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VOLUME IX 1968

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Kossuth Nyomda, Budapest

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JÁNOS KÁDÁR ANSWERS QUESTIONS

On January 1st 1968 an interview with János Kádár, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, was broadcast over Hungarian Radio and Television stations. A translation of the transcript of the broadcast is printed below.

György Szepesi, one of the two journalists who took part in the interview—the other was Károly Megyeri—wrote an introduction for The New Hungarian Quarterly.

"The First Secretary is expecting you," I am told as I walk through the gate of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party's Headquarters at Jászai Mari Square, overlooking the Danube. I am not held up by formalities and I soon reach his office. The window panes let in the faint winter sun. We are sitting at a simple conference table with János Kádár and, as is customary at such a time, and it doesn't matter whether the office is that of the manager of a firm or that of one of the country's leaders, in a minute cups of steaming black coffee are in front of us. Kádár adds a little milk to his.

"I've taken a little milk in my coffee for thirty years now," he said, "and if I think of the number of times that I've got to sit down to a cup of coffee every day, I don't think it's such a bad idea."

He straightaway lights a cigarette too, as if to restore the balance, goodness knows the how-manyeth that day. You might call him a chainsmoker, he just about lights one on the stub of the last, and what's more he smokes the strongest brand, *Szimfónia*, the Hungarian *Gitanes*. It's always there between his fingers. Now I can understand the milk in his coffee.

I have to mention why I came. The Hungarian radio and television weekly asked its readers just before Christmas which public figure, writer, scientist, actor, musician or sportsman they'd like to see on TV or listen to on the radio on New Year's Day. According to the answers the politician whom the overwhelming majority wanted to see and hear was János Kádár, and several thousand letters arrived with questions addressed to him.

"I liked the questions you submitted," János Kádár says, "and I'm not going to change them. There are a fair few personal ones amongst them. There's no point in answering those unless it all serves sound policy, that is *our* policy. I can't imagine my person as such to be of any interest. I've got the same joys and sorrows as everybody else. Anybody would say the same things in my place."

Let us recall a few of those questions which won't get an answer. A fifth-former would like to know when he will be able to spend his holidays on the moon? A postman, who it seems likes to have a good time, wants to know whether Kádár often has a good time himself. A girl, who else, would like to know how many girls he went out with before he met his wife. A married woman on the other hand is interested in who handles the money in the Kádár family. Perhaps she is looking for an example to follow. A whole lot of sportsmen seem to have got together to ask him if he likes shooting? It seems to me that this question won't get an official answer. He told me though, and laughed:

"Of course I like shooting. And I know it perfectly well that the beaters make things easy for me, perhaps they hold the game

still, right there in front of the barrel. I'll let you in on a secret though, what interests me is not the result but the outing."

János Kádár is a good, witty conversationalist. Time passes and we haven't really started to talk business yet. New cigarettes are lit, and smoked, and I remind him that I seem to conduct a major interview with him just about once every ten years. The first time was in 1947 when Petru Groza, who was Prime Minister of Rumania at the time, came to Hungary.

"I remember the article," János Kádár says, "and I shall never forget Groza. What an intelligent and cultured politician he was."

The second, longer conversation between us took place on the 1st of May 1957. There was a television broadcast right from the scene of the celebrations, and I was the first one to interview him.

"Let us not forget the summer of '57 either," János Kádár reminds me. Then I remember that summer in Moscow when we did a direct broadcast from the lobby of the Hotel Ukraine. I was already on the air when János Kádár and his wife came in. I greeted them, and Kádár who didn't know that the broadcast had started, asked me if I had seen Tamás Major, the actor. "I can't understand it, I looked for him this morning, I looked for him midday, I looked for him this evening, but I just can't find him." To this day I don't know what Hungarian listeners thought about this peculiar interview.

If we continue with our reminiscences for much longer there won't be any television the next day. But then, after a few more cigarettes we quickly settled everything.

Next day we are in front of the cameras. Only seconds to go when I notice that he takes out his cigarettes. The fireman on duty notices it too, and though he speaks jocularly, he nevertheless does his duty. He comes up to our table, salutes and says:

"I beg your pardon, Comrade Kádár, but if you light up now I'll have to fine you 200 forints."

The First Secretary laughingly waves him aside.

"It's not worth that much."

It is time for the first question.

Q: A large proportion of the questions addressed to you is connected with peace. Many of those who write would like to know what you think about the world situation, with special regard to the war in Vietnam.

A: I think it perfectly natural that now, on the threshold of a New Year almost everybody should in the first place ask about peace. Honest and hardworking men and women the world over, wherever they may live, are today one in the wish that above all there should be peace. That people should ask this question anxiously is not surprising; after all you could say that mankind in our times has never known complete peace, and that the generation now living has experienced the ordeal of two world wars. That the international situation has in the past few years deteriorated again to a certain extent, after slight temporary improvement, also explains this anxiety and uneasiness. This is expressed by countless events familiar to everybody who reads newspapers, listens to the radio or watches television, such as

various coups, so-called local wars, and especially the war in Vietnam. After all everyone sees and knows that imperialism doesn't rest for a minute, and that the leading and chief imperialist power, the United States of America, carries on a barbarous, aggressive war in Vietnam, a war condemned by just about everybody. They want to force the people of Vietnam to their knees, no less.

As far as I'm concerned I am a Communist and as most people know, the Communist World Movement has for some time now linked the fight for the Communist idea and a Communist society with the fight for universal and lasting peace. We are fighting for peace. We have confidence in our cause. We think it our duty to unite all progressive men and women and to ask everyone to take an active part so that together we will prevent the outbreak of a new world war and make it impossible that the imperialists should threaten and break the peace, even if only through a local war.

These days the war in Vietnam as it were never comes off the agenda. As far as I am concerned I am convinced that the United States will never achieve the purpose which they aimed at when they unleashed this war. They will not be able to force the people of Vietnam, the people of Indochina, back into the colonial yoke once again. In this war the United States committed unheard of atrocities, their manner of waging war is, as we've all seen, one of extraordinary inhumanity. All the same they have not been able to break the spirit of the people of Vietnam. The whole world is a witness to this fight in which the greatest imperial power on earth is unable to impose its will on a comparatively small people. This small people thwarts every attempt to enslave it.

I repeat, I am convinced that the people of Vietnam will be victorious and that the people of Vietnam will be free. And I am also thoroughly convinced that the power of the Socialist countries, the efforts of every progressive man and woman in the world, and the vigilance of the peoples of the earth will prevent the outbreak of another world war.

Q: What is your opinion about the role of Hungary in world affairs?

A: The international standing of the Hungarian People's Republic has grown considerably in the past few years. Perhaps I ought to confine myself to a clearly limited and surveyable period: shall we say then in the past ten years. If you try to think and work out what this is due to, then you realise that it is in the first place the result of a consistent and progressive policy which as far as home affairs go serves the cause of

civil liberty and on an international plane that of peace and socialism. The Hungarian People's Republic belongs to the countries and peoples in the van of progress, in spite of its relatively small territory and population. The Hungarian People Republic's influence on the shaping of international life in the interests of peace, peaceful coexistence and social progress is especially effective through and within the alliance of which it is a part.

I ought to say too at this stage that large power groupings are involved in the struggle in today's complex world, and naturally there are continuing attempts to break up the unity of Socialist countries and progressive powers. Such shall we say seductive sirensong asking why Hungary's foreign policy is not more independent is frequently heard. Without saying it right out they mean, why doesn't Hungary break away from the Soviet Union, or rather from the community of Socialist countries as such? Well all I can say to that is quite simple, that Hungary doesn't break away, because the policy which truly pays in the long run is a policy which is true to principle, and we know that we keep and increase the esteem of our friends and to some extent even the respect of our enemies by sticking to our principles both at home and abroad.

Q: It is I think understandable that the country's population has for some time now been thinking about the new economic mechanism which is about to be introduced on January 1st 1968. One can hear many questions these days which you might say ask: what can we expect from the new economic mechanism? Many put it this way: will there be a rise in the standard of living?

A: That's so. Today an important section of public opinion occupies itself with the reform of the way the economy is directed. This you might say is exactly what the Central Committee of the Party and the country's government would like to happen. These changes in the way the economy is directed we are now putting into effect and, to tell the truth in the economy as such, are changes which are ripe and overdue. That the man in the street should think of it in the first place as connected with the standard of living, well as far as I'm concerned that's the natural thing to happen but I of course can't stop at that. Please let me once again emphasise what I do without fail where this sort of question crops up, namely that as far as I am concerned, following the laws and logic of life, it seems to me that if you put things in the right order then also as far as these reforms in the way the economy is directed are concerned what we are trying to achieve is

efficiency in the economy, a rise in production and in productivity, and it is through them that we'll get a rise in the standard of living. As many of us have said more than once, what we expect from these reforms is a speeding up in the growth of production, and in the rise of the standard of living, in other words to use a term that includes it all, to speed up the rate at which we are building Socialism in Hungary. We are all convinced of this.

Q: One of our correspondents would like to know who thought of the new mechanism?

A: It's pretty difficult to answer this sort of question but it's possible. To start with the new mechanism isn't some sort of brain-wave, and therefore no one thought of it just like that. Thinking about the new mechanism started at a certain given time, say about three years ago, when though well aware that our economy was developing and progressing, some of us nevertheless saw certain signs which indicated that if we didn't change certain things then we couldn't make certain that development would continue at the earlier rate. That's why hundreds of people, in various fields started to examine our economy and the way our economy is directed in order to discover those elements which aided development, and those which put a brake on it. The result of this research was the accumulation of a tremendous amount of experience, this was systematised by the Party's Central Committee, by the government, and on a directly practical level by those who are professionally concerned with the economy, scientists, economists. In the appropriate Party bodies they discussed and debated it all again and in the process the conviction took shape that there was a need to reform the way our economy is directed. I hope this answers the question.

Q: One of our correspondents would like to know whether the reform of the way our economy is directed is likely to solve the housing problem?

A: The housing question is one of the most important social questions today. In a manner of speaking it has been solved, since after all not many in our country sleep rough, but in the way we would consider it really solved, in relation to society as a whole, the way we at one time put it into words, that every family in the country should have its own self-contained dwelling, in that way we couldn't solve it as a result of the building work completed this year. Will we be able to solve the problem as a result of the economic reforms and following the economic reforms,

under the new economic mechanism? I believe we will, because I look on these reforms as the sort of thing we call a reform now, and we'll call it that for another year, but afterwards we shan't speak about any sort of reforms, and afterwards we'll just work this new system, and within it we will solve this.

Now we expect a small surplus as the immediate result of the reforms, since right amongst the regulations giving effect to the reforms there is one which will make something possible that wasn't possible until now, and that is that the production units and enterprises should be able to set aside a certain proportion of their profit, of their income, to deal directly with the housing needs of their own employees. This will be, shall we say, a widening of the present financial basis. In addition the enterprises involved are as a rule important big enterprises which have their own production apparatus, often they have their own building section, so they'll be able to build a certain number of dwellings themselves. But this doesn't really solve the question yet. What we expect from the reforms in other respects, that is that production will be more efficient, that it will produce more income and be more profitable, that's where we expect that surplus power to come from with the help of which we can guarantee a solution of the housing problem within a reasonable time.

As is well known a 15 year housing plan is in operation at the moment, as part of which one million dwellings altogether have to be built. We have so far built the proportionate number for the time that has elapsed, perhaps not a hundred per cent, but more or less, but a lot is still left to be done.

I want to say something else now, because that's how I am, once I start speaking, it's my habit to say something too. As far as this housing question is concerned the position you might say is a little intricate. The housing question as a whole is on the agenda of the Party's Central Committee right now, where every aspect of this question is being examined, such as the construction of new dwellings. To tell the truth I have personally often raised the question that we shouldn't concern ourselves only with the construction of new dwellings, but also with claims to housing and the way dwellings are alloted. Although the majority of the dwellings that are being built are most certainly alloted fairly and according to need, all the same there is need for some sort of perspective, and some sort of intelligible order must be established which accords with our sense of fairness and justice. I must say that it is my impression that if we carry on the way we have until now, then at the end of the fifteen years after we will have constructed a million dwellings, there still won't be fewer claimants than when we started, but on the contrary a fair few more. Now if to become

a claimant and not only a claimant but actually someone who gets a flat you've got to do no more than buy a sheet of foolscap, take a pen and write, and then I'm as good a claimant as anyone else, then we can never solve the problem. I should imagine that we can still do something to improve construction, that perhaps we'll be able to build at a somewhat faster rate; but we'll have to establish some sort of order in the housing lists too, so that this and that person's need, and ability, and the possibilities will be considered, and then the way dwellings are alloted will be fair and just, and this problem too will reach a state of equilibrium.

Q: It is common knowledge that in Hungary women and pensioners are the keenest letter writers. It is now their turn. What will be the situation of women and pensioners under the new mechanism?

A: As far as women are concerned let me say that I have nothing but respect for the working women in our Socialist homeland. I am convinced it is not only when it comes to writing letters that they are the keenest. My own experience tells me that at work too they are extraordinarily keen and devoted. As far as the position of women is concerned I can only speak with respect about working women and it is because of this too that I am in favour of equal rights and of emancipation, and if I say that we in the leadership are of the opinion that the new way of running the economy will benefit working people and improve and ease their lot then I also include working women. Besides our public opinion knows it only too well that our institutions and our government always keep the social problems and special questions affecting working women on the agenda, and always deal with them with the appropriate attention. Following on the decisions of the recent Party Congress a long line of orders and regulations whose purpose is to ease the lot of working women, and especially of mothers, have been given effect to, and have been put into practice. This way of looking at things, and this way of handling the question will go on as before.

Q: And the pensioners?

A: I can speak about the pensioners in a similar way. Our Party and our Government is not in the habit of boasting and I must say I don't approve of it myself, but since we are talking about this, let me say that our pension system is such that it stands out even if judged by world standards. It holds its own in a comparison with the pension system of

any country you care to think about. Everyone knows too that we think and worry about the problems of older people and pensioners, not only from a general social point of view but also when it comes to concrete money problems. In this connection I should also mention that as a result of the principled stand taken by the Party congress, measures were taken which regulate the situation of hundreds of thousands of pensioners.

I should like to say this too though, that good will in itself is not enough, therefore I'd like to return once again to the basic question in connection with the reforms. I am of the opinion that the situation of pensioners will systematically improve in the future for the simple reason that precisely with the help of these reforms we'll be able to establish a wider and firmer financial basis that will allow us to care properly for them. I think that anyone prepared to do a little arithmetic can understand what this problem is about. At the moment, speaking in round figures, there are one million two hundred thousand pensioners and others entitled to assistance, and this in a country with ten million inhabitants. To give you an idea what sort of a proportion this is, and what kind of economic and financial problems have to be solved, let me just say by way of comparison that the number of workers and employees in industry is, also speaking in round figures, one million two hundred thousand. It's not a small problem as you can see, good-will is not enough, we've got that, material conditions are necessary and let's hope that in not so many years we'll be able to dispose over an ampler material basis than today, and then we'll be able to reconsider a certain category of pensioners also, the so-called old-system pensioners. You don't have to tell me that there are problems in connection with them.

Q: Many young viewers and listeners would like to ask you more personal questions, connected with your youth, more particularily how and when did you begin to take part in the youth movement?

A: The position I am in means that I don't get much time for reminiscence, and in general I seldom think about such matters. I must say though that it was an important stage in my development when I joined the labour movement, more precisely the Communist Youth Movement. I don't have to think very hard to remember all about that event. It was about 1930 and I was already a skilled tradesman in industry and, as all those who lived then know only too well, that was the time of the great depression, which weighed very heavily both on the industry and the

agriculture of the sort of half-feudal country which Hungary was then. As far as working people went despair is the only word which correctly describes the situation. Naturally I wasn't an exception to that either. I'll tell you honestly that what brought me as a young workingman to the movement was mainly the wish to earn an honest and decent living with the work of my hands. In this way, because of my trade, I got into contact with men from the so-called ironworkers' opposition who were then the Communist led revolutionary wing of the trade union movement. This is where I got to know the labour movement in practice, including the political struggle. I took part in demonstrations protesting against unemployment, and later, after some thought, I sought out friends of whom I knew, because I had heard about it, that they took part in the youth movement of the illegal communist party. I began to talk things over with them and they enlightened me about this and that. I then asked them to make it possible for me, that I too could join the Communist Youth Organisation, which at the time was functioning in illegality. Since this was an important event for me, I remember it very well. It was in the autumn of 1931, in September, one Thursday evening in Paulay Ede utca, a Budapest street, when within the framework of a so-called illegal street get-together they introduced me to that cell which discussed and decided on the question whether they'd admit me as a member of the Communist Youth Organisation.

Q: How old were you then?

A: I was nineteen at the time.

> Q: We have received a question from a twenty year old young man which we think interesting. He would like to hear your opinion about those who are twenty today. And also, did you when you were twenty ever think that you might be in a leading position one day? Further, how does it feel having to concern oneself with the fate of ten million men?

A: To start with I'll take the easier question, the personal one since I can deal with that quickly. Did I when I was twenty think that I might one day be one of the leaders? Of course not, that is taking that in the way a twenty year old questioner today means it to be understood. On the other hand the situation was that at that time a merciless and violent

struggle was going on, there were sharp clashes between the classes; and in the Communist youth movement work and my own situation somehow developed in such a way, that after only a year's membership of the youth organisation I was co-opted into the district committee, and I hadn't completed the 20th year of my life yet when I became the secretary of the Central Committee of the illegal Communist Youth Organisation and also a party member. Therefore I can say that in a manner of speaking I was entrusted with a leading office already at the age of 20.

In connection with this I'll straightaway answer the second question, for the way it feels to be concerned with the fate of ten million people can be said to be connected with the important office I occupied at such an early age. I'll say it truthfully, it is a big responsibility, though I hardly ever think about it in this way. The way I look at it is, here is a given office with which I am entrusted, certain responsibilities go with it which I undertook to carry out, and I take good care that I should carry out this work honestly. I do this without soul searching or that sort of thing. My own person isn't involved, it's part of the job. To a large and important extent this involves taking up a position on major questions, and that is not an easy assignment. This feeling as such is not all that difficult to puzzle out. I should think that a great many people can feel as I do, if they want to, since we are after all living in a developed society, many people act in full self awareness, and I am prepared to state that there are tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of people who worry not only about their own problems, their own affairs, but who are also concerned about the fate of their ten million fellow countrymen. It worries them, and it occupies their time, therefore they themselves have a pretty good idea what sort of feeling this is. It is a feeling aware of responsibility, its importance and its difficulties.

As far as youth is concerned, this as you know is one of my favourite subjects and if we hadn't eaten up our available time as we have, I could say a lot about it. After all I have spent a great deal of my life working amongst young people and with young people and I have always enjoyed it. Sometimes the question is raised: what is the youth of Hungary like? Of course you can put the question this way, if you want to, but if it is formulated in this way it is just about impossible to answer it. As far as I am concerned, and I am not trying to be funny, this sounds to me just about as if someone were to ask me, what are today's Hungarian adults like? It's difficult to answer because take middle-aged people, or the old, as many as there are, as many different kinds there are. And youth too, that is made up of young people, and young people differ. If you want to

answer it in such generalities, well then I could state a variety of things. Amongst our young people there is a minute percentage, so small that it's almost impossible to show it in statistics, which has no regular job to do. Young people either study or they work. They take part in production, in industry, in agriculture, in a variety of fields. Thus it is my opinion, speaking like this in generalities, that our youth does its job, that it takes part in the building of socialism, or rather that still engaged in studies, it is conscientiously preparing itself for the task which is awaiting it.

On the other hand there are problems. This has got nothing to do with the way society is organised in our country. It is one of the laws of life that there are certain things in which different age groups, especially those at the two extremities of life, cannot really understand each other. On occasions such as this I always recommend, and not only to young people, that they should always remember that youth, just like old age is in itself merely a condition, a certain section in the life of man. It is neither a sin nor a virtue to be young, and it is not a sin or a virtue to be old either. If everyone stopped trying to make a sin or a virtue out of his age, then the approach to the question immediately becomes simpler, and it is more likely to be the right one.

Youth, it is true, is an extremely important period in one's life, when though one's knowledge and experience of life is small, one has nevertheless to take up a position on questions which you might say will determine one's whole life. You've got to establish your relationship to society when you are still very young, you've got to find, as one might put it, the other half of the couple, one has to lay down a basis for one's own future family when one is still young. That is why the young should live in such a way that when there is need for work, they work, when they have to decide about serious questions they must think seriously, and in the little time that's left, well they should have a good time as young people do.

But in making such observations you always think of such superficialities, as what you wear, fashions, that sort of thing. As far as I'm concerned there is no need for society to look on such things as fundamental questions that affect life itself. Fashions come and go. In my time there were wide trousers, then narrow trousers, then wide trousers again, and narrow trousers again. Nowadays of course here and there we've got young men with their hair hanging all over the place, about whom it is said, well this is the fashion, or that is the fashion. My answer is that whatever the fashion might be it shouldn't clash with cleanliness, with health or with aesthetics. We have no need of young people who look like troglodytes. And our

youth won't be like that either. There are those who've let their hair grow long. I imagine that sooner or later they'll have a hair cut too.

Q: You have had a very difficult life. And nevertheless you are jovial and an optimist.

A: Yes. Probably, I imagine precisely because I have experienced a lot. It is true that some of the times I've been through could be called ordeals. Their effect was in general that, how shall I put it, you toughen up. But it's possible too that it's part of your nature whether you're an optimist or a pessimist. Though I must say I don't really think there is such a thing as a genuine pessimist. Human beings are generally optimists, only some deny it. Or they like getting a cheap reputation as prophets. They say about something: this won't work, and I told you so later if it doesn't work. But no one calls them to account if it does work. In this way it's much easier for you if you say you are a pessimist. In my opinion human nature is the way those very old words put it: while there's life, there's hope. I've never denied it that I'm an optimist, and that not only here, at your table. I was an optimist in much more difficult situations too, and I owe this in the first place to the fact that I believe in a scientific world outlook, that I am a Communist.

Q: Joviality and a good sense of humour are closely connected with optimism, and I think everyone knows about Budapest humour. It is therefore not surprising that someone should ask: is there such a thing as humour in politics?

A: I'm all in favour of a good laugh. I believe that when there is need for anger, then you should be angry, and if you can see the humourous, that is the funny side of something, then you should take notice of that too. This is not entirely the case with politics. As far as I know politics is a word of Greek origin and in its original sense it meant State, and State affairs, and I think that today too we can say that it means public affairs. There is nothing funny about public affairs. Of course situations you can laugh about happen in political life too but it is a different thing where State and public affairs are concerned.

Q: A personal question. Do you get time to read, to go to the theatre, to relax? Many would like to know.

A: To tell the truth, I haven't got much free time. But naturally I too have some. Not very much. In general none at all on week days, more towards the end of the week, if I'm lucky. As far as free time goes I belong to the old school. I like to read. To be honest I've loved good literature from early youth, prose I mean, already in my childhood. It means rest and recreation to me. But of course I don't like to cut myself off from the world, and it isn't advisable either. I have a look at worthwhile films, I go to the theatre, it is true not often, but I can say that I go regularly, I don't want to be cut off from that either. Besides that I've got a number of hobbies. There are many things I like doing. I like playing chess, I like sport, and I like nature. Whenever I get a chance, when the occasion arises, I like to have a look at a chess tournament, at all sorts of sporting spectacles, in the first place I like to see a good football match. But if I get a chance I like to go out into the woods and fields, and I must make a confession, I like shooting too, or rather I should like it if I got a chance. For the simple reason because in my opinion true rest means that we fill the little free time at our disposal in such a way that we don't do what we do in working hours.

I like the woods and fields because there is no telephone there, they don't bring me papers, I don't have to read reports, and those few hours mean real rest.

When I think of the coming year, and of our people then I see things in such a way, that there will be work to do then, no less than there was in 1967, we have to struggle and fight for progress, at home against out-moded notions, and often against ourselves, and on an international level against those powers which are opposed to us, whose endeavours threaten peace and socialism. In my opinion our people has sound reasons for looking towards the new year with confidence and in hope. Now I shall return to an earlier question. If our ten million men and women care and think about a happier future for ten million, and if they work, think, and influence their fellow human beings in this spirit, then they can have every expectation that we shall defend peace, continue to build socialism, that there will be work and there will be results.

INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM IN BUDAPEST ON ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND EAST-WEST TRADE

Organized by the Hungarian Institute for Cultural Relations in cooperation with the Board of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and sponsored by the Carnegie Peace Foundation, an international Colloquium on economic integration and East-West trade was held in Budapest, between September 10 and 14. Thirty theoreticians, practicians and researchers in the economic sphere from 16 countries of four continents took part in the Colloquium. Introductory lectures were held by Gunnar Myrdal, director of the Stockholm International Peace Institute, ex-general-secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe, Alexander Lámfalussy, manager of the Banque de Bruxelles, P. S. Lokanathan, head of the Indian Institute of Economics, Imre Vajda, Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and President of the Hungarian Economic Association, and Robert Triffin, a professor at Yale University. The Colloquium, moreover, was honoured by the presence of Raul Prebish, secretary-general of the Economic Commission for Europe. Its meetings were held under the chairmanship of Professor József Bognár, Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and President of the Institute for Cultural Relations.

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The Budapest Colloquium provided an opportunity for economists of countries with different social systems and at various stages of development to exchange views on East-West trade. Owing to the informal character of the Colloquium, the haranguing of monologues and the laying down of principles could be avoided in favour of genuine dialogue. This made it possible to short-circuit the usually long process of clarifying standpoints through protracted debate.

The timeliness of the Colloquium was best shown by the fact that not only the reports, but contributions to the debates and dialogues as well were a genuine reflection of experiences derived from the development to date of East-West trade. A point was thus reached where conclusions from these experiences had to be drawn and new targets set.

The determining factor in the above was the actual situation of East-West trade. For the contradictions between the present level of these trade relations and the dynamism of their development are truly puzzling.

This dynamism is undeniably remarkable. The imports of the western (OECD) countries from socialist countries amounted to about 5,000 million dollars in 1966 as compared with 2,450 million dollars in 1960, i.e., it doubled, by and large, in seven years. The exports of the OECD countries to socialist countries did not lag far behind, increasing from 2,481 million dollars in 1960 to about 4,300 million dollars in 1966, i.e., by 73 per cent.

Promising though this situation may seem, one cannot be overoptimistic, bearing in mind that the foreign trade turnover with socialist countries amounted to only 3.3 per cent of the OECD countries' total foreign trade, whereas the share of the western countries in the total foreign trade of the socialist countries was only 15 per cent.

The explanation is simple enough: foreign trade within the Comecon (CMEA) and the Common Market—the two principal economic units within the eastern and western camps respectively—increased at the same rate as trade between the two blocs, or at an even quicker rate. Suffice it to recall that, since its establishment, the trade within the Common Market has trebled, while foreign trade within the Comecon in 1966 was 2.6-fold that of 1956.

Such a limited contact between the economies of the two units is obviously unnatural and inconsistent with economic and geographic reality in a Europe divided into two parts. Following an objective interchange of ideas the Budapest Colloquium agreed that the restricted economic relations are due to political causes rooted in the recent past. Another impediment to the improvement of relations is the emphasis on bilateral trade, an outgrowth of the former quantitative-minded planning system in the socialist countries and the quota system which found favour in the western countries.

Western countries are, on the whole, insufficiently informed on the functioning of the socialist economic system, whereas socialist countries are concerned about the possible effect of western market fluctuations on the stability of their economy. This, in turn, tends to breed mutual distrust, so that neither side is inclined to enter into permanent partnership. Disastrous consequences might, for example, ensue for a small country that has developed an export industry, if it were to be eliminated from the market overnight due to a decision taken by the other side.

At the Colloquium it became evident that, in addition to explicitly negative factors, there are also retroactive positive factors that react negatively on East-West trade. Thus the very growth of trade within each of the two camps weakens the inclination to establish relations between the Comecon and the Common Market.

At present, the factors serving to increase foreign trade within the blocs still make themselves strongly felt, and in the past years this trade has become increasingly introverted in both camps. The growth rate of world trade in recent years fell somewhat short of 10 per cent; during the same period, the growth rate of trade between the socialist countries was somewhat higher, whereas between the western countries it was considerably higher (about 15 per cent).

The commerce of individual countries leans towards trade with other countries of the same group of states on account of the similarity of their institutional structure and better chances for figuring out prospective trade developments, as well as because of long-standing links between firms and banks. When all is said and done, the principle of *similis simili gaudet* is also valid in the field of business relations.

The supernational institutions of regional groups exert the same effect. The criterion of their success is the degree to which they are able to increase relations within the block, and for the time being there is no institutional force capable of promoting trade between the blocs with similar efficacy.

It is illustrative of the relative weight of supernational institutions (besides the inertia of the trade policy they represent) that 6,000 employees are now working at the Brussels headquarters of the Common Market—as was pointed out by one of the western participants of the Colloquium. Thus there is every indication that Parkinson's law holds good for supernational institutions too.

Nevertheless, economic forces and ideas beneficial to East-West trade are coming to the fore in our days. First among such forces are the needs and interests of microeconomic

units (firms), which more than once in the past as well have been able to break through the barriers of principles set up by official macroeconomic policy.

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At the Budapest Colloquium, in addition to emphasizing the necessity of growth, both sides advanced scientific, technical and economic arguments for developing East-West trade. Industrial cooperation might increase the technological level, a field in which the European countries, both capitalist and socialist, are lagging behind the United States; in addition, higher technical standards could increase the efficiency of research and permit more extensive utilization of inventions. One of the economic arguments was that trade inside each bloc can only be increased within certain limits, and once these limits have been reached, stagnation and the bitter necessity of adaptation are likely to arise. This means, in mathematical-economic terms, that endless exponential growth of any phenomenon is inconceivable within a closed system and under unchanged conditions. There is no *perpetuum mobile* either in technology or economics; and this applies both to trade within a bloc and to the process of growth that feeds on it. In studying the possibilities of increased East-West trade, the participants of the Budapest Colloquium were searching also for the institutions of a new era in economic history and, in so doing, for the reserves of further development.

The potentialities of reciprocal growth inherent in the expansion of East-West trade will also augment the funds designed to aid developing countries, whereas lack of cooperation decreases both volume and efficiency of such aid. One of the main preconditions for the economic growth of developing countries is integrated world trade relying on organized rational bases, with East-West trade constituting an organic part of it.

Expansion of the exchange of goods through consistent application of the "most-favoured-nation" clause was urged by the representatives of the socialist countries. Several western speakers pointed out that the MFN clause is no longer the efficient factor in the expansion of trade it once was. However, apart from practical results, it could well contribute to a more propitious atmosphere.

There was a lively exchange of views on the financial measures required to transform bilateral relations into multilateral ones. Under bilateral trade both partners aim at maintaining a steadily balanced turnover, and, consequently, the impetus so important for achieving an active balance is lacking. In its search for multilateral accounting methods, the Colloquium took into consideration the alternatives of cooperation of the socialist countries with IMF (which is, after all, an organ of the UN) and the theoretical feasibility of the western countries' joining the international bank of Comecon. An accounting system under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Europe, designed to convert bilateral into multilateral relations, seems to be the most realistic solution at the present stage of development. In this respect some experiences and analyses are already available. Though a multilateral accounting system within the ECE was set up as early as 1957, accounts thus settled up to 1963 amounted to no more than 4.3 million dollars. Important analyses made by workgroups of ECE between 1963 and 1965 threw light on possible future patterns of multilateral relations. Experiences could also be gained from the clearing systems applied between the Soviet Union, Poland and Finland, on the one hand, and between Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and Finland, on the other, both of them based on trilateral payment agreements.

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The consensus at the Colloquium was that the economic reforms to be introduced in the socialist countries will expedite the development of more flexible forms of cooperation. The keen interest of western

economists in the forthcoming changes in the system of directing the socialist economy will, it is to be hoped, lead to their becoming better acquainted with the economic life of socialist countries. True, even in the past, the opportunities for doing so were usually greater than assumed.* A regular study of the statistical publications and the economic literature of the socialist countries would enable western economists to obtain a better comprehension of socialist foreign trade policies, enabling western business circles to develop a long-range market policy with greater confidence.

Professor Bognár, in summing up the results of the Colloquium and the possibilities of further investigations, said that during the debate several ways and means of improving East-West trade and economic relations had been indicated. In the application of MFN treatment care should be taken to ensure that advantages should be mutual and equal.

"To this effect," Professor Bognár continued, "appropriate measures should be taken, such as introducing permanent consultations, which should serve, among other things, to correct possible disproportions or difficulties and to envisage measures to promote business. An appropriate institutional framework, acceptable to the parties concerned, for conducting such consultations could increase their positive effects.

"It was also felt that the observance of the principle of equality of treatment, non-discrimination and mutual advantages is in itself not sufficient to promote trade between the Eastern and Western countries of Europe and to make full use of existing possibilities. Measures to promote business should also be taken. These include more comprehensive industrial and economic cooperation between East and West, taking advantage of the wider scope for commercial links opened by the economic reforms. Special attention should also be given to the effects on East-West trade of regional groupings, which, by contributing to increased trade in some sectors and in some directions, create problems and difficulties in others. It is desirable that everything possible should be done to exclude any unfavourable impact on foreign trade or any damage to third countries.

"The participants in the Colloquium, while recognizing the usefulness of their discussions, the similarity of views expressed and proposals made, unanimously considered that further studies on more specific subjects are needed in order to devise possible courses of action.

"Significant progress towards trade expansion on a non-discriminatory, multilateral basis will require improved monetary and financial arrangements in East-West relations.

"The problem should first be studied actively and jointly by Eastern and Western participants, both at an academic level and through informal contacts and exploratory talks between government experts and particularly at the level of regional and international organizations.

"The conclusion of these academic studies should then be discussed at another Colloquium like the present one and might advance informal official exploration of the feasibility of practical negotiations and agreements."

The Colloquium could not, of course, solve East-West trade problems, nor was this its task. It did, however, point out the questions that had become ripe for solution and outlined some practical means towards this end. After the conference, one of the western participants said: "The Colloquium did succeed in clarifying a number of issues of outstanding importance in East-West relations, and an occasion of this sort contributes significantly towards an improvement in atmosphere and understanding."

EGON KEMENES

* For example, the *Statistical Year Book of Hungary* has for years been published also in English. From among works on political economy the books of Professor Bognár and Professor Vajda, published in several languages, should be mentioned, as well as their articles in *The New Hungarian Quarterly* and in the *Hungarian Survey*.

STABLE COOPERATION IN AN UNSTABLE WORLD*

by

JÓZSEF BOGNÁR

We live in an age when the world economy—which I, naturally, understand to comprise not only international trade relations but the totality of human activities and endeavours in economic life—operates defectively since it is unable to fulfil its fundamental tasks satisfactorily.

The defective functioning of the world economy cannot be explained by objective circumstances: economic super powers have developed in our days; the concentration of capital has attained an extremely high level; science, advancing at an unprecedented pace, has given assistance to economic life; and human labour, aided by technology, has achieved a productivity hitherto unknown. In spite of this tremendous pace of economic development, the increase in production of the past decade has only just kept ahead of the rapid population growth; what is more, per capita agricultural production has, in the past few years, been decreasing.

Nor is it a secret that the demographical explosion is expected to accelerate further during the decades to come. Obviously, in a world where goods are unequally distributed, the lagging of production behind population growth affects in a very different manner various national economies which represent widely different lines of development.

In the industrial countries or in those undergoing intensive industrialization, both per capita production and consumption have risen, whereas in economically underdeveloped countries they have substantially decreased, so that the discrepancies in the distribution of incomes and economic resources have assumed larger dimensions.

It may be assumed that the defective functioning of the world economy can be traced back to its obsolete institutional system. (By institutional system

* Paper read at the Budapest International Colloquium on Economic Integration and East-West Trade (September 10–14, 1967).

I mean the complex of relations and endeavours that have developed in connection with international exchange, in the sovereignty of national economies and with ownership conditions, and that constitute the foundations of economic contacts between countries. Underlying these relations, naturally, are different opinions, beliefs and views, and these are reflected in the institutional system in the form of compromises.)

The last two decades have witnessed the development of various integrations, created with a view to improving and bringing up to date the institutional system of world economy. In the economico-historical sense the modern integrations have arisen in order to reconcile contradictions in national economies (especially in small and medium-sized countries) due to the speed of technological development and to the expansion capacity of the market, on the one hand, and, on the other, to the high capital requirements of modern technology and to limited economic resources. In this sense modern integrations have tried to achieve a new international division of labour. It follows from the simultaneous existence of the different socio-economic systems, and from the actual political conditions prevailing in the period prior to the appearance of these integrations, that different types of integration have come into existence in the two parts of Europe.

As the past decades have shown, the Western European integration has only been able to attain part of its tasks. It has proved effective in solving the problems of post-war reconstruction, in increasing employment and in reducing the fluctuations of growth cycles, but it has not proved sufficiently effective in overcoming the differences between the dynamics of the United States of America and that of Western Europe, and in the development of scientific capacities. It has had an untoward impact on East-West trade which it has kept at a sub-optimal level as a result of the cold-war period (Marshall Aid Act 117 d, and Battle Act). Nor has it been able to promote the growth of the economy of the underdeveloped countries.

The Eastern European integration has proved effective in assisting the quick transformation of the economic structure by changing the old agrarian societies into industrial ones. It has created reliable import and export markets for member states even under conditions of discrimination and economic cold war. On the other hand, it has not been sufficiently effective in the increase of productivity and in achieving a rational division of labour. Considerable time is consumed in raising industrial capacities, evolved in the days of inevitable protectionism, to a level fit for export with respect to costs, quality and services, and it is therefore not always possible to exploit available markets. The capacity of the integration to exert a beneficial influence on the economic growth of the developing countries is restricted.

In the economically underdeveloped world one cannot speak of endeavours towards integration in the proper sense of the word, but rather of intentions and conceptions directed at achieving a more rational division of labour. Integration (between states or groups of states) in the international sense of the term cannot be attained unless integration of the domestic economy is already in an advanced stage and the surplus energies thus produced tend to overflow the confines of the national economy. Of course, it is evident that the economically underdeveloped world also needs various forms of regional division of labour in order to save capital and to acquire markets.

Thus the present state of existing integrations makes it imperative to survey and examine the problems of trade between them, as well as the effect the expansion of East-West trade might have upon the economically underdeveloped countries. In other words, it has become necessary to find out what commercial techniques and methods might best be used to develop East-West trade in order to create a more beneficial atmosphere for the advance of the developing countries.

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I should like to point out that significant international efforts are being made to animate East-West trade and to achieve a healthier circulation throughout the world economy. Let me mention three of them: the ad hoc group of the Economic Commission for Europe which has already submitted a report on its activities to the General Assembly, summing up an approach to commercial techniques in four requirements:

a) the principle of the most-favoured-nation clause;

b) the abolition of quantitative restrictions on imports;

c) the avoidance of major price fluctuations or disturbances;

d) the further multilateralization of the turnover of goods and of the accounting (clearing) system.

At its General Assembly, to be held in November, FAO is to recommend the indicative planning, on a world-wide scale, of food turnover and agricultural production. And I should also like to refer to the preparations within the ECE directed at outlining development over the next ten to fifteen years in European countries, or, more exactly, their possible development zones, with due regard to the structural changes in production and trade.

Thus the efforts and endeavours inspiring us at this Conference run parallel to the efforts and endeavours of various international organizations, commissions, governments and individuals to improve the functioning of world economy. This significance of our statements, methods of approach and

recommendations is enhanced by the fact that the Second Conference of World Trade and Development will be held within a few months from now. In this connection I should like to point out that the First Conference, although its recommendations have been realized only to a limited extent, has still opened a new chapter in our struggle for a trade policy promoting development. In his message to the Conference, Secretary-General U Thant could justly say that "nothing but cooperation can give a proper impetus to the fight fought for a better and fuller life of mankind."

I wish, however, to stress that, in examining the situation and tendencies of the world economy and world trade our viewpoints will necessarily differ from the viewpoints and endeavours of the various governments. Not only because scientists naturally think in long-term and exact (objective) categories, but also because we have come to this Conference as independent individuals who are not commissioned to represent national interests and viewpoints. This allows us to approach rationality from the angle of world economy and to assess the consequences of our conceptions and resolutions in the light of long-term expectations.

On the strength of the interests the governments are charged to represent, they are the exponents of another kind of rationality—a rationality emphasizing national-economic aspects. This does not necessarily involve national selfishness or opposition to wider conceptions; it expresses the fact that those governing derive their office from those governed and are called upon to represent their interests. By means of various compromises, the national interests can, naturally, be reconciled with world-economic interests and requirements. We scientists rely on our best convictions when recommending ways and means that are advantageous to all nations in the long run, but it is the task of the governments to evaluate the short-term advantages and drawbacks. Certain long-term advantages will not be accepted by countries for whom they involve serious drawbacks within a short-term period, since a country without adequate reserves could easily lose its economic balance in this manner.

This means that even when weighing purely economic considerations we must reckon with the fact that governmental decisions can best be rational from the national point of view whereas international organizations must make great efforts to coordinate what is rational in the world-economic sense with the interests and the mechanism of existing institutions.

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When assessing government behaviours, attitudes and decisions on economic questions one must never neglect the decisive role of politics. This has

been repeatedly stressed by Professor Gunnar Myrdal, who, by discovering and applying the principle of circulative and cumulative causality, has greatly contributed to recognizing the true course of social and international political processes.

The influence of policy on economic phenomena and decisions increases considerably as a consequence of the fact that governments, regardless of differences between the social systems, are playing a growing role in the solution of both domestic and international economic problems. It is well known, for instance, that, on the basis of political considerations, one of the great powers placed an embargo on trade with a group of states and also succeeded in imposing it on its allies (Marshall Aid Act, article 117 d, and Battle Act 1951; these stipulations covered 50 per cent of the goods in international trade between 1952 and 1954). And early in 1964 the top official in foreign affairs of the same great power declared in the legislative body that the conditions of trade and payment should be made "dependent on the political attitude" of the governments of the various countries of Eastern Europe.

These examples are taken from the past, yet such governmental considerations or their complementary and adventitious economic consequences are still alive and operative.

It would not, therefore, be reasonable to disregard the growing role of politics in our plans for the future and in our recommendations designed to influence the future.

Another thing to be realized is that the "political sensitivity" of the world is constantly growing. Due to the rapid development of technology and communications and also as a consequence of the wide-scale security systems that have arisen in the world, the political history of mankind is becoming more and more unified. We do not wish to qualify these security systems either politically or morally, but accept the view that these systems have been created to avert certain real or presumed dangers, and are faced by other systems inside which the member states consider their existence better safeguarded than by staying outside. These security systems play or may play a positive role through the fact that a possible aggressor is threatened by the risk of all-out war from the very beginning of the crisis. But the inevitable consequence of such security systems is that countries far away from the scene of the existing or threatened conflict immediately become awake to the developing crisis. In other words, security systems tend to enhance the crisis and extend it to wider areas, thus inducing the world to react more readily and sensitively to political crises.

We have, quite evidently, very different views on the political develop-

ment of the coming decades, but I feel we have to reckon with a growing number of political crises in the future on account of the growing number of nations.

And if the frequent political crises were automatically transposed to the economic sphere, it would, I think, have catastrophic consequences for the world. It should be remembered that the world has become more sensitive economically too. Not only have the contacts and interdependencies influencing the world economy multiplied, but "sensitivity to growth" of the economically underdeveloped countries and "sensitivity to cooperation" of the industrial societies have also increased. The underdeveloped economies are known to lack resources, i.e., certain economic negatives that are insignificant or hardly noticeable in countries possessing large resources may upset the equilibrium and entail heavy growth crises in the former ones. And on the basis of the modern cybernetic theory, cooperation may be regarded as a typical case of series-connected batteries within which the absence or failure of one single link may unleash a powerful chain reaction in the whole system.

When weighing up the dangers, it is necessary to consider the phase shift between the political cycle and the economic cycle. Only with a certain delay can the latter apply the induction given by the political cycle (as, for instance, to create an atmosphere encouraging cooperation between countries of different social systems); this then leads to the beginning of joint scientific research in accordance with the principles of vertical cooperation, investments are initiated, the training of experts is started, the new technology is first developed in the designing laboratory, then introduced into factories, and the surplus profit attained through these many material and intellectual investments may cumulate up to as much as eight to ten years later. If, owing to the occurrence of political crises, cooperation has to be discontinued or the evolving economic opportunities restricted, cooperation will be neither safe nor gainful.

Under the impact of such a political attitude contradictions will grow between the economic resources and the population, involving serious political troubles in international life and in the life of the individual states.

It follows that coordination between commercial and accounting techniques, that is, the creation of productive forms of cooperation between enterprises, is of great importance for the future, yet the most important decisions bearing upon the future are and will always be in the hands of politicians. It is, moreover, undeniable that policy always excercises greater power in the negative sense than in the positive sense, i.e., it can hinder more things than it can promote.

World economy will not be able essentially to improve its functioning and fulfil the tasks for which it has been created, unless the governments of the various countries undertake reciprocal guarantees for the future within the organization of the United Nations.

These reciprocal guarantees should, in my opinion, cover the following obligations:

a) to refrain—in the interests of the future of mankind—from transposing international crises of a political character to the field of international economy;

b) to abolish all kinds of discrimination and to avoid the utilization of international trade for political purposes;

c) to ensure the stability and continuity of the economico-political process expressed in wide-scale cooperation;

d) to create an international economic atmosphere promoting the growth of the economically underdeveloped countries.

I am fully aware that it is impossible to move from the present state of world trade into one complying with the requirements of our age by relying merely on guarantees. In every case, particularly in the case of such an interdependent phenomenon as world trade, the transition from one state to another demands time, as well as gradual and coordinated action and measures.

Nevertheless, an unequivocal declaration of these intentions could give considerable impetus to development along these lines.

EAST-WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONS IN EUROPE*

by

GUNNAR MYRDAL

The following remarks are intended to acquit me from a too light-heartedly given promise to contribute, in the form of a number of points, to setting the stage for this colloquium.

The personal background to my thinking about the topic spelled out in the title of this paper is, of course, my experiences during my ten years as Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, from its inception in the spring of 1947 to 1957, when I was striving, together with an exceptionally able and devoted secretariat, against all odds, to promote and preserve the conditions of a maximum of all-European economic cooperation. A brief account of these experiences and some tentative inferences about future needs and opportunities are set down in an address I gave this spring in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Commission.

For the past ten years I have been completely absorbed by a major study of the development problems in South Asia. One departure from this line of work was a small book by me and two like-minded Swedes, *Vi och Västeurope* (Rabén och Sjögren, Stockholm, 1962), where we argued against Sweden's joining the EEC. In another book, *Challenge to Affluence* (Vintage Books, New York, 1964, Chapter 10), I criticized the policy of the United States in regard to West European integration. Some of the arguments presented in the latter book were briefly developed in two lectures last year, one at the University of California, Los Angeles, and another in Mexico City.

To the "definition of the situation" of my appearing at this colloquium I should further add that I am speaking as an independent scholar with no loyalty to the policies of any particular government or governments, but

* Paper read at the Budapest International Colloquium on Economic Integration and East-West Trade (September 10–14, 1967).

only to truth as I see it and to what I consider wholesome for Europe and the world. I have never been, and will never be, involved in the cold war but remain outside and above it. This, incidentally, was also my attitude when I acted as the chief of the Secretariat of ECE, though I was then bound to take into consideration, more than the entirely free scholar needs to do, what was practical and possible at the time—governments and the nations behaving as they do.

I

There is one general point that I believe needs to be stressed in any discussion of East-West economic relations in Europe, viz., the paramount importance of politics in economic affairs. During the whole century before the First World War, and still today, there has been a tendency to overstress economic factors in international relations. The liberal economic theory was in this respect no different from the Marxist tradition. In both camps it was, more particularly, assumed that trade worked for peaceful relations, even politically. I would not deny that there is an element of reason in this view; but I believe that the principal causal relations move in the opposite direction, so that a low level of trade and a distortion of the lines of trade become the result of political factors.

As I have often stressed, politics is sovereign. There is, for instance, no political division line, even when almost absolute impediments to trade and other economic relations are raised in the most "unnatural" way, that does not in time become "natural," in the sense that the economy adjusts itself to the political conditions. Big cities can be divided by a political line, as Jerusalem or Berlin, or new "unnatural" boundaries created, as those between India and Pakistan after Partition, almost extinguishing long-established trade links. The adjustments called for by political fiat are as a rule designed to make "natural" what is "unnatural," thus creating the conditions for its permanency.

II

This point is in my opinion of paramount importance for an understanding of the development of East-West economic relations in Europe. As regards the relatively very low level of the international trade of the Soviet Union before the Second World War, also, incidentally, with the countries that now belong to the Eastern bloc in Europe—the explanation is largely its strained political relations with all non-communist countries following

the October Revolution. And an adjustment of the economies rendering this situation "natural" had occurred in the Soviet Union as well as in all other countries. Even if and when political relations improve, this adjustment of the economies to earlier political relations has created resistance to a change to the higher level of economic relations that, *per se*, could be in line with the improved political relations.

Much of this resistance to change has to do with established trading connections. Once broken, it is difficult to re-establish them.

Thinking more specifically about the organized trading blocs that have been built up in the two parts of Europe, sanctioned and directed by the governments and their bureaucracies, their inward-directed tendency also acquires an ideological and psychological basis. This is clearly indicated by the extraordinary fact that all the Western organizations have, apparently without any hesitation, called themselves "European."

And as officials from the member countries of these organizations frequently meet, they have developed a feeling of "belongingness" that is heavily biased in the direction of exclusiveness and strengthened by opportunities for advancing one's personal career in the administration of the organizations. That the 6,000 posts in the Brussels bureaucracy of the EEC stimulate personal ambitions in the national bureaucracies of the member nations is very apparent.

I have no doubt that similar ideological and psychological forces are at work in the Eastern countries.

III

The importance of the political factors is plainly visible in the way the bloc organizations have been motivated and organized.

It is a plain historical fact that the EEC was built up with the ultimate aim of reaching political unity between the member countries and that this approach to political unity was argued in terms of building up strength against communism in general and, in particular, the communist countries in Eastern Europe.

When the United States put all its weight behind the formation of the EEC and later behind Britain's abortive efforts in 1962 to join this organization—in spite of the fact that EEC implied a high protective wall, discriminating against exports from the whole outside world, including the United States—the openly declared reason was that, as it was planned, the EEC would provide a basis for NATO, the Western military alliance.

If proddings by the United States for EEC agreement to accept Britain's

more recent application for membership have been less vigorous and open, the explanation is on the one hand a lesson, drawn from 1962–63, that such proddings are not so effective as the US government then believed. There has also been a general cooling off of its feelings toward the EEC after the difficulties that arose with the organization during the Kennedy Round as well as in other recent experiences, not least in the monetary field.

That the Eastern counterpart to EEC, so-called Comecon, is equally a political organization is obvious and needs no comment.

Organizations have their own life and acquire vested interests as institutions. As they are inward-directed they will generally tend to strengthen the forces of resistance accounted for under II. This tendency will become stronger to the extent that they are successful in meeting the primary economic programme for which they were created: to develop interrelations within the blocs (see, however, under VIII and IX below).

IV

Even though the initial cause of the "unnatural" and unsatisfactory economic relations between East and West in Europe was political (I above), and though any improvement of these relations now meets strong resistance to change from *faits accomplis* brought about by adjustment (II and III above), the lessening of political tension should nevertheless give new opportunity for endeavours toward improving economic relations. In turn, this would, to some extent, tend to further lessen political tension. Without doubt this sort of circular causation is what we have experienced in recent years.

The first question then is what happened in the political field from 1953–54 and onwards when trade and economic relations generally moved upwards from the very low point they had then reached. It is commonly recognized that a political *détente* has been in progress, a weakening of the intensity of the so-called cold war. Occasionally it is asserted that we are approaching the end of the cold war; this, however, I believe is an exaggeration (V below).

Undoubtedly, the general increase in East-West trade has itself been felt, on both sides, as an element in this improvement of the political climate. Another indication is the growth in cultural relations between the two groups of countries, including tourism. On balance, there has been less acrimonious propaganda by the governments in both parts of Europe, in the press, and at meetings of intergovernmental organizations.

One major cause of the rise in trade and thus, more generally, of the tendency to political *détente* was the breakdown in 1953 and 1954 of the discriminatory strategic export license controls carried out by the governments in the Western political and military alliance. Concomitantly, there has been a consistent increase in willingness on the Eastern side to engage in more trade with the West.*

In the political sphere there has, on a deeper level, been a decrease in the fear on the Western side of the danger of military invasion by the Soviet Union, supported by subversion in the Western countries. On the Eastern side there has been a similar decrease in the fear of similar aggressive action from the Western countries, highlighted by the advocacy in the United States, particularly during the Dulles era, of a "roll back" of the political and military boundary dividing the two parts of Europe.

Between these two main types of initial changes there is an interrelationship. The breakdown of the Western export license controls was caused by a revolt among the Western European countries against a policy mainly imposed on them by the United States. The American pressure was strong and effective as long as the Western European countries received large-scale financial and military aid from the United States, inasmuch as various Congressional amendments had made these controls a condition for aid. By 1953–54 such aid was coming to an end.

In the United States aid had been widely motivated by the alleged military threat from the Soviet Union, and as long as aid was substantial it was natural, and in the interests of the Western European governments, for them to make use of this threat in their own thinking, arguing and organizing. When aid petered out, the strategic export license controls could be liquidated, as far as the Western European countries were concerned; the belief in a military threat no longer had any functional purpose.

A similar process was taking place in the Eastern countries. During the Stalin era the political and economic consolidation of the Eastern bloc was regarded as of vital interest. The propaganda against the Marshall Plan and the American-inspired export license controls undoubtedly served the purpose of impressing upon the Soviet Union's East European allies that they mainly depended upon each other and the Soviet Union for economic development as well as for defence. At about the same time as the system of export license controls in Western Europe broke down, there were also growing tendencies in all the Eastern countries, reflected in their literature,

* An intensive study of the strategic export license policy in the pursuance of the cold war has been under preparation at the Stockholm University Institute for International Economic Studies by Gunnar Adler-Karlsson, and will be published in spring 1968 under the title "Western Economic Warfare 1947–1967. A Case Study in Foreign Economic Policy."

to appreciate the excessive costs of too much Eastern autarky and to seek increased trade with the West.

This mutual decrease of fear of military action thus supported, and was in turn supported by, the gradual increase in trade and the improvement of other relations above referred to. In this process of circular causation with cumulative effects there became visible, on both sides, a trend toward loosening of the bloc discipline and an increasing desire and ability of individual countries to follow more or less independent policies.

V

Under the impact of the changes sketched above, the view that we are approaching the end of the cold war has become customary. This expectation is, in my opinion, not realistic. I cannot give my reasons in more condensed form than by quoting a few paragraphs from my lecture on ECE. I stressed as a fact that *"the cold war has not ended,"* and continued:

"More specifically intergovernmental relations on our continent are, as yet, far from sane and safe.

"More than twenty years after the war, we still seem to be as far as ever from a peace treaty settling the German problem. We have, in fact, now two German states, aligned with the two power blocs, one of which is not recognized as existing by several countries and is not represented in this Commission. It is true that Germany was united only for a relatively very brief period, historically speaking: that is, from Bismarck to Hitler. But we are not living in the middle of the nineteenth century today, and the problem of German unification must be solved—and solved peacefully.

"The precariousness of peace in Europe and the world is demonstrated by the fact that there are foreign military bases, troops and even stocks of nuclear weapons ready for use in several countries in the midst of our continent. Until this situation is ended, peaceful cooperation over the dividing line between the two blocs will continue to be strained.

"The nuclear armament race continues unabated. The test ban is still only partial, leaving the atomic powers free to continue with underground tests. There is also, as yet, no limitation to their production of still more powerful nuclear weapons and penetrating delivery systems. The non-proliferation issue, on which the two super-powers were assumed to have approached agreement, does not even touch these real disarmament problems.

"The frustrating experience of the disarmament talks, which have gone on in this Palace for years and are now interrupted, is deeply disconcerting.

A non-proliferation treaty, if such is finally proposed, does not lay to rest the anxiety of the peoples in the world and will perhaps not even be signed by some independent governments, if it is not amended to include a firm commitment to end the armaments race, which the super-powers have not shown much inclination to accept.

"Meanwhile, widespread preparation for biological and chemical warfare is taking place in all countries, though the inherent dangers of that particular armaments race weigh less on people's minds, as they are badly informed about what is going on. These types of non-conventional weaponry are cheap and do not require much large-scale research. The horrifying risk is, indeed, that they might become the poor man's opportunity to commit genocide.

"In Vietnam, a war, truly horrifying in all aspects, is going on with large-scale and escalating military intervention. It corrodes the moral climate in the belligerent countries and it builds up impediments to understanding and cooperation within the blocs and between the blocs. Not to recognize this is to live in illusions. In planning practical policies all illusions are misleading; indeed, they represent a grave danger in a situation like the present one—not least among them the opportunistically optimistic illusions.

"There are other threatening trends in the world at large. Some of these relate to the great majority of mankind who live in the underdeveloped countries. I cannot take the time, on this occasion, even to enumerate those deeply disconcerting trends; I dealt with these problems in my McDougall lecture, at the opening of FAO's World Conference on Land Reform, and in other publications.

"Let me restrict myself to stating that, in my opinion, we in the rich and truly developing countries—to which most, or all, of the countries who are represented by their governments in the ECE belong—live in a fool's paradise, and that it is written in the stars that events in this third world will, within the near future, create situations such as we have not even begun to face in realistic manner. The President of the World Bank, and many others who are competent to judge, have given us ringing warnings of the dire consequences of a failure to reverse the present trends. But as yet there has been no sign of such a change."

VI

I have emphasized the political factors, as I believe any discussion of economic problems on our continent is doomed to be superficial if due

account is not taken of them. As I have also pointed out, this does not mean that I do not appreciate that—in a minor way—improved economic relations can contribute to lessening political tension. Neither does it mean that, besides the political factors, there are not specific difficulties in the field of economic institutions that hamper the development of trade between the two groups of countries.

One group of such specific difficulties is the established practices and trading connections—or the lack of them—touched upon above under II and III. There is certainly scope for intensive scientific study and courageous practical action to overcome these impediments to trade, which are inimical to all parties involved. Even after the gradual increase in East-West trade since 1954—recorded and analysed in the ECE statistics published both in the yearly *Economic Survey* and in the *Quarterly Bulletin*—the level of East-West trade is still "unnaturally" low. Also, in spite of the rapid industrial development in the Soviet Union and the other East European countries, the share in their exports to the Western countries of manufactured industrial products remains "unnaturally" low.

I anticipate that much of the discussion at this colloquium will centre around the problem of changing this traditional pattern to one better corresponding to the real opportunities for division of labour opened up by the industrial development in the Eastern countries. To be successful such efforts will require changes in the production and monetary planning in the Eastern countries as well as changes in commercial policies in the Western countries.

VII

A whole set of obstacles to East-West trade is caused by the fundamental institutional difference between the two parts of Europe, viz., that in the East production and trade are managed by the state—though with considerable and increasing decentralization of decision-making—while the Western countries are market economies—though with much, and, on the whole, increasing government planning and regulation.

One effect of this difference is that the Eastern countries have adhered to the principle of regulating trade by bilateral trade agreements between pairs of countries. In the absence of a multilateralization of payments this practice has a tendency to lower the volume of trade by short-term balancing of imports and exports, which implies bringing it down to the lower of the two streams of trade.

Another disadvantage is that on the Western side a bilateral trade agreement encourages the use of a licensing system, which, in turn, facilitates a discriminatory commercial policy. From a Western point of view, on the other hand, the state monopolies of production and trade in the Eastern countries make almost any discriminatory policy possible without overt utilization of tariffs or quantitative controls.

Before going further, I should perhaps mention that a Western country may also have a legitimate interest in a bilateral agreement regulating its trade with, and particularly its exports to, an Eastern country, especially when the latter is a very big one, like the Soviet Union. Without having any devious political intentions, a decision of the planning authorities of the Soviet Union to rely upon import of a particular commodity of minor importance might threaten to upset the industrial structure of a small Western country, if the latter is not free to determine the size of the various exports.

I have only touched here upon the manifold obstacles to trade emanating from the difference in the institutional framework for production and trade in the two parts of Europe. To overcome these difficulties a number of agreed actions need to be considered: the conclusion of longer-term bilateral agreements; efforts to multilateralize payments even if not trade; above all, the working out of rules for non-discrimination in commercial policies on the Western side, and corresponding commitments on the Eastern side not to use their trade monopolies for discrimination, etc.

These problems were dealt with by the ECE Secretariat from the beginning and were occasionally also brought up for discussion in the Commission's operational committees. From 1963 to 1965 the so-called "von Platen group" worked competently on methods for tackling them practically. Two years ago their work was discontinued for the time being by what has been called "the intransigence of the United States and the USSR delegates" *— that is, the representatives of the two countries that have least of a stake in a multilateral settlement, because (1) they are big and well able to take care of their interests bilaterally; (2) for the same reason their foreign trade is relatively small compared with the total size of their economies; and (3) the US has preserved the discriminatory export license controls (except in the case of the explicity stated purpose of splitting the Eastern bloc, as in regard to Poland in 1957 and Rumania in 1964), and generally kept down trade with the East European countries to an insignificant volume.

Nevertheless, I believe there is such a strong interest in these issues that

* For a brief but interesting account of this constructive attempt, see Jean Siotis: "ECE in the Emerging European System." *International Conciliation*, No. 561, January 1967, p. 274.

it can be hoped, even anticipated, that this important work will be taken up again. I expect that the discussions at this colloquium will also be focused on these important practical problems.

VIII

In the Rome Treaty it was foreseen that the EEC organization should soon (1971) reach a stage of integration enabling it to negotiate trade agreements on behalf of the member states. Of such a development we have seen little, except in the case of the Kennedy Round.

Aside from the reaction to such a unique challenge as the United States Trade Expansion Act, which cannot be expected to be repeated in the near future, the emergence of the EEC as a negotiating party in the trade field is hardly to be expected, least of all in relation to the Eastern countries. It is clear that if all the countries that have now applied for affiliation with the EEC were to join the organization, a country like rich and unaligned Sweden would definitely not be prepared to surrender its full independence in trade relations with the Eastern countries. It is hard to believe that even Britain, so differently situated, could be driven to renounce its independence in this respect. Of the present six member countries, it is equally improbable that France would do so or, for that matter, Western Germany.

But even apart from this, there are certain elements in the structure of EEC which make it less suitable as a trade negotiating party—at least until it has achieved a political unification, which has become an ever more distant goal. Though it is seldom pointed out, any attempt to involve the EEC in actual negotiations tends to make them more cumbersome and more difficult to bring to a successful result: "It remains a hybrid of unity and diversion. It is neither a government that can negotiate on behalf of all its members, nor an arrangement that can leave the member governments free to negotiate themselves.

"Recalling all the important issues that have to be solved by time-consuming and often frustrating proceedings within the Community, every member has to take the others into consideration; to reach a common policy line must under all conditions be most difficult. Often it will be the position of the member who takes the most negative line that must prevail. That the present situation in the EEC is apt to magnify these difficulties does not need to be underlined. The American Government seems to have been unaware of this consequence of an organization of an EEC-type until it had to cope with it in the Kennedy Round."

IX

This would, of course, not exclude the possibility that the EEC Commission might make studies, lay out guide-lines, or even attempt to initiate negotiations concerning specific problems among those discussed under VI and VII above. The US Government has suggested that the OECD should be used for the same purpose.

It is to be expected that several Western European countries will not respond with great enthusiasm to such proposals. More important, however, the Eastern countries that must be parties to negotiations, if it comes to that, will hardly agree to the use of the Western sub-regional organizations for this purpose.

For this judgment there are several reasons. One is that their own sub-regional organization, the Comecon, has only to a minor degree been engaged in the problems of East-West trade. It has no super-state authority. In particular, whatever coordination exists between the Eastern countries in regard to their policies toward East-West trade has been reached in other and more direct ways. In any negotiations with the Western countries, making use of their sub-regional organizations, the Eastern countries would therefore have reason to feel that they lacked an organization which put them on a par with the Western countries.

This becomes the more important bearing in mind that the Eastern countries generally must consider themselves as the weaker party in one respect. East-West trade is a much smaller part of the Western countries' total trade, on the average only about one fourth of the same proportion for the Eastern countries. The Western countries are therefore less dependent on that trade.

That this greater interest in improving East-West trade relations should induce the Eastern governments to come begging to the Western sub-regional organizations is, in my view, an illusion, particularly as they have the all-European ECE at their disposal if they want to enter into practical negotiations, and as, furthermore, many of their interests can be taken care of in bilateral negotiations. The last choice is, of course, particularly advantageous to the largest Eastern country, the Soviet Union. Without its participation, however, any multilateral negotiations tend to become pointless.

ALBA REGIA IN THE AGE OF ELECTRONICS

The Changing Image of a Town

by

ZOLTÁN HALÁSZ

A non-conformist museum

Right until the early sixties Székesfehérvár was just one of those country towns about which every Hungarian schoolboy knew a few facts: in the Middle Ages it had been the town where coronations took place and diets were held, it has been the seat of a bishop since the 18th century, in our day it has become an industrial centre with 70 thousand inhabitants. That was all—unless job, home or family led to closer contacts. 70 kilometres from Budapest and 30 from Lake Balaton, in the mind of hundreds of thousands it was as a place where you had a cup of coffee and got some petrol on the way to the Balaton. Even Hungarian holidaymakers seldom ventured further than the "Stop" espresso, in order to see whatever was left of mediaeval Alba Regia or the ruins of her destroyed basilica.

Then, in 1963, something unexpected happened: Székesfehérvár became fashionable, for many thousands it became somewhere to go rather than a place to pass through. Odd as it may seem, the change was not due to a new sports stadium or the kind of thing that normally attracts sightseers, but to an exhibition of the works of a Hungarian painter from the beginning of this century. The strange figure and remarkable work of Tivadar Csontváry are more or less known to the readers of The N.H.Q.* There is therefore no need to underline how important an event in the history of Hungarian art or Hungarian taste took place, when—after many years of disinterestedness and silence—the Gallery of the King Stephen Museum in Székesfehérvár showed a representative exhibition of the work of a man who, very likely, was the greatest Hungarian painter of our time. The exhibition created a nation-wide sensation. Tens of thousands came not only from the capital but also from remote country areas to see Csontváry's magic visions

* *Cf.* The essay by Lajos Németh in No 14 and the article by Hermann Hess in No 7.

in colour. The breakthrough was so complete that the Csontváry exhibition was soon taken to Budapest and shown in the marble hall of the National Museum of Fine Arts. The great visionary (whose huge canvases were saved by a devoted amateur of the arts, the architect Gedeon Gerlóczy, and preserved from 1919 to our days) has since become a force in Hungarian consciousness, comparable to Bartók, Kodály or Attila József.

This is not the place for a consideration of the reasons which caused Csontváry to remain unrecognized for nearly half a century. From Manet to Cézanne, from Van Gogh to Matisse, many had to wait for recognition. His was a fate shared by many of the great figures of modern painting.

What interested me more was to find out to what extent this was due to the conservatism of public taste or to the "insolence of office," and to try and establish the background of an intellectual attitude which, going beyond the modest resources of a country museum, resulted in the organization of this exhibition, an exhibition which at that time could have been described as somewhat off-beat. What is more: in the five years which have passed since the Csontváry exhibition the King Stephen Museum has repeatedly played a pioneering role in the improvement of public taste in the country. To mention only the most important occasions: the first retrospective exhibition of the surrealist Lajos Gulácsy*; a commemorative exhibition drew the attention of the public to Vilmos Aba Novák a painter from the period between the wars who deserved our interest, another showed Noémi Ferenczy's** gobelins and another still the vigorous earthy work of István Nagy, who was self-taught. In addition to contributing to the revaluation of artists of an earlier generation, it is to the credit of the museum that they brought to the attention of a wider public more than one ignored or insufficiently appreciated artist of our own age. Miklós Borsos, Tibor Vilt, Erzsébet Schaár, Béni Ferenczy, Béla Kondor, Dezső Korniss—all received a platform in Székesfehérvár.***

Having repeatedly through the years gone to see exhibitions at the King Stephen Museum I recently had the opportunity to take a look "backstage." I soon became aware of the varied work which went on there, of which the exhibitions which closely followed each other were only a fragment. Founded in 1873 by the Archaeological and Historical Association of Székesfehérvár, the museum has remained faithful to its original function and is still mainly engaged in archaeological research work. The director, Jenő Fitz, is an archaeologist specialising in the Roman period; for the past

* About Lajos Gulácsy see Lajos Németh's article in No. 26 of The N.H.Q.

** On Noémi Ferenczy: see The N.H.Q. No 9.

*** *Cf.* articles in The N.H.Q. about Borsos No 10, Vilt No 21, Erzsébet Schaár No. 25, Béni Ferenczy No 28, Béla Kondor No 17.

two decades he has been excavating the remains of Gorsium, a Roman town near Székesfehérvár.*

Archaeologists from the museum have discovered a number of earthworks and considerable remains of a local culture dating from the Middle Bronze Age. This work is continuing. Excavations in the centre of the city have yielded particularly interesting results: new evidence was found, that Székesfehérvár played an important role prior to the foundation of the Hungarian state in the 11th century by King Stephen, already in the reign of Prince Géza. The ethnographical research work of the past few years has also had some astonishing results: contrary to expectations, Fejér County was found to be rich in folklore material, particularly in folk songs and folk dances. An exhibition of the carvings of Transdanubian herdsmen aroused nation-wide interest and proved the vitality of folk art even under changed circumstances. The exhibition contained the work both of past and present carvers. A fair number of the older pieces came from the collection of a working herdsman (to put it more precisely: a stockman on a cooperative farm).

Last but not least let me mention some interesting exhibitions, such as that of the history of pottery, showing products of this ancient craft from as far back as the Roman age right down to the dissolution of the guilds in the second half of the 19th century. It was organized in cooperation by three museums of Western Hungary. The King Stephen Museum and the museums of Vas County and Veszprém County all supplied exhibits which were shown in a number of towns.

