteristics of American civilization.

The French children sometimes differentiated between the two Americas, often mentioning Canada, so closely related to French history and culture, but like the English children they insist on the scientific superiority and the high standard of living in the United States. The young Germans differentiated clearly between North and South America. Their answers are also very different from those of the English or French children in that they lack critical judgment. They quote a precise fact, a historical event, a date. All of them, without exception, praise the American scientific superiority, and the economic and industrial potential of the country.

And so, if we look at the sentences completed by the three groups we get the impression that most of the judgments are not grossly deformed, even though each group analyses the country from a different perspective. From this I think we can draw the following important theoretical conclusion: that, given the judgment of a group A on a group B, we can, with due reserve, arrive at some sort of idea of group B; but we can most certainly arrive at a very well-founded judgment of group A, that is, of the group pronouncing the opinion.

This last reservation enables us to proceed immediately to a series of problems of great pedagogical value: the birth and development of national stereotypes in the life of the individual, the age at which they first appear, the comparison with adult stereotypes, etc. For the study of states of tension presupposes, in order to be complete, good knowledge of certain aspects of child psychology. Above all we must find out whether the intellectual and affective behaviour which characterizes the child's attitude toward his own country and his initial relations with other countries do not contain the germ of later errors and deviations.

GENETIC ORIGIN OF THE STEREOTYPE
IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Another important question is that of whether—and at what stage—the child, during its own development, manifests enough objectivity to be able to resist, later, those tension-creating factors that will influence him as an adolescent and adult. Research conducted in Geneva by Piaget and Anne-Marie Weil gives us a first group of very suggestive facts concerning the genesis of the idea of country.

This concept appears in the normal child relatively late. In order to arrive at an intellectual and affective consciousness of his country he must first be able to decentralize (with respect to his city, his region, etc.) and to coordinate, and it is through this considerable effort that he first becomes conscious of the existence of other countries different from his. This process is not surprising, since all mental activity is at the same time rational and affective; but in this case, the effort the child makes to raise himself to the level of the abstract idea of his own country (by detaching himself from a whole series of empirical situations in which he has been immersed from the age of 8 to 12 years) is such that at the same time it facilitates his objective relations with the concept of foreign country.

In other words, the best age for a child to learn to respect the national individuality of others is precisely between 8 and 12 years, during the passage from the egocentric to the reciprocal stage.

Most of the children analysed (about 250) were from the Canton of Geneva. To the question "What country are you from?" the youngest children answered without hesitating: "Geneva," or "Switzerland." When asked if they were not Swiss and how could they be at the same time Swiss and Genevois, the youngest couldn't give an answer.

Here is a typical example of the questions and answers at this stage. The subject, Matilda, was 6 years old.

"Have you ever heard of Switzerland?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"A canton."

"And what about Geneva?"

"It is a city."

"Where is it?"

"In Switzerland."

"And you, are you Swiss?"

"No, I am Genevoise."

Usually, until the age of 7-8, even though the child says Geneva belongs in Switzerland, he continues to think by juxtaposition; and if asked to illustrate the relationship between Geneva and Switzerland by using circles or polygons, he will draw a figure of juxtaposed unities, being incapable of expressing the relationship between the part and the whole.

But at a later stage, the concept of country becomes clearer and automatically the concept of reciprocity between all the other children belonging to various countries is born. At this second stage the concept of reciprocity appears free from any judgment of value.

To give a better idea of the value of this method I would like to quote the answers given by two little girls of 11 and 12 years, Arlette R. and Janine C.

Arlette R.

"If you had no nationality and you were free to choose any one you want, which one would you choose?"

"Swiss."

"Why?"

"Because I was born here and I come from here."

"All right. Who do you think are nicer, the French or the Swiss, or do you think they're both the same?"

"Oh, I think they're more or less the same. There are nice Swiss and very nice French. That doesn't depend on the country."

"Who is more intelligent, a Swiss or a Frenchman?"

"They both have qualities. The Swiss sing well, the French have great composers."

"If I asked a Frenchman to choose freely whichever nationality he wants, which do you think he would choose?"

"French."

"Why?"

"Because he was born there and France is his country."

"And to a French girl, who would seem nicer, a Frenchman or a Swiss?"

"I don't know, perhaps the French to her, but that's not sure."

"Which of you two would be right?"

"One can't tell. Each of us would be right from her point of view. Everyone has their own opinion."

Janine C.

"Which nationality would you choose?"

"I would choose Switzerland."

"Why?"

"Because it is my country and I love it."

"Who do you think are nicer, the Swiss or the French?"

"It's the same thing. France is bigger, so there are more people; but in Switzerland we also have scientists and professors."

"What would a French boy choose?"

"He would choose France."

"Why?"

"Because it's his country."

"For him, who would be more intelligent, the French or the Swiss?"

"It's difficult to guess. Perhaps he would say it's the same thing, or perhaps he would say it's the French because he would think there are more people in France to think."

"In the end, who would be right? Who answered best?"

"One can't say. That depends on each one's mentality. Everywhere there are all kinds of people, more intelligent and less intelligent, nice ones and bad ones."

To summarize these interesting observations of Piaget's, it seems that in the normal child, till 7-8 years, the preliminary elements indispensable to understanding the idea of country are missing. At this stage, the child has only a simple notion of the territory on which he lives, for example, the city; this notion includes certain characteristics known in a more or less immediate way (approximate size, dominating language, etc.) but intermingled with expressions such as region, or Switzerland, with no synthesis.

Among these verbal affirmations, acquired from parents and teachers, one of them finally imposes itself, towards the age of 5 or 6: Geneva is in Switzerland. Now we must find if this notion modifies the attitude of the subject.

During the second phase (from 7 to 11), the city is inserted in the country, that is, the drawing no longer represents a simple juxtaposition but a real synthesis in space. But this spatio-temporal synthesis still does not correspond to any inclusion in logical categories. The category of Genevois at this stage is fairly concrete, but that of Swiss remains distant and more abstract: "one cannot be Swiss and Genevois at the same time."

The country is still, at this stage, but an abstraction; only the family and the city count; the synthesis between these two affirmations does not reach the point of systematic coherence.

DURATION AND INTERNAL DYNAMISM OF THE STEREOTYPE

Let us examine now another important aspect of the stereotype: its length in time. The first researchers dealing with this phenomenon thought that, when a stereotype survives long enough, one could assume that it was at least partly true. If, on the other hand, the stereotype went through many variations, it would be licit to doubt its exactitude. Today, psychologists dealing

with this problem have modified their original point of view considerably, after studying individual reactions by means of audio-visual methods.

Persistence of a stereotype can simply mean that a particular conception, determined by certain historical or political conditions, remains the same, although it no longer corresponds to the actual situation.

We can perhaps establish a link between the modification of stereotypes and that of the real characteristics of the group in question. One of the best examples is the stereotype of the Chinese in the South of the U.S.A. and particularly California. In a book published in 1936, Bernard Srieke quotes a series of descriptive formulas applied to the Chinese during their presence in California. At the time when these emigrants were sought after for the meanest jobs, the press referred to them in enthusiastic terms as "the most dignified of our adopted citizens." They were considered to be thrifty, sober, sociable, inoffensive and respectful of the law. Then towards 1860, when the great industrial transformation of California came about, the other groups of emigrants—whites this time—flocked to the factories, in competition with the earlier emigrants. The stereotype immediately underwent a transformation: the Chinese became "inas-similable criminals," "dirty," "ignorant," "liars," "vicious."

When the overabundance of labour provoked the first strikes, the stereotype became more and more negative; during the general elections in 1867, the two big political parties—theoretically opposed on every issue—agreed on one slogan: "Protect California from Mongolian barbarism."

Had the characteristics of the Chinese really changed so much in twenty years?

The only possible explanation of such a radical inversion of the stereotype is the economic situation determined by the presence of antagonistic groups and the need to find a psychological justification for a new attitude.

But the most spectacular examples of the inversion of a stereotype are offered us by the cinema. In 1948 Siegfried Krakauer made for Unesco an analysis of the English and German characters in Hollywood films between 1933 and 1948. In general foreign groups as such rarely appear on the American screen. According to Krakauer, "Hollywood is so sensitive to any economic risk that it avoids almost instinctively touching anything which could lead to controversy." The English are rarely represented, because of an uneasy feeling on the part of Americans as regards the labour movement. Since 1945 several Hollywood films have presented the British stereotype characteristic of the pre-war period, which in an indirectly critical way expresses the most radical themes of labourite sociology. As for the Russians, the American screen has translated servilely the political fluctuations which dominated during the 15 years of Krakauer's investigation. Here too, there is no continuity, and a considerable and amazing difference between the films made during the war and after 1944.

I would like to quote two other interesting examples of the internal dynamism of the stereotype.

Professor Ragran made the following experiment:

Thirty photographs of young women were shown to a group of students, who were asked to classify each one from 1 to 5 according to the general impression, the degree of beauty, intelligence, initiative, etc. Two months later the same pictures were shown to the same group of students, but this time the photographs bore the family name of each girl, some of which were Jewish like Rabinovitch, Levi, Rubinstein; Italian like Scarano, Grisolin; Irish like O'Flaherty; and, finally, some which were typical of the oldest settlers, such as Adams or Clark. The results changed immediately; the new ratings were completely different from those given to the anonymous faces. This experiment

shows not only the influence of the stereotype on personal judgment, but also that they can affect the very limits of perception.

Allport and Postman of Harvard University did excellent research on the psychology of oral transmission, using the picture method. One of the drawings used showed a scene in the subway; among a group of people seated, there are two men standing, one white and one black. The white man, dressed like a worker, has an open razor at his belt. Now it is evident that in the U.S. the stereotype of the Negro often includes a razor, which he wouldn't hesitate to use during a fight (somewhat like the knife belonging to the stereotype of the Sicilian in many countries). In half of the answers, the razor went from the white man to the black man before the end of the oral transmission. In some, the Negro threatened the white man with the razor.

This does not mean that half of the subjects who participated in the experiment "saw" the Negro brandish the weapon; it is enough for one subject to commit the error for it to be transmitted from there on. But the frequency of errors is enough to prove how strongly a collective image can directly or indirectly deform even things perceived. But if, in this last case, there is always a minimum of psychological justification, other observations show that this minimum can be absolutely lacking and the stereotype created out of total absurdity.

Here is an example: a dozen psychologists working under Stanley Althom submitted to a group of students from various countries a list of several peoples, asking them to indicate, alongside each one, the degree

of sympathy or antipathy they felt toward them. The list is very long and towards the middle there are three names of peoples which do not exist: the Daners, the Pyrenics, and the Vallonics.

The results are constant: very few students refrain from giving any opinion on the imaginary peoples, but the great majority unhesitatingly declare their sympathy or their hatred for peoples which are no more real than the inhabitants of Lilliput or Mars.

The experiments we have reviewed rapidly show the variety of methods applicable to the study of the existence and phenomenology of the stereotype.

Here, as in other fields of psychology, it is necessary to analyse the same subject with different methods in order to be certain that the results obtained do not depend on the techniques employed.

If the stereotype really represents a fundamental psycho-social attitude toward other groups, it should retain its characteristics whichever methods are used. In these experiments one must also compare the individual stereotype with that resulting from analysis of the products of mass media. A concurrence of the two types of stereotypes will not show which of the two is responsible for the other, since it is now proven that mass media can reflect individual stereotypes (such as the case of the press) or the other way round (of which the cinema offers many examples).

It is therefore probable that the two stereotypes act upon each other, whence the great psycho-social interest in revealing certain causes of this phenomenon, and using every occasion to analyse its genetic process.

SZÉCHENYI AND ENGLAND

1. *Captain of the Hussars*

"He put his finger on the artery of the age and understood its throbbing. That is why I consider him the greatest Hungarian... Count Széchenyi was inspired at the right moment by the demands of the age. He became the spokesman for his age; he gave voice to the thoughts and ideas of the best men of the nation. And therein lies the secret of his influence," said Lajos Kossuth of Széchenyi in 1842, and not even a historian of today could more aptly express the national, in fact to a certain extent international, significance of the activities and achievements of Széchenyi. Public opinion in Hungary has always paid tribute to the memory of Széchenyi but beyond the frontiers of this country, his name fell into oblivion after his death. While Lajos Kossuth's name has always been identified with the period of the Hungarian War of Independence, Széchenyi's name is not known in the England of today, though it was the development and the achievements of contemporary England which he set as an example to his compatriots.

It is therefore worth-while to examine in what light our age sees Széchenyi who, in the first half of the 19th century, before the industrial revolution in Hungary, wanted to develop his country following the example of England, the most highly developed capitalist country, and to see how this example manifested itself through Széchenyi's activity. Széchenyi's foreign experience undoubtedly was a decisive factor in his awareness of the backwardness of his country, and this experience assumed an important role in his detailed and systematically elaborated reform system.

Széchenyi was not a cosmopolite, in fact, he often relentlessly castigated his fellow-magnates for worshipping foreign lands and

for becoming estranged from their nation. He also noticed the faults of the social structure of the Western bourgeoisie, but at the same time he did not fail to see that these countries, in the course of their own bourgeois transformation had gained valuable experience, the adaptation of which to Hungarian conditions might greatly ease the way to the Hungarian bourgeois transformation. Széchenyi wanted to utilize England's political, economic and technical experience; this experience enabled him not to be at a loss when faced with the realities of his country and helped him to find for the first time the remedy for the mortal illness of the feudal system, the symptoms of which had been increasing in Hungary.

István Széchenyi was born in Vienna in 1791. In the paternal home he received the standard education of the magnates, the level of which was low from both the national and the general point of view. From 1808 onwards he served in the army; he took part in the battle of Leipzig which settled Napoleon's fate. In 1815 we find him in the vortex of the Vienna Congress, then—because he was mostly on leave—he travelled extensively in Italy, England and the Near East. At the same time he wanted to acquaint himself better with the people of his own country and their troubles. Sympathizing with the Hungarian feudal resistance of 1822–23, which opposed the Vienna government intent on taking measures without the authorization of Parliament, Széchenyi levelled scathing criticism not only at the Austrian government, but also at the obsolete Hungarian constitution. He saw that the Hungarian noblemen, while crying for freedom, exploited the peasants and refused to pay taxes. "The defence of this anti-liberal government is not a noble thing," he wrote at the time, "for 400,000 persons are involved who are asserting their privileges

in the face of ten million people about whom nothing is said in Parliament." Two years later, in September 1825, after an interval of thirteen years, the Vienna government recalled Parliament, in an event characterized by Hungarian historians as the first milestone on the road towards the full unfolding of the national movement. At the session of the Upper House of the Hungarian Diet on October 12, 1825, an unusual event took place: a magnate, wearing the uniform of a Captain of the Hussars, took the side of the opposition motion of the Lower House and what was in fact still more surprising, he did not speak in the official Latin but in Hungarian. No speech in Hungarian had been delivered for centuries perhaps in that House, and those who witnessed the scene rightly regarded it as the beginning of a new era. At a session of the Lower House a few weeks later, the same young captain, István Széchenyi, on November 3, interrupted the debates on promoting national education and the Hungarian language by delivering a brief speech in plain language in which he offered one year's income of his estates for the purpose of establishing a scientific society. The offer was worth 60,000 forints and the members of the Diet soon felt so enthusiastic about it that by the end of the session a gift of 250,000 forints had been pooled, and a special Act and the draft statutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences assuring its speedy establishment had been adopted. The initiative was of real historical significance because it gave rise to a great many ideas, plans and actions.

2. *The Reformer*

But 1825 was also a milestone from the point of view of Széchenyi's individual development. It was then that he definitely decided to devote his life to his country. The experiences of his earlier and more recent travels were consolidated in him, and together with the rich erudition he derived

from much reading he formed in his mind a practical programme meant not only for the present but also for the future. Széchenyi soon realized that a Parliament can be nothing more than the political system of the society represented by it, and that consequently society itself must be changed. The first step to achieve this is to get people together and to induce primarily those who owing to their financial and social status can afford it to make contributions towards the public weal. Széchenyi destined the "Casino" to be a centre like this, and he recruited hundreds of nobles as its members. The propagation of horse-racing also served this purpose. This was a favourite idea of Széchenyi's. He had already organized horse-races in Vienna and Pozsony in 1826 and a year later also in Pest. In the same year he wrote a small book, entitled "On Horses," in which he exhorted his compatriots to breed horses for their profit. This determination of his gave birth in 1830 to the Hungarian Society of Stock-breeders.

By that time Széchenyi had already been in England with his friend Miklós Wesselényi on two occasions, in 1815 and 1822-1823. The three months' stay in England in 1815 marked a very important period in Széchenyi's life. He spent most of his time there studying. He read English books on economy, technology and horse-breeding; he read plays and delved deep into the study of Shakespeare's works; he frequented Drury Lane and Covent Garden. Often he was a guest of English high society at their soirées, and received invitations from Lord Sligo's, Sheldon's and Belford's; he inspected their estates, and was often invited to the opposition parlour of Lady Holland. The politicians who turned up there appealed to him the most. He made the acquaintance of the most famous manufacturers and engineers in England (Baader, Brunel, Accum). He inspected many factories, studied the machines together with mechanics for three hours every day and received theoretical instruction from English engineers. He saw and made notes

of many practical things which struck him, e.g., chimneys that turn with the wind, doors that open inward and outward or close by themselves, gas lighting, square or round casseroles in which bread can be baked to a specific shape, water closets. As to gas, the idea struck him whether it might not be possible to compress it into bottles like air. Indeed, despite the strictest prohibition, he succeeded in smuggling out of England a 'gas-light machine.' During both of his stays in London, he frequented the Newmarket races; it was then that he laid down, on the basis of practice, experience and of English books, the foundations of his knowledge of horse-breeding. He had already noted down in his diary at that time that he considered the introduction of horse-racing to Hungary as very important. From what he wrote at the time of the establishment of the National "Casino" and of the organization of horse-races in Hungary it is plain that all this only served the purpose of enticing fellow-aristocrats away from Vienna and of dissuading them from winning money from each other in Austria and on English horses. The further aim, for which the "Casino" in winter and horse-racing in summer seemed suitable, was the formation of a great political club in which all the important questions of his country could be discussed. As we may read in a report of 1827: "They want here the order, cleanliness and politeness which can be found in English clubs. . . . Széchenyi can usually win over everybody and he wants to turn Hungary into a second England."

Nothing was farther from Széchenyi than that. As far back as 1815, when he confessed in his diary that he "all but fully agrees with the way of life, morals, and habits of this free country," he added that to imitate the English in loving their country was the clumsiest thing we could do. In fact, the more deeply he delved into the study of English political and economic life, the more definitely was his opinion crystallized that it was necessary to compare the internal struc-

ture and transformation of the two states and that it was very good to follow the example of "England and America in many things. . . . Let us also establish Kindergartens, national monuments, efficient prisons and societies for propagating useful knowledge, but let us do all this—and that is the gist of the matter—only when we have already attained the level of the English and the Americans; today let us do no more than they did when they were at the same stage of national development as we are today."

3. "*The only practical Hungarian*"

Széchenyi undoubtedly became a politician as a result of his first two trips to England. He found there many things which did not meet with his approval and which he did not wish to transplant to Hungary. During his trip there Széchenyi became familiar with the English electoral movement, the English reform movement in which the workers were already having their say. He was shocked at the workers' riots, and at the factory districts of the Black Country, and all this deterred him somewhat and made him doubt "whether anything good for mankind can come from the workshops of Vulcanus." He saw the working masses move about in the factories like mites in cheese. Széchenyi recognized industry as the most important factor of England's prosperity, yet he was opposed to transplanting it to Hungary. He was of the opinion that only England was capable of bearing the evil consequences of industrialism, riots, utter poverty and degradation, but it would ruin Hungary. To make use of the products of large-scale industry but not to introduce it to Hungary remained Széchenyi's basic principle for a long time. When the English Chartists brought about their first organized movement, it nonplussed Széchenyi and made him almost hostile to the movement. The magnate who was so enthusiastic about progress and who was a true friend of the

common people, called the Chartists fighting for their rights a mob, because he did not want them to come to power. He wished to adopt many things from England but to avoid an electoral crisis—that is, Széchenyi did not go to the full length of accepting the workers, although he did accept England's institutions, her Constitution and public spirit. He debarred the workers from his political and economic reform ideas. At the same time he criticized and condemned the anti-social attitude of many families of the English nobility. "Some peers," he wrote on the occasion of one of his trips to England, "treat others as one would treat a dog."

He was scandalized at constitutional England's subduing free peoples. This did not fit in with the idealistic picture he formed of England in the 30's. For what Széchenyi said in general of constitution and freedom he had concluded from his experience in bourgeois circles and in the families of the peers.

According to Széchenyi's concept, the slogan of freedom comprised the security of every individual, of his honour and property, irrespective of rank, religion or fortune. To raise his nation materially and spiritually without divesting it of its national characteristics; to secure it an honourable place in the family of the European nations through welfare and culture—that is what he regarded as his primary and most important task. He held the principle of evolution, and this principle he saw embodied in English life and the English Constitution. Széchenyi rejected the idea of the French revolution and objected to trouble-makers and instigators. He wanted to achieve the transformation of society and public life by improvements, useful inventions and by laws that protect the poor and the rich alike. The means he favoured were partly material and economic, partly intellectual—i.e., an enlightenment that would educate Man to positive happiness, good working conditions and sound morals. He respected the English Constitution also because he liked its public

character: the public, according to him, is alone able to expose usurping authority and to bring hidden talents to light. He held the view that "people do not deserve to be misled by cunning along treacherous ways and to be kept in darkness." This Hungarian magnate, endowed with practical sense yet possessing a certain political idealism, full of formative zeal and wishing to satisfy the demands of the age in his country, may perhaps be compared to Henry Brougham, whose acquaintance he made while in England. This Whig lord's views on the raising of the "lower classes" and his work entitled "Practical Observations upon the Education of the People" influenced Széchenyi considerably, an influence which was enhanced by the fact that the English "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," sponsored by Brougham, elected Széchenyi as its corresponding member. The raising and education of the masses by the enlightened higher aristocracy, and the dissemination of "useful knowledge" as free as possible of politics, concurred to such an extent with Széchenyi's ideas that he even expected that Lajos Kossuth's newspaper, the *Pesti Hírlap*, appearing from 1841 onwards, should spread useful knowledge which the country badly needed.

At that time Széchenyi was already a well-known figure in leading political quarters. Sir Robert Gordon, the British Minister in Vienna, after having known Széchenyi for a long time, said to him: "*Sie sind der einzige praktische Mensch in Ungarn.*" The majordomo of the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg spoke for many others when he declared: "*Nous respectons la Hongrie en vous.*" And the fact that at the time of the Hungarian revolution and the War of Independence interest in the Hungarian cause was so keen can only be accounted for by Széchenyi's having, maybe involuntarily, played a part in arousing international interest. Travellers and writers visiting Hungary spoke in appreciative terms of the outstanding services Széchenyi rendered to his country. Southey, in the *Quarterly*

Review, praised him on the grounds of being personally acquainted with him, emphasizing his great patriotism and his clear reform plan. The *Edinburgh Review* said of him in 1835 that he surpassed his fellow-aristocrats in everything. Turnbull, in his widely-read book entitled "Austria," named him an enlightened and patriotic statesman. Many such examples could be quoted. However, it is improbable that his contemporary admirers could have entirely appreciated the well-thought-out, modern features of his reform concept, its perspicacity, thoroughness and foresight in preparing and establishing the public institutions which he had created.

4. *The Political Writer*

What made Széchenyi's name known both in Hungary and abroad, apart from his early works, were his three important books written in 1830-32, "Credit" (*Hitel*), "Light" (*Világ*) and "Stadium" (*Stadium*). The first was the basis, the backbone and the starting-point of Széchenyi's entire reform system. Emphasizing only one of the problems of transformation, namely the lack of credit, he here went to the heart of the cause of the Hungarian bourgeois reform and started a chain of ideas which in the long run inevitably lead to the liquidation of other basic institutions of feudalism. In "Credit" he already refers—as a more distant wish—to the right of general and proportionate sharing of nobles in taxation, and the warning—based on English example—"of what would result from the general application of the Constitution to every inhabitant of the country." He recommends that the ruling class, even if it involved temporary sacrifices, should voluntarily effect what other people were forced to achieve only through revolutions. (Otherwise, the influence of Bentham can be felt strongly in "Credit," in fact in the second part of the chapter entitled "What to do," Széchenyi repeated

entire pages of Bentham's book on the "Changeableness of the Laws."

The reception of "Credit" surpassed all Széchenyi's expectations. Though he had expected that his fellow-aristocrats would attack him for his work, the surprising effect it exerted on a part of the landed gentry, the intellectuals and especially on the youth, filled him with joy. One of the accusations against him was that the peasants were having "Credit" read out to them and that under its influence they would get into a revolutionary mood. A great many people read "Credit" and soon after its appearance new editions had to be printed. It was during the period between the publishing of "Credit" and "Stadium" that the great cholera epidemic raged in Hungary, imported from India via Russia in the first half of 1831. The primitive and inadequate sanitary measures could not curb it. It was among the population of the north-eastern counties stricken by the epidemic that one of the greatest and most sanguinary peasant uprisings in Hungary broke out in the summer of 1831. There was no way of stifling it except by deploying military forces. This gory warning brought home the need for social reform to an increasing number of nobles. Széchenyi was afflicted on seeing the havoc wrought by the epidemic, but he also saw something useful in the catastrophe. "The cholera will have good consequences as well," he wrote in one of his letters at that time, "for it is impossible that the urge to improve things at last should not have awakened in many people. . . . The old Constitution is shaking and cracking so loudly that it is impossible for the deafest rabid reactionaries and conservatives not to hear it. . . . And if, at the cost of 300,000 or 400,000 human lives, we could pay the price of marking out the way for the Spirit of the Age and liberate all the inhabitants of this country, I for one would call it a bargain."