As is obvious from the above the sphere of activity of the museum far exceeds the boundaries of the town of Székesfehérvár. King Stephen Museum in fact acts as the parent museum for the whole of Fejér County. The open-air museum established on the archaeological site at Gorsium, as well as the Museum of Regional History of the new industrial centre of Dunaújváros are both daughter institutions (when the foundations of the new town were dug the remnants of a Roman fortified town—Intercisa—were uncovered and are now kept in the museum of Dunaújváros); specialists belonging to the King Stephen Museum direct various memorial museums and memorial rooms all over Fejér County, which were established at places where authors, poets and artists lived or were born. (They include the memorial museum of Martonvásár, where Beethoven often stayed as the guest of the Brunswick family and where he composed the *Moonlight Sonata*.) The latest museum is about to be established in Székesfehérvár itself. The family of Miklós Ybl—an outstanding Hungarian architect of the 19th century—has donated his personal belongings to the town. With their

* Cf. an essay about Gorsium by Jenő Fitz, in No. 4 of The N.H.Q.

Székesfehérvár: Szabadság Square with the Episcopal Palace

On the following pages:

1. An 18th-Century Town House (Székesfehérvár)
2. A Carved Vestry-Door in St Nepomuk's Church (Székesfehérvár
3. St Anne's Chapel (Székesfehérvár)

aid an 18th century baroque house is soon going to be turned into a museum.

All this is but part of the work done by the museum. Research work, conservation and sorting of material consisting of almost half a million pieces, organization of exhibitions, both local and travelling i.e. "classical" museum activity, still leaves sufficient energy to those who work there for a great variety of educational activities: conferences and concerts are organized, lectures and courses are held in clubs and culture centres; by means of publications and brochures taking account of different intellectual requirements they try to make their museum an efficient cultural agency. (A number of internationally important publications are also issued, including the "Annales" in Hungarian, English and German, permitting them to maintain regular exchange relations with 300 museums and scientific institutes throughout the world.)

It is not necessary to mention that the various aspects of the museum's activity closely fit into national educational policy which both appreciates and supports the application of varied and original methods. According to the director of the museum the yearly budget granted by the state has to be allocated carefully, but if that is done it provides sufficient financial means for every aspect of its diversified work.

Then, in what respect is the museum of Székesfehérvár "non-conformist"?

Agreement in fundamentals has not for some time now excluded animated and passionate discussions on questions concerning concrete individual issues. Many discussions, ranging from the question of alienation to rethinking certain basic attitudes to Hungarian history, have agitated Hungarian intellectual life. Most of these debates were reviewed in detail in the columns of this journal. Of course, opinions regarding different trends and movements in the arts, or concerning artists who tread new paths—are open to discussion too. Such discussions are not settled by formal declarations but by the contributions of critics, art historians, fellow artists and, in the last analysis, by the position which informed public opinion takes up.

It has been the merit of the curators of the Székesfehérvár museum that they had the courage to begin "informing" public opinion about Csontváry, Gulácsy and other artists about whom—until they acted—silence prevailed.

I have earlier mentioned the thousands who visited the exhibition, as evidence of a "break-through." However, while I was there, I was told two apparently trivial stories which meant more to me than the numbers did.

I. G., a worker, who is now the president of a district council, having spent the moneys alloted for such purposes, was prepared to use a most complicated financial dodge in order to buy a beautiful modern piece of

sculpture by an artist who had been ignored for a long time, and to have it erected near a beach on Lake Velence. The other story is about one of the directors of the Light Metal Works in Székesfehérvár, who provided sufficient metallurgical and metal-working equipment to make it possible for Tibor Vilt to carry out his experiments on the sculptural employment and technology of aluminium.

The sculptor's experiment was a success. And so it seems, was that of the King Stephen Museum.

The Tomb of the Giaour Padishah

Closer acquaintance with Székesfehérvár brings many surprises, there are not many other towns in Hungary made up of such contrasting elements. The medieval royal residence stands next to the towers and blocks of a dynamic new town, in places showing the raw strength of growth, a centre of electronic industry next to the adobe houses of a backward village. We can only guess today at the way these contrasts will in time arrange themselves in an urbanised harmony.

The past appears at every turn. We meet evidence of history wherever we go, even on the outskirts of the town. It is none too easy for the Municipal Town Planning Office, which at almost every building site has to deal with newly discovered remains, in a manner satisfactory to both the builder and the archaeologist. Recently the construction of a new block of flats was held up for a while by the discovery of the remnants of a church dating from the 10th century, very likely the walls of the chapel which the reigning Prince Géza had built as his own and his wife's burial place. (It is of particular importance, since Hungarian historians have in the course of the last years more and more come round to the opinion that Géza's role in the foundation of the state, in the preparation of Hungary's conversion to Christianity and, in general, the country's integration into the community of European states was far more important than had been supposed before.) Of course, plans had to be changed; the new building was placed on a concrete platform. The basement is going to be a museum where the public can view the ruins of the princely chapel *in situ*.

This new block of flats by the way is being built right next to the ruins of the Royal Cathedral: remnants of walls, fine carved stones and even a vast stone sarcophagous were excavated there is the 19th century, experts on the period believe the latter to be St. Stephen's tomb. Succeeding generations of kings belonging to the Árpád dynasty were as a matter of fact

buried within the walls of the Cathedral, including King Coloman Beauclerc who was given that name by history because he introduced written records. (Following the King's order, Székesfehérvár had become the seat of the Royal Chancellery, and, as such, it gained a great deal in importance.) Kings of the Árpád dynasty buried in the basilica include Béla II, Géza II, Ladislas II, Stephen III and Béla III. Following the devastations under Turkish occupation only the mortal remains of Béla III and his first wife, Anne of Antiochia could be found. Built for eternity and comparable in size to the cathedral of Cologne this vast church where Hungary's kings were crowned and buried for centuries, was destroyed in a number of sieges by Turkish and Imperial troops which in the course of the 16th and 17th centuries followed each other in quick succession. So were many other historic buildings in Székesfehérvár. Bishop Hartwick's naive enthusiasm gives us some idea of the Cathedral's splendour. "... the balustrade of the famous and amazing immense Cathedral is decorated with specially selected carvings, its floor with marble slabs.

He who has seen the huge treasure of vestments, church plate and other jewellery, the trays of pure gold in which are set rows and rows of strange stones, the marvellous tabernacle on the Lord's table and the treasury filled with crystals, onyx stones, and all kinds of golden and silver vessels may bear witness to the truth of my words." Let me also quote Mustapha Djelalzadeh a Turkish chronicler who, as a member of Sultan Soliman's staff took part in the first siege of the town in the year 1543. He was one of the last men to see the full splendour of the ancient town, and its churches before Turkish neglect, the destructiveness of war and the new settlers who used the stones of the old houses to build their new homes practically wiped it off the surface of the earth. "It is a beautiful and solidly built town—Djelalzadeh wrote—with impeccable houses and fortifications, and splendid palaces, tall church steeples and marvellous monasteries. The old church serving as burial-place of the kings (who burn in the flames of the lowest hell) is worth a special mention. There were marvellous figures carved out of precious marble in every corner and recess, all of them were in their time Padishahs who could boast of their fame and power. Here and there the tomb of an idolater, or the sepulchral stone of a debauched giaour who has gone to hell. In every corner there were disgusting bodies in stone coffins, who were famous saints possessed by the devil; they had placed crowns decorated with brilliant precious stones on their heads, they had golden and silver crosses and swords on their chests, and valuable golden rings on their fingers. Finally, the inside was crammed full with monks who have left this world, and with priests who have gone to Gehenna."

When the hard times were over, in the 18th century, a baroque and rococo town was built by the new inhabitants where the old destroyed town had stood. To our own day, whole streets evoke the atmosphere of the 18th century: churches, houses of citizens and such "living art memorials," as the town's busiest pharmacy, the *Fekete Sas* (the Black Eagle), functioning in the same house since 1776; its furniture is older still—it was carved in 1758 under the guidance of Bernhard Paumgartner in the workshop of the Jesuit monastery.

All that is left intact of baroque-rococo Székesfehérvár is truly a miracle of luck and devoted reconstruction as the mediaeval town was destroyed once again during the second world war. In 1944–5, when in a series of bloody battles the eastern front moved across Hungarian soil towards Austria, some of the fiercest fighting of the war occurred around Székesfehérvár. The German army tried to hold the advancing Soviet forces on a Danube–Balaton line. In the early spring of 1945 the Germans attempted to launch a final counter-attack. Székesfehérvár changed hands several times in the course of tank battles, artillery duels and street-fighting. Nearly half of the town's 7,700 dwelling houses were either completely destroyed or severely damaged, many public buildings shared the same fate. The town lost eight thousand of its inhabitants, hundreds of families moved away when the war was over. For a long time Székesfehérvár was apparently dead. Within its walls, life returned but gradually.

The change was brought about by industrialization—not without some "birth pangs."

Till 1945, and even afterwards for a good many years Székesfehérvár was essentially a large village and market town—a typically Hungarian agglomeration with many thousands of inhabitants, without any trade or industry to speak of, whose public services and cultural life could hardly be described as urban. In the case of Székesfehérvár this could be said only with certain reservations. Being an ancient episcopal see, and as such an important ecclesiastical centre, it was the seat of many ecclesiastical and cultural institutions. Székesfehérvár has also been an important railway junction for a long time. The offices and workshops associated with the railway meant that the town had many railway-men among its inhabitants.

However, all this urban life was confined within narrow limits. Anyone who does not know the antecedents of today's Székesfehérvár will be surprised by the rows of village houses which penetrate right into the historical town centre, an endless village begins right there. Single-story adobe houses are tangible evidence of a rural past, when a large part of the inhabitants were engaged in agriculture, living the life of peasants.

Industrialization began to get ahead in the middle of the fifties; motorcycles and wireless sets were manufactured in what was before the war a factory making cartridges for sporting weapons. It was one of the first tangible results of a long-range plan aiming at industrializing provincial towns by decentralizing industry that was excessively concentrated in Budapest. The manufacturing of radios was followed in 1956 by the serial production of television receivers and the new Television and Radio Manufacturing Factory became one of the most important Hungarian industrial enterprises. It actually produces 220,000 wireless sets and 170,000 TV receivers a year and exports its products to many parts of the world. The Light Metal Works of Székesfehérvár based on the bauxite deposits of Central Transdanubia have also become a large-scale enterprise of international importance. As part of the decentralization of industry, "Ikarus" of Budapest, the heavy vehicles factory which specialized in buses, founded a subsidiary enterprise in Székesfehérvár which produces a great variety of special vehicles ranging from milk-tankers to fire-engines. All in all, there are more than 50 industrial plants in operation in Székesfehérvár, to which should be added some thirty cooperative workshops, with a total of 20,000 employees.

I shall not at this stage discuss the human and technical problems associated with the early stages of industrialization—that subject has been dealt with on many occasions. Besides I consider present problems to be more interesting.

Formerly industrialization was exclusively the result of central decisions. The highest planning authorities decided what should be established and developed where, when and how. Of course, decisions of nation-wide importance are still taken at top level but central planning today is more concerned with establishing guiding principles and creating possibilities and incentives (thus for instance, Székesfehérvár was lately connected with the natural gas distribution system, providing thereby a new and advantageous source of energy for industries eager to establish themselves in the town.) Individual cases are decided by agreement between the management of an enterprise and the administration of the town. Faced with increasing "competition," the latter must make serious efforts in order to attract this or that important enterprise. The situation has become such that gossips are saying that "the towns are making eyes at industry."

Székesfehérvár has a good many advantages. It is a centre of communications well supplied with sources of energy and with manpower from neighbouring villages. But there are still a lot of problems which have to be solved in each individual case whenever the possibility of the establishment

of a new industrial plant arises. If the municipal council and the enterprise fail to reach agreement during the preparatory discussions the whole matter risks coming to naught, and the enterprise will look for another, more advantageous site.

As in so many newly industrialized towns, the water supply was one of the major problems in Székesfehérvár too. Fortunately it was recognized in time. At great cost a pipeline was built to a mine about 12 kilometers from the town, and clear water, which had until then run to waste is now used not only for industrial but also general purposes.

Of course, the availability of an ample water supply increased the attractiveness of Székesfehérvár in the eyes of industrial enterprises looking for a suitable location. On the other hand, the substantial contribution to the expenses of building the pipeline which the municipal authorities felt entitled to claim from new settlers somewhat dampened their enthusiasm. After long debates the "city parliament"—the council composed of a hundred members—decided that if good enough reasons were given they would not insist on a contribution.

It was not an easy decision. City fathers all over the world are not very keen to make decisions which mean an extra burden for the ratepayers. The Székesfehérvár council thought of the future and, as recent developments showed, it had been worth while.

What, we might well ask, has happened to the agricultural population of this small market-town as a result of growth and industrialization.

Many of them—primarily young people—were absorbed by industry. The life of the 1,400 members of agricultural cooperatives working about 8 thousand hectares of arable land around the town on the other hand has changed and improved in many ways. The industrial town, as an economic background, has changed their situation in two different ways: the three cooperative farms of Székesfehérvár are amongst the most mechanized in the country and are also better supplied with chemicals than most. This has meant a considerable improvement in farming methods and a substantial increase in average yields. At the same time, the town provides a growing market for vegetables, fruit, meat, poultry, and eggs produced by the cooperatives. During the summer months the hundreds of thousands at the near-by holiday resorts on Lake Balaton provide an additional market.

The development of agriculture means that the traditional peasant way of life is about to come to an end in these parts. Less and less manpower is needed on mechanized farms, retired old people are replaced by technicians and qualified specialists. Not much time is left for the ethnographers of King Stephen Museum to collect the remnants of peasant folklore.

The great migration

The foreign tourist is hardly likely to notice it but my ears told me as I walked around the streets of Székesfehérvár how mixed the population has become. People all look much the same, their clothes and outward appearance is homogeneous but the variety of dialects they speak betrays that many of them have only recently settled there. Were it not for the thousands who daily commute from 36 neighbouring villages the marked, pleasant County Fejér dialect would most likely be in a minority.

"Immigrants" attracted by the varied employment available come not only from the nearby area, but from practically every part of the country. Thousands of young men and women, part of the drift from country to town, are sure to find a job here—and not only on building sites, the traditional reception area for unskilled villagers newly arrived in a town, but in large industrial enterprises too, such as the factory for radio and TV equipment Videoton, which need semi-skilled labour and are willing to train them in short courses lasting 3–4 months. In addition large numbers of skilled labourers, technicians and university graduates come to this newly industrialized town, which provides them not only with a job, but also with housing conditions better than the average.

Székesfehérvár had 41,000 inhabitants in 1949, nearly 68,000 in 1966 and more than 70,000 in 1967. The figures don't seem very large, but they become significant if we consider the fact that Székesfehérvár is not a new settlement such as Dunaújváros or Kazincbarcika where the requirements of newcomers—housing, nurseries, schools and public services—could be planned for. Here a town which has grown historically suffered a population increase of 70 per cent—mostly as a result of migration—in hardly more than 15 years. This vast surplus of population had to be secured civilized, urban living conditions and this could only be done by stretching, indeed bursting the frame within which the town had grown in its history.

Like everywhere else the gravest problem was the housing question.

The difficulties started right at the beginning when the location of future housing areas had to be decided on, thus incidentally determining the direction in which the town was to develop. Although enough land was available most of the environs were originally marshy and building on reclaimed marshland is both more expensive and takes longer than elsewhere. This was one of the reasons why it was decided not to build satellite towns. Until now new housing estates were built on open areas adjacent to the inner town. These are now exhausted. The town-planners are actually working on a daring—and very likely expensive—idea that will change parts

of the town centre itself. The old rural quarter with its wretched adobe houses has become ripe for demolition. This is what the municipal council has decided to do. Instead of attempting their reconstruction whole streets are going to be pulled down. A new, modern residential zone will rise in their place.

An important decision indeed since carrying it out will radically change the whole townscape. "Functional" towers and ribbons will become the neighbours of the baroque-rococo middle class houses and classicistic public buildings and thus also change the role of the latter in the townscape. Nevertheless I believe this to be the only way of preserving historical Székesfehérvár in our modern age. The sincerity of this decision is underlined by the huge efforts being made for the conservation and reconstruction of historic buildings. About a third of the town's building estimates is spent each year on the protection of historic buildings.

Some 8–900 new dwellings are built each year in Székesfehérvár—a fair number if we consider the size of the town—or make comparisons with the rest of the country, but still not enough. A sufficient number perhaps if there were only the natural increase in population to be considered but the multitudes moving into the town also have to be housed. The situation is made more difficult by the large proportion of dwellings which are not allotted to those waiting their turn on housing lists, but to highly qualified specialists lured to Székesfehérvár by this or that enterprise or research institute with a promise of a flat which goes with the job. It is a symptom of a sort of "brain-drain" going on within the country, the same kind of competition between the enterprises for a well qualified specialist as that between towns for a "desirable" industrial plant. In the last few years the brain-drain has made itself felt mainly at the expense of Budapest—a sound tendency since it decreases excessive "Budapest-centricity" (and might, in time, result in the revival of the cultural life of country towns), but for the man in the street, waiting for a flat, it is nevertheless a disadvantage. The majority of newcomers is obliged to live for years in workmen's hostels or in furnished rooms, or to commute from one of the neighbouring villages, until they manage to get a proper home in the town.

Needless to say the assimilation of this bulging heterogeneous population to the social and cultural life of the town is also a serious problem. There are many amongst those who have moved into town from villages who are left rootless when they lose contact with the peasant community and spend their leisure hours in bored restlessness with drink as the only consolation for the absence of home and the frigidity of a town in which they are strangers. Young people coming to Székesfehérvár from Budapest and other

parts of the country grumble about the scarcity of entertainments, saying that, in spite of its industrialization and economic prosperity, Székesfehérvár is as dead after 9 as in its past when being a clerical centre dominated the life of the town.

Both the former and the latter are faced with a serious crisis of self-adjustment. Though the environment may be of more or less help in getting over it, each person has to work out a solution by himself.

The newcomers from villages are helped by youth clubs and culture centres (there are 19 of them in Székesfehérvár), which organize different kinds of social gatherings ranging from dances to lectures on hygiène and public readings by authors. In Hungary where club-life has hardly any traditions the atmosphere of these institutions is often not informal enough, or else excessive informality degenerates into rowdyism. Nevertheless for many young people these are the antechambers preparing them for entrance into the social and cultural life of the town. In sport-loving Hungary, sport is another strong cementing force. Football is immensely popular (the football team of Székesfehérvár has succeeded this year in gaining promotion to the first division of the football league, an event which inflamed the local patriotism of newcomers and native citizens alike). All the same cross country walks are still the most popular sport: Out of 8,633 members of sporting-clubs 2,964 are cross country walkers, 926 footballers, 773 are athletes and 686 are gymnasts.

At the other end of social life, the intellectuals are faced with different problems of adjustment. Those coming "down" from Budapest, are soon aware of the poorer cultural opportunities. Of course, the special situation of Székesfehérvár—hardly an hour by car from Budapest—offers an easy way to evade the problem. Five or six years ago many Budapest engineers, economists and other specialists who had accepted a position in Székesfehérvár, retained their flat in Budapest and commuted every day. Others slept in lodgings from Monday to Friday and spent the weekends in the capital. I wouldn't say that nostalgia for Budapest has vanished. All the same the situation has changed in the last few years, partly because the enterprise employing an engineer, an economist, a physicist or similar specialist in most cases provides a flat with the job. The attraction of a flat is great: it tempts you to settle. Before long, such a newcomer feels already like an old Székesfehérvár citizen and criticizes the town from an insider's point of view.

For instance, he is sure to find fault with the fact that Székesfehérvár has no permanent theatre of its own. A town which in the 19th century was one of the cradles of the Hungarian theatrical tradition, which has a very

fine theatre building modernized recently at considerable expense, has no theatrical company of its own. As a matter of fact the theatre-goers are not badly off. The alert theatre-manager engages excellent companies from Budapest and the provinces. There is a visiting performance three or four times a week. The National Theatre Company frequently appears there, and so does that of the Comedy Theatre, or the company from Győr. During the days I spent in Székesfehérvár plays by Tennessee Williams and Dürrenmatt were part of the current repertoire and one of Kálmán's operettas was promised for Saturday night. The house is full every night, but it is still most people's opinion that the absence of a local company deprives the cultural life of the town of an important element. People also take exception to the programme of the cinemas: for the sake of the box-office "off-beat" films are shown rarely and for short periods only. (Even so, the cinemas are much less frequented than they used to be, but this is due mainly to television.)

The streets may be quiet in this "stay at home" town but intellectual life nevertheless goes on. It may not be spectacular but it promises much in the long run. So many people are studying in Székesfehérvár today that the figures cannot but suggest a sort of collective effort. The large number of adults who are studying is the best evidence for the general desire to get on in life. The attendance at evening and correspondence courses run by secondary schools has almost doubled in the last five years. More than 3,600 enrolled in the academic year of 1965–66. There are more than 15,000 children of school age in primary and secondary schools, and more than 3,000 attend training courses for skilled workers. Three technical high-schools (of geodetics, of agriculture, and of mechanics and telecommunications) were established during the last ten years. It has recently become a university town as a result of the transfer to Székesfehérvár of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the Technical University of Budapest.

A SHORT GUIDE TO SZÉKESFEHÉRVÁR

Should any reader of The N.H.Q. turn from an "armchair traveller" into a real one and should he on the way from Budapest to Lake Balaton along the No 7 motorway decide to stop in order to have a look at what lies behind the "Székesfehérvár" sign-board, we would suggest the following programme taking from 2 to 3 hours:

Szabadság Square, the former Market Place, for the past 1,000 years the centre of the town, bordered by baroque, rococo and Louis Seize buildings; the finest ones are the Episcopal Palace (No 10) and the Council Chambers (No 6). The St. Imre church was built 1720–1742. The Esterházy coat-of-arms is visible above the main entrance.

Ruins of the mediaeval Royal Basilica. Coronation and burial place of the kings of Árpád's dynasty. The first excavations were made in 1848. The remnants of the vast cathedral were discovered at the end of the last century. The mortal remains of King Béla III and of his first wife Anne of Antiochia were found, among others. The foundation walls and columns can be seen *in situ*. Other carved stones are placed in an arcaded lapidarium. The sarcophagus of St. Stephen first king of Hungary can be seen in a two storied mausoleum.

Church of St. John Nepomuk. Built 1745–51, belonged to the Jesuits, the Pauline sand the Cistercians. Its fine frescoes are by C. F. Sambach (1715–1785).

Fekete Sas pharmacy, 9, *Március 15 Street.* in an 18th century building, rococo furniture made in the workshop of the Jesuits. Beautiful baroque chemist's jars. Marble press dating from 1752.

King Stephen Museum, 3, Ságvári Endre Square. Founded in 1873, the museum includes archaeological, historical and ethnographical exhibits. Changing picture and sculpture exhibitions. The *István Csók picture gallery*, 1, Bartók Béla Square, is part of the museum.

St. Anne's Chapel (Székesegyház Square). The only intact mediaeval building in the town, built by Hentel a citizen of Székesfehérvár around 1470. A Gothic church with one nave, and fine reticulated vaulting.

Cathedral of St. Stephen. Originally built in the 13th century by King Béla IV; during coronations the kings administered justice and created knights here. Rebuilt in its present (baroque) form from 1758–1768. The finest part is the choir by Franz Anton Hillebrandt, Maria Theresia's court architect. The tabernacle includes a masterpiece by a Hungarian goldsmith, a crucifix by József Szentpétery dating from 1847.

St. Joseph church (Seminary church), built in the 18th century. The frescoes by Franz Anton Maulbertsch are worth a visit (Cf. the article by Klára Garas in The N.H.Q. No 28).

County Council Chambers, 9, István Square. 19th century classicist building by the local architect János Tegl. Mihály Pollack, the leading representative of Hungarian classicism in architecture collaborated in designing the façade. A large number of baroque, rococo and Louis Seize houses are in the Jókai, Zalka Máté, Csók István and Arany János streets.

LŐRINC SZABÓ

POEMS

*Farewell**

What happened? My dear, don't cry. The thing
I felt was: moulting. There's been a dissolving
of the threads in my fate, and now I am spun
by a hundred spaces and times (in the old days one),
destroying-and-building. Turtle-doves coo up there,
have sung four days above me; but I'd despair
of telling you fearful wars have raged here too.
Even to myself it is hard to believe this is true,
although my senses branch out each minute. Your pain
is new, looks through me, asks where I remain.
In a million places every inch of me!
What is it then? Love, electricity?
I'm in the dark still. Maybe gold-gas-atom,
maybe heat-ray-nucleus. Light on Saturn,
space-living light. It's strange. But that
the Universe is only a Poet's Brain I grant
seems true.—Are you going? I feel night's touch.
And since at one time I loved you very much,

. . . on the outlook tower . . .

I will take you now again to Balaton,
to the tower above the lake. Kisses float on
your face from the wind: from me! Huge, full,
the moon sails over rough Badacsony hill,
its bright watery bridge almost at our feet.
Can you hear the chirping of this holy night?
The soul swings open: it is vigilant,

* The first three are concluding verses of the sequence "Cricket Music."

but still the nerves of space envelop it
and between the infinities above and below
crickets strike up a fortissimo:
zither-twangs of *u* and sparks of *i*,
rich and thick, *u-ru-kru* and *kri-kri*,
ringing out loudly and ringing round
like rings of foam that encircle an island,
richer and richer, as they did last year and before
and always will: weave it into your soul,
weave yourself into its warp and weft and
you will become a sigh, and understand,

. . . in the big blue meadow. . .

and you are already that, you are all rustling,
earth and sky, fire-conjuring, dream-dancing,
and you close your eyes for the wind's kiss once more
and inner and outer diffuse into each other
and sounds resound and the grass swims and hums
and as your heart takes that measure and succumbs
the Self leaves you like something exploded off
on the light-wide skin of a sphere and runs rough
up through the sky expanding, and only then,
when it has encapsulated the world of men,
only when it makes the earth its kernel, can
you begin to see yourself again, and
see a vanished particle, yourself the frame
of everything and everything the same
as your own inwardness. . . : comfort comes sudden,
heavenly, as your earth-mind goes unconscious
and in the big blue spaces of the meadow
the stars start up their cosmic cricket-concert.

THE DREAMS OF THE ONE

Since you are this way and they are that
and his interests are different
and truth's a sort of nervous fact
or verbal front
and since nothing out there pleases me
and since the crowd still has supremacy
and of the framing of rules I am utterly
innocent:
it is high time now
that I escaped your net.

What should I go on waiting for any longer,
timidly scanning days to come?
Time hurries past, and whatever lives
is true to itself alone.
Either I am sick, or you are; and
am I not to recognize the weapons in the hand
of love or hate that comes to stand
before my face?
If I am forever only to understand,
where is my own place?

No! no! no! How can I bear to be
no more than a thread in a mad web:
to understand and honour the guard
and share his pain, his pain!
All who could, have long got out of the snares,
they go freely through and about the wires.
I and the world, there go the two of us,
captive in the cage,
the world with the limelight on itself,
like me on my own stage.

We're escaping, my soul, we've sprung the lock,
the mind has leapt away
but is careful to paint itself
with the bars of appearance.
Inside it is one that outside's a thousand fragments!

Who knows where the man ever went
that saw the fish, and still the net
intact?
Forbidden? By someone else! Sin? To them,
if caught in the act!
Within us, inside, no divisions or frontiers,
nothing is forbidden;
we are only what we are, each one a solitude,
not bad, not good.
Hide in the depths of yourself! For there,
the great and free dream, you'd swear,
lies abandoned still, as where
our mother the unbounded
sea appears like a memory
in the sharp taste of our tears and blood.

Back into the sea, into ourselves! Only
there we can be free!
We needn't look out yonder to see
anything coming to us from the Many.
If ever we are hucksters with the crowd,
truth crumbles down to powder;
only the One is our home ground,
never undone:
let us dream, if we still can,
the dreams of the One!

PRISONS

Still in one body, locked and barred?
Still me? Never a new image?
Nowhere a thoroughgoing change?
How do you all endure these bars?

A different man! Why for once
can I not be my anti-self!
My soul, what is out there? It spells
other days, another order, other skies.

My brain is like the shell of a hall,
the word flies through it and returns;
and unless my fate concurs
even dying's impossible.

I am an engineer who sits
in the prison of his own works
fumbling blindly, and in the dark
someday will throw a fatal switch.

ALL FOR NOTHING

It is terrible, I admit that,
but it is true.
To love's to have your own heart
kill or nearly kill you.
You will never see me pause
for today's people, today's laws;
within, the man is master who
was prisoner out there,
and I take gladness only through
the law I own and cannot share.

You are not mine till you are yours:
in love?—not yet.
If it's still me-for-you you choose
you hang weights upon my neck.
Business, though sacred, is business: the thing
I need now is: All for Nothing!
Anything else is two selves running
a hidden fight;
I want more: you, becoming
part and parcel of my fate.

I am tired, I am sick, I am suspicious
of one and all;
my faith has given up its patience
though I perhaps desire you still.

If you would allay my fears,
all my disgusts, this is for your ears:
show me how the last humility
and sacrifice
are for joy, show me your ability
to contradict a world I despise.
For until you need one minute
with yourself alone,
till you dare think you could win it,
till you regret the life you've known,
till you stop being an object,
lying there dead and abject:
till then you are no better, no more
than all the rest,
till then a stranger at my door,
till then irrelevant at best.

Let the law save those who are
good as their fellow-men;
beyond the law, like an animal,
be like that, I'll love you then.
Like a lamp that's turned off, you
mustn't be if I don't need you to;
don't complain, don't even see
a prison that's invisible;
and I in my mind will guarantee
that you forgive my ruthless rule.

Translated by Edwin Morgan

ONE-MINUTE STORIES

by

ISTVÁN ÖRKÉNY

ART HISTORY

Having finished his role in *A Masked Ball* the Italian tenor was off on a night in Budapest. Around dawn he invited a girl to his table. He had danced with her several times.

The guest artist—with the interpreter acting as go-between—chatted to the girl for a while, then he put his hand in his pocket, pulled out his wallet, and with his palm covering it he looked at the interpreter as if expecting something.

The interpreter exchanged a couple of words with the girl.

"*Cinquecento,*" he said to the tenor.

"Too much," the tenor said. "*Trecento.*"

"*Quattrocento,*" the interpreter suggested.

It was a deal.

THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE

"But then crypts are never cheap," the clerk said, "let alone along the main walk."

"No need for it to be along the main walk," the interested party said. "What's important is that is should be concreted."

"Concreted?" the clerk was astonished. "A little unusual, but it can be done."

He put the type-written price-list aside and made a quick calculation on a pad. A concreted crypt, no tombstone—the total would come to quite a sum, even on a side lot. The interested party declared that he didn't mind.

He thought for a moment:

"Furthermore," he said, "we shall want a pipe too."

"What kind of a pipe?" the clerk in the black suit asked.

"I wouldn't know myself. A chimney-like affair. Something like a chimney-stack. Like the ones on a ship. Or in a wine-cellar."

The engineer whom they called over from the construction department, had a slow mind. He got them to explain the whole business twice, but even then he was full of doubts.

"What, if I may ask, do you want this pipe to be made of?" he inquired.

"It's your business to know that," the interested party said, losing his temper.

"Will slate do?" the engineer asked. "Or shall we line it with bricks? Or would you prefer some kind of metal?"

"What would you suggest?" the interested party asked.

"I don't know what this is all about," said the engineer, "but slate would be the obvious choice."

"Let it be slate then," said the interested party and dreamily looked at the obtuse engineer. "Then," he added, "we shall want electricity too."

"Electricity?" they both stared at him. "Whatever for?"

"A good question," the interested party said getting angry. "So that it won't be dark in there, that's why."

THE GREAT MARCH

Once upon a time a long time ago there was an egg. This egg left home to see the world. It went and went till it saw King Arthur. The king asked the egg:

"Where to, where to, my good friend?"

"I'm going to see the world."

"Wait a minute, and I shall come with you."

The egg rolled, the king jogged along. They met half-a-bicycle.

"Where to, where to, my good friend?" it asked the king.

"I'm going to see the world."

"Wait a minute, and I shall come with you."

The egg trundled, the king jogged along, half-a-bycicle went like a hoop. They came across Tweedledum And Tweedledee.

"Where to, where to, my good friend?" he asked half-a-bycicle.

"I'm going to see the world."

He went with them too. They went and went till they saw Bert Brecht coming towards them. He stopped and asked:

"Where to, where to, my good friend Tweedledum And Tweedledee?"

"I'm going to see the world."

"I am too, let's go together."

He hummed and hawed a little, then he got into line. They had gone a long way when they saw Takariko Kirivi, the Japanese table-tennis champion coming towards them.

"Where to, where to, Bert Brecht, my good friend?" the bespectacled champion asked.

"I'm going to see the world."

"Wait a minute and I shall come with you."

The egg in the front, then King Arthur, then half-a-bycicle, then Tweedledum And Tweedledee, then Bert Brecht and last but not least Takariko Kirivi, the bespectacled table-tennis champion.

They are going and going, on and on. They are going and going, and never a word is spoken. And if they haven't died yet, they are still going, even now.

THE ACTOR'S DEATH

This afternoon in a small street off Üllői út, Zoltán Zetelaki, the popular actor, lost consciousness and collapsed.

Passers-by carried him to a hospital in the vicinity, but failing every effort to revive the actor—doctors tried everything modern science offered, even an iron lung—Zoltán Zetelaki died at half past six in the evening. His corpse was taken to the Institute of Anatomy.

In spite of the tragic event that evening's performance of *King Lear* took place without the slightest hitch. Zetelaki looked somewhat tired in the first act—there were moments when he obviously needed the prompter—but in time he found himself and he acted the king's death with such persuasive force that he was applauded while the curtain was still up.

After the performance some people invited him to supper but he didn't go. He said:

"I've had a hard day today."

CLIMACTERIC

It was the porter who noticed the smell of gas. He broke down the door. The suicide note lay on the stone floor in the kitchen, a small earthenware ashtray was on top of it, and in that the butt of a last cigarette.

"Today is my 54th birthday," the porter read. "Nobody loves me in this house. The council's builders will not repair my ceiling. It leaks. I want to die.

Yours faithfully,

Mary Burger"

There was lip-stick on the cigarette butt.

PORTRAIT OF A MAN

To say that I'm well off would be an exaggeration, but I have nothing to complain about. When I was released I was taken on at once as a watchman. Not much money in it but not much work either. Five thousand containers full of sulphuric acid and a few hundred iron barrels of industrial alcohol. My job is to see that nothing is stolen. This is a paying proposition only if you stop others from doing what you get away with yourself. It's not my line, unfortunately, especially because I got out thanks to an amnesty. Still, I had to keep an eye open for something on the side, which considering my state of mind is not easy, after the way I was let down in connection with that trouble I had. I took a vow not to trust anyone in future and to do everything on my own. If it means having to starve, I'll starve but I'll rely strictly on myself alone.

I had a stroke of luck right at the start. I saw a notice and I went straight to the Institute of Immunology in Tímár utca. They asked if I wanted to give blood. Yes, I said, blood. Since then I have not only learned the routine but, even if I say it myself, this connection has grown more and more fruitful over the years.

I can't give precise figures though I keep a diary; one day the notebook got soaked in my pocket. However, allowing for a small margin of error I can say that from 1951 to the present day I have sold 68 litres of blood to the Institute. It is well known that prices have fluctuated a lot in the meantime. They paid 30 forints for 1/10 litre at the start, you can't look down on that considering conditions at the time. I bought this hat then, socks, suspenders, this and that. Later, when they had a big drive for voluntary donors, the price went down to 25 forints, as a result even the old regular donors left the Institute high and dry. It is well known that on January 1st, 1956 the price of blood went up to 50 forints and this schedule is still valid today.

I shouldn't like to use the expression that it was a smart dodge on my part, that I went on giving blood in the 25 forint times without a word of

complaint, after all that's the kind of man I am. I have some reason to think that they took a liking to me already then. A young doctor came up to me one day and asked me if I didn't perhaps fancy switching over to bone marrow. I asked him if marrow excluded blood, but he reassured me that there was no reason why I should not go on giving blood. Bone marrow would mean a little extra money, which, I must say, I could use then. I don't like a badly dressed man and the underclothes I had were pretty badly worn.

As far as I know they need bone marrow because radioactive rays used in the latest kind of physical research attack bone marrow and you can cure that only by transplantation. As far as I was concerned I didn't lose by the deal. They give you an injection, all you feel is a sting on your chest and the same needle which is stuck through your bone straight away sucks out the marrow. They usually take 5 cubic centimetres a time, the price of which is 150 forints. Nothing much really, strictly speaking, but all the same I don't think it too little. Money for jam, as far as I'm concerned. After all, in three or four months your stock of bone marrow is thoroughly regenerated.

I was pleased with my success, but I didn't believe myself that my career at the Institute would develop further. But it did! Some three years ago the same doctor to whom I owed the bone marrow came to see me again. Thanks only to his good will I was among the first who received blood contaminated with isotopes. I venture to say that in this field I also stood the test. To tell the truth these research institutes for understandable reasons lack practical common sense, as a result confidence men and other shady characters perpetrated the most impudent frauds.

This is what happened at first with the isotope-contaminated blood. In this examination, as is well known, they take 20 ccs of blood from your veins on the first day and then, straight after they contaminate it with isotopes, they reinject it back into your blood stream. The price is 150 forints. But this is not all. After an hour they check on the effects with some kind of counting apparatus and they take 5 ccs of blood, for which they pay 50 forints, as a control. This means that right on the first day you lay your hands on 200 forints. All you have to do afterwards is come in once a week when they take 5 ccs of blood and pay 50 forints on each occasion. It is a sad fact, but I can't keep quiet about it that people exist who take the 200 forints and never again even look at the Institute. Many experiments were wasted because of them.

Learning from experience the Institute took counter-measures. The situation now is that they only pay out 50 forints on the first day and everybody

goes through with the weekly control examinations. They only lay their hands on the 200 forints after the last examination shows a negative result, in other words when the contamination is over. I'm not saying it because I want to give myself a halo but I'd like to emphasize that it was not my behaviour which compelled them to take these counter-measures.

I won't say that when I calculate my yearly income and add all this together it comes to an astronomical figure. True I haven't mentioned smaller sums which mightn't seem significant but which nevertheless play a role in my modest budget. Thus on each occasion, even when I only give blood in the ordinary way, I get a free snack consisting of bread, a piece of cheese, a small tin of pig's liver, two chocolate biscuits and a bottle of fruit-juice. I also get travelling expenses, two valid tram tickets each time.

My state of health is good. I'm also lucky because I am an optimist by nature, though I don't look at the future through rose-tinted spectacles. In other words, I'm honest with others, and also with myself, both in a positive and a negative way. If I can continue giving both blood and bone marrow at the same time for a few more years, which I have no reason to doubt, then I think I can safely say that when it comes to essentials I don't fear that I shall lack anything.

I owe all this to my own resources. I've never asked anybody to help me. That's why I haven't had disappointments, as I did in the past. Not having harmful habits or passions has also helped. I don't even smoke. I like a walk, I enjoy fresh air, I like the evening crowds in a city, and colourful shop-windows. I like rain and snow too. I don't mind the heat either. I always go about bare-headed. Summer or winter I always wash myself in cold water.

HONEYMOONERS ON FLY-PAPER

(They didn't go anywhere. Why travel? All Budapest is ours—said the young husband—we have theatres, concerts, cinemas, more than enough to look at. They stayed at home, and had a lovely honeymoon.

One afternoon they got stuck on the fly-paper hanging from the lamp. A stupid accident.)

Husband: Sweetie pie, do you love me?

Wife: Yes, I do.

H: Come on then.

W: Again?

H: C'mon, c'mon.

W: Oh, aren't you wild.

H: C'mon, c'mon, c'mon, c'mon.

W: Just a moment, my heel got stuck in something.

H: Kick off your tiny little shoes and come on.

W: Then we'll stay at home again tonight? They are playing Tchaikovsky at the Academy.

H: Damn Tchaikovsky.

W: Would you rather go and see a play?

H: Damn those over-explicit Hungarian directors, no... I say, don't you feel as if we were dangling?

W: You could be imagining that.

H: I feel as if I were hanging on a thread swinging to and fro in mid-air. What's going on?

W: Never mind, go and have a look what's on in the Opera.

H: Where's the paper?

W: On the kitchen table.

H: I can't go, my feet are stuck on something too.

W: Strange... It seems to me that it's the *Meistersinger*.

H: Tell me, is your shoe stuck on something shiny and sticky?

W: Something like that.

H: I can't pull my hands away from it either.

W: You do like to complain, don't you. We'll end up staying at home again.

H: What's the meaning of these jerks?

W: I'm trying to get out of this glue.

H: Stop it, will you, we might tear off.

W: Oh, you *will* put up with anything. I fell in love with you because you were so enterprising, you always made me laugh and said you loved music...

H: What's the use of loving music when I can't move my limbs?

W: As if you were the first man who got stuck in something. You've never heard about cripples have you, without legs? And they go on living without grumbling, they even go to work.

H: I feel as if we were turning in a circle now.

W: Does this worry you?

H: Everything that I can't understand worries me.

W: Let me explain then. There's a draught from the staircase, that's what's turning this sticky stuff round. I hope that stops your worrying.

H: How can I stop when I have sunk into this glue right up to my belly?

W: You *will* go on about the same thing, won't you? It's twenty to seven. We can't get to the Opera unless we take a cab.

H: Say, are the realities of life nothing to you?

W: We said, didn't we, that our marriage wouldn't be like all the others'. We shall never be bored, we'll always have something to say to each other, won't turn up our nose at everything, we shall never quarrel, or get a divorce... I want to have a few good laughs yet, I want two or three children, and I want them to study music. Please go and ring for a cab.

THE SAVIOUR

It was ten o'clock in the morning when the author finished his new play. The evening before he had still had two difficult scenes to write. He had worked right through the night making himself at least ten cups of coffee and walking at least 10 miles up and down in his narrow hotel room. In spite of it he felt fresh now as if he had no body, he felt happy as if life had suddenly turned beautiful, he felt free as if the world had ceased to exist.

He made yet another cup of coffee. He walked down to the shore. He looked for the boatman.

"Can you take me out for a while, Uncle Volentik?" he asked the boatman.

"Please get in," the boatman said.

There were clouds in the sky but not a breeze stirred. The lake was smooth, grey and sparkling just like a huge sheet of mica. Uncle Volentik rowed with short, brisk strokes as is customary on Lake Balaton.

"What do you think?" the writer asked when they had covered quite a distance. "Can we be seen from the shore?"

"Oh, yes," the boatman said.

He rowed on. The red tiles on the roof of the holiday home were gradually hidden by trees. Only the green of the shore and the smoke rising from a train could be seen.

"Even now?" the writer asked.

"Even now," the boatman said.

Only the splash of the oars could be heard, no noises reached them from the shore. The houses, the landing stages, the forests all ran into each other. Only a pencil line was visible, that's where the lake ended.

"Can one still see us?" the writer asked.

The boatman looked round.

"No, not now."

The author kicked off his sandals and stood up.

"Draw in the oars then, Uncle Volentik," he said. "I'll try and walk a little on the water."

A HUNGARIAN EXHIBITION IN LONDON

NIKOLAUS PEVSNER

HUNGARIAN ART TREASURES

In the eighteenth century England invented the steam engine, in the early nineteenth century the railway engine. Altogether, England was ahead of other countries in the Industrial Revolution. Hence England was also the first country in which the disastrous effect of industry on craft and design made itself felt. The remedy was thought to be a museum of the decorative arts, where manufacturers would find outstanding work of the past to imitate it.

That is the origin of the Victoria and Albert Museum which was opened in 1857. The façade is fifty years younger and nothing like as distinguished as that of the Museum of Decorative Art at Budapest, and behind are the vast halls which the mid-nineteenth century liked. This is where the exhibition of Hungarian Art Treasures had to go, and it was not an easy job to display objects of from a few centimetres to hardly more than two metres. It has been done admirably with a straightforward framework of timber, screen walls and a veil not too high up.

So one enters the exhibition, and one leaves it grateful for the generosity of the Hungarian authorities and speculating on what is specifically Hungarian. What then is it that strikes an English visitor as specially noteworthy, a visitor in my case who is an art historian and who has travelled a little in Hungary? The catalogue numbers 246 items. I can here, of course, single out only a few. Hungary in the Middle Ages lay on the eastern boundary of the western world. She was bound to look west for inspiration, to Italy and to South Germany, Austria, Bohemia. The Italian connection is patent in some of the architectural fragments of the twelfth century, the Germano–Austrian connection in all the Late Gothic painting and sculpture. Much of the painting, but by no means all, is indeed frontier work, provincial and aesthetically indifferent work, but the provincial can have a quality of its own, and the flatness of the Annunciation by Master G. H. of 1471 and

of the two parts of an altar of 1514 in the Budapest Museum are each in the terms of their date and stylistic context impressive just because of a certain poster quality of composition and modelling. And over and above that kind of work there were also masters of the first order in Hungary as well, especially Thomas of Kolozsvár whose parts of an altar dated 1427 are exquisitely tender and at the same time not lacking in observation of the everyday world. The pieces come from the Esztergom Christian Museum, one of the principal sources of the exhibition.

The other greatest Hungarian master painted about eighty years later, the Master MS. It is a great pity there is not more of his altar of 1506 in the exhibition. The Agony in the Garden, for instance, one longs to see again. MS ranks as high as the great German masters of the Danube School, and in that direction are indeed his sources. But the wild swirls of his draperies are all his own; so are the facial types. He can be lyrical in the Visitation and savagely cruel in the Crucifixion. Sculpture of the century from the early fifteenth to the early sixteenth is hardly ever as accomplished, though the three figures from Szlatvin in the Budapest Museum are comparable to MS.

In sculpture, of course, problems of transport must have limited the possible selection, and it remains a great disappointment that the Easter Sepulchre on wheels from Esztergom Cathedral could not travel to London. As it is wood carvings begin just before the middle of the fourteenth century, and the pieces of that and the early fifteenth are close to Austrian work. The Virgin from Toporec, I would date 1440 rather than 1420. The type is still that of the South East German so-called "Schöne Madonnen," but the face has stretched, and the folds begin to turn from rounded to angular. This is according to the standard development of Late Gothic art in Central Europe.

But, then, about 1460 or 1470 Hungary suddenly stepped out of that Central European context. This sensational change of allegiance was due to King Matthias Corvinus. Under him, in architecture, in illuminated manuscripts and in minor work Hungary turned radically to Renaissance Italy. Illuminated manuscripts were made in Florence, pottery was made at Faenza, and the masters who did the exquisite capitals and friezes of red marble for the royal palace on the Vár (Castle) must have been Italian too. In England such work had to wait another fifty years, until you come to Sir Thomas More's chapel in Chelsea church of 1528. Not even France has anything Italian as early and as good as the work on the Buda Vár and at Visegrád. It is a great shame that the two red-marble pieces are displayed in a corner where most people will overlook them. The illuminated manuscripts, on the other hand, are made a big splash of, and rightly so. King

Matthias's library had no parallel outside Italy too. 180 books are known, six of them in English collections, and one is glad to see that London, Oxford and Cambridge have lent to increase the impact of the show.

In the metalwork section—for many people the most admired section of all—England also appears as a lender: the York City Corporation which contributed the fabulous Sword of the Emperor Sigismund which originally hung above his garter stall in Windsor Chapel. It is a gorgeous piece with the almost Chinese dragons on the scabbard—but is it Hungarian? Altogether the Late Gothic metalwork is gorgeous. England has nothing to compare with the filigree chalices, the two Drinking Horns or the Monstrance from the Treasury of Győr Cathedral.

Of course there are other things too to which England offers no parallel, for instance the Late Gothic glazed tiles with figures in thick relief and the Honeycake Moulds in front of which there are always people discussing the technicalities of how they were—and are—used. I, of course, know, I have eaten Hungarian honey cakes myself and like to remember the hospitable place where I did it.

Well—with the cake moulds we are in the seventeenth century. That is where the exhibition ends and that is therefore where I can end.

IVÁN BOLDIZSÁR

A VISIT TO THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT

Queue at half past two

On a Sunday the Victoria and Albert Museum opens its doors at half past two. Continental commonsense would want to keep museums open on Sunday mornings but English traditionalism insists that Sunday mornings belong to Church, that there is no room then for secular enjoyment. It's their business, and so is the fact that they don't chill their beer. This afternoon, for their sake, I'd even drink tepid beer. I was moved to see a long queue collect outside the museum gates, under a poster advertising Hungarian Art Treasures.

The Victoria and Albert Museum houses one of the major collections of the world in a huge building. Not many easelpaintings but the Raffael Cartoons and a fountain by Bernini, Egyptian chrystal and Persian rugs,

gates from early medieval French churches, carved wooden tryptichs from the Rhine, Brussels lace, Oriental porcelain, something of everything that was shaped by human art and skill is here. Especially of those that were meant to be useful as well as beautiful. Anxiety gripped me. What can we say, what can Hungary offer to the English public amidst all this abundance?

Half past two. A clock strikes, they open the doors. My anxiety passes. The greater part of the waiting crowd turns right, they don't even glance at the Roman jewellery or at the Renaissance sculpture, they follow the arrows to the Hungarian exhibition. They didn't turn up on the off chance: London papers had shown themselves surprised and appreciative. One art critic after another had written about the exhibition full of the joy of discovery, like one of Stevenson's heroes. They had stumbled on a treasure island.

A rich survey

Hungarians were fashionable in London last autumn. This exhibition of Hungarian Art Treasures; the success of the Kovács–Cseres film *Cold Days*, following that of Jancsó's *The Round Up* in 1966; then the more modest exhibition of Hungarian books, all excited interest. Fashion can be taken in the literal sense too. Mario Amaya wrote in *The Financial Times* that he was truly fascinated by the silver cover of the "sporran" from Galgóc dating from around 900, which is most beautiful and, from an English point of view, surprisingly new. Amaya feels sure that the fascinating palmettes and scrolls will soon appear in Art Nouveau shops in the King's Road in Chelsea, the playground of miniskirted girls and long-haired youths.

I must admit that I doubt that they read the City's morning paper but suddenly they are all here, the exhibition is full of young people. Their dress is exaggerated and fashionable but their charm is irresistible. Both rooms of the exhibition—arranged with extraordinary skill by Michael Brawne—are now full of people. I'm not too lazy to count them: there are about two hundred of us. There are so many you can hardly see the exhibits. I had come to look at the others, but the exhibits held me captive. The catalogue is beautifully illustrated and contains a number of compact short studies. John Pope-Henessy, the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, who thanks to Hungarian art and art historians has become Hungary's friend writes in his introduction that this exhibition provides the richest and most comprehensive survey of Medieval and Renaissance Hungarian art outside Hungary. Speaking for the few Hungarians from Hungary who have seen the exhibition I can add that even within the Hun-

garian borders one has not seen so much in one place. The exhibition is more beautiful and more integrated than a similar one shown in Paris and in the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest in 1966. Dénes Radocsay and his colleagues deserve all the praise given to them. They assembled the best work from the 9th to the 17th century Hungarian Museums could offer, adding pieces lent by the British Museum and other English museums and libraries. The result shows the British public where Hungarian art stood within Europe, and at the same time, that difference, that more or less, that unique, and national quality which allows us to distinguish between Hungarian art and other Romanesque, Gothic or Renaissance work.

Success and its three reasons

For the time being I can't work out what the English public thinks. I can neither overhear bits of conversation nor ask direct questions, because I am looking at the things themselves and thinking how rich we are, and shortly afterwards, with a painful sigh, how rich we were! What a paradise of art must Hungary have been in the time of the Árpád dynasty, that of the Anjous and especially in the time of Matthias Corvinus if so much is left, if so much was found under the ruins.

Afterwards when I spoke to Englishmen both at the exhibition and outside it I discovered that its success was in a large measure due to precisely this patriotic grief. The English too mourn much of their medieval art. Their country was not ravaged by Mongols, Turks, or Hapsburgs but suffered as a result of the fanaticism and the cupidity of her own sons. Puritan zeal decapitated statues in cathedrals and attacked altar pieces with knives. Others took advantage of Henry VIII reforms to turn Church treasures to their own use. The English can understand better than the French, Italians or Germans how precious the 1150 red marble king's head from Kalocsa Cathedral is to the Hungarians, or the exquisite girl's head which the destructiveness of the last war dug out from under the ruins of previous sieges in the Castle at Buda.

The second reason are the exhibits in themselves. They are beautiful, valuable, and unexpected. "They get your imagination going," an English friend of mine said. He fell in love with one of the most often mentioned exhibits, the bronze bowl dating from around 1200. It shows a centaur beating a drum, and as if that were not enough, there is a boy on his back playing a pipe, and even he is not sitting but standing. "What daring," my friend called out. "How modern it is."

Thirdly the exhibition's success is due to King Matthias Corvinus. The English public doesn't believe its eyes when it looks at the date of the Renaissance exhibits. They open the catalogue and look it up. How was it possible that the Renaissance got to Hungary at the time of Henry VII? A young couple starts to read the text right here in front of me, then they rush to the entrance, to return the hired catalogue and buy one instead. Such questions need more thorough study.

Pop art—1450

Two young girls crouch to examine the gold brocade Báthory vestments. The embroidery looks as if it were embossed. An older woman, speaking English with a Hungarian accent explains to her husband who István Báthory was. "In thirty years you never mentioned him" her husband joked, "though he was also King of Poland."

A group of youngsters collected in front of Michele Pannonio's *Ceres Enthroned* (1450). "Pop-art's grand-dad" one of the boys called out good and loud, so that everyone should hear him. They all like it. It is true this pudding faced young woman, painted in bold outlines, reminds one of pop-art's cinema poster beauties.

Someone says of the St. Stephen of Hungary carved in wood by the Master of Mateóc: "He has lots of character." The prize exhibit though is undoubtedly the well known Visitation by the master who signed himself MS. The disciplined English queue up in front of this picture to get a close-up view of the extraordinary background. A reviewer remarked that the background landscape alone is worth the 2s 6d admission price to the exhibition.

I would have loved to have seen the Emperor Sigismund's famous sword, the inlaid diamonds, the silver dragon heads. Every reviewer had mentioned it. On the day I went a small notice replaced it: "The Emperor Sigismund's sword was kindly lent by the Lord Mayor and the Corporation of the City of York who requested its temporary return for ceremonial purposes."

Isn't the English respect for tradition worthy of respect?

ISTVÁN VAS

GODS

Gods, arraigned so often and so often!

You beasts and monsters, rivers some, and stars,
Dog-headed ones and hundred-nippled ones,
Some marine, some subterrene, some nurtured
On the nursery-floors of underworlds, fen-dwellers,
Attendants of the departed, corpse-devourers,
And totems come of even older strains
Of noble stock, rearing up, stone-faced spirits,
Mounded a-tilt, tent-like, Inferno peacocks,

Never have I prostrated myself before you,
Never in your name gone through a hocus-pocus,
And yet I know you exist, I recognize you
In any form, in the fraudulent arguments
Of an allegedly science-based aesthetics,
In the peristaltic paroxysms of visions,
A consciously sombre rhetoric's sparse emissions,
Or in the ambiguously apathetic
Smile picked up unawares from a young physique,
I know you exist, and it may be, sooner or later,
You will contrive to get me in your clutches.

And yet perhaps—at heart this is what I hope for—
I have succeeded in slipping out of your grasp,
And you can whistle for me, unwieldy
Mask-wearers, prodigies tricked out hooligan-fashion!

And you, the light-bearers, archers, gazers at the sun,
You with the brains of fire, strainers of nerves,
Wearers of helms, shield-wielders, bearers of
Victory on the helm, on the shield the monster's head
Borne to the light, killers of dragons, good swordsmen,
The sunlight-bodied, the from-the-seas-emerging
From among the monsters to unprecedented pleasures,
The beautiful, the illuminations, the
Descenders to hell, overcomers of hell's forces,
Pilfering plunderers of the underworlds,
You have I never professed in hymns nor in
The covertly moustached and self-effacing
Erudite smile of a specialized monograph;
But you have I had with me in the combat.
How often was the shield not held before me, hiding!
How often has your spear not thrust for me!
How often have you not sent me the good enveloping mist!
When I was imperilled, and when I fled, you were with me,
When I invented, when I overcame
And you have been with me in many and many a bed.
Vigour-enduers you, and beauty-pursuers,
You of the bright hearts, you whom I have found,
Surely you know I am yours, and you will surely
Send me down the envoy, the attendant,
The god of poets and of thieves and secrets,
Him, the father of all stratagems,
To be my convoy on my slippery road,
To essay, when I must come to changing over
From form to form, his best wiles for my good,
When I shall step from the one into the other?

Translated by Donald Davie

INTERVIEW

AT HOME WITH GYÖRGY LUKÁCS

Two staff members of *Népszabadság*, the Budapest daily and official organ of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, Péter Rényi and Pál Pándi visited György Lukács in his Budapest home overlooking the Danube, and talked to him about topical economic and cultural questions. The philosopher, who is in his eighty-third year, still follows a strict work schedule. He passionately supports his views and he welcomes every opportunity to discuss them openly.

The interviewers stated that it gives them great pleasure that this conversation could be arranged, and proceeded to their first question:

—What is your opinion of the introduction of the new economic mechanism, what do you expect from it?

—In my opinion this is an extraordinarily important and positive step in a direction first taken by the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. What had been the difficulties from which a way out had to be found? At the time of the revolution and the counter-revolution in the Soviet Union in 1917, it was undoubtedly necessary to introduce the so-called commissar-system both in production and in the army because the military, economic and other experts left over from the ancien régime were as a rule altogether unreliable, and even supporters of the counter-revolution. I am insufficiently familiar with the internal structure of the Soviet Union to be able to tell for how long and in what form this was necessary. It is, however, beyond doubt that this system was not dismantled but further developed in the time of Stalin. Distrust was the rule and this meant bureaucratic concentration, the detailed supervision of every detail.

—However, the development of socialism initiated by Lenin, led to educational progress on such a scale, that the Soviet Union today possesses so

many qualified technicians and skilled tradesmen that now even America is envious. Such men and women could not be governed in that way. Signs of this had been manifest for a long time. The Twentieth Congress recognized this too. It is beside the point that I do not think the expression "personality cult" to be very fortunate; what is relevant is that this problem is being dealt with. It is to the great credit of the Hungarian party that on this occasion too it recognized the necessity for concrete action. The new mechanism is an important experiment in the attempt to realize socialist production in a form free of distortions. This, in my view, is what makes the new mechanism such an important step in the right direction. It is the sort of step which makes a Marxist renaissance both possible and necessary. It is also a return to what we used to call proletarian democracy in Lenin's time. The question now is to what extent we have broken with the old ways and, what problems arise inasmuch as this has not been done. In my view, certain things have been cleared up. One cannot doubt that offences against the rule of law and all that was linked with them have been consistently and properly dealt with in Hungary, but—and this is my opinion—earlier methods have not in all other respects been done away with until now as radically as necessary.

—Let me illustrate this with an example, the relationship between theory and tactics. The misguided judgement that the class war is becoming sharper every day is often criticised. That view has been rejected but the question has not been examined properly from the Marxist point of view. Can we really say that Stalin believed that the class war was becoming sharper all the time, and does this explain the purges of the thirties? Or—and I believe this to be the truth—did Stalin need these purges for *tactical* reasons and therefore he stated that the class-war was continually becoming more acute. In other words: instead of following the true method of Marxism and developing a strategy and tactics from an analysis of the events, tactical decisions—right or wrong decisions—were decisive, and a theory was built on these. Let me also instance an occasion where I agree with Stalin's tactics. I am thinking of the pact which he concluded with Hitler in 1939, and which in my view was the first decisive step towards the destruction of fascist Germany. But what conclusions were drawn? Unfortunately one was that for a time there was our attempt to persuade the French and British communists to suspend the fight against Hitler, it was declared that the real enemy was in their own country, and as a result anti-fascist resistance was paralysed. Think of the first volume of Aragon's Communists where this is depicted most vividly. This method according to which a theory is "made to fit" the tactics has not yet been

altogether abandoned, and until this is done there will still be a danger that the old bureaucratic traditions may move us in a retrograde direction.

—You have mentioned that it is wrong to criticize Stalin's thesis that the class-struggle is becoming more acute all the time with dogmatic methods, without a proper analysis. Situations may occur when the class-struggle is in fact becoming more acute. Does this mean then that you also disapprove if the theory of the continual sharpening of the class-struggle is countered with a theory of a continual slackening of the class-struggle?

—Without a doubt. Whether the class-struggle is becoming more acute or not is always a concrete question that Marxists have to clarify on the basis of facts and they have to fit their tactics to them. To return to the original question, in Hungary—but elsewhere too—there is a certain reluctance to state explicitly that a given important turning point is that. We prefer to present things in such a way that things developed correctly in essentials, we are going to improve on this now; something good is going to be substituted by something better, and not something bad by something good. Permit me to quote here the great master of theory and practice, Lenin. When the Russian civil war was over in 1921, Lenin, as is well-known, elaborated the New Economic Policy. Lenin did not assert then that War-Communism had in essence been a good policy which would now be replaced by something even better, but declared quite frankly that War-Communism had been a policy quite untenable in principle, which had been forced on us by circumstances. When the pressure of circumstances no longer determined what we could do, we were able to bring about a change and introduce the New Economic Policy. Lenin never asserted that the New Economic Policy was a continuation of War-Communism, its further development or its correction, but on the contrary he called the New Economic Policy the opposite of War-Communism. What I object to is that we do not stress the opposition between the new and the old mechanism sufficiently although the transition under Lenin proved that it is often precisely the "shock" that has the effect of shaking up the masses and of directing them towards the new tasks.

—But is today's situation analogous with the turning point in 1921? In the last ten years a considerable number of measures were taken in the organisation of the economy in relation to which the new economic mechanism is not a change but a continuation and a broadening, even though to tell the truth a broadening that cuts right down to essentials.

—This may be so in certain economic matters. I do not claim to be a

practising economist. I think the "shock" necessary so that we should be able to mobilize the people for what is to come, and in my view this mobilization is necessary. When speaking of "shock" I do not mean the shaking of the regime. Lenin did not allege either that we were finished with socialism when we introduced the NEP. On the contrary, he said that after an inevitable bad step which had been forced upon us, we should take a step back and then take the right step forward. What I am looking for here is a method which will make it possible to mobilize millions much more intensively to help put the mechanism into practice. This is why I mentioned this Leninist example, since we wish the masses to act in fact and not only formally. I am speaking in this Leninist sense when I say that such a feeling of a definitive change is needed to put the mechanism into practice.

—You mentioned that the Twentieth Congress represented a turning point. Is a further turning point necessary, following that of the Twentieth Congress?

—That has to be broadened. Looked at dialectically a change does not have to take place in a single day. A turning point may be a whole era. Thus the development of man as such and the beginning of what we think of as work was a crucial turning point and yet it lasted tens or hundreds of thousands of years. It was undoubtedly work that turned man into man. It is equally certain that it took ten thousand or a hundred thousand years for work to be established generally as a way of life.

—In recent years the economic planning mechanism was reformed in several socialist countries, now the new economical mechanism is being introduced in Hungary too. Is this not proof that the turning point as a process is in progress?

—Certain steps forward have been taken. This is true beyond doubt. We are in the turn, but we cannot say that the turn has been completed. I think it necessary that people should be made conscious of the change in methods rather than that attempts should be made to obscure the change, and we still often meet with such attempts.

—You are saying that it is not right to promise "better to replace good," and are also saying that the masses have to be activated, to be mobilized for the mechanism. But we also meet the phenomenon of people saying that "what we have now is quite good." Not good, but "quite good." And they are afraid that in one respect or another they will be in a more difficult position; in other words they are afraid of losing what has already been achieved. So we have to argue that the good will become better.

—Nobody denies that there have been certain improvements in the economy. I do not argue about these things, I consider them self-evident. But I assert that if people are still afraid of the introduction of the new mechanism, this shows that they do not understand what the mechanism actually means for them; and if they do not understand it, then this is our fault.

—If we argue in an evolutionary way, then we have to keep in mind that not only lack of trust—which you rightly mention—was the reason for over-centralisation, but the first stage of industrialisation took place, then the period of collectivization, in other words a period in which great, central decisions were required. This of course increased the weight of the central apparatus, but economic development has overtaken this period and now this modern economy can no longer be satisfactorily directed by the old centralized apparatus. So one has to change over to an economy which is centralized in a different way, which is elastic and to a large extent decentralized. This may be considered an organic process.

—This would be correct if we dealt here purely with a question of technology or business administration, and not something vastly more important. The emphasis on evolution alone necessarily entails the suppression of the principles involved in the change. Do not misunderstand me, I am not saying that everything has to be changed by tomorrow, but I do believe that if we do not fight resolutely and tenaciously for the change then things will not be changed over the years either. The young Hegel produced the following witty paradox: "If we wish to *change* something, then *something* has to be changed." I am fighting so that the superstructure will be changed as soon as possible. The clearer the masses see what it is all about, the sooner they will progress beyond the old.

—Even if there are differences of approach between us, we think that we agree in fundamentals. So let us pass on to the next question. You have been fighting and arguing for several decades for the recognition of the social responsibility of the arts. What do you consider the essence of this responsibility today?

—The real importance of literature is that it reveals what the great and deep human problems are within any given period. This becoming conscious of the problems thanks to the arts then, properly transmitted, acts on the historical process itself. I do not think it mere chance that Marx re-read the Greek tragedies every year and that he knew long passages of Shakespeare by heart. This was not mere love of literature. I am convinced that he learned a great deal from them. He learned to understand conflicts

in history and periods of transition as not merely the sum total of individual chess-moves, but to see the way they were connected, in other words to see them in their proper context.

—Soviet writing began in full consciousness of this role of literature. Gorky's great works such as *The Life of Klim Samgin*, *The Nineteen* by Fadieiev, Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Makarenko's pedagogic novels are all descriptions of those great human problems which arose before 1917 and in the Soviet Union after 1917, and because of 1917. The historic greatness of the 1917 revolution is clearly reflected in such works. In Hungary, I believe Déry's novel *Felelet* (The Answer) to have been the most serious socialist attempt to depict in literature such great human problems after the liberation. Do not forget that originally Révai said at a Congress of the Writers' Federation that in Bálint Köpe Déry had created a typical young worker of the Horthy-period. Révai meant this as praise at the time. The great debate around the second volume was due to the fact that in developing this character Déry had shown that sort of honest, leftist, even revolutionary type of worker who only joined the Communist Party in 1945. Déry used Bálint Köpe's psychology to explain this. That the Bálint Köpes had not joined the Communist Party had its reasons within the movement too. Instead of attacking the novel, the proper conclusions should have been drawn from it.

—I have published an article on Solzhenitzin. In this article I raised the problem that it was impossible to write a true novel about contemporary life in any socialist country which did not contain an attempt to come to terms with the facts of Stalin's period. Because, with the exception of those who are only twenty today all of us lived through that era. How we live today, how we talk or feel, depends on the way we reacted and still react to those times. We should all do our best to bring about such literature and help its development. László Benjámin's last two volumes are an example that cannot be overlooked when such literature is considered. The personality of a convinced revolutionary who saw and lived though evil and in spite of all this evil remained a fighter for socialism, is clearly reflected in them. This is a man of our times. It is the purpose of literature to depict a wide variety of characters. I am optimistic concerning further evolution, but I think it necessary that this type of literature and not that emphasising current topical problems should be thought of as central. You should think of what Brecht represents today the world over; Brecht has success in socialist and non-socialist countries, but primarily with *Mother Courage*, *The Good Woman of Szechuan* etc., i.e. with those plays in which he showed the place of contemporary man in world history. It is

these important human problems that literature has to "excavate" and if it succeeds in doing that, then a new revival of literature will follow, like that of Soviet Literature in the twenties.

—You wrote in your Aesthetics that an art taking its themes from that day's news can be classical and mentioned among others Petőfi and Mayakovski. Do these examples have validity today?

—I do not doubt this. But I am asserting that literature cannot be reduced to this. This aspect was far less present in Arany than in Petőfi. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was strong in Shelley, who was a great admirer of Keats, in whose work it was altogether absent and yet Keats' odes are still topical today. In other words, I do not deny this possibility at all, but what I am protesting against is that in Hungary there was, and with certain persons there still is an inclination to declare that the only possible attitude for a communist writer is that of Petőfi.

—You wrote in one of your articles that you considered the elaboration of the complex described as the personality cult the central task of literature. If the central problem is coming to grips with what we have inherited from that period, this means that in essence we have not yet overcome it.

—In my opinion, this is *one* of the important central problems of our time. I would consider it a great achievement if a Hungarian writer wrote the life of József Révai, which I believe to have been a life full of tragic conflicts. I know a large number of communists who had been distinguished, selfless revolutionaries at the beginning of the twenties; they belonged to the category of which Imre Sallai* was later taken to be a typical representative and who later turned against what they had fought for. I also know some who were transformed into dogmatic bureaucrats. The telling of this is indeed one of the central themes of our times. The expression "central themes" may not be quite fortunate because the relationship of man and society to each other is so involved that one cannot say that only one central question exists. One can talk only of an entire complex of central questions. This is the complex which I mean by the word *Révai-tragedy;* and this is indeed one of the most important and most central questions if one wants to understand contemporary man.

—You emphasised only the negative aspects of the period in question. In the last resort, the generation which grew up in Stalin's time won the greatest battles

* Imre Sallai (1897–1932) a leading member of the illegal Hungarian Communist Party was court-martialled and executed under the Horthy regime in 1932.

of the world war and defeated fascism. And the generation which grew up after the liberation, carried out the socialist revolution in Hungary.

—May I use the following formulation: in my view even the worst socialism is better than the best capitalism. I am deeply convinced of this, and lived through those times with this conviction. Since socialism was being built then too, those times too had their positive side. I have never doubted this. In the Soviet Union a modern industry was created which made resistance to Hitler possible. I do not deny this positive side, but now we are, for instance, speaking of literature, and here we cannot dodge the fact that a lot of people, although full of good intentions, got into a most involved situation which distorted their human condition and talent. Without these distortions today's reality cannot be shown as reality. Human evolution is extraordinarily complicated. And literature should not be allowed to obscure its negative sides, because it is exactly literature that can show what forces of resistance, what reserves that can yet be mobilized are in man's psyche and morality, and on the other hand, what are the stumbling blocks that may determine the development of even the most outstanding of men. And not only of the outstanding ones. Thus in my opinion András Kovács' film *Cold Days* is outstanding because it shows on a high artistic level the human problem how average everyday people turned into fascist beasts. The understanding and explanation of the great human problems of a period, this is the real vocation of literature, of all the arts.