In "Stadium" which he began writing immediately after the crushing of the peasant uprising, Széchenyi outlined his en-

tire reform system more definitely—maybe under the influence of the tragic event. "To give civic status to all the inhabitants of Hunnia is what in this year of 1832 I consider, according to my full conviction, not only premature but almost 'postmature'," he wrote in "Stadium," and it is impossible to ignore here the influence which the English Reform Act of 1832 must have exerted on Széchenyi. In "Stadium" he summed up a series of proposed laws in 12 points, including free land exempt from entailment—land that could be sold, bought and handed down; free landed property of the peasant; full equality before the law; first steps towards a general and proportionate sharing of taxation; removal of obstacles to free industry and trade; open trials and public meetings of the legislative bodies. Kossuth's programme and the Revolution of 1848 went way beyond these demands, but, taking it all in all, it was from the reform ideas expounded in these three works of Széchenyi's that the progressive opposition party and a fuller, more radical reform programme were born.

5. *The Danube Scheme*

But Széchenyi did not break away from practical work either, even in the years of his creative activity. In the summer of 1830, he set off downstream on board a boat designed by himself in order to start on the Danube improvement scheme. At the same time he joined the movement to establish a permanent Hungarian theatre in Pest, and he also fought for the realization of his favourite idea, a permanent bridge connecting Pest with Buda. He set up the Bridge Society in February 1832. As he explained later: "The construction of this bridge would be a moral asset rather than a technical one. . . . There is not one object on which so many desires are concentrated as on the building of this bridge, which would unite for ever the sister cities of this country. . . . Every inhabitant

of Budapest desires this, every citizen of Hungary who looks farther than tomorrow or the day after tomorrow; that is what the present era expects, and the Spirit of the Age will not tolerate that the heart of this country should be separated by a big river." In August 1832 he left for England in the company of Count György Andrassy in order to collect practical information for the construction of the bridge. They made a detailed and professional report on the results of the trip which they submitted early in 1833. This report was the first real attack against the privileges of the nobility whom its authors wanted to oblige to pay bridge toll. (The future of the bridge was settled in Parliament. Act 26/1836 turned Széchenyi's dream into reality, though the contract with those financing the construction of the Suspension Bridge was made only early in 1839.) In the first half of the 19th century there was scarcely a more interesting technical publication in Hungarian than this report by Andrassy and Széchenyi on the experience gained in England in 1833. The questions Széchenyi put to the well-known English engineers about a permanent bridge proved that his technical knowledge was far above that of a mere amateur and that the remark of a Hungarian historian was quite correct when he said: "If he had been born in England, instead of being a Hungarian aristocrat, he would probably have become one of the greatest mechanical engineers of his age."

In 1833 the King appointed Széchenyi royal commissioner to the river improvement project on the Lower Danube. For years this great undertaking stood in the centre of his interest. With Pál Vásárhelyi, who worked out the plans, he left for England again in 1834 to study rock blasting in the river-bed and to order new steamships and machines. Széchenyi would like to have placed a lot of stocks of the Danubian Steamship Company in London. Sir James Graham, a member of the Cabinet, in a conversation with Széchenyi on March 15, 1834, assured him that the un-

dertaking would be promoted. Later on Széchenyi wrote in his diary: "The Russians are behind us because they believe that our Company will harm England. The English are behind us because they think that we shall be in the Russians' way." Széchenyi was convinced that if he went about the matter cleverly he could attain his purpose. Indeed, the British subscribed many stocks at his invitation. It was then that Széchenyi got acquainted with Macaulay and Southey. He attended one of the sessions of the House of Commons, and found Peel maudlin, but William Cobbett, the English patriot also respected by Karl Marx, appealed to him. By the summer of that year the rocks had already been blasted in the Lower Danube, and in the autumn of 1834 the first ship passed over the partly cleared river-bed. Experts in the whole of Europe turned their attention to this scheme. An English traveller wrote in his book that it reminded him of the great undertakings of the ancient Romans.

Széchenyi's creative spirit found endlessly new tasks: until the 1840's he played a major role in the foundation of the Sopron Steam Mill and the Budapest Rolling Mill. Széchenyi saw a steam mill for the first time in his life in Birmingham and when he made contact with the Sopron Steam Mill in 1835 he recommended the methods he had learned in Birmingham. Time and again the Hungarian counties, towns, "casinos" and societies testified to his increasing popularity by giving him the freedom of towns and by electing him an honorary magistrate, and writers and poets vied in immortalizing his merits.

6. Széchenyi and Kossuth

However, the 1840's turned Széchenyi against the other great Hungarian, Lajos Kossuth. Kossuth's daily newspaper, entitled the *Pesti Hírlap*, started in January 1841. Széchenyi considered the trend of this paper to be dangerous and likely to strain the dif-

ferences between the social classes, to incite the peasants against the landowners, particularly the large estate owners, and to push Hungary towards an internal revolution. By word of mouth and in writing Széchenyi fought against Kossuth and the nationalist Hungarian trend opposed to Vienna. As early as 1843 his articles began to appear regularly in the periodical called *Jelenkor*; in them he consistently repeated that the policy of Kossuth and the opposition was going to lead to a bloody clash with Vienna and the nationalities and in this way the Hungarian people would be pushed to the brink of disaster. This, indeed, was the struggle of two principles, that of evolution as opposed to revolution. Széchenyi saw the principle of evolution embodied in England's life and Constitution, while Kossuth was inspired by the French revolution. Kossuth, while seeking to change internal conditions by employing democratic principles, wished to change external ones by breaking away from Austria and thus gaining full independence. Széchenyi deemed it his primary task to change society and public life; he sought to safeguard agricultural interests and was all for free trade. Kossuth's aim was to create a bourgeoisie of artisans and tradespeople such as, in the West, assured the independence and prosperity of their countries. This was impossible without restricting imports of foreign, especially Austrian, manufactured articles, and any restriction would only lead to a clash with Austria. Széchenyi did not want that. Kossuth, especially after 1846, set himself the aim of immediately liberating the peasants and of abolishing the prerogatives of the nobility, above all their exemption from taxation. This was also Széchenyi's aim, but he only wanted to achieve this gradually. He was of the opinion that first of all the large stratum of the nobility had to be educated, and only afterwards the peasants. In short: this was the struggle of liberalism against radicalism. However, as a present-day critic of Széchenyi's works emphasizes, in the course of the years there was not only a

struggle between these two great men and trends represented by them. "There were questions on which they agreed, there were times when they naturally advanced side by side, for they had similar aims, even if Kossuth wanted to go farther and more quickly than his opponent." * The antagonism, the struggle between Széchenyi and Kossuth did not cease; in fact it came to a head in 1847. And though Széchenyi continued his creative activity—in 1845 he agitated in favour of the Danube-Tisza Canal, the Pest harbour and the regulation of the Tisza river (to which he largely devoted himself until 1847)—the passionate political struggle became more and more dominant in his life. In his pamphlet "Fragments of a Political Programme" he attacked Kossuth more fiercely than ever, accused him of inciting the peasants, and branded his entire political role as dangerous. However, he could shake Kossuth's authority only temporarily, so that in early 1848, in the atmosphere of the political revolutions, Kossuth could already take charge of the decisive attack as leader of the opposition against the feudal institutions and against the dependence on Vienna. In March 1848 Széchenyi still dreaded a sanguinary revolution and the subsequent collapse so much that he wanted to fight against it with might and main—in the service of the Vienna Court. However, when instead of an armed clash the Hungarian opposition movement attained civic freedom, Széchenyi was gratified, for it was only the concern he felt for his beloved people that had made him resist Kossuth and the opposition. So, in the first responsible Hungarian Ministry he accepted the post of Minister of Transport and Public Works in April 1848. As a man of action he tried with tremendous energy, from the very first weeks

of his office, to raise funds, to start large-scale railway construction, and speed up the work of the great plants in Pest, etc. However, with his frail nerves he kept on worrying during nights haunted by bugbears, about what was going to happen if the Vienna reactionaries started to undermine the March achievements of Free Hungary. The author of a recently published and well written work, using new sources, describes in the most varied way the Széchenyi of 1848 who approached the revolution at this turning-point of his life and career, and who found himself between the gigantic millstones of conflicting historical forces. * And while Kossuth, realizing more and more clearly that Vienna was only seeking subterfuges for an armed intervention, urged the organization of self-defence, Széchenyi was convinced that the excesses of the Revolution had led to the sanguinary plot, and with caustic self-accusation he blamed himself in the belief that it was his own reform activity which paved the way to the revolution that ended in national tragedy. Darkness descended on Széchenyi's mind, and after he had made a futile attempt at suicide his family doctor escorted him to the Mental Asylum at Döbling near Vienna, where he was a patient for ten years. The cloud over his mind that oppressed him in the first years of his stay there slowly cleared away. Those who visited him in 1856 said that he was wholly sane and sound. Though he refused to abandon the asylum, little by little he showed a new interest in politics, subscribed to newspapers (he read the *Times* and the *Chronicle* systematically and liked *Punch* very much), and also learned the details about the policy of oppression of the Vienna government.

By 1857 he had already put pen to page to pass sentence on the Hungarian policy of Alexander Bach, the hated Minister of the Interior of Emperor Francis Joseph.

* *Széchenyi István válogatott írásai*, "The Selected Writings of István Széchenyi," with an introduction by István Barta, Budapest, 1959.—The passages on Széchenyi's life, his activities in Hungary and his life-work are largely based on this work.

* György Spira: *1848 Széchenyije és Széchenyi 1848-a* ("The Széchenyi of 1848 and the 1848 of Széchenyi"), Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1964, p. 369.

7. *The Great Hungarian Satire*

First he wrote torrents of ideas and scathing political satires, but only for himself. This bundle of manuscripts entitled "Great Hungarian Satire" (published in 1921) was in fact a reply to Bach's book boasting of his "achievements." Early in 1859, in a book entitled *Blick auf den Anonymen Rückblick*, Széchenyi answered Bach with arguments borrowed from his "Satire," putting Bach's system in the pillory and demonstrating that oppression, dissatisfaction and misery followed in the wake of those "achievements." This highly literary work of Széchenyi's, exposing the Bach system with a most scathing satire, was published in England with the aid of the Marchioness of Stafford (the later Duchess of Sutherland), Széchenyi's son, Béla, having taken the manuscript to London. It was the same Hungarophile Duchess who undertook to forward to Lord Palmerston a memorandum of Széchenyi's in which—in the interest of European peace—he requested that Hungary's rightful claims should be satisfied. In 1859 Széchenyi's letters appeared in the *Times* under the pen-name of Ignotus. In them he tried to inform the then strongly anti-Austrian and pro-Kossuth public opinion in England of the situation in Hungary, though he also took into consideration the official English political attitude which sought to maintain Austria's status as a great power. While Kossuth had great success at public meetings in London and other English cities in the spring of 1859, Széchenyi tried to win the benevolence of English statesmen in a less spectacular way. The *Times* strongly ventilated the question of Austria's troubled financial situation. British statesmen began to question Apponyi, the

Austro-Hungarian Minister in London, about Hungary in a condescending tone. On one occasion Lord Clarendon asked him why Francis Joseph hesitated in restituting Hungary's ancient constitution. Lord Russell and the Prince Consort themselves had information given to them through Apponyi (who supposedly had to be briefed himself on the situation in Hungary by Széchenyi's writings) on Hungarian affairs and the details of Austria's policy of oppression. So Széchenyi's "Blick," his writings and his letters appeared at a time when the Bach system was facing total bankruptcy in its domestic policy and full isolation as a result of its foreign policy. Disaster set in in the summer of 1859. The Austrian troops suffered a crushing defeat in Italy. Austria lost its Italian provinces. (Incidentally, this corresponded to Palmerston's policy of the last ten years or so, namely, that Austria should remain a great power but would have to renounce its Italian provinces.)

As a political consequence of the defeat, Bach was dismissed and Hungary was again in ferment. By then Széchenyi had been again in the centre of animated political life: he often came into contact with politicians, carried on correspondence and wrote memoirs and pamphlets in which he elaborated the ways and means of a solution. However, the tragedy was approaching.

A police search for the author of "Blick" led to the Mental Asylum at Döbling. On March 13, 1860, a house search was held in Széchenyi's apartment, where his writings were confiscated and he himself was threatened. As a consequence of the harrassments and after a few weeks' brooding and self-mortification, he took his own life. In the night of April 7, 1860, he blew his brains out.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

BUDAPEST INTERVIEW WITH ROGER GARAUDY

Roger Garaudy last year spent four days in Budapest, where he delivered a lecture and met leading personalities of Hungarian letters and art. This interview with him by the poet György Timár was published in the weekly *Élet és Irodalom* (*Life and Literature*), November 1966, No. 39. Garaudy says:

My book *Réalisme sans rivage* ("Shoreless Realism") has been translated into fourteen languages. In all fourteen, it has been attacked heatedly, mainly because the majority of my critics misunderstood the expression "sans rivage" and interpreted it as "without principles." For this reason I omitted from the new enlarged French edition of my book, which is just leaving the press, the earlier polemic postscript, and replaced it with a new, more systematic review. The text of this makes it obvious that my "shorelessness" is in fact a theory that rests on firm principles. Incidentally, Hungarian readers will also be able to acquaint themselves with these explanations since they will be published in the November issue of the Budapest periodical *Kritika*.

Q.: How did you conceive the necessity of a new view on realism? What did you consider the weaknesses of earlier views?

A.: The point of departure of my investigations was not aesthetics. I originally sought general arguments against dogmatism. I considered that the dogmatic inter-

pretation of Marxism was inclined to view history as something pre-ordained, ready-made, almost prescribed, although Marx, of course, in emphasizing historical determinism, did not tire in stressing the tremendous importance of human activity. In his "What is to be done?" Lenin too called our attention to the role of the subjective moment. This was how I realized that artistic creation was not a luxury that was tolerated within the stream of a pre-determined fate but a part of the subjective formative activity just mentioned; in this context, I also discovered that our theory of reflection contained a goodly share of mechanical elements. The problems of realism did not become important and interesting for me in themselves, but as part of the theory of reflection. In the course of our investigations we must set out from the Marxian concept of *the real*, and this concept does not denote something that is given once and for all, but a thing that is changing constantly. Only the French philosophers of the eighteenth century were of a different belief, and their errors still haunt us here and there. Marx showed that *the real* in our consciousness is reflection and creation at the same time. In other words, in my view, dialectical materialism is a conception of the world that makes the elaboration of the methodology of the historical initiative possible.

Q.: The Hungarian writer Lajos Mester-

házi also argued with your studies on the arts, which have become famous. He explained in his "Play and Magic" that you "were unable to resolve the erroneous dogmatic contradiction because you did not dare to declare that the non-realistic does not equal the non-artistic, decadent, or decayed." According to Mesterházi and others, Kafka and Picasso occupy an important place in the arts, yet this does not necessarily mean that these artists are realists. Do you believe that it is necessary to be a realist in order to be an epoch-making artist?

A.: Unfortunately, I have not read Mesterházi's article, I first heard about it here in Budapest and I shall have it translated immediately. As far as the argument you mentioned is concerned, I believe it derives from a narrow definition of realism, which demands from the work of art some kind of copy of reality. But in realism, in its fullest interpretation, it is the attitude and the actions of the man that count. This is the most important part of reality. Can we then say that Kafka is not a realist? Or let us take, for instance, the paintings of Bazaine. In his works we would look for the copy of an object in vain: he captures reality at a certain abstracted stage. He depicts, for instance, the rhythm of a river or of a sea without painting the waves or the ripples of the water. Has he then turned his back on reality? On an immediate reality, by all means; but only on this. Does this matter? Lenin said: "A good abstraction does not remove us from reality, on the contrary: it brings us nearer to it."

Q.: Are there then in your opinion important non-realistic artistic works?

A.: There are none. There is no work of any importance which would not contain reality. Sentimental trash fiction, the gaudy picture, these are non-realistic. The criterion of realism is whether the work reflects adequately the relationship of man to reality. This may be enthusiastic, adverse or frantic; but the emphasis is at all events on this relationship.

Q.: Does it follow from this that a work which in one way or another contains reality—and according to you all contain it in some way—is already to be considered realistic?

A.: That is right. There are of course degrees. In my opinion the peak of realism is achieved when the work cooperates actively in the continuous "re-creation" of man by man. Kafka's "The Trial" is, for instance, such a work, because it is a protest of elementary force against alienation. Picasso's *Guernica* falls in the same category; in my view this is perhaps one of the greatest works of art of our century, because it represents realistically war's contrariness to nature, and not only man's protest against it but also his power and even victory over it.

Q.: There are many people who believe that the conception of art as a working activity is not opposed to the conception that considers art a tool of perception. You who stress the action side of art, do you agree with this view?

A.: Most decidedly. Art is work, that is, the transformation of the world (and of man himself); but it is of course perception too at the same time. But let us stop here for a moment. The particularity of artistic perception does not consist in what Hegel saw it to be—that art "translates" into a picture what is a concept in scientific perception. I have to point this out most emphatically because it is here we find the source of all the aesthetic muddle of our times. How do we stand on this question? In my view, conceptual perception approaches a thing that already exists while artistic apperception approaches one that is only under preparation. Thus, not only methodological differences known until now exist between the two branches of perception, there is a difference between their object too. In other words, the reality of the two kinds of perception is not the same reality speaking two languages: there are two different kinds of reality. In the new postscript to my book I mention a third system of communication; this ex-

ceeds the second Pavlovian degree, the communication system of words. The first two systems of communication advise me of a reality that already existed before me; but the system of artistic symbols is different. The latter is not interested in already existing things that have been captured or may be captured formally, but in the new reality that is taking shape. Faust too is a symbol and not the copy of an actual person. Or let us take, say, the world of Cézanne; this seems mostly to totter on the edge of some catastrophe (incidentally like Klee's world too), as if a breath at the still life would be sufficient for everything to collapse; and this is exactly when the painter reaches the peak of his realism. As a matter of fact, Cézanne realized already that to watch was to act. And every action is something responsible. However much something may be a matter of necessity, it will always behoove man to validate that necessity actively. I understand that in your country there is a lively argument among historians about the role of the sub-

jective and objective moments of history. In France too, there is such an argument going on between myself and Althusser.

Q.: A few years ago you firmly criticized Sartre for his book about the dialectic mind, in which he strongly emphasized the role of the subjective moment. What then is your opinion: may we learn from the existentialist philosophers?

A.: Not at all. Sartre was right to direct our attention to the role of the subjective element in philosophy. But the way he put the question was wrong, and it is therefore obvious that he could not find the correct answer. It is the task of those of us who are Marxist thinkers to elaborate satisfactorily the non-subjectivist theory of subjectivism. Do not think for a moment that the classics have already done everything for us once and for all. Far from it. What they gave us are extraordinarily important directives, but life puts new questions daily in all domains, and to these we have to give the answers today.

ROMAIN ROLLAND AND HIS HUNGARIAN FRIENDS

I am taking on the task of trying to add a few new traits to the intellectual portrait of Romain Rolland, whose centenary we have recently commemorated. A few years ago I undertook a study aimed at elucidating certain aspects of Romain Rolland's philosophical and moral evolution and, through this evolution, shedding light on the essential intrinsic changes humanism has undergone in our lifetime. This investigation has led me to a closer study of a hundred or so unpublished writings of the author of *Jean-Christophe*, consisting mainly of letters sent by Rolland to his Hungarian friends and admirers. Chance or good luck has helped me to discover 92 letters which I regard as

highly interesting, not only for the variety of the subjects dealt with but also for the intensity of the ideas and sentiments expressed in them.

As it is, I do not consider my research work to be concluded, nor my task of collecting these unpublished letters to be complete; nevertheless I believe even at this stage that the texts in question will afford a more thorough knowledge of, and a better insight into, Rolland's frame of mind, his creative process, his method as a writer and philosopher, and maybe even throw light on certain episodes of his life and political activity.

I want to make it clear, however, that it

is impossible to study all the minor details of this vast amount of material: thus, I shall confine myself to analyzing some of the most significant and informative texts.

I invite you, first of all, to acquaint yourselves with a particularly revealing letter written by Romain Rolland to Lajos Hatvany. The latter, a former leading radical and one of the organizers of Hungarian intellectual and literary life, had published in 1921 a book in German on the situation and worries of contemporary Hungary. The volume bore the pathetic title: *Das verwundete Land* ("The Wounded Land"). Hatvany, true zealot that he was, had dedicated it to Romain Rolland with these words:

"It is not to Wilson, the professor of politics and traitor to his own plans, nor to Clémenceau, evil genius and politician-journalist not even to Lloyd George, the mercenary and cynical peddler of politics, that I dedicate this book, but to Romain Rolland, poet and visionary who observes and understands events while at the same time remaining faithful to his creed and his ideals."

In the text of the book the author again and again addresses his words to Romain Rolland, either in order to justify himself or to call upon Rolland as a witness, which makes this book a kind of open letter of five hundred pages—another proof of Rolland's enormous international prestige in the years following World War I.

Rolland sent a reply to Hatvany on May 3, 1921. His letter—from which the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of November 13, 1921, was to publish extracts—reveals the grave crisis his mind had passed through in the period devoted to the investigation of, what he called, universal humanism or panhumanism.

He begins by expressing his gratitude for the book which had enriched his inner life.

"I would like to thank you warmly for your fine book which has profoundly moved and enchanted me. One can feel in it the burning and quivering soul of

an artist. In parts it is like an anthem, like a symphony, where love, pain, wrath and irony intermingle with the glory of your 'wounded country'. I owe to it, thanks to you, the enrichment of my inner wealth of affection and admiration. I was particularly interested in what you say about the poet Ady. It is unnecessary to tell you how much I was moved to see my name so often associated with your passionate reasoning. I had the impression that you wrote this book as though conversing with me. And I was pleased and moved by this distant friendship I had no cognizance of.—And now to the ideas."

Here Rolland starts a discussion on some of the assertions of his correspondent who, apparently, failed to give an accurate interpretation of the concept of human fraternity and reconciliation he had previously professed but had since become deeply disappointed in. Reading Hatvany, Rolland recalls those Neapolitans who are in the habit of cursing the Madonna as soon as she fails to answer their prayers. And he adds:

"My faith is less dependent on events, because from the beginning it has anticipated the worst.—The essence of a great faith lies in going beyond and leaving present events far behind. To pretend that it will be fulfilled under our eyes, through our own hands, through our simply willing it, amounts almost to being unfair to this faith; for it means ignoring the distance that separates their faith from reality, from the heroic, persevering and indomitable efforts still needed to realize it. You are a Clerambault who has not yet learnt that his mission is really a 'religious' one and not a 'political' one. To be a politician means to strive for an immediate practical solution (mostly at the expense of the future). To be 'religious' (in the sense I intended it for Clerambault) means to take in at a glance the road of humanity,

looking beyond its immediate present and its bends which may conceal the horizon. It means: embracing the whole, perceiving the highest aim, however distant—and leading towards it the foolish crowd of humans, undeterred by their cries of panic and muddled confusion. A 'precursor' is, by definition, a forerunner, one who walks alone. No wonder, then, if the others lag behind.

"I am not a 'pacifist' (in the accepted meaning of the word). Those called 'pacifists' are as a rule people who idealize reality—not daring to look at it too closely; unless they are officious Poloniuses (see *Liluli*) who bandy about big words. I do not idealize reality. I have never seen it through rose-coloured spectacles. Like Christophe, I saw life as a 'tragedy'; whereupon I cried 'Hurrah!' But you can well imagine that this 'Hurrah' was not uttered in cheerful optimism: the joy in it is also tragic, it is a wounded joy.

"One more word about Bolshevism and the dictatorship of violence. I do not think you have assessed in a balanced way the great social movement which is being tested tumultuously in the world and particularly in Russia. But I don't here want to go into discussions that would take more time than I can afford. . . Enough to say that while always trying to understand the—somehow—material necessity of what is and what will be, I, for one, have always remained a free individualist, opposed to all dictatorship and to all violence. I have never been part of the *Clarté*."

Here Rolland alludes to the group of intellectuals led by Henri Barbusse with whom he was then carrying on a sharp dispute on violence and on the participation of intellectuals in political activity. It is known that at a later date, in 1931, Rolland was to renew in the preface to *Quinze ans de combat* the arguments he had

defended in his articles and also in his above-quoted letter to Hatvany. This text—in which, incidentally, we may observe how Romain Rolland liked to comment upon himself and interpret his own work—thus comes at one of the crucial phases of his intellectual evolution. Undoubtedly, it constitutes a precious document of the history of ideas during the period immediately following World War I.

We shall now pass over some letters of minor importance addressed to Lajos Hatvany and other correspondents, in order to consider another bulky exchange of letters. Their history is also worth telling.

Ferenc Hukai was the head-master of a private school at Gyöngyös, one of the Hungarian provincial towns, where he taught modern languages according to his own method. He made Rolland's acquaintance through the intermediary of Esperanto. Towards the end of World War I, devising ways and means to promote the idea of universal humanism, Rolland considered that a universal language—preferably Esperanto—would be an appropriate instrument in bringing about understanding between nations.

His pronouncements, thoroughly commented on in Esperantist publications, could not fail to catch the attention of Ferenc Hukai, a fervent propagandist of Esperanto. Thus, when the latter staged an international meeting of Esperantists at Gyöngyös, he telegraphed a greeting to Romain Rolland, who—also by cable—sent his best wishes for the success of the initiative. Encouraged by this exchange, Hukai entered into correspondence with Rolland and—in 1926—paid him a visit. They exchanged letters regularly, at least once a year. Hukai sent him specifically Hungarian gifts: embroideries, carved wooden statues, porcelain and wine. In return, Rolland dispatched to Gyöngyös the finest and rarest editions of his books, accompanied by warm, friendly dedications, observations, glosses and sometimes even corrections of the original text.