—We should like to ask you a last question. What is your opinion of the standing of Marxism in the world today?

—Recently an extraordinarily favourable situation for us has developed in this respect. When the menace of war was reduced—at least to a certain extent—and a kind of thaw occurred in the cold war, the ideologies which had been developed in connection with the 1945 victory without exception reached a state of crisis in the most important capitalist countries. This is most clearly visible in America, where the dream of post-1945 American political and ideological hegemony, the illusions concerning the American way of life have collapsed. It is mainly the Vietnam war and the tremendous difficulties associated with the integration of Negros that show that the American ideology formulated in 1945 has just about gone bankrupt. The view that with the help of the Commonwealth Britain could remain a world power, even if of the second rank was typical of the situation there after 1945. In recent years this ideology too has been in a state of collapse. The endeavours of defeated German imperialism to "undo" the events of

the world war using the nuclear weapons they desire to exercise pressure is also about to fail.

—On the other hand, in this part of the world the situation has arisen of which we spoke in connection with the first question. One of the most important consequences of this is that interest in Marxism and a positive attitude towards Marxism are increasingly spreading in the West. In 1945 Marxism was treated as an obsolete nineteenth century ideology but today it is interesting to note that Marxism is on the advance. Think only of the stand Sartre took in 1945 and the stand he is taking today, twenty years later. Or we may remember that in the twenties the Freudians still set out from the premise that Marx needs to be supported by Freudian psychology, today their ambition is to put Freudianism back on its feet with the help of Marxism. In one word, a great interest in Marxism is developing and this offers us great perspectives. In the twenties the then still starving and ravaged Russia excercised a tremendous influence on Western intellectuals. We are now at a point where it is up to us to see to it that our influence on the West should grow fast. We are in a favourable position and we must not let it down. We don't even know how deeply we could—supposing that our various art forms were of a sufficiently high standard—influence the development of the capitalist world, from philosophy to literature and to music. Let me remind you here of the example of Bartók, whose influence is growing all the time, as against the extreme modernists whose negative criticism tried to disparage him. There would be no barrier to our literature, our film, our philosophy having a similar influence—if only we resolutely broke with dogmatism.

—A world view is needed which really appeals to the people. All the elements of such a world view are present in Marxism, we have to dig them out and use them, that's all.

—This exchange of views has proven to us that in spite of some differences, we may speak of an identity of views in fundamental questions.

—In many respects. Where differences have occurred, I should like to stress that as philosopher I deem it my duty to express my own views resolutely. So much the better, if they lead to discussion.

—We agree with this in every way. Principles cannot be clarified without an open exchange of views. Permit us to thank you for this conversation and also to wish you continuing good health and further successful work.

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The interview first appeared in the 1967 Christmas number of *Népszabadság*.

DIALOGUE AND DEBATE

LAJOS MARÓTI

McLUHAN'S MEDIA: THE CHANNELS OF UNDERSTANDING AND MISUNDERSTANDING TECHNOLOGY

Only now that I am successively reading the books by Marshall McLuhan published in recent years do I understand the intensity of the success and rejection with which these works have been received, as manifested, on the one hand, in the enormous size of their editions and, on the other, in the fierce critical attacks on their author. Apparently both, success and criticism alike, are the deserved due of the ideas put forth by the professor of English literature at the University of Toronto, and so I myself, in voicing these two—seemingly contradictory yet truly complementary—facts am paying his system of ideas the attention it merits.

Roads and Paper Routes; Clothing; Housing; Money; Clocks; The Print; Wheel, Bicycle, and Airplane; The Photograph; Press; Motorcar; Games; Telegraph; Radio; Television; Weapons; Automation—a glance at some of the chapter headings and a dip here and there into *Understanding Media* suffice to show that here is a work on cultural theory that undertakes to reveal the effect exerted by the ever more total technicization of our epoch in shaping man's ways of living and patterns of thought.

The theme, in these our days, is highly topical. Not as if quite a number of works on this subject had not been written in the past, from Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* in the last century to *Der Mensch und die Technik* by the pessimistic pre-fascist Oswald Spengler, who acquired fame by prophesying the *Decline of the West* and who also devoted a special little volume to the, in his opinion sinister, advance of mechanistic civilization. And just as in the far-off and in the not so distant past, there is, today as well, no lack of thinkers who are concerned over the effects of technicization on our ways of living and our thought patterns, and their number is bound to increase with the continued advance of this process. At the same time it is by no means accidental that in Hungary, for instance, this issue has not yet aroused the attention of sociologists, or at best merely to a very small degree, despite the fact that a political programme that does not include a demand for the "most up-to-date technique," either as postulate or as objective, is indeed a rarity.

Investigations touching upon the interaction between "technique" and "man" usually suffer from a common disease: their conclusions only rarely go beyond a reiteration of the generalities contained in the political programmes mentioned above; at best they point out some partial phenomenon which, though interesting and perhaps even valid in itself, is usually seized upon in an isolated and purely intuitive manner. This explains the excitement with which one turns to McLuhan's books: for he is not just an *homme des lettres* but at the same time also Director of the University of Toronto's Centre for Culture and Technology, an institution which "investigates the psychic and

social consequences of technological media." Of McLuhan one consequently expects expert and scientific, i.e., systematic and carefully proved, information on the whole range of problems investigated by him, after so much eyewash, so many generalities and theories hanging in thin air.

It must be admitted at once that, for the time being, these expectations meet with disappointment. *Understanding Media*, though excellently written philosophizing on culture, replete with witticisms, fails in what might be expected above all else: in scientific severity. This applies even more to the illustrated booklet *The Medium Is the Massage*, which, of course, is only natural, since its aim is to popularize the author's views. (Here I shall not deal separately with *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, partly because it appeared comparatively long ago, partly because its fundamental theses have been woven into the system of ideas outlined in *Understanding Media*.) Up to now McLuhan has been engaged in building theories rather than proving them; in presenting analogies rather than exact formulae; in improvisations that rely on his fantasy rather than upon tests and factual assessments. His method of approaching issues thus involuntarily brings Spengler and Toynbee to mind: "Compared with Mr. McLuhan, Spengler is cautious and Toynbee positively pedantic," said Dwight MacDonald in the *International Herald Tribune* (quoted on the cover of *Understanding Media*); and, though exaggerated, there may be something to this remark.

Moreover, it is not just by chance that, at the PEN Congress of 1966, held in New York—where McLuhan, expounding his system of ideas with special emphasis on its literary aspects, voiced the opinion that in the course of technical progress literature, as an art, will lose its justification for existence, together with the written word—one of the members* of the Hungarian PEN delegation rejected McLuhan's prognosis by drawing a parallel to the experience offered by Spengler's prophecies. In the concluding part of this essay I shall revert, if not to the prospective development of literature and of the writer's personality in general, at least to a particular aspect of the interesting hypothesis regarding the downfall of the *Gutenberg Galaxy*.

Disregarding other essential differences, there is one aspect that decisively delimits the structure of McLuhan's ideas from the culture-philosophical castles in the air built upon historical schemes. Central to his thought system is the "medium," a concept that is akin not so much to the abstractions of the moral and social sciences as to those of the natural sciences and can be anchored down more firmly (or so it seems) than such essentially sterile metaphors as "the life and death of the cultural circle." The concept of "medium," even if not precise as used by McLuhan, can, nevertheless, be made so.

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McLuhan's starting thesis is: "Media, by altering the environment, evoke in us unique ratios of sense perceptions. The extension of any one sense alters the way we think and act—the way we perceive the world. When these ratios change, MEN CHANGE!" (*The Medium Is the Massage*, p. 41.) No matter how obvious the truth of this thesis, it is essential to emphasize it, for—paradoxical though this seems—a goodly part of our contemporaries, including those engaged in social science, are simply unwilling to take note of the fact that they would be unable to take a single step, to exist, to breathe, without our present technical equipment.

Yet what does the term "media" as used in this thesis mean? "All media are extensions of some human faculty—psychic or physical. The wheel is an extension of the foot, the book is an extension of the eye, clothing, an extension of the skin, electric circuitry, an extension of the central ner-

* See Iván Boldizsár: "The Writer and the Dinosaur." *The N.H.Q.*, No. 24, p. 16.

vous system." (*The Medium Is the Massage*, pp. 26–40.)

That the "medium" is an extension of some human faculty tells us precious little. The next sentence is more of a metaphor than a definition and thus can be attacked in its details: the wheel, for instance, if not placed under a vehicle but inside, say, a machine tool as one of its structural elements, can by no means be considered "an extension of the foot." Nevertheless, the statement is essentially unambiguous: by "extension" (i.e., "medium") we are to understand technical facts; wheels, tools, clothing, dwellings, electrical circuitry—all these are "media." And since, to follow up this train of thought, wheel and electric circuitry, in their physical reality, are no more and no less than wheel and electric circuitry, the "theory of media"—let us call it "mediumness"—in a sense places all these means under one hat. If I understand McLuhan correctly, the wheel, the motorcar, the telephone and the digital computer are "media" insofar as they react upon man's individual and social thought patterns.

Only, are we the wiser for it? Unless we define the operative mechanism of this mediumness, we have merely found a new name for the as yet unknown essence of a known phenomenon. What, then, does the mediumness of technical means consist of? Apart from occasional animadversions, McLuhan takes care not to get entangled in generalities, lest he gather live coal upon his own head: he considers the issue settled by the assumption that his books, in the very act of disclosing the natural history of the media, also demonstrate the essence of mediumness. Two constituent elements may be definitely recognized, however.

First: the medium does not exert its particular, i.e., medium-like effect through its concrete content. "Indeed, it is only too typical that the content of any medium blinds us to the character of the medium." (*Understanding Media*, p. 9.) An accurate and important observation is made: the effect of technical means upon man's ways of living and patterns of thought is not primarily determined by the nature of the "information" they communicate (the less so since many of them are not carriers of information in the narrow sense of the word). That the telephone, for instance, changes our relations to the world, to each other and to ourselves hinges (at least, in general) not on the opinions exchanged in the course of telephone conversations but on the novelty of this form of contact.

So now we have an inkling of what mediumness is *not*. What, then, is it really? McLuhan answers with one of those compact and aphoristic definitions so frequent with him: "The Medium is the Message." Let us confess it manfully: this is a disturbing turn. What are we to understand by "message"? How can this term be linked with technical devices that do not serve the purpose of telecommunication but are psychic or physical "extensions" of man in the same way as television or the telephone? To go no further: what is the "news content" and, through it the ability to communicate or, in general, to connect implicit in a wedge or a two-armed lever (both of them, beyond doubt, representing physical "extensions" of man, i.e., media)? The abstract "medium" and the definition "The Medium is the Message"—seemingly adequate concepts for describing and studying the *sui generis* reactions of technique as long as it is confined to the storing, communicating and processing of information—become clumsy and forced once we seek to generalize; moreover, such generalization is inconceivable without a more profound analysis of the concept. McLuhan, however, skips over such analysis and accepts, to an unjustifiable degree, the conceptual apparatus applied by him as self-evident. True, his text contains attempts at generalization such as: "For the message of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs." (*Understanding Media*, p. 8.) This, however, amounts

to the same tautology, the same method of "introducing at best a new name" I have already referred to.

In brief, McLuhan's concept of "medium" and his definition "The Medium is the Message" need to be further evolved; they will be utilizable in describing the phenomena examined by him only if and when he supplements them with parameters suitable for a concrete characterization of interrelations. To my mind McLuhan's conceptual system might serve this purpose to the extent that we approach it from the theory of information. This is essentially his own approach, and I regard this as a lucky starting point. McLuhan correctly says: "As automation takes hold, it becomes obvious that *information* is the crucial commodity, and that solid products are merely incidental to information movement." In the technique of processing, storing, and communicating information the "medium" has a concrete, tangible significance and function: it establishes a connection between man and man, man and the world. Here it is true that technique reacts upon man's way of life, his nervous system and, in the end, his thinking not through the content, but through the very nature of the "message" or, if you prefer, through the quantity and quality of the connections established by it. At the same time, the quality of these "connections" (and here we may disregard telecommunication, since, e.g., the wedge or the lever, though not communicating any "information," does establish a connection between man and the world, man and man), the degree of their closeness qualifies the medium; in that case the medium might even be described mathematically.

I have dealt at some length with the basic concepts of McLuhan's system of ideas so as to show that his abstractions, at least at the present level of their development, do not meet the bill as regards profound and thorough critical analysis. It is important to emphasize this, because one of the secrets of McLuhan's extraordinary success appears to be that the system of concepts and the terminology applied by him appear so obvious to the general public that the latter feels no need to tackle the task of taking real possession of them. Everything that follows then seems to be consistent; and since McLuhan sets in motion his own sparkling terminology with a juggler's skill in the alternating light of logic and intuition, there is nothing left for the hypnotized viewer but to accept his conclusions.

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Of course, the value of any conceptual abstraction depends on how much it succeeds in apprehending and rendering understandable the range of phenomena it pertains to. Now what do McLuhan's media produce in this respect? Definitely much less than implied by what has been gathered in his books: for the incomparably rich collection of materials and ideas in *Understanding Media* is rather a thesaurus of examples for a future "science of media" than a coherent system of interrelations, proved in all its details and elucidating its phenomena within a strict conceptual frame. McLuhan touches upon the techniques or technical achievements recognized as most essential, pointing out the interrelations existing between them and the various aspects of modern life. There is no lack here, either of observations, witticisms and theories, or—to tell the truth—of matters contestable; in any case, there is usually something worth thinking about.

Undoubtedly it is, in the first instance, the definitions that call for argument. McLuhan writes excellently: interestingly, wittily, in an original manner. If I may construct a theory of my own: he frequently presents himself as a creative writer rather than as a thinker—a writer who, for the sake of a striking description, a witty aphorism or turn of speech does not hesitate to abandon his exposition to ambiguity, equivocation and vulnerability. At times, it is true, a witty definition effectively serves to elucidate the meaning and to further understand-

ing. Thus his basic axiom, "The Medium is the Message," is distorted, in the title of his popular book, to "The Medium is the Massage": here he hits the bull's eye, for this pun enables him to pinpoint one of the essential features of the process of "mediumizing" the technical means: namely, that the constantly repetitive techniques "condition" man by "massaging" their secondary yet formative influence into man, into society.

Elsewhere, however, it is not the witticism that serves the meaning but the meaning that serves the witticism: even in the case of remarks that today are already regarded as commonplace, McLuhan manages to evoke dissent in the thoughtful reader. It is a well-known fact, for instance, that, due to the increasing speed of transportation means, there has been a gradual widening of man's immediate environment. At the same time, the expansion of telecommunication, based on the use of electromagnetic waves of light velocity, has led to an extension of this "field" over the entire globe. McLuhan, in his *Understanding Media* (p. 943), sums this up as follows: "With instant electric technology the globe itself can never again be more than a village..." Yes and no! His assertion is true if we consider the fact that everybody is everybody else's neighbour as the basic feature of village existence: in that case the globe is really one big village. Only, is this really the basic feature of village life as against town life? And can the way of life developing on this dwarfed globe be identified with what we call "country life"? Evidently, McLuhan himself does not think so. For, essentially, it would contradict his basically correct observation: "Electric speeds create centers everywhere. Margins cease to exist on this planet." (*Ibid.*, p. 91.)

Of course, in most cases the inadequacy of the formulation indicates the slipshod nature of the idea. McLuhan, like practically any expert who studies a given process with the aid of a single parameter picked at random (in the present case the process is history, the parameter the technical repercussions), tends to one-sidedness, to overstressing the role of the chosen parameter, to disregarding other factors. "Socially, the typographic extension of man brought in nationalism, industrialism..." etc. (*Ibid.*, p. 172.) Nobody contests McLuhan's view that, in Europe, for instance, the awakening lingual awareness played a direct and decisive part in the development of nationalism; and this awareness was strengthened by printing which ensured a wide publicity for literature in the vernacular (and not in Latin). But anybody who, besides and beyond the linguistic and romantic factors, fails to see the outstanding role of the social and economic factors in the shaping of nationalism, has a blind spot in his mental eye. (For instance, which is the more important factor in the rise of contemporary Arab nationalism: the Arab-language press* and radio, inciting and stoking up this nationalism with amazing efficacity—or, perhaps, Arabian oil?) The developmental endeavours and prospects of the modern age can and must be studied from the viewpoint of technical media, and there is no doubt that this research will reveal extremely significant aspects of present—and even more so of future—life patterns. But the researcher will definitely arrive at a dead-end if he forgets that technical media represent merely one of the factors shaping history and mankind and that there are numerous other factors.

Nevertheless, it is not this "professional one-sidedness" that the unbiased observer finds most objectionable in McLuhan's thinking but, on the contrary, the very lack of professional one-sidedness, this time of a desirable kind, i.e., that of scientific severity. The fireworks of witty inspirations with which McLuhan thinks he can reveal the interrelations between things and phenomena are highly amusing and frequently provide ample food for thought, yet much of the

* See p. 215 of *Understanding Media:* "Unity of the Arab-speaking world can only come by the press."

time they are far from convincing. We live in an age where even the wittiest hypothesis remains unappreciated if it is not tested against reality; and in the range of topics examined by McLuhan such proof is eminently feasible by way of tests and test-systems, surveys and statistical analyses. It is no mere chance that the most convincing chapter in *Understanding Media* is the one (dealing with television) which, among others, includes an interesting description of the test carried out among university students in proof of McLuhan's thesis that among lectures, printed matter, radio and television, the latter is the most effective medium for communicating knowledge. This type of argument, unfortunately, is conspicuous by its absence in most of McLuhan's system of thought. (Not to mention the fact that even in the above instance a stricter scientific posture would call for details regarding the exact nature of the test, proof of reproduceability, the results of repeated experiments, the recording and identifying of statistical distribution, the proper indications as to significance and dispersion, etc.) The scarcity of this kind of argumentation in McLuhan's works indicates that his way of thinking is alien to the essence of the technical media—so far this is the greatest contradiction within his system of ideas. Here, he himself is inevitably the main loser: the great mass of unproved hypotheses, frequently spanning too big a gulf, give the impression of flippancy. At times a fantasy freed from the rigid counter-proof of reality induces the author to talk nonsense. For example:

"The typewriter, with regard to the poet or novelist, comes very close to the promise of electronic music, insofar as it compresses or unifies the various jobs of poetic composition and publication." (*Understanding Media*, p. 264.)

This sentence, if seriously meant, shows that McLuhan, the media-researcher, misinterprets the technical function of the typewriter just as—and this is even more surprising—McLuhan, the man of letters, misunderstands the essence of the writer's creative process (whereas the reference to electronic music indicates that he is not sufficiently familiar with the pertinent experiments). For instance, it is not essential to a poet's creative work that he actually write down the verse and publish it in print. Mihály Babits, one of Hungary's most prominent twentieth-century lyricists, "wrote" one of his longest and most difficult poems, the *Danaïdes*, in his head, a poem rich in virtuosity of form and poetic content alike, and he recited it on numerous occasions before finally putting it on paper. Publication of a completed work is in reality the special task of editor, printer and bookseller, and certain phases of this may really be "modellized" with the typewriter. Nor is it essential for the poet's creative work to recite something in rhythmical and rhymed lines. (A verse in prose is also a verse; besides, even the logarithmic table could be put in verse, in arbitrary rhythm, rhymed or non-rhymed; it could also be written down, even with a typewriter—yet the result would still not be a work of poetry.) The essence of the poet's creative process is to offer a special and suggestive vision of the "world" by evolving and utilizing a system of specific associations. As a practising poet and man of *belles-lettres*, I am perfectly aware of the fact that this creative process too involves numerous "internal mechanisms" and can thus in some respects be modellized with mechanical means. Alas, not with a typewriter, but with certain digital computers capable of reproducing certain processes of selection and association. Such computers, of course, will never compose a poem of immanent, aesthetic value but, by reproducing these processes, may contribute a lot toward understanding certain phases of the poet's creative work. (Note that the works of electronic music, e.g., the "Illiac suite," were not produced on a typewriter but on electronic computers.)

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McLuhans most important hypothesis embraces the present and future development of human civilization and culture. Its grandiose character and its endeavour to seize the "whole" make it, beyond doubt, the most captivating constituent of the author's system of ideas; it is to this, above all, that the author owes his world fame.

McLuhan correctly (even if sometimes in an exaggerated way) ascribes vast significance to technical progress in the transforming of man and society. However, from among the conglomeration of techniques, he awards a special place to the technique of the written and printed word, on the one hand, and to that of electric circuits, on the other. The former, in his opinion, all but determined mankind's development in the past and, consequently, its present status. (Thus he traces nearly everything to phonetic writing and printing, from Euclid's space-perception and the infinitesimal calculus to the differences in clothing between American and Russian women—puzzling, argument-provoking assertions, each and all.) The technique of electronic circuits, in turn, will, in his opinion, put an end to the era in the history of mankind that is marked by the monopoly of the alphabet and of printing technique: it will scrap the "Gutenberg Galaxy," do away with our linear and entirely visual perception (traceable to the technique of letter writing and printing), reinstate the ear as against the eye, and steer the "long-literate" society back towards the mentality of "tribal" society—signs of which, according to McLuhan, have already become manifest in the behaviour of teenagers. In brief: the spread and dominance of the technique of electric circuits will profoundly reshape many phenomena of our individual and social life, including our way of thinking and communicating.

"Our new electric technology that extends our senses and nerves in a global embrace has large implications for the future of language. Electric technology does not need words any more than the digital computer needs numbers. Electricity points the way to an extension of the process of consciousness itself, on a world scale, and without any verbalization whatever. Such a state of collective awareness may have been the preverbal condition of men. Language as the technology of human extension, whose powers of division and separation we know so well, may have been the 'Tower of Babel' by which men sought to scale the highest heavens. Today computers hold out the promise of a means of instant translation of any code or language into any other code or language. The computer, in short, promises by technology a Pentecostal condition of universal understanding and unity." (*Understanding Media*, p. 80.)

I am unable—if only for "technical" reasons—to analyse thoroughly this grandiose and daring hypothesis with its ultimate glorious vision. Here again we would have to start with a clarification of fundamental concepts. For even if we agree—and my own dim notions incline me to accept this thesis—that mankind is moving toward "retribalization" (of which the behaviour of teenagers, especially due to the lack of any statistical background, provides no proof any more than the fashion of miniskirts justifies the conclusion that a few decades from now women will walk around nude from the waist down), sooner or later I would have to raise the question as to what long-literate society means and what makes it so. According to McLuhan the West, especially America, is long-literate, whereas the Russians—being "less permeated with the pattern of literate culture than Americans"—are less so; an accompanying hypothesis, equally unconfirmed, is that the Russians are more "oral" whereas the Americans are more "visual." McLuhan's noble humanism and broad outlook protect him from any stupid "Western" superciliousness; all the more are we justified in asking: what makes a people long-literate? The values of its classic literature? But then the works of Tolstoy, Chekhov and Dostoevsky are far more signifi-

cant, both in depth and in their effect upon world literature, than those of the American writers of their time, including even Poe or Whitman. Or do the historical antecedents of literacy determine how much a people is "permeated with the pattern of literate culture?" McLuhan's categorization is not valid in this case either. Or is it rather the result of the present status of the literary component in social education? In that case the categorization and comparison should be supported numerically and by indices. Here I might add, parenthetically, that in Europe the Americans are by no means considered long-literate; while their urban and technical prominence is acknowledged, the average American is generally regarded as lacking in what is understood by "literary culture"—this, I admit, may be just as empty a prejudice as its opposite. The unclarified basic concepts take bitter revenge: since the author has not revealed whence and why the so-called Westerner is long-literate and the Russian less so, and since he is just as unable to prove that the former is more of a visual, the latter more of an oral type, all the suppositions erected by McLuhan on these concepts—as an explanation, for instance, of the disparate behaviour forms of Russians and Americans—merely succeed in provoking the smile of a doubting Thomas.

Leaving aside here the numerous and for the most part notable observations by which McLuhan links culture and civilization, human thought and perception, with literacy and printing, I should like to comment on some of the more distant conclusions his train of thoughts leads to. One can scarcely contest the truth of McLuhan's general observation that with the spreading of electronic means of telecommunication the significance of printing as a channel for communicating information has already been pushed somewhat into the background, a process that is likely to continue. But here, too, one-sidedness is bound to revenge itself no less than elsewhere. Bearing in mind the pace of technical progress and aware of technical achievements already vastly surpassing our imagination, it is not inconceivable, in principle, that the bit-codes of electronic equipment will some day become the common language of human communication. For the time being, however, there is as yet no adequate foundation for interpreting McLuhan's prophecy other than symbolically, nor are their sufficient grounds for us —in line with McLuhan—to consider books and printing as doomed to death. The present-day means of storing information, the various memory units, are incomparably less approachable than is the book: to "read" their contents we need an intermediary, whereas, in the case of the book, all we have to do is to open it. The book will thus be indispensable even when—let us unbridle our imagination—all library collections, all periodical and newspaper archives will be at our disposal in the form of magnetic drums and tapes, of ferrite rings in ferrite nets, and anybody wanting information merely needs to push a button, not to read but to hear what he is curious about. Provided, that is, he has the patience to wait it out. For, given the present storing technique, the growing amount of information supplied will be accompanied by a sharp increase in the time of access. "Why do you write? Can't you remember?"—such, according to McLuhan (*Ibid.*, p. 305), is the primitive counter-argument against writing. Let us agree with him, even if in a somewhat modified form: "I write because I *do not want* to remember." John von Neumann estimated the capacity of the human brain at 10^{20} bits*; though immense, this is a finite number, whereas the information to be stored, the substance of knowledge, is continuously growing in quantity, simultaneously with the ever more profound cognizance of the complexity of the world, so that soon we shall need our brain merely for noting where to find what. According to McLuhan, the book is "an extension of the eye," but

* Unit of information theory, also used as a unit of capacity in a storage device.

I have the feeling that, recently, it has rather become an extension of memory. In its former function it may really be pushed into the background by the appearance of new and more effective extensions of the eye; in the latter function, however, its advantages at present seem unsurpassable.

To illustrate the above let me make a few calculations. At home I have a library of some 1,000 books on a variety of topics and of greatly diverging levels, in Italian, French, English, Latin and, of course, mainly in Hungarian, from dictionaries and encyclopedias to works and compendia on the natural sciences, philosophy, etc., and naturally also including poetry collections and novels. These 1,000 books occupy not quite an entire wall of the room; and since I know fairly well where each of them is located, any book is accessible almost instantly; this applies also to the data looked for, whose place I alone know, without keeping the data themselves in my head. Here —in line with Professor Neumann's train of thought—is a short calculation of the information-storing capacity of this hand library of a thousand volumes.

Let us take the so-called "signature," the unit used in Hungarian publishing practice, since this best meets our purpose. One signature contains 40,000 letters (letter spaces); a book of 20 signatures (this would represent the average size in my library) amounts to $20 \times 40{,}000$ or 8×10^5 letter spaces. A single letter of the alphabet (one sign) equals 4.76 bits. The same value must obviously also be given to each letter space (bearing in mind, for instance, that in the printed text even an empty letter space has a meaning and thus communicates information). A book of 20 signatures consequently corresponds to $4.76 \times 8 \times 10^5 = 3.81 \times 10^6$ bits; and a thousand such books are, in principle, suitable for storing 3.81×10^9 bits. Now let us take an electronic computer in whose storing units 4,000,000 "words" of 16 decimal digits each can be placed, i.e., a total of 6.4×10^7 decimal digits (a year or two ago such a computer was still considered capacious and supermodern). The information theory value of one decimal digit is 3.32 bits; the entire storing capacity of our electronic equipment is therefore 2.13×10^8 bits, as compared to the 3.81×10^9 bits of my thousand-volume library. In plain English, this means that for storing the information material of these 1,000 books the memory units of 18 such large computers would be needed.* Anyone familiar with the cubature of the memory units of big electronic computers can now calculate the space they would require as compared to that needed for the hand library.

It may well be that the book, the printed text, as an "extension" of the eye, has been shoved into the background by technical progress and that this process will be further strengthened; nevertheless, in its competition with electronics, the book as an "extension" of the human memory still seems to be unconquerable. (Of course, one should add: given the present state of technical facilities, and assuming that this technique will continue to advance along the lines indicated by our current knowledge.)

It is similarly conceivable that the book will gradually disappear from among teaching aids as well. Experiments with living organisms of a low order show that "acquired knowledge"—as the equivalent of appropriately codified elements of a suitable system—may be obtained not only

* The 4.76 bits per letter used in estimating the information storage capacity of my library is based on the *a priori* assumption that each letter of the alphabet appears with equal frequency in every language and independent of the subject. This is an untenable assumption. According to data obtained through statistical analysis of texts, the information value per letter is 4.03 bits in the case of the English language. Use of the average value in the above example is justified by the linguistic, thematic, etc., heterogeneity of the library in question. In any case the difference is not important: at a value of 4.03 bits per letter, the number of computers required would simply be reduced from 18 to 15!

by way of "learning." And if knowledge really means that certain neuronal circuits within the brain are charged, then why might it not be imagined that, at a perhaps far-away yet foreseeable date, all the knowledge their ancestors had to acquire by cramming will be funnelled into the heads of the pupils by way of electrodes fixed onto their skulls? All this still belongs to the sphere of fantasy. And as long as a change of such vast dimensions does not take place, we have no adequate grounds—given the present technique of acquiring knowledge and other technical realities—for supposing that the book will lose its role in educational practice within a predictable future, though McLuhan may, of course, be right in asserting that certain elements of knowledge can be more effectively communicated to the student by television or radio than by book.

I should like, in conclusion, to emphasize my essential concurrence with McLuhan's previously quoted vision to the effect that the computer "promises by technology a Pentacostal condition of universal understanding and unity." It is a fact that mankind is being pushed in this direction by the progress of technical media—not so much on account of the "computer world tongue" as because the very existence of these media inevitably presents the alternatives of "together we laugh, together we weep." If mankind does not wish to commit suicide, the present stage of technical advance obliges it to create a "condition of universal understanding and unity," not the day after tomorrow or tomorrow, but today. It would, however, be naive in the extreme to think that all this will be achieved automatically by the techniques, in and by themselves. The unity of mankind is not a technical but primarily a social issue, whose satisfactory settlement can be furthered (or hampered) by the various techniques; they can even press for a settlement as a commanding necessity; but they cannot themselves solve the issue.

TAMÁS NYIRI

MATTER AND LIFE*

The concept of the natural-scientific world of today is characterized by its preference for unity and progress. Matter, life and spirit are held together by a unified history of progress. The vitalist explanation of life hardly fits into this picture. Vitalism attributes life to some non-material factor: life principle, life power, or the soul. Today natural science already considers this theory to be of mere historic significance. Yet, nearly without exception, Christian philosophers are still in favour of the vitalist theory. There is a sad misconception, obviously stemming from this, that the vitalist explanation is also the official standpoint of the Church. This erroneous public view which ought to have been dispelled a long time ago has become the source of countless inner conflicts, badly concealed resentments and unsatisfactory compromises.

We must point out in the first place that Christian dogma takes a neutral stand on this, since vitalism does not affect either faith or one's *Weltanschauung* in a direct way, and what is more the life principle of vitalism offends one of the strictest canons of the sciences: the rule of economy. In other words vitalism is superfluous and the phenomena of life can be explained without this life principle. Biology is an independent science even when removed from vitalism. We cannot agree with the mechanists who do not consider biology a basic science. We do not share their hopes that physics and

* The article first appeared in the Budapest Catholic monthly review *Vigilia*.

chemistry will one day be capable of answering all the questions raised by life.

We believe biology to be a basic science; we do not surreptitiously reintroduce vitalism through the back door. The material world forms a unity, within which there exists a difference between living and non-living matter in spite of this unity. This essential difference does not disrupt the unity of the material world because although there is a border between the living and the non-living it is no unbridgeable gulf.

The Icarus Legend of Biology

The rapid advance of natural sciences during the last hundred years has steadily narrowed the gap between living and non-living matter. On gaining knowledge of the more minute structure of matter it became clear that it is superfluous to speak of a life principle or life power. The most important arguments against vitalism have come with the progress of chemistry. These have been excellently summed up by H. Hofschneider ("Belebte und unbelebte Materie," *Orientierung* 28/1964).

Living and non-living matter is made up of the same chemical elements. Living matter contains mainly carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, phosphorus and sulphur. The chemical variability of living matter is made possible by the special behaviour of carbon. Contrary to other elements, carbon atoms enter into a chemical link with each other, forming carbon chains and carbon rings. It is to this behaviour that we owe the combinations of compounds characteristic of living matter. Carbonic compounds are the concern of organic chemistry which got its name at the time when it was still thought that such compounds were produced solely by living cells.

The new standpoint in regard to metabolism is also an argument against vitalism. In the process of metabolism the living cell absorbs nutritive matter from its surroundings. The matter absorbed in this way is partly decomposed, and the cell builds some of it into its own body with the help of the energy obtained from the act of decomposition. A well-known example of this is alcoholic fermentation. Yeast cells convert sugar into alcohol while gaining energy. For a long time it was thought that metabolism was confined to living cells. It was proved, however, that it does not depend on living cells but on the structure of the enzymes. Enzymes are giant protein molecules. Their structure is already so well-known that their synthetization is hampered only by a few technical difficulties.

The vitalists consider the living cell the non-divisible, smallest material unit of living matter. The cell consists of wall, nucleus and plasm. Its size is, apart from a few exceptions, one tenth to one hundredth of a millimetre. In the opinion of the vitalists the complex structure of the cell is separated from the very much simpler structure of non-living matter by an unbridgeable gulf. Recent discoveries, however, have proved that the transition between living and non-living matter is continuous. Microscopy and microbiology have demonstrated that life phenomena can be observed with bacteria, too. The order of magnitude of bacteria is between one hundredth and one thousandth of a millimetre. They do not possess the classic structure of cells and also frequently lack the cellular nucleus. Viruses pose even greater problems for the vitalists. The size of these parasites is between 1/10,000 and 1/100,000 mms, and they have but one single life phenomenon: reproduction. There is no metabolism, they proliferate solely in the living cell by reproducing themselves from its matter. The discovery of these partly-living entities can likewise hardly be reconciled with the non-material principle of life.

For a long time heredity was the most enigmatic process of life. Today its material bases have already been found. The genes discovered by Mendel, i.e. hereditary stigmata, are handed down unchanged from

generation to generation. The preliminary condition for this is that the genes make a perfect copy of themselves before being passed on. Since the discovery of desoxyribose nucleic acid (DNA) the material vehicle of the genes has been found. The self-reproducing ability of the DNA molecules became clear from the molecular structure of nucleic acid; so did the storing of genetic information and the converting of this information into visible hereditary properties. The identical reproduction of DNA as well as the chemical processes necessary for the conversion of information can also be produced in the test-tube. Thus an artificial system has already been created where the processes of building life do actually take place.

The physico-chemical explanation of life is still far from complete. We are still far from a physico-chemical interpretation of the development of the germ, and it is to embryonic evolution that the vitalists refer most frequently. H. Driesch removed essential parts from the embryos of echini and fish during the early stage of mitosis, yet the remaining part developed into a complete animal. And this occurred though he performed an experiment where he left only a single cell. The interesting phenomena of embryonic development can not be explained up to now in a chemico-physical way. But in spite of this the living principle is still superfluous. The rapid progress of chemistry has step by step demolished the strongholds of vitalism. If we consider the direction of the present advances in chemistry then the conclusions drawn from results achieved hitherto may be justifiably applied to the future: within a short time the assumption of a principle of life will be entirely superfluous.

Considerations of the theory of science also justify us in applying these chemical conclusions to the future. In mathematics the unknown quantity sought for is called 'x' until it is found. The empirical sciences designate the unknown truth they search for as "nature." When Galileo discovered the law he had sought he realized that the "nature" of free fall was continuous acceleration. Previous to his discovery he merely knew that free fall had an up to then unknown "nature." The phenomena of life are much more complex than the free fall. Nor is the science concerned with life satisfied with merely listing. It also searches for the "nature" of nutrition, reproduction, heredity etc. And from the accumulated knowledge of the phenomena of life its aim is to learn the "nature" of life itself. Instead of this "nature" the vitalist uses the word 'principle of life'. The 'principle of life' points to the same unknown entity as the "nature" of life, and in the same way needs explanation.

Mythical thinking is based upon imaginary similarity and imitation. Because of this coral was previously listed in the imaginary taxonomical category of litophytes ('stone plants'), and the starfish under zoophytes ('plant-animals'). Though the thinking of man originates in myths they soon impede it. A classic example of this is the Icarus legend. The legend implied that man could fly if he had wings, like a bird. We were, however, unable to solve the problem of man flying as long as the human mind thought in terms of imitation. Endeavour was crowned with success as soon as we realized the principle of its solution and understood the nature of the activity. The first aircraft consequently resembled anything but a bird. And it is only on account of secondary causes (speed etc.) that the most up-to-date aeroplanes have bird-like contours.

Vitalism is the Icarus legend of biology. The principle of life owes its history solely to external similarity based on illusion. Man experiences directly the close unity his mind forms with the matter of his body. Man's soul is embodied spirit, his body spiritualized matter. Matter and spirit together represent the living body of man. And the external similarity between the body of animals and that of man is a great temptation for us to endow animals also with a soul similar to that of man. Animals, again, are only one

step away from plants. Generalization is of course justified as similar things are naturally given a similar explanation, but from the imaginary similarity there follows a *false* generalization. Under this basis of explanation for example whales and dolphins could be counted as fish.

Vitalism disregards the fact that the difference between man and animal is greater than that between living and non-living matter. An unbridgeable gulf apparently yawns between living and non-living matter since animal resembles man more than a mineral resembles a plant. In actual fact one can find a greater difference between man and animal. This difference is so significant that it is already beginning to affect Christian faith. So it is all the more surprising that most Christian philosophers still follow vitalism, unjustifiably, since vitalism does not sufficiently explain the phenomena of human life. Thus it is pertinent to put the question; how can the spiritual character of our soul better explain our embryonic evolution, and better motivate it, than chemical laws already realized and understood?

We owe the historical importance of this question to vitalism, for the theory of the principle of life which could not be defined more closely, forced the biologists to do exact scientific research. The magnificent results of biology are due to this research. It is due to the Icarus legend that the idea of man flying did not fade away, while in biology we owe a similar debt to vitalism.

Biological Pattern

We have already mentioned that we cannot accept the mechanist explanation of life either, since there appears in life that something extra, that overplus which cannot be explained in terms of physics and chemistry. Only from the biological viewpoint is it possible to understand this overplus. Let us examine closer what this higher biological viewpoint really means.

Physics deals with motion; astronomy examines the interrelations of masses; quantum mechanics the interrelations of the various types of energy. Chemistry is based upon physics, and deals with elements and compounds. The first level of chemistry determines the elements on the basis of their position within the periodical system. The periodical system is a chemical interrelation recognized in the occurrence of particles which, by the way, from the quantum-mechanical viewpoint, is already a non-systematic occurrence. This higher, chemical order goes with physical particles and together with them it forms the elements. Chemical elements can be reduced to their physical particles in so far as they realize possibilities permitted from the quantum-mechanical viewpoint. However, from the laws of quantum-mechanics it cannot be concluded whether elements exist at all, and one cannot deduce how they come into being.

The second level of chemistry deals with compounds. The basis of compounds are the elements. Compounds can be understood from the higher viewpoint of molecular chemistry. This higher viewpoint is the order and interrelation of the elements already recognized, by the way, in a non-systematic occurrence. The periodical system knows only the atomic number and atomic weight of the elements. But in atomic numbers and weights we would have to look in vain for the pattern characteristic of the various elements. We understand the pattern which determines the elements within the compounds from the higher viewpoint of molecular chemistry.

Biology deals with cells, metabolism, reproduction and development. From the biological viewpoint the meaning of these expressions is that higher order and perceivable interrelation which we recognize in the —incidentally—already non-systematic occurrence of chemical compounds and processes. The pattern of the cells which regulates the chemical processes forming the basis of life can be understood only from a higher, biological viewpoint. Such a higher

biological viewpoint is the coding of hereditary stigmata: the chemical memorizing of genetic information may be the reason why DNA molecules have such a complicated structural formula.

It is just as impossible to deduce the biological pattern from the laws of compounds as it is impossible to deduce the latter from the laws of the periodical system. It is characteristic of the biological pattern that in the course of time this pattern, too, is modified within one and the same living organism. Following birth the former embryonic blood circulation is replaced by an independent circulation. Living organisms are not only born, they also grow, age and die. The biological pattern is far more independent of the compounds forming its base than the compounds are from elements, or the elements from particles. The pattern remains in spite of the fact that elements and compounds are continuously changing within the organism. Those computers which are capable of adjusting and copying themselves were built along the same design that models the biological pattern of life. The striking characteristic of biological patterns, however, is their specific difference. Their racial difference can be explained by the history of the development of living beings. Neither in physics nor in chemistry can we find anything to compare with this. Biology may be considered a science since the time it began to search for the interrelations and differences existing between all living forms, and explained them in that complex and comprehensive way which in a single word is expressed as evolution.

Evolution is the highest viewpoint of biology. Evolution, so much attacked and so much misunderstood, especially by the vitalists, makes it absolutely clear that the higher order of life cannot be deduced from physico-chemical laws. From among the innumerable examples available our choice fell on that tiny unicellular dweller of our freshwaters: the sun-animalcule. This spheroid, radially built animalcule possesses mostly a one-cell nucleus; its diameter is between one tenth and five tenths of a millimetre. At first it reproduces in the usual way, that is by cell-division. When the chromosome substance has copied itself the cellular plasm divides into two halves. After a certain time, however, the animalcule surrounds itself with a rather coarse integument. Immuring itself completely in the integument it now divides once more. The two brothers, originating from one body, cling closely to each other. And then comes an unexpected turn: the same process takes place with both brothers that otherwise occurs only in spermatozoa. In these two animalcules the chromosome substance halves itself just as in spermatozoa previous to their fecundation, so that after it the embryo which arises from the fusion of the two cells possesses a complete stock of chromosome. A similar thing takes place here too, despite the fact that these animalcules do not multiply in the form of zoogamy. After the halving of the chromosome substance the two animalcules coalesce, the hull cracks open, and out again steps one single individual. Then everything starts afresh.

Obviously the time will come when both physically and chemically we shall know much more about the peculiar behaviour of the sun-animalcule than we do today. We may rightly expect that electronic microscopy and molecular chemistry will reveal the physico-chemical processes which play a part in this behaviour. We can be sure of finding that chemical compound whose excitatory effect causes the protective hull to split open, and then the mechanism of the halving of the chromosomes will also become clear. Nor will the substances and processes stimulating the coalescing of the two cells remain for ever unknown. All this, and much more will be revealed simply because physico-chemical processes even in living matter, follow the laws of physics and chemistry. The higher order of life does not render the laws of physics and chemistry invalid. But in spite of the magnificent results we can expect

electronic microscopy and molecular chemistry will not be in a position to answer that simple question: why does only the sun-animalcule behave in such a way? why not another protozoon, too? Chemistry and physics will never be able to offer an answer to the question why this kind of chemical process takes place in the sun-animalcule, and that kind in the elephant? The answer lies in the racial differences belonging to the biological pattern of life. And these racial differences of the biological pattern cannot be explained either by chemistry or by merely descriptive natural history but solely by the highest viewpoint of biology: by evolution.

Within the single and interlinked kingdom of matter minerals, plants and animals represent various provinces. The difference between these provinces lies not in the energy or matter forming the basis of the electrons, atoms, compounds, plants and animals, but in the basic design or pattern of these electrons, atoms, plants and animals. This pattern differentiates between the particles and the field of energy, the atom and the particles, living organisms and elements and compounds, and between the various living species and each other. The pattern is essentially one of arranging in an order. The pattern is characterized, according to Norbert Wiener, the father of cybernetics, not so much by the nature of its elements but rather by their order.

Forms of Matter

There exists a close kinship between the Anglo-Saxon word "pattern" and the "form" of Aristotle. The pattern, the inner comprehensibility hidden in things and interrelations, was called "form" by Aristotle. Form in the philosophical sense does not mean outward shape but the inner settlement of the components. Form is a recognized comprehensible component in things and relations as opposed to the parts, which are only perceptible individually or all together. In spite of the fact that it is already more than two-thousand years old, "form" is still not an outdated term. No expensive laboratories and costly equipment are needed to recognize it since it is defined not by physical or chemical laws but by one of the activities of human cognition. We call form all that, and only that, which is recognized by way of insight. The definition of form refers directly not to reality but to the action of recognition by man. From this it follows that form belongs to the most general terms. But at the same time it is real and concrete. Every branch of science uses this kind of definition. If form were not real and concrete then science could not know reality. It would draw conclusions instead about an entirely imaginary world.

But we cannot learn what form is if we only understand the name of the thing or its relation to us. We shall obtain a complete knowledge of form if we understand the interrelations perfectly. Since Galileo we know that colours, warmth, sounds etc. may be ascribed not to the object but to man's subjectivity. Now if the electron, neutron or proton cannot be either red, green or blue, hard or soft, cold or warm, then it cannot be a wave or a corpuscle either. For the concepts of wave or corpuscle are, just as colours and sounds, the concepts of the observer, and not the interrelation between the electrons. These conceptions, however, serve one useful purpose; from them we can fathom the interrelations between the electrons. These relations are recognized by insight: i.e. these forms are expressed by the mathematical formulae of quantum mechanics. The form discovered in the mutual attraction of bodies is the "mass" of bodies in the physical sense of the word. The form discovered in the interrelations between elements is the atomic number. The pattern of metabolism is an organic form, the conditional reflex is psychic form. Even from these few examples it becomes clear that form does offend the canon of thrift. It is no mythical fabrication but the result of proper recognition; it is not an imaginary but a comprehended reality.

The only mystery is why the scientists whom we must generally consider rational men become indignant as soon as somebody uses the term "form" and uses it for the purpose of differentiating between insight and concept, not only theoretically but also practically, because we are convinced that reality can be recognized not by way of concept but by insight and understanding.

Up to now we have dealt with forms fathomed in their interrelations. Physical interrelations do exist between particles so that they possess a physical form. Elements have both a physical and a chemical form; organisms a physical, chemical and organic form; animals possess a physical, chemical, organic and psychic form. Apart from forms discovered in interrelations there is also an entirely different type of form. This latter is called central form. If we can discern unity, entirety and identity in different features then we have recognized a central form. Think of the metamorphosis of the amphibia. If we recognize that the tadpole and the frog, or the caterpillar and the butterfly are one and the same individual then the unity and identity found in these different external features is the central form of the amphibia or the butterflies. The central form thus ensures the unity of matter or living organisms. The unity of matter can be traced to the central form in spite of the fact that different features belong to it in space; the central form ensures that matter is a whole not only in space but also in time. It is formed from different features; the central form maintains the identity of matter despite the changes taking place within it. The central form is understood most easily in the changes, since the condition which makes change possible is always something permanent.

Nor can science exist without the central form, since the interrelations they search for can exist only between things. And one can only properly become acquainted with a thing by discovering its unity, entirety and identity. The forms of physics, chemistry, biology, etc. belong to the central form, and they determine it: physical forms determine the particles; physical and chemical forms the elements; physical, chemical and biological forms determine the living organisms. Physics, chemistry, biology and psychology all look for material interrelations. Consequently they get to the bottom of material forms. We must therefore also consider the central form that is defined by the forms of physics, chemistry, biology and psychology to be material. The situation becomes entirely different if, among the forms belonging to the central form, there is also a spiritual form such as human intelligence. When I say of man that he is an intelligent being then I define him by the intelligence belonging to the central form. From this it follows that man's central form must be considered spiritual, too, if once we have defined it by a spiritual form (human intelligence).

The vitalists err when they see no difference between material and spiritual forms. Because of this they confuse the central form of living beings with the soul or spirit. Form can be recognized solely by insight. Insight is a mental process. But what we work out and understand may be material, and not only spiritual. The root of confusion is the analogous meaning of the word "sensible." We rightly term the electrons, atoms, plants and animals sensible because of the order, law, and pattern recognized in them. But sensible man, who is capable of discerning the comprehensibility hidden in things is much more sensible. If we differentiate between "comprehensible" and "sensible" we shall avoid the confusion. All that is "merely comprehensible" is of material character. Spiritual is what is, over and above this also intelligent. We can simulate conditional reflexes by programming because these are material forms of the nervous system of man and animals. Because of this, nervous illnesses and neuroses can be treated with chemical preparations. Because of this St Thomas Aquinas could endow animals

with an ability similar to human thinking. On the other hand, animals are incapable of understanding and insight because this is a spiritual activity.

Our standpoint will become perfectly clear if we compare it with the various views. Like the mechanists we consider every insight offered to biology by physicists or chemists to be important. We are glad to receive every discovery such as the conditional reflex or the tropisms (changes of position taking place upon the effect of external stimuli) because these insights form part of the biological pattern of life. We do not, however, share the belief of the mechanists according to which reality consists solely of imaginable elements, in the end result of the extended bodies of Descartes. Perhaps today they no longer express the idea in that way, but nevertheless they still think along those lines. Otherwise why would they take their proof solely from the sphere of concepts and conceivable interrelations. Nor do we share the hope of the mechanists that the day will come when the laws of physics and chemistry will offer the answers to all questions of biology. The sole foundation of this hope is the delusion already mentioned that reality consists solely of conceivable elements and because of this the role played by patterns, forms and higher orders may be neglected.

We reject mechanism not because we want to reintroduce vitalism through the back door, especially since vitalism does not repudiate mechanism radically enough. The vitalists also declare that reality consists of conceivable elements, and add that in living beings also an inconceivable principle of life is present. But this principle of life is just as superfluous in biology as the concept of God in a mathematical formula. When, for example, we speak of forms then, according to our standpoint, not only living beings but also electrons, atoms, and compounds possess forms. With the exception of the human mind we consider every form material. By this we eliminate the gap that had opened up between living and non-living matter. On the other hand, we can draw a borderline between the living and the non-living with the help of forms. And in the same way that a borderline separates it also links together.

Contrary to the Aristotelians of the Renaissance and their late successors we accept that postulate of modern science that things and phenomena must be examined through their relations. Galileo was not understood by his opponents because, contrary to his insight, they related the sun not to the earth but to the human eye. Today the relations between objects and observer must no longer be confused with physics, chemistry, biology, and psychology.

Vitalism is rejected by dialectical materialism since it considers the assumption of a principle of life to be unscientific. But it knows of qualitative change, therefore it does not share the view of the mechanists, either. Consequently we stand close to the concept of dialectical materialism on this question. The difference between us results from the differing motivation of the common concept.

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Somebody remarked rather wittily that the Constitution of the Second Vatican Council on the "Church in the World of Today" was written on paper in which the names of Marx and Darwin could be read in the watermark. The Constitution invites the faithful to search for the common language which could serve as the basis of the dialogue between the church and the world. In our opinion the basis for a common language must be sought in the exact sciences. Before one can begin the dialogues, however, the question must be raised *intra muros* whether the Catholic congregation, philosophers and theologians have already acquired and accepted the respective major results of the exact sciences as well as the basic scientific postulates, or whether in the Catholic mind faith and science exist beside each other in a largely unsolved way. Our paper has sought a solution to this problem.

SURVEYS

IMRE VAJDA

THE DEVALUATION OF THE POUND

On the 18th November 1967 the British Government devalued the pound and thereby repeated the step that another Labour Government had been forced to take eighteen years earlier. In 1949, the government of Clement Attlee, when devaluing the pound was struggling against the economic consequences of World War II. Devaluations followed one another in a number of countries in Western Europe, American deliveries under the Marshall-Plan had not yet taken full effect; capitalism had not yet become stabilized. That devaluation had been more drastic than the present, the pound lost more than 30 per cent of its earlier value (only 14.5 per cent on this occasion), and even so for almost ten years its value could be maintained only by restrictive financial measures. At the end of 1958 the pound was made convertible to dollars or gold, for foreigners, but in at least half of the nine years that have since passed there has been a sterling crisis. The good years, when Macmillan the then Tory Prime Minister could print on this election posters: "You have never had it so good," coincided with the first period of the development of the Common Market, the extraordinarily fast expansion of world trade, later the large-scale increase in American export-prices and, for a time with the beginning dollar-crisis. The relative calm around the pound sterling was due to the increased purchasing capacity of its external markets and to the weakening of its main competitors due to domestic problems. But as soon as this extraordinarily favourable concurrence of external circumstances was no longer effective the pound found itself once again in a crisis.

The most conspicuous element of the crisis showed itself in the world market. Britain's share of world trade has dropped year after year, as if due to some irresistible force. In 1955 British exports provided a round 20% of all industrial products traded in world markets, by 1960 this share was reduced to 16 per cent and by 1966 to 13 per cent. Although the share of United States exports was also reduced, the drop was far smaller than the British one (from 24.5% to 19.5%); at the same time Western Germany, Italy and Japan increased their share. But while most of the American loss of ground—or maybe all of it—is only apparent, since American capital conquered markets under foreign—German, British and other—flags, and these gains were not reflected in American trade statistics, British capital investment has not been able to expand significantly abroad since World War II, on the contrary British capital has lost ground. British industry's loss of ground is incontestable, while that of the Americans is only apparent, the facts indicate the contrary.

The decline in Britain's position on the world market was not a matter of chance, but establishing the causes demands research on many levels. Undoubtedly the break-up

of the British Empire, the independence of former colonies and dominions, the end or loss of importance of trade preferences that had been enjoyed earlier, certainly all played their part. But the defence policies of British governments—there has not been much difference between Conservative and Labour governments on this subject—have also played their part by tying down a disproportionately large percentage of Britain's industrial and research capacity—approximately seven per cent of national income—and by the effect of the purchase of foreign armaments, as well as that of the maintainance of troops and bases abroad on the balance of payments. (In December 1966 the American Business Week reported that the British Government had placed a two billion dollar order with American aircraft factories for bombers and military transport planes.) The "draw" of America, the "brain drain" cannot be ignored either; many thousands of trained scientists, engineers, technicians and doctors migrate annually to the United States, which offers more attractive working conditions and higher incomes.

The central question though concerns the internal problems of British industry and its growth-capacity.

British industry was late in adapting itself to the changes that had occurred in the world economy. The White Book issued by the Government in 1952 described the lag pregnantly by stating that to redress the situation (a deficiency of £500 million stg. in the balance of payments) it would have been necessary to increase production for export of those goods which were saleable abroad and to save without hesitation on imports intended for home consumption, but the application of the remedies was impeded by the pressure of domestic demand weighing heavily on the engineering industry. (The discreet expression "domestic demand" also included armaments—the Korean war.) The White Book went on to say that at the same time world demand for textiles dropped heavily and foreign competition became more acute; this meant that Britain was unable to sell enough of the goods she was able to supply and was unable to produce enough of the goods which she could have sold.

This situation did not change under the 13 years' rule of the Tories either; during the entire period the growth of Britain's gross national product was slower than that of any of her competitors in or outside Europe; technological progress, the growth of the rate of productivity was the slowest; there was a lag in the level of investments and—as we have seen—of exports. The continuous reduction in the competitiveness of industry was also confirmed by the situation in the domestic market. An official report stated in 1965 that the fast increase in imports of machinery was mainly due to differences in quality, the imported machines were not cheaper than the British ones but more up-to-date. This lack of up-to-dateness obviously influenced the foreign buyer too, who in consequence did not buy the British product. Foreign buyers were obviously even more susceptible than domestic customers, since the local producer always has an advantage in the home market. But even this advantage was insufficient.

On entering into office, and even more clearly prior to that, in opposition, the Labour Party recognized the causes that led to the weakness of the pound. It recognized that the deficiency in the balance of payments was only a symptom, the illness lay deeper, only far reaching, thoroughly worked out policies could promise recovery. The modernization of industry took first place in its programme; but as the programme turned into a budget, and criticism into government policy, the original concept paled, conservative considerations prevailed, the long-range programme—which in the short period of its glory was christened the "national plan"—was pushed into the background by immediate, short-range compromise solutions. Finally the expectation of a miracle from entry into the Common Market, the birth

of new illusions as if the Common Market could automatically solve everything that the Government had been unable to deal with.

In the given circumstances, the devaluation of the pound may contribute only to a very small extent to the solution of Britain's basic financial problems, its effects will probably be short-lived. For a while—the long-awaited devaluation having occurred—the pressure on sterling will lessen—at the end of 1966 sterling balances and deposits of central banks and international institutions alone amounted to seven and a half billion pounds—two and a half times as much as total British gold and currency reserves—and the eight per cent bank rate may even attract short-term capital to Britain. It is further likely that since the increased imports of recent months included heavy purchases by importers wishing to cover themselves against the possibility of devaluation, i.e. the possibility that imports might become more expensive, imports will be reduced in the near future. Imports may also be limited by the reduction in domestic consumption, in internal demand, owing to the rise in the price of imported goods, and because deflation has sharply increased unemployment. Neither the reduction in imports nor banking operations will decide the issue. In Britain, where food and raw materials dominate in imports, lasting reduction of imports can only be achieved through a general drop in the standard of living with millions of unemployed and the closing down of considerable sections of industry.

Only a growth in the capacity to export goods which can be sold offers a solution. A reduction in the price of goods for sale—supposing that dearer imports in consequence of devaluation do not soon cancel out all its advantages—cannot compensate for the disadvantage of obsolence where such a disadvantage exists. And yet as we saw and know, saving certain most advanced industrial developments, the loss of export and even domestic markets by many branches of the British engineering industry is due to their obsolescent technology. Shipbuilding is a typical example—the unprecedented boom of the Japanese shipbuilding industry, and at the same time the threatening bankruptcy of British shipyards, which could be avoided at the last minute only by massive state support. It is also a fact that the huge Anglo-Dutch oil company, Shell, places orders for giant tankers in Japan. In 1957, 80 per cent of all ships under construction were being built in Western European and American shipyards, in 1966 this share had dropped to 45 per cent and the share of Japanese shipyards had risen to almost 55 per cent.

It is not deflation or devaluation that helps one to get to the front in technology; unemployment—quite irrespective of its being unbearable from a political and moral point of view—does not stimulate in this field, on the contrary it puts the brakes on. Only a dynamically developing economy is capable of fast technological progress, and the preconditions for this were pushed into the background by the barren three-year fight for the stability of the pound. You cannot eat your cake and have it too; the two cannot be done together, nor even where the pound is concerned.

The attentive reader must have realised that the firm stand taken by the author, was due not only to his interest in the technical factors affecting the British capacity to export, our Hungarian experiences and Hungarian worries are also present in his mind. Indeed—this is the most critical area in Hungarian economic progress too. It is worth thinking about British experience since this concerns a country which is still rich, which was once the industrial workshop of the world, which yesterday was still the centre of a worldwide empire, and the country of world-famous scientists and inventors. We in this small country which has never been rich, must all the more endeavour to increase the level of quality of our products, and the productivity of our labour, by using all our strength and ability to this end.

MIHÁLY SIMAI

THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE WORLD ECONOMY

Perspectives and limitations

"A bull was requested once from the United Nations in the technical assistance programme by a remote developing country to improve the cattle breeding. The discussions took almost two years, but finally the demand was fulfilled. The bull, an excellent specimen of world-famous Swiss stock, was delivered and placed in a brand-new stable. Cows selected very carefully from local farms were already lining up. The bull however was standing quietly, gazing at the cows. Nobody knew the reason since his qualifications according to all the documents were excellent. The veterinarian examined the bull carefully and found him in good health. The correspondence between the local officials and the UN Headquarters couldn't solve the problem either. Finally a witch doctor was called from the jungle who supposedly understood the language of animals. He asked the delicate question and received the calm answer immediately: Sorry, I'm from the United Nations and my mandate is limited to advisory services."

This joke was often heard in meetings of organizations belonging to the UN family to symbolize the possibilities of the United Nations in the present world affairs. It exaggerates, as every symbolical joke. The UN with all its agencies cannot of course be more than what is requested and approved by the majority of member states.

It is a tool of its members and not a world government. Some important countries do not belong to it. With its limited possibilities, means, and power in the arena of international political life, the UN is playing a special role in the ebb and flow of forces dominating the world economy of our age. Today's world economy is an extremely compound complex of contradicting elements and processes. First of all, it is composed of two different social and economic systems, which in themselves are again heterogeneous. Second, great inequalities have created a sharp contrast between developed and developing nations, and in international economic relations. Third, the process of internationalization left its marks upon the output, the use of goods, services, and the ownership of capital in vast areas of the world. Economic blocs, integrated markets are emerging. The distances, once separating the nations of different continents, were defeated as obstacles to international relations. The sciences in the different countries of the world are more interdependent than ever before. On the other hand, the tendency to confine economic and political decisions within national limits is still very much in the picture.

It is not easy therefore to answer questions regarding the function of the UN in the present world economy. Is it a passive stage, where all the different forces are performing (and not necessarily the same play), or is it an active stimulator? Is it really a reflection of the increasing internationalization of economic life, or is it motivated and limited by divergent national interests and political factors.

There is little doubt about the fact that the United Nations was born fundamentally as a political organization. To give economic functions to the UN was not regarded as an important goal by the founders. The "Twins of Bretton Woods," the World Bank and Monetary Fund, while formally belonging to the UN family, did not apply to all UN members. Some specialized agencies which were established or re-established after the Second World War had a very limited scope.

Only Article 55, of the UN Charter, stated among the tasks of the organization the promotion of "higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development..." With the establishment of the ECOSOC (the Economic and Social Council) as one of the six principal organs of the UN, the institutionalization of these tasks was considered as sufficient. Nobody among the founders wanted the UN to carry the burdens of organizing a system for international economic cooperation.

The place of economics in the World Organization is substantially different today. The UN is of course basically a political organization and it will remain so; politics are its main job. Some economic issues discussed are even derived from and attached to current political problems in the organization, like the economic impact of disarmament, economic sanctions against specific countries like South Africa, etc. These problems however represent only a small fragment of the economic activities of the UN. One can state that the United Nations has become really the most important centre of a world-wide economic dialogue and to a certain extent of international cooperation.

More Research for Action

Progress of course was greatest in economic research, but many other fields were also opened up for direct action in the UN family. There is hardly any significant area of international economic relations where the UN and its affiliated organizations were and/or are not undertaking at least a study. The economic problems of education (in almost every field of it), the factors of economic growth, the theory and practice of planning the development and dissemination of science and technology, industrialization, the promotion of international trade, the problems of the world monetary system, valuable advice and modest assistance to the developing countries, the surveying of natural resources, the improvement of taxation, budgeting, the increase of world food supplies, elaboration of land reform policies, the problems of building apartment houses, power-stations, improvement of labour and social legislation, etc. are only some of the examples from present activities. The collection, processing and publishing of statistical data were also important items on the list. By initiating and carrying on methodological discussions the UN really promoted better understanding among the statisticians (at least as far as the categories are concerned) and helped the world-wide development of statistical activities. Forecasting and projecting on an international scale also have importance for the world community.

The increasing scope of work expanded the institutional framework. Regional Economic Commissions, new independent organizations, like the UNIDO (United Nations Organization for Industrial Development), the Secretariat for UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), were added to the different specialized agencies (Atomic Energy Agency, Universal Postal Union, International Labour Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization, etc.). Sometimes "Parkinson's law" was cited in connection with organizational growth since the increase in the number of the organizations didn't automatically mean higher efficiency.

In research work however there was a change of emphasis from "League of Nations" type fact-finding and codification activities to programmes of operational value, directly helping action. The shifts of the centre of gravity in favour of activities like promoting international economic cooperation, were accompanied by significant changes in the character of the debates among governments in the committees, and also in the work of the Secretariat. Debates as well as research work became more practical, sometimes more technical. The officers of the Secretariat, and experts selected by them, were more often called in to assist

governments in formulating programmes, recommending measures, etc.

These changes of course required a new type of international civil servant: high-level specialists, technicians, planners, econometricians, etc. The active cooperation of well-known specialists or research institutions from different countries of the world was also required to help the UN as consultants, or direct participants in different programmes.

In addition to traditional diplomats, working in permanent missions at Headquarters and regional secretariats, etc., new, internationally oriented economic experts were needed too.

We do not want to go into details in this paper in explaining all the reasons which led to the "break-through of economics" in the United Nations family. The emergence of the "Third World," an extremely complex phenomenon, which the world had to face, was probably the main motive force behind it. Positive answers had to be found to the various aspects of promoting economic development. This proved to be a common ground where a meaningful dialogue could develop among the member countries of different systems, without giving up their basic positions. Problems of economic development had become and remained the focal point of research and action of the World Organization. Many other areas of international economic activity, however important they may have been for a country or for a group of countries, remained among the "sideline" activities of the United Nations.

One cannot deny the impact of increasing regionalism either. Many important economic issues of the developed capitalist countries and substantial areas of their international economic relations were discussed, for example, within the framework of the OEDC, EEC, EFTA, etc. The main body for economic discussions among the socialist countries is COMECON and not the UN.

The experience of the past 15–20 years proved that conditions in the United Nations are not ripe yet, to get the Organization involved actively in many important areas of the world economy, like monetary issues, trade and capital flows, on a world-wide and operative basis, especially in those fields, where not only surveys or discussions, but firm agreements are required, including the possibility of sanctions. Not only the economic interests but the political views of member countries are much too conflicting to permit strong involvement on a world-wide, multilateral basis.

These are the reasons, for example, why suggestions to increase multilateralism in international assistance were rejected, and also suggestions to increase the scope of activities of some of the member organizations. The delegate of Czechoslovakia recently suggested, for example, that the new organization, UNIDO, should not confine itself to the 5 per cent of world industrial capacity, now installed in developing countries, but it should cover world-wide industrial cooperation and technical advice. This proposal was not accepted either, because the majority did not want world-wide industrial cooperation, while they agreed in working together on more limited fields and issues.

"The Long-term Factors"

From among the broad economic issues of the developing world which became the main subject of operative actions and research activities of the UN family, two major areas emerged, in addition to the field of technical assistance.

The accumulation of unsolved old problems and the emergence of new dangers within the world economy required both of them. One new field was research on long-term factors affecting the development of the world economy. The other one was interrelated with long-term factors: the general recognition of the fact that the principal responsibility for the development of a

country lies with the country itself, and no international cooperation or assistance can be a substitute for domestic action. This brought the problems of national planning into the different organs of the UN.

One can add another new task, connected with institutional changes in the UN family. By the establishment of UNCTAD and UNIDO, the organizational framework of the UN became more or less comprehensive in the field of international economic problems and relations. These new organizations increased the dangers of parallelisms and overlappings in the work of World Organization. Efficient coordination of activities has become vital. It was natural that the ECOSOC, the trunk of the UN family tree in the field of economics, was considered the main factor. These problems however are beyond our discussion.

The long-term factors on which the research work was concentrated were important not only for future generations, they required immediate international action. One of them was for example the "population explosion," another the precarious future food balance of the world. Among the long-term problems, those connected with the present structure of the world economy were also very important: the increasing international indebtedness of the developing countries, the "trade gap," the "savings gap," etc.

Research on future problems necessitated a forecast of the magnitude, a quantification of those aspects of the trends which the world community wanted to find solutions for. Projections were undertaken in the UN family by several specialized agencies, organizations, centres and departments. These projections gave some indication of the efforts needed in specific areas.

On population increases, the projections showed that by the end of this century world population may reach about 6,130 million (or 7,500 million, if the decline in fertility was not correctly estimated by the experts). These projections stimulated research on future trends of food demand and supply. The Food and Agriculture Organization, for example, estimated that to achieve even a modest improvement, the developing countries, where population increases are the greatest, should increase their food output by the middle of the seventies by 80 per cent above the level achieved in 1957–59. The average rate of increase of this output in the past decade was less than 3 per cent.

Projections of economic growth and foreign trade revealed the fast widening of the two existing gaps in developing countries; the gap between domestic savings and investment needs and the gap between foreign exchange earnings and needs corresponding to the expected growth rates. A chain reaction was started by this work, and research was focused on such areas as the impact of foreign assistance on economic development, the future pattern of trade flows and the policies required to improve the position of developing countries. A major point for future concern was the increasing indebtedness of the developing world. According to available data, the amount of the public external debt of developing countries was 36.4 billion dollars, at the end of 1965. The flow of dividends, amortization and interest on all loans paid to the developed capitalist countries amounted to about 7 billion dollars, which was far more than half of the gross flow of public and private resources to the developing countries. Together with the repatriated profits of private investments and the flight of capital, about 30 per cent of the export earnings of developing countries was absorbed. The projections forecast a sharp increase in this field. Some major borrowers like India, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Turkey, Indonesia, etc. already looked for refinancing or moratoriums. Such demands will increase in the future. The first decade of large-scale international borrowing by developing countries did not solve but aggravated the debt repayment problems.

These were only a few of the many

examples of the results of projections. There are also interesting results in such areas as future skill needs, housing, health and educational requirements, etc.

A very important aspect of the projection activities in the UN family is the methodological value of the process. The projections which are going on in the UN family include almost every aspect of the world economy and that of specific regions. They are of course using various models. Their scope varies. Some are not looking further ahead than the 1970s, some to the 1980s. Population projections are looking forward as far as the end of this century, etc. Methodological differences often lead to differing and sometimes contradictory results. Furthermore, they are often based on different sources (aggregates and estimates) for the same subject. Critical discussions, which are going on on a more or less permanent basis in the UN, are of course improving methodology and increasing the scientific value of the projections, fitting them more for practical use in the orientation of long-term planning by different countries.

In connection with these projections an important question was raised recently by some personalities whether it is possible to prepare some kind of a direction giving plan for world economic development or not.

Such a plan would of course be very stimulating for international discussions. Conditions in the world economy are however not ripe yet even for a direction giving plan.

Any plan either national or international must be implementable. It should therefore have the approval of all the parties involved. The present world is full of political and economic contradictions. It is difficult, even within the developing countries, to find an economic compromise among the different forces on the objectives of a modest development programme. The difficulties are much greater if the different governments which are partners represent countries on different levels of development, with different economic systems. Any plan should be in possession of tools for its implementation. There are no ways for the UN to serve as lever for promoting the implementation of a plan on an international scale.