(E.g., in the copy of his *Empédocle d'Agrigente, ou l'âge de la haine*, which he sent at the end of December 1924, numerous and important marginal notes modified the original text.)

In a letter dated December 31, 1924, Rolland informs Hugai that he has started to write his autobiography.

"Up to now I have not deliberately put in a work the essence of what I feel and what I am. I am trying to do so at present, in a very intimate work which, perhaps, will not be published before I die, and which is a kind of *Voyage intérieur*."

In fact, as we know, Rolland was to publish a volume of memoirs under this title eighteen years later. The same letter of December 31, 1924, by the way, contains important information on Rolland's admiration for the composition and folk-song collections of Bartók and Kodály.

"I thank you very much for the charming consignment of music. It gives me great pleasure. You write that these compositions were 'chosen by Béla Bartók.' Do you know him personally? I feel a great admiration for him. And I have also heard works by Zoltán Kodály that have impressed me."

In 1926 Hugai put forward the idea of founding a literary prize in order to reward Hungarian works "written according to the ideas of Romain Rolland." He asked Rolland to authorize the use of his name for the foundation. The answer, dated January 1, 1927, is particularly illustrative of Rolland's aesthetic principles.

"What do you mean by 'Hungarian books written according to my ideas'? I think this would mean works of a broad mind and human spirit. Beyond this I would not like to interfere with the

freedom of ideas. Everyone should think as he likes as long as he respects the thoughts of others!—Let us never forget: the first requirement of a work of art is to be beautiful. Having achieved this, it has the right (and—if it aspires to greatness—the duty) to impress by its Ideas. But beauty, in art, is a natural condition. Without beauty there is no art."

In the same letter, the longest and maybe the most important among those written to Hugai, Rolland unfolds at length the basic idea of his two monumental novels: *Jean-Christophe* and *L'Ame enchantée*. His observations concerning the latter (two volumes of which were still to be written) are of the greatest interest, giving, as they do, the clue to the novel and throwing light on the much-discussed character of the heroine. Here are the theses. (Incidentally, they are quite characteristic of the habit acquired by Rolland of interpreting in an apologetic manner his life and work and commenting upon it.)

"I. The motto of my *Jean-Christophe*. *Christophori faciem die quacumque tueris— Illa nempe die non morte mala morieris.*— In the Middle Ages a huge statue of St Christopher used to be placed in the churches, within the nave, not far from the main gate. The sight of St Christopher was supposed to protect one from accidents. The Latin inscription in two verses, which I have just quoted, could be found on the plinths of various statues of this saint, for instance at *Notre-Dame de Paris*. It says:

Whenever you look at the face of
Christopher,
 On that day you won't die an evil
death.

I have invested the words with a symbolical meaning you might be able to guess now. I tell my readers: 'As long as

Christophe is your companion, there is no risk of your falling.' But, as is my wont, I have concealed my idea under a veil: because I like to see if my readers have the curiosity to lift it.—Very often they haven't! They will just read and pass on without understanding. You, you have stopped me on my way and you were right to do so.

"II. *L'Ame enchantée*. As you say, it is too early to discuss the idea of the work. (Incidentally, it has more than one.) There still remain two more important volumes to write. The first of these will come out next February under the title *Mère et Fils* and will cover the period from 1914 to 1918. But this is by no means the end.—Also, there is a trap hidden in the title *L'Ame enchantée*. Most of the readers have taken it to mean 'the happy soul' which scarcely fits in with the story. In fact, it is about the human soul which is enveloped in the web of life and which unties the meshes of enchantment one by one and discovers the truth that lies behind the dream.—However, this is only one of the meanings of my work. There are others, more relevant to our age and to women. Patience! Gradually all will become clear."

The main themes of *L'Ame enchantée* come up again in other letters by Romain Rolland to Ferenc Hugaï. For instance, the theme of the deliberate choice of a moral and political point of view in contradiction to the established order is described and illustrated in a letter dated December 28, 1929, sent in thanks for some Christmas present. The gift—a Hungarian peasant embroidery—calls to his mind Mihály Károlyi, who was President of the Hungarian Democratic Republic of 1918/19. Károlyi, at that time, lived in emigration, in Geneva, and was in constant touch with Rolland.

"A faithfulness as lasting as yours is a rare thing nowadays," reads the letter to

Hugaï. "I am more moved than I can tell. Also I am bewildered because each new year you manage to send me such wonderful presents. The last one is all the more precious to me, because you had to undertake a long trip to the mountains in order to find it. . . And I like it, even more because its sight recalls memories of Károlyi, this noble-hearted count, this last of the knights, against whom the world's hatred, derision and wickedness are directed. There is no more shameful injustice than the one he (and with him all those who loyally served him) had—and still have—to suffer. It is a remarkable thing that this persecution has spread well beyond his own country and is merely waiting, all the time, for a new opportunity to re-start in any country. I know, I know: those men who, in the course of history, are followed by the greatest hatred are the ones who have ceased to serve (some say, betrayed) their own class for a wider, more human cause. This is the crime of crimes as long as that class remains in power. History is often distorted by it, and remains so for centuries."

Rolland was literally obsessed by this idea. So much so that—as pointed out above—it became the basic motif in *L'Ame enchantée*. Having dwelt upon it, Rolland reports to his correspondent on the progress of his work. The instability of the structure and inconsistencies in the conception of the second part of *L'Ame enchantée* become more or less understandable (even pardonable) in the light of this confession:

"One should not worry about the future at my age. (He was 63 at the time.) I savour the hour and try to extract its nectar in what I write."

Romain Rolland's aesthetic taste and his assessment of the salient features of French literary life were also reflected in this cor-

respondence. When Hugai asks his opinion about the contemporary French authors he ought to read, Rolland takes up the subject in two of his letters. What he writes about Rimbaud in 1932 is characteristic:

"As regards Rimbaud, his meteoric personality has played a considerable role in new French poetry. But you don't have to enjoy him. As for me, I am going to drink from other sources."

In the same letter he warmly recommends the books of either Georges Duhamel, or of "Alain the vigorous thinker."—In a letter written at Christmas 1934 he calls the attention of his pen-friend to Malraux, Giono, Chamson and Guéhenno—young writers who were coming to the fore at that time:

"You have asked me to guide you in the new French literature. The fresh names which have cropped up with the greatest *éclat* these last years are those of André Malraux and Jean Giono. The former has devoted several novels to the Chinese Revolution, of which he had been a temporary witness: these books are raw, profound, and involved; the technique is so sure and the thinking process so complex. The latter, Giono, is one of the greatest lyricists in French prose, within the framework of the meadows of the French Midi. Let us add André Chamson, a serious novelist with a masterly style, who is also wrapped up in the study of his own native province, and Jean-Richard Bloch, whose *Sibylla* (of which only Volume I has appeared so far) is as full of brilliance and wit as everything else he writes.—Finally, a very valuable book which I especially recommend to you: *Le Journal d'un homme de quarante ans* by Jean Guéhenno. He is one of the persons I appreciate most in France; having risen from the ranks of the populace and from misery, he has become a great

humanitarian. After living through the war he painfully destroyed the illusions of the very culture which had turned his hair grey and separated him from the living and suffering people. His book is one of the noblest, purest Confessions, and has about it a ring of complete sincerity and a classical power. A masterpiece of art and the soul."

Rolland's taste and admiration for the creative genius of the people continues to grow as the Christmas presents (mostly folk-art products) arrive one by one from Hungary. This is how he writes on December 28, 1929:

"The embroidery you sent me is stunning. I cannot understand why your people's gift for using such extraordinary colour patterns has not manifested itself in other fields than fabrics. I think Hungary should have produced masters of glass-painting, famous artists who could have created those rose-windows of the Thousand-And-One Nights one can see in some of our Gothic cathedrals of the Ile de France and Champagne.—Among your painters, who is the greatest colourist?"

In other letters too, he never tires of expressing his admiration for folk art. On January 18, 1931, for instance, he writes:

"Your vases show an admirable originality and harmony. They could well belong to one of the great epochs of Italian-Greek art. Our drawing-room has been truly adorned by the Genius of Hungary. His magic wand has touched our Vaudois villa and illuminated it."

Sometimes he would inform his pen-friend of events in his life. Gandhi, for instance, left the following impression on him:

"Last month I was visited by Gandhi, who stayed with me five days before returning to India. I found him not only a wise man, but also a friendly and gay companion in whom a firm mind goes hand in hand with *finesse* and good humour."

Towards the end of 1937 Hugai wrote to Rolland about a decision, he had just taken, he wanted to leave Europe—then heading towards the domination of tyranny—and settle down overseas, in New Zealand. (In fact he did set out, but his venture failed: homesickness and nostalgia for his family soon brought him back to Gyöngyös, where he was to die in 1954.) In his answer Rolland tells Hugai of when he himself took the bold resolution to make a change of air and country; after a voluntary exile of nearly a quarter of a century, he was preparing to return at the age of 72 years, not only to his country but to the very land of his ancestors, where he would be able to rest near his forebears. . . . In a letter dated December 22, 1937, he tells Hugai:

"I too am about to leave my Swiss retreat. The air is no longer free enough for my lungs. The two great Fascist neighbours, from the South and the North, are casting their menacing shadows over Switzerland.—By next summer I shall have settled down again, with my wife, in my Burgundy, on the sacred hill of Vézelay, where I have recently acquired a smallholding. There, I will be quite near to Brèves and its curate, the friend of Colas Breugnon."

Quite near to Brèves. . . . i.e., the small village where—according to his wish—he would be buried, having brought to an end a life wholly devoted to the exaltation of mankind's purest values.

Thus ended the correspondence Romain Rolland carried on with a humble Hungarian teacher from the provinces—for whom the

tokens of this distinguished friendship meant the most precious treasure and the ultimate achievement of his life.

"In our time it is a fine thing—and not always a safe one—to keep up one's attachment to people and ideas, as you do," Romain Rolland had written him that same year.

Incidentally, during the whole of this beautiful and voluminous correspondence Rolland never ceased to arouse in his distant acolyte the noblest sentiments. Thus, on December 27, 1932, he wrote:

"Keep up your faith in Life, despite everything! The present hour is full of suffering, but it is also full of energy. One may get scorched by the fire; but the fire burns: it is Life. It forges new shapes, new worlds. We shall not die of cold."

This ideal of stoic heroism finds repeated expression in the letters Romain Rolland sent to his Hungarian translator, Professor Marcel Benedek, between 1923 and 1933. The most important among these is certainly the one dated November 17, 1933. In it, Rolland agrees to a few insignificant amendments to the text of *L'Âme enchantée* and outlines his situation in the critical year of 1933.

"I perfectly understand your request, and have no reason not to accept the three changes or elisions proposed by you. I am even surprised that they should be all and that you are not obliged to make more changes.—It was Hamlet, I think, who said that the whole universe was a prison, and that the Earth was one of its cells. The cell grows smaller day by day. My new books are banned in Germany. (The old ones too. A ban was pronounced on *Au-dessus de la mêlée*, though it had been published by a Swiss firm.)—The

time will come when they will also be banned in France. It is then that writing will have become most worth-while."

It should be noted that Romain Rolland held the translations of Marcel Benedek in high esteem. He even had them checked, as demonstrated by a letter of November 23, 1923. In addition to this the Rolland-Hugai correspondence (which we have scanned briefly) contains a passage—in a letter dated January 12, 1928—whereby Rolland expresses his warm friendship for Marcel Benedek, who had met him personally in 1927 on the occasion of the Beethoven Festival of Vienna. Asked by Hugai for authorization to translate the two volumes of *Mystique et action de l'Inde vivante*, Romain Rolland replies by urging him to contact his preferred translator.

"I would grant you the right of translating into Hungarian with pleasure, but I have a moral obligation towards Dr. Marcel Benedek which gives him the right to publish all my works in Hungarian. I am determined to do nothing which might displease him, because I hold him in great and affectionate esteem. Consequently, please find out whether he intends to translate this book too; if not, make your arrangements with him."

In conclusion, I should like to draw your attention to some further unpublished manuscripts of Romain Rolland's which may reveal new aspects of his thinking process and his activity. I am referring to three letters written to Jenő Krammer, at present professor of Germanic philology at Eötvös University in Budapest. The history of this correspondence, is briefly as follows:

In 1930 a former Protestant minister, Pál Simándy, who was a victim of the persecutions following in the wake of the 1918/19 revolutions, published a courageous book on the crisis of Christianity, entitled *The Sermon on the Mount Spirited Away*. In it he expounded the idea that the Sermon on the

Mount constituted the centre of Christian doctrine, but in the course of subsequent centuries this central theme was altered, ridiculed and usurped. This fine book, a characteristic product of so-called progressive Christianity, strives to endow the Sermon on the Mount—and Christ's teachings in general—with the original interpretation.

At the author's request, Mr. Krammer translated one of the important chapters of the book and sent it to Rolland. In his particularly suggestive reply, Rolland discourses at some length on the metaphysical basis and dialectic form of his intellectual world, and on the motives which determine his social and political attitude. His letter adds a further brush-stroke to the intellectual portrait of Romain Rolland which we have tried to sketch with the help of his unpublished correspondence. After Rolland the philosopher and Rolland the writer, here we see Rolland as a man of action, a promoter of the union of men of good-will, who wishes to link the hands that are extended towards each other throughout the world.

"I like your letter and I like you, through this letter. I can see you, bravely and simply engaged in a difficult task, facing the world as it is, facing the future as it comes, and going on your own straight path, without bowing your head or losing your smile. . . 'Come what may! I do my duty. . . '—You call me your 'captain'. . . I am proud of soldiers like you.—I have read with interest the chapter on your friend. The idea is striking and, I think, true: this duality of the law of Christ and of the basic law of nature is indeed the tragic problem of social life. No use to deny one or the other, and it is a criminal thing to shroud the second in the mask of the former. This is the kind of deceit (by which people in the last fifteen years were no longer taken in) that stigmatizes the Christian churches and has discredited their religion.—To

arrive at a harmony of the two opposite forces. . . . According to my favourite saying, which I have borrowed from Heracitos, this is the supreme task of art and life. I am not sure whether this equilibrium—even if reached—could be maintained for long. Life is in constant motion; it rises and falls, it breathes in and breathes out; like when the heart stops beating, when it stops death ensues. But I believe that the two opposite poles are necessary for the rhythm. Neither of them should give up! Your friend is right in saying that 'the destructive forces too are instruments by which the Maker (I say: the Cosmic Law—because I know nothing else) accomplishes His aim.' I had never felt so strongly the irresistible currents of these great Cosmic Laws as I have since the war began and (even more so) after the war. For the men who govern states and peoples are obviously being carried away themselves, against their will, against their interests and contrary to all reason—towards a mighty holocaust which, by its destructive force and the transformation it causes, will inevitably lead to a new era of mankind.—I have forwarded the manuscript of your friend to some young Swiss Christian pacifists, who take the Sermon on the Mount seriously and have more than once suffered imprisonment as conscientious objectors. I gave them your address. Possibly they will try to get in touch—through you—with your friend.—I received, the same time as yours, a letter from England which shows how the moral sufferings caused by religious and social lies are identical in all countries, in the ranks of the most wide awake and pure young people. Its writer is a highly energetic young English Quaker, Reginald Reynolds, who has just spent a year in India, with Gandhi. As a witness of the commencement of the civil disobedience movement, he was able to see on the spot the intolerable cruelties of the British régime and the lies of the

press. He has denounced them in a series of circulars sent to the Quakers. These letters make up the most important testimony of events in India in the first six months of this year. Recently he had to return to England, where he is making vain efforts to rouse public opinion—but the public refuses to be informed."

Here Rolland gives the address of his English correspondent so that Mr. Simándy may "come nearer to these disillusioned young Quakers." He then goes on:

"I, for one, will remain faithful to my mission—as you see—which consists of helping to join the hands that are groping towards each other across the world."

Finally, he informs Jenő Krammer that he is transmitting to him his work *Empédocle d'Agrigente, ou l'âge de la baine* and explains its genesis in the words:

"I am sending you a copy of a minor work which has recently been published in German. It was written in April 1918 when the war was at its fiercest, when Paris was being menaced—at the time when 'Pierre and Luce' died at St Gervais. It reveals the great vision of Empedocles of Agrigentum. The huge sails unfurled over his Trinacrian* boat have borne me without my knowing towards the shores of India."

The next summer after this correspondence, Jenő Krammer wished to prove in person his affection for the man he had called his "captain." Rolland's answer to the letter announcing his visit was not confined to fixing the date of the meeting and to giving instructions as to the route, but contains biographical data of great literary interest. Rolland compares his father, who had died recently, to Colas Breugnon, thereby indicating as it were his ideal hero.

* Trinacria = Sicily, in Latin poetry.

"I lost my poor father some days ago. A beautiful death, as serene as his life. He passed away whilst standing in his garden. He was 95 and to the very end he kept the integrity of his mind, which was always young and cheerful. In a way the image of Colas Breugnon."

Rolland's third letter to Jenő Krammer dates from 1936. Krammer had asked him whether he approved of his intention of devoting his entire energies to the everyday task of teaching, instead of launching himself into public life. Contrary to his habit Rolland was somewhat late in answering; on March 5, 1936, he explains this delay by the state of his health:

"I am sorry I have taken so long to answer your long letter of January, 25, and that even now I can only do it rather hurriedly, though I feel I have so much to answer. As it is, I am overburdened with tasks and correspondence; and my health is very poor: I am unable to fulfil all my obligations. My personal work has been almost entirely sacrificed, and since the beginning of the year I have not had even two hours to myself for the new work I would like to write!"

This admission throws an interesting light on the imperfections of construction which have been criticized in Rolland's works written in this period. (For instance the last two volumes of *L'Âme enchantée*.) The permanent fever concomitant with his illness was not the only factor which interfered with his creative work. The fever of activity was equally upon him. This period abounds in articles, messages, appeals, private and open letters. Such was his dedication and his spiritual authority that he submitted to the most varied exigencies. Nevertheless, moved possibly by his sense of fairness and his respect for the intentions and inclinations of others, he tries to dissuade his pen-friend from throwing himself into action.

"What you wrote to me has touched my heart by its affectionate fidelity and loyal confidence.—I concur with you, dear Eugen Krammer. Carry on your teaching job. This is where you can have the most profound influence—without having to throw yourself into the midst of the battle. Shape the minds of the new generations, teach them the habit of seeing and judging clearly and fearlessly all that goes on within themselves and around them! Sew in their virgin soil the seeds of the new faith, the great hope whose stormy spring shall waken the old world!"

Rolland thanks his correspondent also for having reported on the movement of the socialist teachers. (One of the latter, Pál Ilku, is at present Minister of Cultural Affairs in the Hungarian People's Republic.)

To conclude, I would like to insist on the significance of this last letter. I do so because it is a very instructive example of the countless writings—stimulating and encouraging—which Rolland never tired of sending to the four corners of the world. He sent them to all who were relying on his moral support, whether outstanding personalities or humble intellectual workers. In this way he believed he was discharging his supreme duty as a humanitarian; for to him (as he said himself) "the important thing was not to be right but to be just," and his principal mission consisted in "helping to join the hands that are groping towards each other across the world."

I have taken the liberty of presenting these unpublished documents which prove (without the slightest doubt) that Romain Rolland did not merely possess a universal spirit, eagerly watching all manifestations of the creative intelligence, but also—and above all—that he was a fair and just man, who sought, under any circumstances, to discover the truth and to bear witness to it. Perhaps this is the greatest praise one can bestow upon a man and a thinker.

LÁSZLÓ DOBOSSY

MILTON ON RUSSIA

Milton's "A Brief History of Moscovia" has not found much favour with the critics. Among the authors of some recent full-length studies, E. M. W. Tillyard (1930) barely mentions it; Kenneth Muir (1955) fails to refer to it altogether; and R. M. Samarin (1964) dismisses it as a compilation. Originally published in 1682, the treatise has been reissued in the Columbia edition of Milton's Works (1931-1938) and edited separately by Prince D. S. Mirsky¹ and R. R. Cawley.² All editors and critics substantially agree with Samarin's description. Mirsky calls it "no more than a compilation"; Cawley, "one of the frankest patchworks ever composed"; and E. N. S. Thompson describes it as "a summary of his readings in the works of modern explorers... a composite of the narratives found in Hakluyt and Purchas."³ This characterization of the essay is confirmed by Milton himself. "What was scattered in many volumes, and observed at several times by eyewitnesses, with no cursory pains I laid together," he says in the preface of his work,⁴ and at the end of his treatise he gives a list of the authors from whom the narratives have been taken. These accounts are all included in the expanded version of Hakluyt's "Principall Navigations" (1598-1600) and in the two collections of his disciple: "Purchas His Pilgrimage" (1613) and "Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas His Pilgrimes" (1625).

¹ "A Brief History of Moscovia," with an introduction by Prince D. S. Mirsky. London, 1929.

² "Milton's Literary Craftsmanship. A Study of A Brief History of Moscovia," with an edition of the text by Robert Ralston Cawley. Princeton University Press, 1941.

³ "Milton's Knowledge of Geography," by Elbert N. S. Thompson. *Studies in Philology*, vol. XVI (1919), p. 151.

⁴ Bohn, V. 394-395.—The references are to Milton's *Prose Works* in Bohn's Standard Library, the most easily accessible edition of Milton's tract.

It would seem, then, that Milton's object was a fairly humble one: to compare a number of independent narratives, select from them the essential facts, and group them under suitable headings. A cursory glance at the treatise would persuade one that Milton has done no more than that. The first three chapters are mainly geographical in nature, describing the physical configuration, first of Russia proper, then of the Samoyed, Tunguz, and other Asiatic territories, as far as the borders of China, together with a sprinkling of miscellaneous information on the political and military system, religion, character, and customs of the population. Chapter IV is a brief survey of Russian history, from the legendary beginnings until 1613, the year of the accession of the first Romanov. Chapter V summarizes the story of Russian-English contacts from 1553 to 1604.

It has become customary to take Milton at his own word and regard his treatise chiefly from the stylistic angle, to compare his narrative with the sources he used and to praise him for the art of skilful condensation. Thus, in Mirsky's eyes, the main interest for the student of Milton and of English literature, as distinct from the student of Anglo-Russian relations, will be the way Milton transforms into his own Latinized prose the plain or florid English of his sources, the Elizabethan navigators.⁵ In Cawley's eyes, Milton's "literary craftsmanship" actually consists in his gift of condensation, of omitting everything but the most essential, of fusing two or more accounts: "Milton succeeded in giving to his eclectic account a sense of completeness as well as of smoothness often lacking in the original."⁶

Cawley may be right in his opinion that

⁵ Mirsky, p. 20. This statement is echoed in J. H. Hanford: "A Milton Handbook," fourth ed. New York, 1946, p. 130.

⁶ Cawley, p. 18.

Milton used the judgment of a master in the elimination of all unessential detail, though some critics maintain that he went too far in the work of condensation.⁷ In any case, the negative virtue of elimination or omission would hardly account for the attraction of Milton's book. If the work has any value of permanent interest, it must be owing to the presence of some positive qualities and merits.

Some of the most essential qualities have been pointed out by Academician M. P. Alekseyev in the chapter on Milton's "A Brief History of Moscovia," in his book presenting and discussing the accounts of Western European travellers and writers on Siberia, from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries.⁸ Alekseyev's main concern is, naturally, with chapters II and III of Milton's work which describe the Asiatic territories of the Russian empire; here he establishes Milton's indebtedness to I. Massy's works on Siberia, originally published in 1612 and included in English translation in the 1625 edition of "Purchas His Pilgrimes." He also identifies the embassy sent by Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich from Tooma (misprint for Tomsk) to Alteen and Cathay (Bohn V. 406) as the embassy of Ivan Petlin, sent by the *voyvode* of Tobolsk. In this connection Alekseyev revives Baddeley's suggestion that Petlin's account of his journey to China found its way to England through Sir John Merrick, the English Ambassador, who had been anxious to open an overland trade route for his country, through the Asiatic territories of the Russian empire, to India and China.⁹

⁷ See e.g. E. N. S. Thompson, p. 153: "Milton transferred from his sources only those details that seemed most essential, and, by leaving out many trivial experiences that had impressed the minds of the actual travellers, lost much of the personal and graphic touch that their accounts possess."

⁸ M. P. Alekseyev: *Sibir v izvestiyakh zapadnoevropeyskikh puteshestvennyikov i pisateley XIII-XVII vv.* Vtoroje izd. Irkutsk, 1941.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 311-313.

As may be seen from the foregoing, Alekseyev shifts the centre of inquiry from problems of style to those of contemporary politics and economics—problems that were of paramount interest in Milton's own eyes. Milton did not indulge in mere literary exercise: he wanted to find out and present to his countrymen the truth about Russia. He mentions in the very title of his tract that it was gathered from the writings of eyewitnesses; at the end of both the preface and of Chapter V he stresses his dependence on Russians "who describe the countries in their way far otherwise than our common geographers" (p. 395). Milton's main concern was, evidently, to give a reliable account of Russia; hence, we must direct our attention to his selection, not of words, but of facts. Such a selection was determined partly by the material at his disposal, partly by his own personality.

The material at his disposal comprised, besides the written sources, the facts of a particularly dynamic age both of English and Russian history. Whatever date one assigns to "A Brief History of Moscovia," it was certainly written either during the storms of the English Revolution or a few years before.¹⁰ It is hardly necessary to recall here the well-known facts of the tremendous development, whether in the field of economics, the consolidation of military strength

¹⁰ Alekseyev agrees with David Masson in dating the work about 1649-1652, the years when Milton began his service as Secretary for Foreign Tongues to the Council of State of the young Republic (p. 302). A similar view was expressed by G. B. Parks (quoted by Hanford, p. 129), who argues for December or January 1649/50, when protest was made by the Council of State to Russia against the banishment of the English merchants. A post-Restoration date was suggested by Alfred Stern (quoted by Alekseyev, p. 303), on the ground that Milton may have derived some of his material on Russia from his poet-friend, Andrew Marvell, a member of the unsuccessful embassy led by the Earl of Carlisle in 1663-4. Mirsky stands fairly alone in his unsupported view that the tract was written several years before Milton's continental journey, i.e., prior to 1638 (p. 14).

and political power, the rapid expansion of the intellectual horizon, or the flourishing of arts, that characterize the sixteenth century both in England and Russia. The direct contact and important trade route between the two countries via the White Sea was first opened by Richard Chancellor in 1553. Two years later the Muscovy Company received permission to trade free of all customs throughout Russia. The English merchants made full use of such facilities, crossing Russia to Persia and Central Asia; as early as 1558, the year of Queen Elizabeth's accession, Anthony Jenkinson reached Bokhara. Economic penetration was accompanied by a continuous string of embassies. Many of the merchant adventurers and diplomats were shrewd observers; the accounts of their experiences in Russia and the territories farther to the east found their way into the collections of Hakluyt and Purchas, serving as raw material for Milton's tract.

"A Brief History of Moscovia" must be examined in this wider context. Its unique significance consists in the fact that a great Englishman and a great poet, writing at a time when he felt his country to be in the vanguard of human progress, both in religion and politics, defines his attitude to "the most northern region of Europe reputed civil" (p. 394), a country which had only recently been brought "out of obscurity into renown" (p. 409), was a comparative newcomer to the comity of European nations, and in the early years of the seventeenth century had undergone a harassing "Time of Trouble."

Under such circumstances, and taking also into account the pronounced anti-Russian bias of some of his sources (especially Dr. Giles Fletcher's "Of the Russe Common Wealth," published in 1591), it is hardly a matter for surprise that, on the whole, Milton's attitude to Russian conditions is one of superior condescension. We hear the voice of the stern republican when he condemns the absolute power of the emperor (p. 399); the fighter for the purity of faith is

shocked by the immorality and extortion practised by the clergy; of the monks Milton remarks with scathing scorn that they are as great merchants as any in the land (p. 401). The tone of sympathy is heard in his words when he remarks that "there are no people that live so miserably as the poor of Russia" (p. 402).

Occasionally the less attractive sides of Milton's personality also appear. He gives too easy credence to slanderous reports about the lack of truth in the Russian character. An example of his prejudice against women has been noted by Thompson: speaking of the presents usually given by the bridegroom to the bride, Milton mentions only the whip (p. 402) and passes over the needles, thread, silk, linen, and shears, found in his source.¹¹

When discussing public affairs, Milton's patriotic pride comes out at every step, most dramatically in the scene of violent altercation between the Tsar, Ivan the Terrible, and Sir Jerome Bowes, Ambassador of Queen Elizabeth (pp. 426-427). The scene closes with a reconciliation and a heightened respect for the person of the ambassador, reminding one of the well-known fact that Ivan IV and his *de facto* successor, Boris Godunov, were westernizers who favoured the English.

Milton condemns in no uncertain terms the autocratic régime of the tsars, paints a lurid picture of the violent events following the death of the Emperor Fedor in 1598, and pays a warm tribute to the liberator in the form of "a mean man, a butcher" who, with the help of General Pozharsky, drove the Poles out of Moscow. He is referring, of course, to Kozma Minin, one of the leaders of the popular rising of 1612.

Given a man of Milton's convictions, it was natural that he should give a moral

¹¹ Incidentally, this omission and the unchivalrous tone of the whole passage make it practically certain that *A Brief History* must have been written after 1643, the date of the domestic crisis in Milton's life.

interpretation of historical facts. For instance, he attributes the rise of the first pseudo-Dmitri and the sudden death of Boris Godunov to "divine revenge" for the murders plotted by Boris which extinguished the imperial dynasty after a rule of three hundred years (p. 412).

But it is in the field of economics that Milton's preoccupation with moral issues most obviously distorts his judgment. There is no doubt that the establishment of direct commercial relations with England through Russia's northern ports was mutually advantageous to both countries. The English were eager to secure a monopoly of trade with Russia and the East via this route, since it brought them considerable profit. At the same time, the opening of the new trade route hastened the westernization of Russia and helped to transform the country from a feudal state into the mercantile monarchy of the tsars.¹²

Milton fails to recognize the importance of such developments—his moral bias blinds him to the significance of economic issues. It is fascinating to see his divided mind in the remarks with which he introduces Chapter V, his account of the English discoveries of, and embassies to, Russia. Milton's patriotic pride is evidently kindled when he states that the discovery of Russia through the northern ocean was made first by Englishmen. He goes to the length of calling the enterprise almost heroic, but is then sharply pulled up by remembering that the design had been animated merely by vulgar economic motives: the excessive love of gain and traffic. Milton consoles himself with the thought that the adventurous voyage, though undertaken for the

sake of gain, has brought to light many things useful for the knowledge of nature, and winds up with a generalization that is central to the basic conception and theodicy of "Paradise Lost": "good events oft-times arise from evil occasions" (p. 418).¹³

This moral or theological parallel is an addition to those parallel passages of a geographic nature common to "A Brief History" and "Paradise Lost" which have been pointed out and turned to different uses by various critics. Alekseyev rightly emphasizes Milton's interest in Moscovia, especially in its eastern territories, which has left its mark in a number of poetic similes, chiefly in the later books of Milton's great epic (pp. 304-305). Leslie C. Tihany discusses¹⁴ some of these parallels with the intention of fixing the date of Milton's "youthful attempt at geography" and establishing the importance of "A Brief History of Moscovia" as a connecting link between early English travel-books and "Paradise Lost." Attention has also been called to an interesting example of Milton's making use of a definite historical incident in a passage of the Tenth Book.¹⁵ As Mirsky points out (p. 18), the simile reflects a passage from the voyage of Banister and Duckett, contained in Hakluyt. They were members of the 1568 embassy of Thomas Randolph and were commissioned to conduct an expedition into Persia. Setting out from Yaroslavl in July 1568, they were attacked on their way to Astrakhan by Nagaic Tartars (see also Bond, vii).

A different aspect of the relation of "A Brief History" to "Paradise Lost" is stressed

¹² See E. A. Bond's "Introduction to Russia at the Close of the Sixteenth Century," comprising the treatise "Of the Russe Common Wealth" by Dr Giles Fletcher; and "The Travels of Sir Jerome Horsey," London, Hakluyt Society, 1856.—S. Jakobson: "Early Anglo-Russian Relations (1553-1613)." *The Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 13 (1934-5), pp. 597-610.—Mirsky, p. 1.

¹³ O goodness infinite, goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good.

Par. Lost XII. 469-471.

¹⁴ Milton's "A Brief History of Moscovia," *Philological Quarterly*, vol. XIII. (1934), pp. 305-306.

¹⁵ As when the Tartar from his Russian Foe
By Astracan over the Snowie Plains
Retires.

Par. Lost X. 431-433.

by Thompson (p. 155), who takes a plain, unadorned sentence from Chapter I of Milton's history¹⁶ and compares it with one of the most splendid and spacious of Miltonic similes,¹⁷ as evidence of the poet's ability to use uncoloured material for higher ends and sublimate mere facts into poetry. Thompson is undoubtedly right in this particular instance; yet one must not forget that "A Brief History of Moscovia" is much more than a mere collection of bare, prosaic facts: it is a poet's response to an exciting subject, and when the occasion demands it, Milton's prose style rises to poetic splendour.

A touch of poetry pervades some of Milton's geographic description, such as his account of the city of Moscow (pp. 397-398), the great wall of China and the imperial white city (pp. 406-407), in the same way as lists of sonorous geographical names and concepts serve to widen the perspective of the Biblical subjects of his epics. In Milton's days geography was not yet an exact science but a story of wonder based on the adventurous exploits of daring explorers. Thompson rightly stresses (p. 166) the merging of geography, history, and romance in the scholarship of the age and praises the splendid atlases of Ortelius and Mercator which Milton must have used, among them a map of Russia, with tents, camels, and Tartar horsemen in the empty spaces, and above the map the tsar himself, Joannes Basilius, sitting in his tent and holding a sceptre.

Milton's instinct for the picturesque and

¹⁶ The river Pechora or Petzora, holding his course through Siberia, how far the Russians thereabouts know not, runs into the sea at seventy-two mouths, full of ice.

"A Brief History," p. 396.

¹⁷ As when two Polar Winds blowing adverse
Upon the Cronian Sea, together drive
Mountains of Ice, that stop th' imagin'd
way

Beyond Petsora Eastward, to the rich
Cathian Coast.

Par. Lost X. 289-293.

the gorgeous found fullest scope when he described the emperors of Russia, not in their tents, but in the centre of public events—reception of embassies, banquets, or even a coronation. The accounts of such public functions form the most colourful pages of "A Brief History." The tone is set in the description of the reception of Richard Chancellor by Ivan IV: we see the emperor in the midst of his councillors, all appalled in cloth of gold, the emperor himself sitting on a lofty throne, on his head a diadem of gold, in his hand a crystal sceptre set with precious stones, his countenance full of majesty. The reception was followed by dinner in the golden palace; Milton is evidently impressed by the eastern, somewhat exotic magnificence, yet cannot refrain from remarking, with a touch of sarcasm, that the place was called the golden palace without cause, for the Englishmen had seen many fairer. There is a similar ambivalence between admiration and derision when he remarks that during the dinner the emperor twice changed his crown, the waiters thrice their apparel (p. 422).

Milton describes four more receptions and state dinners with evident relish: those of Anthony Jenkinson in 1557, of Thomas Randolph in 1568, the embassy of Sir Jerome Bowes, the last to be received by Ivan IV in 1583, and finally, the embassy of Sir Thomas Smith, sent by King James to Tsar Boris in 1604. These accounts differ from each other in picturesque detail. On one occasion Milton calls our attention to the rich store of gold and silver vessels, the huge and bulky goblets; on another, to the six hundred guests and two thousand Tartars who dined in the emperor's halls. We next see the emperor on his throne, with the three crowns of Muscovy, Kazan, and Astrakhan placed beside him, with over a hundred noblemen sitting round on benches. In Milton's account of the 1604 embassy these splendours are doubled: next to Tsar Boris, on another throne, sat the

young prince. At dinner "the emperor's table was served with two hundred noblemen in coats of gold; the prince's table with young dukes of Casan, Astracan, Siberia, Tartaria, and Circassia" (p. 430).

The splendour of these descriptions is surpassed only by Milton's account of Fedor's coronation in Chapter IV (pp. 411-412), a veritable revelling in colour. We must, however, take another look at Milton's accounts of the reception of diplomatic missions since the subject links up in an unexpected way with a painting in Hungary.

Originally in the possession of the Fugger family, this small painting (64 by 43.5 cm) found its way into the Hungarian National Museum in 1836 and has long been regarded as representing the reception, in the *Granovitaya Palata* of the Kremlin, of a Hungarian embassy sent by King Matthias Hunyadi to Ivan III in 1488. S. Mihalik, Deputy Chief Director of the Hungarian National Museum, discussing and reproducing details of this painting, assigns it to the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but still regards it as representing a Hungarian delegation, mainly on the strength of certain stylistic qualities of the silver cups included among the gifts.¹⁸ But the assumption that the painting represents the reception of a Hungarian envoy, however tempt-

ing to a Hungarian, seems by no means necessary. Obviously, the reception of foreign missions had become a well-established ritual at the Kremlin and followed practically the same lines, whatever the nationality of the foreign envoys. Thus, many details enumerated by Milton may be observed in the painting—the emperor sitting in state on the throne, with sceptre in hand, at his side "a fair globe of beaten gold... with a cross upon it" (p. 430), noblemen sitting on the benches round. It would be rash to suggest that the painting represents any of the embassies described by Milton; but there is much to be said for Charles Oman's view that the tsar is Mikhail, the first Romanov.¹⁹ Oman does not give any grounds for his suggestion, but it may be supported by the youthful appearance of the emperor and the fact that the second throne is obviously occupied by his father, the Patriarch, who returned from his imprisonment in Poland in 1620 (see Oman, p. 33). The subject of the painting may thus well be the reception of the embassy headed by Sir John Merrick in that year. The final word on this question rests with the art historians but in the work of identification they may receive valuable help from Milton's colourful descriptions.

¹⁹ See the caption to the reproduction of this painting in Charles Oman's book: "The English Silver in the Kremlin, 1557-1663." London, 1961.

MIKLÓS SZENCZI

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ARTS

THE PARIS EXHIBITION OF HUNGARIAN ART

"Ogre (man-eating giant—etymology dubious) perhaps originates from the word hongre, hongrois. In fairy-tales a ravenous giant who eats little children." With this quotation taken from the twentieth century Larousse *L'Humanité* began its review of the Hungarian exhibition held in the Petit Palais. (*L'Humanité*, 29th February, 1966.) Later on, the writer of the article, in discussing the barbaric pomp of the art dating from the Hungarian nomadic period, reverted to the spirit of the quotation. Nor was it only the art critic of *L'Humanité* who was nonplussed when he had to guide his reader through the Hungarian collection at the Petit Palais. Here is the beginning of another article taken at random: "In the second half of the tenth century the Hungarians arrived in the Danube valley from the East; there the Medieval charm of Western art soon cast its spell over the steppe-art of these bold horsemen, but this attachment withered when the Turks occupied central Hungary and held the country subjugated for a century and a half..." (*L'Aurore*, Paris, 3rd May, 1966.) If we were to survey all the press reviews of the show, we would see that this short opinion is typical. Although the exhibition goes up to the middle of the twentieth century, most of the criticisms agree that Hungarian "attachment to the charm of the West" did not produce anything noteworthy—in the critics'

opinion—after the decline of the Middle Ages.

This is usually the case when we compare our culture with that of the West. We are fully aware that the confrontation obliges us to be modest. We also know that our possibilities are smaller and more limited, and yet the suspicion crosses the mind whether it is inevitable that our culture should be introduced—as it is in the *Humanité* article—with false notions about feeding on children's flesh. Isn't there some basic mistake in the gesture with which we introduce ourselves, isn't there an error in the manner of the confrontation? Couldn't this be done better, in a more natural way and with more favourable results?

The guest exhibition of Hungarian art in Paris is again such a case. For the gesture can be misunderstood. To display at one go the art of ten centuries at the Petit Palais might mean to the uninitiated that this is all there is of Hungarian art. Although it was our intention to offer a survey, the objective result was questionable. It is evident that only what is permanent can remain memorable. Instead of a single "survey"—or perhaps subsequent to it—only a permanent participation in the art exhibitions of Western Europe would serve the purpose. If we are unable to ensure this, our solemn entry in the Petit Palais may easily give an impression similar to that made by the Hungarian

Archbishop Tamás Bakócz when he marched along the streets of sixteenth-century Rome seeking to win the papal throne: It was a random attempt timed between a Turkish invasion and a national peasant war.

A comprehensive survey

The core of the exhibition, the Hungarian Middle Ages, is in itself a complete whole. Some months prior to the Paris show it was exhibited at Neuchâtel in Switzerland. This was a more successful and more characteristic venture, since—however random the material of such a touring exhibition may be—the unbroken homogeneity of the period between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries as well as the expert selection made by the collaborators of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts succeeded in producing an impressive collection. It would have been better to leave this material untouched instead of completing it with Hungarian Baroque art, which is definitely provincial, or with contemporary works chosen without apparent purpose. The artistic past of a nation has plenty of periods unsuitable for display at touring exhibitions; the historic atmosphere and objective culture can be presented to foreign viewers only indirectly, by means of certain documents and photographs. The Classicism of the first part of the nineteenth century was, for example, one phase in the history of Hungarian art. It produced individual and singular works in the field of architecture. Another was the final period of the Baroque centuries when folk art started flourishing in a way that compensated for many things. This period might be particularly valuable for a public interested in Hungarian folklore and even for persons who regard folk art through the prism of modern art. In the art history of recent times the Hungarian *art nouveau* or *Jugendstil* is still to be discovered. In the fields of architecture, applied arts and painting alike this movement produced works that could complete,

in a most illuminating way, the overall picture of the "*Sezession*" exhibitions of Munich and Vienna. The revival of *art nouveau* would especially justify the presentation of this material to an international public. Obviously the "ten centuries of Hungarian art" fall into many smaller but more palpable and convincing periods, each of which would require an exhibition of a different character. Of course, the contemporary material demonstrates most painfully our inexperience in the world of foreign exhibitions. The artists who painted the pictures and the experts who selected them suffer equally from this voluntary absence from European competition. In this respect no reasonably satisfactory success can be expected before regular exchanges of exhibitions are started.

And yet the Hungarian exhibition in Paris had some incontestable merits. First of all it succeeded in calling attention to the existence of Hungarian art. Moreover, we learned by dismal experience that to knock now and again at the door of European culture with representative pretensions is no substitute for conducting a modest but permanent dialogue—if we expect to make a representative appearance. These experiences will bear fruit when the next exhibition is to be staged, if we are not utterly forgetful. And there is another lesson, even more fundamental, a lesson that may appear surprising to non-Hungarians. It was a most felicitous step to exhibit the material, after its return, in the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest, to show it to the Hungarian public. Here we could get some idea of the art treasures of our own past, and of the internal proportions and concrete values of centuries of Hungarian art.

Owing to a number of reasons we have never before surveyed our art as a whole. One is purely technical: the material of this show was collected from the stock of a dozen museums in different parts of the country. In vain do summaries of art history meant for domestic use enumerate side by side the various objects—works of art have a volume,



MASTER G. H.: VIRGIN MARY
64.5 × 51 cm, 1471

Overleaf:
TAMÁS KOLOZSVÁRI: THE BEARING OF THE CROSS
OIL-TEMPERA, 87 × 68.5 cm, 1427



Sicut uultis ut fiat uobis sic fiat illis ueltra



HEAD OF AN UNKNOWN KING, FROM KALOCSA
RED MARBLE, 17 CM, 12TH CENTURY



AQUAMANILE
BRONZE, 42.5 CM, 13TH CENTURY



PÁL SZINYEI-MERSE (1845-1920): THE SWING
OIL, 35.7 × 43 cm, UNDATED

Overleaf:
MIHÁLY MUNKÁCSY (1844-1900): DUSTY ROAD
OIL, 96 × 129.7 cm, 1881



space and atmosphere that cannot be conveyed through the pages of a book. This could be easily answered by the statement that the same situation prevails in other countries too, and that a smaller nation may even have an advantage when speculatively selecting a smaller number of works of art. But this advantage is only apparent. Actually, larger cultural areas have always owned creations that in themselves are able to represent not only the specific character of the region in question, its proportion and scale, but also the changing and interrelated cultural strata of successive periods. But Eastern Europe—including Hungary—hardly possesses such a comprehensive group of art relics. And this as a result of historical factors. Even if there used to be Hungarian palaces and towns that developed organically and accumulated the treasures of centuries in layers growing one upon the other, they were swept away many centuries ago by history. Who would remember today what there was at fourteenth century Nagyvárád in addition to the long since vanished statues of three kings cast in bronze by the brothers of Kolozsvár? (The statue of St. George in Prague is also the work of these masters.)

The Middle Ages

For this reason the unquestionable reality and sensuous palpability of the Hungarian Middle Ages overwhelmed us with pleasant surprise. The unbroken existence of the Hungarian state from the eleventh to the fifteenth century as well as its material culture, which developed ever more richly and in no way inferior to any other, had previously been to us like the text of compulsory literature readings at school: a material known but never seriously believed in. The sabretache plates of the Magyars had to be brought back from Paris for the Hungarian public to go and "see" them. The ornamentation of these sabretache plates is up to a point specific: a variation of Persian-

Sassanian palmettes. No doubt, it points to an Oriental origin, but by no means with the exotic and "barbaric" character assumed, as a matter of course, by several critics of the Paris exhibition uninformed in the history of arts. All over the continent the tenth century produced an ornamental art thoroughly permeated by the motifs, often similarly Eastern in origin, of the wandering tribes of the Great Migration Period. Thus the palmette motif was only one of many; in any event its westernmost occurrence was in the valley of the Danube. However, the appearance of this ornamental culture is important not for its "barbaric" character but as a clue to the rapid unfolding of the Hungarian Romanesque style. Be it in the form of architecture, of ornamental or fine arts, the Romanesque style developed this archaic idiom of motifs, and the Hungarian masters had only to switch over from Persian-Sassanian palmettes to the ribbon-ornamentation of Celtic-Viking origin, or other Frankish-Gothic or Italian ornamentation, to pursue the natural rhythm of their development within universal European culture. In the material exhibited, works of goldsmiths demonstrate most beautifully this unbroken line of development. The animal-human forms of aquamaniles and candlesticks—often fantastic—are the results of the same synthesis: they are the fruits of the stylistic idiom of surviving Antiquity and of the Great Migration Period. One of the masterpieces of the show, the aquamanile in the form of a centaur drumming a tambura and carrying on its back a small flute-playing manikin is an example of this synthesis. It has not been determined whether this composition is a survival of the antique pair of Cheiron and Achilles or something more impersonal: one of a number of Romanesque grotesque figurations that had been dissolved into ornamentation at the time of the Great Migration. Particularly enlightening is the great *Gesamtkunstwerk* of this period, the complete absorption by architecture and the applied arts of the so-called "higher" fine

arts. The highest degree of plastic perfection was reached in the "genre" of vessels holding water for washing the hands.

However, the exhibition can scarcely illustrate the scale and healthy evolution of Hungarian Romanesque art—this was the age of stone-carvers, and it is chiefly fragments, though of high quality, that have come down to us from our churches. Thus the "personality" of the show was a representative of Hungarian art from a later period, from the centuries of Gothic art. Master M. S., whom we know only by his initials, may have painted his panels, these nervous and restless compositions constructed of fragile forms in a russet colour, about 1506. Two of them were taken to the Petit Palais from Hungary; the third came from the Museum of Lille and is supposedly related to the former. And, indeed, the pictures hung side by side again demonstrated that they had been made by the same master. (This was confirmed by Professor André Chastel in *Le Monde*, 29th April, 1966.) Master M. S. was the only artist in the exhibition who scored an undivided success, who up to a point may have provided a revelation and whose art—at least in a subjective observer's opinion—harmonizes with the subtleties of late Hungarian easel painting. Evidently, this harmony is not a manifestation of some mysterious Hungarian temperament but a heritage preserved in the related circles of German and Czech art and recurring atavistically. At the source of this heritage is Master M. S., who with an individual inspiration made use of Dürer's engravings. This is one of the reasons why we regret that, for example, the easel paintings of Béla Kondor, an artist working today, were not included in the modern part of the exhibit. His compositions too are nurtured on the heritage of German graphic art and yet, at the same time, are able to render topical—although with some savour of eclecticism, with a great suggestivity—the vibrating golden skies of the late Gothic style and the nervous agility of the "decline

of the Middle Ages." In this tense manner of composition, belatedly ecstatic and romantic even in Master M. S.'s case, the historic atmosphere of the Danube Basin may be at work. Thus it would have been worth while for those who organized the exhibition to emphasize more strongly this characteristic.

Of course, the more staid and classic tradition is also to be found in the altarpieces, dated 1427, painted by Tamás of Kolozsvár, the first significant artist of easel painting. As a matter of fact, he represents the Gothic style, which was still strong, and even if his forms are less emotional and fascinating, this feeling of security gives an idea of what the style of fifteenth century Hungarian easel painting—now so faded as to become almost unknown—was like. Seen from the angle of present tastes fond of distortions and stylized colours, some works of the naive artists of easel painting, provincial in their own days too, have become imbued with unexpected poetic qualities (e.g., Master G.H.'s Annunciation wrapped in unlikely greys). But it was under the reign of King Matthias Corvinus that the classic tradition grew really strong. Thanks to his widespread activity as a Maecenas, the Renaissance was introduced to Hungary earlier than it took root in the North of France, in England or the German Hanseatic towns. Buda and Visegrád became vanguards of the Florentine Renaissance and produced, in addition to the illuminations of the Corvina volumes of the far-famed library, suggestive works first and foremost in the field of the applied arts. The finest among the stove tiles with figural compositions rank as high as independent works of plastic art; the brilliant colours and the many and diversified forms of a surface of floor tiles testify to the high level of maiolica craft. Alas, Matthias's activity as patron of arts remained an episode only and the relics of his activity as a Maecenas wind up that part of the exhibition that forms an independent, complete unit.

The Baroque Period

The works of the Baroque period were included in the exhibition only for the sake of "continuity." However small their number, they take up space superfluously. Let us admit: a broken history and an art fighting against provincialism and maintained by foreigners are characteristic of the Baroque centuries in Hungarian art. Although for Hungarians Mányoki's portrait of Ferenc Rákóczi is a fond memory, its idealized clumsiness will not be mitigated in foreign eyes by any historical piety. The same holds good for other works of Baroque art. In the Petit Palais an animated sketch by Maulbertsch, borrowed from a French collection, was the only really outstanding piece to suggest that several distinguished masters of Austrian Baroque art had worked in Hungary and left many significant frescoes to posterity. The first product of nineteenth century art mentioned by French critics was Károly Markó's landscape of plastic realism, "Visegrád," a painting which foreshadowed progress. In the eyes of the Hungarian middle class Mihály Munkácsy was for a long time "the greatest Hungarian painter." Indeed, his Turneresque vision, the painting entitled "Dusty Road," bears witness to his unquestionable talent—but, unfortunately few pictures of his of this standard exist. Pál Szinyei Merse's "Picnic in May," this plein-air painting of very audacious colours, is a more significant work. Both in its bourgeois ease and in the access it gives to the open air within the frame of a painting, this picture, painted in 1873, points to Manet's art. "Picnic in May" might be the overture in fine arts of a country finding itself again and rapidly developing a bourgeois mentality.