It is of course theoretically possible to summarize the results of all the projections (especially with the help of the International Computer Centre in the UN) and to suggest policy measures on this basis. The worldwide aggregation of national economic plans or forecasts would also provide some indication for an international programme. The first development decade, the nineteen-sixties, were already an important step towards achieving these aims and the preparation of the next one is going even more in the direction of a comprehensive effort based not only on projections and broad targets. It will do more than this by suggesting concrete policies and measure to the world community and giving an international frame to national economic decisions.

"*The Planning Dialogue*"

The second major area of concentration in the activities of the organization is the better mobilization of the domestic resources of developing countries. Improvements in the national planning system are in the forefront of these efforts.

More than 70 countries of the world, belonging to different economic and social systems, prepare economic plans. The worldwide acceptance of planning as a tool for achieving national development objectives, has made academic the doctrinal debate about whether a country should plan or not.

These developments put research and discussions on planning into the mainstream of United Nations activities. There is hardly any member of the UN family not preparing at least a survey in this field. A Centre for Development Planning Projections and Policies in the Economic and Social Department of the UN was created specifically with the aim of providing new facilities to

study the problems of planning and plan implementation on a world-wide scale, to improve the methodology of planning, and to disseminate the experience gained by countries successfully implementing economic plans. A new permanent committee of Development Planning was also set up by the ECOSOC. This committee is composed of some of the best experts on planning and plan implementation from the socialist, developing, and western capitalist countries. The development of the planning dialogue within the UN is a process reflecting the better understanding of the problems involved, but also revealing controversies derived from the fact that planning cannot take identical forms in all countries, nor in all phases of development of any one country.

The first stages of this dialogue were characterized mostly by general, sometimes theoretical, debates on the necessities and the possibilities of planning. Two dogmatic approaches appeared and vanished in these discussions. One which attacked and condemned the idea of planning while defending the free market forces, and the other which considered only a system of central directives as planning. The discussions in the later stages centred on the plan itself. What should be in the plan, what should be the priorities, what methods should be used in elaborating the plan, etc.

One of the most interesting aspects of these debates was the question, whether the current economic equilibrium should be envisaged as an aim by the developing countries or not. It has been stated however that an equilibrium policy would result in stagnation rather than economic development. This does not mean of course that the attainable equilibrium should be completely neglected, but it must be subordinated to a superior goal, aimed at the structural changes, which will infuse dynamism into the economy.

An abortive result of these discussions was the rapid expansion of "paper planning." Planning became fashionable. Plans were prepared by different countries which were never implemented, because they were neither realistic, nor implementable due to a lack of purpose, the absence of resources or both. Sometimes the necessary methods for implementing an economic development programme were not known or not developed. These phenomena shifted the emphasis from the dialogue to the problems of plan implementation.

The implementation debate of the nineteen-sixties revealed many important problems. First of all, that plan implementation is an indispensable part of the planning process, second, that no substitute for the necessary political and institutional conditions of efficient planning can be found in perfecting planning methods and implementation techniques. Within these two broad ideas however many vital details were brought out and discussed (but not necessarily solved).

One of these problems was the recognition of the fact that the difference between the socialist and capitalist systems is not the only one which determines the choice and forms of planning and the methods of plan implementation. There are internal differences among the individual developing countries of the Third World, which in many respects are as big or even bigger than those between the socialist and developed capitalist countries. The magnitude of the subsistence sector in relation to the market sector, the share of small-scale and large-scale industries, the importance of different forms of ownership, especially of public ownership of the means of production, etc. determines the choice of the planners among the various available instruments of plan implementation.

The means for plan implementation are also influenced by the character of political power. This usually determines the role of a plan in a given economy.

In many developing countries, especially in Latin America, for example, the plan is prepared by technicians, sometimes not only

without the active participation of the legislative and executive bodies, but as some sort of quasi-revolutionary instrument against the political and social structure. Sometimes, the central planning agency is a ministry, having no special status, or power over other branches of the government which have much greater power. If and when planning is introduced into an existing state administration without major administrative reforms, the traditional structure tends to limit its scope. The opposition between Ministries of Finance and Planning Agencies are for example a permanent problem in many developing countries.

The implementation debate threw some light on the strategic importance of the size and structure of the public sector in developing countries. In this sector, governments have the right and the possibility, at least potentially, to use more direct methods. These possibilities are potential because of the weaknesses and disorganization of the public sector in many developing countries. Apart from the differing importance and role of the public sector, among the more general problems one can find many shortcomings, sometimes of the opposite nature. There are, for example, countries with overcentralized decision-making, while in some other countries the autonomy of different government departments is almost complete. The slow improvement in the selection, training and pay of civil servants, the relatively low level of efficiency in public enterprises were also among the issues discussed in various debates. There are still many countries with rudimentary budget systems. Sometimes the image of the public sector is not very good either. Popular mistrust is excited by corruption, by local political bosses or tax collectors, and also by a compulsory labour system in the public sector, which still exists in some countries in Latin America. Despite all problems and difficulties, however, the growth of the public sector is one of the most important levels in the introducing of necessary reforms for the successful implementation of plans. A document, accepted by the Development Planning Committee of the UN at its 1967 annual meeting in Santiago (Chile), made the following, rather strong statement:

"Development planning should not be thought of solely as a set of accounting techniques. The arithmetic of plans—the quantification of objectives and of resource requirements—has too often been equated with the whole of planning. Though this is an important and necessary element, planning must deal with the larger social and institutional conditions for development. There is little disagreement today that adequate growth in developing countries demands vigorous action to bring about far-reaching changes in the social, economic and institutional structure. Such action, which in large part can only be qualitatively expressed, is often the primary condition for the achievement of development objectives. It is not meaningful to talk of the implementation of development plans if necessary policies for social change, such as land reform and income redistribution, or the necessary measures for social discipline, including fiscal and financial restraints, are avoided. In other words, the political will to develop and the ability to exercise substantial control over strategic activities in the economy are accordingly the inescapable conditions for the effective implementation of development plans. This ability can be particularly strengthened by appropriate development of the public sector, by the assumption of a leading role by the State in investment and credit policy, and by the organized supervision of the activities of the private sector, including foreign enterprises." (E/CN 12/772)

In the light of these developments, it is understandable why there is an increasing interest in the planning experiences of the socialist countries. This is a relatively new phenomenon. Earlier while the planning system of the socialist countries was not completely disregarded, especially not by

economists from developing countries, it was somewhat neglected by many western experts working in the field of development planning. The socialist countries themselves were sometimes not aware of the international importance of these experiences. Being deeply involved in the reform of their system of planning and management, and in the critical analysis of the over-centralized system of planning of the past decade, they did not pay too much attention to a re-evaluation and analysis of their first steps in introducing economic planning. Considering the needs of developing countries, more attention was paid in recent publications by western economists to the GOELRO plan of the Soviet Union, to the economic debates of the twenties and to the first plans of the socialist countries in Eastern Europe than by the socialist countries themselves.

Some Remarks on Perspectives

It is much easier to make projections for specific areas of the world economy than to forecast what the UN will do in those areas or in the field of international economic relations in general.

A utopian approach, disregarding the highly complex world situation, can put all the unsolved economic problems in the world to-day on a list of tasks for the Organization. This would add an unlimited number of questions to any future programme. The extrapolation of past experience dictates however a more realistic and more modest expectation.

It is well known that the number of questions requiring world-wide economic co-operation is increasing because of rapid technological and scientific development, and because of the growing inequalities and imbalances of the world economy, both between countries and groups of countries. These processes influenced the past of the UN and will have their impact on the future activities of the Organization.

In addition to stimulating debates on almost every vital aspect of the world economy, some new issues may come within the sphere of actions of the UN. Increasing regionalism, for example, will add several new problems to the agenda of the meetings and to the activities of the members of the UN family. Not only the impact of the regional groupings on the rest of the world, but also the problems of discussing and organizing cooperation, working out possible agreements among them, may come within the scope of UN activities.

The coordination of the assistance programmes, especially those in the field of technical assistance, will require world-wide discussions and action. Initiating and carrying on world-wide programmes and campaigns in different areas of economic relations, like tourism, such fields as irrigation and transport development, the productive use of the wealth of the oceans, etc. may on a much broader scale become part of the work of the Organization.

A bank—an international centre—supplying data, planning techniques, technical and general market information, expertise and experts on a world-wide scale can also come into existence as a joint venture of the UN family. Sometime in the future UN bodies can be responsible also for such activities as specific commodity agreements, establishment and control of international buffer stocks on a world-wide scale, etc.

The various forces which are acting in the world may and will dictate other changes as well, in various directions, which cannot be foreseen today. While recognizing the increasing economic interdependence of the world, most of the people within and around the UN agencies agree, that the future scope and efficiency of activities undertaken by the Organization regarding the world economy will be largely determined by and subordinated to political factors. The future of the UN in the field of international economic relations cannot be separated from its political perspectives.

LÁSZLÓ PASSUTH

THE SIX-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF HUNGARY'S FIRST UNIVERSITY

On September 1, 1367, hardly a day's travelling from Rome, Pope Urban V made a brief halt in Viterbo during a journey which became an outstanding event of the late Middle Ages: inspired by Catherine of Siena and Brigitta of Sweden, Pope Urban had put an end to the 64 years of the "Avignon captivity" and was transferring his residence from the peaceful French fort to plague-stricken, depopulated Rome. Petrarch wrote a panegyric in honour of the returning Pope, and Giovanni Boccaccio, Ambassador of Florence, was among the secular dignitaries surrounding him on that September day.

It was decided during this memorable stay in Viterbo that a month later, in October, Emperor Charles IV would enter in state into the Eternal City and the Empress would be crowned in St Peter's Basilica by the Pope. At the same time, an edict was submitted for signature to the Holy Father under the terms of which Urban V consented to the request of King Louis of Hungary to found a university, or, as it was known in those days, a *studium generale*, in the Southern Hungarian city of Pécs, called Quinque Ecclesiae in Latin (the exact text reads as follows: "in this famous city of Pécs, in all respects suitable and fit for the purpose").

This signature seemed to have put an end to the painful conflict between Hungary and Avignon. Urban V was still a young cardinal in 1349 when his predecessor Clement VI was arbiter in a trial between two crowned heads. The plaintiff was the same King Louis I, the founder of the university; he accused his sister-in-law, Queen Joanna I of Naples, of subornation and complicity in the murder of her husband: in Aversa Castle in Italy a group of aristocrats had assassinated the brother of King Louis the Great, Prince Andrew. Louis was represented in Avignon by his envoys, while Joanna pleaded for herself. In a two-hour speech delivered in Latin she succeeded in convincing the Pope and his cardinals of her innocence and was accordingly acquitted by the verdict of Pope Clement. A few days later, Joanna, Queen of Naples and Countess of Provence, sold the fort and city of Avignon to the Holy See for a golden rose. Thereafter the envoys of Louis never ceased to urge for reparation, but many years were to pass until the hangman put an end to the proceedings—and to Joanna's life. All this may have influenced the Pope's decision to grant the request of King Louis, offended by his predecessor in this "drive for universities."

It is rather difficult to trace the origins of European universities. The university of Salerno in Southern Italy is generally considered to have been the first university in Europe, in the modern sense. Medicine was being professed there as early as the eighth century, obviously under Moorish influence. In the twelfth century, two different types of universities took shape: that of Paris, where scientists and professors teamed up and gathered those who wished to learn, and that of Bologna where the students organized themselves and engaged the most brilliant scientists as professors. This difference determined the internal life, the statutes and the programme of studies of the two types of university. When, in the fourteenth century, the idea of founding universities spread through Central and Eastern Europe, the petitioners, usually crowned heads, indicated whether their new Alma Mater was to be of the Paris or the Bologna type.

The first Central European university was founded in Prague by Emperor Charles IV in the year of the great plague—*La grande peur*—in 1348. He explicitly chose the Sorbonne as model. After the first university of the German Empire (then including Bohemia) came the foundation in 1364 by the Polish King Casimir of Cracow University, and a year later Vienna University was permitted to open its doors at the request of the Austrian Prince Rudolph IV. Two years later King Louis of Hungary received the papal bull authorizing the foundation of the University of Pécs.

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What was such a *studium generale* like? One might imagine the main branch of study to be theology. The deed of foundation of Pécs University, however, definitely excludes theology from the subjects to be taught. Surprising as it may seem, the Holy See granted this privilege to no more than two or three universities in the course of one and a half centuries. This was probably due to the fact that as the popes of Avignon were of French origin and closely attached to the Sorbonne, they wished to secure the privilege of teaching theology to the University of Paris: anybody who wished to obtain the highest qualifications in theology was obliged to make a pilgrimage to Paris. The deed of foundation of Pécs University points out that Roman and canon law could be lectured on freely and "other faculties" might be organized. This meant law, the faculty of arts and probably of medicine too.

Only nine documents of Pécs University are still in existence, all of them in the Vatican Archives and none in Hungary.

It might be justifiably asked to what the city of Pécs owed the honour of becoming a university town. In those days, Pécs was one of the most suitable urban centres; it was the centre of a county which included as many as 520 villages and 200 parsonages. Buda was barely urbanized, while the royal court resided in beautiful though isolated Visegrád, to the north of Buda. Most cogent of all arguments was the fact that one of the best diplomats of King Louis, William of Bergzabern, was Bishop of Pécs. In previous years he had frequently been to Avignon and the choice naturally fell upon him to direct negotiations regarding the founding of the University. The papal edicts usually designated the person or corporation to perform supervisory duties or to assume the dignity of a Chancellor. This function was bestowed on Bishop William, mainly in recognition of the fact that he was prepared to bear most of the maintenance costs of the university.

Once the site and the buildings were secured, as in the case of Pécs, the budget of a medieval university covered little else than the salaries of the professors. Information is available on the emoluments of a certain Master Galvano de Bologna (son of Bettino), an outstanding Italian humanist of the Trecento, appointed by Bishop William to be a professor at Pécs; he received a house in the city, the tithe of the village of Ürög and 300 silver marks a year—quite a substantial sum in those days. His colleagues usually had to content themselves with 80 gulden. However, if they had taken holy orders—which they most probably had—they usually obtained a canonry or some other ecclesiastical benefice in the bishopric.

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It is not known exactly how long the original University of Pécs existed as such. The last written document dates back to 1402. It may be assumed that, mainly for material reasons, the university subsequently became unable to uphold its rank of *studium generale* and was re-classified as an "academy." In any case, King Matthias Corvinus, in his appeal to Pope Paul II in 1465, wrote the following: "Hungary, though a large and fertile country, has no university. I therefore request Your Holiness to authorize me to establish a university in a Hungarian city... with every faculty. Its organization

and privileges shall follow the pattern of Bologna University..."

However, the University of Pécs had impressed itself profoundly on the memory of Hungarian people. An outstanding sixteenth-century Hungarian historiographer, Miklós Istvánffy, wrote: "...There was also a famous university in Pécs where young men wishing to study arrived in large numbers; it is said that a few years before the Turkish wars there were as many as two thousand of them..."

In 1715 another Hungarian historiographer, Sámuel Timon, committed the following legend to paper: 300 students of Pécs, headed by their professors, took part in the tragic battle of Mohács in 1526 and were all killed in action. (Some fifty years ago the author, then a school-boy, learned the story in much the same version, and it is only the ruthlessness of recent historical criticism which has demonstrated its untenableness.)

A most efficient historian, whose accounts are not absolutely reliable though, the Turkish traveller and writer Evlia Tchelebi has left some remarkable records. In the last decades of Turkish rule in Hungary he travelled all over these regions and arrived in Pécs in about 1660, which was then an important Turkish administrative centre. His travelogue includes some ten pages about the town. "...there are also academies here, five schools of the Ulemah and of the commentators of the Koran. In the old fortress there was once a college in honour of the divine Plato (in Turkish: *Eflatum*). I have seen seventy of its magnificent vaulted rooms... In olden times many students from the East and the West came to live in this academy in order to acquire the whole treasury of sciences from their masters..."

As far as the activity of Pécs University in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries is concerned, the only historical evidence in existence are the nine charters in the Vatican, and a finely carved stone with the arms of the University, found under the ruins of a house in Pécs. There are some other records abroad and at home, and a series of legends dating from the eighteenth century. Since Pécs was built on the remains of an ancient Roman city, research work in archives may be completed by the work of archaeologists. It would appear that long before Tchelebi's arrival, the University (or Academy) ceased to exist. Several centuries later a new University was founded in 1923 at Pécs which successfully survived the Second World War and is, at present, one of Hungary's seven universities.

GÉZA HEGEDÜS

THE WRITER'S PRESENCE

Thoughts on Meetings between Writer and Readers

Over thirty years have passed since, although proudly clutching a brand-new degree, I was obliged to join the army. We were second-line reserves, members of a neglected age-group, young men just down from University, who were given the once-over with justifiable suspicion by the non-coms. On the first day the platoon had to line up, and a sergeant asked everyone in turn:

"What do you do in civilian life?"

When my turn came I clicked my heels and replied in the obligatory military style of the times:

"I respectfully report that I'm a history teacher." (I also had an earlier LL.D. to my

name, but thought that my superior with the outsize moustache would be more impressed by a mention of the teaching profession, for most people associate unpleasant memories with lawyers and judges, but men over school-age usually remember their teachers with affection.)

The effect was entirely unexpected. The sergeant's face became contorted, he was quiet for a moment, and then said:

"Well, you're for it! I was flunked by a history teacher once."

"I respectfully report that it was not me," I declared with military resolution. At that the sergeant, who had already passed further down the line, turned back and said:

"But he isn't here. And you are."

It is a fact that no unpleasant consequences ever resulted from my having been a history teacher, nevertheless this brief dialogue has remained in my mind indelibly. Even at the time I had the feeling that I was facing a situation very characteristic of human relations. And during the last twenty years I have often been compelled to recall the words of this heavy-moustached sergeant:

"But he isn't here. And you are."

At the meetings between writer and readers which have been customary in this country for some time, I meet this situation again and again, though with a different emotional charge. Just recently, for instance, at Izsák—a large village producing grapes and fruit in Bács-Kiskun County in the very heart of the Hungarian Great Plains—a reader asked me what personal experience Dickens had had of the world of crime before he wrote *Oliver Twist*. I almost replied that it would be best to ask the late Dickens himself, but immediately recognized the indubitable fact: he isn't here, and I am.

This is a typical feature of the writer-reader meetings that have become so general as to become a way of life for several authors. When, at the invitation of schools, libraries, industrial plants or cooperative farms we go to meet our readers personally for a couple of hours, we not only face the younger and older readers of both sexes in our more or less known person, but at the same time we are there on behalf of literature itself, contemporary and classical, Hungarian and foreign. And I believe that is also the undefined feeling of the readers, and for this reason it seems so natural to them to pose a wide variety of questions to the writer who is visiting them. True, there is a certain natural distribution of questions. The reader is interested even in a writer he has read little or nothing of, and all the more so in one whose books he has enjoyed. And, more important still, the reader is interested in literature itself, with a capital L, and welcomes every reputable poet or writer in its name. Consequently, in addition to questions referring to the person or the works of the author present, there is a volley of questions, worded in precise or primitive sentences, on literary aesthetics or writing technique, on the tricks of the trade as applied by others, living and dead, remembered by only a few or crowned with the halo of the classics—and often even about their private lives. And the writer who is there either is in a position to answer these questions or he is not. But since Shakespeare and Tolstoy are not there, and he is, he has to find some reply to every query, that is, to utilize every question for communicating, interpreting and clarifying his own message to a public that expects information and pleasure from literature.

I am often abroad, I am a very keen traveller, and can even regard myself as a welcome guest in several European cities. In London, Paris, Stockholm and Basel the homes of relatives receive me. I have talked my way through half of Europe, from Warsaw to Toulouse, amongst other things on literary questions. And is there anyone professionally involved in art who is not forever stimulated by the problems of the trade? Thus, I have a global impression of the artistic preoccupations of the thinking minds of a Europe, that, although divided into two social systems—has but a single tradition.

I have heard repeatedly from cultured Western Europeans, from men of letters, what a mystery the communication of their ideas is to them. They hear no response to their words, their message echoes in an unknown medium. Books, the stage, the screen, the TV tubes and radio loudspeakers publicize the writers' thoughts and words. But they cannot gauge the effect on those addressed. The reviews are the responses of fellow-professionals. The opinion of the critics is similar to the comments of one shoemaker on the products of another—an opinionated shoemaker, at that, who rarely makes shoes himself and prefers to criticize the work of his colleagues. In the meantime, however, he never finds out whether the man or woman who wears the boots and sandals he has made blesses or curses him. He tries to visualize the type of feet he is supposed to make shoes for, but never finds out whether his careful work might be too tight, too loose, too stiff, or whether it might stretch too soon.

Of course, the accounts of bookshops and the statistics of public libraries and of newspapers do provide some information about the demand for a given book. But demand or lack of it may be due to many factors. Maupassant in his wonderful short stories intended to condemn bourgeois pettiness, narrow-mindedness, selfishness and stupidity —yet his books were very much sought after by this same bourgeoisie, because they satisfied the readers' thirst for piquancy and erotic images. Dumas glorified the sanguinary magnificence of France with Republican ardour—yet he has had unceasing mass success because his books cater to the readers' most superficial desire for adventure. What the bookshops and libraries verify is whether —from a purely business point of view—it pays or does not pay for the author to write as he does. But there is no objective indicator of the influence the sentences he wrote have on the reponsive soul. And even less can the writer, alienated from his public, find out what the sensitive soul does require.

Among other causes, that is why there is so much concern in the West about artistic loneliness and alienation. The distance between man and man has grown to such an extent in society itself, the nooks and corners of society have become so Kafkaesquely incomprehensible that the writer's experience of expressing what he wants to say in a vacuum is only a consequence of this situation and its projection on his consciousness as an artist.

In innumerable instances I found this lack of contact to be already almost taken for granted. Some were inclined to take the artist's isolation for an absolute, believing that ever since the dissolution of a direct patriarchal relationship between Homer-like bards and their listeners—and, later, since printing has become general—lack of contact is the inevitable state of all literary creation: the artist and those to whom his art is addressed never really meet, the writer does not know what the readers desire, the readers misunderstand the writers—and there is no way out. Those who undergo this experience of the writer's position in society always regard me with incomprehension when I tell them about our reader-writer meetings and how they have become a regular feature of our life. It is hard to make such people understand that these gatherings are not an assembly of professional men of letters, of inordinately avid readers, or of literary snobs, responding to posters inviting them to listen to the pronouncements of some popular writer. Of course, literary evenings of this kind, or in the provinces chiefly Sunday literary matinées, do take place, attended by people who are fond of literature as they would attend a theatrical performance or a concert; but those are not reader-writer meetings. The real reader-writer meetings are not for the initiated, and the snobs certainly deem it below their dignity to mix with the "vulgar mob" gathered together for a talk with a writer who has come to visit them. The fact is that these meetings are without a definite programme, and the conversations that develop

at them are free and informal; the people who go there either want to speak themselves with the writer or want to hear their friends asking questions of the writer and the writer answering them.

The antecendent to this custom was the multiplication of the number of readers during the last two decades. Before the war publishing houses counted on some eighty to a hundred thousand regular readers in Hungary, a country of about ten million inhabitants. Today the usual estimate is that there are from two to two and a half million regular readers. Not only has reading become a "way of life" for the new generation by the time they leave school, but even many of the older generation—industrial workers and peasants—have made a try at reading and acquired a taste for it. Every larger place of work has its own lending library. In the village culture centres, where of an evening one can see an occasional film, read the papers, play cards or chess, and meet stamp-collecting friends, there is always a lending library, whose librarian is glad to discuss new and old books with whoever comes in. Every school has its lending library. Book borrowing is becoming irresistible, as is book buying—considering how cheap books have become.

This education of a reading nation has been a deliberate cultural policy in Hungary. For, even if opinions have at times greatly diverged as to just what this new reading public should read, there has always been general agreement to the effect that the habit of reading is a precondition for intellectual progress. And once this had more or less become an accomplished fact, the reading masses themselves began to demand a say in what they were to read. Booksellers and librarians register the demands of the reading public and pass them on to the publishers, who, in turn, have to lend an ear to these demands.

It became fashionable at the end of the 1940's for librarians and those in charge of cultural activities in the enterprises, and later even for the schools, to invite some better-known author to talk about books, writers and literature. There were writers who took an interest in these events, and others who did not. The same was true of readers. But wherever writer and readers did meet, a spirited conversation usually developed. The meetings became increasingly frequent, so that we hardly noticed just when they became an established national custom and for many writers an integral part of their literary life. Yet this is exactly what happened.

For the readers—and this has also been my personal experience—this is good entertainment. And for the writer, I believe, it is something much more important than that: it means direct contact with those who read me, us, the whole of literature. In my own case, it has really become a hobby. For some twenty years there has hardly been a month without my making at least one visit to some factory, to a village, to a public library or to a school, for the purpose of conversing about literature. At the height of the book season (before and during the Spring Book Week or during the month preceding Christmas) such rendezvous crop up in my calendar with increasing frequency. At such times, the hosts are eager to arrange visits well in advance of the actual date.

To give an idea of the variety of social strata in which these meetings take place, let me enumerate the groups I visited in the spring of 1967. In Budapest I attended writer-reader meetings at a club of intellectuals, at two schools and in a district library; in Bács-Kiskun County in two town libraries and three village cultural centres; and in Komárom County in a factory and a youth library—all within two weeks. This in itself will show that people from widely different walks of life and in varying numbers are interested. In some meetings only seventeen people were present, in others almost three hundred took part. I personally much prefer gatherings attended by less than fifty, because when there are more, the con-

versation inescapably turns into a lecture, into a one-sided exposé by the writer.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the readers always have something clever or important to say. Often, the school-children are terribly high-brow, the adults very childish. What is more, the questions often reveal an appetite for gossip rather than a thirst for aesthetic knowledge. Not to speak of how many readers get excited over the supposed connection of the characters in the writer's novel with his private life. It is also true that these meetings represent a wide range of standards, and that, when there are too many non-literary questions or such as more properly belong to the gossip column of a literary magazine, the writer cannot always direct the conversation according to his own intentions. But even in these cases the writer gets to know his readers—the people to whom his works are addressed. In general, about 40 per cent of the questions and comments represent sheer waste—but all the more important are the remaining 60 per cent, revealing as they do what readers of different cultural standards expect of literature, how they react to different books, what their opinion is of the work of the writer present and his contemporaries, and what they would like to read. Need I add that the literary panorama and rating that comes out of these meetings is unrelated to the panorama and rating produced by professional critics? I have often thought that, side by side with reader-writer meetings, regular reader-reviewer meetings should be organized. Of course, there is good reason to fear that the professional critic would not regard the reader's evaluation as authentic, and the readers would show little enthusiasm for the views of the critic who visited them.

At these meetings the writer thus finds himself in the world of the readers, and he has to take cognizance of the value system and demands of the public at large. True, one must guard here against over-generalization. For only those attend a given meeting who feel like going. In other words, the majority consists of those who have a soft spot for the writer in question, whereas those who do not have a liking for him tend to remain absent. Whether in the capital or in the provinces, in factories or schools, libraries or culture centres, the writer thus meets mainly those who have grown fond of him through his books, and he hardly meets anyone who is definitely hostile. As a result, he easily falls victim to the misconception that he is the most popular writer of the country. (Well, I suppose most writers entertain this idea even if they have never met any of their readers.)

It cannot be expected, then, that the meetings give an accurate picture of literary public opinion in the country or an exact popularity rating of writers. The truth, probably, is that around every reputable writer a special atmosphere develops or, if you like, a particular value system, in which the writer who meets a large number of readers can give himself a high rank. Still, if the public evaluations of the works of the most widely-read authors are compared, the organizers and observers of these meetings—above all the book distributors and the libraries—do get an opinion poll that influences publishing much more than the far from uniform stand of professional critics.

Much more important from the writer's viewpoint is the fact that the readers, after such a meeting, are no longer an unknown and impersonal quantity for him. He can find out from opinions of widely diverging levels how the reader responds to what he has written. I myself, have more than once had to realize that some books of mine not only contain what I deliberately put into them, but also give rise to entirely unexpected interpretations or emotions. At other times, motifs I had set forth with particular care went completely unnoticed. As I found out more and more about reader reactions to various stylistic solutions, my expressive faculty became modified and developed. Since every writer wants to communicate something, he cannot give up striving for

successful communication. He is consequently compelled to take note of and draw conclusions from the opinions and wishes of readers.

The writer cannot remain indifferent to the wishes expressed at such meetings. Art, after all, is also a form of production within its own sphere—that of the mind. I certainly have no intention of drawing a sign of equality between consumer goods industry and literature. But, on an entirely different level, artistic production also brings into existence something that fulfils the requirements of others. Beauty, moral values, comprehension of the world one lives in—all these represent a different kind of instinctive need from hunger. Still, it is a social need as well. The artist then—and this includes also the writer—can fulfil his mission only if he knows what kind of social need he is satisfying commensurate to his gifts. Thus, reader-writer meetings are at the same time a form of intellectual market research, not to be confused with the commercial market research of publishers and book distributors, nor with that of the culture-politician. The book dealer is on the look-out for the writer whose books are highly sought after and for the type of books that are in greatest demand. The culture-politician tries to discover by what aesthetic methods public taste, morality and ideology can be most effectively shaped. The writer's personal market research is very different: he tries to learn how the reading requirements of readers can be brought to a common denominator with the ideas and experiences he wants readers to absorb.

Let me cite an example from my own practice.

I feel at home in several genres and I have always been unwilling to lock myself up in a limited area of literature. Occasionally, I like to write novels addressed also to adolescents. There was a time when I set out to give them important and interesting information on ancient Egyptian culture. This was my intention, at any rate. But I decided I ought to know the "market" facing me. And since I often attend reader-writer meetings in schools, I started to ask boys and girls between 12 and 16 what kind of novels they like to read, or rather which of the books they recently read had most earned their favour. And I was not the least bit shocked when I heard from them over and over again that they found crime novels the most absorbing. I have nothing against detective stories and thrillers *per se;* what I dislike is that usually weak make-shift works are written in the genre. But if the readers want just that? I could not help noticing that what most stirred their imagination in my previous non-detective historical novels were precisely those episodes that had crime-story elements in them. Well, if they wanted a crime story, and I wanted to present them with the cultural history of Egypt, why not put the producer's intention and the consumer's demand under one hat? Why not write a thriller set in ancient Egypt, enabling the reader, while tracking down the criminal, to learn about social movements, art, archaeology and ideology during the reign of Echnaton. This is how my novel *The Scribe and the Pharaoh* was born. If you like, it is an epic, if you prefer, it is a whodunit, and regardless of your choice, you will learn, in reading it, what every youngster with educational pretensions ought to know about ancient Egypt! With this shrewd educational stratagem and aesthetic game, I managed to produce a novel which—something I had not even hoped for—won favour among adults too.

I do not wish to draw any general sociological conclusions. I am not analysing—I doubt whether I possess enough data for such a purpose—the interconnections between the present social set-up in Hungary and the writer's means of communicating with his readers. But again and again I feel called upon to tell some of my Western European friends about our reader-writer meetings with a view to counteracting their tendency to regard the chasm between reader and writer as a condition *sine qua non* of artistic existence. I am not asserting, of

course, that every artist in the West is beset with a sense of loneliness, or that in Hungary there is no artist who feels isolated. Here, however, such loneliness is neither inevitable nor widespread.

The reader-writer meetings also serve to link the writer more fully with present-day literature than if he were living far removed from his readers, for when he sits down to talk about himself and all sorts of other things, he will certainly be asked questions about this or that contemporary. And he cannot excuse himself by saying that he does not know his colleague any more than he can evade giving information about the classics. Just imagine his trying to get out from under by saying: "I am very sorry, but I haven't the good fortune to have made the personal acquaintance of Dr. Jonathan Swift, so I cannot venture any statement as to what he intended to communicate through the adventures of Mr. Gulliver."

If, nevertheless, he did dare to say it, the reader would reply along the lines of my one-time sergeant:

"But he isn't here. And you are."

And being present is a commitment.

SÁNDOR VARGA

BOOKS IN THE VILLAGE

Early in the eighteenth century a Lutheran clergyman, one Péter Kis-Viczay, edited a collection of proverbs in Latin and Hungarian for Hungarian students. In it he translated *Nihil gracula cum fidibus* into Hungarian as "He knows as much about it as a hen about reading," and added the following explanatory note as if to remove all doubt: "Books are not for peasants."

It has frequently been said over the last few years that Hungary has become a "nation of readers." Whilst this is somewhat exaggerated, the situation regarding the access of our peasants to books has certainly changed considerably since the time of Péter Kis-Viczay, and this might be illustrated effectively by a few figures.

When in 1951 the Hungarian Minister of Education first declared in a speech "Hungarians are becoming a reading people..." there were 2,972 state public libraries in Hungary with a stock of 1,115,000 volumes. Throughout the villages, farms and cooperative stores were receiving supplies of books; and subsequently bookshops have been opened all over the country.

In 1951, 143 million forints worth of books were bought in Hungary (the average price of a book then being 15 forints) about 45 per cent of which by public institutions. Comparative sales figures for villages are lacking even for this period. However, a report on the work of the consumer cooperatives for the year 1950 has been preserved by the deputy president of the Nógrád County Union of Consumer Cooperatives, according to which the consumer cooperatives in the villages of Nógrád sold 1,000 forints worth of books during the whole of 1950. As the deputy president commented, "the man who made this report obviously rounded off the sum."

The data corresponding to the fifteen years that have elapsed since then show a marked development. In 1965 the number of village reading rooms was 3,868, that of village lending libraries being 1,464, with a total stock of 7 million volumes and 1,100,000 subscribers, an annual subscription costing about 4 forints. In 1965 village libraries made more than 23 million loans and spent more than 20 million forints on new books. And in the same year the local councils spent over 11 million forints on the salaries of 2,513 employees of these libraries.

Statistics on village book purchases in

1965 reflect the same development: 209 million forints worth of books, or 27 per cent of the total sales of books in this country, were bought by peasant people.

The greater part of the village book trade consists of the turnover of the consumer cooperatives. In 1966 the joint sales of consumer cooperatives bookshops and book-selling agents (the latter averaging about three to each village) totalled 145 million forints worth of books. In addition, books were sent to the villages by the town booksellers and agents.

According to comparative figures at our disposal, while national book sales more than doubled since 1957, village sales have quadrupled.

Surveys in this field show that despite this sky-rocketing trend of the reading and buying of books, we still cannot say that we are a reading people.

These surveys—as József Darvas, a writer and President of the Hungarian Writers' Union, pointed out in the daily paper *Népszabadság*—have shattered many of our illusions, for the figures also reveal that the famous black spots on the map of literature can be found not only in the villages, among the peasants, but also in Budapest and among intellectuals.

Now, as to the illusions connected with the village distribution of books the facts have disproved the idea that it is enough to give people the opportunity to obtain books at reasonable prices, and make them readily available in the country, and the rest will take care of itself.

It was naive to imagine that no one would choose a thriller, now that he could buy Hungarian or world classics, or many modern works for the price of a few pounds of bread. (Every volume of the Treasure Trove Series published under the auspices of the Federation of Hungarian Cooperatives costs the price of a bottle of beer.)

That the price of books is an important factor is clear from the report made by an English Cooperative Party delegation to Hungary in 1960. ("Hungary, As We Saw It." Report of a Cooperative Party Delegation, London, 1961.) This report not only gives data concerning the Hungarian cooperative book-distributing network and sales, but also points out that all kinds of books were obtainable in the villages, including English authors such as Thackeray, Brontë, Dickens, R. L. Stevenson, Hardy, Graham Greene, H. E. Bates, and that these books were very cheap.

As a result of the dogmatic educational policy, neither the publishing nor the distribution of books in the towns and villages was able to develop satisfactorily up to 1953.

However, book publishing gradually began to improve from 1953 onwards, and in 1956–57 a change also occurred also in the organization of book distribution in the villages. Namely, ninety-two state bookshops were taken over by consumer cooperatives, and as a result the cooperative bookshops of the district capitals instead of Budapest became the provincial distribution centres.

During this reorganization we realized that books, and above all Hungarian classics, should be published in special editions for rural readers, at a cheap enough price but in a more attractive finish than the Cheap Library Series whose presentation is rather poor. The Treasure Trove Series was thus born, and each volume now sells at a price of 9 forints. It began in the summer of 1957 with one of the romantic novels of Mór Jókai. Since then the Szépirodalmi Publishing Company and the Európa Publishers have brought out 137 excellent Treasure Trove titles for rural distribution in 3,600,000 copies. (The average number of copies of each work is about 26,000.)

There are about 5,646,000 people—1,600,000 families—living in the area supplied by the consumer cooperatives in district and county towns. Even if all Treasure Trove Series had been sold, then during the past ten years scarcely more than two copies would have come into the hands of each

family. Obviously this is far too little. And yet we found that stocks were rising, that is, the market had become saturated with Treasure Trove books. Analyzing this, we discovered that villagers to whom reading is important prefer to spend 25 to 30 forints on a "real" book in a well-presented edition than pay 9 forints for a paper-bound Treasure Trove book, even though the contents of the latter might be on the same level. As for those who dislike reading, for whom it is not a necessity, in vain are they shown the cheap Treasure Trove books in the cooperative shops, they do not buy. This, in fact, presents one of the greatest problems to book promotion in the country.

What does the villager read?

First of all newspapers and magazines. According to information received from the distributing section of the Post Office, 375,000 copies of *Népszabadság* (the central daily of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party) and 400,000 to 420,000 county dailies are sold on a weekday; and *Szabad Föld* (an agricultural weekly) and *Képes Újság* (an illustrated weekly) reach a total of 370,000 and 155,000 respectively in the villages. The yearly almanacs sell one million copies in the villages.

According to library statistics, 43.4 per cent of the members of village libraries are school-children under 14, and only 18.5 per cent are agricultural workers. The survey of the Central Statistical Office gives us even more detailed information: 12 per cent of the agricultural manual workers read books often, and 31 per cent rarely, which means that 57 per cent do not read at all. A statistical study of the reading habits in a village of 1,000 people shows that 19 per cent of the peasants questioned have not read anything since they finished elementary school, not even a newspaper, and 31 per cent have not read any books. It is worth noting that 71 per cent of the peasants who read books preferred novels, and 70 per cent of these novels they read are classical Hungarian works, while only 8 per cent are works of contemporary Hungarian writers.

By way of comparison, according to the *Giornale della Libraria*, the paper of the Federation of Italian Publishers, which published the results of sociological survey of reading in 1965, 21.6 per cent of the "hired hands" in Italian agriculture read regularly. And according to recent French statistics, 52 to 58 per cent of French people never read books.

The demands of village intellectuals are no different from those of the urban intelligentsia. There is perhaps only one difference: that white-collar workers of which there are increasing numbers in the villages too, have a growing preference for Series and Collections.

We carried out a survey on the purchasers of the 19,000 copies sold by the consumer cooperative bookshops of the fifty-volume Golden Library* Series which appeared from 1959–63.

This showed that the buyers comprised the following groups:

Doctors, engineers, teachers, etc. and clerical staff	62%
Workers	25%
Agricultural workers	7%
People of other occupations (mainly members of families)	6%

The situation in the villages is the same with the 15,000 subscribers to the My Library and Books of the Millions, and with the 25,000 subscribers of the Classics of World Literature Series. How can the popularity of these Series be explained? Why did so many people—and as we have seen,

* The Golden Library and the other popular series mentioned here publish independent series of books, consisting respectively of Hungarian or world classics. They include mainly 19th and 20th century novels, collections of short stories, sometimes anthologies or plays. Every volume is unabridged, and carefully translated and edited.

mostly intellectuals and employees—spend 25 forints a month on books for 3 or 4 years?

First of all, the purchase of these books has come to satisfy an intellectual urge for very many people. Apparently, most of the subscribers to the Golden Library Series wanted to have the works of the representative writers of Hungarian literature in their personal libraries. Many of them were glad that the publisher himself made the selection: they had only to rely on his taste and professional knowledge.

No doubt some of these people bought the series out of snobism, and to complete the effect of their furniture. It is also possible that many buyers may never even open these books. Nevertheless, they will be there for their children, when they grow up. This new generation of country children will have been borne among books, as it were; for them the presence of books in their home will be natural, no longer just a decoration.

In Hungarian villages, in addition to the distributing agencies for political literature which are directed by the village party organizations, books can be obtained from 9,900 other sources, in schools, consumer cooperative stores, on cooperative farms, in chemist's shops (health publications), as well as from the state purchasers of agricultural produce and livestock, from agricultural consultants, from activists of the youth movement and from libraries. This means that, on an average, i.e., including infants, there is one bookseller for every 600 village inhabitants.

In the cooperative bookshops, in the houses of the village book distributors and in the book depositories of the Consumer Cooperative Book Distributing Enterprise about 10 million volumes worth more than 110 million forints are waiting to be bought. Considering, then, that in the 5,332 village reading rooms and lending libraries more than 7 million volumes are waiting for village booklovers, one is entitled to ask, what can be the reason for the lack of readers in the villages?

The white spots

Sociological and statistical surveys have done signal service by marking the distribution of the black spots of our book culture. However, up till now, they have failed to provide a satisfactory answer as to why most villagers do not avail themselves of the opportunities offered by village book distribution? What is the reason why villagers who for the last few years have become so accustomed to washing-machines, motor-cycles, black coffee and tinned food, can get along very well without books? What can account for the fact that of those who are regular subscribers to the popular illustrated paper of the peasantry, *Szabad Föld*, or the illustrated *Képes Újság*, who listen to the radio, and who watch more than just the football matches on television, only a few are interested in reading books?

We must not overlook the fact that 75 per cent of the cooperative farm members attended only seven classes of the village school, or less, that is, did not complete the basic schooling from 6 to 14 years of age, and 62 per cent of those working on cooperative farms are over 50. It is also relevant that every third agricultural worker—a total of 1,200,000 people—lives in a farmstead or outlying hamlet, and that although the nation-wide electricity network has made electricity available to all villages, there are still 38.1 per cent of the houses which are not linked up to the village network.

But the relationship between the number of books bought and people who have completed the eight grades of school remains irregular. While the village school-children attend school they are in daily contact with books (as mentioned, 43.4 per cent of the subscribers to village libraries are under 14), but for many of them, once they leave school, this contact is broken. It is superfluous to emphasize what a decisive role the village school plays in developing a child's taste for reading. Be that as it may, one thing is certain: children who are not encouraged in

their homes to love books have to fight a natural reluctance to read.

Part of village public opinion still regards reading as something to be ashamed of. It often happens in villages that peasant women and girls take their books back to the lending library hidden under their aprons or wrapped up in paper. Or a peasant woman from a hamlet having bought a book for her son may warn him: "Hide it well so your father doesn't see it!"

A few months ago I heard a young peasant-woman say: "I like books and I read a lot but I always feel guilty, thinking that I am behind with my work."

Force of habit can be a hindrance in other respects too. For example, a person's reading taste changes or develops much slower than it should.

A few years ago I had the opportunity to convince myself of this during a visit to a peasant family. The most precious book of their domestic library—which consisted of 183 volumes, and although crammed into an old cabinet was worthy of the taste of any teacher of literature—was a penny dreadful by one Mihály Herke, which had appeared in 1928. It was not really a book, but the peasant-woman herself had copied it in 1959 from the original. It was entitled *Sándor Rózsa in 1848*,* subtitled "The Life of the Outlaw and Freedomfighter of Legendary Fame," and husband and wife had read it five or six times.

In future, the cause of books will have to be espoused with more care: the taste of the readers should be developed, too. In this connection we may wonder what the relationship of the village leaders—and of the leaders in general—is to books, for they are the ones who can do a great deal towards forming the readers' taste and point of view. It would, of course, be worthwhile for sociologists to examine this question in more detail. Meanwhile suffice it to quote the words of a district party secretary on the subject: "A good few of the district leaders prefer attending a fire brigade competition to a cultural event or lecture, a football match between the tractor station and the producer cooperative team to a performance of the touring Madame Déry Theatre, or to that of the State Folk Ensemble of Singers and Dancers. And if they took a mere half an hour a day from the time they spend playing cards and read, it would be a good beginning."

Certain cooperative leaders admit that book circulation in the villages is not a very commercial business, and yet in the shops under their supervision books are stored in the farthest corners or hidden behind other wares. Indeed, these functionaries shut an eye to the reluctance of book agents working on the "House-to-House Book Sale" drive to venture further than the most centrally situated houses in each village.

A great deal depends on these 12,000 village booksellers, agents, and librarians, but their literary and professional background, their activity and their methods leave much to be desired. However, even if the village librarians and book distributors could remedy all their omissions, even if they could work ten times or a hundred times harder, they would still not be able to solve this task without the backing of the nationwide apparatus of adult education, in other words, society itself.

It is obvious that the spread of book culture is not the concern of a few people, but should be the affair of every organ or organization active in the villages. However, this rallying of forces on a social scale is only just unfolding, and though certain signs seem to indicate that the process is gaining momentum, e.g., the autumn "County Book Weeks," or the drives of the House of Book-lovers

* Sándor Rózsa (1813–1878) was a notorious outlaw, a Hungarian Robin Hood of sorts who terrorized the landowners and county squires of the Great Hungarian Plain, and often aided the poor. With his company of outlaws he volunteered against the Austrians in the Hungarian War of Independence in 1848–49. In 1856 he was sentenced for life but was pardoned in 1867. In 1869 the gendarms set a trap for him and his troop, and he died in prison.

(built at Somogyvár, a small village in Transdanubia, at a cost of 500,000 forints as a joint investment by the local council and consumer cooperatives, this will house a library, a bookshop, a newspaper reading-room and café), we cannot yet be satisfied knowing that success or failure hinges mainly on this developing rallying of forces. In other words, the sooner a greater number of village people come to realize the value to themselves of reading the better success may materialize in this field.

Book culture has grown more rapidly in Hungarian villages during the two decades since the liberation in 1945 than it had done during all the 473 years from the setting up of András Hess's first Hungarian printing shop in Buda, in 1472, up to 1945.

BERTHA GASTER

A HUNTING PARTY AT EISENSTADT

"His Highness Prince Esterházy, at all times desirous that strangers as well as his countrymen should partake of those pleasures which his vast income and possessions enabled him with such unbounded munificence so frequently to entertain his friends, fixed the 16th September, 1822, for a party to meet at Eisenstadt, in Hungary, to partake of the chase. A carriage was at the disposal of Capt. Bauer and myself, and we left Vienna at seven o'clock in the morning."

So opens a long-forgotten description by a British rear-admiral of a visit to Eisenstadt, in the Burgenland, a few miles north of the present Hungarian frontier, when it was at the height of its splendour. Even as late as the beginning of this century Eisenstadt, or, in its Hungarian dress, Kismarton, transferred to Austria in 1920 under the Treaty of Trianon, was one of the 21 castles which, together with 29 lordships, 60 market towns and 414 villages, made up the Esterházy estate in Hungary, quite apart from several lordships in Lower Austria and a county in Bavaria. And eighty years earlier, when the rear-admiral visited it, the lords of Esterháza lived on a scale of regal splendour that not even the wealthiest of the English aristocracy could attempt to emulate.

The account of the hunting-party is to be found in an autobiography—"The Life of a Sea Officer"—which the rear-admiral wrote for the delectation of his wife and two daughters some six or seven years later, in the years of his last active appointment, from 1828 to 1833, and published privately in Maidstone some time in the eighteen-thirties. The book is unique in that it is the first English autobiography of a naval career, although it was shortly followed by others. Revealing little of his intimate life or character, and written in a rather pedestrian style, it is nevertheless of considerable interest for its picture of life at sea at the beginning of the nineteenth century, his observations on the various countries he visited, and in particular for his experiences as a prisoner of war during the French Revolution.

Copies of the original edition are very rare. One, presented by the author to Earl de Grey, who was First Lord of the Admiralty, is in the Admiralty Library; neither the British Museum nor the other big public libraries appear to possess a copy. The book was reprinted under the original title in 1929, but the chapter dealing with the visit to Eisenstadt was omitted, and this may very well be the first time it has been

reproduced *in extenso* since its original appearance.

It is also unusual in the identity of the author himself. For Rear-Admiral Raigersfeld of the Red was the son of John Luke de Raigersfeld, Baron of the Holy Roman Empire, an Austrian subject, who first came to England as a member of the Austrian Embassy in 1756. He married an English wife and settled down in England, dying there in 1819 at the age of 86. His son, Baron Jeffrey de Raigersfeld, born in England in 1771 and brought up there, chose the Navy at an early age. His career was unspectacular. He was a conscientious and efficient officer, but promotion was slow. "As a commander he was side-tracked into converted colliers, and as a post-captain he never had a sea-going command."

His father's diplomatic and aristocratic connections, however, both in England and among the Continental nobility, stood his son in good stead. The elder de Raigersfeld was well acquainted with Collingwood, under whom Jeffrey served in his first ship, and was friendly with Howe and Hood, who recommended him to Sir Richard Strachan for his next appointment in the "Vestal." On his voyages as far afield as the West Indies, Madeira, Java and Tangiers, and his travels on the Continent, his father was again behind him with influential introductions.

It was in 1822, when Raigersfeld, still as yet a captain, was 51, that "the Austrian Ambassador, civil on my father's account, knowing how desirous I was to make personal acquaintance with my relations on my father's side, proposed my accompanying him to Vienna," an invitation which, "after procuring leave of absence from the Admiralty," was promptly accepted.

It has not yet been possible to discover any details of Raigersfeld's connections in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They gave him the entrée to Imperial society, and indeed he enjoyed it all so much that he brought his family over and settled for a stay in Vienna which lasted some five or six years. The name may in fact be a Germanized form of some landed Bohemian or Croat family, but he makes no further mention of them in his book.

The Austrian Ambassador referred to was Prince Pál Esterházy, who had taken up the post in England after the conclusion of peace in 1815, and was the son and heir of Prince Nicolaus Esterházy. Prince Nicolaus, Raigersfeld's host at Eisenstadt, lived in extraordinary magnificence, and spent prodigally on entertainment, building and the arts; the pictures he assembled at Eisenstadt were bought by the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts in 1865, and formed the nucleus of its collection. Whenever possible the Prince with the "nature of an Asiatic despot," as a contemporary described him, spent the summer and autumn at Eisenstadt, which he greatly embellished, besides laying out part of the gardens in the then fashionable English style.

*

After an enjoyable stay in Vienna—"the ladies at Vienna... universally have very engaging manners" he noted—Raigersfeld set out on his visit to Eisenstadt. As he and Capt. Bauer bowled along they found "horses in readiness at the different post-houses for the company as they arrived to carry them on, so that there were no delays caused by payment or anything else (this was an arrangement of the Prince)."

We may indeed let the admiral continue in his own words.

"As we entered Hungary the peasants were ploughing; the ploughs are very light, sometimes drawn by one horse, or cow, at others by two or three abreast, with one man to drive them all; the earth was a very dark mould, it was rich, and did not require deep ploughing; the country through which we passed was open country and rather flat, without hedges. We arrived at Eisenstadt in good time; it is a very pretty town, situated upon the declivity of a hill, commanding a view over a large valley of rather flat country,

terminated by a chain of hills at some distance. In the centre of the town, a little higher on the hill, stands the palace of the Prince, enclosed in front by an iron railing, where a company of Grenadiers continually do the duty of the palace and town; we entered this enclosure by a large gate close to the guardhouse, and traversing the parade, passed the portico of the palace into a large square in the centre of the building."

The visitor to Eisenstadt to-day will find a very different atmosphere. The imposing ochre-coloured building and its four squat Baroque corner towers, with the horizontal row of busts breaking the facade and the grinning masks of the corbels supporting the roof on the town side, and the great colonnaded portico facing the garden on the other, are still there. But the iron railing is gone, the company of Grenadiers is no more, and there is an air of desolation and desertion about the place. The present Prince Esterházy, who fled from Hungary in 1956, returned to find that under the Russian occupation of that part of Austria most of the estate had been divided out and let at extremely low rents to the peasants of the region, the great park had been turned into a public garden for the benefit of the inhabitants of the town, and part of the palace had been let to the town authorities. A prolonged legal battle with tenants and town authorities followed; the Prince has retrieved a great number of the peasant tenancies, and also a third of the park—the other two-thirds remain as a public garden. Nor can he evict the public authorities from the parts they occupy before their lease runs out. As a result relations are more than strained. The Prince does not live in Eisenstadt. Not only are the private quarters of the palace, as is usual, inaccessible, but recently, as a mark of displeasure, he has closed all those parts, such as the famous Haydnsaal, which were formerly open to the public. Were the ghost of Raigersfeld to return to-day, he would find bare staircases winding up to deserted landings and locked doors, and would be aware of an infinite sense of dust and loneliness.

"As in these cases," continued Raigersfeld, "the first thing is to know your rooms, we were shown two over the portico, looking into the garden; the servant said these had been fixed upon for the sea Captain, as sailors liked a place to walk backwards and forwards on, but if any of the other apartments were preferred we had only to choose. The windows of these rooms opened upon the portico, where was a large space, at least ninety feet long by fifty wide, being boarded, was excellent walking."

Of the two hundred rooms for guests at Eisenstadt, this row of rooms on the top floor overlooking the Portico is today occupied by a section of the Finance Ministry. Perhaps the room allocated to Raigersfeld was the charming empty room at the end of the row, with medallions representing the arts—books, quill pens, palettes, musical instruments and so forth—delicately painted on the walls.

A glimpse of what Eisenstadt may have been like in those days—and indeed may still appear in the jealously sealed apartments of the Prince—can be gathered from the suite of rooms on a lower floor now occupied by the authorities, consisting of the local court and the offices of the chief legal authority. There must be few dry as dust judges and lawyers, and even less law clerks and secretaries, who carry out their duties in rooms papered with rare Far Eastern wallpapers and blue and grey striped silk and rich red brocade; who work under exquisite stucco ceilings; who have marquetry furniture and elaborately gilded side tables and—in the inner sanctum of the judge himself—a ravishing ebony and silver buhl table, on which to deposit their files; who may even—who knows—invite visitors on business to seat themselves on elegant eighteenth century chairs of painted wood, upholstered in delicately worked silver and pale blue brocade.

Dinner was served soon after Raigersfeld's arrival.

"We sat down about eighteen, including the officers of the guard, who when the Prince is here always have a cover; after coffee and tea, which is served about seven, we entered the concert room; it was well lighted up, where was the Chapel Master and his scholars of vocal and instrumental performers of both sexes, and filled with company from the town, waiting the entry of the Prince and his guests. On his Highness going in, the company rose up, and his Highness returning the salute and waving his hand, put every body at their ease, and the concert began. The music and singing was good, and the French horns admirable; indeed when one considers that this school of the Prince had given to the world Haydn (his Highness's late Chapel Master), one of the first composers of his time, one cannot but suppose each succeeding master would do all in his power to bring forward students who should uphold the credit of an establishment attended with much expense, for all who have talent and arrive at a certain pitch of perfection, are pensioned by the Prince, with permission to engage wherever they please."

The next morning, a little before eight "the servant brought us excellent coffee, hot cream, fruit, and what else we choose to have. Afterwards we strolled in the shrubbery, which is laid out in the English style; there is a beautiful grotto cascade, built at a great expense, the rocks and water being brought from a distance, it forms a deep, wide basin, excavated in the ground, into which the water from above, running under ground, falls tumbling into this excavation perpendicularly over great rocks, and from thence breaks over others into a river below, that meanders through the grounds; on a promontory on one side the basin is a handsome temple, fitted up to live in; and about a quarter of a mile higher up the hill is a fort, mounting several pieces of brass ordnance, 24-pounders; and higher up stands a pavilion, well furnished and fitted up for instant use. The cannon were now making the vale re-echo, saluting his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland," the fifth son of George III, and later, on the accession of Queen Victoria, King of Hanover, "who was seen from the heights, as was also his Serene Highness the Prince of Saxe-Coburg, and his brother."

"At dinner to-day the company was more numerous, the officers of a regiment of cavalry, that had come into the neighbourhood on purpose should his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland wish to see them manoeuvre, being invited, so that we were about fifty or more who sat down to a most magnificent dinner, attended by a regiment of servants, bearing a succession of dishes to which you could see no end, for the string continued unbroken all the time we remained at table. The wines were of all descriptions, perfect and in abundance; a Hungarian red wine that I tasted very much resembled good old port, both in flavour and colour; it is named Bude."

One may speculate whether it was done in those days to take the guests for a tour of the wine cellars. The cellars at Eisenstadt are an extraordinary feature of the place. They run in meandering passages underneath the building, and are its oldest part. The inner circular passage dates from around 1300 and is surrounded by a curiously elliptical outer cellar, both filled with thousands of racks of wine from the estate, which is today a profitable business. Some of the huge wooden tuns are carved with elaborate designs, for a special tun with his name and the date of his birth is carved for each Esterházy heir when he comes into the world.

Even the wine, however, could not divert Raigersfeld's interest in the food.

"The devices in confectionery that ornamented the table were elegant models of ruins, very large; plumed helmets, and many other things, so well executed that the feathers on the helmets I thought were real ostrich ones, but when they in turn came to glut man's capacious appetite I felt repugnance in their destruction, their excellent

flavour however allayed the sensibility of the virtuoso, and I ate again."

And then, the following morning, came the first day's shoot.

"The next morning early all was alive, breakfast was soon dispatched, and about eight o'clock all descended to the court-yard, where a dozen carriages, with four black horses each, were in readiness to convey the company to where the shooting was to take place; these carriages being intended for quick and comfortable conveyance, are open, having two seats within the body, the front a double one, so that on this you sit back to back, the backs are well stuffed, with plenty of room for the legs to stretch out, and nine persons may sit with ease. Away we went" wrote our nautical author, "one after another in line-of-battle a-head, which had a very pretty effect, going along a dusty road with the wind abeam blowing fresh; At two we found ourselves in the field, and on quitting our carriages were conducted by the master of the chase, or grand verdier, in rich uniform and sword by side, to our station in the line, which was flanked by a wood on its left, with parties of peasants in it to drive out the game; the line consisted of a double row of peasants close together, the first row had whips and sticks in their hands, and the second none; the sportsmen are placed each at the distance of fifteen yards one from the other in this line behind the double row of peasants; attending on each sportsman are two men, with a stand of six fusees ready loaded for use, slung at each of their backs; there are likewise two game-keepers to each of these stands, one to hand you a loaded piece, and receive that which you have discharged, which he places to the left on the stand; the other game-keeper takes the unloaded one from the stand and loads it, he then puts it on the stand to the right, from whence the other game-keeper takes it as wanted, so that each sportsman has six men to attend him and twelve fusees, some of which are double barrelled: besides these two lines there is a third of chasseurs in livery, sword by side, with horns and whips in hand, at a distance from each other about fifteen paces, whose duty it is to keep their individual squads of peasants in the lines before them upon the alert; then come head gamekeepers on horse-back, in rich liveries, sword by side, who ride along the line in the rear, and have an eye to the whole that nothing may be wanting; last of all comes the outward circle of peasants, by far the most numerous, they include all ages and sexes; these enclose a large space of ground all round the preserve, making the wood their centre, and these peasants you can just distinguish; they have whips, long poles, horns, and drums, and make all manner of noises, as their duty is to drive all game back that attempt to pass their outward circle; they stand from each other about fifty or sixty feet apart, and being far out of hearing they can holloa and cry as loud as they please, so that now and then you perceive they are endeavouring to frighten the game by lifting up their hands and the poles.

"Everything being arranged, and each sportsman at his post, not a word is spoken nor does any one stir, the huntsmen on a signal given wind their horns, and the whole body at once move forward in a line, the peasants of the first line beating the low brushwood which covers the ground, and up fly clouds of game, while the sportsmen blaze away at random and as quick as possible; the birds tumble by dozens. It may be necessary here to observe that each sportsman discharges his piece in front only, by which precaution no accidents happen from shot, indeed there is no necessity to incline your fire, as you have more game on the wing and hares on the ground in front than you can possibly fire at, but should any fly to your rear no heed is taken of them. At first starting I found myself hesitating to fire from the quantities of game before me, but I soon became *au fait*, and my six men found employment enough in supplying my wants. When a person singles his object, either on

the wing or the ground, the six men are not more than enough to supply him well, all their hands are kept going; if your piece misses fire, which rarely happens, you never attempt to cock it again, but give it with one hand and receive with the other, and if the gamekeeper perceives that you shoot better with one piece than another, he endeavours as often as possible to give it to you; their attention is very great, and their quickness is such that when you would ask for any thing you want in the field it is presented you before the words are out of your mouth; if they see you shoot well, the peasants in the line will mark the game for you, while others contrive to drive it across you, and every time you kill you hear a hum of approbation. Game wounded are picked up and killed instantly."

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One cannot help pausing a moment to savour Raigersfeld's next statement. "It is extremely gratifying to find this description of men so very eager to do all they can to please their master's guests, and it is certainly no unfavourable indication of their comfortable enjoyments in their line of life."

This was written a few years before Baron Miklós Wesselényi, another great landlord of the time, but a politician with progressive tendencies, had carried out a survey of the peasants on his own estate which revealed that they had to put in between 78 and 156 days corvée a year in the service of their master, in addition to the dues to be paid in the form of eggs, butter, the weaving of linen, preparing the vineyard, etc. Adding all these burdens on the peasant, to the cost of tilling his own few *jok* of land, Wesselényi discovered that it cost the peasant 54.32 kreutzer to till a *jok* of land which brought him in 49.10 kreutzer. In fact, a deficit. "The peasant labours" said Wesselényi, speaking at an Assembly of the Kőrös-Szolnok county in an attempt to change the onerous laws enslaving them, "but the fruits of his labour are enjoyed by his lord."

"The second line of peasants" Raigersfeld continued, "find employment sufficient in picking up the dead game, which is immediately sent into the rear, and from thence carried off the ground; in this way the sportsmen go on for about a quarter of an hour, when the line is stopped by high underwood, about five hundred feet in length and one hundred in breadth; here you cease firing, while the first line of peasants enter it and drive the game that has taken shelter there forward; you then enter and form your line afresh just within the wood on the other side, and when all are ready, the word forward is given, and the firing recommences *de novo*, and you march onward as before through the low brushwood, until another high underwood of the same dimensions stop the line. In this way you keep going round the centre wood that flanks your left until you arrive at the point from whence you set off, and here you rest, and the gamekeepers on horseback in the rear, inform all who wish to know what game has been killed. During this repose Tokay with biscuits were brought round by the valets, and we are informed that in the first hour eight hundred and fifty head of game had been shot.

"In about half an hour the lines were formed, and round we went again, and once more besides, after which we left off, and entered the wood on the left of the line, where in its centre is a circular grass plot, on which all the dead game was laid out in rows of ten, each of its kind together, and each hundred separate—partridges, pheasants, hares, and amongst other things was a stoat killed by me; in all, to the best of my recollection, one thousand eight hundred head, killed by sixteen persons in about two hours and a quarter. Here we eat grapes fresh from the vine.

"Upon inquiring what number of persons were attending upon the ground in consequence of being assembled together in this part of their duty, the huntsman informed that there were something more than three

thousand. The carriages were now ready, and we returned in the same order to Eisenstadt.

"Our party at dinner was the same, and in the evening instead of a concert there was a ball, which began at seven; the principal inhabitants of the town were invited, and upon entering the ball-room we found it filled with well dressed people, besides an excellent band of twenty-four musicians, who kept playing the animated waltz with taste. As fancy led, the gentlemen selected partners, and waltzed round the room twice, thrice, or more, according as they found themselves equal, for the German waltz is an exhilarating dance, and the constant whirl and exertion does not admit of its being continued long at one time; sometimes only one couple are dancing, at others several, and frequently so many couple get up at once, that they remain one behind the other, until those before them waltz away; it is then that the experienced waltzers show off with advantage, passing you sometimes within and sometimes without the general circle, as it suits them." The gallant captain obviously found the waltz greatly to his taste:—"indeed it is one of the most agreeable and convenient dances I know of, and the only one in which you are wholly occupied with your partner"...

"...To conclude the evening and compliment the English, the German country dance was performed, in which the whole company took part, and the English and Scotch gentlemen, not willing to be outdone, danced Scotch reels, and a strathspey, which they performed admirably, accompanying it with the true Highland fling and the ha ha, with the clap of the hands in the national style."

"...The next morning betimes every body was again in motion, his Highness not feeling satisfied unless he could amuse his guests to a degree that not any thing more could be desired, therefore orders had been given to prepare another kind of chase for the day's amusement in one of his forests about ten miles from Eisenstadt, where two hundred head of deer were to be let loose; so after breakfast we repaired to our carriages, which were waiting in the large inner court of the palace, from whence in about an hour and a half we entered an extensive forest, and soon arrived at the keeper's lodge, and a little way further, coming to where two roads crossed, alighted from our carriages; here an occurrence of an unpleasant nature threw a gloom over the whole company. The valet of his Serene Highness Prince Saxe-Coburg fell down, being seized with a paralytic affection, which deprived him of speech and the use of one side; the medical gentleman attending upon his Highness Prince Esterházy immediately rendered his assistance. These visitations cast a sudden damp over man, who though absorbed in pursuit of amusement, from which he anticipates much gratification, yet he is affected for some time after, notwithstanding the hurry and whirl he may be surrounded by, and this was apparent in his Serene Highness, for the man had been in his service since he was a boy, and I believe, judging by myself, all the company felt the same.

"Enclosing the whole space allotted for the chase is a stout white canvas, twenty feet high, fixed with strong poles to prevent the escape of the deer, and within this all round at the distance of two hundred yards from the canvas, are stations eight feet diameter, built with stakes and stuck with green boughs; these stations are between three and four hundred yards from each other, and three men attend at each, one with a stand containing six rifles, another to take the piece when fired and give you a loaded one, and a third to load them and replace them in readiness for use: between these stations and the canvas, and from these stations towards the centre of the enclosure all round for about one hundred yards, the very large trees are cut down, which admitting of more light gives to the wood beyond a dark and sombre appearance. In one of these stations

I remained sometime, and my attendants informed me that when all was in readiness we should hear the horns, which were to announce the deer being let loose, but that nobody was to fire towards the centre, as that would be filled with peasants, whose duty it was to drive the deer to the space between us and the canvas, and that no one was to fire at the deer until they came opposite to them, as by a slant fire the ball might take a tree and glance to another station either to the right or left, and perhaps hurt some person there."

The complete unconcern with which Raigersfeld described the shambles which followed is a vivid reminder of at least some difference in attitudes between that century and this. "The sound of horns now informed me that the deer were let loose, and the report of several rifles fired off announced the hasty strides of death; then was heard the cracking of whips and shouts of the peasantry labouring to force the deer from the ravine, which was pretty deep, across the centre of the enclosure, to take the open space between the stations and the canvas, and afford to the sportsman a rich and sumptuous repast. The continual shouts echoing from the deep wood thrilled upon my ear, but no deer came my way, although the peasants of all ages—men, women, and children—soon made their appearance, moving slowly in a body of four or five lines, extending right across the enclosure, and as they rose, the ravine under the dark and sombre part of the wood, their numbers, attended by the gamekeepers of all grades and liveries, with horns and whips in their hands, had an imposing effect, while the timid and hunted deer bounding to the open space afforded the sportsman every now and then a shot or two, and if perchance one paid the forfeiture of its existence, the very instant the herd had passed, men from the station the shot had been fired dragged the expiring animal to that post, where it lay as a trophy until all was over.

"The herd was now upon the trot, going round close to the canvas, anxiously endeavouring to find some small opening through which they might escape the destructive fire that poured upon them every way they turned; at last the poor creatures, finding all their efforts useless, would not run any more, but stood stock still, herding every here and there in small bodies of ten or fifteen; notwithstanding the deadly fire with deliberate aim, each shot telling, they never moved, except when the force of a ball made them stagger and crouch down, with the hope of avoiding destruction. At this point dogs were let loose at them; these attacking the herds forced the deer to separate and run, and as they became completely lost they fled in all directions for shelter towards the body of the wood, where the peasantry with dogs drove and chased them towards the canvas, when finding all their efforts to escape ineffectual they lay down and would not stir; in this situation they became a point blank mark to those sportsmen who chose to leave their stations and end the misery of many whose wounds wept with blood.

"At last, satiated with the fatigue of sport, I gladly attended to the horns sounding a retreat, and quitting my station followed the sound to where we first alighted: here the company had assembled, and whilst an excellent band of French horns kept playing, the company eat fresh grapes from the vine, recounting their prowess, until the wagons began to arrive with the game, and as they came one after the other well loaded, the horns made the forest resound with appropriate sallies of triumph, and as soon as one was unloaded others succeeded: the great bucks were laid in a row even at the head, and every tenth was drawn further out than the rest; the bucks of the first head the same; scores in the same manner, sorels next, then prickets, and afterwards fawns, all in one row, and to mark the separation the last of its kind was laid length ways, with its antlers to the interior. I counted one hundred and thirty-eight in all, and in general they were well shot, the balls having entered the

body and head, very few shewing three wounds. His Highness Prince Esterházy was the most active man there; not a wagon came that he did not point out where the game was to be laid, and the huntsmen when they had seen one job finished, made their report to him, and he always went to observe how it had been performed; if incomplete, he had the person who did it called out to undo and do it again; by this means all was in a very little time laid out so well that no mistake could mislead the bystanders either in class or number. After the whole had been inspected by the company, his Highness answering any questions that were asked, they were left with directions how to be disposed of, and we returned to Eisenstadt in the same order as we came, and very soon after sat down to an excellent dinner, and passing the evening gaily, retired to our beds.

"The next day a grand chase of stags took place at another forest, but having seen one of deer, I quitted Eisenstadt after breakfast, and returned to Vienna, much gratified in being present and partaking of sports that from the description I had ever heard came far short of the reality."

ZOLTÁN VAS

KOSSUTH IN ENGLAND

Nearly a year and a half had passed since the collapse of the War of Independence in 1849. Throughout this period Austria and the other Great Powers had forced the Hungarophile Ottoman Empire to keep Kossuth interned in Asia Minor. International public opinion strongly demanded his release, but in Constantinople Canning, the British Ambassador, who considered himself a great power in his own right, still held that the peace of Europe would be endangered if Turkey were to permit Kossuth to leave.