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Unfortunately the exhibition was unable to represent the further development of painting, which soon came to full bloom.

The Hungarian art of the turn of the century is unthinkable without Csontváry's "Cedar" pictures. (We mention only parenthetically that the "intoxicating flowers" of Master M. S. and the magic vegetation growing in a symbol of destiny painted by Csontváry* could well have been shown again here.) The decorativeness of Rippl-Rónai, who worked as a member of the French group, Nabis, and later returned to Hungary, and the qualities of Károly Ferenczy, who gave to the plein-air of Munich a local peculiarity, were only well-built foundations for the independent talent of their successors. However, since none of the larger or the smaller compositions of Csontváry's were taken to Paris, the edifice itself was missing from this period. The fact that Csontváry's pictures were held back arose, apart from technical difficulties, from a certain lack of a feeling for proportions: the most independent figure of fairly recent times should not have been excluded from the exhibition.

The early Hungarian avant garde too was completely missing, although it also played an important part internationally: Lajos Kassák's group endowed the later Bauhaus with highly talented artists—László Moholy Nagy, Marcel Breuer, the theoretician Ernő Kállai, [etc. Béla Czóbel, known as a member of the Fauves, was not included, although there are few Hungarian artists who could expect so understanding a welcome at the Petit Palais as this artist who spent half his life in Paris.

The selection from the years between the two world wars was also incomplete. The singular art of Derkovits** and Egrý*** (these examples of an individually inspired utilization of Cubism and Expressionism) was among the most important achievements of Hungarian painting in that period. But of

* On Csontváry see the article by Lajos Németh in *The N. H. Q.*, No. 14.

** On Gyula Derkovits see Gábor Ö. Pogány's article in *The N. H. Q.*, No. 1.

*** On József Egrý see Sándor Lánicz's article in *The N. H. Q.*, No. 4.

no lesser importance—particularly for the foreigner—is the later development of the avant garde, first and foremost the art of Lajos Vajda, * who died young. In his compositions of fragile beauty—non-figurative or surrealist-folkloristic in their spirit but imbued with a profound intellectuality—he was one of the most interesting artists of Eastern Europe in the 'thirties, and the only artist who approached independently and so early the world of Klee's problems. The painters gathered around Vajda conveyed in a suggestive way the combination of a progressive artistic approach and of an anti-fascist attitude. Their inclusion in the exhibition would have thrown light on the years following the second World War.

Hungarian art, like Hungarian society, is to-day going through a period of transition. The selection perhaps over-emphasized the academic at the expense of the younger, experimental painters whose work is not without importance and interest.

Jenő Barcsay's small-size Constructivist paintings are modest pictures, not real vintage Barcsay,** but economical in the utiliza-

* On Lajos Vajda see the article by Éva Körner in No. 16, and the reminiscences of Lajos Bálint ("The Search for the Archetypal Form") in No. 23 of The N. H. Q.

** On Barcsay see the article by István Genthon in No. 15 of The N.H.Q.

tion of their means; they perhaps best hold their own ground. Domanovszky's larger size non-figurative paintings and László Bartha's guaches are not examples of their best work.

It may be because of their translucent material that the sheets of Feledy, Gross and Kondor, representing new Hungarian graphic art, which is otherwise more self-confident, were less noticed among the works of sturdier media.

Sculpture is a great question mark in the modern section, a branch of art almost completely neglected by the organizers of the exhibit. Their reference to lack of space is by no means convincing. During the time the Hungarian exhibition was held at the Petit Palais, the small plastic works of Tibor Vilt were shown at the Paris Galerie Ledoux and had a remarkable success. No doubt there would have been room for these pieces in the great exhibition, along with the works of other Hungarian sculptors: Ferenc Medgyessy, Dezső Bokros-Birman, Béni Ferenczy, Miklós Borsos and Erzsébet Schaár or others. It is to be hoped that this exhibition will go further, to other European and even overseas capitals, complemented by a wider variety of exhibits in its modern section to give an all-round picture of Hungarian art to-day.

GÉZA PERNECZKY

VICTOR VASARELY

One critic has called Victor Vasarely "the luckiest painter of our days," though Fortune took him by the hand just forty years ago. For he was spared a lot of unnecessary work and frustrating detours when in 1926 he enrolled in the Medical University in Budapest, instead of the Academy of Arts.

The teachers of the Academy were upholders of academism and any of them who did not look upon the Impressionists as downright frauds passed for progressive. Many talents withered for good in the stuffy atmosphere of the school-rooms decorated with reproductions of Greek art.

Besides attending the Medical University Vasarely also went to the classes of a private academy. Although he was taught nothing there, he was at least left alone to study and learn on his own whatever he needed.

Budapest

He dissected in the mornings, and drew nudes in the afternoons, learning about the live body, the living form, together with the structure, the geometry of the bones and muscles. This school had the same significance for him that Strasbourg Cathedral had for Goethe: a discovery—to be realized consciously only years afterwards—of the tasks of a lifetime, a preparation that implied all the phases of his later fulfilment. Already at that early time he made experiments with the use of optical delusions in art, particularly in graphic art. Was there a more complete optical delusion than that the dead body on the dissecting table in the morning came alive in the afternoon, that the demonstration in anatomy and the artist's model were distinguished only by the chemical process manifesting itself in motion?

In 1928–29 he studied at Sándor Bortnyik's Workshop, the "Budapest Bauhaus." Here too he received a lesson to last a lifetime: he made the acquaintance of László Moholy-Nagy and the constructivists. That is, he became acquainted with a theory and practice that sought to overcome the confusion prevailing in the world and art by aiding one another. The geometric ordering of pictures was the final result of a process at once pictorial and conceptual. Malevits' black square on a white ground was not merely a pictorial creation but "the quintessence of a plan for the world" (Wieland Schmied), "the icon of a new state of consciousness" (Hartmann), an attempt to re-establish the harmony of the physical and spiritual worlds. Mondrian's right-angle was not simply the element of a picture but the new measure

of a universal harmony exempt from individual emotions and from the differences that get expressed in more personal terms.

Paris

Vasarely went to Paris in autumn 1930. Success eluded him: for fifteen years he lived on his drawings, made illustrations and designed placards and books. He turned these bread-winning jobs into an organic part of his life-long programme. He made freedom of necessity, creative work of drudgery. In his graphic works he utilized all the achievements of modern art, enabling it to be reproduced and multiplied and making it available to those for whom billboards, posters and shop-windows replace museums and exhibition halls. He summed up the result of his work in a series of drawings consisting of 80 sheets. Each sheet is a study in method and matter. Each was made taking into account the technical conditions of reproduction. The series offers examples of solutions to the most varied graphic tasks. It is a textbook for those who wish to serve the demands of modern life without aesthetic compromise. And this store of examples stimulating others is at the same time a deeply personal creation: the draft of a life programme, a detailed plan of a life-work yet to be accomplished. It is not the daring of the design that is exceptional since all considerable artists get their task and probably also the order of their works clear in their minds before producing the first work that really counts. What merits our admiration is the loyalty with which he stuck to his youthful plans, refusing to throw them overboard in favour of changeable fashions as he went along. Yet neither for the sake of clinging to former plans was he unfaithful to the changing world, and time. He owed his first significant success to the exhibition of this series in the Denise René Gallery in 1944.

Success made it possible for him to take

up the brush again after a long pause. The paintings dating from after the war are soundings, experiments, the applications of the techniques that had been solidified in his graphics. After a short detour—some of his pictures exhibit Cubist and Symbolist influence—he found his real element in the employment of black and white, the two representing the whole range of colours. In one of his pictures the diagonal black stripes conjure up with their vaguely suggested curves the form of a galloping horse and also evoke the sensation of its movement, speed and rhythm. His lissom lines are captivatingly effortless; they have a charm of their own, while in the dialectic of his colours there is a gravity that is more profound and dramatic than the meaning of the form. The harmony of his black-and-white paintings is expressive not merely of the order of geometry but also of the order and discipline of the attitude of self-assurance. The optics of his pictures elicits from the spectator such feelings as have hitherto been unknown, such passions as have not yet been named. Vasarely legalized the unnamed emotions and impulses that the spectator too discovers in himself.

The age invested the black-and-white with a new meaning. "Why black-and-white pictures?" the artist puts the question in his Notes on behalf of the uncertain spectator.—"It is to enable us the better to render the art of the newspaper, television and the film. That is, the most readily comprehensible information. But the thing goes further: black and white, dot and dash, yes and no, are elements of works of art that can be produced by the electronic computer."

These pictures were not yet abstract in the real sense of the term since the abstract composition was built out of representational elements identifiable with details of reality. Chance assisted the next step, chance that holds the key to closed doors.

In 1947 he spent a holiday in Belle-Île. The shells found on the shore and the pebbles worn to an oval shape, so eagerly

collected by Braque, impressed him but not by their unconscious beauty and captivating formal perfection. He saw the line of the waves recurring in the oval shape of the pebbles, the form of the movement that had worn and moulded them to its own image. He discovered that these forms could be traced back to an ellipsoidal motion, the ever recurrent movement of the sea. What he found worthy of admiration was not the forms of Nature but its creative activity in bringing about such perfect sculptural forms.

The next year chance presented him with the experience of destruction following the experience of creativity. He visited Gordes, a town reduced to ruins, where the planes, ovals, squares, tumbled-down walls of houses assumed the reality of regular ground-plans delimited by broken, jagged stones; destruction was incarnated in the same form as creation. The proliferation of cells may equally serve growth or decay according to the mechanism of organization. In a similar way formal elements as such might mean anything in themselves: They are given a definite meaning only by the structure. Gordes provided the antithesis to the purpose of Vasarely's plan and programme; the dynamics of this contradiction opened a new phase in the painter's development.

His pictures broke away from external reality. As the rounded pebbles on the shore were expressive of Nature's creativity and motion, the ovals and rectilinear figures of Vasarely's paintings realized the painter's visions of Nature invariable in her variations; in Gordes these formal elements were the work of destruction, while in his pictures they are the symbols of creation, birth and victory over death. Anyone can make ellipses and parallelograms but there are few who can express a pictorial idea through these forms.

The "Folklore of the Globe"

He found the justification of his pictorial conception in Wittgenstein's theory of im-

age. On the basis of the intimate internal identity of the structure of the natural world and the picture, Vasarely considered the system of formal elements, determined by the composition, to be a model of another—of Nature's—system. "We form pictures of the facts for ourselves," says Wittgenstein. "There must be something common in the picture and that which is pictured in order for the one to be the picture of the other. That which must be common in the image and reality, so that it can picture reality in its specific manner, is no other than the form of picturing the picture."

He did not rest content with expressing motion with the help of symbolic forms. In 1948 he placed two paintings on glass one above the other so that the pictures changed and were modified as the viewer passed before them. The forms were shattered and re-assembled into a new unity in consequence of the changing viewpoint, and the alteration of the forms in space was complemented by the temporality of motion.

The formal elements of the picture, such as curves of varying radii, parabolas, hyperbolas, ellipsoidal arcs, intersect and fill the surface with continuous tension. The line is more than simply the bound of forms; it defines between two forms a relationship expressible also in a mathematical formula. The same relationship holds together form and colour fusing them in a plastic unit. Vasarely wished to achieve spatial and temporal dimensions with motion, which is not there in the picture, and must be contributed by the spectator. He expected the viewer to cooperate with him in the creation, to complement the painter's work with his own imagination and experiences, that is, to enter into the world of the picture as if it were his own creation. And then the work reveals itself, yields its secrets as the effect of the common efforts of the painter and the spectator united by an inner affinity.

Vasarely is aware of the kind of significance his work has beyond aesthetics: "Works of art based on the theory of motion charge

the plastic arts with a humanistic content that affects their aesthetic, moral, social and economic aspects alike. This idea, which proclaims man's self-transcendence in our continually progressing world and gives impetus to the exchange of mechanical procedures, plastic activities and artistic thoughts, is no other than the unification of bodily and intellectual motions. . . . The work of art is no longer the concentration of all the qualities for reaching one goal but the creation of a prototype leading further, a prototype whose qualities can be carried over into various operations or new works." He found probably the simplest and most universal pictorial manner of expression of our age, in his own words "the folklore of the globe."

The quieting down of motion

But this ceaseless restlessness of the picture, its vibrancy, which is obedient to the least information, is capable of calming down, of freezing into immobility. In Vasarely's pictures motion contains its own opposite: calm. This is what Georges Braque demanded of painting: "That bird should at last be drawn which at the same time flies and perches on a quiet twig." With the quieting down of motion the colours appropriate to calm appear at once. Instead of the antitheses the transitions seem to dominate, delicate modulations of colour and tone fill the surface of the picture.

We are often too tired to believe in the naive rationalism of the great constructivist generation and its monolithic order. The constructivists imprisoned behind the bars of straight lines running to infinity—no doubt as a protest against a more oppressive imprisonment—the spirit of mobility, playfulness and poetry.

Vasarely set the spirit free and let it loose over the fields and waves of the picture. He obeyed our most intimate human desire and gave us the most in doing so. He did

not even prove unfaithful to his masters since the aged Mondrian himself admitted that "the plain surface and the straight line are suitable to tell everything but the right of speech is reserved to the painter alone." Of course he speaks not only on his own behalf, Vasarely adds.

Not only are his studio and his work methods like those of a designing engineer. The history of the fine arts is the history of artistic techniques, materials and methods; the development and direction of Vasarely's pictorial revolution is also best understood in the knowledge of his techniques and working methods. He tells us the story of the birth of his pictures in his Notes.

He makes no preparations. He needs no inspiration, divine frenzy. And yet the birth of the vision cannot be hurried or artificially produced. The forms and the colours come together, the one is the condition of existence of the other. The first sketch embodying the idea is always small in size and it is then followed by any number of further studies. The sketches are then filed in a cabinet, sometimes remaining there for months and years. The time of incubation or gestation is long; the final shape of the picture comes slowly. "And now an exciting time follows," he writes. The colours and forms must be harmonized on a larger scale, in the same harmony as that worked out on the sketch-book scale. He copies the picture on to plexiglass or cellophane and projects the composition on to the wall with the help of a magic lantern. He magnifies the image until it is the right size. He traces the projected picture in black pencil and copies it on the canvas with the help of cross-lines.

His working method led him to the following conclusion: "The proportional enlargement of the figures has been necessitated by the speeding up of the tempo in all fields of our life. This forces us to hurry, to be impatient even. We no longer have time for long contemplation. We have lost our joy in details. Our lives have become com-

plicated. We are wasting lots of time. For the same reason we want to take in everything quickly. We seek the direct. The impact of the momentary shock. To this new world of human emotions the big formats and glaring local colours correspond." And the work of art is that whose value lies not in its individuality but in its reproducibility, that is, "not in the rarity of the object but in the rarity of the value represented by the object." He based his art on constants so that forms and colours should come to his hand in equivalent proportions in the process of recreation. "Cadmium, cobalt, ultramarine chemically; straight lines, curves, angles geometrically; proportion, distance, size are mathematically measurable constants." The constants naturally have no independent function in the picture: they are merely constituent elements of the pair, form and colour, which we could call one term of the equation; for "two pairs of form and colour are needed for the plastic unity to come into existence. This unity is nothing else but the standard measure of art and the touchstone of susceptibility. The plastic form-colour pair represents always some measurable, constant, objective quantity; its interpretation on the other hand is subjective, because the quantities pass over into qualities. This interpretation varies according to the responsiveness and susceptibility of the spectator. Therefore we state the law of the transformability of the plastic unity: this unity, which is initially expressed in terms of positive-negative or negative-positive, black-white or white-black dualities, can be easily converted into oppositions and harmonies of colour... What of ancient painting? We will supplement it with pliability. Against the masterpieces of the past, which were realized in themselves, we put our prototypes. We do not at all deny the principle of the thing-in-itself; we advocate the principle of multiplicity only because that is more generous and humane. This initial prototype is a work of art conceived in such

a way that at the moment of realization it manifests itself in not one but a hundred copies. . . Henceforward thought and the artistic procedures must keep pace with the most progressive ideas and technology of the age; in this way the dream of the co-operation of civilization and culture will come true. The less we take pride in the individualities in our works the more universally our minds will shine. . . Work based on the theory of motion can be refashioned and so the artistic thought inherent in it becomes indestructible. The object ceaselessly rejuvenating itself in its original form is given eternal existence, and in this way there will open up the tremendous prospect of the systematic distribution of art brought within everybody's reach."

The Role of the Colours

Classic constructivism made a maximum use of the divergent qualities of colours. In Vasarely's pictures the colours often change their original—optical—qualities: the white becomes more ponderous and distant than the black, the green larger and warmer than the yellow of equivalent surface. And since form and content are inseparable, and since the form is the geometrical expression of the relationship among the colours, one form-colour pair seems positive, while another pair seems negative. Owing to the effect of the contradictory perspective the elements achieve depth in space and create an illusion of movement. The form-colour ensemble therefore includes in itself the potentiality of space, time and movement; we see the rhomb as a square in motion, the ellipse as a rotating circle on the level canvas which under the effect of motion becomes a four-dimensional space.

Vasarely referred to his pictorial practice as kinetism. Kinetism started in fact in his graphic sheets as the exact and logical working out of the intuitions outlined in the "plan." It was not an accidental discovery,

but an organic development which utilized the accidental, the idea that had haunted him as a young painter.

In the "Yellow Manifesto," published in 1955, which formulated the theory of kinetism and outlined the road he intended to pursue as an artist he wrote: "Our circumstances have changed. Our ethics, our aesthetics perforce must also change. In old times the idea of a plastic work of art resided in the handicraft methods, in the myth of the "unique work." Today on the other hand the idea re-awakens in contemplating the possibility of reproduction, multiplication and dissemination. Is there any harm done to the unity or qualities of literary or musical works when they are widely circulated? The majestic pageant of the static pictures extends from the Lascaux cave paintings to the abstracts. . . the future will bring us the joy of the new plastic beauty in motion." Vasarely's plastic unity affected by the pair form-colour and the four dimensions was not simply a pictorial solution, but a correlative in art of his view of the Whole, the new measure of a universal harmony, comparable to Malevits' square and Mondrian's right-angle.

In his Manifesto he attempts to extricate his art from the schemas of previous aesthetic thinking. He considers reproducibility, the possibility of continuation and modification and the variability of size to be the cardinal features of his art. This means not only a break with the phenomena of external reality but at the same time an abstraction from the material shape of the picture. It comes to the same thing whether the painter expresses the pictorial idea in oil, water-colour or pencil since the picture is essentially pure imagination, an idea, a vision, which can be conveyed in any of the pictorial media and can be reproduced in any form. "In this way the picture," says Wieland Schmied, "comes close to the world of the word, the logos." The notion of the image turned into idea has been known since Plato, but it has become reality

only in our days, and has fascinated only the artists of our age. Under its effect they have renounced a great deal formerly regarded as indispensable in the fine arts. According to the prophecy of Walter Benjamin: "The fine arts came to an end in the age of technical reproducibility." This solemn piece of wisdom, however, formulates a gross error. For it is not a matter of the possibility of reproduction—Leonardo can also be reproduced—but a matter of repeatability. In classic art the notion of the picture was inseparable from the unique expression, from the idea of the "singular work of art," whereas for the artist of today the concept of the picture is not identical with its unique realization. The idea does not spend itself, is not exhausted after a single realization. It can be repeated in oil, tempera, colour print, slides. It can also be repeated in different colours, and what is more, with changed forms. Naturally, always adhering to the basic plan of the idea. And each of these formulations have an independent existence: none of them is a copy but all of them are new visual expressions of the same thought or recognition.

The transformation of the idea of the picture has resulted in the transformation of the arts. "If the different branches of creative art—painting, sculpture, architecture, town-planning—are seen in their coordination, we can say that the synthesis of the plastic arts has already come into being, Vasarely sums up his views on the matter. "Painting, sculpture—these are old-fashioned terms; it is much better to speak of two-, three-, and multi-dimensional plastic arts. We have no longer to do with separate manifestations of creative sensibility but with the development of a common plastic sensibility in various fields. . . . The multi-coloured town—multi-coloured here refers in particular to the diversity of the covering materials used on buildings, etc.—represents for me the complete synthesis: the fundamental prin-

ple of the integration of the arts revitalizes all the branches of the plastic arts in 'the total function,' which can be most consistently put into effect just in the multi-coloured town at this stage of our history. . . . The multi-coloured town realizes that unique architectural synthesis that ensures for the plastic value of a material space a spiritual and intellectual dimension so that it can lay the triple foundation of space-form-colour in the universal consciousness. . . . Like the units of the great ages of the past the multi-coloured town is the unit of today, the architectural construction that can realize the relation of the spiritual dimension of bodily space with its own counterpart, the contemporary social structure. . . . When we justify the acceptance of the forms of industrial proliferation, we incorporate the 'work of art' into the community."

Vasarely's name is also linked with the most fashionable trend in the art of our day—Op-art—which is rejected by our respecting intellectual as the miniskirt is rejected by Dior's designers. The fashion designers, because of their customers; the fastidious aestheticians, with an appeal to the "eternal" nature of art. Gothic art was not harmed by the fact that not only the church tower was arched but also the shoes of the knights; in the same way modern art was not rendered flippant by some of Vasarely's optical tricks or Le Parc's fun-fair. The idea of Op-art and its practical employment was essentially implied in the youthful plan, and practical application always means popularization. The plan has not yet been carried into effect in all its details, and even if some of his further experiments should become fashions of the day, it remains a sad truth that for the time being the spirit, intellectual and moral ideas of his art are not threatened by popularization. Though this alone would mean Vasarely's real triumph.

CSABA SÍK

MUSICAL LIFE

BUDAPEST MUSIC WEEKS, 1966

The excitement attending the opening of the 1966 Budapest Music Weeks suggested the growing importance and broader framework this by now traditional autumn festival is acquiring. Beginning this year the programmes scheduled for the Music Weeks form part of a more ambitious Budapest Festival of Arts. The Festival included big-name concerts, the International Piano Competition, a ballet première at the Opera House, a Week of prize-winning Hungarian Films, several important exhibitions and a number of dramatic productions—all in all a convincing demonstration of the project's large scope.

What did this year's Music Weeks have to offer? There were three first performances of works by Hungarian composers—one new piece each by Gyula Dávid, György Ránki and Rudolf Maros—and a really magnificent parade of the best Hungarian concert artists.

The Hungarian Tátrai String Quartet celebrated its twentieth birthday with an anniversary concert. The performance of Zsuzsanna Sirokay and László Mező, and Imre Antal's triumph at the International Piano Competition among others were welcome evidence of a breakthrough by the younger generation of Hungarian concert artists. Finally many people enjoyed a chamber music concert featuring a revival of already performed and successful works by contemporary Hungarian composers. Among

the impressive number of famous foreign guest soloists visiting Budapest were the singers Irmgard Seefried and Peter Pears, the instrumentalists Lajos Kentner, Hans Pischner and Igor Oistrakh, and above all Artur Schnabel, one of the greatest living masters of the piano. Visiting foreign ensembles included the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, the Turkish State Symphonic Orchestra, the Rumanian Madrigal Chorus, and the Loewenguth String Quartet. Karel Ančerl, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Hans Swarowsky, Carlo Maria Giulini and Benjamin Britten were the guest conductors.

From such a crowded programme, we are able to deal in detail with only a few important events. The choice of Bartók's *Cantata Profana* and Liszt's *Faust Symphony* for the opening concert by the Hungarian State Concert Orchestra, conducted by János Ferencsik, was excellent and representative. In Bartók's work a wonderful unknown new world is created from the synthesis of primitive and ancient, of sophisticated and modern emotions and thoughts; whereas Liszt's monumental masterpiece is perhaps the most modern musical portrayal of the nineteenth century. Moreover, especially because of its influence on Bartók, it is a symbol of the uninterrupted development and eternal renewal of art. Ferencsik gave an inspired interpretation of the two works, emphasizing in the first the mysterious

mythical world of Bartók's music, the "modern archaism" of its introduction which recalls Bach, and the cruel magnificence of its natural force, and stressing in the second the romantic splendour of the *Faust Symphony* and the several levels of meaning and depth of its musical ideas.

Of the three Hungarian premières we were able to attend two: Rudolf Maros's *Euphony* 3 and György Ránki's *Circus*. Maros's work was performed by the Symphonic Orchestra of the Hungarian Radio and Television, with György Lehel conducting. Maros presented some of the interesting tonal possibilities and developmental principles of recent music in his characteristically cultured conception and carefully wrought execution. As a pattern of form he offered the reversed recapitulation of the themes of the work, a principle modern music has been applying since the 1920's and 1930's. (Examples of this are Bartók's "bridge pattern," Hindemith's opera *Hin und zurück*, and some of the most recent Polish music.) Emotional elements appeared chiefly in the middle part of the work, which is inspired by the dance-poetry of Bartók's expressionist period, *The Miraculous Mandarin* and the *Dance Suite*. György Lehel and the orchestra interpreted Maros's composition with admirable concentration and expressive power.

György Ránki's "symphonic dance drama" *Circus* was performed by the State Concert Orchestra, with Gyula Borbély conducting. This dance drama, based on the short story of the same title by Frigyes Karinthy, is music of extraordinary intensity composed with a sweeping imagination that draws the listener into a spiritual vortex. In this sincere and bitter work Ránki borrowed some of the ideas of the great masters to enrich his expression: the dream world as a dramatic framework and the obsessive musical idea that keeps recurring at every twist and turn of the maze of dream logic suggest Berlioz's *Fantastic Symphony*. The sharply interrupted lyric confession as a dramatic process on the other hand recalls the "Intermezzo interrot-

to" movement in Bartók's *Concerto*. The interrupted violin melody itself is developed from Bartók's so-called "Love four-tone" motif, from the theme of *Two Portraits*, in a somewhat sentimental intonation. But let no one be deceived by these influences—*Circus* is a vividly original work every measure of which is characteristic of its composer. The fast film-like flashes of ideas, the patterns of tone-colour and rhythm, and the bitter, sympathy-inviting humour are very much Ránki's own. With a fine sense for parody he even ridicules himself in this music. Listening to this beautiful and significant work, we had the feeling that to get the full effect of these mosaics of mood and emotion, one should not only hear the music but also see the ballet.

The most highly anticipated events of the Music Weeks were Arthur Rubinstein's two concerts. The master returned to Budapest after an interval of over thirty years. During this period his personality has become a legend for Hungarian audiences. The news of his concerts abroad, Thomas Mann's tribute, his recordings and concert broadcasts have all contributed to the Rubinstein legend, so has the fact that Rubinstein is one of the last active representatives of the "golden age" of twentieth-century concert art, of the generation born around 1880. No wonder then that the audience expected his performance to be little short of miraculous.

And the miracle took place. We heard a wise old man whose age is apparent only in the number of his years and whose wisdom is a wealth of experience. Arthur Rubinstein is a youthful personality. His physical stamina, the tirelessness with which he astonished listeners at his two Budapest concerts, on the one hand, and his impressive power of concentration and his artistic approach, more "modern" than "romantic," on the other, were equally indicative of his youthfulness. No, Rubinstein is by no means a "late romantic." He is a twentieth-century musician through and through. In his performance one was less conscious of the

physical than of the intellectual wonder; one forgot to be impressed by the performer because one was overcome by the music.

At the orchestral concert—at which János Ferencsik conducted the State Concert Orchestra in his best form with deep comprehension and artistic humility—Rubinstein played Chopin's *E-minor Concerto* and Brahms's *B-Major Concerto*. At his piano recital he played Schubert's great *B-Major Sonata*, Schumann's *Carnival* cycle and works of Debussy, Ravel and Chopin. His encores were two Chopin pieces at the orchestral concert, and Liszt, Villa Lobos and de Falla compositions at the piano recital.

His playing at both concerts began with a certain reserve, and this deeply and evidently affected his audience. In other words he did not woo his listeners with passionate outbursts, but invited and demanded their full attention and cooperation. As soon as this stimulating bond was formed between artist and audience, its two-way radiation grew almost tangible, and it became obvious that the apparent reserve concealed fullness of feeling. (At the orchestral concert the bond was established during the slow movement of the Chopin *Concerto*, and at the solo recital during the *Carnival*.) This lyricism, however, was revealed only to those who themselves "worked for it," those who have the ability to respond emotionally.

In the first movement of the Chopin *Concerto* the power and concentration of the opening bars and the intimate expression of the secondary theme were overwhelming. The slow movement revealed the inner glow and intensity of Rubinstein's art through his evocative weaving of the theme, the lyricism and logic of his *fiorituras* the enchanting poetry of his *diminuendos*. Equally impressive was the scintillation of the lights and shadows of the closing movement. Rubinstein's Brahms interpretation was even more beautiful. There was no decorative passion here, only the genuinely Brahmsian features: an inner glow, suffering and manly resolution. The energetic Scherzo of the sec-

ond movement switched to a sorrowful Waltz almost unnoticably, and the recapitulation suggested the autumnal lyricism of reminiscence. Rubinstein started the Finale in a light narrative tone, but still this music was both heroic and sorrowful, multi-coloured and irresistibly beautiful.

In the solo recital, the opening number, Schubert's *B-Major Sonata*, immediately captivated listeners with the childishly simple reproduction of the first movement's main theme, the clearly shown meaning of every change in key, and the clean presentation of the themes.

The slow movement's suppressed dramatic glow was exciting. Rubinstein was able to point out the dramatic function of the slight pause before the recapitulation. In the Scherzo the rapid tempo and the full emotional charge of each tempo were impressive. In the Finale Rubinstein presented "the classic Schubert," Beethoven's spiritual kin. In his playing of Chopin, Rubinstein's "modern romanticism," his subtle openings, dramatic tension and naturalness were admirable. This exceptional artist uses the piano with the same directness as the greatest singers use their vocal cords: he is one with the piano, the sovereign master of his instrument. His virtuosity, his masterful feeling for tone-colour and the purity of his musical logic were brilliantly evident in his renderings of Debussy, Ravel and de Falla. (Regrettably, Rubinstein never became really interested in Kodály's piano compositions, which are so close to their music.)

Apart from the quickening glow of youthfulness, these two concerts had another quality that made them unforgettable: the poignant tones of passing, of farewell. This alone reminded one of Rubinstein's age, and it created the enchantment of a never-to-be-repeated great ephemeral moment.

British artists provided the closing chord of the five-week Festival. Peter Pears sang Schubert's *Winterreise* cycle to Benjamin Britten's piano accompaniment. It was a wonderful evening. Pears was able to evoke

Schubert's intimate and sad poesy with exceptional intelligence and awareness, perfect technique and deep feeling. The real sensation of the recital was, however, Britten's piano playing, the high level of his musical interpretation. Every configuration, every characteristic rhythm and every change in harmony had a meaning, a purpose and message in his performance. This absolute understanding of the composer's intention is possible only for someone who is himself a creative artist. The audience had every reason to sense that Schubert's masterpiece was practically "recreated" for them by the performers.

Two days later Britten and Pears were on the concert platform again, this time in Britten's *War Requiem*. This work conducted by János Ferencsik was first performed in Budapest two years after its original première. The Festival performance was directed by two conductors. The full orchestra, the mixed chorus, the children's choir and the soprano (State Concert Orchestra, Budapest

Chorus, the Children's Choir of the Hungarian Radio and Television, and Mária Werner, respectively) were directed by János Ferencsik. The chamber ensemble and the tenor and baritone (Peter Pears and Zsolt Bende) were directed by Britten. This was not an externally imposed distribution of labour, but designed to suggest the structure and intellectual planes of the music. The big ensemble presented the music to the text of the liturgical *Requiem*, and the chamber ensemble sang the musical adaptation of Wilfrid Owen's poetry—as if the meditations and reflections of modern man were linked to the ancient communal words of the funeral mass.

In the closing movement which expresses reconciliation and eternal rest, the full ensemble is united and there is a *rapprochement* in the musical material of the two intellectual spheres as well. This profound and poetic thought closes the work—and closed the 1966 programme of the Budapest Music Weeks as well.

FERENC BÓNIS

AT WORK ON A HAMLET OPERA

I find it difficult to speak about this work I've recently undertaken not without anxiety, embarrassment, even fear, for I think a creative artist can never feel completely confident about what he is doing, and this applies above all to his daring and difficult undertakings. I say this without concurring with the generally held opinion that the possibility of a *Hamlet* opera is foredoomed. I do not mean that I have not reckoned with the risk of failure; I have, of course. The prospect of success at any price cannot be held before one's eyes during the composition of a new work. It is rather that I cannot get rid of the idea. It has eaten into my mind, and it has become a matter of inner compulsion. The work of two or

three years, which this composition will require, cannot turn out to be wasted time. It will have refined my sensibilities, made me aspire to higher standards of creation, disciplined and enriched me with new qualities even if, in the end, the problem of the work remains where it was before I touched it.

I have emphatically believed in the possibility of an opera in Shakespeare's play from the beginning, and to this day opinions to the contrary have not succeeded in disabusing me of that conviction. Perhaps this subjective attitude is my good luck (or else misfortune). After the first re-reading of the play, I put it in imagination on an operatic stage—freed, of course, from the

sense of the oppressive impact of Shakespeare's unique genius. Let me repeat: after reading it. For, under the influence of a theatrical production, this audacious idea would perhaps never have entered my mind. I saw in Shakespeare's work not "the drama of dramas," for in that case my audacity would have been considerably diminished. The first experience left no room for pondering over pros and cons. I conceived of the idea of a *Hamlet* opera more than ten years ago, at the very beginning of my career when I was still at the Academy of Music.

The next great impulse came not from the theatre but from Laurence Olivier's film *Hamlet*, which I saw more than thirty times in two months during its first run here. (On some days I sat through all the performances on end.) Later I managed to put the entire original English text of the film on tape. The Hungarian poet János Arany's superb translation also cast a magic spell over me. I may add that in the course of my work I systematically compare the Hungarian translation with the German and French versions as well as with the English original. In most cases I write the lines of the text in four languages, one under the other, to find out more about prosodic, intonational and syllabic exigencies. After finishing the composition, I should like to fit the vocal score to the original English text—at least at the crucial points. By doing this I hope to avoid the necessity, if it ever arises, of having to translate the Hungarian-language opera back into English. The latter course would be patently absurd, for then each line would be rendered by one identical in content but much poorer in expression.

All the lines of the opera come from Shakespeare's dramatic text. I have refrained from any adaptive re-creation. Naturally there was no question of setting the entire *Hamlet* to music, because that would take eight to ten hours to perform. I had to do some cutting, and the writing of the libretto has been the heaviest responsibility with

which I have had to cope. I had to rely on the backbone of the play and condense in such a way as not to violate the sequence of scenes, on the one hand, nor to impair the philosophic content by the accelerated action, on the other. I strove to make the abbreviations and cuts appear as inconspicuous as possible even to those well-versed in the text. In short, my aim in writing the libretto was to transpose the play into an opera having the air of the "original."

I spent the summer of 1965 in France on Ile d'Yeu in the Atlantic. The ruins of an ancient castle, the sea and the cliffs transformed it into Elsinore (Helsingör) for me. There, working strenuously for a month or so, I roughed out the main design of the opera and put together the final version of the libretto. University professor Françoise Perdoux had been of invaluable help to me in translating into French the text of *Blood Wedding*, my first opera. She learned Hungarian, speaks some Spanish and excellent English, has a fine sense of music and an equal command of linguistics and literature. Her help in the transposition of the *Hamlet* opera will be useful. Subsequently András Mikó, chief manager of the Budapest State Opera House, rendered me great assistance; I had already found him very helpful during the work of producing *Blood Wedding*.

Although *Blood Wedding* was my first opera, it seems to me to be the second, because I can with some justice consider my oratorios and ballets as conscious preparation for the stage. The two oratorios and the six cantatas all had plenty of "plot" and incident. Thus, apart from acquiring a measure of confidence in vocality, I also learned a lot about the possibilities of dramatic expression, not to mention the experience I gained in the search for form and style and in orchestration. This sort of planned activity was to prove essential.

I had probably never engaged in such varied kinds of study as I undertook before trying my hand at composing an opera. The complexity of scenic art demands incredibly

much, little less than the whole man, from those who go in for it. The preparations that went into *Blood Wedding* and more recently into *Hamlet* took longer perhaps than the actual composition. I believe that one should not get down to composing so long as one is occupied with the minor details. On the other hand, the sorting out of the elements, including the most minute, is indispensable to the recognition or discovery of the comprehensive interrelations. No work can be approached without preparation, and this applies in a more than usual degree to a work like *Hamlet*, since it is one of the most complex creations in all world literature. It cannot be read simply with a modern eye, wrenched from its contemporary context; equally, to relate it to nothing but the past is to make nonsense of the play. Masterpieces have a way of changing with time, and this change is a constant. Misapprehensions and "transfers" read into them in conformance with a particular epoch are all inevitably linked to their after-life. Shakespeare's immortality has also had to pay a high price in this respect. Of course, every age may find its image in different conceptions of the masterpieces without doing violence to them. This is because the possibility of "re-living" them is unlimited. What must be looked for are the interrelations.

What Hamlet?

What I would like to achieve is to write an opera that is fully modern, that is contemporary, free from stylization, one in which the stress is not laid on an archaic presentation of the age, the courtly setting and transitory taste. It need not be emphasized that the opera I have in mind will be composed from beginning to end in a premeditated and unified way and will not be a string of set pieces. I discovered Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for myself in its atmosphere of universality. It is not

its historical character that is decisive. That aspect is limited in scope and isolated. Sándor Hevesi (who in the '20s and '30s raised Hungarian Shakespeare productions to a European level) was perfectly right, I feel, when he stated that "this tragedy poses the question of life and death more than any other drama in the world." And *Hamlet* is the only Shakespeare tragedy whose hero continues his existence in the whole of humanity and his fight for justice long after the curtain has dropped on the last scene. This is what makes him timeless and at the same time of our own age. And it is this *Hamlet* I must translate into the idiom of music. *Hamlet* wants above all to be just—he is no hesitant, uncertain personality. Yet he feels that only certainty will entitle him to take action and revenge. The price of attaining certainty is his own death—this is the reason he did not kill Claudius earlier. All his actions are directed towards unmasking Claudius' guilt. He acts when he is sure of what is to be done. (For instance, he has no pity for the spying Polonius hidden behind the arras, nor does he hesitate to settle accounts with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.) Claudius is not a common and stupid criminal. He has deceptive manners and cunning; this makes *Hamlet's* position all the more difficult.

The proportions and formal structure of a drama are not the same on a musical stage as on a theatrical one. The spoken text proceeds faster than the words sung. Even recitative can at best approximate the tempo of speech, whether prose or poetry. In Shakespeare's plays there are no acts properly so-called. The division into acts was probably made by later hands. There is no intermission in the play. Structure must be looked for in the sequence of scenes.

At the beginning of the work I had to commit to memory the portions of the text selected for setting to music. This method has become natural for me and a habit in composing vocal works. Incidentally, memorizing Lorca's *Blood Wedding* was child's play

for me compared to memorizing Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

After learning the text by heart, I realized that in the course of the composition I was to become a director of the play. Simultaneously I must also interpret and re-create, and this is an additional responsibility. (A job no one can eschew.) For this purpose I had to recite the play to myself aloud, so that the starting point of the play should rest on the original foundations even in the new conditions of the musical phrasing and formation. This kind of amateur theatrical recital by repetition becomes almost imperceptibly more and more musical. It is not inventing the notes that will be actually sung that is essential, but deciding their "how." (The setting down of the actual melodies comes only in the final stage, after the many variants have themselves filtered out the "false" ones. This process in the end leads to the inevitable solution, of which it may be said that "it couldn't be any other way." This, by the way, is one reason why it is wrong to attack the text at once with the intention of vocalizing it from the outside, as it were; later it may become impossible to get out of those first grooves, and the composition will have an air of unnaturalness. Everything must be patiently awaited and left in gestation. I have recorded this kind of recital on magnetic tape, and playing it back several times has afforded many fresh insights. The heightened manner of speech often became imperceptibly song-like, and the outlines of the melody, the phrases, the rhythm, the pause-like holding on of a long note, the possibilities of forming *melismata*, the "on-sets," the increasing and decreasing of tone volume, the emphases, diminutions and augmentations were all beginning to take shape. To decide how the textual climaxes and anticlimaxes are related to the whole was a separate concern. Mapping the tempo, dynamics and rhythm also precedes the actual work of composition. Not everything belongs to the sphere of conscious composi-

tion. Planning and arrangement do not exclude instinctive forces and significant intuitions, but merely put them in their places!

This kind of interpretative approach to Shakespeare's play suggests the formal units. Of course it would be all wrong to follow the text slavishly. There are some things that the music will accelerate and other things that it will slow down, expand. To use recitatives against the long broad notes accidentally, as they come, is not to be recommended. Everything must be allotted a place in the continuity so that the "fine," "wise" and "moving" things should not be spoken (sung) as ends in themselves, as so many inserts, but should follow one from the other organically. This is perhaps the hardest thing to achieve in Shakespeare: to reconcile the classic drama with the requirements of the opera.

I do not agree that opera is a moribund art form. It has plenty of life left in it today, and I believe that despite the present crisis it will yet reach a new flowering. The time of the traditional patterns of the "number opera" is gone, and today the literary standard of the librettos is a precondition for success. The only secure literary foundation upon which it is possible to build is one that has enough to say even without the music. On the other hand, the opera, chiefly because of its complex nature, is primarily not an experimental genre. The sounding board—the public—must not be entirely overlooked either. Yet to compromise for the sake of "success" and work with material of a less exacting, more diffuse kind seems even more repulsive. Singing in the true sense of the word on the modern opera stage is not, I am persuaded, conservative and antiquated. But the singing must be rooted in the inherent qualities of the play, it should not be an end in itself. Today it is no longer possible for a singer to come on the stage only to show off the brilliance of his or her voice. That belongs definitely to the past. From rhythmic speech through recitatives to singing on the

grand scale, all means of expression are now required. It would be a poor thing, however, if a vocal composition were nothing more than a musical notation of some spoken performance! That too is needed of course, but is not sufficient in itself. The pathos of singing in the traditional operatic style may after a while become ludicrous. I feel that it is rather tiresome if singing aims merely at imitating—at a certain remove—the mode of speech used in the theatre of the spoken word. I cannot sufficiently emphasize this point. In the appropriate circumstances, however, it may have shock value. The plausible sense of continuous present time on the music stage can therefore be insured only by a varied synthesis of the vocal means of expression. I believe in this fundamentally.

The musical style and execution of the *Hamlet* opera will be basically different from those employed in *Blood Wedding*. But I do not intend to "change my skin." As to my technique of composition, I have been for some time experimenting with a slower and more daring expressive form. This needed maturing, for as I have said earlier the opera is not an experimental form. (Possibly experimenting involves less risk in incidental, chamber and symphonic music.) Work on *Hamlet* is gradually teaching me to set less and less value on externalities. It directs me towards solutions that are more polished, rely less on extrinsic means, and are in a way closer to chamber music; it certainly does not tolerate illustration. After many years of experiments I feel that I have absorbed and assimilated (in my own independent and free interpretation, let me add) twelve-tone technique. In *Blood Wedding*, I used the twelve-tone technique of composition only "in the presence of death." Now I should like to reconcile the Neo-Viennese School with the heritage of Bartók and the influence of Stravinsky.

An eruptive force has been probably the most characteristic trait of my musical compositions to date. The monumental, fresco-

like choral-orchestral *tutti* seems always to have been my strong point. Aside from Bartók's and Stravinsky's influence, I have learnt much (as my critics point out and I am ready to acknowledge unhesitatingly) from Moussorgsky, Honegger and Britten, as well as from the school of Schönberg, all of whom have left marks on my works. Expressive melodiousness, spontaneous buoyant movement, polyphonic harmonic conception, vigorous rhythms, striving for climaxes and melismatic inclination are other features that may strike the listener at a first hearing. Probably coldly calculated effects and artificial grotesqueness are furthest from my temperament.

In this opera it is of little importance to know whether a particular male part is cast for tenor, baritone or bass voice, because the character of most of the parts is not primarily determined by the range of the voice. Having said this, I may disclose that Hamlet is tenor; Claudius, baritone; the ghost of Hamlet's father, bass (accompanied by women's voices off-stage); Ophelia, soprano; Gertrude contralto; Polonius, bass; Laertes, tenor; and Horatio, baritone.

I should like to contrive the opera with two intermissions, that is in three acts. At present I am putting the last touches to the first act.

Adding to Shakespeare?

I found it difficult to break away from *Blood Wedding*, from the high-tension of passions where the dramatic conflict lay in the relationship of man and woman, from the mysterious symbolism of language, from the density of natural phenomena impinging upon the nerves and the senses, where the spectator was confronted with the terrifyingly high-toned diversity of the Wind, the Mountain, the Trees, the Moon, the Water, the Rivulet, the Sea, the recurrent rhythmic cycle of the Year and the Day. All this was not of course simply a background of *décor*, but a part and parcel of the play's total impact.

Yet from the raw impulses and passions (which provided the substance of *Blood Wedding*) the road to the world of Hamlet had to be taken almost through a renunciation of my past. This change-over was the hardest thing to accomplish. The philosophical value of the words put me under an obligation to try to avoid in the future, as far as possible, the gesture-like musical idiom. I had to create a more differentiated, more sublimated, less lapidary and impressive style in which effects and "idle runs" could have no place. I had to avoid externalities in forming the thematic substance of the opera. I had to resist completely the temptation of the splendour of the courtly events, stately processions and fanfares in order not to disturb the main current of the philosophical and humane message, the essence of the play. Calculated straining after effect should have no place in a modern *Hamlet* opera.

True, dramatic operatic music in contrast to concert music is liable to make many concessions, and in most cases it is prone to eclecticism. This risk I must increasingly guard against. Equally, a purely intellectual, coldly reasoning attitude would only detract from the original drama. But is it at all possible to add anything to Shakespeare's play? This is not my point! To entertain such a vain dream would be tantamount to irreverence. I want something else: a music drama, the laws of which are necessarily different. No one in the world can be worthy of Shakespeare. It is enough if I do not injure and falsify him or "play him false." Of course, the final result may be judged only on the stage—by myself, the public and the critics.

I have tried to reduce the number of characters slightly in the interest of compressing the play. For instance, I have left out Reynaldo's part completely. Voltimand and Cornelius do not sing but are present silently, and so also is the second gravedigger. In addition, I have shortened Rosencrantz' and Guildenstern's part the most drastically.

It is difficult to speak in more particular terms (i.e., to give an overall and technical account) of my opera in progress. It will be possible for me as well as for the critics to deal in more detail with the *Hamlet* opera only after the first night. Thinking aloud about it is possible only in the stage of approximate determination of characters and timbres of voice, style, formal structure, conception and interpretation. All these things will, however, remain in a state of constant flux until completion of the opera. Moreover, I do not want to imply that what has become law for me has any binding force on anybody else. I am also hampered by many small inaccuracies occasioned by trying to express myself in writing. But I do not want to shirk the pains of clarifying my ideas and keeping a check on them, since I am aware that this is indispensable to pressing ever further.

Hamlet opened a new phase in my work as a composer. But looking forward makes looking back and taking stock of one's potentialities imperative. I think I can now see my previous *ars poetica* fairly clearly, but I do not see the future sufficiently well. I might call the present reflections I am putting on paper: *postludium* to *Blood Wedding* and *preludium* to *Hamlet*.

It is certain that *Blood Wedding* closed a period in my life. That opera was the summing up of my previous experiments and works. The initial years of my career as a composer were characterized mainly by a passionate striving for making the work effusive, self-projecting, tense and impetuous; and by a deeply felt instinctive faith, an immediate boldness of expression exuberance and an almost prolix communicative urge. In the course of the years (although I denied nothing of my past) I was gradually estranged from this approach. What brought about this change? After six or eight years of apprenticeship, one begins to realize that one cannot dissipate one's energies but must make at least some conscious attempt to plan ahead for longer periods. This will

inevitably result in a temporary decrease in spontaneity. It is a renewed test for moving forward. I know that it still does not mark the beginning of the distillation of impurities from my work. That clarification is achieved only by repeated new beginnings until one is able to sum up one's life work.

Of course, it remains a question how much new matter the organism is able to assimilate. Everyone must decide that for himself. Clarification is the fruit of struggles and experiments, and possibly of the richness of the amassed material and of the lessons drawn from its exposition. It is my observation that forcing the process of clarification too soon entails the danger of sterility. Those who take over ready-made the crystallized results of, say, Bartók's hardly won achievement, and go on distilling it until almost nothing is left and they forget their own talents and personalities, are, I feel, wrong. The empathy, the aesthetic involvement in the work, even if present, is so slight that it creates indifference. Art, however, tolerates no indifference. I mention all this because I am obsessed by this question. Some give themselves up to an "intellectual engrossment" so coldly and bloodlessly that the public for whom they seem to be taking all these pains, even the most exclusive public, is left behind and ceases to exist for them.

I realize more and more how great a responsibility my talent and my whole life are. Just as I did not find satisfactory the earlier practice of directing and centralizing artistic activity, so nowadays I feel we have gone to the other extreme and that creative artists are too isolated, knowing hardly more about each other than what is reported in the press. One is made fit for the community by the periods of solitude in which one matures. The community is indispensable, if the desire for it is fostered by inner need and if it comes naturally. I think I can say that the theatre has in this respect brought a decisive change in my life. Granting that the author is the most important person in

bringing the opera to life, he is, nevertheless, one among many co-authors, or at least, one among many artists responsible for the production. Their equal and mutual interdependence is indisputable.

For some years I have felt a growing need to grasp consciously all that is instinctive. This has given rise to a complicated, seemingly over-philosophical interpretive style, which was characteristic of my preparations for *Blood Wedding*. It is difficult now to recall everything from the recesses of the past. I prepared for that work as does a soldier who gets his weapons ready before going to battle. Many times in the little wooden shack up in the Buda hills I had to leave off composing at the most inspired moments to jot down on slips—later on cards, seeing their advantage—as if advised by some invisible voice, "the military secrets" that had suddenly become clarified in my mind and yielded to me the necessary keys. Perhaps some of these notes are not valuable at all, but at that time they were indispensable to work myself into a state of inspiration. Apart from the external, technical side of composition not much instruction about such creative processes is given (and I think it is the same everywhere). Therefore, everyone must learn through his own labour how to get at these mysteries so hard of access.

The often unnecessary, impromptu gropings of many years have made me realize what work means to me—that is, when the play of variations does not interfere, when I dare to try and do all possible things with the material, go at it from all possible angles, freely substituting and re-arranging, and do not acquiesce in the imperfection of sudden ideas just because they are ideas. To be able to do all this is no more than a precondition to mustering enough strength to break up the recalcitrant matter in order to construct larger forms. The material must be handled gingerly; everyone must learn how best to treat it through his own painful experience. To force it, to proceed in a quick and slick fashion may be and often is dan-

gerous. Sometimes it happens that the larger form snaps into being at once; at other times, putting it aside to rest, and then taking it up again and listening to it with a fresh ear, will make the stagnant material develop and roll on as if of itself. The material throws off any violence imposed on it; what it needs is not forcing but appeasing (or "composing" in both senses of the word). In addition, it is the high intensity and fervour which primarily justify the work and never the form, the game of combining and the joy of variation in themselves.