Up to March 1851, Lord Palmerston, the British Prime Minister, had shared this opinion. At this point, however, he took sympathetic notice, on behalf of Great Britain, of the resolution passed by the Congress of the United States declaring Kossuth and his interned comrades heartily welcome in America. Austria strongly protested against the departure of Kossuth, but upon Palmerston's advice, the Ottoman Empire, which had indeed only interned the leader of the Hungarian War of Independence out of political necessity, at the demand of the Russian Czar and the Austrian Emperor, now readily consented to let him go.

Kossuth received with joy the invitation by the United States, which meant his release. But he protested against any possibility that this invitation, as Pulszky, the former Minister of revolutionary Hungary in London, had informed him in a letter from England, was in fact designed to remove him, as an emigrant, from the still seething scene of the European revolution.

Kossuth therefore informed both the Turkish Government and the American Minister in Constantinople that he wished to accept the invitation by the Congress of the United States only on the condition that he went to America not as an immigrant but as a free person, and that he could pay a short visit to England on his way to America.

He confided the delivery of his letter to Lemmi, one of Mazzini's most trusted aides. Mazzini, the leader of the Italian revolutionary party, had done him many a service during his internment.

Lemmi, however, was afraid that Kossuth's conditions might delay the decision of the Turkish Government and the United States by weeks, even months. He consequently decided to withhold delivery of the letters entrusted to him, and begged Kossuth to be patient.

In the last days of July 1851, the Turkish Government, despite repeated protests by Austria, finally requested the American Minister in Constantinople to send a ship to the Dardanelles to fetch Kossuth and his comrades.

On August 22, Suleiman Bey, the Government Commissioner, officially informed Kossuth that he was free and should prepare for his departure.

As when they had come to Kütahya, the place of their internment, so now Kossuth and his comrades, this time also in the company of his wife and three children, set out in a long caravan, in carriages, on horseback and in ox-carts. Their first stop was Brussa, and from there to the port of Gemliki, where they arrived on September 8 and boarded a steamship which took them to the southern mouth of the Dardanelles. There the American frigate *Mississippi*, one of the finest ships of the United States, equipped with every comfort, awaited them, decked out with American, British, Turkish and Hungarian flags.

On Board the Mississippi

On the frigate Kossuth was received with full naval honours. The return route was planned via Smyrna in Turkey, La Spezia in Italy, and Marseilles in France; at each point the ship was to refuel and take on water. From Marseilles, it was planned, they would sail to Gibraltar and then cross the Atlantic, after calling at Madeira. When he learnt this, Kossuth asked Captain Long, the commander of the frigate, to change the route and to go via Naples and Genoa, rather than La Spezia, though he did not tell him why. He had arranged with Mazzini, before his departure, through an exchange of secret letters, to meet the leaders of the forthcoming Italian revolution in one of these ports. They were planning to hold detailed discussions on a new and simultaneous uprising of the Italian and the Hungarian peoples in the near future, making use of the fact that Austria was using a large number of Hungarian regiments in the occupation of Milan and Venice, as well as her other Italian provinces.

Kossuth further told Captain Long that before they finally directed their course across the Atlantic, he would like the *Mississippi* to take him to England, where he intended to stay for twenty days. If this was impossible, then he would like the frigate to wait for him at Gibraltar while he visited England.

Captain Long had orders to take Kossuth to America by the shortest way, and to prevent any demonstrative manifestation *en route* which might give rise to antagonism between the European powers and the United States. Long was therefore in no position to put into Naples or Genoa, nor was he willing to agree that Kossuth should disembark at any other point in order to go to England.

When Long explained the route the *Mississippi* was due to take Kossuth found himself in a dilemma. He was afraid that if he did not go to England then, a long stay of several months in the United States would deny him any opportunity of talking to the other Hungarian émigré leaders and with Mazzini, and of influencing British public opinion in the interest of his homeland and the new revolution. This public opinion was still favourable to him, but tomorrow it might well be indifferent, or even antagonized by his American contacts. If, however, he left the *Mississippi* against their will to go to London, it would upset the Americans, who were great supporters of the Hungarian cause. But Long's statement that he could only go to America promptly produced a protest from

Kossuth on principle. He was no longer a captive, and he would decide in La Spezia whether to continue his voyage to the United States at all.

At Smyrna the first to board the frigate was the Consul General of the United States, who greeted Kossuth on behalf of his Government. He also presented him with a large sum of money for travelling expenses, but Kossuth courteously rejected it, saying he had never accepted any gift, and could not do so now.

Nearly all the Hungarians living in Constantinople had flocked to Smyrna to greet Kossuth, and with them many of the sympathizing Italian émigrés of the Republican movement. Even the local inhabitants joined so enthusiastically in the reception accorded him that the American Consul General, fearful lest the demonstration might lead to embarrassing complications for the Porte with Austria, ordered the *Mississippi* to leave at once.

In La Spezia

On September 21, 1851, the frigate anchored in the port of La Spezia. The Italian people gave Kossuth the same enthusiastic welcome, and the authorities were unable to prevent it.

Kossuth was overcome by the reception in La Spezia and by the fact that he, a person persecuted by Austria, yesterday still a prisoner, now stood on the deck of an American frigate especially sent to convey him to that country, amidst the plaudits of a cheering people. He answered them with a speech forecasting the victory of democracy, speaking as the leader of the imminent European revolution and it was in such a mood that he turned to the Hungarian people on September 22, 1851, with a proclamation calling on them in the name of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

"Two years have passed over our heads since the defeat of the revolution." In strong language he attacked the Emperor Franz Joseph, not even a crowned king of Hungary, merely a usurper, existing by the grace of the Russian Czar. He exposed the ruthless rule of the Emperor that had made the whole country into a prison and plunged it into mourning.

"Behold! Here am I, the Regent of Hungary, exiled by the treason of Görgey and the united power of Austria and Russia, in an Italian port, under the shelter of the American flag, on board a mighty warship of the New World sent for me by the President in Washington, upon the orders of the Congress of the United States, where I begin to write to you, not words of farewell, but the first heartening words of greeting, words soon to be followed by action..."

In another letter dated from La Spezia Kossuth informed Morgan, the commander of the Mediterranean fleet, of his intention to visit England. By way of argument in support of his request he pointed out that the Austrian press had put it about that the Turkish Government had only released him on the condition he emigrate permanently to America. Such a false allegation could only be effectively refuted if he were to appear in England, making it clear that he sailed to America under no duress but, following his visit to England, by his own free decision.

Morgan considered it impossible to grant his request and tried to persuade him to abandon it, since he was expected in New York at a fixed date. Kossuth, however, insisted, but changed it so as to reach New York in time, after his visit to England. Instead of disembarking at Gibraltar he decided to leave the *Mississippi* at Marseilles, which would shorten the trip through France to the Channel, and after a twenty days' stay in England he would sail to Gibraltar on the first mailboat, board the frigate, and continue his voyage to the United States.

Morgan's commission was to take Kossuth to America. But he could not use force to achieve it, and when he saw that no argument would deter Kossuth, he consented.

While Kossuth was in England, the *Mississippi*, carrying the other émigré Hungarians, would sail to Gibraltar and there await Kossuth's return for a period of three weeks, but no more.

In the meantime the news that Kossuth had been released from internment in Turkey and was on his way to Europe and America to win support for the cause of Hungarian independence spread like wildfire through the whole of Hungary.

In Marseille

On September 26, 1851, the *Mississippi* dropped anchor at Marseilles. The American Consul, with the permission of the mayor of the city, offered his own house to Kossuth and his family for as long as the frigate remained in port.

Kossuth's first step was to ask for a laissez-passer through France from the French Government. It was promptly refused.

By way of reply, to the great joy of the French left-wing parties, Kossuth sent an open letter to President Louis Bonaparte, framed in a radical-republican spirit, and by no means mincing his words: "I know that the French people are not behind you in this action. I am well aware that Monsieur Louis Bonaparte is not yet the French nation, that he merely represents the executive power and not the honour of free France." He went on to reproach the president for forgetting that not so long ago he himself had been an exile. In a prophetic voice he warned the president that sooner or later he would again be one.

He also wrote a letter to the mayor of Southampton informing him that since he was unable to travel through France he would interrupt his voyage to the States in Gibraltar, and would be arriving in England shortly.

Despite Louis Bonaparte, the people of Marseilles streamed to the harbour in their tens of thousands, carrying the French national flag, accompanied by bands, cheering Kossuth and overwhelming him with flowers.

This vast popular movement was at the same time a demonstration against President Bonaparte, at that time preparing his reactionary *coup d'état;* in his speeches, and in his proclamation addressed to the citizens of Marseilles, Kossuth emphasized this in extreme-republican terms. The views on socialism he aired were to some extent in line with the spirit of the French socialists, emphasizing the adherence of the French people, and especially the workers, to the republican cause of the people's freedom.

Kossuth's letter, and his statement, were regarded by the French Government as interference in the internal affairs of the country, and as a form of reprisals, all passengers on the *Mississippi* were forbidden to disembark. Whereupon Kossuth handed the official notice he had received to the French press, from which it was clear that it was Louis Bonaparte who had forbidden him to pass through France. The attack then launched by the radical Marseilles newspaper *Peuple* in connection with this exposure did not only embarrass French Government quarters. The American Consul sharply reproached Kossuth saying that the notice had been given him, Kossuth, exclusively to read, and that by publishing it he had not only interfered in French affairs but had also compromised the Americans. At the Consul's request Captain Long added his protest, energetically demanding that Kossuth should refrain in future from any step which could discredit the policy of the United States in France. Kossuth and Long clashed; Kossuth declared that he would appeal to the American people against the course of action taken by the Consul and Captain Long.

On October 5 the frigate reached Gibraltar, where not only the people but the Governor as well received Kossuth with the honours due to a head of state.

What Kossuth would have liked to do would have been to set sail for England that

very day, but the mailboat had left Gibraltar the day before, and he had to await her return.

While he was in Gibraltar he received a letter from Pulszky informing him that huge preparations were being made in Southampton for his reception. He urged Kossuth to hasten his arrival, fearing that any long delay would tire the people and lessen their enthusiasm.

Pulszky's fears were unfounded. The mail boat had brought over the latest editions of the great London and country newspapers. All of them devoted columns to Kossuth's release, the voyage of the *Mississippi* and the preparations for his reception in England. The great majority of the press was pro-Kossuth, despite the fact that the radical tone of his speeches in Marseilles had caused disquiet in the United Kingdom. Most of the newspapers criticized his radical attitude, and some of them even expressed doubt that he himself had written the Marseilles statement supporting the socialists, but added that if this were so then unfortunately he had evidently not considered carefully enough the impression his appearance had given. They were unable to imagine, they wrote, that Kossuth, up to then known as a moderate, would strike the same radical republican chord before the public upon his arrival in England as he had done in Marseilles. This kind of thing better suited the British Chartists of the extreme left and the revolutionary Mazzini, as well as the French popular leader Louis Blanc, than Kossuth.

Seeing the articles in the British papers Kossuth himself came to the conclusion that, in terms of gaining support for the Hungarian cause in England, he had made a political mistake in Marseilles. To remedy it, and to prevent his first public appearance in English being a failure, he worked out in detail the main principles of his policy and his speeches in England. These were the same as already expounded in his political letters from internment in Kütahya: Great Britain should not permit any power to interfere with the internal affairs of other states. Thus in the case of a new Hungarian War of Independence (which Kossuth hoped would break out in the immediate future), Great Britain should prevent the intervention of Czarist Russia on the side of Austria. With this end in view Kossuth decided to display no hostility to Palmerston, who had done considerable damage to the Hungarian cause in the War of Independence, but rather with the help of British public opinion to try and gain Palmerston's support.

Here Kossuth found himself contradicting his earlier attitude, for in his earlier letters to the West he had written of Palmerston, asking how anyone with a modicum of sense could have imagined that the British Foreign Secretary, who had tolerated Russia's intervention in Hungary, would suddenly turn against Russia in the interest of Hungary. But Kossuth also contradicted himself in carefully refraining from emphasizing his republican views in England, in order to mitigate the unfavourable political effect of his appearance in Marseilles. He would have liked his radical proclamation there to be entirely forgotten.

In Gibraltar he was forced to wait some ten days for a ship to London. As a result, according to the orders issued by Admiral Morgan, there were only about ten to twelve days left, out of the promised three weeks, for the *Mississippi* to wait for Kossuth's return. This would allow too little time for the stay in England and the trip back to Gibraltar. It was therefore agreed with Captain Long that Kossuth would sail directly from England to New York. The *Mississippi* would proceed to cross the Atlantic on half-steam, lest she arrive earlier in New York than Kossuth, since his absence from the frigate might give rise to false political conclusions. Kossuth, allowing for mishaps, gave a letter to Captain Long for the Government of the United States excusing himself for spending several days in England before his arrival. "The overriding duty of the patriot, the father and the man forces me to find a place for my children with friends,

and put them to school in England where, after my trip to America, I myself intend to settle down for the short transitional time until I return victoriously to Hungary."

Arrival in Southampton

On October 16, 1851, the steamship *Madrid* sailed from Gibraltar to Southampton, where she put in on October 23. On board were Kossuth, his wife and three children, their tutor Ignácz Karády, Lt-Colonel Dániel Ihász and his A.D.C.

Kossuth, his family and his friends awaited the great moment, dressed in their best clothes. On the quayside large crowds had gathered. They were not only the local population and folk from the surrounding regions, but included large numbers from London, many distinguished political personages among them, who had come to greet their great guest, the hero of freedom.

The crowd cheered and thronged round him with roars of enthusiasm; it was with great difficulty that a way was forced for Kossuth from the ship to his dwelling. Upon repeated calls from the crowd he stepped onto the balcony and delivered an extemporary oration in English. For the first few sentences his speech was still somewhat halting, wrote the British papers afterwards, but at the official reception in the Town Hall he was already speaking easily, fluently and with passionate conviction.

He did not forget his previous decision; Pulszky, who had arrived for the reception, and whose political convictions were right-wing, had again warned Kossuth not to speak out in the radically republican spirit of Marseilles, because in that case he would lose the sympathy not only of the British but of the American ruling classes as well.

Kossuth went on in a burst of rhetoric to explain the reasons for the Hungarian people's war for freedom, to denounce Austrian tyranny, and to make clear that the downfall of Hungary had been caused solely by Russian intervention. He demonstrated in detail the damaging political consequences to England and pointed out that it was to the interest, and indeed the duty of the liberal powers to prevent the interference of other powers with the internal affairs of any nation, if need be by armed force. In explaining conditions in Hungary he stressed the importance of constitutional liberty.

As again later on, above all in the speech he made at Winchester, Kossuth here had already completely dissociated himself from revolutionary socialist theories. He emphasized the purely defensive character of the Hungarian revolution of 1848–1849, declaring that the Magyars had not originally planned a revolution. Hungary, not a country given to secret plotting, had only adopted this weapon after Austria had abolished the ancient constitution of the country. He himself, too, had been called a revolutionary, said Kossuth, whereas he had never been a red republican, and his Hungary would never be a breeding-nest of revolution. He then declared what, in London and Birmingham, he was to expound in detail, that he himself considered a revolution a disaster, yet the right of revolution could not be denied to an oppressed people that had already exhausted all other means of preserving its very existence. He reminded the British people that in their proud security they should not forget those who lived under despotism and oppression. They should not give the Czar a free hand to determine the fate of the peoples of Europe. They should save the millions who would otherwise bleed to death, they should not allow despotic oppression to rage unbridled, they should become the liberators of the world...

Speaking to the large delegation of Hungarian émigrés who had arrived from London, he explained his objectives as follows: The implementation of the Statement of Independence of our country which had been passed in April, 1849, in Debrecen; the

deposition of the House of Hapsburg, and a republic based on the sovereignty of the people and on general elections; equality before the law, self-government of the counties and towns and villages; the maintainance of Hungary's territorial integrity... It was the right of the people to decide on this question but in order to decide it the people must be independent. Thus he, Kossuth, would unfurl the banner claiming independence for Hungary, but the banner was republican and democratic, not socialist or communist; these were doctrines with which he had no concern; in his homeland there was neither room nor need for them.

With his first appearance and speech in England, as well as those that followed, Kossuth achieved his aims with the liberal bourgeoisie of Albion. The British papers published his speeches either in full or in comprehensive excerpts. As a result he considerably lessened the adverse effect of his republican attitude in Marseilles, and paved the way for an even more favourable reception by the English liberal bourgeoisie.

A great many newspaper articles as well as books appeared, dealing with his reception and his four weeks' stay.

Just as in Southampton, the crowds massed to greet Kossuth in Winchester, London, Manchester, wherever he stayed. It was a triumphal welcome which in that century had only before been accorded by the British people to Admiral Nelson, the victor of Copenhagen and Aboukir, and the Duke of Wellington after the defeat of Napoleon.

This magnificent reception became an international issue, from at least two aspects. On the one hand his release sparked off demonstrations from Stockholm to Paris, and in all the Italian towns, and on the other Palmerstone's office saw the ambassadors of the Austrian Emperor, the Russian Czar, and the King of Prussia in swift succession, finally protesting in a joint note against the British Government's toleration of the great reception accorded Kossuth, which they claimed, encouraged international revolutionary forces and endangered the peace of Europe. By way of protest the Austrian Ambassador even temporarily left England.

But the diplomats' protest was in vain, and equally in vain were the attempts of the British Government to play down Kossuth's reception and lessen its political significance. Three hundred towns from different parts of the country invited him to speak, and letters of sympathy poured in in their tens of thousands, in which a considerable majority of the British people unmistakably and clearly expressed their hatred and contempt for the oppressive Hapsburg rule in Hungary, assuring that country, through Kossuth, of their support in the fight for independence. They also started a collection for a British gift to Kossuth, but he declined it, on the grounds that it would compromise his personal independence, and accepted it only as a contribution towards the cause of his country. This made a deep impression in England, since it was known that he was the father of three children and had neither personal wealth nor an income.

Kossuth's policy in England

But behind this cheering and the festive celebrations were the forces of political power and policies, and these were not at all unanimous. As soon as Kossuth adopted a definite line on the problems of his country and on Europe he instantly elicited a reaction, both on the part of the British Conservative party, which launched a strong attack both on him personally and on the Hungarian cause, and from the forces of the left, which directed their fire not against the Hungarian cause, but against the attitude adopted by Kossuth.

It was Pulszky who had been the first to step aboard the *Madrid* even before she had dropped anchor (he had gone out to her in a rowboat), to greet Kossuth, bring him the latest news, and to warn him against repeating his Marseilles performance in England.

At the same time he brought with him a letter from Mazzini, in which Mazzini greeted Kossuth in the name of the Central Committee of European Democracy, asking and warning him not to accept Palmerston's invitation to visit him, the news of which was in the papers. The rejection of this invitation was a political question. On the threshold of the vast change expected in Europe, of the new French revolution planned to counteract the threatening *coup d'état* of Louis Bonaparte, and of the uprising of Europe as a whole, Kossuth, by visiting Palmerston, would appear to be supporting the very Palmerston who, as a believer in a strong Austria, had accepted the Czar's intervention in Hungary, and who, in the event of a new French and European revolution, was even prepared to bring about its downfall as the ally of the Czar and the Emperor. Thus Palmerston's personal invitation was a trap designed to separate Kossuth from the British people, introducing him instead into the circle of the British aristocrats, who would overwhelm him with flatteries for a time, only to drop him as soon as he had lost his influence over the masses.

The Chartists, who had received Kossuth's appearance in Marseilles with great joy, even despite his speech at Southampton expressed their hope that in England he would rely upon the working class, the true followers of democracy who, after all, at the time of the War of Independence, had asserted their Hungarophile feelings at huge mass rallies demanding aid for Hungary. They consequently asked Kossuth to support not Palmerston but the people, and to attend the great Chartist dinner for 2,000 guests, where they would celebrate his arrival and offer him an opportunity for elaborating on the principles he had expounded in Marseilles.

Cobden, the famous and highly respected leader of the British bourgeois liberals, upon his arrival in Southampton for the reception, also advised Kossuth to reject Palmerston's invitation. Cobden was a sincere adherent and supporter of the Hungarian cause, and thought Kossuth would be serving its best interests if he were to denounce in public the double-dealing of Palmerston in regard to Hungary, thus contributing to Palmerston's downfall. According to Cobden this was in any case likely to occur in the near future.

And yet Kossuth did not attack Palmerston. With the help of the well-known Hungarophile politician, Lord Dudley Stuart (a friend of Palmerston's), Kossuth very courteously warded off the invitation by saying that he was very honoured by it, but as yet unable to accept it. With political goals to be pursued in England he would speak to the people who, as it seemed, readily listened to him as the advocate of his oppressed country. If, taking this into account, Lord Palmerston still wanted to see him, he would consider it a great piece of good fortune for his country, since then the visit would assume political significance.

But while Kossuth showed such courtesy towards Palmerston, and also did everything possible to eradicate the effect of his radical republican speech in Marseilles, he was most discourteous in refusing the invitation of the Chartists to the working men's dinner. And in regard to the request by the leaders of the working class to attend a mass rally, he stipulated that, at most, he would meet a small delegation of workers. And this despite the fact that the radical leftist Dániel Irányi, in a letter from Paris, had warned him to take care lest a negative attitude toward the London proletariat might lose him the support of the partisans of democracy in France.

Kossuth's policy in England was also criticized by Count Teleki, the greatly respected envoy of the Hungarians in Paris: "Of course, it would be very bad to alienate British sympathy, but to alienate the sympathy of the European democratic party would be suicide."

After so much criticism and so many remonstrances, Kossuth realized that he had made a mistake with his too constitutional

attitude in England. In his later speeches he showed more sympathy for republican and popular rule, but nonetheless he did so with such caution that he came into serious conflict with the leaders of the British working class. The reason why Kossuth made such contradictory statements, in Marseilles and London, on the French radicals and on his own republican views, was always the same. The fundamental question for him was what would best serve the cause of Hungarian independence. By cooperating with popular revolutionary forces everywhere, or by relying upon the support of Great Britain and other great powers? He tried to do both. Because Kossuth always relied upon the force which, at the given time, at a given geographical spot, and under given political conditions, could offer the greatest support for the fight of the Magyars against Austria. In France he expected the revolution to break out shortly, with a powerful role played in it by the working class. He wanted to gain its support for the cause of Hungarian independence, and consequently emphasized his republican views and expressed a favourable opinion on socialism when he spoke in Marseilles. In England he considered the arrival of the working class to power as inconceivable, therefore held that if he were to take up the same radical position as he had adopted in Marseilles he would risk alienating the sympathy and support of the ruling bourgeoisie.

He therefore paid court to the British bourgeoisie and rejected the teachings of socialism. He thought that the British working class movement would, in any case, side with the Hungarians; so it might be better to avoid too close a contact with it. Its leaders, however, despite Kossuth's objections and in the interest of their anti-government and anti-bourgeois goals, organized a demonstration at Copenhagen Fields demanding freedom for Hungary; and in the end Kossuth was forced to appear at it. Two hundred thousand people took part in the demonstration carrying British, Hungarian, American, Italian and Turkish flags, as well as a gallows from which hung the reactionary newspaper *The Times*. They cheered Kossuth and Hungarian independence with enthusiasm, while their speakers sharply attacked the Government and Palmerston for their pro-Austrian and pro-Russian policy. They declared that if the Government had listened to the demands of the working class, England's answer to Russian intervention would have been no mere paper protest; the Czar would have had to reckon with British arms defending Hungarian independence.

At this mighty mass demonstration of the British working class Kossuth read a speech, prepared in advance, in which, acting on the repeated warnings by his friends, he emphasized the advantages of a republican constitution, being very careful not to loosen the ties which bound him to the left wing of the British liberal party and the middle class.

His manoeuvring, and the moderate political position he adopted in England, made an unpleasant impression in the genuinely democratic circles of both the British and the French working class. Their press sharply criticized Kossuth.

Marx on Kossuth

Marx, who could safely say of himself and Engels that no one had done more abroad for the cause of the Hungarians than their paper, the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, and who had remained a friend of the Hungarian cause from that time on, followed Kossuth's reception with great interest. He was surprised at the contradictions between Kossuth's speech in Marseilles and his ensuing speeches in England, and on October 27, 1851, he wrote with indignation to Engels: "Mr. Kossuth is, like the Apostle Paul, all things to all men. In Marseilles he shouts: 'Vive la république!', and in Southampton 'God Save the Queen!'." He critized Kos-

suth on this account, including him among those petty-bourgeois democratic revolutionaries who desired to make pure will, and not actual facts, the driving force of revolution, refused to realize that the time of proletarian and not bourgeois revolutions was coming nearer, and that they could not be brought about on command within one or two years, but only at the price of years of struggle.

For the very well informed Marx knew that Kossuth and Mazzini, at their repeated talks in London, had agreed that the victory of the Hungarian and Italian revolution was to be expected within the next months; they would prepare for it, and take joint steps in their own countries. This Marx considered, as he expressed it in one of his articles, an irresponsibility on the part of the bustling popular-leaders, an attitude of political recklessness which would result in catastrophe.

Kossuth really believed the Hungarian uprising could be launched by the spring of 1852, following the expected victory of the left-wing parties in France, and he wrote home with utter assurance: "We have nothing to fear from Russian intervention any more, either because they dare not intervene, or if they do they will encounter the entire force of Europe. That much I have already achieved... Hungary's need of freedom is acknowledged, and her standing and her independence are ensured once we have won the first battle."

In another letter he sent home he wrote: "The outbreak of revolution will be uniform throughout Europe. Russian intervention is impossible, this much I have achieved already, that is half the victory. There will be more too; all that is needed is organization, passing the word round, and awaiting my orders. We shall win..."

In the meanwhile the reactionary forces in England and France increased their attacks on Kossuth. These attacks were partly launched upon the suggestions of agents paid by Austria, alleging that Kossuth had stolen the jewels of Count Zichy—executed upon the orders of General Görgey—and that he maintained suspicious contacts at home with Countess Beck, the spy, now in England awaiting trial. The work and excitement of his receptions in England brought about a temporary breakdown. The Queen's physician treated him, but warned Kossuth he needed rest, and even suggested he postpone the voyage to the States.

The same suggestion was made by the Central Committee of European Democrats, headed by Mazzini and the Frenchman, Ledru Rollin. They believed the outbreak of the new French revolution to be a question of days, weeks at most, since it would have to forestall the impeding *coup d'état* of Louis Bonaparte. Relying on Kossuth's popularity and his powers of rhetoric they asked him to remain in England for the time being and help to move public opinion in favour of the French democrats. He would still have time for a formal visit to America afterwards. Kossuth, on the other hand, considered his visit to the States was by no means merely formal, since he wanted to achieve there what he wanted to achieve in England: to obtain a pledge from the United States, in alliance with Great Britain, to help destroy despotism in Europe and liberate his own country. But in any case he thought he could not, by a lengthier stay in England, offend the United States, which had procured his release and even sent a ship to fetch him.

So Kossuth rejected their request. After a month's stay in England he made preparations to leave for the States. In order to keep the threads of the Hungarian movement in his hands during his absence he appointed a Military Council headed by Colonel Miklós Kiss, ceremoniously swearing them in.

And then, on November 20, 1851, after entrusting his children to the care of their Hungarian tutor, Kossuth and his wife boarded one of the finest ocean-going steamers of that time, the *Humboldt*, and sailed for the United States.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

IN MEMORIAM ZOLTÁN HORVÁTH, WRITER AND HISTORIAN*

1900–1967

Zoltán Horváth's oeuvre as a historian is not large in bulk: two monographs and a volume of shorter studies and polemical essays, that is all. Even they only partly show those externals which those of us who think we are professional historians consider an essential part of our work. But what they have to say carries more weight than the life-work of more than one professional historian, let alone what such a one normally produces in a decade. It is this that earned Horváth our respect.

Zoltán Horváth did not become a historian on graduation. He was already in his fifties when, after a lifetime as a writer, editor and journalist, he decided to concentrate his attention on historical research. And even then he was not interested in the past for its own sake, but just as before, he looked on it as a way to understand the present and as a help in shaping the future.

It is not unusual for politically minded people to turn to the past: in most of the cases, though, they do so merely looking for evidence in an arbitrary fashion which they wish to use to justify the stand they take in the present. Zoltán Horváth, on the other hand recognized that the past only offers something to him who does not try, with all his might, to look for contrived proofs for preconcieved ideas but who turns to it with humility risking that sometimes the truths of history might roundly contradict his own preconceptions.

The crucial question which Zoltán Horváth, with the sometimes uplifting, sometimes depressing national and personal experiences of a lifetime's struggle behind him, put to history was: what is the role of the man of ideas, of the intellectual creator, in the development of society, how can the intelligentsia of a country, obeying their vocation, contribute most effectively toward the theoretical clarification of the actual problems of a given era, and thus toward the advancement of society?

A first approach to answering this question was Zoltán Horváth's *Magyar századforduló* (The turn of the Century in Hungary) which for the first time presents a true picture of the generation of Endre Ady, Béla Bartók and Ervin Szabó that of the author's first teachers and examples. Faced with a variety of calumnious reactionary arguments Horváth shows that on an intellectual level the left wing served the interests of Hungary better than anyone else. He also shows though that this group did not succeed as it should have, not only because of the overpowering strength of its enemies, but also because of its own inconsistencies and limitations.

His second attempt to answer that question was his biography of László Teleki, who can be considered one of the fore-

* Funeral address delivered on behalf of the Hungarian Historical Society on November 21, 1967.

most Hungarian political thinkers of the 19th century, very likely no purer, nobler and more upright politician was ever born on Hungarian soil. The picture which Horváth gave us, is this time too a truer one than any published before, again it is ambivalent: it is a picture of a tragic hero, of a far-seeing man who becomes the victim not only of the opposition or indifference of his contemporaries but also of his own illusions, of his propensity to retreat when faced with ultimate decisions.

His third attempt at an answer might perhaps have been a history of Hungarian thought before 1848. This work, however, remained merely a plan. This too reminds us how painful it is to think of the bitter years in Zoltán Horváth's life, which may have undermined his health. Someone unjustly dragged through the mud can afterwards be given legal or moral compensation but curbed physical powers can never be restored.

However, let me repeat: though sickness may have killed Zoltán Horváth before his time it could not until the very last moment, deprive him of his desire to work, nor could it curb his fighting spirit. I purposely mention these two together. Not only work but also a struggle filled the last years of his life. His statements, and not only occasional exaggerations but even his most important and undoubtedly valid statements, frequently provoked controversy and even attacks, mostly unmerited attacks. He again and again took up the fight in his own cause. Horváth knew it to be self-evident that the often bitter truths discovered by him could only arouse indignation in those who remained slaves to illusion, and especially in those who still fanatically believed in nationalist illusions. It was also self-evident to him that it is not enough to discover truth, truth must also be exhibited for all to see and defended to the very end so that it will eventually become the possession of all.

Those who do not believe in the immortality of the soul are in the habit of consoling themselves, when a creative person dies, with the thought that though he himself exist no more he lives on in his works. Where scientific achievements are concerned, even this thought is alas of but limited validity: though posterity will keep the results of our work in evidence, yet as knowledge increases, they are continuously reviewed. In my opinion posterity will long continue to build upon those of Zoltán Horváth's discoveries which made our picture of the Hungarian past better differentiated, more precise and more true. His attitude to his work, concretely embodied in his discoveries, his passion for truth, shown both in his trying to find it, and in speaking it at all times, will last even longer than they. It may well be that this passion for truth will be the immortal part of Zoltán Horváth, that is if it catches root in us, who stay behind. Need I say that it is our duty to let this passion for truth grow in us? We owe this not only to Zoltán Horváth's memory but also to ourselves.

GYÖRGY SPIRA

ZOLTÁN HORVÁTH

DANUBIANA

Its origin lies deep in the centre of the German cultural sphere; its southeastern mouth reaches the Balkan peninsula which—not without reason—was for two centuries considered the powder keg of Europe. Flowing from central Germany to the Black Sea, it traverses seven countries inhabited by eight or nine different peoples. This is the Danube, the second largest river of Europe, destined by all logic to become its most important waterway. The reason it missed this destiny can be ascribed to politics, history, wars and rivalries.

The successive tribulations of history decided the course of development in this area, and determined that the Danube did not transmit progress so much as jealousies —German aspirations to hegemony on the one hand and Byzantine and later Turkish domination, on the other.

With the exception of short periods, as in the reign of Joseph II at the end of the eighteenth century, or the first ten years after 1849 in the reign of Francis Joseph neither Turkey nor Austria tried to eradicate the national tongues or obliterate ethnic groups: no attempt was made either to Turkize or really Germanize the peoples. This led to a situation peculiar to Europe.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the great nations of Europe emerged with their own identity, regardless of numberless small state boundaries. A native of, say, the state of Calabria considered an Italian from the state of Tuscany just as much an Italian as himself, nor did the Neapolitan feel more Italian than a Piedmontese. It was the same with the Germans, the inhabitants of the small German states, the Rhinelander or the man from Württemberg, the Prussian or the Bavarian, the Saxon or the Austrian equally considered himself a German. As Dante or Giotto belonged to every Italian, Goethe or Johann Sebastian Bach belonged to every German.

In southeastern Europe, on the contrary, embracing the area along the middle and the lower reaches of the Danube, the opposite picture developed. While the Italians or Germans enjoyed a national identity, though living in a dozen different small states, southeast Europe was the home of a multitude of larger or smaller national and ethnic groups, all living within the boundaries of two large integrated states: the Empire of the Hapsburgs and the Turkish Empire. All these varied nationalities harboured resentment, and grievances springing mainly from ethnic-national causes, but which were also due to class oppression. These grievances, these national sentiments, which in their proper time, the nineteenth century, were a progressive impulse, could not be given full expression because any activities based on national grounds were regarded as tantamount to rebellion against the absolutist Establishment. Under the growing oppression of an autocratic regime national sentiment consequently developed to high points of tension, creating an atmosphere of mutual mistrust, jealousy and hatred throughout the Danube valley; the difficulty of maintaining the *status quo* in these empires was only matched by the danger of breaking them up.

These facts must always be borne in mind in examining the extensive literature on this subject, displaying a complex and growing interest in the study, interpretation and evaluation of the past, present and future of the Danube Valley. Since 1878 (Treaty of San Stefano) Turkish power has been a mere shadow of its former self, and since 1912 it has entirely ceased to be a European factor; it is only natural therefore that the problems of the Danube Valley should be studied, first and foremost, in the context of the Hapsburg Monarchy.

The three books under review here all

adopt this point of departure: this is what they have in common, although they differ sharply from one another in all other respects.

In *The Fall of the House of Hapsburg* (Longmans, London, 1963) Edward Crankshaw describes the last seventy to eighty years of this dynasty, which disappeared after seven hundred years of domination; his subject is the efforts of the Hapsburg rulers to preserve the integrity of their multinational empire in the Danube Valley. In his final judgement he blames its disintegration on everybody—except, perhaps, Francis Joseph I.

The second book, *Das blieb vom Doppeladler* (Molden, Vienna, 1966) by Ernst Trost, is concerned with the phase that followed. It seeks, let us add, most nostalgically, for such memories and vestiges as the empire of the double eagle so bewailed by Crankshaw may have left to its seven *disjecta membra*. Trost is a newspaper man, his book is *rapportage*, not, like Crankshaw's a scholarly study, but in its central theme it echoes: how sad that after 1918 this superb empire was dismembered by the short-sighted peace-makers.

The third book—Thomas Ross's *Osteuropa kehrt zurück* (Molden, Vienna–Munich, 1965), unlike the first, dealing with the past, and the second, dealing with the present—tries to predict the future (in line with the author's desires, of course). The subject-matter is the same. On the basis of extensive material assembled with great care, the author discusses the chances of Eastern Europe returning to the European community, by which he means from the socialist to the capitalist world, and arrives at the clear-cut conclusion that, in view of the interdependence of the peoples of the Danube Valley, they might well be advised to return to some kind of follow-up of the Monarchy.

Bearing in mind the common background of the three approaches to the same problem, I find it necessary to discuss them separately in order to compare their findings.

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The book by Crankshaw, written with admirable knowledge and learning, in fact builds up an argument on two foundations which, let me hasten to add, are both completely wrong. It rests on two pillars: a wholesale defence and a wholesale accusation. It defends the Hapsburgs; it unequivocally accuses the Hungarians. Behind this double argument is a premise which in itself is sound; it is so to speak, the ideological root from which springs his analysis of the downfall of the Dual Monarchy: a strong condemnation of every kind of nationalism—only his basic error is that he sees nationalism only in the Hungarians.

In defending the Hapsburgs Crankshaw goes so far as to declare that "what is surprising is that any society has ever managed to exist at all—unless a perfect tyranny. The Hapsburg Monarchy was never that: even at the time of the Counter-Reformation there were no burnings of heretics." He applies this statement explicitly to the Emperor Francis I who was responsible for the execution of the Hungarian Jacobins, as well as for the most reactionary measures instituted after the Napoleonic Wars. He goes on to say that "Franz, the grandfather of Franz Joseph, was in no way a malevolent tyrant. He was the kindest of fathers, an adored uncle, and his dry, good-humoured steadiness was, for some time, what the people needed. He was clever enough to contrive things so as to divert all criticism of the evils of his régime on to his ministers."

He has the same completely unfounded predilection for the real subject of his book, Francis Joseph I, whom he presents as practically the only genuine democrat of the empire—since, he implies, as sovereign of a multinational empire he was free from all nationalist prejudices.

If Crankshaw is really to be believed, one must accept that throughout this great empire, which had the good fortune to be ruled over by a line of eminent Hapsburg sovereigns, no one was really a nationalist,

no one was really a chauvinist, except the Hungarians, and the Hungarians were chauvinist to a man, without exception, irrespective of social standing and class allegiance. It was the Hungarians who were selfish and cruel, it was the Hungarians who blackmailed the empire when the poor Hapsburgs were helpless and vulnerable.

But Crankshaw goes even further. Without deigning to give any explanation he brands Kossuth as "an unprincipled demagogue of a new and ominous kind. Kossuth was more than a disaster for nineteenth-century Hungary: he was a portent. To an uncanny degree he was the forerunner of Hitler and Mussolini and all the tyrannous rabble of our own time who were to stir up mass hysteria to achieve their own ends, who used the appeal to militant nationalism as the way to power."

I have no intention of defending Hungarian nationalism against Crankshaw's accusations. It is also blamable, and deserves its share of the blame, for the situation which arose in the Danube Valley. But condemnations are automatically unfair when they reproach one side only and hold a people collectively responsible for the doings of their privileged ruling class, supported in fact by the Hapsburgs themselves. The author fails to notice that the reason why the crime of chauvinism appears more heinous with the Hungarians, was because, owing to historical developments and geographical position, it was they—the Hungarian landed nobility—who wielded political power and were in a position to oppress the other nationalities.

Crankshaw does not see the fundamental truth that a historic approach based on negations cannot be credited. His observations on a number of occurrences, in the first place, nationalism itself, are perfectly accurate, but he is bound to arrive at false conclusions when his starting point for everything is a biased anti-Hungarianism. It goes so far as inducing him to say: "the Emperor could not turn against the Magyars because he had sworn on his apostolic oath to maintain the Compromise; the fact that the Hungarians offended against the spirit of the Compromise with every action, and against the letter of the Compromise with most, was neither here nor there: if they liked to prove themselves false, that was their own affair. The Emperor was not false. So that the drama of the next twenty-five years was played out under the aegis of a man bound hand and foot." This is his opinion of a sovereign who refused to entertain a single doubt that the armed forces were under his personal and exclusive command; who was incapable in 1905 of realising that the former policy of compromise had failed (regardless of whether or not it was desirable); who resorted to armed force to dismiss the Hungarian National Assembly and appoint a non-parliamentary government; who, without asking the consent of the National Assembly, first occupied Bosnia by force and then annexed it; and who, finally, in 1914, arbitrarily declared war. I repeat most emphatically that I have no intention of exculpating the Hungarians. Hungarian policy in the era of Dualism deserves severe censure; numerous wrongs and iniquities can be laid at the door of the successive Hungarian governments which, it must not be forgotten, all came from the same class, the men who defended their possession of vast semi-feudal estates, oppressors of the people and the minority nationalities as well, and who—as is already clear today—all stood by the principles of the 1867 Compromise. That these principles were reactionary and against the interests of the people, that their support came exclusively from the Austrians and the Hungarians, that they were contemptuous of the nationalities, was a crime the guilt of which was shared by the Austrian and Hungarian ruling classes and the dynasty itself.

Mr. Crankshaw is correct in a number of his views, but he is loath to recognize the facts mentioned above, truth, and this reluctance vitiates the conclusions of the book. He says, for example, that in 1918, when Hungary was

literally starving, István Tisza "was virtual master of the Empire, using the immense reserves of Hungarian grain to put pressure on Vienna, which had nowhere to turn." And he is quite unaware of the true facts again when he alleges that the leader of the Hungarian democratic independence movement, Michael Károlyi, was "the splendid and courageous exception" to those who actively worked against Vienna. It is well-known that Tisza had not been in power since the middle of 1917, and Károlyi had been definitely "anti-Vienna" already before the war.

What moved Crankshaw to write this book, extolling the most reactionary features of the last fifty years or so of the Hapsburg Empire? What has prompted him to admire everybody and everything that history has condemned, from Francis Joseph to the cynical Prince von Schwarzenberg? What has induced him to single out and condemn Hungarian nationalism out of all nationalisms in the Danube Valley? And, finally, how is it possible in the seventh decade of the twentieth century to write history without a word about social stratification and economic development, and practically no reference to class relations?

If I object to Crankshaw's book it is not because it is not "Marxist," and finds itself unable to adopt the Marxist view of history. But the plain fact of the matter is that there is no worthwhile historian in the world today who does not think in social and class terms. He attacks the "Hungarians" in general with vehemence and bitterness; he does not notice that, from the point of view of Hapsburg policy, Hungary meant the landed aristocracy and the landowning princes of the Roman Catholic Church. He does not notice that the Hapsburgs left semi-feudal social conditions of Hungary untouched, and indeed even consolidated them. He does not notice that the bourgeoisie in Austria gained substantially in influence and did their best to obstruct the emergence of a Hungarian bourgeois class by all economic means within their power. And, finally, he does not notice that sixty-five per cent of the population of Hungary was occupied in agriculture —small farmers or small holders, or absolutely landless peasants, who had no vote nor any say in political life. Crankshaw has not a single word to say about Hungarian peasant risings, the organization of the working class, and the evolution of Hungarian bourgeois radicalism at the close of the last century; for him it is all as if it had never occurred—to him policy-making is the business of the sovereign and his prime ministers in conjunction with the higher clergy. Such an approach not only makes a proper judgement, it even makes an approximately true picture of the subject impossible.

It is clear that the author of this, generally speaking, harmful book—harmful on account of its very readability—was anxious to endorse the real or presumed values of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. But if this was his intention—and he has a right to sustain it—it was his duty to demonstrate these values, and show how the peace treaties concluded at the end of the First World War made it impossible for these values to outlive the collapse and death of the Monarchy. It seems clear that the national states quite unavoidably had to come into existence. The victorious Entente powers (and the blindness of deliberately fanned nationalisms) are to be blamed if the achievement of independence by these nations did not end national hatreds. That these hatreds ever began was mainly due to the Hapsburgs and the classes most closely related with them in the empire, the great landowners, the aristocracy, and the upper ranks of the clergy. It was they who represented the principle of "divide and rule," and when they had ceased to "rule," all that was left was to "divide." This is the basic truth on the question of guilt, and the principal defendant on trial is precisely the dynasty so extolled by Crankshaw.

It is a fundamental error to fail to notice that the House of Hapsburg, even when drawing to the end of its reign, associated

itself everywhere and to the very end with the most reactionary and most conservative forces in the countries under its rule: the great landowners, the upper clergy, and the armed forces. And when, as equally in the absolutist era preceding the Compromise, the dynasty was on the worst of terms with the Hungarian nobility, it turned out that the imperial armed forces were always on hand, to help them subdue any peasant outcry against the landowners. When, moreover, in 1905 it seemed that the sovereign would side with the people against the ruling classes, in the question of the franchise, it was soon clear that his actions were intended only for blackmail: as soon as the gentry gave up their national demands, the sovereign immediately gave up any idea of universal suffrage.

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Das blieb vom Doppeladler by Ernst Trost is a much more modest book, based actually on a single idea. Trost made a tour through the more important regions and cities of the territory which was once the Hapsburg Empire, following up the traces left by the Monarchy in architecture, manners of living, culture and so forth.

While in Crankshaw's view—and he is not alone in this—it was the Hungarian influence which mostly prevailed in the life of the Dual Monarchy, Trost looks for—and finds—the traces of Austrian influence everywhere.

Trost has written a journalist's book, searching out curiosities and things of interest, with no intention of building theories or new concepts on them. His basic attitude is very characteristic of the thinking of the bourgeois of Central Europe—he wants the return of the Monarchy. He is well aware at the same time having learnt from others, that for all the legends, life in that peculiarly constructed state, was not a bed of roses.

In the preface to his book the author quotes from an Israeli writer of Viennese extraction, Ben-Gavriel: "...that Austria–Hungary which at the turn of the nineteenth century owed its existence not so much to historic necessity as to a geo-political confusion; which might be included among those peculiarities of international politics that constituted a variety of nails in the coffin of European continental humanity; that Austria which in its mendacity had for decades transposed the sound of its death-knell to the strains of a waltz, was to be taken seriously for the first time in the historic prelude that took place between 1914 and 1918."

But his real opinion was expressed by Churchill, who considered the dismemberment of the Monarchy a historical mistake which brought immeasurable suffering to all peoples and provinces that had ever belonged to the empire.

Trost also refers in his conclusion to a statement by Jaksch, a former Sudeten German social democratic deputy, "The fate of Austria–Hungary reflects the aberrations of the nascent nationalism of more than one people, and this is why, time and time again, one will have to refer, to the example of success provided by that great supranational state. The historical vindication of the former Danubian state is proceeding irresistibly."

So after all this cerebral effort Trost finally decides in favour of the return of the Monarchy, and promptly reveals the basis on which this dream is built: he is saturated with a sense of German culture, the German vocation, German superiority. He certainly has nothing in common with Nazism, having neither a sentimental nor any other attachment to it; but he is incapable of understanding that the whole of German world, both inside and outside the territory of the former Empire, did and does have ties with it.

Trost entirely ignores the plots hatched between 1936 and 1939 by the Germans of the Sudeten region who, led by Henlein, acted as the battering ram in the campaign for the destruction of Czechoslovakia. He

forgets the destructive role of the Germans of Czechoslovakia, he overlooks the fact that the *Volksbund* of Hungary and similar *volksdeutsch* organizations in the other countries of the Danube Valley played a special part in supporting Greater German aspirations, and displayed complete disloyalty towards the interests, freedom and independence of their own homeland.

It would be easy to pick out Trost's many errors, imprecisions and superficial judgements. We rather felt, however, that anyone who writes about this complex problem, delicate from so many points of view, and also politically significant, should realize that this is a "sore" subject from many aspects and sensitive to the slightest touch. Trost, however, rubs every sore, and, interestingly treads on every corn, shows neither understanding nor sympathy for the peoples he visited.

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The third book on the Danube Valley is in some respects the most interesting of the three. Thomas Ross's work *Osteuropa kehrt zurück* is interested in the present, and the author is to be praised for the hard work he undertook in order to acquire a thorough, precise and authentic knowledge of it. (This does not naturally mean that he has arrived at acceptable conclusions on every question—a point which seems obvious from the title of his book.)

Ross's work is eloquent evidence that a writer's intentions, the basis underlying his work, overwhelmingly determines the directions of the story, with all its virtues and weaknesses.

In examining conditions in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, Ross was quite free of malice and immensely curious. He collected information meticulously and conscientiously, talked with party members and independents, questioned persons presumably opposed to the socialist system, asked questions of young and old alike.

And he tries to evaluate and point out the results achieved in the construction of socialism. He writes with genuine admiration, for example, of the cultural development in these countries, its extensive scope, and its effects which reach the lowest strata of the people.

He makes no attempt to deny that these countries have obviously progressed. According to him, communism is the age of puberty in the industrial revolution of Eastern Europe, a stage which the more developed countries went through in different forms earlier. He tries to demonstrate that the substance and the socio-economic effects of the industrial revolution are to all effects and purposes in no way dependent on property relations. He considers the fact that the means of production are not privately owned has no effect on the rate of economic growth, but he does not negate the social significance of this fact. And he puts it very clearly: "It is certain that the large majority of the people, in the first place the young, have no desire to restore pre-war economic and political conditions; nor do they wish to adopt Western methods; but—if today there is anything at all concrete of this sort—they are looking for a kind of middle course. They want more democracy, although their idea of it is not yet clear; certainly they long for greater personal freedom, but they are not even considering denationalizing economic life, or restoring private ownership, either of the factories or the agricultural estates."

This is about the most one may hope to expect from a man with a western-capitalist outlook. And it is to his credit that he is able to think by European standards: before his eyes is the vision of a single and universal European culture, even if he cannot always formulate his concept of this culture.

All things considered, the book by Ross differs from the two other books reviewed here in that it indulges in no day-dreams about a Danubian integrated state to be restored in some form or other. He looks farther ahead and has the great European integration in sight.

Yet, while writing that the young people of Eastern Europe do not long for Western ways of life, while seeing the enormous development in the cultural field, and making clear that property relations play a role far inferior to what our forefathers would have anticipated, the conclusion he draws is that integration will be of real value only if the countries of Western Europe do not fall victim to collectivism and if the peoples of Eastern Europe abandon it themselves. This is what the title of his book means to him—The Return of Eastern Europe.

It does Ross credit that he demonstrates the absurdity of this "return" through the book itself. The information he has assembled in it gives every evidence that the countries of Eastern Europe would like to fill some entirely new, unprecedented role, and that this role is not the "puberty of industrialization," but the education of a new type of man. Ross insists that this new type of man does not exist, that the desires and needs of man are the same in Eastern Europe as in the West. There may be a grain of truth in this, but, measured by the historical yardstick, the systems working towards socialism can so far look back on only a very short existence: barely the span of a generation. Christianity moulded man for five to six centuries (and moulded him into something different from what its first originators would have liked)—how would it be possible to achieve the total human, cultural and moral transformation of hundreds of millions of people in the span of a quarter of a century?

History puts the question differently. The proper question is whether this Eastern European system is working hard enough to shape a freer type of man, more capable of forming independent judgements, more exacting with himself, with a higher morality. Briefly, this means whether man in Eastern Europe becomes more humane and more humanistic than he was before, more humane and humanistic than man has become in Western Europe in a world that worships private property.

It is quite certain that modes of life and the social and economic pattern of the Eastern European socialist countries have still many changes to undergo. The investigation of the past as history, of the present as turning into history, may help to make the changes better and easier. But it is also certain that this transformation will not lead us back to Crankshaw's Hapsburg Empire, it will not bring back the hegemony of a Vienna "gleefully waltzing to the strains of its death knell," nor will it take Eastern Europe "back" into the world of its Western neighbours. Some other form of coexistence must be found.

THREE WORKS OF NON-FICTION

On this occasion we have chosen non-fiction works from the current crop of Hungarian books, books which show us reality in a more direct manner. They belong to a category which is on the borderline of fiction and non-fiction. They are undoubtedly literature but their methods are not the kind of generalisation and concentration with which we are familiar in works of fiction. They stick to experience and to what actually happened in a manner which approaches that of straightforward reports.

All these, apparently so different, works have one thing in common: faced with a confused and immense world they rely on facts for support, and they appreciate the

support they get. Facts are easier to control and they provide a less controversial basis than the kind of artistic authenticity which works of fiction have to strive for. It is the kind of genuineness respect for which provides a convenient meeting-point for writer and reader.

The Reality of Poetry

(István Vas: *Nehéz szerelem* [Troubled Love]. I. Confidence Found. II. Investigation Interrupted. Vol. I, 1964, 418 pp.; Vol. II, 1967, 431 pp. No. 15. of The N.H.Q. carried excerpts from "Troubled Love".)

The autobiography of the poet is at the same time a report from the past, a document relevant to the literary history of a period, and it also has some of the qualities of a work of the imagination based on facts. The author states in the motto of the first volume that he does not wish to idealize the past but to investigate it. If I were not afraid of desecrating a work of art, I would say that this investigation offers the reader the excitement of a truly intellectual thriller. It is at the same time a work of scholarship and a confession.

If to write means to sit in judgement over ourselves, then to write an autobiography is doubly that. In his own reminiscences István Vas is in fact pronouncing judgement over a period and a generation. He exposes the lies of an opportunistically ambitious way of life that pretended to be upper middle-class; he exposes the nature of conflicts both of principle and between various interests that existed within the working-class movement; he exposes the conservativism and even petty bourgeois dogmatism of the avant-guardist proletariat. But with nothing and no one is this highly critical poet as severe as with his own self, as he was at the beginning of his career when he was trying to find his way.

Nehéz szerelem is in fact István Vas's second autobiographical work. According to his own admission it is almost a quarter of a century since he reached an age when poets begin to be tempted by the idea of writing their autobiography. He wrote one, too, as early as 1942–43, but he recoiled from the publication of the finished manuscript, a confession in the shape of a short novel. Newly finished, it impressed him as too personal and incomplete. This autobiography, *Elveszett otthonok* (Lost Homes), was published for the first time only when the heat of the confession had cooled, the places in which the action took place had become a sunken world, and what happened—history (1957). Then, with the passing of another decade, instead of filling out the incomplete confession, the poet put into a new work all that had once interested him. At the peak of a successful career he rewrote his own judgement on himself, and once again investigated his own life, but at the same time he widened the limits within which he thought, in other words his past. He dug deep in buried plays and manuscripts and called on every witness whose testimony added something to the trial of a generation. István Vas's self-portrait is a unique mixture of self-confidence and self-doubt, modesty and vanity—and a self-irony that hovers over both. What soon becomes obvious is that he has set high standards for himself. This was true as early as in his conflict-filled adolescence.

Unlike some of his contemporaries István Vas does not retroject his present-day judgements into the past, nor does he get bogged down in the way he had felt then. All the same he is able to suggest, almost as if he were engaging in controversy, how he saw his fellow-poets, his contemporaries when they too were still more or less at the beginning of their careers. "How easy hindsight is," he notes, not without irony, on the margin of an account of his own past views, indicating that he is willing to comment and to revise—but never to falsify. This ambivalent view of literary history appears—perhaps not as sharply, but at least as well

defined—in those aspects of his novel which deal with the history of the period. When it comes to an analysis of political and social problems the experiences of a third period are also involved. István Vas alludes more than once to his experiences in the fifties.

The autobiography starts in 1929 but, using flashbacks, he first turns to the past and then traces the fate of his own generation until 1933. The crisis of the Hungarian middle class, its world of lies, convincingly unfolds in István Vas's autobiography. One can sense the hero's attempts to break away, his deeply felt passionate protest against the middle-class conventions which shackled his talent. Still this is only one aspect—and probably not the most original one—of *Nehéz szerelem*. Similar social images are not unusual in Hungarian prose. What is new and original is the picture painted—also on the basis of personal experience—of the literary left and the working-class movement, and within this primarily what he has to say about the affairs of the avantgarde in Hungary.

What he has to say is obviously due not only to István Vas's poetic attempts, his growth as a poet and his search for a satisfactory ideology but also to personal connections. His great love and later wife was Lajos Kassák's adoptive daughter. Lajos Kassák, the recently dead poet, painter and editor, was at the time one of the leading figures in the Hungarian avantgarde. Thus his private life with all its conflicts was bound up with the sort of stand he took in literature. When he turned against Kassák, he was rebelling at the same time against a father opposed to Vas's relationship with his daughter, and against his former master. Vas's way has been that of a continuing search, and repeated attempts to break free; he was a rebel, and yet he overcame the pull of the avantgarde when he found his own voice as a poet.

When István Vas deals with facts of public and literary-historical significance he takes good care to document what he says; he often quotes from sources. On the other hand when he writes about intimate details of his private life, about his happy love for Eti, his later wife, which involved him in a conflict with what seemed to be the whole world, he writes a novel in the first person. *A megtalált bizonyosság* (Confidence Found)—the title of the first volume of his autobiography—alludes to this purifying and redeeming love, the only experience in his life that is of the same value as poetry, and at times even more important to him. The quality of the writing, the fact that he is faced with a world of art rather than the events retailed, is what appeals to the reader at this stage. In this way Vas is able to avoid his autobiography sinking to the level of idle gossip, thus experience is turned into literature.

István Vas's autobiography provides a key not only to his own poetry but also to the intellectual history of an era. The reader, immersing himself in exciting intellectual adventures, would gladly carry on to the present, but his poet-guide interrupts his investigation in 1933, roughly at the time of the rise of fascism. He explains that he feels he is a private detective unsupported by either his majesty's government or his majesty's opposition, and for this reason he does not feel prepared to undertake the increasingly dangerous task of following up the story of living characters. Taking his leave from the reader, he promises that when there are fewer totems and tabus in our intellectual and public life, and social and personal relationships, he will continue the novel. All we can say is that we look forward to reading the next volume of his autobiography.

Off-Beat Reports

(György Moldova: *Rongy és arany* [Rags and Riches]. Kozmosz Books, 1967, 155 pp. The report which gave its title to the volume was published in *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, No. 21, "The Invincible Eleven" in No. 24.)

György Moldova's subjects are decidedly off-beat. He shows a preference for themes and types of characters which occur rarely if at all in Hungarian literature. Down and outs working in canneries, pawn-brokers, down at heel insurance agents, stall-keepers on the move from market to market all over the country, and rag and bone men who turn rags into riches. Even when he writes about the mainstream of life, for instance about the work of the emergency squads during the floods or about the inhabitants of the housing estates for miners in Komló, he looks for what is out of the way: the miserable fate of people who have dropped out and lost contact with the life of the community.

In their choice of subjects Moldova's reports run directly counter to the traditions of Hungarian "sociography." Unlike sociography he does not look for his subjects along the main line of social development, at the focal point of social problems. The promise of quaintness, the possibility of discovering something latent in these marginal subjects attracts his imagination. Nevertheless, he is related to the classics of his subject in both his technique and his attitude. His candid camera catches the past as well as the present, and he is never satisfied with reassuring appearances. He patiently waits for conflicts and trouble to appear. And, what is most relevant, these troubles unearthed on the margins of society are not so very different from the conflicts in the more central areas of life. Here and there mistrust, incompetence, and unfairness make men bitter, here and there their work is hampered by poor organization, poor planning and red tape. What applies to the margin, applies as well to the centre. The material and moral conditions of life are more difficult, that is all, after all the majority of people on the margin drifted there because they had failed elsewhere.

Moldova as a rule lets us know what memories, experiences, or news items involved him with his subjects, what technique he used to make his anti-heroes talk freely, where he went and what questions he asked. What he tells us about the tricks of his trade shows how much research and legwork there is behind these impressionistic sketches. Moldova is willing to trudge from office to territory and from territory to office more than once if need be, an odd phrase, inadvertantly spoken by someone, will set him off again. He picks his subjects in two ways: either according to a plan subordinate to a theme—when, for instance, he hunts after the longest serving employee of an insurance company; or by paying attention to chance promptings—and by following up a hunch—when, for instance, in the insurance office he speaks to the first man he sees without a necktie. Moldova asks the usual questions newspapermen ask but in addition, and primarily, he wants to find out about the load which people carry on their backs, that load of the past which is responsible for their being out on the margin of life. The newspaperman having done his job, the writer in him gets to work and builds up the personality afresh from the psychological and biographical data provided. This is how "Flying Béla" is reborn in this volume, the pilot condemned to be a miner, who not only lost a prosperous livelihood because of his older brother's defection abroad, but also the splendour of soaring through the skies. This is how the characters of the pious actuary, father of nine children, that of the ambitious rag and bone man who was formerly a gipsy-musician, and of others are developed. If it were to occur to someone to put the men and women Moldova interviews on stage, he'd have an eccentric and strange collection. There wouldn't be many neat clean-shaven clerks amongst them, nor bored, reliable professional men, nor the kind of idealized worker figure usually found on posters. The anti-heroes themselves, even those who have sunk lowest, are shown to be human. Those who stood their place during the flood seemed unable to govern the waters of their own lives, the best forestry

worker turned out to have been at one time the Council Chairman in his own village. Many of them are wounded men who only stick out their heads from the shelter provided by real or imagined insults and injuries for the sake of a mug of beer, or the chance of a good grouse. Some complain about the place they live in, some about their wives, others about red tape or being cold-shouldered, but practically nobody complained about the work itself. The one ray of hope in this unvarnished picture of human misery, of intellectual and moral blackness is the joy men find in their work. The fact that all those questioned, right there on the margins of reality and of society, are related meaningfully to whatever they are doing: the pawn-broker to the Sunday suits pawned on Mondays and redeemed on Saturdays, the actuary to his columns of figures, the stall-keepers to the ever new vulgar show, and the rag-pickers to their odds and ends of fabrics. Over and above the realist description, the buried and faded dreams, the extremities of their psychological make-up, this passion, seemingly not dependent on the nature and conditions of the work these people have to do, gives this volume an aura of romance. One of the sheep-gut-washers in the salvage dump gives a creditable, or shall we say at least acceptable, explanation: "...you sooner or later come to like what you work with, otherwise you just couldn't keep going."

Moldova is not hampered by conventions or inhibited by prejudices, neither in his approach nor in his technique. He studies and observes a selected and closed area of reality. He goes on questioning his informants until he feels that his exploratory work is successful, and that he is in a position to write something which is both true and interesting.

Having read this slim volume, we are left with only one question unanswered: could he write something that is both true and interesting even if he were to turn his attention towards the mainstream of life? Today—as is evident from other writings of his, from volumes of his short stories and from the sociographical reports he has published since the appearance of the volume here discussed—Moldova seems to be at home almost exclusively on the margin of society, that is where he has obtained a firm foothold in reality. He is craving for the infinite but he is in fact living in a narrow world. But, as his reports show, he knows this world really well.

To Detect the Truth

(Klára Fehér: *Ma éjjel ne aludj* [Don't Sleep Tonight], Szépirodalmi Kiadó, Budapest, 1967, 227 pp.)

Klára Fehér began her career as a reporter on the daily *Szabad Nép*, and although in the course of the past twenty-two years her trilogy *A tenger* (The Sea) was reprinted several times and her comedies have packed theatres from Helsinki to Prague and from Berlin to Moscow, she is still as active a journalist as she ever was. Her features and sketches in the daily *Magyar Nemzet* still discuss the everyday world in all its aspects, and on TV she tries to find answers to her viewers' educational and family problems. It is not surprising that her personal mail is a veritable storehouse of complaints and problems and that it provides a vast amount of raw material for a writer or journalist.

Miss Fehér has undertaken to present reality itself in a series of short novels written like magazine report. *Idegen víztükör* (In Foreign Waters) is a typical example. She uses the letter of an unknown Hungarian ship's doctor on his way to the South Pole as a starting point. She traces the sender and finds out what sort of people and what sort of events caused the depression which is evident in the letter. As far as the literary value of the novel is concerned it is immaterial whether Dr Balázs Ádám really wrote to Klára Fehér or not, or whether the plot does in fact tally with his actual ex-

periences. What is significant is the way in which Klára Fehér uses her own experiences. The sort of research and fact-collecting which others do, if at all, before they write their novel becomes part of the plot itself in Klára Fehér's book, serving to testify to the truth of what she writes about. Naturally she does not merely change names, she alters and modifies some of the facts. Thus, it is most probable that the concentration of events, and various romantic coincidences, are a literary or editorial device.

This same device of twining the process of collecting material into a principle of composition is found in *Ma éjjel ne aludj*, Klára Fehér's most recent successful short novel. The author insists that the subject also found her at home or rather at her desk: a medical student in his middle thirties who still had not taken his final examinations visited her at the editorial office, asking for her help. According to the young man's complaint, he had been studying medicine for eleven years, but his cruel professors still would not let him pass. What mafia is likely to stop a strong-willed poor peasant lad in Hungary today, who wants to study and is anxious to heal from taking his final examinations? Who could be interested today in putting obstacles in Csongor Tusz's way? The writer—whom Tusz only expected to give publicity to his complaint—cannot, of course, be satisfied with one side of the question. When she starts she thinks that Csongor Tusz's statement represents half the truth—but she insists on investigating the other half as well.

The theme of the novel is once again this activity to detect the truth. It is a report on a real investigation. In accordance with the traditions and established forms of the genre Klára Fehér herself, investigating reality and fighting her own doubts, plays an important role in the finished work. More is revealed about her own character by her untiring energy and the thoroughness of her work than by a few incidental comments. There are writers who follow their heroes from their childhood to old age in order to unfold their characters. In Klára Fehér's works character development does not mean dynamic growth analysed from within and followed in its temporal sequence, but the process of her getting to know a character. She adheres to the traditional technique of character portrayal only to the extent that every episode in the plot adds something to the reader's picture of this eternal student and adventurer. Gradually not only his boundless stupidity, but also his pretenses, and his stubborn and harmful careerism all become quite obvious. He is shown to be someone trying to turn his lack of education and his peasant origin into political capital.

All this would remain, however, merely a feature story taken from life if Klára Fehér had not extended her investigations, if she had not tried to find out who was responsible for the temporary success of this adventurer and opportunist, under what conditions stupidity, dilettantism and careerism can still thrive undisturbed. Her past as a militant journalist and her sense of responsibility as a writer oblige Klára Fehér to face these questions.

Is *Ma éjjel ne aludj* really a factual report? Of course not. Obviously only the final conclusions of the published results of the investigation are identical with the material the writer accumulated. The details were altered to suit the writer's conception. The twenty-five documents from Csongor Tusz's file at the University, for instance, are obviously a deliberately chosen ingenious literary device. But it is just this sticking to apparently concrete facts, to the events, this puritanical manner of communication restricted chiefly to facts and dialogue, and coloured mostly with anecdotes, that makes it evident how very much aware Klára Fehér is of the advantages of the journalist's technique in writing a novel.

ANNA FÖLDES

LÁSZLÓ FERENCZI

THE POET AS EGOIST
LŐRINC SZABÓ (1900–1957)*

The Anti-poet

Had the terms anti-novel and anti-play been in currency in 1932, the year which saw the publication of his most important volume of poetry, there would presumably have been a critic to describe Lőrinc Szabó as an anti-poet. The volume entitled *Te meg a világ* (You and the World) made the quality and character of his work apparent: the confession of an individual personality about his age group's characteristics, to draw on the jargon of pedagogy, not about a personality in general, but about his everyday needs, potentialities, victories and failures. Not a confession in any religious sense, but an account, a communication of facts: this poetry was always cast in the present tense like a journal. There can scarcely be many examples of a poet being so unfaithful to his own traditions as he; the summits he had attained repulsed him rather than disciplined him. This kind of poetry has no specific climate, flora, legends, myths, artistic ideals; artistry is here relegated to second rank, at least artistry in the conventional sense. The unity is effected here not by vision or art, but by will: here is a man who wants to tell, through the use of poetry, of his thirst for life, of himself and his relationship to the world: it is the confession and the account that are primary and not the work itself. This holds true even though he would polish and refine a poem or translation, following classic examples, sometimes for decades. His poetry developed not from one book to the next like that of Shelley or Auden, nor from publication to publication like Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal* or Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

It began anew with each volume. One could almost say that from volume to volume Szabó consistently learned and then forgot the tricks of his art, just as the individual re-learns—and forgets again—his experiences, desires, disappointments, and above all, his potentialities, with the passage of the years. Szabó, possibly the only consistently egoistic Hungarian poet, felt responsible to no one but himself. For him the poem was an expression of his eagerness to live, his unsatiable omnivorousness. He did not make a statue of himself, nor did he pose as saint, prophet, hero or visionary artist. He simply set out to speak of himself with an unsparing candour, without the beautifying mask of legends; he went on recording with professional duty and gusto, from day to day and decade to decade, everything that in any way related to himself. He was a psychologist and a moralist, but with him the ethical attitude never became, as with so many others, a handicap to psychological understanding, though he knew and warned us against the pitfalls of psychology:

> *"If I am for ever to understand,*
> *where is my own place?"*

On the other hand, rather than moralize he appealed to psychology:

> *"and of the framing of rules*
> *I am utterly innocent."* **

The problems of living together in society have rarely been examined from the individual's viewpoint with greater persistence than by him, yet his ethical imperatives: unflinching frankness, endless striving for perception and the demand for unceasing self-renewal were fatally egocentric. Of the Dantean requirements of *veritas* and *pietas* he chose only the first: this was how he be-

* See Szabó's poems on pp. 52–57 of this issue.
** Translation by Edwin Morgan.

came a monster in his private life, which is amply evidenced in his poetry. Because of the lack of piety, on the other hand, this individualistic, egoistical, rationalistic man, for ever striving for unconditional sincerity, was perhaps never internally at peace: every one of his gestures betrays a strained effort towards freedom, and thus, naturally, his rationalism could not be consistently upheld.

In numerous poems Szabó revealed merciless self-torturing because of an insatiable sensuality. Love and humanism, even sexuality and humanism, all but presuppose each other with the majority of the major twentieth-century Hungarian poets. Szabó differed from them not only by the exuberance of sensuality, and by the often precise physiological account of this, but by the fact that in love too he could not, dared not or did not wish to let himself go: compassion, solidarity, light-heartedness, awareness of the community, which might, even if only temporarily, have smoothed the rough edges of his personality were lacking from his poetry. Even more than "doubting Thomas" of the Bible, he observed himself: he wanted with such intensity to fling himself into life while all the time cautious of being imposed upon, of traps laid for him everywhere and in everything: in love, both spiritual and carnal, in sacrifice, and even in the pleasures of the body. "A naive child, and perhaps the most unsparing psychologist of modern European literature," as one of our living poets, János Pilinszky, sums up his opinion of him. The child, wondering, losing heart, showing off his strength, the psychologist, for ever on guard, catching himself out, supercilious, registering every moment of the present, everything he could put his finger on, the male, resolutely egocentrical and suffering from his own selfishness, claiming all women for himself and seeing in every one of them an enemy, the recluse dreading humiliation from every gesture of help, the craftsman communing with Caliban and the eastern philosophers of resignation, all these facets of Szabó combined to create his poetry. He wrote more than eleven hundred poems.

The Translator

Lőrinc Szabó was born in 1900 and died in 1957. During his lifetime, not counting selections, ten independent volumes of his poetry appeared, the first, the bucolically inspired *Föld, erdő, isten* (Earth, Woods, God), in 1922, and in the thirties he was already ranked among the best poets of his generation. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his death I believe we can safely say, together with many others, that one of the three greatest achievements of twentieth-century Hungarian poetry belongs to him. The tragic-pathetic weaknesses of the creative personality behind the work cannot lessen its value.

His career began in exceptionally auspicious circumstances. As the youth of barely nineteen years arrived in the capital his explosive talent was instantly recognized by one of the greatest poets of the period, Mihály Babits, the restless, modern classic, who took him on to cooperate with himself and Árpád Tóth, another poet of repute, in an undertaking as a result of which, in 1921, on the occasion of Baudelaire's centenary, the complete *Les Fleurs du Mal* appeared in Hungarian. Szabó's poetic career started with a quantitatively as well as qualitatively impressive output of translations. Besides one third of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, his work as a translator and his interest in foreign poets subsequently covered *Petits poèmes en prose*, Verlaine's selected poems, Theocritus, and above all English works (in the course of his life he rendered several hundred poems by altogether 77 English poets ranging from Lyly to Auden): he made marvellously accurate versions of Fitzgerald's recreation of the *Rubaiyat*, Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* and Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. The interest and significance of the latter is that, although at the beginning of the twenties the Hungarian Shakespeare cult could look back on a tradition of

more than a century, and one of the greatest poets of the nineteenth century, Mihály Vörösmarty, had said that one good Shakespeare translation is equal in value to at least half of belletristic literature, the *Sonnets* were really discovered for the Hungarian reading public and literature by Lőrinc Szabó. And that the discovery bore fruit is to be seen from the 120 sonnets of *A huszonhatodik év* (The Twenty-sixth Year), the last volume of verse to appear during the poet's lifetime. In these sonnets quarrelling with death Szabó erected a monument for a woman who had taken refuge in suicide, an autobiographical sequence in which each of the main motifs is queried or explained by hundreds of counter-arguments, in which implacable facts, rationally respected facts mingle with dream and imagination consciously indulged in but always interfused with conscious irony.

Ars Poetica

Strange, astonishing poetic canons can be drawn from Szabó's practice, even after the achievements of the great twentieth-century English anti-romantic poets (almost as many poetics as the number of his collected editions), and even though they are at variance with they never invalidate each other.

A good poem is one which cannot be said differently in prose. A poem does not consist of words, as Mallarmé told Degas, but of thoughts and metre. The poem is not the unity of form and content, as the various aesthetic manuals insist unanimously, but it is the opposition of form and content. The Szabó poem can be divided into two well-discernible components: on the one hand, a definite, conventional verse form, strophic structure, syllabic constitution and rhyme scheme, and on the other the hammering into this ready-made and previously chosen steel framework of what he has to say. The artistic product comes as a result of struggle and effort; at each re-reading one can feel how the poet grappled with his material in the process of shaping it. The word and the sentence, which always carry a semantic load and never merely an affective meaning, strain against the structure, the enjambments run riot, the definite article falls again and again into rhyme position, because the thought, the heat, the passion, before completely carrying the verse away, pull up feverishly at the end of the line only to resume their hopeless attempt to work themselves free in the next line. The music of the verse derives not from the pleasing undulation of vowels and consonants: there is hardly anything left here of the celebrated euphony of the Romantics and the Symbolists; a bitter, threatening, one could almost say aggressive music is produced from the intellectual tension, from the antithesis of strophic structure and sentence structure, and that of discipline and impulse. The autonomous metaphor, characteristic of post-Rimbaud poetry, is unknown to him as a poetic device, figures of comparison have only one function: to make the poet's thought more sensuously clear and unambiguous. The poem is applied logic, it is psychology, moral, experience and facts forced into the mould of poetic form, an essay definitively compressed, formed from the diarist's entries, and fitted onto the verse structure. The poem tolerates nothing accidental or imprecise, nothing of secondary importance; it is unequivocal, clear-cut, precise as a mathematical thesis or the *Code Napoléon*. Anything that can be interpreted in several ways must be debarred from the poem; it would compromise its uniqueness and its integrity. The poem —often a sonnet—is one single thesis stripped of any incidental elements. Szabó is the Pope or Boileau, not of verse, but of modern psychological poetry, he has the same classicistic aim to express the essential, the inevitable as they had, differing merely in subject-matter.

All that has been said so far, however, is only applicable to a single volume of his, *Te meg a világ* (You and the World). I have already referred to the sonnets of *A huszon-*

hatodik év (The Twenty-sixth Year). The two volumes are separated by twenty years. The lack of metaphors, the savage music, the preponderance of run-on lines are characteristic of the latter book too. But while the earlier work communicates the intellectual-emotional end-result distilled in poetic form, "The Twenty-sixth Year" gives an account of the process—the birth of the idea, emotion, passion, how one thought, one feeling gives rise to another, how they consume each other and how they are then reborn. The poem does not communicate laws, conclusions we could draw from "The Twenty-sixth Year" as against "You and the World," but it is a reservoir of psychological and moral processes.

"You and the World" appeared in 1932. The previous volume, *A Sátán műremekei* (The Masterpieces of Satan) was dated 1926, and the following one, *Különbéke* (Separate Peace) 1936. "You and the World" is the starting-point and is the poet's most significant volume. It is characterized by the opposition of form and content; as I have said, the poem usually divides into two well-distinguished levels, artistry derives from the counteraction of impulse and discipline. In the expressionist poems of "The Masterpieces of Satan," however, verse and sentence structure, passion and word, thought and sentence come into being all at once. The music of the free verse is brought about by the flux of words and emotions, artistry is here the product of the weight of the things he says and of the audacious associations:

> *"Look about you: somebody steals*
> *your eyes from under your forehead,*
> *harnesses your fresh desires as a horse*
> *before his coach, your hot heart*
> *he harnesses for a sole beneath his shoes*
> *and from your misery he builds*
> *a golden palace for himself. . ."*
>
> (Prose translation)

And "Separate Peace"? If in "You and the World" anecdote was, at best, occasionally a pretext, it now came into its own. The poem is often a story in miniature building up to a climactic point. In place of the poem excluding the incidental, the poet now luxuriates in the incidental. The laws are resolved into tales, severity into compassion. The poem is a description of situations and states in episodic, narrative form. It is a two-fold change to be found in his poems for children, where he recounts stories, psychologically or morally significant, taken from child life, and in his poems of oriental themes. He is the first major Hungarian poet to versify Eastern myths—this was the mid-thirties. Su Vu Kung, the King of the Monkeys, relates one of these pieces: demanding the Supreme Throne, he rebels against Heaven, and is on the verge of victory when Buddha restrains him with his "gentle flower-hand": he cannot get beyond his palm. The self-torturing severity of "You and the World," its uncompromising clear-sightedness gives place to the resignation of "Separate Peace":

> *"If I had known everything*
> *that is here at once,*
> *most certainly I would have*
> *hanged myself.*
>
> *But, it seems, Fate had*
> *some plan for me:*
> *it has shown me everything, but slowly,*
> *patiently:*
>
> *this is why I have made a separate peace*
> *with nothingness,*
> *this is why I am doing*
> *what there is to do,*
>
> *this is why I can value so much*
> *each good moment,*
> *this is why I am writing poems*
> *in the midst of war*
>
> *and amidst the lepers I am whistling*
> *and laughing*
> *and why more and more I am coming*
> *to love children."*
>
> (Prose translation)

Diagnoses of Individual Existence

There is no artistic unity in Lőrinc Szabó's poetry, and it would be futile to look for it. He was faithful only to the changes within himself and to his resolve to document his thirst for life, his desires and his self throughout his life with the mercilessness of a diagnostician. One of the people who knew him best, Gyula Illyés, his contemporary and a leading poet in twentieth-century Hungarian literature, has called his poetry an autobiographical novel, emphasizing its confessional nature. It is autobiographical in the sense that the novel grows from a carefully and conscientiously kept diary, each poem being an entry and each volume a sequence of notes organized and unified according to specific points of view. Szabó's poetry, as already said, is a continual present tense always documenting the present like a journal. The only exception is the volume called *Tücsökzene* (Cricket Music), written between 1945–47, expanded in 1957, consisting altogether of 370 pieces, each of which uniformly containing 18 lines of decasyllabic couplets. "Cricket Music" has been described, perhaps justifiably, as a Proustian composition, a quest for lost youth and an explanation of the poet's life. But even this work is characterized by the diarist's documentation rather than by the memoir-writer's shaping of situations and facts. Lőrinc Szabó made his poetry a collection of individually existing documents. He tells us in one of his poems that he made jottings every five minutes during an attack of cardiac thrombosis; it was this courage, curiosity and will to live which characterized him to the end.

O'NEILL TO ALBEE

*American Plays in Hungarian**

American drama worth the name began with Eugene O'Neill. On the one hand this means that it grew out of the Boucicault tradition. O'Neill's father was a successful actor. Thus O'Neill learnt the language of the stage in the cradle. On the other hand thanks to O'Neill American drama immediately outgrew its origins. He not only broke with established tricks of stagecraft, as a writer too he was a pioneer: it was he who raised American drama to world significance, who made it socially conscious and psychologically profound—modern in every possible sense of the world. Today less than fifteen years after his death O'Neill's importance and his place in the history of literature are still an open question but it is incontestable that he opened up new perspectives for American drama, that on the American stage nobody can deny him without first assimilating his achievements. Everything that was new in the twenties and thirties in Europe and America, not only in stagecraft but also in philosophy and psychology was again and again expressed in his plays by O'Neill who in them both showed the truth about Americans and the social situation in which they lived and in turn affected it.

A great personality moulds his own times and succeeding generations in two ways: firstly by his influence, through the "school" of his followers, and secondly by the rebellion against his outlook and method which he provokes. This was true of O'Neill, too, in whom psychological interest and the excitement of the search for a suitable form coexisted with social responsibility—the first

* *Nem félünk a farkastól* (We're not afraid of the wolf—Hungarian adaptation of the original title of Edward Albee's play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*). *Modern American Plays*, Vol. 1, pp. 487, Vol. 2, pp. 467. Európa Publishing House, Budapest, 1966.

two, however, generally governing his writings to a greater extent. As a result of the depression and the New Deal, and the influence of Marxism, later of the threat of fascism, and the approach and actual outbreak of the Second World War, dramatists of the thirties and forties were primarily interested in social problems. Then in the fifties things changed again: drama meant almost exclusively the psychological crises of the individual, although in the plays of its best dramatists society and its problems hovered gloomily in the background. Both as regards the individual and also the community it is the psychological crisis or actual disease which is held up for examination in these plays. In the sixties, American drama took a strikingly new turn—but facts are still too close to us and too diverse to be reduced to a common denominator. Perhaps we are, nevertheless, not too precipitate in our judgement if we see the main trend today as a naturalistic closeness to life and as the exaltation of this lifelikeness, with emphasis on the one hand on the documentary, and on the other, stressing (of course often interwoven with, certainly not completely separated, from the former) an anti-literary "pure theatre," a new kind of *commedia dell'arte* which looks for the solution in the common experience of actors and audience this side of the text, in other words in action.

The two-volume selection published by "Európa," presents eight of the last thirty years' dramatists in Hungarian translations, each with one work. They are all excellent writers and every play is interesting; if quality alone be the criterion the selection cannot be faulted. Nevertheless, one wonders whether it was right to chose just the best-known American playwrights—though perhaps until now unpublished in Hungarian, but already familiar from the stage or in some other way. Shouldn't a selection of this kind bring plays by dramatists who are less known, perhaps even not as good (or not as much in the public eye), to the attention of the Hungarian reader and in this way both contribute to our knowledge, and at the same time give us some notion of that varicoloured diversity which is so typical of American drama.

Let us start with O'Neill. His inclusion here is open to question. This is not to say that *The Iceman Cometh* is not an excellent play; but this American echo of Gorky's *Lower Depths* showing such exceptional emotional intensity, sure theatrical sense and profound humanity and sound psychology, is in fact a pre-war work—even though it was actually staged only after the war—and hence it unnecessarily stretches the timespan of the collection. Moreover its author is neither unknown nor unpublished in Hungary. Would it then not have been wiser to publish it as a separate play, or to wait for the appearance of a more complete O'Neill collection in Hungarian than the 1961 selection and which could have included it? We can with equal relevance question the inclusion of plays by Arthur Miller or Tennessee Williams. Both *Incident at Vichy* and *The Night of the Iguana* are excellent and representative works, but both playwrights are well-known to Hungarian readers and theatre-goers, and several of their plays have already been published in Hungarian. Would it not have been preferable to include others in their stead, who are perhaps not well known but who are nevertheless interesting both technically and because of what they have to say?

And to continue harping on the problems of selection, Lillian Hellman certainly deserves a place in any volume containing the foremost contemporary American dramatists, but was her *Toys in the Attic* really the proper choice for this collection? True, she received the Pulitzer Prize for this particular play, but then prizes have a habit of missing the best work of an otherwise deserving artist. This play—at least looked at from this side of the Atlantic—seems very much like a re-working of Tennessee Williams themes, even though within its own category it is definitely a worthwhile work and in

its approach a step forward from Tennessee Williams. Personally I think that Lillian Hellman would perhaps have been better represented by *Watch on the Rhine*, which I regard to this day as her most important work, and which would have had the added merit of giving voice to American anti-fascism at its best.

The composition of the anthology poses some more general problems as well. Strangely enough when you consider the role they play in the American theatre, humour and comedy are conspicuous by their absence—and the not entirely logical sequence of the plays is open to question too. Why does Thornton Wilder precede O'Neill, and Lillian Hellman come before Archibald MacLeish in the first volume? And was it entirely judicious to close the second volume with Arthur Miller's play? This is probably the correct temporal sequence as far as the time of actual writing of the individual play is concerned, but the logic of the development of American drama demands that this place should have been reserved for Albee or Baldwin.

It must be said though that the world that unfolds in these plays is certainly truly "representative," the power of art and poetry make it that. A world that, despite its brightly glamorous surface, despairs and makes us despair, the only hopeful aspect of this despair being that the writers who live in it speak about it and condemn it with the full seriousness and severity of someone who is both witness "under oath" and judge.

It is O'Neill who gives the most profound and most poetic expression to this deep-seated despair. The human wrecks of *The Iceman Cometh* build illusory walls around the ruins of their personalities, and shutting themselves in, they ogle each other yearningly. They made themselves believe that their weakness is strength, that their lies and meanness are virtues; they can find release only in the irresponsibility of drunkenness because at such times illusion completely replaces reality and the reality of the other person does not painfully destroy their own illusions.

The elaboration—the refinement or monstrous exaggeration—of this approach to the world, this description of the place of man in society is the stuff most of the plays in these volumes are made of, Lillian Hellman's just as much as Tennessee Williams's, and Albee's just as much as Baldwin's. The social environment changes, the problems are modified but overtones of despair stay the same. Two voices stand out because they strike up a different melody: those of Thornton Wilder and Archibald MacLeish.

It is not a matter of mere chance that the only school of philosophy that is truly native to the United States is known as pragmatism. To this day empiricism is closer to American thinking than rationalism; American writers are more at home in the observation of life, in the recording of life than in the creation of abstract structures. Ideas are certainly not the strongest feature of the American drama; on the contrary, generally speaking, it is satisfied with commonly known—not to say commonplace—thoughts, and instead of ideas it provides emotion, structural rhythm and authentic observation of the major and minor facts of inner and outer life. This characterizes the majority of the authors in the volume, O'Neill just as much as Tennessee Williams, and Miller just as much as Baldwin. Thornton Wilder and MacLeish are exceptions to the rule in this respect, too, as both of them "philosophize" on stage and create situations and internal conflicts only as a corollary.

By the Skin of Our Teeth shows Thornton Wilder to be the simpler and more optimistic of the two. He looks at world history from Grover's Corner, once again to express—in childlike allegories and in the evergreen commonplaces of the Bible—his conviction that however narrow the escape, mankind somehow manages to get off at the end, and we don't even have to be very angry with the

fascists since a little treatment by psychoanalysis can turn them too into decent democrats. Sparkling direction can give this naive morality play a veneer of sophistication, but read, or seen in a weak production—like the one which was on some ten years ago in Hungary—its limitations become blatantly obvious.

Archibald MacLeish is a recognized poet, but as a philosopher he is not much deeper than Wilder. His *J. B.* transposes the Biblical story of Job into the world—and onto the level—of the average American. The explicit message of MacLeish's play is the need to rely on emotion and metaphysics rather than on the intellect. This is true even though a circus tent and two ancient clowns who have come down in the world and who personify God and Satan willy-nilly mock at the metaphysical approach.

But this sentimentalism promoted to philosophy is typical not only of Wilder's grocery-store-clerk optimism and of MacLeish's resignation: practically all the writers in the volume are infected by it. One kind of apotheosis of this trend is the senseless aristocratic-Messianic self-sacrifice in *Incident at Vichy*, and the fact that this approach leads to a dead end is exposed by *The Night of the Iguana* both in its sentimental and in its erotic aspects. Lillian Hellman's *Toys in the Attic*, which presents with great force the nefarious life-destroying nature of sentimental solutions and of pretended humanity, already goes one step further; but only two of the playwrights in the volume make a real attempt to turn against this trend: Edward Albee and James Baldwin.

Of the two, Baldwin has less theatrical routine. *Blues for Mister Charlie* is again—consciously or unconsciously—dramatic polemics. The stage situation of Wilder's *Our Town* is here transposed to a different key. What is the apotheosis, for Wilder, the two-faced identity of philistinism, becomes for Baldwin the irrational and nevertheless inexorable conflict within American society: the mutual lack of understanding, and hatred of whites and Negroes. What are the two sides of the picture, for Wilder, are the two edges of the abyss for Baldwin. Baldwin sympathizes with the character in his play who tries to bridge the abyss, but he is as critical of him as of those who insist, with blind prejudice, on staying on their own side. (All this cannot cover up for the fact that *Blues for Mister Charlie* is not a really good play; its significance lies in the stand it takes and in the passion with which it shows rather than in its artistic value.)

Albee, on the other hand, knows all the tricks of the trade, in fact he is a master of them all. His *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* —with somewhat questionable logic—provided the title of the entire collection. This "quartet for two couples" is the quintessence of writing skill, of ability to record the finest fluctuations of mood. The way husband and wife tear each other apart apparently for the sheer joy of it but really to good purpose is in a manner of speaking a protest against the sentimental American tradition, at least in a narrow sense, where it concerns the relationship between husband and wife. But at the same time this is an attempt to turn away from the O'Neill tradition: O'Neill was Ibsen's heir in many respects, one could even say he completed what Ibsen had started particularily in one of his last works, *A Long Day's Journey into Night*. The problems of the quartet are different but it harmonizes with Albee's. It is not quite clear just how conscious Albee's polemic with this particular work is but it is certainly evident that he has turned from Ibsen to the other great dramatic tradition of the nineteenth century, to Strindberg, in this way—deliberately or not—accepting all the retrograde tendencies which this implies. This, a matter of fact, is not true of all of Albee's works, but it does hold for this play and for those which follow it. Inspite all its grotesque features, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is a work of ultimate despair, of a hopelessness which does not even bother

to rebel any longer, but simply toys with its own inability to see a way out.

No doubt the psychological state of the playwright is largely responsible for this disillusionment, but it definitely also has a social origin. It derives first of all from the fact that the American dramatists have lost their faith in the social efficacy of their activity. The tradition of the American theatre plays a part in this just as do the social and political forces which turned a society with a progressive mentality (in the 1920s and 1930s) into an arrogantly self-satisfied one which is dazzled by its own prosperity. This society accepts the possibility of crisis and tragedy only in the psyche of the individual—as far as possible the psyche of the isolated individual; and no play, even though it aims to be more than mere entertainment, can afford to go beyond the limits of public psychoanalysis. Tennessee Williams is the greatest master of this manner. Arthur Miller stands for an approach—which fights and embraces this tendency at the same time. Albee carries this individual analysis with its social overtones *ad absurdum*, rendering it ridiculous in its extremity. But his laughter is mirthless and desperate. The source of despair lies not so much in the characters themselves as in the fact that their portrayal achieves no social purpose, in the writer's impotence in public life.

It is against this situation that all those rebel—not very tidily and with unclarified ends and means—who want to realize either the documentary theatre, or the "pure" theatre—as against a literary theatre. The documentary, whether it shows an assembly of hippies or life in a disciplinary unit of the army, or action on stage taking off from a moment in reality and often assuming surrealist overtones, coming into being in most of the cases without the intervention of a writer, simply as a result of the co-operation of actors and director is in both of these a manifestation of protest, an endeavour to find a way out from this hopeless situation—just as the "happenings" were, which when they were not mere clowning and artistic quackery showed as much an attempt to achieve a form of "Gesamtkunstwerk" as the ambition to destroy the barriers separating players and audiences, and to replace entertainment with common action—however limited in time and space.

It is a pity that the volume could not have given at least a taste of these new ways and experiments. But even in their absence we can only welcome the collection: it presents significant writers with their significant works, and it helps the attentive reader to understand and experience a little more the tensions, crises and conflicts within American society.

PÉTER NAGY

TO PLEASE WHOM?

*22 Hungarian Short Stories**

I can't remember whether it was one of those highly respectable and still more boring fabulists of antiquity who wrote the highly instructive story about a donkey, a father and his son; wanting to please everybody, they rode by turns on the donkey's back, until the time came when they thought it only fair to carry the poor beast on theirs. Now, whether the story is classical or more recent in origin—the present volume inevitably called it to mind. Twenty-two selected short stories, by which the selectors wanted to please everybody and everything—except those who want to read something good.

Of course, the compilers of anthologies always have the same everlasting excuse that

* Oxford University Press, 1967, and Corvina Press, Budapest, 1967.

the number of pages is limited, that tastes differ, that you can't please everybody. I quite agree, but then don't try to. The more limited the space, the more a clearly defined conception is needed, independent of the demands of the Establishment, devotion, deference, and tactful friendship.

What this anthology tries to do is to satisfy the following ambitions—simultaneously. Its title is not The Oxford (or Corvina) Book of Hungarian Short Stories, only "22 Hungarian Short Stories," but it sets out to review the last hundred years of the Hungarian short story—that is, apart from a few early experiments, practically the whole of what is to-day meant by that term.

It then sets out to include those who are presumed to be living authors known abroad because one or the other of their works have been published in English, or who are sufficiently important in professional literary circles to have gained a certain reputation abroad.

It then sets out to exclude all the short stories that have appeared in a previous and similar anthology published by Corvina (*Hungarian Short Stories*, 1962). This could be a justifiable point of view, although it is open to question whether the said Corvina publication is as universally known in the English language area as all that. After all, we are not so poor in good short stories that no other good ones can be found—but what is unforgivable is to find worse ones. And I am rather afraid that is what the compiler (or compilers)—veiling themselves in unusual anonymity—have done more than once.

The anonymous compilers then set out to exclude everything that is provocative in politics or taste.

Very probably they had other considerations in mind as well, which are, however, shrouded in mystery for the poor critic; he merely suspects their existence, since the presence of this or that author or story can hardly be explained by anything less than reasons of a highly esoteric and secret nature.

But before going into more detail, let me play a little with the figures which are becoming more and more of a fashion in criticism as elsewhere.

Among these 22 short stories, the choice of seven authors and their stories cannot, I think, be faulted unless on grounds of purely personal taste (Mikszáth, Bródy, Móricz, the elder Karinthy, Andor Endre Gelléri, who are no longer living; Endre Illés and Déry, who are still with us). In terms of my own personal taste, I admit, I would have preferred one of the earlier and more dramatic short stories of Móricz, just as I would gladly have sat on the sentimentality of that vigorous naturalist, Sándor Bródy. But that is splitting hairs.

Five of the 22 authors included would not have appeared at all in so limited a collection of such limited size were I the anthologist (Jókai, Gárdonyi, Szomory, Heltai, Antal Szerb), nor would I have included Gyula Illyés and Magda Szabó, neither of them being primarily a short story writer. And in any case the childhood memory of skating down the river by Illyés which was chosen is not a short story at all. Illyés is certainly one of our greatest modern poets, and one of our best prose writers as well, but as it happens, he has never written short stories, and this book is not an anthology of Hungarian prose but of Hungarian short stories. He is obviously included as an act of homage and because his name is internationally known, particularly in France. And these are poor reasons. Magda Szabó is an excellent writer, but as a short story writer she is certainly no better than many of her contemporaries or younger colleagues, who have chosen short story writing as their own specific genre. (As, for instance, Iván Mándy*, Ferenc Sánta and István Csurka). So the authors this side of the sixties are represented only by Magda Szabó and the younger Karinthy, Magda Szabó obviously because some of her novels have already been published in Western languages. With consummate discrimination the anthologists

* See his story *Private Lives* in No. 26.

have singled out a rather insignificant and trivial story of Karinthy's, although it really would have demanded very little trouble to find a better among the many excellent short stories he has written. The reason why they chose Karinthy and not Mándy or Galgóczi, all writers of between forty and fifty and of much the same standing, is part of the aforesaid mystery. So here we have a novelist who has written scarcely any short stories, represented by what is undoubtedly a good one, and a fine short story writer with a body of first-class work to his credit, by a poor one. And they are to represent "young" Hungary. Why?

Lajos Nagy and Kosztolányi figure in the collection with a good short story each, but I still do not find the choice quite happy. The short story of Lajos Nagy, a sketch of two students frustrated by their poverty and sexual misery, moves too slowly, the inner tension cannot be recognized and savoured unless the reader is aware of the writer's background—his passions and pre-occupations, all the social and personal bitterness and indignation of the have-nots directed against the injustices of Hungarian society before the Second World war. It is equally necessary to know something of Kosztolányi's work, the whole cycle of sketches of "Kornél Esti," the young man resembling in many ways the young writer himself, and the poem, *The Song of Kornél Esti*, to appreciate the charming tale of another young and penniless man and his difficulties, this time the embarrassment of a poor student who has stumbled into a rich restaurant in error, and the humiliation that every poor student has known in his life, that is, if we are not to fall into the same trap as Mr. Alvarez, who cites it as an example of the cynicism of Hungarian writing.

In the case of the five other stories, I think the choice was made with either too much deliberation or none at all, and is in any case basically wrong. The earlier selection published by Corvina had already made the mistake with Gyula Krúdy of publishing only one of a pair of stories *(Death and the Journalist)*.

Now, in order to repair the damage, "22 Hungarian Short Stories" have selected the other. Writers do not describe the same event from two different angles by accident. Krúdy quite deliberately meant to expose his own sense of relativity when he did it, and if we are incapable of perceiving his intention, let us at least pay due respect to his authority as a writer. And it is really not so difficult to find quite a lot of excellent short stories in Krúdy's oeuvre.

Géza Csáth, in whose work fin-de-siècle mannerism is intermingled with a cruel naturalism, hardness and pain, is represented by a half-ironical half-story which is not very typical of his work. Why not have chosen *The Matricides*, his best and boldest story, written at the beginning of the century, a dispassionately unsparing story of two boys, dissecting first small, then ever larger animals, cold-bloodedly, to pass the time, who end by killing their mother equally cold-bloodedly, to give her jewels to a girl. It would no longer shock, as on its first appearance, and it is extremely characteristic of the first expressions of the psychological approach, as well as of the more significant part of Csáth's work as a whole.

Was it for the sake of a bit of social criticism that the short story by Sándor Hunyadi was included? I don't know. It is a superficial story, a piece of journalism, quite unrepresentative of Hunyadi, whose description of his characters is far more intimate and ironic; even in his tragic writings there is much more charm than can be discovered in this unfortunate example. Why not the delicately ironical story of a student who finds accommodation in a brothel, called *House with a Red Lamp*, or the dramatic and compassionate *Razzia in the Golden Eagle*, to pick only two from his single book of collected stories. As for József Lengyel, it was probably an unwillingness to recall memories in the dark past of socialism which dictated the choice of *Hohem and*

*Freier**, a documentary short story which is not one of the author's outstanding achievements. Or was it perhaps the fact that a volume of Lengyel has already been published in English**? Anyway, there was no reason why one of his finest stories, like the *Enchantment* or *The Little Angry Gentleman* should not have been selected. Written in bitter pain, with profound feeling and yet implicit with so much faith, these stories represent most authentically what József Lengyel endured in labour camps and in exile in Siberia and what he wants to tell us of his unshaken faith in humanity. And they are written with a convincing simplicity and anguish, at the height of his powers. Surveyed by the standards of *Enchantment, Hobem and Freier* is at most a preparation, a trial run.

The choice of the short story by Károly Pap is also incomprehensible to me. It is impeccably written, but not much more than an anecdote. Yet it was not this kind of writing which made a great writer of Károly Pap, the son of a rabbi, killed by the Nazis, but the very distinctive tone and atmosphere of his stories of Jewish life. In his recreation of the formidable world of orthodoxy and the uncontrollable passions of childhood, Károly Pap has few equals in European literature. Zsigmond Móricz, in fact, called him the Jewish Thomas Mann. And then comes this anthology and presents whar appears to be a not very exciting author from the turn of the century and his anecdote about strolling players. Hundreds of similar stories are written every year all over Europe, but there are none comparable to the myths and childhood stories of Károly Pap. This highly original, very modern author has been successfully presented as a conservative writer of trivial tales.

But now let us turn to the basic concept underlying the selection, which seems to be to demonstrate the development of the short story in Hungary, i.e., an academic concept. In the first place, allow me to say that a literary-historical approach is nonsensical and useless, may in fact actually be harmful for an anthology designed to be read abroad, and is unable to give a genuine cross-section, owing to limitations of space or other reasons. Particularly in the case of prose, where the possibilities are in any case more restricted. And it is certainly harmful for a literature which is unknown and is genuinely desirous of gaining readers abroad, and not of complying with the requirements of some academic bureaucracy. The reader wants to enjoy the experience of good writing, what he does not want is a list of celebrated names or literary trends or a line of development and all the rest of the poppy-cock. A selection which bears the modest, unassuming title of 22 Hungarian short stories could really have afforded to ignore the grand names and to look for twenty-two short stories with a promise of something strikingly and genuinely new, likely to elicit a response from readers with contemporary tastes, even at the risk of incurring the displeasure of all those lovers of literary lists headed by such names as Jókai or Gárdonyi. I would prefer to discuss an individually chosen, bold, irreverent selection, set on pleasing the reader first of all, than such limping circumspection. (I should not like to be misunderstood: I am talking of short stories of a high literary level and not of trash.)

I certainly would not have selected the sentimental stories of Jókai, who, in any case, is important as a novelist but not as a short story writer; nor would have I chosen Gárdonyi, a well-known writer of the turn of the century, whose short stories are so often sugar sweet and verge on folk whimsy; or Szomory, highly appreciated by many but too oppressively fin-de-siecle for me, whose spell anyway lies in his absurdly mannered style, impossible to reproduce in translation. Put into English, Szomory gives a bit of an impression of a sham Oscar Wilde. Jenő Heltai, amiable, clever and frivolous, but not very profound, would also be absent

* See the story in No. 19.

** *Prenn Drifting*, Peter Owen, London, 1967.

from my anthology; and the story chosen is one of the least attractive and least characteristic of his short stories, being held together by nothing but a bright idea; and so would Antal Szerb, impressive and clever as a literary historian and essayist, but not of any significance as a writer of fiction; he was obviously picked on account of the English background of his amusing story. Some of these, as short story writers, are dated, and the others are not even second-rate.

On the other hand, I would have found place for Tömörkény, one of the minor masters in tales of peasant life, whom I find fascinating—an opinion shared by no less a person than Tolstoy himself; and for Margit Kaffka, who might perhaps be called the Hungarian Katherine Mansfield; and possibly a place for another teller of peasant tales, the Transylvanian Áron Tamási*, who died recently and who would certainly be no more difficult to translate in terms of dialect than Szomory. If the size of the anthology allowed, I would not hesitate to give preference to those writers at the turn of the century—Thury, Cholnoky and others—who were influenced by the Russians, rather than to the well-known writers in the traditional style, such as Gárdonyi or Jókai.

And I would most emphatically give preference to the authors of the last thirty years, living and dead alike; to the daring young ones, and the sedater old ones, who succeeded in making their own world, like Iván Mándy or Erzsébet Galgóczi. *My* anthology would begin with Krúdy and Zsigmond Móricz, and would hardly include others among the dead than Nagy, Kosztolányi, Pap, Gelléri and Tamási. The rest of the space would be left for the living, strictly selected, ignoring all demands of the Establishment. The anthologist would almost certainly have to cloak himself a while in a veil of anonymity, but then, that is precisely what he has done in any case. A critic's activities may sometimes involve him in professional risks comparable to big game shooting; unlike the lion, the writer generally attacks when wounded.

Well, this anthology can hardly fill our soul with a feeling of national pride that this is what we have to put on the table, however much the world has been unaware of it up to the present. Neither can we indulge in expectations that it is now the turn of our loaf of bread to be cut. It is of course hardly possible to achieve a major success nowadays with an anthology of short stories—even a better one—when short stories are losing their popularity. But in a more auspicious case it is feasible to imagine that an interested editor or critic might take note of a tone, a rhythm, or a name. An anthology of this kind is a good thing if it is intended not merely as a gesture of cultural courtesy, but as a shop window. And the fact that it is published in the World's Classics series of the Oxford University Press may have possibly been helpful from the publicity aspect. (Although I can hardly form an opinion of the attention the series does actually raise in competition with more provocative and youthful publications.)

So this one remains a purely cultural gesture, and the elegant preface by Mr. Alvarez bears the same imprint of this formal respectability. Minor factual errors are not worth particular comment; they could easily have been avoided, but they do not affect the concept as a whole. The whole idea makes it clear that the information Mr. Alvarez was given was both insufficient and inaccurate, and the selection itself provides every possibility that the misinformation be converted into a misconception.

At bottom Alvarez believes that the Hungarian short story, and particularly those with an urban subject, are dominated by "wit and cynicism and the insider's stylishness above all else... No matter how trivial the theme, the writers seem at once in love with their own cynical clear-sightedness, which helps them see the shams and pretensions for what they are, and at the same time they are

* See an obituary on Tamási and his story *The Messenger* in No. 24.

mildly shocked by this vision. So they write as though with a distaste for themselves, a wordly yearning for some lost innocence." Then again: "When the writers stick purely to the urban scene, cynicism dominates everything else; there is an obsession with the corruption, arrogance and triviality of the complacent rich."

He says this with reference to Gyula Krúdy and Sándor Hunyadi. It is in fact valid for certain of Hunyadi's short stories, but not in the least for others that are equally urban in their setting; while there is hardly anything that characterizes Krúdy less. It is certainly the selection and not Alvarez who must be blamed for this error; had he known the twin half of Krúdy's short story, he might have been aware that Krúdy was by no means illustrating the corruption of the rich, but the relative effects of environment and of the way of living, the fortunate or unfortunate mistakes of conduct in the Krúdy-type land of dreams constructed out of the mystical lyricism of love and death, food and drink.

A similar misjudgment has been passed on Kosztolányi's short story: it is not cynicism, but an understanding smile at the memory of the early blunders and anguished gaucheries of all of us.

The Hungarian short story, indeed, is not free from cynicism and from the knowing wink over the shoulder, the smug complicity of the "in" group, and this was particularly true at the time when the short story anecdote was pre-eminent. Mikszáth is the master of this genre. As soon, however, as the short story managed to break out of the pattern of the anecdote, in both content and form, this aspect of it pretty well disappeared. In point of fact it is not really possible to apply a single principle of conduct and attitude which would embrace twentieth century Hungarian literature and would cover the explosive passions of Móricz, the bitter analytical cruelty of Lajos Nagy, the visionary dreams of Krúdy, the psychological depth of Kosztolányi and the surrealistic realism of Gelléri.

Nevertheless, the theory of Alvarez cannot be blamed exclusively on errors of selection and information; we have ourselves to blame as well. Talking about the cynicism of writers, Alvarez describes the cultural life of Budapest, this scurrillous café-frequenting world, eager to learn the newest gossip and read the newest book. And although his theory is not true of our short story literature—which after all is something more than the Café Hungaria—it is to a certain degree true of Budapest literary life as it is lived to-day, and its impact on any foreigner should not be underestimated. From such an angle, and without a profound knowledge of Hungarian literature, how could he understand that the attitudes he classifies as cynicism, I—if I have to classify—would characterize as emotion and fervour. These are also the qualities implicit in the social and political commitment of Hungarian literature, which, happily or unhappily—do not let us argue the point now—has attended on Hungarian literature from that day to this. Alvarez also refers to them in most clear and appreciative terms. He thinks Thomas Hardy and his elegiac insight would be inconceivable in Hungary, and how very right he is, but not because of any inbuilt cynicism, but rather because a Hungarian writer from the social class of Thomas Hardy would have found it quite impossible to ignore the burning social contradictions around him, and the fatal "loss and deprivation" of his heroes would be replaced by social tragedy far more closely tied to a specific time and space. How far this confinement of Hungarian writing to specific ages or periods hinders its universal validity is another question. An author comparable in profundity to Hardy would probably free himself more easily from these limitations of time and space, but the great Greek tragedies, like the novels of Hardy, needed a certain freedom of action, a social and emotional spaciousness which, unfortunately for us, was not given to the Hungarian writers of Hardy's time.

In reading Alvarez's preface it is only this theory of his, to tell the truth, which we feel, rather grumblingly, inclined to challenge.

It is to be regretted that the rules of preface-making have imposed the usual central and original theme—in this case unfortunately wrong—on Mr. Alvarez's polished, friendly and attractive introduction. I would much have preferred to read a highly revolutionary essay, with no central theory at all, written in this same enviably plain style that we Hungarians, under the crushing weight of our erudition, our complex philosophical analyses and our flourishes, find ourselves almost incapable of using.

And finally do not let us forget the ultimate conclusion of the essay, where the isolation of the modern artist is metaphorically illustrated by the isolation of our national language and literature: "In a sense all original modern artists are spiritual Hungarians." We hope with anguish that Mr. Alvarez is wrong again.

IMRE SZÁSZ

AN AMERICAN BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HUNGARIAN LITERATURE

Mr. Albert Tezla, Professor of Literature at the University of Minnesota, who has specialized in the English Romantic period, has visited Hungary four times since 1959. In 1950 he began work on an ambitious study embracing the whole literature of European romanticism. This led him to Hungarian literature, in which he became so absorbed that he laid aside his original subject of research.

Professor Tezla, who speaks excellent Hungarian, has in fact concentrated on Hungarian literature over the last ten years. His accomplishment is all the more admirable in that he himself had to create the facilities for his work from the ground up. In the first place, using his own knowledge and, of course, with the help of all the catalogues in the United States, he proceeded to build up an excellent library in his department at the University. He then made contact with the National Széchényi Library in Budapest, from which he obtained the full entries of all general works on Hungarian literature and a detailed bibliography of the works of authors he himself had designated. From then on he has continued to build up and augment the library along these lines.

As a result of Professor Tezla's efforts, there is no other college or university in the United States which has such a rich collection of all the main works of Hungarian literature, literary history, and *belles-lettres*, together with series of all the most important literary and scholarly journals and textbooks. Rare or otherwise inaccessible volumes are represented in a collection of micro-films.

While engaged on this successful preparatory work, Professor Tezla has made several trips in America and Europe during the last five years. He worked for about one and a half years in all in Hungary, at shorter or longer intervals. In the course of his researches he collected material for his Hungarian bibliography of literature, which he plans to run into two volumes, and for another work in which he will attempt to identify and classify some of the problems attached to the study of Hungarian Romanticism, thus opening the way for further research work by students of Hungarian literature. His work in organization and research, and the favourable reception accorded his first book on this subject, *An Introductory Bibliography to the Study of Hungarian Literature*, published by the Harvard University Press, have opened up further prospects. He became a member of the Immigrant Archives Committee,

founded a few years ago, and Columbia University invited him as guest professor for the full semester of 1965–66. At Columbia he gave a series of lectures respectively entitled "Introduction to Hungarian Literature. Handbooks and Bibliographies" and "The History of Hungarian Literature from 1772 to 1849."

At present Professor Tezla is preparing the second volume of his bibliography for the press. This book will be a comprehensive bibliography of Hungarian literature from its first beginnings to 1945, and will list all the most important and serviceable editions of the works of some 150 or 160 Hungarian writers, and literary studies on them and their writings. The alphabetical index of authors will include the names of approximately 18 writers from the earliest periods of Hungarian literature, 27 from the Era of Enlightenment and the Reform Age, 22 from the nineteenth century and 88 from the twentieth century. Each chapter starts with a short biography of from 15 to 20 lines; this is followed by the first editions of the works of the writer concerned, then by the critical and semi-critical editions, and finally by such popular editions as are considered reliable for research purposes. It is followed by an annotated bibliography of selected literature on the works and life of the writer in question. There are a number of appendices. The first contains an encyclopaedic list of Hungarian writers of the post-1944 period. The second gives a list of general works on literary history published between 1960 and 1965—in fact a supplement to the first volume. A third appendix lists the reviews and periodicals which were used in compiling the material.

If the author judges it expedient, a table will be added with an indication of the place in the history of literature of each of the writers discussed.

A certain problem arises from the fact that Professor Tezla divides the history of literature into periods differing from those generally accepted in Hungary. According to his division the Middle Ages are reckoned from 1000 to 1450, the Renaissance and Reformation from 1450 to 1600, the Counter-Reformation and the Baroque from 1600 to 1772, the Enlightenment, the Reform Age and Romanticism from 1772 to 1849, Realism and National Romanticism from 1849 to 1890, and Modern Literature from 1890 to 1945. His last division is Contemporary Hungarian Literature, from 1945 to the present, which is given in the Appendix.

There is no doubt that the work that Professor Albert Tezla has undertaken, and the projects he has in mind, are and will be performing a signal service to the cause of Hungarian literature abroad, and will do much to help spread a knowledge of Hungarian literature and literary research throughout the world.

SÁNDOR V. KOVÁCS

(From *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, Vol. 70, No. 3–4, 1966.)

A FINNO-UGRIC PEOPLE ON THE SALISBURY PLAIN?*

A few years ago Mr. Edgar V. Saks began a series of scholarly treatises dealing with European prehistory. In the first volume of *Studies in ur-European History* (Aestii, 1961) the author simply set out to demonstrate that the original inhabitants of the original East Prussia and the Memel region were Finno-Ugric people. Apparently, scientific reviews specializing in the field did not even react to this work, although it did receive favourable criticism in some periodicals, possibly as a result of successful publicity. Encouraged by this success, the author, who is of Estonian origin, produced a second volume in the series, this one entitled *Esto-Europa*, and offering the public further sensational revelations. In fact his point is that the ancient inhabitants of the whole of Europe, from the Ice Age through the Mesolithic and the Neolithic Ages, were Finno-Ugric. In the author's opinion Britons, Picts and Ligurians spoke a language closely related to Estonian and Finnish, and so then even Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain showed evidence of Finno-Ugric presence in the area. Then, he alleges, this original Finno-Ugric culture was gradually superseded by the Celtic, Greek and later Roman, German and Slavic groups of peoples moving into Europe.

It seems necessary to state at the outset that this theory is mere fantasy, and hardly deserves to be discussed. It is commonly known that the predecessors of the Finno-Ugric peoples dispersed to their present abodes from the Ural Mountain region (according to traditional views from the areas between the Ural Mountains and the Volga River, and in the opinion of the present reviewer from North-West Siberia), and that the last period of coexistence in the Ural region was in the 4th millennium B.C., very little being known about earlier times. To trace back Finno-Ugric history to the end of the Paleolithic Age is as yet a hopeless project. Saks simply rejects these accepted facts without explanation or justification, whilst setting forth his new theory in a style so "scholarly" as to mislead those readers not fully informed on the subject. For this reason the book can be called definitely noxious—and that is why we feel it necessary to comment on it.

Saks found the starting point for his theory in the works of a well-known Estonian archaeologist Richard Indreko, who recently died in Sweden. It was Indreko who discovered and interpreted the Kunda culture (North Estonia), which can be geologically dated as having existed during the Ancylus age (approximately the 7th millennium B.C.) At the excavation site located outside the city of Kunda one of the richest Mesolithic finds of the Baltic was revealed. Indreko devoted several works to the problems of the Kunda fishing and hunting culture, which are indispensable reading for those engaged in research on the European (and particularly the East European) Mesolithic and Neolithic civilizations. The fact is, however, that Saks has not bothered to go deeply enough into the works of Indreko (he has ignored, for instance, Indreko's last, posthumously published volume), but on the basis of passages torn from their context he arbitrarily interprets and develops Indreko's thoughts, attributing to him views which Indreko never professed.

Archaeological finds can yield much information, reporting on the life of ancient societies. One thing, however, they cannot show. No matter how extensive the detail they reveal to us on the life of a given society, they provide no clue as to the origins of that society. Thus the ethnic

* Edgar V. Saks: *Esto-Europa*. A Treatise on the Finno-Ugric Primary Civilization in Europe. Lund, Montreal, 1966.

features of the Kunda people can only be guessed at indirectly, by a complex process. With Indreko, for instance, the dominant hypothesis is that the Kunda people were Finno-Ugric. Saks seizes this link and later says that, according to Indreko, some of the implements used in Kunda culture, their bone harpoons, for instance, show a certain relationship to the Upper Paleolithic civilization of Western Europe. Quoting these statements of Indreko he deduces that the Kunda huntsmen and fishermen were direct descendants of the Western European Upper Paleolithic civilization of Magdalenian times, and therefore they should all be regarded as Finno-Ugric. The Magdalenian hunters, according to Saks, reached the Baltic proceeding in a north-easterly direction from their original homelands (the British Isles, France, Germany and Belgium) in the wake of the receding ice. If then the Kunda people belong to the Magdalenian period, it is obvious, continues Saks, that Magdalenian man in Western and Central Europe can be attached to the Finno-Ugric ethnic group. And his final conclusion: at the end of the Ice Age, in the Upper Paleolithic, the original inhabitants of Europe were Finno-Ugric.

We have already expressed the view that with this type of argument Saks enters the realms of wayward fantasy which require no evidence, nor is any supporting evidence available, since such conclusions in prehistory cannot be made on the basis of Indreko's statements.

Indreko carefully analyses the types of Kunda implements and expertly weighs the possibilities of contact with contemporaneous neighbouring cultures and with the preceding Upper Paleolithic civilizations, but does not necessarily see in these accidental links between certain types of tools an ethnic connection. But let us quote Indreko himself: "In summary the following can be established about bone and antler tools. Certain types of these tools... came from the Paleolithic centres of Western Europe, where they spread outwards in a northerly and easterly direction. In the Eastern European area their earliest forms can be found in the East Baltic... Kunda culture adopted them from here, probably by the way of cultural influence. On the other hand, Kunda culture did not use flint points and other flint tools to be found frequently in Western Europe as should have happened in case of resettlement or ethnic infiltration from the outside." *

Thus, Edgar Saks has read something into Indreko's views on the connections between the Kunda and Magdalenian tools which Indreko has never stated, in fact something Indreko denied.

Saks, of course, should also have made mention of the fact that traces were found of cultures similar to the Kunda one in places far away also from the city of Kunda. As a matter of fact, this type of culture can be demonstrated to have existed from the Baltic to the Ural (it is called summarily Kunda-Sigiri culture, after its western and eastern end limits). Nor does he speak of the fact that in recent decades a wide controversy has developed around the development of the Kunda-Sigiri culture. He neglects to say that in opposition to Indreko's theory of west-east migration, Soviet researchers (chiefly Briusov, Tretyakov, Bader, etc.) are examining the possibility of migration from the Ural Mountains, that is, an east-west migration. He also omits to refer to the fact that in defining the ethnic site of the Kunda culture, archaeology does not profess unified views. Ed. Šturms suspects that the representatives of Kunda culture were predecessors of the Lapps, but not of Finno-Ugric origin (in *Commentationes Balticae*. Vol. III, Bonn, 1957). It is difficult to keep abreast of all these complex issues, and even more difficult to take a definite stand. Orientation and information can certainly be expected from those who have done work on Kunda, but how could we expect Mr. Saks to

* See R. Indreko: *Mesolithische und frühneolitische Kulturen in Osteuropa and Westsibirien*. Stockholm, 1964. pp. 33–34.

disperse his attention on such small matters of detail when he has not even been able to concentrate on Indreko's thought processes, as is evident from the fact he distorted them in his attempted reproduction.

Linguistic Analysis

The archaeological exposition of the book takes only two or three pages, and this brief treatment suggests that the author places much greater emphasis on linguistic analysis. Indeed, after the introductory chapter entitled "The Evidence" the author tries to support his erroneous notions on the Finno-Ugric people as original inhabitants of Europe with a medley of linguistic material.

Saks examines the major river systems of Europe (the Elbe, Oder, Weser, Rhine, Seine, Loire, Garonne, Thames and Danube) and from the river and place names gathered from the various sources he picks out each whose phonetic form suggests some Estonian or Finnic word. For instance, he explains the derivation of the name Duna—Danubius from the Finnish term *Tuoni, Tuonela* meaning "inferno," "other world," whereas he derives the old name of the river, *Istros* (just as that of the river Isonzo), from the Estonian verb *istuma* meaning "to sit," even alleging that the name of the Estonian people belongs to this same family of words. In his opinion the name of the Thames—Thamesis comes from the Estonian *tamm* standing for "oak," while even Albion is of Finno-Ugric origin because it is connected with the Finnish *ala* or "lower part." Saks pours forth this kind of etymology which, of course, cannot be taken seriously. This is amateurish play in which etymology is based simply on a similarity of sounds with no regard to the methods and results of linguistic history and comparative linguistics. The author of a work dealing with geographical names should have considered a study of onomastics an obligation of the first order. And in connection with the names of European waters Saks would not have had a difficult task: the comprehensive works of Bach, Dauzat, Kniezsa, Lebel, Rohlfs and others would have given him ample guidance, though not of the type he could have used as proof of his basic concept. Or did he forego a reference to onomastics because this might have invalidated his ready-made etymological conclusions?

It is the fundamental tenet of comparative linguistics to examine the genetic connections between the words of the languages compared on the basis of relation or adoption with due attention to the phonetic form and meaning of the words, that is considering equally the two poles of form and meaning. Even so it often happens that there are two or three possibilities to explain the derivation of a word, and nothing to help us to decide in favour of any one of them. And yet obviously only one conclusion can be correct whilst the other possibilities are simply coincidental. It is much more difficult then for the linguist when he has to derive geographical names, for in this case he cannot rely on the duality of form and meaning. Geographical names, in most cases, have no common meanings, and in fact relation to a common noun can rarely be deduced even by language-historical analysis. Nevertheless, by means of typization and language-historical study, the geographical names of a given area can usually be related to local languages or to languages which were spoken in the area one or two thousand years earlier. We know, for instance, that in France, Germany and elsewhere, in addition to the more recent names of French, German, etc. origin, there are a multitude of names taken over by the French and Germans from the languages of peoples who had dwelt there previously (many names of water originating from Roman times, or even from the Celts). The geographical names current in Hungary reflect not exclusively the denominations given by the Hungarian conquerors who settled in the area a thousand years ago; our ancestors have in fact taken over a great many geographical names from the languages

of the Slavic tribes who were living in the Carpathian Basin when they occupied it. In this connection it may be worthwhile to point out a striking phenomenon, namely the fact that whilst the names of the smaller brooks and rivulets can usually be deciphered from the local language or languages, the names of the larger rivers are generally not of local origin but have been passed down for thousands of years from one people to the other. The names Loire, Rhône, Seine, Garonne, Maas, Po, Neisse, Memel, etc. are of pre-Celtic origin stemming from the depths of the prehistoric times preceding the Celtic era. The prehistoric character of the names of these big rivers can be diagnosed, but linguistic science is unable to work out their meaning, for we do not know the ancient languages which contributed to these names. Unfortunately it just has to be accepted that such river names "*mysteria sunt et mysteria permanebunt.*"

For geographical etymology a mastery of onomastic methods is thus highly important. Without the availability of such methodological supports the mere phonetic make-up could serve as a basis of derivation. Moreover the phonetic names of the major waterways and localities are generally short, often consisting only of a monosyllable or two syllables. Such short geographical names could be "explained" in many ways and "derived" from many languages—if one had the relevant dictionaries to hand.

In all the languages of the world the range of speech sounds consists of a few dozen sound symbols (30 to 60) from which the words are built according to certain rules of combination. Owing to this relatively small number of phonograms, accidental phonetic similarities often occur even between unrelated languages, and no significance should be attached to them. In actual fact, if the phonetic make-up in itself were sufficient for establishing the derivation for similar sounding words in two languages, the name of the town of Obudu in Biafra could be related, without a second thought, to Óbuda on the northern edge of the Hungarian capital. And strange conclusions would indeed be drawn if such unmethodological comparisons were taken seriously. This is just what Mr. Saks is doing, for without linguistic onomastic knowledge, but on the mere basis of his knowledge of Estonian and Finnish, he notes from the map those names which remind him of some word in these two languages, and from these he builds his house of cards on the shaky grounds of an erroneous hypothesis.

From the point of view of scholarship, the book by E. Saks is a collection of valueless and groundless etymological notions. Of course, there is no question that there is a basic concept in the book but not much more. This Pan-Finno-Ugric concept is, as a matter of fact, fairly unequivocal: by stating that all culture flowed from west to east it tries to render acceptable some kind of a prehistoric Atlantic concept. Through his false thesis of an ethno-cultural and even linguistic unity in the Baltic countries and in Western Europe at the end of the Ice Age, he presents a historical picture which, with reference to the past, could revive chauvinistic passions and cause unrest and even serve as a "historical" background for revisionistic political ideas.

PÉTER HAJDÚ

ARTS

THE ART OF BÉLA UITZ

Béla Uitz, whose eightieth birthday in 1967 was marked by an exhibition in Budapest, can look back upon a life full of vicissitudes. At the age of fourteen, when a pupil in the fourth form of the "gimnázium," the Hungarian secondary school, he was expelled and banished from all secondary schools of the country. He then became an engine fitter's apprentice. After two attempts he was admitted to the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, but barely had he entered it than he had to leave because of a quarrel with his masters. In 1914, for the first time, his works were exhibited in the National Salon in Budapest at the show of the Young Artists' Association and this first appearance was greeted in the following terms by Artúr Elek, an exceptionally keen-sighted art critic: "Uitz is an artist of great temperament and genuine strength makes itself felt in his drawings. His compositions are not sufficiently pictorial yet, but he will learn to achieve this. We should like to draw the public's attention to this young man. Unless life renders his development too difficult he can anticipate a brilliant future." And, indeed, in the following year he won a gold medal in San Francisco. And then came the great turning point in his career: Uitz joined the ranks of the Hungarian avant-garde movement, and shortly afterwards this impulsive young artist, always ready for an argument, became one of the avant-garde spokesmen. During the months of the 1919 Hungarian Republic of Councils he was one of the leading artists of the revolution; he designed outstanding posters and organized the Proletarians' Studio, the School for young painters of working-class origin. After the defeat of the revolution, imprisonment and exile fell to his lot. But, as early as in October 1920, he was again exhibiting his work in Vienna; he made designs for frescoes and it was also in Vienna that he produced his masterpiece—the series of etchings entitled *General Ludd*. Meanwhile, in 1921, he took part in the Moscow Congress of the Comintern and at the same time joined the Communist Party. From 1924 to 1926 he lived in Paris and had two exhibitions at the Clarté Salon. He designed the set for a Gorky première during this stay, and published an album entitled *Contre la guerre impérialiste*, the preface of which was written by Marcel Cachin.

Since November 1926 Béla Uitz has been living in the Soviet Union. In Kirghizia, in Kharkov and in Moscow he created works of considerable importance. However, his associations with the circle of friends of Béla Kun, who was executed during the Stalinist regime, caused Uitz considerable problems there too. Although a remarkably prolific artist, his works have become dispersed and most of his large-scale designs for frescoes never went beyond the design stage.

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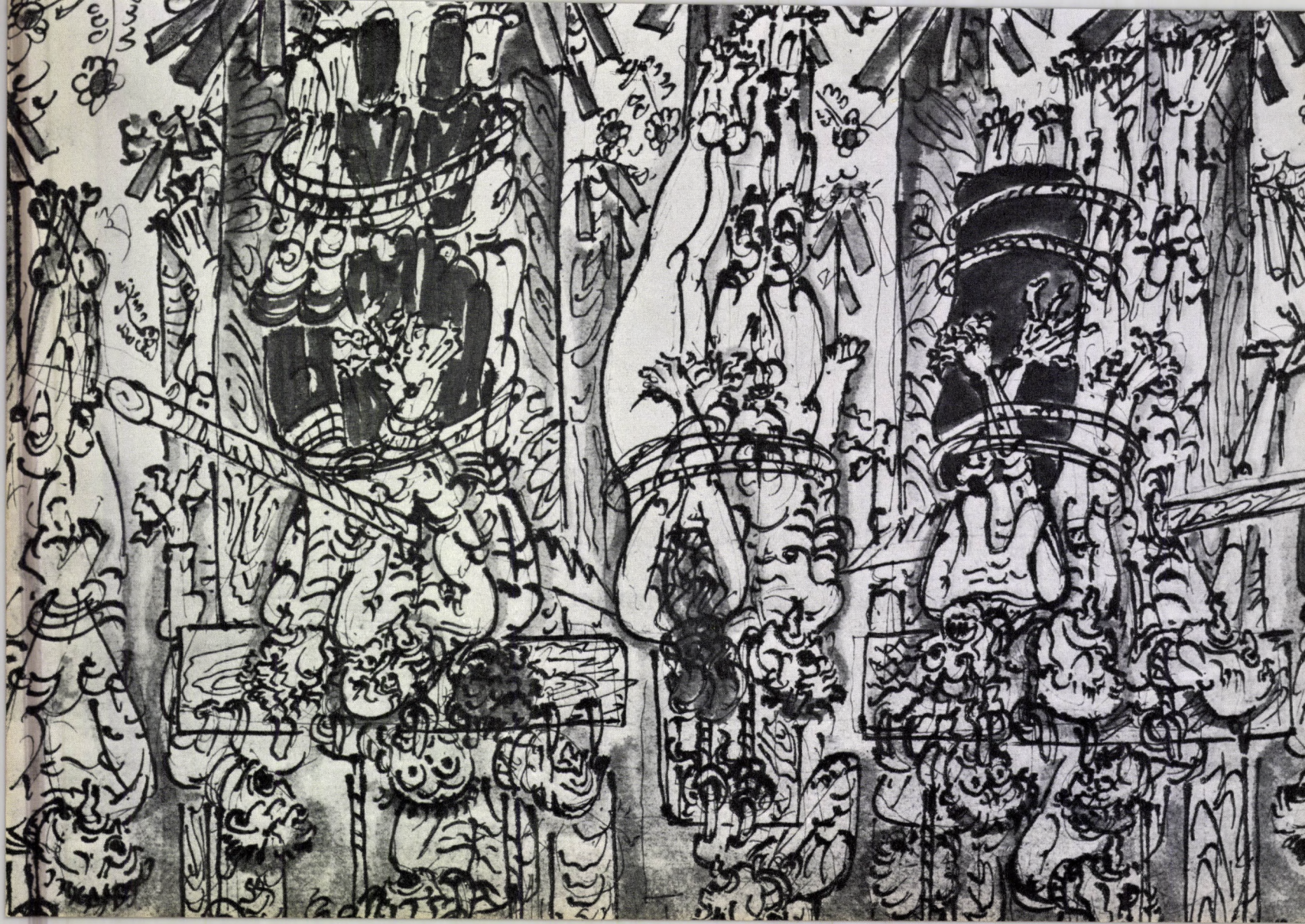
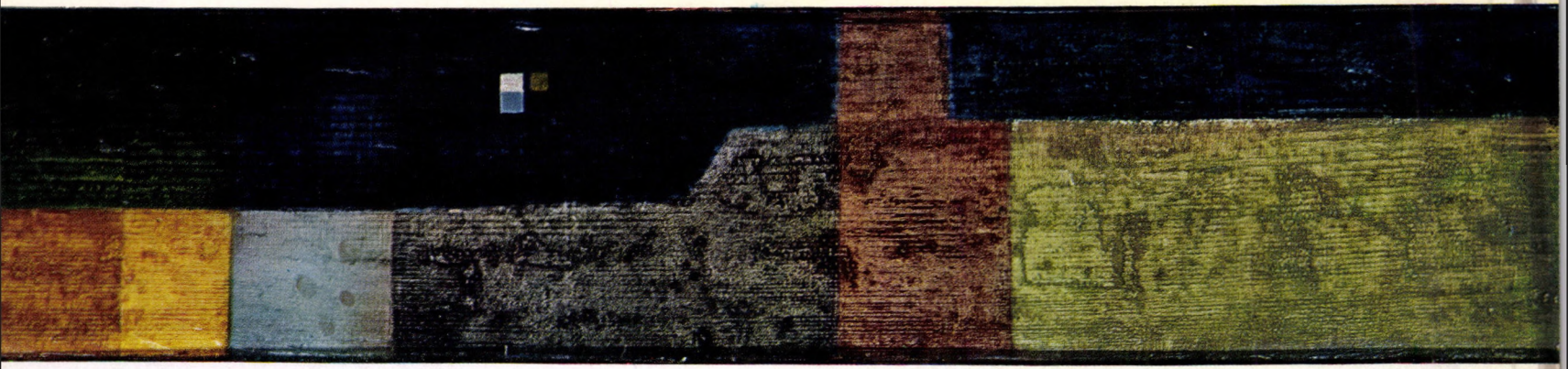
BÉLA UITZ: PARIS BRIDGE
(INK AND WASH, 1925. PUSHKIN MUSEUM, MOSCOW.)

Overleaf: BÉLA UITZ: EXECUTION OF THE LUDDITES
(ZINC ETCHING FROM THE "GENERAL LUDD" SERIES, 1923.)

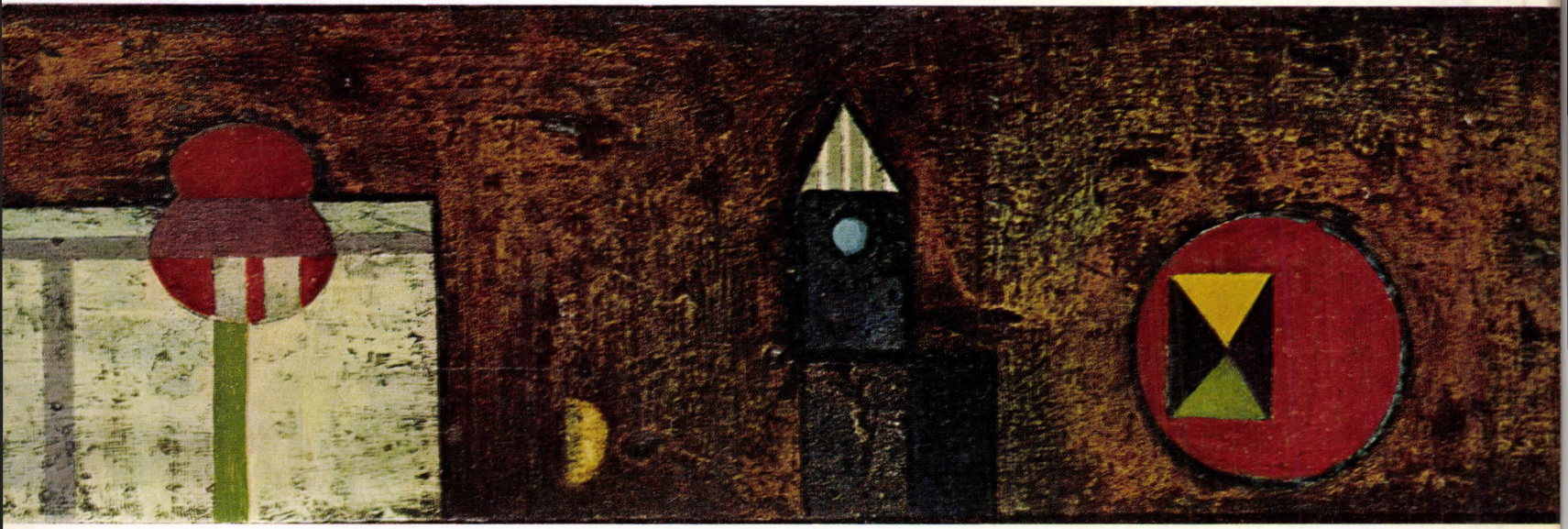


ENDRE BÁLINT: YELLOW HORSES (OIL, 20 × 37 CM, PROPERTY OF MR. ISTVÁN BÁLINT)



ENDRE BÁLINT: SZENTENDRE WALLS (OIL, 63 × 13 CM, PROPERTY OF THE ARTIST)

ENDRE BÁLINT: THE RAILWAYMAN'S DREAM (OIL, 44 × 16 CM, PROPERTY OF MLLE THERÈSE CLAEYS, GAND)



Béla Uitz's name is closely associated with Activism, which, in Hungary, was first and foremost a movement rallying literature and not fine arts. Its birth is connected with the organizer of Hungarian avant-garde literature, Lajos Kassák, who died not long ago.* Kassák edited first a magazine called *Tett* (Action) (which was launched and suppressed in 1915) and thereafter its successor, *Ma* (Today), these periodicals rallying around them avant-garde trends. Neither periodical can be grouped with any clearly defined stylistic movement. They were related to German Expressionism but had also absorbed the dynamism of Futurism, although rejecting its aggressiveness and being—from the very beginning—consistently anti-war. With the full development of Hungarian Activism it came to be merged with the great international movement of Constructivism in which the Hungarian Activists thought they had found similar revolutionary spirit craving for a new social order. As a painter Kassák himself was a representative of two-dimensional Constructivism, of "Pictorial Architecture." All this shows that Hungarian Activism is not so much to be compared with German Expressionism and avant-garde—although their names indicate a certain kinship—as with the Russian avant-garde, the more so as the social passions inspiring the art of the Hungarian and the Russian avant-garde movements were similar.

Around 1910 Endre Ady's poetry, the writers of the periodical *Nyugat* (West) and their congenial circle of painters, the Group of Eight, represented progress in Hungarian art. They introduced the first wave of the European avant-garde into Hungarian fine arts. But after this upswing of modern Hungarian art there came a decline after 1912. In the fields of politics, social trends and culture alike, conservative reactionary forces launched a counter-attack. The movement of the Group of Eight, which had seemed to hold the promise of a revolutionary course, flagged. At that moment Hungarian Activism, this second rallying of Hungarian avant-garde art, tried to occupy the position the Group of Eight had held.

In June 1917 there was an exhibition in the National Salon in Budapest at which some young artists including János Kmetty and József Nemes Lampérth set forth their views in the preface to the catalogue. According to this they wanted to start from Cubism and to create, making use of the elements of Cubism, "the great monumental art of the twentieth century." Inevitably, the young artists' path led them towards *Ma* and in 1918 they took part in the demonstration show of *Ma*. By this time Béla Uitz belonged to them and it must be said that he found his real self when he joined the Activists. It was, in fact, the art of József Nemes Lampérth, another activist painter and a more original and robust personality than Uitz, which opened the eyes of the latter. Lampérth became the leading figure of the avant-garde movement which followed the decline of the Group of Eight, although this does not affect Uitz's artistic importance within the Activist movement, for Lampérth's role was rather that of an eye-opener and soon the paths of the two artists took different directions. In the late 1910's Lampérth became the most revolutionary-minded and important personage in Hungarian painting, undertaking a task similar to that of Béla Bartók in composing the *Allegro barbaro*. Whereas the majority of the artists of the Group of Eight were unable to digest the fresh effects of Cézanne, of Cubism, of the Fauves and of Expressionism and were slipping from Constructive monumentality to the easier solutions offered by ornamental transposition and stylizing, Lampérth was seeking new principles of construction in his pictures and interpreting in his own way the achievements of the international avant-garde. His compositions,

* See Lajos Kassák's obituary notice in No. 28 of *The N.H.Q.* Kassák's writings, pictures and a chapter of his autobiography were published in No. 19 of our periodical.

based upon a rhythm-formula of light and shade, are really reminiscent of a savage *ostinato* rhythm; with him the grouping, the alternation of light and dark is consciously arranged in the form of a counterpoint.

Against this, the works of Béla Uitz constitute a transition from the stylizing endeavours of the Group of Eight and the dramatic qualities and internal tension of the Constructivism of Lampérth and the Hungarian Cubists (Sándor Galimberti and the young János Kmetty). Not for nothing did Uitz declare Michelangelo, Tintoretto, El Greco, Goya, Rembrandt and Cézanne to have been his real masters rather than those who had taught him at the Academy of Fine Arts. His pictures painted in the late 1910's often reveal a Baroque ardour and later he consciously undertook—as his chief task—the designing of decorative, monumental murals. But after this period of Baroque conceptions he, too, adopted the principles of Cubism, although his work retained a markedly plastic aspect. In themselves the motifs powerfully suggest spatial and corporeal plasticity, yet, their place and the role they play in building a picture is unmistakably of the early Cubist period. These works can be best compared with Léger's early period, whereas the pictures painted a few years earlier and representing women sewing or variants of the mother and child motif in hues of blues and ochres evoke the lessons learned from Picasso's blue period, but in a Cubistic transcript. In fact, these pictures, composed in cold colours, testifying to a deep insight into human character and reminiscent of Picasso, are the *chef d'oeuvres* of Uitz's Activist period.