Of very great interest to me has been another discovery of almost obsessional force—that creative work needs exceptional moments and, above all, purity. I have long since given up the belief that if the artist is pure his art will also be pure. It is not necessarily purity of heart which makes him create something pure and true, since the revelatory force does not automatically follow from purity. Many of the pure are self-sufficient. The artist, if he wants to create something pure, must himself become pure, but this should not be purity for itself since this is not creative and not the source of the dynamism of art. The decisive question is whether the artist can achieve the energy and purity needed for his work in each individual instance. The work demands a human transformation, a self-adaptation to the task, and dignity, in order to come to life. Art is not the recording of man's will (his qualities and unchecked desires). Art, to my mind, begins when one is able to apprehend the work in its embryo; when one makes oneself, as an integral part of the work, suitable for the task, guided by an inner suggestion, as it were; and allows oneself to be formed and moulded by the work—often against the grain of the desires of the conscious self.

And here it is that inspiration really begins to work. For only transcendental forces are able to inspire. And such inspiration is in command (it does not engender sentimental emotions or lull us into some state

of being moved); it gives exact instructions in accordance with the purpose of the developing work, and if one does not underestimate the visions that arise on such occasions and does not want to be wiser than they are, the greatest thoughts will come to life as if of themselves, as inscrutable mysteries of nature, though there is nothing in the whole process to engender mystification or superstition.

If art holds any magic for me it is actually in the imponderable things. Craftsmanship, culture, manual dexterity, ability to develop a theme, taste—all these things are for me present in the creative process as "necessary evils," as some material mediating factors, but I am happiest when I do not notice them. Much in the same way a violinist plays for me not with the bow, the strings, the fingering, the smaller and greater movements, but by using all these in such a way that I, the specialist, am not conscious of them. Is this the mysticism of creation? I have reached all my vocal themes through symbols, enchantments affecting all the senses, through magic. These themes have nothing mystical to say—most of them are only too realistic. But one must fall in love with one's themes. This does not mean I am an advocate of spontaneity. In art, Order is of paramount importance.

Some workshop secrets

In the general mode of expression of the opera, voice and orchestra are interwoven and of equal rank. Yet I am handling Hamlet's soliloquies always with a minimum of instrumental accompaniment (organ, string quartet, etc.). The orchestra can never compete with Hamlet's personality and the weight of his words. With the ill-feeling and intrigue around Hamlet, there is much more possibility for the orchestra to "lay it on thick." (That is, to express what is "behind appearances.") The dense atmosphere of the contradictions of history, of society settles heavily over the stage, the orchestra, the choir (which inci-

dentally plays no great part) like a thick fog through which Hamlet penetrates with an almost X-ray-like incisiveness. This forces me to concentrate everything at one pole as if through a focus. His thoughts of a pure, white, blinding light are constantly brought from a long-shot into a close-up, obliterating everything else. This contrast highlights Hamlet's greatness as a man and a thinker and makes him stand out from the corrupt society needing reform so sharply in a qualitative way that quantitatively the philosophical elements will not hold up the action, for which the stage after all exists, but, on the contrary, will prepare the next movement of the stage business. More exactly, the chamber-music-like, muted monologues lead on to the next *tutti*-like move forward, and the action is always taken a step further in this manner. There is enough incident in *Hamlet* to make it a good opera. But there is also thought enough to make it hard to weld the two together. For it is beyond question that action cannot dominate at the expense of Hamlet's character.

One of the hardest tasks in all operatic literature will be for the singer to cope with this part by bringing to it both vigour and range. It may not be an exaggeration to say that the success of the whole opera depends on the person who plays Hamlet.

This is true also in a formal sense. The whole cast must pivot around Hamlet, and the scenes and finales have to be placed in relation to him. He is the centre of the opera. It is interesting that the next greatest problem is presented by the part of Polonius. As regards the two female parts I must not forget that here primarily I have to do with two female voices which, in contrast to the numerous male parts, I have to proportion in point of tone volume (and

not dramaturgically). Both assist the operatic solution excellently. On the other hand, it is Claudius' part that is most suited for the singing voice.

The musical development is very well assisted by the recurrent scene of the guard in the first act, when Hamlet's presence and the speaking of the ghost enhance the expressive effect of the first scene. These are the two pillars buttressing the structure.

The hardest task comes in the great soliloquies in the second part of the opera, whereas the third part, the denouement, is again fairly obvious. So also is the climax of Act I (in the fourth scene, luckily in the second half of the act), when the words "O, horrible! O, horrible! Most horrible!" bring to a climax the ghost's relation of his destruction, while the dramatic *diminuendo* is very well hinted by the lines, "The glow-worm shows the matin to be near and 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire." These lines inevitably affect the musical conception.

I am writing the piano score in a fully elaborated form, in 3-4 staves as a reduced score. In recent years I have composed largely without piano, a method which has many advantages. Thinking in terms of instruments and orchestra seems to me essential. Orchestration cannot be regarded as something merely superadded to the finished composition. It is improper if orchestration comes up only as a problem of scoring a piano composition for the orchestra.

That the "To be or not to be" soliloquy should be the hardest to handle is natural, but I am slowly coming to the conviction that it is not an insoluble task. Quite independently of the composition of the opera I work continuously on this monologue.

I expect to finish the work in about a year's time.

SÁNDOR SZOKOLAY

THEATRE

THE OPENING OF THE SEASON IN BUDAPEST

Budapest has always been known—and this is a factual statement not a value judgment—for its lively theatrical life. This is still a characteristic of the capital's cultural climate. Although there are only sixteen professional repertory theatres in Budapest, the theatre has always been and still is regarded in this city as a public matter. It "enjoys" special attention from both the public and the higher authorities. I put the verb *enjoy* in quotation marks because the public's avid interest is often directed towards the events going on around the theatre or towards its artists and does not always mean a full house, and the solicitude of the official authorities does not always evoke pure gratification either.

Five of the sixteen may be called ordinary permanent theatres. Among them, and indeed among all the drama theatres in Hungary, a place apart is occupied by the National Theatre, which is not simply a state-run theatre—all the theatrical establishments in Hungary are run by the state, by a municipality or other public institution, and no theatres are privately owned—but it is a truly national institution. It represents a tradition of nearly a century and a half. This tradition has continued under the socialist regime which, at best, in some respects has given it a new content. The National Theatre was founded as a state theatre in 1837 to make a home for the Hungarian language and

Hungarian drama and as a bastion against the Hapsburgs' policy of wholesale Germanization. The first permanent home of Hungarian-language productions thus became a national cause. The noblest and most memorable moments took place on the stage and in the auditorium of this theatre on the outbreak of the 1848-49 Revolution and War of Independence. After the *rapprochement* with Vienna (1867), the National Theatre continued to fulfil its original mission by championing the Hungarian language and drama, but later with the administration's growing conservatism it became itself conservative in both its repertoire and style of acting. When, around the turn of the century, the first bourgeois private theatres were founded (like the *Vígyszínház*), and the first progressive movements in the theatre (the Thalia Society) got under way, the National Theatre remained a citadel of the feudal Establishment. Yet despite its state-sponsored conservatism, it nevertheless fulfilled very important tasks for the development of Hungarian dramatic art in fostering the national drama and keeping the international classics on its stage. True, other theatres had already adopted a more up-to-date, life-like style of acting while the National Theatre was still reluctant to step down from the stilts. Yet its rhetorical presentations were fired by true passion and in their own category were of a high professional

standard and featured the very best of actors. Beyond all this the National Theatre had its share in educating the new public, first of all, the younger people, and instilled in them a spirit of patriotism and service to high principles.

These functions have by and large been continued by the new socialist direction. The National Theatre still occupies a special place among the other state theatres. The basic principles of cultural policy are much the same for all the theatres, but each strives to work out a character of its own, a special line, or as we call it, a profile. In other words, each intends to be as different as possible from all the other in its repertoires, style of acting and production, and quite often is influenced in this direction by its own public. The National Theatre regards its paramount task to be to foster indigenous dramatic traditions and to keep the classics of the world's stage on its programmes. In addition it offers its boards to today's new Hungarian plays and presents contemporary foreign dramatic works. Under an unwritten law the National Theatre in the past had the privilege of picking the best and most talented graduates of the Academy of Dramatic Art, and it still has the role of guaranteeing realization of the aims of state theatrical policy by setting an exemplary standard in its production.

A task of this kind is easier to state than to translate into artistic terms. Quite frankly, the National Theatre has not always succeeded in living up to this objective. The past decade has seen a decline in the National Theatre's standards and the realization of its artistic aims has become rather uneven. Then during the last season, after some fumbling and false starts, the theatre did at last stage a production—Peter Weiss's *Marat/Sade*—which in the unanimous judgment of critics and audiences could be a new departure permitting the National Theatre to regain once more its inherited and acquired authoritative status as "the first theatre in the country." This, however,

belongs to last year's season and is not the fresh event that has put the National Theatre's new season once more in the foreground of interest.

The National Theatre moved into a new home for its 1966/67 season.

With the first night production in its new home the theatre became involved in a lively debate that provoked a thrashing out of theoretical principles. The National Theatre was inaugurated in 1837 with the production of Mihály Vörösmarty's "Árpád's Awakening," a verse play written specially for the occasion. Vörösmarty was a first-rate Romantic of the early 19th century, a vigorous master of the language and the first significant translator of Shakespeare's plays (*Lear*, *Julius Caesar*) and, of course, as a dramatist strongly under the spell of Shakespeare's art. The modern National Theatre turned to him to open the season in its new home. However, the stagecraft of Vörösmarty, who was primarily a poet, has dated a great deal in the intervening hundred years or so, and the grandeur of his diction is also out of touch with contemporary taste. Therefore, in order to bring the play within the reach of the modern public, the theatre "touched up" the text, making cuts and here and there also additions. The aim was achieved: the play did get across. In fact, the play is about an episode in 15th-century Hungarian history (the title of the adaptation is "Czillei and the Hunyadis") and the age depicted was also brought closer to the public. Yet the production touched off a storm of polemics. In some literary circles the "tinkering" with the poet's text was roundly condemned. Certainly this practice is nothing new and authors as great as Shakespeare are no exceptions (witness Brecht's *Coriolanus*), but, the argument went, this is only permissible when the adapter has a genius commensurate with that of the original author and when out of the encounter a new, original work is born. Against this stiff "literary" view, articles presenting the case for the "theatre"



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argued that the work could not otherwise have been offered to a modern audience, and that the theatre is not a museum: its duty is to play for today's public and, if necessary, to throw overboard any philological dogmatism left over from the last century. Behind all the pros and cons, of course, lies the question of the National Theatre's vocation that we mentioned above. The theatre is in duty bound to foster, cherish and keep alive the dramatic traditions of Hungarian and world literature. The question is how best to achieve this? The dilemma has relevance because it is faced time and again in other countries too when a classic is to be revived in a production designed to appeal to modern taste. The more in a contemporary spirit, the better. Without doing some violence to Shakespeare's text Peter Brook could not have achieved in his celebrated production of *Lear* that "it should be Beckett in the spirit of Shakespeare and not a Shakespeare production in the spirit of Beckett."

Shakespeare revivals

Budapest theatres open in mid-September after a summer recess observed by all Hungarian theatres except the open-air ones which put on occasional—mostly musical—productions. There is only one drama theatre playing indoors in the summer in Budapest and that too has an *ad hoc* company who get together for one production in the summer and often change their place. This is the Round Theatre. It played Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* this year.

In Hungary the season cannot open without a Shakespeare *première*. One of our most discriminating theatres, the Budapest Madách Theatre, began the season with *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The production was directed by Ottó Ádám, who though quite young has already moved into the first rank of directors. His work is distinguished by his thorough analysis of the play, impartial pres-

entation, psychological delicacy and skill with the actors. However, it would be a disservice to rank this production among his more successful ones. His aim apparently was to deromanticize the play and to divest it of the trimmings with which 19th-century taste wanted to prettify it. Alas, the much too cool approach froze not only the romantic but the poetic, too. The production dropped Mendelssohn's music—I almost said, as a matter of course—without the new specially commissioned music succeeding in striking the modern poetic note. Nor does it rely on spectacle. It eschews almost any scenic effects. The action takes place on a well-nigh empty and denuded stage. For all that, Shakespeare's poetry could perhaps be evoked. But the acting lacks passion and, authentic as the characters are in the odd detail, they fail precisely in the moments where they should lose themselves and without which there's little point in Theseus's saying: "The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling, Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven." Shakespeare's humour fared best, especially in the hands of the artisans.

Another Shakespeare production, incidentally also in the Madách Theatre, is worth more attention. This was *Measure for Measure*, presented by the excellent ensemble of the provincial theatre at Pécs in a few guest performances.

Measure for Measure is among the Shakespeare plays least frequently produced in Hungary. This is also like elsewhere, yet it may be noted that its presentation in Paris in the last century preceded that of the great tragedies. In contrast, our first performance came a bare forty years ago in 1927, although its first Hungarian translation is now a hundred and twenty years old. Reluctance to stage it had a twofold source. First, the play's content was, here as elsewhere, pronounced immoral, and secondly, its execution was, here as elsewhere, dismissed as slipshod. The 1927 *première* did much to disabuse the public mind of the charge of

immorality, but the most eminent of our Shakespeare critics upheld the verdict that the play was a flop. As a result the production was not successful. The great merit of the Pécs company, directed by Vilmos Dobai, lies precisely in showing that even by Shakespearean standards *Measure for Measure* is a first-rate play and that it is no accident that its writing fell between *Hamlet* and *Othello*. It would be easy to quote damning criticism from Coleridge ("The comic and tragic parts equally border on the *μισητόν*, the one disgusting, the other horrible") or from a Hungarian Shakespeare specialist ("it is a carnival fancy-dress made of sables") but in refutation let me outline the concept of the Pécs company's production.

They assumed for a starting point that Shakespeare must have already had premonitions of the Puritan onslaught that was a little later to send the playhouses packing from London, stifling the joy of life in men, young and old, and regarding the fullness of love and the body as sources of sin in their guilt-ridden medieval minds. If the Merchant of Venice is Shakespeare's Hapagon and Miser (and that he is, essentially), then *Measure for Measure* can rightly be regarded as Shakespeare's *Tartuffe*. For Shakespeare believes in the Puritans' sincerity no more than Molière, and he believes puritanism to be a social evil just as Molière does. Of course, as perhaps every schoolboy knows, Molière shows his characters from a single side, the tragically ludicrous side of their harmful obsessions, and Shakespeare presents his personages in all their contradictions, I should say, together with their excuses. This more complex mode of representation is brilliantly exploited by the Pécs company: Hungarian society has only recently rid itself of a system of government termed the personality cult, one of the characteristic features of which was just the puritanism castigated in *Measure for Measure*.

The initial dumbshow in Vilmos Dobai's production makes it clear that the Duke already knows of Angelo's harmful prin-

ciples and practice. His deputizing of authority and disappearance are contrived from the beginning in order to set a trap for Angelo. Then the comedy gets under way and a threatening execution already explores the world of a "modern" Shakespeare, that black humour in which living is mordantly humorous and death taken for granted. It is in this medium that *joie de vivre* and carnal love strive to attain their end in face of all the suffocating atmosphere of puritanism. This joy of living and this force of love triumph in the end over four people in the play. The first is Lucio in whom all this appears as downright lust and debauchery—for which Shakespeare finally metes out punishment. The second is Claudio in whom it is coupled with true love and so he obtains his reward. The third is Angelo, in whom it triumphs, although he himself tries to swear it out of existence on behalf of a hypocritical morality. And finally, Isabella, who thinks as a Puritan and wishes to become a nun, valuing higher a virgin's life than her brother's ways, finally abandons her vow and becomes the Duke's wife. The production shows this inner and outer resistance to puritanism very poignantly: Although the director did not have at his disposal the very best actors in Hungary, the big success was due to a series of excellent performances. At one point only did the production slip from a very solid conception: in the end Isabella is made to refuse the Duke's offer of marriage and goes back to the nunnery, and in doing so she all but destroys the anti-puritan tendency of the play. Perhaps the young director was beguiled by Shakespeare's failure to prepare for the marriage psychologically and logically. Yet the play abounds in details and incidents that are not psychologically-logically elaborated (and this is why so many dismiss the play as a poor one). But in a well-harmonized production no one would hold this against the author. If the Duke knows of Angelo's previous guilt (as it appears in the end he does), why does he elevate him to

so high a post? Why is there no sign of vice to be seen in Angelo? etc., etc. The original Cinthio *novella* is logically sounder, in fact, and so is the playwright's immediate source, Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra*. In general, however, I feel that we tend to exaggerate such claims to logicity on the part of Shakespeare. He really did know everything that could be known about the human psyche, but he was not at all in the habit of telling everything. It is quite despairingly beyond knowing why Jago hates Othello, the psychological and logical clues are simply missing. Jago's one sentence about it (that his wife was Othello's mistress) is a palpable lie and only complicates the mystery. (A young writer once told me that because of this he thought Shakespeare bungled Jago's character.) But quite clearly Shakespeare often showed an unconcern for psychological details and niceties. When his interest lay elsewhere, he completely neglected them. Isabella is herself an involuntary but honest representative of puritanism in the play. The play ends with her renunciation of puritanism. This escaped the director, who evidently saw in the betrothal a happy ending. Young directors seem only too regrettably prone to yield to the temptation of extravagance. I know from an account by Kenneth Tynan that the young director of a production of *Measure for Measure* in Berlin ten years ago made of the Duke a quite young, inexperienced ruler. When all is said and done, however, the Pécs team's production was a fine demonstration against puritanism.

From "Rosmersholm" to "Luv"

The Madách Theatre put on two Hungarian revivals and the Vígyszínház a Schisgal *première*. The first of these, "Three Nights of a Love," a tragic musical, was presented a few years ago by another theatre. The play was inspired by the tragic fate of Miklós Radnóti, the poet who was deported and killed by the SS on his way to a German concentra-

tion camp during the last months of the Second World War. (A tribute and a sample of his poetry appeared in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, No. 18.) Three major creative artists collaborated in producing it. Miklós Hubay, the playwright, István Vas, the poet, and György Ránki, the composer, were responsible for the prose parts, the verses and the music respectively. The work is more like a requiem than a regular drama, and the principal characters, the poet and his love, are the least satisfactory, but the verses, the tunes, and the irony in the subsidiary parts as well as the evocation of the atmosphere and background are all vital enough to sustain the play. It may be remarked in passing that it was this production (and Brecht's *Drei Groschen Oper*) that the company played on their Italian tour in the course of which they participated in the Second Drama Festival held at the Metastasio Theatre in Florence (just before the flood disaster), and then performed in Bologna and Turin.

The first night performance of the Madách Theatre "Chamber Ensemble" was Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*. The director, Géza Pártos, has made a name for himself in recent years by blowing the dust off forgotten plays, or those regarded as hopelessly dated, and his very brisk and convincing productions have led to one success after another. Now it seems to me that he has managed to blow the dust onto Ibsen with his version of *Rosmersholm*. As far as the acting is concerned the performance is impeccable, the direction meticulous and psychologically authentic, but in the end it is a bit of a bore.

There are some successes to report from the first few months of the current season. First to be mentioned is again a revival. "The School Mistress," written in the first decade of the century by Sándor Bródy, the father of Hungarian naturalism, who died in 1924, has been twice revived in the past couple of years. This time it was staged by the Budapest Thália Company. The play, which has preserved so much of its original appeal and effect, is about a teacher in the

country whose honest endeavour to educate the children of poor peasants, as well as her love for the wealthiest young man in the village, are both thwarted by the genteel outlook and the corrupt mentality of the age. The play has been known as a typical star-play in which each performance brought success to the actress in the title-role. This time, however, it was different. The young actress in the excellent part of the teacher is rather colourless and anaemic. The main interest in this very successful production is Zoltán Latinovits, who once again makes an excellent job of his part, that of the teacher's lover, which by the way is not quite in tune with his actor's personality.

The only "new" play which went down well with critics and audiences alike was Murray Schisgal's *Luv*. Budapest drama critics joined their colleagues who at earlier *premières* lost no time in pointing out the antecedents and collateral relatives of Schisgal's play from Pirandello to the Marx Brothers. Schisgal has remarked on some occasion that he never writes an ideological "message" into his play. His message or lesson is always what the public recognizes as such. The public and the critics in Budapest recognized a lot of things, but they recognized most readily the lashings directed at the degeneration of love, which, as we know from Schisgal himself, was the main burden

of the play. Press opinions seem to boil down to this: the play appears to be no more than entertainment, high comedy, but undeniably the author also has serious things to say about life. Or alternatively, the play seems to speak about the serious matters of life but it does so in an amusing and hilarious comedy. The first-rate production, for which director Zoltán Várkonyi is responsible, had no little share in its success. Reality and absurdity mingle in a happy blend on the spacious stage of the *Vígszínház*. This blend is emphasized by the decor too. Downstage is a huge section of a bridge against a stylized scaled down hint of New York in the background. The style of acting is that of circus clowns down to quite acrobatic tricks, and at the same time all is continually controlled by some absurd logic. The river, for instance, flows a long way down below the bridge so that people jumping or falling in reach the water after a count of eight or ten, and yet the body's impact splashes the water up onto the stage. And so on. Three distinguished actors and actresses keep the play going with wryness and yet with passion, revelling, so to speak, in the scintillating ideas of the direction without for a moment stepping out of the tragicomic characters and the tragicomic atmosphere in which the play wraps them. A great success.

JÓZSEF CZÍMER

ECONOMIC LIFE

THE ECONOMIC REFORM—AS SEEN BY A PRACTISING MANAGER

The foreign press has of late been turning its attention increasingly to Hungary's economic policy and system of directing the economy. This growing interest is a reaction to the discussions touching on economic theory currently in progress in this country.

One such article, appearing in the London *Economist* in January 1966, under the title "Switzerland on the Danube?" discusses the prospects which, in *The Economist's* view, would open before Hungary once the structure of its economy were retailored to fit existing resources.

The *New Hungarian Quarterly* has repeatedly devoted space to the debate on the aims of Hungarian economic policy and the system of directing the economy and to setting forth the main ideas underlying the movement for economic reform.* All the same, now that the principles—drawn up by economists and other experts—that are to govern the proposed reform have been adopted by the Hungarian Government (May 1966), and as preparatory work toward their implementation is already in progress, it may be opportune to present a fresh analysis of the reasons for overhauling the present system and the objectives this reform seeks to achieve.

* Cf., among others, József Bognár: "Towards a New System of Guidance in the Socialist Economy." Vol. VI, No. 20, and "Direction and Operation of the Economy," Vol. VII. No. 21.

Economic Policy and Economic Mechanism

By economic policy, in a broader sense, one means not only the totality of aims relating to the economic development of a country, but also the coherent system of all methods of directing the economy that offer the most suitable means of achieving the targets set.

As regards targets, Hungary's Second Five Year Plan spanning the years 1961–1965 was governed, essentially, by the economic policy consistently realized ever since 1957 and aimed at overhauling the country's economic structure, mindful of the advantages to be derived from Hungary's participation in the international division of labour. The fundamental principles governing that economic policy were summed up by Professor Imre Vajda* as follows:

1) In view of Hungary's shortage of raw materials, it is expedient to concentrate development efforts on those industries that are capable of utilizing available raw material supplies economically and at a high technological level. In general, economy should be practised in raw material and power consumption. The use of plastics in the processing industries (e.g., in engineering) should be stepped up.

2) Efforts should be directed primarily

* *The Role of Foreign Trade in a Socialist Economy*. Budapest, 1965. Corvina Press, 336 pp.

toward developing those industries that consume comparatively small quantities of imported raw materials and give considerable scope to highly qualified labour. (The rate of manpower consumption, it goes without saying, must be in proportion with world standards.) The possibilities that obtain in this sphere can best be seen from statistics which show that, whereas ship building and crane manufacture rely on imports for 30 to 40 per cent of all new materials used, the share of imported raw materials is only 10 to 15 per cent in precision engineering, 12 to 16 per cent in chemical industry machinery, and 14 to 18 per cent in machine-tools manufacture.

3) Growth in output should be achieved mainly by raising productivity.

These principles of economic policy were, essentially, formulated as concrete targets to be achieved under the Second Five Year Plan. During the plan period—1961 to 1965—industrial output rose by 47 per cent, in the same five year period agricultural output was, on an average, higher by 10 per cent than during the preceding five years. Investments—to the total value of 206,000 million forints—exceeded the original plan target. Also, a start was made in overhauling the economic structure. The most modern and—for Hungary—most advantageous industries were expanded at a faster-than-average pace, with the result that their importance in the economy increased. Thus, for instance, the chemical industry and precision engineering nearly doubled their output between 1961 and 1965.

Nevertheless, the dynamism of growth on the whole fell short of that foreseen in the plan: the national income in 1965, though higher by 25 per cent than it had been in 1960, fell short of the 36 per cent rise that had been envisaged in the plan. The growth rate slowed down especially during the last two years of the plan period. Nor did economic efficiency develop satisfactorily. Productivity rose, it is true, but at a lower rate than envisaged in the plan. Part of the

economic growth helped to build up redundant stocks. Of the total national income produced in five years—831,000 million forints—36,000 million served to increase available stocks. Most of these, it is true, were needed (because of the expansion of production and trade); still, some estimates put the quantity of redundant stocks accumulated at 7,000 million forints.

Thus, though the implementation of the Five Year Plan initiated a structural overhauling of the Hungarian economy, the inadequate realization of the original concepts, the slowing down of the rate of growth, inevitably compelled attention. Investigations subsequently undertaken have shown that, at present, the totality of the methods of direction in the Hungarian economy—the economic mechanism—far from providing the most propitious conditions for accomplishing the aims of the government's economic policy, actually hampers the efforts directed towards that goal.

The economic mechanism, as set forth in an interview* by Rezső Nyers, is the projection of the actual production relations and, within them, of the links between the various elements of production, i.e., the system of direction of the economy. The elements of this system are: economic planning on a national scale and at enterprise level; market conditions; levers influencing and determining the market, such as financing, price control and credits as well as material incentives. The various economic bodies, the division of their responsibilities and their scope of authority, are also included. The economic mechanism itself, therefore, is not the same as economic policy, although it is closely related to it. Rather, it is the instrument by which economic policy is implemented, and which itself affects this policy.

Why has a revision and overhaul of our economic mechanism become necessary? Because, given the present stage of develop-

* "Reform of the Economic Mechanism." *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, No. 20.

ment of productive forces in this country and the complexity of our economy, the earlier system of direction—overcentralized, built to function according to detailed plan directives—has ceased to meet actual needs. In this system, conceived as a machinery to be run solely by orders from a central brains trust, a number of contradictions emerged that prevented the realization of optimum economic efficiency in the development of the national economy: growth and equilibrium had come into conflict with each other.

The proposed reform has become opportune owing to the fact that the practical experience amassed in the operation of the socialist economy has reached proportions that permit certain theoretical conclusions to be drawn. An opportunity thus offers of intervening in the future economic advance through a scientific approach. It should not be forgotten that it was only after the Stalin era that a socialist economic science based on an objective analysis of actual facts could arise in Hungary. István Friss, writing in the December 1965 number of *Közgazdasági Szemle* (Economic Review), rightly points out that in the years of the personality cult the facts of the economy, including economic statistics, were inaccessible to economists no less than to the public at large. This led to a separation of theory and practice—to the immeasurable detriment of both and in flagrant conflict with the meaning of socialism. The liquidation of the personality cult removed these barriers, and it is now possible for economists to acquaint themselves with and analyse actual facts; it is also possible separately to analyse the effects that arise from economic circumstances, those that are the result of economic policies, and those caused by the operation of the economic mechanism. The reform, whose basic principles have now become the official programme of the government, therefore embodies practical experiences and theoretical conclusions alike. The reform was drawn up by economists and technological

experts, party workers and business executives, working together; it was, moreover, widely discussed prior to its publication. The reform thus makes full use of the theoretical knowledge and practical experience available in Hungarian economic life today.

Central Direction and the Market

The investigations and discussions have made it clear that it is equally necessary to raise the level of central direction and to give scope, under the conditions of socialism, to the play of the market laws if a well-balanced economic advance is to be ensured. The new economic mechanism strives to achieve a close coordination of central planning and direction and an efficient market mechanism. The increased readiness to employ—more extensively than hitherto—such market factors as prices, interest, supply and demand, as instruments of economic policy lends added importance to central direction.

Central planning is to stay, but it will be transformed. Along with it, the market will become a new regulating force throughout the economy, and this synthesis will alter former concepts. The market that is contemplated here is not the free competition market of Liberalism but one that controls while being centrally controlled itself.

At the given stage of development of the productive forces it seems expedient to give wide scope to the market mechanism, since it is liable to ensure a higher degree of economic efficiency than can be achieved by the system of control by detailed instructions from above.

The underlying concept of the new economic mechanism, therefore, is the combination of central direction and the market. It follows that a model of direction is needed in which independent action, regulation and development come into full play. That becomes possible only if and when a distinction is drawn between the macroeconomic

and microeconomic levels of economic activity. Central planning and direction are macroeconomic instruments with built-in safeguards designed to guide the market towards attaining the social goal of satisfying needs by increasing profits at the microeconomic—i.e., enterprise—level. The central plan serves as a guarantee that free market activities of the enterprises will favour realization of the central objective. At the enterprise level, a model is being set up in which the national economy will exercise its influence for the most part indirectly. This influence reflects a central will, but the reactions are, essentially, free and may be called organized only to the extent that the influences producing them are organized. In this type of model the enterprise groups and the enterprises themselves are independent, in the sense that only in exceptional cases are they subject to instructions. It is not through instructions that "reasonable" conduct is imposed on them. However, should they fail to show sense in their economic activity, they will do so at their own expense.

The economic reform will reduce the scope of central direction. The practice of breaking down the plan targets and thus gearing all their activities to the national economic plan will be discontinued. Nevertheless, the importance and impact of central guidance will increase, since it has to ensure that the mechanism will operate in the right direction.

The earlier, highly centralized method of directing the economy lost much of its efficiency in recent years because of its failure to differentiate between the macroeconomic and the microeconomic levels and to draw up alternatives for technological development, and because of the low standard of surveying market fluctuations. The vigorous advance made in economics and the application of higher mathematics, however, now permit the elaboration of economic methods that may achieve an economic optimum by influencing market conditions, while at the same time making sure that the indirect

economic instruments operate in the centrally intended direction.

By making market relations an integral part of the modern means of directing the national economy, this concept will also produce a change of approach as a result of which profitability will replace the quantitative plan fulfilment as the principal yardstick of efficiency.

Prices and Competition

The deliberate employment of merchandise and market conditions increases the importance of prices.

In the new mechanism, prices have the double function of providing information and incentive. They are to provide information on the actual social cost of every product and on the buyer's judgment of market values. They are to provide an incentive to producers, stimulating them to take correct economic decisions, and they are to further the appropriate utilization of resources, the adjustment of production to demand.

Prices can fulfil their basic functions if they are shaped under the combined influence of (a) costs of production, (b) market value judgments, (c) state preferences.

Costs of production and market value judgments tend to diverge, partly because the usefulness of merchandise shows considerable diversity, partly because price trends in the domestic and the foreign markets, though influencing each other, are not identical. Therefore, a price system is needed in which the prices of only a small number of goods are fixed officially. A price system based largely on officially fixed prices is not flexible enough to adapt itself to changes in costs of production and in market value judgments. Such flexibility is particularly vital for a country like Hungary, where external trade is of such great importance: here, world market prices ought to have far greater influence on domestic prices than they actually have. The price reform, there-

fore, should bring about a close connection between domestic and foreign prices. This has hitherto been prevented by the foreign trade price-levelling system, whose very existence isolated the manufacturing firms and the domestic market from the markets abroad.

At the same time, the need to ensure stability and equable living standards, and various other reasons oblige the socialist state, especially during the early stage of readjustment, to retain price control; such control, however, must be carried through within a very flexible price system. The present bureaucratic, nearly all-embracing central pricing system is an obstacle to progress; hence the new economic mechanism cannot be expected to function without a reform of consumer prices. The triple division envisaged by the proposed price reform (fixed prices, sliding prices whose movement is subject to official approval, and free prices) as well as the steady movement of the products falling within these three groups towards free prices provide a mechanism that seems flexible enough to carry out its functions; at the same time, it permits spontaneous downward as well as upward price movements, i.e., it does not inhibit a fall in prices—another essential requirement.

Competition is one of the important preliminary conditions of flexible prices—indeed, of the operation of the market mechanism as a whole. The correctness of socialist competition has been recognized all along only there has been a failure to create such market conditions as might have asserted the beneficial effects of competition that would have aided technological progress and a sound trend of prices. On the contrary, any possibility of competition was eliminated through the creation of state companies having a monopoly in their respective domains of industry or commerce and through the system of breaking down the plan targets to the enterprise level—a system which, in fact, put even small firms in a monopolistic position.

Monopolies were set up in branches—where, owing to the stage of development of productive forces, there was no need for them. Once the one-sided, indiscriminate subsidizing of monopolies is stopped, the role of imports increased, and the big firms given an opportunity to use their free capacity for manufacturing the things they want to manufacture, we shall be able to give considerable scope to competition. Moreover, the new economic mechanism provides an opportunity for competition in the fields of commerce and services as well as of production.

There is always a chance, of course, that competition may go too far. All the same, there is every reason to use it wherever the possible drawbacks are smaller than the advantages that may be derived from introducing competition. Nor should it be forgotten that central control can always check the harmful effects of competition.

Autonomy of Enterprises

The use of market relations as an instrument of directing the economy greatly increases the independence of the enterprises, their initiative and responsibility, and—in close connection with this—it involves an adjustment of the system of material incentives for the enterprises and their employees and workers. The enterprises are only capable of utilizing the possibilities that the market relations afford them if their operation is not hedged in unnecessarily; if they are given freedom to use their fixed and liquid funds and the know-how of their personnel—within the bounds of the possibilities open to them.

Managements know the field of activity of their respective firms, and all information available to them, better than anyone else; hence it is only right that the drafting of the plan for their firms should be left to their discretion. Each enterprise will have a say in the allocation of its investments, the

greater part of which will be decided on by themselves, and they will invariably have a material interest in realizing their projects.

It is also to be designed that the enterprises should be free to establish close ties with markets abroad as well as at home. To this end, uniform rates of foreign exchange must be fixed for both imports and exports and the firms made interested in foreign trade.

The need to harmonize objectives at the enterprise level (profits) and at the national economy level (better satisfaction of consumer needs) has already been mentioned. It must be pointed out here that, if the enterprise is to be granted more freedom of action, a system of guidance and material incentives must be created that will induce the autonomous firms to serve the interests of the national economy and will ensure harmony between the aims of the enterprises and of the national economy as a whole.

Enterprise autonomy, of course, involves an obligation to take risks, without which there can be no economic progress. For this reason the material incentives offered to the enterprises should be such as to enable them to take risks.

The attainment of enterprise aims closely depends on incentives given to the individual employees and workers. It is not enough to rely on the guidance of profits in general; the enterprises, the executives and—what is more—the entire personnel must be given an interest in bigger profits for the firm. To evolve a system of material incentives in which workers and employees realize that they earn considerably more when working more efficiently, is of no less importance, in the present situation of Hungarian economy, than to determine how much is to be invested.

Under such a system, profits, after payment of taxes, are divided into three parts. One part constitutes a fund aimed at augmenting the personal income of the workers and employees through pay rises, premiums,

bonuses, and profit sharing. Central specifications impose certain restrictions on this fund and its use. The second part—disposed of by the firm itself—is the company-development fund aimed at increasing the fixed and liquid assets and financing investments. It should be noted that large projects will continue to be financed from budgetary allocations, towards which the enterprise will be required to pay capital charges. Some types of investment will be financed by the enterprise from bank loans. The third part forms a reserve fund designed to help the enterprises to cushion the impact of possible losses incurred as the result of risk-taking.

The apparatus of central direction, needless to say, possesses other means of coordinating macro- and microeconomic objectives besides that of skimming income. Such means—to mention only the most important ones—are: taxation and credit policy; in foreign trade, the granting of import licences—a means of regulating the competition of imported goods—and foreign exchange rates, which are the essential link between the domestic market and those abroad. As these facts show, central direction disposes of ample means for orienting the market towards the attainment of the objectives set before the national economy.

Problems Arising from the Changeover

The introduction of the new economic mechanism does, of course, involve some hazards. The debates that preceded its adoption pointed out these dangers, particularly two of them. One is the danger of inflation; the other the issue of employment.

Undoubtedly, the new economic mechanism is susceptible to inflation. Inflation may be caused by rising prices, a consequence of reduced price control, and by growing demand, a consequence of greater incomes. In a centrally directed economy, however, the chief menace is from inflation triggered off in the sphere of investments. The floating

of excessive loans affects every branch of the economy, including consumption. Thus, dwindling purchasing power of the currency is the result primarily of inefficient carrying out of investments. In point of fact, the issue of inflation is essentially one of proportions. What has to be prevented is a deterioration of the wage-price ratio. If rising prices are matched by rising incomes accruing from solid economic achievement, the resultant slight inflation may even have a beneficial effect, provided it is purposefully controlled. If, as the result of excessive investments or other bank loans, the inflation exceeds this measure, it may render the mechanism and some of its elements inoperative. Serious inflation robs interest of its regulative capacity. Theoretically, therefore, since loans are available from several sources, the danger of inflation does exist; it may, however, be averted by fixing a sound level of investments and determining their proper composition.

The other thorny problem is that of employment. Increased incentives at the enterprise and individual level may lead to reductions of the working force in some firms. Moreover, introduction of the market mechanism may affect whole industries, and this, in turn, may lead to the migration of labour forces. Such migration may also result from competition; for, with the differentiation of earnings, efficiently run firms will be able to pay higher premiums and profit shares than less efficient enterprises. These are all positive phenomena, but they are at variance with current practice. This opens up the whole issue of employment, even on the theoretical plane. What is the standard concept of employment under socialism? It may be formulated as a guarantee to the members of the community—including temporarily free manpower (i.e., manpower waiting to be regrouped)—of whatever living standard is feasible at the given level of production.

This concept, consequently, implies the presence of free manpower. Under our eco-

omic system, we may safely assume that there will be no decline in the present level of employment, since the new mechanism will involve an expansion of output, trade and services, and the growing branches of industry will be capable of absorbing redundant manpower. It is beyond question, however, that, with the desirable structural transformation of the productive system, the above causes are bound to produce some migration of labour forces, and there will be some—temporarily—redundant manpower waiting to be regrouped. However, in line with the afore-mentioned concept, the socialist state is obliged to take steps to ensure this regrouping and, meantime, to support the redundant manpower. To this end, appropriate social welfare measures will have to be taken. These two factors—i.e., the regrouping and the support of the (temporarily) free manpower—together guarantee the flexibility of the economy. This conception, therefore, is not at variance with that important principle of economic policy which requires the guaranteeing of the worker's right to work and the systematic improvement of the working people's living standards and of their living and working conditions.

Results to be Expected

According to what has been set forth here, the reform of the economic mechanism is designed to carry through a unified concept. The various elements of the scheme dovetail so closely that the absence of any of them may diminish the effectiveness of the whole. The reform will tap certain reserves which central measures could not tap. The reform will make a transition to intensive development possible; for only through introducing a sound market economy and through making the enterprises self-reliant and providing them with appropriate incentives will it be possible to obtain a better utilization of the labour force. Investigations have shown that the reserves

necessary for future progress are now to be found, mainly at the enterprise level. Once the enterprises have been granted freedom to act on their own, such reserves will be brought to light as structural adaptation to market requirements, the guaranteeing of continuous manufacturing processes, elimination of wasteful management and wasteful handling of stocks, and, above all, the stepping up of technological development.

The reform should also make its influence felt in the field of exports, increasing the competitiveness of Hungarian products.

The bulk of Hungarian exports goes to the socialist countries—a circumstance which has proved of great advantage to our foreign trade, because it has meant ready markets for our products and a secure source for many of our imports. All that has been a lever of progress for Hungary. No sizeable shift is to be expected in the years to come: a change in the proportion of Hungary's trade with the socialist and the capitalist countries is unlikely. Trade must, therefore, expand in equal measure with both the

socialist and the capitalist areas. This presupposes a stepping up of the competitiveness of our products, and this is precisely what the economic reform will encourage.

The economic reform is thus liable considerably to affect both the domestic and the foreign market, since the bureaucratic barriers that have hitherto hampered economic progress in this country will be removed. It will become possible for the economic life of this country to be given a new lease of life and to advance towards prosperity parallel—and in harmony—with the reassertion of central direction of the national economy.

These are the main principles on which the decision to introduce the reform is based. It goes without saying that the reform is still giving rise to important problems in the various departments of the economy. These problems are currently being studied and analysed. But even at this stage it is clear that when the reform is introduced, in 1968, a new era will have been opened in socialist economy.

RÓBERT HARDI

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

HOW ART THOU TRANSLATED?

Pál Réz

LATE ARRIVAL

Péter Nagy

THE SPIRIT OF DIALOGUE

Miklós Hubay

COUNTERPOINT IN THE FILM

Yvette Bíró

ARTS — BOOKS — THEATRE — MUSIC — PRESS CUTTINGS

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

ALLEN, Walter, is the noted British novelist, essayist and literary historian. See also his "Dream and Tradition—On the English and the American Novel," *The N.H.Q.*, No. 8.

GABOR, Dennis, F.R.S., Professor at the Imperial College of Science and Technology at the University of London, Department of Engineering. See also "The New Trahison des Clercs" in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 2.

PHILLIPS, William, is the Editor of *Partisan Review*.

ROBERTS, Chalmer M., is National News Bureau Chief of *The Washington Post*.

LORD SNOW, the novelist, scientist and statesman contributed to our review with his "The Moral Un-Neutrality of Science" in No. 2.

STALLAERT, Lund, Dutch philosopher, is Editor of *Euros*, an international magazine.

SZENT-GYÖRGYI, Albert, M.D., the Nobel Prize biochemist is Director of Research at the Institute of Muscle Research, Marine Biological Laboratories, at Woods Hole, Mass.

TREWIN, J. C., well-known British drama critic, regular theatre reviewer of *The Illustrated London News*. See his "The Frightened Theatre" in No. 6, "Playgoer in Budapest" in No. 11, and "Helping Charles and Mary" in No. 15, of *The N.H.Q.*

WESKER, Arnold, the outstanding British playwright.

PÉTER, János. The Hungarian Foreign Minister's article appeared in the 1966 Christmas number of *Népszabadság*.

ILLYÉS, Gyula (b. 1902). The most outstanding figure of present-day Hungarian poetry, well known to our readers. The present paper has often been quoted and misunderstood in the press, especially in *The New York Times* and *Time*—mainly its allusion to the meaning of the bath-tub. A French selection of his poems was published by Editions du Seuil in Paris. See "Rácegres Notebook," "Switch-Over," "Ode to Bartók," "What I Brought Home from a Writers' Congress," "The Favourite" (a historical tragedy), "The Word of Music" (poem), in Nos. 1, 5, 11, 12-13, 17, 20 and 23 of *The N.H.Q.*

MORGAN, Edwin (b. 1918?). Poet, literary critic, well-known broadcaster, Senior Lecturer in English at Glasgow University. He is particularly interested in the problems of verse translation. His publications include: *Beowulf*, verse translation into modern English, 1952; *The Cape of Good Hope*, poetry, 1955; *Poems from Eugenio Montale*, 1959; *Sovpoems*, translations, 1961; *Starryveldt*, concrete poetry, 1965; Editor of *Collins' Albatross Book of Longer Poems*, 1963, and *Scottish Poetry No. 1*, 1966. Translated a number of Hungarian poems some of which have appeared in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 23, and in the present number. Spent two weeks in Hungary participating in International Poetry Days in Budapest, October 1966, and as guest of the Hungarian P.E.N. Center.

CAILLOIS, Roger (b. 1913). The well-known French writer, head of the Literary Section of UNESCO, contributed to International Poetry Days by sending in his text, since his official occupation prevented him from coming to Budapest. See also his essay "From Fairy Tales to Science Fiction" in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 22.

SÓTÉR, István (b. 1913). Novelist, literary historian, Professor of Hungarian at Eötvös

University in Budapest, President of the Hungarian P.E.N. Center. Studied in Budapest and in Paris at the École Normale Supérieure. Began his literary career with novels and short stories in the 'thirties, wrote monographs on Franco-Hungarian cultural relations, a great number of essays on French and Hungarian authors, important books on the various theoretical problems of romanticism and realism, a monograph on the Hungarian literature of the late 19th century. Also translated works by Emily Brontë, Dickens and Hemingway. Edited the six-volume standard "History of Hungarian Literature." See also his essays on Imre Madách and Miklós Radnóti in *The N.H.Q.*, Nos. 16 and 18.

KORMOS, István (b. 1923). Poet, editor of a series of verse anthologies entitled "Gems of Hungarian Literature" and "Gems of World Literature" at a publishing house in Budapest. Published his first volume of poems in 1947, praised by critics for its sophisticated simplicity of tone and outlook. Since then has written very little poetry until a recent long stay in Paris revived his interest in writing. Has translated Chaucer, Burns, Pushkin, Shukovsky, Russian folk poetry and *Sganarelle* by Molière.

SCHREIBER, Thomas (b. 1929). French journalist of Hungarian origin, working on the staff of *Le Monde* and French Radio and Television. Author of several studies on Eastern Europe in *Documentation Française*. See his "Economic Relations between France and Hungary" in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 19.

DOBOSSY, László (b. 1910). Literary historian, Professor at Eötvös University in Budapest. Studied at the Sorbonne and at Charles University in Prague. In the 'thirties he was a leading figure in the progressive Hungarian youth movement in Czechoslovakia, and during the war a member of the French Resistance. His research work centres around certain problems of French and Czech literary history, literary

theory and comparative literature. Published studies on Romain Rolland, on questions of periodization in Czech literary history, also a two-volume Czech-Hungarian dictionary, books on Karel Čapek, Hašek and Rolland, and an anthology of contemporary French poetry.

GALGÓCZI, Erzsébet (b. 1930). Short-story writer, born in a small village. She came to the capital in the early 'fifties to work as an unskilled factory hand, and was discovered as a writer on the occasion of a trade union short-story competition. Later she studied drama at the Academy of Theatre and Film Art. Her numerous short stories and reportages, always based on fact and personal experience, deal with contemporary peasant life, the vicissitudes of the peasantry in the painful and slow process of transformation that is changing not only the face of the rural countryside but people themselves. Her fine newspaper articles, accounts of her frequent journeys in villages, made her a well-known and controversial writer. She has published three volumes of short stories and recently a collection of her articles entitled *Kegyetlen sugarak* ("Merciless Rays"). The present story was originally published in the periodical *Kortárs* (1966/9 issue.) See also her story "Below Zero" in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 12.

VÁLYI, Péter (b. 1919). Economist, a chemical engineer by training, first deputy president of the National Planning Bureau in Budapest. Has been active in comprehensive central planning of the national economy for fifteen years. President of the Hungarian-Yugoslav Committee for Economic Cooperation. Has published studies and articles on various economic questions in Hungarian journals. See also "Hungary's Twenty-Year Economic Development Plan," with István Hetényi, in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 11.

HETÉNYI, István (b. 1926). Economist, deputy president of the National Planning

Bureau, Professor at Karl Marx University of Economics, lecturer on national economic planning at the Technical University of the Building and Transport Industry. He is Hungarian representative at the Office of Comecon's Executive Committee. His studies on long-range planning and on methodological problems of planning appeared in various Hungarian journals. See also "Hungary's Twenty-Year Economic Development Plan," with Péter Vályi, in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 11.

VAJDA, Imre (b. 1900). Economist, Professor Emeritus at Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest, member of the Editorial Board of, and a frequent contributor to, *The N.H.Q.* See his "The Changing Role of Hungary in the International Division of Labour" and "Economic Growth and International Division of Labour" in *The N.H.Q.*, Nos. 19 and 22, and earlier papers in Nos. 3, 5, 8, 11, 17.

HORÁNYI, Elvira. Economist, deputy head of the Census Department in the Central Statistical Bureau in Budapest. Has published papers on professional classification in statistics and other problems of demography.

FULCHIGNONI, Enrico (b. Sicily, 1913). Professor of Psychology at Rome University, Director of the Film and Cultural Television Section at UNESCO in Paris. Has published numerous works on problems of the theatre, the cinema and communication. His book, *La moderna civiltà del immaggio*, won the 1966 Marzotto Prize. See also his "The Responsibility of Midcult" in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 12.

HARASZTI, Éva. Historian, research worker at the Historical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Her main sphere of interest is that of Anglo-Hungarian relations in the 19th century and of the Chartist Movement. A comprehensive work of hers deals with the role of British foreign

policy at the time of the 1848-49 Hungarian War of Independence. See also her "Hungary at the Great Exhibition of 1851" in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 5.

SZENCZI, Miklós (b. 1904). Literary historian, Professor of English at Eötvös University in Budapest. Was for several years lecturer in Hungarian at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at London University. Author of numerous studies in English literary history, editor of a big collection of Elizabethan plays in Hungarian translation; wrote the entries on the Hungarian language and on Hungarian literature in "Chambers' Encyclopedia." See also "The English Department at Budapest University" and "The Old Hungarian Drama" in *The N.H.Q.*, Nos. 3 and 4.

PERNECZKY, Géza (b. 1936). Art historian and critic, art columnist of *Magyar Nemzet*, a Budapest daily. Studied art history and music, graduated at Eötvös University. See his "Two Exhibitions," "Béla Kondor the Painter," and "Miklós Borsos" in *The N.H.Q.*, Nos. 12, 17, 20.

SÍK, Csaba (b. 1933). Essayist, critic, reader at *Magvető* Publishers in Budapest. Graduated in Hungarian and history at Eötvös University. Has written on a number of outstanding Hungarian and foreign authors and artists, edited anthologies, etc. See his "Men before the Mirror," and "Zoltán Kemény" in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 1 and 24.

SZOKOLAY, Sándor (b. 1931). Composer. Studied under Ferenc Szabó and Ferenc Farkas at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, won four international competitions of composition, was awarded the Kossuth Prize in 1965. Worked for a time as music editor at Hungarian Radio and Television. His *Déploration*, composed in memory of F. Poulenc, was performed at the Tours Festival in 1964. His first opera,

"Blood Wedding," composed to Federico García Lorca's text was received with enthusiasm in the Hungarian press and also by critics in England, France and West-Germany. It has already been performed in Wuppertal, West Germany, and performances of the work are scheduled in Zagreb, Toulouse, Prague and Berlin. Other compositions include 2 oratorios, 6 cantatas, a Violin Concerto, a Piano Concerto and some ballet and film music.

CZIMMER, József (b. 1913). Theatre critic, translator, literary manager of the Budapest *Vígyszínház* theatre, a psychologist by training. Has translated plays by Anouilh, Tennessee Williams, James Baldwin, etc. In addition to two collections of articles, has published numerous essays on the theatre.

See also his "Letter to London" and "Visiting the New York Theatres" in *The N.H.Q.*, Nos. 15 and 18.

BÓNIS, Ferenc (b. 1932). Musicologist, head of the department of Hungarian musicology at the Budapest Bartók Archives. Studied musicology at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. Has published numerous studies and articles on musicology. See also his "Pál Kadosa" in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 15.

HARDI, Róbert (b. 1915). Economist, lecturer at Karl Marx University of Economics in Budapest, deputy manager of KONSUM-EX (Commodity Trading Enterprise). See also his "Congress of the International Fiscal Institute" in *The N.H.Q.*, No. 18.

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