"Furious Expressionism"

Not only Cubism but Expressionism too had a fruitful effect on Uitz the Activist. The connection between the Hungarian avant-garde and Expressionism is a highly intricate one. The emotional charge of Hungarian art has always been very intense; the spirit of Romanticism also exerted a long-lasting influence and, accordingly, the subjective factor often dominates in creative work. With artists pursuing Munkácsy's tradition even Realism came to be imbued with expressiveness. As a matter of course Expressionism pervaded Hungarian avant-garde too; moreover, its incessant presence rendered the crystallization of pure stylistic formulae rather difficult. Suffice it to point, in this connection, to the hybrid style blending Expressionism and Cubistic structure of the young Róbert Berény or Lajos Tihanyi, artists from the Group of Eight. Even in Nemes Lampérth's style—although in a more sovereign manner than the art of the two painters mentioned above—expressiveness was emphasized in the same measure as constructivity; his passion can sometimes be compared with Van Gogh's and—as far as form is concerned—with the painters of *Die Brücke*. It follows that the very character and function of Expressionism suited this genre for a significant role in the art of the Hungarian Republic of Councils. That is why the fact that in the early 1920's Béla Uitz turned the course of Hungarian Activism towards Expressionism cannot be considered as purely fortuitous. However, previously—under the impact of the experience gained from the revolutionary period—Uitz too, more or less contemporaneously with the Cubistic Expressionistic pictures, had been searching for possibilities of a monumental art along classic lines. It was in this spirit that the designs for frescoes were born in Vienna. Foreign instances of this intention are well-known: as a result of the revolutionary wave following in the wake of the First World War the attraction of Neo-Humanist and quasi-Classic monumentality could be observed from Picasso's Neo-Classicism, through Braque to the movement of the *Valori Plastici*. However, with Uitz, up to a point sectarian and doctrinaire in his ideas, who had but recently been released from the prisons of the Horthy regime, Neo-

Classic monumentality could necessarily be only an illusion and a transition; the merciless logics of a social transformation nipped in the bud his attempts of this kind. It was in "furious Expressionism" that his true attitude and frame of mind, his experience of a tragedy after the defeat of the revolution he had adopted with heart and soul, burst out: in 1923 he created the *chef d'oeuvre* of his life: the cycle of etchings representing the Luddite riots for the destruction of machinery.

Expressionism has always been permeated with an element of fury and passion so we can hardly speak of "lyrical Expressionism." This style of Expressionism was much more characterized by a rejection of Classic canons, by distortion, jarring and barbarism. Furiously, the Expressionists smashed into smithereens what was considered academically beautiful; they felt that forms and harmonies, beautiful within the academic definition, always concealed something. From Munch's pictures pervaded by nightmarish anguish, to Ensor's world of masks, Van Gogh's, blazing cyprus trees, Kokoschka's self-tormenting portraits, Soutine's horror still-lifes and Nolde—in whose art even the mother and child motif became awesome—the fury of revenge for the lost Eden, for the disruption of completeness blazed through Expressionism; indeed this intention to expose and reveal was at least as important a component of Expressionism as was the endeavour to project the artist's internal world.

In the posters produced during the months of the Republic of Councils the direct task of agitation contributed to Expressionism's gaining ground and, obviously, after the interlude of Neo-Humanism and Classicism, after the fall of the Republic of Councils, it was again Expressionism that became the leading style of progressive art. Uitz's series of etchings representing the Luddites' revolt also bore the marks of Expressionism. In choosing the Luddites for his theme he must, in all probability, have been under the influence of the German socialist writer Ernst Toller's drama: *The Machine Wreckers*, written in 1920–21. But Uitz would have been impressed by this theme only because it was suitable for the artistic expression of his attitude. The destruction-motif was the manifestation of a helpless, impotent fury—of the projection of pain after defeat into the sphere of longing. This series of etchings reveals embittered and impotent rage; the expressive intensification of form, the elementary representation of an all-destroying rage are a self-torment yet, at the same time, preserve him from despair and profess a faith surviving the tragedy—all by means of the magic power of art. Nobody could express on so high an artistic level the state of mind that prevailed after the defeat of the Hungarian revolution.

Nor was there in the Hungarian poetry of the period a voice whose force was comparable to Uitz's; for that was the era between Endre Ady and Attila József, when a word issuing even from the lips of the best became a "Complaint burning in the stillness of night" as Árpád Tóth, that sensitive lyric poet, characterized the work of his contemporaries. And Uitz's companions in exile cannot be compared with him in their artistic strength.

In the best sheets of the series—such as the *Oath of the Luddites*, which has deservedly become the best known of all—Uitz preserved the Constructivism too, which all along had been one of the characteristic features of Hungarian Activism. Although profiting from the teachings of his Renaissance masters Uitz was nevertheless attracted by the principles of composition determined by geometry and based on calculations. He drew some compositional geometrical schemas, which reveal how in Uitz's intentions the structural framework blended with expressiveness. But Uitz considered Constructivism only one component part of his pictures and consciously drew the line between himself and dogmatic Constructivism. This was, incidentally, the reason why his way

parted from Kassák's. As already mentioned, in the Kassák circle Hungarian Activism was swept towards two-dimensional non-figurative Constructivism or rather its Hungarian variant: pictorial architecture, whereas Uitz branded Constructivism as a "dictatorial trend of the big bourgeoisie" and grouped his friend Kassák among its representatives. He confronted it with proletarian art, "the collective dictatorial art of communist artists," the content and form of which must be related to architecture, painting and even music. In his view the Luddite series represented this "new, collective, centrally dictatorial content and form." And, indeed, this series of etchings is not only important in the projection of Hungarian fine arts, Lunatcharsky justly declared it to be one of the *chef d'oeuvres* of the art of the left wing in the twenties.

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It is rather difficult to pursue the course of development of Uitz's art in later years, for the internal logic and self-development of his art were too strongly influenced by external circumstances. In the same way as the Constructivism of the Kassák circle essentially exceeded the boundaries of Hungarian art and, through the activity of Kassák's pupil Moholy-Nagy, joined the international circuit of Constructivism, the art of Uitz, who had emigrated to the Soviet Union, became increasingly significant within the trends of Soviet art and in the interpretation of Socialist Realism there. Although his works created in Kirghizia had preserved something of the spirit of Activism, for in these designs a striving for monumentality was coupled with expressiveness, he was later criticized heavily for being a formalist. And, indeed, the fresco-frieze executed at the Agricultural Exhibition of Moscow tallies in its style with the other monumental, decorative murals conceived in the same spirit.

In Hungarian art, however, Uitz's name is linked with Activism and with the Activist trend that became fused with Expressionism.

LAJOS NÉMETH

ENDRE BÁLINT'S EXHIBITION

In his exhibitions at the Esztergom Balassi Bálint Museum last summer and at the Budapest Institute for Cultural Relations, last autumn, Endre Bálint showed his work of the past eight years: paintings conceived partly in Paris and partly in Budapest.* The style of the pictures, however, is not related to the newest, most up to date fashions. They are rooted in the constructivist and surrealist tradition of the thirties. At the beginning of that period conditions in Hungary were unfavourable for progress in the arts. Possessed of sound instincts Bálint turned away from the officially favoured, mostly post-impressionistic painting of the period and looked for other sources of inspiration. Thus—in time—he became acquainted with the constructivist school centering on Lajos Kassák.**

Bálint joined this somewhat isolated school of Hungarian art, but his poetic temperament would not allow him to express

* On Bálint, see No. 18 of The N.H.Q.

** On Kassák, see Nos. 19, 23, 28 of The N.H.Q.

himself in a purely impersonal, geometrical way. Thus he was at the same time attracted to surrealism, which was in direct opposition to some of Kassák's ideas. The aggressiveness and the desire to shock, so often found in surrealism was foreign to him, nor does his art show any pretentiousness. Max Ernst's intimate, fragile, nuanced painting, the surrealist world of dreams and memories, appealed to him. Childhood experiences, old photographs, a memory recalled without apparent reason, produce a system of associations, having an inner order and meaning.

Bálint considers himself a constructivist surrealist, as did Lajos Vajda,* Bálint's teacher and friend, who died before his time in 1941. His constructivist-surrealist inheritance has taken on a new significance in the past eight or ten years. In his art nostalgic atmosphere and a clear, well thought out design complement each other organically.

The cycle of motifs in his paintings—a symbolic system built on childhood memories and not difficult to understand-gives concrete expression to his intimate, personal style. Individual elements receive their meaning and justification only as parts of the structure of a picture. Moreover, certain motifs are symbolic only within the picture, in which they appear, outside their proper context their meaning becomes vague and obscure.

"What am I thinking of" Bálint wrote himself. "It is simply the wonderful change of rôle objects undergo at night—the glimmering large red square of a window appears against the darkness of the sky as a rectangular celestial body and the red-blue dots of neon lights become stars within human reach, cleaving to the dark silhouette of houses and trees." But the tiny dots of light are not only materialized dreams but also essential elements of the design.

The pictures do not at first sight reveal the principles of their construction and composition. The design only gradually emerges from the mood and atmosphere. The surface is generally broken up by both horizontals and verticals. The two can't be said to balance in the strict sense of the term. Silhouettes of standing houses, interior columns or figures, geometrical streaks of colour which break up the walls and recurring U-shaped smaller forms are strictly vertical. At the same time other houses are placed horizontally; silhouettes of stylized figures are generally not upright, but horizontal, as if floating in space. That which is usually architecturally rigid and balanced in constructivist design, is still balanced in Bálint's work, but a little irregular all the same, and a long way from any sort of puritan severity. The point from which the picture is lit up, sometimes appears as the moon above a house, sometimes as an abstract design within the picture. Bálint does this deliberately. Thus the Christ of the Tin Cross, standing with his arms outstretched almost symbolically steps towards the stylised platformlike design on which the light is concentrated.

Space and colour

Bálint is an artist who composes in two, but thinks in three dimensions. His figures, cottages and other subjects are generally in the form of silhouettes; architectural forms only rarely appear in the interior of houses to hint at plasticity and perspective. The design of the picture is generally on one plane. For the sake of pictorial economy the author dispenses with traditional space rendering since this would be likely to burst the unity of his small pictures. He is however unable to confine himself altogether to a flat reality: dots of light or celestial bodies are built into the picture to express his nostalgia for somewhere else, for a different world. This ambivalence is, however, characteristic not only of Bálint's art, but in a wider sense it is a basic requirement of all painting. As György Lukács put it in his Aesthetics: "It is imperative that every

* On Vajda, see No. 23 of The N.H.Q.

brushstroke, every colour, every line, every shade in a picture, in a two-dimensional as well as a three dimensional integration and order, should completely fulfil its function of correctly indicating what is meant to be evoked. To a large extent this convergence brings about the *Welthaftigkeit* of a painting. In the same way the intensive infinity of the whole work of art and that of its details is very much dependent on the fact that each element of the picture independently and in its context, should solve a large number of problems and the design should be able to manifest itself at any time and to varying points of view."

Space gives a home and a framework to the individual motifs; figures can exist only in space and only through it separate elements become connected. Conversely, space is created by the objects themselves, they radiate the particular mood which gives unity to distinctive forms.

On the other hand, it must be said that colour rather than space is principally responsible for the mood of a picture, iridescent, bluish green, dull grey, mostly dark nuances, suggest an atmosphere, that differs from the everyday world. The broken colours merge into each other tonally: almost imperceptible transitions enrich and beautify them. The harmonised, extraordinary coloured stains always create a festive feeling and impression. The painter avoids the din and directness of primary colours—his effects are always complex, but well balanced and differentiated. Although his themes seem simple, often almost primitive, the colour tones are singular and inimitable. Though certain objects and figures often recur the surface tones vary and are ever new. Sometimes a mystical, flame like brilliant red dominates, in others a greyish-black enigmatical light rules, elsewhere the silhouette of a horse paler and finer in tone cuts into a clear light blue background.

The surfaces of the pictures reveal beauties ever new—the tones merge into each other like in an opal, allowing the texture of the canvas, or rather more often than not, the wooden surface to shine through. The texture of the material thus becomes an essential part of the picture, or rather it is a presupposition of the composition. Bálint loves his materials and his craft, not unlike a medieval craftsman, for whom technique was an integral part of the spirit of what he wanted to express.

Montage technique

Bálint is not dramatic, he portrays people in a reticent, lyrical manner. This is why he probably rarely focusses his attention on one figure or subject, but more often on a number of smaller elements which appear on the surface of a picture. This apparent dispersion in itself leads to a horizontal organization of the material which is further strengthened by a tendency to tell a story. The long, extended, panelpaintings can generally be divided into a number of groups of subjects which follow each other in a predetermined strict order. Though naturally the connection is not one between events nor a historical one all the same the order of the groups of subjects suggests a certain kind of temporal sequence. The onlooker considers the figures of the scene one after the other, and thus time—though not mentioned—becomes implicit in the arrangement and structure of the composition. The onlooker's eye having established certain habits while reading—moves from left to right and this direction unconsciously determines the design technique of the artist as well. Bálint also has a technique which he derives from photomontage. His own, earlier compositions are frequently transplanted with smaller or greater changes into his later pictures. In the new composition the earlier ones lose their independence, only vague areas of colour separate them from each other. Thus certain pieces—follow each other as if in a time sequence—like eastern fairy tales, in a way evoking the whole world of the artist, all

that he loves and wishes to keep from his past in order to make it present once more. Thus—re-creating and varying his subjects he does not allow them to fade and become forgotten; the figures in his pictures are reborn from time to time in a new guise.

Mutually inclusive forms

Bálint has a closer and more intimate connection with time, and its passage, than the majority of modern painters. He always feels, observes and paints time. Influences from outside get into his pictures after being carefully sieved and distilled, never hastily, without ripening or revaluation. New subjects are ripened until they thoroughly fit into previously established mood of his pictures. This condensation is most manifest in the way the forms are arranged to include and cover each other. He always builds up a painting from the outside: the outer surroundings are looser, and, with their intertwining, the patterns become richer and richer, more differentiated and lyrical. Our eyes are automatically attracted time and time again, by the beautifully formed, innermost element which, independent of its place on the surface of the picture becomes the core of the whole representation. Thus the structure of the pictures is analogous with its origin: the outer forces grow clearer and clearer in time, and moving towards the centre in space they become more and more meaningful.

Bálint's later pictures are simpler and easier to understand. His earlier playful little figures are usually replaced by one or two motifs of greater size and importance. The character of the pictures has thus undergone an imperceptible change: the elements, fitted into toned down surroundings have become more effective and more important. Instead of the epic atmosphere of previous canvases, condensed, monumental effects are now presented.

Bálint is an up-to-date, contemporary artist. The problem of whether an antagonism exists between his mode of expression and what he has to say is therefore relevant. His static interpretation, despite his use of modern forms, his adherence to the past, and the respect for symbols representing a world passing away, may seem something of an anachronism in the second half of the 20th century. His pictures undoubtedly keep well away from the throbbing and disturbing rhythm of broken lines, from playfully varying optical effects or those juxta positions of posters and pictures from magazines and scenes from department stores which are designed to shock. Bálint follows his own impulses logically and steadily without yielding to the influences of either purely abstract or of op- or pop-art. He himself experiments with his means of expression without adopting any established method. This inner consistency is what makes his work so valid and convincing. He keeps away from the quick succession of various fashionable schools therefore, his pictures do not become obsolete, interest in them is not lost as the fashion changes. Thanks to his mastery over his art he is able to create a personal, closed, harmonious world as the mediaeval craftsmen did. Those who have the opportunity to see a sequence of his panel paintings no doubt will carry a memory of this world with them.

KRISZTINA PASSUTH

GYÖRGY BUDAY

In the autumn of 1967 the Budapest National Gallery arranged a retrospective exhibition—the first of the work of György Buday—an artist best known for his wood-cuts—who has been living in England for the past 20 years. On that occasion one of the artist's oldest friends, Gábor Tolnai, professor of literary history at the Budapest Eötvös Loránd University, published an article in *Kortárs*, a Hungarian literary review. A slightly altered version of that article is printed below.

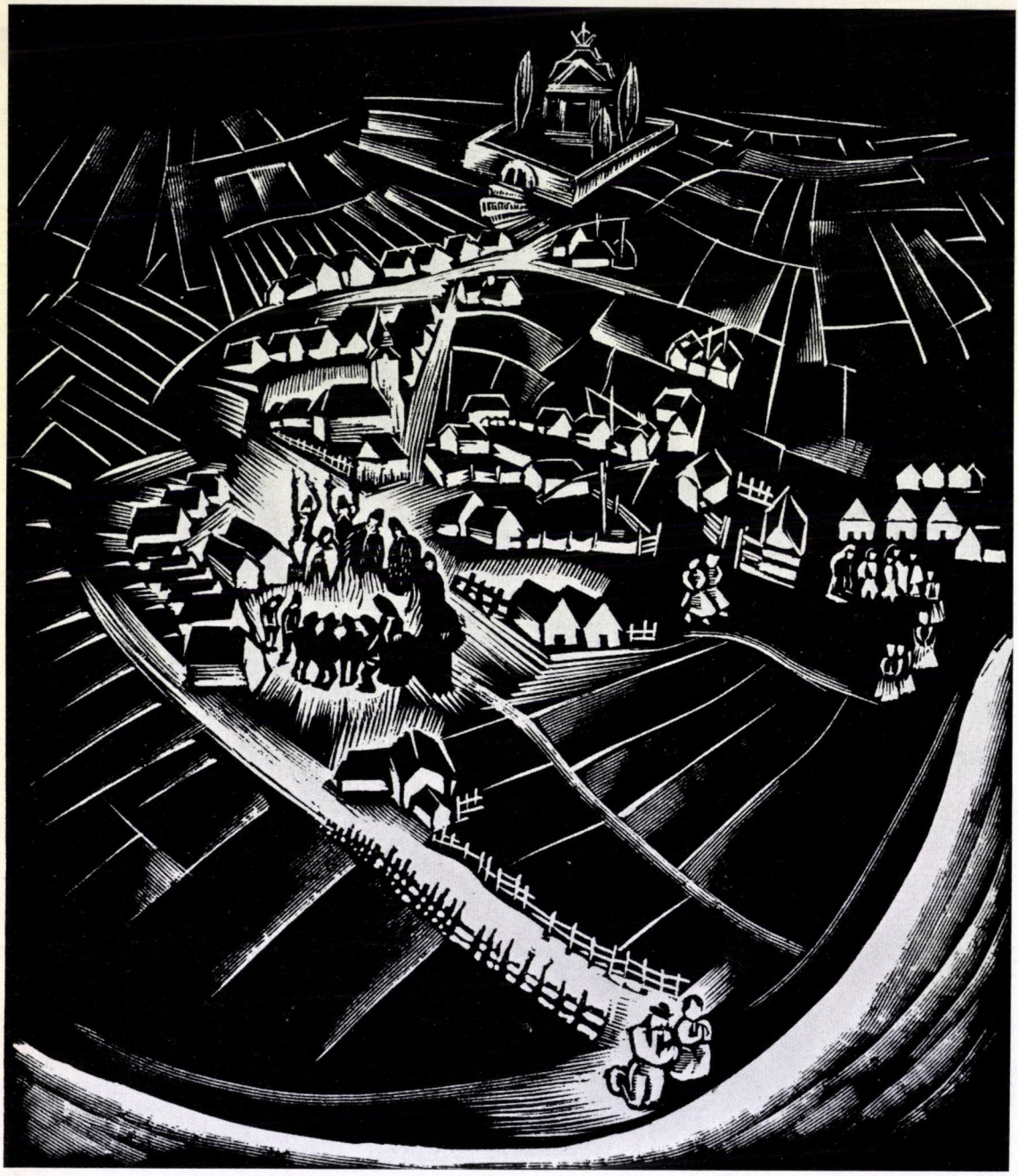
I am neither an art critic nor an art historian, but that is not the only reason why I hesitate to undertake an objective analysis of György Buday's work and career. He is part of my own youth to an extent that makes it impossible for me to write with the necessary detachment.

I would rather deal with the way his personality and work became part of my own way of thinking, a subject on which I can speak with some authority. Most of all I should like to tell what memories each of his works awakens. The time will surely come when his place in the history of Hungarian art will be established. For the present I am prepared at most to indicate his place, and even that only by way of a few marginal notes to part of his life's work—mainly that of the early years—prepared on the occasion of his current exhibition when given a chance to look at it once again.

I looked at everything in the exhibition—his woodcuts arranged in more or less chronological order—and a selection of his canvases. Later, at home, I took down books from my shelves which he had illustrated, covers he had designed, and books which printed reproductions of his pictures. The beginning—if we leave out early experiments, paintings, black, blue and brown drawings in chalk and later in ink, and a volume of verse illustrated by his woodcuts—were the slim volumes of the *Szegedi Kis Kalendárium* (The Little Almanac of Szeged), first published in 1930 and appearing till 1938. They contain folk songs collected in the spirit and according to the methods established by Bartók and Kodály, folk songs illustrated by Buday's drawings in ink. In 1931, soon after the appearance of the first volume of the almanac he published *A Boldogasszony búcsúja* (The Kermess at St Mary's), a series of woodcuts which made his reputation in Hungary. Recognition abroad soon followed. Thus, following the drawings in ink in the almanac a new technique: the woodcut with which he had only experimented previously, and following the playful illustrations to the folk songs the series of woodcuts expressing tragic aspects of contemporary peasant life. This work was the first "story in pictures" published in Hungary. Critical opinion in general was surprised by the originality of the young artist's work. They noted the personality of the artist as expressed by the woodcuts and the originality of his technique which had no precedent in the country, earlier Hungarian woodcuts having an altogether different character.

What he had to say about society was at least as important as the new forms and techniques expressed in the relationship of black to white. The world of the Hungarian peasant, particularly that of an inhabitant of the Great Hungarian Plain, was concentrated into these fifteen woodcuts depicting a church fair in the downtown, more rural area of Szeged.

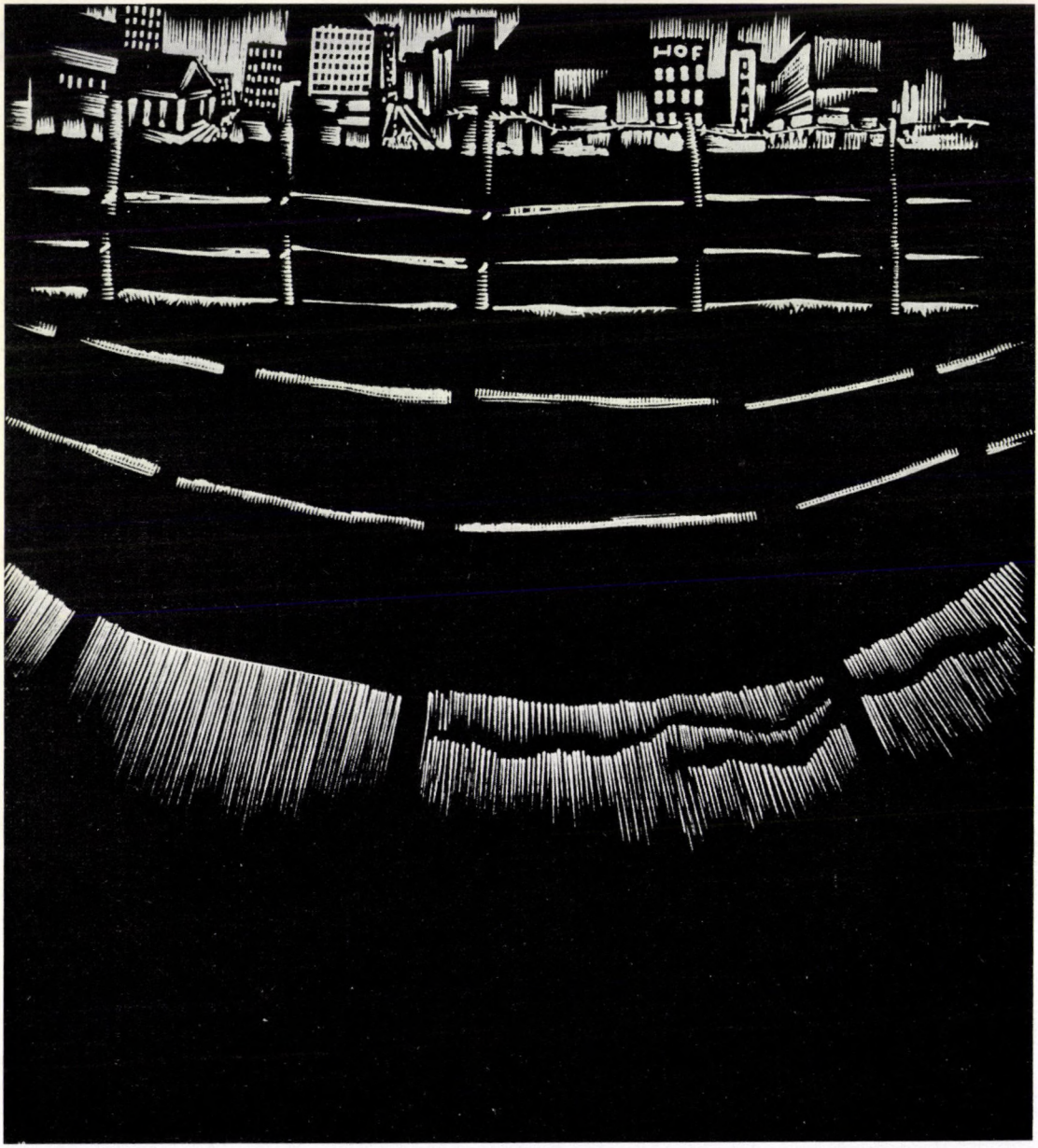
"...these sheets are darkened not only by the horror implicit in our common human fate, another 'special kind of death' throws its shadow over them, the tragedy of the peasantry of the Great Plain that is condemned to death and knows it," the art critic Tibor Joó wrote in the monthly *Nyugat* (The West) at the time. The sequence of woodcuts is not determined by chance. An active relationship of mood and feeling combines them into an integral composition,



György Buday: Folk Ballad (woodcut)

◂ György Buday: Timon of Athens (woodcut)

György Buday: Village at Tisza-river (woodcut)



GYÖRGY BUDAY: THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE TOWN (WOODCUT)

supported by the rhythm of the sequence and the pattern of expressed ideas. Károly Kós, the Transylvanian architect, draughtsman, writer and politician, wrote in the *Erdélyi Helikon:* "Most of the sheets of *The Kermess at St Mary's* not only show great virtuosity of black and white composition, their realism is natural and unaffected. Every sheet is torn out of György Buday's very being, showing a poet's directness and the true artist's awareness of his material. Whatever he says is pure emotion that flows like birdsong, but it is told by a story-teller accomplished in his craft who knows his subject well. Buday as a draughtsman will scarcely find a subject more suited to his art than that soil, those surroundings, that people which he sees through his own eyes in the mirror of his own soul. He expresses himself simply, concisely, tersely, even roughly, like the sort of people he depicts."

Károly Rosner, writing in the periodical *Magyar Iparművészet* (Hungarian Arts and Crafts), tried to explain the development of an artist fully mature when he first presents himself. "Wherever he went," Rosner is referring to Buday's stay in Austria and England, "he not only absorbed what the museums had to offer, he also got to know how the poor lived and how young people imbued with a new spirit thought. This not only influenced his outlook but also his art. Transylvanian mountain shepherds, Székely handymen peasants and farm labourers of the Great Plain as well as London slum dwellers are all given their own voice and colours, but are all evidence of the same powers of observation and of the same faith."

These interpretations of György Buday's *The Kermess at St Mary's* taken from three different reviews are still valid. They draw attention to traits which, though they were already present at the time, only became dominant in the artist's later work.

Allow me to say in parenthesis that the activities of our group of young artists in Szeged, the *Szegedi Fiatalok Művészeti Kollégiuma* (College of Art of Szeged Youth) had been noticed early on. Praise and criticism had appeared in a variety of publications, some had strongly attacked our "rural settlement" work. The *Sarló* (Sickle) organization of progressive Hungarian Youth in Czechoslovakia looked on us in Szeged as a sister organization and a similar group the "*Erdélyi fiatalok*" (Transylvanian Youth) in Transylvania went as far as to think of us as an example to be followed. All the same it can be said that György Buday's *The Kermess at St Mary's* series of woodcuts established the reputation of the young artists of Szeged, both because of what he had to say and because of its artistic success. Its influence was wide, some of those who showed it had genuine talent; it also succeeded in focussing the attention of Hungary's progressive opinion on our work, both what we had done and what we were about to do.

I am writing about György Buday, not about the young artists of Szeged. All the same I don't think that what I've said about them, what I'm going to say, is superfluous. I don't feel it to be that, since Buday's development can as little be understood apart from that of his fellows as theirs from his.

Buday's *The Kermess at St Mary's* truly reflects the state of our ideas about the world and society at the time (in 1930). At that time we spent more time than ever before on *homesteads* both in the Szeged area and further away.

The majority of us were no longer satisfied with the spirit and practice of English-type rural-settlement social work, designed principally to reconcile the classes. Spending years getting to know the peasants' world and situation—"bare facts crying out for help" as Buday put it—had as a consequence the taking up of a position, and increasing opposition to the existing order. The press response to what we published in those years was far from uniform. *Korunk* (Our Age) recognized our changed attitude already in 1930 when it detected in our work "an opposition to the ruling powers" (Sándor

Haraszti). In 1931 it was again *Korunk*, a communist periodical published in Kolozsvár, that came to our aid against attacks from the right, but at the same time they criticized us and warned us that it is not up to young intellectuals to lead, but to join in and commit themselves to fight at the side of the working classes. This, where the peasantry is concerned, means the fight for the re-distribution of land (Sándor Gergely, and Gábor Kemény). This criticism bore fruit. We began to study Marxism in the autumn of 1930, in the course of 1931 we read a number of Marxist classics, Engels, Plekhanov, Lenin. At that time we also developed an enthusiasm for the biting sarcasm with which George Grosz attacked the ruling classes in his drawings, and for Franz Masereel's woodcuts which show the strength and depth of the artist's social consciousness.

Buday's *The Kermess at St Mary's* faithfully mirrors the changes in our way of thinking and in the character of our social work. Some of the critics noticed this. I am quoting from a review which appeared in Szeged. "Scenes at the annual August 15th fair at downtown St Mary's are recorded by him with poetic insight, embedded in a symbolism of great depth, and yet on a firm realistic foundation. It seems almost as if reality were anxious to break out... a merciless openness and honesty celebrating in a revolutionary manner. This ambivalence gives the woodcuts their rhythm and accounts for the spell they cast. You can feel the faith of youth in them, and the earnest endeavour of an artist who senses the break of day of a new world" (Vilma Lengyel, in *Dél-Magyarország*). This change is there to be seen in what the whole series says about society, but it is most marked in the 9th sheet of the sequence. All the woodcuts of *The Kermess at St Mary's* are tragic or grotesque, as are also Miklós Radnóti's early poems. The latter too was a member of this group of young artists and writers in Szeged. The 9th shows a critical content more serious than the merely grotesque or ironical. The bitter and cruel terms in which the woodcut is conceived points towards the artist's later socio-critical series, *Present Chimaeras*.

The peasantry started György Buday on his career, it was the first inspiration of his art. It taught and helped him to understand concrete reality, it lent wings to his art, and gave purpose to his social and political aims. At the beginning he owed a great deal to folk art. Even then, disclosing the truth about the life of the people in all its horror, he produced works of universal validity and a humanist and intellectual temper. Following the success of *The Kermess at St Mary's* he produced a number of woodcuts as illustrations to books. Whether they were meant for Gyula Ortutay's collection of folk songs, or a new edition of János Arany's poems, or Székely folk ballads, or various novels, or Miklós Radnóti's volume of verse *Újhold* (New Moon) or Madách's *The Tragedy of Man*, they were all equally inspired not only by the work they illustrated but also by the society in which we lived and the tensions it generated.

At that time, when we were beginning to understand what life and reality meant, and we were beginning to grasp the significance of the fundamental problems of our times, German fascism, about to be victorious in its own country, appeared as a new threat in Europe. At that time, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of Goethe's death, Buday produced his woodcut: *Walpurgisnacht 1932*. The title itself is unambiguous. It indicates what Buday expresses through his art: the Witches' Sabbath of the society of his time. Goethe's world meets our own, his nightmare is completed by ours. Among his other woodcuts *Young People* expressed a poetic feeling that all of us can share. *The Blind Leading the Blind* and the *Present Chimaeras* sequence on the other hand are a demand for social justice. In them Buday depicted all the hypocrisies of capitalism, giving evidence of a keen eye and a talent for biting satire. The church, the army and big business are summoned to

the judgement seat of art, with a power and realism equal to that shown in the woodcuts prepared as illustrations. Nothing appears as often in his illustrations to collections of folk songs as gaols, gibbets and gendarmes. They are recurring and authentic motifs in the verses themselves but it is not by chance that Buday placed them in the foreground. The choice is deliberate since Buday's illustrations to folk songs and ballads are meant to tell us about the peasantry's desire for freedom, and its struggle for a better and more beautiful life.

I should like to take this opportunity to draw attention to the influence György Buday the artist and Miklós Radnóti the poet had on each other, and the way they shaped not only each other's thought but also each other's technique. Radnóti, left-wing, steeped in Marxism, influenced all of us. As I mentioned earlier the woodcuts of *The Kermess at St Mary's* are either tragic or grotesque, and so are Radnóti's early poems. Perhaps a mutual influence was at work, more likely social conditions and a shared point of view led to the same result; it is also not unlikely that the work of both was given momentum by Expressionism. There are other occasions though, where their effect on each other's art is direct, and clearly felt. Thus the image of church and steeple, inspired by the Szeged townscape, occurs again and again in Radnóti's early poems, written in Szeged. But obviously not only the townscape inspired him. The Gothic nave and Baroque steeple of St Mary's in downtown Szeged occur in more than of one Buday's early pictures, in the pen-drawings in the *Kis Kalendárium* and even in the woodcuts for the Székely folk ballads.

The dove as an image occurs in a number of Radnóti's poems. There is more than one dove in the *Kis Kalendárium* for 1931. The letterhead of the College too, designed by Buday, shows a dove over the drawing representing Szeged. Another frequent image in Radnóti's early Szeged poems is that of a pond, or a stream, any water stocked with fish, or fish as such.* Buday too, frequently uses stylized fishes and fish in water in both drawings and woodcuts.

One could go on comparing the images used by Radnóti and Buday. Their art meets in many other ways. Thus the suppression of Radnóti's *Újmódi pásztorok éneke* (The Modern Shepherds' Song) led to a woodcut by Buday, and of somewhat greater importance, Buday later illustrated Radnóti's *Újhold*.

The most beautiful of Buday's works connected with Radnóti is a woodcut *Hispania, Hispania* which he created later, already in Rome. It is a masterpiece of purified, almost classical art. It shows a demolished statue of a female nude with ruins and decay in the background, the stillness of death, in other words the horror produced by the destructiveness of fascism. The artist's chisel produced a balanced, formal design, as though it were not connected with Radnóti's strange and thrilling poem, as if he anticipated his friend's later poems, unwritten as yet, those poems of classical calm and purity which Radnóti produced shortly before his death. The woodcut shows a perfect formal solution, a classical tranquillity, and just because of that it is like Radnóti's later poems, an all the more powerful protest.

The works György Buday produced after *The Kermess at St Mary's* are imbued with the same poetic spirit, the same epic sweep, the same dramatic power and passion. This is the only way, however, in which his later work does not differ from his early success. The possibilities inherent in the relationship of black and white in a woodcut, of light and shade are used to produce greater variety. In *The Kermess at St Mary's* he showed crowds on the move, with the emphasis on the unity of the crowd; the faces are symbols, pious and grotesque, mostly without individuality. In his later work he shows individuals in the crowd. In crowds or groups various figures differing in posture and costume represent individual characters. Female

* On Radnóti, see The N.H.Q. No. 18.

figures and female faces first gain in individuality. They are suffused with feeling. Movement too, first appeared in female figures; the men remain immobile at this stage of the artist's development, the female figures on the other hand suggest movement even when immobile, their faces are alive and never static, even in his early work they are poetically formed individuals. When movement first began to appear in his male figures they seemed to be clumsier, more restrained; at this time the women's faces already shine, the men are sombre, for quite a time they lacked subtlety.

Though rooted in folk art Buday's work showed signs of sophistication right from the start and in time grew more and more intellectual. After 1937, when he lived in Rome, his work became more subtle, and he began to work in more colours. While in Italy, he illustrated Gyula Ortutay's *Tales from Bátorliget*, a collection of fairy tales. They are coloured woodcuts, evidence of a highly developed technique. At first sight he seems to be playing, especially if we compare these illustrations with the tragic mood of his earlier black and white work. He is illustrating fairy tales but the folk-art elements of his art have become much more sophisticated than at any earlier stage in his works. Thank to the colours, though not only to them, something of Italy seems to show in these illustrations. The blues and the reds, as well as the yellows and greens grow to be dominant, black which dominated all his earlier work, is hardly noticeable. It is true, these colours are not alien to the world of Szeged either, but the way they appear, the four colours attuned to each other, can only be described as a Roman harmony; after all it is also evident in a work in black and white completed in Rome, the twin female figures of the *Annunziazione Romana* with sections of the Eternal City in the background. His stay in Rome was Buday's most harmonious creative period so far, it was almost as if he had thawed out in Italy.

He thawed out, and though it was a temporary phase, it was a thawing out all the same. Nor did this mean a break with realism; after all the woodcut *Hispania, Hispania* dates from this period, and so do other works which reflect life around him.

Moving to England from Italy—he still lives there—Buday continued to produce work of high quality which was in general favourably received. It does not seem to me when looking at what he produced in England, that I am facing the man I had known before. The woodcuts produced in Britain are outstanding too. I am convinced that his art has reached an even higher standard than it had when we worked together. I ought, however, to look at these pictures in a different spirit, a more impersonal one, I lack the immediacy given by common personal experience. In England he illustrated amongst others Omar Khayyam, Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*, Aragon, Ovid and James Joyce, showing a virtuoso's technique, a further growth in the artistic resources at his disposal.

I should all the same like to say something about one of them, the sequence of ten woodcuts illustrating *Timon of Athens*.

As far as I know it was not the artist himself who chose *Timon of Athens* as a subject. He was commissioned by an American publisher who, preparing a new Shakespeare edition, chose a different artist to illustrate every one of his plays. Although Buday had not chosen *Timon of Athens*, *Timon of Athens* gave him the opportunity to say something very personal and close to his heart.

Like Shakespeare's tragedy the ten woodcuts of 1950 express poetically a self struggling in its own shell, afraid even of its own thoughts. Shakespeare in this work outgrew his earlier manner and made an attempt to create a new dramatic form. The ten woodcuts for *Timon of Athens* mean a new departure in Buday's work too. Emotions are expressed by human faces, one in each woodcut; a face in each woodcut provides

a focus for what the artist has to say. Each one of the ten sheets expresses a powerful emotional conflict.

There is something personal I feel I want to add to the recent work of the artist. It seems as if his latest work reached back to his, perhaps to our, youth. In his *Little Christmas Book* sequence he depicts London characters in a style reminiscent of that of the *Kis Kalendárium*, though in a more decorative manner. In another woodcut a woman's face stands out, a face in which faces from his early woodcuts seem to come to life. And on another an arm is lifted, the hand holds flowers, just like in a picture he created long ago, when he was a young man.

György Buday has been living a long way from us for many years, a long way from his country of origin, but his woodcuts and drawings are messages. They evoke our youth, our home, our country for the sake of whose future we worked together and from which he has not cut himself off to this day.

GÁBOR TOLNAI

TWO EXHIBITIONS

The last one and a half years have seen several exhibitions showing the traditions of Hungarian constructivist art: after the shows of Jenő Barcsay, Lajos Vajda, Dezső Korniss, Lajos Kassák and Endre Bálint, there was recently a Jenő Gadányi Memorial Exhibition at the Hungarian National Gallery, and a posthumous display of the works of Géza Bene in the Museum of Tihany Abbey.

The constructivist architectonic pictures of Lajos Kassák* represent a trend of Hungarian constructivism that occurred between the two wars. Of the emigrant artists who broke away from the main current of Hungarian art, the works of László Moholy Nagy and Alfréd Réth nevertheless pursued constructivist objectives, and essentially the creations of Vasarely also fit into this line.

The majority of the painters who stayed in Hungary remained essentially figurative, and in their work constructivism became affected by other characteristics of vision and style.

The art of Lajos Vajda,* Dezső Korniss, and Endre Bálint* is usually classified as "constructivist surrealism," whilst Jenő Barcsay,* Jenő Gadányi,* and Géza Bene are always mentioned in a separate group. Although the art of each is different from the other two in many essential features, the three of them are linked by the fact that each regards as his central problem the pictorial re-interpretation of the natural world, applying the principles of modern picture-building to nature. All three wished to build a bridge between Hungarian and European art and join the currents of modern art. Their ambition, however, was not merely to join but to enrich up-to-date endeavours with new values and qualities. This is how they attained, first instinctively and later consciously, the re-interpretation of the world of nature and of landscape. This choice was not independent of historical circumstances. Owing to the rapid advances of technical civilization and the metropolitan way of life, the re-interpretation of natural existence did not play a central role. On the other hand, because of the slower rate of industrial development, the Central European way of life permitted an active and intimate relationship with nature much longer, and the relationship of man and nature remained

* These artists have been dealt with in our previous numbers: Kassák No. 28, Vajda Nos. 16, 23, Bálint No. 18, Barcsay No. 15, Gadányi No. 9

more direct and more many-sided then was possible in the course of all-out industrial development further West. The re-interpretation of nature and landscape is one of the characteristic and valuable manifestations of modern art in Central Europe.

Jenő Gadányi—Painter, Researcher and Inventor

Gadányi was of the opinion that an artistic rendering of the visible was not sufficient; more than reproduce the atmosphere of the world, he strove to capture its essential interrelationships. His artistic career was an ever-renewing chain of intellectual search. He believed that the real artist is "not only a painter, but also a permanent researcher and inventor." This versatile interest made his appeal so varied and wide that many thought his painting lacking in independent style. And yet his independent and characteristic architecture, his individual style, become clearly apparent once one strips off the results of stylistic detours—some of these works of quality—from the backbone of his lifework. On the other hand, the explanation for this mobile branching out in many directions lay in the age itself. The generation of artists who began their careers after the First World War had to face many difficulties and disappointments; the development of progressive painting in Hungary had lost its momentum in the intellectual vacuum following the White Terror of 1919, and art life had somewhat foundered. Only pleasing genres, pictures which emanated a rosy atmosphere, only idealizing classicism had hopes of success. Those who looked outward, watching the stimulating course of European painting, were faced with the fact that in a single decade they had fallen behind contemporary art several stages. The integration of new achievements and the maintaining of traditions in Hungarian painting were a challenge to ambitious artists, but an oppressively difficult one which demanded moral fortitude and consistency. It is understandable that of the members of this generation—at least the majority—Gadányi, just as Barcsay and Bene, matured slowly and their work did not reach its zenith until the 1940's and 50's.

Already as an adolescent, Gadányi had observed with keen insight the trends of new paintings in Hungary. As early as the 1910's he came to know Expressionism and Cubism from reproductions, and directed his attention towards the Activists in Hungary. At the College of Art in Budapest, his development was assisted by his master János Vaszary, an open-minded man who quickly found his bearings everywhere, and later, when the New Society of Artists enabled him to spend some time in Paris (1927), he studied the works of Picasso, Braque and Matisse, and also visited the exhibitions of the Surrealists and the Abstracts. In his own admission he went to Paris with a fully developed approach to art, or as he himself wrote: "...I knew what I had to do. All my desire was to build up my inner world in constructive forms." His instinctive discovery of modern art was coupled with a deliberate search, for a way of interpretation and for information, and with critical self-discipline.

During his first period Gadányi experimented with several possibilities of expression, but the most characteristic works of this period—which lasted from the end of the 20's until the mid-40's—bore the hallmarks of Constructivism. Rational purity, search for interpretation, explanatory analysis, interrelationships, and the courage of abstraction characterized these pictures, including his constructive *Self-Portrait* of 1930 and *Composition* of 1933. Reduced to intercepting planes, the composition of the *Self Portrait* is actually a re-conception, a transformation of the still-life theme: the table with the glass jug, and looking-glass on it, and the portrait that is reflected in it.

The other picture mentioned above also shows circular and elliptical forms intercepting each other: this composition, set in a plane, is again an absolutely simplified and abstracted expression of still-life motives.

The forms are pure and sharply drawn on both pictures, without the addition of detail. The colour composition is also typical of Gadányi's early period. The basic tone is reddish-brown whilst the intercepting forms have illuminating grey-white bands and glowing reds. The bright whites radiate a purity and beauty which create order. *Forces and Directions* (1932) is a non-figural picture, which quite obviously did not come into being as a result of purely abstract geometric form construction, but as a condensed expression of the forces active in nature.

Between then and 1945 Gadányi experimented with various approaches to modern art. Later his interest turned more and more towards nature, and he found the purpose of his art in the modern interpretation of natural existence. "My artistic aim is very ambitious: to find the interrelationship between man and the reality of nature," he wrote in his diary in 1945. Landscape, however, is only a skeleton, a mere pretext for expressing his real theme: the forces governing nature, the interpretive view of modern man who seeks interconnection, and the relationship between man and nature. He applied the achievements of his previous period, the principles of constructive picture-building to nature and consequently, the relationship of the parts to each other and the degree of abstraction are not determined by the proportions in natural vision, not by superficial moods, but by the essential interconnections, and through them by the composition. Constructivism manifests itself through the creation of a balance of structural relationships according to their own laws. The trees, vegetation, house and fence motifs of *Békásmegyer Landscape* (1947) are cemented by thick contours of constructive composition, which are integrated with the objective elements of the picture and cut the landscape into segments, pieces straining against each other, and these details present the luxuriant vegetation in new and different projections. The constructive order of *Blue Lights* is rendered by the dynamic interlinking and crossing of branches set against the vibration of yellow and blue patches. The order, the balance, the harmony created by Gadányi is most often a result of the pull, tension and equalization of opposing forces. This dialectic approach is what renders his way of creating order and harmony so modern.

Strangely, but not accidentally, it is just this search for internal connections and structural order of things that leads Gadányi, in addition to geometric order, to a study of the mysteries of amorphous forms. He recognized that geometrical structure is only one manifestation of the rich variety of the world of nature, and restive amorphous shapes are another. Thus, he draws the conclusion: "Nature always tends towards irregular things: it is not symmetrical, not parallel, not straight, etc. Man deforms the natural irregularity of things if he insists on regularity." It was in the spirit of this concept that the small masterpieces of his series *Vegetation* and *Amorphous Forms* came into being (graphs, aquarelles and oils). These works present a vision of the internal essence of vegetative existence, of vegetative luxuriance. Later he varied regular and irregular, harmonious and dissonant forms—often in a single picture. The endeavour to capture phenomena in their full complexity leads him to depict geometrical and amorphous forms together (*Composition*, 1955; *Farmstead*, 1953, etc.). Attention to structural composition is also characteristic of his pictures built on amorphous forms, which emphasize, besides the lines, the patch effect. The structural lines of force are provided by the vertical and horizontal lines, crossing a pictorial surface that suggests the freedom of improvisation, and also by dots, by intercepting straight lines, or spiralling whirlpools of forms. Richness of form combines with an unusual sensitivity to colour and a heavily sensuous colour scheme. Gadányi's art is a realization of well-considered ideas, and his best works are the result of an exceptionally successful combination of the instinctive

and the conscious, the up-to-date re-conception of the essence of the world of nature.

The one-man show held in the Hungarian National Gallery presented a multifarious picture of Gadányi's art. His work between the two World Wars would probably become far better known if pictures at present believed to be lost were to be discovered. Important paintings were missing even from among the works produced in the 1940's and 50's. On the other hand, a good many of the pictures displayed at the exhibition could have been omitted, especially some of the overcrowded experimental works which reflect transitional solutions.

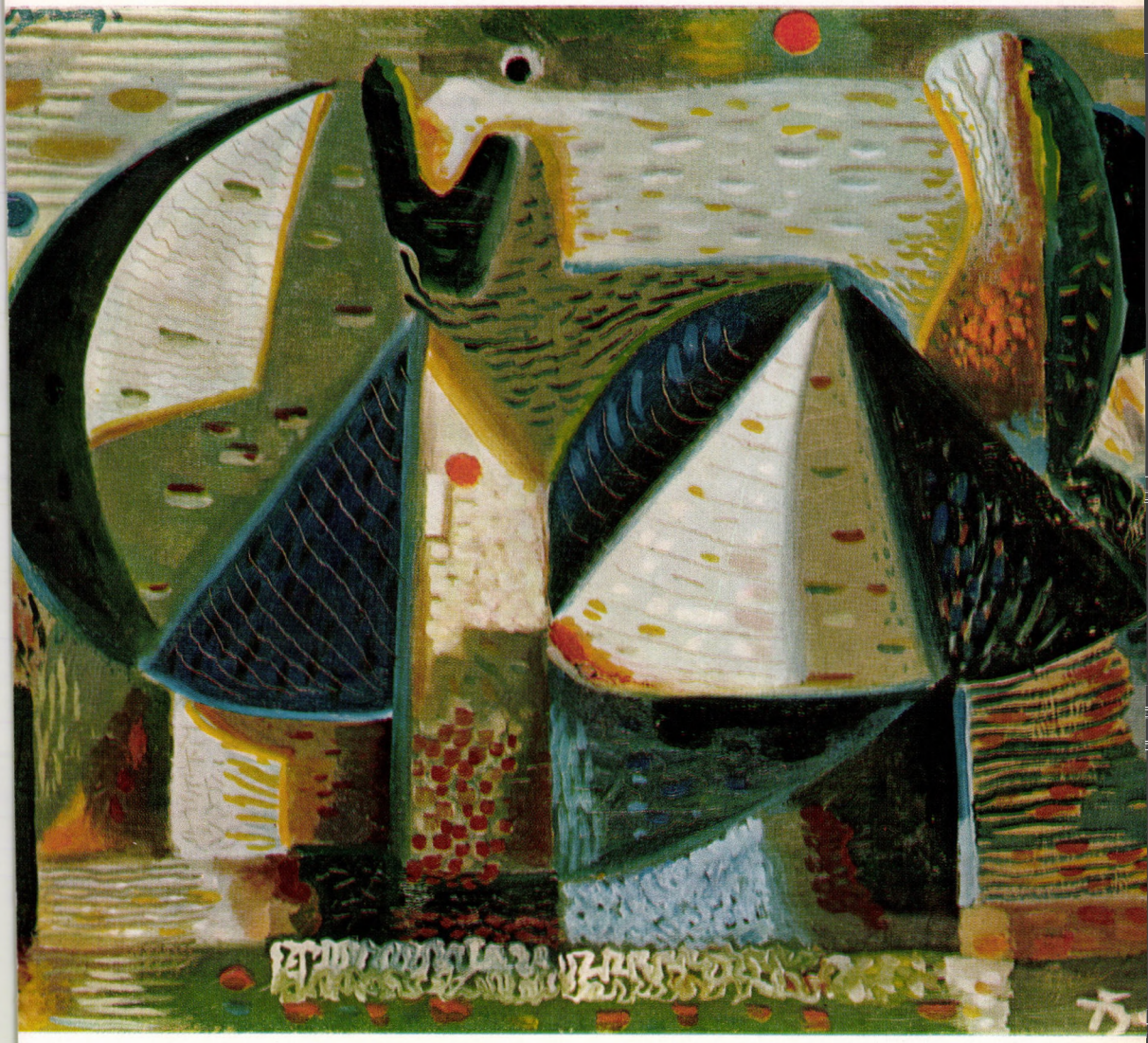
Géza Bene—Discovery of a Neglected Artist

The Géza Bene Memorial Exhibition did not intend to present the artist's entire life-work. In the rooms of the Tihany Museum only the last two decades of his creative career were represented, and this choice was well justified. The fact is that these two decades sum up Bene's entire career. The presentation of his whole work will be realized through a one-man show.

Géza Bene is one of the undeservedly neglected and forgotten artists of Hungary. The true significance of his work has come into perspective only since the exhibition at Tihany. Until then his contemporaries concentrated only on the artistic nature and constructive structure of Bene's paintings, hardly noticing the complex problematology in which the artist interested himself, nor realizing that these pictures, which present a vision of the same spontaneity as the phenomena of nature, condense a great deal of thought and experience and are subordinated to a strict intellectual discipline. Bene was not one of those artists who accompanied their creative work with loud proclamations. Even in his pictures he avoided solutions suggesting a thesis. He believed that it was better for the work if the thesis remained concealed, appearing not in a direct form but only being transmuted into a pictorial vision. Shaping them to his own image, he utilized the individual achievements of Cubism, Constructivism, Surrealism and Expressionism, and managed to be a modern painter while containing the traditions of Hungarian painting.

What were the problems that occupied Bene? The painting depicts the vision at a given moment from a single viewpoint. How could one show the theme and the object depicted, not from a single aspect but from several points of view; to make the painting reflect not only the subject at a certain moment, but also suggest the changes as they occur in the different temporal strata? Bene's ambition was to make visible in a single picture, condensed into a single vision, everything he sensed as essential in the changing phases of natural existence. In everyday life we see only the outer shell of things, but we know of their internal structure. Bene renders visible the inner processes taking place under the surface. Parallel with his showing the successive phases of the plant world as coincident, he is even able to suggest the passing of time through the concentration or spacing of lights and shadows.

Bene realized these ambitions through the creation of a new pictorial reality, and through his condensation, superimposition and blending into each other of the various motifs. He treated trees, leaves and seeds as elements of a still life. He displaced them from their everyday context and juxtaposed them just as the objects in a still life are arranged. The horizontal band of colours stretching along the bottom part of the picture signifies the earth, but at the same time by association it suggests the surface of a table supporting a still life. In other works, the house motif which symbolizes the human way of life, is completely surrounded by plant forms signifying vegetative existence, and this becomes a constructivist structure of a complex of interconnections and proportions. The proportions of plant forms are not determined by their actual proportions in relation to the landscape, but by



Géza Bene: Composition
(Oil; 40 × 50 cm, property of the artist's widow)

Overleaf: Pál Gadányi: Self Portrait
(Oil; 80 × 100 cm, property of the artist's widow)

their function within the picture: sometimes the artist enlarges the dimensions of a single tiny seed to such an extent that it contains the entire foliage of a tree. Bene intended to work around the associative and memory images in the imagination of the spectator. He did not represent things which people frequently see in their full dimensions in space, but would illuminate a single well-chosen detail of the whole: a white detail of the wall of a house, a part of the foliage or the oval outline of the crown of a tree; sometimes he would draw into a single tree everything that he regarded as the essence of vegetative existence. On one side of the foliage there is, for instance, a dark half-moon-like silhouette: the detail of a strongly magnified seed. The next segment perhaps translates the internal structure of the leaf into pictorial vision, and on the other side the branches or the venation of the leaf are suggested. The motifs condense several levels of association. All this is an analytical dissolution of the vision, and in fact a rendering visible of what is invisible to the naked eye of our daily life.

On the other hand if the picture is observed from a distance, the analytical parts lose their independence, they fade into the larger forms—into outlines which are more closely linked with natural sight. In addition to the changing rhythms of light and shadow, the recurring celestial bodies also suggest the passing of time: in Bene's paintings there will sometimes be three suns or moons of various colours. A compact re-creation of nature condensed into a constructive order appears in his works.

Constructivism is, however, only one characteristic of Bene's art; in some of his pictures expressive and surrealistic elements colour the composition of constructivist structure, and in others the creation of a vision is so strong that the outcome is an unstable world of relaxed forms with an expressive emphasis. Colour composition plays an important part in the artist's expression. The colours of the nature motifs which appear in the picture are never determined by fidelity to their real appearance, but only by the message the artist wishes to communicate. With his colour schemes Bene deliberately strives to awaken primary emotions, to release subconscious experiences.

The re-interpretation of nature and the condensed representation of his experience of nature are subordinated to still deeper strata of the world of experience and of the artist's theme. The cycles of nature come to express the cycles of life; birth and death, the relativity of time and space, and the fusion of past, present and future are translated into a pictorial vision. These pictures are the confessions of a man about his absorption in the secrets of natural existence, about his love of life, and the drama within himself when his diseased organs rebelled against the treacherous disease which was to carry him away. A craving for life, delight in the richness of existence, dramatic protest against the idea of death, and then the nostalgic acceptance of it; the consolation he found in the cycles of decay and renewal, the cycles of existence, all these radiate with cumulative force from Bene's pictures. His paintings are full of the joy of living and free from worry, but at the same time they are pregnant with grief and tragedy. They are like life itself, oscillating between the poles of life and death.

ISTVÁN KERÉKGYÁRTÓ

SET DOWN IN BLACK AND WHITE

Graphic art is an intimate art, like chamber music. But it has not remained as it once was, a secondary, subordinate art. It has imperceptibly taken the same place in the Hungarian visual arts in the twentieth century as the short story in Hungarian literature. Hungarian painters considered themselves painters first and foremost, but just as many Hungarian novelists found the greatest opportunities for self-expression in the short story, so many artists found the graphic arts essential for the same purpose.

In the first decades of the century the members of the Group of Eight,* although they did a great deal of work in fresco mosaic, found the most suitable form for themselves in charcoal and Chinese ink drawings. What might have been considered a compromise, dictated by necessity, served to intensify their work; by its simplicity it eliminated much of the theatrical and over-dramatic tendencies to which they were prone. Their drawings, woodcuts and engravings, represented the best of them, unlike much of their painting, which appears overworked. The interplay of lines, often meaningless in Bertalan Pór's large panels, came to life in his sketches. In the pure and powerful lines of Károly Kernstok's early Chinese ink drawings there is no suggestion of the mannerism of his later large-scale stained glass windows. Ödön Márffy betrayed his own creative instincts when, under the influence of the West, he began to paint in a Constructivist manner. In his Chinese ink drawings, however, bursting with vitality, he resembled nobody but himself.

Within a short time the revolutionary upswing of the Group of Eight flagged; the group activity came to an end in 1912, and their avant-garde leadership was taken over by the Activists under Lajos Kassák's intellectual domination. The Activists—who abandoned the large-scale impressive work of their predecessors—deliberately took to the poster, the spontaneous, terse sketch or drawing, and the formalized language which expressed them most effectively. The poster answered the requirements of their sense of social commitment, their practical work within the working-class movement, and their aesthetic principles, much as the various forms of montage suited their western contemporaries.

What the poster was to Kassák and his group the graphic arts were to József Nemes Lampérth and Lajos Vajda. They were both painters, but they did not pursue the graphic arts as a sideline. The graphic arts in their case represented an inevitable stage in their artistic development.

Nemes Lampérth stopped using colours when he had no more money to buy them with. But lack of money made no difference to his style; the blaze and fever of his oils only took on a heightened expression in his Chinese ink paintings. The very few motifs he played with in his paintings were still further simplified in his ink drawings; out of the sheer and powerful structure of heavy black lines, nudes, houses, churches, bridges and chimney stacks emerged. The lines of light transmuted into paint were replaced by the freshness of his improvisation and the lack of colour by the vibration of all the shades of grey, by the stark contrast of black and white, and by the skill of the strokes of painting in Chinese ink.

Nemes Lampérth raised the graphic art to the rank of great art. What he had to say in

* A group of modern painters who came together in 1909 exhibited under the name of the Group of Eight from 1911 onwards. They were: Róbert Berény, Béla Czóbel, Dezső Czigány, Károly Kernstok, Ödön Márffy, Dezső Orbán, Bertalan Pór and Lajos Tihanyi. They broke with the Hungarian traditions of Naturalism and Impressionism, and chiefly inspired by Cézanne and Matisse, evolved a Constructive-Expressionist style of painting.

Dóra Maurer: Fishing

ARNOLD GROSS: VIA MARGUTTA

his drawings or ink paintings was no less important—and effective—than in his paintings. There was no artist to carry on where he left off, and the form the graphic arts followed in Hungary, traditional in approach, continued to prevail.

Lajos Vajda broke with it when he put on paper the architectural and religious patterns of the town of Szentendre, using curving unbroken lines and a surrealistic linking of the motifs, built upon one another. His "bare" manner of representation, which made no use of traditional graphic effects, and his method of composition, making use of montage where necessary, gave a further depth to graphic art. His austere drawings went hand in hand with his paintings. In the last years of his life, however, at the end of the thirties, he gave up painting exclusively for the graphic arts. The catastrophe of fascism forced in him the need for a single, exaggerated form in which to express himself. At that time he only produced large-scale charcoal drawings in which vegetal forms and organisms were intertwined with powerful and visionary monsters and masks. Over and over again, obsessively, he repeated them in a hundred variations, never freeing himself from them, never resolving them. Vajda's charcoal drawings first introduced abstract form as a familiar idiom in Hungarian graphic art; here was something no longer literary or anecdotal, but conceived in its own terms.

Hungarian graphic art was never homogeneous. Vajda's Abstract Surrealism, it is true, remained a solitary phenomenon. Only one or two of the last ink drawings of Imre Ámos, who tragically died young, revealed a use of the abstract similar to Vajda's.

The Constructivist line of graphic art was more vigorous and continuous, although it showed considerable variety. The common Constructivist approach of many artists led to different forms of expression; it is noble and dynamic in Nemes Lampérth, lyrical and intimate in János Nagy-Balogh, markedly and immediately inspired by nature in István Nagy and polished and careful in Jenő Barcsay.

The fully representational though formal type of graphic art which began with the poster art of the Activists also found successors, as it turned out, without merging in the undistinguishable stream of commercial art. The series of etchings by Béla Uitz and the woodcuts of Gyula Derkovits were independent works of art, despite the topicality of their subject-matter and their directly representational forms.

Everything outside these tendencies was Naturalist-Impressionist, in the style of the Nagybánya school of the turn of the century—the strongest and most durable influence in Hungarian painting. The half-poetic representational drawings of István Szőnyi and the sculptor Béni Ferenczy are the most individual variants in these smooth and quiet continuations of tradition.

What however all Hungarian graphic artists had in common before the Second World War was a serious approach. Both the original and the purely conventional painters tried to communicate, they did not allow their skill to degenerate into empty routine or mere decoration. Their work was spontaneous, not automatically conditioned, with something in it of elemental force; something not bound to theoretical considerations or sophisticated techniques.

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The graphic arts, however, have really only come into their own with the present generation of artists. The Biennale of Graphic Art at Miskolc, the exhibitions at the Dürer Gallery in Budapest, the ever-increasing opportunities in book illustration, all seem to indicate that it has at last come of age. Paradoxically it has achieved this position at the time when the traditions that had determined and inspired its development have been eroded and in fact have disappeared.

The majority of contemporary graphic artists have done well out of it. They have

clung resolutely to representational forms, and even their attempts to break away from them have resulted in compromise. As a consequence what is new in modern graphic art is in technique, not form; it has tried to be modern within the limits of conventional realism. But all these new and improved techniques have been used to express empty and pretentious forms. The virtuosi of today's graphic art: Gyula Feledy, Gábor Pásztor and Ádám Würtz have in fact shut themselves away in a dazzling maze of pleasing and surprising tricks of technique. However noncomformist their method of composition appear to be, they are, when all is said and done, traditional; in their drawings, even with the use of motifs effective in themselves and inscriptions that seem to communicate, they try in fact to cover up a lack of communication. This timorous and accommodating attitude is also revealed in the faulty forms, the heavily blackened lines muddled together, the smudgy outlines lost in shading, the senseless interplay of surfaces with one another.

The graphic work of Kálmán Csohány, Károly Reich and János Kass are characterized by a lesser degree of self-deception, and a more consistent respect for their own limitations and the traditions of representational art. There is also a certain poetic sentimentality in their style common to all three, though János Kass, who sometimes shows the strong influence of Lajos Szalay, the Hungarian artist living in New York reveals a more sophisticated and experimental attitude than the others. Their normal simplifications lack tension, their art is static, and tends to repetition.

The real dignity of graphic art, in the old meaning of the term, has returned in the art of Béla Kondor. Like the great masters of old, like Dürer or Rembrandt, Kondor draws simply, with ease. His work is representational, but has taken on a new content and a new reality, so variable that neither content nor reality has been swamped in academism or reduced to mere mannerism. His technique is so self-explanatory that it is not the achievement that fascinates us but the work itself. Without raising his pencil from the paper, Kondor effortlessly draws or burns his passion into the pattern of lines in his etchings, or expresses his intentions through the empty white patches—for there is nothing arbitrary in his work—only the consistent search for its symbolic, mythological or ironical content. He is content with nothing less than the whole of reality, where God, king, angels, devils, murderers and saints live in a world amenable to law. They can be angular in the manner of caricature, they can be touchingly charming, as in a nineteenth-century engraving, human beings all eyes, heads, or hands, like the devout figures of medieval stone carvers, or teeming like grotesque insects, limbs entangled, half light-hearted, half anguished.

In his representational works the meanings are superimposed on one another; in the illustrations he made to Blake's poems the tiny people besieging a castle appear to be climbing the mast of a ship; in one of his pictures the angel, grasping at nothingness with his distorted hand, seems as fallible as man. Blake's prophets may be tempters, gangsters or the shining embodiment of divine guidance.

Kondor has his followers. What in him is a reverence for the past is in them a comfortable compromise. His ideas have been carried on, but as mere indulgence in detail, since without his intellectual attitude they have lost their meaning. The sweep in his style has become a hackneyed routine, and his ease contrived imitation.

The other original personality in Hungarian graphic art, Arnold Gross, has created a style exclusively for himself: so highly personal that no one can follow him. His work also is representational. True, he does not make use of the same expressive distortions and sweeping simplifications as Kondor does, but his drawings, elaborate and realist in their detail, are surrealist in a number of aspects. It would be a playful sort of sur-

realism, almost a private joke were it not that the peculiar nonsense in his etchings, prinked with tiny objects, sets us off on one meditation after the other. They are waking dreams—sober dreams—with embarrassing surprises, in which a winged ballerina holds the reins of a horse, and a rakish bird is cocked on the mane of a peaceful lion; naked women stand at the window, hearts and angels, owls and human beings rock in silly helplessness on the branches of trees in all the idiotic rigidity of nineteenth-century photographs. We enter a quaint, spellbound world, with balloons, chipped looking-glasses, the streets of small towns, canaries, Christmas trees, a gentleman in a chimney hat standing in a flowerpot, grandfather's clocks and travelling circuses—a world in which all things are linked together and shown in their stripped reality, a world which even in its fairytale improbability is immutable.

Liviusz Gyulai has been influenced by Kondor in his technique, and also by Gross. But Gyulai has a cruder humour and a sort of peasant fantasy which have given him a special place in Hungarian graphic art. In his half-crazy, naive, fairytale drawings and engravings he plays with the anachronism of medieval manuscripts, Transylvanian woodcuts or old French engravings, through which the glitter of his irony can be discerned. His sense of pastiche is admirable—but it would be no more if he had not informed it at the same time with the ironic perception of its inability to express the attitude and emotional experiences of today. It is precisely this use of the inadequacy of the past to express the reality of the present that gives its value to Liviusz Gyulai's work. It is the mocking grimace that enriches it; the caustic admission—and this again gives food for thought—of his need of traditional forms, for he cannot create new ones to replace them.

Together with the various solitary and individual graphic artists of Hungary a new trend was born in the late fifties; what is called magic naturalism. It has brought Surrealism into the visual arts of today, not through Miró and Chagall, but rather in the style of Salvadore Dali and the later conscious automatism of Max Ernst. Its representatives have been trying to renew Hungarian painting, and their technical experiments have been conducted with painting in mind. But it has equally had its effect on the graphic arts. The founder of the group, Tibor Csernus, stirred up a small revolution with his illustrations to *Cyrano;* in point of fact his painting style began with his graphic work.

His graphic works are paintings in monochrome: the changing surfaced and the depth of the nuances have been retained in his drawings. His brilliant draughtmanship quite often turns into a surprising kind of abstract "anatomy," showing the bones, the tendons and the fibres of his gorgeously clothed figures; in the same way he strips plants and machines to their merest skeleton. His cold lunar landscapes, without atmosphere, have a magic air—true, the magic of the Ice Maiden, bringing death in her touch. The rankly luxuriant dry vegetation evoked from the paint is a stripped and spoiled vegetation, just as his figures walk through the wonders of technology as through a grotesque apocalypse.

László Lakner has also identified himself with "magic naturalism," and has introduced new elements into it. His surrealism is created not from the absurd concatenation of natural objects but from a montage technique. Details in his larger paintings are apt to recur is his graphic works, in which classic influences, such as the revealing brutality of Goya and the interplay of light and shade in Rembrandt, make themselves felt. There is a felt tension in his efforts to make them at once classically clear and completely contemporary.

A certain yearning for representational art in János Majos has been realized in his etchings, somewhat akin in spirit of the work of Csernus and Lakner. He is a man

who has thought much and worked hard. His intellectual attitude can be felt in the theoretical and austere language of his etchings; nothing is left to chance or to instinct, and this has made him a representative of "orthodox" Surrealism.

It is true to say that however symbolic-mythological, ironic, grotesque or surrealist the Hungarian graphic arts of today may be, they continue the traditional representational style. Yet Vajda's Abstract Surrealism has not completely disappeared. It has survived in the art of Endre Bálint, his friend and contemporary,* whose creative period, dating from the late fifties, has exerted an inspiring effect on some members of the young generation—on Dóra Maurer and Lili Ország in particular. By linking various motifs simplified into practically abstracts forms, projecting them one upon another and permeating one with another, he has created a dream surrealism in which shining heavenly bodies, trees opening like fans, burnous-clad women, cemeteries, bones and horses, as stiff as if lifted from signboards, have become symbols of existence. His linocuts, monotypes and water-colours alike display the same simplicity of forms as Vajda's graphic works.

Dóra Maurer's power of design is equal in rank and authority with that of Bálint. Her engravings and woodcuts are filled with objects recalling prehistoric petrifications and the proliferation of new vegetation. The stones preserve the fossilized imprints of dragonflies, leaves and roots, and in "The House of the Dead" and "The House of Flower," for instance, a typical use is made of embryonic formations, resin frozen into stalactites and stalagmites, melted rocks and the veining of wood.

* On Bálint, see No. 18 and p. 180 of this issue.

Lili Ország is probably the most abstract of all Hungarian graphic artists. She "writes" her pictures with elements of Hebrew characters, which are in themselves abstract forms; but even in their interconnection she is not attempting to suggest surrealist associations. These letters have weight and plasticity, they tremble and trickle like petrified tears. The way they tower like organ pipes, or are wound with silvery scales into a spiral, or dissolve into almost geometrically regular shapes—shows a genuine re-creation of ready-made forms. Her graphic works are coloured in greys and yellows and browns, which conjure up the monotony of indecipherable manuscripts thousands of years old; they are heavy on a biblical scale with the implicit expression of the concentration camps and mass murders of the twentieth century.

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Just because they are popular, the Hungarian graphic arts include a great deal of purely ephemeral and fashionable work by artists anxious to jump on the latest bandwagon. It cannot, however, conceal the few original personalities who have brought authentic new developments to modern graphic art. They are felt only as tendencies at present; no homogeneous and characteristic graphic style has yet emerged as a whole.

There are three ways in which the rigidity of surviving traditions can be broken: Béla Kondor has created his style within the limits of representational art, rediscovering the substance of drawing as such. With pictorial devices Tibor Csernus has found a graphic style with surrealist connections, Abstraction, the legacy left by Lajos Vajda. is best represented in the work of Dóra Maurer and Lili Ország.

JUDIT SZABADI

MUSICAL LIFE

MUSIC REVIEW

Open-air Music

One of the numerous places where Budapest music-lovers can listen to summer concerts is the Károlyi Gardens. The Károlyi mansion to which the gardens belong was formerly the residence of the Károlyi family and now houses a museum and a library; its courtyard has proved to have a seating capacity of nearly two and a half thousand. Unfortunately the acoustics are far from perfect and although finer and finer amplifying systems have been successively tried out in an effort to improve the sound each seems to have broken down at the crucial moment.

Nevertheless, the Károlyi Garden concerts continue to enjoy great popularity in Budapest. The fresh air and pleasant surroundings are a great attraction, where smokers can puff away to their heart's content and even listen to good music at the same time. (Smoking is prohibited at all indoor concert halls, theatres and cinemas in Budapest.) Critics like the Károlyi Gardens even more than concert-goers, because the vagaries of the weather and the vicissitudes of the amplifying system supply them with ample material to write about when nothing better occurs to them.

But through these problems the observant listener can draw some important conclusions from the Károlyi Garden concerts. Good music surmounts all obstacles, without a doubt; this appears to be the most important lesson that one might learn from them. The music of a conductor or soloist who plays artistically will find its way to the audience without an amplifier, even through wind and cold. On the other hand, music that has nothing to communicate will inevitably suffer, however calm and warm the weather. Thus the history of meteorology can hardly recall a constellation favourable enough for conductor Edouard van Remoortel to afford his audience an enduring musical experience.

Tradition has it that one conductor plays only what is in the score, and another plays only what is missing. Remoortel appears to belong to the former category, and fails to draw any conclusions whatever regarding the sound of the music. He conceives faithfulness to the score somewhat primitively.

It is an old truth that in the case of the most popular and most frequently heard works, the performer has to refer back to the score again and again and re-create the composition, as it were, from the original notes. And just because a good many conductors neglect doing this, in the course of time the musical material of these works becomes encrusted with a thickly fossilized layer of faults. In opera an endeavour is made to prevent this by repeated revivals and new settings. But by all indications symphonic music has remained a stepchild in this regard.

The audience mistakenly believes that a

great performing artist reveals, let us say, Beethoven's Seventh Symphony "in a new conception" to his listeners, and therein lies the artist's greatness. But in the case of the greatest ones this is generally not so. The truly great conductor cleanses the material of the imprints of his mediocre predecessors. He therefore leads the masterpiece, worn by everyday usage, back to its original realm of beauty, back to the form in which the composer conceived it.

In Remoortel's conception of faithfulness to the score the conductor leans with his entire body, accompanied by angular gestures, into the stresses marked by Beethoven, thereby obliterating all other accents and "bogging down" the pulsating flow of the work. He carefully observes every indication for the performance of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony—but this is little or nothing. Instead he should attempt to motivate Beethoven's use of certain accents, and to justify a crescendo or diminuendo in the music. This motivation, as mentioned, is inherent in the material of the music and the great classical masters included indications on performance only for the sake of the not-so-well-versed. Any musician who is unable to tell by glancing at a score whether a given section is supposed to be performed forte or piano will do best to abandon the field as quickly as he can.

Apart from this, Remoortel conducted his orchestra with angular movements, which resulted in a convulsed and spasmodic sound image. As for the last movement of the Seventh Symphony, he rushed it beyond comprehensibility, obviously aware that intensified tempos offer strong possibilities of success.

About three weeks later in early August Lazari Berman, the young Soviet pianist, visited Hungary, and on this occasion performed Prokofiev's First Piano Concerto for us.

Berman earned his popularity in Hungary by winning Third Prize at the Liszt Piano Competition in 1956. Since then he has toured our country almost every season, and we have a more or less accurate picture of his development.

He is not a performer with a clear-cut reputation, but is a noteworthy figure. The effect of his robust piano playing is never lost on the audience, and intentionally or not it has a compelling force, although otherwise he is prone to a kind of coarseness and even incomprehensibility. Often for the sake of greater effect he will sacrifice the sense of a work, or sections that offer no possibilities for effect, and leave empty the peaceful, quiet surfaces of the work. In contrast to this, however, in the Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev piano concertos he elevated the voice of his instrument to the rank of an equal partner with the orchestra in the strict sense of the term concerto, and he dominated the fortissimo orchestral sound image with effortless ease.

Berman knows no acoustical difficulties. The ringing tone of his piano filled even the vast open space. We admired his buoyant virtuosity and the breathtaking force of his personality, particularly in his two encores (Prokofiev's March from *The Love for Three Oranges*, and Scriabin's Etude in D sharp minor). The most important thing Berman needs to learn is that state of natural calmness in which the performer does almost nothing, but allows the music to unfold its sense of its own accord, as it were. It is true, of course, that this ability is possessed only by the greatest.

Another of our young and no less faithful guests, Malcolm Frager, is one of those fragile artists who are poetically endowed. He came to Hungary three years ago for the first time. Since then he has demonstrated his exceptional ability through several recitals and a number of piano concertos. In the middle of August he performed Schumann's Concerto at the Károlyi Gardens.

From Frager we are used to hearing beautiful music full of the joy of living. It is the beauty of his piano tone, and his free, at times almost loose, treatment of melody

that especially charm the listener. Yet Frager, also, is unable to discard enough of his artificiality.

Simplicity is music's greatest "art," we might even describe it as its rare and great gift. For example, Lazari Berman is aware that it is the sweeping force of his virtuosity which has the greatest impact on his audience, and is therefore inclined to approach and transform the musical work he is performing somewhat from this aspect. Frager seeks melodic possibilities, that medium in which he may give vent to his almost gipsy-like free musical spirit and thus ingratiate himself with his audience. If I say that both of them lack simplicity I mean that they do not construct their performance out of the work they interpret, but infuse their playing with something external (in this instance with something of themselves), using the work almost as a mere pretext to show off their personality in an advantageous light. The natural artist, therefore, is the ideal one, whose spirit is imbued with the same quantity and diversity of sympathetic strings as the composer's.

Of course, both Berman and Frager display their arbitrariness on a very high artistic level. For instance, Frager becomes as closely knit with the orchestra as in chamber music. In contrast to the great majority of soloists, who generally concern themselves only with their own concerto part, his efforts are directed at integrating the sound of the piano and the orchestra into a single sonorous image of sound. We could sense this lofty effort particularly in the slow movement of Schumann's Piano Concerto, and this was one of the reasons for his great success.

The simplicity just mentioned was represented in all its greatness and to an almost ideal degree in the violin artistry of Dénes Kovács.

Dénes Kovács is indirectly a product of the famed Hubay school. His teacher, Ede Zathureczky, was one of Jenő Hubay's outstanding pupils. Audiences in England first heard Kovács in 1955, the year in which he won the Carl Flesch competition. Since 1957 he has been professor and head of the Department of Strings at the Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music, and a few months ago he was appointed Director of the Academy.

Towards the end of August János Ferencsik conducted the closing concert of the Károlyi Garden series, in which Kovács was the soloist. We heard him then in Beethoven's Concerto in D major, which always has the force of a revelation when played by Kovács.

The most fitting characterization of this great artist appears to be Nietzsche's familiar adjective: "Apollonian." Every performance by Kovács is marked by the perfect harmony of the musical elements. He deliberately and instinctively searches for the common roots, the ultimate identities, and this is his point of departure in bringing out the contrasts within a work. It was he who taught us that the principle and the second subjects of any classical movement always make their appearance as two sides of the same material, the very same problem, and not as contrasts that preclude each other. From a music-technical point of view this means that all the delicacy of his piano lives in each one of the forte sections, and vice versa; his pianos soar as if they were played forte. The same may be said of the performance of his quick and slow movements. It was Kovács who realized the seemingly paradoxical, but in reality, fundamental principle put forward by Leó Weiner, the Hungarian composer who died exactly six years ago, that "one must learn to play quick pieces slowly, and slow pieces quickly." Thus, slow pieces must always be held in a state of continuous tension—continuously advancing pulsation—otherwise the mounting and backbone of the melodies disintegrate; and in quick movements the performer should avoid producing a frantic confusion. This profound *aperçu* of Weiner's that Kovács accomplishes at the highest possible level reminds us of the bearing of the music, the realization of the actual value of the notes.

The musical material happily submits itself to such an artist. When we listen to him we are always possessed by a feeling that playing the violin is infinitely easy, that anybody can do so if he tries. Virtuosity without any show of ostentation whatever appears in this music as a kind of natural element, easily and with fragile delicacy, but at the same time with absolute self-evidence, as something that is like this and cannot be otherwise. The "strain," the "dash," etc., so often experienced among instrumental virtuosos, is foreign to Kovács, just as nature does not exert itself, for example, when it raises a breeze.

Owing to this simplicity and naturalness many people still do not recognize Kovács's exceptional qualities today. There is no doubt about it, if an artist does not remind the audience with some customary external sign, that a particularly spectacular feat is about to take place, if he does not wrinkle his brow, or assume a determined look and gnash his teeth almost audibly, then perhaps for many a supreme accomplishment of skill and talent will pass unnoticed. (This is somewhat like the roll of a drum before a death-defying leap in the circus, and then the clash of the cymbal after the feat is done.) Kovács has no such tricks. He is concerned with the music itself, with re-creating its living continuity—humbly and simply. His virtuosity is an organic part of the living process, in the same way that our heart does not always beat in the same rhythm, or the same tempo. Kovács's art emanates a kind of vegetative purity.

This was not the first time I had heard the Beethoven Violin Concerto played by him, yet I simply could not get my fill of its beauty. The way he picks up the deeply submerged stream of the music to let it soar high again, and sets the musical material into motion once more in the brief cadenza, always makes the listener catch his breath. In fact each bar of his interpretation deserves to be evoked, but I must necessarily confine myself to a single feature: the trio section of the last movement, the G minor episode, where the violin introduces the theme, then the bassoon takes it up and this time the soloist weaves garlands around it. This is the point at which Kovács, always the true soloist, inevitably becomes a chamber musician for a single moment, and his violin takes on a flute-like quality: he continues to adorn and unravel the theme in the manner of the masters of woodwind chamber music. At the same time one is moved by the way he inserts this little cloud in minor into a movement whose very soul is major, the way he leads into, and then out of the ephemeral episode.

Sviatoslav Richter

At the end of August Sviatoslav Richter surprised us with a sudden visit, and gave two recitals in the Hungarian capital's largest concert hall, the Erkel Theatre. (This building otherwise serves as Budapest's second opera house during the concert season, and is used about once a month as the setting for major concerts.)

Richter, who is now 54, embarked on his world career relatively late—around 1953–1954. The first and very significant stage of his career was an appearance in Budapest. His very first recital in the Hungarian capital filled only one-fifth of the large hall of the Academy of Music. For his second recital the police had to draw a cordon around the building. Those who were unable to obtain any more tickets for the sold-out concert, broke through the police cordon, forced their way through the doors of the auditorium and occupied practically every square inch of space, hanging from any place of vantage, including the drapes and other ornaments, to hear Richter play.

It is difficult to describe to the English reader what Richter's playing was like in the early 1950's. Western audiences became acquainted with this Dostoevsky of performing artists much later—as suggested, among

other things, by the fact that the Riemann Encyclopaedia issued in 1961 does not contain Richter's name in its second volume. In the course of his first visit to Hungary, during some ten concerts he played a half dozen concertos, as well as at least one composition from every significant composer in the history of the piano from Bach and Scarlatti to Prokofiev. Since then he has given almost twenty concerts in Budapest, and with the exception of Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasy, the same piece has never yet appeared twice in his programmes. Apart from these, he has given numerous concerts in the provincial cities—each of them with an entirely different programme. For instance, I had to travel to Miskolc, slightly less than two hundred kilometres from Budapest, in order to hear him play Liszt's Sonata in B minor. In those days his appearances usually ended with a series of encores that constituted practically another half-night's recital, so that one programme often lasted well over three hours. (There were occasions when Richter played from eight in the evening until midnight.)

This time the closing selection of his first recital was the "Appassionata." As he was going through the last bars, the audience, as though drawn by some invisible force, slowly rose from their seats. Some even stumbled in a kind of stupor towards the stage. And indeed it was difficult to escape the feeling that if Richter had continued to play for even as much as a second longer, some sort of terrible catastrophe would descend upon all of us.

Richter accomplished the impossible in revealing the magic of performing art: he uplifted us and flungs us down again, he did with us as he pleased. We felt what Liszt must have experienced when he first heard Paganini play. We glimpsed a world which we never even imagined to exist.

This world was fundamentally dark—just as Dostoevsky's plots were set largely in the night—but from time to time a kind of blinding light flared up in our imagination in the wake of Richter's piano playing. In recent years this light flashes through the steadily thickening darkness more and more infrequently. Anyone who has followed Richter's artistry for nearly a decade and a half, and has also experienced this, will have created a deep and intimate relationship with it—just as the Hungarian public has had an opportunity to do. Such a listener or critic reacts differently to his playing from someone who became acquainted with Richter only a few years ago.

It seems as though the fundamental features of Richter's art have deepened even more in recent years: his musical realm has grown a shade darker, the musical images he evokes are even more ominous than we had known from him in the past. Sometimes—quite surprisingly—even the simplest musical material from him will suggest complexities that virtually crush the work he is performing. This is what happened to Haydn's Sonata in C major, in which the light accompaniment of triplets in the left hand was reminiscent of the realm of meanings in Schubert's last works. And as a result the Haydn structure veritably collapsed. But this very same attitude in Chopin's Ballade in G minor brought forth the deepest essence of the work.

Richter knows, and feels, that the "action" of the Ballade in G minor, or its programme in the musical sense, a thought that gradually surfaces within the memory and suddenly bursts forth almost in anguish, is unfulfillable. The manner in which Chopin unravels this thought, the way in which he attempts to find a reply to it, the solution that proves impossible—all this, without our wishing to impute some sort of concrete, literary programme to Chopin's Ballade in G minor, achieves an unequivocal and clear formulation through the composer and Richter. And we also learn the meaning of the repeated sweeping runs at the end of the composition: an expression of helplessness. The last notes of the runs are "suspended" high up—and the music falls back again and

again into the starting mood. And in the final bars, when the octave passages of the two hands rush towards each other from the ends of the keyboard—Richter's playing seems intent on annihilating the piano itself in bitter fury.

Debussy's Preludes Volume II revealed the great changes that Richter's art had undergone. His robust personality, which earlier had seemed to shatter the delicate framework of impressionistic music, appeared to be more refined, as if it had grown receptive to details of beauty which it might possibly have by-passed earlier. It is true, however, that in exchange for it, he now gave us a number of elements of his magical performing art striving for the essential. Richter had thus grown more refined—in both the positive and negative senses of this definition. But even here he could not completely avoid being himself: the *feu d'artifice* became *feu follet*, a dark-hued, fateful phenomenon enlarged to cosmic proportions.

A few days after the two recitals we heard Richter again, as the soloist in the opening orchestral concert of the Budapest Music Weeks in September, playing Britten's Piano Concerto, accompanied by the Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra conducted by János Ferencsik.

Benjamin Britten and his works enjoy great popularity in Hungary. Among his unforgettable appearances was the song recital last year with Peter Pears, when we heard the full cycle of Schubert's "Die Winterreise." Britten as a pianist can be compared with the greatest masters of the instrument. In his accompaniment of the Schubert songs he conjured up a whole world in a single moment, created an atmosphere, almost a *mise en scène*, and completely transformed himself in accordance with the requirements of the individual songs: at various moments his piano sounded like a flute, a violin or even a trumpet—all in a perfect chamber music ensemble with the equally splendid song recitalist.

Nevertheless, the piano concerto written in his youth impressed us as lacking in weight, as being an eclectic work, as combining style elements almost thoughtlessly at times. A certain impressionistic elegance, as well as a kind of mocking, deliberately trivial tone that is constantly perceptible, occur throughout this concerto; his characterizing ability is undeniable. But these two emotional layers appear to be insufficient to hold together and fill such an extensive work.

It is quite possible that Richter's monumental performance did not enhance the work either. With his enormous personality he seemed to crush Britten's composition, as though it were consumed by the flame of Richter's fiery temperament.

Rostropovich

The greatest event of the Budapest Music Weeks was the guest performance of the Soviet cellist Mstislav Rostropovich. This artist also has a long-standing and warm relationship with Budapest audiences. He won a prize in the music competitions of the Budapest World Youth Festival in 1949, and since then has given concerts here on several occasions. Among other works, he introduced Shostakovich's Cello Concerto in Hungary in the early 1960's. English readers are no doubt aware that Benjamin Britten also composed a cello concerto for Rostropovich, since he, like Shostakovich, was inspired by the playing of the great artist. Apart from these, Prokofiev's monumental Cello Concerto, which he played in Hungary for the first time on this occasion, was also composed for him. His presentation of Haydn's Concerto in C major also had the effect of a revelation.

Rostropovich is one of those overwhelming virtuosos who may be regarded as the direct descendants of the instrumentalists who flourished around the turn of the century. This kind of musician is quite a rarity nowadays, primarily because of the need for absolute dedication to his music. In fact, it

sometimes seems that only an occasional portion of the great works reveals itself to performing artists. In this sphere the differentiation produced by scientific development can be seen in the specialization of one performer as an authentic interpreter of the old masters, another as a "romantic" artist, a third as an outstanding "modern" performer, etc. One may possess an impressive tone, the second nimble fingers, still another particularly great mastery in his use of the bow, and so on. Rostropovich combines the most outstanding features of these different types, and at the same time his performance overwhelms one with a force reminiscent of the previously mentioned instrumental virtuosos. What may be regarded as "modern" in Rostropovich's music in the noblest sense, is the infinite humility with which he approaches music.

On the occasion when he introduced Shostakovich's Cello Concerto in Budapest with such success, the thunderous ovation drew an encore from him. He played the Sarabande movement of Bach's Cello Partita in C minor, a seemingly simple movement requiring no virtuosity.

In a single moment the hall holding nearly two-and-a-half thousand people grew as silent as death. Every turn of the melodic contour of that Bach movement seemed to be charged with a kind of super-tension: the individual notes fairly hung in the air and the homophony became transformed into a kind of ringing harmony in the listener's soul. We found out then that Rostropovich knew the secret of "long tones," the profound mystery of how a single tone can be rhythmical, even how a single tone must be rhythmical, must resound elastically, must bear within it the succeeding note, and that the interpreter must fill the difference between the two tones with dynamic tension.

Bach's Partita in C major for solo cello revealed this kind of magic at Rostropovich's recital on this recent occasion. His chords evoked an *organo pleno* effect, without once sounding gruff. This tone was full and soared with beauty, especially in the Sarabande—and in the Bourrée it immediately took on a light, dancing pulsation. Rostropovich's blazing temperament, his fervent emotionalism unfolded in the Bach framework just as fully as in the Brahms Sonata in F major which opened the programme.

Alexander Dedyuhin, Rostropovich's accompanist, unfortunately appeared unable to equal him as a sonata partner, which is hardly surprising. There are few pianists in the world today who could be a worthy partner of the great cellist.

Rostropovich's success can be pictured from the fact that he played encores for more than half an hour. And this time again, of course, Bach had the last word: we heard the Sarabande in D minor. When it was finished the audience remained listening for several moments—to the silence.

ANDRÁS PERNYE

AN EARLY BARTÓK–LISZT ENCOUNTER

Work on the relations between the music of Ferenc Liszt in his mature period and old age and twentieth-century music, with particular reference to Bartók's music, has been going on in Hungarian musical research for over fifty years. Bartók himself was the pioneer in this field. In an article entitled "The Music of Liszt and Contemporary Audiences,"[1] written in 1911, he spoke very highly of the later Liszt compositions, which were at that time little known and even less appreciated. In his inaugural lecture at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1936—("Liszt Problems")—Bartók re-affirmed and enlarged on what he had written twenty-five years earlier.[2] The influence of Liszt's music on later developments constituted a separate section in this lecture. When Bartók declared that "in any number of more recent Hungarian compositions traces of Liszt's legacy can be discovered with absolute certainty,"[3] he was undoubtedly including himself among those who showed signs of Liszt's influence, as was clear from the subsequent sentence in the lecture.

The parallel between the art of Liszt and the art of Bartók had been drawn as early as 1940 by Aladár Tóth in his paper "Ferenc Liszt in the Development of Hungarian Music." Although in 1932 Zoltán Gárdonyi drew attention to the significance of Liszt's later style ("Liszt's Unpublished Hungarian Compositions"), it was only first analyzed with the care both its own profundities and its fecundating influence on European music merited by Bence Szabolcsi in his inaugural lecture in 1954 at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and then, following the lecture, in his book "The Twilight of Ferenc Liszt,"[4] which was soon afterwards published in several other languages as well as in Hungarian. This very important study was the first to throw a light on Liszt's influence on Bartók. Since then, further research has confirmed the Liszt–Bartók resemblance so clearly illuminated in Szabolcsi's study. István Szelényi published his researches in a number of first editions of Liszt compositions, and the author of the present paper reported in an article which was published in German on his discovery of a Liszt-manuscript, in the musician's handwriting, the *Eighteenth Hungarian Rhapsody*, which presaged the style of Bartók.

It is no accident that the subject of these researches and in general the basis of the Liszt–Bartók comparison were very largely the compositions Liszt wrote in his old age. Bartók himself could hardly have known most of the work written by Liszt in his old age, and certainly not when he was a young man. It is worth noting, however, that in both his earlier articles and his lecture on Liszt, Bartók gave especial praise to the Liszt compositions connected with the Faust theme, the *Faust Symphony*, The *Sonata in B minor*, the *Danse Macabre* Piano Concerto, ranking them as works that would retain their influence for a long time. The aspirations and conflicts of Faust, the infernal powers of Mephisto to destroy ideals on the verge of fulfilment are the questions which found most valuable and most characteristic expression in the art of the aged Liszt, and this was precisely the theme, both in terms of content and style which is of absorbing interest to Bartók.

1 See Béla Bartók: "Letters, Photographs and Music." Compiled and edited By János Demény, Budapest 1948, Hungarian Art Council.

2 Cf. Liszt, *Hangnemnélküli Bagatell* ("Bagatelle without Tonality"). Compiled and edited from Ferenc Liszt's manuscripts by István Szelényi. With an introduction in Hungarian, German and French by the Editor. Budapest 1956, Editio Musica.

3 Ibid.

4 Szabolcsi, Bence: "The Twilight of Ferenc Liszt" (Translated by András Deák). Budapest, 1959, Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, pp. 134.

We are talking of a link: Bartók need not have had any direct knowledge of the compositions dating from Liszt's old age; it was obviously enough for him to have known the subject-matter expressed in these compositions—expressed in its final and almost ruthless simplicity—from Liszt's earlier and somewhat milder and more romantic phase. This was really enough, for both the aged Liszt and the young Bartók were temperamentally inclined to the broodings and speculations of lonely genius in the Faustian manner. It was inevitable they would both discover Faust in themselves, it was inevitable they would both give artistic expression to the struggle between good and evil embodied in the Faust legend.

Our own Liszt–Bartók parallel is connected with Faust. It can be followed through two "Bagatelles" composed for the piano, one of them being Liszt's *Bagatelle without Tonality*, and the other Bartók's *Fourteenth Bagatelle*.

*

The year 1908 was a turning point in Bartók's life and music. In 1908 works of an entirely different tone, introducing a new world of melody and harmony, replaced the compositions inspired by popular songs and later by peasant melodies. In the posthumously published *Violin Concerto*, the *Two Portraits*, the *Fourteen Piano Pieces*, the *Ten Easy Piano Pieces*, the *First String Quartet* and the *Two Elegies*, Bartók produced something unprecedently new, something that astounded and shocked the critics. At that time there were few who surmised that these works by the recently appointed 27-year-old professor at the Budapest Academy of Music would eventually come to be regarded as landmarks in the history of both Hungarian and European music.

But 1908 nowadays means more to students of musical history than the above list of Bartók's works. These attempts to find a new musical language were closely linked to a profound appraisal on his part of the deepest human and philosophical questions. In point of time, no doubt, the latter came first. Thinking about a new way of life must have preceded the desire to express it in art. The climax came after a spiritual crisis lasting several years, probably beginning in 1905, the year of the disappointing and disillusioning Paris competition for composers, and ended in 1908, when he was first attracted to Márta Ziegler, who later became his first wife.

The intervening three years were marked by the onset of a host of new experiences. It was a period of anguished loneliness, despite the attentions of many friends and well-wishers, and of philosophic meditation, nourished by this loneliness. Among those who gave him support was Dietl, professor of piano at the Vienna Conservatoire who had been on the jury of the Paris competition, and had revealed to Bartók in detail all the doings of the inept and impotent jury of that unfortunate affair. And far away—in Pozsony (now Bratislava, Czechoslovakia), Nagyszentmiklós and Budapest—there were warm-hearted correspondents like his mother, the Jurkovics girls, friends since their common childhood, and later Stefi Geyer, the concert violinist, an outstanding pupil of Hubay, all of them concerned for his welfare.

As we know from the letters to his mother dated August 15, 1905, and September 10 respectively, Bartók was taken around in Paris by Dietl. The flood of new impressions seemed to make him forget the recent failure, the blow to his pride as an artist. Some of them were bound to leave their mark on later compositions. Before attempting to analyze one of them, let us quote a longer section from the letter he wrote to his mother on August 15, 1905, from Paris. The description in this letter and the *Fourteenth Bagatelle* of Bartók seem to have common points of emotional and intellectual reference.

"...Dietl took us to a peculiar place of 'amusement.' The idea on which the place

is based is so bizarre that it is worth describing at some length.

We entered a tavern called 'Le Néant.'

The first room was a dark little den; the light was provided by torches, and waiters dressed in the clothes of funeral attendants set our beers down on plain wooden coffins instead of tables, accompanying their action with rude remarks, the gist of which was that we were corpses, so would we please keep quiet. The walls were decorated with amiable inscriptions like: 'Corpses, hurry up and drink your beer because you're beginning to stink'. Above them were hung pictures depicting quite ordinary scenes: a battle scene, someone serenading his sweetheart, a rendezvous of lovers, etc. Every patron was given a thin candle.

A burning liquid suddenly ran into a glass tube hanging from the ceiling—and the room was flooded as if by daylight. Hardly had this happened when we had the frightening experience of noticing that our faces had turned ashy pale, our lips livid and our nails violet—in fact, we looked like corpses.

In the meantime the waiters in the room spoke to us in a funereal voice, and by the sharp light we could clearly see that every implement and piece of furniture in the room was made of human bones.

Now came the first attraction: the room was darkened again, the light being concentrated on the pictures of romantic subjects: the young lover and the soldiers gradually assumed the appearance of skeletons.

The second attraction was the following:

We went on into another, still smaller room, completely dark, on the wall of which opposite us was a small opening just large enough to see through it an open coffin under a bright light in the further room. Someone in the audience was invited to go across and stand in the coffin. Dietl—knowing what was to follow—volunteered without further ado. He stood in the coffin, wrapped in a white shroud up to the chin. All of a sudden, oh, horror, his face grew waxen and rigid, his eyes looked sunken, the flesh seemed to peel off his body and slowly he turned into a skeleton. A skeleton stood in the coffin!

He changed back in a similar fashion.

A pretty young girl also volunteered to submit to the metamorphosis...

...Don't imagine for a moment that the audience was impressed! Not at all! The whole 'tavern' seemed to be based on the idea of flirting with death, of mocking the fear of death.

One finds such strange things in Paris!..."

So, there was the theme of death in a Paris night club in 1905, whose mood probably mingled with other impressions it was to imbue a Bartók composition, the *Fourteenth Bagatelle*. But was it mere accident that twenty-three years earlier, in 1885, in the creative brain of Ferenc Liszt, then in the last two years of his life, a tavern scene also matured into a piece for the piano reflecting the same macabre death fire. István Szelényi found it in 1956 in the course of his researches at Weimar—and he was the first to edit it from the scattered manuscript pages—a piano piece by Liszt to which the composer had finally given the title of *Bagatelle without Tonality*. The original title had been more revealing: "Fourth Mephisto Waltz (without tonality)." This title (which does not refer to a piece identical with the later "Fourth Mephisto Waltz") points to the tavern scene in Lenau's Faust. This is a satanic waltz—a grim, forbidding and restless harmony, and a worthy companion to the other late Liszt compositions, preparing to cast off the outworn trappings of musical romanticism and don the dress of the twentieth century.

As far as we know today, Bartók at twenty-seven could not have known of the existence of this piece by Liszt. But we do know that at this period he was already making every effort to discover for himself the largest possible number of less popular Liszt compositions. We also know that the Faust theme of Liszt had begun to interest Bartók

at an early stage in his career, for he had played the *B minor Sonata* (even if not fully comprehending its depth at the time) as a student at the Academy of Music, and then several times again; and in the article "The Music of Liszt and Contemporary Sources," written in 1911, he described the Faust Symphony as "a whole mass of wonderful thoughts, the planned elaboration of the satanic irony that first appears in the Fugato of the sonata (Mephisto)."

Of course, all this is not enough to explain the resemblance that can be detected between Liszt's *Bagatelle without Tonality*, written in 1885, and Bartók's *Fourteenth Bagatelle*, composed in 1908. Two people with similar human and artistic temperaments do not express themselves in works of similar form. The old man bitterly facing solitude and the young man sensing a lonely future both select the Bagatelle, that characteristic and apparently platitudinous piece of romanticism, as a means of at once conveying and disguising their emotions. It was at the end of the year in which he wrote *Bagatelle without Tonality*—the last but one year of his life—that Liszt made an allusion in so many words to the lack of understanding he found. This was when he "visited the place of Tasso's death with a pupil and pointed out to him the route by which the body of the great Italian poet had been taken to be decked with a laurel wreath at the Capitolium. 'They will not take me to the Capitolium' he added, 'but the time will come when my works will be recognised. True, it will be too late for me—I shall no longer be with you.' "

Twenty years later, beginning his career, Bartók was faced with the same lack of understanding, his failure in the Rubinstein competition. Even in the heart of Paris he wrote about being friendless: "... in spite of the fact that I have my meals in the company of twenty people—Cubans, North and South Americans, Dutchmen, Spaniards and Englishmen—and go on outings with Germans and Turks, I am a lonely man! I may be looked after by Dietl or Mandl in Vienna, and I may have friends in Budapest, Thomán, Mrs. Gruber, yet there are times when I suddenly become aware of the fact that I am absolutely alone! And I prophesy, I have a foreknowledge that this spiritual loneliness is to be my destiny. I look about me in search of the ideal companion, and yet I am fully aware that it is a vain quest. Even if I should ever succeed in finding someone, I am sure that I would soon be disappointed."[5]

Apparently Bartók's prediction first came true three years later, in 1908. Stefi Geyer, the concert violinist, with whom he had shared his innermost thoughts, to whom he had revealed his deepest fears and meditations on the insoluble problems of life and death, God and immortality, the infinite and the purpose of life, to whom he had dedicated his 1907 *Violin Concerto*, and for whom he had composed a whole series of variations which were dedications concealed in his works,[6] this woman who had been spiritually so close, ceased to exist for him. By now she appeared perhaps only as a *Leitmotiv*, the *label* of a name in a code whose symbols had been agreed upon in advance, the person herself, whom the label represented having apparently passed out of Bartók's life. "*Elle est morte—*" wrote Bartók on the manuscript of the funeral music in the *Thirteenth Bagatelle*. And in the last line, symbolically the label also died: over the first soaring and then declining motiv Bartók wrote down: "dead—"

And then, suddenly, the same symbol, the intimate symbol in the funeral music of

5 See Bartók's letter written to his mother from Paris on September 10, 1905 in Béla Bartók Letters, Photographs and Music Scores.

6 For the argument that this motiv was not exclusively devoted to Stefi Geyer but became expanded as a reference to the "ideal companion" Bartók sought, and other questions connected with the Violin Concerto, cf. D. Dille: *Angaben zum Violinkonzert 1907, den Deux portraits, dem Quartett op. 7 und den zwei Rumänischen Tänzen. Documenta Bartókiana.* Vol. 2. Budapest 1965, Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, pp. 91–102.

the *Thirteenth Bagatelle*, spins round into a grotesque dance in the *Fourteenth Bagatelle* Valse. ("*Ma mie qui danse....*") reads the French title with its memories of Paris. The label motif—the Hungarian translation over the notes, saying "My Lover dances" makes clear the subject of the music—screams out in a savage Presto and then yields to the compulsive drive of the violently intensified waltz tempo. On the mistress he believed to be unfaithful Bartók invokes the doom of the girl who was made to dance to death—a theme familiar in many folk ballads. Now for the first time—but not for the last—(let us not forget its great successor *The Miraculous Mandarin!*)—he grapples with the cruel pace of the Dance of Death. The 27-year-old Bartók's dance macabre is haunted by the grim death music of the aged Ferenc Liszt. One does not know whether it is mere chance that both Liszt and Bartók gave the name "Bagatelle" to their piano pieces, that both of them give their macabre subject a waltz to dance, in which the outworn and rapid rhythms of the conventional waltz serve as an introduction and sometimes as an accompaniment. None the less, the fact remains that there is an amazing similarity in the story-content expressed in the same pattern.

This then is how presentiments and memories blended in Bartók's work: Ferenc Liszt's art, the acrid aftertaste of *Le Néant* and the *Moulin Rouge*, and the bitter personal experience of the young artist who found himself condemned to loneliness when the dear companion to whom the Violin Concerto had been dedicated grew as cold and death-like to him as the night club guest in the coffin, turning death-like in the sinister light. The influence of Mephisto took effect once again twenty years later, in the "Monstrous Portrait" orchestrated from the Bagatelle; and the same young composer was one of the first to act as an intermediary between Liszt's last works and the new age.

István Kecskeméti

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

HOMEWARD BOUND (chapter from an autobiography)
Ferenc Münnich

PRIVATE NOTES (parts from an autobiography)
Tibor Déry

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE HUNGARIAN REFORMED CHURCH
Tamás Esze

A TWELFTH-CENTURY ROYAL TOMB
Éva Kovács

THEATRE AND FILM

THEATRE REVIEW

The Hungarian capital has several musical theatres, and also a special playhouse which bills alternately prose plays and musicals. The theatre in question, which took its name from Attila József, the most significant personality in modern Hungarian poetry, is situated right in Angyalföld, the largest working-class district of Budapest, yet it would be a mistake to imagine it to be out on the periphery of town, in fact it can be reached by public transport in a few minutes from the main boulevard. Perhaps this explains the Janus appearance of this popular theatre: the fact that both high-standard plays and light comedies, many of them with music, are featured here. Neither the building nor its company can claim to make the Attila József Theatre one of the older theatres of the capital. Originally the building was a house of culture, and has since been converted several times, each renovation bringing it closer to the requirements of a permanent theatre. At the beginning it housed a studio theatre, and became independent only in 1956. It was lucky in forming its company, for several significant actors who for various reasons found it difficult to get contracts with the main Budapest theatres, were given roles in the Attila József Theatre, a fact which helped the theatre to maintain a good artistic standard. The theatre soon found popularity with the people of the neighbourhood, firstly owing to the fact that it reacted with considerable subtlety to the events of 1956, and later because it presented a succession of Hungarian plays dealing with the situation in 1956 and afterwards. These plays may not have represented a very high level, but they concerned matters that were of the greatest interest to the people, and treated them with a sense of humour and some sentimentality. Contact with the audience was further promoted already at the time by the production of well-known Western musicals on the one hand, and the performance of musical versions of light plays by well-known dramatists such as Oscar Wilde and Sardou on the other. And in order to cast some of their really outstanding actors in challenging prose parts, and to attract audiences from other parts of Budapest, they staged some really ambitious plays by Russian and Western authors (Ostrovsky, Anouilh). This current has remained unchanged to this day. In the meantime some of these famed actors "in exile" received contracts in city theatres, but as the Attila József gained a new impetus through an energetic director and some promising young actors, it was able to increase its popularity. In the meantime it excelled in its range of productions, especially as it succeeded in presenting outstanding productions of practically all types of plays. Among the more ambitious dramatic works staged, Ostrovsky's *Bride without Dowry*, Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie*, and Anouilh's *Becket or the Honour*

of God proved to be highly appreciated performances.

A few Hungarian plays in lighter vein also met with great success, including *The Tight-Rope Act* by István Kállai, and *The Loop-Hole* by Miklós Gyárfás. Among the new Soviet authors, Rozov is predominant in the Attila József Theatre, and virtually considered a "house-author." Long runs have been achieved by light Western musicals, such as Deval's *The Stow-Away* or the popular *The Cactus Flower* by Barillet and Grédy. In these comedies, the music—although an important contributor to the box-office success—does not gain individual importance and never overshadows the libretto. With this type of musical play the Theatre—whether deliberately or not—has become committed to a new trend, for it has not staged one single operetta, a type of work which has always been traditionally popular in Hungary. Perhaps one reason is that the theatre is not adequately equipped to produce operettas, lacking the singers and other musical facilities, although in the general view this has not been the main reason. For background information let us say a few words about the position of music on the Hungarian stage.

Operetta or Musical

There was a time when theatrical life in Budapest was renowned for its flourishing cult of the operetta, under Viennese influence. The fact was that the militant genre of Offenbach and Hervé had been adopted by Vienna and tamed to suit its own taste. Standard dramaturgy and roles had nothing new to offer in the librettos. The *prima donna* and the leading man fall in love in the first act, quarrel in the second, and are reconciled in the third. In the shadow of this plot the *soubrette* and the comic dancer add a little humour, and the "conflict" of the *prima donna* and her partner is resolved naturally in the happy ending. This rather insipid and hackneyed pattern would probably have become extinct much sooner were it not for a sudden revival in Hungary by such excellent composers as Imre Kálmán, Ferenc Lehár, Jenő Huszka, Albert Szirmai and others, and the "jazzy" variations by Alfréd Márkus, Pál Ábrahám, Miklós Brodszky, and in the younger generation, Szabolcs Fényes, which brought it new popularity. In the newer "jazzy" version the Vienna waltzes were replaced by the hesitation waltz and the tango, and the Boston gave way to the foxtrott and the rumba, and later other fashionable dances—but in fact the rhythm and librettos remained substantially the same. The main trouble—which also prevented the development of musical composition—lay in the more and more stereotyped, uninspired patterns, let us say frankly, in the complete imbecility of the librettos, which had long since lost that Offenbach tendency to mock at the absurdities of the times, and very slightly *Épater le bourgeois*. The inaneness of the words did not even dull the senses any longer; most of the operettas were kept alive, apart from the music, by impromptu jokes opportunely inserted into the text and ad libs by the favourite actors.

The story went about in the Budapest theatre world that in theatreland the man who had an idea for a comedy wrote a tragedy, he who had an idea for a farce wrote a comedy, and he who had a theme for an operetta wrote a farce. Who then wrote the operettas? The man who had no ideas at all. Thus, Budapest humour, which hardly exaggerated the truth, merely condensed it.

After the Second World War when the operetta still had a large audience, the voices of dissatisfaction and the demand for something new, grew stronger. The first experiments attempted, along Soviet lines, to refresh the theme of operettas with modern problems, and to imbue their music and dances with stimulating injections of folk music and dancing. This attempt was encouraged by the conservative policy of the

state, which actually attacked operetta because of the bourgeois bias of the libretto, but otherwise found it suitable. This experiment was not very successful, because it did not speak in the musical idiom of the times, and because the fact that the leading man was a miner instead of a prince, and the leading lady was a chicken-breeder on a cooperative farm instead of a young gentlewoman or actress, did nothing to compensate for dramaturgic weaknesses of the operetta. In fact the too obvious tendency to insert material for political education hampered even the redeeming grace of humour.

After 1956—as in so many other areas—something new began in this field, too. A company which up to then had performed prose plays was given the task of experimenting with some new musical genre to replace the obsolete operetta. In the early sixties the Petőfi Theatre did in fact try to handle this problem, intending to follow the trails blazed by the American musical. The American musical had, of course, also been up against the low literary standards of the librettos from the early part of the century and consequently in order to find new paths it drew on literary material of unusually high calibre for the genre and converted highly successful plays into musicals. This tendency gave rise to such sensational hits as *My Fair Lady* from G. B. Shaw's *Pygmalion*, *Caroussel* from Ferenc Molnár's *Liliom* and the *West-Side Story* based on *Romeo and Juliet* as well as *Hello Dolly* from Thornton Wilder's *Matchmaker*, and so on. Quick to learn from this example, the Petőfi Theatre tried to create musicals with literary qualities, as for instance *Three Nights of a Love* by Miklós Hubay, István Vas and György Ránki, and also staged some modern Western musicals.

The Hungarian capital has, however, an independent theatre devoted to the old operetta, with an excellent company of good singers, dancers and well-known actors possessing perfect mastery of their art, and a good orchestra. Some of these—together with the less demanding part of the audience—continued to champion the operetta against all other experiments. Their wish was that the librettos of the old operettas should be modernized as much as necessary but to interfere with the operetta would be unimaginable. And apparently they won the battle. The sad fact was that the Petőfi Theatre met with failure. It had not been able to cope with the task it had undertaken. Originally a theatre, it did not have the staff for the new experiment. In the first place it lacked suitable singers, dancers and musicians. There were few really impressive personalities among the actors and actresses, and the management was not sufficiently strong either in directors or playwrights. Finally, in 1964, the theatre closed down.

History is familiar with the process by which, after a conflict, the victor takes over the culture of the vanquished and sometimes even their customs and language. Something like this is happening at the Budapest Municipal Operetta Theatre, which is the present headquarters of operetta. After the closing of the Petőfi Theatre, it suddenly seemed to be taken for granted that the monopoly of the operetta on the stages devoted to light music could no longer be maintained, that such a monopoly was out of date and even absurd. Consequently the following season the Operetta Theatre itself tried its luck with the production of a modern Czechoslovak musical. The decisive change came, however, with *My Fair Lady*, which had its Hungarian première in February 1966. The Municipal Operetta Theatre put on the musical with a star-studded cast and in an excellent production and reaped the rewards of an explosive success. *My Fair Lady* has been running for over one and a half years, and its appeal has still not diminished. This does not mean, of course, that the operetta will be wiped out definitively from the scene. I believe this would not be right and, considering the interest of audiences, it would not even be realistic. There is nothing wrong with a theatre of this kind keeping in reserve and

occasionally reviving the classics of operetta. At any rate the emancipation of the genre has produced two effects. One is that the monopoly of operetta has been abolished and that its librettos, so long a means of mass-anaesthesia, will be replaced by plays of higher quality whose musical idiom will be up to date. The other is that, in its attempts to produce new works, the theatre will no longer orientate authors towards operetta, but rather along the lines of the musical. This trend has already become evident in the 1966–67 season in which the programme was supplemented, in addition to the successfully running *My Fair Lady* and the operettas (chiefly Imre Kálmán's *Countess Maritza*), by an Italian and a new Hungarian musical.

The Renaissance of the Farce

The Municipal Operetta Theatre is today the only playhouse in Budapest where light-music productions are staged. The more serious theatres also occasionally produce plays with music, but only the kind in which music does not play a dominant part, where only a few lyrics are inserted. In addition to the Attila József Theatre, which has been mentioned already, the Little Stage caters for this type of play. The Little Stage is actually the little theatre of the Gaiety Stage, which, however, has an entirely different type of programme from its little theatre, the two playhouses being only linked by their company. The Gaiety Stage is a satirical, political cabaret, exposes, sometimes very sharply, some of the absurd practices of public life, in prose and musical scenes. The theatre has a very popular ensemble of actors and actresses, and additional outlet for whose talents is provided by the little theatre of the company, the Little Stage. Here light farces are played almost always with music. Their most recent premières include Marcel Mithois's *Croque-Monsieur*, and the French adaptation by Savajon of the Soviet Katayev's *Crazy Sunday*. Hungarian composers wrote music for both of these plays and the result proved most encouraging.

Since we are speaking of plays in the lighter vein, it is worth mentioning two widely acclaimed farce premières in two of the leading Budapest prose theatres. One of these hits is *Caviar and Lentils* written jointly by Giulio Scarnicci and Remo Trabusi, both Italians. The story of the enchanting paterfamilias, both impostor and gentleman, fool and artful dodger, helplessly impractical at times and then again shrewdly astute, and his crazy family living in an atmosphere of neo-realism, are already known to Budapest people from some of De Sica's films and De Filippo's plays, and here the amusing situations in which the family find themselves are interpreted by an excellent cast. The rebellious, uninhibited tone of the production, scoring a big success for Imre Kerényi, the youngest director of the Madách, was a complete surprise, not without a certain piquancy, issuing from the stage of the Madách Theatre on which a regrettably academic dullness had descended in recent years.

The other successful farce was the revival of Feydeau's classical farce *Une dame de chez Maxim*. This revival had its antecedents, of course. French comedy has always enjoyed great popularity in Hungary. Molière could almost pass for a Hungarian playwright, and it was a fact that our first theatrical companies learned the language of the stage at the same time as really literary Hungarian—from Shakespeare and Molière. The first great reformer of literary Hungarian, Ferenc Kazinczy, who created literary life in the modern sense in Hungary, proved with a Molière translation that Hungarian was well-suited for the stage. Post-Molière French comedy (Marivaux) was less popular, but the end-of-the-century bourgeois farces of Labiche, Feydeau, etc. found great favour with the new bourgeois audiences. People of "nobler tastes" deplored these authors be-

cause of their love triangles, adulteries and other unheard-of immoralities. Although the most successful Hungarian playwrights, Ferenc Molnár and Jenő Heltai, learned a great deal from these Frenchmen, their works remained the shamefully and silently tolerated mistress on the Hungarian stage, something not to be mentioned in polite society. After the nationalization, Hungarian theatres succumbed to a wave of prudery which did not relax for some time. During this period, when the Vígszínház wanted to revive *Une dame de chez Maxim*, there was an uproar in official circles as well as in parts of the press. In vain did the theatre point out that in France the Comédie Française and in England the National Theatre had put on the play, the story of the girl from Maxims still caused shudders amongst certain people, as the acme of immorality and lewdness. When finally the revival was staged and proved another success which brought the house down, it turned out that it had far less eroticism or obscenity than the most innocent contemporary play. In addition to the excellent farce itself, two factors contributed to its success. One of them is Zoltán Várkonyi's direction. Várkonyi, at 55, is one of the most mature, imaginative and ingenious Hungarian directors. And as for comedies—probably no one understands them better than he. Just recently his revival of Ferenc Molnár's *The Guardsman* and later his production of Schisgall's *Luv* were very well received. The brilliant production and splendid rhythm of his *Une dame* captivated audiences. It is no mere coincidence that, speaking of the young director Kerényi in connection with the success of *Caviar and Lentils*, so many critics drew comparisons with Várkonyi. (In addition to being the first director of the Gaiety Theatre, Zoltán Várkonyi also directs films, his most recent cinematographic contribution being *A Hungarian Nabob.)* The other factor responsible for the success of *Une dame* is the cast headed by Éva Ruttkai in the title role, and Iván Darvas, playing the part of the General.

JÓZSEF CZIMER

COUNTERPOINT IN THE FILM

We have now passed the time when the quality of art in the film, its claim to equality with the other arts, needs any further reiteration. Today we are proud to stress that the film has come of age, that we recognize its freedom and capacity to express the intricacies and contradictions of human experience in all their complexity.

Some years ago Alain Resnais's *Hiroshima mon amour* brought about a revolution by putting us into immediate visual contact with the whole variety of moods of its two characters, and did it by the use of a series of unexpected methods and techniques. Rhythm, light and shade, music, silence, the intonations of human speech, the melody of recitatives, movement and rest, all played their part in building up the overall effect of the various climactic moments.

In *Ivan the Terrible* Eisenstein used elements of language and colour with conscious deliberation, to point and accentuate roles and atmosphere. We have only to compare his employment of space and of dazzling whitenesses, in the dynamic long shots in which Ivan first appears with the darkness, the underground vaults, the terrifying rigidity of the icons in the world of the boyars, the shadows of murderers and assassins passing on the walls.

The directors of these films worked like the conductors of a symphony orchestra. The mounting music is echoed by the intensity of the film sequence, the alternating shots by the change of rhythm. Sounds and colours, movement, the beat of words, are unexpectedly resolved in a composite effect.

The range available to the film producer is astonishingly various. Whereas other arts are dependent on one—or two—means of expression or perception, language, colours, lines, it is a distinguishing feature of the film that it lacks the homogeneity of the other arts.

Eisenstein himself, analysing *Alexander Nevski*, refers to the wealth of material components used in building a really substantial sequence. In the famous battle scene on the frozen surface of the lake he comments on "the tones of the sky—clouded or clear, the accelerating speed of the riders, the direction, cutting back and forwards between Russians and knights, the faces in close-up and the embracing long shots, the tonal structure of the music, its themes, its tempi, its rhythm, etc..." No easy job for any director to make an organic whole from such diverse elements.

In the hands of a good artist all these innumerable possibilities can be used with great sensibility to convey subjective thoughts and feelings. And this, maybe, is the very quality that raises a film above a mere anecdote, a simply story. The very complexity of its sound structure may help the director in manipulating the various elements and welding them into his own picture of a new world in a new harmony.

However, it is at this very point that one should stop a moment. When we speak about harmony in terms of film, too often we use it in the old, traditional sense of the word. As though the meaning of harmony had not itself undergone a revolutionary change in the last fifty years. It is worth considering what we mean by harmony a little more closely, and what are the still unexploited opportunities it offers.

Counterpoint, that is to say, the contrast of aural and visual effects and the use made of it to complement the one by the other, may well be included in the notion of harmony in terms of film. An instance of this is the Vergano film *Il sole sorge ancora* so often referred to, or Zampa's *Vivere in pace*, where various emotional states or changes are expressed exclusively through the musical or sound effects, the images themselves remaining unchanged or indeed on occasions contradicting what we hear.

The most exciting possibility opened up by the film, however, is the capacity to suggest what lies concealed behind the visible world and to make the contradictions apparent, not through explaining and resolving contradictions chronologically, in succession, but just the opposite, by preserving simultaneity and by representing inconsistencies, which frequently contradict each other, in their physical, coincident presence.

Yet the spectator is only too often left with the impression that the director has failed to make use of all these various structural elements as he should, in order to explore actions, moods and feelings simultaneously reacting upon one another in a visual and aural manner, and has contented himself with creating nothing more than witty effects or interesting contrasts by this "orchestral counterpoint." Or indeed, they make every effort to coordinate these elements in a precise or parallel pattern in order that the different levels should show no dissonance or irregularity in tone or style.

Is indeed the achievement of such a simple consonance and consistency the *non plus ultra* of a system of film harmonics, an achievement never to be surpassed? Cannot the film today take a lesson from modern art in intellectual depth and complexity by a more up-to-date approach to this system of harmony, by making it even more sensitive and various?

If there has ever been any point in using musical metaphors or similes, it is more justified now than ever before. Once again

the film seems to have renewed a close association with music, and like music its efforts are directed towards a simultaneous diversity.

The emergence of counterpoint in music was a long process, which brought about a tremendous qualitative change in musical thought. The significance of the change is not that the simultaneous sounding of different notes is a simple mathematical combination of their frequencies. It is in the concord, and in the new perceptional experience, that the qualitative change and enrichment makes itself felt.

The development towards counterpoint in film took a similar course. The first attempts to enrich music showed themselves in the endeavour to give more fullness to the sound. The same thing happened in film, where directors tried to achieve greater impact by multiplying the visual effects, by the "spectacle."

The next phase in music was the trend towards the use of elaborate ornaments and colouring in a homophonic melody. The absence of polyphony or counterpoint—the simultaneous sounding of different notes or melodies—was compensated by the adornment of the successive musical passages. And in the film, the excess of narrative, the overdecoration, the intricacies of the plot, corresponded to the same stage of development.

And ultimately, in the final emergence of counterpoint, two stages must be distinguished called, in strict terms, polyphony and counterpoint by musicologists. The accompaniment or complementation of a melody, coordinated with it only in time but not in pitch, such as the accompaniment of the melody by different drums or other instruments, belongs to the former category. Debussy found it in Oriental music: "A passionate little clarinet will arouse emotions, a tam-tam create fear—that's all."

In the first phase the development of counterpoint in the film again followed a similar line. That is to say, by the use of simple or complementary accompanying devices. To be more precise, in the beginning it was the task of the music chosen to accompany the "melodic line" of the film, i.e., the plot, with its rhythm, to emphasize its emotional content. The whole musical pattern was designed simply to enhance the passions and emotions portrayed in the film.

There is, however, the more complicated phase: counterpoint, in which the melodic material itself is made up of two separate strands of equal importance. It is in their progress and intertwining, side by side, in their consonance and their relationship to each other, that the integral whole comes to be revealed. When this occurs the experience is only "quantitatively" richer, but it offers us a series of layers, of musical processes, on varying emotional and intellectual levels, connecting and interlacing with an intensity that enables us to experience it fully. Now turn to the cinema again. Let us consider its use of compositions in spatial structure, which make it possible to follow several plots simultaneously—the use of the *profondeur de champ* device, for instance—or a similar way of handling time in which different relationships in time can be projected simultaneously upon one another on the screen. One of the "parts" of the film, to continue the musical metaphor, represents events in normal everyday life, here and now, as it were, providing a framework to the movements of the other "parts," representing internal, psychological time, with different rhythms. Examples of this are the fascinating finales of *Les enfants du paradis* or *Le diable au corps* in which the contrapuntal use of different time rhythms show the surging crowds milling around, hurrying to and fro, and the solitary sorrow of the hero, at the same time.

In András Kovács's "Cold Days"* different levels of time are superimposed on one another, or interwoven. The men, sitting in a prison cell, recall and exchange almost impersonal comments on the massacre they

* Reviewed in No. 24, of The N.H.Q., p. 207.

committed—this mood thus determining the rhythm and the emotional level of the sequence—the events evoked by the conversation recall the past in a dynamic flow and flux of recollections, in a completely different tone. The inter-relation of these two quite different levels sustain and carry the story and the essence of the film. The effect is not the contrast of past horror and present indifference; it is the strange admixture and simultaneous expression of both.

But polyphony, which in modern musical usage includes counterpoint as well, can be practised on other levels of the film, for every truly intensive and profound sequence, every episode of any value, derives this value from its orchestration of a thousand colours and sounds crowded into a single moment. Take the restaurant scene in *Bicycle Thieves*. Isn't its authenticity due to this very fact? From the touching effect of contrasts and contradictions, incoherent and entangled, instead feelings aroused by a chemically pure stimulus? The living restless experiences of "mean joy" and "exultant sorrow" are born just so. They are enhanced by the counterpoint of the shots, the cunning orchestration of other contrasts and elements, a shabby suit against luxurious surroundings, by the melancholy character of the music, the touching ugliness of the singer...

To carry the musical analogy a step further. The crucial moment in modern music came when the complexity of the musical material forced the framework apart, when the whole principle of tonality, hitherto regarded as sacred, was called in question. The composer began to feel the strict observance of tonality an obstacle to the full expression of the complicated emotions of modern experience, and first experiments in tonality, and finally polytonality, came into existence. The simultaneous use of two or more keys inevitably goes hand in hand with new principles of harmony—the formation of new harmonies not accounted for or accepted in the classic rules of harmonics. Instead of consonant harmonies leading towards a classic resolution they seek out challenging nervous effects which in turn modify the rules of rhythm.

It may be worth considering how, in the present phase of film development, similar methods could be—or have been—employed.

One thing is sure. Relegating plot to the background in favour of a direct interpretation of the sweep and fluctuations of feelings and thought—that is, transcending the "melody" line—has led to an increased differentiation and sensitivity in a great many outstanding modern films. Bazin may have been the first to stress the right—and capacity—of the film to express the ambiguity of things and events, by pointing out that the co-authorship of the public, which gives the event its compelling force, is a fundamental condition of artistic experience.

Recently, in Hungary, the critics argued at length whether the world conjured up by Antonioni in *Deserto rosso* was beautiful or repulsive. Only after lengthy discussion could they be brought to see that the authenticity and sincerity of the film lay precisely in this ambiguity, produced through a highly complex "polyphonic" orchestration of effects. But Antonioni offers something quite different from what we are used to in what might be called conventional counterpoint: the thing seen has more than one implication, offering different kinds of alternatives; not only is his concept of beauty itself full of contradictions, imbued with a sinister peculiarity, but it is continually counterbalanced, invaded by its opposite, ugliness, which appears in strange vital forms. These different layers and strands are inseparable, and create a strange "dissonant harmony", the effect of which is compelling and disquieting.

Miklós Jancsó's *The Round-up** also works through an admirable and strange unity made up of striking contrasts. The sense of oppression and confinement is con-

* Reviewed under the title "The Outlaws" in Yvette Biró's "From the Personal to the Impersonal," in No. 21, p. 181, of The N.H.Q.

veyed through carefully composed shots of the vast plains and the infinite distances; the impression of a hidden and ruthless order emerges through the arbitrary and the incomprehensible. Jancsó's unusual power and mastery comes from this very complexity, cunningly building up the tension and the restlessness which pervade the film.

But if today we consider the composition of a film as bizarre and its structure perplexing—is this not just what happened with Stravinsky's or Bartók's early works? An exchange of familiar harmonies for a more restless, dissonant, and perhaps truly a more chaotic interpretation of experience? And if, in *Hiroshima*, we are somewhat taken aback by the trivialities which excite pathos, or rather by the pathos of certain trivialities, are we not faced with a new unity of subjects, decisions and levels which have been kept separate, until now, or, at most, presented in sequence as demanded by traditional convention? A new and still uncommon unity, not justified by the plot itself, but by the personality of a creative artist. The artist is not content to tell us a story; he wants to express himself, his multitudinous and violent experiences, agonies and thoughts with the same arbitrary inconsequence, the same kaleidoscopic lack of logic as he found in life.

The contrapuntal structure of the film is a flexible tool with which to mirror these emotional experiences; each phase must have a meaning of its own, colours and sounds, tones and rhythms, gestures and silence—all of them must be elements of a conscious composition. Only by understanding this will we, the professional critics, be able to analyse a film with some degree of exactitude, instead of offering impressions for considered judgement, an exactitude that is able to appreciate proportions and connections correctly.

Only then will we be able to hear distinctly all the parts in the structural counterpoint, be able to assess the pattern of movement and the permutation of tensions, and thus understand in full the human significance of the film.

YVETTE BÍRÓ

FROM OUR NEXT NUMBERS

ITALIAN RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE SMALL BRONZES
Mária G. Aggházy

GYPSIES
József Vekerdi, Dénes Szántó, Károly Koffán

BARTÓK—PIANIST AND TEACHER
Lajos Hernádi

THEATRE, FILM, ART, MUSIC, BOOK REVIEWS

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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MYRDAL, Karl Gunnar, LL.D., the Swedish economist and politician.

HALÁSZ, Zoltán is deputy editor of The New Hungarian Quarterly.

SZABÓ, Lőrinc. See the article on him on p. 156. of the present issue.

ÖRKÉNY, István (b. 1912) Novelist, short story writer. His sharp wit and dry intellectual approach, his shrewd and subtle powers of observation and a tense, often ironic style, have earned for him an extensive readership in Hungary. His experiences during the war, especially his time in a forced labour battalion, form the frequent subject of his stories and plays. His main interest is in exploring human reactions a the moments of greatest stress. His recent collections of short stories, *Jeruzsálem hercegnője* ("The Princess of Jerusalem," 1966, reviewed in our No. 26) and *Nászutasok a légypapíron* ("Newlyweds on the Fly-paper," 1967) were popular successes. See also his stories "No Pardon" in No. 17, "The 137th Psalm" in No. 26, and an excerpt from his comedy "The Tót Family" in No. 28 of The N.H.Q.

PEVSNER, Nikolaus, the British art historian. See also his "Impression of Hungarian Building" in No. 21 of The N.H.Q.

VAS, István (b. 1910). Poet, author, translator, one of the outstanding personalities in contemporary Hungarian writing. Has published poetry, essays and criticism since early youth. His recent publications include a volume of collected poems (1963), parts of an autobiographical sequence, *Nehéz szerelem* ("Troubled Love," 1964), and a collection of his shorter translations from foreign poets, *Hét tenger éneke* ("Song of the Seven Seas," 1962). His translations include plays by Shakespeare, Molière, Racine, Schiller, T. S. Eliot, O'Neill, Tennessee Williams; a volume of English metaphysical poets, as well as many other English, French, German, Russian and other poems; works of fiction by Goethe, Thackeray, Fontane, Maeterlinck, Maugham, Aldous Huxley, Steinbeck and others. See his "A Journey to England" in No. 1, parts of "Troubled Love" in No. 15, "T. S. Eliot" in No. 17, and "The Via Appia" (a poem) in No. 23 of The N.H.Q.

MARÓTI, Lajos (b. 1930). Poet, novelist and essayist, a physicist by training, working at present as publisher's reader in the science department of *Gondolat* Publishing House in Budapest. Has published poems, essays, translations of Italian poetry, and a novel. See also his contributions in Nos. 12, 17 and 20 of The N.H.Q.

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district of Budapest. *Vigilia*, a Catholic periodical, frequently publishes articles by him. His main field of research is the area where the social and natural sciences and theology overlap. His new book: *A keresztény ember a mai világban* ("Christians in Today's World") is in progress.

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. Some of his last contributions: "The Changing Role of Hungary in the International Division of Labour", in No. 19, "Economic Growth and International Division of Labour", in No. 22, "Brakes and Bottlenecks in Hungary's Economic Growth" in No. 25, and "Automation, Alienation, Socialism" in No. 27 of The N.H.Q.

PASSUTH, László (b. 1900). Novelist whose historical novels, rich in colour and authentic historical detail, have won him great popularity in Hungary and abroad. All his historical novels are based on a profound study of the subject—usually a great personality of the past like Cortez, Joan of Naples, Constantine the Great, Theodoric the Great, Monteverdi, Giorgone, Velasquez, Raphael, etc.—and the semi-romantic treatment, in addition to its literary qualities, has interested a large audience in history and art. He is one of the most widely read Hungarian authors; his works have been published in German, English, French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish, some of them in several editions. See his contributions in Nos. 2, 3, 5, 7, 13, 18 and 26 of The N.H.Q.

HEGEDÜS, Géza (b. 1912). Writer. Graduated at the Budapest Pázmány Péter University. Since 1945 professor at the Budapest Academy of Theatre and Cinematography. Has written a number of historical novels and plays that were particularly successful among young readers. His works, written in an attractive style, are rich in conflicts. Was awarded the József Attila prize on two occasions. His works have been published in German and Italian as well. See his "Shakespearean Voyage" in No. 2, "The Merchant of Venice and Problems of Civil Law" in No. 13 of The N.H.Q.

VARGA, Sándor (b. 1920). Manager of a firm for the distribution of books in villages. Has published numerous articles and studies in this field.

GASTER, Bertha. Journalist, translator. For many years on the staff of the London *News Chronicle*. See her "Hungary in English Dress" in No. 28. of The N.H.Q.

VAS, Zoltán (b. 1903). Politician, journalist, writer. Joined the Communist youth movement as a young man to become one of its leaders; later became a leading member of the party. Was given long prison terms several times for his activities in the Horthy era, spent altogether more then sixteen years of his life in prisons. Took part in the armed resistance to the Nazis and the Hungarian Arrow Cross and after the liberation of the country occupied high party and government positions, including the posts of Mayor of Budapest and President of the Planning Bureau. Published his first novel, which he wrote in prison, in 1922. His autobiographical work *Tizenhat év fegyházban* ("Sixteen Years in Prison") has been a popular success running into several editions at home and abroad. Since 1956 has devoted himself entirely to writing. Published a fictionalized biography of Marx and, Engels in 1960, and a trilogy on the life and activities of Kossuth, 1965–66.

SPIRA, György (b. 1925). Historian. Graduated from Budapest University in 1948. Since 1949 works at the Historical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His main field is the history of Hungary in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Main works: *A magyar forradalom 1848–49* ("The Hungarian revolution 1848–49," 1950); *1848 Széchenyije és Széchenyi 1848-a.* ("Széchenyi in 1848 and 1848 in Széchenyi's life," 1964.)

FÖLDES, Anna. Journalist, critic and literary historian, on the staff of *Nők Lapja*, an illustrated Budapest weekly for women. Has written monographs on Ferenc Móra and Sándor Bródy, two Hungarian novelists, for a post-graduate degree, and also travel diaries and a book on cheap literature. See her book reviews in Nos. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26 and 28 of The N.H.Q.

FERENCZI, László (b. 1937). Literary historian. Graduated at Eötvös University in Hungarian and History. Is engaged in research on nineteenth and twentieth century Hungarian and French literature at the Institute of Literary History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest. See his review on István Vas's volume of poems in No. 23 and "Arion" in No. 27 of The N.H.Q.

SZÁSZ, Imre (b. 1927). Novelist and translator, at present working as publisher's reader with *Szépirodalmi* Publishing House, Budapest. Began his career as a writer with a highly successful historical novel. His later works, novels, and short stories, deal with contemporary intellectuals. Has translated many English and American authors from Shakespeare to Hemingway. See also "Nocturnal Acquaintance" in No. 5, "Hungarian Short Stories in English" in No. 11, and "The Comedians of the City" in No. 19 of The N.H.Q.

NAGY, Péter (b. 1920). D.Litt., literary historian and critic, Professor of Modern Hungarian Literature at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. Studied in Budapest and Geneva, was for a time member of the diplomatic service, later a publisher. Wrote monographs on Zsigmond Móricz and Dezső Szabó, two leading twentieth-century Hungarian writers. Has translated works by C. G. Jung, Sean O'Casey, Tennessee Williams, Simone de Beauvoir and J.-P. Sartre. Among his many contributions see "The Anti-Theatre," in No. 5, "Irreverent Thoughts on Maeterlinck," in No. 8, "London Nights" in No. 12, "Bookshelf" in No. 14, and an essay on T. S. Eliot in No. 26 of The N.H.Q.

KOVÁCS, Sándor (b. 1931). Graduated from Eötvös University, Budapest, in Hungarian and History. For one year he taught in a Budapest high school and since 1957 he has been scientific worker at the Institute of the History of Literature of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His main field is the literature of the renaissance in Hungary. He is on the staff of *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, a periodical of the history of literature. He was one of the editors of *Magyar Irodalmi Lexikon* and elaborated in Vol. 1–2. the literary documents of the late middle ages in Hungary.

HAJDÚ, Péter (b. 1923). Linguist, Head of the Institute of Finno-Ugric Studies at Kossuth University, Szeged. His field of research includes the Finno-Ugric and Samoyed languages and Hungarian prehistory. His best-known work, *A magyarság kialakulásának előzményei* ("Antecedents to the Formation of the Hungarian People") was published in 1953. See also his "International Finno-Ugric Congress in Budapest" in No. 2. of The N.H.Q.

NÉMETH, Lajos (b. 1929). Art historian. Studied at Eötvös University in Budapest. Edited an art review before taking up research work at the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest. See his previous contributions in Nos. 14, 24, 26 and 27 of The N.H.Q.

TOLNAI, Gábor (b. 1910). Literary historian, Professor of Hungarian at Eötvös University, member of the Hungarian

Academy of Sciences. Graduated from Szeged University, was research worker at the National Széchényi Library of which he became Director after the liberation. In 1949 he was nominated Hungarian Minister to Italy. From 1957 to 1962 he was editor of the periodical *Kortárs*. His main field of research is the literature of 17–18th century Transylvania, and also contemporary literature. He was awarded the József Attila prize in 1960 for his work *Évek—századok* ("Years and Centuries"). His latest works include: *A tenger és a szél* ("The Sea and the Wind") a Cuban diary, 1964; *Federico García Lorca*, 1964; *Itália dicsérete* ("In praise of Italy") a volume of essays, 1965.

PASSUTH, Krisztina (b. 1937). Art historian; graduated from Eötvös University in Budapest. Her main field of study is twentieth century Hungarian painting. See her "Endre Bálint's Painting—A World of Houses and Objects" in No. 18 of The N.H.Q.

KERÉKGYÁRTÓ, István (b. 1938). Critic. Graduated from Kossuth Lajos University, Debrecen, in Hungarian and French. Worked as reader at the *Magvető* publishing house. Since 1965 has been on the staff of the *Corvina* publishing house. He published several essays on 20th century Hungarian literature and art in various periodicals.

SZABADI, Judit. Art historian. Graduated from Eötvös University in Budapest in Hungarian and Art History. Works as reader for Corvina Press in Budapest. See also her "Magic Naturalism" in No. 22 of The N.H.Q.

PERNYE, András (b. 1928). Musicologist, critic and broadcaster, music critic on the staff of the Budapest daily *Magyar Nemzet*. Studied at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music. His special fields of study are baroque organ music, Italian romantic opera, the history of jazz, music aesthetics and sociology. Has published numerous essays and books on these subjects. See his Music Review in No. 28 of The N.H.Q.

KECSKEMÉTI, István (b. 1920). Musicologist, head of the Music Department of the National Széchényi Library. Studied at the Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music. Has done research into works of Mozart, Süssmayr, Liszt, Debussy, Bartók and others, and published a number of studies on them in Hungary and abroad. See also "Recent Findings in 18th and 19th Century Music" in No. 20 of The N.H.Q.

CZIMER, József (b. 1913). Theatre critic, translator, literary director of the Budapest Vígszínház theatre, a psychologist by training. See his Theatre Reviews in Nos. 25, 26, 27 and 28 of The N.H.Q.

BÍRÓ, Yvette. Film expert and critic, our regular film reviewer. Research worker at the Budapest Institute of Cinematography and Editor of the bi-monthly *Filmkultúra*, published by the Institute. The article published here is a slightly expanded version of a lecture given at the Nuovo Cinema Festival is Pesaro, Italy, May 1966. See her reviews in Nos. 21, 22, 24, 26, as well as her article "A Nouvelle Vague of Hungarian Films?" in No. 27 of The N.H.Q.

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